

# Regeneración English Section

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## When The Shadow Of The Sword Shall Pass.

Roosevelt must be furious. Alone, or almost alone, among the really big politicians of the United States he has stepped out boldly to the front and declared, in unmistakable language, that this country should be ashamed to wink at or compromise the crimes against her of which Germany has been guilty. Most specifically he has stated that no country can retain its self-respect while allowing its treaties to be regarded as mere "scraps of paper" or while finding apologies for the premeditated slaughter of its innocent citizens on the high seas, as in the Lusitania case. This he has done despite the fact that he has German blood in his veins, and German affiliations of great value to him politically.

The press, as shown more particularly by its cartoons, is awakening to the fact that the fight for the presidential nomination will be in all probability between Wilson and Roosevelt. That the latter is gaining rapidly in strength I myself cannot doubt, and I base my judgment mainly on the conviction that, at bottom, the public loves the man who has the courage to speak out. This Roosevelt has. When Roosevelt wrote in "The Metropolitan" that "the American who defends the action taken against Belgium, or who fails to condemn it, is unworthy to live in a free country, or to associate with men of lofty and generous temper," he uttered a sentiment which many Americans doubtless were not prepared to indorse. But it was not possible to misunderstand him. The public likes that, and the public is right in liking it; for when both sides of a case are stated plainly we are able to reach a decision. On the other hand, when Wilson talks about being "too proud to fight," and balances ambiguous phrases with scholarly dexterity, we do not know where we are at. I myself, for example, following Wilson's state ments with the greatest care, for a long time considered him a peace-at-any-price man. Today I consider that he intends, by smooth and tortuous diplomacy, to commit this country irrevocably to conscription. To me the course of such a man is unsatisfactory in the highest degree. Straight hitting from the shoulder my eye can follow and I can understand it. But the Wilson raper-play dazzles and puzzles me. I believe that to be the mental attitude of the average man. I believe we are all justly suspicious of the fellow who is "too jolly clever by half."

Nevertheless Roosevelt must be furious, for he himself has received a blow straight from the shoulder, and by a most unexpected hand. Of all men in the world Prof. Hugo Munsterberg, the most Teutonic of all Teuton champions, has recommended Roosevelt as worthy of the German-American vote! Even more; another of Harvard's German professors, Dr. John A. Walz, nails down the suggestion still more firmly by adding that "the Progressive movement in this country is the attempt to apply German methods and principles of government to American conditions."

That is what hurts, and it hurts because it is so deadly true. Obviously nothing could set public opinion in this country so fixedly against Roosevelt's program as the understanding that it had been made originally in Germany. Yet that is precisely where it

came from, and, in my judgment at any rate, the misfortune into which the German people have blindly plunged, dragging all the world with them, are due almost exclusively to the infatuated enthusiasm with which they embraced Bismarck's State Socialism, nearly fifty years ago. Thence came directly all those imperial ambitions which today are laying the world in ashes. Thence came that all-absorbing bureaucracy which has established its title to "efficiency" by the creation of the most perfect murder-machine on record. Thence came the greatest concentration of authority, and the most submissive obedience to authority, to be found in history. A frightful reversion and, therefore, the most pitiful of tragedies.

Progressivism WAS an attempt to fit Bismarckian State Socialism to American conditions. It was saturated with paternalistic, aristocratic thought, as all Socialism is. It copied tamely all the old devices for helping the masses from above, as by State insurance schemes, old-age pensions, and so forth "ad libitum," which represent in all their crudity the ancient patriarchal idea of the benevolent monarch, the tender and vigilant shepherd, the faithful watchdog who will guard the sheep against the ravening wolves. Such a philosophy and such a system beget sheep. They also beget a certain class of men who feel their mission to act as faithful watchdogs. As I see it, Roosevelt belongs to that class, and so does Wilson. I consider the latter the more dangerous because he does not bark so loudly.

Progressivism, as a separate political party, had its last stronghold in California. I lived in that State for many years, and my own studies and experiences confirm the general opinion expressed by publicists, viz. that no State in the Union has been so completely under the domination of politics and so glibly eager to swallow the State Socialist nostrums politicians are always ready to hand out. The Progressives—for whom, as soon as they became a power, leading Socialists quite logically worked and voted—dosed the people of California so heavily that finally they succeeded in turning even their hardened stomachs. Laws were multiplied until the thing became a farce so uproarious that even lawyers had to laugh. Officials grew in number, until their maintenance, always at a high standard of living, became an intolerable burden. The press was "tuned" by the simple expedient of providing newspaper proprietors and editors with offices. An administrative machine was formed that cut like a Tammany razor; and it would be as omnipotent today as Tammany is had it not gone a step too far in its abuse of the public's patience. Last fall a wave of indignation swept California, and the Progressives got about as bad a licking as any party could receive.

