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CAUSES OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE BRAZILIAN EMPIRE

To ex-President Roosevelt has been attributed the statement that there were two revolutions whose motives he had never been able to fathom—the February Revolution which overthrew the government of Louis-Philippe and the Brazilian Revolution of 1889 which brought to an end the only empire in the new world if we except the shortlived monarchy of Maximilian in Mexico. And in truth the causes of the collapse of the imperial regime in Brazil seem at first sight inexplicable. When on November 15, 1889, the world learned that the venerable Emperor Dom Pedro II. had been deposed and a republic declared the news was received with incredulity coupled with a feeling akin to indignation. Outside of South America at least the feeling was all but universal that the Braganza dynasty had become thoroughly acclimated in Brazil; that it was largely due to the wisdom and statesmanship of her ruler that Brazil had enjoyed a half century of almost unbroken peace, accompanied by a material progress which was the admiration and envy of her South American neighbors. Under the liberal and enlightened rule of her emperor, Brazil, the “crowned democracy of America” had apparently solved the difficult problem of wedding the principles of an hereditary monarchy with the political and personal freedom assumed to exist only in a republic. To depose and banish the kindly and genial old emperor, the “grand-son of Marcus Aurelius” as he was somewhat whimsically called by Victor Hugo; to send into exile the aged ruler whose every thought was directed to the welfare of his country, seemed not only unwise but ungrateful. It is the object of this paper to submit to a brief scrutiny the causes of one of the most striking and momentous political transformations in the history of Hispanic America.

It is a historical commonplace that the causes of the great crises in a nation's history, whether it be a civil or foreign war,

or as in the case of Brazil, a bloodless revolution, are apt to be complex and strike their roots deep into the nation's past. The explanation ordinarily given for the overthrow of the Braganza dynasty, namely the resentment of the army at the alleged ill-treatment it had suffered at the hands of the imperial government, a resentment culminating in a barrack-room conspiracy and a military pronouncement of the traditional Spanish American type, is much too simple. If the monarchy tottered and fell at a blow leveled by a few disgruntled regiments garrisoned at Rio de Janeiro, it was because the supports on which the monarchy might be expected to rely were lacking. By 1889, the Brazilian Empire, which to the world at large presented such an imposing front, had in reality become a hollow shell, ready to collapse at the first assault. One by one the foundations on which the stability and persistence of the Empire were based had crumbled.

As a preliminary to our analysis of the causes of the downfall of the Empire stress should be laid on certain peculiar characteristics of the Brazilian monarchy. The history of continental Europe would lead us to believe that if the cause of a monarchy is to become identified with that of the nation certain indispensable conditions must be fulfilled. A monarchy must derive its vitality, and to a certain extent, its sanction, from a national and warlike tradition, a hereditary nobility of which the reigning prince is the chief, a military spirit, incorporated in the prince and finding in him its highest expression, a clergy whose interests are closely identified with those of the crown, and finally a profound conviction in the popular mind of the legitimacy of the privileges and authority claimed by the ruling dynasty. Such a conviction would of course be greatly reinforced by the belief that the sovereign was invested with certain mystical attributes, emanating from the doctrine of the divine right of kings.

In the case of Brazil under Dom Pedro II. these conditions were in considerable part lacking. The Empire possessed a titled aristocracy, to be sure, but it was not hereditary; it enjoyed no political privileges, and the mere possession of a title did not of

itself assure any great social prestige.¹ In other words the titles of the swarm of barons, counts, and viscounts whose sonorous names were supplied by the rivers and other geographical features of the Empire were largely honorific distinctions, bestowed by the emperor as a recognition of public service, or for the establishment of a school, hospital, or insane asylum. They were also used, as in England, by the prime minister to pay political debts or to win over possible political opponents. There was little in common, however, between the nobles of Brazil and the aristocracy of England or the noblesse of France under the ancient regime; nor did the court of Rio de Janeiro reflect the pomp and splendor of St. James or Versailles.

As for the emperor himself he was to all outward seeming the exact antithesis of the crowned heads of the late empires of continental Europe. Of the conventional trappings of royalty, he had few if any. Simple, democratic in his tastes, hating all display and ostentation, accessible to even the humblest of his subjects, caring nothing for military pomp, he might inspire respect and esteem, but seldom veneration or awe. By no stretch of the imagination could this kindly, genial, scholarly ruler be regarded as an exemplar of the divine right of kings.²

Yet it would be idle to deny that during the greater part of the nineteenth century the Empire enjoyed a real popularity and could count on the support of almost every element of the population. Especially was this true in the '50s, '60s, and '70s, when the influence and prestige of Dom Pedro II. were at their height. The army, the great landowners, the professional classes, the clergy,

¹ The Brazilian nobility in 1883 was composed of one duke, 5 counts, 39 viscounts, 268 barons. Widows of the members of the nobility were permitted to keep their titles. Of these noble ladies there were 4 marchionesses, 6 countesses, 7 viscountesses, 41 baronesses. *Almanak administrativo mercantil e industrial do Imperio do Brazil por 1883* (cited by Vicente Quesada, *Mis Memorias diplomaticas, mision ante el gobierno del Brasil*, 2 vols., Buenos Aires, 1907, p. 450). Statistics for 1889 are given by Felisbello Freire, *Historia Constitucional do Brasil*, 3 vols. (Rio de Janeiro, 1895) I. 339.

² In Europe and even in Brazil Dom Pedro often declared: "If I were not emperor, I should like to be a school teacher. I know of nothing more noble than to mould the mind of youth, preparing them to be the men of the future." Afonso Celso, *Pourquoi je m'enorgueillis de mon pays* (Paris, 1912), 247.

were all regarded as pillars of the throne. But as the century began to draw to its close one by one these props fell away; the last agony of the Empire found the logical defenders of the dynasty either apathetic or actively hostile. How is this waning of the star of the monarchy to be reconciled with the real and indisputable benefits which the Empire had brought to Brazil?

This change in popular attitude is to be seen most clearly perhaps in the case of the large landowners. This class, comparatively small in number but great in wealth and influence, had always been regarded as one of the pillars of the monarchy. They formed the nearest approach to a landed aristocracy to be found anywhere in South America outside the Republic of Chile. From the great *fazendeiros*, the coffee kings of São Paulo; from the ranchers of Minas Geraes; from the old families of sugar and cotton planters in Bahia and Pernambuco, had been recruited many of the staunchest supporters of the Empire. It was the irony of fate that the loyalty to the throne of this influential class was converted over night into an indifference or hostility as a direct result of the greatest social and humanitarian reform ever consummated in Brazil. On May 13, 1888, Princess Isabella, acting as regent for Dom Pedro who was then in Europe, signed the bill definitely extinguishing slavery in the Empire. That slavery was destined to disappear; that its existence was a standing reproach to the fair name of Brazil, no one undertook to deny. Unlike slavery in the United States, slavery in Brazil, at least in its latter days, had as an institution no defenders. The cleavage in public opinion came between those who favored gradual emancipation and the champions of immediate liberation. Up until 1888 the former had been in the ascendant. In 1871 the Rio Branco bill was passed which, among other provisions, declared that henceforth all children born of slave mothers should be free. In 1885 freedom was granted to all slaves over 60. But the abolitionists were not satisfied. Led by a phalanx of able and enthusiastic young men, of whom the most noted was Joaquim Nabuco,³ later appointed the first Brazilian ambassador

³ The relation of Nabuco to the whole abolition movement is graphically described in his two works *O Abolicionismo* (London, 1883) and *Minha Formação* (Rio de Janeiro, 1900).

to the United States, they kept up a ceaseless agitation in press and Parliament and prepared the ground for the final act of 1888. Princess Isabella had become an ardent convert to the abolition cause and threw into the scale all the influence of the monarchy.

The most anomalous and unfortunate aspect of the problem was the question of indemnity.⁴ It is probable that the planters would have acquiesced in the situation, even with a certain cheerfulness, had they received some compensation for their slaves. But the abolitionists, who now found themselves in a strategic position, were opposed on principle to any indemnity. This attitude reflected on their part little political acumen or sagacity. The chief wealth of many of the planters was confined to their slaves; to these men emancipation without indemnity seemed to spell financial ruin. Especially was this true in the north where it was hopeless to expect to substitute for slave labor that of European immigrants. But when it became clear that a bill for complete emancipation was certain to be voted by Parliament a curious situation developed. Though the hope of some compensation had in the past been held out to the planters, at the present juncture no one apparently dared to incur the charge or even the odium of pronouncing the word indemnity; this despite the excellent precedent established by England and France in the case of their slaveholding colonies in the Antilles and the Guianas. Even the Brazilian slaveowners themselves, with a delicacy little short of quixotic, seemed loath to mention the fatal word. They feared apparently that they would be accused of placing their opposition on too sordid a basis. The prime-minister, João Alfredo, seemed to have been laboring under the same generous obsession. He made the mistake of assuming that emancipation had become such a national ideal or aspiration that it would be unseemly to tarnish it with financial considerations.

It is true that Princess Isabella had received intimations that abolition, immediate and without compensation, might be fraught

⁴ The act of May 13 liberated 720,000 slaves (census of 1887) whose value was estimated at some 485,225 contos (something over two hundred million dollars). Duque-Estrada, *A Abolição (Esboço histórico)* (Rio de Janeiro, 1918), p. 261.

with grave consequences for the Braganza dynasty. Yet some of the most experienced of Isabella's advisors deprecated any such peril. Dantas, the ex-prime minister in reply to Senator Cotegipe who was opposing the act as being too drastic declared: "It were better only to wear the crown a few hours and enjoy the immense happiness of being a fellowworker with a whole people in such a law as this, than to wear the same crown year upon year on the condition of keeping up the accursed institution of slavery. No, there is no danger. From my experience and on my political responsibility I declare from my seat in this house that today we have a new country, that this law is a new constitution."⁵

The popular rejoicings which followed the passage of the emancipation bill awoke few echoes among the great landowners. Following a natural reaction, this influential class ceased to regard its interests as identified with those of the monarchy. While little if any overt opposition was manifest there were evidences of a strong undercurrent of revulsion, to those who could look beneath the surface. It is significant for instance that within a month after the passage of the act of May 13 a number of the larger municipalities of the provinces of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Minas Geraes addressed themselves directly to Parliament demanding not only indemnities for the loss of the former slaves, but what was more ominous, the calling of a constituent assembly to discuss the whole problem of the future government of Brazil.⁶ Small wonder therefore that many of the planters joined the ranks of the Republicans or at least looked with complacency or open approval upon their anti-dynastic propaganda. The number of converts to the republican cause was especially strong in the provinces of Rio de Janeiro where the saying was current that since the blacks had been freed it was time the whites should be emancipated likewise.⁷

⁵ Quoted in *Anti-Slavery Reporter* (London), ser. 4, VIII. (July-Aug. 1888), p. 125.

⁶ Afonso Celso, *Oito annos do parlamento* (Rio de Janeiro, 1901), p. 265.

