

should be reflected towards all Americans. But this phase of the situation will pass, and should not be taken over-seriously. Meanwhile, those of us who go abroad will have had a valuable reminder as to some points in the etiquette of being a guest in another land.

## An Ancient Conflict

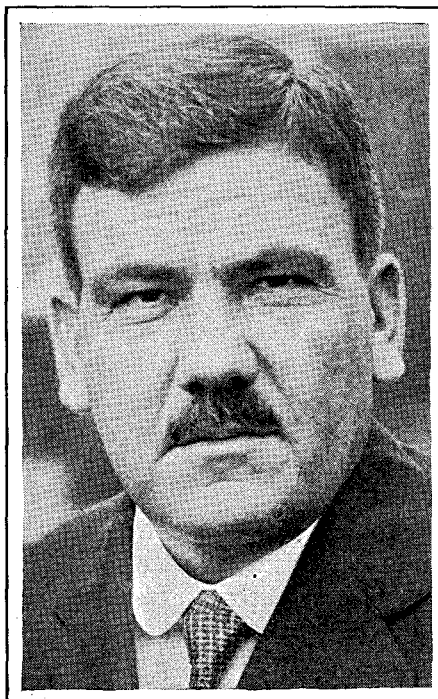
**A**N account of the labor parade of August 1 in Mexico City in support of President Calles's attitude toward the Catholic church asserts that probably eighty per cent of the paraders were Catholics. Why should this be so? The answer goes to the basal nature of the trouble.

The ecclesiastic influence in Mexico has always been politically on the reactionary side. It has never encouraged or sympathized with the efforts to make the peons something more than toilers who do the hard work of the country and get nothing in return but scanty food and clothing and huts to live in. Madero, nominally a conservative but a democrat at heart, tried to get land and education for the Indian and half-breed Mexicans, and failed. Others have made that cause a political slogan but little has been accomplished. President Calles is a radical, courts the support of organized and unorganized labor and asserts that the Church wants to keep the peon down and exerts itself to that end politically. He is quoted as saying: "We have no quarrel with religion. We have no quarrel with the Catholic faith, nor the Protestant. Our quarrel is with the foreign-imposed hierarchy, which for four hundred years has always been on the side of tyranny and ignorance and oppression." He considers that the Church is allied against progress with the great landowners (whose tenure is often based on former military or political services), with the foreign and native concessionaries, and with the idle, unproductive rich.

On the other hand the Church with some reason asserts that it is willing to submit even to unjust laws but that the present Government has gone beyond its constitutional rights and has interfered in matters which are not political or governmental, such as the size of bishoprics, the dress of the priests, and the internal management of the churches. The church officials deny emphatically that they are interfering in politics, ask for a national plebiscite on the issues involved

and declare that they are willing to accept any solution that may save public liberties and not be disloyal to the Government.

As to what the Government has done



International

President Calles

which has led the Church to discontinue the sacraments in the churches, to encourage their people to refrain from buying goods, to institute a world-wide campaign of prayer accounts differ and are contradictory. What the Mexican laws now promulgated to enforce the

latent ownership of the churches are, is stated by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Mexico, Mr. Aaron Saenz, in an article in the New York "World" as follows:

(a) Complete separation between church and state.

(b) That none but Mexicans may be ministers of a cult in Mexico.

(c) That elementary, primary education must be non-sectarian in Mexico, which does not preclude the existence of high schools where religion may be taught or professional schools like seminaries, etc., for the exclusive teaching of religion.

(d) That neither convents nor any of the other religious organizations forbidden in Mexico since the time of President Juarez shall be permitted.

(e) That only elementary primary schools shall not be in charge of priests but of professional teachers.

Obviously the situation is one for mutual concession and compromise and as we write there are indications of a movement in that direction.

All who are well informed about Mexican conditions know that it will be a long and difficult task to educate and improve the masses to a point where they can exercise self-government wisely. Meanwhile the world must be patient with outbursts of ill feeling, the ever-present danger of revolution and the quarrelsome habit of mind of Mexico toward other peoples. If there is a remedy, it lies in the hands of time.