Porfirio Diaz was a benevolent despot of the Bismarckian type. To his policies the unbiassed historian will be compelled to trace the streams of blood that have soaked the soil of Mexico this last five years. The Kaiser and his military entourage are of that type. Roosevelt and Wilson, like Debs and Berger, are of that type—well-meaning gentlemen, perhaps, whose well-meaningness ends in reducing us to the status of sheep at the mercy of the armed guards who look so tenderly after our welfare. They are forcing my native country, England, into conscription—a form of slavery to the State, which she, above all other nations, loathes.

They are forcing my adopted country, the United States, under the same yoke, for when England yields we shall be compelled to follow suit. It cannot be helped. The man with the gun is master of the situation and can make the unarmed citizen dance to any tune he pleases. The military country, such as Germany is, that has made the State a fetter and given its leaders unlimited powers, can take the more democratic countries—such as France, Great Britain and the United States—by the throat and force them into the game of universal slaughter whether they like or do not like it. Just as the State, based on force and employing always the methods of compulsion, dips its hand into our pockets without even saying "By your leave," and orders us hither and thither without troubling to consult our pleasure, so does the more powerful and autocratic State act toward its less military and therefore weaker neighbors. "Play the game!" it says to them. "Your damned liberalism brings our autocracy into disrepute and threatens to drag Authority to ruin."

This is the conflict; a conflict we can no more avoid than we can avoid our development from youth to manhood. We may wince at growing pain; we may make frantic efforts to arrest and set back the hand of Time; we may sidestep, dodge, and try a thousand compromises, but we are not going to escape the fight. Either we work as freemen, making our own agreements, or we work as slaves, taking orders from above. Either we govern ourselves or we are governed. Either we make our own lives or we allow others to shape them according to their arbitrary will.

At this moment the State towers supreme, for we too are cowering beneath the shadow of the European sword. Be not afraid! The wind is changing, and ten times harder it begins to blow from quite another quarter. As yet only the cottages have suffered, but a hurricane is coming that will lay the palaces in the dust. The attempt of the few to run the world has proved a dismal failure, and failure is the one thing humanity will not endure.

WM. C. OWEN.

## Such Is Life

Militarism is today, and certainly will be for a long time to come, the question that will swallow up all others. It cannot be otherwise, for the simple reason that already it is revolutionizing all modern life from top to toe. Our propaganda does not recognize that, as yet; or, if it does, has lacked the energy and intelligence to change in accordance with the imperative demands of changing circumstances. At this writing it appears probable that militarism will succeed in forcing Great Britain to adopt conscription, and tremendous is the power that can compel her subservience to an institution abhorrent to her whole scheme of life and to her entire national philosophy. And America? America, which always has prided herself on her freedom from European entanglements and antipathy to the enslaving methods of the Old World monarchies; America which has been peopled so largely by refugees fleeing from conscription? America also, in all probability, will have to follow suit; will be forced to face the music and fall into line. Even now it is being frankly admitted by high officials that Wil-

son's propositions for a volunteer army are only preliminary to national conscription, which is the real goal in view.

This means the State supreme; this means the complete surrender of all we have been struggling for during more than a century; for, after all, this country has been struggling to stake off despotism and break its way to individual freedom. This means, therefore, a long and bitter fight between the champions of individual freedom—those who do not regard a life enchained by despotic Authority as worth the living—and those overwhelming forces, as they at this moment appear to be, which are pressing us once more beneath the yoke. I care nothing whatever about names, but have called myself an Anarchist because, as I conceive, Anarchism, true Anarchism, is the philosophy of individual freedom; expresses more forcibly than any other philosophy man's right to be master of himself, the moulder of his own destiny, a full-grown, responsible being and not a child to be held eternally in leading-strings. The Anarchist movement, therefore, should be the one lion that bars the way to every attempt to force the collar of arbitrary Authority upon our necks; should be the one to fight for freedom as the one thing really worth living for and dying for. That, as I conceive, is its historic role; the role it HAS to play. But first it will have to strip itself for action by casting loose every one of its compromising alliances with State Socialism, with State Socialistic Trades Unionism, with all those half-hearted, mentally-confused, sit-on-two-stools hybrids who have flocked to its standard and brought it to the point at which it does not know whether it is standing on its head or on its heels. All that rubbish will have to go, and in its place there will then arise, not a rabble of erotic, neurotic hysterics, devoted to the chasing of every new will-o'-the-wisp that flashes his misleading lantern before their dazzled eyes, but an army of hard-thinking men and women, capable of concentrating on the thing worth doing and prepared to do it. That is coming; must come; will be forced to come.