⁷ There are not lacking Brazilian writers who claim that the abolition of slavery had no influence whatever on the collapse of the monarchy. Such a one is Sr. Osorio Duque-Estrada, whose excellent monograph entitled "*A Abolição*

The defection of the great landowners and those financially interested in the maintenance of slavery had been preceded by the loss of another element in the population to which the monarchy should logically have looked for support. Through a chain of mistakes and errors which should never have arisen the Empire had aroused the hostility of the clergy even as it had that of the former slaveowners.

The limits of this article naturally preclude any detailed account of the relations of the church and state under the Braganza dynasty.⁸ It may merely be noted that, when Brazil separated from Portugal, the new Empire continued to exercise the jealous and petty supervision over the church that had characterized the Portuguese government since the dignities and prerogatives of the great military orders had been attached to the crown in 1551. This tendency towards an exaggerated regalism was of course accentuated during the despotic rule of Pombal. Of the various prerogatives bequeathed by the mother country to her trans-Atlantic offspring, the most important was perhaps the *patronato*, or right of patronage, a right tolerated, but never recognized by the Holy See.⁹ As the nineteenth century wore on the supervision of the state over the church became more minute and vexatious; every important act of the ecclesiastical authorities was subject to inspection and revision.

For a full half century after Brazilian independence this system had evoked no serious opposition from the clergy. The clerical question, in the sense it is understood in Catholic Europe or in such South American countries as Chile had never arisen in Brazil. From the first the Empire had recruited many of its staunchest supporters from the ranks of the clergy. The most striking instance was of course Padre Diogo Feijó who acted as

(*Esboço histórico*) was published in Rio de Janeiro in 1918. (cf. p. 306 ff.) Yet the consensus of most authorities runs quite to the contrary.

⁸ This subject is treated at length from the Catholic point of view in an able article by Padre Julio Maria entitled "A Religião," published in *O Livro do Centenario* (Rio de Janeiro, 1901), pp. 60 ff. An objective and scholarly discussion is given by Joaquina Nabuco, *Um Estadística do Imperio, Nabuco de Araujo; sua Vida, suas Opinões, su Epoca*, 3 vols. (Rio de Janeiro, 1897), III. *passim*.

⁹ Cf. J. Burnichon, S.J., *Le Brésil d'aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1910), p. 180.

regent of the Empire during the troublous years 1835-1837. The clergy had full liberty to enter politics and there were repeatedly to be found a number of able and patriotic priests in the Imperial Parliament. If, as has been frequently alleged,¹⁰ the tutelage of the state was but a veiled form of slavery the clergy had willingly acquiesced in this servitude.

In 1873 a change came. The cordial relations hitherto existing between the Empire and the Church were suddenly interrupted by a quarrel of extreme bitterness. The contest which has sometimes, though with scant justification, been styled the Brazilian *Kulturkampf*, was in part but a repercussion of those ultramontane tendencies which during the preceding decade had made such headway in Catholic Europe, particularly in France. As was to be expected the movement was signalized in Brazil by a revival of certain Catholic practices and teachings which had gradually fallen into abeyance.

The relation of the Church to the Masonic Order was the storm-center about which the conflict revolved. It should be kept clearly in mind that the masonic lodges in Brazil had up to this time evinced no antagonism to the Church. Representatives of the clergy were frequently counted among their members. Moreover the lodges had entrenched themselves solidly in public esteem through the conspicuous service many of their members had rendered in public life. A number of the protagonists of Independence had been masons. Dom Pedro himself was a mason; the prime minister, the Baron of Rio Branco was a Grand-Master of the Orient. In many communities the lodge had become a common stamping-ground for monarchists, republicans, Catholics, and free-thinkers.

An institution enjoying wide popularity at this time in Brazil was a kind of religious and benevolent association known as the *irmandade* or brotherhood. Though the members of this organization were almost exclusively laymen it was conducted to a large extent under church auspices and was supposed to be amenable to church discipline. Up until 1873 masons had been freely admitted to membership; their presence in the brotherhoods had

¹⁰ By Padre Julio Maria, for instance (*Livro do Centenario*, I. 60).

not only occasioned no scandal but was regarded as proper and fitting. It was not unusual to find influential Catholics members of both the masonic orders and the *irmandades*.

On which side rests the responsibility for the interruption of these harmonious relations is still a matter of controversy. Certain it is, however, that to the exalted, ultramontane elements among the Brazilian clergy such a situation was regarded as scandalous. The opposition to the masons was led by the Bishop of Olinda, Mgr. Vital de Oliveira, a young, hot-headed¹¹ prelate, who had been educated in Rome and had been swept into the current of Catholic reaction associated with Pius IX. In December, 1872, Dom Vital, as he was generally called, ordered the *irmandades* of Pernambuco to expel from their organizations all members who were masons unless they should withdraw from this order, "which had repeatedly been the object of condemnation by the Church."

In issuing this command Dom Vital ran directly counter to the laws of the Empire, as the order condemning masonry had been promulgated without the sanction of the government. The *irmandades*, moreover were not only religious but also civil corporations and in the latter capacity did not come under the authority of the Church. The bishop none the less persisted in his course and when the *irmandades* refused to expel the masons their chapels and churches were placed under an interdict.

The *irmandades* in their distress appealed to the imperial government, which in turn laid the matter before the Council of State. In a famous *paracer* or decision, signed by the distinguished Minister of Justice, Nabuco de Araujo, this body declared that the bishop had exceeded his authority in demanding the expulsion of the masons from the *irmandades*.¹² In pursuance of this decision the government ordered the bishop to withdraw within a month the sentence of interdiction. Dom Vital not only refused to obey this injunction but enjoined refusal on his vicars

¹¹ The epithet was applied by Pius IX. "Que volete? É uma testa calda," His Holiness stated to the Brazilian Ambassador Baron Penedo. Penedo, *Missão Especial a Roma* (London, 1881), p. 19.

¹² Joaquim Nabuco, *Um Estadista do Imperio*, III. 375.

under threat of suspension *ex informata conscientia*. He publicly declared that he refused to abide by the constitution as he recognized no higher authority than that of the Church. The remaining members of the Brazilian episcopate, with the exception of Dom Antonio de Macedo Costa, Bishop of Pará, took no active part in the controversy. Dom Antonio, however, late in 1873, endeavored to subject the *irmandades* of Pará to the same discipline as had been applied by Dom Vital in Pernambuco.

The imperial government took vigorous action to bring to an end a controversy which was filling northern Brazil with dissension and threatening to envenom the relations between the Empire and the Church. It determined to attack the Bishop of Olinda in the most vulnerable point of his defense. In the early autumn of 1873, it sent a special mission to Rome under Baron Penedo to secure an official disapproval of his acts. Penedo carried out his instructions with tact and success. Pius IX., through the Secretary of State, Antonelli, wrote a famous letter to the Bishop of Olinda, formally disapproving his conduct and containing, according to Penedo, the phrase *gesta tua non laudantur*.¹³ The refractory bishop was ordered to restore the broth-

¹³ This phrase was the occasion of a violent controversy which for years raged about the so-called "Olinda affair". Penedo explicitly states (*Missão especial a Roma*, London, 1881, p. 28) that Antonelli read him the phrase from the letter of disapproval, dated December 18, 1873, and addressed to Dom Vital. On the order of the Pope, however, this letter was destroyed and its very existence was denied. But on the occasion of the amnesty of the bishops, Antonelli sent a copy of the famous document to Brazil. It was not published until 1886 when the Bishop of Pará made a violent attack on Penedo in a work entitled *A Questão Religiosa perante a Santa Sé* (Maranhão, 1886). The letter, in Latin, appears on pp. 63-65; the famous phrase beginning *gesta tua* does not appear. Penedo in the following year replied (*O Bispo da Para e a Missão a Roma*, Lisboa, 1887). He denied that the letter appearing in the Bishop of Pará's book was the one read to him by Antonelli, largely owing to the absence of the phrase *gesta tua*. The Bishop of Pará returned to the charge in his work *O Barão do Penedo e a sua Missão a Roma* (Rio de Janeiro, 1888). The truth seems to be that the letter published by the Bishop of Pará in 1886 was a faithful copy of the original letter minus the phrase *gesta tua*. The mystery has never been satisfactorily cleared up. In the course of a series of lectures delivered at Harvard in 1916 the well-known Brazilian historian Dr. Oliveira Lima hazarded the conjecture that we are to see here a wile of the astute Cardinal Antonelli: the famous passage was inserted for Penedo's consumption but was omitted when the letter was sent to

erhoods to their former state and to reestablish peace in the Church.

It would have been well for the prestige of the monarchy had the government been content to let this diplomatic triumph close the incident. But in spite of the success of the Penedo mission the government determined to prosecute not only the Bishop of Olinda, but also the Bishop of Pará, who as we have seen had entered the lists in defense of his colleague. Both men were tried and convicted by the Supreme Court at Rio and sentenced to four years of hard labor; Dom Pedro commuted the hard labor and after two years granted pardon to both of the bishops.

It is beyond cavil that the religious controversy of the seventies seriously impaired the prestige of the Empire. The prosecution of the bishops and their four years' sentence won them much sympathy not only in Brazil but also in Europe.¹⁴ Among ultramontane circles they were naturally regarded as martyrs. The Brazilian clergy, though for the most part holding aloof from the controversy, felt keenly the affront suffered by their bishops. This grievance against the Empire, harbored in secret, found passionate expression upon the advent of the Republic. The collective pastoral letter of March 19, 1890, written by the former Bishop of Pará, now Archbishop of Bahia, and signed by the entire Brazilian episcopate declared: "We have just witnessed a spectacle which filled the universe with astonishment; one of those events by which the Almighty, when it is pleasing unto Him, teaches tremendous lessons to peoples and kings; a throne sud-

Dom Vital. On this whole subject, *cf.*, in addition to the works already noted: Nabuco, *Um Estadista do Imperio*, III. 364-415; Padre Julio Maria, *op. cit.* 91 ff.; Padre Raphael M. Galanti, S.J., *Compendio da Historia do Brasil* 5 vols. (São Paulo, 1910), V. 32-37; J. Bourniehon, *op. cit.*; Louis de Gonzague, *Une page de l'histoire du Brésil*; *Mgr. Vital, évêque d'Olinda* (Paris, 1917); Alexandre José Barbosa Lima, "Frei Vital (Bispo de Olinda)" *Revista do Instituto Historico*, 1908, pt. II. 145-152.

¹⁴ During his imprisonment Dom Vital was comfortably installed on the Isla de Cobras (Snake Island) where he was allowed many privileges and permitted freely to see his friends. The French papers of the time—'74, '75—under the reactionary influence of Marshal MacMahon and the dynastic aspirations of the Count of Chambord took up the defense of the prelate and described him as being surrounded by reptiles.

denly precipitated into the abyss which dissolvent principles, flourishing in its very shadow, had during a few years dug for it."¹⁵

One of the prime factors in the collapse of the Empire was of course the growing sentiment in favor of a republic as the ideal type of government. The very name republic had a certain magical appeal among a people whose political thinking was for the most part immature. That the free soil of America, the continent of liberty, should be the seat of an empire ruled over by the scion of an old world dynasty seemed to such Brazilians illogical and absurd. *O Imperio è planta exotica no continente americano*¹⁶ was a phrase which steadily gained currency in the press and finally was heard even in Parliament. Such ideas found most ready lodgement among the professional classes, especially the lawyers and journalists. Towards the end the officers of the army became inoculated with the republican virus and, for reasons which have already been noted, republican propaganda in the last days of the Empire made rapid headway among the planters and the clergy.

