

pounding industrial phenomena from their most complex and confusing aspects, as if one were to teach the laws of the mechanical powers from the operation of an elaborate and complicated modern machine, working—to complete the analogy—under great stress of difficulty. Thus, while the seed of transcendently important economic truth has been long and faithfully scattered abroad, the impression still prevails, among not only the masses but men of great attainments and undoubted devotion to ideals of justice, that nature has made no provision for industrial peace and harmony in the civilized state, and that this oversight must be corrected through the labored lucubrations and contrivances of men.

We need not wonder then that the present widespread awakening of the public conscience, to say nothing of the public prudence, regarding the wrongs and sufferings of the disinherited should be largely wasting itself on inadequate, impracticable and inconsistent "demands." Through the hopeless impossibility of doing more than a small fraction of the multitude of things which we are authoritatively assured must be done, the forces of industrial regeneration are divided into rival squads on questions of policy. Their leaders dispute in vain over the relative importance of numberless schemes of partial relief pending the revolution or catastrophe which all agree in foreseeing, and spend much of their effort in mutual bickering and vituperation; while the rank and file see small opportunity or prospect of ever accomplishing by political action anything more than a demonstration of their abiding and rapidly growing discontent.

In view of this general confusion and uncertainty it would seem that the urgent need of the hour is to emphasize and insist upon the plain natural principles of industrial activity as shown in the simple beginnings of surplus production and exchange of commodities. The harried and anxious multitude will now hear gladly that there are such principles, ordained from the beginning, eternal and immutable, to be not altered or improved but only recognized and obeyed. Most gratefully will they learn that there is in the nature of man an automatic and equitable regulator of prices and wages, incredible as it may seem to the perplexed and worried gentlemen of the boards of industrial arbitration and the public service commissions. Many of our best and brightest will recoil at its name, which is that of the most maligned and least understood of all the principles involved in economic or other human activity, competition. But let them boldly advance and challenge its further acquaintance, for their theory of its practical obso-

lescence is an utter delusion. It is as if an observer of a cyclonic disturbance should infer that it was abolishing the law of gravitation. The economic principle of competition deserves our earnest study, by way of reparation if nothing else; but it must be studied in respect of its free and natural action, like the orderly exit of an audience from a crowded theatre at the close of the performance. Its ill repute has arisen from unfairly judging it as we see it hemmed in by privilege and pursued by the devouring fiends of poverty, like the fierce scramble for the doors of that same audience when the stage is on fire.

ELIZABETH P. ROUNSEVELL.

---

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

---

### THE MEXICAN SITUATION.

Puebla, Mexico, March 15.

It is only within the last few days that the nature of the recent increase in Mexican disorder has become clearly manifest. As a residence in several parts of the country since the fall of Diaz last June has given me a favorable opportunity to observe post-revolutionary events, my impressions of the present situation may prove of interest.

During the five-month incumbency of provisional De La Barra, and up to the inauguration of President Francisco Madero in early November, the country was for the most part in a quiet and orderly condition and trade was active and prosperous except in those industries, like mining promotion, dependent upon the constant introduction of new foreign capital. Outside investors have been shy of Mexico since the anti-re-election agitation became active in 1910, and gave the lawless elements in the back districts an opportunity to ply the trade of bandit under the guise of revolutionist. Though the bandits did not disband on the exile of Diaz, they were obliged to retreat to the more remote districts, where their depredations did not seriously affect the mass of the people, and would have, normally, been more and more difficult to continue.

In the struggle against Diaz, one of the Madero chiefs in the South had been Emiliano Zapata, an outlaw of no formal education, but of considerable natural force and shrewdness. After the triumph of Madero, Zapata did not disband his troops, but allowed them to pursue their depredations, giving as an excuse that his men had not been paid their wages as soldiers of the revolutionary army. But when Zapata's troops were paid, and even their firearms purchased by President De La Barra, the brigandage still continued. Francisco Madero, the controlling voice of the De La Barra regime, had several conferences with Zapata in September, in which he tried to quiet him by kindness rather than force, but without success; for Zapata, a wild man of the hills, proved amenable to neither reason nor patriotism.

General Bernardo Reyes had been politically prominent under Diaz, having been successively

commander of the army, secretary of war, and governor of the state of Nuevo Leon. In 1910, Diaz had sent Reyes on a mission to France, fearing his presidential ambitions, but he recalled him in the spring of 1911, to defend the government against Madero. At the fall of Diaz, however, Reyes was only at Havana on his return journey. On reaching Mexico, Reyes pretended a friendship for Madero and even spoke of becoming a candidate for vice president, but later he undertook to run for the presidency himself.