Wells enumerates various forces which, as he thinks, will eventually offer effective resistance to invasive militarism. In most of them I have little confidence, for they are chiefly mechanical propositions, but I agree with the following: "That is one change the war will bring about that will make for world peace—a quickened general interest in its possibility. Another is the certainty that this war will increase the number of devoted and fanatical characters available for disinterested effort. Whatever other outcome this war may have, it means that there lies ahead a period of extreme economic and political dislocation. The credit system has been strained, and will be strained, and will need unprecedented readjustments. In the past such phases of uncertainty, sudden impoverishment and disorder as certainly lie ahead of us have meant for a considerable number of minds a release—or, if you prefer it, a flight—from the habitual and selfish. Types of intense religiosity, of devotion and of endeavor are let loose, and there will be much more likelihood that we may presently find what it is impossible to find now, a number of devoted men and women ready to give their whole lives, with a quasi-religious enthusiasm, to this great task of peace establishment, finding in such impersonal work a refuge from the disappointments, limitations, losses and sorrows of their personal life—a refuge we need but little in more settled and more prosperous

periods. They will be but the army of outstanding individuals in a very national conscription, which is universal quickening."

Addressing 3000 trades unionists in Glasgow recently, Lloyd George said: "This is not a passing shower. It is the deluge. It is a convulsion of nature. It is a cyclone which is tearing up by its roots the ornamental plants of modern society and wrecking some of the flimsy trestle bridges of modern civilization."

"It is an earthquake which is upheaving the very rocks of European life; it is one of those seismic disturbances in which nations leap forward or fall backward generations in a single bound. All this chattering about relaxing a rule or suspending a custom is out of place. You cannot haggle with an earthquake."

That seems to me well put, and I think we should understand clearly that neither in England nor in this country are we any longer interested in the huckstering tactics of trades unionism, its sordid bargaining, its contemptible readiness at any moment to sell out the whole future of humanity for so many pieces of silver dumped down on the counter. When nothing else is stirring the skirmishes of kites and crows may excite some languid curiosity. But not when a battle royal is raging.

Some conception of the frightful wastage of human life caused by this war may be gained from the following, which I clip from the "Thrice-A-Week World" of Dec. 24: "Prussian war losses, totalled in Holland from detailed lists, now rise to 2,287,083. That ratio would give for the empire more than 3,700,000, with some to add for naval lists and for officers with the Turks and Bulgarians. Entente losses, especially of prisoners, are greater still. The grand total of perhaps 8,000,000 is too vast to be grasped. Some measure of the suffering entailed is given by the fact that the Prussian lists alone would fill 100 volumes of 350 pages each." It must be remembered, of course, that these fighting-men losses represent the very physical flower of manhood, and it must be remembered also that they are a mere drop in the bucket as compared with the losses by disease, insufficient nourishment, deprivation of shelter, etc., etc., imposed on countless millions. To get even a faint idea of the sufferings of the common people in such countries as Belgium, Northern France, Poland and Serbia, one should read the excellent accounts by special correspondents which are now being published in book form. These correspondents have been usually picked men, of established reputations, and, as a class, their professional pride has made them eager to get at and record faithfully the actual facts. Great events always beget a great literature.

In anticipation of a Congressional enquiry the Government at Washington has been compiling the reports on Mexico made to it during the last three years. According to advanced notices the reports will show that the Americans killed in Mexico number, approximately, 125, and that American property losses amount, approximately, to \$300,000,000. The Roman Catholic church unquestionably will make its voice heard loudly, for it is said that "there were, approximately, 2500 nuns in Mexico when the revolution began, and that the whereabouts of 90 per cent of these women is now unknown to the Church authorities. Only 250 have been accounted for. Some are in Cuba and some in the United States. In Mexico virtually all religious institutions have been closed and nuns are not allowed to follow their vocations."

Special blame is laid on the Carranza forces, but not one acquainted with the history of Mexico need be surprised at learning that a vast body of Mexicans, and those the most intelligent and best acquainted with their country's history, hate the Roman Catholic church with a hatred that knows no bounds. To them she has been the backbone of landlordism and the great upholder of the various tyrannies which have held Mexico in their clutches from the time of the Spanish conquest.

It is certain, however, that if the landlords get no more for their land than they paid for it, it wouldn't bankrupt Mexico to vote them compensation. Most of the vast fertile tracts held by absentee landlords and by such native potentates as the Terraza family were bought for a few cents an acre. The size of these estates is almost incredible. The property held by Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst in Western Chihuahua is said to comprise 3,000,000 acres. The Rockefeller-Aldrich syndicate owns a 2,000,000-acre ranch in the state of Zacatecas. British and American interests hold under title or lease more than 20,000,000 acres in the Tampico oil region. There are huge ranches and plantations owned by Americans scattered all through northern Mexico.

