

LOS OBISPOS NORTEAMERICANOS PUBLICAN UNA CARTA PASTORAL
QUE SE RELACIONA CON LA SITUACIÓN MEXICANA

El Importante Documento Expresa Profunda Simpatía por el Sufrido Pueblo de una Nación Vecina. Habla de Principios de Libertad Violados. Contesta Concluyentemente las Acusaciones contra la Iglesia en México.
No se Busca la Intervención de los Estados Unidos.

Washington, D.C., 15 de Dic.- Los Cardenales, Arzobispos y Obispos de la Iglesia Católica en los Estados Unidos publicaron hoy una carta pastoral que se relaciona con la situación en México.

En la reciente junta de los Obispos de los Estados Unidos, que tuvo verificativo en la Universidad Católica, de Washington, durante los días 15 y 16 de Septiembre del presente año, se acordó publicar dicha carta, habiéndose designado un comité para tal objeto, que quedó integrado por Su Eminencia el Cardenal Patrick Hayes, Arzobispo de Nueva York, como Presidente; el Muy Ilustrísimo Austin Dowling, Arzobispo de St. Paul; el Muy Ilustrísimo John J. Glennon, Arzobispo de St. Louis; el Ilustrísimo Joseph Schrembs, Obispo de Cleveland, y el Ilustrísimo Francis C. Kelly, Obispo de Oklahoma. El comité sometió un borrador a todos los Obispos de la Unión Norteamericana, quienes conjuntamente aprobaron la carta pastoral de que se trata.

Al principio de ella, los Obispos manifiestan que el motivo que los impulsa para publicarla no se debe únicamente a "la profunda simpatía que sienten por el sufrido pueblo mexicano en la persecución que se emprende actualmente contra la religión en ese país", sino también al hecho de que México es vecino de los Esta-

dos Unidos y hay que tener en cuenta "todo el influjo que la proximidad ejerce sobre el poder del buen o el mal ejemplo."

La carta pastoral contesta amplia y concluyentemente las imputaciones de que la Iglesia en México es responsable por la ignorancia que prevalece en dicho país, así como de que se ha mezclado en la política mexicana.

No Intervención de los Estados Unidos en México

Los Obispos no piden que los Estados Unidos intervengan en México. Dicen lo siguiente sobre el particular: "Por lo tanto - lo que hemos escrito no es un llamamiento a los fieles de aquí o de cualquier otro lugar para una acción puramente humana, ni tampoco significa una interposición de nuestra influencia como Obispos o como ciudadanos para llegar a los que ocupan puestos políticos en cualquiera parte del mundo, y mucho menos en nuestro propio país, con el fin de que intervengan, por la fuerza de las armas, en los asuntos internos de México para proteger a la Iglesia. Nuestra obligación queda cumplida cuando, al relatar los hechos, advertimos a la civilización cristiana que sus cimientos están siendo atacados y minados. En cuanto a lo demás, Dios hará Su voluntad a Su debido tiempo y a Su manera, y México será salvado para que cumpla su misión, sea cual sea."

He aquí el contenido completo de la carta pastoral:

"Los Cardenales, Arzobispos y Obispos de la Iglesia Católica en los Estados Unidos de América al Clero y a los Fieles:

"Paz y Bendición en Nuestro Señor Jesucristo, Maestro de la Verdad que Nos Hace Libres -

"El gran corazón del pueblo norteamericano nunca ha rehusado simpatía para los que sufren por causas de conciencia; pues, casi

instintivamente, se da cuenta de que la opresión aniquila la armonía del hogar, así como que es un abundante manantial de los mal entendimientos y odios que dividen a las naciones y a los pueblos y que perjudican la causa de la amistad internacional y de la paz mundial. Si nosotros, como Obispos americanos, no tuvieramos otra razón para publicar esta carta pastoral que mostrar nuestra gran simpatía por el sufrido pueblo mexicano en la persecución que actualmente se emprende en ese país contra la religión, ello la justificaría; pero existen otras razones, todavía de más peso y urgencia, que hacen que este acto sea una obligación; las cuales se basan en el hecho de que México es nuestro vecino y hay que tener en cuenta todo el influjo que la proximidad ejerce sobre el poder del buen o el mal ejemplo; que es una república que se pensó hacer parecida a la nuestra, y un país que cuenta con un pueblo cristiano, cuya devoción a la Iglesia Católica hace un llamado especial a la caridad de los fieles de todo el mundo, pero más especialmente a los de los Estados Unidos.

"Razones todavía más poderosas para la publicación de esta carta pastoral provienen de las consideraciones más elevadas del deber para aquellos principios sobre los que deben basarse todos los gobiernos justos; principios que guardan los derechos conferidos al hombre, no por los Estados, sino por Dios mismo. Nadie, y mucho menos los Obispos de la Iglesia que cuenta con la fidelidad espiritual de casi todo el pueblo mexicano, puede mostrarse indiferente cuando estos principios vitales se atacan tan osada y cruelmente como se hace actualmente en México. Esta obligación de defenderse y protestar ha sido ya reconocida por los Obispos de México, según las peticiones admirablemente escritas contra la

opresión, así como en oportunas, íntimas y edificantes cartas que han dirigido a sus feligreses. Esta acción puede muy bien ser secundada por nosotros, sus hermanos separados por fronteras nacionales, pero, a pesar de todo, unidos por los lazos de la fe común, así como los de la caridad fraternal que son más fuertes todavía por el entendimiento mútuo, la estimación y la amistad.

Hablamos tanto por los intereses de la Iglesia como del Estado.

"Sentimos una obligación más poderosa para hablar clara y públicamente sobre la persecución que actualmente tiene lugar en México contra la Iglesia, porque el Padre común de la Cristiandad, Pío XI, Vicario de Jesucristo, ha pedido a todos los fieles del mundo que unan a él su simpatía y oración a Dios por la afligida Iglesia. De esa manera manifiesta su profundo pesar por las tribulaciones de la Iglesia y su gran percepción del peligro que esta persecución significa para "la paz de Cristo en el Reino de Cristo" sobre la tierra. El que ha expresado claramente su más caro deseo, así como que el motivo supremo de todos sus actos oficiales, no es nada menos que el reinado del Príncipe de la Paz sobre todos los corazones, y que ofrece a un mundo enfermo e inquieto el remedio de las enseñanzas y el amor del Maestro, ha reconocido, en su oportuna rogación, la gravedad y amenaza que existen para la religión en todo el mundo.

"Sin embargo, hay todavía otro motivo más poderoso que nos obliga a hablar, y consiste en que el conflicto actual, como parte de una lucha en contra de la religión en México, la cual tuvo sus principios hace ya casi un siglo, y que ahora ha alcanzado un grado mayor que en ninguna otra época, intenta nada menos que la destrucción de la Divina Constitución de la Iglesia, reduciéndola a la categoría de

un cuerpo cismático, controlado por el Estado, quitándole el derecho de ordenar, disciplinar y educar a su propio clero; de contar con un número suficiente de sacerdotes para atender a las necesidades espirituales; de encontrar los medios de sostenerse; de emprender obras de acuerdo con su misión de caridad y civilización; y de aplicar las enseñanzas del Evangelio para la formación de una conciencia universal. Una triste experiencia, así como un exacto modo de razonar nos dicen qué pasaría después, en caso de que se lograra implantar una cosa por el estilo, y lo que significaría para la Iglesia, así como para el Estado.

"Si la Iglesia en México fuera dominada y maniatada como trata de hacerlo la autoridad civil, nominalmente estaría separada del Estado, pero realmente sería una parte de la maquinaria política de él. Sus jerarquías y puestos vendrían a ser regalías de los políticos; y su voz la voz cambiante de la acción política; se vería despreciada por sus fieles y justamente burlada por sus enemigos; el eslabón de unión con la Iglesia Universal empezaría por debilitarse y terminaría por romperse estrepitosamente. El Gobierno de México pide a la Iglesia que acepte una esclavitud que hoy no significaría sino una enfermedad cogida en sitios infestados; pero que mañana se convertiría en un mal mortal que haría que inevitablemente desapareciera de la vida del pueblo mexicano.

Hablamos con nuestro carácter de norteamericanos y de católicos.

"El Estado también obtendría muy malos resultados; pues no contando con la influencia religiosa, la historia se repetiría para él: olvidaría sus sueños de democracia y se volvería despótico; la corrupción aumentaría al contar con autoridad para conferir emolumentos eclesiásticos a los indignos; merecería y recibiría el odio de los

hombres justos del país y el desprecio de los justos en el extranjero. Un "Sínodo Santo", emprendiendo una ingrata labor de despotismo, gradualmente absorbería la fuerza y la influencia del Estado y la usaría como una maquinaria muy conveniente de gobierno. Lo que llegare a haber de bueno en los ideales del Estado, terminaría sobre una de las rocas más antiguas que se ocultan en las aguas de la vida política.

"El asunto que estamos tratando es de tanta importancia para la Iglesia como para el Estado. A pesar de lo ofuscado que se encuentren los que defienden tales planes de gobierno, la Iglesia mexicana prefiere perecer defendiendo su Divina Constitución y los derechos religiosos de su pueblo mejor que aceptar la alternativa de una esclavitud que significaría la ignominia de la impiedad y la ruina final de su misión espiritual. En una palabra, la Iglesia en México no puede escoger; pues el continuar simplemente sus funciones públicas religiosas sería una franca declaración de que se había sometido a ellas, y con eso daría el primer paso para divorciarse de la unión de la Iglesia Universal.

"Entonces, si por el hecho de que la persecución en México está encaminada contra todos los principios de la religión, deberíamos hablar como siervos de Dios, si porque se ha desatado especialmente contra la religión de la mayoría del pueblo mexicano deberíamos hablar como católicos, hay grandes razones también por las que tenemos obligación de hablar como norteamericanos adictos a las instituciones de nuestra patria, las cuales debemos amar por los beneficios que nos han traído a todos. El Gobierno de México, por sus propios actos en nuestro seno, nos ha obligado a no guardar silencio por más tiempo, pues la guerra que ha emprendido contra la religión la lleva más allá de sus propios límites, por medio de propaganda organizada en muchos

países, especialmente en el nuestro.

Consideramos al Gobierno Mexicano según los Principios Norte-
Americanos y Cristianos.

"Valiéndose de sus agentes diplomáticos y consulares, ese Gobierno apela al pueblo norteamericano para justificar sus acciones. Por lo tanto tenemos ante nosotros el espectáculo extraordinario de un gobierno extranjero que no sólo inunda a nuestro país con propaganda en favor de sus propios planes y de su política interior, sino que trata de justificar y defender, en nuestra patria, leyes y procederes que varían con los principios fundamentales que asentaron en documentos imperecederos los Padres de esta República. Interpretando erróneamente la tolerancia que tenemos para un país vecino que todavía se halla intranquilo a consecuencia de tantos levantamientos militares, el Gobierno de México se ha atrevido a solicitar la aprobación de nuestros conciudadanos; lo cual significa que somete su caso a la opinión de un tribunal fuera de sus propios linderos; defendiéndose, no ante sus propios ciudadanos que, según su Constitución, son los que deben formar el único tribunal competente para decidir, sino ante extraños que no tienen derechos para juzgar los asuntos políticos de sus vecinos, y cuyo único interés en ellos es el deseo que abrigan por el bienestar del pueblo mexicano y porque existan relaciones mutuamente amigables. Bajo tales circunstancias, el Gobierno de México no puede, por lo tanto, objetar si se considera el caso que ha presentado según los principios norteamericanos, de acuerdo con lo que expresan nuestras leyes, y también según los principios cristianos, ya que apela a la simpatía de los que profesan la fe de Cristo; ni tampoco si las declaraciones que ha presentado en pro de su causa, se someten al fallo de la his-

8

toria, ya que con tanto celo habla por el progreso de la educación. Estas son las cosas que nos proponemos hacer para que no sólo nuestros compatriotas queden bien informados de los intereses que se hallan afectados, sino también para que el pueblo mexicano no se vea privado del privilegio de apelar a los tribunales, ante los cuales sus gobernantes han apelado, aunque erróneamente.

Parte I

La Libertad según las Constituciones Norteamericana y Mexicana.

"El Gobierno de México basa su causa en repetidas afirmaciones de que simplemente está poniendo en vigor la Constitución y las leyes fundamentales de la nación mexicana. Por lo tanto no está por demás comparar esta Constitución y estas leyes con las nuestras, por lo menos en lo que se refieren a los derechos de conciencia; pues de ningún otro modo se pueden aclarar mejor los puntos que se discuten.

"Para entender mejor la diferencia que existe entre la idea de lo que es la libertad civil y religiosa, según la Constitución de los Estados Unidos, y la idea de los que formularon y defienden la actual Constitución de México, es necesario comparar los dos documentos. Con esto se verá que el Gobierno de México sólo ocultando los verdaderos hechos podrá obtener la simpatía de norteamericanos sensatos y sin prejuicios, cuyas ideas de justicia cívica y derechos difieren radicalmente de los que expresa la ley mexicana. La comparación probará esto sin necesidad de argumentos; aunque, si hay que decir verdad, no existe base para tales argumentos; a menos que sea una tentativa para no reconciliar nuestros planes de acción con los del Gobierno mexicano, y probar que los nuestros no son buenos. En una palabra, lo que el Gobierno de México pide, al solicitar nuestra simpatía y aprobación, es nada menos que censurar la obra de los Pa-

dres de esta República, mostrándonos descontentos con la Constitución que nos legaron y echando ésta abajo; pues ningún norteamericano puede aceptar^{que} la teoría mexicana de gobierno está de acuerdo con la justicia fundamental, sin que con ello repudie sus propias tradiciones e ideales. La gran audacia y osadía del Gobierno mexicano, al apelar de esa manera a nuestra simpatía, en favor de leyes y proceder que varían con nuestras más caras convicciones políticas, ha sido, tal vez, la razón principal por la que no se ha hecho caso a la oposición de dicho Gobierno a estas convicciones. Quizá por esta misma razón, los cristianos de todas partes no han parado mientes en que el actual Gobierno de México está emprendiendo una guerra contra uno de los principios de la Cristiandad, o sea la libertad de conciencia, sobre la cual León XIII expuso claramente su actitud; diciendo que: "Se aboga mucho por otra libertad, o sea la libertad de conciencia. Si con esto se quiere decir que todo el mundo puede adorar o no a Dios, según le convenga, ello queda refutado ampliamente con los argumentos ya mencionados; pero también puede interpretarse como significando que todos los hombres del gobierno civil pueden seguir la voluntad de Dios, y conscientes de su obligación y libres de todo obstáculo, obedecer Sus mandamientos. Esto es, ciertamente, la verdadera libertad, una libertad digna de los hijos de Dios, quien noblemente mantiene la dignidad del hombre, y es más fuerte que todas las violencias o todas las injusticias; una libertad que la Iglesia ha deseado siempre y considerado con mucha predilección. Esta es la clase de libertad que con intrépida constancia reclamaron los apóstoles para ellos mismos; la que los apologistas de Cristo confirmaron con sus escritos; y la que los mártires, en vastos números consagraron con su sangre, y muy merecidamente; pues esta libertad cristiana

es testigo del dominio absoluto y muy justo de Dios sobre el hombre, y de la obligación principal y suprema de éste hacia Dios. No tiene nada que ver con cerebros sediciosos y rebeldes; y no se desvía un ápice de la obediencia a la autoridad pública; porque el derecho de mandar y exigir obediencia puede llegar sólo hasta el punto en que vaya de acuerdo con la autoridad de Dios, y dentro de los límites que El ha fijado. Pero cuando se ordena algo que claramente está en contradicción con la voluntad de Dios, hay una gran divergencia de este orden divinamente constituido, y al mismo tiempo una lucha directa contra la autoridad divina; y por lo tanto no se debe obedecer."

La Misión Divina de la Iglesia.

"En otros mil pasajes, este Pontífice ilustre, sus predecesores y sucesores, han expresado sus enseñanzas católicas sobre éste y otros divertos puntos que nos atañen actualmente. Las doctrinas de la Iglesia no son secretas; con su Maestro, puede ella decir: "Jamás he dicho nada en secreto". (2) Según esa enseñanza, es la voluntad de Dios, contenida tanto en Su ley natural y positiva, la primera ley de la vida, pública y privada. Descubrir esa voluntad por medio del proceso escudriñador de una conciencia sincera e ilustrada, usando los medios que Dios ha proporcionado, y luego seguir su guía, es el derecho natural y la obligación de todo hombre. "Este es mi amado Hijo, oídlo," (3) es el contenido del mensaje de Dios a la raza humana. Por lo tanto nos adherimos a Dios porque es "el medio, la verdad y la vida". (4) El en cambio encomienda a Sus Apóstoles y a sus sucesores que continúen Su misión de enseñar y de santificar las generaciones venideras. "El que os escucha, Me escucha y el que os desprecia, Me desprecia." (5) Por lo tanto los católicos consideran a ellos como los guías autorizados para que los conduzcan por la sen-

da que lleva a la eternidad. A estos "dispensadores de los misterios de Dios" (6) deben los católicos obediencia en todos aquellos asuntos que les tiene confiados el pastor principal de nuestras almas, que es Cristo. Sólo por intervención arbitraria, que esté fuera de su propia esfera de acción, puede el Estado obstruccionar el debido cumplimiento del ministerio pastoral; y esto es lo que el Gobierno mexicano trata de hacer, negando en efecto la autoridad final de la voluntad de Dios, que se ha expresado claramente al hombre para su guía espiritual, y por un acto osado de autoridad arbitraria se invaden sus derechos en favor de los del Estado.

"Pasando a considerar la idea de la libertad civil y religiosa en las Constituciones a las Constituciones mismas, nos encontramos con el argumento del Gobierno de México de que sólo se concreta a poner la propia en vigor. Sin embargo, aquí, al principio, se deben confrontar dos hechos importantes: primero que aunque las leyes antirreligiosas del país datan (7) desde 1857, ningún Gobierno hasta ahora había intentado ponerlas en pleno vigor; y segundo que aunque esas leyes fueron reiteradas y se les dió un carácter más drástico en la Constitución de 1917, el Presidente Carranza sugirió que se cambiaran las cláusulas que afectaban a la religión, (8) y el Presidente Obregón, durante los cuatro años de su administración, nunca intentó ponerlas todas en vigor. Estos dos hechos demuestran que tácitamente se reconocía lo lejos que de la justicia y de la aprobación del pueblo mexicano se encontraban tales leyes. Sin embargo, el hecho de que se cite a la Constitución, hace que por el momento dejemos a un lado personalidades y pongamos nuestra atención en el instrumento escrito, sobre el que se basan tales personas para tratar de justificar sus actos. De ahí que sea necesario in-

vestigar la naturaleza y objeto de la Constitución.

El Objeto de la Constitución.

"Una Constitución escrita es un documento que enumera y define los derechos y obligaciones del Gobierno, hace división de los poderes, prescribe la manera de su ejercicio, limitándolos con el fin de que queden protegidos los privilegios de los ciudadanos. Como el objeto del gobierno es proteger los derechos humanos, y no destruirlos, naturalmente que la carta constitucional por la que se ha de regir un gobierno no debe autorizar un poder ilimitado; pues el ejercicio de tal poder constituiría una tiranía, ya que conduciría a destruir los derechos que tanto las leyes naturales y positivas de Dios colocan fuera de la jurisdicción de los hombres. De acuerdo con la doctrina generalmente aceptada por el pueblo norteamericano, una Constitución reviste al Gobierno con aquellos derechos y poderes que son necesarios para el debido ejercicio de sus funciones lícitas, y al mismo tiempo le prohíbe usurpar los derechos que por orden superior tienen los hombres, y que no provienen del pueblo, ni del Estado, ni de cualquier conjunto de Estados, sino del Dios Todopoderoso, Creador de los hombres y los pueblos. Esta idea se halla enteramente de acuerdo con las enseñanzas de la Iglesia Católica.

No puede haber duda posible, entonces, de que la protección de los derechos naturales e inalienables del individuo es esencial a la noción de una Constitución. Un poder ilimitado no necesitaría de Constitución, ya que ésta es una garantía de libertad y no un instrumento de tiranía. Cuando un documento de esa índole, cualquiera que sea su origen, destruye estos derechos o decreta leyes cuyo ejercicio es moralmente imposible, no puede ser respetado ni tampoco

obedecido; pues tal documento no está de acuerdo con la razón justa que vindica los derechos naturales del hombre. "La ley humana es ley sólo por virtud de encontrarse de acuerdo con la razón justa", dice Santo Tomás de Aquino, "y por ello está manifiesto que dimana de la ley eterna. Desde el momento en que se desvía de la razón justa se le llama una ley injusta; y en tal caso no es ley, sino más bien una clase de violencia." (9)

El Hombre tiene Derechos Inalienables.

"En esto, realmente, se basa la fuerza de la Declaración de Independencia, un documento que todos los norteamericanos consideran con razón la piedra angular de este Gobierno; y con los firmantes convenimos que existen ciertas verdades que "son evidentes de por sí." Convenimos que "todos los hombres", incluyendo a los mexicanos, "están dotados por el Creador con ciertos derechos inalienables, entre los que se encuentran los de la Vida, la Libertad y la Busca de la Felicidad; que para asegurar estos derechos, se instituyen los gobiernos entre los hombres....." Entonces, es claro que estos derechos conferidos a todo hombre, no por tolerancia ni por merced de ningún Estado, no deben ser destruidos u obstruccionados por ningún Gobierno, ya que tales derechos son un decreto inmutable del Dios Todopoderoso; siendo obligación solemne del Gobierno "asegurarlos"; y cuando se da el caso de que una autoridad los ataca, ésta debe ser repudiada por todos los hombres sensatos. Según las palabras de Santo Tomás, su acción no es ley "sino más bien una clase de violencia." En este respecto, tanto Santo Tomás como la Declaración de Independencia están de completo acuerdo.