A clear distinction is of course to be made between the republican ideal on the one hand, and the Republican Party, fostered by republican propaganda on the other. While the latter did not make its appearance until 1870 the former antedated the independence of Brazil and harks back in fact to the period of the French Revolution. It is a fact worthy of note that almost every political upheaval in France has had its reverberation in Brazil. In 1789 broke out the ill-starred revolution in Minas Geraes headed by Tiradentes. The July Revolution which brought Louis Philippe to the French throne was not unrelated to the forced abdication and banishment of the dictatorial Dom Pedro I. in 1831. While the Brazilian Empire had by the middle of the century struck its roots too deep to be seriously affected by the proclamation of the Second Republic in France in 1848,¹⁷ the republican spirit was by no means extinct.

¹⁵ Text given in *Livro do Centenario*, I. 108.

¹⁶ "The Empire is an exotic plant on the American continent". Cf. Ernesto Mattoso, *Cousas de meu tempo* (Bordeaux, 1915), p. 12.

¹⁷ It is difficult to establish any direct connection between the February Revolution in France and the so-called "Revolução Praieira" which broke out in Pernambuco in 1848 and was the last civil war under the Empire.

It was not until 1870, however, that these vague republican aspirations crystallized into a definite political organization, with a program and plan of campaign. Once more the direct impetus came from abroad. The establishment of the Third Republic in France and the temporary overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy in Spain awoke powerful echoes in the only monarchy in the new world.¹⁸ On December 3, 1870, a number of the most enthusiastic of the Brazilian Republicans put forth a Manifesto destined to become famous, as it marked the beginning of a political agitation which finished only with the collapse of the Empire. This document, which was published in the first number of *A Republica*, the official organ of the new party, consists of a "Statement of Motives", followed by an "Historical Retrospect". In the latter we are informed that "the Empire has filched from the Brazilians the glorious conquests sought for by the Wars of Independence in 1822 and 1831. Liberty in appearance, despotism in reality—the form disguising the substance—such is the characteristic of our constitutional system". After a lengthy arraignment of both the spirit and organization of the Empire the Manifesto closes with an eloquent appeal to "American ideals". This document was signed by 57 Brazilians, among whom were a number who sprang into prominence in the overthrow of the Empire.¹⁹

The extravagant hopes of the signers of the Manifesto proved to be premature and with little foundation in fact. The new party, after being a nine days' wonder, caused scarcely a ripple of

¹⁸ Not inaptly has it been said that Gambetta and Castellar were the god-fathers of the Brazilian Republican Party. The former sent a cryptic letter of encouragement without offering any practical suggestions; the latter was much more to the point. He despatched an envoy versed in all the wiles of republican intrigue as practiced in Spain. In initiating the Brazilians into the theories and practices of republican propaganda he pointed out that the all essential thing was "to know how to escape."

¹⁹ E.g., Aristides Lobo, and Quintino Bocayuva, ministers of the interior and foreign affairs, respectively, under the provisional government. The complete list of signers is given in Mattoso, p. 21. Cf. Pereira da Silva, *Memorias de meu tempo* (Rio de Janeiro, 1895) II. 163.

There were a considerable number of defections from the ranks of the Republicans, including their most distinguished representative, Conselheiro Lafayette Rodrigues Pereira, who became prime minister in 1883.

excitement on the placid current of Brazilian political life. The people as a whole were indifferent, the paper *A Republica*, launched with such a flourish of trumpets, died of inanition after a precarious existence of barely four years.²⁰

For the next decade and a half the movement grew slowly and adhesions were comparatively few. Its greatest vitality was to be found not in the Capital but in the provinces, particularly in São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul. Small but active clubs sprang into existence and in São Paulo a number of Republican Congresses were held. In this province the movement was largely under the guidance of two young and able lawyers, Manuel de Campos Salles and Prudente de Moraes Barros, both of whom became presidents of the Republic. It was not until 1884 that the Republican Party entered its candidates for election to Parliament. Although they gained three seats in the parliamentary session of 1885,²¹ their candidates were defeated in subsequent elections and it was not until the last year of the Empire that republican deputies were again returned.²²

The abolition of slavery in 1888 was a turning point in the history of the Republican Party.²³ We have seen that many of the

²⁰ It is not without interest to note the reaction of the emperor to the new party and its Manifesto. The prime minister, Marquis of São Vicente, informed Dom Pedro on the publication of this document that the imperial government should adopt as an unswerving line of conduct the policy of giving no public office to Republicans. The emperor replied: "Let the country govern itself as it desires and let the best side win (*o de razao a quem tiver*)." The prime minister somewhat scandalized pointed out that the monarchy was a dogma of the constitution and was incarnated (*encarnada*) in the person of the emperor. "In that case," replied Dom Pedro with a laugh; "if the Brazilians do not wish me for their emperor, I will go and be a professor." Nabuco, *Um Estadista do Imperio*, III, 192.

²¹ The three deputies were Prudente de Moraes and Campos Salles from São Paulo and Alvaro Botelho from Minas. Galanti, V, 95 gives excerpts of Campos Salles' maiden speech in which he makes his profession of faith.

²² This failure to return Republicans to Parliament was not due entirely to lack of popular support. Almost invariably the Liberals and Conservatives combined forces against the candidates of the new party. The high property qualifications of the electorate and the pressure exerted by the government were also factors in their defeat.

²³ Among the histories of the republican movement in Brazil two may be singled out for special mention. Both were written by partisans of the movement

slaveowners, as well as brokers and others identified with agricultural interests, enrolled in the new party or gave it their moral support. The Republicans in turn were quick to seize upon the occasion and proceeded to capitalize their advantage to the full. Hitherto republican agitation had been carried on sporadically and without system. It was now determined to launch an unremitting propaganda through the length and breadth of the Empire. The number of republican papers, especially in the provinces increased by leaps and bounds until in 1889 they amounted to 88. While few of the metropolitan dailies adopted republicanism as their credo a number were of immense indirect assistance through their unsparing attacks on the government. The Republicans also exploited for their own interest a section of the papers, particularly in the case of the great *Jornal do Commercio*, called *publicações a pedidos*, open to any type or class of contribution on the payment of a relatively small sum.

Republican agitation was by no means confined to the press. In the last years of the monarchy apostles of the new faith went up and down the land, holding public meetings, and winning proselytes to the cause. Of these itinerant propagandists the most picturesque and important was a young man named Silva Jardim, whose tragic death²⁴ shortly after the advent of the Republic, helped to invest his exploits with a legendary and heroic character having little warrant in cold fact. This remarkable man, of whose ability and intellectual endowments differing views are held by his own countrymen, seems to have had little appreciation of the common proprieties of life. But he was enflamed

and both show the partisan's impatience with the arguments of their adversaries. Christiano B. Ottoni, *O Advento da Republica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1890) is the work of one of signers of the Manifesto of 1871, a distinguished engineer (he was director of the Dom Pedro II. Railroad), and for a number of years member of Parliament. His book, however, is not written *sine ira et studio* and his statements should be checked up by the reply written by the Viscount of Ouro Preto (the last Prime minister of the Empire) in his *Advento da Dictadura Militar no Brazil* (Paris, 1891), 127 ff. *L'Idée républicaine au Brésil*, by Oscar d'Aranjo (Paris, 1893) is an uncritical history of the republican movement.

²⁴ He lost his life in 1891 through the caving in of the rim of the crater of Mount Vesuvius. Jardim has given an entertaining account of his journeys of propaganda in his *Memorias e Viagens, Campanha de um Propagandista* (Lisboa, 1891).

with the zeal of a fanatic and possessed a certain magnetism which carried his audiences with him. Within a period of little less than two years—from January, 1888 to November 15, 1889—he passed through entire provinces, speaking in hundreds of towns and cities, heartening his coreligionists, converting the undecided and even the hostile. His tour through North Brazil in 1889 when he dogged the heels of the Prince Consort, Count d'Eu, who had undertaken this journey to revive the prestige of the monarchy, is regarded by his admirers as his greatest triumph.

It is difficult accurately to appraise the results of this republican propaganda. While converts were undoubtedly made, their number and importance may easily be exaggerated. Aside from a few zealots like Jardim and a group of able journalists and politicians in the provincial capitals the number of avowed Republicans was comparatively small. Perhaps their most striking success—if success it may be called—was to lower the prestige of the monarchy. The evidence seems to be overwhelming that in political matters the great bulk of the Brazilians were inclined to be apathetic; nowhere, outside of certain restricted circles, was there any insistent or overwhelming demand for the abolition, much less the violent overthrow, of the existing regime.

But the Republicans, even had they been much more numerous, would have been incapable of consummating the overthrow of the monarchy had its supporters rallied vigorously to its defense. Unfortunately many of this class had grown lukewarm in their devotion and loyalty to the Empire;²⁵ others played directly into the hands of the Republicans through their intemperate, and oftentimes venomous, attacks on the monarchy, attacks frequently motivated by personal pique, thwarted ambition, or merely by the spirit of the *frondeur*.²⁶ Certain it is that in the late

²⁵ Yet this feeling of indifference had by no means invaded all monarchical circles. In 1889, Senator Alfred d'Eseragnolle Taunay, the distinguished author and abolitionist, made in a series of *Cartas Politicas* a dignified and impressive appeal to the monarchical elements in Brazil to rally to the support of the Empire.

²⁶ Afonso Celso (the son of the last prime minister of the Empire) then a member of Parliament informs us that the academic belief that a republic was a more perfect form of government than a monarchy was general; usually with the qualification that the country was not prepared for such a change. "At heart

seventies and eighties the star of the monarchy began to wane.²⁷ There was a growing conviction that the golden days of the Empire were over. Many Brazilians looked back with longing to a generation or even a decade earlier when under the guidance of a galaxy of able and patriotic statesmen chosen by the emperor, Brazil reaped the benefits of what was in many respects a model constitutional government. In the great days of Olinda,²⁸ Paraná,²⁹ Zacharias,³⁰ the Elder Rio Branco,³¹ and Nabuco de Araujo,³² Brazil was a standing refutation of the jibes of such foreign critics as Lastarria and Alberdi that the only American empire had as the maxims of its policy internal despotism and unscrupulous foreign aggression.³³

One of the most striking indications of the decline of the Empire was the increasing sterility with which the two great political parties seemed to be afflicted, a sterility which was naturally reflected in the labors of Parliament. There was gradually forced home to the thoughtful Brazilian the conviction that the Liberals and Conservatives had abandoned their earlier ideas in favor of a sordid opportunism. The complete volte-face of the Conservative Party in 1888 when it espoused the cause of emancipation, a question whose solution logically devolved upon the Liberals, gave rise to the most cynical commentaries.

Justly or unjustly the emperor was also taxed with the responsibility for the political disintegration which appeared towards the end of his reign. There is reason to believe that the charge harbors at least a kernel of truth. During the waning of the Empire, Dom Pedro was a weary, and for months at a time, a

I am a Republican", affirmed many a higher government functionary. Government offices, learned academies, higher schools contained many such. *Oito Annos do Parlamento*, p. 260.