Most of the property in question was formerly known as "community lands." It was divided into small farms held and worked by peasants without titles. It supported in modest comfort a great population which, since the land was taken and consolidated into big estates, has been reduced to helpless peonage. The agrarian commissions maintain they are simply restoring those community lands to their rightful owners, as an act of social justice and a guarantee of the future peace and prosperity of Mexico. The unscrambling process is drastic, but there is much to be said for it. ("Tacoma Tribune.")

WM. C. OWEN.

## DUE EXPLANATION.

Several of my English-speaking comrades that know that I can make myself understood in their language although that most unfortunately I do not possess so well that I should dare to write in this tongue that is not mine, have requested me to express my thoughts in this page whenever there be space for it, instead of running the large advertisement of our pamphlet entitled "Land and Liberty."

Thinking that they are right in their complaint, and that I should not rob our English readers of such a big space of reading matter as takes the said advertisement, I have decided to do my best to furnish myself enough English copy—allow me to call so my writings in my poor broken English—whenever the copy sent by our comrade William C. Owen do not fill the page.

I hope that comrade Owen in turn will forgive me for daring to spoil with my writings his brilliantly edited page, taking into consideration that as he is so far away from these offices, at Lakebay, Wash.,—I am unable to beg him in time to fill this page whenever there is shortage of English copy.

Of course, whatever I might write, I myself should be held responsible for, because it must be kept in mind that comrade Owen is residing in Lakebay, Washington, and, therefore, although he is the Editor of this page, he cannot look upon my copy before being printed, for this is furnished a few hours before going to press here in Los Angeles, when we cannot wait for more copy from the powerful pen of our dear English Editor.

ENRIQUE FLORES MAGON.

## Will Carranza Do It?

There will be a big howl about the division of Mexican estates under the new government, but not a great many people will participate in the howl. The Carranza policy means in general the restoration to the Mexican people of lands that were stolen from them and given to foreigners under the Diaz regime. It means too, if successfully worked out, the elimination of the fundamental cause of the discontent which found expression in the revolution. Hundreds of landlords, most of them American and British, some of them Mexican, are being stripped of their estates, whether any compensation is to

be made is not yet apparent. It is certain, however, that if the landlords get no more for their land than they paid for it, it wouldn't bankrupt Mexico to vote them compensation. Most of the vast fertile tracts held by absentee landlords and by such native potentates as the Terraza family were bought for a few cents an acre. The size of these estates is almost incredible. The property held by Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst in Western Chihuahua is said to comprise 3,000,000 acres. The Rockefeller-Aldrich syndicate owns a 2,000,000-acre ranch in the state of Zacatecas. British and American interests hold under title or lease more than 20,000,000 acres in the Tampico oil region. There are huge ranches and plantations owned by Americans scattered all through northern Mexico.

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## Mexican Lessons

The Mexican Revolution has many lessons to be learned from by the international working-class.

The proletariat of the world over should learn from the experiences of his Mexican brother, that its emancipation, its coming into its own,—the land, the machinery, the means of transportation, and, in a word, all the natural and social riches,—cannot be accomplished through legal and peaceful ways, but that it has to be brought about by means of armed revolution.

It should learn that whenever there is compromising from the part of Labor with politicians, there always shall be foul game on the part of the latter with detriment to the interests of the former.

It should learn that in order to reach its goal safely and quickly, with the least amount of sacrifices as well as of loss of energies and blood, it shall keep far aloof from politics and politicians of all shades, no matter how big mouthed they might be.

It should learn that to fight in the battle fields to throw down a ruler in order to replace it by another is a futile and foolish task that brings more harm than good to humanity, for it means just to change tyrants.

And finally, it should learn that the aim of the pending world-wide revolution should and must be—in order to accomplish something good for humanity—the entire overthrow of the whole capitalist system by crushing down to its very foundation Authority, Capital and Church, by the expropriation—within the armed revolution—of the land, the factories, the shops, the machinery, the means of production and transportation, and, in a few words, of all the natural and social riches for the use and benefit of all.

All this must be learned by the international proletariat from the experiences of its Mexican brother, and should be well kept in its mind, so as to use it for its own advantage in the near future, when the same hard conditions that it is enduring now would grow worse and so unbearable, as it is growing already, that revolution shall come as naturally as the ripe fruit falls from the tree. ENRIQUE FLORES MAGON.