"Ahora, aunque no es una tarea fácil, según lo declaró recientemente la Suprema Corte, enumerar todos los derechos que están compren-

14

didos bajo los derechos principales o primordiales de "Vida, Libertad y Busca de la Felicidad", es cierto, según lo ha manifestado la Corte, en un caso muy importante, (10) que entre ellos se encuentra el derecho de adorar al Dios Todopoderoso, según los dictados de la conciencia. Hay que observar, además, que la interpretación constante y variada que los tribunales dan a la Constitución Federal, corrobora nuestra afirmación de que el Gobierno existe para proteger a los ciudadanos en el ejercicio de sus derechos naturales e inalienables, y que no puede decretar ninguna ley que los destruya.

El Estado debe Proteger estos Derechos.

"La Iglesia Católica, también, ha apoyado constantemente esta idea de gobierno, sea cual fuere la forma en que sea ejercitado. Un poder ilimitado de la libertad del individuo no es enseñanza cristiana, ni tampoco la de los Padres de esta República; así como no es la doctrina de nuestros tribunales, que en repetidas ocasiones la han rechazado. No está dentro de la autoridad legítima de ningún gobierno civil, no importa cómo haya sido constituido, formular una Constitución o promulgar leyes que imposibiliten al hombre a gozar de su herencia natural de libertad; pues esta herencia le viene por la ley natural, que es "contemporánea de la humanidad", y ya que "está dictada por Dios mismo", según escribe Blackstone en sus celebrados Comentarios, (11) "es, por supuesto, superior en incumbencia a cualquiera otra..... Ningunas leyes humanas son válidas, sin son contrarias a ésta; y todas las que se consideran como válidas derivan su fuerza y su autoridad de esta original." El legislador que se opone a los dictados de esta ley, no puede ordenar un curso razonable o productivo para la comunidad, y desde el momento en que este acto no refleja de ninguna manera la sabiduría de la ley natural, que es la sa-

biduría del Eterno Legislador, no es ley y no puede imponer obligaciones a ningún ciudadano, no mereciendo el respeto de ningún hombre justo y mucho menos el de todos los norteamericanos, ya que es una afrenta para sus teorías de gobierno. Por lo tanto se verá que la sabiduría de las enseñanzas cristianas no ha dejado de quedar impresa en las mentes de hombres distinguidos, cuyos estudios y escritos sobre leyes los han hecho notables ante sus compatriotas. En este respecto recordamos las palabras contenidas en nuestra carta pastoral de 1919: "El fin para el que existe el Estado y para el cual se le concede autoridad, determina el límite de sus poderes; debe respetar y proteger los derechos divinamente establecidos del individuo y la familia; debe proteger la libertad de todos, de modo que nadie abuse de los derechos de los demás; pero no debe poner obstáculos al ciudadano para el desempeño de sus obligaciones de conciencia, y mucho menos en el cumplimiento de sus deberes para con Dios."

El Hombre no Puede Suprimir los Derechos Otorgados por Dios.

"Estas palabras están de acuerdo con las leyes verdaderas y absolutas de Dios, así como con el reconocimiento que les dieron los Fundadores de nuestra República. Con el fin de dar un efecto práctico a tales leyes, se adoptó la primera enmienda a la Constitución, por la que se prohibía que el Congreso pusiera trabas al libre ejercicio de la religión, y poco a poco se fue introduciendo una reforma parecida en las Constituciones de los diversos Estados. De ahí que estas garantías formen una parte muy importante de la Constitución Federal y de las Constituciones de los Estados; así como parte de la Constitución de los derechos de los hombres libres. La Igle-

16

sia jamás ha estado en desacuerdo con ellas y, aunque siempre ha tenido por mira conservar la paz y oponerse a la discordia, protegiendo a las autoridades legítimas, nunca ha dejado de señalar a los gobernantes civiles las obligaciones que tienen para con el pueblo y sus responsabilidades para con Dios. Por conducto de sus teólogos, entre los cuales se pueden citar a Santo Tomás de Aquina y al Beato Roberto Bellarmine y Suárez, ha indicado los derechos del pueblo, con los que ningún Estado o gobernante puede intervenir, insistiendo en que están muy por encima de las leyes de reyes y senados, ya que derivan su sanción, no de la voluntad y poder de la autoridad terrenal, sino de la autoridad de Dios y de la dignidad del hombre como ser inteligente.

"No es posible afirmar que el progreso moderno considere como anticuada o descartada esta verdad acerca de la procedencia divina de toda autoridad, pues no está en el poder humano destruir lo que es verdadero, ni tampoco está en su poder cambiar lo que es inmutable, y la verdad es precisa e inmutable. Aunque es posible descubrir una nueva hermosura en la verdad que la haga brillar más ante los ojos del hombre, su luz no puede ser extinguida; pues la luz no rechaza a la luz, sino que se disuelve con ella, según la ley universal de la unidad esencial. Tampoco es posible afirmar que, bajo circunstancias excepcionales, pueda una nación adquirir o apropiarse el derecho de rechazar los principios sobre los cuales se basa todo gobierno justo, por el imaginario bien del Estado, e intervenir con los derechos fundamentales de conciencia. El Estado no puede beneficiarse con injusticias, y los derechos concedidos por Dios se hallan fuera del alcance del poder legítimo del hombre para ser suspendidos o suprimidos.

El Santuario Inviolable del Alma.

"Por lo tanto el ciudadano no renuncia en favor de la sociedad los derechos que posee como hombre libre, según algunos lo quieren hacer aparecer, recibiendo en cambio, como una gracia del Estado, sólo una parte de ellos y reteniendo, nominalmente, para sí una soberanía que de hecho la ejercitan los que gobiernan en su nombre. Los Padres de nuestra República conocieron bien esta doctrina y la rechazaron. El Gobierno de México, al insistir en que se obedezca una Constitución hecha por un puñado de autoridades militares, que carece de base de justicia, es contraria a los derechos humanos y nunca ha sido sometida a la aprobación del pueblo, también insiste en que el ciudadano no tiene derechos que el Gobierno debe respetar, y en que la autoridad del último es ilimitada. Ninguna otra doctrina podría ser más eficaz para acabar con la confianza que un pueblo debe tener en sí mismo; para sembrar la discordia dentro y la enemistad fuera. El poder del Estado, que emana de Dios, puede ser conferido por el pueblo; pero cuando eso sucede, no incluye ni debe incluir lo que no está dentro de la competencia del Estado aceptar. Si Dios hubiera ordenado que el Estado dominara el alma y la conciencia, El habría proporcionado a éste los medios de dirigir la conciencia y dominar las acciones del alma, ya que El proporciona los medios para los fines. El Estado no puede invadir el santuario del alma y de la conciencia, y precisamente esto es lo que trata de hacer el Gobierno de México; el cual quiere justificar su proceder ante un pueblo, cuyos ideales nacionales se hallan en directa contradicción con el perverso espíritu de despotismo y tiranía que anima a las leyes y a los gobernantes que hacen ahora de México un ejemplo ofensivo ante los ojos del mundo civilizado. Claro que no hubo exageración en el lenguaje que empleó el Papa Pío XI, al llamar a estas

leves "diabólicas".

El Reconocimiento Norteamericano de los Derechos y de la Utilidad de la Religión.

"Haciendo a un lado la consideración de las Constituciones mismas, vamos a comparar ahora las leyes comprendidas en ellas y en las que se basan México y nuestra propia República.

"Las leyes norteamericanas reconocen el derecho del ciudadano para adorar a Dios "según los dictados de su conciencia", y, con el objeto de que él quede asegurado de esta libertad, se reconocen a las sociedades religiosas como entidades de grupos legales con derecho para poseer los bienes que necesiten para el desempeño de su misión, y se reconoce a esta última no sólo como religiosa en sus raíces y tronco, sino como produciendo flores y frutos que consisten en obras de enseñanza y de beneficencia. Por lo tanto, las sociedades religiosas están autorizadas para ser dueñas de terrenos y erigir en ellos los edificios que necesiten para sus trabajos; establecer, poseer y dirigir escuelas, colegios, universidades, asilos, hospitales, y otras instituciones de educación y de caridad; en su calidad de entidades legales, pueden proteger sus derechos de propiedad, recurriendo a los debidos procesos de ley; pueden tener dotaciones para beneficio de sus actividades y recibir donaciones; así como contar con seminarios donde enseñar y educar a sus sacerdotes. Aparte de todo esto, se hallan exentas, por lo general, en este país, de pagar contribuciones cuando las propiedades que poseen son dedicadas a cultos, instituciones de caridad o de enseñanza; ya que no sólo se reconocen como de utilidad pública, sino también para poner en práctica el espíritu de la voluntad nacional que, expresado por conducto del Congreso Continental, dice: "Como la religión, la moralidad y la ciencia son necesarias para un buen gobierno y la felicidad de la humanidad, se estimularán siempre las escuelas y los medios para obtener educación."

(12) En este sentido son elocuentes aquellas palabras de nuestro primer Presidente: "Seamos precavidos en tolerar la suposición de que la moralidad puede mantenerse sin la religión. No importa lo que se conceda a la influencia de una educación refinada de cerebros de estructura extraordinaria, tanto la razón como la experiencia nos impiden esperar que excluyendo el principio religioso pueda predominar la moralidad nacional." (13)

"Esta situación ha prevalecido desde la formación de la República, habiendo resultado benéfica tanto para el Estado como para el pueblo. Hoy nadie pensaría con seriedad en que se podría cambiar, pues ha venido a ser una parte aceptada y altamente estimada de nuestra vida nacional, porque reconoce los derechos de la conciencia, estimula la iniciativa privada para el establecimiento de medios útiles de educación y de beneficencia, fomenta la paz, la satisfacción y la buena voluntad entre los ciudadanos, alienta la observación de leyes justas y sabias, así como la práctica de las virtudes cívicas, y deja a la religión libre, dentro de su propia esfera, para poner en práctica sus enseñanzas y cultivar la vida espiritual del pueblo; ha soportado una prueba de cerca de siglo y medio, y no hay duda que la nación norteamericana se encuentra actualmente más convencida que nunca de la conveniencia de que continúe dicha situación. Aunque con nosotros no existe una unión de la Iglesia y el Estado, sin embargo se reconoce amplia y francamente lo útil que es la religión para un buen gobierno. De ahí que el Gobierno Norteamericano aliente a la religión para que contribuya lo más que pueda para la felicidad del pueblo, la estabilidad de las autoridades y el reinado del orden.

Intento de México para Destruir la Religión.

"Contrastando con esto y según la presente Constitución de Méxi-

co, ninguna sociedad religiosa puede constituirse legalmente. (14) Oficialmente no existen Iglesias en México, pues una Iglesia no puede ser dueña de nada, se le priva del derecho de pedir reparación de daños, no puede demandar ni ser demandada en los tribunales civiles, y, en una palabra, se le niega todo derecho; y en cuanto a los sacerdotes, por el hecho de su profesión, tampoco pueden gozar de sus derechos civiles. (15) A las Iglesias les está vedado poseer los templos en que se verifica el culto. (16) Tampoco pueden disfrutar de dotaciones. (17) No les está permitido recoger dádivas o limosnas fuera de las puertas de los templos; éstos pertenecen al Gobierno, a pesar de que el pueblo los ha adquirido y los sostiene. El Gobierno simplemente deja que el propietario legítimo (el pueblo) use los templos, según plazca a los funcionarios públicos. (18) Por lo tanto, todas las Iglesias en México tienen que sostenerse por medio de las limosnas que se recogen durante los servicios; y en cambio las Iglesias en otras partes se sostienen, principalmente, con contribuciones que se aceptan aparte de los servicios del culto. Aquí, en este país, la mayoría de los templos se pagan de esa manera; pero eso está prohibido en México, y no por una simple orden, sino por ley constitucional. (19)

"Con el fin de hacer efectiva esta ley, se prohíbe a la Iglesia que posea residencias para sus obispos, sacerdotes, ministros, maestros o inspectores; y también que se prepare para el futuro, porque no puede contar con seminarios en donde educar a sacerdotes que deban tomar el lugar de los que mueran o estén incapacitados. El hecho de que una Iglesia use un edificio se considera como una buena razón para sostener que dicho edificio pertenece realmente a una comunidad religiosa, y por lo tanto está sujeto a confiscación. Si un sacerdote renta una casa para vivir, la ley estipula que por una simple sospecha

puede ser confiscada dicha casa. A los parientes de los sacerdotes se les amenaza con la pérdida de sus propiedades personales, por medio de confiscación, fundándose en que ellas pertenecen realmente a la Iglesia; pues la ley previene que una mera sospecha en tales casos es suficiente para presumir que esas propiedades se retienen para la Iglesia. (20) Todos los bienes dedicados por corporaciones religiosas a fines benéficos o de enseñanza, están sujetos a confiscación. (21) Con el fin de imposibilitar a una Iglesia para que adquiriera cualquiera clase de edificio, se estipula que en caso de confiscación, no se permitirá que el verdadero propietario apele a la justicia y lleve el juicio a jurado. (22)

Se Destruyen las Obras de Educación y Beneficencia.

"De ahí que una Iglesia no puede ser dueña de nada, ni subvenir a sus gastos, así como tampoco sufragar los de los futuros sacerdotes. Como con esto es imposible contar con un clero mexicano y ello haría que extranjeros tuvieran que encargarse de atender a las necesidades religiosas del pueblo, para impedir tal cosa, la ley estipula (23) que solamente los sacerdotes de nacimiento mexicano pueden officiar en los actos del culto. Por tal motivo todos los sacerdotes extranjeros han sido expulsados. De modo que así, primero la ley hace imposible que la gente cuente con un clero mexicano y luego hace imposible que tenga un clero extranjero. Entre tanto, el Gobierno sigue asegurando al mundo acerca de su liberalidad y de que no existe persecución religiosa en México. (24)

"El efecto de tales leyes se siente más en la ruina de las obras de educación y de beneficencia. La religión alienta a la educación. Prácticamente todas las grandes universidades de los Estados Unidos, por ejemplo, fueron fundadas por organizaciones religiosas, con excepción de las universidades de los Estados, y hasta algunas de éstas de-

ben sus comienzos a clérigos o a corporaciones religiosas; aunque todas les deben a ellos la inspiración que les dió principio. Es muy cierto que ni la tercera parte de los colegios y universidades existirían hoy, si no hubiera sido por la actividad de las Iglesias en cuestión de enseñanza. Hasta 1840, casi todos los estadistas y letrados nacidos en los Estados Unidos, se educaron en escuelas establecidas bajo auspicios religiosos. Ahora la Constitución mexicana estipula (25) que ningún sacerdote puede enseñar en una escuela primaria, o dirigir escuelas superiores, si no es con condiciones que le es imposible aceptar. Ningún colegio dirigido por particulares, puede expedir títulos que sean reconocidos por el Estado. (26) Todas las órdenes religiosas dedicadas a la enseñanza han sido suprimidas (27) y se considera ilegal la formación de las mismas.

"Todavía es más desconsolador el efecto de esas leyes en lo que se refiere a las obras de beneficencia, que es un campo especial para los esfuerzos religiosos. Las Iglesias siempre han sido y todavía son, los medios principales de alivio para pobres y enfermos. Más del sesenta por ciento de las camas de los hospitales en los Estados Unidos se encuentran en instituciones religiosas. La ley mexicana, para asegurarse de que las Iglesias no se ocupen en obras de misericordia de tal índole, confisca las instituciones de caridad y prohíbe la existencia de cualquier cuerpo religioso de abnegados hombres y mujeres que se dediquen a ese servicio; por lo tanto, actualmente, se encuentra México lleno de instituciones de caridad arruinadas, y los necesitados y enfermos sin ninguna protección.

"Según la ley mexicana, se permite que la prensa religiosa exista con la condición de que renuncie a su libertad; pero ni las leyes ni los actos de los funcionarios públicos pueden ser criticados, por los periódicos religiosos ni por las publicaciones seculares que ten-

gan un tinte religioso. (28) Varios de los periódicos religiosos han sido suprimidos, así como ciertos diarios de gran publicación que aunque no eran católicos, sí simpatizaban con la religión. Comparando la Ley de Virginia y otras parecidas con las leyes mexicanas se podrá apreciar cuan distantes se hallan éstas últimas de los ideales norteamericanos.

La Persecución es un Producto de un Nuevo Paganismo.

"Apenas si se hace necesario señalar las conclusiones que naturalmente se desprenden del contraste que hemos indicado, pues son aparentes a primera vista y deben convencer a todo hombre y mujer sensato de que no puede haber relación entre los principios sobre los cuales se basa la Constitución mexicana, las leyes que ésta comprende, el espíritu con que se propone que se pongan en vigor, y los principios, las leyes y el espíritu que el pueblo norteamericano considera sagrados.

"Es un hecho que tales leyes provienen del paganismo, y si llegasen a prevalecer, indicarían que la sociedad civil marchaba, pero no hacia adelante, sino en un círculo, llegando de vuelta al punto donde empezó con el nacimiento del cristianismo. Tales leyes, en realidad, forman el plan pagano de gobierno, pues no difieren nada en efecto, sino en la manera y forma de obtener resultados. El antiguo pagano daba autoridad despótica al Estado, desafiando sus orígenes, y con frecuencia a sus gobernantes y a sus acciones, y los fundadores de Roma se creían ser hijos de dioses; a sus emperadores se les saludaba como "divinos" y se les erigían altares, y por el mismo estilo se honraba a los grandes hombres de Grecia; aún en nuestros días existen gobernantes en la tierra que reciben honores semi-divinos. Se cuenta que el benefactor legendario de las antiguas tribus de México y Centro

América fue un hombre blanco, a quien se adoraba como Dios. (29) De ahí que el resultado de la unión de la autoridad terrenal y la divina fuera un gobierno divinizado. El programa de este nuevo paganismo elimina lo divino, dejando en pleno dominio a lo terrenal. A primera vista se puede apreciar lo distante que se encuentra todo esto de nuestras convicciones como norteamericanos y como cristianos.

Parte II

Lo que la Iglesia ha hecho en favor de México.

"Una causa que para ser defendida ante el pueblo norteamericano oculta sus motivos fundamentales, no vacila en recurrir a falsedades y hasta a suprimir los hechos de la historia. En consecuencia no se debe uno sorprender al encontrar acusaciones que no han sido probadas ni pueden ser probadas, en contra del papel que desempeñaron los misioneros católicos en su tarea de implantar la religión y la civilización en México. Todo esto se hace más fácilmente porque la mayoría de la gente que lee y oye tales acusaciones no dispone del tiempo ni del sosiego necesario para prestarles la debida atención, y, por lo mismo los acepta como informes indiscutibles de hechos históricos. Por eso es que muchos creen, y la creencia ha sido fomentada por la propaganda del Gobierno de México, especialmente en nuestros colegios, que los misioneros destruyeron una civilización superior en México para edificar sobre sus ruinas un monumento nacional dedicado a la ignorancia y a la superstición. La mente popular ha sido alimentada con el embuste de que la Iglesia no sólo no dió nada de valor al pueblo mexicano, sino que plantó lo que era nocivo, rehusando mejorar la condición de la gente, no estableciendo escuelas, y haciéndose acreedora al desprecio por haber mantenido al pueblo, durante siglos, en la ignorancia y en el atraso.

La Iglesia y el Indio Mexicano.

"Haciendo una consideración honrada y justa de los hechos se verá cuan frágil es la base sobre la que se hacen tales cargos. Según todas las probabilidades, existió en un tiempo una civilización pagana en México, superior a la condición social y política de cualquiera otra parte de este hemisferio en ese tiempo, con excepción, tal vez, de Perú; pero ella había desaparecido mucho antes de que los misioneros pusieran su planta sobre el suelo mexicano, y no podemos indagar su importancia. Lo que los misioneros encontraron, sin embargo, no fue el Imperio fantástico de los Aztecas, que fue una creación de la imaginación (30), sino un país degradado, en donde el crimen y el canibalismo (31) habían adquirido la dignidad de ritos religiosos. La vieja civilización, que había pasado hacía mucho, había dejado parte de su historia en forma de leyendas y en ruinas. La nueva civilización, traída por los misioneros españoles, conserva todavía en pie sus monumentos, y sus obras se encuentran en escritos históricos; sus leyes de las Indias se han llegado a considerar como el código más justo que hasta ahora se ha hecho para la protección de un pueblo aborigen (32). Si comparamos la condición del indio mexicano al principio del siglo diecinueve, con la de su vecino en el norte, se puede apreciar inmediatamente que la obra de los misioneros católicos fue bien hecha, y encontramos que hasta la fecha todavía se pueden apreciar los resultados de dicha obra. Por ejemplo, las alabanzas y honores conferidos a Juárez, son merecidos en cuanto se refiere a su inteligencia y a sus aptitudes; pero estas mismas alabanzas y honores se reflejan en la Iglesia que él persiguió, la Iglesia que hizo posible que existiera un Juárez. Un indio tal como Juárez sería una maravilla aquí, pero no lo era en México, donde la población indígena produjo grandes

hombres y todavía los está produciendo porque la Iglesia, antes de que se le pusieran cortapisas y se le hiciera daño, había colocado las bases para ello. Miguel de Cabrera fue el pintor más célebre de México, a pesar de ser indio; Panduro y Velázquez se hizo acreedor a ocupar un sitio en la galería de la fama indígena; Altamirano, considerado un gran orador, novelista, poeta y periodista, fue también indio; Juan Esteban, un simple lego, Hermano de la Sociedad de Jesús, alcanzó tanto renombre como maestro de instrucción primaria que hubo familias españolas que enviaran a sus hijos a través del océano para que este indio original les impartiera sus métodos tan eficaces de enseñanza; entre los oradores, existió un Obispo indígena, Nicolás del Puerto, que ocupó un lugar distinguido; y en el reino de la filosofía profunda, el mundo ha dado pocos hombres tan notables como el Arzobispo Munguía, de Michoacán; Francisco Pascual García fue un gran abogado; Ignacio Ramírez un periodista distinguido; Rodríguez Galván un exquisito poeta y periodista; Bartolomé de Alba un predicador convincente; Diego Adriano y Agustín de la Fuente impresores expertos; Adriano de Tlaltelolco un gran latinista. Todos estos fueron indios, así como los historiadores Ixtlilxochitl y Valeriano; Rincón escribió la mejor gramática de la lengua azteca y fue, como De Alba, un descendiente de los Reyes de Texcoco. Una bibliografía de los libros escritos por mexicanos antes de la primera revolución, llena muchos volúmenes, y en ella los indios ocupan un lugar nada despreciable. ¿Y para quién es el crédito? Para la Iglesia, de la cual dice el Gobierno mexicano que no ha dado nada a su patria.