²⁷ This point is freely conceded by Nabuco, *Um Estadista do Imperio*, II. 407.

²⁸ Prime-minister during the periods 1850-1851, 1857-1858, 1862-1864.

²⁹ Prime minister during the period 1853-1857.

³⁰ Prime minister during the periods 1862, 1864-1865; 1868.

³¹ Prime minister, 1871-1875.

³² Minister of justice, 1858-1859; 1865.

³³ The attitude of Alberdi towards Brazil is so well known as to make further comment unnecessary. Lastarria's strictures are to be found in his *La América*, 2 vols. (Madrid, n. d.) II. 453 ff.

sick man. Towards the end his attitude in regard to public affairs was colored with a certain scepticism merging into fatalism. He made little effort to stave off the catastrophe with which he must have seen his dynasty was menaced.

The attacks on the emperor which did so much to impair the prestige of the monarchy had as their chief burden the abuse of those prerogatives granted him by the constitution under the designation of the Moderative Power.³⁴ Under cover of this authority, the emperor was accused of having set up a kind of veiled and irresponsible despotism to which the name of *poder pessoal* was loosely applied. In the appointment of his prime ministers he constantly aimed, it was charged, at maintaining a certain equilibrium between the two political parties in order that the balance of power might always remain in his hands. Though nominally responsible to Parliament, the ministry, critics declared, was really under the control of the emperor. Confronted with a hostile Chamber of Deputies, the ministry was more apt to dissolve Parliament than to go out of office. The electoral system was such that any ministry following dissolution was able to secure a unanimous Chamber and thus remain in office at the good pleasure of the emperor. Dom Pedro was furthermore accused of never allowing his ministers to rise in popular estimation beyond a certain level; nor did he ever accord them his full confidence.

These accusations were by no means confined to zealous Republicans whose stock in trade consisted in disparagement of the Empire. The utterances of a number of Dom Pedro's distinguished ex-ministers have become almost classic. Eusebio de Queiroz,³⁵ after having been minister for a little over two years, said to his friends: "Who has once been minister of Dom Pedro must put aside all sense of shame to occupy such a post a second time". Senator Silveira Martins³⁶ stated in Parliament: "The Government is bad; the system is bad. We are living under a disguised absolutism; it is necessary to end it". Ferreira Vi-

³⁴ Constitution of 1824, Tit. V., ch. I.

³⁵ Minister of Justice in the Olinda Cabinet, 1850-1852.

³⁶ Minister of finance in 1878.

anna,³⁷ speaking of the emperor declared: "Forty years of falsehoods, perfidy, domination, usurpation; a caricature of a Caesar; a prince who is a conspirator." But the most celebrated of these indictments was that of the famous novelist José de Alencar.³⁸ In 1870, possibly as a result of the emperor's refusal to appoint him a member of the Senate, he violently broke with Dom Pedro and in a series of articles contributed to the press of Rio de Janeiro subjected both the emperor and the *poder pessoal* to a scathing arraignment. The sensation caused by these attacks of Alencar was heightened by the fact that less than a decade earlier in a widely-read work entitled "Letters to the Emperor" and signed by "Erasmus" he had depicted Dom Pedro as a model constitutional monarch whose excellent intentions were frequently thwarted by an oligarchy of self-seeking politicians. But in 1870 Alencar entirely recanted his earlier beliefs; the emperor has become a despot while the *poder pessoal* "like a monstrous octopus invades everything from the transcendent questions of high politics to the trifles (*nugas*) of petty administration."³⁹

It is now recognized that these attacks on the alleged exercise of despotic power by the emperor are somewhat wide of the mark. Under the social and political conditions then prevailing in Brazil the emperor could hardly have avoided the exercise of the *poder pessoal*, which was thrust upon him by the force of circumstances. There did not exist that indispensable prerequisite to a genuinely representative government—the expression of national opinion by means of a popular vote. We can clearly see now—a fact necessarily obscure to contemporaries—that the smooth functioning of the machinery of government year after year without a serious breakdown was due in large measure to this tireless vigilance of the emperor. Despotic Dom Pedro may have been at times. Not always were the susceptibilities of his ministers duly safeguarded. But above the interest of parties, of cabinets, of the dynasty itself, was the higher interest of the nation; this was the

³⁷ Minister of justice in 1888.

³⁸ Minister of justice in 1868-1870.

³⁹ A long and sympathetic discussion of the quarrel between Dom Pedro and the author of the *Cartas ao Imperador* is given by Escagnolle Taunay in his *Reminiscencias* (Rio de Janeiro, n. d.). Cf. Freire, *op. cit.*, I. 146.

loadstar by which the actions of the emperor were guided; this the touchstone by which he judged both men and events. In the phrase of the Brazilian historian, Oliveira Lima, "if there was any despotism, it was the despotism of morality."⁴⁰

If despite these attacks the emperor was to the very end of his reign the object of affection and esteem by large classes of the Brazilians, the same could not be said of his daughter Princess Isabella, and the Prince Consort, Count d'Eu. Both were unpopular; both were the victims of charges and calumnies having little basis in fact. More specifically, the princess was accused of being under the control of the church; it was freely declared that on the death of her father the policy of the government would be amenable to clerical influences.⁴¹ As for the prince consort nothing could be alleged against him save his reserved, somewhat formal bearing and the fact that he was a foreigner.⁴²

⁴⁰ In July, 1889, Salvador de Medonça, Brazilian Minister to the United States had an audience with the emperor just before he departed for his post. Dom Pedro said to him: "Study with special care the organization of the Supreme Court of Justice at Washington. I believe that in the function of the Supreme Court is the secret of the successful operation of the American Constitution. When you return we must have a conference on the subject. Between ourselves things do not go well and it seems to me that if we could create here a tribunal of the type of the Supreme Court and transfer to it the attributes of the Moderative Power of our constitution things would do better. Give every attention to this point. Mendonça, *Situação Internacional do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1913) p. 163.

⁴¹ The popularity won by Princess Isabella through her signature of the Law of May 13 was largely dissipated as the result of an agitation which came to a head later in the year. Largely at the instance of the German colonists in Southern Brazil a bill was introduced into Parliament designed to remove certain legal disabilities under which the Protestants still labored. The bill passed the Senate but was defeated in the Chamber partly as a result of petition of protest signed by some 14,000 Brazilian women. The princess was accused of having instigated the protest although her name did not appear among the signers. T. H. Fulano, *Der Sturz des Kaiserthrones in Brasilien* (Köln, 1902), p. 91 where the petition is given. Fulano's real name was Pfarrer Esch. He was father confessor of the imperial family and for many years confidant of Dom Pedro II.

⁴² The Count d'Eu was the oldest son of the Duke of Nemours, the second son of Louis Philippe. He was born in 1842. The causes of the unpopularity of the Prince Consort have been analyzed at length by Ernesto Mattoso in his *Causas de Meu Tempo* (Bordeaux, 1916), pp. 141-171. For the most part they were trivial or even frivolous.

In spite of the alienation of the planters and the clergy; in spite of the inroads made by republican propaganda in the ranks of intellectuals and to a certain extent among the mass of the people; in spite of the waning prestige of the dynasty, the Empire might have lasted many years longer had it been able to count on the loyalty of the army. Without the active participation of certain military elements the Republic would not have been declared on November 15, 1889. What were the causes of the disaffection in the army? What plausible reasons could the military leaders advance for their abandonment of the emperor?

The whole subject of the rôle of the army in the collapse of the Empire is both complicated and controversial. Even now, over a quarter of a century after the event, there exist the sharpest divisions of opinion as to the motives and even honesty of the leaders of the revolt.

Broadly speaking Brazil had been free from the blight of militarism so typical of certain of her Spanish American neighbors. Military dictatorships had been unknown. The higher positions in the government had been filled almost entirely by civilians; it is significant that of the fifty-four ministers of war in the thirty-six cabinets under Dom Pedro II., only eighteen had been officers in the army. While the wellknown pacifist leanings of the emperor were partly responsible for this situation the Brazilian people as a whole were strongly averse to militarism.

The Brazilian army had given a good account of itself in the few foreign conflicts in which the nation had been involved; especially was this true of the Paraguayan War in which both the army and navy added heroic chapters to the annals of Brazilian history. Yet the army, especially in times of peace, had never been a model of discipline. The civil wars and revolutions which had characterized the period of the Regency (1831-1840) and the early years of Dom Pedro's reign had bred a feeling of recklessness and even insolence among the army chiefs. The contact with the Platine Republics during the conflict with the tyrant Rosas and during the Paraguayan War had a deleterious effect. Despite the efforts of President Mitre of Argentina to infuse a new spirit into Argentine institutions only too often the Bra-

zilians found in their southern neighbors a school of despotism and all the evils of *caudillismo*. The chronic disturbance in the Province of Rio Grande do Sul, necessitating the presence of large forces on the Uruguayan frontier, aggravated these evils. Finally the imagination of certain of the Brazilian chieftains was captivated by the sinister but dynamic personalities of Rosas, Rivera, and the younger López.⁴³

During the decade of peace following the Paraguayan War the army became increasingly lax in discipline and morale. The type of instruction given in the military schools indirectly fostered this tendency. As a result of a series of reforms in higher education, science, and mathematics were given the places of honor in the curricula.⁴⁴ The result was that instruction became theoretical rather than practical; purely military subjects were relegated to a secondary place. Many young officers prized the degree of *bacharel* (bachelor) and *doutor* (doctor) more than their military patents. The lower officers began to find vent for their energies in political discussion in which the terms freedom and equality figured prominently; the higher officers were often more concerned with literature and the vogue of the Positivistic philosophy of Auguste Comte than with military tactics or discipline. The privates, recruited almost exclusively from the lower classes, prone to regard their officers as they would plantation overseers with the additions of gold braid and trappings, were so much malleable material in the hands of their leaders.⁴⁵

All public agitators at the time, republican or otherwise, upheld the doctrine that the members of the army were subject to military discipline only when on duty or in action. At other times they might freely participate in public affairs as "citizens in uniform."

⁴³ López especially impressed Floriano Peixotto, one of the leading actors in the drama of 1889. "That is the kind of man we need in Brazil," he said to a fellow officer during the Paraguayan War. Tobias Monteiro, *Pesquisas e Despairamentos para a Historia* (Rio de Janeiro, 1913), p. 118.

⁴⁴ The educational reforms of the period are admirably characterized by Dr. Oliveira Lima, *Sept Ans de République au Brésil*, in the *Nouvelle Revue*, August 1 and 15, 1896.

⁴⁵ Eduardo Prado, *Fastos da Dictadura Militar no Brazil* (Lisbon, 1890), pp. 68-69; Monteiro, p. 123. Prado states that the army was over-officered, the proportion to privates being 1 to 13. *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

In a country like Brazil, in which military discipline is not reinforced by long tradition and in which politics is one of the dominant passions of the race, such a doctrine was especially seductive to those unfamiliar with the problems of government.⁴⁶

Under these circumstances many of the officers began to aspire to a brilliant rôle in politics. This tendency was increased through the absence of any law debarring members of the army from a political career. A number of officers were elected to the Chamber of Deputies and were appointed to life membership in the Senate. Protected by their parliamentary immunities they did not hesitate to attack members of the cabinet including the minister of war. Further possibilities of tension between the military and the government were always present owing to insistence of certain of the officers on their alleged right to ventilate their grievances through the medium of the press.

