



IN JAMAICA AND CUBA



By
H.G. de LISSER

WITH
HINTS TO TOURISTS



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BY

H. G. DE LISSER

KINGSTON

THE GLEANER COMPANY LTD.

1910

PREFACE

CUBA, Jamaica, Panama: those are the countries dealt with in this little work.

On Panama I have written very briefly. The present importance of that Republic lies chiefly in its being the scene of a great undertaking which, when finally accomplished, should bring about far-reaching changes in the industrial and economic position of the West Indian Islands. The principal route to the Canal, on its Atlantic side, is the Windward Passage, and that Passage is commanded by Cuba and Jamaica. Hence it follows that Cuba and Jamaica have, geographically and strategically, a close connection with Panama. Because of this, and because I believe that those two islands must reap directly most of whatever benefit there is to be derived from the opening of the Canal, I have added to a work on Cuba and Jamaica a chapter on Panama.

Why has this book been written? To give those who do not know the West Indies some idea of their people, their appearance, and the manners and customs that prevail in them. Cuba is a Spanish, Jamaica an English island. They are near neighbours, but their development has taken place along different lines, their people are different, and so is their future. And the contrast they present, even as regards configuration, topography, and scenery, is most interesting.

I have added a few notes which I hope will prove of some service to tourists.

Most of the following chapters first appeared in the *Daily Gleaner*, the leading West Indian newspaper.

H. G. DE L.

KINGSTON, JAMAICA.

December 14, 1909.

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CHAPTER I

THE KEY OF THE NEW WORLD

QUITE forty miles away a fan-like glare flamed bright against the horizon, looking as though it rose out of the depths of the tropic sea. To the right of us and but dimly discernible in the light of the stars and the crescent moon was a long low-lying shadow which we knew to be the north-western coast of Cuba ; around us were the starlit waters of the Caribbean ; above us a sky studded with a million distant suns and streaked here and there with heavy clouds from the heart of which gleamed forth at intervals broad sheets of pallid lightning. The freshening wind whipped the surface of the sea to foam. Here and there from the looming shadow-like land a friendly lighthouse sent forth its rays of warning. We went slowly, very slowly, for we could not enter the harbour of Havana before sunrise ; but the fascination of the city was already upon us, and so we stood for hours on the deck of the vessel watching the lights come closer into view.

I had passed near the island of Cuba on previous occasions and had gazed with curiosity on its terrace-like slopes and on the numerous islets and cays that cluster along its extensive line of coast. The largest of the West Indian islands, the most important strategically and the most fertile, it had always had for me an appeal of the strongest. It was Spain's last possession in these waters. It is the latest of all the Spanish-American republics. Before it became free some bloody revolutions had to be suppressed and more than one fierce battle fought ; and in the end, as fate would have it, the freedom of Cuba was not won by the same means by which the rest of Spanish-America attained its independence.

Province after province of the old Spanish dominions in the New World rose and proclaimed its independence after Napoleon I. had driven the Spanish kings from the throne of Spain and put his own feeble brother in their place. Not one of them chose to return to its old allegiance when the Spanish sovereign Ferdinand came back to his own. They fought to preserve the freedom they had won, and Europe and America left them to win or lose as fate should decide.

They won; but Cuba chose to remain loyal, and so to Cuba was given the title of "The Ever Faithful Isle."

But the time came when "The Ever Faithful Isle" in its turn became weary of oppression and misgovernment. Something of that story I shall tell later on—the last chapter of it is already known to all the world. The revolution which began in 1895 lasted until February, 1898. In that month a new phase of the struggle was entered upon, for, with the blowing up of the *Maine* in Havana Harbour, American intervention followed as a matter of course. Intervention was sure to come; that it came so dramatically was but an accident in the procession of events. For seventy years the eyes of American statesmen had been turned towards Cuba. For seventy years—for longer than seventy years—the Spaniard had realised that the day would come when he should have to fight for the last remnant of his vast dominions in the West. The signal for the final struggle was given on the night of February 15, 1898, and a few months later the fleet of Spain under Admiral Cervera lay a wreck and captive along the coast of Santiago. In the West Indies the reign of the Spaniard closed amidst the thunder of cannon and the shrieks of drowning men. The world which Columbus had discovered for Spain was finally lost when, weeping like a child, Admiral Cervera stepped on board the conqueror's ship and handed him his sword.

Something of all this passed through my mind on the night when I first saw the lights of Havana flaring on the distant sky, and realised that at last I was about to see the city and country I had so often longed to see. We crept forward at a snail's pace, and one by one the passengers dropped off to sleep in their cloth chairs upon the deck. But with the glimmer of daylight in the east, with the first paling of the stars and lightening of the sky, we were awake and trembling with anticipation. At three o'clock in the morning the great lamps along the foreshore of the city could be distinctly seen, blazing in a magnificent crescent. At five o'clock the lamps had all gone out, and there appeared along the sea-front the noble esplanade which forms part of the sea-wall of Havana. On the north behind this a long row of yellow-white houses rose, following the curve of the crescent shore and stretching away to the west. On our left a dark-grey fortress surmounted by a lighthouse jutted out into the sea and completely commanded the entrance to the harbour; straight in front of us was a narrow opening, and to the right of it another fort. This was La Punta, that on the left was the famous Morro Castle of Havana, a fortress massive and stately, and with the dignity that comes of age and of historic associations.

Before we pass between these ancient forts and into the harbour of Havana, we have already received an indelible impression of the city as one sees it from the sea. We have seen before us a bay whose blue waters pale into pearly green as they roll shoreward and break into surf against the shelving coral

coast. We have seen the sea-wall promenade that the Americans built, and the flat-roofed houses; we have seen a city that rises from the sea and has put on its best robes to greet the stranger. It is a city which seems proudly conscious of its splendid appearance, its fine situation, and its reputation as being the first and best amongst the West Indian capitals. The men who built this part of Havana built well, for on those who have seen it it leaves an unforgettable impression. And as this picture prints itself on the retina of the mind, we pass between the forts, and into the sheltered, spacious harbour of Havana.

Let me try to make you see it with the eye of the imagination and with the aid of such poor powers of description as may be at my command. No one has ever yet described a city or a scene as it actually is: it is the province of the painter to catch and fix for us the world of colour and of form and light. Yet a writer may put down the impressions he receives from some beautiful landscape or from some interesting spectacle of human life and activity; and such a spectacle is that which the harbour of Havana presents. The city itself is built upon a peninsula, a large part of which is composed of alluvial sediment. The entrance to its harbour is but a thousand feet wide, but further on the harbour widens to a mile and a half: in length it is something over three miles. On its western shore lies the city, and one may see at a glance that Havana is but a little above the level of the sea, the ground rising gently from the water-edge into low wooded hills to the south and west. On the left-hand side of the harbour as you steam inwards are the fortifications of the Morro and Cabana. These follow the line of the low hills that protect the harbour, and further in there are still other fortresses. All these may have been excellent defences in the days of wooden ships. To-day their usefulness is gone, but their picturesque effect is undeniable.

The Spaniards knew the value of Havana. Early in the sixteenth century Don Diago de Velasquez called it "The Key of the New World," and commanding as it does the straits of Florida and the Gulf of Mexico, this name has a certain poetic appropriateness. The forts with their hundreds of embrasures stand out grey patches in the midst of green, and opposite to them Havana appears as a mass of yellowish, red-tiled houses interspersed with patches of green. Green, too, is the water of this harbour, an oily, sickly, darkish green, horrible to look at and horrible to think about. For centuries the filth and sewage of the city has flowed upon it. Once it was 40 feet deep, now it is but eighteen or twenty, and the bottom of it is a bed of slime undisturbed by the trifling rise and fall of the tide. Except when strong winds blow, the water here is calm and, as Havana is one of the busiest ports of tropical America, the shipping of the world is represented here.

There they lie, the ships of all the nations. A great Frenchman is anchored in the centre of the harbour and is flying the yellow quarantine flag; two Americans boats are being laden with sugar; the flag of Spain floats from that

vessel yonder ; our own ship flies the Union Jack, and there are other steamers and barges and schooners everywhere. On the Havana side of the harbour a hundred lighters lie with furled sails—a very forest of large flat-bottomed boats and rakish masts. Fine ferry-boats steam across at regular intervals, bearing freight and passengers to the little town of Regla, which is situated opposite to Havana and is one of the city's suburbs. Pert little steam launches flit hither and thither among the large craft, impudently demanding the right of way ; heavy barges pursue their lumbering course from one point to the other with solemn indifference ; and everywhere are the stout, strong passenger boats with each its single boatman, its awning over the stern seats, and its shoulder of sail. How bright and animated is the appearance of it all ! The boats with their awnings and their sails have reminded some voyagers of the canals of Venice ; and here, too, the city rises from the shore, and from the surface of the water one may catch a glimpse of long, narrow streets, and church towers, and avenues of trees. From the roof of Havana's Chamber of Commerce there rises a splendid dome, and from the dome there springs a golden figure which holds your attention for a moment as the vessel passes by. Along the low sea-wall are wharves and covered iron piers, splendidly built and kept in good condition. A busy harbour it is, and the entrance to a prosperous city. And looking down upon it all are the weather-worn fortresses which the Spaniards built, but which could not prevent "The Key of the New World" from passing into other and alien hands.

Havana does not wake to business as early as the sea-coast towns of Europe and America ; so though you may come to anchor a little after six o'clock, it may be some time before you are free to go ashore. There are many preliminaries to be gone through. First the doctor comes on board and examines the ship's papers ; then he inspects you personally to ascertain your health. He is satisfied and leaves ; then comes another official (called, I believe, the Captain of the Port), and I think he brings with him about twenty-five "inspectors," all dressed in neat "crash" uniforms and caps, and most of them looking as if they would be much happier with some real work to do. It takes the chief inspector quite a time to examine the ship's papers. He must know the quantity and contents of all the passengers' trunks, as well as the quantity and kind of cargo in the ship ; he wants duplicates of every form, and if a single name is misspelt, or a wrong initial set down on the duplicate, the form may have to be made up all over again. If this official is satisfied, he leaves two or three of his subordinates on board to watch proceedings, and betakes himself to his launch and to another ship. Now, you think, we can land at last ; but you are soon undeceived ; for though you may have come successfully through the scrutiny of the doctor and the examination of the inspector, you have yet to reckon with the immigration agent. This officer will want to know your status in society and your object in coming to this country, and unless he grants permission you cannot go ashore. So we:

wait for the immigration agent while a hot hate of Cuban official routine springs up in our hearts ; and no wonder, for now the sun is shining full upon the water and yonder the green avenues seem to promise a grateful place of rest. Still, even in Cuba, the immigration agent does arrive at last, and after satisfying himself that we are not Chinamen or penurious labourers he says we may land ; on which we discover that the launch which is to take us ashore is nowhere to be seen. We therefore find ourselves either compelled to remain on board a little longer or to take one of the boats that have gathered in scores around the ship. The launch will come later on, we know, but some of us will not wait for it. We have had enough of Cuban procrastination. So we spring into a *guadano* and are pulled towards the shore. In a few minutes we are treading on Cuban soil.

In every land the traveller is greeted by hosts of porters anxious to assist him (for a consideration) in his passage through the Custom House. In Havana it is the same, though of the ten or twelve persons who surrounded me as I landed I am not sure which were employed by the Government and which were gentlemen of independent and irresponsible position. I only know that I saw a four-hundred-weight trunk carefully deposited on the top of my light valise, which had been placed on the truck used to take the luggage from the wharf to the Custom House. I did not approve of this arrangement, but my attempts at remonstrance were evidently misinterpreted as signs of complete approval, for, after nodding at me encouragingly, the porter shouted "Vamos !" and away he went to where, in the centre of a square formed by low counters, the Custom House officials of the Republic were standing. Then commenced an excited dialogue between the hotel agent who claimed me as his own, and the Custom House officer who was much perturbed by the neckties I had brought with me. The Cuban Customs regulations allow the traveller to bring with him clothing to the value of twenty pounds, and I am sure that the things I had were not worth quite that. Yet he could not away with those three new ties. He pointed to them fiercely. I explained that a civilised man was usually expected to wear ties ; the hotel agent called down the vengeance of heaven upon every one who could make a fuss about a few ties. The official eventually yielded, and after still another official had satisfied himself that the trunk and valise I had landed with corresponded to the number of packages I had reported to the ship's officer as belonging to me, I was allowed to go my way.

We had been outside of Havana from about four o'clock in the morning, and had we arrived at half-past six the evening before we should still have been obliged by the harbour regulations to wait until six the next morning before entering the port. We had anchored in the centre of the harbour at about twenty minutes after six. Yet we did not leave the Custom House before a quarter to ten, and for all this waste of time we had to content ourselves with the reflection that it was "the custom of the country." "The custom of the country !" It is a

phrase that you hear every day in Cuba. There is no reason why large ships should not go alongside the wharves, for the draught of water is deep enough to accommodate them. But the lightering interests are powerful enough to insist upon the maintenance of an obsolete and annoying system which costs the consumers of Havana over £500,000 a year, and the reason is that lighterage is a custom of the country. Every good purpose could be served, and time and money saved, by having one set of officers to look over the papers of the ship. But it is apparently a custom of the country to find public employment for the largest possible number of persons. Still, all these numerous officials were polite, for politeness is also a custom of the country. It is a custom which the stranger appreciates, and so one soon comes to address even one's porter as "senior" and "caballero"—as "sir" and "gentleman"—and to permit him to take, on request, a light from one's cigar. To refuse to let him do so would be to offend against a custom of the country.

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From the roof of the Belen College I am looking down upon and over the city of Havana, and with me is a Jesuit priest who relates the history of this institution and tells me something about his Order and his life.

"I leave for Spain on Thursday," he is saying; and I ask, "Are you glad to return home?"

"It is all the same to me," he answers; then he adds: "It is the second rule of our Order that one place must be to us the same as another; we are to have no preferences."

He pauses, then continues: "In Spain, in the winter, I can work harder than I work here; but here the climate is genial, and one feels warm and pleasant all the year round; so, you see, there is no reason for preferences. The body can be ruled by the mind. One may be happy anywhere."

As he spoke of the genial climate of Cuba he waved his arm towards the city which lay stretched out in silence and bright sunshine at our feet. I followed the motion of his arm. There to the west, on an eminence commanding the city, was an old Spanish fort, the Castillo del Principe, and to the south and west were the low, sloping hills that form the background of Havana. To the east was the harbour, to the north the Gulf of Mexico; on every side were the houses and the streets and the plazas; and gazing down upon them all, upon the red-tiled roofs, the solid square and rectangular houses, the avenues and the narrow thoroughfares—the city seemed to me to be still dreaming the dreams of the eighteenth century, and not yet to have awakened to the bustle and activity of to-day.

There is an old Havana and a new. The old books will tell you that once the city was all to the east, along the eastern edge of the harbour, and was surrounded by a thick wall and defended by a fort. The wall has disappeared

but the fort is still there, and near it still cluster the public buildings of Havana ; its president's palace, its cathedral, and its "Templete," which marks the spot where was celebrated the first Mass sung in Havana. There, too, within what was once the boundaries of the old city, are the narrow business streets of Cuba and the solid stone buildings a single storey high. And there is the Plaza des Armas, where once the Spanish band played at night, and the soldiers paraded in the day. To the north and south and west the city has spread out. It grew outside of the walls, and as it grew its streets widened, its open spaces multiplied, and elegant houses were built in its suburbs and on either side of the broad tree-shaded avenue which now runs through the present centre of the town. It is growing still ; it is spreading itself out in new suburbs ; and as one saunters about this Spanish-American city, one comes upon instant evidences of the changes that are taking place.

From the heights of La Fuerza or the Belen College the city seems asleep or but half-awake ; but in the streets below there is activity and movement. The stranger in Havana, after leaving the Custom House (which once was a church that the English desecrated), finds himself in a narrow street which runs along the whole harbour front and on which are built some of the great business houses of the city. Above this street is the only bit of elevated railroad track to be found in Havana ; and following this tract, which soon descends to the level of the ground, we catch glimpses of the sea. The sea is everywhere here : to the east it looks a sickly green, to the north it shines in the sunlight—a sheet of limpid blue. And running at right angles to the water-front are a number of other paths that lead into the city. I call them paths, for they look as though they had been hewn out of a solid block of houses, so narrow are they and so steeped in shadow, except when the sun is high above the roofs. They were laid out so as to exclude the sun, so as to shut out its fierce rays and its fiercer glare ; they were built only for pedestrians too, and by a people who could not imagine an era of hurry or of electric cars.

I love to stand at the beginning of one of these streets and gaze down into its cool dark depths. I see on either hand a number of small stores and shops, nearly all of one storey, that open on a level with the street. So high and spacious are their entrances, you might almost imagine that the side of them which fronts the street had been lifted away ; yet in many of these shops there is always something of gloom except at the brightest hours of the day. The street itself seems decked out as for a festival. The Spaniard has painted his house here as he has painted it in Mexico and the Canaries ; and red and blue and yellow are the colours with which he has adorned the walls. The effect is quaintly pleasing, and the holiday quality of the scene is heightened by the festoons of cloth and the canopies hung out above. The canopies are

for the comfort of those who work in or patronise the shops; the festoons that look like banners at a distance are shop-signs setting forth that here is the best emporium for Parisian goods, and there the best opticians in the world. Sign follows sign; you walk or drive under scores of them. They flutter in the breeze, they challenge your attention; they make of gaudy-coloured Havana a picture-city adorned with flags. And sauntering along the tiny sidewalk where all must walk in single file, you see exposed in the windows hats that are still the fashion in Paris and robes which you may have seen this season in the stores in Regent Street. And you notice that each of these shops has a fancy name, such as "The Hope," or "The Dove," or "The Grand," for the Spaniard loves to give fine-sounding names to everything he owns.

But one does not go to Havana to buy goods from Paris or London or Spain; so the shops that will entice you are those in which Cuban fans are sold, or Cuban souvenirs; shops in which Spanish girls, and perhaps a Cuban girl also, will be found, and where you may buy a fan for fifty cents or five dollars from a quiet, pretty, tired-looking girl who never hurries and is never impatient . . . only fatigued.

In this narrow street are all the other evidences of the commercial life of Havana. I think the Cubans must love three places above all others: the barber shops, the *cafés*, and the tobacconist shops. These are everywhere in this city of three hundred thousand persons, as numerous nearly as the houses themselves. I sit in a *café*, and opposite is a sumptuously fitted-out "hair-dressing saloon," with its high, adjustable, plush-covered chairs, its huge mirrors, and its stock of cosmetics and tonics, all infallible cures for baldness. I see the barber at his business; I see him stopping every now and then to admire the work of his hands, for he is an artist. I watch the stream of life as it flows by, and it occurs to me that there are but few women in the streets of Havana. The heat keeps them indoors, and the custom of the country. The seclusion of women was a custom which the Moors brought with them to Spain and which the Spanish adopted willingly. I have only to walk a little further on, and I shall see houses whose heavy doors are studded with great brass- or iron-headed nails, and whose high, wide windows are barred with iron grills. Behind those doors and barred windows are the women; and if I sit here till evening I shall see them going in twos and threes to the shops. At this hour they are dressed in their loose dressing-gowns, and are whiling away the long hot hours in sleep or in some of those light feminine occupations that make no great demand upon their energy. In temperate countries the women work; in tropical countries the peasant women work also; but the women of the better classes rest. In Cuba, too, women have not yet entirely ceased to be the property of men, and the barred windows and massive doors are a sign of their subordination.

I also notice that there are very few black men and women in this



THE MORRO CASTLE AND MALECON HAVANA.

street. Somehow, the idea prevails in other countries that Cuba, like the British West Indies, is a land of black or dark-coloured men, whereas it is for the most part a country of white and light-coloured men, and is steadily becoming whiter. At any rate, though they are here to the number of some thirty thousand, you do not see large crowds of negroes in the streets of Havana. But swarthy Cubans constantly pass up and down; Spaniards go by; victorias drawn by fine strong horses roll and clatter over the hard pavement. Carts drawn by pairs of mules, and sometimes by teams of mules, creak slowly along, and as they pass you hear the tinkling of the bells hung round the necks of the mules, and see the broad red bands and the tassels with which the halters are trimmed. The Cuban muleteer loves his animals, if the appearance of these mules be any proof of care and affection. People of the Latin race are not renowned for taking thought of the patient brutes that serve mankind so well; yet the horses and the mules I saw in Havana, and even the dogs, showed as it seemed to me no trace of ill-treatment. Just the reverse.

The sing-song voices of boys hawking the daily papers break upon the air at intervals with shrill insistence, and now and again the electric car goes by. The car tracks of this city are of a narrow gauge, and many of the lines are laid down in single tracks on one side of the street. Sitting in a car, you may shake hands with or talk to a friend in the near-by shop or house, without troubling to move from your seat. On the side opposite to this single track all wheeled traffic is brought to a standstill when a car is passing, and this for fear of accidents. And there are other streets through which only one line of victorias or landaus may drive, for there is not space enough for two. "How, then, does the crowd move about?" one imagines some one accustomed to the thronged thoroughfares of London or New York asking; but there are no busy crowds in Cuba. There are people in the streets, but the tide of human beings that flows across Brooklyn Bridge in the evening, or along Piccadilly or the Strand when the day's work is done—nothing like that will you see in any Cuban town. Indeed, to one coming from the cities of Europe or America the streets of Havana will seem almost deserted and empty. Yet Havana is a populous city, and in its warehouses and shops an immense amount of business is done.

In the *café* with me, seated round the little marble-topped tables, the customers are talking and reading and sipping refreshing drinks. Two or three are playing dominoes, and have thrown off their jackets so as to be more at ease in their absorbing occupation. Some talk politics. I hear the names of Zayas, of Gomez; I hear the word "Americano" pronounced with bitter emphasis. The Cuban is by nature an eloquent talker, and politics to him, as to every other Spanish-American, are as the very breath of life. The newspapers are full of politics, the *cafés* are full of politics; yet I witness no unseemly demonstration; even the gestures of the talkers are not violent.

I catch such expressions as "el progreso del pais," and I gather that, in the opinion of that bearded man opposite, the country is not progressing under the present Government. From another speaker I learn that it is. But these differing opinions are given quietly, and however long these men may remain in this *café*, they will leave sober, for drunkenness is not a vice of the Cuban.

Behind the long, high counter stand the bar-tender and his assistants, all Spanish. For if the Spaniard has lost his political supremacy in Cuba, he still retains his superior commercial position: all the retail business of the country is in his hands, and every one is agreed as to his competence and ability as a man of business. He is a polite salesman with a democratic freedom of manner which no wise man would deprecate. He serves you drinks, native, Spanish, or American, with commendable quickness, and most of his mixtures are good. At one end of his counter is piled a great heap of tropical fruits: pineapples and melons, with mangoes and bananas and soursops and cocoanuts. You ask for "pina fria," and he takes a pineapple and peels it and cuts it into large chunks and pounds it up with white sugar and ice and water, and hands the concoction to you in a huge, thick tumbler, and you find it delicious. He will do the same with tangerine or melon; he will mix you a white almond drink of sickly sweetness, or an orangeade of refreshing flavour. Or you may have coffee, with milk or without; an excellent tonic which acts as a stimulus on the heart and nerves. But, for myself, I prefer the fruit drinks to any, and I love the Cuban *café*s for their sake.

At the end of an hour or so I leave my seat and wander towards what was once the principal plaza of the town. I emerge from a narrow street upon a square, and in the square is a park with benches and a marble statue, and planted out with laurel trees and royal palms and flowering shrubs. Before it is the immense yellow-white building of the Administration, with its lofty, imposing colonnade. To one side of the square is the building where the Senate meets. This square is almost deserted, though here, too, are one or two *café*s in which a few men sit, and in the park some idlers lounge upon the benches. A mulecart passes every now and then, its tinkling bells making music as it moves. A soldier, a policeman, or a public officer comes forth from the palace. Suddenly a shadow falls over the peaceful, quiet square, and looking up I notice that dark clouds are drifting across the brilliant blue above. Then a muttering sound warns me of the approaching thunderstorm, and in a few moments the rain begins to fall. I seek shelter; and for an hour or two I watch the rain pour down in great sheets, and see the paved narrow streets of old Havana transformed into muddy streams.

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When does Havana appear at its best? I have seen it in the early morning, swept, clean, and preparing for the business of the day. In wagonettes drawn

by stout pairs of horses, in victorias, in street cars and on foot I have seen its workers going out to work, its shops opening, its *café* proprietors arranging chairs for the morning coffee, and its newsboys shouting and singing the names of the papers they sell. I have seen it at midday when the sun blazed down upon it, and when its streets were almost deserted and nearly every one had sought the shelter of its canopies and colonnades. And I have seen it in the evening when the sun was going down and a refreshing coolness seemed to steal over its plazas and along its thoroughfares; again, I have seen it at night when it has adorned itself with a thousand lights and has sent out its young men and women to listen to the music of the band. Havana is then at its gayest and brightest, and striving to be what it so proudly asserts that it is—the Paris of the West Indies. I like to see Havana then; but, better still, I like to see Havana after rain has fallen and just when evening is beginning to shade into night. For then its skies are laminated with delicate pinks and with gold and crimson, and the painted city shines in that luminous atmosphere like a city of one's dreams.

The Havana that spreads itself out beyond the old city walls contains many beautiful homes and a splendid promenade. At different points along this promenade (the Prado it is called) are the principal parks of the city; to the south is the Columbus Park with its Royal palms and its fountains; to the north is the old fortress of La Punta, now partly remodelled into a pleasure resort for music lovers. In between these termini stands the statue of the Indian Woman in India Park; it is called La Habana, and is supposed to be symbolical of Havana. And there is a statue of José Martí, the Cuban patriot who inspired the last Cuban struggle for freedom and who died in one of the first battles fought in 1895. They have erected Martí's monument in Central Park, where it ought to be, for this is the finest and best situated plaza in Havana. Round it are built some of the great stores and clubs and hotels of the city, and when it is lit up at nights it is a patch of green over which a web of light has been thrown. There are other parks in Havana, and many squares plainly planted out in grass and surrounded with laurels. These are not beautiful, but in time, I suspect, the Havanese will make pretty plazas of them. At present their Prado is their pride and their delight; and stretching westward from the southern end of it is the Malecon, the sea-wall which was built during the governorship of General Leonard Wood, and which, with the fine mansions to the south of it, and the green and blue waters of the Gulf to the north, is one of the finest drives in all Tropical America.

The Prado with its avenue of laurels, and, in between these laurels, its beds of lace-plant and other shrubs, is to Havana what the Champs Elysees are to Paris. I will not compare the two. There is nothing in all Havana comparable to the great drive that leads from the Place de la Concorde to the Arc de Triomphe; nothing like the fountains and gardens to the south of the Champs Elysees, between

which you pass to the splendid bridge that spans the Seine, and on to where the golden dome of the Invalides rises serenely in the air. But Havana's Prado has a beauty of its own, and its people are right to love it ; and the houses they have erected here are worthy of the avenue, built as they have been with taste and architectural effect. In front of each is an arcade or colonnade, with Doric or Ionic columns. Massive doors of cedar or mahogany open on a hall paved with marble, and a marble stairway leads to the upper floor. The house is built round an open space, or *patio* as it is called, and this is filled with shrubs and palms, and perhaps a fountain ; and on this *patio* the living-rooms open, so that the garden is always at one's feet, while above is the sky. Colonnades strike the dominant note in Cuban architecture. Clearly the Spaniard planned that Havana should be a city of shade, a city where one might walk for hours and yet be safe from the rays of the sun. And he built his houses of stone, and so lofty that a single storey might look as high as two storeys, and a three-storey building might wear the appearance of a palace. As you pass up and down the Prado at night you will see these houses lit with electric lamps, and through the open doors and the beautiful iron-work of the barred windows you will catch a glimpse of elegantly furnished drawing-rooms, in each of which a number of well-dressed persons are sitting, in which some one may be playing a piano, and about which small fresh-looking palms are so arranged that these rooms look like conservatories filled with graceful, laughing women.

