

# Catholic Mexico

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## Dedication

This pamphlet is the first of two which shall be written to acquaint our fellow American Citizens with the truth about Mexico. The present pamphlet deals with three centuries of Catholic influence. The second pamphlet will deal with the anti-Catholic and anti-Religious century of revolution in which the Church was not allowed to play any part and for the devastating results of which she can in no way be held responsible. The author is pleased to dedicate this pamphlet to the memory of those Mexican Catholics who have lived and died and who still live and die for what is dearest and best in Mexico.

Edward Lodge Curran.

American citizens know little about Mexico. Catholics as well as non-Catholics must be included in this indictment. In the mind of the average American there is some vague remembrance of the Revolt of Texas, of the Mexican War, of Woodrow Wilson's "Watchful Waiting."

Little knowledge is had of what the Church, in the name of Christianity and civilization, has done for Mexico and of what has been done to the Church, in the name of American Masonry and Mexican military tyranny, by those who have had as little right to the presidency of Mexico as the unfortunate Huerta over whose supposed violent succession to the assassinated Madero, President Wilson and the American Oil Companies shed so many patriotic and petroleum tears. Little knowledge is had of the anti-religious, and not merely anti-clerical, provisions of the Constitution of 1857, of the "Reform Laws" of 1859 and of the Constitution of 1917, which robbed the Church of her properties, of her right to exist as a distinct legal personality, and even of her opportunity to work for the spiritual betterment of the overwhelming majority of the Mexican population, ninety to ninety-five percent, who have been willing and who still are willing to commit themselves to her spiritual care.

## Colonial Policies

No American should be left in the dark as to the superiority of the treatment of the Indians by the Catholic Spanish conquerors over that accorded the Indians of the American Republic by the non-Catholic invaders and settlers of the original thirteen colonies. The American nation and the American government owe a lasting apology, an apology whose depth should be gauged by the physical impossibility of ever making adequate retribution, for their treatment of the American Indian. Even today the case of the Indian vs. the United States is one of those which cries to heaven for vengeance.

The pagan policy of the survival of the fittest, based as such a policy always is on the arbitrary extinction of those arbitrarily deemed unfit, has almost removed the presence of the American Indian amongst us. The Christianizing and civilizing work of the noble North American missionaries, who devoted their lives and gifts to the Indians, has gone for nothing. An isolated monument to the Jesuit Martyrs or to Father Marquette or to Father Juniper Serra is all that remains. Generally speaking, the non-Catholic tradition and invasion of North America was anti-Indian. Generally speaking, the Catholic tradition and invasion of Mexico and Central America was pro-Indian. These and a multitude of other facts must become a part of the mental makeup of every living American throughout the land.

## **No Apology**

In other words, the Catholic Church has nothing to apologize for during the three centuries between 1524, when the Spanish military conquest of Mexico was assured, and 1824 when, in the words of the Catholic Encyclopedia, "freemasonry, so actively promoted in Mexico by the first minister from the United States, Joel R. Poinsett, began gradually to lessen the loyalty which, in accordance with the plan of Iguala, both the rulers and the governed had manifested towards the Church." During those three centuries the Catholic Church in Mexico did everything she possibly could for the religious and educational and economic welfare of the native population. She did this despite the absolutism and red tape of the Spanish civil regime, despite the difficulties of communication between the isolated communities into which tropic forests and snow-capped mountains divide the land, and despite the horrible and harrowing heritage of cannibalism and human sacrifices which Aztec chieftain and Mayan priest had engrafted upon the land. As Catholics and as Americans and as thinkers it is well for us to investigate the facts.

## **Form and Face**

The present day Republic of Mexico is not geographically identical with the Mexico which greeted Captain-General Hernando Cortes and six hundred followers and sixteen horses and thirty-two crossbows and seventeen firearms in the spring of 1519. I trust that the reader will re-read the number of men and horses and weapons which constituted the invading army. Surely such a pitiful army, pitiful in numbers and equipment, could not have perpetrated the great number of supposedly ghastly massacres that unfriendly non-Catholic historians, without any historical foundation and with little historical vision, have been fond of imputing to the Spanish Conquistadores. Surely the modern historian who has to record the history of the World War, wherein millions of men, white men and cultured men and educated men, were at one another's throats by means of bayonets and hand grenades and machine guns and poison gas, will smile at our rashness in calling the followers of Cortes an army.