The historians of the revolt of 1889⁴⁷ have succeeded in creating the legend that the army during the last years of the monarchy was the victim of intolerable injustice and vindictive persecution on the part of the government and that it was only when all other means of redress were exhausted that recourse was had to armed rebellion. But when the specific grievances of the army are subjected to a close scrutiny they shrink to pitiable dimensions. For the most part they are either frivolous or based on a palpable misunderstanding. It is possible that the imperial government treated the army with neglect but there is no evidence that this neglect was studied or due to any animus. The unprejudiced investigator is forced to the conclusion that in the final instance the real grievance of the military was the refusal of the government to grant the army a privileged position in the state. Had Brazil possessed a strong military tradition; had the army been content to eschew politics and confine itself purely

⁴⁶ Once in power the adherents to this doctrine beginning with the chief of the Provisional Government, Marshal Deodoro da Fonseca, promptly repudiated it. Instances abound during the first few years of the Republic. Cf. Monteiro, p. 139.

⁴⁷ E. g. Freire, *Historia Constitucional*; Ottoni, *O Advento da Republica no Brazil*; Anfriso Fialho, *Historia da Fundação da Republica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1892).

to its proper rôle of providing for national defense and internal security, it is improbable that any serious issue would ever have arisen.

The first serious clash between the army and the government occurred in 1883. Under the belief that a bill⁴⁸ fathered by Senator Paranaguá was a covert attack on the army, a large number of officers of the Military School of Rio de Janeiro formed a *Directorio* whose chief object was to launch a press campaign against the measure. Adhesions from higher officials including a number of generals, and even from students of the Military School poured in. A certain Lieutenant Colonel Senna Madureira, whom we shall meet later, wrote a series of articles for the *Jornal do Commercio* vigorously attacking the bill. Partly as a result of this agitation the obnoxious measure was thrown out by the Senate; at the same time the government called attention to the ministerial *avisos*, repeatedly issued, prohibiting officers of the army from having recourse to the public press without the previous consent of the minister of war.⁴⁹

The year 1883 also witnessed an event which filled the supporters of the monarchy with the gloomiest forebodings and served as a direct encouragement to the unbridled pretension of the army. As is well known the press under the Empire enjoyed a freedom frequently degenerating into a license which did not spare the imperial family itself. Under cover of this toleration a number of disreputable and scurrilous sheets were published in Rio de Janeiro. Such a paper was *O Corsario* (*The Corsair*), edited by one Apulcho de Castro. In the fall of 1883 appeared a series of vicious attacks on the reputation and honor of a cavalry officer stationed in the Capital. Rumor had it that the victim of these attacks, together with certain of his brother officers, was

⁴⁸ The bill itself was an apparently innocuous measure providing for the organization by the military of a *Monte Pio*, a kind of loan and insurance association. Details of the measure are given in Freire, I, 181.

⁴⁹ The first of these *avisos*, that of October 4, 1859, signed by the minister of war, declared that "every soldier who turned to the press to provoke conflicts or bring disrespect on his superiors, lays himself open to the most severe punishment." An *aviso* of a similar tenor had been issued October 1, 1882. Monteiro, p. 128.

plotting vengeance on the editor of the offensive sheet. Fearing the worst Castro appealed to the police for protection. The chief of police sought the cooperation of the ministry of war. The decision was reached to remove Castro in broad daylight to a distant part of the city where he might be safe from his enemies. To assure him protection a certain Captain Avila was detailed by the ministry of war to accompany him. But the carriage had hardly left the police station before it was beset by a mob in which a number of officers, dressed as civilians, figured prominently. Castro was stabbed to death despite the protests of his escort. In the official investigation which followed no serious effort was made to apprehend or punish the perpetrators of this crime. Both the police department and the ministry of war were held in popular opinion to have been derelict in their duty. The painful impression caused by this outrage was deepened by the fact that while the investigation was still pending the emperor saw fit to visit the quarters of the regiment to which the suspected assassins belonged. Possibly no single event in the later days of the Empire did more to bring the monarchy into disrepute than the unpunished assassination of an obscure and wretched journalist.⁵⁰

The order issued by the minister of war, forbidding officers from ventilating their grievances in the press, was soon disregarded. In 1886 Colonel Cunha Mattos published an attack on one of the deputies who had accused him in the Chamber of conduct in the Paraguayan War unbecoming an officer. The dispute became so acrimonious that the government felt constrained to act. In July, Minister of War Alfredo Chaves formally censured Cunha Mattos, pointing out that he had not only disregarded various ministerial *avisos* but also the order of the adjutant general, which under date of December 20, 1884, had forbidden any officer

⁵⁰ *Jornal do Commercio*, October 26, 1883, where a circumstantial account of the assassination, which took place the preceding day, is given. Cf. Mattoso, p. 26 ff. for the setting of this drama. The wellknown Brazilian historian, Pereira da Silva, in his *Memórias de meu Tempo* (Rio de Janeiro 1895), II. 262 gives a long but exceedingly inaccurate account of this affair, which he declares occurred not in 1883 but in 1885. Galanti, *Historia do Brasil* (São Paulo, 1910), V. 6-9 falls into the same errors.

from carrying on a discussion in the press, even to vindicate himself from unjust accusations.⁵¹ He was sentenced to a nominal imprisonment of eight hours in the headquarters of the general staff.

As Cunha Mattos received both the censure and punishment without protest the incident might soon have been forgotten but for the unexpected and intemperate action of Senator Pelotas. The Viscount of Pelotas, General Camara, as one of the heroes of the Paraguayan War, enjoyed general esteem and wielded great influence in military circles. As a friend and fellow officer of Cunha Mattos he felt called upon to take up his defense. In a lengthy speech, vibrant with suppressed emotion, delivered in the Senate on August 2, 1886 he expressed amazement at the severe punishment inflicted upon the offending officer and declared that the other officers of the army would see in the sufferings of their comrade an offense committed against them all. "The official who is wounded in his military honor has the imprescriptible right to avenge himself." When one of the Senators interjected, "if the law permits it", Pelotas replied: "I do not say that our laws permit it; I am informing the noble minister of war of what I understand a soldier should do when he is wounded in his honor . . . and he who is speaking will thus proceed whether or not there is a law to prevent him. I place my honor above all else".⁵² The effects of this tirade, uttered by an old soldier, a veteran of the Paraguayan War, on the younger officers needs no comment. The following year when the military question had reached an acute stage the prime minister rightly charged Pelotas with the major responsibility for the crisis.

Meanwhile the government, hoping to strengthen the hands of the minister of war, submitted the whole question of the use of the press by the army to the Supreme Military Council. This body handed down a decision to the effect that the members of the army, like all other citizens, might according to the constitution, freely have recourse to the public press. The only excep-

⁵¹ Monteiro, p. 127.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

tion was questions exclusively between members of the military; these should be forbidden lest discipline suffer. This decision, which played directly into the hands of the radical elements of the army, was naturally regarded as a severe blow to the government. Had it been wise it would have at once recognized that its position in regard to the censures based on the ministerial *avisos*, or even on the order of the adjutant general, was no longer tenable. This it refused to do and as a result soon found itself in a false and even ridiculous position.⁵³

While the tension created by the Cunha Mattos episode was still acute, fresh fuel was added to the fire. On August 16, 1886, Lieutenant Colonel Senna Madureira published in a paper in Rio Grande do Sul an article intended to vindicate himself against a slight which he alleged had been cast upon him by a member of the Senate. The article, widely copied in the metropolitan press, aroused much comment. When reprimanded by Minister Alfredo Chaves, unlike Cunha Mattos he refused to accept the rebuke in silence.⁵⁴ In November, 1886, he published a vigorous memorial in which he took the ground that no law forbade an officer from defending himself in the press, adding that he for one would refuse to recognize the competency of the minister of war in such matters. He wound up his memorial with the demand that he be granted a trial before a council of war.⁵⁵

This protest of Madureira, coupled with the refusal of Alfredo Chaves to remove the censure or permit a trial before a council of war caused great resentment among the military and won for Madureira much sympathy and admiration among the various elements opposed to the government. The fact that he was known to possess strong republican leanings was an added circumstance in his favor. A new and ominous factor was suddenly injected into the controversy when there rallied to his support perhaps the most popular official in the entire army, General

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁵⁴ Madureira's reputation for discipline was not of the best. In 1886, at the height of the Paraguayan War, General Caxias said of him: "He is an officer of intelligence and has shown valor but he is very insubordinate." Monteiro, p. 132.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

Deodoro da Fonseca, destined to be the outstanding personality in the Revolution of 1889, the Chief of the Provisional Government, and first President of the Republic. At this time he was the chief military authority in Rio Grande do Sul and was also vice-president of the province. Possessed of but moderate intellectual gifts, headstrong and impulsive, passionately convinced of the justice of any cause he espoused, he was only too often the pliant tool of men more clever or less scrupulous than himself.⁵⁶ At the present critical juncture he took up the cause of Madureira and granted permission to a large number of officers stationed at Porto Alegre to hold a meeting of protest against the acts of the minister of war.

The prime minister, Baron Cotegipe, whose cabinet (conservative) had held office since August 20, 1885 fully realized the importance of having Deodoro as a friend rather than an enemy. But when both persuasions and blandishments⁵⁷ proved unavailing, he relieved Deodoro from his duties in Rio Grande do Sul and summoned him to Rio de Janeiro. With his own and his brother officers' grievances rankling in his breast⁵⁸ the disgruntled general was willing to go to any length to humiliate the cabinet and render its position untenable. On February 2, 1887, was held under his patronage a great meeting of protest in one of the

⁵⁶ In an interview granted by Deodoro less than two months before the fall of the Empire the following dialogue took place: "Are you a Conservative?" "I am a Conservative because the Conservative Party protects the army. (At this time the Liberals were in power.) I have had but one protector, Solano Lopez. I owe to him, who provoked the Paraguayan War, my career." Ernesto Senna, *Deodoro, Subsídios para a História* (Rio de Janeiro, 1913), p. 19.

⁵⁷ The interchange of correspondence between Deodoro and Cotegipe prior to their break is extremely interesting. After pointing out how prejudicial to the discipline of the army and the prestige of the government the conduct of Deodoro was likely to prove the prime minister intimated that Deodoro might, with his assistance, aspire to a seat in the Senate and to a title of nobility, probably that of "Baron of Alagoas." The general thus summarized his reply: "My answer was that the seats in the Senate should be offered to *politicos* . . . and as for titles of nobility I content myself with a nobility of sentiments. I wish to be a simple soldier; therefore I refuse both gifts, preferring to remain at the side of my brothers in arms." A. J. Ribas, *Perfil biographico de Campos Salles* (Rio de Janeiro, 1896), p. 110; cf. also Freire, I. 185 ff.; Fialho, p. 65.

