

**ANOTHER MINACIOUS COIN**

By Dr. A. F. Pradeau, ANA 3787

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Most collectors are familiar with the death threatening MUERA HUERTA peso struck at Cuencamé, State of Durango, in 1914, but few have knowledge of another doubly menacing peso, struck in silver twenty one years later at an unknown place and to date, of a yet unnamed genesis. Its description is: Obverse" In the field, the coat of arms of Mexico – an eagle, wings out stretched, frontal view, head to the right, devouring a serpent, perched upon a cactus that grows on a mound arising from the water of Texcoco Lake. Oak and olive branches at the base. Marginal inscriptions: Beginning at the lower left quadrant and ending at the lower right, REPUBLICA INSTITUCIONAL MEXICANA; in the exergue, Muera Calles. Slightly raised border.

Reverse: The field may be divided into three parts; in the center there is a row of mountains which actually represent the Popocatepec volcano on the left and the Ittlacihuatl on the right. The upper third presents a radiating Liberty cap with the value UN PESO below. The lower third shows the year of issue 1935 over a garland of oak and olive branches. Marginal inscriptions: above, ABAJO LOS MONOPOLIS (down with the monopolies); in the exergue, MUERA GARRIDO CANABAL with a slightly raised border.

Edge: plain; size 33 millimeters; weight, 16.5 grams.

The planchet is circular but of uneven thickness measuring two millimeters at the top and one and a half at the bottom. The design on both sides being topmost instead of the customary way of having one side facing up while the opposite side faces down. It is definitely a well struck piece but of inferior workmanship to that of the Mexico City Mint. The eagle is somewhat coarsely engraved, the talons of the left leg are completely separated from the body and the bird does not seem to have tail feathers.

As the Mexico City Mint emphatically avers that it was not struck there, the investigator must look elsewhere. As Plutarco Elias Calles and Tomas Canabal were anticlerical, the logical assumption is that it was issued by a fanatic or some religious group, but an impartial investigation absolves the latter.

The religious persecution that had its inception with the rise in power of Oberegón and Calles in 1913 reached its climax during July, 1926, when all Catholic churches were ordered closed. This motivated the Soldiers of Christ (Cristeros) revolt that lasted until June, 1929, who emitted paper money assuming the obligation under the name of *Liga Nacional de Defensa Religiosa*, not the 1935 pesos. With the closing of the Calles presidential term on November 30, 1928, the subsequent Presidents were more tolerant or conciliatory towards the clergy and the prevailing religion, that the problem had ceased to exist by 1935.

Calles remained in Mexico in a more or less passive capacity until April 8, 1936, at which time President Cárdenas must have discovered some activity on the part of the antireligious ex-president, and exiled him two days later. Incidentally, both Calles and his first wife passed away in California in Catholic hospitals. It has been rumored that he was the son of a Smyrnian camel driver, an escapee from the U. S. Camel Corps established in 1858.

Garrido Canabal did not achieve the high post of General Calles although he had greater educational advantages, was a lawyer by profession, was congressman and senator and later governor of his native state, Tabasco. At the time Calles was exiled, Garrido Canabal was a member of the cabinet of President Cárdenas. He has been much more hostile toward the clergy than Calles and on August 19, 1926, an attempt was made on his life wounding him slightly, killing three of his companions and injuring a boy lottery ticket vendor.

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