Most of the houses in Havana are of one story, and in these three-fourths of the population live. The city is said to be one of the most crowded in the world, and this and the democratic habits of the Spaniard have worked together to bring about a close contiguity of rich and poor, palace and hovel. Fine residences may be found in the business quarter of the town. In the houses that face the Malecon, even along the Prado itself, I have seen places inhabited by people of the slums. In a very short time the Prado will have purged itself of these, and the Malecon quarter will follow its example ; but to-day, as one walks along the sea-wall, one's eyes are constantly offended by glaring advertisements of Tivoli Beer or of Lecha Condensada stuck up on a gigantic hoarding next to some mansion with its arcade of rare and beautiful design.

This mixture of mansions, hovels, and advertisement hoardings, in the best residential section of Havana, spoils its appearance. True, it may be touching to think of rich and poor as living together in brotherly unity ; but proximity does not always mean unity (it may come to mean hatred), and then there is the inartistic effect of the glaring incongruity. But let such reflections be. I am writing of Havana as it is, as one sees it at night when it is wrapped in its garment of darkness and the stars ; and not of as I think it should be.

At this hour, though you see a few men here and there in the houses, you will find most of them in the *cafés*, and many are dining there as they dine in the *cafés* of Paris. But whereas in Paris you will find the *café* tables and the restaurants

crowded with women also, you will see very few of Havana's women dining in the open air. Here is where Havana fails to be like Paris, in spite of its ambition, for it is the custom of the country for women to dine at home. This custom will slowly yield before the revolutionary influence of the vigorous American; for his women dine in *cafés* and restaurants with him, and Havana's daughters behold the miracle. Already a few are following the example.

All the old customs are beginning to feel the influence of the foreigner. I stand at the corner of a street, and in a balcony above are two girls, pretty, with nicely fitting white robes and with chestnut hair puffed in front and neatly gathered in a coil on the crown of their heads, and tied round with blue ribbon. The light shines on them from the room behind; in the street below is a young man who keeps watch, steadily pacing to and fro. He is a lover; perhaps he has met one of these girls at a ball given by the club of which their brother or father is a member. There are many clubs all over Cuba—Clerks' Clubs, Conservative Clubs, Liberal Clubs, and the like—and these give balls and parties, and at these many young people meet one another. The next step in the path of love is the parade before the house, and perhaps the serenade; and then, if the lady likes her suitor, she will go to the window and the courtship will begin in good earnest. It is a Spanish custom and not confined to Cuba, and it amuses the stranger who is not accustomed to such public love-making. But some of the travelled Cubans are beginning to dislike it.

"It is not decent," said one of these to me. "Why can't a man go into a house and talk to a girl if he wants to talk to her?"

"Ah, but it is so picturesque," I objected. "There are your iron bars, you know, and there is your bright-eyed beauty behind them, watched over by mamma and papa and the whole family of aunts and sisters. Then outside is your bold lover in the light of the moon; and at last, moved by his unwearied attention, she lets her womanly heart triumph over her maidenly modesty, and she rises and goes to the window and he pours forth his love in spite of all the listeners in the world. I like that."

"It is not decent," replied my friend.

I have no argument to advance against the compelling plea of decency. In time it will become "not decent" to pay one's court at the window and in the open street, and then the streets of Havana will no more be enlivened with the lover's presence and the sound of his guitar. But I feel that the Cuban girl loves to sit there and see him pass; and I have seen her eyes brighten with pleasure when some bold stranger has looked up at her with open admiration in his gaze. Form is of importance in Cuba; one bows down before custom and fashion; so the Cuban girl impassively looks in front of her as you stare. But the tell-tale eyes betray her; in the flash and twinkle of them, and perhaps in the faint half-smile that plays about her lips, you read the thoughts of her heart.

But "it is not decent," so the time may come when to look may give offence : decency createth a multitude of sins.

In the dimly lighted streets in the centre of the city friends are talking to one another at the doors and windows. A party or gathering of some sort has broken up, and I meet a number of persons pouring out of a small building : I notice they are all women. In another part of the town a dark street is lined on either hand with houses with each its heavy door, and in every door a wicket, and at every wicket a woman. This is the famous San Cedro of Havana, the street of ill-fame ; and some of the women here, if you met them in the Prado, you would think to be daughters of the best houses in Havana. Some are beautiful. Many are graceful. The Spanish woman has learnt or has inherited the art of walking, and so some of the women of the San Cedro will move with the mien of queens. There is no noise in this quarter, no unseemly demonstration, nothing vulgar. The police rules here, but I doubt if it would be much different even if the police were kind. A Haytian general, bent upon sacking Port-au-Prince, advised his ragamuffin army to "pillage in good order," calling them his children as he gave this good advice. The women of San Cedro follow their calling "in good order," so that no scandal shall result. And thither come the youth of Havana, and many who have long passed the age of youth. Married men come here. That, too, is a custom of the country. I have not heard it spoken of as "not decent."

Havana's residences have spread out into the suburbs, and it is in one of these (the newest) that I find a portion of twentieth-century Havana. In the older suburbs, in the Cerro and in Jesus del Monte, you see the old type of the Havanese suburban house ; massive single-story houses fronting the street, and each with its colonnade. Some of them are great buildings with gardens attached, gardens in which fan-palms grow and Royal palms ; and laurels and crotons and flaming poincianas. Some of the owners of these bear the names of the old nobility of Spain and these houses have sheltered some of the proudest families of Cuba. They have been built as family mansions, built solidly and with no sparing of expense, as they used to build in the British West Indies and never will do again.

But the suburb that one hears most about in Havana is Vedado ; its praises are sung by every visitor, and one American writer has even called it an earthly paradise. I do not know what Paradise is like, but I suspect it is not a compromise between Spanish and American styles of domestic architecture. And this, amongst other things, is what Vedado is. It is in the Vedado buildings that I see most clearly the influence of the dominant American ; for Vedado is unlike the Cerro or Jesus del Monte, is being laid out differently, and is being resorted to by many of the wealthy foreign residents of Havana.

This suburb lies to the west of the city, a few miles distant. To the north it overlooks the sea, and was once, indeed, a favourite bathing-place of visitors and the wealthier classes. It is a comparatively new suburb, the land has not yet all been taken up ; large open spaces are seen here and there, and most of the houses

have a new, bright appearance that but few of them wear in the city. Vedado has been laid out in avenues of laurels; its principal street is a boulevard, on either side of which its finest houses stand. They have paved the streets with macadam and laid down a system of concrete curbs and gutters. It is connected with the city by the cars, and some of its houses are really beautiful. Many rise to two storeys, and sometimes the second storey is smaller than the first, so that one part of the house stands as it were inside of the other. Many of the doors are beautifully carved and ornamented, and open on a lofty portico supported by Ionic columns of stone. Some of these residences are surrounded by verandahs, and these verandahs again are shaded by deep-green lattice curtains when the glare of the sun is at its fiercest. And gardens are everywhere, for here, unlike in the Cerro or Jesus del Monte, or the other near-by suburbs of Havana, the houses do not open on the street or run along in one continuous block. They are all detached, all standing in their own grounds; and some of these grounds have been planted out as gardens, and these gardens are railed in by handsome iron fences; and so these spacious, ornamented buildings speak eloquently of comfort within and of the opulence of their owners.

But the taint of jerry-building is on Vedado. I see in Vedado houses that the old Spaniard would never have built. The style is Spanish, but the material is cheap; and the wooden palings surrounding these cheap houses—surely they were an invention of the jerry-builder. No defence can be offered for these wretched grey or white palings: they are out of place in a Spanish-American city. And even many of the iron fences here are frail and mean-looking. They suggest hurry and cheapness and modernity. They suggest also the twentieth-century Havanese suburb that will be created as the population grows. These houses are cooler than those in the city; air and light and the blue sea are the common possessions of Vedado. But the little villa with its pathetic aping of the style of the great house is in Vedado also, and it will be found in increasing numbers in every new suburb that is built.

A part of the seashore of Vedado has been made into baths. The hard coral rock has been cut into squares, with an opening in front through which the sea ebbs and flows continually, and a bath-house has been built around and over these excavations. The water here is always cool and clear, and, in one great rectangular bath, swimming is an easy and delightful exercise. Once the fashionable bathing-place of Havana was where the Malecon now stands; looking over the embankment one can still see the coral baths filled with pale green water, but now fallen into decay. To-day the baths are at Vedado; and at Marianao, some miles away, is the shore-bathing resort of Havana.

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To the south-west of Havana lies the suburb, or, more properly, the village of Marianao. It is separated from the city and from Vedado by a large track of waste land, and in travelling over this you obtain some idea of what the site of the city

itself was once like. The old writers on Cuba tell us that outside the city walls there were swamps and evil-smelling places, and in rough weather the waters of the Gulf of Mexico would roll in upon the land. There were no gutters to carry off the storm waters when it rained, and the filth and garbage of the city that did not find its way into the harbour was often thrown outside the walls and lay there in the sun, rotting and reeking, and breeding hideous forms of life. The saturated soil teemed with rank vegetation, and this gave the refuge to myriads of flies and mosquitoes which preyed upon the people and spread the germs of disease. So Havana lived and moved and had its being on what in rainy weather must have been little better than a marsh; and driving to-day along the road that leads to Marianao one feels that even now the city is perilously near a breeding-place of disease.

On leaving Vedado the car emerges on an open undulating plain, and in the distance one sees the low hills that rise to the south of Havana. On your right are cultivated fields in which vegetables are grown; to your left you see the tall chimneys of some factory; standing out singly or in groups, like cays and islets in a sea of green, are a few large trees; and houses appear here and there; and cattle and horses occasionally. The car rushes between living walls of rank vegetation, which are sometimes high enough to obscure the view. You have passed over a low bridge that spans a slow-flowing, mud-coloured river that empties itself into the sea upon the right and makes a swamp of acre upon acre of the low-lying neighbouring country. You have passed an ancient fort which is said to have defied the pirates in the past; and though you are but a mile or two from Vedado, it is as though you were in a country almost deserted, so few are the signs of life everywhere. The driver leaves his brake and leans carelessly against the rail that separates him from the passengers in the car. The conductor comes inside and sits down to smoke a cigar and to talk with a friendly passenger. The car goes at full speed; presently, riding across the open country to a red-roofed house surrounded by royal palms which I see in the distance, is a troop of Cuban cavalry, a fine body of men whose khaki uniforms, slouch hats and long swords, and whose martial appearance as they trot along mounted on their strong, fine-looking, well-kept horses, make a splendid picture in that landscape of green and blue.

In the days of the Spaniard thousands of soldiers were to be seen by night and day in the streets of Havana and in other towns. Their uniforms brightened the scene, the music of their bands and the sound of their bugles were heard everywhere. At one time there were quite 200,000 of them in Cuba, and they were the mighty instrument and symbol of Spain's predominance in that land. Now they are all gone; and though one sees a good many soldiers in Cuba to-day, and in Havana especially, their number is by no means out of proportion to the rest of the population. The army is but 4,000 strong, and is for the



THE MALECON, WITH RESIDENCES IN THE DISTANCE.

most part composed of men with well-formed features and athletic appearance. I think they must choose the pick of Cuba's men for the army. When one sees a troop of them riding across open country, as I saw them on the morning I went to Marianao, one must admit that, in looks at least, they compare favourably with almost any soldiers in the world.

Nearing Marianao one catches a glimpse of a group of red-roofed houses that look like a manufacturing depôt, and in front of these is the sea. Then comes Marianao, and one enters the village through an avenue of great trees whose over-arching branches completely shut out the rays of the sun. We climb up a low hill with houses on either side of the street. A policeman, big, black, and the picture of good nature, is leaning against a wall and talking to a rather well-favoured mestizo girl; a few black women lounge about smoking; a *café* or two hang out the announcement that there the traveller may have board and lodging; the shops are deserted; a few dogs stray aimlessly about. In a word, Marianao is a village asleep.

Yet it is a summer resort for the fashionable folk of Havana, and some of its houses are as handsome as any you will see in the suburbs near the city. They stand in the midst of their gardens, with high iron fences surrounding them; and as you pass you may see the ladies of the house seated in rocking-chairs on the broad verandahs with little children about them, and black nurses. These nurses are said to look after their charges well, and a neater lot of women servants it would not be possible to find anywhere in the tropics. They are well paid too, and the children they care for look strong and healthy—healthier by far than those who live in the crowded houses of the city.

The city houses, in truth, where 95 per cent. of the population live, are not places where one would expect children, or even men and women, to thrive and be strong. The wonder is that any escaped the periodical epidemics of smallpox and cholera and yellow fever which time and again broke out in the city of Havana. The soil was sodden with the leakings and the filth of centuries; many of the streets were unpaved; open gutters took the waste water to the bay, and from each gutter came the horrible smell of stale soap-water and kitchen refuse. The latrine system was primitive: a pit situated next to the kitchen and belching odours into the living-rooms. Thus every courtyard of the poorer sort of house was a wretched, evil-smelling place, and on these courtyards all the living-rooms of the single-story rectangular tenement opened. Everything came in and went out by the one door that opened on the street; and in the little cells that faced one another and opened on a level with the ground many families lived. Many families still live in them—overcrowding is common in Havana, is, indeed, a custom of the city. It costs a great deal to build a house of stone, and so long as one of these places is habitable it will be tenanted. It is no wonder consumption is the most prevalent ordinary disease in Havana to-day in spite of the tropical climate and the pure air that blows from the Gulf; yet yellow fever has

disappeared and smallpox, and one sees the reason of this as one peeps into or walks through some of the houses in the poorer quarters of Havana.

Most of the thousands of courtyards have been paved with flag-stones or brick, many of the streets are paved with brick or asphalt, and the modern sewer system, though not yet completed, embraces a great section of the city.

The crowded tenements of Havana do not look unclean now, with their paved courtyards and drains. I peep into them, one after the other as I pass, and I see naked or half-naked children playing and crawling about the yard, and women washing and doing their domestic work. There are no *patios* here, no tasteful arrangements of palms and ferns and flowers and fountains; yet there are a few palms and shrubs ranged in pots and pans around the courtyards; these redeem these places from utter sordid ugliness, and testify to the unconquerable craving of a city population for the green things of the field and the forest. The furniture of these rooms is a bed sometimes of iron, often of wood; sometimes a "cot" only, which is simply a piece of rough canvas stretched over a light wooden frame that can be opened and closed at will. There are a few rocking-chairs, a table or two, and a wooden cupboard in which is stored the crockery of the house. In this room, with its flooring raised but a few inches above the ground, a family of five or six persons may live, and when the door is closed at night I imagine that the heat must be infernal.

Havana is clean on the surface and filthy beneath, is what some of the foreign residents in the city are fond of saying, but they exaggerate. The poorer classes have certainly not yet learnt the value of cleanliness, but the house-to-house inspection by sanitary officers is not altogether a paper precaution, and the streets at any rate, are well kept. As one drives through them after nightfall, one finds the dirt and rubbish of houses and shops all packed into receptacles or neatly heaped up on the sidewalk awaiting the street-cleaner's cart. And all day long the members of the sanitary corps may be seen sweeping the streets and taking the refuse away in their hand-carts. Havana, too, is excellently supplied with an abundance of good water from the Vento Reservoir, and its sewers are flushed and its drains disinfected regularly. The Government knows that an outbreak of yellow fever or any other epidemic would mean a grave remonstrance from, and perhaps the intervention of, the United States; so it does try to keep Havana clean. Intervention will come sooner or later, but at present, at any rate, it does not seem likely that the alleged neglecting of the sanitary condition of Havana will be the cause of it.

There is a Chinese quarter in Havana, as there is in every important city in the world. There are mean streets in Havana; streets in which are little shops with fly-blown meat hung out for sale, or with piles of vegetables and fruit exposed, or a miscellaneous stock of groceries. They are never very busy, these places. They must make a profit, but quietly, for hurry and bustle are not characteristic of them. The flies love them, for they swarm there by the thousand, but the

customers do not mind the flies. And so the beef is sold, and the vegetables; and if the fly has his meal first . . . well, there is enough left for God's other creatures.

Most of the book-shops of Havana are situated in a busy thoroughfare facing Central Park on the east; here the books and papers are displayed on counters set out on the piazza. The literary tastes of the reading population, if one may judge by the literature displayed for sale, are not such as the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge would approve of. Pornographic literature abounds. French novels translated into Spanish, Spanish novels as bad as, or if anything a little worse than, these translations, you will find in plenty in Havana. On their coloured covers one is treated to scenes in which a conventional devil with flames and fork may be represented as triumphant or enraged, or one sees masked men stabbing a half-clothed woman to death, while the title of the book gives a clue to its contents. There are other works, of course. "Don Quixote" seems to be a favourite, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's detective stories are here also, and American tales of the Wild West. And there are anti-theological works in abundance.

It is easy to see that the newspapers are well read here. There are a good many published in Havana. Two (the *Havana Daily Post* and the weekly *Havana Telegraph*) are in English; *La Lucha* has an English section also; then there are the *Diario de la Marina*, and the *Triunfo*, and others; and the offices of these are all fitted out with linotype machines and modern engraving apparatus. The Press is perfectly free in Cuba, and is outspoken; but now and then, unhappily, editors are shot at by angry politicians, and this makes the work of newspaper editing a little difficult at times. The weekly illustrated papers contain cartoons of public men and pictures of public events, and seem to have a large *clientèle*. In Havana, as elsewhere, the newspaper bids fair to beat the book out of the field; that is, of course, the sort of book that is something better than rubbish.

Yet they have a fine National Library in Havana (which is hardly ever used); and one or two other public libraries. The guide-books never omit to tell you that the volumes in the National Library are all richly bound; so, I may add, are those in the Centro Dependientes, a Clerks' Club that has over 20,000 members and the finest club-house in Havana. The building is of three storeys and faces the Prado. You pass through a lofty doorway, with magnificently carved doors of cedar, and enter on the first floor of the house by a marble staircase, with richly worked rails. The splendid, spacious ballroom of this club, with its painted ceiling, its glitter of electric lamps, its cushioned seats, its marble floor, its mirrors ranged on either side of the room, and the veined marble arches supporting the lofty roof is a pleasure saloon of which any palace in the world might well be proud. Now in this club there is a library, and through this library I was permitted to look by the obliging librarian. It is not large, but the books are beautifully

kept, the room is cool and spotlessly clean, and the leather-upholstered chairs are comfortable. On the shelves were ancient treatises on Spanish-America, and Plato's works, and some of the works of modern European authors. Dickens was there, and Victor Hugo ; Balzac and Goethe and Zola. Mr. H. G. Wells is there—they have bound his "Anticipations" and his "First Men in the Moon" together, and near him stands Ribot's psychological studies ; and there are histories of literature and the lives of great generals. I could add to the list, but these names are enough to show that the Clerks' Association of Havana is catholic enough in its literary tastes ; or rather, I should perhaps say, catholic in its selection of books for its library. For as I took up book after book and looked at its beautiful binding, as I opened Dumas' novels and remarked how new they were, I was reminded of Porthos' famous will, in which was mentioned Porthos' library of eight thousand volumes—"all uncut." The Centro Dependientes of Havana has a fine library—all unread. I left the library and went to the bar. The businesslike appearance of that institution showed that it was by no means "all unused."

When one mentions bars, one is reminded of the ways and habits of those who serve at them ; now it will always strike a stranger as peculiar that even in the bars of the best hotels in Cuba he will often find the assistants working in their shirt-sleeves. The waiters at the hotels, too, will come to you in the act of putting on their dress jackets, and, so far as I can remember, none of the boys who worked at the hotel I stopped at wore anything like a livery. I think I can remember seeing two coachmen in livery in the streets of Havana—there may have been more, but I do not recollect having noticed them. Servants in Spanish-America, in fact, do not like to wear anything that might seem a badge of private service. But the saying in Havana amongst the foreigners is that if you put a Cuban in an official's uniform you may pay him half the salary he could earn in private employment. His dignity is enhanced by the outward and visible signs of public office. He is then more than a man ; he is a public functionary, however humble.

Perhaps the Government had this in mind when they gave their police force a grey-blue uniform with caps to match. This uniform may have been designed by the Americans or the Cubans (I do not know which), but, at any rate, it is a handsome one, and the men look well in it. Havana has about a thousand policemen—an extraordinary number. But the police are intended to do more than protect property and see that the laws are obeyed. Armed, every one of them, with a heavy revolver, feared and respected because of the support they receive from the Government, seen everywhere—in the street cars, in the streets, in the parks—they are really a semi-military force which would be most effective in crushing one of those *émeutes* for which the cities of Spanish-America are famous. They are well paid too (though they wear uniforms), and well looked after. Sometimes, late at night, I have seen one

of their officers sitting motionless on his horse at the top of some street, his cloak thrown across his shoulders, his left hand on his hip, and his eye surveying the scene before him as though he were a general on a battle-field. He carries himself proudly: perhaps he is aware of his statuesque appearance, and delights in it. He knows how much he and his colleagues of the force stand for in this city, but I do not think he takes undue advantage of his knowledge and position. He must be obeyed—that is well understood—but he does not officiously interfere with one. And he and his subordinates do keep order in Havana, where, I may say in passing, the stranger is perfectly safe at any hour of the night or day.

What, indeed, you cannot but remark in Cuba, and especially in Havana, is the politeness of all the public functionaries. They show an urbanity and a readiness to help that win your good opinion at once. On the day I visited the Palace where (as I have said before) the President lives and the public offices are situated, a parliamentary committee was busy revising the Budget for 1910, and at first there was some difficulty about allowing strangers to go through the principal rooms of the building. But when the object of my visit was explained, one of the officials in charge remarked that, after all, I could not disturb the members of the Committee by simply passing through or near their room. Later on, when I met one of the Under Secretaries of State, he expressed his regret that the President was away on vacation, and presented me with a splendid Atlas of Cuba and a copy of the last Cuban Census, giving at the same time a copy of this work to each of the five gentlemen of my party.

It was in this Under Secretary's office that I met and had a talk with Pino Guerra, about whom the world has heard something. It was he who, in 1906, went out into the bush, and put himself at the head of the movement which had as its result the overthrow of President Palma's second Government and the intervention of the United States for a second time in Cuba. A more unassuming, simple-looking man I have never met. He was placed by Governor Magoon in command of the Rural Guards, or army, after the revolution; General Magoon's idea being to make him, the most popular guerilla leader in Cuba, responsible for the maintenance of peace in Cuba. This revolutionist became a Major-General, was dressed in a khaki uniform on the day I saw him—there was no difference between his dress and that of a common soldier, his sword even, with its plain leather scabbard, was of the same pattern as the common army sword.

Pino Guerra is a little above middle height and is sparely built. He looks you straight in the eyes when speaking to you, and smiles frankly. In complexion he is swarthy; the thin, hooked nose betokens energy, and if the upper lip is too short to give the impression of inflexible will, the strong, prominent chin and firmly closed mouth leave you no two opinions as to his strength

of character. Pino Guerra's eyes seem to me to indicate a strain of Indian blood in his veins, but this may be a mere fancy of mine, for I have met Englishmen and Americans of great force of character who have the same half-closed, gleaming, rather oblique eyes.

People speak of him in Havana as a political factor of the first importance. He himself does not seek to give you any such impression. I told him that I had heard much about him and had read his statement in the *North American Review*, written while he was still a rebel in arms, and setting forth the reasons why he was leading a revolt against the Government of Cuba. He smiled at this, somewhat deprecatingly, as though what he had done was of little consequence. I asked him what he thought of the political future of Cuba. He told me he believed it would be peaceful. Did he think the United States would again intervene in Cuban affairs? No; he saw no reason why it should, and had no fears that it would. He believed, too, that the next Presidential election would be conducted with perfect fairness and that the will of the people would prevail. I suppose he could not have been expected to say anything different from this; but now, when I come to think of it, I really had no right to ask him these questions, and he could with perfect courtesy have refused to answer me. What struck me about the man, too, was this, that he talked with real modesty and as though he were the humblest servant of the Administration. I know that Pino Guerra can be different when he likes: men with a face like his can make their power and authority felt, and their will obeyed, very effectively indeed. But I specially mention his demeanour and his politeness here, because I found it characteristic of Cuban officials and soldiers generally. It was characteristic of the white officer who allowed me to go through the old fortress of La Punta, and equally of the well-set-up black soldier who showed me what was interesting in that place.

CHAPTER II

HAVANA AT PRAYER AND AT PLAY

ONE morning the sound of bells awoke me. The insistent clanging of them broke loudly on the morning silence; from all parts of the city the sound seemed to come, peal answering peal as though the bells called to one another.

I slipped out of bed, wondering what this continuous ringing could mean. At first I thought of the mule-carts and the tinkling of the bells hung round the necks of the splendid brutes I admired so much, but in a moment I dismissed them: this noise was far louder than any the mules could make. Then suddenly I remembered that this day was Sunday, and that these were the church bells calling the faithful to early mass. In fifteen minutes I had dressed and swallowed a cup of black coffee, and was standing on the piazza of the hotel waiting for a victoria to come in sight.

The city still lay sleeping as it seemed, wrapped in a mantle of dark grey clouds. A fine rain was falling, the trees in Central Park were covered with shining drops of water, and in the concrete gutters thousands of bubbles were formed by the pattering drops of rain. All was deserted and quiet, except for the pealing of the bells which was waking the city and calling it to prayer. Presently Havana would awake; indeed, as I stood there I saw that it was waking. The passing street cars contained passengers; one, two, many victorias appeared. I hailed one of these: in a few moments I was being rapidly driven through the narrow streets to where the Merced Church is situated.

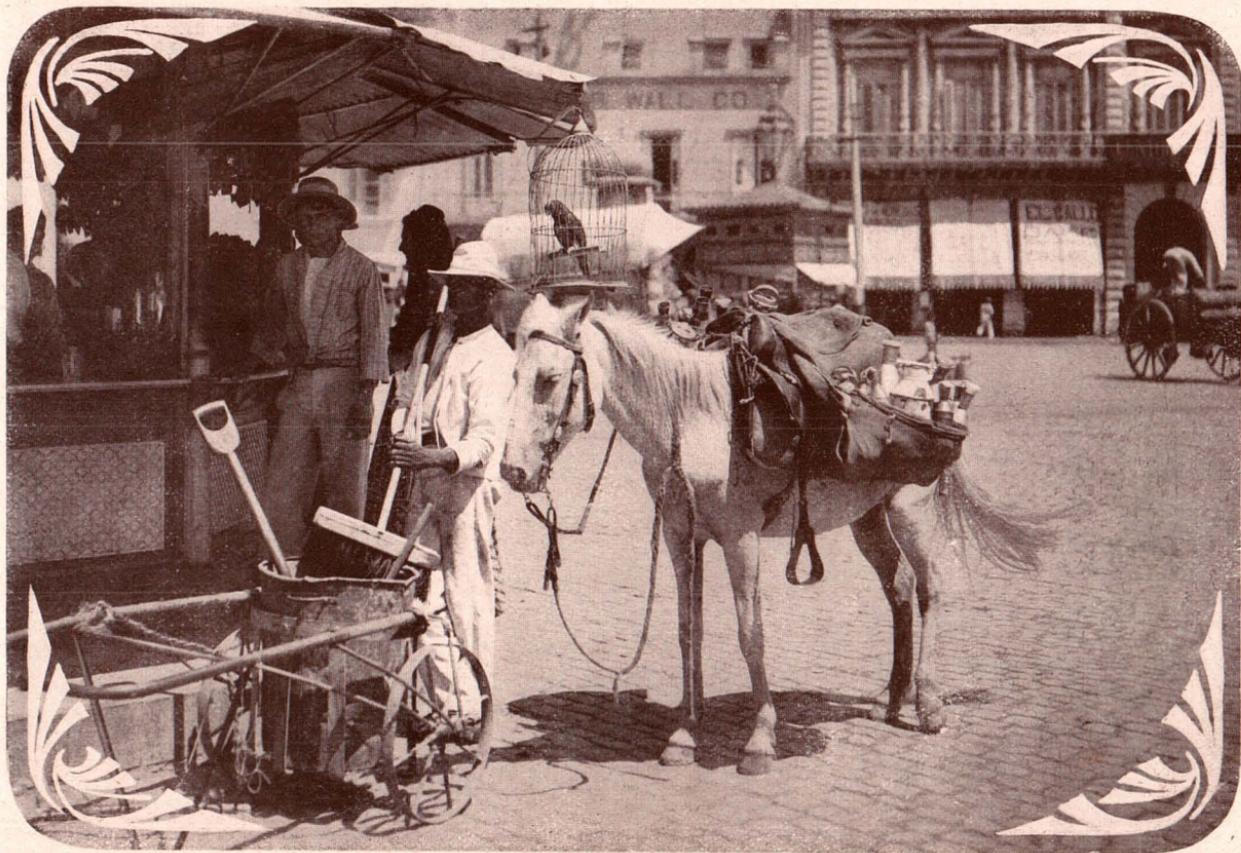
Men leaned here and there against the tall columns of the arcades and colonnades, two or three women covered with mantillas and holding umbrellas were hurrying on, evidently to some favourite church. We passed under a great dark arch that is one of the picturesque features of the city, the Arch of the Jesuit College; then we turned once or twice and stopped before a large edifice standing near the end of a narrow deserted street.

