

## Mexico for the Mexicans

THE prestige of the United States is now involved in the Mexican entanglement. We cannot withdraw in response to the demands of Carranza and Obregon without creating an impression throughout Mexico that we have become frightened by the threats of the First Chief and his spokesmen. That, indeed, is an impression that the Carranzistas would like to have created. When we withdrew from Vera Cruz, not knowing what else to do, the press of Mexico claimed credit to Carranza for driving us out and humiliating us. Our loss of prestige then was Carranza's gain. If we accept the greater loss of prestige that would follow retirement from northern Mexico before our ends have been achieved, the immediate gain to the *de facto* authorities would be even greater. In the case of the Vera Cruz affair it was not clear to the Mexicans or to anyone else just what we had expected to accomplish. Our failure to accomplish our end was therefore not demonstrable. What we expect to accomplish in northern Mexico, on the other hand, has been clearly stated. We intend to rid ourselves once for all from the menace of Villa and his marauding bandits. We intend to establish peace, if not in the whole of Mexico, at least in those states that most immediately concern us. If we withdraw before this is accomplished, our failure will be notorious. If we withdraw in response to Carranza's demand, we shall have suffered what European diplomacy describes as a serious moral check.

It is our prestige against Carranza's. If this were all, we might properly yield, even though it is upon our prestige that Americans in Mexico must depend for their safety and the security of their property. We should rather endure a temporary loss than to follow the European nations in their pursuit of prestige through the infinite miseries of war. But much more is involved than our national pride and advantage. The peace of Mexico and her chance to develop into a great and civilized nation are involved. Such prestige as Carranza might win through threatening the United States and apparently forcing the retirement of the American troops would not be sufficient to give him a durable hold upon the government. It would not remove the menace of counter-revolution. It would not free Mexico from the danger of foreign intervention.

What foreign intervention is possible, if the United States withdraws and refuses to intervene further? In a country like Mexico groups of private capitalists can intervene just as effectively as can official government. There are Mexican leaders to-day, opposed to the existing government, who

could secure unlimited funds for a new revolution if it were certain that the United States would maintain an attitude of indifference to what goes on beyond the border. Carranza holds the government, but his money is worth just one cent on the dollar, and his soldiers are underfed and discontented. What would happen if an attractive new leader appeared with a platform of peace and prosperity and the ability to pay real money for military service? There are hundreds of millions' worth of foreign properties, not now yielding anything, that would be eager to make up such a leader's war chest. There are new opportunities for investment, worth hundreds of millions, that could be parcelled out by such a leader among his foreign supporters.

Let Mexico alone, say Carranza apologists, and we will fight ourselves to an equilibrium, and establish the kind of government we need. Did it not take France twenty years to work her revolution through to its logical conclusion? And would it not have been a misfortune to the world if the intervention of the First Coalition had been successful in putting an end to the Revolution? Granted; but Mexico is in a very different condition from revolutionary France, and the environing world is very different now from what it was in 1793. There was nothing in France to correspond with the vast wealth of concessionary opportunities characterizing Mexico. There was nothing in the world of 1793 to correspond with the huge mass of capital now flowing irresistibly toward profitable investments. France could survive twenty years of domestic revolution and foreign wars. The reconstruction of property still left control purely French. If the Mexican revolution has effected a certain reconstitution of property, increasing the measure of Mexican control, there is no guaranty that the counter-revolution, always menacing, will not work to the extension of foreign control.

Mexico for the Mexicans is a principle that the great majority of Americans are willing to accept without qualification. Let Mexico set her great resources to work to lift the ban of poverty and ignorance and superstition that have rested upon her since prehistoric times. She must have capital to do this and she must draw this from abroad, but let her reserve for her own uses all surplus profit above a fair return, as other civilized states do. Giving only a fair return, she must give security, and there is no security without a government strong enough to maintain order. If the concession is handled in such a way that only a fair return goes to foreign capital, while the surplus profits go to the government, there will be left no vast possibilities of unearned increment to tempt foreign adventurers into private intervention. With the wealth of Mexico developing, opportunities will

present themselves to the ambitious Mexican, who will thus be weaned from too ardent an interest in politics and revolutions.