⁵⁸ In a letter to Cotegipe, Deodoro declared that the wound inflicted upon the army was *forte, cruel e mortal*. Galanti, V. 99.

largest theatres of the Capital. Over two hundred officers were present and the public was admitted to the galleries. From the first it was evident that the purpose of the meeting was to bring pressure to bear upon the government. To the accompaniment of tremendous applause a motion was carried investing Deodoro with full authority to defend before both the government and the emperor the rights of his comrades and his class.⁵⁹ In pursuance of this mandate, on February 5, Deodoro sent an open letter to Dom Pedro. Although the writer professed loyalty to the monarchy the burden of the letter was a recital of bitter accusations against the government and insistent demands for justice to the army. It was a frank effort to override and break down the constitutional powers of the government.⁶⁰

In the face of this assault the ministry fell a victim to divided counsels. When energy and unity were essential the cabinet temporized and fell back upon half measures which tended only to aggravate the seriousness of the crisis. There is evidence that the minister of war favored drastic action: Deodoro should be retired from the army and the Military School—rapidly becoming a hotbed of anti-dynastic intrigue—should be closed. But Cote-gipe and possibly the emperor opposed these measures and on February 12 Alfredo Chaves tendered his resignation. Once again the belief gained currency that the government had been worsted by the army.⁶¹

⁵⁹ The text of this motion may be found in Monteiro, pp. 137-138.

⁶⁰ The text of this and the subsequent letter written by Deodoro to Dom Pedro is given by Ribas, p. 115 ff.

⁶¹ The exact measures proposed by Alfredo Chaves have never been disclosed; that they were far-reaching was admitted by Cote-gipe at the opening of Parliament the following May. Cote-gipe essayed to defend his temporizing course: "It is very easy to advise 'strike, seize, cut off heads,' but in practice we are often obliged to yield in order not to sacrifice higher interests." (Monteiro, p. 141.) The future was to show that on such fundamental questions compromises were fatal. The perspicacious editor of the *Rio News* wrote, on February 15, à propos of the resignation of Alfredo Chaves: "Whether or not the ministry remains in power this abandonment of their colleague in face of such insubordination will not reflect much credit either on their judgment or their courage. And it must be confessed that the emperor has made a serious mistake in not supporting vigorous measures. We are inclined to think that the worst results of this controversy are yet to be experienced."

On the very day that the minister of war left the cabinet Deodoro wrote another open letter to the emperor in which references to the government were couched in even more violent and minatory terms than in its predecessor. To neither of these letters did Dom Pedro vouchsafe either acknowledgment or reply. Cotegipe declared in this connection that "the cabinet would not remain in power a single hour if it ceased to be the channel through which all communications should pass to his Majesty".⁶²

Although Cotegipe had refused to support the minister of war his own course of action was little calculated to allay the growing resentment of the army. On the burning question of the rights of the two officers, Cunha Mattos and Madureira—nominally the pivot about which the whole controversy turned—he yielded to the extent of offering to remove the censures if this were asked for as a favor and not demanded as a right. This compromise the leaders of the army indignantly rejected and on May 14, 1887, was given to the press an energetic and vigorously worded manifesto addressed "to Parliament and to the Nation", and signed by both Deodoro and Pelotas. The gist of this document was the necessity of appealing to the Brazilian people and their representatives for the justice denied the army by the ministry.⁶³ At the same time Pelotas delivered a speech in the Senate in which he warned the ministry of its dangerous course, ending his address with the covert threat that unless the cabinet reconsidered its action the army might be forced to take independent measures to defend its own interests.⁶⁴

⁶² Monteiro, p. 138.

⁶³ The text of the manifesto is given in Fialho, pp. 80-85. The authorship of the document, according to Cunha Mattos, belonged to Ruy Barbosa, editor of the *Diario de Noticias*, a strong, anti-administration organ. Monteiro, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁴ The following excerpt will sufficiently characterize the spirit of Pelotas's address. "I earnestly beg the noble President of the Council (Cotegipe) to reconsider his act, not in order to afford me any personal satisfaction, but for the love of this country. If he refuses to do so we cannot predict what the future may bring forth in spite of the confidence which the noble President of the Council reposes in the armed forces of the nation which he has under his command. The circumstances may be such that they will fail him." Galanti, V. 102.

A way out of the impasse into which the ministry and army chiefs had drifted was at length suggested by Senator Silveira Martins on May 20. The government was invited to declare null and void the censures directed against the two officers, thus bringing the whole episode to a close. After some hesitation this solution was accepted by the cabinet; Cotegipe recognized that it emerged from the controversy "with its dignity somewhat scratched" (*cum alguns arranhões na dignidade*), a phrase which became celebrated.⁶⁵

The heavy atmosphere of suspicion and distrust was only partly clarified by these eleventh hour concessions wrung from the ministry. The military question was suddenly complicated by the emancipation movement, which as we have seen, came to a head in 1888. During the summer and fall of 1887, the slaves, especially in the Province of São Paulo, began to abandon their plantations *en masse*. As the local authorities were quite unable to cope with the situation recourse was had to the army. But the task of chasing run-away slaves was exceedingly repugnant to the soldiery. This sentiment was shared by Deodoro and the powerful Military Club of Rio de Janeiro. In October, 1887, the club sent a petition to Princess Isabella, who was then acting as regent, begging in the name of humanity, that the army be relieved of this odious task. Isabella ignored the petition, while Cotegipe, who was generally regarded as hostile to the abolition movement, refused to act. In practice, however, the soldiery proved a broken reed to the planters, as they rarely if ever captured the slaves whom they were supposed to pursue. None the less the whole episode tended still further to estrange the army from the government.⁶⁶

The Cotegipe cabinet, after having weathered so many storms, was fated to go down to defeat before the pressure from the army, which on this particular occasion had joined hands with the navy. In the spring of 1888, an officer of the navy, Captain Leite Lobo, while dressed as a civilian, was apprehended by the

⁶⁵ Details of the compromise are given in Monteiro, p. 157.

⁶⁶ Monteiro, p. 171, where long excerpts of the petition are given. Cf. also Galanti, V. 49 and Duque-Estrada, *A Abolição* (Rio de Janeiro, 1918), *passim*.

police on pretexts which he regarded as frivolous and subjected to various indignities before his release was effected. The influential Naval Club, vigorously supported by the disaffected elements in the army, raised a great hue and cry, demanding the resignation of the chief of police. Cotegipe refused to yield to this clamor and when Princess Isabella acceded to the demands of the Naval Club and the army, the prime minister resigned (March, 1888).⁶⁷ Still another triumph was added to the laurels of the army in its conflict with the government.

The Cotegipe ministry was followed by that of João Alfredo (March 10, 1888), likewise conservative. We have already noted that the energies of the new cabinet were largely absorbed by the solution of the emancipation problem and the great act of May 13. Partly on this account the military question was temporarily relegated to the background. The cabinet showed, however, that it could act with vigor and firmness when occasion demanded. When, at the beginning of 1889, rumor reached Brazil that a conflict was impending between Paraguay and Bolivia the government adopted the bold course of sending to the frontier in distant Matto Grosso two battalions from the Capital under the command of Deodoro, thus removing from Rio de Janeiro the most important leader of the dangerous faction in the army. Had João Alfredo's successor persisted in this course of action the next decade of Brazilian history would have been quite a different story.

On June 7, 1889, came into office the last cabinet of the Empire. It was recruited from the Liberal party and was presided over by Affonso Celso de Assis Figueiredo, Viscount of Ouro Preto. The new prime minister was a man of ripe experience in public affairs. He had held the portfolios of finance and war in 1879 and 1882 respectively and had also served a long apprenticeship in both houses of Parliament and in the Council of State. He was a brilliant lawyer, a formidable debater, and a sincere and devoted supporter of the Empire and the reigning dynasty.⁶⁸ As a close

⁶⁷ Monteiro, p. 161; Galanti, V. 103.

⁶⁸ The monarchical convictions of the prime minister were put to the test on his first appearance before Parliament. One of the Deputies, Padre João Manoel,

student of political and economic problems he fully realized that the maladies from which the Empire was suffering were amenable only to the most drastic and thorough-going remedies. The program which he submitted to Parliament embodied the most comprehensive series of reforms ever sponsored by any of Dom Pedro's ministers. These reforms included extension of the suffrage through the removal of property qualifications, full autonomy of the provinces and the municipalities, election of the presidents of the provinces instead of their appointment, abolition of the life Senate, reorganization of the Council of State, freedom of education and its improvement, reform in agrarian legislation, reduction of export duties, and promotion of credit establishments designed especially to aid the agricultural interests in tiding over the crisis caused by emancipation.⁶⁹

There is some warrant for the belief that Ouro Preto's heroic measures to inject new life into the decrepit institutions of the Empire would have attained a measure of success had they been granted a fair trial. Early in his ministry he won the full confidence of the business circles of the capital; by a stroke of brilliant financiering he converted a portion of Brazil's foreign debt on very favorable terms; foreign exchange, always a barometer of the prosperity of the country for the first time in the history of the

wound up an attack on the government with the phrase "Down with the Monarchy! Long live the Republic!" a cry never before heard in Parliament. Hardly was the seditious but loudly applauded speech finished before Ouro Preto rose to reply. By the testimony of his own enemies he showed himself fully equal to the task. In a voice trembling with indignation he delivered himself of an eloquent and passionate defense of the monarchy. The opening paragraph perhaps deserves to be cited: "Long live the Republic! No! not a thousand times no! It is under the monarchy that we have won the freedom of which other peoples envy us and we can conserve this liberty with sufficient amplitude to satisfy the most high spirited and freedom-loving nation. Long live the Monarchy! the form of government which the immense majority of the nation embraces and is the only one which can insure its greatness and felicity. Yes! Long live the Brazilian Monarchy! so democratic, so self-sacrificing, so patriotic, that it would be the first to yield to the wishes of the nation and would not oppose the least obstacle to a change in our institutions if the desire were presented through the proper channels." Afonso Celso (son of the prime minister) *Oito Anos de Parlamento*, p. 106.

⁶⁹ *Organizações e programas ministeraes desde 1822 a 1888* (Rio de Janeiro, 1889), 243.

Empire went above par.⁷⁰ His political reforms, could they have been carried out, would have gone far towards neutralizing the propaganda of the Republicans by showing that the monarchy was quite capable of meeting the demands of the Brazilian people for a fuller participation in public affairs. The large measure of autonomy granted the provinces would have met the justifiable charge that the Empire had fallen victim to an excessive centralization. There were not lacking impartial observers who predicted that under the guidance of Ouro Preto the Empire was about to take on a new lease of life.