Los Progresos de la Educación bajo la Iglesia en México.

"El Baron de Humboldt dijo del México que visitó: "Ninguna ciudad del nuevo continente, ni siquiera exceptuando las de los Esta-

Unidos, cuentan con establecimientos tan importantes dedicados a las ciencias, como la capital de México" (33). ¿Por qué, entonces, escaló México un lugar tan elevado, habiendo salido de las profundidades del salvajismo, se detuvo allí y empezó a retroceder, mientras que los Estados Unidos ascendieron hasta la cúspide donde se encuentran? Hágase esa pregunta a la universidad clausurada, a los colegios suprimidos, a las escuelas vacías, a los monasterios y conventos confiscados, a los estudiantes esparcidos en otros países, a la prensa amordazada, a las Leyes de Reforma, a la espada, al fusil y a la urna electoral forzada. Uno de éstos tendría el poder para susurrar solamente la respuesta, pero todos juntos la gritan de modo que el mundo entero la oiga. Un testimonio convincente de la obra maravillosa de la perseguida Iglesia consiste en que a ella y sólo a ella se le debe el crédito de que a principios del siglo diecinueve, México, en proporción, tenía más colegios y más estudiantes, así como menos iliteratos, que Gran Bretaña, Tal testimonio lo publicó recientemente un escritor en un número reciente de una revista londinense (34).

"Este hermoso cuadro se desvanece y es suplantado por uno de tristeza, con la iniciación, hace más de un siglo, de los disturbios internos de México. En dos generaciones perdió lo que había adquirido durante tres siglos de paz y de cultura, ya que se le confiscaron sus templos, así como su fortuna, que antes había sido dedicada para fomentar la educación y obras de beneficencia, y la cual fue a parar a manos de los despojadores. Los elementos peores se elevaron al poder y para ellos éste significó simplemente el camino a la riqueza. Todavía prevalecen las subversivas doctrinas jacobinas, herencia perversa que como infección maligna en la sangre va pasando de generación a generación; pero los edificios de la Iglesia, los monumentos a la educación y al mejoramiento

social, todavía se encuentran en pie, aunque dedicados, desgraciadamente, a otros fines con frecuencia innobles. Muchos de ellos de construcción sólida y hermosa, a veces, se ocupan como cuarteles, prisiones, hoteles y oficinas. A México cabe la gloria del primer libro, de la primera imprenta, de la primera escuela, del primero colegio y de la primera universidad en el Nuevo Mundo (35), y su gratitud por estas distinciones debe ser para los misioneros católicos de México. A la filosofía depravada del Terror Rojo corresponde solamente el calamitoso crédito por un siglo de destrucción. Un escritor francés sobre ciencias sociales dijo que "La iniciativa privada empieza donde termina la intervención de la autoridad." En México se propone no permitir nunca que empiece, pues la autoridad del Estado no debe tener fin. Sin embargo, este último debe todo su progreso y su buen éxito al individuo. Todo el progreso en la educación, por ejemplo, como en la ciencia de la pedagogía, proyectos de métodos, la debida división de estudios, el equilibrio de las asignaturas, son contribuciones de los individuos. Con certeza que estos neojacobinos deben ver la fuerza de las palabras de un escritor francés, quien dijo hablando de gentes bajo tal régimen, que ellos "juzgaban que la libertad consistía en restringir las libertades de los demás."

La Riqueza de la Iglesia en México.

"El cargo de que la Iglesia acumuló una proporción indebida de las tierras de México, reuniendo vastas propiedades, así como dinero, ha resultado muy exagerado, al examinarse. Cuando se investiguen los hechos desapasionadamente por la historia, y se den a conocer las cifras exactas de esta riqueza, se derrumbará tal cargo, porque la llamada riqueza de la Iglesia consistía en dotaciones para la educación y obras de beneficencia de los mexicanos. La Iglesia era due-

ña de muy pocas tierras (36) y durante un período que comprendió tres siglos, en uno de los países más ricos del mundo, solamente una parte de la riqueza reunida para las dotaciones que se dedicaban a la enseñanza y a obras de beneficencia, provenían de limosnas de la gente; pues estas dotaciones también representaban el trabajo y el sacrificio de millares de religiosos y religiosas que no recibían mas que su alimentación y vestuario. Como ya hemos manifestado, la mayor parte de la riqueza no pertenecía a la Iglesia, sino a los órganos que se encargaban de la cultura y mejoramiento social del país, y el monto total, en sí, ha sido altamente exagerado, con fines de propaganda.

"Cuando se den a conocer las cifras que revelan la cantidad efectiva de estas dotaciones, y cuando se comparen con dotaciones parecidas, aquí en los Estados Unidos, dedicadas a instituciones de enseñanza y beneficencia, se verá claramente que no está bien fundado el cargo de que ellas formaron una porción indebida de la riqueza de México. Sólo tres grandes universidades norteamericanas (37) tienen dotaciones más importantes que todas las de los establecimientos de cultura y caridad al cuidado de las órdenes religiosas en México; y cierta denominación religiosa, que no es católica ni tampoco de las más grandes, tiene más inversiones aquí que las que poseía la Iglesia Católica en México, con todas sus obras de educación y beneficencia, en el tiempo de su más grandes prosperidad. (38) Esa secta especial en este país cuenta hoy con un número veinte veces mayor de ministros, en proporción con sus fieles, y cinco veces más el número de templos. (39) Por otra parte, la historia del principio y desarrollo de las dotaciones para enseñanza y caridad, aquí, es casi idéntica a la de México, por lo menos en lo que se refiere a los motivos religiosos que les sirvieron de base. Todo el principio de la educación popular y superior en los

Estados Unidos tuvo su origen en las sectas religiosas que encontraron un sitio en la vida norteamericana, como ya lo hemos indicado; de modo que si restáramos de la vida norteamericana todos los valores de cultura y bienestar social que estas sectas aportaron en un principio, tendríamos en la actualidad menos de la mitad del equipo con que contamos. Pero aquí en los Estados Unidos el fervor fue el que dió comienzo y el estímulo se encargó de la edificación; mientras que "los patriotas" de México destruyeron y consumieron su propia esencia y vendieron sus derechos de nacimiento, uno por uno, a medida que se clausuraban sus escuelas, se arrojaban a sus maestros y se dedicaban a otros usos sus instituciones de beneficencia, habiéndose vendido muchas de éstas a precios nominales con el fin de enriquecer a las familias de los revolucionarios. (40) Las que quedan todavía hoy son monumentos al fervor y a la devoción que prometía grandes cosas para el pueblo mexicano; pero que hoy está viniendo a ser el recuerdo de una luz que en una época asombró por su fuerza y su fulgor; pues los primeros progresos de México, hechos a la sombra de sus misioneros, fueron la admiración del mundo. Sin embargo, las cifras hablan más alto que las palabras. La valuación más elevada que han llegado a hacer, hasta sus mismos enemigos, de la riqueza de la Iglesia en México, ha sido de \$250,000,000, incluyendo todas las dotaciones. Sin tales dotaciones, la propiedad dedicada a la religión en los Estados Unidos se estima, según la Comisión Federal de Comercio, en \$2,820,220,000, y con las dotaciones se calcula en siete billones de dólares. En proporción las cifras mexicanas deberían igualar a una cuarta parte de las norteamericanas, pero en realidad no llegaban ni a la décima parte. Cuando las autoridades confiscaron dichas propiedades y las realizaron, obtuvieron una suma que no llegaba siquiera ni a la mitad del valor en

que fueron valuadas. (41)

"Con la expulsión de los Jesuitas, en 1767, empieza la historia de la decadencia de la educación en México. Un poco más tarde vino la ruina que se siente desde entonces. Había muy pocos que tomaran el lugar de los antiguos maestros, y colegio tras colegio tuvo que cerrarse; muchos de ellos fueron clausurados por los predecesores del Presidente Calles. Gómez Farías cerró la Universidad de México, la primera universidad en este continente, en el año de 1833, la cual fue vuelta a abrir por los católicos, habiéndola clausurado de nuevo Comonfort, en 1857; un año después se abrió otra vez y Juárez la mandó cerrar en 1861; el gabinete liberal del débil Maximiliano puso fin a dicha institución en 1865; más tarde descendió a la categoría de escuela superior y, con pocas excepciones, en ciertos departamentos, puede decirse que casi ocupa ese mismo grado actualmente.

La Iglesia y los Pobres en México.

"Ciertamente es que fue amarga la suerte del pueblo que tuvo que presenciar, no sólo la confiscación de los establecimientos de enseñanza y caridad, que le pertenecían en toda la extensión de la palabra, sino ver que al arrebatársele sus dotaciones, aumentaba la usura y la explotación de la pobreza con el fin de acrecentar la riqueza de una nueva clase adinerada que había formado la revolución. Casi exclusivamente los fondos correspondientes a las dotaciones de las instituciones de la Iglesia se prestaban, a bajos tipos de interés, para el cultivo de grandes terrenos agrícolas; y las rentas de estas inversiones se dedicaban al sostenimiento de los centros de educación y beneficencia, escuelas, colegios, asilos para huérfanos, para ancianos y hospitales; y las inversiones mismas aumentaban la prosperidad agrícola e industrial, así como los productos ayudaban al progreso intelectual y social. La

misma profesión de los eclesiásticos hacía que los deudores fueran sus amigos. Pero dejemos que un enemigo haga la narración, la cual tomamos de un discurso pronunciado por Juan A. Mateos, en la Cámara de Diputados, de México, con fecha 20 de Octubre de 1893: "En los tiempos del antiguo régimen, cuando el clero poseía un gran número de fincas urbanas y rústicas, pasaba año tras año sin que se vieran los lanzamientos vergonzosos de que son víctimas actualmente muchas familias. La avaricia mercenaria de los propietarios de hoy no tiene comparación con el clero que, animado por un verdadero espíritu cristiano, rara vez hacía tales cosas. La Iglesia prestaba dinero con un tipo bajo de interés, 4%, 5%, o 6%, al que se llamaba tipo legal y el cual es desconocido en nuestros días; en ocasiones muy excepcionales se publicaba un aviso relacionado con el remate de una propiedad empeñada por un préstamo de fondos. Por esta razón propuse, cuando se hizo la confiscación de los millones del clero que con ellos se estableciera un banco para los pobres; pero mi voz fue ahogada por las pasiones de la revolución. Por esto, los intereses egoístas y las extorsiones de hoy han dejado sin hogar a muchas familias que anteriormente gozaban de la tolerancia y de la caridad del clero." Fue el jefe revolucionario, Presidente Juárez, quien, por medio de su decreto del 15 de Marzo de 1861, abolió las leyes contra la usura. La obra en beneficio del pueblo, por el uso de estas dotaciones, prácticamente constituía un banco para los agricultores mexicanos. (42) Hace unos cuantos años que nuestro Gobierno tuvo que fundar un banco de esa clase en los Estados Unidos para ayuda de los campesinos.

La Iglesia y la Elevación Social en México.

"Se ha hecho la acusación de que la Iglesia en México no tenía un programa definido de acción social y de que su actitud ha sido una de oposición. La historia de la España católica en este respecto,

justifica la declaración de una autoridad reconocida en la historia del pueblo mexicano, que dice: "Ninguna otra nación ha fundado tantos establecimientos de caridad en las colonias." La Iglesia fue la primera organización en México que se dedicó a resolver la cuestión social; aunque por más de sesenta años no ha gozado de libertad. Sin embargo, antes de que estallara la revolución de 1910-1911, tenía ya un programa de acción social, progresista, avanzado y amplio, libre del espíritu de castas y que no conducía a disturbios ni a confiscaciones injustas. Este programa de la Iglesia era leal para el pueblo de México, así como generoso, desinteresado y no se hallaba inspirado por ninguna pasión política.

"En el año de 1903, los delegados católicos al Congreso Nacional de México presentaron proyectos de ley para la creación de bancos agrícolas cooperativos; y ese año, una convención de católicos mexicanos se reunió en la ciudad de Puebla y discutió, entre otros problemas, los de las uniones laboristas, los de los indios y de la educación industrial. En años subsiguientes se celebraron congresos por el mismo estilo; y en el de 1906 se presentaron no menos de veintinueve informes, relacionados con las distintas fases de la acción social en que entonces se ocupaba la Iglesia. En casi todo el tiempo que duró el Congreso celebrado en Oaxaca, en 1909, se discutió el problema indígena. (44)

"Un grupo de delegados católicos al Congreso de México presentó algunos proyectos para que se considerara legal el establecimiento de uniones laboristas, para que se hiciera efectivo el descanso dominical y hubiera una ley de compensación para los trabajadores. En el Estado de Jalisco, donde en 1912 los miembros católicos constituían una mayoría de la Legislatura local, se decretaron leyes para proteger

los derechos de propiedad de las esposas e hijos, proteger los derechos de menores y aceptar la legalidad de los sindicatos laboristas. Con sólo leer las publicaciones católicas de esa época se puede saber el celo con que la gente católica y el clero de México se dedicaban a las cuestiones sociales en ese país, cuando sus acciones eran libres. En Marzo de 1913, el Partido Nacional Católico, reunido en Guadalajara, discutió un programa, el cual incluía puntos tales como la autonomía municipal, los problemas agrarios, los bancos rurales cooperativos, y los derechos de propiedad de las esposas e hijos; la simple enumeración de lo cual demuestra hasta donde había avanzado, no sólo el partido, sino el pueblo católico de México, en la solución de los problemas sociales de ese tiempo. Las Uniones Laboristas Católicas de México, en su convención celebrada en 1913, en la ciudad de Zamora, adoptaron resoluciones reclamando todo lo justo que contiene el Artículo 123 de la Constitución de Querétaro y hasta más de eso para la protección de los derechos de los trabajadores. (45)

"Si no fuera por lo limitado de espacio, no sería difícil ampliar la historia de los esfuerzos que ha hecho la Iglesia en asuntos sociales, con el objeto de mejorar la condición del pueblo; y, al mismo tiempo, insistir en que los católicos de México nunca se han rehusado a contribuir en todos sentidos para las peticiones que se les han hecho para obras inteligentes y patrióticas.

La Iglesia y la Política en México.

"La acusación que con más facilidad hace un político mexicano es la de que la Iglesia intervenía en la política. Es más sencillo dar la respuesta que hacer la acusación, puesto que nadie trata de ofrecer pruebas verdaderas, ya que se toma por sentado que se creará sin las pruebas. ¿Cuándo y cómo estuvo la Iglesia mexicana en la política? Si la acusación se refiere a los tiempos en que dominaba España, es

cierto que hubo hombres como Bartolomé de las Casas, a cuya memoria el México revolucionario le erigió recientemente un monumento público, que tomaban parte en "la política", con el fin de luchar contra los funcionarios españoles de la colonia, y que en ocasiones tenían que apelar al rey para que impartiera justicia y el derecho de educar a los indios. También es cierto que debido a que la unión de la Iglesia y el Estado en esa época no era nada satisfactoria, pues el último algunas veces se extralimitaba de lo que le concedía el Concordato, en perjuicio de la Iglesia, ésta le mostraba oposición y le echaba en cara su proceder. Es cierto también que, de cuando en cuando, algunos individuos aprovechaban la unión para su engrandecimiento propio; pero es falso en cualquier otro sentido.

"Si la acusación se refiere a las primeras épocas revolucionarias, es cierto en lo que se refiere a que sacerdotes encabezaron la lucha contra España, y que la Iglesia condenó a estos últimos por haber desertado sus obligaciones espirituales para mezclarse en la única clase de política que se conocía entonces, y que era la guerra. También es cierto respecto a que los Obispos trataban de defender los derechos religiosos en contra de los ataques de los revolucionarios de la época.

(46) En cualquier otro sentido es falso.

"Si la acusación se refiere a la historia revolucionaria más reciente, es cierto que la Iglesia es la única defensora que el país podía encontrar para rechazar los ataques de los comunistas y ateístas a las libertades civiles, religiosas y políticas; pero no es verdad que la Iglesia se ocupara en mera política de partidos. El Partido Católico del tiempo de Madero fue formado por civiles que se organizaron para que, valiéndose de medios constitucionales, México contara con una constitución más justa; y Madero aceptó este partido manifestando que "eran los primeros frutos de mi revolución." Y esta fue la única

manera en que los católicos, no la Iglesia, intervinieron en la política. ¿Y qué tiene todo esto de particular? ¿Qué el gobierno democrático no proclama la legitimidad de los métodos constitucionales para reparar las injusticias? Si ese método es erróneo, entonces nosotros, los norteamericanos, no entendemos lo qué es democracia. Y si estas injusticias, por obra de los enemigos de la religión, dependen del dominio de los derechos religiosos, ¿les queda prohibido, por ese hecho, a los amigos de la religión que trabajen por su reparación, porque con ello se mezclan en la política?

La Iglesia y el Estado en México.

"La declaración del Gobierno de México de que ahora sólo trata de disolver la unión de la Iglesia y el Estado, y de que la Iglesia busca poder temporal, encuentra una clara respuesta en la historia de la nación mexicana: Desde 1857 no existe unión de la Iglesia y el Estado en México; y aún en 1821, cuando el Gobierno revolucionario mexicano deseaba retener una parte de la unión para tener en sus manos la designación de los Obispos, basándose en el antiguo derecho de "patronato" de que antes gozaba la corona española, el Arzobispo de México se negó a ello; y cuando al año siguiente se volvió a hacer la petición, fue rechazada de nuevo y en esta ocasión por todo el Episcopado. (47)

"La Constitución de 1857 declaró que quedaba disuelta la unión de la Iglesia y el Estado. (48) Sin embargo, ese documento reconocía a la Iglesia como una entidad legal, aunque separada. De acuerdo con la doctrina "liberal" entonces en boga, ninguna "persona legal" lo era por derecho inherente, sino por concesión del Estado, el que creaba una ficción de derecho. Sin embargo, lo que hace el Estado lo puede deshacer, y esto fue lo que trató de llevar a cabo la Constitución de

1917, por la conclusión lógica de una afirmación falsa; no reconociendo (49) ninguna "personalidad jurídica de las instituciones religiosas conocidas como iglesias," privándolas de ese modo de cualquiera protección legal en contra de los abusos de los tiranos, cuyo objeto expreso y verdadero era y es, frecuentemente, no separar la Iglesia del Estado, sino sujetar la Iglesia al dominio del Estado. (50) La Iglesia en México, por otra parte, no pide que se restaure la unión de la Iglesia y el Estado, sino que se introduzca el sistema norteamericano de libertad de religión. Esto puede deducirse fácilmente de las palabras de los Obispos mexicanos, dirigidas a la Legislatura: "¿Qué es lo que pedimos? No es tolerancia, ni complacencia, y mucho menos privilegios o favores. Demandamos libertad y sólo libertad; demandamos libertad para todas las religiones..... Un régimen de restricciones en contra de la religión es una negativa de libertad."

Calumnias en contra del Clero en México.

