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*THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

THE EXERCISE OF THE VOCATION.

By G. CAMPBELL MORGAN, D. D.

The day when a man stands girded at the threshold of his actual work in the ministry of the Word, is a day full of mystic wonder. He is conscious of strange lights and shadows, of joy and of fear, of hope and almost of despair. The opportunities of service are seen to be at once so vast, and so full of solemnity, that he is seized with a sense of inability and of unworthiness. He feels in his own soul what the Apostle undoubtedly felt as he inquired: "Who is sufficient for these things?" Nevertheless he is conscious anew of the fact that his call was from God, and that Divine resources are ever at the disposal of those called to Divine service; and so a sense of dependence is also a sense of confidence. These apparently conflicting emotions fill the soul with a great and reverent awe.

Perhaps the most common disaster in ministerial life is the loss of this very sense of awe. The glory passes; the light becomes dim; the wonder ceases; and work become routine, and preaching a drudgery. How is this to be obviated, and the first glory maintained undimmed? This is really a great question, demanding serious consideration. I propose to deal with it so far as I am able strictly from the positive side. There are four matters which seem to me to be of paramount importance in the exercise of the vocation of the ministry of the Word. They are: first, the prayerful culture of the spiritual life; secondly, the persistent study

*This article is one of the lectures given by Dr. Campbell Morgan at Union Theological Seminary on the Sprunt Foundation, and is printed here by permission of Dr. Morgan and the Fleming H. Revell Company.

THE CAUSE AND CURE OF THE ILLS OF MEXICO.

By REV. W. A. ROSS
Toluca, Mexico

No one doubts about Mexico being ill. Some may regard her as in worse condition than she really is, but all have come to look upon her as suffering from moral, spiritual, and physical infirmities. Something has kept Mexico from reaching the front rank of civilization. In matters of education, moral ideas, and spiritual values, the people of Mexico are yet far behind other peoples. Something is wrong somewhere. In thinking of the sad condition of Mexico, some people are critical, others are sympathetic, but all agree on one thing—Mexico is in a bad way.

There is a growing desire on the part of people of other countries to help Mexico cure her ills. The unhappy conditions of the past few years have forced people to think about Mexico more than ever, and thoughtful people everywhere have felt a desire to help her. Different forms of help have been proposed, the form being determined by the mental and spiritual attitude toward Mexico of the person proposing the help. A study of the causes which have brought Mexico to her present condition will enable us to understand her, and the more easily help her. No one can read the history of Mexico without being impressed with the struggle that the people have been forced to make against great odds. And it is not a struggle of the people of this generation. The seeds for the present condition were sown early and have been sown again and again during her history. A sympathetic search will reveal the causes of the trouble and point the way to the remedy.

I. THE CAUSE.

1. *Racial Backwardness, Weakness and Pride.*

If we are to search deeply for the cause of the ills of Mexico, consideration must be given to the origin of the great masses that constitute the present population of Mexico. We make this statement remembering also that the history of ancient Mexico shows that they were a people of great achievement. They had made great progress in Art, Science and Agriculture before the Spaniards came.

And if the race that was found when the Spaniards came has had a different opportunity the result would have been very different. If the blood of those ancient tribes had been kept pure, the result might also have been very different, but as our study will show, neither of these two things happened. The races became mixed, and the civilization found was destroyed and the people subjugated.

Racially the Mexican people may be divided into three groups, and each group has contributed its share to the making of modern Mexico, and its unmaking. First there are descendants of the people who were found in Mexico when the Spaniards came. They are usually called Indians to distinguish them from the mixed races. The civilization found among them clearly shows that they possess native ability of no mean order, and are capable of great development. There never has been a period of Mexico's history without its distinguished men of Indian stock—poets, painters, statesmen and warriors. But from the very beginning of the Spanish domination they were deprived of their rights, their civilization destroyed and they were placed in a position of subjection and inferiority and denied intellectual training and many social rights. Their development was suddenly stopped, and the great majority of them have made no progress since the days of Cortez. They remain untrained, and their condition of servitude has made inroads into the character of the people. In his ignorance he has been an easy prey to the greed of the more fortunate and unscrupulous. There are now over six million of the Indians in Mexico, and the great majority of them keep timidly to the wild mountain regions, and hold tenaciously to the land that remains to them, and are jealous of the inroads the foreigners make on them. They have been cheated so much and have been imposed on so many times during the last 400 years that they have reason to be on their guard. He is naturally quiet and peaceful. He has been a serf so long that he has lost the power of thinking for himself.

