

porary cessation of this beneficent vigil that he wandered from prudence into politics and drew some of his priests with him. Rufino Barrios was not the man to tolerate any such incursion as this on his domain, whether led by priest or potentate. Politics with him rested upon muskets and machetes, and sacerdotalism, even with an archbishop, should not seek a sphere inconsistent with the crozier and the cross. I do not know whether Barrios had ever heard of Q. Fabius Maximus, or his famous tactical policy of delay, known as Fabian, but if he had it had not commended itself to him. Enemies, or even fortuitous foes, found no gentle dalliance in him. He had men at his command to hew down obstacles with their cruel knives, and who would do it with as much serenity and despatch as they would hew down a bunch of bananas for their breakfast. He did not bandy argument with the archbishop, bishops or priests. They had overstepped the domain of orthodoxy in venturing on the perilous sea of politics, and lest they should even presume to dictate to him he ordered them to be gone. Consternation deprived them of the power of movement for a time, but the sound of marching feet and clanking arms without convinced them that it was no dream, and engendered a desire to immediately remove out of the reach of this terrible man. They were rounded up from mountain and plain and were escorted to the sea shore where they were courteously informed that the first steamer which came along would convey them hence, but that they could stay where they were and have the pleasure of being shot or chopped up, as they might prefer. The unanimous choice of this remarkable clerical conference was for steamer staterooms, much to the disappointment of the machete men, who pride themselves upon the dexterity with which they can handle their keen blades, and who could not understand the womanly leniency of

their master, the Dictator, in letting so many of his opponents escape when he had them strong within his grasp. But the shovel-hatted gentlemen got away with whole skins, and they have never been allowed to set foot in Guatemala since. Thus did a vigorous and fearless mind settle the vexed question of clerical influence in elections off hand and expeditiously. Cromwell, that greatest of all Englishmen, could not have done it better. And how satisfactory it is to know that there live now and then in this small world of ours men with strength of character enough to pull down pretension and put presumption away from men. The church anathematized Barrios, cursed him with the most withering curses, but priestcraft in Central America has not recovered, and never will recover, from the blow he dealt it, the which it had long deserved. Probably the church attributed the troubles which subsequently came to him to its blighting denunciations of him, but this one truly brave character in the annals of Spanish America succumbed to the common weakness of men who achieve absolute power. In the exuberance of his youthful democracy he had contemned and combatted the aristocratico and as earnestly eulogized the puebla with which he proudly proclaimed kinship. But when his intrepidity and force had carried him nigh to the ends of his ambition, he dimmed his fame by turning to fondle the class he had spurned. Then he presented the pitiable spectacle of a comparatively great mind, a mind bright according to its obscure and intangible lights, stooping and truckling in unworthy obeisance to an element from whom he could hope for no recognition or respect save what was exacted through fear of his strength—a spectacle degrading and sad to his adherents, as it was a delight and derision to his detractors. Perhaps the great wealth he had