"Tan falsa es la calumnia referente a la educación y a la riqueza de la Iglesia como la concerniente a las extorsiones por parte del clero mexicano. (52) Los que han visto la pobreza en que vive el clero de nuestra generación, no necesitan consultar estadísticas para saber que la acusación es una difamación; y en cuanto a las épocas pasadas, baste decir que las colectas totales en las iglesias, hechas por el clero mexicano, jamás llegaron a alcanzar ni siquiera un peso por término medio, anualmente, de cada miembro de la grey. Las oblacones con motivo de bautismos y casamientos son mucho menores que las que se hacen a los sacerdotes en los Estados Unidos. (53) Las obras de educación, así como las de beneficencia, han sido sostenidas principalmente por las personas cuyos medios les han permitido ser generosas, así como pasa en nuestro propio país. Los pobres no contribuían

mas que con el centavo que depositaban cada domingo en las cestas de limosnas. Es cierto que en tiempos de la conquista las entradas de los Obispos eran importantes, por lo general (54), pero también es cierto que el excedente se empleaba en las instituciones a que ya nos hemos referido. Parece que la construcción de hospitales y orfanatorios era la obra favorita de muchos Obispos, y que hacían estos gastos con lo que les quedaba de sus entradas, después de deducir lo necesario para el sostenimiento de sus hogares y el costo de manejar sus grandes diócesis. (55) Los hospitales, con especialidad, era de lo mejor que se conocía en aquellos tiempos, y superiores a los europeos.; todavía existen algunos de ellos, que se consideran modelos para un clima como el de México, hasta en la actualidad. Entre edificios tan notables se halla uno que está en Guadalajara, y el cual es visitado hasta por médicos de los Estados Unidos, con el fin de estudiar su construcción y sus métodos para el cuidado de los enfermos; tiene tres siglos y fue donado por un Obispo. A qué dedicaba el Obispo Zumárraga sus entradas, lo indica una de sus cartas (56) al Rey de España, escrita en 1537: "Lo que ocupa mis pensamientos, a lo que se inclina más mi voluntad y a lo que dedico mis pequeños esfuerzos, es a que en esta ciudad y en todas las diócesis haya un colegio para niños indígenas, donde aprendan, por lo menos, gramática; así como un gran establecimiento con espacio suficiente para acomodar a un buen número de las hijas de los indios." Antes de morir, el Obispo vió realizados sus deseos, en gran parte. Tampoco debemos dejar de llamar la atención a la carta que dirigió Gerónimo López al Rey, en 1541, en que se quejaba de la Iglesia, diciendo que el clero se había dedicado con tanta fidelidad a enseñar a los indios que éstos habían llegado hasta el punto de ser excelentes escritores y expertos latinistas. (57)

"Debe tenerse presente que los Obispos eran responsables por capitales que se les depositaban para obras que no correspondían a las parroquias ni a las misiones. En su celo por el progreso, sin embargo, iban más allá de su radio de acción para hacer de México una nación adelantada, pues llegaron a construir caminos públicos y hasta acueductos. (58) Si fuera cierto que los pobres de México hubieran sido despojados por las extorciones del clero, sería difícil explicar porqué tienen esa devoción para con la Iglesia y sus sacerdotes, que ni la censura más rígida consigue en ocultar de los que leen actualmente acerca de lo que ocurre en México.

La Iglesia se Vale de las Oraciones y No de las Armas.

"Hasta los católicos han preguntado por qué la Iglesia en México no emplea su poder para poner un término rápido a esta persecución, tomando medidas para evitar su repetición, ya que se admite que la inmensa mayoría del pueblo mexicano es católico. Pero los que así interrogan olvidan que sólo existen dos medios humanos para conseguir tal fin: el voto y la espada. Del primero no hay esperanza, porque en México no se respeta el voto y los gobiernos no son afectados por él; pocos ciudadanos lo usan, puesto que saben que sus votos sólo se toman en cuenta cuando favorecen a las autoridades, o cuando éstas, por decepción o para producir impresión, estén dispuestas a admitir la existencia de una minoría pequeña. Una prueba de esto se tiene con el hecho de que la petición que dirigieron los Obispos mexicanos al Congreso, fue rechazada por todos los miembros, con excepción de uno, y a pesar de que tal petición contaba con la aprobación del pueblo. Tanto la Cámara de Diputados, como la de Senadores y los tribunales obedecen las indicaciones del Presidente; y esta situación ha imperado, sin excepción, desde que México obtuvo "la libertad" por la fuerza de las armas; y segui-

rá imperando mientras que dure esa clase de "libertad". Los votos son menos poderosos que las balas cuando son los juguetes de la tiranía.

"Del segundo remedio humano tampoco hay esperanza, puesto que los principios cristianos prohíben que la Iglesia, fundada por el Príncipe de la Paz, empuñe la espada o se fíe de las armas carnales que las pasiones inflamadas de los hombres escogerían. Si la Iglesia ha aprendido muchas cosas en los dos mil años que lleva de existir, la lección principal la ha tomado de la paciencia de su Divino Fundador. Ella no está destinada a morir, pero sabe cómo sufrir; con El será sacrificada, pero también con El resucitará. Las armas de los hombres no son para ella; pero si la Iglesia no usa estas armas, es porque tiene una que es muy adecuada para su mano, ya que está fundida en la justicia y en la verdad, y esa arma es la oración. Jamás, en la historia de las tribulaciones de la Iglesia en México, había ésta empuñado dicha arma con tanta firmeza, como ahora, gracias a los consejos paternales del Soberano Pontífice; por eso es que ya la voz tremulante de la afligida Iglesia en México no se eleva sola hasta el Espíritu Santo; pues de un extremo a otro de la tierra, suben hasta el trono de Dios las oraciones, de acuerdo con la petición hecha por Pío XI. El odio de los hombres las pueden desdeñar; la malicia de los hombres las pueden maldecir; la incredulidad de los hombres las pueden befar; pero son la esperanza en una Promesa y el poder en una Fe.

Esta no es una Petición para Intervención Política o para
Actividades de otra índole.

"Lo que hasta aquí hemos escrito no es un llamamiento a los fieles de aquí, ni de ninguna otra parte, para una acción enteramente humana; ni tampoco es una mediación de nuestra influencia como Obispos o como ciudadanos para llegar a los que poseen poder político en cualquier parte de la tierra, y mucho menos en nuestra propia patria, para que se

intervenga, por medio de las armas, en los asuntos interiores de México, para protección de la Iglesia. Cumplimos nuestra obligación al referir los hechos, defendiendo la verdad y recalcando los principios, y haciendo una advertencia a la civilización cristiana de que otra vez se atacan y minan sus cimientos. En cuanto a lo demás, Dios hará Su voluntad a Su debido tiempo y a Su manera, y México será salvado para que cumpla su misión, sea cual sea. Podemos muy bien creer que esta misión consiste en dar ahora un gran ejemplo de paciencia cristiana y de demostrar la fuerza de una fe enorme. En cuanto al futuro podemos tener confianza en los ejemplos de otras naciones que han pasado por la misma horrible hoguera de persecución y han salido triunfantes de ella, preparadas para grandes cosas. La nación mexicana ya probó su valía por el avance rápido que hizo en la civilización cristiana. México no tiene necesidad de ofrecer ninguna disculpa por los días de Gante y Zumárraga, Las Casas y Motolinía, así como de Junípero Serra, que impulsaron la obra de los misioneros en lo que es ahora territorio nuestro.

La Deuda de México para la Iglesia.

"Por los tristes días de declinación, la Iglesia, a la que la ley ha prohibido enseñar y le ha robado los medios de desempeñar su misión de cultura, tiene sólo que mostrar sus cadenas, y decir a sus enemigos: "Me acusáis de pobreza, y, sin embargo, me habéis quitado las dotaciones para mis hospitales, mis orfanatorios y mis numerosas obras de misericordia. Me acusáis de ignorancia, y, sin embargo, habéis clausurado mis escuelas, robado mis colegios, los primeros que prendieron la luz del saber en este continente. Decís que no he contribuido con nada para las ciencias y las artes; pero vosotros destruistéis las artes que traje conmigo y que desarrollé, quemastéis mis libros y esparcistéis a los cuatro vientos los resultados de mis labores en favor de la ciencias.

42

Me acusáis de desórdenes, cuando vos destruistéis mis misiones dedicadas a un pueblo indígena pacífico y trabajador, a quien distéis, en cambio del Evangelio de Cristo, las treinta monedas de plata con que lo sobornastéis para asesinar a sus compatriotas. Quitastéis la cruz de sus manos para reemplazarla con una antorcha y un fusil. Mostradme algo bueno en México que yo no os lo haya dado. Mostradme un genio por el que no haya sido yo responsable. Señalad un paso hacia la luz que yo no os haya ayudado a dar. Sacad de vuestra patria todo lo que yo puse en ella, y ved lo que queda. Me podéis acometer, expulsar a mis Obispos, asesinar a mis sacerdotes, hurtar de nuevo mis escuelas y profanar mis santuarios; pero no podéis borrar la historia, y no podéis tampoco borrar la huella que dejé, ni en un centenar de siglos."

"En obsequio de mi Nombre"

"Si el obtener todo un mundo no recompensa al individuo por la pérdida de su alma, qué beneficio obtendrá entonces con ello una nación? Existió un alma en México, un espíritu que manifestó su presencia por el impulso que envió sus misioneros de civilización por una vía que no había sido trazada sino por las huellas de sus sandalias, y que ahora es el Camino Real de California. Fue un espíritu que guiado por su fe y su inspiración, dejó nonumentos que refieren la historia de México en las antiguas misiones de Texas, Arizona, Nuevo México y a lo largo de las costas del Pacífico, de San Diego a San Francisco. Para nosotros los del Norte, estos edificios, marcas de las primeras misiones cristianas dentro de nuestras fronteras, faros de la religión y civilización en nuestra patria, fuentes y manantiales fecundos de una literatura característica, retocada y mati-

zada con motivos propios, son tesoros que consideramos como una rica herencia, noble e ilustre. Los antiguos documentos nos informan, en idioma español, que no fue España sino México la que mandó los Padres al Norte. La lengua castellana está siendo olvidada y no quedan ya muchos de los descendientes de las almas heroicas que fueron a escribir el primer capítulo, capítulo de hermosura, de la historia de California; pero los recuerdos no han muerto, ni se ha borrado la pista que dejaron los descubridores que dieron a la región occidental del país los primeros mártires, así como los primeros maestros de nuestra nación. Con ellos compartimos la gloria del gesto inicial de la civilización cristiana en este continente, y nunca hemos negado, ni negaremos, la deuda que tenemos para con México por esto; lo que ya ha sido reconocido por voces que si no todas entonan los antiguos himnos, reconocen algo del mensaje de los cantores; y si no todos rinden culto ante los antiguos altares, sí consideran sagrados los lugares donde los Padres los construyeron, y dan a las ciudades nuevas de los alrededores los nombres antiguos, con el fin de que el gran Oeste guarde sus tradiciones, su representación y su encanto. Si una madre olvidara aquello en que se deleitan sus hijos e hijas, ¿no se avergonzarían éstos de ella, en vez de enorgullecerse? Para vosotros los de nuestra grey, en este país, donde las leyes reconocen los derechos de conciencia, y el pueblo los respeta, volvemos a hacer hincapié en la petición de nuestro Santo Padre, el Papa Pío XI, y solicitar la caridad de vuestras oraciones, dedicando un recuerdo en las misas diarias de los sacerdotes, y uno en las oraciones diarias de los fieles, por vuestros afligidos hermanos en México, y recordando a vosotros las palabras de Nuestro Señor para mostrarles que vuestra simpatía práctica así expresada será agradable a Su vista:

"Bienaventurados los que sufren persecuciones en nombre de la justicia, porque de ellos será el Reino de los Cielos." (59)

A los Obispos, al Clero y a los Fieles de México dedicamos esta defensa de su historia y de sus derechos, no sólo como un deber para la fe que tenemos en común, sino como un testimonio de su entereza en esta desgracia, y de la justicia de que hablan en sus demandas legítimas y dignas. Les rogamos que no se desalienten, porque al México afligido se le puede aplicar, una vez más, las significativas palabras del Maestro de los Apóstoles, relativas a los gentiles: "Este hombre es para Mí un vaso de elección, que lleve Mi nombre ante los gentiles, y los Reyes y los hijos de Israel, pues debo enseñarle lo mucho que debe sufrir por Mí." (60)

Expedido, este día doce de Diciembre, del año MCMXXVI de Nuestro Señor, Fiesta de nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

R E F E R E N C I A S

- (1) Encíclica "Libertas Praestantissimum," del 20 de Junio de 1888.
- (2) Juan XVIII, 20.
- (3) Mateo XVII, 5.
- (4) Juan XIV, 6.
- (5) Lucas X, 16.
- (6) 1 Cor. IV, 1.
- (7) Antes de esta fecha, el Estado trató de nombrar a los Obispos y a los sacerdotes como funcionarios, y para que legislaran en asuntos eclesiásticos.
- (8) Diario Oficial, 21 de Noviembre de 1918. Proyecto de ley para modificar el Artículo 3.

Diario Oficial, 17 de Diciembre de 1918. Proyecto de ley para

modificar los párrafos VII, VIII y XVI del Artículo 130.

- (9) Summa, 1a, 11ae, Q, XCII, Artículo 3.
- (10) Meyer contra Nebraska, 262, E. U., 390.
- (11) Comentarios, Introducción, sección 2.
- (12) Ordenanza del Noroeste, Artículo 3.
- (13) Discurso de Despedida.
- (14) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 130. Ley del 25 de Noviembre de 1926, Artículo 5.
- (15) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 37, párrafo III.
- (16) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 27. Ley del 25 de Noviembre de 1926, Artículo 6.
- (17) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 27, párrafo II. Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 21.
- (18) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 27, párrafo II. Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 22.
- (19) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 27, párrafo II.
- (20) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 27, párrafo II.
- (21) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 27, párrafo III. Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 4.
- (22) Ley del 25 de Noviembre de 1926. Constitución de 1917, Artículo 130.
- (23) Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 1. Ley del 25 de Noviembre de 1926, Artículo 8. Constitución de 1917, Artículo 130.
- (24) Relaciones Extranjeras, Octubre de 1926. "La Política de México, Hoy", por Plutarco Elías Calles, página 4. "Para concluir deseo manifestar enfáticamente que no existe un verdadero problema religioso en México. Quiero decir con esto que no existe tal persecución de carácter religioso

de sectas religiosas, u oposición por parte del Gobierno a los dogmas o prácticas de ninguna religión."

- (25) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 3. Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 4.
- (26) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 130. Ley del 25 de Noviembre de 1926, Artículo 15, Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 4.
- (27) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 5. Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 6.
- (28) Constitución de 1917, Artículo 130. Ley del 21 de Junio de 1926, Artículo 13. Ley del 25 de Noviembre de 1926, Artículo 16.
- (29) Orozco y Berra, Historia Antigua, volumen 1, páginas 63-67.
- (30) José María Luis Mora, "México y sus Revoluciones", París, 1836, volumen 4, página 2 y subsiguientes. Mora explica que como con ideas abstractas acerca de la independencia, no podría conseguirse la ayuda de las masas para la revolución, hubo necesidad de encender sus pasiones con "fábulas" acerca de la grandeza de los aztecas y las "barbaridades" de los conquistadores y "trescientos años de esclavitud."

El grito de combate de Hidalgo fue la defensa del Rey y la Religión. Alamán, volumen I, página 379.

- (31) Tercera Carta de Cortés a Carlos V: "Los muertos son devorados después del combate y los cuerpos de los niños asados se encuentran entre las provisiones del enemigo."

Las Casas, Brevísimas Relaciones: "Los muertos y los prisioneros son devorados después del combate."

Sahagún, Libro II, Capítulos II, XX, XXI, XXXII, Durán. Capítulo LXXXI, Mendieta, Lib. II, Capítulo XVI, Motolinía, Capítulos 17,

- 19, 27, Pomar, Relación, página 17. Recopilación de Indias, 1-1-17. (Ley prohibiendo el canibalismo.)
- (32) Lummis, "El Despertar de una Nación," introducción.
- (33) Opúsculo Político sobre el Reino de la Nueva España, traducido del original en francés, por John Black, New York, 1811, volumen 1, página 159. "La capital y algunas otras ciudades tienen establecimientos científicos que pueden compararse con los de Europa," página 139.
- (34) "The Month", Octubre de 1926, "La Iglesia y el Estado en México."
- (35) Icazbalceta, Bibliografía Mexicana del Siglo XVI, página XVI, Primera Imprenta en 1536, Primer Libro "La Escala Espiritual", 1537. La Primera Escuela, 1522. (Justo Sierra, México -"Su Evolución Social", página 478.) Primer Colegio, 1533. (Cuevas, Historia de la Iglesia Mexicana, volumen 1, página 386.) Primera Universidad, 1553. (Cavo, Tres Siglos IV, 12.)
- (36) Humboldt. Opúsculos Políticos sobre el Reino de la Nueva España, New York, 1811, volumen 1, página 174. "Los bienes raíces del clero mexicano no exceden a más de 12 o 15 millones de francos." (\$2,285,714,28 a \$2,857,152.85). Colección Dávalos, Volumen 2, Doc. 361. Abad y Quelpo dice: "Mas la poca propiedad de la iglesia y clero de América no consiste en posesiones." Y en Doc. 363: "El valor de los bienes de estos piadosos destinos (capellanías y obras pías) se puede estimar prudencialmente en dos y medio o tres millones de pesos."
- Mora (Obras Sueltas, volumen 1, página 372) hace aparecer un informe del Ministro de Asuntos Eclesiásticos, 1833, en que aparecen 129 haciendas y 3,331 fincas urbanas pertenecientes a órdenes religiosas de ambos sexos. La renta total de estas

propiedades se calcula respectivamente en \$147,047 y \$631,762. Los miembros de estas órdenes, según el mismo informe, ascendían a 3,160. El cálculo hecho por Mora de la riqueza de la Iglesia (menos sus valores ficticios) monta a menos de \$120,000,000. Duarte, "Curiosidades Históricas", página 82, anota 861 haciendas y 22,649 fincas urbanas, valuadas en \$184,614,000. Varios colegios y hospitales, y hasta el gremio de plateros aparecen como propietarios.

Véase también la nota 41.

(37) Almanaque Mundial de 1926, página 392:

Harvard.....	\$69,689,840
Columbia.....	57,456,803
Chicago.....	31,992,620

\$159,139,263

165 instituciones poseen \$794,231,462 en dotaciones de un millón o más.

(38) Se hace referencia a los Bautistas con objeto de hacer comparaciones, ya que el número de sus comulgantes en 1916 fue casi igual al número de mexicanos en 1810. La comparación es como sigue:

Población.....	6,107,686	6,122,354 (b)
Iglesias.....	51,243	10,112 (c)
Clero.....	36,926	7,341 (b)
Propiedad Improductiva..	\$173,705,800	\$52,331,894 (d)
" Productiva....	98,453,844	64,073,180 (e)
Rentas.....	43,055,007	5,683,153 (f)
Valores Totales.....	\$272,159,644	\$116,405,074 (g)

(a) Libro Anual Bautista de 1916.

(b) 1810 - Navarro y Noriega, Memoria, en el Boletín de la Sociedad de Geografía y Estadística, 2a., Ep., volumen 1, página

281. Basado en el censo de 1793 y en la obra de Humboldt 1803.

- (c) Romero, "México y los Estados Unidos", página 97.
- (d) Mora, "Obras Sueltas", volumen 1, página 372. Citando el informe del Ministro de Asuntos Eclesiásticos, en 1833, incluyendo 213 establecimientos conventuales, valuados en \$21,300,000.

(e) Ibidem, menos sus valores ficticios; por ejemplo: El Dr. Mora calcula en \$600.00 la entrada que recibía cada parroquia, multiplica esto por 20 y lo carga al capital.

(f) Ibidem, menos sus valores ficticios; e incluye los diezmos de 1829, que montaron a \$2,341,152. No incluye las limosnas ni las gratificaciones.

(g) Ibidem, menos los valores ficticios.

Incluyendo los valores ficticios, las cifras de Mora llegan a \$181,116,754 de valores totales y a \$7,456,593 de entradas totales.

Según Abad y Quelpo, los fondos depositados con el clero secular y regular (1807) llegaban a \$44,500,000. Representación. Colección Dávalos, volumen 2, documento 263.

Mora los considera en \$80,000,000. "México y sus Revoluciones", volumen 1, página 121; pero en "Obras Sueltas", volumen 1, página 372, los hace aparecer en \$44,500,000. Estos fondos se conocían con el nombres de "capellanías y obras pías", calculándose que \$256,000 pertenecían a "capellanías" y \$220,630 a "obras pías", habiendo otros fondos dedicados al colegio de "San Ignacio" para niñas,

de la ciudad de México, Boletín, etc., 3a. Epoca, volumen 5, página 652.

(39) Esto se basa en la población actual de México, 14,234,799, según el censo de 1921 y el "World Almanac" de 1926.

Trad.: CMR

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American Bishops Issue Pastoral Dealing With Mexican Situation

Important Document Expresses Deep Sympathy with the Suffering People of a Neighboring Country -- Principles of Liberty Violated -- Charges Against Church in Mexico Answered Conclusively -- No United States Intervention Sought

(By N. C. W. O. News Service)

Washington, D. C., Dec. 15.—The Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States today made public their Pastoral dealing with conditions in Mexico.

The decision to issue the Pastoral was made at the recent meeting of the Bishops of the United States, held at the Catholic University, Washington, Sept. 15-16, 1926. At that meeting, a committee was appointed to care for the issuing of the Pastoral. The members of the committee are His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Hayes, Archbishop of New York, chairman; the Most Rev. Austin Dowling, Archbishop of St. Paul; the Most Rev. John J. Glennon, Archbishop of St. Louis; the Right Rev. Joseph Schrembs, Bishop of Cleveland, and the Right Rev. Francis C. Kelley, Bishop of Oklahoma. The draft drawn by the committee was submitted to all the Bishops of the United States and the final result is the joint Pastoral.

In the beginning of the Pastoral the Bishops say that they are moved to speak not only by reason of the sympathy for the suffering people of Mexico in the persecution now raging against religion in that country, but also by the fact that Mexico is a neighbor to the United States "with all the power that propinquity gives to the force of good or evil example."

The Pastoral answers at length, and conclusively, the charges that the Church in Mexico is responsible for the illiteracy prevailing in Mexico and that it has interfered in Mexican politics.