## John Jacob Astor

By LAWRENCE F. ABBOTT

Contributing Editor of The Outlook

**I**N this Sesqui-centennial Year, in which is being celebrated the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the hundredth anniversary of the death of its author, it is appropriate that there should be a revival of interest in the history of the Northwest. For we owe that vast, valuable and progressive section of our country largely to Thomas Jefferson. By the Louisiana Purchase he added it to the territory of the United States and by the Lewis and Clark Expedition he prepared the way for its settlement.

A group of historical writers and students, organized by President Ralph Budd of the Great Northern Railway, has just completed a journey from Chicago to the Pacific Coast and return, on

a special train of the Great Northern, to visit various points in North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon made historic by the early French, British, and American pioneers. Nothing in the travels of the Venetian, Marco Polo, or the Arabian, Ibn Batuta, is more thrilling or adventurous than the exploits, discoveries and records of these pioneers. They deserve the monuments which were dedicated in their honor by the co-operation of various municipalities, Mr. Budd and the historical party that traveled under his auspices. Here there is space to speak of only one—the beautiful column, one hundred and twenty-five feet high and erected on Coxcomb Hill in Astoria at the mouth of the noble Columbia River. This shaft,

which in form and sculpture is one of the notable monuments of the United States, commemorates the discovery of the Columbia by the Bostonian, Captain Robert Gray, the explorations of Lewis and Clark and the achievements of John Jacob Astor who founded Astoria more than a hundred years ago.

The name of John Jacob Astor forms a romantic link between the little city of Astoria on the Pacific and the megalopcephalous city of New York on the Atlantic. New Yorkers are too often forgetful of the part their city played in the winning of the west. As a loyal native of this no mean city (to use the Pauline phrase) I gladly seize this opportunity to sketch the pioneer achievements of one of its really great citizens. Those who are interested will find them narrated in vivid detail by a great New York author, Washington Irving.

As early as 1796 the Government of the United States began to look with disquiet at the growing domination by the Canadians and British of the fur trade and its Western territory. It therefore sent out agents to establish trading-posts on the frontier. "The expedition," says Washington Irving in language which well may be taken to heart to-day, "was unsuccessful as most commercial expedients are prone to be where the dull patronage of government is counted upon to outvie the keen activity of private enterprise. What government failed to effect, with all its patronage and all its agents, was at length brought about by the enterprise and perseverance of a single merchant, one of its adopted citizens."

This man was John Jacob Astor, born in 1763 in the little German village of Waldorf on the Rhine. Thus three great and noble rivers figure prominently in his career—the Rhine, the Hudson, and the Columbia. He migrated to London where he was for a time engaged in the business of making and selling musical instruments, and one of the most famous of English pianos still bears the name of one of the partners of his firm. Pushing on with the spirit of a pioneer Astor brought his little savings to New York in 1784 at the close of the Revolution. A chance acquaintance, who was his fellow passenger on the sailing vessel in which he crossed the Atlantic, suggested that he invest his tiny capital in the fur trade. Astor accepted the suggestion, and traveled between New York, Montreal, and London in the prosecution of his merchandising. By the time he was

forty he had accumulated a fortune, enormous for those days, of at least a million dollars. This sum he used in organizing the Pacific Fur Company, the object of which was to establish on the Pacific coast a trading post and colony from which, as a center, the fur trade could be carried on with the Atlantic seaboard and the Orient. To do this he sent out one expedition overland from St. Louis and another by sea around the Horn in a little vessel, the *Tonquin*, of only two hundred and ninety tons burden.

The passenger who crosses the Atlantic or the Pacific to-day on a twenty-thousand-ton steamer has little conception of the courage and virility required for such ocean pioneering as that of the *Tonquin*. In spite of her diminutive size she carried a crew of twenty-four of Mr. Astor's partners, twelve clerks, several artisans, thirteen Canadian *voyageurs* and all the necessary supplies for founding a colony. Surmounting incredible obstacles both expeditions finally reached the mouth of the Columbia River and Astoria was painfully established and named in honor "of the projector and supporter of the whole enterprise." But the project was overwhelmed with catastrophes. The *Tonquin* was blown up in a fight with the Indians, Astor's timorous partners sold the establishment and its valuable furs for a third of their value to British competitors, and the entire region fell into the hands of the British during the War of 1812.

The loss of Astoria was happily temporary, but it is a good illustration of the slowness of our National Government to appreciate a good thing when it sees it. Jefferson and Madison did not give the enterprise much more than their cordial approbation. They were fearful of the constitutional complications involved and Astor did not receive the slight military protection which he asked for.

