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Editor and Proprietor, Anselmo L. Figueroa.

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Shadow & Substance

Thursday morning "The Los Angeles Times" regaled its readers with the pleasing fiction, figured in huge letters at the head of its bulletin boards: "Official announcement made that Diaz and Corral will resign within present month and thus end hostilities throughout Mexico." Did the "Times" believe it? If so, what a particularly stupid publication the "Times" must be!

That same evening the front page of "The Los Angeles Record" was more than half filled with news of fighting, and fight preparations, in Mexico; set off with such headings as these: "Mexico City is menaced by big bands of rebels. Hatred of Juarez conqueror by near metropolis probably prevent army's march." "Peace conference is on at Juarez; men dissatisfied." In confirmation of which viewpoint the reader is respectfully referred to the items we ourselves give in the column headed "Across the Border."

Here is a clipping from "The Chicago Daily Socialist" of May 13, which may throw a little more light on the subject. That paper says:

"In a manifesto presenting the claims of the Mexican Liberals, Julius Menke, their Chicago representative, makes clear that the workers of Mexico, while fighting side by side with the Maderists, are still seeking more liberty than Madero is likely to give them. This is borne out by the statement of Gilson Gardner who, in the 'Chicago Daily Socialist' a while ago, stated that the Madero revolt could be ended from Wall street at any time and that the real revolution was that in which Ricardo Flores Magon and others are taking part."

In the manifesto referred to Mr. Menke, after explaining clearly that Madero is essentially the representative of the moneyed aristocracy, forecasts the future of the workers if the revolution should stop forthwith. He says: "Their demands for more freedom, more knowledge, higher forms and enjoyments of life will be crushed by all the severity of laws and repressive measures. The masters will only repeat that which, after the revolution in Russia, set the world of labor agast with horror and amazement."

Whips and lashes, prison, banishment and the death of the best of the proletariat in Russia were the answer of the capitalist rulers to the demands of the subjugated to make good the promises given under pressure. And banishment, prison, perdition, death, will be the lot of all who today are on the firing line of Mexican revolution when Francisco I. Madero and his followers, his class, will be called upon to give answer to the demands of the wage slaves, and make good his promises and carry out the reforms and concessions now granted under stress and strain."

Labor is appallingly slow to learn lessons written by the iron hand of history so plainly that one would suppose a child could comprehend them. But fortunately the punishment inflicted on the Russian peasant for his easy-going weakness is of recent date, and fortunately at least one party is determined that we shall profit by experience. That party is the Mexican Liberal Party.

Meanwhile all over the world the disinherited are discovering that fine words butter no parsnips; that the promises of politicians, like piecrusts, are made to be broken; that empty bellies cannot be fed on words, and that economic freedom—free access to the means of life—must PRECEDE not FOLLOW the so-called citizenship which smug and well-to-do citizenship so fondly dotes.

Across the Border

Simultaneously with the positive declaration that Diaz has consented to resign, the despatches of May 18 report fighting more severe than any yet chronicled. Thirteen thousand men, from Guerrero, Morelos, Chiapas and other parts of Southern Mexico, are marching on Cuernavaca, with Mexico City as their subsequent goal. Iguala has fallen into the hands of the rebels after a hard, ten-hours battle. Forty federals are said to have been killed and 250 taken prisoners.

Heavy fighting is reported in the important maritime State of Vera Cruz, large forces being engaged on either side. A bloody engagement has taken place in the adjoining State of Puebla, in which the revolutionists have developed much strength. In Tabasco, another coast state lying immediately to the south of Vera Cruz, Pichucalco has fallen to the rebels, who took possession of the public funds.

In San Luis Potosi, the revolutionists have taken Xilitla and are en route for the State of Hidalgo, in the near vicinity of Mexico City. Aguas Calientes, a city of more than 30,000 inhabitants and capital of the State of the same name, is seriously threatened by two large insurrecto forces.

The adjoining State of Zacatecas lies apparently at the mercy of the revolutionists. Noria de Los Angeles having been captured and the city of Sombrerete being beleaguered by a combination of guerilla bands that have advanced from the States of San Luis Potosi and Durango. The revolution is also showing great strength in the State of Jalisco, which faces the Pacific Ocean. Three powerful guerilla bands are reported as operating with much success in the neighboring territory of Tepic.

In Sinaloa the rebels, already in possession of the important port of Mazatlan, have now seized that of Topolampampo.

In Puebla, previously referred to, factory stores have been looted by the employees, and at other points public archives have been burned. The federal troops, under Gen. Cauz, proved powerless to give relief.