No United States Intervention in Mexico

The Bishops do not ask for United States intervention in Mexico. On this point they say: "What, therefore, we have written is no call on the faithful here or elsewhere to purely human action. It is no interposition of our influence either as Bishops or as citizens to reach those who possess political power anywhere on earth, and least of all in our own country, to the end that they should

intervene with armed force in the internal affairs of Mexico for the protection of the Church. Our duty is done when, by telling the story, defending the truth and emphasizing the principles we sound a warning to Christian civilization that its foundations are again being attacked and undermined. For the rest, God will bring His will to pass in His own good time and in His own good way. Mexico will be saved for her mission whatever it may be."

The full text of the Pastoral is as follows:

The CARDINALS, ARCHBISHOPS and BISHOPS of the Catholic Church in the United States of America to the Clergy and Faithful: Peace and Benediction in Our Lord Jesus Christ, Teacher of the Truth That Makes Us Free

Sympathy to those who suffer for conscience sake has never been refused by the great heart of the American people. They, almost instinctively, sense all oppression to be a destroyer of unity at home, as well as an abundant source of the misunderstandings and hatreds that divide nations and peoples and threaten the cause of human liberty and world peace. If then we, as American Bishops, had no other reason for issuing this Pastoral than to show our deep sympathy with the suffering people of Mexico in the persecution now raging against religion in that country, it would be justified; but there are other reasons, carrying even greater weight and urgency, that make of this act a duty. They are found in the fact that Mexico is our neighbor—with all the power that propinquity gives to the force of good or evil example—a Republic which it was intended should be modeled on lines similar to ours, and a nation with a Christian population whose devotion to the Catholic Church makes a special call upon the charity of the faithful everywhere, but more especially upon those of the United States.

Even stronger reasons for the issuing of this Pastoral arise out of the higher considerations of duty to those principles upon which all just gov-

ernment must be founded, principles which guard rights conferred upon man, not by states, but by God Himself. None, much less Bishops of the Church that holds the spiritual allegiance of almost the entire Mexican population, can be indifferent when these vital principles are attacked as boldly and as cruelly as is being done in Mexico today. This duty of defense and protest, first and most properly, has been recognized by the Bishops of Mexico themselves in admirably worded petitions against oppression as well as in timely, edifying and intimate letters to their flocks. Their action may well be seconded by us, their brothers separated by national frontiers, but nevertheless bound to them in the bonds of a common faith, as well as by ties of fraternal charity made stronger in mutual understanding, esteem and friendship.

We Speak in the Interests of Both Church and State

All the more do we feel an obligation to speak boldly and publicly on the religious situation in Mexico, because the Pope, Pius XI, Vicar of Jesus Christ, urged the faithful of the whole world to unite with him in sympathy and prayer to God for the Church. He thus manifests at once his deep sorrow over her trials and his keen perception of the danger that this persecution threatens to "the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ" everywhere. He who has made it plain that his dearest wish, as well as the supreme motive of all his official actions, is nothing less than the reign of the Prince of Peace over all hearts, and who offers a sick and disturbed world the remedy of the Master's teachings and the Master's love, has, by his timely appeal, recognized its gravity and the threat it carries to religion the world over.

Yet another and still stronger motive urges us to speak. It is that the present conflict, as one part of a war against religion in Mexico which had its

(Continued on page 14)



WRITER-ENVOY COMES HERE. M. Paul Claudel, just appointed French Ambassador to the United States, is considered one of the world's greatest living poets. He and his family are Catholics. (Herbert Photos)



FIRST PORTRAITS IN THEIR EPISCOPAL ROBES. The six Chinese Bishops whom His Holiness personally consecrated three weeks ago graciously posed for the photographers a few days after their elevation. Before returning to China they will visit the principal cities of Europe and may come to the United States. All but two are members of religious orders conducting missions in China. (International Newsreel)



SIX NOVELS SINCE MARCH. Father Will W. Whalen, of Ortanna, Pau, has just got word of the acceptance of his story "Priests"—the sixth he has produced and placed in nine months.

Proof Furnished by Bishop Dunn That Church Is Not in Politics

In Radio Address the Bishop Cites Figures on Congressional Representation That Are Conclusive—Catholics Have by Far Smallest Number of Any of Strong Religious Bodies

The Right Rev. John J. Dunn, Auxiliary Bishop of New York, on Wednesday night, Dec. 8, from the Paulist Radio Station WLWL, delivered the final talk of his series on tolerance. His subject was "Religion and Citizenship." He spoke as follows:

"In the first section I tried to show that there is no necessary antagonism between democracy and Catholicism; and even that certain teachings of Catholicism—such as the doctrine of the essential equality of all men—really give strong support to the fundamental principles of democracy.

"Then I went a step further, and showed that the allegiance we Catholics owe the Church is in a different sphere from the allegiance we owe the State; that no conflict can occur unless either the Church or the State steps out of its legitimate field; and that there is little reason to fear this will be done by either the Catholic Church or the Government of the United States. Such an issue is quite outside the realm of actual politics; and the practical man—properly informed—will perceive that a conflict between Church and State in this country is utterly impossible, while Americans remain Americans.

Separation of Church and State

"Now I am going to discuss another question: Does the Catholic Church accept the fundamental American principle of separation of Church and State, in the sense that the Church must not engage in politics? Or is the Catholic Church a political body?"

"The answer to this question, I believe, is that there are people who entertain these suspicions and who therefore live in constant dread of the nightmare of Catholic domination. Let me reassure them by saying now with all the sincerity of a member of the Catholic hierarchy, that there is no ground for this suspicion. It is based on an entirely false notion of the Church. I have been a Bishop for five years, and I give you my word that never during that period have I engaged in any sort of political activity, nor have I attempted, except by exercising my right to vote, to elect any candidate to any office. Before being a Bishop I was a priest for twenty-five years, and I give you my word that I never even heard of any Bishop telling a priest how he should exercise his right of suffrage. Nor did any of the thousands of priests whom I know ever instruct parishioners how to vote.

"There is absolutely nothing to justify the suspicion that the Catholic Church uses its influence to elect Catholics to office. Fortunately, we have certain facts which will go far to prove this contention and to make plain to every fair-minded man that there is no such thing as an organized Catholic vote.

Comparative Figures

"According to the latest available figures, the total population of the United States in 1925 was over 113,000,000. The Catholic population was over 16,000,000, or fourteen per cent. of the total. It is easy to see that if Catholics obtained representation in proportion to their numbers they would form fourteen per cent. of the House of Representatives and the Senate, whereas in fact, they form but seven and five per cent., respectively. In other words, if there were any such thing as a Catholic vote, the House would include sixty-one Catholics instead of thirty-two, and the Senate would include thirteen Catholics instead of five.

"Looking at these facts from another point of view, we may re-



PRELATE SPEAKS ON RADIO.

Rt. Rev. John J. Dunn, Auxiliary Bishop of New York, who gave a series of lectures from (Paulist) Station WLWL, New York, on Catholic doctrines. (P. & A.)

call, as a matter of common knowledge, that Catholics are the largest religious group in the United States, forming thirty-four per cent. of the total Church membership, which is about 46,883,000. On that basis, out of 390 Congressmen with religious affiliations, Catholics would have 132 member instead of thirty-two, and out of eighty-five senators with religious affiliations, would have twenty-nine instead of five.

"The situation becomes even more interesting if we compare the different religious groups. Methodists number nearly 9,000,000 or nearly eight per cent. of the total population. On a numerical representation they would have in Congress thirty-four members, whereas, actually they have ninety. In the Senate they would have eight members, whereas actually they have twenty-eight.

"Baptists number over 8,000,000 of the total population, or slightly over seven per cent. On a numerical representation they would have in Congress thirty-two members, whereas actually they have forty-six. In the Senate they would have seven, whereas actually they have five.

"Episcopalians number over

1,000,000 of the total population, or about one per cent. On a numerical representation they would have in Congress four members, whereas actually they have sixty-one. In the Senate they would have one member, whereas actually they have twenty-three.

What An Equality Comparison Shows

"Or, to present the same facts in another form, we can compare a group in each of the other denominations with an equal number of Catholics,—remember, with an equal number of Catholics. If we do this, then we shall find that in the Senate, the Episcopalians have seventy-three times as many as the Catholics have; the Methodists have eleven times as many as the Catholics have; and the Baptists have twice as many as the Catholics.

"In the House of Representatives, the Episcopalians have thirty times as many as the Catholics have; the Methodists have five times as many as the Catholics have; and the Baptists have three times as many as the Catholics have.

"I am not presenting these facts as a criticism of any religious denomination; nor do I imply that any Church is electing political candidates on a basis of church membership. But I do affirm that the actual facts show that Catholics should be the last of all to be charged with organizing a religious vote. These arguments could easily be developed at greater length and with more detail by analysis of the figures in particular sections of the country, but I believe what has already been said is sufficient and that it amounts to good proof that Catholics do not work together as Catholics in the political field.

"Of course, in some great cities, such as New York, with a large Catholic population, many Catholics are elected to office. The reason is quite plain. When Catholics form a large percentage of the population, a considerable number of them will enter actively into political life and become candidates for office, and by the law of averages, a good number will be successful.

Catholic Colonists' Work

"And in connection with the subject we are considering tonight, I would like to remind you that Catholics are really entitled to no little share of credit for the establishment in this country of the principle of the separation of Church and State. Maryland, founded by Lord Baltimore, a Catholic,—took so determined a stand on this matter that ministers of religion have never been eligible for a seat in the State Assembly. Of course, I do not wish to detract in the least from the honor due to Roger Williams and William Penn in the matter of religious toleration and the separation of Church and State, but any fair-minded student of history will readily grant that the Catholic Colonists also are entitled to no small share of credit.

"Moreover, I am equally confident that the impartial historian

of the United States will endorse my statement that the Catholic Church has faithfully lived up to the principle of separation of Church and State as established by our forefathers. She never takes a stand on either side in a purely political question. Anybody who wishes to check up this statement of mine need only undertake to visit Catholic churches and listen to the character of the remarks addressed by the priests to the people. Sunday after Sunday he will hear sermons on the Gospel of Christ, but never political sermons. I know I have never heard one; and I know too that if by any chance an individual priest, carried away by his feelings, should venture to use the pulpit to obtain support for his favorite candidate or for his political convictions, he would be instantly called to order by his ecclesiastical superiors.

Church Aloof from Politics

"In a word, I affirm categorically, and without fear of contradiction, that there never has been and there never will be any attempt on the part of the Catholic Church to favor or to oppose any particular policies or particular candidates for office,—unless in the exceptional case that a platform or a party has raised a religious issue and, despite the Constitution, has undertaken what amounts to a religious persecution. In a few rare instances this exception has occurred,—as, when recently a political party in Oregon proposed to abolish private schools, Catholics opposed that policy as un-American, and the Supreme Court of the United States unanimously endorsed their opposition.

"I affirm then that the Catholic Church holds aloof from politics as such. This does not mean that there is no connection between Catholicism and political life, or that the Catholic Church exercises no influence in the political world. The Catholic Church would be an anaemic sort of institution, if she were not interested in this very important department of human activities. She does indeed enter into our political life, but by means of principles, not by means of parties. She influences political institutions not by arguing in behalf of favoritisms, but by teaching the fundamental moralities.

"Thus you will find it laid down in Catholic books of ethics, that a citizen living in a democracy, and having the right to vote, has also an obligation to vote. As you are aware, one of the most important problems of the present day is that of getting out the vote of all good citizens. So acute has this problem become in some places, that certain States have considered the advisability of imposing a fine on citizens who have failed to vote. The performance of this public duty, as I have stated, is, according to the Catholic Church, an obligation on all good citizens.

Ethics Guide Catholics

"Furthermore, it is laid down in Catholic ethics that a citizen is

(Continued on page 7)

Nuns Who Help White Slave Girls Are Here

They Come From Egypt Seeking Aid for Their Work Among Victims of Dreadful Traffic.

Two Sisters of the order of Notre Dame de la Delivrande from Egypt are now in New York, and have the permission of the ecclesiastical authorities to collect offerings for their work among girls and young women in Alexandria, Cairo and other centers where these Sisters conduct Houses of Mercy. The girls to whom these Sisters devote their lives are all victims of the infamous White Slave traffic, which flourishes in that region. In Alexandria alone there are 386 houses to which helpless girls are lured, kidnapped or compelled to go by brutal force. Before the war conditions were bad enough, but in recent years the number of victims has increased enormously.

The Sisters of Notre Dame Delivrande have the sanction of both ecclesiastical and civil authorities in their efforts to rescue the unfortunate victims of man's depravity and brutality from their awful fate. The Sisters aided by the consuls of the different European countries in getting the girls released and, when feasible, sending them back to their own countries. In their Houses of Mercy they nurse and care for the hapless girls until suitable provision can be made for them.

At present the Sisters are in need of new buildings to accommodate the increased demands of their hospitality. Their funds being exhausted they have come to America to lay the conditions and needs of the White Slave victims before the humane and generous-hearted. Some response has already been made which encourages the nuns to expect that their long journey will not prove fruitless. Several pastors have allowed the Sisters to collect offerings for their mission in the city.

Marlborough Heirs' Legitimacy Shown

(By N.Y. W. C. News Service)
London, Dec. 7.—It is authoritatively revealed here this week that although the union between the Duke of Marlborough and Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt was not a valid marriage, their two children, the Marquis of Blandford and Lord Ivor Spencer-Churchill, are legitimate in the eyes of the Church.

Canon Law, it is pointed out, is explicit on the subject. Canon 1114 states: "Legitimate children are those conceived or born in valid marriage, or in marriage contracted in good faith though invalidly."

The good faith of either or both of the parties at the time of the marriage ceremony has never been questioned. Miss Vanderbilt, it is understood, believed consistently until a recent date that the ceremony she went through was a true marriage, even though she gave her consent under pressure of fear. She has since found out that this belief was erroneous, but she held the belief in good faith.

Even were only one of the two contracting parties in good faith the legitimacy of the offspring would be assured, according to Canon Law ruling.

Jesuit Missions' Organ

A new publication, The Jesuit Missions, is to be issued in New York by the Jesuit Fathers, it has been announced. The first number will appear Jan. 1, 1927. The publication office is at 503 East Fordham road, New York City.

It is pointed out, in announcing the new magazine, that more than 200 native Americans are now laboring in Jesuit mission fields. These are in Alaska, British Honduras, Jamaica, India, the Philippine Islands and Indian areas in the United States. The purpose of the magazine will be to create closer and more effective contact among friends of the missions.



DEPARTING FOR THE SOUTH SEAS. These nuns—Sisters Ottonia, Irmegarde and Alexis—and Father W. A. Ross recently sailed from Sydney, Australia (where this picture was taken) for the Missions in New Guinea. There they will work among the Papuans, many of whom already have been converted to Catholicism. (International Newsreel)

I-311
E-9

The Bishops Speak As Americans and Catholics

(Continued from page 1)

inception almost a century ago, to a greater degree than any preceding it comes from an attempt at nothing less than the destruction of the Divine Constitution of the Church by reducing her to the status of a state-controlled schismatic body, without the right to form, train and educate her own clergy, to have a sufficient number of them for the care of souls, to find means for her support, to develop works in accord with her mission of charity and enlightenment, and to apply the teachings of the Gospel to the formation of a public conscience. Sad experience, as well as right reason, tells us what would follow the success of such an attempt, and what it would mean to Church as well as to State.

The Mexican Church thus controlled and bound, as the civil power seeks to control and bind her, nominally might be separated, but really would be a department of the political machinery of the State. Her dignities and offices would be the perquisites of politicians; her voice the changing voice of political action. She would be despised by her faithful and justly mocked by her enemies. Her bond of unity with the Church Universal would first be weakened and then snapped asunder. The Mexican Government asks the Church to accept a slavery that could mean nothing today but an infection caught from evil surroundings, and tomorrow a decline into mortal sickness inevitably ending with her passing from the life of the Mexican people.

We Speak as Americans as Well as Catholics

To the State would come no less evil results. With the check of religious influence gone, history for her also would be repeated. She would forget her dreams of democracy and actually become a despotism. Corruption would increase with power to confer ecclesiastical appointments upon the unworthy. She would merit and receive the hatred of just men at home and the contempt of just men abroad. A "Holy Synod," doing the unholy work of despotism, would gradually absorb her strength and seize her power as a most convenient machinery of government. Whatever of good is in her ideals would be shattered on one of the rocks that lie hidden in the waters of political life.

The question that we are considering then is vital both to the Church and to the State. However blind may be the advocates of such plans in government to their evils, the Mexican Church prefers, if she must, to perish defending her Divine Constitution and the religious rights of her people rather than to accept the alternative of a slavery that would mean the disgrace of faithlessness, as well as ultimate ruin to her spiritual mission. In fact, the Church in Mexico has no choice; for merely to continue her public religious functions under these oppressive and unjust conditions would be an open declaration that she had submitted to them, and thus had taken a first step toward divorcing herself from the unity of the Church Universal.

If, then, because of the fact that the persecution in Mexico is directed against all the principles of religion, we should speak as the servants of God; if, because it is unloosed particularly against the religion of the majority of the people of Mexico, we should speak as Catholics; there are grave reasons, too, why we have a duty to speak as Americans attached to the institutions of our country and loving them for the benefits they have conferred upon us all. The Government of Mexico has, indeed, by its actions in our very midst, made it necessary that we should no longer guard silence, for it has carried its war on religion beyond its own boundaries through organized propaganda in many countries, but especially in our own.

We Consider the Mexican Government in the Light of American and Christian Principles

Through its diplomatic and consular agents in the United States

that Government appeals to the American people to justify its actions. In consequence we have before us the extraordinary spectacle of a foreign government, not only filling our country with propaganda in favor of its own internal plans and policies, but even attempting to justify and defend, in our nation, laws and conduct at variance with fundamentals set down in imperishable documents by the Fathers of this Republic. Misinterpreting our good-natured tolerance for a neighbor still disturbed by consequences of many military upheavals, the Government of Mexico has thus presumed to appeal to our fellow citizens for approval. This actually amounts to the submission of its case for judgment to a court beyond its own boundaries; pleading, not before its own citizens who, according to its Constitution, form the only court competent to pass upon it, but before strangers who claim no jurisdiction over their neighbor's political affairs, and whose only interest in them is a desire for the well-being of the people of Mexico and their own peace in amicable mutual relations. The Government of Mexico cannot, therefore, object, under such circumstances, if the case it has thus presented for judgment be considered in the light of American principles, as embodied in our fundamental laws, and in the light of Christian principles, since it appeals for the sympathy of Christians; nor, since it claims great zeal for the advancement of education, if the statements it has presented in support of its pleading be submitted to the test of history. These are the things we purpose to do, so that, not only will our own citizens be fully informed of the interests at stake, but the Mexican people will not be without benefit of advocate before the court to which their rulers have actually but mistakenly appealed.

PART I

Liberty in the Light of the American and Mexican Constitutions

The Government of Mexico bases its case upon repeated assurances that it is merely enforcing the Constitution and fundamental laws of the Mexican nation. It will not be out of place then to compare this Constitution and these laws with our own, at least in so far as they affect the rights of conscience. In no better way can the points at issue be made clear.

The difference between the conception of civil and religious freedom upheld by the American Constitution and that of the makers and defenders of the present Constitution of Mexico will be best understood by contrasting the two instruments. This will show, that only by slurring over or concealing the actual facts of the case can the Mexican Government hope to secure the sympathy of thoughtful and unbiased Americans, whose ideas of civic justice and right are radically different from those expressed in Mexican law. The contrast will prove this without argument. Certainly there is no basis for argument, unless it be in an attempt, not to reconcile our policies with those of the Mexican Government, but to prove that ours are wrong. In fact, what the Government of Mexico actually asks us to do, in begging our sympathy and approval, is nothing less than to condemn the work of the Fathers of this Republic, register dissatisfaction with the Constitution they gave us, and demand its overthrow; for no American can accept the Mexican theory of Government as being in accord with fundamental justice without repudiating his own traditions and ideals. The very audacity and boldness of the Mexican Government in thus appealing to us for sympathy in favor of laws and conduct at variance with our most cherished political convictions has been, perhaps, the chief reason why the fact of their opposition to these convictions has been overlooked. Possibly it is for the same reason that some Christian people everywhere have overlooked also the fact that the present Government of Mexico is making war

on one of the essentials of Christianity, namely, liberty of conscience, on which Leo XIII. clearly set forth the Christian position. "Another liberty," he writes, "is widely advocated, namely, liberty of conscience. If by this is meant that everyone may, as he chooses, worship God or not, it is sufficiently refuted by the arguments already adduced. But it may also be taken to mean that every man in the State may follow the will of God, and, from a consciousness of duty and free from every obstacle, obey His commands. This, indeed, is true liberty, a liberty worthy of the sons of God, which nobly maintains the dignity of man, and is stronger than all violence or wrong — a liberty which the Church has always desired and held most dear. This is the kind of liberty the apostles claimed for themselves with intrepid constancy, which the apologists of Christianity confirmed by their writings, and which the martyrs in vast numbers consecrated by their blood. And deservedly so; for this Christian liberty bears witness to the absolute and most just dominion of God over man, and to the chief and supreme duty of man towards God. It has nothing in common with a seditious and rebellious mind; and in no little degree from obedience to public authority; for the right to command and to require obedience exists only so far as it is in accordance with the authority of God, and is within the measures that He has laid down. But when anything is commanded which is plainly at variance with the will of God, there is a wide departure from this divinely constituted order, and at the same time a direct conflict with divine authority; therefore, it is right not to obey." (1)

The Divine Mission of the Church

In a thousand other passages this illustrious Pontiff, his predecessors and successors, have set forth Catholic teaching on this and kindred topics with which we are now concerned. The doctrines of the Church are not secrets. With her Master she can say, "In secret I have spoken nothing." (2) According to that teaching, it is God's will, contained in both His natural and positive law, which is the first law of life, public and private. To discover that will through the searching process of a sincere and enlightened conscience, using the means which God has furnished, and then to follow its lead, is every man's native right and duty. "This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him." (3) is the burden of the message of God to the human race. Therefore do we cling to Christ as "the way, the truth and the life." (4) He in turn charges His Apostles and their successors with the task of continuing His mission of teaching and of sanctifying the coming generations. "He that heareth you heareth Me and he that despiseth you despiseth Me." (5) To them consequently the Catholic looks as to his authoritative guides in the pathway that leads to eternity. To these "dispensers of the mysteries of God" (6) the Catholic owes conscientious obedience in such matters as have been confided to their care by the chief shepherd of our souls, who is Christ. Only by arbitrary interference outside its own independent proper sphere of action can the State obstruct the due fulfillment of the pastoral ministry; and this the Mexican Government seeks to do, denying in effect the final authority of the will of God plainly expressed to man for his spiritual guidance, and by a bold act of arbitrary power invading its rights in favor of the State.