Besides its present area of 767,005 square miles and its present distribution into twenty-seven states, three territories and a federal district, Mexico of the sixteenth century embraced present day Guatemala and British Honduras to the south, and the whole stretch of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and southern California, constituting now our own American southwest, to the north. The eastern coast slopes gradually to the Gulf of Mexico. The western coast plunges precipitously into the Pacific and the Gulf of California. Mountain ranges, joining the Andes mountains of South America with the Rocky mountains of North America, account for the high and rocky table lands on which, for at least six months, never a drop of rain appears. Atmospherically, one cannot speak of the four

seasons in Mexico. A dry season and a rainy season, extending from May to October, are its atmospheric divisions. A few high mountain peaks, such as Popocatepetl (17,800 feet) and Orizaba (17,000 feet) and a few rivers, whose volume scarcely entitles them to the name, completes this brief physical description of our southern neighbour.

## **The Spanish Game**

Cortes and his small army and smaller crew set out due west from Havana on February 10, 1519. About the first of March the Peninsula of Yucatan was sighted. A landing was made. A pitched battle was fought against the native Mayas in which the sixteen horsemen, naively called cavalry by one newspaper reporter-historian, saved the day for the Spaniards. Finding Yucatan too difficult for conquest Cortes once more set sail, to disembark not far from the present Vera Cruz and to begin his slow and laborious journey up the mountains to Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City), the residence of the Aztec Emperor and the capital of the Aztec Confederation which, however, exercised control over less than one fourth of the native Mexican tribes.

## **For Gold**

Many motives explain the coming of the Spaniards. Like every other European explorer of the sixteenth century, Cortes had come to conquer. He also came to search for riches, for the gold and silver of the Mexican mines, whose wealth was imprudently revealed in the magnificent gifts which the Aztec Emperor had sent from his mountain stronghold as a peace offering to the Spanish captain on the coast. With few exceptions, every maiden voyage of the English and the French and the Portuguese and the Dutch to North America was likewise a search for gold, gold that would pour into the treasury of the mother country and into the pockets of the mariner and his crew upon finding a shorter western trade route to the Islands of Cipango (Japan) and Cathay (China). Gold is gold whether it come immediately from the mines or immediately through the buying and selling of silks and precious spices from the Orient. It is part of the non-Catholic and anti-Catholic historical tradition, however, to over-emphasize the material motives of the Mexican invasion and under-emphasize the material motives of the North American invasion.

## **For Christ**

Finally, the Spanish conquerors had come to Christianize. This fact is amply proven by the presence of priests with the army and by the history of subsequent events. Many of those who came with firearms in the original detachment of Cortes threw down their arms, laid aside their military trappings and devoted themselves to prayer and the sacrificial life of Spanish Missionaries. As soon as the conquest was assured, missionaries poured into the Mexican hills and plains to bathe the people in the saving waters of Baptism and win them for the kingdom of eternity. The Franciscans were the first to offer themselves. Twelve of them formally took possession of the missions in 1524. Prior to that, three Flemish Franciscans, one of them the famous lay brother, Peter of Ghent, a kinsman of Emperor Charles V, had already joined the priests of the original expedition.

The religious motive of the conquest cannot be lightly set aside. In fact, the religious motive of the Spanish conquest of Mexico is of a higher nature than the religious motive which brought various European groups to the shores of North America. The latter saw in the newly discovered territory a haven from religious persecutions at home. The Puritans came to Massachusetts to escape the

religious persecutions against Dissenters (Protestants who were not Anglicans) in England. Catholics came to Maryland to escape the anti-clerical and anti-Catholic laws of the same mistress of seas and tyrant of consciences. The non-Catholic groups of North America made little or no attempt to bring the Indians within the saving and civilizing benefits of Christianity. They were content to hold their own. They looked upon the Indian as their enemy. They sought to exterminate him, bit by bit from the Atlantic Coastal Plain, and then bit by bit beyond the Alleghanies, and then bit by bit beyond the Rockies until today the native Indian population of the United States is less than one half of one per cent of the total.