They have not been contributors to what should have been enlightened Mexico, except through one of their numbers now and then who had risen out of his environments in spite of the conditions. In any event, their advancement in civilization would have been slow, and handicapped as they have been, they have

stood stagnant for 400 years, and in their ignorance and superstition, there they are today.

Another large group of Mexico's population is the mixed races—the *Mestizos*. These, with the native Indians, constitute four-fifths of the people of Mexico today. Very few women came with the Spaniards in the early days of the conquest, and the Spanish men mingled freely with the natives. This intermarriage was inevitable, and the people of the mixed blood multiplied and became nearly one-half of the population. The conquerors were for the most part ignorant and superstitious, and their marriages with the native Mexican women would produce a race which would be at a disadvantage at the very beginning of Mexico's modern history. We would hardly have chosen Mexican Indians and Spanish adventurers of the age of the Inquisition as our ancestors. We desire to be just in the estimate of this great company of the people of Mexico, and no railing accusation should be brought against a whole nation, or even a certain group of the inhabitants of a nation, yet it is unfortunately true that people of mixed blood tend to inherit the weaknesses and vices of the races from which they spring rather than their strong points and their virtues. This is what has taken place in Mexico.

Added to this there was the attitude toward them of the Spaniard at the time when the races were growing up. Avenues of development were closed to them; they were denied the privileges of education; their religion was a matter of form. Their morbid taste for gambling and dissipating amusements were given a free hand, and it is not surprising that the *Mestizos* of Mexico have often been turbulent and unruly. They have differed from the Indian in that they lack the pressure of his conservative social and domestic traditions. These *Mestizos* are the typical Mexicans of today. They are the great body of the people and with the Indians form the masses of Mexico.

The third group of the people of Mexico is made up of Spaniards. The distinctions are not closely drawn at the present time, but at the time that the races that make up modern Mexico were being formed this was a class quite distinct, and should be considered separately. They contributed their share to the present condition of Mexico. A few considerations will help us to see how the ideas and viewpoints of the Spaniards of the sixteenth century

and later have affected the conditions in Mexico, and have had a large share in producing them. The Spanish character of the conquest and colonization of Mexico was the product of the Roman law and the Roman church. The Pope granted the New World to the Kings of Spain and Portugal. Spain became the great world power, and its subjects began to enjoy the old Roman idea of its citizens, that is, the prerogative of living by the labor of the subjugated nations, made invincible by the sanctions of the supreme Church. In this spirit and with this viewpoint the Spaniard came to Mexico. However kindly he might feel toward the Mexican, and however humane might be his treatment of them, they were but an inferior race, and had no share in the government. Self-government could not grow up in such an atmosphere. The seeds sown then are still bearing fruit. The rule of the viceroys for three hundred years gave an example of governing for personal gain, which is also bearing unwholesome fruit in government circles in Mexico. It seemed to be considered one of the prerequisites of the position that the viceroy should enrich himself. He was the master of the financial administration of a large and productive province, and it so happened that most of the viceroys during the two hundred and eighty-six years of their rule in Mexico returned even after a brief turn, rich, to Spain. This beyond a doubt is one of the great defects in the Mexican situation at the present time, and the example was set by the rulers from the very beginning. It is hard also for Mexico to get away from the old Spanish idea that the benefits of the government are for the ruling classes. The Mexican people long for a free and just republic, one that will give them protection and justice, but in far too many cases those who have aspired to rule have failed to rise to the true ideal of their obligations to the people. This attitude is an inheritance from the Spanish days.

These, then, are the races that make up the population of modern Mexico. There are other races, but for our study they may be neglected. We do not do them an injustice by calling attention to their backwardness, weaknesses and pride. Virtues they have, and these excel their weaknesses, but these have been suppressed and left dormant so long that they have not been brought into play in the work of building up their country.