In Michoacan, which borders on the State of Mexico, guerilla forces have been exceptionally active, capturing Yurecuaro and besieging Jilotlan. In Morelos, almost at the doors of Mexico City, the State capital is being attacked by the insurgent chief, Emilio Zapata, who holds all the approaches to the city and has rejected proposals for an armistice.

Moving north we find the insurrectos still victorious in Coahuila, the federals having attempted vainly to recapture Parras and San Pedro. A force of 500, with six machine guns and a field piece, made a stubborn effort to retake the first-named city, but was repulsed with great slaughter.

Durango reports two bloody engagements during the past week, in both of which the federal forces were defeated.

Cuba Was Different

With the capture of Juarez a great cry went up that, at last, the Mexican insurrectos would be able to import arms from the United States. But this was promptly contradicted, and any one who imagines that the capture of Tia Juana, Mexicali and Sasebe—all of which are on an equal footing with Juarez as ports of entry—ever enabled the Mexican Liberal Party to import arms has not understood why the United States troops are on the frontier.

Laws are elastic things, and much depends on whose ox is being gored. For example, back in the nineties plutocracy was much interested in fomenting trouble in Cuba, and accordingly we find Attorney General Harmon, in 1895, advising the State department at Washington that "the mere sale or shipment of arms and munitions of war by persons in the United States to persons in Cuba is not a violation of international law."

Similarly you may be interested to know that in the Federal Statutes (Vol. 5, p. 358), it is declared expressly that "it is not a crime or offense against the United States for an individual, whether he is or is not a citizen, to leave the country with intent to enlist in foreign military service."

Don't rely too much on this last paragraph if you think of crossing the Rio Grande.

Death to Such Order

"There must be Order." Thus shriek nowadays all the upholders of what is called Order. For these gentry Order can exist only so long as society is subject to the rod of the policeman, the soldier, the judge, the jailor, the hangman, the governor.

But that is not Order. What I understand by Order is Harmony, and there can be no Harmony so long as anywhere on the surface of this planet there are human beings who feed to repletion and human beings who have not a crust to lift to their lips.

If things were well arranged; if every human creature had enough to eat and could obtain shelter without paying rent—in a word, if by a minimum of healthy labor everyone could obtain the wherewithal to live a decent life, no one would have the audacity to say: "I am a greater man than you. Obey me!"

Then there would be true Order because there would be Harmony. Men would not quarrel, men would not envy one another. We should all be brothers, and the policeman, the soldier, the judge, the jailor, the hangman and the governor would be superfluous. They would be superfluous because, Harmony among human beings having been achieved by the conquest of economic liberty, the parasitism of public officials would have no reason for existence.

Public officials are not, as is generally believed, the guardians of Order. Real Order, which is Harmony, requires no guardian, precisely because it is Order. It is Disorder that requires guardians, and Disorder—scandalous, disgraceful and humiliating, from the very fact that we were not born to be slaves—at present rules society's political and social life.

That one social class oppresses another social class is Disorder, for there should exist but one class—that of the producers, the workers. Humanity will become a working class when the land and the machinery becomes the property of all, for then all will have to work in order to eat.

It is the maintenance of Disorder—that is to say, the maintenance of political and social inequality, of the privileges of an upper and the subordination of a lower class—which necessitates the governors, the laws, the police, the soldiery, the jailors, the judges, the hangman and the whole mob of big and petty officials who sponge on the people's energies. The existence of these officials serves not to protect humanity but to hold it in submission; to hold it in slavery to those who have been clever enough to get possession of the land and the machinery.

"There must be Order." Thus shriek nowadays the upholders of Disorder; that is to say, the upholders of social and political inequality.

No Order does not mean the slavery of part of humanity by another part, but liberty for the whole human species. As for bourgeois Order, we Mexicans are battling against it in our present rebellion. Against that kind of Order we shout: "Death to such Order!" For it is an Order that shackles man's free initiative; the Order of the guardroom and the barracks. Death to such Order!

(From the Spanish of Ricardo Flores Magon.)

The Patriotic Dodge

San Diego has been flooded during the last few days with leaflets in Spanish issued by what calls itself "The Organized Junta of the Society of Defenders of the National Integrity." These leaflets call on the "loyal Sons of the Fatherland" to lend their services for the defense of their country's honor, "stained by a mob of foreign bandits which is sowing sorrow and desolation among the towns of Lower California." In stirring accents one of the leaflets summons "compatriots" to arms, and calls on Mexicans to remember that "we are descended from a race of heroes which has preferred, a thousand times, death to slavery."

