

AN AVOWAL OF MEXICAN HOSTILITY

DISTRUST of our motives has been exprest from time to time in Mexico, but seldom so openly and frankly as in *El Intransigente* (City of Mexico), which goes so far as to say that even friendship between the two countries is impossible. It represents Mexico standing as the sentinel of Latin America, facing the big Anglo-Saxon Republic of the north and defying it. Our intervention in Nicaragua and our new Monroe Doctrine are regarded as dangerous signs of aggression. *El Intransigente* is especially irritated at the legislators who are always working for international peace and amity, and it remarks:

"The idea of this company of very estimable representatives indicates a candid and patriotic intention, but we share the belief exprest by our colleague, *El Pais*, that they are on the wrong path, and furthermore we must declare that it is utterly impossible to work toward such a goal while a most formidable fist hovers immediately above our heads. Any affection that may exist between the United States and ourselves can be merely diplomatic. In treaties, of course, in commerce and in certain restricted spheres of action, in such as do not touch the spirit of the two peoples, we can be friends.

"Consider the fact that destiny has placed us in a geographical situation of extreme delicacy. Already, and obviously quite unjustly, we have been reproached in the name of the Latin race that finds in us the nearest outpost toward the natural enemy. Not for ourselves alone, but for every group of the great family of the Indo-Spanish that ever looks toward the north with keener suspicion as the northern republic expands, is our position one of profound concern and responsibility. Standing confronted with the United States, we must look steadily ahead, ever suspiciously and distrustfully, in the name of every country of America that speaks Spanish. No other people can have less friendship for this hostile neighbor than the Mexicans. The law that has been laid down in and by the universe, the invincible law of 'they and we,' prescribes a deep and eternal division, draws a line that can not be erased, points to an abyss that can not be bridged.

"And the responsibility for a critical situation must not be placed upon us, it must rest on 'them.' It is they who frown at us constantly, at our life and our liberty. It is they who, from the depths of their souls to the very words of their speech, evince gloomy and acute hostility for us. Is it possible for us to be so slightly human, so absurdly candid, as to respond to such a sentiment with cordial affection or romantic love? Peace and friendship? The degree of them that already exists should satisfy us. So long as 'they' are what they are, it is impossible for us either to dream or to think alike. Our faith is the Latin faith, the faith of the Scipios and the Guzmans. Their faith is the *fides Punica*, the faith of Hamilcar Barca, of the *Maine* and the Panama Canal.

"Never can we unite in sympathy two constitutions, two natures, two spirits rigidly opposite, incompatible, and contrary by virtue of the mysterious laws of humanity."

The existing friendly relations are declared merely a mask:

"It is necessary that we should be friends, such friends as official appearance permits us to be.

"This whole utterance is a defense of our weakness against the menace, the threat, of their dangerous force. As the days pass we hear them repeat promises of respect and affection, and we do not omit to give such promises; they continue to impress us with their grand achievement in general civilization, specifically in machinery, railroads, ships, hotels, the pork-shops of Chicago, the shoe-stores of Buffalo—but we distrust, distrust, aye, we distrust.

"Between 'them' and us, beneath the smiles of ambassadors and behind the hypocrisy of the official note, our soul surges against their soul, their cupidity against our pride.

"Every effort that may be made to join those whom destiny has separated irrevocably will, must be, useless . . . unfortunately, useless."—*Translation made for THE LITERARY DIGEST.*