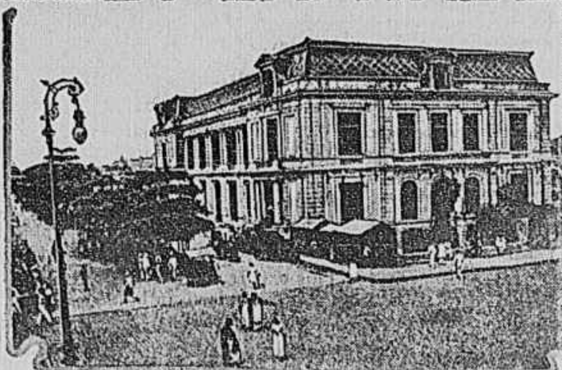
YUCATAN'S BUSY CAPITAL



The Federal Palace, Merida.

SAILING into a foreign port at the break of day appears to be a favorite custom with the average sea captain, and the occasion to which we write was no exception. For several hours our ship's course had been guided by flashes from the friendly lighthouse, and the latter we knew stood on the Yucatan shore at Progreso. The morning broke calm and peacefully over the tropical waters of the gulf, and soon the movement of anchor chains automatically announced that the limit had been reached—the limit of deep water—and five miles away lay Progreso, one of the world's most important shipping centers of henequen or hemp.

Going ashore at Progreso is rather an exciting novelty if not a dangerous experience, writes William A. Reid in the Bulletin of the Pan-American Union. The sea is alive with sharks, and they are darting here and there about the big ship, to the consternation of the stranger. The clear waters which bathe this shore seem to accentuate the size of these monsters, and while the visitor shudders the boatmen on the ship's tender, as we are bounding shoreward, announce that arrangements may then and there be made for a shark-fishing excursion later in the day.

Progreso from the sea presents long rows of houses flanked on either end by miles of sandy beaches, while a tall lighthouse about the center of the port dominates the surroundings. The general appearance is attractive, and even more so when we notice tidy buildings and the cleanly clothing of even the laboring class. The time was August when we arrived in Progreso—about the very worst season of the year for the foreign visitor in Yucatan; but business matters do not wait for the most propitious occasions. As a matter of fact, the winter season in the United States furnishes the best time climatically for visiting Yucatan.

Few Sights to See in Progreso.

Sightseeing in Progreso does not detain the visitor. But the port with its 5,000 people is usually a busy one, as the bulk of the vast henequen crop passes via Progreso to world markets. The smaller ships calling for cargo manage to draw much closer to port than the big ocean vessels; but when the long-talked-of piers are constructed several miles out into the roadstead the handling of the country's commerce will be greatly facilitated.

In the shipping season the town presents unusually active scenes with its trucks, mules, and men. One might imagine himself amid the cotton bales at New Orleans, so much do henequen and cotton resemble each other in the method of shipment and size of bales.

By and by the day grows warmer, and one is glad to board the train for Merida, 30 miles southward. Traveling on this three-foot gauge road is cheap, being only about two cents a mile for the best accommodation offered. Slowly through the suburbs of Progreso our train steams, but soon we are moving rapidly over a level country with a dry and parched appearance, abounding in shrubs, cacti, and coarse grasses; but to this condition Yucatan owes its vast revenue derived from the marvelous little maguey plant and its product. Here and there are breaks in the barrenness and we catch sight of swamps with lilies and other water plants, a relief to look upon.

As our train proceeds, with stops at little stations en route, the cars are better filled, and at the same time opportunities are afforded for getting close glimpses of the henequen workers and their fields of maguey plants that lie in view from the car window. Long before sighting Merida the landscape becomes dotted with windmills, and when finally the capital city is reached one can almost imagine himself in old Holland or Barbados, about the only difference being that Yucatan has the modern-style mill. These windmills explain that Merida, like other regions of the country, must pump water from beneath the surface, so few are the lakes and streams.

Driving About Merida.

After being made comfortable in one of Merida's hotels we start out to view the city. There is no lack of vehicles and the stranger is literally swamped with proffers of a "delightful drive." Most of these small carriages, generally drawn by a single pony, have rubber tires, and many are kept conspicuously clean and inviting looking, despite the dust of the suburban sections of the city.