Passing from the consideration of the conception of civil and religious liberty in Constitutions to the Constitutions themselves, we are met with the plea of the Mexican Government that it is doing no more than enforcing its own. Here, however, at the outset, it is confronted with two important facts: first, that, though the anti-religious laws of the country date (7) from 1857, yet no Government till now has ever attempted to give them full effect; and second, that, though these laws

were reaffirmed and made more drastic in the Constitution of 1917, yet President Carranza himself suggested changing the clauses affecting religion, (8) and President Obregon never attempted to enforce all of them during the four years of his administration. These two facts show that it was tacitly recognized how far removed such laws were from justice and from the approval of the Mexican people. The appeal to the Constitution, however, does take our eyes off persons and, for the moment, directs attention to the written instrument by which such persons seek to justify their acts. It is in order, therefore, to inquire into the nature and purpose of a Constitution.

The Purpose of a Constitution

A written Constitution is an instrument which enumerates and defines the rights and duties of government, distributes its powers, prescribes the manner of their exercise, and limits them to the end that the liberties of the citizens may be preserved. Since the purpose of government is to protect human rights, not to destroy them, it follows that the charter by which a government operates cannot contain a grant of unlimited power. For the exercise of such power would be tyranny, inasmuch as it would tend to destroy rights which both the natural and the positive laws of God place beyond the jurisdiction of men. Hence, in the commonly accepted American doctrine, a Constitution vests the Government with such rights and powers as are necessary for the proper exercise of its just functions, and at the same time forbids it to encroach upon rights of a higher order which come to men, not from the people, nor from the State, nor from any aggregation of states, but from the Creator of both men and states, Almighty God. This conception is wholly in keeping with the teaching of the Catholic Church.

There can be no possible doubt, then, that protection of the natural and inalienable rights of the individual is essential to the very notion of a Constitution. Unlimited power would need no Constitution, for a Constitution is a guarantee of liberty, not an engine of tyranny. No such document, whatever its origin, can win respect or exact obedience when it destroys these rights or enacts statutes which make their exercise morally impossible. For such an instrument is not in accord with that right reason which vindicates man's natural rights. "Human law is law only by virtue of its accordance with right reason," says St. Thomas Aquinas, "and thus it is manifest that it flows from the eternal law. And in so far as it deviates from right reason it is called an unjust law; in such case it is no law at all, but rather a species of violence." (9)

Man Has Inalienable Rights.

This, indeed, is the force of the Declaration of Independence, a document rightly regarded by all Americans as the cornerstone of this Government. With the signers, we hold certain truths "to be self-evident." We agree that "all men," Mexicans included, "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men. . . . Plainly, then, these rights are held by every man, not by the tolerance or grant of any State, but by the immutable decree of Almighty God. It is not within the authority of any Government to destroy or to hamper them. On the contrary, it is the solemn duty of the Government "to secure" them; and the Government which attacks them must be repudiated by all right-minded men. In the words of St. Thomas, its action is not law "but rather a species of violence." On this teaching St. Thomas and the Declaration of Independence are in complete accord.

Now while it is not easy, as the Supreme Court has recently declared, to enumerate all the rights which are comprehended under

the primal right "to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness," it is certain, as the same Court has held, in a very important case, (10) that among them is the right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of conscience. Let it be further observed that the constant and unvarying interpretation of the Federal Constitution by the Courts bears out our contention that the Government exists to protect the citizen in the exercise of his natural and unalienable rights, and that it may enact no law which destroys them.

The State Must Protect These Rights

Constantly, too, has the Catholic Church upheld this conception of government under whatever form it may be exercised. Unlimited power over the liberty of the citizen is not Christian teaching. It is not the teaching of the Fathers of this Republic. It is not the doctrine of our Courts, which have again and again rejected it. To frame a Constitution or to enact legislation which makes impossible man's enjoyment of his natural heritage of liberty, is not within the legitimate power of any civil government, no matter how constituted. For this heritage descends to him by the natural law which "is coeval with mankind" and, since it "is dictated by God Himself," as Blackstone writes in his celebrated Commentaries, (11) "it is of course superior in obligation to any other. . . . No human laws are of any validity if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original." The legislator, opposing the dictates of this law, cannot prescribe a course which is reasonable, or which is profitable to the community, and since this act in no way reflects the wisdom of the natural law, which is the wisdom of the Eternal Lawgiver, it is not law, and can impose no obligations upon any citizen. It merits respect from no just man, and is of all from Americans whose theory of government it outrages. Thus it is seen that the wisdom of Christian teaching has not failed to impress itself on the minds of distinguished men whose studies and writings on law have won for them deserved eminence before their fellows. In this connection we recall words written in our Pastoral of 1919: "The end for which the State exists, and for which authority is given it, determines the limit of its powers. It must respect and protect the divinely established rights of the individual and the family. It must safeguard the liberty of all, so that none shall encroach upon the rights of others. But it may not rightfully hinder the citizen in the discharge of his conscientious obligations, and much less in the performance of duties he owes to God."

Man Cannot Suspend God-Given Rights

These words are in accord with both the natural and the positive laws of God. They are in accord with recognition of these laws by the Founders of our Republic. To give practical effect to them the First Amendment to the Constitution, forbidding Congress to prohibit the free exercise of religion, was adopted, and by degrees a similar prohibition was inserted into the Constitutions or Bills of Rights of the several States. These guarantees are more than part of the Federal Constitution and of the Constitutions of the respective States. They are part of the Constitution of the rights of free men. The Church has never been in discord with them, for, while she has been careful always to safeguard peace and oppose discord by protecting legitimate authority, she has not failed to point out to the civil authority its duties to the people as well as its responsibilities to God. Through her theologians, among whom may be cited St. Thomas Aquinas, Blessed Robert Bellarmine and Suarez, she has indicated the rights of the people with which no State and no ruler may interfere, insisted that they are beyond and above the statutes

(Continued on page 25)

**Society for the
Propagation
of the Faith**
Archdiocese
of New York
462 Madison Avenue
(Cor. 51st St.)
New York City

THE MISSION PAGE

**Rt. Rev. J. J. Dunn, D. D.,
Chairman**
**Rev. Thos. J. McDonnell
Diocesan Director**
Office Hours: Daily, from
9 a. m. to 5 p. m.
Saturday,
9 a. m. to 12 noon.
Sunday,
2.30 p. m. to 5 p. m.

Pray for Our Holy Dead

In your charity you are asked to remember the souls of the recently deceased members of the society. For thirty days the following souls will be remembered in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass:

Alice Marion
Julia Morris

God Bless You All

The Mission Page extends a big "God bless you" to everybody.

From the little child, hisping a prayer and poking a penny into the mite-box, to the devout financier writing out a check for thousands in order that he may do something for the greater glory of God, sacrifices have been made. And from the snows of Alaska to the parched plains of the tropical portions of Africa gratitude has gone up from the hearts of missionaries who go about thinking little of themselves in order that they and others may think more of Him over whose birth the Church will soon burst forth in song.

God bless you all, and give you the spirit of gladness throbbing in the following lines, taken from the hymn read in the Divine Office for Christmas:

"From lands that see the sun arise
To earth's remotest boundaries,
The Virgin-born today we sing,
The Son of Mary, Christ the King.

The heavenly chorus filled the sky,
The Angels sang to God on high,
What time to shepherds, watching
alone,
They made creation's Shepherd
known.

All honor, laud, and glory be,
O Jesus, Virgin-born to Thee;
Thy glory, as is ever meet,
Ends and to Perseveres."

Who Will Help Father Meyer for One Year?

Father Meyer of Maryknoll called at the diocesan office just before sailing for the mission. He will be stationed in Pingnam, Kwangsi. The consciousness of difficulties to be encountered did not dislodge his whole hearted and prayerful enthusiasm, which is the mark of every true missionary. He spoke to us about the salutary assistance that comes through the work of a catechist. Naturally he would be greatly delighted to be able to hire a native to instruct the people who come under his influence. But catechists must live, and human existence involves an expense. Father Meyer told us that in his section of China it takes about \$130 a year to keep a catechist going. Think of it—\$15 a month—for harvesting immortal souls!

We ask those who are not in a position to give alms to pray that this notice may fall effectively under the notice of some person who will send us a check sufficiently large to fulfil this holy hope for Father Meyer. God is blessing the work of Maryknoll, the first American foreign mission seminary, and Catholics who dwell in this country ought to look upon their support of Maryknoll as a privilege and an invitation of heavenly favors into their own homes.

Christmas Greetings From the Philippines

Missioners are grateful men, filled with the good-will that marked the shepherds who were told about the coming of the Saviour. True, they seem to be perpetually appealing for something. But think of their position—thousands of miles removed from the comforts that we are sometimes taking to be ordinary necessities. They are forced to beg. And for whom? Not for themselves, but for Him Who was born in Bethlehem, that His glad

THE Bishop's Corner

"I see by the papers that a lady the other day ran her automobile into a taxicab and then for a change hit a steam roller and landed in the police coop," said Louis to Father Tim. "Don't you think ladies are learning to shoot straight these days, Father? I do, but I'm not telling my wife."

"I don't see why you select such matter for reading," replied Father Tim with his most disapproving air. "If you were at all observant you would notice that the papers today are filled with utter nonsense, which drugs the imagination and dulls the other faculties."

"Just as you say, Father, but just the same I see you reading two pages every morning and I haven't noticed that you've changed," continued Louis. "It all depends on how you read the paper. For myself I like a good murder occasionally and the hold-ups are thrilling. They're getting better and better every day. I lose a lot of time? I don't, not the way I read. I commence with the first page and end with the ads and before I know it the morning's gone and I'm ready for the first afternoon editions. And do you know I pick up a lot of information most of which isn't true but what's the difference. For example I know there's a war in China, and somebody put poison in Jack Dempsey's ice cream and Christmas trees are higher in price this year and mail your letters early and don't forget the janitor and how to act like a gentleman when you don't feel like it and so many other things that I can't think of them at the moment."

"It's all nonsense? Perhaps you're right, and I don't mean maybe. One thing I've noticed—they put the news so alluringly, if you get what I mean, that you just can't help reading to the very end. I wish someone would print all about the missions in the same way and it wouldn't be hard to get the money, don't you think? I wonder if they'll make the trial if I suggest it? Perhaps a story of what the missionaries have to put up with, add a little soft soap, and there you have the cake all ready. For I've noticed that a little bit of sad stuff with a dash of soft soap beats a hammer at winning and keeping friends, so why not try it and see how it works. So that'll be all for that this week."

tidings may ring around the world!
The following letter is characteristic:

"Dear Father McDonnell:

"I cordially wish His Lordship Bishop Dunn and yourself a very Happy Christmas and Joyful New Year. I retain very happy memories of my visit to you in New York in May, 1924. Allow me to ask for my missionaries here a share in the alms and intentions you will distribute at Christmas time. We are working in your island possessions and appreciate the help you send us. We devote every cent we can to school work—so necessary to give these poor children a knowledge of our faith.

"Work is progressing. Thank God the Fathers are so well in health. This is indeed a great blessing.

"Wishing you all Christmas joys, and united in work and prayer,
"LAURENCE ROGAN,
Superior, Mill Hill Missioners,
Box 29, Hilo, Philippine Islands."

Christmas Brings Greater Knowledge of God

St. Thomas Aquinas was such a holy and learned man that we are confident that you do not mind seeing him frequently quoted on The Mission Page. In commenting upon the 2nd Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, II, 14, he wrote:

"The knowledge of God which comes from science enlightens the intellect, for by it we know that God is the First Cause. The knowledge of God which comes from faith both enlightens the intellect and flames the will for by it not only do we know that God is the First Cause, but also that He is Our Saviour and Redeemer, and that,

loving us, He was made man for us."

Prayers and alms strengthen the steps of the missionaries who go into far countries to carry the glad tidings of Him Who was born in Bethlehem.

Calendars, Seals and Things for Christmas

We call to the attention of our readers the beautiful Mission Calendar which we are now distributing. Please use one in your home in order that you may not be forgetful of eternity while you are marking the flight of time.

There are other things at the diocesan office that ought to be put in circulation at Christmas time. Seals, for instance, little paper stamps suitable for adorning the backs of envelopes or making parcels secure. They may be had for one dollar the hundred. And paste-board banks are to be had from us for the asking—they are in the form of small Christmas stockings, containing ten little openings that yearn for the rescue of ten little dimes for the missions. Then we have phone indexes—attractive, substantial and very practical. You may obtain one of these for ten cents at the diocesan office, or for fifteen cents through the mail.

Little things—all these—but who knows how far their influence may extend if you put them to prayerful use!

Shopping Through Mail

Besides the little things we have mentioned in the foregoing item, we call your attention to the following ways in which you can do your shopping through the mail:

Secure a Life Membership for the living or the dead. This is a means of sharing in perpetuity in the good works of the missionaries. The offering is \$40.

Send to a friend or relative a Special Membership in the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. It extends over a period of one year. The alms—\$6.

Subscribe to The Good Work, our missionary magazine. Delivered to any address in this country for a whole year for \$1. Send names, addresses and subscription to the diocesan office.

Subscribe to The Catholic News. Wherever it goes it carries The Mission Page with it. The yearly subscription is \$2. This is to be sent to 33 West Sixtieth street, New York.

Send any offering, large or small, for the missions, to the diocesan office.

For shopping such as this, may God bless you all!

Christmas Present from the Sunday Companion

Beginning with the issue of Jan. 2, The Sunday Companion will conduct a new department. We look upon the event as being a New Year's present to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Why? The answer is simple when we tell you that the new department is to be called The Schools' Mission Page.

It will have in mind the promoters and the children who belong to the Catholic Students' Foreign Mission League. Geography will be made easy through its stories that concern the extension of the faith. Arithmetic will be given a charm through the use of figures that concern the number of souls to be reached and the amount of prayers and pennies to be gathered. The catechism itself will find forceful illustration through thrilling tales gathered from strange lands where holy men and women are struggling, suffering and dying in ways that manifest the expression of faith and good works.

We are happy to announce this new stimulus to mission spirit. May God prosper The Sunday Companion for introducing The Schools' Mission Page! And may a legion of new subscribers come forward.

Who Will Help Rescue Mohammedan Children in Abyssinia?

We have a letter from the Very Rev. Jean Baptiste. He is stationed at Dire-Dawa, Abyssinia. As he remarks towards the close of his appeal, he is looking longingly to America for those who will listen to the "cry of anguish of a poor missionary."

He is hoping and praying and working that the Holy Cross of Christ may triumph over the Crescent of Mohammed. He sadly asserts that Islamism is already mas-

ter of a large part of Africa. His Lordship Bishop Le Roy, Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers, and non-Catholics, such as Lathrop Stoddard in his book, "The New Islam World," admit this.

What is to be done? Father Baptiste sees little hope in working among the adult Mohammedans. He says they are proud and think themselves superior to the other natives.

Is there no ray of hope? Yes—he finds it among the children. In this connection he writes: "At Dire-Dawa where I am (and this is the case frequently in the towns) one can see every evening along the stream, hundreds of young abandoned children, sleeping in the sand." He argues that if he had the means he could rescue many of these, clothe them, feed them, and teach them about the Saviour born in Bethlehem. In this way the light of faith would begin to burn brightly in the hearts of the rising generation.

There is something dramatic about this venture. Will you, dear reader, enter the cast of characters, by drawing down grace through your prayers, and by applauding the hero through your contributions?

Medical Work to Develop in Chusan Island Mission

The development of medical work is an important project to the Sisters of Charity of Chusan Island, China. They hope to find a young Catholic native doctor to take charge. The Sisters are planning to erect a house for the doctor, at a cost of \$700. The elimination of this burden at the outset would make them profoundly grateful. We are also searching for hospital equipment.

Parish Branches Invite Christmas Blessings

Supporting the work of the missions is one way of participating in the blessings of Bethlehem. This holds for parish life as well as for the life of an individual. Branches have been recently established in the following parishes: Blessed Sacrament, New Rochelle; Our Lady of Mercy, Port Chester; St. Peter and St. Paul, Bronx; St. Anselm, Bronx; Holy Innocents, New York, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Tuxedo.

Christmas Mission Novelties

We are still in a position to supply Mission Seals. They may be had for one dollar the hundred. Phone indexes are also to be had at the diocesan office—fifteen cents through the mail, or ten cents by calling. Cardboard Christmas Stockings for collecting ten dimes for the missions are yours for the asking.

**God Bless You All
On Christmas Day
and
All the Days to Come**

BISHOP DUNN and FATHER McDONNELL

gratefully extend to everybody the
greetings of the Sacred Season.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
462 Madison Ave. (Cor. 51st St.) New York City

Address all communications regarding this page to the
Rev. Thomas J. McDonnell, 462 Madison Ave., N.Y.C.

Recognition of the Rights and Utility of Religion

(Continued from page 14)

made by kings and senates, because deriving their sanction, not from the will and power of earthly authority, but from the authority of God and the dignity of man as an intelligent being.

It is not possible to hold that modern progress has antiquated or set aside this truth of the Divine source of all authority, for it is not within man's power to destroy that which is true, nor yet within his power to change that which is unchangeable. Truth is fixed and immutable. It is possible to discover new beauty in truth so that it shines brighter to the eyes of man, but its light cannot be extinguished. Light does not fight light but dissolves into it according to the universal law of its essential unity. Nor is it possible to hold that, under exceptional circumstances, a nation may acquire or take the right to set aside the principles upon which just government is builded and thus interfere with the fundamental rights of conscience for the supposed good of the State. The State cannot benefit by wrong, and rights given by God are beyond the legitimate power of man to suspend or to cancel.

The Inviolable Sanctuary of the Soul

The individual citizen does not then resign to society all the rights that he possesses as a free man, as some would have it appear, receiving back only a portion of them as a gift from the State, while nominally retaining in himself a sovereignty that actually is exercised by those who rule in his name. This doctrine, well known to the Fathers of the Republic, was nevertheless rejected by them. The Government of Mexico, by insisting on obedience to a Constitution made without reference to justice by a handful of military rulers, contrary to human rights and never submitted to the people for ratification, insists that the individual citizen has no rights that the Government is bound to respect; that there are no limits to the powers of government. No doctrine could be more certain than that to sweep out of existence the sturdy self-reliance of a people, to sow discord within and enmity without. The power of the State, coming from God, may be bestowed by the people, but when thus bestowed, it does not and cannot include what is not within the competency of the State to accept. Had God ordained the rule of the State over the soul and conscience, He would have given the State the means to direct conscience and control the operations of the soul, since He gives means to the end. The sanctuary of the soul and of conscience the State cannot invade. It is precisely this that the Government of Mexico seeks to do, and then to justify, before a people whose national ideals are in direct contradiction to the evil spirit of despotism and tyranny that actuates the laws and the rulers now making of Mexico a shocking example of wrong to the whole civilized world. It is plain then that there was no exaggeration in the language of Pope Pius XI. when he characterized these laws as "diabolical."

American Recognition of the Rights and Utility of Religion

Passing now from consideration of the Constitutions themselves, we may, with better informed minds, contrast the laws founded upon them by Mexico and by our own Republic.

American laws recognize the right of the citizen to worship God "according to the dictates of his conscience" and, in order that this freedom may be assured him, religious societies are recognized as

corporate legal entities having power to possess what property they need to carry out their mission. Furthermore, that mission is recognized as being, not only religious in root and trunk, but as bearing flowers and fruit in works of education and social welfare. Religious societies may, therefore, own land and upon it erect such buildings as are necessary for their purposes. They may establish, own and direct schools, colleges, universities, asylums, hospitals, and other institutions of education and social welfare. They may, as legal entities, protect their property rights by recourse to due process of law. They may possess endowments for the benefit of these activities and receive bequests. They may have seminaries wherein their clergy are trained and educated. Over and above all this, property owned by them, when used for purposes of worship, charity or education, almost universally with us is specially exempt from taxation; not only because it is recognized as of utility to the public welfare, but also in order to carry into effect the spirit of the national will which, expressing itself through the Continental Congress, says: "Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." (12) In this connection the words of our first President are eloquent: "And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." (13)

This condition has obtained since the formation of the Republic. It has worked out for the benefit of the State and of the people. No one now seriously believes that it could be changed. It has become an accepted and highly esteemed part of our national life, because it recognizes the rights of conscience, encourages private initiative in the establishing of useful agencies for learning and charity, promotes peace, contentment and good-will among citizens, encourages the enforcement of wise and good laws as well as the practice of the civic virtues, and allows to religion freedom in its own sphere for its teachings and for the cultivation of the spiritual life of the people. It has stood the test of nearly one and a half centuries, and the American people today are undoubtedly more than ever convinced of the desirability of its continuance. While with us there is no union of Church and State, nevertheless there is full and frank recognition of the utility of religion to good government. Hence the American State encourages religion to make greater and greater contributions to the happiness of the people, the stability of government and the reign of order.