The source of these pamphlets, as of the money devoted to their printing and circulation, to say nothing of the free transportation promised, is well known. It was Dr. Johnson who remarked that "patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels," which Ambrose Bierce has amended by declaring it to be the first.

Fancy defenders of the existing regime in Mexico appealing for support to those who prefer death to slavery!

Army of Discontent

Says Gilson Gardner, Washington correspondent of "The Chicago Daily Socialist," under date of May 12: "The Mexican crisis may be expected at any moment. It will not be denied much longer that intervention is a result which has been foreseen from the start."

"The property interests of Americans in Mexico furnish a motive which is too powerful to be withheld. The strong arm of the United States—our army and our navy—will soon be stretched out to save these interests."

"War may be the result. Intervention is the name under which invasion will be taken without the authority of congress."

"Everything is being done to prepare congress for a special message from President Taft asking such authority. The subject is being presented in strictest confidence to leaders in both houses, without regard to party."

In common with many other Socialist papers, "The Kansas City Socialist" is paying much attention just now to the prison question, reprinting almost verbatim an address recently delivered by Julius P. McDonough, entitled "Ten Years in a Federal Hell," and giving his own experiences in the Leavenworth penitentiary. The prison question will continue to the front so long as economic dependence continues and power considers the defense of special privilege its first and most sacred duty. Of Leavenworth in particular the secretary of the Mexican Liberal Party's Junta could tell a moving story.

"L'Era Nuova" (Paterson, N. J.) while devoting, as usual, much space to the Mexican Revolution, emphasizes the impetus it has given throughout the country to the anti-military propaganda, calling special attention to the increasing number of desertions from the United States army now stationed on the frontier. It quotes the "Industrial Worker" as saying that San Diego is at present a veritable focus of anti-militarism, and remarks that more than fifty soldiers deserted their regiments in that city within two weeks. At one of the anti-military meetings held there Kaspar Bauer was arrested.

"Solidaridad Obrera," organ of the Workmen's Societies of Barcelona, Spain, gives much of its latest issue to the manifesto published by the Federal Committee of the National Confederation of Labor, in which the labor movement of the world is reviewed at great length. Under the head of America the manifesto says: "The American proletariat is in a constant state of effervescence, from Canada to Patagonia, both in consequence of the recrudescence of plutocratic exploitation and because of the persistent immigration of European starvelings who, fleeing from their own countries as from the plague, spread like a continuous flood over the New World. The struggle in Argentina and the anti-authoritarian and agrarian rebellion in Mexico deserve special notice."

"Cultura Proletaria" (New York) devotes constantly increasing space to the Mexican Revolution, giving detailed news and lengthy editorial comment, from which we quote as follows: "All the big capitalists, and Diaz himself, believed that Madero was the genuine 'leader' of the revolution; but they found to their surprise that after Madero had declared a truce the rebels seized new cities, with the result that Madero has been ridiculed even by his own protectors—the North American capitalists."

In the same number Juan Uriarte has a powerful article in which he reviews the labor movement of the world and maintains that Mexico is setting an example it will be compelled to follow.

"Las Dominicales" (Madrid, Spain) calls special attention to the vigorous propaganda by "Regeneracion" in the columns of which, it says, "there palpates an enthusiasm, vigorous and ardent, for the cause of Mexican liberty. The fine protest made in March last by the men and women of the Liberal Club of Bridgeport, Texas, who denounced in ringing words the massing of United States troops on the Mexican border, is reproduced in full. Thus, on every hand, the internationality of the labor movement asserts itself."

"Meanwhile the revolution in Mexico goes merrily on. If an aroused working class on this side of the border can prevent Mr. J. P. Morgan and his pals from jumping their troops across the river its success is certain."

For World-Wide Propaganda

As supplementary to similar action, taken or about to be taken, in other cities, the "International Committee of the Mexican Liberal Party Junta" was organized in Los Angeles, May 14; Spanish, Italian, Russian, Polish, Austrian and American comrades participating in the two meetings already held. Those in attendance were largely either editors or constant and well-known contributors to the press, and with little difficulty an extensive scheme of international agitation on behalf of the Mexican Revolution was devised. That the work mapped out will be prosecuted vigorously is best guaranteed by the previous activities of the members who took part in the proceedings.

It was shown that the active propaganda carried on among the Latin races, both in this country and abroad, has produced excellent results; their many papers being almost universally sympathetic, and correspondence, which is heavy, being of a most satisfactory character.