The obligations resting upon the United States are clear. As the nearest great Power, the United States cannot view Mexican disorder with indifference. As the country from whose soil private interventions are most likely to be launched, the United States is under obligation to assist in removing occasion for them. We are in Mexico now, with the intention of remaining until order is restored. Let us not be cheated by a semblance of order, but insist that we be permitted to coöperate with the de facto authorities in placing order upon the solid basis of a government with constitutional powers broad enough to secure the Mexican people in their just rights to their resources and liberties.

## Organized Labor on Education

**A**T a recent labor conference in New York City, called to present a program for the local public schools, Mr. Gompers expressed himself as open-minded towards the Gary plan which is about to be extended to thirty-five more New York schools. This open-mindedness of Mr. Gompers is in welcome and significant contrast to the attitude taken by some of the smaller leaders in the city, who have apparently tried to line up organized labor with a personal political machine and with reactionary schoolmen in obstructing the reorganization of the elementary schools. But organized labor has better business than opposing educational reform, and Mr. Gompers's remarks, made with full responsibility and in direct opposition to the thinly-veiled partisan spirit of the conference, suggest that the responsible leaders of labor are willing to take a more enlightened stand in this important movement.

Organized labor has repeatedly gone on record in favor of a public school system which will train a labor citizenry so versatile and intelligent as to be able to protect itself from exploitation and the hazards of our social shiftlessness. It has demanded that vocational teaching be kept intimately related to life, so that children come out from the school neither helpless unskilled workers nor narrow machine-tenders, but potential citizens acquainted with the backgrounds of their crafts, with the significance of the labor movement and the institutions and movements of the world about them. Labor above all classes has a vital interest in an education for all children which acknowledges the full intellectual and social meanings of industrial processes and occupations. The education that labor desires is one which will give, particularly to those who engage in industrial callings, the desire

and ability to share in social control, and to become masters of their industrial fate.

Now organized labor must be rapidly coming to see that this demand will never be satisfied by the conventional type of city public school. A traditional school founded on the bookish education of a leisure class can never be made into a pre-vocational school that will give power and dignity to labor, without a fundamental transformation of the present spirit, subject-matter and teaching methods. An elementary school which gives its children no more than narrow drill in the three R's plus a little remote and unreal text-book information in history and geography, with what little half-hearted music and drawing and nature-study can be squeezed in, will never give the foundation that the trained worker will need. No system of trade-training or vocational education superimposed upon such an elementary school will remedy the evils. Children who have been listlessly and ineffectively drilled in book-work will have acquired attitudes that are likely to be carried over into vocational work. Except for the few, industrial training will seem sheer drudgery, for it will have its roots in no interests and powers developed in earlier years. Pre-vocational education must mean something more than a mere sop to the motor-minded boys and girls who are restless with their books and are on the verge of leaving school for work. Such training, if it is to mean anything, must be woven in as an organic part of the school course. The entire elementary school could be a general, free, spontaneous, amateur pre-vocational school, where in direct contact with machines and industrial processes as well as books, with gardens and gymnasiums as well as laboratories and kitchens, with tools and print and pottery shops and drawing and music studios, children might have their imaginations stirred, try out their busy hands on things, and gradually sift out of the variety the interests that they can lay hold on with some promise of creative use. The school might be a place where play passed insensibly into work, and aimless experiment into purposeful construction.

Most of the current criticism of the public schools arises from the rapidly growing conviction that only in such a school will the modern city child have a chance to be educated in any way which will meet the demands in industrial or commercial life that will be made upon him. There is danger in current educational experiments that we become too easily satisfied with the mere addition of desirable courses, without at the same time transforming the school so that the new work is organically assimilated. Labor cannot be content with the school reform which many cities are adopting in the introduction of vocational courses merely in the upper grades.