Merida today claims 62,000 people; and among its residents are numerous families of wealth which have acquired riches in connection with the great industry, the growing of the maguey and the production of henequen. Merida, while not as old as the port of Sisal, dates from 1542, when a settlement was founded by Francisco Montejo on the site of the ancient Maya city of Tihoo. Today one of the most interesting buildings to be seen in Merida is the casa Montejo, still well preserved after weathering the sunshine and storms of centuries. Another edifice which every visitor should see is the cathedral which was started in 1561 and not completed for nearly 40 years.

For those fond of seeing relics of bygone ages a visit to the museum will be full of interest, and especially so if some of the ancient Yucatan ruins are to be seen and explored. In the former one may inspect articles and curios that have been collected from the ruins and preserved—really a link connecting the art and trade of past centuries with present peoples.

Merida, commercially, industrially, and socially has greatly improved during recent years. Streets and avenues have been paved with asphalt, electricity has been provided, labor-saving machinery introduced, and otherwise life and conditions have been modernized.

Climatically, Merida is hot, but healthful. During the hours of midday the sun's rays are extremely unpleasant and the stranger is told to keep in the shade. Cool breezes from the surrounding seas, however, often temper the heat of the whole peninsula. The months of March and April are regarded as especially trying to the newcomer in any part of Yucatan; winter by far is the best season for visiting the country, and during these months the excursion to the famous ruins existing in several different parts of the peninsula can be made with a fair degree of comfort. The temperature in Merida ranges from about 75 degrees to 98 degrees Fahrenheit.

Volan the Popular Vehicle.

The visitor in Merida for the first time will be interested in a native vehicle known as the "volan," which might be aptly termed a half brother of the famous calash of Quebec. The volan has two big wheels and is usually drawn by three ponies working abreast; it is provided with easy-riding springs, a thick mattress floor covering offers a soft seat on the floor of the vehicle, while a top with side curtains protects the traveler from the sun's rays. Highways in Yucatan have not greatly improved with the degree of the prosperity of the land, and the volan seems to be a popular method of cross-country transportation. The stranger out of curiosity, if for nothing else, usually goes for a ride in this rather novel means of travel.

Mingling with the business men of Merida provides excellent opportunities for studying the commercial side of affairs; and I found many of these gentlemen willing to talk freely about Yucatan's future outlook. One of the first things which seems to have impressed itself upon the average resident is the improved condition provided for the laboring classes, such as higher wages for work and generally more freedom of action than in former years. Better wages out on the henequen plantation is of course reflected in the business activities of Merida, for the latter is not only the capital of the state but a place in which everything centers. The working day has been reduced to eight hours, and for this time the henequen laborer is paid the equivalent $1.50 to $3; five days the Yucatecan works and two days of the week are reserved for rest and recreation. On the larger plantations schools have been opened at the expense of the landowner, and numerous improved sanitary regulations are in force.

If the stranger tarries in Merida he is likely to have opportunities for seeing something of the home life of the people. Even during a stroll along the best residential streets a glance into open-door patios reveals charming flower gardens and a degree of comfort and refinement not noticeable from outward appearances of the average private home. Many of Merida's citizens are hospitable to a marked degree, and when the foreign visitor finds favor and is invited to the family circle he is on the road to many enjoyable functions.

CROP PRICES AND DOLLAR VALUES

Commodity Prices Are High, but Crops Are Higher—The Dollar Is Cheap.

When is a dollar not a dollar? Relative values shift so rapidly these days that a dollar has no definite value. It is merely a question of how much of the commodity you want, you can get for the commodity you have to exchange—whether that commodity be labor, live stock, corn or wheat.

A bushel of corn will buy more fertilizer now than it would in 1914.

Every purchase must be considered on the basis of relative values rather than dollar values.

The high quotations for spring fertilizers have caused many farmers to ask whether it will be possible to use fertilizers at a profit next season. The answer to this question may be found by a comparison of the relative purchasing power of crops before the war and at the present time.