The committee is preparing a short manifesto, designed to set forth with the utmost clearness the economic nature of the revolution in which Mexico is engaged. This doubtless will be adopted at the meeting of May 21. It will be translated into a number of languages and will be circulated with the smallest possible delay, the needs of the respective nationalities being attended to by their representatives on the committee.

Arrangements for the holding of a propaganda picnic are being made, and the illustrated lecture to be given by John Kenneth Turner will be advertised as fully as possible, the committee recognizing them as of great educational value.

Who Would Be a Soldier?

Q. What does the soldier do?
A. He puts his life at what is called "the service of his country."

Q. What does "his country" really mean—in the case of Mexico, for example?
A. Wall Street; financiers who, having milked the cow dry in the United States, have moved to other pastures.

Q. What have you in common with such people that you should rush to their defense?
A. Echo answers, "What?"

Q. What do you yourselves get out of it?
A. Such treatment as you got during the Spanish war, when they fed you on embalmed beef, clothed you in shoddy uniforms, and let you die by the thousands in malarial camps.

Q. Did those of you who survived find "your country" grateful? Did it make heroes of you and see that your declining years were passed in ease and plenty?
A. For the last ten years the ranks of hobos and the jails have been full of discharged soldiers; men broken in health and fortune who must beg or steal to live.

Q. Had you any personal quarrel with the Filipinos, whom you were sent out to shoot? Have you anything against the Mexicans who are fighting against slavery?
A. On the contrary, these were and are your fellow workmen, engaged in a fight for economic freedom, which, if successful, will benefit you incalculably.

Q. Then, what is there in it for you, naturally intelligent man as we pay you the compliment of supposing you to be?
A. We cannot for the lives of us see, since the women no longer run after you, and your superior officers—the "gentlemen" who order you about—consider you dirt beneath their feet. What does a common soldier amount to anyhow? Food for powder!

No wonder they have to cover the country with lying posters to lure you into enlisting. No wonder the percentage of desertions grows continually larger. Because of this we pay you the compliment of considering you intelligent. Did we not think so we should not waste ink and paper on you.

Madero, one of several drops wafted to places of temporary emprise on the crest of the great popular wave of Mexican revolt, has been for some time conspicuous for his futile attempts to turn aside the irresistible onrush of that wave into impossible channels, rather than for any intelligent willingness to aid in its natural and destined course. It was in spite of him, not because of him, that Juarez was taken. (Roswell R. Brownson, in "Revolt.")

REVOLUTION

(From the German of Freiligrath.)

And though ye caught your noble prey within your hangman's sordid thrall;
And though ye led your captive forth beneath the city's rampart wall;
And though the grass lies o'er her green, where, at the early morning's red,
The peasant girl brings funeral wreathes,—I tell ye that she is not dead.

And though from off the lofty brow ye cut the ringlets flowing long;
And though ye mated her amid the thieves' and felons' hideous throng;
And though ye gave her felon fare, bade felon garb her lively be;
And though ye set the oakum task,—I tell ye that she still is free.

And though compelled to banishment ye hunt her down through distant lands;
And though she seeks a foreign hearth and silent 'midst its ashes stands;
And though she bathes her wounded feet where foreign streams meet foreign seas;
Yet, yet, she never more will hang her harp 'neath Babel's willow trees.

Oh, no! she strikes it doubly strong; and bids its proud defiance swell;
And as she mocked your scaffold erst she mocks your banishment as well;
She sings a song that starts you up astounded from your slumberous seats,
Until your heart, your coward heart, your traitor heart in terror beats.

No song of grief; no songs of sighs for those who perished unsubdued;
Nor yet a song of irony at life's fantastic interlude;
The beggar's opera that ye strive to drag out through its lingering scenes,
Though moth-eaten the purple be that decks your tinsel kings and queens!

Oh, no! The voice those waters hear is not of sorrow or dismay;
'Tis triumph song, victorious song; her prophet voice is sounding free,
As once of old your Godhead spake: "I was, I am, and I will be."

Will be, and lead the nations on, the last of all their foes to meet;
And on your necks, your heads, your crowns, I'll plant my strong rebellious feet;
Avenger, liberator, judge; red battles on my pathway hurled;
I stretch forth my almighty arm till it revivifies a world.

Ye see me only in the cell; ye see me only in the grave;
Ye see me only wandering lone beside the exile's weary wave.
Ye fools! Do I not also live where ye have strived to pierce in vain?
Rest not a nook for me to lodge in every heart, in every brain.

