

*Las cuatro grandes crisis de la educación de México al través de los siglos.* By EZEQUIEL A. CHÁVEZ. (Mexico: *Revista de Derecho y Ciencias Sociales*, 1942. Pp. 46.)

This study was read by the author at the National Congress on Education held under the auspices of the Secretariat of Education in Mexico City on January 14, 1943. This reviewer was present when the paper was read and the impressions obtained then are confirmed by an analysis of the printed study.

Dr. Chávez is a distinguished scholar in the field of the history of Mexican education. The facts of that history set forth in this study are beyond question and the study constitutes a worthwhile review of some of the basic trends in Mexican education.

Dr. Chávez points out that the initial crisis in Mexican education was that resulting from the culture contacts and conflicts among the indigenous peoples of Mexico in pre-Columbian days. The crisis resulting from those relationships, both cause and effect of a religion based on fear and of antagonistic behavior among the important tribes, culminated in the coming of the Spaniards and led into the second crisis which resulted from the conflicts of interests as between native populations and newcomers. This conflict of interest continued throughout the colonial period and resulted in relegating the Indian and mestizo masses to an inferior social and economic position. The third crisis pointed out by Dr. Chávez is that which he calls the prevalence of irreligion in the positivistic tendencies of the nineteenth century. The author dwells at great length on irreligion as reflected in the scientific curricula of secondary education and points out that the irreligion of the nineteenth century projected itself into the twentieth century to produce the fourth crisis. This he attributes to Article III of the Mexican Constitution, which gives control of education to the state and forbids sponsorship of education by sectarian religious groups or organizations.

With due respect for the distinguished contributions of the author in the field of the history of Mexican education, this reviewer cannot help but conclude that Dr. Chávez's bias as a devout Catholic of the old school has colored and warped his interpretations of educational principles and of the recent development of Mexican education. In response to this bias, the author confuses religion with sectarian dogma and fails to see where moral education can very properly take place within the state principle of public education. Admitting that Article III has gone too far in denying to religious organizations participation in education does not justify challenging the right of the state to

control and guide education or to imply, as maintained by the Catholic church, that education is a function of the family and that the state is to serve simply as an auxiliary agency to develop the sort of education which the family determines.

As a review of some of the issues in the development of educational thought, this study is a worthwhile one. As a comprehensive interpretation of Mexican education, the study is too tinged with factional sectarian bias to make it worthy of serious consideration.

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*Passengers to Mexico: The Last Invasion of the Americas.* By BLAIR NILES. (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1943. Pp. 390. \$3.00.)

This is a very difficult book to evaluate. There is but little that is new in it, compared with the excellent works on the period under consideration. There certainly is little in the style in which it is written that enhances its value. Add to this a sense of incompleteness and the loose style in which it is written and one will be justified in asking why the book was published at all. It is not that Maximiliana or Napoleoniana does not need additions. It is badly in need of new studies, for the story has not yet been told, despite the rather large amount of materials already published. The reviewer feels that Blair Niles is a distinct novice in this field, despite the fact that she visited Mexico in order to get local coloring. The reviewer, having spent years in gathering materials on Maximilian and the French invasion of Mexico under Napoleon III, is distressed with this work. He repeats that he does not understand why it was published. It does bring into the picture such figures as Ogden Yorke and his sister Sara; but who are the Yorkes? The drama in which they were involved is hardly enriched or clarified by their rôle in it. Nor is the drama made more intelligible by the rôle played by the Princess Salm-Salm. On the other hand, more of Maximilian, of Napoleon, of Bismarck, of Lord Russell, and of Prince Gorchakov of Russia would have added much, if properly handled, to this great world drama.

The book is divided into twenty-five chapters and a résumé entitled "Remembering." The book is sketchy, journalistic, but fairly balanced. The chapter captions give an idea of the gossipy nature of the work. "Passengers to Mexico," "Sara's Brother," "The Zouaves Arrive," "Circus-Rider Princess." "French Bugles," "Crisis," "The Youngest Toast," "More Passengers to Mexico," "With