From within came the sound of an organ. I entered; in front was the high altar blazing with lights and rich with flowers and variegated colours; on either hand ran a row of marble columns sweeping up into arches and

supporting the lofty roof above. Behind these columns were the chapels and side-altars of the church, some of the latter decorated richly. The scent of incense filled the building and hung upon the moisture-laden air ; at the altar officiating was a grey-haired priest ; and scattered about the church were some seventy worshippers who knelt devoutly while the solemn chant went on.

This church, La Merced, is reputed to be the most wealthy and the most aristocratic in Havana. It has one of the largest congregations, and the finest church orchestra in the city ; it can seat hundreds ; but at this morning's mass there were but seventy persons present at the most, and most of them were women. The spacious aisles looked empty, the kneeling worshippers here and there mainly serving to call one's attention to the empty seats, and the lights on the altar, but throwing into relief as it were the thick shadows which shrouded the building. From the gallery above the main entrance to the west, where the organ stands, a singer with a strong, fine baritone voice chanted the responses, and every now and then a woman would steal across the church to one of the side-altars, and, fixing her eyes upon some image there, would lose herself in contemplation and prayer, as though there were nothing else in all the world except herself and her saint. As the service went on I had time to look about quietly. The women were dressed plainly in black and white, and though one or two of them wore hats, the rest wore black mantillas which draped their shoulders and covered their heads. One or two of these women were black, and these sat with the rest, for there is no colour line drawn in Cuba in either the theatre or the church. The few men present sat near the doors that led to the street, and one or two of them slipped out towards the end of the service. On a few chairs to the left about five little girls sat waiting, all dressed in white, and veiled, and with white, slender wands in their hands. These were to make their first communion that morning, and presently they were taken in front of the altar by a woman clothed in black, and there they knelt and took the sacrament, while the congregation looked on. This ceremony over, I left the Merced and went to the Cathedral. From what I had already seen I did not think that the people of Havana greatly cared to go to church.

The Cathedral of Havana stands in one of the oldest parts of the city and faces a square. The tide of life and activity has, so to speak, flowed by it and left it stranded ; other churches have sprung up in other parts of the city, and have acquired fame as the most wealthy church or the church which the prettiest women prefer, or where the best preaching may be heard. These have been built with a greater attempt at show, or in better localities, while the Cathedral of Havana is surrounded by shabby-looking buildings, and its square is paved with rough stones and has not a single tree growing in it. Yet Havana's Cathedral has a certain dignity which none of the others possesses. It is not old, having been built but some two hundred years ago on the site of an older church ; but time has not dealt kindly with it, and as one comes upon it with its dome and its two square



MILK VENDOR, CUBA.

towers rising into the sky and marks where the rain has beaten great holes in the limestone blocks of which it is built, and sees its huge, dilapidated wooden door studded with rusted iron nails, and the two plain smaller doors on either side of this, and the heavy, dark-grey colour which the passing years have stamped upon it, one is at first inclined to believe that centuries have gone since its stones were first laid, and that man and the elements have warred against it and left it half a ruin.

You enter the Cathedral by a broad flight of steps, and pass into a sort of vestibule that opens on the right and left into the interior of the church. Here you see at a glance that those who built this cathedral aimed at nothing like picturesque effect, but rather at a solid simplicity; so the weather-beaten appearance of the Cathedral without is matched by the austere coldness of its interior, and even the paintings on its vaulted roof have faded into a sober harmony with the cold, bare walls and heavy marble columns of the aisles. The high altar on which, to-day, a few candles are burning, is in keeping with the sombre appearance of the church. Here, at any rate, is none of that garishness and that tawdry tinsel which so constantly offend the eye in too many Spanish-American churches. Behind and on either side of the altar are arranged the choir stalls of black, polished mahogany, and the walls of this chancel are inlaid with slabs of black marble, so that the gleaming lights on the altar shine out against a background of semi-darkness.

There are side-altars here, and one or two paintings, and a covered niche in which the remains of Columbus are believed to have reposed until they were removed to Spain in 1898. But San Domingo still claims that the bones of the great Genoese are in the Cathedral of the city which Columbus founded himself, and which is the oldest in all Spanish-America. I leave this dispute to those interested in it; but I think the Cathedral of Havana was no unfitting resting-place for Columbus, since he seemed to have loved Cuba best of all the islands that he discovered for Spain.

In the Cathedral on the Sunday of which I write a special service in honour of some saint was being held. I noticed as I entered that only about one-third of the interior was provided with seats, and this added to the bare and drear appearance of the church. But what was more significant than this was the number of worshippers. I counted them: twelve in all—nine women and three men. At the altar were three priests, all robed in vestments of white silk embroidered with gold. They wore the tonsure; and attending at the altar was one other man dressed in ordinary clothes, and two acolytes, each not more, I should say, than about fourteen years of age. As the service proceeded, one of these acolytes swung a silver censur with rhythmical motion, the smoke of the incense burning within it filling the aisles with its pungent, oppressive scent. Then by degrees, as the minutes slipped by, a few other persons straggled into the building, and after an hour had passed there were twenty-five persons in the

congregation. But still the ceremony went on with its full wealth of ritual, so that you might have thought that the church was crowded to overflowing, and that this long, impressive service was being followed by hundreds of devout and eager listeners.

Then something happened which showed me that the demon of anger could not altogether be exorcised even by the presence of the Blessed Sacrament upon the altar.

The moment came for reading a portion of the Scriptures, and one of the priests, a sharp-faced, elderly man, found on turning round that the acolyte had not brought the Bible. He spoke to the boy, then seizing him by the arm, gave him a sharp push and sent him off to bring the book. On the boy returning with it, the old man caught hold of it and pulled it sharply out of his hands, pushing him away as he did so. No one seemed disturbed by the incident; perhaps it was not uncommon. But whatever spell of impressive solemnity there may have been about the ceremony was broken for me by that open display of temper on the part of this priest in the very act of officiating at the altar, and in performing one of the most sacred duties imposed upon the priesthood of his Church.

The first part of the service lasted an hour. That over, the door to the left of the altar opened, and, preceded by an acolyte, a young-looking priest came in. For a minute or two he stood with the others before the altar, just a little behind them, then he went towards the pulpit, and his colleagues sat down within the altar rails. Mounting into the pulpit he began by praying inaudibly, muttering a few words. Then he rose and made the sign of the cross, and then he prayed again. Presently he began to preach in a scarcely audible voice. He continued thus for about a minute, then his voice rose, and rose louder, and in a little while he was rapidly pouring out his sermon to his few patient listeners and the empty spaces of the church. A soldier stole in to listen, then went his way. An old woman peeped in at the door, and then came further in. He seemed to notice nothing, the words came rolling in a steady torrent from his lips, while his right arm cut the air in emphatic gestures. A life without religion, he insisted, could only end in shadows and night; but his rhetoric never deepened into fervour or rose to high eloquence; one might have thought he had studied this sermon by heart, and perhaps he had.

He preached for fifteen minutes, then stopped; muttered another prayer, and then went on again. The sermon must have lasted half an hour. But at last it was over, and when he came down and rejoined his colleagues the four of them disappeared into the robing-room, and in the interval a boy went round with an armful of huge wax candles and handed each of us one. We lit them with wax vespers, the crackling sound given off by these as they ignited seemed strangely out of place in a cathedral. In a little while the doors of the robing-room opened, and the two acolytes appeared holding aloft two great silver candlesticks in which candles blazed, and between them came a priest with a massive silver crucifix, and

after him a boy swinging a censer, and behind them all the three officiating priests marching under a canopy held by four men who had been amongst the congregation. They paused before the altar, and we were motioned to take our places near them. Then turning their faces to the north they led the procession, chanting, and as we moved away the organ in the gallery above the entrance thundered forth in a tremendous burst of music, and the great bells in the towers broke into clamorous peals.

Slowly we moved, a straggling crowd of thirty-four souls in all. Mingled with the chant, and the pealing of the bells, and the sound of the organ, was the steady patter of the rain as it beat down upon the roofs and on the hard pavement outside; mingled with the smoke from the censer was the smoke given off by the candles we bore in procession round the church. It was a pathetic contrast: the full-dress ritual, the splendid robes of the priests, the music of the organ, the clanging of the bells, the noise of the rain, and the volume of smoke that went curling and floating up to the cold, painted, lofty roof, and then this handful of women and men straggling with irregular steps in the wake of the crucifix held high before them, and looking as though they took but little interest in the service or the chant.

It was over at last. We stopped before an altar of the Virgin, and the priests took sacrament from the sacred chalice, and we extinguished our candles and gave them back, and went out once more into the streets and the rain. I had been in the Cathedral upwards of two hours. I had assisted at a special service with a handful of worshippers. I had seen but a few of Havana's people at church, and if I was inclined to think it was the rain which prevented them attending that day, I was to learn later on that rain is no hindrance in Havana when pleasure calls to its people.

The following day I asked a Jesuit priest about the religious condition of the country. "The men have no religion," he said, "though many of the women have. There is very little of real religion here."

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Some writers have written as though Havana were a city of churches and temples, but I should say that compared with many another Spanish-American city, and considered positively from the point of view of population, it has but an ordinary number of places of worship. The Catholic churches number less than twenty; and it is only since the end of the Spanish dominion in Cuba that Protestants have been allowed to build a church in Havana, or in any part of the island. Intolerance was rife in the island. No Protestant ceremony could be performed in public, not even the burial service; and this rigid rule was never relaxed. The Church was supported by the State. A yearly contribution of some \$400,000 (£80,000) was paid out of the Cuban Treasury to the ecclesiastical authorities; and all the higher ecclesiastics, as well as most of the priests,

were Spaniards. The island was divided, as it still is, into two dioceses, the eastern and the western; at the head of the eastern diocese was the Archbishop of Santiago, at the head of the western was the Bishop of Havana, and both these prelates received a salary of \$18,000 a year before the Church was disestablished under the new régime. In addition to the aid it received from the State, the Church in Cuba acquired riches by the same means that have helped to make it so wealthy an institution in many lands. Devout ladies gave of their substance to Holy Church, rich men dying bequeathed property to the representatives of God on earth; the property of the priests multiplied, they owned estates, they became powerful; but whenever the Spanish Government was in difficulties, or thought it was, it did not hesitate to plunder the Church. So what it gave with one hand it often took back with another a little later on, and the religious orders were the chief sufferers.

Still, the Church in the days of the Spaniards was never very poor. The authorities in Spain must have clearly perceived that the Spanish ecclesiastics in Cuba formed a strong factor in favour of the continued domination of Spain; hence they were treated well, and no prelate in Cuba was by any chance of any other nationality but Spanish. The Cubans felt this deeply; they saw that their sons, however talented and distinguished, could no more hope to rise to place and power in the Church than in the Army or the Public Service; little wonder it was, therefore, that the Church had little influence upon them. The Cubans are Catholics nominally, and when not positive unbelievers or Free Masons, they do subscribe to the doctrines of their Church. But the men are mostly indifferent to religion, and if there is no open hostility shown to the Church, that is because the Church has largely ceased to be Spanish and has become Cuban.

After the Spaniard was driven from Cuba and the Church disestablished, a Spaniard was sent to Havana as Bishop. He did not remain for long. The people would not tolerate him; they had not forgotten that Spanish prelates were once the instruments of Spanish tyranny, or at the very least the symbols of it. So they hissed him and threw stones at his carriage, and eventually he was recalled and a Cuban put in his place. A good many of the priests in Cuba are still Spanish of course, but as time goes on their proportion will steadily decrease. And, if one may judge by all the signs of the times, the influence of the Catholic religion will steadily lessen also, as it is lessening in Spain, as it has lessened in France.

My friend the Jesuit told me that there was little real religion in Cuba. The poor attendance at the churches, the cessation of imposing religious processions through the streets, a recent suggestion on the part of some Cuban politicians that such processions should be forbidden by law—all this shows what is the influence and status of religion in Cuba. The statistics of illegitimacy might also be regarded as indicating the prevailing religious indifference; but I should not take that view myself. A religion may be believed quite fervently, and yet may fail to influence the morals of a community to any remark-



MAKING LOVE. CUBA.

able extent. Belief is one thing, its influence on conduct is quite another ; and so, though reliable statistics are lacking, I am satisfied that the people of Cuba were not more moral when they had greater faith in the doctrines of the Church.

Yet the priests continue their ministrations, the Jesuits labouring hard especially. This Order is now building two new churches in Santiago ; their college (the Belen) in Havana is the leading educational institution in the city for gentlemen's sons under eighteen years of age ; here they not only teach languages and literature, but something of the physical sciences as well ; here, also, they make the meteorological and astronomical observations which have gained for their college a world-wide reputation. I went through this institution when I was in Havana : the priest who took me round was a Spaniard who spoke English fairly well ; he was a genial, cultured man whom it was a pleasure to meet. Like all the brethren of his Order, he was dressed in full black, with black boots and cap, a sombre figure moving about the squares and corridors of the large, rambling building.

Eight hundred boys are educated there, he told me, a large number being boarders. The fathers can take no black scholars, for that would injure the school, but they have Sunday classes for the black boys of the city, at which the catechism is taught : class and caste prejudice will not allow them to go farther. These priests, following the established policy of their Order, do everything in their power to influence the boys in their charge in favour of the Church ; they are incessant in their watch over them ; they treat them kindly, looking well to their comfort, and they try to shield them from all irreligious and immoral suggestions. No part of a boarder's life is left unsupervised. In the chapel, in the schoolroom, in the playground, in the sleeping corridor, the watchful eye of the Jesuit father is upon them ; and so the atmosphere of the institution surrounds them and helps to mould them to the service and "to the greater glory of God."

I spent an interesting hour at the Belen College. I went through its museums, its library, its art gallery (which contains a fine Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane), and its Boys' Chapel and the Belen Church. Froude said that the Jesuits of Havana were the Royal Society of Cuba. They are to-day, perhaps, the most zealous workers for the cause of Catholicity in Cuba. Their simple life, their devotion to the ideal of their founder, their unhesitating sacrifice of comfort and friends and personal ambition to what they believe to be the interests of the Church, all serve to place them among its best agents and apostles. Yet though they have been educating the better-class youths of Havana for generations, Havana's leading men are not the strongest supporters of the Church.

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At about one o'clock on the same Sunday that I went to the Cathedral, I was mingling with the crowd of boys and men that had collected under the

colonnades which face Central Park on the east. Many of the shops and stores had been open for some time; the *cafés* were doing a good trade, the cigar sellers and barber-shop keepers looked happy, and every now and then a boy thrust a red, or green, or yellow programme into my hand. From these programmes I learnt that the theatres would be having performances that afternoon, and eventually I decided upon going to the "Moulin Rouge," where, it was said, certain "escultural" ladies would delight the audience with exhibitions of dancing and with songs.

On the programmes of this theatre it is stated that the performances at the "Moulin Rouge" are "for men only"—"dedicada á los caballeros." There are two of these "men only" theatres in Havana, and they never lack for enthusiastic audiences. Some time last year a Cuban girl who had been trained in Spain returned to Havana and was employed at the Payret Theatre to dance and sing; and to all accounts she performed her part exceedingly well. Yet few cared to see or hear her; she could not draw a crowd. So, after a while, she left the Payret Theatre and entered into an engagement for a season with the "Moulin Rouge." She danced before men only, and sang to them; and in a week her fame had spread all over Havana, and the city was raving about her. The management of the Payret Theatre saw its opportunity. Overtures were made to the young actress, and, shortly after, the Payret's bills announced that the "escultural" young lady would in future perform at the Theatre Payret. The move was a wise one. Men, women, and children went to see this actress dance. Night after night she drew thousands, and many had to be turned away from the theatre's doors. This was significant of the sort of entertainments Havana loves. And while very pretty variety performances may be attended by audiences numbering from fifty to a hundred persons, the "Alhambra" and the "Moulin Rouge" have no reason to complain of lack of patronage. The men of Havana are faithful to them.

Havana's "Moulin Rouge" is a sort of barn, with a pit and a long gallery. The stage is large, the orchestra is divided from the audience by a light rail. In the pit on this Sunday evening there was a large number of respectable-looking men; in the crowded gallery there were all sorts and conditions of persons, some of them the very dregs of the city. Black and yellow and swarthy and white faces peered down upon the stage. Chinamen, mestizos, negroes, and white Cubans were huddled up in a whistling, perspiring, malodorous mass that was every moment growing more impatient. Cries, shrill whistling, impatient exclamations broke out; the pit was more orderly but was obviously impatient also. And with every moment the noise became louder, until at last, obeying a signal from some one half-hidden by the curtain, the orchestra broke into sound.

It might have been the tune of a devil's dance. The music had a fierce, brutal quality that was clearly intended to arouse every evil passion within the soul of man. It suggested a wild abandonment to the animal impulses; it hissed out mad desire; it screamed as if enraged. Then it became staccato, and its harsh

pulsations were accompanied by the steady beat of the heels of the sound-intoxicated men in the gallery. Suddenly it stopped. The curtain rose slowly and the lights went out. Then on a white sheet was thrown a picture from a cinematograph, which I must not describe. The real entertainment of the afternoon was yet to come, however; this was a drama in two acts, and the play bills proudly announced that the work had been prohibited: in two seconds you quite understood why. Then followed songs and dances, the dancers working themselves into a perfect frenzy of savage movement from which all suspicion of decency was abolished; and these sweating, writhing women on the stage were cheered on to further exertions, by the screaming, applauding, delighted audience which had now lost all control of itself.

The scene was in strange contrast to that I had witnessed in the Cathedral that morning—in strange and significant contrast. And much worse scenes have taken place in Havana. In the month of June, at the “Alhambra,” the dancers came on the stage without clothing, and the cinematograph exhibitions represented the very last perfection of indecency. Fights occurred amongst those anxious to obtain a good seat; tickets sold at a vastly increased price; during the performances the theatre was a perfect pandemonium. But this was more than the clergy and the better classes of the city would stand. The Bishop of Havana gathered round him the best elements of Havana society, and pressure was brought to bear upon the Government to put an end to these demoralising orgies. The Government intervened; but what is now permitted is not much worse than what has been prohibited. And the Government will hardly venture on a further prohibition.

The Americans tried to put a stop to what they considered were the more demoralising pastimes of the Cuban people, but what they did is rapidly being undone by the Cuban Government. The latter declares it is powerless: the people want cock-fighting and lotteries, and they will have them; so cock-fighting and lotteries have again been legalised. In time, maybe, the great bull-ring at Regla will again be the arena of bloody fights between pain-maddened bulls and nimble matadors, but bull-fighting is still *prohibida* at the moment that I write. The lust of blood and of money must needs be content with the excitement of the lottery drawings on Sunday afternoons, and the cruel combats of infuriated game-cocks.

Sunday in Havana, as in all Latin countries, is the great day for amusements. The lottery, which has been recently re-established as a state institution, announces the winning numbers on Sunday afternoon, and its announcements are feverishly awaited by thousands of persons. This is what the *Havana Telegraph* had to say the other day about the opening of the lottery. “Most extensive preparations are going on for the opening of the lottery; the machine which served in the old Spanish days has been refurbished up and provided with an electric motor, and all other gambling has been suppressed that there

may be an accumulation of hard-earned wages on hand to be invested in lottery tickets. Heretofore all efforts to stop gambling in the clubs of the city were vain, especially in the political clubs, but now there is no playing in any of these, not even in the Miguelista Club itself. Gambling has been declared intolerably immoral, unless you gamble with the Government, in emulation of the President's virtuous example."

This, of course, is a political outburst; yet it is quite true that the President himself chose the number 1895 for the first drawing of the national lottery.

The Havana theatres, although large, can claim but little in the way of appearance. The Havanese are very proud of their Opera House, but I found it a rather shabby structure capable of seating some three thousand persons, the entrance to this building being through one of the largest *cafés* in the city. It is not singular in this respect. The stranger who is directed to the Havana Opera House and who finds himself in a large room with a bar at one end of it, in which scores of men are seated round little tables, smoking, sipping cool drinks, and talking, may well imagine at first that he has blundered into a public-house. But he has only to walk straight towards the big doors in the centre of the wall facing the *café's* entrance, and he will find that he has made no mistake. After giving up his ticket and passing in, he will see before him a spacious amphitheatre, the pit of which is crowded with seats, and which is provided with galleries rising vertically one above the other to the roof. These galleries are all very narrow; the lower ones are divided into boxes in which two rows of chairs facing one another are ranged, so that a company of ladies and gentlemen may comfortably sit in one of these boxes as they do at home, and talk during the intervals of the play. In a Cuban house (it is the same in other Spanish-American countries) the ladies sit opposite the men unless related or on very familiar terms, and those who manage the Cuban theatres have thoughtfully provided that there shall be no divergence from this custom in a theatre box. These boxes have no curtains; they are separated from each other by the flimsiest of white railings; you enter them through a flimsy slat door; and as a rule they are patronised by women.

It is when there is some specially attractive performance at one of these places that Havana's fashionable folk are seen in all the glory of their war-paint. A Havanese audience prides itself upon its appreciation of good acting and singing: the women show their approval by going in hundreds to hear their favourites, the men express their delight by cheering vociferously, by throwing bouquets on the stage, and by making presents of jewellery to popular actresses.

There is always an Italian or Spanish Opera Company cruising about in Central American and West Indian waters. These companies seem to be as much a part of these regions of the world as the sky or the sea itself. The



THE PRADO, HAVANA.

prima donnas are frequently fat; the tenors, too, have often reached an age when, in spite of hardships and the vicissitudes of fortune, their abdominal development indicates that they have long since passed the days of love's young dream. Yet one must be thankful for what the gods provide, so a West Indian audience will turn out in thousands to hear a *prima donna*, aged forty-five, declare in quavers and high notes that she is on the point of committing suicide because a cruel uncle prevents her from being united to the dear object of her love, who may be fat, florid, and fifty years of age.

Such a company going to Havana does not often leave dissatisfied. Yet some very good companies have gone to Havana, and not a few "artistes" who have won fame in Europe have appeared before the footlights of the Grand Opera House of that city. During the summer there is no opera in Havana, but there are always variety entertainments at which you are treated to exhibitions of ballet dancing by an "incomparable" dancer who (so the programme informs you) delighted and astonished the people of Paris last year; and then, since even the incomparable one may not suffice, there are views from a cinematograph, and jokes by a world-famed comedian, also "incomparable."

And what amuses me about the Havana theatres is the quite cheerful way in which the audience is permitted to see what is going on upon the stage before the curtain rises and after it falls. There is always something the matter with the curtain; it persistently refuses to come right down to the flooring of the stage, nor does it always hide the wings of the stage from view. So one, sitting in the pit, sees quite easily what is going on upon the stage; and if it happens that some one has died in the last scene of an act you have been witnessing, it is not at all uncommon to see the dead man rise with remarkable agility and take himself off. The enterprising advertiser has also made the most of the opportunities which these theatres afford him for publishing the excellence of his goods to the Cuban world; and so on many a drop-curtain I have seen flaring advertisements of beer and biscuits, while the picture of a watch, rising like a sun out of the sea, and sending forth bright rays of light, haunts my memory like an evil dream. I saw that picture on the curtain of the Payret Theatre, and remember that underneath it was the veracious announcement that watches of that make are the best and the cheapest in the world.

The prices charged at these theatres (except during the Grand Opera season) are very low. In the course of an evening three entertainments may be given at the same play-house, each lasting about an hour. You pay a shilling or two (25 or 50 cents), and at the close of one part of the performance you leave or buy another ticket as you please. But these variety shows, though very good for the price, are but poorly attended; you see very few women at any of them, for example. And the men, as a rule, prefer the "Moulin

Rouge" or the "Alhambra." I imagine that the actors and actresses at the ordinary respectable Havana theatre must often ruefully conclude that while respectable acting is praised in the press, it is a little too often (like virtue) its own reward.

From what I have written it will be concluded that the moral tone of Havana is not high. The watch which mothers and fathers keep over their daughters, the insistence that all love-making shall be done under the eye of a relative, the partial seclusion of the women, the disinclination to allow a young woman to go anywhere alone: all this finds an explanation in the Spanish proverb which recommends "a brick wall between a male and a female saint." The Cuban woman is reputed to be a faithful wife and a devoted mother. The Cuban husband, it is said, regards continence as an admirable thing—for his women folk. Ten years ago, according to available statistics, 25 per cent. of the white Cuban children were illegitimate. The percentage amongst the negroes could not be ascertained, but was believed to be very much higher. The last Cuban census (whose figures are suspect) gives the proportion of illegitimates to the rest of the population as something over 12 per cent. The figures show a truly wonderful improvement, an improvement too good to be true. So I glanced over the statistics given by the Cuban Government in its elaborate "Censo de la Republica de Cuba, 1907"—and remember they were prepared for the perusal of others besides Cubans and residents in the country.

A foreigner long resident in Havana told me, too, a story which he declared illustrated a common enough phase of life in Havana. He was staying at a boarding-house with a number of other persons, and amongst them was a young couple whom he thought a pattern of mutual affection. They must have lived in the house for over two years, when one morning he noticed that neither was present at breakfast. As he had been on fairly friendly terms with them, he casually inquired of the landlady what had become of Mrs. D—, and was told that she had left for good; had gone to the country, the landlady thought. And Mr. D—? Oh, he was to be married next week! Then the landlady, who had known all along the true relations existing between Mr. D— and his lady, explained that the gentleman belonged to a very good Cuban family who wanted him to marry; and he, in order to please them, had severed his connection with the *soi-dissante* Mrs. D—, but not one moment before he thought it absolutely necessary to do so. "And that sort of thing, my dear sir," said my friend, "is common enough here." He was a great moralist in words, and so he went on to tell me innumerable other tales reflecting upon Havana society, to each of which he added a severe remark of condemnation though I noticed that he told his stories with infinite enjoyment. I doubted none of them. He was a bachelor who lived in lodgings, and so should know.

But enough of reflections upon Cuban morality. As I write I think I see a bevy of Havana's fairest daughters gracefully walking under the shade of the laurels that form the leafy avenue of the Prado, and this brings to my mind the memory of a Sunday evening promenade when the sun was sinking, a globe of gold, and when the stars were beginning, one by one, to peep out of the pale blue dome above.

"It is something we can all enjoy," said an American to me when speaking of this Sunday promenade. It is something every one in Havana does enjoy. It is at this promenade that you see a real crowd in Havana; not a hurrying, busy crowd, but thousands of pleasure-seekers whose one thought is of the enjoyment of the evening.

In Central Park and on the Malecon the bands are playing, and as the dusk deepens the throng of well-dressed people increases. Motor-cars, private landaus and victorias drive up and down the Prado and along the road that runs beside the embankment from La Punta to where the Malecon ends. But by far the greater number of persons are walking about or sitting on the fauteuils provided by the municipality, and for the use of which a small amount is charged. Most of the women are bareheaded; and the lithe, sinuous bodies of those that are still young, with the light from their dark eyes, and their graceful movements, and their self-conscious, studied look of indifference as they pass groups of young men who stare with bold admiration at them—all this makes a picture I should not willingly forget.