Unfortunately the new cabinet in its laudable desire to quicken the economic and political currents of the nation failed to attach sufficient weight to what was after all the gravest menace to the Empire: the grievances and pretensions of the military. To be sure, Ouro Preto had some reason to depreciate the importance of the military question. The army, it would seem, had won all its contentions. The honor of the two aggrieved officers had been fully vindicated; the right of the army to ventilate its grievances in the press had been recognized; the ministry, which had attempted to thwart the wishes of the military, had gone down to defeat. Moreover, the first acts of the Ouro Preto cabinet pre-saged a policy of conciliation. Probably at the instance of the emperor, two high military and naval officers, Viscount of Maracajú and Baron Ladario were assigned the portfolios of war and marine respectively, thus breaking a long tradition of civilian appointments. The object was probably to allay discontent among the officers by placing them under control of men of their own profession. As a further concession, Ouro Preto recalled from

⁷⁰ It is hardly necessary to add that Ouro Preto's financial and economic reforms were subjected both during and after his ministry to bitter and at times unfair criticism. Two of the most influential papers of the Capital, *O Paiz*, edited by the avowed Republican Quintino Bocayuva, and *O Diario de Noticias*, edited by the brilliant orator and journalist Ruy Barbosa, kept up an unceasing attack on the cabinet. During the provisional government, Ruy Barbosa as minister of finance drew up a terrific arraignment of Ouro Preto's financial measures especially his plan of aiding the agricultural interests (the so called *auxílios à lavoura*). This attack may be found in Campos Porto, *Apointamentos*. The ex-prime minister met these charges in detail in *A Decada da Republica* (Rio de Janeiro, 2d ed., 1902) I. 3-231.

Matto Grosso General Deodoro da Fonseca. The future was soon to reveal that the prime minister could hardly have committed a worse blunder.

It soon appeared that all attempts on the part of Ouro Preto to bridge the ever-widening breach between the government and the army were fruitless. Of actual grievances against the new cabinet the army leaders had few and those were almost too trivial to merit serious discussion. The punishment of the officer in charge of the treasury guard for a minor dereliction; a clash between the soldiery and police in Minas Geraes; the failure of Ouro Preto to accede to the wishes of the Director of the Military School of Ceará in regard to an appointment: such were the acts of the cabinet, for the most part purely disciplinary in character, which were seized upon by the opposition press and enemies of the Empire as proofs of the injustice of the government towards the military. In the absence of fact the most extravagant rumors were pressed into service. It was declared that the prime minister had nothing less in mind than the total dissolution of the army; as a step in this direction certain of the regiments which were the object of Ouro Preto's special dislike were to be sent to the most distant provinces. The place of the army was to be taken by the police force of the Capital and the National Guard; the latter body according to a plot revealed by the *Diario de Noticias*, was to be armed and placed under the command of the unpopular Count d'Eu. It was even alleged that the government was contemplating the creation of a "Negro Guard" (*Guarda Negra*) to whose special protection the dynasty was to be committed.⁷¹ These charges, capitalized by the hostile press and disseminated by Republican agitators acted as a powerful sol-

⁷¹ These allegations were answered one by one by Ouro Preto in his famous *apologia* published shortly after his banishment. He absolutely denied any intention of disbanding the army; the withdrawal from the Capital of certain infantry battalions was proposed by Adjutant General Floriano Peixoto, one of the chief actors in the drama of November 15; the increase of the police force and the National Guard were fully justified on grounds at which the army could properly take no umbrage; the *Guarda Negra* was a myth pure and simple. "If any accusation is to be leveled at the government it was not oppression but too great condescension." *Advento da Dictadura Militar no Brazil*, 2nd ed. (Paris 1890), 85 ff.

vent to undermine the loyalty of the army and to weaken the monarchical sentiments of the people.⁷²

Thus far the disaffected elements in the army, with occasional exceptions, had not made common cause with the Republicans. Opposition had been directed against the government and particularly the ministry in office and not against the dynasty. In this regard the attitude of General Camara, Viscount of Pelotas, one of the signers of the famous Manifesto of May 14, 1887, was typical of that of his class. In a letter written to Ouro Preto in 1890 he declared that he had not considered the possibility of the Republic during the lifetime of the emperor.⁷³ That the plans and purposes of certain of the recalcitrant officers were directed into frankly revolutionary channels was due in large part to the teachings and machinations of a single individual, Lieutenant-Colonel Benjamin Constant de Botelho Magalhães.

This official, whom the more ardent of the Brazilian Republicans have regarded as not unworthy of the honors of an apotheosis,⁷⁴ had for a number of years been professor of mathematics in

⁷² A topic deserving of greater attention than is possible in the present article is the rôle played by the press in the last days of the Empire. The assaults of the opposition papers, especially *O Paiz* and *O Diario de Noticias*, on the Ouro Preto cabinet and indirectly on the monarchy were unremitting and at times vindictive. In the appeals to the army rebellion was openly counselled. One or two instances may be noted. On the morning of November 9—less than a week before the revolt—Captain Antonio de Espirito Santo wrote in *O Diario*: "Comrades, the moment is a tragic one. The president of the council (Ouro Preto) intends to annihilate (*aniquilar*) the army. We are under the heel of a daring and ambitious dictator." On the 11th, the same writer thus apostrophized the prime minister: "Tyrannical President of the Council! The oppression (of the army) is a crime. The usurpation of the government is a crime of high treason. Comrades! On your guard in defense of the country!" And finally in a series of leading articles appearing during the first fortnight of November from the pen of Ruy Barbosa, the editor, clear intimations are given that some mysterious and dire catastrophe is impending. (These articles are reprinted in the introduction to Campos Porto under the caption "Pronuncieio".) A recent writer (Duque-Estrada, *op. cit.* p. 307) speaks of the Ouro Preto ministry as "Flagellated by the adamantine pen of Ruy Barbosa, who incited and aided the army to overturn the throne, and was thus the real founder of the Republic." It is of interest to note that the preface to this work was written by Ruy Barbosa.

⁷³ Monteiro, p. 147. Fialho, p. 110, gives similar testimony in regard to Admiral Wandenkolk, who was minister of marine under the provisional government.

⁷⁴ He is repeatedly spoken of as the "glorious and immortal founder of the Brazilian Republic", etc. The standard biography of Benjamin Constant is

the Military School of Rio de Janeiro. He was a thorough exponent of that theoretical type of education which, as we have seen, had, in the latter days of the monarchy, made such headway in the Brazilian military academies. The decisive event in his intellectual development was his discovery of the philosophical system of Auguste Comte known as Positivism. The young professor was fascinated with the seductive theories of Comte which seemingly represented the definite integration of all human knowledge; during the remainder of his life he was one of the most ardent champions of Positivism in Brazil. The movement for a time made considerable headway and is regarded by some as one of the factors in the collapse of the Empire.⁷⁵ Through the misinterpretation, wilful or otherwise, of Comte's system, the Brazilian Positivists claimed that they found in their master's teaching warrant for the belief that a republic was the ideal type of government. In any event, Benjamin Constant, partly as an outgrowth of his philosophical speculation, became an enthusiastic convert to the republican cause. Inspired with the zeal of a fanatic he did not scruple to inculcate in his students doctrines subversive of their loyalty to the Empire and to Dom Pedro. His keen intelligence, persuasive oratory, and sympathetic personality caused the young officers and cadets to become pliant instruments in his hands. As a consequence the Military School became a veritable hotbed of republican propaganda. It followed as a matter of course that in the controversy between the army and the government he threw the full weight of his influence into the scale in favor of the military. One incident became famous. On October 22, 1889, a group of Chilean naval officers visited the Military School. In the presence of the minister of war and the foreign guests, Benjamin Constant made an impassioned plea in favor of his comrades in arms, protesting against

that of the Positivist R. Teixeira Mendes, *Benjamin Constant, Esboço de uma apreciação sintética da vida e [sic] da obra do Fundador da Republica Brasileira*, 2 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1890.

⁷⁵ The best account of the Positivist movement in Brazil is that published by Dr. Carlos Rodrigues (for many years the brilliant editor of the *Jornal do Comercio*) entitled "Religiões Acatolicas," in vol. II, 110-134 of the *Livro do Centenario* (Rio de Janeiro, 1901).

the "charge of indiscipline, disorder and insubordination leveled by the government", adding that "they would always be armed citizens but never *janizaries*". On the following day his students greeted him with vociferous applause accompanied by a shower of flowers.⁷⁶

The preliminaries of the conspiracy of which Benjamin Constant was the guiding spirit may be passed over rapidly. Unlike the other aggrieved military leaders he was held in check by no dynastic scruples or loyalty to Dom Pedro; to postpone the establishment of the Republic until the death of the emperor would in his opinion play directly into the hands of Ouro Preto and his plan for a monarchical reaction; moreover Princess Isabella and the Count d'Eu, once they were enthroned, might be much more difficult to brush aside than the kindly and peace-loving old emperor. In fine, it was Benjamin Constant's self appointed task to forge the accumulated grievances against the government and more particularly the cabinet of Ouro Preto into a weapon capable of demolishing the monarchy.

Secure in the support of the cadets of the Military School he turned to the powerful Military Club to which many of the prominent officers stationed at Rio de Janeiro belonged. At a secret meeting, held on November 9, and attended by one hundred and fifty-three officers, he was given *carte blanche* to make a final effort to obtain a cessation of the alleged persecutions to which the army was being subjected.⁷⁷ Entrusted with this commission he called upon General Deodoro da Fonseca, who, as we have just seen, had been recalled from Matto Grosso, and proposed to him a plan of action not only against the ministry but also against the monarchy. The old soldier was not immediately won over. For a time his loyalty to the emperor, from whom he had received nothing but favors, struggled hard against the passionate pleadings of Benjamin Constant. He finally capitulated: "The Old Emperor (*o Velho*) is no longer the ruler, for if he were there

⁷⁶ Galanti, V. 109.

⁷⁷ Our account of the meeting of the Military Club is derived from an article by Colonel Jacques Ourique who was present on the occasion. "A Revolução de 15 de Novembro," published originally in the *Jornal do Commercio*, and reprinted in Campos Porto, *Apontamentos*, p. 961.

would not be this persecution of the army; nevertheless, now that there is no other remedy, *carry the monarchy by assault*. There is nothing more to be hoped from it. Let the Republic come."⁷⁸

From this moment both set feverishly to work to prepare for the advent of the Republic. Up to this time, with the exception of the editor of the *Diario de Noticias*, Ruy Barbosa, no civilian had been initiated into the plot.⁷⁹ On November 11 was held a meeting at Deodoro's house at which in addition to the general and Benjamin Constant were present Ruy Barbosa, Quintino Bocayuva, Aristides Lobo, Francisco Glycerio—all prominent civilian leaders of the Republican party and later members of the provisional government. At this meeting the overthrow of the monarchy was definitely decided upon, in the words of one of the conspirators, "as a measure of urgent necessity for the salvation of the country and the only possible means of restoring the army".⁸⁰ The details of the revolt were then worked out; the uprising was scheduled for the evening of November 16 when the emperor would be holding a conference with his ministry. On the 13th the conspirators won another prominent military chieftain to their cause, namely, the adjutant-general of the army, Floriano Peixoto, a warm personal friend of Deodoro, and in due time destined to be the second president of the Republic. The adhesion of Floriano was regarded as an especial piece of good fortune as he enjoyed the entire confidence of the prime minister and the minister of war.⁸¹

It does not fall within the scope of this article to discuss in detail the actual events of November 15. The military and republican plotters had things practically their own way. Up until almost the last moment the government was strangely

⁷⁸ The version of the interview given here is taken from a letter to the *Gazeta de Noticias* (July 17, 1890), written by Captain José Bevilacqua, to whom Benjamin Constant had related the conversation with Deodoro. A somewhat different account of this famous episode is given by Teixeira Mendes (I. 341): "The general hesitated long in replying but finally he rose with the exclamation: 'To the devil with the throne (*Leve o diablo o throno*). I am at your orders.'"