## **The Indian**

Today, the Indian population is the backbone and the heart and soul of Mexico. Only eighteen per cent of the present Mexican population is non-Indian. Thirty-five per cent are pure Indian and forty-seven per cent are Mestizos, possessing half or more than half of Indian blood. Extermination of the Indian because he is an Indian was the unofficial policy of non-Catholic America, a policy which resulted in Indian Wars throughout the nineteenth century and in the failure of the Federal government, until the middle of the nineteenth century to treat the Indian as a brother and grant him full exercise of those inalienable God-given rights which he, too, despite the subsequent distortion of the Declaration of Independence, possesses.

The military conquest of Mexico, aided by the opposition of three-fourths of the native tribes to Aztec domination, was practically completed in 1541. Mexico City was taken in 1521. The Mayas of Yucatan succumbed in 1541. Thereafter, and despite the fact that numerous tribes in the jungles and mountain fastnesses were never subdued by the sword, Mexico belonged to Spain. In 1876, upon the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of the Dakotas, in the homelands of the Sioux tribe, white settlers were still driving the Indians from their American homelands, at the point of the musket and for the sole purpose of securing gold. Let those who talk and write about the Spanish invasion of Mexico for gold keep silent until the extinction of the American Indian for gold and lands has received its proportionate historical statement and development.

## **Kind Peace**

Taking into consideration the smallness of the Spanish army and the small number of Spaniards who constituted the civil regime in Mexico City, and the numerous geographical subdivisions of the country, a possible source of constant guerrilla warfare, it is only fair to look elsewhere for the cause of that universal peace and submission which continued for three hundred years.

In other words, the Christian conquest of Mexico was far more important than the military or civil conquest. We have already mentioned the presence of priests in the first invading detachment. It would be wrong, however, to surmise from this that the sword always preceded the cross or that both were raised simultaneously in the native pueblos (or villages) and against the native teocalli (or temple). In the south and west the missionaries found the natives already pacified and submissive. Against the more warlike and less easily pacified Indian tribes of Northern Mexico the cross and sword sometimes went hand in hand. The missionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, disliked this method and consequently visited and converted the northern tribes by themselves alone. Thus it was, on the basis of a pure unadulterated missionary approach, that the Jesuits converted the northwestern part of Mexico and the Franciscans, the northeastern part.

Many of the missionaries attained the martyr's crown. During a formidable rebellion of Indian tribes in New Mexico in 1680, twenty-one Franciscans were martyred and Christianity was all but exterminated. The names of those who, unprotected by the sword and uninspired by any Captain save the Captain of souls, converted Mexican territory to the North, where the Spanish sword never conquered and where peace came through Christ and not Cortes, are amongst the noblest names that any nation reveals upon its roster. Father Salvatierra, who secured Lower California for the government, and Father Junipero Serra, who founded the missions of Upper California, are but two of the many gentle ambassadors of Christ whose gifts and graces are as pressed spiritual rose leaves between the pages of history.

## **Little Blood**

A consideration of the methods of Spanish Conquest reveals several interesting conclusions. In the first place, it was not an exceptionally bloody conquest. It was no bloodier than the Cromwell's conquest of Ireland, over a century later. It was no more savage than the English conquest of the Boers, three and three-quarter centuries later. Spanish troops engaged in the conquest were no crueller than the troops of Sherman marching through Georgia, than the invaders of Belgium, or than the troops of any of the armies along the western front. In fact, the balance wheel turns in favor of the Spaniard.