"The whole blessed family goes out together," a young American remarked in disgust to me. "They will not trust a girl alone." That is true: "the whole blessed family," or most of it, does seem to go out together. And mamma is generally fat, while the spinster aunt runs to skin and bone; papa, too, I suspect, is a bit of a savage where his daughters are concerned. His swagger and the defiant set of the straw hat that he wears seem to utter vague but terrible threats against those who would venture too far. Still, thank heaven, there is nothing to prevent your staring; so while the band plays you follow the girls with your eyes, feeling sure that they also are looking (but furtively) at you.

The Cuban woman, as I have hinted above, has a tendency to grow fat or thin as she passes from youth to age. But she is pretty and graceful when young, and for so much the stranger is most thankful. She almost invariably carries a fan, and has learnt to manipulate it with the same dexterity with which she uses her eyes; with the slightest motion of her fingers it opens or closes rapidly, and she fans herself with a series of quick movements fascinating to behold.

Many a young man, I fancy, would, on a promenade night, as he watches these girls, vote most cheerfully for the abolition of papa and mamma. He would like to see the girls alone, with their airs and graces, their soft movements and their quick or languishing glances. And no doubt a future emancipated generation will see mamma relegated to the company of her contemporaries, and papa sent altogether

about his business. But that time is not yet ; so, meanwhile, "the whole blessed family," or the major portion of it, strolls up and down the Prado, or along the Malecon, and the strains from the band fill the tropic night with music and the moon up above aids the lamps of the city to shed brightness on the scene ; and to the north the waves of the Gulf of Mexico eternally roll shoreward and break in surf against the shore, and the wind comes stealing over that wide expanse of water, bringing a sweet, refreshing coolness to the pleasure-lovers of this queen city of the Caribbean Sea.

And so the hours steal on, and gradually the crowd thins and vanishes, and Havana retires to rest after a day of prayer and pleasure—or of pleasure merely, as some observers would say.

CHAPTER III

THE PEOPLE AND THE COUNTRY

THE harbour of Havana was beginning to awake to the business of the day when, along with a number of other passengers, I stepped on board the ferry-boat that was to convey me over to Regla. In this little town was the railway line that connects Havana with Santiago de Cuba, the capital city of the great Province of Oriente at the other end of the island. Five years ago it would not have been possible to go right through the country by train, for although there were several lines of railway running in Cuba, they were all independent and all disconnected. To-day they have changed all that : to-morrow they will improve on what they have already done. Road-building and the extension of the railway system have begun in good earnest since the dawn of Cuban independence, and so one can now see Cuba without any considerable difficulty. Ten years ago the ordinary traveller contented himself with a visit to Havana.

The train did not leave Regla promptly at 7.30, as it was scheduled to do. The reason was that neither the train nor anything else pays strict attention to schedule time in Cuba. This contempt for punctuality is one of the customs of the country which I failed to admire ; anyhow we did start at about eight o'clock, and after pulling out of the station and leaving the little town, we found ourselves in the open country—in the green undulating plains and under the bright blue sky of Cuba.

What a contrast to the city it was ! We had left the narrow streets with their painted houses behind us, and were now in the midst of cultivated fields dotted here and there with peasants' houses, interspersed with clumps of heavy-foliaged trees, cut through by paths which showed red or black according to the nature of the earth, and watered by dark, gleaming streams that flowed and gurgled between banks fringed as far as the eye could reach with Royal palms. Here was where the real wealth of Cuba lay. Here was the soil whose fertility is so wonderful that it never needs manure, where the cane-farmer does not have to replant his land with new canes for seven and sometimes for ten years. So rich is this soil that from the same roots fresh canes will spring and be as full

of luscious juice as those he gathered last season, and so deep down is this layer of black or red earth that at some places you must dig for a yard or two before you reach the hard limestone rock beneath. And nature has in other ways been kind to this island of Cuba. It has given her a genial climate which varies slightly as you travel from west to east, and which is almost cold in the west in winter and never unbearably hot in the summer months. In all the four seasons of the year it is still a land of bright sunshine and genial temperature : if not, perhaps, in the towns, then at least in the country districts over whose whole area the trade winds blow, bringing a refreshing coolness from the sea.

It is a land of placid beauty, smiling, fertile, and with something feminine about its low wooded hills and purling waters. And it is the soft richness of the island, its three thousand varieties of plants, its thick carpet of variegated green, its deep blue skies, and its millions of palms and trees which grow in luxuriance on its broad plains, in its deep valleys, and on its mountain peaks, that have gained for it the title of "The Pearl of the Antilles."

The shape of Cuba has been likened to that of a hammer-headed shark. The similarity exists. From point to point the island is 900 miles long, and is everywhere less than 100 miles broad ; in one or two places it is less than 25 miles across. Most of it is flat country, except to the east and west. In the east a well-defined mountain range sends up lofty peaks, the highest of which is 8,000 feet ; in the west there is also a range of low mountains, and in the centre of the island, running through it like a backbone as it were, are spurs of the Sierra de los Organos and groups of hills ; but, on the whole, Cuba is singularly free from mountainous projections.

The island is divided into six provinces. The province to the extreme west, Pinar del Rio, is the scene of the tobacco industry of Cuba. It is here and in the farms immediately west of Havana that the tobacco is grown which has made Cuba famous, and which gives employment to thousands of men and women. I have already spoken of the tobacconist shops in Havana ; and one of the most interesting sights of that city also is its tobacco factories with their thousands of workers, both male and female, and their atmosphere of busyness and skill. The tobacco is cultivated on vegas, or small farms, by men who know their business by instinct as it seems. Every farm is a little community in itself ; there the houses of the farmer and his workers are situated, and there the vegetables for home consumption are grown ; sometimes, too, these vegas have gardens for the common enjoyment of the community, and there are sheds for the cattle, and the tobacco drying-house.

These vegas are hardly ever larger than forty acres. The men who grow and tend the tobacco (chiefly white Cubans) know that while the soil and climate will do much to bring the leaf to perfection and give it the fine flavour that the connoisseur loves, everything may still be ruined by unskilful handling or careless sorting, and so they go about their work with something of the

care a mother shows in looking after her child. The best quality of leaves is carefully sorted out from those of slightly inferior quality, and then the better quality of leaves is sorted out. And so the process continues, until the poorest quality of the tobacco has been picked out to be used in the making of inferior cigars, while the finer leaves are all neatly made up into bundles and duly labelled according to their worth. But the finished work of the grower and sorter is but the raw material of the man who makes the cigars. A great deal depends upon him also. He knows it, and takes pride in his work. Seated at innumerable tables in some great factory in the capital, with their knives and their pots of paste at hand, and, with cigars in their mouths, hundreds of these workers sit for hour after hour in the day, rolling and cutting the cigars that are to go all over the world. In the centre of the room, perched upon a sort of pedestal, sits the reader of the factory, the man who is employed by the Company to read aloud to the men who are at work. It is a curious custom this, but the cigar-maker is a politician wherever he is found, and wants to hear what the newspapers are saying on the topics of the day. So the reader reads to him as he works, and in listening he manufactures the fine cigars from which Cuba draws so large a portion of her revenue.

Tobacco is grown in other provinces, as well as in Pinar del Rio; through all of these, with the exception of Pinar del Rio, the train passes on its way to Santiago de Cuba. The line I travelled by is a single-track, broad-gauge railway system owned by an English and Cuban Company; the first-class cars they provide are fairly comfortable, and are fitted out with straw-covered, reversible seats and electric lamps (though some are still lighted by kerosene lamps). The price of a ticket from Havana to Santiago is £5 2s. 6d.

After we have been travelling for ten or fifteen minutes the characteristic features of the Cuban landscape begin to unroll before our eyes. One may have read before coming to Cuba of the Royal palm and of how it grows in profusion in this land; but no amount of description, no piling of adjective upon adjective, no excess of poetic simile, can give any true idea of what these palms look like as one sees them rising out of the ground in groups, in single stems, or in countless thousands for hundreds of miles upon the way. They are fewer in the east than in the west, and after passing through Havana, Matanzas, and Santa Clara one sees another variety of palm, a fan-palm which is not as stately as the Royal palm, but which has nevertheless a beauty of its own, with its crown of short fan-like fronds shining a dark green in the rays of the sun.

Rank after rank of these Royal palms appear and vanish as the train speeds past; sometimes they put one in mind of a regiment of soldiers marshalled out there upon the plain, or of a forest that has not been allowed to grow up at will, but has been trained and looked after, so that every tree has been given room enough to spring up towards the sunlight and to spread out its branches in the air. They strike a note of stateliness, so noble and so graceful is the look

of them. The wind passes through them, and the long green branches sway here and there—thousands upon thousands of them moving at one moment. Grass grows about the roots of them, long, thick, and emerald green; a carpet of beautiful colour from which the slender, grey-white columns rise up and expand into waving crowns of green.

Reddish-brown penguin hedges show where a careful farmer has sought to protect his crop. A stream tumbles over its rocky bed, perhaps to join farther on some river that flows towards the sea. There are many rivers in Cuba; the country is a land of streams. But so narrow is it that but few of these are large, and only one or two are navigable for any appreciable distance. The Rio Cauto is the largest; the others flow chiefly north and south to empty themselves into the sea. The rainfall in Cuba is copious, and so these rivers supply the land with the water that it needs; but many of them sink into the limestone caverns, while others spread themselves out on the low-lying lands of the southern coast, and thus help to form the vast cienagas, or swamps, of Cuba, where the crocodile lurks, and savage landcrabs find shelter, and fierce mosquitoes swarm in millions. Evil places these are: death-traps and poisonous; yet I can imagine that, in the days gone by, many a fear-maddened slave flying from a daily torture worse than death may have plunged into them as behind him he heard the thunder of the hoofs of pursuing horses or the deep, awful baying of the bloodhounds tracking him to his doom. And to him they may have proved a place of refuge.

The cattle ploughing in the heavy black soil of the countryside, and the group of huts near by, tell me that I am passing one of the numerous farms of Cuba. This is a small one, probably not more than 40 acres; and a glance at the labouring oxen shows that they are harnessed to a wooden plough, a crooked branch, one end of which, thrust into the soft earth, turns it up in heavy lumps which must afterwards be broken by the hoe. A primitive process, yet it serves the farmer's purpose well. The land is so soft that it yields to his efforts, the soil is so rich that even a superficial ploughing will give him good returns. Yet it must not be thought that modern agricultural implements are unknown in Cuba: they are being used more and more every year. I find that in the three years, 1905-7, Cuba purchased over £172,000 worth of agricultural implements from America and the United Kingdom, and it has purchased more since then. The American may be trusted to preach the value of modern implements and methods to the Cuban.

Standing at the doors of the huts on this farm are a few women, white, loosely dressed, but with their hair neatly plaited and parted. One of them holds a naked child of about five years old in her arms. This custom of leaving the children to go naked until they are five or six years old is one that will die hard in Cuba. I don't think it hurts the children much in this sunny climate, but the sight is a little startling at first. A strong, fine-looking American



THE CATHEDRAL, HAVANA.

from the Southern States, seeing me look at the child, offers some information on the subject.

"A law has been passed prohibiting mothers to let their kiddies go naked after four years of age," he tells me, "but nobody obeys it. The laws here are a joke. Everything here is a joke! Why, in the interior many of the boys and girls never put on anything before they are sixteen."

My informant was an intelligent man who helped to make the journey interesting for me. He had been in Cuba for fourteen years, and cordially disliked the people. He found them a joke, a bad joke apparently, for his laugh when he spoke of them was not appreciative.

"Yes, sir," he continued, "boys and girls naked up to the age of sixteen. What do you think of that? And the older men all patriots who fought in the war of liberation! Everybody here is a patriot and fought in the war of liberation; and when it came to paying off the army some years ago, it seemed as though every person in the country had been engaged in a life-and-death struggle for freedom, and patriotically expected to be paid for it. I know hundreds of these patriots, and only one of these was a private—he was not even a sergeant—he insists upon it. I regard that man as something rare and wonderful, for all the other patriots were either colonels or generals. One private, sir, to a thousand colonels! It is a joke."

I laughed; "But they fought well?" I suggested.

"They ran away well. I never saw such people for getting out of the way of an army in my life. You simply couldn't catch them—the patriots!

"The Spaniards fought all right. The Spaniards and we are good friends now, you know; we appreciate one another and despise the Cubans.

"There is no damned, high-fallutin' nonsense about the Spaniards. But we all wept over the Cuban before we knew him. General Wood came over here and talked a lot of nonsense, and spent a lot of money for no good purpose whatever. They have made him Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army, because, I suppose, he entertained the Cuban ladies at balls and dances at the palace in Havana when he was Governor here. He built a million-dollar road from Santiago to the San Juan hill, so that tourists could go and see where the bold Roosevelt did the great deed that made him become President of the United States. We call that road "Wood's Folly" over here. Fancy building such a road in a country that needs roads to develop its agriculture! It is a joke."

My candid friend relapses into silence, and in the interval I scrutinise closely the other passengers in the car. There are three or four Americans, a few Cuban ladies with children, and numbers of men, all Cubans presumably, who are going on to Matanzas or Camaguey. I stroll into the second-class carriage; here another type of tropical humanity presents itself for study: rough-looking men, without their jackets, and swarthy in complexion, and

women with figures and faces which indicate that they belong to the working-classes, are seated here. My friend the Southerner will tell me that the Cuban woman does not work ; but then, he is judging by the American standards, and judged by those standards even the lower-class Cuban woman does little. But when I remember that even the simple duties of the home must take up some time, when I think of the girls who are employed in the tobacco factories of Havana, and when I call to mind the demands which a tropical climate makes upon one's energy, I will not agree with any wholesale charge of laziness brought against either the men or the women of Cuba. I know that in the cities it is the Spaniard (as I have said before) who is the man of business. I know, too, that the men in the cities and towns do not seem as robust and are not so energetic as those who work on the farms and estates. The Latin-American city-dweller does not love the strenuous life and is not fitted for it ; yet, after all, it is chiefly the native Cuban who grows and manufactures the sugar and cigars, and who cultivates the fruit, which Cuba exports in such large quantities. He is a splendid hand at cutting timber. He is fairly good at cattle-raising. Some railway-men say he is a good hand at heavy railroad work, but others deny this ; so I suppose that some Cubans do navy work fairly well, while others do it badly. In the light of all this I cannot refrain from differing from my Southern friend's opinions on Cubans as a whole.

I look out of the window again, and in the middle distance I see the forests of palms, and behind these, against the horizon, there runs a low range of green hills. The sun is now high in the heavens and the heat has stilled the landscape to sleep. I imagine that out yonder the silence is as the silence of night, unbroken save by the chirping of some insect or the lowing of the cattle as they wander about cropping the juicy grass. Picturesque groups of peasants' huts we pass, a little settlement here and there, with its shops, its houses, and its vegetable gardens, and before we come to Matanzas we pass by a great sugar estate with its square and rectangular fields of cane, its red-roofed factory with the tall iron chimneys rising suddenly into the sky, its avenue of Royal palms leading up to a low house surrounded by verandahs and its grove of young cocoanut-trees with their fronds of yellowish-green.

We are in the province of Matanzas, one of the chief sugar districts of the island. Sugar is grown everywhere in Cuba ; it occupies about one-half of the cultivated area of the country ; it gives employment to the bulk of the people ; and while, in other West Indian islands, the cane-sugar industry has fallen upon evil times, in Cuba it flourishes and has nothing to fear from the competition of the beet ; and no wonder, for what better sugar lands can you find anywhere ?

I know that Java is said to have some of the best sugar soils in the world ; but this flat, rolling country with its thick layer of vegetable mould, its numerous fine harbours to the north and to the south, its easy access to the

sea from every point; this island of Cuba, I think, has nothing to fear from Java, which is not even now as important a sugar-producing country as Cuba. You must remember that the cane can be grown on almost every part of it, and that of its area of 40,000 square miles (excluding the islands and cays along the coast) only about 3 per cent. was said to be under cultivation in 1899. Picture to yourself this island well supplied with roads and an extended railway system (as it one day will be), and steadily attracting workers from Spain and the other West Indian islands, and you may form some idea of the position it will occupy as one of the world's sources of sugar supply. Even now the larger number of its sugar estates are splendidly equipped with modern machinery. And the latest process of sugar manufacture will be found in Cuba to-day.

A large sugar estate is a village, with its barracks for the workers, its 20, 30, or 40 miles of narrow-gauge railway tracks for the train of cars which bring the canes from the field to the factory, and its hundreds of draught-oxen and its gangs of labourers. The industry here is carried on upon a grand scale, with expensive sugar centrals and an enormous output. This one island alone can supply all the world with the sugar it needs. Yet, fifty years ago, Cuba produced, not sugar chiefly, but coffee, and only gave up the cultivation of that berry with reluctance, and in obedience to stern economic necessity.

To-day Brazil is the great coffee-producing country of the world. Fifty years ago she had already begun to threaten the other coffee-growing countries with her promise of enormous production. The Cubans saw the danger that threatened; their coffee plantations had also severely suffered through the hurricanes of 1843 and 1845; so the ruined cafetals were re-planted in cane, the fruit trees that once shaded the delicate coffee plant disappeared, and where the tender shrub had once blossomed into snow-white flowers of delicious perfume, the green blade of the cane now appeared. Thus an economic revolution took place, and Cuba, which once had produced great quantities of inferior coffee, began to produce greater quantities of superior cane sugar, and in the production of this she will not be beaten by any other tropical country in the world.

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And now I notice that the appearance of the country has slightly altered. We are now running through a valley almost entirely surrounded by hills, and through this valley a river flows, and here and there are houses and groups of peasants, and horses and cattle, and plots of cultivated ground, and—but suddenly I cease to observe the scene, for we have emerged from the valley now, and surely that stretch of sparkling blue water is the sea, and there, climbing from the shores of that noble bay up the low sheltering slopes of the hills, is a city—Matanzas with its red-roofed houses and its six-and-thirty thousand souls.

The train stopped. We had been a little more than two hours upon the way,

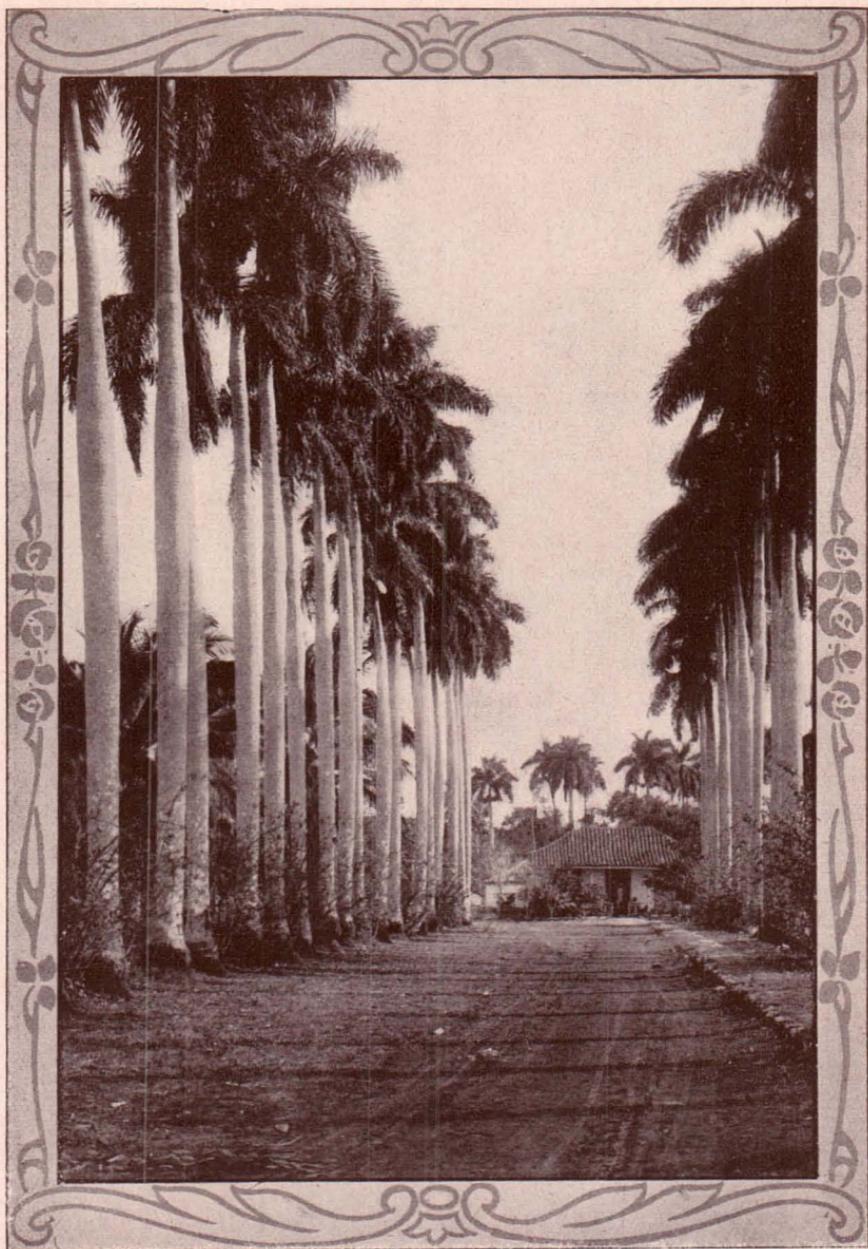
and it was at this station that we should stay for twenty minutes for breakfast. So we left the train and streamed into the station, and here we sat down to a meal prepared in Cuban style, which is a style quite different from that which prevails in the American or the Americanised hotels of Havana.

In the large waiting-room several long tables were set, and heaped upon them was food of all sorts and descriptions. Great dishes of rice coloured red and yellow, and cooked with large pieces of fowl or fresh fish, or with shrimps, were scattered all about. Beef lopped with egg, eggs fried in oil, Cuban steaks swimming in a rich gravy, ripe plantains sliced thick and fried to a golden brown, sweet potatoes and yams and avocado pears—the tables were laden with all these. And in the centre of each table, forming a sort of ridge, or backbone, was a row of bottles and water jars, and claret decanters, and fruit-stands filled with fruits; and dishes with slices of cream cheese and guava jelly were placed in between those containing more solid food.

What a mixture it was! We sat on benches ranged on either side of the tables, and while we were being served I looked around me. Cubans of all colours and complexions were there—black, white, and brown—and some Americans, and a Chinaman or two. My friend from the Southern States sat next to a negro; I glanced at his strong-featured, rather proud-looking face—he did not seem disturbed by the proximity. John Chinaman eats quickly, undisturbing, and undisturbed. And every one assisted every one else to food and drink, some of us talking, some eating in silence.

Here, at any rate, we were all on a footing of equality. At the other Fondas in Cuba you will also find a mixed company—you cannot exclude a man from an hotel or restaurant in Cuba on account of his race or colour. But in the hotels frequented by American tourists, I am told that they sometimes charge high rates to certain guests whom they do not want; or they perhaps discover that there is not a spare room in the house. But the poorer establishments do not venture to do this; and, for my part, when I saw a Southerner sitting side by side with a negro, and near to a Chinaman, without evincing any disapprobation whatever, I felt that at last the lion was (temporarily) lying down with the lamb.

We ate with remarkable rapidity, having little time to lose. The plates and glasses were of an extraordinary thickness, of execrable pattern, and clumsy beyond description. Some of us began with fruit, following this up with fried eggs; claret mixed with water was the favourite drink, and for dessert we had bananas and native cream cheese flavoured with slices of guava dulce. I tasted nearly everything—I paid the penalty afterwards—and I confess I found most of it good. The dishes were oily beyond description, and some of the meats had a tendency to sweetness; still they were palatable, and the price of the breakfast was moderate—an American dollar for each person. This restaurant, I understand, and the others at the different stations along the line, are either owned by or run in connection with the Railway Company. The waiters at



COUNTRY HOUSE WITH AVENUE OF ROYAL PALMS.

Matanzas, I noticed, too, were Spaniards, but at the station eating-houses farther on they were all Chinamen; and all the cooks were Chinamen.

We left Matanzas at about eleven o'clock, and as the train drew out of the station I again caught a glimpse of the city and of the bay into which the Yumuri empties itself. The Valley of the Yumuri is believed to be the most beautiful spot in all Cuba; here, too, are the famous caves of Bellamar, great limestone caverns that reach a depth of 400 feet, and which are one of the tourist-shrines of Cuba.

But it is the bay of Matanzas which charmed me, so calm it is, and so beautiful is its surface of blue and frosted silver. And here I may remark on the peculiar formation of so many of the harbours of Cuba. They are nearly all of them long and narrow, and entered by a narrow opening, so that the cities built upon the shores of these bays cannot always be seen from the sea. Santiago de Cuba, for example, is so completely hidden by the hills on either side of the winding channel which forms the approach to it, that one may pass near to the coast, and, but for the presence of the Morro Castle at the entrance of the harbour, never suspect there was a city within a hundred miles of it. These pouch-like harbours are formed by the erosion of the limestone rocks by the sea. The reef-rock that for the most part forms the Cuban coast is hard and resisting, but immediately behind it is a softer substance: hence the numerous, narrow, protected bays of the island. The harbour of Cienfuegos, for example, is thought to be one of the safest in the world; while that of Santiago de Cuba is one of the most sheltered and most beautiful that I have ever seen. And many other of Cuba's harbours make admirable anchorages for ships.

After leaving Matanzas we settle down for a journey of several hours; for though we shall stop at different stations along the line, the destination of most of us is Camaguey, and that place we may reach at nine o'clock to-night. My friendly Southerner is joined by another American who shares his views on the Cuban situation, thinking it somewhat of a joke; but the newcomer is more charitable towards the people, and so tells me of their good qualities, which information I receive most gratefully.

The torpor which follows after a heavy breakfast falls upon all of us. It is warm in the train, and presently many of the passengers settle themselves down to sleep in attitudes that suggest the writhing of men stretched out on beds of torture. The guard comes in, and seeing us all comfortable, or at any rate resigned, proceeds himself to make the best of the situation, and begins to do so by sitting down, picking his teeth, and spitting on the floor. He is a Cuban but speaks English, and he tells you he has lived for some time in Canada and the United States. Most of the guards on this line speak English (this to facilitate the American traveller), and all of them are quite prepared to give you any information in their power with an easy familiarity which is not intended to be offensive and is not in reality so. Still, any one accustomed to the habits of those countries where a railway guard is supposed to keep to himself and not mix on

friendly terms with the passengers, would be a little surprised at the conduct of the guards on this Cuban railway line. Shortly after this particular one sat down before me, he pulled a mango out of his pocket, and, peeling it, threw the skin upon the floor. Slicing off the heavy flesh and judiciously sampling it, he began to talk, telling me about the country, and the people, and the Americans, whom he did not seem to love. Another guard was talking to my Southerner with his right hand resting familiarly on the latter's shoulder, and a cigar between his lips. Everything and every one suggested a kind of lazy indifference to class distinctions, to discipline and order; and if there was not much conversation, that was either because we were lazy or had nothing to talk about; it was not because we were proud.

The villages we see after passing Matanzas are larger, more numerous, and of more prosperous appearance than those we passed before. Some of these settlements are towns, and I know of nothing more interesting in its way than one of these Cuban towns set down on the railway line, with its church and its better-class houses, and its huts and its streets and lanes, and perhaps a tiny park. Colon town, as I remember it, was a town of the better sort: a pretty place with red-tiled houses, and a plaza with a statue in it, and streets paved with cobble-stones and macadam; a place with a mixed population of whites and negroes and mestizos, who all looked careless and happy, as they slowly moved about or stood loitering at the thresholds of their doors. But Esperanza, situated farther on upon the way, was altogether different. Esperanza, or the village in Esperanza that I saw, is perhaps a typical Cuban settlement upon which fortune has smiled. It is a mass of roomy huts divided from one another by narrow lanes. The huts are thatched with the fronds of the Royal palm, and the sides of them are either built of boards or of the flat end-portion of the fronds. There are a few tiled houses there, and a church; but the dominant note of the scene is struck by the grey, painted, comfortable huts, and the patches of banana-trees and sugar-cane near them. The sun was shining down upon it all as I saw it on the day of which I write, and the spears of the cane-plant gave back the light in flashing reflections. Above the village a flock of vultures (the John Crows) circled and wheeled, and just outside of its boundaries a few horses and cattle strayed. Two or three shops supplied the community with its few wants, and before these, as before every village shop in Cuba, a number of horses were tethered to the poles that support the projecting eaves of the little wooden buildings, each of which is surrounded by a narrow verandah.

