Causes of the Mexican Revolution; Revenge of Downtrodden Peons

An Uprising Against a Niggardly Landowner—His Vast Domain Worth $100,000,000—Treated the Peons as Slaves—Mexico Cursed by Absentee Landlordism and Great Estates.

WILLIAM E. CURTIS, writes in the Washington Star and the Chicago Record-Herald:

The so-called revolution in Chihuahua is an armed protest against an autocracy which has existed there for nearly half a century under Don Louis Terrazas, who owns half the land in that state and is credited with more wealth than any other man in Mexico. He is probably the largest land owner in the world. His wealth is estimated at more than $100,000,000. He owns or controls everything in the city of Chihuahua, and is as great an autocrat within his dominions as the Czar of Russia. He owns all the public utilities, which are monopolies, and pay big dividends. No one can borrow money or buy a piece of property without his consent and no concession will be granted by the Government within that state without his approval. Either he or one of his sons is always governor, and they take turns in exercising authority. Don Alberto Terrazas, his second son, is the present governor, and during the insurrection has proved himself to be of little capacity. He has not been able to do anything to defend or protect his father's property, or the city of Chihuahua, or any other part of the state. Everything is in a condition of anarchy and Don Alberto's authority is defied and ridiculed.

Terrazas' Vast Domain.

Nobody knows exactly how much land Don Luis Terrazas owns, but you can ride all day north and south, east and west, on the railways of Chihuahua without going outside of his domain. His holdings are estimated all the way from 5,000,000 to 15,000,000 acres. People say that he does not know himself how much land he has, nor how much live stock, but it is believed that he has more than 400,000 cattle, 50,000 sheep and 100,000 horses. The animals have never been counted, and it would be impossible to count them. They have never been assessed. Don Luis pays no taxes, and that is one of the principal causes of the uprising.

Last fall, it is said, Don Luis shipped fourteen trainloads of cattle to market and each train had more than 40 cars. He shipped almost as many sheep and about 6,000 horses. This will give you an idea of the wealth and the transactions of the old man. He is nearly 81 years old, small of stature, wrinkled and bald, but in full possession of all his faculties, physical and mental. They say that he grows keener in business transactions, and more avaricious every year. He used to be satisfied with 8 per cent. profits. Now he demands 12, and nobody can borrow money in Chihuahua without his approval and paying 1 per cent. a month interest. He controls all the banks and no one would dare loan a dollar without the approval of Don Luis. If a merchant, miner, or haciendado wants to borrow for any purpose, the bank consults Don Luis and acts under his orders. If he wants the notes and mortgage they turn them over to him, and if he does not the bankers keep them themselves. But people will tell you that no transaction involving real estate is ever made without his approval. He never sells anything himself, but will lease land on long time, both on shares and for cash. He is always adding to his holdings and never lets an acre or a dollar get away from him.

Boundaries Not Defined.

Much of his land is in the mountains—nobody knows how much. Nobody knows where his acres begin or where they end, and hence he gets the credit for owning more than actually belongs to him. People who fear his enmity usually consult him and ask his permission for whatever they wish to do. The mining companies are all more or less subject to his control. He doesn't care much for mines, his passion is limited to land, live stock and loans. But it is imprudent to attempt anything in Chihuahua without the favor of Don Luis.

Doubtless most of these stories are exaggerations. Many of the things that are told of him are incredible, but nevertheless he is the richest man in Mexico, the largest landholder and an autocrat as far as Chihuahua is concerned. He was born in Chihuahua and has lived there all his life. His parents had a ranch near the city, and his father obtained a large grant of land because of his services in the war for independence. When Maximilian invaded Mexico, in 1865, Don Luis organized an army and held the state of Chihuahua against the invaders. For that he received another large grant of land. In 1876, when Diaz came into power by a revolution, Terrazas was the leader of his sympathizers in Chihuahua, and was appointed governor of that state. This brought him more land, and still more, and he has been adding to his holdings continually by methods which need not be discussed. At any rate, he has obtained millions of acres as rewards for his services to the Government, and has purchased and obtained by foreclosure as much more.

Insist on the Formalities.

Although he is simple in his tastes and frugal in his habits, he exacts from his family and retainers the formalities that would befit a king. During the St. Louis exposition he took 60 members of his family on a special train of Pullman cars to that city and afterward to New York. They had a good time, but were not allowed to go anywhere or do anything without the old gentleman's permission. He required them to come to his room the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night to salute him as their host and the head of their clan.