## **Much Faith**

In the second place, Christianity was not forced upon the Indian native at the point of the sword. Where the sword preceded the Cross, military conquest made the pathway of the missionary easier. In such conditions, however, military conquest was not the cause of conversion. Where the missionary advanced alone, as the Franciscans and Jesuits did throughout northern Mexico, the missionary's labors alone, together with the grace of God, accounted for conversion. Only where Cross and sword advanced together can there be question of the relative influence of both in the work of conversion. One fact is clear. From the seventeenth century on the missionaries went forth alone. Prior to the beginning of the seventeenth century, the overwhelming majority of the tribes were Christianized long after they had submitted to the Spaniard military and civil power. Relatively few were the instances when soldiers and missionaries invaded Mexican territory together.

## **Great Love**

In the third place, the Spanish missionaries and the Spanish occupation of Mexico regarded the Mexican Indian, whether Nahuas or Mayas or Otomis or Mixtecas-Zapotecas, the four races which have produced two-thirds of the modern Indian population, as human beings with a right to life and as possessors of a culture and economic existence worthy of preservation and development. No attempt was made, as in Northern America, to oust the Indian from his soil. The Indian's right to till the soil and secure a living therefrom was clearly recognized. Spain rewarded the conquerors of Mexico just the same as England and France and Holland and Sweden and every other nation of the period rewarded those who planted the national flag upon virgin territory. Lands were given to the Spanish conquerors with the right to utilize the labor of the Indians dwelling thereon, the so-called system of "Encomiendas."

## **Some Hardship**

That such a system meant the economic as well as political subjection of the Indian should occasion no surprise to those of us who remember that boatload after boatload of settlers from England to America, including the inmates of the Mayflower whose stockings were not all so blue, contained indentured servants bound over to grantees and owners of royal patents and compelled to work as hard and under conditions that were often little better than those surrounding the Indians on Spanish lands in Mexico.

In Mexico, at least, the Indian was not robbed of his land as the North American Indian was. After paying the agricultural duties owed by the Mexican Indian to his Spanish overlord, there was sufficient time to till his own field and minister, peacefully, without fear of further white invasion, to his wife and children. Moreover, the survival of the slavery of the black in the United States, down to 1865, with all the attendant horrors of importation from Africa and division of families, should temper the pen of any American historian who presumes to write about the indentured service status of the Mexican Indian immediately following the Spanish conquest.

## **Indian Brotherhood**

Not more than three hundred thousand Spaniards ever settled in Mexico, the merest drop of humanity in a colorful sea of millions of Indians. Against the few Spanish captains who, like Nuno de Guzman, gave vent to their native cruelty and who were repudiated by the Spanish Civil authorities, the Mexican Indian could always look to the Catholic missionary for protection. Thus, through the aid of the missionaries, the Spanish Government obtained from Pope Paul III a papal document which gave the Indian equal rights with the white man and proclaimed his right to receive the Christian faith in its entirety. The will of the Spanish Queen Isabella entreated the Spaniards to treat the Indian as a freeman and a spiritual equal. Again and again written directions were sent from the crown to the Viceroy and administrators to cooperate with the missionaries in their work of educating and civilizing the natives.

Due to the protests of the saintly Bishop De las Casas and other missionaries, who were centuries ahead of their time in their desire to free the Indians economically, the Spanish Government made every effort to do away with the "Encomiendas." The new laws which Las Casas was instrumental in having passed against the "Encomiendas" remained inoperative throughout Mexico, due to the inability of their enforcement in an age that recognized democracy nowhere and to the fact that to have summarily destroyed the "Encomiendas," would have plunged the entire country into civil warfare. Even the beloved Fray Motolinia, who baptized 400,000 by his own hand, and who loved the Indians with a love that was wholeheartedly returned, denounced the visionary views of Bishop Bartolome de las Casas as impractical.

The social and economic units known as "Encomiendas," whereon the Indians labored and paid taxes directly to their masters, will bear comparison with any other contemporary colonial policy. Every effort was made by the Spanish government and by the missionaries to remove whatever abuses arose in certain "Encomiendas." The very fact of intermarriage, resulting in that branch of the population known as Mestizos (half Indian and half white), is proof of the kindly tolerance of the Spaniard. The historian who contrasts the history of the Indians to the north and east of the Rio Grande with the history of those to the south and west of the same "great river" will acknowledge the greater humanity and prudence and Christianity of the Spaniard.

