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**THROTTLING THE CHURCH IN MEXICO**

*Showing, by States, the Outflowing or Limiting of the Number of Priests*



IN SOME INSTANCES, THE NUMBER OFFICIATING IS LESS THAN THAT SHOWN BECAUSE LOCAL AUTHORITIES, BY CANCELLING LICENSES, REFUSING TO REISSUE EXPIRED LICENSES, AND BY ILLEGALLY EXPELLING PRIESTS FROM THEIR PARISHES, HAVE REDUCED THE NUMBER OF PRIESTS TO LESS THAN THAT PROVIDED BY LAW.

FIGURES IN PARENTHESES INDICATE THE POPULATION OF STATES.

Total number of priests authorized, 334. Total population, 15,012,573.

but it was based principally on the idea of Christianizing, educating and uplifting the native. It was then the direct opposite of the English plan which in purpose and execution was the planting of a foreign people on new soil, with its own civilization and the extermination of the native. Without doubt, the task assumed by the Spaniard was the more difficult. Its full results must await long years to show their benefits. But, as a matter of fact, they were shown in part far more quickly than anyone reasonably could have expected.

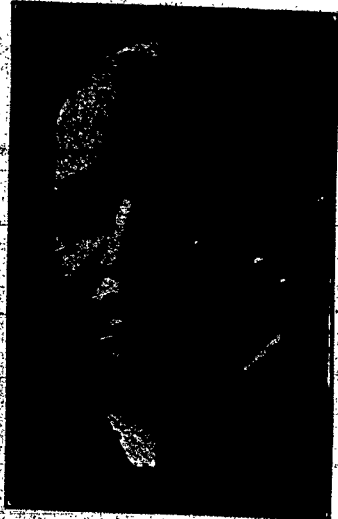
Though the Mexican Indian has no greater mental capacity than other Indians on the North American continent, as actual tests prove, yet by contrast with these others, he shows far more progress. He soon proved the wisdom of the Spanish methods by assimilating a culture, and developing equal ability with his white brother in absorbing learning. In some respects—such as the artistic—he frequently surpassed him. The full-blooded Mexican Indian, given education and opportunity, shone in every trade, profession and walk of life. A descendant of Cortez became a Viceroy. Many Indians became governors of States and mayors of municipalities. Many became rich. Indians themselves builded and ornamented their beautiful churches. Indians excelled in the plastic arts. Indians spoke Latin. Indians taught philosophy. It would be hard to find a record to surpass that of the Spanish educator; impossible to find it on a nation-wide scale and for different tribes over a vast stretch of territory. It is time justice was done the Spaniard. He saved Christian civilization to Europe by his victory over invading Islam, and he planted it on the soil of the New World. His faults may have been great—whose faults are not?—but his spirit was greater. Weighed against the faults of other discoverers and colonizers, he does not lie in the scales against him. He did not kill a people. He preserved it.

To the Spaniard goes the credit of striking the mortal blow at slavery, for he gave to Pope Paul III the opportunity for which the Church had waited for fifteen centuries. To Bishop Las Casas, in all probability, the chief single merit for that should go, without the consent of the King of Spain and the Council of the Indies. Las Casas never could have brought his appeal to Rome. Once the way was clear to denounce the enslaving of the natives in Mexico, Paul III seized his opportunity to denounce all enslaving of native peoples and forbid it by formal decree. We have good reason to date the beginning of the end of slavery from the Pope's bull that issued.

It is far from the truth to say, as many have said, that Spain sent only missionaries and gold-seekers to Mexico. Cortes himself turned the King of Spain into an unrepentant and generous man. For more than two centuries the Spaniards were well looked upon in the American continent. The Spaniards' treatment was a state of intelligence, charity and justice. It is a question if there ever had a more equal and just treatment than that which the Spaniards gave to the natives of the New World.

Francis Clement Kelley, well-known author of the book "Blood-Drenched Altars"—writes again on the Mexican problem. Educated at home and abroad, Bishop Kelley has had a wide and varied experience in many fields. In 1905 Bishop Kelley founded the Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States and served as president of the Society. For many years he was editor-in-chief of the Extension Magazine, the official organ of the home missions. Bishop Kelley served as chaplain in the Spanish-American war and is the author of a number of books including "Church Work," "The Story of Extension," "The Flaming Cross," and "When the Fall Is Real." Bishop Kelley's success includes the first territory of Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

**Author-Bishop**



came only by his control over the appointments of bishops and canons. To this the Church yielded and the Patronato came into being.

Obviously such an arrangement could only be temporary, an arrangement arrived at for the purpose of doing a definite work for an unconverted people. Thus it was quite possible to grant such patronage to the Spanish rulers while they were defending Western Civilization against the Moslem at home, since it strengthened the force that was bearing the brunt of a fight on the issue of which depended the fate of all Europe; equally obvious was the possibility of granting such patronage to those who are making a new and a Christian world. But it could not be made permanent without imperilling both Church and State when both settled down to normal life.

The Patronato worked in Spanish Mexico for nearly three centuries. Abuses during the last few decades showed that it had to end. It was starting to corrupt the whole body by the placing of mercenary State officials in control of Church affairs, and raising up a section of the clergy who owed so much to Caesar that some of them forgot what they owed to God.

As soon as Mexico became independent, no longer subject to the Spanish Kings, the Patronato ceased. But the new authorities were unwilling to allow it to be so. It was a matter of life or death to the Church. She could not allow a temporary arrangement to fasten itself forever upon her. She refused the Patronage to the new government. That was the real beginning of the anti-religious movement in Mexico.

In all this the people played no great part, but there was always their passive resistance to the threatened loss of their religious rights. Those who wanted the Patronage for the State were those controlling the State. It was a guarantee of the continued existence of their own power; just as if the President of the United States were to be given the right, directly or indirectly, to name every pastor, bishop or superintendent, of every religious body in the Republic. He might as well have given him a guarantee of life tenure of office and the power to continue it forever in successors selected by himself. The result could only be the imposition of a tyranny, a danger to the peace and to the liberty of the whole continent; even linked to that of the world. A principle was involved in the refusal of the Church to allow the Patronage to continue beyond the emergency which alone justified it in the first place. The Mexican politician has never given up his dream of securing the Patronage. But he never will secure it again.

The Patronage, as I said, was not badly used by the early Spanish rulers of Mexico. The Kings were careful to select good and learned men as bishops, canons, and heads of missionary orders. The Viceroys in turn selected good men as pastors, acting as a rule on the advice of the bishops. The beneficiaries of the royal prerogative in Mexico were for a long time equal, and in many cases superior in intelligence and piety to those of the mother country. Their work proved

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