If we could understand the centuries-old struggle of the people

of Mexico for freedom—freedom economic, political, intellectual and spiritual; of her betrayals, exploitations and sufferings—if we could understand this story as it is written in the annals of her history for those who will take the time and have the sympathy to read it, then we would understand the historical reasons for her failure. This story must be known if we are to deal rightly and safely with Mexico. It is absolutely necessary to go back to historical principles if we are to understand Mexico. We have been told that the Mexican people are illiterate and superstitious; that the spirit of revolution is incarnate in the Mexican nature; and is only controlled by an equal tendency to despotism; we have been told of their instability, and failures in self-government; but when all these things are said, we have not arrived at the Mexican heart. It does not tell us the why of things, and it gives little hope of remedy. We must look for other causes.

2. *Governmental Failures and Abuses.*

In matter of government no people were ever more afflicted than the Mexican people have been. From the days of the conquest until now the people have never had an opportunity to develop normally, on account, in large part of governmental failures and abuses.

When the Spaniards set up a government in Mexico it was not for the purpose of benefitting the people of Mexico, but solely for the benefit of the crown and the people of Spain. During the two hundred and eighty-six years of the rule of the viceroys in Mexico, some of them were good men, and the Spanish period was not one of unmixed cruelty, yet injustice and oppression prevailed to such a degree that deep lines were scored in the national character. It bred a heartless fatalism in the minds of the down-trodden people. Their helplessness was so manifest, and the power of the rulers so absolute that resistance was unthought of, and submissiveness became a habit of mind as well as of life. It has told mightily on the Mexican character. It is telling mightily on the Mexican character still; it will take years and years of training before its evil effects are rooted out. A stream of gold and silver flowed to the mother country; the remainder of the wealth came into the hands of the privileged class in Mexico who held besides

this financial power all political and religious domination. The condition of the people was of little concern as the condition of the great masses of Mexico since that time testify. In the matter of education the attitude of the government was the attitude of the Church of that day—the all important attitude of submission to temporal task-masters and spiritual guides is best maintained through ignorance. Not only were the governing classes controlled in the attitude toward the people whom they found in Mexico by this desire to keep them ignorant and submissive, but also by the idea which they had regarding the standing in the scale of society of the native Mexicans. To distinguish themselves from the Indians they called the Spaniards the “People of Reason,” the implication being that the Indians were people without reason. They may not have meant all that it seems to mean, but at any rate it indicates an attitude of mind toward the native Indians, which had a profound effect on their conduct toward them.

While Mexico was being ruled by the Spaniards there was growing up a large privileged class at home, and when the yoke of Spain was thrown off, this privileged class, although they had fought bitterly against those seeking the independence of Mexico, at once by intrigue and by force attempted to gain control of the government. Mexico was to again to encounter serious difficulties in setting up a government of her own. In casting off the foreign yoke she did not get rid of the dangerous privileged class at home. These men although unfortunately a part of the Mexican people, opposed the popular movement for independence, and thus delayed the success of the cause of independence. But in the hour of success they were quick to grab the reins of government and to erect a home despotism in place of a foreign one. The men of that day have always had their successors in Mexico and that explains in large part the political revolutions in Mexico. The patriotic, since the days of Hidalgo, have fought and died for the freedom of the people against the selfish class who still possess the ideas of government inherited from the Spaniards.

In studying the present condition of the people of Mexico the background of their oppression must be kept in mind. Growing out of this oppression there grew up a social organization which could only bring evil results. This social organization consisted

until recently, of the exploiters, and the exploited. The two ruling powers of the country, the Church and the State, fostered this social organization, taking almost always the side of the exploiters, until it soon hardened into a tradition. The results are seen in the great masses of the people at the present time. Life for the poor man was without incentive or hope, and under such conditions generations came and went without making any progress. Such experiences inevitably made a deep and lasting impression on the character of the people. They not only widened the social chasm, but they weakened and debased the man. With little to inspire there was scarcely a motive beyond eating and drinking and prop-a gating his unhappy kind. It can easily be seen that the tendency would be toward idleness and other vices. It can easily be seen also how there would lurk in his bosom a feeling that he was being treated unjustly.