The unpopularity of Reyes's candidacy, which culminated in September by the mobbing of a Reyes procession in the capital, so appalled the general that he abandoned his campaign and fled to San Antonio, Texas. After Madero's inauguration a large part of the federal army was sent to the northern border to guard against a suspected Reyes raid, so that finally, in December, when Reyes did cross the line, he was unable to get a following, and was soon captured and sent to the capital for safe keeping.

During the absence of the federal army in the North, to watch Reyes, Zapata had improved his opportunity; supplied with arms and equipment from some mysterious source, he grew so bold as to attack important towns like Yultepec and Cantita. But with the return of the army in January and the declaration of martial law in Morales, Guerrero and Puebla, Zapata was obliged to retreat and many of his men were either shot or captured.

Emilio Vasquez-Gomez had been secretary of education in De La Barra's cabinet, but had been dismissed for alleged embezzlement. Retiring to San Antonio, Texas, he had launched occasional tirades against Madero, but had apparently gone no further. What a surprise then, in the last week of February, when a band of Vasquists appeared before Ciudad Juarez and demanded the surrender of the city! The federal troops having been sent south, Juarez was easily captured, and at present writing the Vasquists are said to have there an army of 4,000 men under regular pay and well equipped.

The next surprise was the defection, on March 3, of General Pascual Orozco, the trusted lieutenant of Madero in the latter's capture of Ciudad Juarez last year, and who had been appointed chief of the rurales of Chihuahua. Orozco had a large following in the North and he soon was able to capture the city of Chihuahua and loot the state treasury of \$300,000.

To the political student, the Mexican crisis two weeks ago seemed inexplicable. It was comprehensible how unscrupulous men like Zapata, Vasquez-Gomez and Orozco could resort to arms for their private ends, but how they could so readily obtain followers, and especially funds from a nation which, barely three months earlier had elected President Madero almost unanimously, was the mystery. Was democracy then impractical for Mexico? Were the ideals of President Madero impossible of realization? Could anarchy and universal chaos be prevented only by the restoration of another dictator, another man on horseback?

The "platform of San Luis Potosi," the basis for the Madero revolution, is democratic and progressive, but cannot be called demagogic or visionary. President Madero has also been temperate in his

public speeches, and he told the workmen at Vera Cruz last November that they could expect of democracy only a square deal; for industrial success they must depend on hard work and sobriety. Many of the Maderist politicians were, however, less sincere and promised almost anything in order to get office. Universal suffrage prevails in Mexico, and among the illiterate masses such political chicanery raised such false hopes as to the coming paradise that they were greatly disappointed when the inauguration of President Madero failed to bring in the millennium. The deceived districts were those that listened readily to the siren songs of the counter-revolutionary agents. For that the present crisis is due to a counter-revolution cleverly engineered and financed from France, whence Limantour and other multi-millionaire "cientificos" (Diaz grafters) had fled, seems now the only adequate explanation of recent events. First Reyes starts his raid as a feint to draw the army north and give Zapata a clear field for work in the South. After Reyes's capture the army is rushed south to crush Zapata, thus leaving the North so undefended that the strategic port of Ciudad Juarez is easily captured by a few Vasquists.

The large sums now being spent for the wages and equipment of the Vasquist soldiers in Juarez are reported to come from Paris, via New York, and Zapata's funds are believed to have the same origin. The biggest land monopolist in Mexico, and perhaps in the world, is the "cientifico" Terrazas of Chihuahua, with his 12,000,000 acres of land. It is a peculiar fact that his the Lagunas district, north of Torreon, where Terrazas has many estates, is a hotbed of disorder, and it is believed that Orozco's defection was the result of direct purchase by Terrazas.

The declared policy of President Madero has been the abolition of favoritism in taxation, and a recent revaluation of the city of Chihuahua showed that Terrazas held \$5,000,000 worth of property there, but had previously been only assessed for \$50,000. It was also estimated that Terrazas's total taxes on the new valuation might aggregate \$2,000,000 annually, and it is remarkable how soon after the publication of this fact that the counter-revolution began to start up everywhere.

In spite of the immense fortunes of the "cientificos," gained not only from hereditary landed estates, but by a vast organized manipulation during the last twenty years, of public finance and natural resources for private profit, the chances of success of the counter-revolution seem almost hopeless. As public sentiment heartily sustains President Madero, the conspirators must exclusively count for success upon their military operations.

At present the federal army exceeds 15,000 well-equipped and trained men, while the rurales, or mounted police, are estimated at 25,000 more. The federals are led by graduate officers, while both Zapata and Orozco are untrained in military science. The federals control all the railroads south of Chihuahua, and still retain all the large cities except Juarez and Chihuahua. Advancing south, the Vasquists will be in the enemy's country and it is difficult to see how they can reasonably hope to succeed in capturing Mexico City. Only by the winning of a decisive battle or by the purchase of the

leading officers of the federal army can the Vasquists make good.

