

57 WASHINGTON STREET,

Chicago, Ill., ^{USA,} January 17, 1898.

Sir J. William Dawson, L.L.D.:-
Honored Sir:

A Committee was appointed in this city in April, 1894, to direct a movement to secure for Protestants in the Republics of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia that same liberty of conscience which is enjoyed by Roman Catholics in the United States of America. The American press has strongly endorsed this movement. A letter addressed to President McKinley by the Committee elicited cheering replies from the Executive Mansion and the State Department. A communication from the Department of State, dated June 21, 1897, says:

“On March 31 last the Department advised our Legation at Lima of its hopes that Peru would adopt a marriage law more consonant with the general practice of modern nations, and expressed its concern lest the civil rights of American citizens in that quarter might be impaired through the deficiency of existing law. It was further stated that this Government would be glad to learn that the subject would be revived at the next session of the Congress and satisfactorily disposed of. Copy of your letter will be forwarded to our Legation in connection with the instruction referred to.”

The Committee aims at the accomplishment of THREE things:

1. To secure religious liberty for Missionaries working in the Republics of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia.
2. To secure religious liberty for native Christians who dissent from the Roman Catholic faith.
3. To secure in those South American Republics, the fullest civil liberty for foreigners and native-born Protestants, especially by the legalization of marriages performed by others than the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church.

A dispatch to the Associated Press says:

“LIMA, Peru, Nov. 10, 1897.--A bill which legalizes non-Catholic marriages in Peru, and which makes legal all civil ceremonies performed by the Mayors of towns in the presence of two witnesses, was sanctioned by Congress late last night, just before adjournment.”

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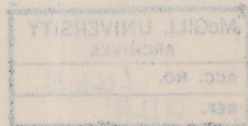
The Associated Press further reports that on Dec. 9, 1897, President Pierola of Peru "vetoed the measure recently passed by Congress legalizing non-Catholic marriages;" that "he gave as his reason the fact that the bill only authorized the registration of foreigners, without providing for native-born Peruvians descended from Protestants who hold to the religion of their fathers," and that "he is about to present to the special session of Congress now in progress another proposal dealing with the subject."

A new measure was afterward passed by the Senate and the House of Peru for the legalization of non-Catholic marriages, and a dispatch, dated Dec. 23, 1897, states that President Pierola on that day promulgated the new law.

As Chairman of the Committee I shall thank you sincerely if you will give your valuable aid by an expression of opinion concerning this movement, which aims to secure a larger degree of liberty for Protestants in the Republic of Peru, and to gain for Ecuador and Bolivia that same measure of liberty which already has been granted in their sister republic. I am happy to say that intelligent Roman Catholic laymen have raised their voices in support of this agitation. The Committee asks nothing more for Protestants in these South American Republics than is cheerfully accorded to Roman Catholics in this Republic, and it feels confident that your favorable utterance will assist largely in bringing about the entire removal in Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia of what the Roman Catholic editor of THE CITIZEN in this city designates "odious religious restrictions."

Yours most respectfully,

John Lee



Mr. J. Lee - Chicago. 1908
Acting "Contract" to Commencement
Letter sent in Nov 98

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As Chairman of the Committee I shall thank you if you will give your valuable aid by an expression of opinion concerning this movement, which aims to secure a larger degree of liberty of Protestants in the Republic of Peru, and to gain for Ecuador and Bolivia the same advantages.

I am happy to say that intelligent Roman Catholic laymen have raised their voices in support of this agitation. The Committee feels nothing more for Protestants in these South American Republics than is cheerfully accorded to Roman Catholics in this Republic, and it feels confident that your favorable attention will assist largely in bringing about the entire removal in Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia of what the Roman Catholic editor of THE OCEAN in this city designates "obnoxious religious restrictions."

Yours most respectfully,
John Lee

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