## **Pagan Twilight**

For three centuries, then, the influence of the Catholic Church in Mexico remained expressive. Within that time, the Indians of Mexico, though varied in language and tribal ancestry and customs, became Christians. Conversion meant the end of cannibalism and human sacrifices. When the Spaniards reached Mexico, an average of 20,000 victims were being yearly offered as religious sacrifices upon the pagan altar stones. The inauguration of an Aztec King required the slaughter of over 20,000 victims in a single holocaust. The following description of sacrifice in the reign of Ahuizotl at the completion of the lofty teocalli (or temple) in Tenochtitlan is worthy of attention.

"The first streaks of dawn disclosed, winding up the sides of the temple, a great procession, conducting war-captives to the piedra de sacrificios. At that huge block of convex jasper towered six priests with long matted locks, decked with green feathers and flowing in Medusa-like disorder over their black hieroglyphic-covered robes, awaiting their victims who, one by one, were sacrificed before the eyes of the dense, breathless mass below. Five priests would secure the head and limbs, while the sixth, clad in a blood-red cape, slit open the breast with a flinty razor, and, thrusting his hand into the wound, tore out the palpitating heart. With a mighty gesture it was held up toward the sun and then flung smoking at the feet of the terrible snake-sheathed god, Huitzilpochtli, who reared his grotesque brutal form above the prostrated multitude. Every day until dark for four long days, every day until priests and stones were reeking with blood, the sacrifice continued."

## **Christianity's Triumph**

For the removal of such scarlet scenes from the pages of Mexican history the world owes a debt of lasting gratitude to the Spanish Missionaries and the Spanish Conquistadores. The fact that the Mexican Indian is civilized today is due to the seeds of civilization that were sown by the Catholic Church and watered by the Catholic Church and harvested by the Catholic Church during those three centuries of unbroken peace. Schools and hospitals and literature and progress need a peaceful soil wherein to fasten their tender roots. Such peace was given Mexico before the war drums of revolt broke out in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. No greater peace existed, throughout those same three centuries, in any country, European or Colonial, throughout the world.

This gift of peace cannot be lightly tossed aside. The background of most of Mexico's troubles today is the constant warfare that has scourged the country for the past quarter of a century, from the fall of Porfirio Diaz, the benevolent despot, to the rising star of a brutal despot, Plutarco Elias Calles, which will set like so many of its godless predecessors in blood. Well might Mexico yearn, like Babylonian exiles whose own country has been turned into Babylon, for those centuries of Catholic Peace during which the Indian developed the dignity of his manhood, the freedom and perfection of his spirituality, and the progress of his tribes and nation under the kindly direction of the Catholic Church ever ready to assuage and curb the civil tyranny of Spanish administration.

## **Schools**

Wherever the Catholic missionary went, the arts of peace accompanied him. In each new centre a school was attached to each church and convent. From eight hundred to a thousand children attended the larger schools. Thus Bishop Zumarraga, the first Bishop of Mexico, founded eight or nine schools for girls in his diocese. With utter confidence in the abilities of the Indians to rise above the sodden paganism in which he found them, the same Bishop founded the famous Indian

college of Santa Cruz, at Tlalteleleo, in 1534. Besides religion the Indian students were taught reading, writing, Latin grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, music and Mexican medicine — a course that will bear favorable comparison with the initial courses of the early American colleges whose establishment was to wait for over a century later and whose doors were not always open to the red man. The college of St. Juan de Letran for the mestizos and the college of San Pablo under the direction of the Augustinians and the college of San Ildefonso under the direction of the Jesuits, in addition to the church and convent schools which dotted every mission area, bear unimpeachable testimony to the civilizing progress of the Church amongst the native population.

## **University**

On June 3, 1553, the University of Mexico was opened with all the faculties and privileges of the University of Salamanca. So anxious was the Church and the Civil power to make the University a means of ultimate benefit to the Indian that the Marques de las Amarillas was instructed by Madrid to "consider the advisability of adding to the statutes of the university a clause to the effect that the degree of theology should not be conferred on those who did not know the Mexican language, and fixing a special hour for its study by the students of philosophy, either before or while they were studying the classics."