As President Madero is a man of sincerity and high democratic ideals, it is the duty of progressives everywhere to sustain him in his endeavor to hold his post in spite of the conspiracy against him of the millionaire criminals of the old regime.

R. B. B.



## HOW NOT TO DO IT.

Brooklyn, N. Y., March 5.

Of political progressiveness in the East, perhaps the best we can say is that there are sporadic cases. Even here in the very web of the money spider there is a constantly growing public sentiment in favor of direct primaries. You need not take my word for that. There is better evidence in the fact that both principal parties in convention assembled indorsed a principle of that nature. This could only be because they had their ears to the ground and heard something convincing. That is what happened here in 1910. The Democratic and Republican parties embodied in their respective platforms a pledge to pass a direct primary law.

The plank of the Democratic party, which was the successful contestant for popular favor, declared for State-wide direct primaries. But the legislature of 1911 was a long while about giving any attention at all to that pledge. They finally tackled the job, however, with the same alacrity that a small boy exhibits about washing the back of his neck in cold water on a winter morning.

The first thing in their law is that "party nominations be made by conventions composed of delegates." That was hardly what we had a right to expect from a party that had specifically pledged itself to State-wide primaries; but when we had glanced over the provisions for the direct primaries we did get, we found that we did not care so much whether they were the width of the State or the width of Ann street.



I don't want to be prolix, but I do want you to understand. On the ballot used in elections in New York each party has a column. Over the column is the party emblem, and under the emblem is a circle. A cross in the circle means a "straight" vote for all the candidates in the column, and it makes "straight" voting easy. The ballot to be used in primary elections under the new law will be gotten up in the same manner, with columns for each *faction*, and an emblem and circle at the top of each column. Stick a pin in that piece of information.

Party committees having been elected, these committees may name candidates for all offices other than State offices, but including delegates to State conventions. The names of the candidates thus designated by the committees must be printed in the first column of the official ballot, and the *party emblem* must head that column. The names of the other fellows must be printed in columns to the right of the first; and they *may* have an emblem if they care about it, but they are interdicted from adopting certain symbols, such as the national flag and the "party emblems of any party."

A candidate nominated by petition must file his

petition not more than five days after the filing of the "regular" nominations, but not earlier than the "regular" nominations. His petition must be signed by not less than five per cent of the enrolled members of the party, and not less than four per cent of the last vote cast for the party's candidate for Governor, and each signature must be certified by a notary public. A candidate for Assembly is specifically required to obtain 800 signatures. Perhaps the gentlemen who framed that section did not know what they were doing; and again, perhaps they did. Anybody who has ever been engaged in the effort to obtain signatures to an electoral petition will realize how nearly a physical impossibility it is to obtain within five days four per cent of the vote cast for Governor, which is a very different thing from five per cent of the enrollment. It is true, signatures might be sought before the party committee had filed its nominations; but as no one could be certain that such nominations would be objectionable until they were made, disinterested party members would withhold their signatures until they knew good reasons for giving them. Even to obtain five per cent of the enrollment in such a time would be a considerable achievement.

Let me quote parts of two sections as the quickest way of unfolding one of the cleverest pieces of skulduggery ever sneaked into a legislative act.

Section 38 provides that—

Each committee may, and each State and county committee must, prepare rules and regulations for the government of the party and the conduct of the official primaries within its political subdivision, which may include the payment of dues.

Then, away off at the other end of the act, we find:

No contributions of money, or the equivalent thereof, made, directly or indirectly, to any party, or to any party committee or member thereof, or to any person representing or acting on behalf of a party, or any moneys now in the treasury of any party, or party committee, shall be expended in aid of the designation or nomination of any person to be voted for at a primary election, either as a candidate for nomination for public office, or for any party position; except that such funds may be used to pay the expenses of holding any meeting of a party committee called to designate a candidate or candidates for nomination for public office in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and for the purpose of printing and distributing any literature regarding such candidates, the postage, clerk hire and necessary expenses incident to informing the voters regarding such candidates, the holding of meetings and other legitimate expenses necessarily incurred in promoting the canvass of such candidate.

These sections, read together, create a paradise for political highbinders. A committee empowered to make rules may fix a stated sum as dues to be paid into the party treasury. They may also make a rule that one who has not paid dues cannot vote at a primary. If there is opposition to their nominations, they are prohibited by the law from spending this money for primary purposes—*except* for every blessed thing necessary to elect their candidates. I am at a loss for words to express my admiration of the genius who manufactured that political sandbag. To compel the adherents of an insurgent candidate to contribute funds to be used to defeat that candidate is a proposition of such sublime audacity, yet of such practical efficiency for the purpose for