Now no one is a more ardent constitutionalist than I am. The Constitution is the very cornerstone of the Republic. Haphazard tinkering with it or impulsive disregard of it is a sure road to disaster. There come, however, crises in our national life when a President must brave the criticisms of the technical constructionists and act for the national welfare. The Louisiana Purchase, if not unconstitutional, was certainly extra-constitutional; but it was one of the finest and most beneficent of Jefferson's achievements. The constitutionality of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation has

been seriously questioned by theorists in government; but who would wish to have it expunged from the record. Some of those who enjoy and profit by the Panama Canal assert that it is the child of constitutional illegitimacy; Roosevelt, however, wisely said that he preferred to dig the Canal and have the constitutionality of his act debated for two centuries rather than postpone its construction while the country spent two centuries in arguing about the constitutional technicalities involved. That the soil on which Astoria stands to-day finally became American soil is a blessing for which we do not owe any overwhelming debt of gratitude to the National Government of that early era of the Republic. Perhaps no more could have been expected of that government than it accomplished. It was young, inexperienced, struggling with unprecedented problems, and in those days of rudimentary transportation and communication Astoria was, so far as time and space are concerned, literally on the other side of the world from Washington. But it is fair to say that all Americans owe a great debt of gratitude to the merchant prince of New York, through whose vision, persistence, and patriotism the standard of political and social civilization was first planted on the banks of the Columbia.

It is too often the custom, at least among New Yorkers, to regard the name of Astor as merely a synonym of accumulated wealth. This is an injustice. John Jacob Astor was truly a pioneer and a patriot. When warned by his agents of the dangers and obstacles that threatened his enterprise and might mean the loss of his fortune, he replied:

Were I on the spot and had the management of affairs I would defy them all; but as it is, every thing depends upon you and your friends about you. Our enterprise is grand, and deserves success, and I hope in God it will meet it. If my object was merely gain of money I should say to you, "think whether it is best to save what we can and abandon the place;" but the very idea is like a dagger to my heart.

These are not the words of a sordid trader. They express the heartfelt sentiment of an American who wished to see his country grow in strength, stature, and character. So may it be said of all of us, when our turn comes to pass off the stage, whether we live on the banks of the Hudson or the banks of the Columbia.

# Church and State in Mexico<sup>1</sup>

By JOSÉ MIGUEL BEJARANO

**P**ERNICIOUS as may be regarded the conduct and influence in Mexico of the Roman Catholic Church when considered as an international political organization, and although many people—nearly every one of Mexico's present political and social leaders included—are inclined to believe that the Roman Catholic religion, together with all the other old-fashioned religions developed in a pre-scientific age, has outlived its usefulness, it is not necessary to go very deep into the controversy which is placing Mexico once more on trial before the world, to realize that the present difficulties are merely the superficial manifestations of a local political struggle.

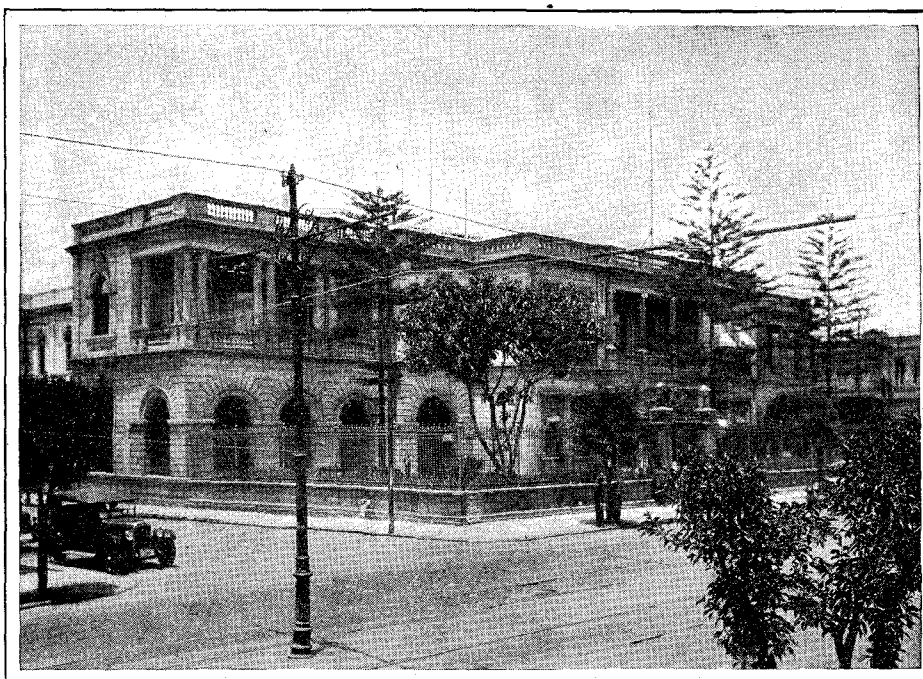
Substantially, the two political factions that are contending now in Mexico for the control of the country are the same political factions which became factors in the national life of Mexico when the country became independent in 1821. Even at that time they were the continuation of two opposing forces which developed during the colonial period and which have been manifesting themselves in every country and in every community since social life began: conservatism and evolution.