These village shops are all the same. Some of them hang out the sign that there the traveller may have food, or may have his hair or beard attended to. "Fonda y Barberia," says one sign; "Ropa y Articulos de Fantasia," says another. So that cloth and clothing and fancy goods may be purchased there, as well as condensed milk and beef.

I imagine, too, that these shops are the gossip-houses and clubs of these settlements. Men riding from different parts of the adjacent country districts alight at these places to "pass the time of day" and have a little talk. This explains the number of saddled horses I see here, and I can picture a gathering of these caballeros in times of revolution; I can see them spring out of their high-peaked, hollow, richly worked saddles, each with a long machete hanging at his side and a gun in his hand, and all gesticulating fiercely, and discussing the all-absorbing topic of the day. Then I see them moving off in a group, and trotting across the plain until they are swallowed up in a forest of Royal palms, or disappear behind the distant horizon. And as I see some of them, now, jacketless, good-humoured, and armed with the machete, I suspect that in a tussel they would not prove to be merely the joke that my Southern friend describes them to me.

It was, I think, at the station which was labelled Colon that a boy led in a blind beggar, evidently one of the cherished institutions of the town. The cry for alms rang plaintively through the train, and I noticed that but few persons refused to assist the beggar. This scene was repeated at more than one station farther on, and takes place every day, no doubt. You do not hustle the beggar here and give him to the guardians of the poor; you look upon him as part of an ordered scheme of life, and give him your pence, and receive his blessing, quite as a matter of course. But there was something else accepted as a matter of course also, which I did not appreciate. A man went from car to car selling papers and illustrated magazines; I thought I would buy one or two, and I did so. He handed me the papers, and on his giving me the change of the silver coin with which I had paid him, I looked at his hands. To my horror, I saw that the man was a leper—the signs of the disease were all too visible—and I had touched his paper and money! I called the Southerner's attention to his case, and asked him if lepers were not segregated in Cuba. This gave him an opportunity to launch out upon a description of all the loathsome diseases of the country, and the carelessness of the authorities in dealing with them. And here, I am afraid, he was not altogether wrong.

A blind beggar led through the train to plead for alms was a pathetic object, and illustrated the easy-going kindness of the people. But a leper allowed to sell papers on a train was enough to make one sick. The leprosy of Cuba, fortunately, is said to be non-contagious; nevertheless one does not feel very happy for some time after one has come into contact with a man suffering from leprosy or some other dangerous contagious disease.

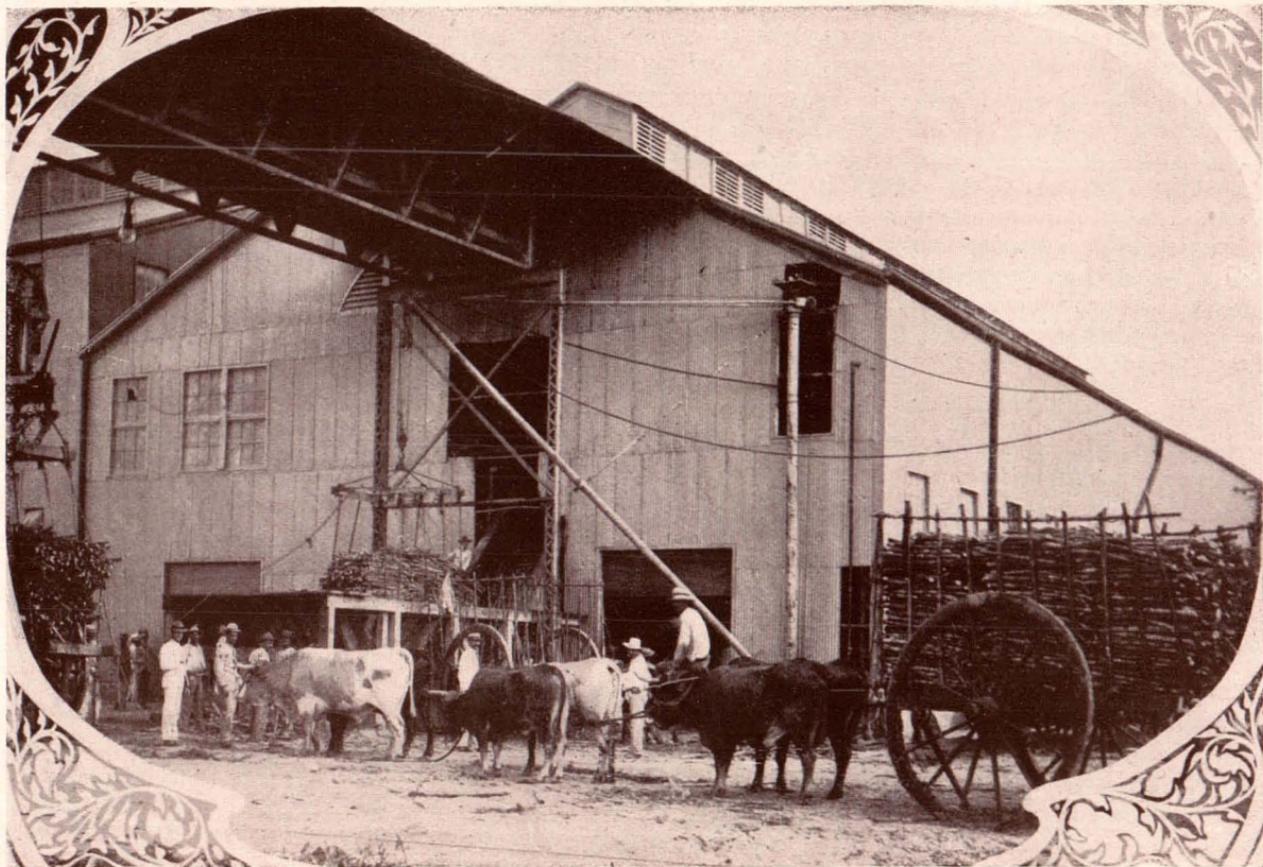
Santa Clara, the province through which one passes after leaving the province of Matanzas, is the largest sugar district of Cuba, and one of the best cultivated. Signs of its prosperity may be seen in the superior appearance of its peasants' huts, and in the size of its settlements scattered along the line. And yet wages are lower in Santa Clara than in almost any other part of the

island. I say this on the authority of the latest statistics I have been able to obtain upon the subject; from them I learn that while in Camaguey, a province with only four or five sugar estates, the rate of wage for an agricultural labourer was 3s. 8d. a day in 1907, it was 2s. 9½d. in Santa Clara. On the other hand, it costs a labourer much less to live in Santa Clara than elsewhere: the average cost of a month's board for a labourer in Santa Clara is put down at about £1 16s. 4d.—little over 9s. a week. The best paid workers in Cuba are unquestionably those employed in tobacco growing—but these, of course, are nearly all skilled men. In the cities, too, the price of labour is high, some domestic servants getting as much as £1 (\$5) a week.

Wages fluctuate in Cuba as elsewhere, and as the exploitation of the island continues wages will rise. The country will require a much larger population than it has if it is to be developed properly, and part of the labour force it requires must be attracted by high wages. After the independence of the country was attained in 1898, a stream of emigrants began to pour into Cuba. The census of 1899 gave the population as 1,572,799 souls; the census of 1907 gives it as 2,048,980—an almost incredible increase. Now nearly one-third of this population lives in towns and cities of 8,000 inhabitants or more. This means (stated differently) that over 600,000 persons in Cuba are town and city dwellers; and if we took the towns of 1,000 inhabitants and more, we should find that the people who live in towns and cities numbered nearly 900,000. Many a town, however, supplies the surrounding country districts with workers; so, in speaking of the city dwellers, the first figure given above more fairly indicates the proportion of the urban to the rural and agricultural population.

But even that proportion is entirely too large. The Cuban clearly loves the life (such as it is) to be found in the streets and plazas of his towns, but the city-bred man will not do much towards developing his island. As for the Cuban labourer, although admitted to be good-humoured and imitative and willing, he is very apt to take offence, and very quick to resent a real or an imagined insult. Speak harshly to him, and you may find yourself suddenly attacked; and when he is armed with his machete he is no mean antagonist. He may even do worse. He may set your cane-fields on fire. The knowledge that this is possible keeps many a "boss" to a perfect courtesy; nor does the latter resent being called by his Christian or his surname by his labourers. For they do not mean to be discourteous. They merely feel that they are quite the equal of the man who is placed in charge of them.

I have met many men who have had gangs of these Cubans working under them, and one and all have told me the same story. The unmarried Cuban, they say, is almost hopeless as a worker—as an American epigrammatically put it, "He is all necktie and affection." The Cuban youth loves a gaudy-coloured neckcloth, and he always wants a woman near him: away from his wife or his fiancée, or the woman who stands to him in the relation of wife, he does badly. His



BRINGING CANES TO THE FACTORY, CUBA.

thoughts are always with "a certain she," even though he may not be constant to one. Now, women are fewer than men in Cuba. While the gentler sex preponderates in many other lands, in Cuba it is more than 100,000 less than the other, and this alone would be a good reason for the not very high moral tone of the country. So long as this great disproportion continues, too, the Cuban will always have a liking for the towns, where, naturally, the women prefer to live.

This preponderance of males in the population has prevailed for over a century. As the authors of the last census tell us, "En todos los censos, los varones han constituido una mayoría de los habitantes." In 1841, 58 per cent. of the population were men; this proportion became 51·8 per cent. in 1899; in 1907 it was put down as 52·5 per cent. And the cause? The slave trade in the first place, and emigration in the second. Slaves continued to be taken to Cuba up to 1845, and most of the slaves imported were men. Shortly after this commenced the introduction of indentured labourers from China, and in twenty years some 130,000 of these workers were brought to Cuba. Most of them were men, and they were so badly treated that, in 1877, the Chinese Government refused to allow any more of them to be taken to the island. There are only about 11,000 of these Chinese in Cuba to-day, and there is now a law prohibiting the entrance of new arrivals. The others have either died or have returned home, or have migrated to other lands.

As the Chinese are a disappearing quantity in the Cuban population, I may deal with them in a few words once for all. They are industrious, law-abiding, and frugal; they are restaurant-keepers, vegetable gardeners, and cooks. A few work on the sugar estates, where their services are appreciated, for the Chinaman does not neglect his work. For example, the cane juice must boil for a certain length of time before it becomes transformed into the crystals that are sent abroad. If the liquid is poured out too soon, it is spoilt; if allowed to boil too long, the crystals are not of the required size and quality. Now it is just possible that the Cuban, at the very moment his attention should be fixed upon the boiler, may remember that he wants to light his cigarette. But the Chinaman stands there watching with a wonderful patience, and at the right quarter of a second he upsets the boiler, and the sugar is done to perfection. Still, he is not wanted in Cuba. That island will never be developed with the help of the Chinese.

Another reason for the preponderance of the male population of Cuba is the number of male emigrants which has been pouring into the country since the establishment of Cuban independence. These are chiefly from Spain, and are the most prized and probably the most valuable element of the Cuban population. They are splendid workers, and peaceful on the whole, and though in the past a good number of those who went to Cuba did not always remain there, the likelihood is that the larger portion of the Spanish emigrants will

settle for good in the island, where they will merge with the people, who are of the same race and who speak the same language as themselves.

It will also be apparent that the steady emigration of Spaniards to Cuba must lead to the gradual disappearance of the darker elements of the Cuban population. These strangers will seek wives amongst the women of the country, and the competition of the males for the women will end in a victory for the white men, who, for one thing, will be better able to support their wives. As a matter of fact, the coloured element of the population has been steadily decreasing in proportion to the whites for near upon a century. The negro never thrived in Cuba—he died there easily—and the mixture of the races has further tended to diminish the numbers of the black man. So we find to-day that more than two-thirds of the Cubans are put down in the census as white—a doubtful statement—while the remainder are divided into mestizos and blacks, the latter being least of all.

The process of miscegenation will continue. Cuba will steadily become more white, and the strain of black blood in the veins of the people will probably help them to bear the effects of a tropical climate better than they otherwise would. It is this island and the colony of Porto Rico that will furnish in the future some most valuable data on the question of white colonisation in the tropics, a question of some importance to both the white and the darker races of the world.

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Night had fallen when the train drew into the station at Camaguey. From the station I passed into a street, lit here and there by faintly gleaming lamps. Except for one or two hotel boys, and a few victoria drivers, I saw no one: the city was asleep.

The city is always asleep, as I found when I wandered about on the following day—it has been sleeping for over two centuries. What an impression it made upon me! I had read of the independence of its people, of how it had been one of the centres of revolution in the days when Cuba fought with Spain for independence, of how it was the “whitest” of Cuban cities, and of the superior beauty of its women and the bravery of its men. What did I expect? I cannot tell; yet what I saw in Camaguey was something I had not expected; for it was all new to me, and strange: a curious city which lives upon the few traditions it has acquired with time.

It is an inland town, built upon the site of an ancient Indian village whose name it bears. The name the Spaniards gave it is Puerto Principe; but Puerto Principe is a seaport to the north; and though once the city itself was there, fear of the terrible pirates drove its inhabitants to move into the interior, until they came to where Camaguey now stands.

The whole province of which the city is the capital is also known as Puerto.

Principe or Camaguey. But even the Cuban might be a little puzzled at first if you spoke of it by its Spanish designation. In the West Indies there has been a conflict of names as well as a conflict of races and nationalities, and in many instances the native names have won. "Cuba" itself is an Indian word, but the island has been christened many a time. Columbus called it "Juana," then it was renamed "Fernandina." Shortly after they named it "Santiago," then "Ave Maria," then "Alfa y Omega." But there was a district in the central region of the island called "Cubanacan," and this name, truncated to Cuba, was eventually bestowed on the whole country. In a somewhat similar manner an Indian village has given its name to a province and city, and the people of this part of Cuba are proud to speak of themselves as Camagueyans.

It was early morning when I went out into the streets of Camaguey, and what first struck me was the silence that seemed to reign everywhere. A few women were going to church in twos and threes; a man or two loitered at a shop door; but what other sign of life was in this city of thirty thousand souls? . . . Yes; I remember some other things as I recall that ancient town. I remember little carts drawn by goats and looked after by boys, which went about with vegetables and with bottles of milk. And where the Alameda stands, with its withered-looking trees all covered with dust, I remember seeing a stray horse or two, and a man who ineffectually tried to persuade himself that he was trying to catch them. Other scenes rise before me like dark specks on a white curtain. So I remember that I found the short-circuit electric car after some search; and saw a few more people here and there; and—yes, Camaguey is not dead but sleeping; but one may be excused if at first one is tempted to write of it as dead.

The streets of this inland city curve about, of their own volition as it seems. Parallel streets are unknown in Camaguey; the ancient founders of this place must have hated the straight line and loved the circle. There has been some attempt at paving these thoroughfares; but where the rough cobble-stone or the macadam ends, the sand begins; and in a Camagueyan street I have sunk to the ankles in sand. Most of the houses here are of a single storey, and old; the walls of many of them are cracked and dilapidated; the low steps leading to the doors of these places are narrow and encroach upon the tiny side-walks; often, too, they are broken—fallen to pieces through age and decay.

The wooden window grilles project into the streets. They are big and clumsy, nothing at all like the plain or fancy iron-work that one sees in Havana. Where they are broken they have sometimes been patched with pieces of cloth; but at the best they cannot be intended to secure privacy, for I have no difficulty in peering into the interior of the living-rooms as I pass along; and there I see the scantily clothed women lolling in rocking-chairs, and the naked babies crawling on the floor. There is hardly any furniture in the houses of the poorer sort. One or two tables, a bed, a few rocking-chairs—that is the inventory. The houses

of the better sort, I am told, are furnished fairly well ; but the doors and windows of all these are kept closed ; and so when I passed through a street where are situated the houses of the aristocracy of the town, it seemed to me as though I were in a place deserted by its people.

The one bright thing in all Camaguey is its liquor shops. I saw no customers in them ; nevertheless their shelves were not covered with dust as was the case with the other retail establishments I saw. Its cathedral and churches, large though they are, are ugly buildings, and the altars in them are decked out with artificial flowers and tawdry tinsel. I think it was in the cathedral that I noticed a score or two of rickety benches painted blue and provided for the use of worshippers, the entire building looking deserted, squalid, miserable, out of repair. And the beautiful women of Camaguey ? I saw just nine of them—or, at least, I saw nine fairly good-looking girls, and I suppose these were representative of the rest. It was at the corner of a street—No. 35 Calle Soledad, to be precise, that I came upon something that looked like a little shop, in which some girls and a man were gathered. I peeped in ; the easels and paintings about showed me at once that it was an art school—or what is considered such in Camaguey—and the ages of the pupils may have ranged from fourteen to twenty-one. The features of the girls were rather sharp, but their eyes were bright and they were a merry lot ; the pictures scattered about were execrable, and the room itself, a plain wooden structure, must surely have been used for retail-trade purposes in the not distant past.

A priest draped in a long brown cloak and wearing sandals on his naked feet passes up the street. A child or two come out of a house near by, and run inside again. Every one seems bent upon avoiding the open air : is it that the habit of seeking shelter—acquired in the days when the fear of pirates was upon the people of this town—has clung to them through all these generations ?

Strolling back to my hotel I lean against the door, and from here I can see where the street ends and the open road begins. There are no suburbs here, no gradual transition from town to country : one ceases and the other begins abruptly, and the grass grows round the city, disputing its boundaries with it. Grass grows in the streets of the city, in those silent, deserted streets through which life moves with such monotony. Camaguey is the great cattle-rearing province of Cuba, and in travelling through it one passes savannah after savannah of rich parana or guinea grass, and thousands of cattle. Sometimes the grass grows so high that nothing else can be seen ; even the cattle are hidden by the long spears. The soil of this province is not so rich as that of other portions of Cuba, being largely composed of sand ; yet it serves its purpose, for Camaguey is the meat-supplying province of Cuba. Now, as I stand at the door of the hotel and note where the houses cease and the sand and grass begin, I picture to myself how easy it would be for all these low and ancient structures to be buried and forgotten did all these people leave the city for two or three short years.

How easy for ruin to overtake this place which strikes such an unharmonious note in the centre of these green savannahs. The silence and oppression of vastness are already upon it; yet, in the end, the commercial spirit of the age will conquer the spirit of the plains; for even in Camaguey two or three new buildings are being erected, and land agents are there, and a speculation in land has begun.

Who owns the land in Cuba? Cubans chiefly, but foreigners also own a good deal of it. An attempt has been made to effect legislation prohibiting foreigners from acquiring land; it has proved unsuccessful, and so the transfers of property continue, much to the annoyance of those far-seeing Cubans who perceive that the strength of the stranger will be chiefly in his ownership of land. I was told in Havana that the younger Cubans are hastening to get rid of their possessions, so that they might go to enjoy the pleasures of Paris. But here, in Camaguey, I hear a different, and, I believe, a truer tale. It is a land-speculator who tells it to me, an American whose yearly transactions amount to many thousands of pounds.

"The Cuban never willingly sells his land," he says; "never sells it until necessity compels him to do so. When he comes and offers me so many acres, I know he is in difficulties, and I offer him my own price. 'Oh, no!' he says, 'couldn't think of selling for that, would much rather not sell.' But I don't budge, for I know what will happen; so he goes home and talks the matter over with his wife, and turns it over in his mind, and in the end he comes back to me and we close the bargain. But he only sells under compulsion." That I believe to be the truth; yet, in spite of this reluctance, some of the land is being sold.

For one thing, not many Cubans have capital enough to develop their properties, and the temptation to realise on what brings them but little, if any, profit must always be great.

"How do these people live?" I ask my informant, as we stand together at the door of the huge hotel that was once a barracks for Spanish troops.

"How do they live? I have been eighteen years in Cuba, and have made it my ambition to be the best-informed man in the island on Cuban affairs. I live in this city, and I like it; I know a good many of the people; yet time after time I have found myself asking the very same question you have asked me. I am not sure that I can answer it, but I will try. You see those little goat-carts going about? well, they go from door to door selling vegetables, and a woman or child will come to the door and will buy a quarter of a cabbage, or a plantain, or a few bananas, and a small portion of fish or beef is bought at the shops; but it is chiefly vegetables that these people live upon."

"But they must have money to buy these," I said. "Where does the money come from? I see no one working here, and no signs of industry."

"Well, it is like this. Every man here, more or less, owns a piece of land or a few head of cattle. Now, a few of them will go into partnership—that is,

they will put all their cattle under one man and divide the calves amongst them. These calves can always be sold, and so a little money comes in in that way. Then there are one or two sawmills near this town, and a sugar estate, and the railway shops. All these employ some of the people. And these live upon so little that they don't require much money. Nobody works very hard in Camaguey."

That was obvious enough; and if the secret of a happy life be a minimum of exertion and a minimum of wants, I think the lower classes of Camaguey have learnt that secret.

Great two-wheeled carts drawn by teams of oxen creaked past the hotel, each taking one or two huge logs of wood to the sawmills. These carts were driven by swarthy Cubans, each armed with a whip whose thick, tapering leather thong measures some three or four yards. Dogs sneaked about here and there, big brutes which must have descended from the hounds that were used to hunt the slaves in the days gone by. I left my hotel, where the three male guests had sat down to a game of poker which (so far as I could make out) had been in progress for a week or two, and strolled towards the end of the street. There I found a victoria, and taking it, was driven into the open country over what was by courtesy called a road.

In the last "Census of the Republic" we are given two pictures: one is called "Un camino primitivo en Cuba," the other, "Un camino Cubano de construcción moderna." Only those persons who have had some acquaintance with an average Cuban road can understand why the Cuban authorities are so anxious to show the difference between the old roads and those they are now building. The Spaniard, while he founded substantial and even fine cities, systematically neglected to build even passable roads in any of the countries he won from the Indians. Here and there he paved a path, like the famous gold road across the Isthmus of Panama, in order that the mule trains bearing the gold and precious stones from the mines might reach the coast safely. But mule tracks and narrow pathways cut through the forest represented almost all that was done in the way of road-building for the purpose of facilitating travel and the development of the country; and this policy of neglecting the means of transit it was which prevented Spain from easily and completely subduing the Cuban revolutionists. The Spanish soldiers, though brave, could not reach the enemy, and so passed most of their time in the towns. The enemy, knowing every inch of the country and all the defiles of the hills, mocked at the efforts of the Government. So, from a military as well as an agricultural standpoint, some good roads would have proved a blessing to Spain. As I plunged and jolted over the stretch of earth that formed the Camagueyan road, and saw the deep trenches dug out by the rains, and the great holes here and there, and the hillocks everywhere; as on every hand was visible an absolute disregard for the conveniences of communication; as I perceived that when the rains fell this road must be entirely impassable by man or beast; I felt that at any rate the American

had rendered good service to Cuba by instituting a system of modern road-building. Next to sanitation, this was one of the real benefits of the American occupation.

Just outside of the city, hovering on the boundaries of it, and perhaps officially included as part of it, stands a settlement of huts. One or two great trees overshadow them, and the near-by shop marks their comparative independence of the retailers of the town. I mention them particularly, for I noticed the wide gaps in the sides of these huts, I saw where the nails had given, and how the rough planks of unpainted, weather-beaten wood had fallen apart from one another, and I wondered why no one had troubled to make these places decent once more, and why the people should be contented to endure the discomforts of rain and wind when a little exertion might make them comfortable. It could not be poverty that had caused these huts to fall to ruin. I saw breadfruit and banana-trees growing near them; the dogs that prowled around did not look ill-fed; goats and pigs searched for food here and there, and horses were tethered under the trees or to broken-down remains of what once may have been fences. It was not poverty, it was indolence—it was the spirit of *mañana* and the spirit of sleep that had brought about this general neglect; and yet one would have thought that the misery which the rainy seasons must inevitably bring would have roused any one to a sense of the necessity of making his habitation rain-tight. When the rains fall heavily, as they do in May and June and in October in Cuba, the hard earth over which these huts are built must become sodden, and in this mud their owners must walk or stand. Yet a few planks laid down and nailed to a beam or two would constitute some sort of flooring. But no one seems to think of it, and in Cuba there are hundreds of dwellings like these. I don't wonder now that consumption is prevalent in Cuba.

And now when I come to look back upon it all, I think that the most interesting thing I saw in Camaguey was its cemetery, for that seemed to typify the place. There are two great burial grounds in Havana, and one, which I visited, contains many splendid monuments and the mausoleums of some of the oldest families of Cuba. But, I was told, you either bought a piece of burial land for a large sum of money, or you rented it for so many years—five years for ten dollars—and if you did not renew your lease the bones of the person interred were taken out and cast into a ditch—a sort of modern Golgotha made up of the skulls and the skeletons of the poor. In the Espada Cemetery of Havana are niches which may even now be rented for a term of years, and all over Cuba this system of grave-renting prevails. But a Cuban guide-book informed me (with much evident satisfaction on the part of the writer) that in Camaguey one could rent a grave for twenty years, a fact which is mentioned to show that the Camagueyans have great respect for the dead, and love to think of them after they are laid to rest.

Inscribed in Latin above the gate of the Camagueyan Cemetery I visited were the words: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." The impressive text,

the silence, the shadows cast upon the graves and tombs as the light clouds trailed slowly across the sun, the black-clothed woman and child hanging a wreath upon a family vault, and weeping silently, the rustle among the grass and weeds as a great lizard ran from one grave to another, and the occasional shrill shriek of a blackbird hovering among the branches of a tree, . . . I shall never forget it all, so sad and so appealing it was, and so symbolic of this still sleeping city, and perhaps also of the ancient Indian village of which one now remembers but the name.

I was told that the train would leave Camaguey for Santiago de Cuba at 12.20 ; so I went to the station at that hour, and waited until long past one o'clock before the train arrived. Here, at any rate, were many signs of life. About a hundred persons had gathered to see some ten men and women leave for other parts of the country, and these strolled about and lounged, and from the appearance of most of them I gathered that they were the loafers of the town. Most of them had just enough energy to live. And though Camaguey may be the whitest of Cuban cities, the persons who frequent its railway station are of all colours, most of them being swarthy, many looking emaciated.

A black policeman strolls nonchalantly up and down, a black woman lovingly caresses her naked baby as she pulls at the stump of a cigar, a man who rents a stand on the station sells sweet drinks and brandy and claret to those persons who want to buy. He alone displays some energy ; the rest of us are languid, indifferent. But at last the scream of a steam whistle is heard, and shortly after the train comes in. Those who are to leave by it take their seats, and presently we are leaving the city of Camaguey behind. And lo ! it has put on a new appearance, for there it stands in the distance, red-roofed, substantial-looking, with its church towers soaring serenely up towards the sky. It stands there, for all the world like a prosperous, opulent city, and while I stare and wonder at the mirage which distance and a new point of view have created, it slowly fades from my sight.