He entertains with royal magnificence and can accommodate 100 guests at his ranch. Some years ago the archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church came up from the City of Mexico to dedicate a church Don Luis had built on one of his ranches, and brought a party of distinguished guests. They were entertained for three weeks, and as a compliment to the archbishop none but white horses were used during his visit. The ranch was 50 miles from the railroad, and their journeys back and forth were made by carriages; there were hunting parties and excursions to various points of interest by carriage and by saddle, but there were white horses enough to go around, and animals of no other color were seen by the guests. Similar stories are told to illustrate the peculiarities and power and wealth of this old man. There are other stories that are not so amusing concerning his craft and cruelty, the tyranny that he exercises over his peons, who number 30,000, and the penalties he imposes upon those who interfere with his will.

Revenge of the Peons.

One of the reasons given for the revolution in Chihuahua is his treatment of the peons. He has never done anything for them. He has kept them on scantiest wages; he has exacted labor to the limit of endurance; he has compelled them to pay back their wages in trade at his stores; he has treated them as slaves, and while he has been growing richer and richer every day, they have been growing poorer. Now that the revolution has given them an opportunity for revenge, they are joining the bands of guerrillas and are plundering his villages and ranch houses, burning his buildings, killing his cattle and doing him as much damage as possible.

Francisco Madero, who provoked the revolution, has encouraged these raids. During his campaign for the presidency last fall he told the peons on the Terrazas lands that the land belonged to them, and that they should arm themselves and compel their employer to give each of them a farm and pay them wages of a dollar a day instead of 30 and 40 cents, which is the maximum paid on the estates. He told them that while they were being taxed to support the Government, Don Luis was paying no taxes, and that if he, Don Francisco, was elected president he would have things changed; he would give everybody a farm; would increase wages to a dollar a day and distribute the cattle and the sheep among them. While the vaqueros and peons upon the Terrazas estates were generally loyal to their master, and continued to be so as long as they were kept in ignorance, these speeches of Madero naturally caused universal unrest and inquiry. The Mexican peon is illiterate, but has a fair degree of intelligence, and the possibility of having a farm of his own, and a share of the cattle and sheep that now belong to his master very naturally appealed to him. These aspirations are said to have been encouraged by the priests, and gradually the loyalty of the peons has been undermined, and they are now almost universally in sympathy with the insurrectos, who are being recruited, supported and aided by the vaqueros and other employees on the Terrazas estates. Therefore, no matter what negotiations may be carried on at the City of Mexico, the rebellion in Chihuahua can never be subdued. The old feudal relations between Don Luis and his employees, who are said to number more than 30,000, will never be the same as before, and the first estate in the republic to be broken up and divided among the peons will be his. There will never be peace in Chihuahua until this is done.

The same rule may be applied to the Madero estates in the neighboring state of Coahuila, which also embrace several million acres and are said to be much more valuable, acre for acre, than those of Terrazas. The Maderos have large vineyards and comparatively few cattle. Much of their land is in a high state of cultivation.

Creel's Relations With Terrazas.

Enrique C. Creel, who was formerly ambassador of Mexico at Washington, and was called to the City of Mexico to become minister of foreign affairs, married a daughter of Don Luis Terrazas, and for 30 years has represented him in many mines, banks, manufactures and other enterprises, and has looked after his real estate in Chihuahua and the capital. Mr. Creel is very rich on his own account. His wealth is estimated at $20,000,000, but most of it is in banks, mining stock and other investments than land and cattle.

Mr. Creel was born in Chihuahua in 1854. His father, Reuben W. Creel, was a Kentuckian, who went to Mexico during the war of 1846-8, and settled in Chihuahua, where he conducted a small store. He had a family of seven children, of whom the eldest was named after his favorite statesman, Henry Clay. The latter was sent to the United States to be educated, and when he returned to Chihuahua started a school. His intelligence and accomplishments brought him into relations with the businessmen of Chihuahua, who commended him to Don Luis Terrazas, who persuaded him to give up teaching and enter his service. Within a few years Creel had become indispensable to his employer and strengthened the relation by marrying his daughter.