The conservatives entrench themselves in tradition, custom, and established social and scientific principles; they find religion a bulwark and a cloak, making it a refuge in case of trouble and a disguise under which to hide their worldly purposes.

The liberals, progressives or radicals in their struggle against conservatism, sometimes willingly but more often reluctantly, direct their attacks against religion also, as a fortress behind which their enemies shelter.

Pure religion is not what the Catholics in Mexico have in mind in their collective struggles, and history proves that they are willing to sacrifice its tenets for the sake of personal political ambitions. The Catholic Church as an international political institution and the Christian Religion as a universal code of morals are the main sufferers in this contention between two groups, neither one of which has either true religion or Rome very much at heart.

The Constitution of 1917, the Reform Laws of 1859 and even the Constitution of 1857 were not being rigidly enforced in Mexico prior to February, 1926, when the reactionary element of Mexico which



The Home of the Mexican Department of the Interior—it is this branch of the Mexican Government that is charged with enforcing her Church Laws

was suffering by the enforcement of radical, economic, and social legislation brought about by President Calles, succeeded in luring the Catholic hierarchy into denouncing the laws of Mexico as "wicked."

It is interesting, however, to observe that the Pope in Rome, although condemning the present legislation of Mexico, instructed his flock to *keep aloof* and to use the only means within the dignity of Catholics such as patience and prayer.

The occasion and advisability of his Apostolic Letter are decidedly doubtful. What was the use of denouncing laws that theoretically were in force but which were not enforced in practice?

The best proof that the officials of the Catholic Church in Mexico are simply the tools of the enemies of the present administration is that they were lured into the blunder of going beyond the instructions from Rome; as is said in Spanish, they proved to be more popish than the Pope. Once on the downward slide there has been no limit to the folly of their measures until as an extreme resource the Bishops have seen fit to declare a *strike*, which the Holy See, if it wants to preserve its dignity and self-respect, may probably have to disown.

The actual strength of the ties connecting Rome with the so-called Catholic Party in Mexico is very much to be doubted, even more so is the statement that Rome wants to control Mexico to use it as a basis for a campaign of proselytism in the United States. This may

prove as unfounded as a similar statement to the effect that Moscow wants to use Mexico as a basis for Soviet propaganda in the United States.

The arguments used by the Bishops against the government are weak and unsustainable. They may be used for a short-lived struggle to mystify the ignorant; but they do not stand investigation.

Even if the laws of Mexico as they are at the present moment are rigidly enforced the Roman Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic religion could live and develop in Mexico without any hindrance, but they can not serve as heretofore as the tool of irreligious, hypocritical and greedy politicians to bully the Mexican people. If Rome permits their representatives in Mexico to use religion as a cloak to cover their movements to control the political machinery of Mexico, Rome will be the principal sufferer.

An end to the present difficulties is visible, according to recent dispatches to the effect that the Bishops are asking for a truce. Although this has been refused, new overtures from the same source will probably follow. The Mexican Government has been prudent in not making the strike a lockout.

The immediate consequences of the controversy have been a very much needed publicity for Mexico. When the scaffolding of calumny and propaganda collapses many people will behold for the first time in their lives a structure the soundness and beauty of which will prove a revelation.

<sup>1</sup>This article presents the views of the Mexican Government. Next week we will publish an article from a Catholic source.