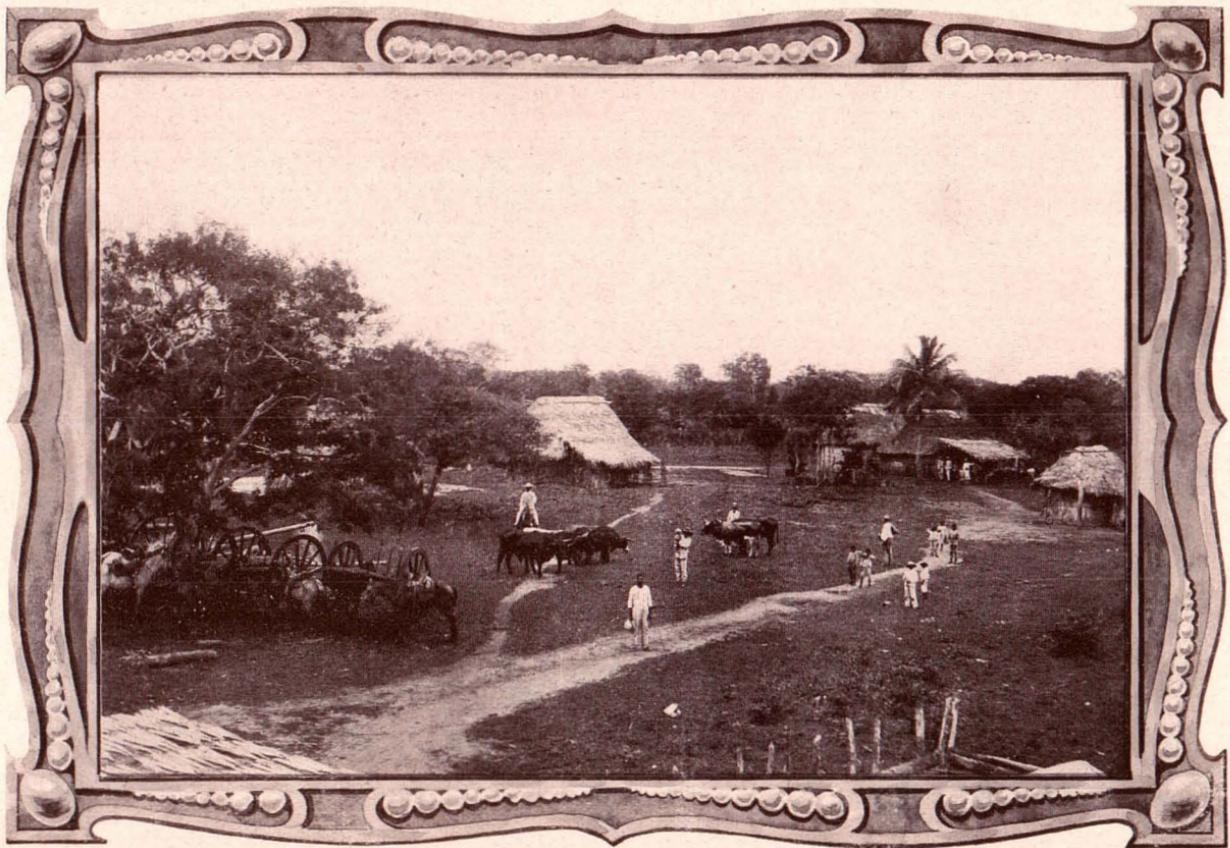
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Once again we were among the fields and plains, and Camaguey became but an incident in this journey through the island of Cuba.

And now the monotony of the scenery began to pall upon me, as hour after hour passed and still we saw the same type of settlements, the same sort of towns, the same rolling savannahs, and the eternal unvariegated green of the countryside.

Now and then we passed a forest, with its thick, tangled undergrowth, and that was a relief ; but we knew that it would not be before nightfall that we should reach the eastern end of Cuba, with its mountains and valleys and its noble forests and its murmuring streams. And as we travelled eastward the heat increased, and towards evening we found ourselves in the midst of a terrific storm. This lasted an hour, and when the skies cleared a few stars peeped out, and then the moon came up and lightened the darkness with a faint silver glow.



A COUNTRY SCENE, CUBA.

When should we reach Santiago? I was positively informed in Havana that a train leaving Camaguey at the usual hour would arrive between nine and ten o'clock at night at Santiago. But after night had come on I noticed that the train had slowed down considerably, and was even stopping every now and then. These stoppages might be included in the regular itinerary—but then they might not be. So I thought I would ask the guard when we were likely to reach our destination. "At ten—or eleven—or twelve," he told me, pausing thoughtfully as he mentioned each hour, perhaps with the idea of giving me time to choose the hour I fancied most. Ten, or eleven, or twelve o'clock; and the proper hour was nine! I inquired of a friendly passenger if this train ever kept to its timetable. He assured me that it did—sometimes.

And then I learnt the cause of the present delay. Something had gone wrong with the engine, and when the train went at its usual speed there was danger of fire. The reason why it stopped so often, and blew its whistle (as it now occasionally did), was because another train was coming in the opposite direction, and so there was the possibility of a collision. "And we would telegraph," added the guard, "only the telegraph wires are down." A chapter of accidents, truly; but I was told that there really was not much to complain of. "For," said the passenger who had spoken already, "sometimes the bridges are swept away, and we have no knowledge of it until something begins to happen. You can never tell what may not have occurred during a heavy rain here." This was not exactly reassuring, and I began to feel that Cuban travel had many disadvantages.

I bought a cup of black coffee from a boy who went about the train with a kettle and a wire basket in which, on little hooks, a number of tiny cups were hung. Afterwards I went to the compartment where he sat and asked him for some beer: he opened the bottle and handed it to me—there were no glasses on the train. I went back to my seat, and, sitting down, looked out of the window. It was ten o'clock, we were in the province of Oriente, the largest province in Cuba; but I caught no glimpse of hills or valleys. I saw nothing. Everything was wrapped in soft darkness as with a mantle or a shroud.

Somewhere on the road, at one of the side stations, we passed the train which might have collided with us, and therefore were relieved of that anxiety, at any rate. Ten o'clock passed; then eleven. I must have fallen asleep after that; for the next thing I heard was a voice asking me if I wanted a boy to take my things to a hotel. Was this Santiago? No; Santiago was the next station: I should be there in a very few minutes. And half an hour afterwards I was indeed in the city of Santiago. I looked at my watch. It was two o'clock.

Santiago de Cuba, situated at a distance of 869 miles from Havana by the Cuban railroad, is next to Havana the most important city in the island of Cuba. Driving through its streets at two o'clock in the morning I remembered that fact; when I saw it in the light of day I noted also that it was very unlike Havana. I stayed at the best hotel in the city that night, and several incidents occurred which have

caused me to remember that experience. First, there was the heat : only in Colon and Panama have I found it hotter than in Santiago de Cuba. Then there were the cats, which kept up a lively dispute amongst themselves until about four o'clock in the morning. After they had retired (whether to rest or not I do not know) some men in the street, which my bedroom overlooked, began an argument, from which my attention could only be diverted by the shrill piping of the mosquitoes in my room. I fell asleep when the dawn was breaking, and was rather glad that the porter did not come to call me up at six o'clock, as he had most faithfully promised to do. He never came near me at all—as a matter of fact, he simply promised and forgot. Later on I was to learn that to trust to the memory of a hotel servant in Santiago de Cuba was to place one's faith in something apparently non-existent.

If in Havana the majority of the people one meets are white or light-hued, in Santiago the majority are black or dark-coloured. The province of Oriente is the one province of Cuba where the negroes outnumber the whites and the women outnumber the men ; its capital is also one of the hottest of Cuban cities.

The city of Santiago has in the past been a most important administrative and revolutionary centre. It is built on the side of a hill, and so its streets run up and down at steep gradients, or terminate suddenly against high banks of earth, or break away in precipitous descents of some 30 or 40 feet. You stand at the top of a street and look down at the shops and houses on either hand. A little further on in the same street, and you are looking up towards more houses and more shops. I have a memory of the Archbishop's Palace : that, too, climbs the hill on which it is built. I remember seeing a public school near the hospital, a handsome structure which the Americans say was the work of General Wood. It overlooks the hospital from the top of an eminence. And so on of nearly the whole city ; only along the sea front is there anything like a fairly continuous strip of level land. One street of the city, indeed, consists of seven flights of concrete steps, four steps to each flight, and each flight ending on a broad platform. Similar constructions will have to be provided in other parts of Santiago if one is to move freely from one part of the city to the other. For here and there I have come upon great masses of earth overgrown with grass and weeds, and up the steep sides of which a goat alone can climb.

What impression did Santiago de Cuba leave on me? This is what I had read of it in a Cuban guide-book : " It is to-day clean and healthy, and one of the most alluring and delightful cities to visit on this side of the Atlantic." I found it one of the most unhealthy-looking places I had ever seen, and one of the dirtiest.

They have been doing much to clean Santiago, and already a portion of its streets have been paved. But most of them are unpaved, and some are

simply the filthiest of gutters with no side-walks and with hardly a dry spot on which one may place one's feet. In the Calle San Pedro, I remember, I had to walk between the car-lines which were laid on a track specially paved for the purpose. On either side were trenches a foot or more deep, and these were filled with slime and decaying vegetable matter and with soap water which gave off a horrible stench. Not even in the city of Panama, in its worst days, had I seen anything to equal this. Most of the houses in Santiago look old and dilapidated, and the steps leading to them have encroached upon the narrow streets. So that an unpaved street represents to the newcomer the last word of wretchedness. Yet as I heard many pipes being played by musical-minded persons in San Pedro Street, I suppose that any sympathy expended upon the people of Santiago would be resented as an impertinence.

If I had seen scores of naked babies in the yards of Havana, in the settlements along the line, and at the railway station at Camaguey, I was to see them in hundreds in Santiago. They were mostly black here, and they trotted about in the back streets and besported themselves on the doorsteps with all the modesty that comes of innocence. The men and women of the city, however, looked prosperous enough ; and the shops filled with merchandise, and the stir in the streets and the independent demeanour of the inhabitants of the place, all showed me that Santiago de Cuba was a thriving city and the capital of a wealthy province.

The copper mines of Cuba are situated but a few miles from the town, and the ore is shipped from Santiago. The banana industry is carried on in this province, hardwoods are cut and exported, and coffee, cocoa, and sugar are grown. With its high hills and deep valleys, its moist heat and copious rainfall, the province of Oriente will one day produce magnificent crops of every kind of tropical product. Its people have great faith in its future ; they, indeed, call themselves Cubans, and call their city Cuba : the other people of the island they allude to by the name of the provinces from which they come. "We are the Cubans," said one of the inhabitants of Santiago to me. "The only Archbishop in the country is the Archbishop of Santiago, and this city was the first capital of the island." All of which is true enough ; but Havana will never lose its primacy. For one thing the geographical situation of Santiago is not to be compared with that of Havana, even though it lies in the track of the Panama Canal. Then its people are more backward than the Havanese ; and the city itself, with its 50,000 souls, can never equal Havana in salubrity, nor can existence be ever as pleasant there as in the capital city of the island.

Indeed, this city of Santiago, despite its history and the aspirations of its people, still gives every indication of being but a tropical provincial city. And the dominant note of it all is a good-natured, lazy indifference ; thus, in some of the barber shops I see women suckling their babies, and in some of the smaller provision shops I see half-clothed children sitting contentedly upon the

counters. And in the streets I come upon groups of horsemen from the surrounding country districts, all contentedly having a talk, and apparently quite oblivious of the fact that the pedestrians might resent their blocking of the way.

Santiago does not sleep like the city of Camaguey. Here there is some work to be done, and the people do it. But they do it in a way of their own, and always (as it seemed to me) with a rocking-chair near at hand. It is not a city that hustles. But it contains politicians in abundance, and if there is ever any trouble in Cuba, Santiago will participate in it.

I was booked to leave for Jamaica by the weekly service boat which connects Kingston with Santiago, and I was informed that the vessel would leave the wharf at twelve o'clock sharp. At twenty minutes to twelve, accordingly, I was on board, the arrangement with my hotel being that my luggage should precede me by at least an hour. But remembering my experience with the hotel porter, I thought I would inquire if the things had arrived. They were nowhere to be found. Nobody on the ship had seen or heard anything of them. Had I any time to spare? I asked the purser. "Fifteen minutes," he said; the vessel would leave promptly on the stroke of twelve. I had to make up my mind between the risk of being left by the vessel or losing my clothes. I determined to take the risk knowing that "promptly" might mean anything in Santiago. I drove rapidly to the hotel, and was at first assured that my trunks had been taken to the ship, since the cartman had said that he would take them. That faithful servant, on my earnest recommendation, was sought for and found. He was very sorry, but he had quite forgotten my luggage. He could not understand how he had forgotten it; it was the most extraordinary thing in the world. In fact, the whole affair seemed to appeal to him in the light of a most humorous incident, and he evidently expected to be tipped for his forgetfulness.

I went back to the wharf, trembling with anxiety as to whether I had been left behind, and in my hurry I gave the cab-driver a five-dollar instead of a one-dollar bill. I rushed on board, happy that I had secured my baggage and had not missed the boat. When should we leave? I inquired; "Immediately," I was gravely informed. It was then half-past twelve o'clock. We left at two.

While waiting until we should immediately leave, I had time to reflect upon the peculiar monetary system of Cuba. When in Havana, I had found that Spanish and American and even French money circulated freely, while all about the city were the shops of the money-changers who, to judge by the number of them, must do an active business. Cuba has no currency of her own, Spanish gold and silver having been the coinage of the island for centuries. American money was always accepted in Cuba, and often American gold was at a high premium; then, with the independence of the island, came a proposition to make the American dollar the standard currency of the country. This proposition has not been acted on, and in Havana I found that the Spanish coinage still held first place, in the retail business transactions of the city at any rate. My surprise

may therefore be imagined when I found they would not accept Spanish silver from me in the shops of Santiago de Cuba. And everywhere in that city you will find the sellers demanding American money.

Indeed, although it is but little more than ten years since Spanish soldiers swarmed in the streets of Santiago de Cuba, the Spanish copper coins seemed to have completely disappeared, for some of the people to whom I showed them did not know what they were. I gave a boy some; he handed them back to me, saying that not even the money-changers would have them. Yet in Havana they are the means by which all small purchases are made.

The inconvenience of this refusal to accept Spanish money in Santiago will be better understood when the reader is told that the smallest American nickle coin in use in the city is a five-cent piece; so that if any article costs but a cent you must purchase five at a time, or take a sort of promissory note in lieu of the change from the petty retailer. The shops must benefit immensely by the lack of coins of a small denomination, for I noticed that they insisted on selling a pair of things for five cents, on the ground that it was impossible to sell one alone. Why the Government of Cuba does not make Spanish coins legal tender in Santiago as well as in Havana is a problem that perhaps only the Cuban mind can solve. Perhaps the Americans will eventually settle this currency question for the Cubans.

CHAPTER IV

THE AMERICANS AND THE CUBANS

It was at the Payret Theatre in Havana that I witnessed one night a significant demonstration of Cuban political feeling. Several items of the programme were performed ; then came a rather pretty feature of the evening's entertainment. This consisted of a band of girls marching round the stage to the tune of the national anthems of the leading countries of Europe and America, and displaying by means of little white shields the names of the rulers of these countries. On each shield was painted a letter, and as the girls moved round the stage to the sound of the music, these letters were arranged to form the name of each ruler. One after another the national anthems were played ; then came the Marseillaise, and I think I detected a faint murmur of appreciation from the spectators. "Yankee Doodle" followed, and the name of "William Taft" stood out in bold letters on the shields : it was received in deadly silence. The first bar of the Spanish anthem next came from the orchestra, and the letters held in front of us spelt out "Alfonso XIII." You might have thought that that monarch himself had entered the theatre ! Men and women, the audience broke into loud cheering, and I do not think they cheered José Miguel Gomez, President of Cuba, more, when his name followed that of the young sovereign of Spain.

Ten years ago they would have hissed Alfonso XIII. and applauded the President of the United States. But the glamour of American intervention has passed, the sober reality of American domination has daily to be faced. And this people who fought for their freedom and who hoped for complete independence fear now that they have but made an exchange of masters. "The future is dark," said a Cuban to me one day (he had been the head of an important revolutionary Junta in the last revolution) ; "the future is very dark." We were in Santiago de Cuba, and he was showing me a new suburb laid out by the Americans and being built in the American style. He seemed to think that even this suburb contained a vague, dark hint of the future that threatened—it was American, and it signified the presence of the Americans in the land.

But to understand the Cuban situation to-day we must go back a little into the history of the past.

In my opening remarks I told of how Cuba had come to win the title of "The Ever Faithful Island." This title was bestowed upon the island because of the famous oath of fealty which every member of the Provincial Councils swore to their true sovereigns after Napoleon had expelled them from the throne of Spain; but when the legitimate dynasty was restored, the Cubans discovered that they had to deal with men who were incapable of ruling, and with a nation to whom the bitter lessons of colonial misfortune had taught no wisdom. In 1825 came the royal decree that struck so terrible a blow at the aspirations of those Cubans who had hoped for some progress towards political freedom. That decree gave to the Governor-General of Cuba all the powers and authority belonging to the Governor of a city in a state of siege. It gave to him "the most ample and unbounded power, not only to send away from the island any persons in office, whatever be their occupation, rank, class, or condition, whose continuance therein your Excellency may deem injurious, or whose conduct, public or private, may alarm you, replacing them with persons faithful to his Majesty, and deserving of all the confidence of your Excellency; but also to suspend the execution of any order whatsoever, or any general provision made concerning any branch of the administration, as your Excellency may think most suitable to the royal service." Those words, conferring the power of a despot upon the Governor-General of Cuba, proclaimed also the doom of the sovereignty of Spain in the last of her great American possessions.

Two years before the promulgation of this royal decree, an uprising had actually been attempted, but had been prevented with no great difficulty. After the promulgation of the decree, revolutionary sentiment spread apace, and discontent with Spanish domination grew. But the curse of slavery was upon the land; at the back of every white man's mind was the fear that a revolutionary movement once started might lead to the freeing of the slaves; and the terrible warning of Hayti, the island not 50 miles from Cuba, was sufficient to make the Cubans bear in impotent rage a tyranny from which they would otherwise have tried to free themselves.

So the cause of Cuban independence languished, but was never wholly forsaken. The ill-fated expeditions of Narcisco Lopez, the Venezuelan, and Colonel Crittenden, the American, showed that the more daring spirits in Cuba were prepared to make an effort towards the freedom of their native land. These had planned to join Lopez and Crittenden, but the former, although he actually landed at Cardenas in 1850, had to re-embark his men and was nearly captured by a Spanish warship as he fled to Key West. The next year he landed again on Cuban soil and fought a disastrous battle with the Spanish troops near Havana. Crittenden and his American associates were shot, Lopez was garroted on the September 1, 1851.

A peace that was not peace endured for over twenty years. In the meantime oppression grew, and misgovernment multiplied its evil effects. Taxes were enormously high, and the proceeds of them went into the pockets of the Spanish officials chiefly. Once, as in 1877, the amount raised in taxes amounted to the extraordinary sum of £12,000,000 (\$60,000,000), and this in a country where production was hampered by lack of commercial freedom because of Spain's insistence that Cuba must buy what she needed from Spain! The population at that time, too, only amounted to 1,509,000 persons.

A yearly contribution of \$6,000,000 was made to the Spanish Treasury, Spain's Colonial system being based upon the principle that the colonies must assist the mother country.

From Professor Robert Hill's "Cuba and Porto Rico" I take the following statement of how the revenue raised in 1884 was expended. It amounted to \$34,269,410. "Of this sum, \$12,574,485 was paid for old military debts incurred by Spain in suppressing Cuban outbreaks and otherwise riveting the shackles of tyranny upon the Cuban people; \$5,904,084 for the Ministry of War; \$14,595,096 or nearly one-half the revenue, for supporting Spaniards, as follows: pensions of Spanish officers, \$468,000; pay of retired Spanish officers, \$918,500; salary of Captain-General, \$50,000; salaries of colonial officials (all Spaniards), \$10,115,420; church and clergy (all Spaniards), \$379,757; military decorations (to Spaniards only), \$5,000; pay of gendarmerie (all Spaniards), \$2,537,119; expenses of Spain's diplomatic representatives to all American countries except the United States, \$121,300. This left £1,195,745 for the ordinary administration of the island, such as education, public works, sanitation, the judiciary, &c."

By one budget we may judge the rest. The island was governed by military men; every Governor-General had to hold the rank of Lieutenant-General in the Spanish Army; the governors of the six provinces of Cuba were all generals, and there were thirty-four subordinate administrative positions called captaincies, and these also were held by officers of the Army. The position of Spain in her colony was, in fact, that of a conqueror; yet the Cubans were mainly people of Spanish descent. With a very few exceptions, however, to be born in Cuba was to be counted as a Cuban, and to be counted as a Cuban was to be treated with injustice and suspicion. Such a situation could not possibly last. The signal of revolt was given in 1867 by Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, a wealthy planter and lawyer of Santiago, who headed the first rising. Thus began the terrible Ten Years Revolution. In 1868 a declaration of independence was formerly proclaimed, and in 1869 a constitution was adopted by the revolutionists.

The constitution decreed the abolition of slavery. This was a wise provision. It helped to win the sympathy of the negro for the cause of freedom, and struck a blow at the policy maintained by the Government of pitting white against black. The one thing to the credit of Spain in Cuba was her legislation affecting the slaves. Slavery was not only definitely abolished in 1884, but the number of slaves then



GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA.

set free was merely 25,000. Long before this, repeated enactments had ameliorated the condition of the slaves: they had the right of marriage, they could insist upon being transferred from one master to another if they so desired, they could purchase their freedom by paying the purchase money in instalments, and their value was fixed by a disinterested tribunal. Then, about the same time as the beginning of the Ten Years Revolution, a law was passed giving freedom to every child who should be born of a slave, and to every slave of sixty years of age. Free negroes, too, were allowed to bear arms as volunteers, a privilege denied to white Cubans. The followers of Cespedes therefore acted with wisdom when, by their constitution adopted at Guaimaro, they proclaimed the abolition of slavery under the "Cuban Republic."

But the revolution was ill-fated. Year after year the struggle dragged wearily on, but the Cubans were not recognised as belligerents, and so arms and ammunition could only be brought into the island by filibusters, and food and money could only be obtained by the revolutionists levying contributions on the planters. The revolution came to an end in 1878. Its energy had perhaps been already exhausted, and this may have been the reason why its leaders so readily listened to the overtures of General Campos, whose policy, on his arrival in Cuba, he had proclaimed to be one of conciliation. Promises of reform were made by the Spanish Government, which afterwards proved illusory. And the total result of the struggle was an exhausted and almost ruined country and an appalling loss of life.

Spain is said to have lost between eighty and one hundred thousand men in the Ten Years Revolution, while the cost of the war amounted to £40,000,000. This was charged to the Cuban Treasury, and, in consequence, taxes were increased. So the gulf that separated the Spaniards from the Cubans widened and deepened; and many of the natives who had fled from the island during the revolution refused to return. Some settled in Jamaica, others in different parts of Spanish-America; but the vast majority made the United States their temporary home, and there they organised the movement that was finally to lead to the overthrow of the Spanish power in Cuba.

Juntas, or revolutionary committees, were formed in Cuba, in the United States, in Jamaica, in Costa Rica, in Santo Domingo, and elsewhere. The headquarters were in New York. Funds were raised, arms secretly purchased, and then on February 24, 1895, as had been arranged by José Martí, "the Apostle of Freedom," the standard of revolution was hoisted in Cuba.

This time the majority of the soldiers were negroes, and two of the leaders of the movement were the Maceos, mulattoes both. The Ten Years War had been mainly a war of white men; now all classes and colours were united in the struggle for freedom. One of the first acts of the revolutionists was to form a Provisional Government, and Martí having been killed at the beginning of the war, a Camagueyan gentleman of noble descent, the Marquis

Salvador Cisneros y Betancourt, was elected president of the republic. He was a white man. So was Maximo Gomez, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army. But his second in command was Antonio Maceo, and throughout the war negroes and white men fought side by side for the common cause. And the black man was the common soldier, on him fell the brunt of the fighting. Slavery had not bred in him a savage hate of his master; and so when the white man appealed to him he did not appeal in vain.

The revolution lasted three years. The war was carried on with singular fierceness on both sides. At first General Campos was sent from Spain to deal with the rebels, and he again endeavoured to try the effects of a policy of conciliation. But this time the insurgent leaders would not listen to him, and all his attempts to confine their forces to one part of the island, and then to force them to a decisive engagement, failed completely. They eluded his troops, they broke through his lines, they fell upon small bands of Spanish soldiers and destroyed them, and they laid waste the country as they moved. The plan of the rebels was to make Cuba an unprofitable place for Spain to hold, even at the cost of the devastation of the country. Every town or village that did not show active sympathy with the cause of Cuba Libre was destroyed, so that it was better to join the rebels than to remain neutral. The horror of the situation for the peaceful peasant may be imagined; for if he was left alone by the rebels, he fell under the suspicion of the Government. Campos having failed, the terrible Nicola Weyler was sent to take his place. He was known as "the butcher," and he promptly proceeded to show how well he deserved the name. So that the insurgents should find as little aid as possible, and with a view of striking terror to the hearts of the Cubans, he gathered the people of the country districts into concentration camps, military zones where they could be watched by soldiers, and where they were ordered to grow food as best they could. I have walked in one of these old concentration camps in Havana. To-day it is a park filled with palm-trees and flowering shrubs and splashing fountains. A little more than ten years ago it was filled with emaciated men and starving women and children. The filth and wretchedness of these camps was indescribable: many thousands of persons perished in them. In the meantime plantations and ranches were being given to the torch and the sword by Spaniard and Cuban alike, and the civilised world wondered when the carnage would cease.

Several of the Cuban leaders, including José Maceo, were slain. Gomez and Garcia still continued the struggle. The insurgents endeavoured to secure recognition as belligerents from the United States, but could not succeed. Spain, however, had received a clear warning from America in 1896 when President Cleveland said in his message to Congress that the time might come when considerations of humanity might constrain the Government of the United States

to take such action as would "preserve to Cuba and its inhabitants an opportunity to enjoy the blessings of peace." The warning was not without effect, for, towards the close of 1907, Weyler was superseded by General Blanco, and the new Governor came with orders to establish an insular parliament, to break up the concentration camps, and to take steps to relieve the suffering of the starving non-belligerents.

Was Spain sincere? We can never know. What we do know is that with Blanco's arrival hostilities practically ceased, more, perhaps, because of the exhaustion of the rebels than because of their confidence in the new reforms. But whether Spain was sincere or not, she was given no opportunity of proving her good faith. For in February, 1898, the *Maine* was blown up in Havana Harbour, and in April of the same year war was declared between Spain and the United States. That the Americans had been preparing for intervention before the destruction of the *Maine* is made evident by the message which President McKinley sent to Congress in December, 1897. He refused to recognise Cuban belligerency, but he said that "If it shall hereafter appear to be a duty imposed upon us by our obligations to ourselves, to civilisation and humanity, to intervene with force, it shall be without fault on our part and only because the necessity for such action will be so clear as to command the support and approval of the civilised world."

The Cubans have never forgiven America her refusal to grant them belligerent rights. "We could have beaten Spain," said more than one Cuban to me in the island, "if we had been allowed to raise money and import arms openly." Men who speak like this believe that American intervention took place for the sake of America and not for the sake of Cuba. And so, but a few years after the close of a most terrible revolution which, with its battles and its concentration camps, cost Cuba fully two hundred thousand men, we find the name of William Taft received in silence in a popular Havana theatre, while that of Alfonso XIII. is applauded to the skies.

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A country devastated by civil war, accustomed to despotic government, with no training in politics and still infected with the virus of revolution—this was the Cuba which the Americans undertook to make "a free and independent" republic of. There was some doubt at first as to whether the United States would really hand over the administration of Cuban affairs to Cubans. A few able Americans argued that, as economic freedom was the chief desideratum of Cuba, that country would be satisfied if, for some time at any rate, the United States authorities continued to govern her, while removing the vexatious hindrances to trade and commerce with which Spain had handicapped the development of the island. Annexation was advocated by some, and these were supported by the views of conservative Cubans who doubted the capacity of their countrymen for self-government. It

was confidently assumed that "the more the Cubans know of the United States and of our institutions, the better they will like us." But the majority of the Cuban politicians and soldiers showed plainly that they expected Cuba to become a republic; accordingly, in 1902, the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba was adopted, its first article setting forth that "The people of Cuba are hereby constituted a sovereign and independent State, and adopt a republican form of government." The other articles which follow are all drawn up on the most approved republican pattern. All Cubans have equal rights before the law; every person arrested shall be set at liberty or placed at the disposal of a competent judge or court within twenty-four hours immediately following arrest; in no case shall the penalty of confiscation of property be imposed; the profession of all religious beliefs, as well as the practice of all forms of worship, are free; primary education is compulsory and gratuitous; and so on to the end of the chapter. But at the end of the chapter there is an appendix known as the Platt Amendment, and Article III. of that Amendment reads, "That the Government of Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a Government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty, and for discharging the obligations with respect of Cuba imposed by the Treaty of Paris on the United States, now to be assumed and undertaken by the Government of Cuba." This amendment proposed by Senator Platt and forced upon the Cuban people (who could not possibly have refused to accept it), is really the most important part of the Cuban Constitution. More will be heard of it one of these days.