Mr. Creel has not returned to Chihuahua since his retirement from the cabinet of President Diaz. He is supposed to be in consultation with other leaders at the Mexican capital concerning plans for peace. Among those plans is one proposed by Mr. Limantour for breaking up the big estates which pay no taxes and the distribution of the land among the peons, after a plan similar to that recently adopted by the Russian Government. Eighty-five per cent., if not more, of the area of Mexico is held in enormous estates, and most of the owners live in Paris and Madrid and spend the revenues derived from them in those cities. They do nothing for the improvement of the condition of their tenants and peons; they contribute nothing to the support of the Government, and there can be no permanent security or prosperity in the republic until this system is broken up. President Diaz has long recognized this fact, but has temporized with the absentee landlords in order to avoid their hostility. He has postponed the evil day, but cannot do so any longer.

A SHIP'S STRANGE DILEMMA

Many strange reasons have been given for a vessel's disappearance, but the loss of the English schooner J. C. Strawbridge is a quite exceptional story. The vessel was bound for Nassau, in the Bahamas, with a cargo of ice. The J. C. Strawbridge ran into the warm temperature of the Gulf Stream, and, instead of ice as cargo, she was presently battling with a hold full of water, which kept her bobbing about like a mechanical toy. All hands were ordered to the pumps, and for four days the crew pumped the melted cargo into the ocean. Their efforts, however were in vain. The crew had to take to the boats, and a few hours later the schooner foundered.

A Former Londoner Writes On the Pleasures of Walking

Mr. Thomas Martindale's Experiences—The Way to Lay Up Reserve Force—Be Systematic.

MR. THOMAS MARTINDALE, of Philadelphia, formerly of London, writes instructively in "Store Chat," a trade publication, on the benefits and pleasures of walking in the spring. He says:

"For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come;
Arise, Oh my fair one, my dove,
And come."

I am asked to write for the Store Chat something about walking, as if I had not already said much in writing to readers of that delectable Store magazine and yet, why cavil at that when the injunction to walk, walk, and yet again walk, should be a perennial one at any and all times of the year.

And isn't this the blessed springtime, when now, if ever, you should be out in the fields, in the woods, on hill or dale, or along the "brown road" in all the spare time that you have?

Shakespeare says, "I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you," this last promise being the best of all the four; and again, "Come, you and I must walk a turn together; I have news to tell you." According to the immortal bard, it is much better to walk in company than alone. "To walk alone, like one that had the pestilence," is the way he puts it. Truly it is much better to have company as you walk to and from the store. The distance travelled always seems less, and particularly when one says, "I have news to tell you"; what an invitation that is for a walk for either man or woman. No crowded street car riding will do then. No, no indeed; the news can best be told while walking so that the outsider may not, indeed cannot, hear.

Acquiring Reserve Force.

Aside from telling of news and of swapping the gossip of the store, the true and earnest walker is always building up a reservoir of energy to serve him in time of illness or mental trouble, because the homely exercise is bound to harden the muscles, increase expansion of the lungs, make the liver and bowels more active, brighten the eyes and bring to the face the ruddy hue of health and cheerful happiness.

For people who are housed in department stores where large numbers of customers congregate every weekday, in addition to the regular force of employees, the best system of ventilation for these mammoth establishments that was ever devised cannot thoroughly purify the air that must be breathed over and over again to a greater or lesser degree.

Hence, if you will not set your mind upon one resolve, let come what will, you will walk a certain distance in the open air, every day, and carry that resolve out honestly and faithfully, you will be doing for yourself something that excels the use of medicaments many and many times over.

Be Systematic.

In order to enable you to take this exercise you must make some sacrifices. You should be up early, so as to "see how the morning opes her golden gates, and takes her farewell of the glorious sun." Up early enough to get your breakfast, without hurrying, and give you time to walk, if not all the way to the store, yet at least a certain number of squares and which number you might try to increase day by day. When the day's work is done, if you must take a street car, suppose you walk several squares at first, until the car commences to empty out, and then get in and complete your journey. Some way or some plan you should adopt so that you really take a certain amount of walking each day.