This helps us to understand that feature of the Mexican life, which has so much puzzled and irritated the Anglo-Saxon—his propensity for revolutions. These revolutions, including the last one, have grown out of the feeling that injustice has been done them during all their history. They have all, at bottom, been phases of a blind, often misguided struggle of a strong uneducated people for liberty. They have sprung from a desire on the part of the great masses of the people to throw off the bondage both religious and political, which has been on them for centuries. They have been struggles of the great masses of the Mexicans, the Natives and the Mestizos, to gain for themselves and their children a small place upon the soil of their native land. They have been the expressions of the people of Mexico to realize the benefits of democracy, whose catch words have reached them, but whose terms they only vaguely understand.

3. *Ecclesiastical Bigotry and Oppression.*

Along with bad governments in Mexico, the Church must take its full share of responsibility for the sad condition of the Mexican people. The history of the Catholic Church in Mexico is a well-known and heart-sickening story. We need not discuss it at any length here.

The Church fostered superstition. Many of the pagan customs were appropriated by the Church. People were baptized

in mass. It is affirmed that within twenty years after the political conquest of Mexico, the religious conquest was practically complete. Two of the early missionaries declared that their ordinary day's work was from ten to twenty thousand souls. Many of their old superstitions were retained. Humboldt, writing of Mexico, says: "The introduction of the Romish religion had no other effect upon the Mexicans than to substitute new ceremonies and symbols for the rites of a sanguinary worship. Dogma has not succeeded dogma, but only ceremony, to ceremony." Christianity, instead of fulfilling its mission of enlightening, converting, and sanctifying the natives, was itself converted. Paganism was baptized, Christianity was Paganized."

To the Church was committed the education of the people. The fidelity with which the charge was carried out may be seen in the fact that at the time of the independence of Mexico three hundred years after the conquest, ninety per cent. of the people were illiterate.

Into the hands of the Church there came great riches. It was not known until Mexico had gained her independence, and was struggling to establish her own government, how much wealth had come into the possession of the Church. It was the policy of the clergy to conceal the financial prosperity of the Church. When the patriots began to exercise their influence, they were amazed and over-awed at the power of the Church, represented by her immense wealth. And yet with all this the people remained in ignorance. It was used in building costly cathedrals of mocking splendor. Millions upon millions of gold, silver, and precious stones were expended on the dresses and adornments of the images of the Virgin, and of the Saints, and on priestly robes. The wealth was used to attract, to awe, to dazzle, but not to uplift, or to educate, or to enlighten.

The Church allowed the oppressors and exploiters to have a free hand. The avowed purpose of the conquests in America were to extend the sway of the Church, and there is no doubt that among the Franciscan and Dominican missionaries there were some devoted and sacrificing men. Las Casas, the priest-historian of the time of Cortez, says of the fortune which the conqueror had gathered in Cuba before coming to Mexico, "God, who alone knows at what cost of Indian lives it was obtained, will take account of

it." These early monks raised their voices against the oppression of the people by the ruling classes, but with the passing years the Church itself, as was inevitable with the Romish system where it has full sway, imposed almost intolerable burdens on the people, and her voice of protest against the abuses of others was either entirely hushed or of no force.

The Church in Mexico has from the beginning opposed the efforts of the people to establish a free independent and just government. When Hidalgo, "the Washington of Mexico," raised the cry for independence, he was degraded from the priesthood, and excommunicated from the Catholic Church. When Jose Maria Morelos joined himself to Hidalgo and his associates, he was covered with ignomy by the Church. When Jaurez promulgated the Reform Laws, and the Reform Constitution, and secured their adoption, he did it only after a prolonged and desperate conflict with the clerical party. The Pope, in denouncing these laws, said, "Let it be understood that the Roman Catholic Church declares such laws as these, wherever they may be enacted, to be null and void."

"It is clear that Mexican Church held the people in ignorance and treated them most unjustly. She was greedy for wealth, and has used much of that wealth for unholy and frivolous ends. More serious by far has been her attitude of persistent opposition to the people in their struggle for liberty."