⁷⁹ Jacques Ourique, *loc cit.*, states that Ruy Barbosa was apprised of the details of the plot as early as September 18.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

blind to the imminence of the catastrophe. To be sure the prime minister was beset by rumors and anonymous denunciations but he refused to accord them any credence. His suspicions were first aroused when he learned something of the decisions reached at the Military Club on November 9. On November 12, he held a cabinet meeting in which he discussed with the ministers of war and justice the need of precautionary measures. But Minister of War Maracajú scouted even the possibility of a military revolt. "Have no anxiety", he stated to Ouro Preto; "we are on the watch, Floriano and I; nothing will happen".⁸² And on the following day this same Floriano Peixoto, who, as we have just seen, was adjutant-general of the army and the recipient of the full confidence of the prime minister wrote to Ouro Preto: "At this hour your Excellency must have observed that plotting is taking place in certain quarters. Attach no importance to it. . . . Trust the loyalty of the military leaders who are on the alert. I thank you once more for the favors you have deigned to bestow upon me."⁸³

Despite these assertions Ouro Preto took such eleventh hour precautions as seemed possible. On the 14th, the minister of war was requested to summon Deodoro and if his explanation of his recent conduct was unsatisfactory to remove him from the army; the president of the Province of Rio de Janeiro was ordered to concentrate such troops in the Capital as he had under his command. Finally the minister of justice was instructed to have the police force and national guard ready for any emergency.⁸⁴

The military uprising, scheduled as we have seen for the 16th of November, took place a day earlier as the result of widely

⁸² Ouro Preto, *Advento da Dictadura Militar*, p. 45.

⁸³ *Ibid.* Attempts have been made by apologists of Floriano to exculpate him of the charge of betraying the confidence of Ouro Preto. The effort can hardly be called successful. Colonel Jacques Ourique, later secretary of Deodoro, categorically states that Floriano was fully initiated into the plans of the conspirators as early as the 13th through a long conference which he had with Deodoro. (Campos Porto, *Apontamentos*, p. 961.) This is fully confirmed in an interview which Sr. Tobias Monteiro had with Marshal Hermes da Fonseca, the nephew of Deodoro and later President of Brazil. (Monteiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-247.) The republican writer, Fialho (*op. cit.*, p. 134), virtually makes the same admission.

⁸⁴ Ouro Preto, pp. 49-51.

scattered rumors, launched on the 14th, to the effect that the government had ordered the imprisonment of Deodoro and Benjamin Constant and the embarkation for the provinces of a battalion of infantry and a regiment of cavalry whose loyalty was suspected. These rumors, utterly without basis of fact, were invented by a certain Major Frederico Solon "as a patriotic stratagem of war"⁸⁵ to exacerbate the feelings of the soldiers of the Second Brigade and cause them to precipitate the revolt by taking matters into their own hands. The stratagem was successful. On the night of the 14th, the troops stationed at the imperial palace at Boa Vista in the suburbs of the Capital decided to leave their garrison and fully armed, to march to the Campo da Acclamação, a great park or square in the centre of the city where was located the office of the ministry of war. Learning of this move through Benjamin Constant, General Deodoro rose from his sick bed and hurrying to Boa Vista put himself at the head of the revolting troops.

Through the vigilance of the chief of police, the news of the uprising of the Second Brigade reached the prime minister immediately after the soldiers had left their barracks. At this crisis Ouro Preto displayed both coolness and energy. He sent word to the members of his cabinet to meet him at the marine arsenal, which was immediately placed in a state of defense to repel all attacks. The police force and the municipal firemen were ordered to be ready to march at a moment's notice. The regiments stationed on the Island of Bom Jesus and at the Fortress of Santa Cruz were summoned to the city.

But Ouro Preto was now guilty of a blunder which made the success of the revolt all but inevitable. On his arrival at the marine arsenal, Viscount Maracajú declared that he would return to the war office, which was his post in time of danger. Ouro Preto strongly urged that the entire ministry remain at the marine arsenal, which in case of attack, could be much more easily defended than the war office; moreover, owing to its location on the edge of the harbor, aid and reinforcements could easily be summoned. Maracajú not only did not yield to these arguments but seconded by Floriano Peixoto persuaded the prime minister against

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* The expression is Solon's own.

his better judgment to accompany him. "The presence of your Excellency," he observed, "is necessary to encourage resistance."⁸⁶ This was the type of appeal Ouro Preto found difficult to resist. After receiving assurances from Floriano that everything possible would be done to put down the revolt the prime minister accompanied by several members of his cabinet repaired to the war office.

Here Ouro Preto beheld evidences of both incompetency and treachery. Nothing had been done to put the large fortress-like building with its spacious courtyard in a state of defense nor had any effort been made to intercept the Second Brigade during its long march from Boa Vista to the heart of the city. Surrounded by treacherous friends and evil counsellors the prime minister was caught in a trap from which no escape was possible. Shortly before daylight the revolting brigade with Deodoro da Fonseca at its head reached the park in front of the ministry of war. Orders issued by Ouro Preto and repeated by Maracajú to attack the rebellious troops fell upon deaf ears. When the prime minister reproached Floriano that such a refusal to obey orders hardly became a veteran of the Paraguayan War the adjutant general replied: "Yes, but there we were confronted by enemies; here we are all Brazilians."⁸⁷ Shortly afterwards Deodoro rode into the great court yard of the war office amid the *vivas* and acclamations of the troops. The revolt had triumphed.

The immediate results of the pronunciamento whose antecedents and character we have endeavored to sketch are well

⁸⁶ In two open letters published respectively in the *Jornal do Commercio* of January 14, 1890, and in the *Gazeta de Noticias* of March 23, 1890, the minister of war challenges this statement of Ouro Preto and accuses him of other inaccuracies. The reply of the prime minister (*Advento da Dictadura Militar*, p. 47 ff.) seems to the present writer to be conclusive.

⁸⁷ Ouro Preto, p. 66. Apologists for the pronunciamento of November 15 have cited this reply of Floriano as reflecting credit both on himself and the cause he represented. It is to be noted that on this theory every constituted government should cross its arms and abdicate as soon as it is confronted by rebellious troops. Floriano's own actions when, as chief executive, he was called upon to put down the Revolt of 1893 were hardly consonant with this theory. Not only was the resistance by the government troops of the most sanguinary character but after the revolt was entirely crushed many of the revolutionists were shot.

known. The emperor, summoned by telegraph from his summer residence at Petropolis, made futile efforts on the afternoon of the 15th to form a new cabinet. But even while these deliberations were taking place at the Boa Vista palace the Republic was proclaimed at the Municipality and the provisional government was organized with Deodoro da Fonseca as its chief and Benjamin Constant as minister of war. At the same time troops were thrown about the palace and the emperor and his family made prisoners. On the 16th, Deodoro formally notified Dom Pedro of his deposition, and banishment from the country within a space of twenty-four hours. The reply of the aged emperor may be quoted:

In view of the representation delivered to me to-day at three o'clock in the afternoon, I resolve, yielding to the force of circumstances, to depart with all my family for Europe to-morrow leaving this country beloved by us all and to which I have striven to give constant proofs of deepseated devotion during almost half a century when I filled the position of chief of the state. In departing therefore I with all my family shall always retain the most tender remembrances of Brazil and offer ardent prayers for her greatness and prosperity.

Before daylight on the morning of November 17, the imperial family was forced to embark on the *Alagoas*, which under convoy of a Brazilian man-of-war set sail directly for Europe. The emperor, already in failing health, died less than two years later in Paris, at the modest Hotel Bedford.

The proximate cause of the collapse of the imperial regime was a barrack-room conspiracy participated in by only a fraction of the Brazilian army whose grievances were skillfully exploited by a small group of determined men bent on the establishment of the Republic. The ultimate cause, as we have endeavored to show, was the slow crumbling of the foundations on which the stability of the Empire depended. We have seen that the monarchy had gradually ceased to be identified with the nation in the minds of the majority of the Brazilians. It had become a thing apart, encompassed with a growing isolation, an object of respect but incapable of arousing, save in a small restricted class, any feeling of self-sacrifice or devotion.

Yet the Brazilian people as a whole had neither part nor lot in the Revolution of 1889. Utterly fallacious is the view, assiduously fostered by certain apologists of the revolt, that the overthrow of the Empire represented a great popular reaction against an intolerable despotism. The rejoicings with which the advent of the Republic was hailed were shortlived and in many cases artificial. The populace at large, after the first exuberance had cooled, was almost completely apathetic and regarded the new regime with a mixture of indifference and cynicism. The true character of the revolution was candidly admitted by one of the leading republican propagandists, Aristides Lobo, minister of the interior under the Provisional Government. "I should like to call November 15 the first day of the Republic," he wrote, "but unhappily I cannot do so. What has taken place is one step—perhaps not even that—towards the advent of a great era. What has been done may mean much if the men who are about to assume power possess judgment, patriotism, and a sincere love of liberty. But at present the stamp of the new government is purely that of the military. This is logical. The work was theirs and theirs alone, for the collaboration of the civilian element was almost *nil*. And the people stood by stupefied,⁸⁸ dumb-founded, without an inkling of what it all meant. Many honestly believed they were beholding a parade."⁸⁹

Whatever may be the verdict of history on the motives and ideals behind the Revolution of 1889 it is even now reasonably clear that sooner or later the coming of the Republic was inevitable. The Empire touching elbows so to speak with all but one of the Republics of South America was inexorably fated to become more and more of an anachronism. Yet he would be quite wanting in historical perspective who with his eyes fixed only on the remarkable progress and achievements of the Republic would ignore or minimize the beneficent rôle which the Empire played in the national evolution of Brazil. Thanks in large part to the ability, patriotism, and rugged honesty of Dom Pedro II. the monarchy rendered the nation inestimable

⁸⁸ The Portuguese is much stronger: "*O povo assistiu bestializado.*"

⁸⁹ *Diário Popular de São Paulo*, November 18, 1889.

services. It supplied the cohesive force which prevented Brazil from falling a prey to anarchy and possible dismemberment. Under its aegis Brazil took her place among the most liberal and enlightened countries of Hispanic America. A half century of almost unbroken internal peace made possible a material prosperity which until the spectacular rise of Argentina was unique in South America. Through its intervention in the Platine Republics to aid in the overthrow of the odious tyranny of Rosas and López the Empire won for itself the political preponderance of the continent. Yet after all perhaps the greatest service rendered by the Empire was to afford the Brazilian people, decade after decade, a large and fruitful apprenticeship in the practice of self-government within the spacious confines of a liberal constitutional monarchy. Thus were laid, solid and enduring, the foundations on which the success and prosperity of the Republic had ultimately to depend.⁹⁰

PERCY ALVIN MARTIN.

⁹⁰ As an evidence of the respect of the Brazilian people for the memory of their last emperor it may be noted that on the initiative of President Pessoa the Brazilian government has just decreed the transfer of the mortal remains of Dom Pedro and the empress from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. Their final resting place will be in the cathedral of Petropolis.