It is well in walking to and from the store to walk with head erect, shoulders thrown back. Do not lounge or loaf along, but walk briskly enough to set the blood tingling through the system. For those of you that have a tendency to stooped shoulders a light bamboo stick twenty-four inches long, carried between the shoulders as you walk, is a great help. Wear good fitting but easy shoes with a stout sole, and rubber heels. If you walk far carry with you a pair of extra socks or stockings to make a change of footwear when you arrive at home or at the store; this will be very grateful and cooling to the feet. If you crave company, it is well to agree upon a meeting time and place with some of the other employees, and which time should be religiously kept, as one laggard is likely to destroy the comfort of the whole party. It is also well not to be burdened with too many wraps, you need less clothing than when riding in the street cars, but a wrap or light coat can be carried along to put on if the walk is to be only a portion of the distance.

Take Time to Observe.

When you are in the field or the woods, in the lowlands or on the mountain tops and you want to study and enjoy the panorama that nature sets before you, then you must not hurry; no, indeed, "a man in haste has no chance with nature. You cannot hurry through a field or wood and gather the waiting glories. Time and mood are the price you pay for what you get over the counters of the universe."

"You must become an intergal part of the scene before the scene can communicate itself to you. A daisy is a patient thing, and only a patient person can comprehend the whiteness of its petals, and the gold of its disk." Chaucer called the daisy "the eye of the day," and you must meet it glance for glance "If you would read the soul of the day, and drink the wine which it holds out to you in the chalice of the hours."

People the Walker Meets.

As you walk in, morning after morning, you'll soon note that you'll meet a certain number of people moving in the opposite direction to you each morning, and as the days go by you come to watch for their daily appearance. It is an interesting study to note their manner of walking, their deportment and their expression of face as they finally come to recognize you.

I make it a practice to walk from my house in the morning to my store, a distance of two miles and a half, and for some three years past I've met a paralytic man, at about 7:20 a.m., shuffling along with both feet on the pavement. He was scantily clad in the winter time and seemed to suffer much from the cold. He was always cheerful and it came to pass as we met, that each would have a pleasant word to say which made us watch out for each other. I've missed him for over two months back, and it is more than likely his tribulations are over and he is at rest.

About 7:25 I meet on Thirty-second street, a short, stout man, walking slowly and deliberately. Never have I seen him look to either left or right, but with a sullen look upon his face and an old pipe in his mouth he goes along in his accustomed way.

About 7:40 an old, white-haired woman appears in the throng, she is but poorly dressed, and although she's maybe seventy, yet she walks briskly along and is usually in pleasant humor. I have sized her up as a janitress of some office building, hence her hurried walk.

There are two young girls that are met about 7:45. The oldest we'll say is seventeen and withal radiantly beautiful. She walks erect with her head thrown back, and always has the other girl's hand in hers. Oh, but she's a vision of loveliness; no need has she of "pink pills for pale people," or of pink powder. She has the real pink that "doesn't come off." Light hearted and happy both of them are, and what an object lesson they make of the benefits of the noble exercise of walking.

Gentle reader, will you become a convert to this pastime and partake of its benefits?

Don't Grow Old Too Fast

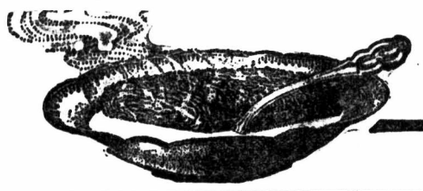
"A man is as old as his arteries." Old age is merely a hardening of the arteries—and hardening of the arteries comes from excessive eating of high-protein food such as meat and eggs. Cut down the high-protein diet for awhile and eat Shredded Wheat. It supplies all the body-building material in the whole wheat prepared in a digestible form. Of course

SHREDDED WHEAT BISCUIT

will not "cure" appendicitis—nor will any other cereal food. The excessive eating of indigestible foods, however, gradually brings on stomach and bowel disorders—and these can be prevented by a daily diet of thoroughly cooked cereals. Shredded Wheat is best for this purpose because it is steam-cooked, shredded and twice baked, retaining the bran coat, which is so valuable in keeping the bowels healthy and active.

Heat the Biscuit in the oven to restore crispness and serve with hot or cold milk and a little cream, adding salt or sugar to suit the taste. It also makes delicious combinations with stewed or preserved fruits. Two Shredded Wheat biscuits with stewed fruit makes a wholesome nourishing meal.

TRISCUIT is the Shredded Wheat wafer—a crisp, tasty, nourishing whole wheat Toast, delicious for any meal with butter, cheese or marmalades. Always toast it in the oven before serving.



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