

THE OLD SAILOR AND THE RECRUIT



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even the playing of card games without stakes a crime. Then he turned the Socialists loose among all the workers to organize labor unions everywhere.

One organization of the capitalists he protected and encouraged. That was the "Commission Reguladora del Mercado de Hennequin." This was an association which had been formed by the farmers to protect themselves, as they supposed, from the machinations of the American harvester industry. While a few of the land owners had been making millions, the majority of them were barely making both ends meet. The American Harvester Co. was dealing with big fellows; the little farmers had to sell through them and the price of hennequin was often as low as a cent and a half a pound. So they organized this union, each member agreeing not to sell any hennequin except to the organization, the organization to sell to the harvester men.

"That's a fine idea," said Gen. Alvarado, unexpectedly, for all the farmers saw plain ruin ahead if they had to pay real wages to their help. "That's a fine idea. We'll make it a State Department The Governor of Yucatan will be President of the commission. No one may sell hennequin except to the commission and we'll see that you get a living."

He did. Those who had capital invested in hennequin have got a living since, but that's all. The State Commission, when I was there, was paying 7 cents a pound for hennequin and selling it to the American Harvester Co. for 18 cents a pound. Dividends are returned to the farmers from time to time.

With this tremendous revenue, charges of personal graft have not held against Gen. Alvarado. He has, however, most liberally financed the revolution.

Alvarado has practically closed the jails in Yucatan. He freed thousands of prisoners. There is only one jail now, which is the most luxurious estate in the province, and it has only twenty-six inmates. They are paid one-half of the value of their product, by Alvarado's orders, and earn from \$5 to \$10 a week. Two of the prisoners are women. One of these remains in jail only because she won't move out. I wonder if there is another State on earth with a population of 350,000 with such a prison record.

All this is not Socialism. Socialism means the collective ownership of the means of production of wealth, and there has been no great movement in Yucatan for collective ownership of the land. It is, however, government from the point of view of the workers;

and the Socialists and Indians, to a man, are with their Czar.

The next Governor of Yucatan will be Carlos Castro, now general manager of the railroad. He was nominated by the Socialists and Constitutionalists and his election in November is certain. The only opposition will be based upon personal liberty to drink and gamble and see bull fights; but bull fighting in Mexico is a sport of the nobility, and the nobles, in Yucatan, at least, have long since ceased to count.

"Yucatan is the worst place on earth," said an American business man I met on shipboard on the way down. "A man can't hire help there for love or money; and they get so much money that they come after it in automobiles."

I found this to be literally true, although it depends upon one's point of view whether this makes Yucatan the "worst place on earth."

Men as a rule choose their own hours to work, and they knock off during the heat of the day. Then they hire automobiles, at \$2 an hour, and give the family an outing along Meridia's Fifth avenue, the Paseo Montejo. Often they are still in their working clothes. The sight was a delightful shock to me.

Yucatan folk love children passionately. An American Socialist is always welcome among them until he begins to talk about birth control. They show then that they are plainly bored.

And now, Alvarado is dead. Alvarado is dead, laid low by an assassin's bullet.

Alvarado, governor of Yucatan, started the world by his advances in humanization and became so popular with the workers that Carranza and the cohorts of the banking powers dared not try to dispossess him!

Now the end has come, as it came to Lincoln and Jaures. A silencer was used by the assassin, for no shot was heard. Silently the hero of Yucatan gave up his life for the working class.

Weeks ago this occurred and not one capitalist newspaper has printed the news. I learned it from the lips of General Nicholas Senn Zogg, associate of Zapata in Southern Mexico, who received word by special courier.

Details of the death have not been learned.

COURTS ON TRIAL

Comrade Frans Bostrom is to go on trial in Tacoma on January 31. The case against him is extremely flimsy. It is a fight on the constitutional rights of every citizen.

Verily, this court, and all courts, are on trial before the American people. They are being weighed in the balance—and it looks as if they will be found wanting.

Fred Bastian, an old prominent farmer of Coleharbor, N. D., says he received wonderful benefit from Dr. Mellenthin's treatment and now is able to enjoy life again. Dr. Mellenthin & Co., will be in Everett at the Mitchell Hotel, Friday, February 15. Hours 9 a. m. to 4 p. m.—Adv.

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