

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

A GREAT EVENT IN MEXICO.

During the past month a religious ceremony has been performed in Mexico, which, if it had not been for the prompt action of the United States minister, would in all probability have resulted in trouble and international complications. American missionaries are said to have given expression to their opposition to the adoration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and received, consequently, a number of threatening letters, proving that their lives were endangered. The tragedies of China might have been re-enacted in Mexico.

The story of this rite is both remarkable and interesting. Ten years ago the archbishop of Mexico obtained permission from the pope to place a diadem of gold on the image of the blessed virgin of Guadalupe, "with solemn rite and observance." And in order that the performance should operate to the good of the faithful, the promise was given that "to all those that, in the day of the coronation, or in any one of the seven days immediately following, shall direct pious prayers to God before the said image of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe for the concord of Christian princes, the extirpation of heresy, the conversion of sinners and the exultation of the holy mother church, plenary indulgence and the remission of all their sins, which can be applied by the method of suffrage to the souls of the faithful in Christ that, united to God in charity, may have departed from the world."

The date was originally set for Dec. 12, 1889, but owing to the feeling of hostility between clericals and liberals, the latter seeing in it a political scheme, it was indefinitely put off till the month of October, this year, the coronation itself taking place on the 12th of that month. The crown or diadem is a very costly affair and was placed in position over the head of the image, supported by two angels, by the archbishop of Mexico. Archbishop Corrigan, of New York, was among the high prelates present, and he is reported to have exclaimed in enthusiasm: "Viva Mexico!"

The painting to which the homage was paid is the center of an ancient and peculiar tradition. An Aztec convert, Juan Diego—so the story goes—in the year 1531, ten years after the Spanish conquest, was walking to the city one morning to hear mass. At daybreak he encountered the Virgin Mary who told him it was her wish that a church should be built on the spot where the vision appeared, and that he was chosen as a messenger to convey this to the bishop. This functionary, however, refused to believe the poor Aztec and demanded some sign by which his truthfulness might be established. The sign was given, for, according to the legend, the virgin again appeared to Juan Diego by a spring and miraculously imprinted on the lap of his mantle her own image. Convinced by this, the bishop placed the painting in his oratory and "gave thanks to the Lord and

His glorious mother." The rumor was quickly spread abroad, and people gathered from far and near to worship before the painting.

Such is the tradition, to a certain degree authorized by the solemn ceremonies just performed. That there, at the hill of Tepeyac, was an image enshrined soon after the conquest and that the natives gathered there for religious purposes is a matter of historical record. An early chronicler, says a writer in the Chicago Times-Herald, records that there were a number of places near the mountains where idolaters "were accustomed to make very solemn sacrifices that brought devotees from distant lands." One of these was on the flank of Popocatepetl, where there was an image of Tezucatl (one of the names of the pagan god, Tezcatlipoca). Another was the shrine of deified symbols of the earth, situated at the foot of the mountain now called Melinche, in Ilacala, to which came devotees "from provinces more than forty leagues distant." A third was at the foot of the hill of Tepeyac, in the valley of Mexico. "In this place," says Sahagun, "they had a temple dedicated to the mother of the gods, whom they called Tonantzin."

Juan de Torquemada, one of the earliest missionaries in the country, is quoted as stating that the Franciscans, who came before any others to prune the untilled vineyard, erected a church (in the place of Teotl) and in it enshrined the glorious Santa Ana, grandmother of our Lord, "because it would coincide with the ancient festival and in the place of Tonantzin, adjacent to Mexico, which is, by the indications, the site of Guadalupe, the virgin that is our lady and mother."

According to this evidence the adoration of the virgin of Guadalupe as still in vogue is a continuation of a pre-Christian rite of the Aztecs. The picture is a beautiful painting, representing a woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet and a crown of stars upon her head. It is enclosed in a golden frame and is believed to be a copy of the image Christ carried on his banner in his invasion of Mexico.

SENATORS AND PRESIDENTS.

It is a curious fact in American political history that no man has ever been elected to the presidency who was a senator at the time of his candidacy. The one who came nearest to making an exception to the rule was General Garfield, who was in fact senator-elect, though he would not have taken his seat in that body until the date when he actually took the oath as President. Senators Cullum, Allison, Sherman and others may therefore find it difficult to derive much comfort from precedent, although the first named lately declared that there were quite a number of our Presidents who had first been senators. The statement is true enough, but, as the Chicago Times-Herald somewhat cruelly observes, Senator Cullum does not come within

the historic range of his precedent, for such senators as were successful presidential candidates were out of the first office before they were named for and gained the second. In ten instances our Presidents had been at one time or another members of the upper house of Congress, these being James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan, Andrew Johnson and Benjamin Harrison. But to offset these ten, history names at least twelve who have been defeated either in convention or as candidates; and, as already stated, there is not a single case where the President was elected direct from the Senate and while his term in that body was still unexpired. No wonder Mr. Reed, Mr. McKinley, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Russell and others are not hurrying just now to get into the more exalted congressional chamber.

REVOLUTION IN ARMENIA.

The most alarming news yet received from Asiatic Turkey is that 26,000 armed Armenians are in open revolt against the government. This means that the oppressed people are on the eve of making a desperate struggle for liberty and commencing, if they can, a movement in which the interested European powers must take part in some way, either for or against Islam. It is impossible at present to foresee what proportions this insurrection may assume, but that the sultan considers it serious is evident from the fact that he has ordered out the reserve troops to meet the rebels, and it is tolerably certain that if the Armenians succeed in holding their own for some time, as they are more than likely to do in their inaccessible mountain fastnesses, they will receive aid from other sources. The Greeks, scattered all over Syria, the chief cities of Egypt and the islands of the eastern Mediterranean sea; the Christians in the interior of Asiatic Turkey, and the valiant people of Montenegro and Herzegovina and other principalities in Europe, however widely they may differ in traditions, religion and customs, meet on common ground in their sentiments against Turkish rule over Christian nations, and they would not hesitate to embrace a favorable opportunity of terminating it forever. That the situation is one of grave import may, further, be inferred from the fact that unusual activity is reported among the Russian troops along the southern border of the czar's empire.

In view of the facts it becomes interesting to note the actual present situation. When the European powers first took the Armenian question to hand, they made certain demands on Turkey regarding the reforms needed in Armenia. The sultan for a long time refused to comply, but finally, after the demands had been toned down considerably, he yielded. The reforms agreed upon amount chiefly to this, that in six districts certain officers are to be Christians, and that Mohammedan governors are to have Christian vice-governors. It took five months for Europe to force the sultan