The university remained in a flourishing condition until the year 1833, when it was closed by President Gomez Farias, during whose regime the anti-clerical and anti-religion laws of present day Mexico had their inception. Reopened by President Santa Anna in 1834, it was again suppressed by President Comonfort in 1857. Reopened by Zuloaga in 1858, it was once more closed in 1861 by Benito Juarez, whose "reform laws" of 1859 are the direct legal antecedent of the irreligious and Godless legislation of the present day.

## **Civilization**

Unlike their contemporaries in North America the rulers and administrators of Mexico set out to study the language and customs of the native population. When the missionaries landed in 1524, not a single Indian could read. Twenty years later, in 1544, Bishop Zumarraga urged the translation of Fray Pedro de Cordoba's catechism into the Indian tongue because, in the space of twenty years, so many Indians had been taught to read.

For three centuries, then, hospitals and asylums and churches and schools arose and functioned throughout the land. Such is the measure of civilization. No history of the United States is ever written without fulsome praise for the founding of those early colleges and academies which became the fireside of civilization and culture throughout our own land. Similar praise and similar weight must be given to the history of the Church in Mexico. Her interest in the social and economic betterment of the Indian, already referred to, and her constant contribution to his educational progress, give the lie to any historian who denies her labors and accomplishments or who attempts to damn them with faint praise.

The churches of Mexico today, nearly all of them, go back to the time of the Church's benign influence. The schools of Mexico are likewise traceable to her labors. The anti-clerical rulers who have governed Mexico for the past twenty-five years, when they opened schools, have merely reopened those closed by some one of their vicious predecessors or established a substitute for an older school whose doors will never again hear the shuffling sound of Indian feet across the

threshold. I have read books, presumably histories of Mexico, with a chapter on the Church's history, devoted to every species of denunciation, but silent towards every civilizing and Christianizing act of the Catholic Church. Such silence is the measure of contemporary bigotry and prejudice.

## **No Absolutism**

The Catholic Church need not apologize for the three hundred years of her influence in Mexico. She did the best she could with the best and the worst presented to her. It is false to speak of her absolutism. The Spanish Civil authority alone was absolute in Mexico, as the English Civil authority was absolute in British India throughout the same historical period. The entire control of the human administration of the Church was in the hands of the Spanish King in Europe and his appointed Viceroys in Mexico. No churches, monasteries or religious foundations could be erected in Spanish territory without the consent of the Spanish monarch, who likewise possessed the power of nominating candidates for all Bishoprics. All Bulls and Briefs from Rome had to go through the Council of the Indies. Missionaries appointed by the Congregation of the Propaganda for work in Mexico had to secure the permission, of the King or his Council.

Three centuries of absolutism cannot, therefore, be laid at the door of the Catholic Church. Rulers then, as rulers now, interfered in every way with her freedom of appointments and with her freedom of activity. Such was and is the danger to religious freedom from every state that conceives itself to be powerful in its own right. Such was the temper of the times. At least, the Spanish King never set himself up as head of the Church, as his contemporary, Henry VIII, did, to the ruin of English faith and morality, in the very years when the Franciscan missionaries were saving Mexico.

Whatever human defects and defections occurred during three centuries of Catholic influence must be attributed to the over-reaching of Spanish civil power, which controlled the human appointments of the Church on the one hand but which gladly and generously cooperated with such appointees, once approved, for the benefit of the Mexican Indian. In other words, Spanish absolutism in Mexico, during the sixteenth and seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, must be compared with the absolutism of contemporary civil powers then and not with the modern spirit of democracy or with the modern relations of Church and State which exist in our own country today.