Mexico's Attempt to Destroy Religion

In contrast with this, according to the present Constitution of Mexico, no religious society may enjoy the right of corporate legal existence. (14) Officially, there are no Churches in Mexico; for a Church cannot possess anything, lacks the right of petition for redress or grievances, cannot sue or be sued in the civil courts, and in general is entirely without legal standing. Clergymen are disfranchised by the fact of ordination. (15) A Church cannot own the buildings in which its public worship is held. (16) It cannot possess endowments. (17) It cannot take up a collection or a subscription outside the doors of the building used for religious services. That building, however, is owned by the Government, though paid for and supported by the people. The Government merely allows the rightful owner to use it at the good pleasure of state officials. (18) All Churches in Mexico therefore, have to be supported by collections during the services. Now Churches are mainly support-



PRIEST-ARTIST COMPLETES PICTURE. Rev. Father Norbert, O. S. B., of Newark, N. J., though he never has had a lesson in painting, has won flattering criticism for his canvasses. He is shown here with a portrait which is among his latest works. (Henry Miller)

ed everywhere by subscriptions accepted apart from the acts of worship themselves. With us, nearly all church building is paid for in that way. This is forbidden in Mexico, not by a mere regulation, but by constitutional enactment. (19)

In order to make this enactment effective, a Church is not allowed to possess houses for its Bishops, priests, ministers, teachers or superintendents. Its future may not be provided for, because it cannot have a seminary in which a clergy may be trained to take places made vacant by death or incapacity. The fact that a Church uses a building is considered good ground for holding that it really belongs to that religious body. If a clergyman even rents a home for himself, the law provides that it may be seized on mere suspicion. Relatives of clergymen are threatened with the loss of their own personal property by confiscation on the ground that such property really belongs to a Church, for the law decrees that mere suspicion in such a case is full ground for the presumption that the property is held for the Church. (20) All property devoted by religious bodies to educational or charitable purposes is subject to confiscation. (21) In order to make it impossible for a Church to secure a building of any kind, it is provided that, in case of seizure, no trial by jury shall be allowed should its real owner appeal for justice. (22)

Works of Education and Charity Destroyed

A Church, therefore, cannot own anything, cannot provide for its current expenses, cannot provide for a future clergy. A native clergy is thus made impossible, a fact which ordinarily would throw the burden of the religious care of the people upon strangers. To prevent the possibility of that happening, however, the law provides (23) that no clergyman but a native-born Mexican may officiate in any act of worship; and in consequence foreign clergy have been expelled. Thus the law first makes it impossible for the people to have a native clergy and then impossible to have a foreign clergy; while the Government keeps assuring the world of its liberality and that there is no religious persecution in Mexico. (24)

The effect of such laws is felt in more than the spiritual work of the Church. It is also the ruin of works of education and charity. Religion fosters education. Practically all the great universities of the United States, for example, were founded by religious organizations, except the State universities, and even some of these owe their beginnings to clergymen or to religious bodies, while all owe to them the inspiration that gave them birth. It would be true to say that not one-third of the colleges and universities of the

United States would be in existence today had it not been for the educational activity of the Churches. Almost every American-born statesman and scholar up to 1840 was educated in schools established under religious auspices. Now the Mexican Constitution provides (25) that no clergyman may teach in a primary school, or manage higher schools except on conditions impossible for him to accept. No college under private control may give a degree recognized by the State. (26) All religious teaching orders have been suppressed (27) and the formation of such orders made illegal.

Sadder still is the effect of such laws on works of charity, a special field for religious efforts. Churches have always been, and still are, the principal sources of relief for the sick and the poor. More than sixty per cent. of the hospital beds in the United States are in religious institutions. To make it certain that Churches will not engage in such corporal works of mercy, the Mexican law confiscates institutions of charity and forbids the existence of any religious band of self-sacrificing men and women devoted to their service. In consequence, Mexico is today full of ruined institutions of charity, and its sick and poor are without protectors.

Again, under the Mexican law the religious press is permitted to exist only on condition of giving up its liberty. The laws and even the acts of public officials cannot be criticized by a religious paper under severe penalties, not even by secular papers betraying a religious bias (28). Several religious papers have already been suppressed, and even certain daily papers of large circulation that were not religious but were at least sympathetic with religion. How far such laws depart from the American ideal is shown by the Virginia Bill of Rights and other similar acts.

The Persecution a Product of New Paganism

It is scarcely necessary to set down the conclusions that naturally flow from the contrast we have made. They are at once apparent and must convince right thinking men and women that there can be no relationship between the principles upon which the Mexican Constitution is built, the laws that embody them, the spirit with which it is proposed they shall be enforced, and the principles, laws and spirit that are held sacred by the American people.

In fact, such laws hark back to paganism. Were they to prevail they would show civil society to have been marching, not in advance, but in a circle; and again arriving, in this our day, at the point from which it started with the dawn of Christianity. Such laws, in reality, embody the pagan plan of government, for they differ from it not at all in effect, but only in the manner and form of attain-

ing the result. The ancient pagans gave despotic authority to the State by deifying it in its origin, and often in its rulers and its actions. The founders of Rome were supposed to be children of the gods. Her emperors were saluted as "divine" and altars erected to them. Great men of Greece were honored likewise. Even to this day some earthly rulers receive quasi-divine honors. The legendary benefactor of the ancient tribes of Mexico and Central America is said to have been a white man worshiped as a god (29). Thus paganism united earthly and divine power in a deified state. The program of this new paganism eliminates the divine so as to leave the earthly in full possession. But the result of both extremes is the same—the slavery of the individual. How far all this is from our convictions as Americans and Christians is immediately apparent.

PART II.

What the Church Has Done for Mexico

A cause that has to be defended before the American people by concealing its underlying motives will not hesitate at having recourse to falsehoods and even to suppressing facts of history. Hence it is no surprise to find charges unproved and unprovable urged against the part played by Catholic missionaries in the task of planting religion and civilization in Mexico. This is all the more easily done because the great majority of the people who read and hear such charges have neither the time nor the leisure to give further attention to them, and, therefore, accept them as undisputed statements of historic facts. In consequence, it is believed by some, and the belief has been encouraged by propaganda efforts of the Mexican Government especially in our colleges, that these missionaries destroyed a superior civilization in Mexico to build on its ruins a national monument to ignorance and superstition. The popular mind has been fed with the falsehood that the Church not only gave nothing of value to the Mexican people, but planted amongst them what was harmful; refusing to improve their condition by establishing schools, and meriting their hatred for thus keeping them illiterate and backward for centuries.

The Church and the Mexican Indian

Fair and honest consideration of the facts will show the frail foundation upon which such charges are built. There was once, in all probability, a pagan civilization in Mexico superior to the social and political condition of any other part of this hemisphere at the time, possibly excepting Peru; but it had disappeared long before the missionaries set foot on Mexican soil. Its depths we cannot probe. What the missionaries found, however, was not the fantastic Empire of the Aztecs, a creation of the imagination (30), but a degraded land in which murder and cannibalism (31) had reached the dignity of religious rites. The old civilization, long since passed, had left part of its story preserved in legends and in ruins. The new civilization brought by the Spanish missionaries has its monuments still standing, and its deeds set down in historic writings. Its laws of the Indies have been pronounced the most just code ever made for the protection of an aboriginal people (32). If we contrast the condition of the Mexican Indian at the beginning of the nineteenth century with that of his northern neighbor, we see at a glance that the work of the Catholic missionaries was well done. We find even that the work has not failed to show results down to our own day. The praises and honors showered on Juarez, for example, are not undeserved so far as his intelligence and ability are concerned; but these praises and honors are reflected back to the Church that had made a Juarez possible. Such an Indian as Juarez would be a wonder here, but he was no wonder in Mexico where great men came out of the Indian population, and are still coming out of it, because the Church, before

(Continued on page 26)

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What Church Has Done for Education in Mexico

(Continued from page 25)

her work was hampered and injured, had laid the foundation. Miguel de Cabrera was Mexico's greatest painter, but an Indian. Panduro and Valazquez were worthy of a place in the same hall of Indian fame. Altamirano was at once a great orator, novelist, poet and journalist, but likewise an Indian. Juan Esteban, a simple lay Brother of the Society of Jesus, was so great as a primary teacher that families of Spain sent children across the ocean to secure for them the foundation of this Indian's original and most effective methods of instruction. Among orators, an Indian Bishop, Nicolas del Puerto,

holds a place of distinction. In the realms of profound philosophy the world has produced few greater than Archbishop Munguia of Michoacan. Francisco Pascual Garcia was a great lawyer; Ignacio Ramirez a distinguished journalist; Rodriguez Gavan a fine poet as well as a journalist; Bartolome de Alba a winning and solid preacher; Diego Adriano and Agustin de la Fuente were expert printers; Adriano de Tlatelco, a Latinist as well. All these were Indians, as were the historians Ixtlixochitl and Valeriano. Rincon wrote the best grammar in the Aztec tongue. He was, like De Alba, himself a descendant of the Kings of Texco-

co. A bibliography of the books written by Mexicans before the First Revolution fills many large volumes and in it the Indian has no small place. To whom the credit? To the Church which the Mexican Government informs the world gave nothing to its country.

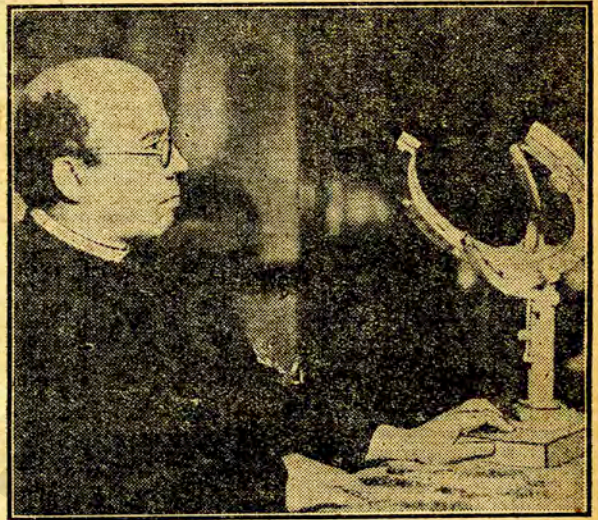
Educational Progress Under the Church in Mexico

Baron Von Humboldt testified thus of the Mexico he visited: "No city of the new continent, without even excepting those of the United States, can display such great and solid scientific establishments, as the capital of Mexico" (33). Why, then, did Mexico advance to such a high place from the depths of savagery, there stop and begin to retrograde, while the United States went on and climbed to her present eminence? Ask that question of the closed university, the suppressed colleges, the empty schools, the confiscated monasteries and convents, students scattered in other lands, the muzzled press, the Laws of Reform, the sword, the gun, the violated ballot-box. One of these alone might have the power only to whisper the answer, but together they shout it so that the whole world may hear. It is an eloquent testimony to the wonderful work of the persecuted Church that to her, and to her alone, the credit is due that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Mexico had proportionally more colleges and more students in them, as well as less illiteracy, than even Great Britain, a testimony given her by a writer in a recent number of a London magazine (34).

That fine picture fades and is replaced by one of sadness when, more than a century ago, Mexico's internal troubles began. In two generations, she had lost what three centuries of peace and cultivation had won for her; her churches seized; her wealth, formerly dedicated to education and social welfare, turned over to the looter. The worst elements rose to power and for them power was merely the road to riches. The subversive Jacobin doctrines, an evil legacy carried like a taint in the blood from generation to generation, yet prevail; but the buildings of the Church, monuments of education and social betterment, still stand, changed, alas, to other and often ignoble uses. Solidly, often beautifully constructed, many remain as barracks, prisons, hotels and offices. To Mexico goes the glory of the first book, the first printing-press, the first school, the first college and the first university in the New World (35), and to Mexico's Catholic missionaries should go her gratitude for these distinctions. To the evil philosophy of the Red Terror goes only the sad credit for a century of destruction. A French writer on social science said that "Private initiative begins where the intervention of power ends." In Mexico it is proposed never to permit it to begin since the power of the state is to have no end. Yet the state owes all its progress and success to the individual. All advance in education, for example, such as the science of pedagogy, the planning of methods, the proper division of studies, the balanced curriculum, are the contributions of individuals. Surely these neo-Jacobins must see the force of the words of a French writer who said of people under such a regime, that they "judged liberty to lie in restricting the liberty of others."

The Wealth of the Church in Mexico

The charge that the Church accumulated an undue proportion of the land of Mexico and gathered to herself vast estates as well as money, on examination has been found to be a gross exaggeration. When the facts are examined in the cold light of history, and the actual figures are given to show of what this wealth consisted, the charge falls to the ground, for the so-called wealth of the Church was chiefly in the endowments of Mexican education and works of social welfare. Little land was owned by the Church (36), and in part only did even the wealth gathered for the endowments of education and social welfare come from the gifts of the people during a period covering



PRIEST INVENTS NEW SUNDIAL. Rev. Symphorien Terraz, of Assumption College, Worcester, Mass., has greatly improved the ancient device for recording time. His instrument gives accurate readings of the minutes as well as the hours. It is said to be the only one of its kind in the world. The dial "keeps God's time, not men's time." (International Newsreel)

three centuries in one of the richest countries in the world; for these endowments represented also the labor and self-sacrifice of thousands of religious men and women, working for nothing but their bread and raiment. The greater part of the wealth was, as we have stated, not that of the Church but of the country's educational and charitable agencies, and the amount itself has been greatly exaggerated for the purposes of propaganda.

When figures revealing the actual extent of these endowments are shown, and when they are contrasted with like endowments for educational and social welfare institutions here in the United States, it is plain that the charge that they constituted an undue part of the wealth of Mexico is not well founded. Three American universities (37) alone have endowments greater than all the educational and charitable institutions under the care of the religious orders of Mexico. A certain single non-Catholic religious denomination here, and that not the largest, has far more invested funds than the Catholic Church in Mexico possessed, with all her works of education and charity, at the period of her greatest prosperity. (38) That particular denomination in this country today has twenty times the number of clergy, in proportion to its membership, and five times the number of church buildings. (39) Moreover, the history of the rise and development of educational and social welfare endowments here is almost identical with those in Mexico, at least in so far as religious motives entered into the effort. The whole foundation of popular and higher education in the United States was built by the religious denominations that had found a place in American life, as we already pointed out; so that if we took from American life all the educational and social welfare values that these pioneers put in it, we would have

today less than half our present equipment. But here in the United States zeal began and encouragement built; while Mexico's "patrilots" destroyed and ate up her own substance and sold her birthright as, one by one, her schools were closed, her teachers driven out, and her welfare institutions turned over to other uses. Many of these were sold at nominal prices to enrich the families of the revolutionists. (40) Those that stand today are monuments to a zeal and devotion that promised great things for the Mexican people, but which is now fast becoming a memory of a light that once astonished by its brilliancy and power; for the early progress of Mexico under the care of its missionaries was the admiration of the world. But figures speak louder than words. The highest estimate of the wealth of the Church in Mexico ever offered even by her enemies was \$250,000,000, including all the endowments. Without such educational and social welfare endowments, the property devoted to religion in the United States is estimated by the Federal Trade Commission at \$2,820,220,000. With the endowments, it is estimated at seven billions of dollars. Proportionately the Mexican figure might well be one-fourth of the American. It was actually not even one-tenth. When it was confiscated the government realized far less than half of its estimated value. (41)

The history of the decline of education in Mexico begins with the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767. Shortly after came the debacle that has been going on ever since. There were few to take the place of the old teachers. College after college had to be given up, most of them closed by the predecessors of President Calles. Gomez Farias closed the University of Mexico, the first university on this continent, in

(Continued on page 27)

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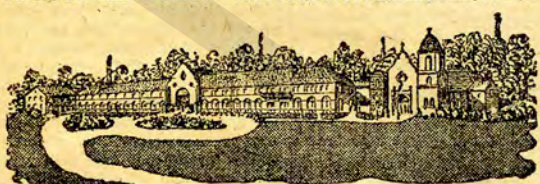
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No Interference by the Church in Politics

(Continued from page 26)

1833. Reopened by Catholics, it was closed again by Comonfort in 1857. Again, reopened one year later, Juarez closed it in 1861. The Liberal Cabinet of the weak Maximilian put an end to it in 1865. Later it descended to about the grade of a high school and, with some exceptions in certain departments, it has scarcely more than that rank today.

The Church and the Poor in Mexico

Bitter indeed was the lot of the people who had to witness, not only the confiscation of the educational and charitable foundations that were their own in every sense of the word, but to see, in the sweeping away of their endowments, the rise of usury and the exploitation of poverty in order to increase the wealth of a new moneyed class that revolution had made. The endowments of the Church institutions were almost exclusively invested in the development of Mexico's great agricultural resources at low rates of interest. The revenues from these investments went to the support of the country's educational and charitable institutions, the schools, the colleges, the orphan asylums, the homes for the aged and the hospitals. The investments themselves increased agricultural and industrial prosperity, even as the returns furthered intellectual and social progress. The very profession of the churchman made of his debtors his friends. But let an enemy tell the tale. We take it from a speech on the subject by Juan A. Mateos in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, delivered on Oct. 20, 1893. "In the days of the old regime, when the clergy possessed a great number of city and country properties, year after year went by without the shameful evidence to which so many families were the victims today. The sordid avarice of the landlords of today has no compassion in contrast to the clergy who, animated by a spirit truly Christian, overlooked and excused. The Church loaned its capital at a low rate of interest, 4%, 5%, or 6% which was called the legal rate, a rate unknown to-day. Very rarely was a foreclosure notice published against a property pledged for a loan from these funds, for this reason I proposed, at the time of the confiscation, that a bank for the poor be established from the millions of the clergy, but my voice was drowned in the passions of the revolution. Because of this, the selfish interests and exactions of today have left homeless the many families who formerly enjoyed the tolerance and charity of the clergy." It was the revolutionary leader, President Juarez, who repealed the laws against usury by his decree of March 15, 1861. The work done for the people by this use of endowments practically constituted a land bank for the Mexican agriculturists. (42) Only a few years ago our own government had to found such a bank in the United States for the relief of the farmers.

The Church and Social Uplift in Mexico

The charge has been made that the Church in Mexico had no definite program of social action, that her attitude has been one of opposition. The record of Catholic Spain in this respect toward Mex-

ico was such as to justify the statement by a recognized authority on the history of the Mexican people that: "No other nation has founded so extensively such beneficences in the colonies." (43) The Church was the first organization in Mexico to devote herself to the solving of the social question. But for sixty and more years she has not been free; yet, even before the revolution of 1910-11 broke out, she had already a program of social action, progressive, advanced and comprehensive, free of the spirit of caste, and not leading to turbulence and to unjust confiscation. This program of the Church was one of loyalty to the people of Mexico, generous, disinterested, and inspired by no political passion.

As early as 1903, Catholic delegates in the National Congress of Mexico introduced bills providing for the creation of rural cooperative banks. That year a Mexican Catholic convention was held in the City of Puebla, and, among other problems, it discussed those of labor unions, of the Indians and of industrial education. Similar congresses were held in succeeding years. In that of 1906, no less than twenty-nine reports were presented covering distinct phases of social action in which the Church was at that time engaged in Mexico. At the congress held in 1909, in the City of Oaxaca, practically the entire time of the congress was devoted to the discussion of the Indian problem. (44)

It was a group of Catholic delegates to the Congress of Mexico that introduced bills giving legal status to labor unions, providing for Sunday rest, and a Workmen's Compensation Act. In the State of Jalisco, where in 1912 the Catholic members constituted a majority in the State Legislature, statutes were enacted protecting the property rights of wives and children, protecting the rights of minorities and granting a legal status to labor syndicates. One needs but read Catholic publications of that time to know what was the Catholic people and the Catholic clergy of Mexico were devoting themselves to social questions in that country when their action was free. In March, 1913, the National Catholic Party, assembled in Guadalajara, discussed a program which included such points as municipal autonomy, the land problems, rural cooperative banks, and the property rights of wives and children; the mere enumeration of which shows how far not only the party, but the Catholic people of Mexico, had advanced in the solution of the social problems of that day. The Catholic Labor Unions of Mexico, at their convention held in 1913 in the City of Zamora, adopted resolutions demanding every just thing contained in Article 123 of the Constitution of Queretaro and even went further than this article in the protection of working-men's rights. (45)

It would not be hard, but for limitations of space, to enlarge on the story of the effort of the Church along social lines to better the condition of the people; and, at the same time, to insist that the Catholics of Mexico have never failed to contribute their best to all the demands made on them for intelligent, patriotic action.

The Church and Politics in Mexico

The charge that comes easiest to the tongue or pen of the Mexican



FIGURE OF POPE BENEDICT XV. This is a model in plaster of paris of the fine statue which will be erected at the tomb of the Pontiff in St. Peter's. This design by Pietro Canonica was selected from a large number submitted by noted sculptors to a committee of cardinals. (Wide World)

politician is that the Church interfered in politics. The answer is even easier to give than the charge was to make, for no one ever tries to offer proofs that it is true. It is taken for granted that it will be believed without proofs. When and how was the Mexican Church in politics? If the charge refers to Spanish times, it is true that men like Bishop Las Casas, to whose memory revolutionary Mexico has recently erected a public monument, were in "politics" to the extent of fighting the Spanish officials in the colony, even to the foot of the throne of the king, to secure justice and education for the Indian. It is true also to the extent that, because of a false too ideal union of Church and State in those times, the latter often went beyond its rights granted under the Concordat, to encroach upon those of the Church, and was for that rebuked and opposed. It is true again to the extent that individuals sometimes sought to use the union for their own self-aggrandizement. It is true in no other way.

