
SINCE our review of Jean Charlot's exhibition at the Art Students League, which appeared in these pages Jan. 19, the question of Charlot's nationality has been raised. He was referred to in the review as a native Mexican artist, along with Rivera and Orozco, although it was also mentioned that he was born in Paris. Strictly speaking, Charlot's nationality is French; but the strain of Mexico in his makeup is very strong, as the following letter just received brings clearly to light. Except that there seems to be some confusion regarding the actual date of his first arrival in Mexico a decade ago ("one might almost say he returned"), the facts set down in this communication at hand are substantially the same as those given in Anita Brenner's fascinating book, "Idols Behind Altars," published last year by Payson & Clarke, Ltd.—a book that presents a wealth of information about the whole modern Mexican art movement. Charlot speaks:

"I was born in Paris; my nationality is French. However, my family has been closely linked to Mexico for more than a century, since 1820, when one of my forefathers established himself in that country. Since then part of the family remains in Mexico, where they are still living today, others returning intermittently to Paris. My grandfather Louis Goupil married in Mexico Sarah Melendez, my mother's mother. His brother, Eugene Goupil, is well known in Mexican archaeology for his collection of Aztec manuscripts. Another uncle, Aristides Markel, lived and died in Mexico, part of his archaeological collection passing to the National Museum of Mexico City. I left France at 22, in 1920, and have since then worked in Mexico, for some years as a Mexican Government employe.

"My work was included in our first show outside of Mexico, the Independent of 1923, New York. I was invited to show in the Mexican section of the Pan-American show of Los Angeles, 1925. The Mexican Government sent my work, together with that of other Mexican painters, to the group show held at the Art Centre in January, 1928. I am listed for the forthcoming Mexican exhibition arranged by the Carnegie Institution.

"My work is presented and discussed in books on Mexico of such authority as 'Mexico and Its Heritage,' by Dr. Ernest Gruening, and 'Idols Behind Altars,' by Miss Anita Brenner. As to the opinion of Mexicans on the subject, Diego Rivera, in an article entitled 'Notes on the Mexican Painters of Today,' includes me as one of the five painters whose work is reviewed.

"However, my paintings themselves speak perhaps more strongly than even those facts in favor of my being classified with the Mexican school of painting, whatever my nationality."