## **No Wealth**

It is also false to speak or write of the Church's enormous wealth. Whatever tithes were contributed towards the Church remained in the hands of the Crown. It is only fair to the Crown to assert that most of the tithes were directed by the Spanish monarchs to the erection of those schools and churches and hospitals and asylums and colleges and convents which constitute three centuries of Mexican progress and perfection. Other revenues, in addition to the tithes, were contributed by the Crown for works of mercy and for spiritual purposes, from time to time. History records, however, with an emphasis that only those who hate the Church wish to soften, that absolute title and absolute disposition of all tithes and taxes and revenues collected in Mexico remained in the Spanish Monarch.

Legally and actually, then, the Church possessed not a peso of the enormous wealth assigned to her by short sighted historians. Were every parish of the Established Church in England compelled to turn over its pew rents and voluntary offerings to the English Crown, every Anglican divine and

every Anglican layman would be justified in declaring that the Established Church possessed no ecclesiastical wealth of its own. The recipient of royal charity has hardly ever been looked upon as a wealthy aggressor, especially when the charity, however large, has been translated into schools and hospitals and other institutions of civilization.

Such was the financial status of the Church in Mexico. And even if, through royal favor, at any time, the value of church buildings and hospitals and schools amounted to thirty or forty or fifty per cent of the total land value of the country, we who live in an age, when, as we have been so often told, up to recently ten per cent of the people in the United States owned ninety per cent of the wealth, have little cause to complain or condemn or criticize. Half the land value of Mexico did not represent half the wealth of the country. The centuries of machine made progress, God save the mark, which have succeeded the Catholic influence in Mexico, have developed financial tyrants and overlords at the expense of humanity. The lands and buildings of the Church were devoted to the betterment of the native. The millions of many American millionaires have been mainly devoted to the enslavement of humanity and to the satisfaction of their own pagan greed and pleasure.

## **Again No Apology**

The expulsion of the Church's influence in Mexico began with the expulsion of the clergy as teachers from the public schools in the year 1833. A hundred years have elapsed between that acorn and the mighty oak of wholesale persecution whose baleful shadow covers the presidencies of Obregon and Calles and their successors. The Catholic Church need not apologize for what she did for Mexico between 1524 and 1824. The military tyrants who forced themselves into the presidency between 1833 and 1934 must take the blame for the present condition of Mexico. Since 1833 the Church has been ostracized from the schoolroom. Since 1857 and 1859 the Church has been a Constitutional outlaw. For one hundred years she has been permitted to exercise no influence upon the affairs of Mexico.

At the present date, by the restriction of one priest to every twenty-five or fifty thousand souls, and by the prohibitions against the wearing of the clerical dress, against the holding of religious services outside religious buildings, title to all of which is vested in the State, the Catholic Church is forbidden to exercise her purely spiritual ministrations. What right has anyone to blame the Catholic Church for the past century of misrule, of constant warfare, blood-thirsty general succeeding blood-surfeited general in the presidency, of closed schools, of oppressed peons, made slaves to foreign owners of oil fields and rubber plantations and copper mines, of misery and hardship and modern paganism and historical lies and political tyranny and economic enslavement!

## **Love One Another**

American Catholics love their persecuted brethren in Mexico. American Catholics repudiate the economic invasion and the political blundering on the part of American capitalists and American diplomats in Mexico. American Catholics have never been truly represented by any American Ambassador in Mexico City. American Catholics are proud of the record of Catholicism in Mexico. American Catholics look forward to the day when they can stretch forth their hands in faith and fellowship to their Catholic brethren across the Rio Grande, where a godless governmental minority has suppressed the progress of a Catholic nation and now seeks, through the written and spoken word, in league with the enemies of the Church in America, to obliterate the Catholic heritage and

history of old Mexico. The American Catholic knows he is expressing the thoughts and translating the heartbeats of every loyal Mexican from the Rio Grande to Guatemala and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific when he says to a listening world:

## **The Verdict**

The Catholic Church guided the progress of Mexico, despite civil absolutism, from 1524 to 1824. She offers no apology for the glorious history of those golden years of triumph in Mexico.

The Catholic Church has been refused the slightest leadership or direction in the past hundred years of Mexico's enthrallment. Therefore, she is absolved of all responsibility for the condition of Mexico today. Others must apologize for the history of those red and purple years of tragedy in Mexico.

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