If the charge refers to the early revolutionary times, it is true to the extent that priests led the fight against Spain, but that the Church condemned them for deserting their spiritual activities to mix in the only kind of politics men then understood—warfare. It is true to the extent that the Bishops tried to preserve religious rights against the assaults of the revolutionists of the day. (46) It is true in no other way.

If the charge refers to more recent revolutionary history, it is true that the Church is the only defender the country could find against assaults by communists and atheists on civil, political and religious liberties. It is not true that the Church engaged in merely partisan politics. The Catholic Party of Madero's day was a party of laymen organized to win for Mexico by constitutional means a more just and equitable code of laws. Madero welcomed it as "the first fruits of my revolution." To this extent, and not to any other, Catholics, not the Church, were in politics. What of it? Does not the democratic state proclaim the legitimacy of constitutional methods to redress grievances? If that method is wrong, then we Americans do not understand democracy. And if these grievances, by the deed of the enemies of religion, lie in the realm of religious rights, are the friends of religion forbidden by that fact to work for their redress, because by so doing they would be mixing in politics?

that, however, when in 1821, a revolutionary Mexican Government desired to retain some part of the union in the ancient right of "patronage," formerly enjoyed by the Spanish crown, so as to have the appointment of Bishops in its hands, it was met with a refusal from the Archbishop of Mexico. When the demand was made the following year it was again rejected, this time by the whole body of the Episcopate. (47)

The Constitution of 1857 declared the union of Church and State to be dissolved. (48) That instrument, however, recognized the Church as a legal, though separate, entity. According to the "liberal" doctrine then in vogue, no "legal person" was such by its own inherent right, and became so only by grant of the State, which by a legal fiction created it. What the State makes, however, it can unmake, and this the Constitution of 1917, by a logical conclusion from a false premise, attempted to do. It recognizes (49) "no juridical personality in the religious institutions known as churches," thus depriving them of any legal protection against the encroachments of tyrants, whose real and often expressed purpose in Mexico was and is, not to separate the Church from the State but to subject the Church to the control of the State. (50) The Church in Mexico, on the other hand, is not asking for the union of Church and State to be restored, but for the American system of freedom of religion to be introduced. This may easily be learned from the words (51) of the Mexican Bishops addressed to the legis-

Coming Week's Program at Radio Station WLWL of Paulist Fathers

Sunday, Dec. 19	
8.55 p.m.	"What Think Ye of Christ?" Sermon by Rev. John H. Sullivan, C.S.P. Paulist Chorists.
Monday, Dec. 20	
8.55 p.m.	Carl Wagner, violinist.
8.15 "	"Christ, the King." Rev. Joseph A. Nelson.
8.50 "	Concert.
9.00 "	Comments on "Current Events." Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.
9.15 "	William Gibson, cellist.
9.30 "	Hawaiian Entertainers.
10.00 "	Harold Noble, tenor.
10.20 "	St. Cecilia Ensemble.
Tuesday, Dec. 21	
9.00 p.m.	Paul Gundlach, pianist.
9.15 "	"Physics" talk by Prof. Chas. A. Corcoran of City College.
9.30 "	Venetian Ensemble.
9.45 "	Paulist League Musical.
10.00 "	"Current Plays."
10.15 "	Clarence Kirk, violinist.
10.35 "	Paulist League Musical.
10.40 "	Rev. Wm. J. Finn, organist.
Wednesday, Dec. 22	
9.00 p.m.	Ruby McDonald, violinist.
9.15 "	"Doomed to death—but rated not to die." Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.
9.45 "	Wendell Hart, tenor.
10.05 "	Harry Mohr, cellist.
10.15 "	Rosalie Wolf, soprano.
10.45 "	Elite Ensemble.
Thursday, Dec. 23	
9.00 p.m.	John Picani, violinist.
9.15 "	"Reveries." Alfred Young.
9.30 "	John Valentine, tenor.
10.00 "	"Christmas Carols." Rev. Francis X. Tuboi, S.J.
10.15 "	Mary Louise Gately, contralto.
10.30 "	Theresa Laisieux Ensemble.
Friday, Dec. 24	
12 Midnight.	Solemn Mass.
	Sermon by Rev. Henry E. E. O'Keefe, C.S.P.

lature: "What is it that we petition? Not tolerance, not complacency, much less privileges or favors. We demand liberty and we demand nothing but liberty, we demand liberty for all religions. . . . A regime of restrictions against religion is the denial of liberty."

Slanders Against the Clergy in Mexico

Equal in falsehood with the slander against the Church in reference to education and wealth is that concerning extortion on the part of the Mexican clergy. (52) Those who have seen the poverty in which the clergy of our generation have lived need no proof drawn from statistics to know that they have been slandered. It suffices to say for those of other days that the total offerings collected in the churches by the Mexican clergy never represented a donation of even as much as one peso from each member of the flock per year. Offerings on the occasions of baptisms and marriages are smaller than those made to clergymen in the United States. (53) Works of education and charity have been supported chiefly by those whose means enabled them to be generous, as in our own country. The poor paid nothing but the copper dropped into a collection basket on Sunday. In Spanish times it is quite true that the revenues of the Bishops were often large (54), but it is also quite true to say that the surplus was spent on the great in-

(Continued on page 28)

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Prayer Not Arms Is the Defense of the Church

(Continued from page 27)

stitutions to which we have already referred. Indeed, the building of hospitals and orphanages seems to have been the favorite work of many Bishops, who paid for them out of the revenues not needed for the support of their households and the cost of managing their large dioceses. (55) The hospitals in particular were the best that the times knew and superior to those of Europe. Some of those still standing are considered models for such a climate as that of Mexico, even at this day. Notable amongst such wonderful buildings is one in Guadalajara which is still visited by physicians, even from the United States, to study its construction and its plans for the care of patients; yet it is three centuries old and the gift of a Bishop. Where the revenue of Bishop Zumarraga went is indicated by one of his letters (56) to the King of Spain written in 1537: "That which occupies my thoughts, to which my will is most inclined and my small forces strive, is that in this city and in every diocese there shall be a college for Indian boys learning grammar at least, and a great establishment with room for a large number of the daughters of the Indians." Before his death the Bishop had seen to it that a goodly part of his wish was made a reality. Nor should we pass without attention the letter of Geronimo Lopez to the King in which, as early as 1541, he complained against the Church because her clergy had taught the Indians too faithfully, even to the point of making them excellent writers and expert Latinists. (57)

It must be remembered that the Bishops were the responsible trustees of funds for works other than those of the parishes and missions. In their zeal for progress, however, they often went far afield to make Mexico a progressive nation, for we find them building public roads and even aqueducts. (58) If the poor of Mexico have been systematically robbed by the extortion of their clergy, surely it will be hard to explain a devotion on their part to the Church and to their pastors which not even rigid censorship succeeds in concealing from those who today read what is happening in Mexico.

The Church Turns to Prayer Not Arms

Even Catholics have asked why the Church in Mexico does not use its undoubted power to bring this persecution to a speedy end and take measures to prevent its recurrence, since it is admitted that the overwhelming majority of the Mexican people are of its fold. They forget that there are but two human means to that end: the ballot and the sword. The first is hopeless in Mexico, because there the ballot is not respected and governments are unaffected by it. Few citizens use it, because their votes are counted only when they favor the ruling powers or when these powers, for effect or deception, are willing to admit the existence of a small minority. An outstanding proof of this is found in the rejection, by a vote of every member save one, of the petition for relief addressed by the Mexican Bishops to the Congress, though the petition was supported by the people. Congress, Senate and courts do the bidding of the President; and this condition has been the rule and not the exception since "liberty" came to Mexico by force of arms. It will continue to be the rule while that kind of "liberty" stays. Ballots are less powerful than bullets when they are the playthings of tyranny.

The second human remedy is

equally hopeless, for Christian principles forbid the Church founded by the Prince of Peace to take up the sword or rely upon such carnal weapons as the inflamed passions of men would select. If the Church has learned many things in her life of two thousand years the principal lesson came from the patience of her Divine Founder. She is not fated to die, but she has learned how to suffer. With Him she will be crucified but with Him also she will rise. The weapons of men are not for her. But, if these human weapons the Church will not use, she has one that will fit her hand, armored as it is in justice and in truth. She has prayer. Never in the history of the trials of the Church in Mexico has that weapon been so firmly held as now, thanks to the paternal counsels of the Sovereign Pontiff. Because of these, no longer does the quivering voice of the afflicted Church of Mexico rise alone to the Comforter. From end to end of the earth the answer to the appeal of Pius goes upward to the throne of God. The hatred of men may spurn it. The malice of men may mock it. The unbelief of men may mock it. But its hope in a Promise and its power is in a Faith.

This Is No Appeal for Political Intervention or Action of Any Sort

What, therefore, we have written is no call on the faithful here or elsewhere to purely human action. It is no interposition of our influence either as Bishops or as citizens to reach those who possess political power anywhere on earth, and least of all in our own country, to the end that they should intervene with armed force in the internal affairs of Mexico for the protection of the Church. Our duty is done when, by telling the story, defending the truth and emphasizing the principles, we sound a warning to Christian civilization that its foundations are again being attacked and undermined. For the rest, God will bring His will to pass in His own good time and in His own good way. Mexico will be saved for her mission whatever it may be. That this mission is now to give a great example of Christian patience and to demonstrate the force of faith undaunted, we may well believe. For the future we may take confidence from the examples of other nations that went through the same fiery furnace of persecution and emerged, triumphantly prepared for great things. The Mexican nation once proved its inherent worth by its rapid advancement in Christian civilization. For the days of De Canto and Zumarraga, Las Casas and Motolinia, as well as those of Junipero Serra, who carried the work of the missionaries into what is now our own land, Mexico has no need to offer apology.

Mexico's Debt to the Church

For the sad days of decline, the Church, forbidden by law to teach and robbed of the means to carry on her mission of enlightenment, has only to show her chains, and say to her enemies: "You blame me for poverty, yet you took from me the endowments for my hospitals, my orphanages, my countless works of mercy. You blame me for ignorance, yet you closed my schools, and stole my colleges, the first to light the torch of learning on this continent. You say that I have added nothing to science and art, but you destroyed the art I brought with me and developed, burned my books and scattered the results of my labor

for science to the four winds of heaven. You blame me for lawlessness, yet you destroyed my missions among a peaceful and thriving Indian population, and gave to them, in place of Christ's Gospel, the thirty pieces of silver with which you bribed them to murder their fellows. You took the cross out of their hands to replace it with a torch and a gun. Show me one good thing in Mexico I did not give you. Show me one genius for whom I was not responsible. Show me one step toward the light that I did not help you to make. Take out of your country all that I put in it, and see what remains. You may thrust me out, exile my Bishops, murder my priests, again steal my schools and desecrate my sanctuaries, but you can not blot out history, you can not erase the mark I made on you—not in a century of centuries."

"For My Name's Sake"

If the gaining of the whole world does not recompense the individual for the loss of his soul, what then shall it profit a nation? There was a soul in Mexico, a spirit manifesting its presence by the impulse that sent her missionaries of civilization along a way unmarked, save for the print of their sandals, but now the great Royal Road of California—the Camino Real. It was a spirit that, building on its faith and its inspiration, left monuments to tell Mexico's story in the old missions of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and along the shores of the Pacific from San Diego to San Francisco. For us of the North, these buildings, landmarks of the first Christian missions within our borders, beacons of the light of religion and civilization on our soil, fountains and fertile sources of a distinctive literature touched and tinted with colors and values all its own, are treasures honored as a rich legacy, noble and ennobling. The old records speak in the Spanish tongue to tell us that it was not really Spain but Mexico that sent the Padres to the North. Their Castilian speech is passing; nor are there left many descendants of the brave souls who came with them to write the first chapter, the chapter of beauty, into the history of our California. But the memories are not dead, nor has the trail been lost that was marked by the discoverers who gave to the Far Western country the first martyrs as well as the first teachers in all our nation. Through them we share in the glory of the initial gesture of Christian civilization on this continent. We have not denied, nor shall we deny, our debt to Mexico for this. Already it has been acknowledged by voices which, if they do not all sing the old hymns, yet do all understand something of the message of the singers; if they do not all worship at the old altars, yet do all hold sacred the spots upon which the Padres built them, and give to the new cities that grew around them the old names, to keep for the great West its traditions, its character and its charm. If the mother should forget what the sons and daughters love, shall not these sons and daughters take shame instead of glory from her? For you of our own flock in this happy land, where the rights of conscience are recognized and upheld by the laws, and respected by the people, we re-echo the appeal of Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, and ask the charity of your prayers—a memento in the daily Masses of the priests, and a remembrance in the daily devotions of the faithful—for your afflicted brethren in Mexico, recalling to you words of Our Lord to show that your practical sympathy thus expressed will be pleasing in His sight: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." (59)

To the Bishops, the Clergy and the Faithful of Mexico we inscribe this defense of their history and their rights, not alone as a duty to the faith we hold in common, but as a testimony to their fortitude under trial and to the justice they preach in their dignified and legitimate demands. We bid them be of good cheer, for to Mexico in

affliction may the significant words of the Master to the Apostle of the Gentiles be once more applied: "This man is to Me a vessel of election, to carry My name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (60)

Given, this Twelfth Day of December, in the Year of Our Lord, MCMXXVI, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

References

- (1) Encyclical "Libertas Praestantissimum," June 20, 1938.
- (2) John xviii, 20.
- (3) Matthew xvii, 5.
- (4) John xiv, 6.
- (5) Luke x, 16.
- (6) 1 Cor. iv, 1.
- (7) Previous to this date, the State endeavored to make the Bishops and priests political appointees, and to legislate in Church affairs.
- (8) Diario Oficial, Nov. 21, 1913. Bill to modify Art. 3.
- (9) Diario Oficial, Dec. 17, 1918. Bill to modify paragraphs VII, VIII and XVI of Art. 130.
- (10) Summa, 1a, 11a, Q. xciii, Art. 3.
- (11) Meyer vs. Nebraska, 362, U. S., 360.
- (12) Commentaries, Intro., sec. 2.
- (13) Northwest Ordinance, Art. 3.
- (14) Farewell Address.
- (15) Constitution of 1917, Art. 130. Law of Nov. 25, 1926, Art. 5.
- (16) Const. 1917, Art. 27, § III.
- (17) Const. 1917, Art. 27. Law of Nov. 25, 1926, Art. 6.
- (18) Const. 1917, Art. 27, § II. Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 21.
- (19) Const. 1917, Art. 27, § II. Law of Nov. 25, 1926, Art. 6.
- (20) Const. 1917, Art. 27, § II. Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 22.
- (21) Const. 1917, Art. 130. Law of Nov. 25, 1926, Art. 14.
- (22) Const. 1917, Art. 27, § II.
- (23) Const. 1917, Art. 27, § III. Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 4.
- (24) Law of Nov. 25, 1926. Const. 1917, Art. 130.
- (25) Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 1. Law of Nov. 25, 1926, Art. 8. Const. 1917, Art. 130.
- (26) Foreign Affairs for October, 1926. "The Policies of Mexico Today," by Pinaros Elias Calles, page 4. "In conclusion, I wish to lay stress upon the fact that a real religious problem does not exist in Mexico. I mean that there is no such thing as persecution of a religious character against religious creeds or opposition on the part of the government to the dogmas or practices of any religion."
- (27) Const. 1917, Act. 2. Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 4.
- (28) Const. 1917, Art. 130. Law of Nov. 25, 1926, Art. 15. Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 4.
- (29) Const. 1917, Art. 5. Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 6.
- (30) Const. 1917, Art. 130. Law of June 21, 1926, Art. 13. Law of Nov. 25, 1926, Art. 16.
- (31) Orozco y Berra, Hist. Ant., v. 1, p. 62-67.
- (32) Jose Maria Luis Mora, Mexico y sus Revoluciones, Paris, 1926, v. 4, p. 2 et seq. Mora explains that the aid of the masses for the revolt could not be enlisted with abstract ideas about independence, so it was necessary to inflame their passions with "fables" about the greatness of the Aztecs and the "barbarity" of the conquest and "three hundred years of slavery."
- (33) Hidalgo's rallying cry was defense of King and Religion. Alaman, v. 1, p. 379.
- (34) Cortes, Third Letter to Charles V. Dead are devoured after battle. Bodies of roasted children found in provisions of enemy.
- (35) Las Casas. Brevisima Relacion. Dead and prisoners are devoured after battle.
- (36) Sahagun. Lib. II, Caps. II, XX, XXI, XXXII. Duran. Cap. LXXXI. Mendietta. Lib. II, Cap. XVI. Motolinia. Caps. 17, 19, 27. Pomar. Relacion. p. 17. Recopilacion de Indias. 1-1-7. (Law forbidding cannibalism).
- (37) Lummis, Awakening of a Nation, Introduction.
- (38) Political Essay on The Kingdom of New Spain. Translated from the original French by John Black, New York, 1811. v. 1, p. 159. "The capital and several other cities have scientific establishments which will bear a comparison with those of Europe." p. 139.
- (39) The Month, Oct. 1926, "Church and State in Mexico."
- (40) Icazabalcaeta. Bibliografia Mexicana del Siglo XVI. p. xvi. First Printing Press 1536. First Book, La Escala Espiritual, 1537. First School, 1522. (Justo Sierra, Mexico—Its Social Evolution, p. 478.) First College, 1538. (Cuevas, Historia de la Iglesia Mexicana, v. 1, p. 286.) First University, 1523. (Cayo, Tres Siglos, Lib.

IV, 12.)

(38) Humboldt, Political Essays on the Kingdom of New Spain. New York, 1811. v. 1, p. 174. "The lands of the Mexican clergy (bienes raices) do not exceed the value of 12 or 15 millions of francs." (\$2,285,714.28 to \$2,857,142.85).

Coleccion Davalos, v. 2, Doc. 361. Abad y Queipo says: "Mas: la poca propiedad de la Iglesia y clero de America no consiste en posesiones." And in Doc. 363. "El valor de los bienes de estos piadosos destinos (capellanias y obras pias) se puede estimar prudencialmente en dos y medio o tres millones de pesos."

Mora (Obras Sueltas, v. 1, p. 372), quotes a report made by the Ministers for Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1833, showing 129 farms and 3,331 city properties belonging to the religious orders of both sexes. The total income from these properties is given respectively as \$147,047 and \$631,762. The members of these orders according to that same report numbered 3,160. Mora's estimate of Church wealth (minus its fictitious values) totals less than \$120,000,000. Duarte, Curiosidades Historicas, p. 82, lists 861 farms and 22,649 city properties valued at \$134,614,000. Various colleges and hospitals, even the Guild of Silversmiths, appear as owners.

See also note 41.

(37) World Almanac, 1926, p. 392.

Harvard	\$69,689,840
Columbia	57,456,303
Chicago	31,992,620
	\$159,139,263

165 institutions possess \$794,231,462 in endowments of \$1,000,000 or more.

(38) The Baptists are referred to for purposes of comparison, because the number of their communicants in 1916 happens nearly to equal the number of Mexicans in 1810. The comparison is as follows:

	Baptists (a)	Mexicans
Population	6,107,828	12,354,793
Churches	51,243	13,112 (b)
Clergy	36,324	7,341 (b)

Unproductive property \$175,705,500 \$52,321,894 (a)
Productive property \$28,453,844 \$84,073,150 (a)
Income \$42,055,907 \$6,682,163 (f)
Total values \$272,159,344 \$138,495,047 (g)
(a) Baptist Year Book 1916.

(b) 1810—Navarro y Noriega, Memoria, in Boletin de la Soc. de G. y E. 2a Ep., v. 1, p. 241. Based on census of 1793 and Humboldt 1807.

(c) Romero, Mexico and the U. S., p. 27.

(d) Mora, Obras Sueltas, v. 1, p. 272. Ciudad report of Auguster for 1833. Alamos 1833, including 715 conventual establishments, valued at \$11,300,000.

(e) Ibid. Less fictitious values: for example, Dr. Mora assumes \$600,000 as the income of each parish priest, multiplies this by 20, and charges the product to capital.

(f) Ibid. Less fictitious values; and includes the tithe for 1923 amounting to \$2,341,152. Does not include alms or fees.

(g) Ibid. Less fictitious values.

Including his fictitious values, Mora's figures show \$181,216,754 total values and \$7,456,592 total income.

According to Abad y Queipo the funds held in trust by the secular and regular clergy (1907) totaled \$44,500,000. Representacion, Coleccion Davalos, v. 2, Doc. 253.

Mora estimated them to amount to \$80,000,000. Mexico y sus Revoluciones, v. 1, p. 121. But in his Obras Sueltas, v. 1, p. 372, he follows the Bishops (\$44,500,000).

These funds were known as "capellanias y obras pias." Their disposition is indicated by \$200,000 of "capellanias" and \$200,000 of "obras pias" being tied up with the funds belonging to the girls' college of San Ignacio in Mexico City. Boletin, etc., 3a Epoca, v. 5, p. 652.

(39) This is based on the present population of Mexico, 14,234,799 (Census 1921; World Almanac, 1926) and (Continued on page 31)

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