The Government of Cuba was transferred to its people on the 20th of May, 1902. Dr. Estrada Palma, who had been head of the chief Cuban revolutionary junta in America, and who represented the Conservative Party, was elected President. I was told by an American in Cuba that the election was managed entirely by the Americans in the island, and that many people voted for Palma under the impression that he was some one else! This may have been so; but in any case it is certain that Estrada Palma had worked well for the cause of Cuban independence, and possessed a reputation for integrity and single-mindedness which was second to none in Cuba.

Problems presented themselves from the first to the new Cuban Administration. The Americans had cleaned Havana and had improved some of the other cities. They had begun roads and had established a system of common-school education. But they had spent millions of dollars on the work, and the Palma Government found the Treasury depleted when it came into power; yet it had had to promise to continue the sanitation of the island, this being one of the provisions imposed upon it by the United States. It had also been agreed (it is part of the Platt Amendment) that Cuba should contract no debts the repayment of which could not be covered by the ordinary resources of the annual budget. Nevertheless, no sooner was the new Government installed than the soldiers of the revolution began

to clamour for their pay. These were difficulties enough, but they were met; revenue came in rapidly, such is the wonderful power of recuperation possessed by the island. With the consent of the United States, a loan was raised and the soldiers paid off (most of the money going into the hands of American speculators who had bought the debt from the soldiers in advance, while assuring them that they were not likely to be paid). To some outsiders it seemed at first that Cuba would really set an example of peaceful progress to the rest of Latin-America, but such a belief left the character of the average Latin-American politician entirely out of consideration. For one thing, the Liberals were not satisfied with the Government.

In 1905 the Liberals of Cuba held a congress and drew up a political programme. One of the chief principles of that programme pledged the Liberal Party to work for the abolition of the Platt Amendment. This was significant of the growing feeling against the Americans, who were believed to be on the side of the Cuban Conservatives.

The second presidential election came off early in 1906, and Dr. Palma was again elected President. That fraud had been used at the polls was unquestionable. The President himself was an old man, and had never been counted ambitious; yet he had undoubtedly allowed himself to be persuaded that the safety of Cuba depended upon his retaining office. He had become the tool of self-seeking politicians, and no one was really surprised when, in August, 1906, a revolution broke out. The mass of the people were with the Liberals. The Conservatives in Cuba will tell you to-day that this was because the Liberal leaders basely pandered to the lowest tastes of the mob by promising them bull-fights and cock-fights and lotteries, and perhaps there is something in this. But whatever the cause, the fact remains that Pino Guerra easily gathered an army of malcontents and began to move on Havana. Then Palma did a deed for which he is cursed by some Cubans and blamed by others, those who praise him being few indeed. He said he could not set Cuban to fight against Cuban, brother against brother. But he did not surrender office to the Liberal insurgents. It was to America that he turned in that hour of difficulty, and already the Americans had prepared to intervene. In September Palma resigned office as President of Cuba, and on the 17th of that month Mr. Taft was proclaimed as Provisional Governor.

President Palma's enemies say that he betrayed his country. "Because he and his party could not retain what they had won by fraud, he was willing to sacrifice the independence of Cuba." I cannot undertake to discuss the motives of a man who sacrificed much for his country when he could not have hoped to be its President; yet the public admission that Cuba could not govern herself in peace, coming from one of his reputation and position, was without doubt a more formidable indictment against her than any that could be drawn up by the people of the United States.

The second period of American intervention lasted a little over two years. In January, 1909, General Miguel Gomez, who had been elected President by an overwhelming majority of votes, assumed charge of the affairs of State. The American troops evacuated Cuba, and were allowed to leave without a single mark of appreciation or even cordiality. On the other hand, a Spanish training-ship, the *Nautilus*, going to Havana almost by accident last year, was welcomed with every manifestation of joy. Enough could not be done by the Cubans to make the Spaniards stay in Havana one long fiesta. The streets were decorated, rockets were fired, three whole days were devoted to public rejoicing; and when the *Nautilus* left, the sea-wall of Havana was thronged with thousands of cheering spectators. Why? I put the question to a Cuban. "After all," he said, "we are of one blood, father and son." But the Spaniard was a cruel parent, according to the Cubans themselves. And even to-day the Spaniards who lived in Cuba before the independence most cordially despise the natives. Yet it is America who is the enemy, in the mind of the average Cuban—between American and Cuban no love exists. The reason is not far to seek.

The existence of Cuba as "a sovereign and independent State" may be formally stated in the constitution, but the sovereignty and independence of the island is certainly not recognised by the American Government. It does not appear that Washington interfered too sharply in the internal affairs of Cuba during the Palma administration. But since the new Government assumed office there has been repeated interference. As it was the Liberals who made the last revolution, too, and as they welcomed an intervention which they believed would lead to their becoming the dominant party in the State, it is difficult for them now to murmur against the decrees of their powerful suzerain, and the Opposition knows this well. So the Opposition papers twit the Government with supinely carrying out the orders of its "senior partners," but no one really imagines that the Cuban Government likes the tutelage to which it is subject.

Three instances will suffice to show how Washington keeps the young Republic in leading-strings, to the bitter annoyance of her people.

The Cuban Government wishing to purchase guns for the Army the other day, entered into negotiations with a German firm of manufacturers for the required supply of arms. The United States interposed its veto, and the guns were not bought from Germany. The Cuban Government prepared its budget for the year 1909-10. The authorities at Washington thought it was an extravagant budget, and quietly said that it must be reduced. And reduced it accordingly has been, especially in the matter of salaries. The last instance: before Governor Magoon left the island, he appointed Mr. James Page, an American, to be chief engineer of the sanitary work now being done in Cienfuegos, which city is being improved. But the Cuban Secretary of Public Works dismissed Mr.

Page, one of the reasons being that all-important positions in Cuba must be filled by Cubans. Mr. Page, however, did not go, for again the American Government reminded the Cubans that there are some things which it is not expedient to do, and the Cubans took the hint. Other instances of diplomatic interference may be given, and all of them have occurred since January, 1909—ever since Cuba began to govern herself.

These constant reminders of American suzerainty have called forth bitter protests from the Cuban Press. One paper, *La Discussion*, has uttered threats—"Our powerful friends will do well not to carry their rigour to extremes, for the desperation of a people, even of a small people, may give them much to do." Others write more calmly, but yet with deep annoyance. Still, the United States will continue to interfere, and the Cuban Government will continue to obey.

Another reason why the American is not liked in Cuba is because some of the Americans who visit the island do not show much consideration for the feelings of the people. The resident American complains bitterly of this, and I have been told that the American Minister has expressed the wish that he had the power to expel all objectionable American visitors. For while most of the tourists are estimable people, some take a delight in elbowing the Cubans off their own side-walks, and in entering the churches while the service is going on, for the purpose, if you please, of staring, or of even taking photographs. These show by their manner that they think little of the Cubans. Even an American guide-book is thoughtless enough to inform the stranger that "the average native guide would rather tell an untruth for credit than to tell the truth for cash," a statement which is not calculated to make the average Cuban think highly of American manners. He does not distinguish between different types of Americans; he judges all by those that are rude. He is not a "hustler" either, and does not like to be hustled. Above all, he remembers that he is in his own country, and he wants all the world to recognise that fact.

But over and above every other feeling is the fear that haunts the mind of the Cuban that one day the American will return to Cuba, and this time for good. He knows something of America's overwhelming strength. He knows that a struggle against her would be short and inglorious. The Spaniard remained in the cities and fought when the Cuban came within reach of him; the American would go and search for the rebel, and would surely find him. I believe the Cuban to be quite capable of rising against his American protector in an outburst of uncontrollable anger, but in his calmer moments he feels that even such a demonstration would not drive the American out of Cuba.

Not every Cuban, however, is opposed to the Americans. There is a party (a minority it is true) which is in favour of annexation. Thus a coloured man who has lived in the United States and Canada told me that the bulk of the Cuban people do not really understand what annexation would mean. They do

not understand, he said, that Cuba, if admitted into the Union as a State, would elect her own Governor, and have her own Legislature, and make her own State laws, and be in every way better off, especially as she would have free trade with the other States of the Union. Another Cuban, one of the biggest men in Havana, rather bitterly remarked to me that the common people did not know what they wanted and that the politicians were interested only in themselves. I conclude that he, a Conservative, would much prefer to see a Conservative than any other Government in Cuba; but failing that, he holds annexation to be preferable to what he no doubt considers to be Liberal misgovernment. And here perhaps is the rock on which the Cuban ship of State may eventually split. It is the political jealousies and oppositions amongst the Cubans themselves that are more to be feared than the wishes of the foreigners for American annexation, and the annexationist aspirations of the travelled Cubans.

The Conservatives were so badly beaten at the last election that they cannot depend upon their own strength to win them back political power for many a year to come. But this will not prevent them from intriguing; and the longer the Liberals remain in power, the more bitter the enmity of their opponents will grow. Then the Liberals themselves have more than once exhibited a tendency to split into factions; and that a fission will actually occur some day is beyond all question. For in spite of party names and party shibboleths, the really dominant force in Cuban politics is the personal element: it is the man that counts, it is individual ambitions and not party principles which cause most of those revolutions for which Spanish-America has become so notorious. The Cuban, like his Latin-American brother on the continent of South America, is a natural-born politician, and his leaders are all constitution-makers and amenders. They believe devoutly in political theory; they thirst for honour, distinction, and popularity; and every man wants to be his own master and the master of some others. So though the present Cuban Government has not yet been a year in existence, there have been many Cabinet resignations, and more than one rumour of a "crisis." A part of the Liberals are the personal followers of Senor Zayas, the Vice-President of the Republic, and these are determined that he shall be the next President: the remaining Liberals are the personal followers of General Gomez, and, as he has said that he will not again be a candidate for the Presidency, his friends have already been seeking to find some one whom they think will rule the country better than Senor Zayas.

There are other disruptive forces at work, chiefly personal. In June last the leader of the Negro Party in Havana, Senor Morura, ostentatiously resigned the position of director of the National Lottery, to which he had been appointed by the President. His reason was that the latter had refused to allow him to name his own chief subordinate officer, a refusal which he

seemed to consider an affront. And so that there should be no misunderstanding of his influence in the country, his followers and admirers in Havana organised a demonstration in his honour, which was to consist of a procession, and public speeches, and the firing of rockets (for some inscrutable reason, rockets are frequently fired off in the daytime in Havana). All this was to take place on a Sunday afternoon; but the rain coming down in torrents, the programme could not be carried out.

Then, just a little before this, there was a dispute between Pino Guerra and the Government as to whom the former should be directly responsible to in his capacity of Major-General of the Army. Pino Guerra thought he ought to be under no one but the President himself. The Government said he should be subordinate to the Minister of the Interior. The general had to submit, but he is not satisfied. Perhaps he will again refer to the matter. And the worst of it is that all these disputes find their way into the Press and are discussed by the politicians in the *cafés*; and in a small country, with a disproportionate and rather excitable city population, this cannot make for a peaceful settlement of personal or political differences.

Meantime the Conservatives declare that, under any Liberal Administration whatever, the country is certain to go to the dogs; and experience has proved that a defeated Cuban party will prefer to turn to the United States rather than allow its hated rivals to enjoy the sweets of place, position, and power. By the time the next general election draws near, therefore, there will be at least three parties in the field, and the watchful eye of the American will be fixed upon them all. I fear too, that, if the election is not managed by impartial outsiders, fraud will again be practised at the polls; and this is almost certain to be followed by some sort of demonstration on the part of those defeated. This is why the American can well afford to abide his time. He is waiting until Cuba herself shall have given full and ample proof to the world of her incapacity for peaceful self-government.

What will happen then? The Cuban fears the annexation of the island. The foreign element in Cuba and some of the Cubans (as said before) desire it. Some of the journals in the United States openly advocate it. Does the American people, as a whole, want it? Does its Government wish it? I imagine no. I think the American Government and people wish to keep Cuba in a state of tutelage, wish to remain the island's perpetual suzerain; I believe that the present system of control over the Government suits them entirely, and that the forcible annexation of the island at this juncture would be undertaken with some reluctance. After all, America already holds Cuba in the hollow of her hand. The Cubans have been compelled to lease two naval stations to the United States; they can enter into no treaty with a foreign Power that may give the latter any control over the country or may lead to international complications; and the reciprocity treaty between Cuba and America guarantees

to America almost all the trade of Cuba. By allowing Cuban produce to enter her markets at a duty lower by 20 per cent. than the duty paid by other countries, America secured cheaper sugar and tobacco for her own people. Thus America benefited at least as much as Cuba. By arranging that American goods shall be admitted into Cuba under a preferential clause, America secured an important market for American foodstuffs and manufactures. The preference granted by Cuba to America, too, is greater than that granted by America to Cuba—for there are several articles sold by America to Cuba on which the preference given is more than 20 per cent. With such a treaty, with two naval stations in her hands, with the Platt Amendment in force, and with a Minister in Havana to convey to the Cuban Government the views and suggestions of Washington, there is no good reason why the American Republic should want to undertake the actual governing of a country that will not easily forgive annexation unless it comes about at the request of the people. Annexation, moreover, will always be fiercely opposed by a large number of the people and politicians of America herself. These want no colonies; besides, they will think of what Europe will say if their country, having fought to liberate the Cubans, brings that people under her own yoke. All these considerations can never be absent from the minds of the rulers of America, and in view of them they would probably prefer a continuance of the present system of control over Cuban affairs. But this system is galling to the Cubans, and they will endeavour to put an end to it; in addition, I fear it is impossible to hope for political peace amongst the Cubans themselves. No wonder, then, that, to some Cubans, "the future is dark."

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What exists in Cuba at the present moment is practically an American Protectorate, and undoubtedly it would be good for the country if a protectorate could be openly established and accepted. This would obviate all pretence about the existence of Cuba as a sovereign and independent State, would put the right of America to give advice on matters of policy and finance beyond the possibility of dispute, would leave the internal administration of Cuba in the hands of her own people, and would ensure the presidential and other elections being conducted without fraud and without violence. The American Minister in Havana could be used, as he actually is now used, as the medium of communication between the United States and the Cuban authorities, and the broader aspects of Cuban financial policy could be settled by Washington. There would, of course, be an "army of occupation," but the Americans could easily follow the example of England in Egypt, and utilise the native troops for the maintenance of peace and order in the country. These troops could be trained by American officers and, if necessary, stiffened by a contingent of American soldiers. Cubans could be appointed to very high positions in

the Army, and good salaries and permanency of position should ensure their loyalty and help to create amongst them an effective *esprit de corps*. Such a protectorate would still leave Cuba a republic with real and large self-governing powers, would leave to her the opportunity to learn in the school of experience the lessons of self-control and practical efficiency that she still has need of. Then, with order assured, and confidence restored in the stability and peaceful progress of the country, capital would flow into the island, and its prosperity would be another of the already remarkable achievements of American capital and American energy.

A protectorate would solve the difficulty for both Cubans and Americans, and the Americans would not object to it. They would welcome it in preference to annexation, and even, no doubt, in preference to the present system of undefined control which is but winning for them the hatred of most Cubans. But would the Cubans care for a protectorate even? I think not. They will not willingly accept any form of tutelage whatever. Yet, if they refuse a protectorate and still are unable to govern themselves, the only alternative is annexation. For America is determined to keep her hand upon the island, and it is to her interest that there should be peace in Cuba.

The wish of America to acquire possession of Cuba is not a thing of yesterday. It goes far back into the nineteenth century, to the time when Jefferson and Madison gave expression to the feeling of all thoughtful Americans by saying that the United States could not view with satisfaction the falling of the island of Cuba under any European government "which might make a fulcrum of that position against the commerce and security of the United States." Some time after this, John Quincy Adams wrote of Cuba and Porto Rico as "the natural appendages of the North American continent"; and again: "Looking forward," he said, "for half a century it is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the annexation of Cuba to our republic will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself." Jefferson, too, advised his countrymen "to be in readiness to receive that interesting incorporation when solicited by herself, for certainly her addition to our confederacy is exactly what is wanted to round our power as a nation to the point of its utmost interest!" All these prophetic sentiments were expressed before the close of the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Spain was still mistress of Cuba, but the revolt of the Spanish colonies in South and Central America, the obvious weakness of Spain, and the indications that she would one day lose her remaining possessions in the Western World, all caused the attention of American statesmen to be turned to the question of Cuba's future; and that future, the ablest of them declared, could not ultimately be with any other country except the United States.

An attempt to purchase the island from Spain was actually made in 1848 by President Polk. Through the American Minister at Madrid, he offered the

Spanish Government \$100,000,000 for Cuba: "The country would prefer to see it sunk in the ocean," was the proud characteristic reply of Spain. But her Government did not rest content with this reply. Very shortly after, it endeavoured to induce the United States, France, and Great Britain to enter into an agreement that none of them would acquire Cuba; but the United States peremptorily refused to be a party to any such compact. This alone was significant of American hopes and designs; significant also was the Ostend Manifesto, drawn up by the American Ministers at Paris, London, and Madrid, and setting forth that Cuba ought to belong to America, and that it would be to the advantage of Spain to sell the island to that Power. The Ministers were not supported by their Government, yet they could hardly have acted as they did had they not known that they were not likely to be severely blamed for publishing a manifesto that might easily have led to a war between the two countries. Other instances of the desire of America to obtain possession of the island might be given, even though her statesmen did inform the Spanish Government in 1874 that they did not "meditate or desire the annexation of Cuba to the United States, but its elevation into an independent republic of freemen in harmony with ourselves and with the other republics of America." As a matter of fact the geographical position of Cuba rendered it inevitable that the United States should be anxious to control the island, and any further pretence that the Spanish-American War was merely a war of humanity would be the sheerest hypocrisy. No doubt many Americans still honestly think so, but their statesmen do not. Cuba, as John Quincy Adams wrote, is "an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interests" of the American Union, and the recognition of that salient fact is a sufficient reason for the determination of American statesmen to guide and control the destinies of the island of Cuba.

With the opening of the Panama Canal, the strategical importance of the island must largely increase. Holding Guantanamo and Bahia Hondo (both situated at the eastern end of Cuba) at strongly fortified naval bases, the United States commands the Windward Passage, which is the route mainly used by vessels going from Europe to the Isthmus of Panama. Thus the approach to the Canal from the Atlantic side is amply protected by Cuba, and all the Caribbean Sea is made into a great American lake by this island, by the island of Hayti (or Santo Domingo), where the United States Government had also a naval station, and by Porto Rico which is now an American colony. From her basis in the Province of Oriente the United States can sweep the Atlantic Ocean from Florida to Trinidad with a West Indian squadron; while, from the western part of the island of Cuba, she can protect her own eastern coast up to Cape Hatteras. Then, again, the possession of Cuba makes the Gulf of Mexico an American sea: America completely dominates that Gulf with Cuba in her hands. These propositions may be proved by any one who simply

takes the trouble to glance over a map of the New World ; and if the possession of Cuba secures to America the mastery of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, if it makes the protection of the Panama Canal a comparatively easy matter, if it helps to bring the Central American Republics more completely within the sphere of the influence of the United States, it follows surely that the existence of Cuba as a peacefully-governed appendage of the United States is an absolute necessity from the American point of view. In these circumstances the "independence" of Cuba could not be anything but illusory. And given all the elements of discord at present operating in Cuba, even the existing appearance of independence in that island must give place to a more explicit assertion of American control before long.

What will be the effect of this upon the Cuban people? I have already said that prosperity must inevitably follow domestic stability and peace ; but I fear that at first, after the change of government which all foresee has come about in Cuba, there will be considerable unrest. Hatred of the Americans will be expressed in frequent broils, in murders, in destruction of property ; sometimes, perhaps, in revolts. There will be a deliberate attempt to make the island an unpleasant place for Americans to live in ; and it will take some time to teach the malcontents that guerilla warfare cannot succeed in Cuba now, and that order will be maintained at any cost. But once that lesson is taught, I do not see why there should be any further trouble. After all, the interest of the mass of the people is not to be found in disturbances, and they will soon realise that fact. The Americans are never going to emigrate in large numbers to Cuba : the American never wishes to live outside of his own country, and certainly has no liking for a tropical climate. The Cuban need never fear, therefore, that Cuba will be overrun by active, energetic aliens bent upon driving him to the wall by a determined and ruthless competition. The American tourist is not a settler. And if he is sometimes rude, there is nothing to prevent his being rudely treated in return. American capital, too, can be nothing but a benefit to a country that is still so largely undeveloped, and the more developed Cuba becomes the better the position of her people.

As for the politicians, who would naturally feel the effects of American control more keenly than any other class, even they would not be so hard hit as they may fear. Some part in the government of their country they must have, and there are a number of positions which they would fill, and have filled even during the periods when the Americans were administering the affairs of the island. I admit that many of them would feel genuinely humiliated to see their country's government in the hands of foreigners, but they would find some scope for their ambition in agitating that, if Cuba is to be connected with the United States, it must be as a State in the Union.

And that the island will become a State eventually is beyond all doubt. Education will spread, population will grow, industry and wealth will increase.

Consequently, however much one may now dwell upon the gulf which separates the Latin from the Anglo-Saxon, however much one may discuss the difference in ideals, in religion, and in traditions between Cubans and Americans, the end must be the incorporations of Cuba as a State in the Union. Religion has nothing to do with the matter—there are millions of Catholics in the United States to-day. Traditions will not affect the eventual solution of the Cuban problem either, for if the hordes of Italians and Poles who have for so many years been pouring into the United States can have become citizens of the American Union, I do not see why the Cubans, who are mostly a white people of Spanish descent, and whose increase by immigration will be chiefly from white sources, should be held to be less amenable to American influences. I admit at once that the man who remains in Cuba will be much less affected by such influences than the immigrant who lives in the United States, and is forced by circumstances to conform to the habits and customs of that country, to learn its language, and to obey its laws. It is plain that in the latter case environment counts for a vast deal in moulding the man according to the dominant American pattern. It is plain, also, that the character of a man born and brought up in a tropical island, believing that his country has been wronged, cut off largely from outside influences, and thinking in narrow, insular grooves, will remain unmodified during almost the whole course of his life. But I do not believe the intelligent Cuban will be cut off from outside influences or will grow up a simple, ignorant man. The day of Cuban isolation is past. The day is coming when English will vie with Spanish as the spoken language of the country when it will be taught in every school of the island. And if large numbers of Americans are not likely to crowd into a country already settled by people of another race and civilisation, and where the land is already parcelled out amongst the inhabitants, it is certain on the other hand that thousands of Cubans will visit the United States, will go there to be educated, will follow its politics with interest, and will thus gradually assimilate American modes of thought.

This is what is already happening. Once it was to Paris chiefly that wealthy Cubans went and sent their children to be educated. Now it is to Boston and New York. And as the habit of travelling grows amongst the Cubans, as it is growing amongst all West Indians, it is to the United States that they will turn their faces. This will mean that nearly every one in the island belonging to the classes which count politically will in time have become affected by the American *ethos*, and these will demand State union and State rights, and their demands will surely not be denied. "But what of the negro population?" some one may ask. "Surely it will be a danger to admit any more negroes into the Union?" Considering that less than one-third of the Cuban people is coloured, and that less than one-half of the coloured element is black, I do not see the reason for the slightest apprehension. Besides, as I have previously pointed out, the coloured element is slowly but steadily disappearing, owing

to the number of white men emigrating to Cuba and seeking wives amongst the people, and also to the predominance of the male over female population of Cuba. Here is the number of foreigners that were in Cuba when the Census of 1907 was compiled—the proportion of the white to the black immigrants may be seen at a glance :—

From Spain	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	185,393
„ China	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11,217
„ Africa	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,948
„ The United States	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,713
„ The West Indies, not including Porto Rico	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,280
„ Porto Rico	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,918
„ France	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,476
„ South and Central America	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,442
„ The United Kingdom	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,252
„ Mexico	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,187

And 80 per cent. of the white immigrants were men.

The colour problem of Cuba, then, will tend to grow less and less as time goes on : indeed, I am not justified in saying that there is a colour problem in Cuba at all. There is prejudice, there is class feeling. There may even be what Sir Harry Johnston has told me he perceived in the island, a tendency to keep the negro out of his due share of political power, and out of his due proportion of public employment. This prejudice and this tendency towards discrimination on account of race may increase with the growth of American influence in Cuba—which would be a danger ; and yet I am not sure that, at first at any rate, American influence would not make against undue discriminations. For whatever practices may obtain in the Southern States in the way of preventing the exercise of the Negro suffrage at the polls, would certainly not be allowed to obtain in a Cuba governed as a colony, or over which a protectorate had been established. The aim of the American Government would be to hold the balances even between all classes and races in Cuba, until the island had acquired the status of Statehood ; and this would inevitably have a great educational effect. Then, it is absolutely certain that, whether as a republic, a protected dependency, or a state, the island will always be divided into two parties, and each party will be quick to see the wisdom of not giving its rival the opportunity of making a bid for the entire negro vote. The Spanish colonies and republics, we must also remember, have always managed to handle their negro question very well ; nor is Porto Rico troubled by any race problem at the present day. A careful study of the Cuban political situation, therefore, does not seem to warrant the belief that the racial factor will ever be a seriously disturbing one in the future. Difficulties may arise now and then ; but these will not be like the difficulties

which have perplexed the Southern States. Negro predominance is out of the question in Cuba. And, if treated fairly, the negro, who occupies contentedly an inferior social position in the island, will not want to form an aggressive, independent party of his own.

I see Cuba, then, a future State in the American Union. I see her a prosperous island, an example to the rest of the West Indies, a great winter resort for Americans, a factor in the civilisation of the West Indian Archipelago. Spain failed to make her anything like what she will become. She could not thrive and prosper by herself. None of the European nations could give her that helping hand that America will be glad to hold out to her. And a future generation of Cubans, looking back upon the past of their country, will see that union with the United States was inevitable, and that only by union with the United States could the destiny of Cuba be fulfilled.



KING STREET, KINGSTON.

CHAPTER V

KINGSTON, THE GATEWAY OF JAMAICA

WHO does not know the story of Columbus' description of the island of Jamaica ?

Taking a parchment in his hand, he crumpled it, and throwing it down before their majesties of Spain he exclaimed that that was what the island he had discovered was like. The story may be untrue, yet the illustration was so appropriate that I think Columbus may well have used it. For nowhere in this island of 4,200 square miles does one ever lose sight of hills and mountains, sometimes towering sharply up into the sky, sometimes rising gently against the horizon ; but always visible, always impressing one with a feeling of grandeur and of illimitable freedom.

It is the work of man's hand that makes an impression upon you as you approach the city of Havana from the sea. It is the work of Nature that impresses you as you draw near to the city of Kingston. At the edge of a spit of sand lies a little town, a group of red houses standing amidst cocoanut palms. Opposite to this is a low, dismantled, dark grey fort : Port Royal on the right, Fort Augusta on the left, and mangrove bushes growing on either side along the shore. These send their twisted snake-like roots deep down into the slime and sea, and their dense, dark green metallic foliage throws a dark green oily shadow upon the water edge. But a yard or two from these sickly looking shores, the surface of the sea is clear and bright, is pearl-green and blue, with here and there a silver streak ; and is as still as the surface of a mirror if the wind is sleeping, or dances and breaks into a million diamond points of light if ever so faint a puff of wind comes stealing over its broad expanse. A magnificent sheet of water is this land-locked harbour, but how singularly quiet ! . . . what an atmosphere of silence seems to pervade it, as though the informing genius of it were the spirit of sleep ! A boat here and there : to the far east a shining white cliff, to the north a few piers, and behind these a mass of houses that gleam white in the sunshine and nestle amongst countless trees. A haze seems to float over the city, and from the deck of your ship you see none of the outstanding features of it. A few persons loiter on some of the piers, a few ships are alongside of them. This, you perceive at

once, is no busy harbour, no entrance to the wealthy capital of a prosperous island. It is all exceedingly beautiful, but all so still.