In every brow that brooding thinks, erect with manhood's honest pride?
Does not each bosom welcome me that beats with honor's generous tide?
Not every workshop brooding woe? Not every hut that struggles for relief?
For am I not the BREATH OF LIFE? That pants and struggles for relief?

And therefore will I be and lead the nations on their foes to meet;
And on your necks, their heads, their crowns, I'll plant my strong, rebellious feet.

It is no boast, it is no threat; thus history's iron law decrees.
The day grows hot, O Babylon! 'Tis calm beneath thy willow trees.

Face the Issue

First, and above all else, it must be understood that the Mexican workers are fighting for their very existence; that the country is passing through an economic and NOT a political revolution.

Secondly, it must be understood that the Mexican Liberal Party, as distinguished from the followers of Madero, has grasped that central fact and is, therefore, not a reform but a revolutionary party. This must be made quite clear for the workers care nothing about mere reform.

On the other hand, a successful economic revolution means everything to them, since it will be the passage from slavery to freedom, from financial dependence to financial independence, from trembling insecurity to the courage that comes with the banishment of the fear of want. It means the abolition of the slums, the emptying of prisons, the disappearance of poverty, the realization of the rich and care-free life to which man's mastery over nature today entitles him.

Thirdly, it must be made clear that Mexico will fight to the death, both because the Spanish-Indian blood is fighting blood, and because Mexico finds herself face to face with economic slavery of the most unbearable type. Mexico is under the heel of the money power; her lands have been swept from beneath her feet, and her people, therefore, have been left the tragic choice of exile or working for absentee masters to whom dividends are everything and the claims of humanity a cipher.

In Mexico the world-wide struggle for economic emancipation has broken out in its acutest and most savage form, for Mexico has been subjected to financial tyranny of the most savage type. Mexico, above all other countries, has been the pawn in the heartless game of international finance; in less than a decade it has scored its most rapid and, apparently, its most decisive triumph. But while capital has been pluming itself on the acquirement of an immense and immensely wealthy territory, on having brought into its service the cheap labor of an entire nation and on having secured to itself thereby rich and permanent profits—while it has been pluming itself on this its latest triumph it has, in reality, precipitated the world-wide conflict that will dig its grave.

The Mexican Revolution is our opportunity; the opportunity of the proletariat throughout the world; the opportunity of the outcast and disinherited; and also the opportunity of every heart that hungers for justice while knowing well that under monopoly and profit-mongering justice is the emptiest of words.

Magon voiced the determination of

his people when he wrote the oft-quoted sentence: "Our race would rather perish than remain enslaved." The nation has rallied to that cry, and its fighters—whether with rifle, pen or tongue—have shown, and are showing a contempt of danger which speaks a language all can understand.

The issue is simplicity itself; it is so simple that a child can understand it. If the vast resources of Mexico are to remain in the possession of the financiers who, by hook and crook, have managed to lay their fingers on them, the Mexican people must remain economically enslaved. Electoral reforms, constitutional rights to free speech, changes of officials and so forth will avail them nothing. They will be compelled to work for their financial owners, on whatever terms those owners choose to dictate.

This is a greater and more serious conflict than was the American Civil war. It has been longer in preparation; the issues lie far deeper; the battlefield is infinitely larger, and the fighting will be much more severe. Do not deceive yourselves or allow others to be deceived upon this point.

Capitalism, thinking only of its dollars, cries "Robbery and Murder!" We revolutionists, placing human life and happiness far above the dollar, hurl back the cry and declare that Lazarus shall no longer be crucified that Dives may glut himself in peace. The conflict was inevitable from the very first; it has come; it will be fought to a finish and we shall win. For the world is sick to death of capitalism, and on our side is the spirit of the age, the urge to a higher civilization.

From this conflict none can stand aloof. Either with the robbers or with the robbers every one must take his stand. No man, for example, can pose as a Socialist, declaring economic dependence the root of all misery, and remain inactive without complete abandonment of self-respect. No man can hold, with Henry George, that land monopoly is the quintessence of slavery and adopt a coldly critical attitude without playing the dastard. No man has a right to prate about the rights of labor and sit stolidly indifferent while labor is fighting for its life against the allied money powers of the world.

Alfred Henry Lewis is now correspondent at Juarez for the Hearst papers, and daily we are regaled with pen pictures of the "transparently honest" Madero, the "coolly intrepid" Madero, and so on "ad nauseam." This is the Lewis whom Hearst commissioned to counteract Turner's damaging articles in the "American Magazine." In "Barbarous Mexico" Turner scattered his ridiculous allegations to the winds and made mincemeat of the gentleman himself. But the pieces have gathered themselves together again.