In 1914 the usual corn fertilizer cost $21 per ton. Today the same fertilizer costs around $32 per ton—an increase of 50 per cent. In 1914 corn was worth about 60 cents per bushel, taking the country over. Today it sells at not less than $1.20 per bushel, on the farm—more than 100 per cent increase.

The same calculation could be made for wheat, potatoes, or almost any other crop (excepting in the case of those fertilizers containing potash).

Each individual farmer has merely to consider whether fertilizers paid before the war; if so they will pay even better now.

WHY FERTILIZER PRICES HAVE ADVANCED.

Cannon and crops use the same food. Six hundred thousand tons of nitrates went to make explosives last year, in the United States alone.

Sulphuric acid necessary for the manufacture of field phosphate is normally made from Spanish sulphur ores. Submarines have now almost entirely cut off this supply.

Brimstone, used as a substitute source of sulphur, must be transported by rail at great expense from Louisiana and Texas, since the government has found it necessary to commandeer sulphur-carrying boats.

Large quantities of phosphate rock from Florida and Tennessee must now go by rail at high freight rates. Uncle Sam needs the boats.

Higher labor, machinery, coal and supply costs have caused a general advance in all raw materials varying from 25 to 100 per cent.

Burlap bags which normally cost 10 cents each, now cost 25 cents and are scarce at that.

Labor which was plentiful in 1914 at $2.00 per day is now almost unobtainable at $3.50 per day.

There can be but one answer to conditions such as these; namely high-priced fertilizers.

WHAT CAUSED FOOD SHORTAGE?

Herbert Hoover, U. S. Food Administrator, says there have been two principal reasons to account for the present food shortage. First, the "unkindness of nature," including the late spring, droughts, hurricanes, poor conditions of rainfall, unexpected frosts and periods of intense heat in sections throughout the world.

Second, he gives "reduced productivity of the soil in Europe." Concerning this, Hoover says: "This condition has been brought about by bad management, unskilled work, and lack of fertilizers; and these in turn can be explained by the withdrawal of men from farm and field to army and factory, and the employment on the soil of overworked women, unskilled old men and listless prisoners. Furthermore the vicious submarine has sunk boat after boat filled with nitrates and fertilizers, conspiring to augment the pauperization of the earth, so that reduction in soil productivity was inevitable."

ARMIES ARE NEEDED AT HOME.

If this war is to be won, we shall have to put several armies in the field, the army of soldiers in the trenches, the army of food producers in the furrows, the women's army of food conservers, beating back the attacks of that world-old camp follower of war—famine, and a patriotic army of civilians in the business and political world. — The Banker-Farmer, Oct., 1917.

FARMERS AND THE WORLD WAR.

The farmer's tools of production in wartime become of importance second only to the needs of the army itself. Food production is a patriotic duty, and the farmer is in the second line of defense. Every effort is needed to increase production, to feed our armies and allies. Food prices are forced higher because the demand is increased greatly and the supply is limited.

WE'RE COMING!

(By Judge Stephen C. Bragraw, in University News Letter, Chapel Hill, N. C.)

We are coming, Mother England, we are coming millions strong;
Hands across the sea are reaching, gripped to rid the world of wrong,
We are coming, stricken Belgium, there with you to face the foe,
Pledge to make the haughty Prussian pay in full for all your woe.
We are coming, France, our sister, the glorious and fair,
By your side we'll soon be fighting in the trenches, in the air,
And the Hun shall feel the power of the men from over the sea.
We are coming and are swearing that this whole world shall be free.

We are coming, fair Italia, land from which Columbus came,
We, Columbia's sons, are coming, coming in Columbia's name,
Now to raise our starry banner where a Caesar wore a crown,
Knowing that when once we raise it, naught on earth shall tear it down.

We are coming, German Kaiser; call your hosts from hill and plain,
Mass your men and Mass your cannon, but your work will be in vain,
We are coming, German Kaiser, and our coming sounds the knell
Of your boasted German Kultur that has made on earth a hell.

We are coming, men of Europe, we are coming millions strong,
There to stay and ne'er to falter, tho' the the fight be hard and long.
"To the end" shall be our slogan, for the world it SHALL be free,
And the evil power of despots crushed at last on land and sea.