II. *The Cure.*

I am conscious that this is a very incomplete account of the influences that have brought Mexico to her present condition. I have not dwelt on the conditions themselves—of the moral, intellectual and physical ills. These exist: There is ignorance, which is the mother of evil; there are wanting moral sanctions—there is great poverty; there is the degrading place given to women. We have heard of the bad conditions in Mexico. But we believe they are improving. We are sure there is a cure for all of them. God never intended for any people to struggle on hopelessly. He supplied the remedy for all human ills long ago. This remedy has never been applied to Mexico. This remedy is faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Such a faith as will give power to overcome sin, and live righteous lives.

Our study of the causes of the failures help us here in applying the remedy. In seeking to help Mexico, we must remember that the best way to help her is to help Mexico to help herself. Mexico must be put in touch with the principles and with a power that will enable them to work out their own salvation. Here history helps us as we seek for these principles, and this power Mexico is, and ever has been, in the bondage of Medieval superstitions and oppressions. There needs to be applied the force that enabled Europe to break away from this bondage in the sixteenth century. This force was the great doctrines of the Protestant Reformation. The principles of the Reformation have hardly more than begun to operate in Mexico. This is the remedy for Mexico's ills; the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ; the doctrine of the risen Christ as our only Saviour; the doctrine of the souls communion with God directly, the doctrine of the entire separation of Church and State. These and other great principles of the faith which were discovered and restated again during that historic period, and the discovery and restatement of which gave us the modern world.

This is the cure needed for Mexico, because these principles and these doctrines discovers and develops the common man. He has hardly been discovered in Mexico. He is there; he has great possibilities and powers, but these are undiscovered. We have but to observe history to recall how these great doctrines took hold of the down-trodden people of Europe and taught them to look into the faces of nobles and kings, and not be ashamed; it took the poor commons of the country and raised them into men who could not again be forced to submit to tyranny. These doctrines make their appeal to the great masses of people, teaching them as a Divine revelation, that natural equality of man. These doctrines oppose hereditary bondage, and reveals man in his worth and dignity, called of God, heir of Heaven. They take the trader at his counter, the digger in his field, the high and the low, and under their life-giving power raise them to the dignity of the sons of God. There will be a New Mexico indeed, when God touches and awakens and raises up the multitudes who are now in bondage.

These principles give liberty to the nations where they are taught and believed and observed. This follows closely on the discovery which it makes of the common man. The fundamental axiom

of modern democracy is that "All men are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights," These principles stand for a system of popular government according to law; it provides a true authority, resting humanly speaking, on the consent of the governed. The governments are for the good of man. Man is not created for them. There is nothing finer in the history of Mexico, than the stubborn determination with which against great odds of discouragement, the people have held onto their ideal of popular government. They have struggled against foreign powers, and against dictators of their own nation, and yet in all this long weary struggle, measuring now a full century since the first great effort was made to establish a republic, the heart of Mexico has beat true to its ideal—a government of the people, for the people, and by the people. They need the power which comes from the evangelical faith to give them the ability under God to realize their ideal.

And this evangel reveals God to men and brings them face to face with Him. This is the fundamental trouble with Mexico. The people do not know God as he has been revealed in His Son. And so it comes about that the Mexican problem is not peculiar. Any people who do not know God need to know Him, and will be sick and faint and sorrowful until they do. When they know God their ills will be cured. This is the one universal remedy.

When we think of the stubborn hatred of the Mexican for injustice; of his sympathetic nature; of his generosity; of his hospitality; and of his rich inheritance of talents in the truly fine and beautiful things of life, our hearts are encouraged when we think of what Mexico will be when her people know God.

We are sure that this is not an idle fancy, as we recall the experience of the woman who was ill, and drawing near to the Master in the midst of a throng, timidly touched his garment. Instantly she knew within herself that she was healed, while all the hands and voices of the multitude could not conceal from Him the sense that a hand of faith had been stretched out to Him. So Mexico stretches out her hands today. She needs to touch the Saviour. She loves the Saviour when she knows Him; we must take to her the Saviour's word, and the Saviour's Gospel, so that she may touch Him and be healed.