Hohenzollerns, Hapsburg, hearken to the fast approaching beat
Of the footsteps of a nation that has never known a defeat,
Clad in armor of the righteous, caring naught for German might,
We are coming, we are coming, there to win or die for right.

Keep Well

Do not allow the poisons of undigested food to accumulate in your bowels, where they are absorbed into your system. Indigestion, constipation, headache, bad blood, and numerous other troubles are bound to follow. Keep *your* system clean, as thousands of others do, by taking an occasional dose of the old, reliable, vegetable, family liver medicine.

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Mrs. W. F. Pickle, of Rising Fawn, Ga., writes: "We have used Thedford's Black-Draught as a family medicine. My mother-in-law could not take calomel as it seemed too strong for her, so she used Black-Draught as a mild laxative and liver regulator . . . We use it in the family and believe it is the best medicine for the liver made." Try it. Insist on the genuine—Thedford's. 25c a package. E-75

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5 Commitment for Imprisonment, &c.
6 Recognizance upon Appeal.
7 Warrant Discharging from Jail, upon Appeal.
8 Complaint for Peace Warrant.
9 Peace Warrant.
10 Search Warrant.
11 Warrant in Debt.
12 Warrant in Damages.
13 Execution.
14 Garnishee Summons.
15 Indemnifying Bond.
16 Forthcoming Bond.
17 Affidavit for Summons in Unlawful Detainer.
18 Summons in Unlawful Detainer.
19 Affidavit for Distress Warrant.
20 Distress Warrant.
21 Complaint for Attachment agains Removing Debtor.
22 Attachment Against Removing Debtor, with Garnishee Process.
23 Attachment Bond.
24 Deed of Conveyance, with certificate.
25 Deed of Trust, with certificate.
26 Deed of Lease.
27 Homestead Deed.
28 Declaration in Assumpsit.
29 Declaration in Debt on Bond.
30 Declaration in Debt on Promissory Note.
31 Declaration in Debt on Negotiable Note.
32 Notice of Motion on Note, Bond, or Account.
33 Power of Attorney.
34 Notice to take Depositions.
35 Indictment, General.
36 Indictment, Liquor.
37 Commissioner's Notice.
38 Abstract of Judgment Before Justice.
39 Warrant in Detinue.
40 Garnishee Summons and Judgment.
41 Subpoena for Witnesses.
42 Contract and Agreement.

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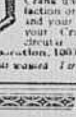

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No. 2, Daily: Lv. St. Charles 7:45 a. m.; Appalachia 8:50 a. m.; Gate City 10:41 a. m.; Moccasin Gap 10:45 a. m.; Ar. Bristol 12:10 Noon. Connects at Moccasin Gap with No. 8 from Bulls Gap.

No. 3, Daily: Lv. Bulls Gap 8:45 a. m.; Moccasin Gap 10:45; Gate City 10:55 a. m.; Big Stone Gap 12:48 p. m. Ar. Appalachia 1:00 p. m.

No. 4, Daily: Lv. Appalachia 1.30 p. m.; Big Stone Gap 1:45 p. m.; Albert Yard 3:15 p. m.; Gate City 3:25 p. m.; Ar. Bulls Gap 5:15 p. m. Connects at Albert Yard with No. 6 for Bristol and Mountain City.

No. 5, Daily: Lv. Bristol 4:40 p. m.; Gate City 6:16 p. m.; Big Stone Gap 7:52 p. m.; Appalachia 8:05 p. m.; Ar. St. Charles 9:45 p. m.

No. 6, Daily: Lv. Albert Yard 3.05 p. m.; Gate City 3:15 p. m.; Ar. Bristol 4:40 p. m.; Lv. Bristol 5:10 p. m.; Elizabethton 6:15 p. m.; Ar. Mountain City 8:10 p. m.

No. 9, Daily, except Sunday: Lv. Bulls Gap 11:10 a. m.; Ar. Rogersville 12:05 p. m.

No. 10, Daily, except Sunday: Lv. Rogersville 7:55 a. m.; Ar. Bulls Gap 8:30 a. m.

No. 11, Daily, except Sunday: Lv. Bulls Gap 5:15 p. m.; Ar. Rogersville 6:00 p. m.

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