This thought possesses you, and you perhaps give expression to it in a half-suppressed sigh, or give over yourself to a placid enjoyment of the scene. The languor of the tropics is already upon you, a sense of quietness and ease, the delight of the lotus-eater. You do not know it, maybe will not perceive it for some time to come, may never perceive it if your stay in this island is short. But the song of the lotus-eaters is in this sea and this sky and those sun-lit mountains, and it will sound in your ear and steal into your heart and blood. Yet it is not deadly, it lures no one to his doom : at most it will but lull your energies to sleep if you surrender yourself wholly to its soft, seductive influence. Few can do so ; life has to be lived even here—life which means competition and a wrestling with nature. . . . But look ! we are at the pier : even before we have begun to dream we are awakened. And Kingston is a city where one fights continually with the spirit of the tropics, the spirit of sleep.

If you have ever been in a Spanish-American city, you will at once recognise the difference between the Spaniard's methods of building and those of the English in tropical countries. The Spaniard came to stay, and he brought with him the type of houses he was accustomed to at home : the Englishman came to stay also, but to stay as an outsider, not as an inhabitant. He brought his customs with him, but home to him was always England, so at first he set himself to erect a camp, to build houses which should shield him from the sun and rain, but which he should be able to leave without regret when the time came for him to return home. Thus it is that no British West Indian city is anything like any English town I know, while in nearly every Spanish-American city you may trace a resemblance, and more than a resemblance, to the cities of Spain, and may see reproduced everywhere in it the Moorish architecture which the Spaniards adopted in the days when the Moors were in Spain.

I have said that the English built camps in the West Indies. But they laid out those camps on a settled plan, with long streets running down to the waterfront, and other streets running at right angles to these. And as time went on the camp improved, and better houses were built, and here and there a family mansion was erected. Then perhaps a catastrophe occurred, an earthquake which threw down a part of the town, a fire which swept one-half of it away, a hurricane which blew the frailer structures all to pieces. And after each calamity something more substantial took the place of what had been destroyed ; but as a portion of the town had always managed to survive fire or hurricane or earthquake, there is now no uniformity anywhere about it all ; and so to-day an eighteenth-century type of West Indian building stands next to a type belonging to the latter half of the nineteenth century ; while, but three hundred yards farther on, there may rise the latest achievement in West Indian architecture, a solid, square structure of iron and concrete, not beautiful, but commodious and safe, and more like the

buildings you will see in some stolid English town like Bristol than like anything else I can remember just now.

Once Kingston, the chief city of the British West Indies, was a collection of two-storey houses, the lower part built of red brick, the upper part of wood and roofed with cedar shingles, and with narrow jealousy shutters painted a dark green, and a few glass windows in between these shutters. Less than a mile to the north from the sea-front the country district began. On the boundaries of the country and town they built those large houses with the deep verandahs and the lofty mahogany arches which are still a delight to-day : built them solidly upon high foundations so that the wind might sweep through them, and then reared a high wall around them so that the house might be a castle in appearance as well as in legal theory. They planted gardens in front of these houses, and the gardens are there to-day. Some of them have fallen to decay, others are still bright with flowers, with crotons, caladiums, with elder and Sweet William and lace-plant and English roses. But these houses belong to a day that is dead : I see some of them now, in ruins, deserted, with no one willing to rebuild them. As slowly they fall to pieces, they give place and will give place to smaller structures, to cheaper, common-looking buildings ; and thus the old city will disappear, as the city of Tom Cringle has long since disappeared, with its sandy streets, its hogs rooting in the gutters, and its naked children playing contentedly by their mothers' side.

Where shall I find a symbol to represent Kingston ? It is a city grown old and still young, a city that has thrown off its child's clothes, but has found nothing to fit it as yet. I read over these words and I find the similies almost meaningless. You must see Kingston to understand what it is like. And to understand what it is like you must also have known some other city which has been finished and paved ; which may still be growing, but growing gradually, naturally, not suddenly and spasmodically at the extremities before the middle portion of it is completed and done with.

That is how Kingston has grown. It was compact once, with its Parish Church in the centre, and near the church an open sandy space, to the north-west of which were the barracks where soldiers and the militia were sometimes lodged. Even to-day this open space transformed into a park with great green trees and grass plots, and with palms and a fountain, is still called the Parade, though almost every one has forgotten that troops were drilled there once. Around and near by the town were grass pens ; and above the shops in the business quarter of the town, close to the shore, the trading classes lived, while in the lanes and meaner streets the workers huddled in the tenement yards.

Then came a street-car system, and the boundaries of Kingston widened suddenly. An escape from the congested quarter was welcomed, and population began to move northward and eastward. Another revolution came : ten years ago an electric tramway system replaced the mule-cars, and this time the wealthier

section of Kingston's inhabitants moved northward chiefly. Suburbs sprang up, new townships were laid out . . . then an earthquake came and the lower portion of Kingston was shaken to dust. It is rebuilding now; but lower Kingston, one feels as one walks about its streets, will never be a beautiful city unless it is pulled down and restored upon some carefully thought-out plan. It will have two or three fine streets, and the rest of it—well, I think the rest of it will remain true to the tradition of a British West Indian city—true to the old idea of a camp of wood and brick to shelter one from wind and rain. It will have about it nothing suggestive of permanence and solidity, nothing that seems built to last for generations.

The Spaniard went to Cuba to live, and he imported slaves to help him earn a living. The English settlers came to Jamaica to make a fortune, and they, too, imported slaves and were content that the slaves should greatly outnumber them. At most but few of them came to Jamaica, and so to-day, while one finds Cuba a white island or nearly so, one finds Jamaica, the neighbour of Cuba, a black island or nearly so.

The traveller perceives this as the vessel drops anchor alongside of the wharf. Around the ship are a crowd of laughing, shouting boys, clad but in a sort of clinging breech-clout, their black skins gleaming in the water, their white teeth shining up at you as they hold their faces upwards and rapidly move their heads from side to side to dash the spray from their hair or out of their eyes. Most of the people gathered on the wharf are black or dark; the porters who take your baggage to the Custom House (where the officials are all polite and as expeditious as a tropical climate will allow)—these, too, are black. You leave the wharf and soon you find yourself in a city where at least forty thousand of a population of sixty thousand are black; and moving along in the streets, on the side-walks, driving the cars, driving the cabs, loafing about, working as storemen, as carpenters, as bricklayers, as hod-men, and hod-women, as vendors of fruit, as tailors, as barbers, as washerwomen, domestic servants, candy sellers; doing all the varied tasks, performing the thousand-and-one things that one makes a living by in a British West Indian city, are black women and men. And this is one of "the outposts of Empire" where the flag of Great Britain floats over a peaceful mixed population. And, in its way, Kingston, the capital of the island, is a city of almost inexhaustible interest.

Come with me into its streets and its lanes and its suburbs for a while. The principal business thoroughfare is King Street, a wide, well-paved street which begins from the water-edge and runs in a straight line for nearly a mile upwards; then curves eccentrically to the east and west and becomes a mean street with miserable, broken-down hovels on either side of it. The business portion of it, along which several lines of electric cars run continually, stops at the Central Park, and at either end of this section of the street a marble statue stands. Large concrete buildings are being erected; some are already

completed, and these are filled with goods from England—with hats and laces and satins and silks, and all the other articles with which men and women love to adorn themselves. Colonnades are numerous in this street, and on the wide, covered side-walks it is a pleasure to walk. The stores here are better than those in Havana. Their goods are better displayed. The Metropolitan House is larger than any other retail establishment in any other West Indian island except Trinidad, and is better appointed. Electric fans cool the hot atmosphere of these buildings and give a little relief to the perspiring clerks. I think that when King Street is completely rebuilt it will be the finest street to be found in the West Indies or in Central America.

The chief Government administrative offices are building in this street. Near these they have laid out some gardens, a wonderful æsthetic adventure on the part of a city hitherto so terribly utilitarian. Those gardens, when the street is reconstructed, will give to it that touch of beauty without which the heavy concrete buildings on all sides would seem oppressive, and will be a delight both to the people of the city and to the people from abroad who visit Jamaica in increasing numbers year by year.

Less than three years ago this street was a mass of blackened ruins. Three years hence it will form one of the attractions of the island. Indeed, it forms that now, presenting as it does so many pictures of British West Indian outdoor life to those who have eyes to see. It is the busiest street in all Jamaica: cars pass up and down at short intervals, cabs and private buggies clatter over the pavement and stop before one or other of the stores on either side. Women of all complexions move along the side-walks, peeping in at the shop windows for a moment or two before making up their minds whether they shall enter and purchase what they want. There is no great hurry displayed by any one, and no bad temper except by the cabmen who may be quarrelling with their hereditary enemies, the drivers of drays. These coming round a corner at full speed, and with the cheerful anticipation of being arrested for furious driving, serve to make walking just pleasantly dangerous, and enliven the streets with occasional disputes amongst themselves, or with the cab-drivers or the police.

The latter, clad in dark blue serge and white helmets, and armed with short clubs, stroll about nonchalantly keeping the peace, and now and then acting as judge and jury in some case that is brought to their attention. It may be that two women have come to blows through jealousy, or that a vendor of cakes is trying to persuade a labourer to pay a debt of some weeks standing. Voices are raised to a high pitch, the Almighty is called upon to witness the greatest advantage ever yet taken of a poor unfortunate woman, a group of idlers gathers and makes suggestions as to what should be done to the party it believes to be guilty; and as sometimes the idlers do not agree amongst themselves, there seems to be every indication of a general combat. It is

usually when the excitement is reaching its climax that the policeman appears. He has been aware of the quarrel from the moment it began, but thought it wise to remain aloof; now he makes up his mind to interfere, and at once puts on the air he has frequently noticed the judges assume when hearing a case of great importance. Paternal authority distinguishes him as he steps into the midst of the crowd and asks the reason of the row. Every spectator at once begins to give his own particular version of it, with a sense of pride at being participators in so stirring a drama. He tries to listen for a moment, then informs all and sundry with severity that "although I am a black man, I am not a fool," a statement that is taken to imply a threat, for comparative silence ensues; which gives him an opportunity to listen to the complaints of the disputants. His *rôle* is that of a peacemaker. He begins by wanting to know "why black people are so foolish." He next suggests that the prison is not the pleasantest place in Jamaica, advises the man to pay the woman, or the two women to "make up and be friends," according to the circumstances. The last thing he does is to arrest, but arrest he certainly will if peace is not restored, or if his personal dignity is seriously offended. He is conscious that he is a black man: he tells you so. But he does that in order to let you know that you must not presume too much upon that fact. If you do, you may be arrested on the charge of "obstructing the police in the execution of their duty," and the magistrates are very severe in dealing with this class of crime. So, in nine cases out of ten, the noise subsides, the crowd disperses, and the normal activity of the street once more continues undisturbed.

Little covered carts looking for all the world like tiny houses upon wheels are pushed about by boys, and nearly every cart has a name. "In God we Trust!" is the pious exclamation uttered in blue paint by one; its owner, as you will discover if you follow him for five minutes, indulges in cheerful blasphemy at frequent intervals, probably by way of showing his faith. "Hope on, hope ever," is the motto on another of these carts, and "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" is the inscription borne by a third. These are the snowball carts which will sell you a mixture of crushed ice and syrup for a penny, and those who own them evidently believe that their occupation is a sufficient excuse for personal untidiness. These boys all have a common cry, "Hokey pokey," the words being uttered in what is assumed to be the very latest edition of the American accent, for the American accent is much admired by the lower classes of the Jamaica towns.

A beggar passes calling down the blessing of the Lord upon all those who will assist him. Two little girls go by, and you hear one telling the other that "I left him to God." It begins to dawn upon you that you are in a very religious city, a city that thinks continually of Providence, and, like the Puritans of old, interlards its conversation with tags of Scripture. It does the latter thing

certainly. The influence of the Bible may be clearly perceived in the talk of the Jamaica peasant and the working classes.

It may be that you leave King Street and saunter along Harbour Street, once the chief business thoroughfare of Jamaica, now largely a mass of bare ruins, a monument to the work of earthquake and fire. Here and there between the blackened walls you see mounds of *débris* covered with grass or with a creeper bearing a yellow flower like the buttercup. To the dweller in this city the sight no longer awakens deep emotions, does not startle or send the blood coursing quickly to the heart. It is to him all commonplace, the sad significance of it has ceased to appeal to his imagination; yet no stranger can look upon those shattered walls rising one after another along the length of the street, or upon those grass and flower-covered mounds between them, and not remember that hundreds of men perished here one bright, sun-lit day in January when this city was making plans for the future and rejoicing in the fulness of life. . . . They are rebuilding Harbour Street now; little by little the signs of the earthquake's havoc will disappear. They are building as science has taught us to build where there is fear of earth upheavals, so that there may be again no loss of life. The present generation will pass away, and perhaps another and another, before a like calamity recurs. Meanwhile the silent open spaces speak of that day of desolation, and the people go about and think of what they shall do this year and next. Only the stranger looks upon these walls and mounds, and remembers.

The ordinary Kingston street is a mixture of buildings of all shapes, ages, and descriptions: no two houses are quite like one another, each one has apparently been built with a lawless disregard of all precedent. Only on one point did the original owners of them seem to agree; and that was in the successful attempt to encroach upon the public thoroughfare, an attempt persisted in for over two centuries and only condemned within the last two years. According to the charts and plans of the city of Kingston, each street is provided with side-walks of a certain convenient width; but when you find the front of a house or shop actually built upon the side-walk, and when a few yards beyond you discover that something like an embankment has been ingeniously constructed on the public's property, and, a little farther on, that a flight of steps obstructs your right-of-way, and so on without cessation, you wonder why the original designers of this city troubled to think about side-walks at all. At last, however, the law is being enforced, though I know of one man who has recently managed to better the Government in this matter of public rights, and is consequently the object of his friends' undying admiration.

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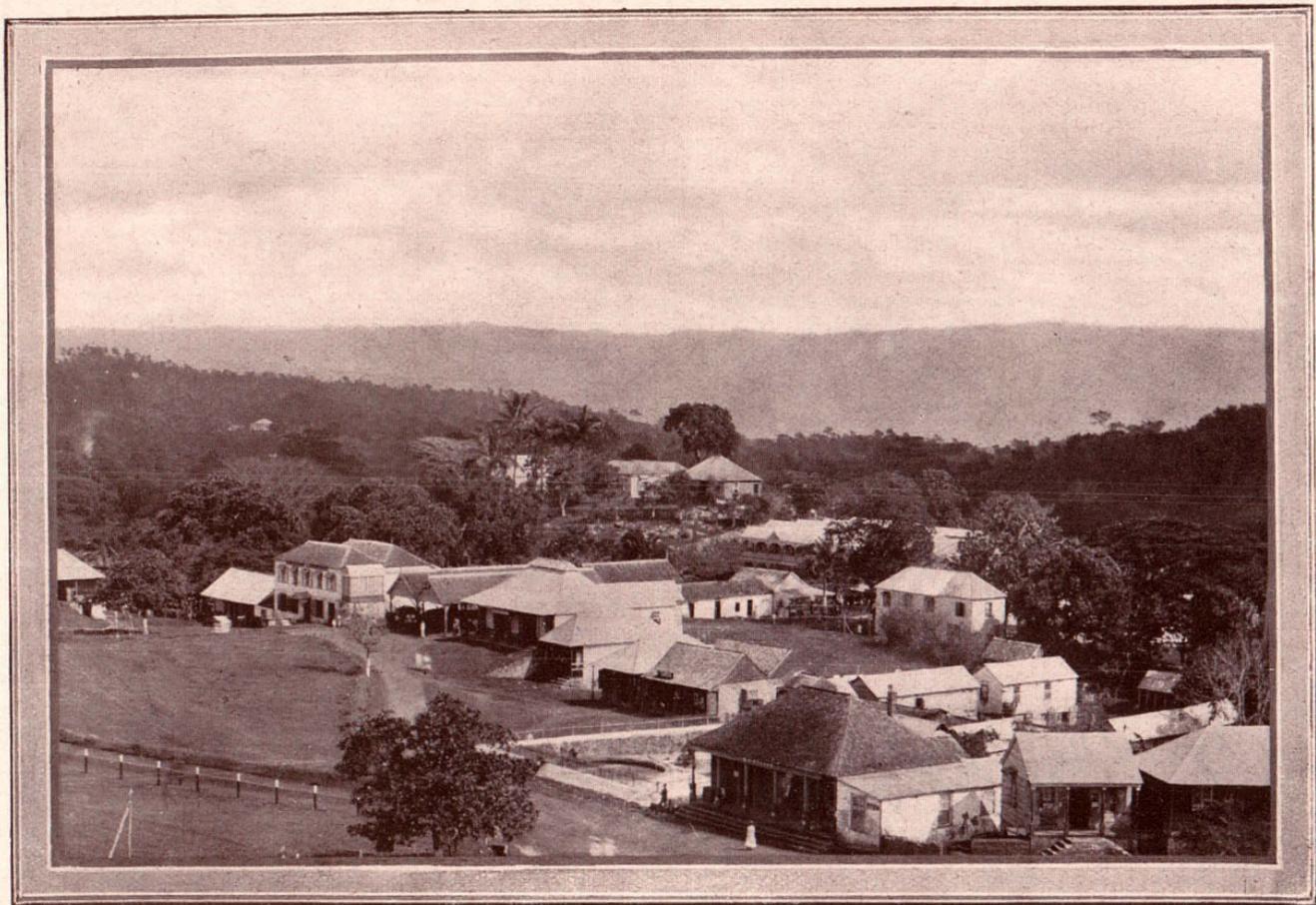
And now I want to tell you something about the lanes of Kingston and about its suburbs; something about the class of dwellings there and the people who live in them.

Between every two streets in Kingston there runs a narrow lane, and most of the houses that open on the street have back-entrances in these lanes. Nearly all the lanes in Kingston run from north to south for a mile and over, and at regular distances, where the cross-streets bisect the lane at right angles, a little shop stands, and in these shops most of the imported food-stuffs of the lane dwellers is purchased. These are the salt provision shops, called so because they sell salted fish and herrings in large quantities, and flour, and rice, and crackers, and condensed milk, and any number of other articles of common consumption. Almost every one of these shops is kept by a Chinaman. He stands behind his counter, clad but in a merino and a pair of trousers, alert, businesslike, making himself understood in pigeon English, and perfectly aware that he and his colleagues have captured the retail trade of Kingston and Jamaica. He has done so by masterly and judicious knavery. I enter his shop and I see a few girls buying a number of little things; "a gill of this," and "a gill of that"—a gill being three farthings—and the whole amount being spent with much vociferation and argument, time being of no value to the purchasers.

"A gill of kerosene oil!" The Chinaman measures the amount called for; then, in emptying it into the bottle, he manages to shake the measure ever so slightly, and back runs some of the oil into the tin from which it has been taken. The purchaser suspects villany, exclaims, "I see you, Mushay!" But he protests his innocence, and there is not much further argument, for the girl, boy, or woman, as the case may be, invariably begs him for something, and obtaining it, departs well pleased.

For the Chinaman never refuses to give something to every purchaser. That is one of the secrets of his success. He robs your oil and he gives you a biscuit, and you go away thinking you have got something for nothing. He works fourteen hours a day; he sleeps in a little apartment attached to his shop; he is never tired, and he answers to any name you may choose to give him. "Mushay" is the favourite. It is a corruption of Monsieur. All foreigners are called Mushay, except the Hindoo immigrants, who are known as Baboo. And in Mushay's shop an idler or two will always be found, leaning on the heaped-up bags of rice near the door, or perched upon an empty biscuit barrel, or doing their best, apparently, to prevent the counter from falling down.

But the Chinaman's shop is not the gossip house of this section of the lane; to find that you must go elsewhere. Not to the tailor's shop. That is devoted to making clothes and music. The two or three journeymen who sit for hours before their treadle machines refresh their souls by chanting hymns or psalms in fervent tones, or by whistling; but the jewellers near by, or even the shoemakers, have more time for argument; and so, at almost any hour of the day, you may hear a spirited conversation which, in nine cases



TOWN OF MANDEVILLE, JAMAICA.

out of ten, is of a religious character. In the little shop some twelve feet square, three or four men may be gathered. Leaning against the doorposts, there being no room inside, may be two other gentlemen, loafers both, the others being workers. It is a characteristic of the loafer that he is a good conversationalist: living largely upon the charity of his friends, he has been able to devote his mind uninterruptedly to the study and contemplation of men and things. He entertains his friends by calling in at opportune moments (breakfast-time is his favourite hour), and by asking them if they have heard of the Rev. So-and-So's sermon. A casual question, as it were, but of the highest importance as eventually is seen. For it involves an argument on Transubstantiation, or the Trinity, or the Millennium, or on some other like subject of inexhaustible interest to all the Jamaica working classes.

A theological controversialist is what the Jamaica tradesman, artisan, or labourer is, first and last, and all the time. You may picture to yourself this little shop in the lane, with its two or three little work-tables, its benches on which the master and his partners or his apprentices sit, its few tools hanging against the wall, and the busy men attending to their work. You would think that these would be talking about some event of everyday life. But no, the question with them is whether the Virgin Mary was immaculate or not, and probably being Protestants, to the extent of hating all Roman Catholic doctrine most unreasonably, they invariably decide against the Immaculate Conception, and then perhaps fall to talking about women in terms which cannot possibly be transcribed in these pages.

A talk upon religion is an intellectual exercise. A discussion on women is a sort of light relief from strenuous thinking. Not infrequently a good-looking girl passing down the lane is hailed with "Hi, look this way, me love!" and, if she does condescend to do so, all graver matters connected with heaven and our eternal welfare are put aside for the time, and a Rabelaisian passage of arms takes place between the damsel and her many admirers.

Other shops are in this lane; vegetable shops where yam is sold, and plantains, and potatoes and cabbage and beans and bananas. Nearly all the purchases are made in small quantities. A halfpenny or a gill is the amount usually spent upon one article; but of yam you can hardly buy less than a quattie's (three half-pennies) worth; so yam is a luxury with the poorer classes. And what a sight is a vegetable shop! There may or may not be a counter; there may be two or three shelves against the walls; but whatever may be the fittings of this tiny place, you will find most of the vegetables heaped up upon the ground; the yams and bananas and potatoes lying on the hard earth or the brick pavement, the beans and tomatoes and the softer things in large flat baskets made of the plaited strips of the stems of the bamboo plant. A middle-aged woman, usually enormous, squats amongst these heaps and these baskets, a short knife in her hand, dirt upon her person, a formidable look upon

her face: and almost without moving she sells her goods to those who wish to buy. "Three green bananas for a farthing, and nothing more." "Not even a pepper with it!" "No, this is not a Chinaman's shop;" and so on and so forth in the vernacular, all the livelong day.

You will observe that in addition to the gates and fences and shops in the lane there are any number of little houses, each one with a step leading out into the lane and many of these steps encroaching upon the narrow sidewalk. These are "front houses," houses of two or three rooms, built high above the ground, of wood painted white and green, but facing the lane and opening upon it. Respectable members of the lower middle-class live in these houses: small shopkeepers, artisans, and decent women who may have toiled and saved for years to build a home of their own.

Those who live in these front houses not infrequently own a harmonium, upon which hymns are played (for the number of persons who can play fairly well upon musical instruments in Jamaica is simply astonishing). A small "centre table," a side-table on which a large kerosine lamp may be placed, two American rocking-chairs, three or four smaller chairs, some framed coloured prints from the *Graphic* or the *Illustrated London News* which hang upon the wall: I think that is a fair inventory of the furniture in the room which opens on the lane. You dine in this room, you receive your friends here; in the evenings when you are at home you sit at the window and think if you are not minded to enter into conversation. The bedroom is furnished with a neat wooden washstand, a clothes press, a table with a looking-glass, and a modern iron bed, and what more comfort could you possibly desire? Your poorer neighbours live in the same yard with you. A range of wooden rooms runs from one end of the yard to the other, each room divided from the next by a thin partition of board. These rooms are built low to the ground; eight of them may be in the row, from two to five persons may live in one room; and each yard is a little society in itself, with its own interests, its gossiping, its quarrels, its intrigues, its envies and hatreds, its friendships and its loves.

Kingston has two kinds of suburbs: those in which the poorer classes and the artisans and the smaller middle-class live, and those in which persons of the upper middle-class live. But it is also like Havana in this: very often you will find a mean structure next to a fine mansion, or very near to it; and Chinese shops and rum shops are scattered everywhere, for there are no building laws to prescribe the kind of house that must be built in a certain locality. Building in Kingston has proceeded on the principle of every man after his own order and according to his taste, so that you now have a city of many quaint contradictions and anomalies, which makes it all the more interesting.

But outside of the city proper, in the suburbs that have sprung up around it, one happens upon evidences of a wish on the part of the people to follow

some uniform plan in building. I see such evidences even in the suburbs where the artisans live : in the little townships where most of the buildings are neat little cottages, with gardens attached to them. Unless you visit one of these places, or go into some of the small houses in the city itself, you can never know of the progress which the city dweller of African descent has made in civilisation and in the art of living. You can never know how the lower middle-class lives. Some of the lanes and the meaner suburbs are for the poorest class of the city : the labourers, the servants who have poured into Kingston from the country districts in search of work. Their wages are small, their future never brightens. They come into the city when young, and the fascination of city life seizes hold upon them, so that even when pinched by poverty they are loath to leave it. Kingston has been the object of their thoughts, the goal of their hopes for years : to them it is a great metropolis, a crowded city full of strange delights. And so they fill the ranks of the poorly paid workers and offer up their lives to their delusion. But above them is the class, black and dark-hued also, whom I have spoken of above and who have won more from life than the poorest classes have done ; who have built their own little homes, who have made for themselves a good reputation as workmen, many of whose names are on the Voters Roll of the parish, and who form a large part of the church-going contingent of the city.

It is this class that you will find in a suburb like Franklin Town or Campbell Town, clean little places that slumber quietly out of reach of the electric cars. And there is the other type of suburb also, the suburb of the middle classes, cottages of from five to ten rooms, most of them with gardens and verandahs, and installed with electric light and boasting of an atmosphere of comfort. It is in these that the better-off classes of Kingston live.

Some of these suburbs, situated upon or a little above the border-line of Kingston, are really beautiful. I have one in mind as I write : the car passes through it, and looking southwards you see before you the blue waters of Kingston harbour and the narrow strip of land that sweeps westward like a bow and ends in the town of Port Royal. Behind you rise range after range of smoke-blue mountains which form the impressive background of the city, and to your right, as you look down towards the sea, are the houses I speak of here.

Large and airy, mostly of one storey, built chiefly of wood and painted white and green, they each of them stand in the midst of large gardens or smooth lawns. They suggest comfort—not comfort of a heavy, meaty kind, but comfort softened by elegance : comfort in which beauty plays some part. They are light structures, and so are suited for a country of blue skies and fiery sun ; they are lightly furnished too, furnished with bamboo tables and wicker chairs, and with centre carpets and light lace curtains, and iron beds and imitation-oak bedroom furniture. The old solid mahogany beds and chairs and tables made

of Jamaica wood by Jamaica workmen—those are rare to-day. I am writing on one of those tables, but the chair I sit on is of black steambent wood and straw, and was made in Austria; and this Austrian furniture and cheap furniture from America will be found in many a Jamaica home to-day. Even the old mahogany sofas are disappearing, and “couches” are all the fashion instead. These are frail and do not last, yet fashion has the last word to say in Jamaica as elsewhere, and couches, of course, are fashionable now.

No drawing-room in Kingston is quite complete without its piano. Walking in a Kingston suburb after nightfall one hears these instruments being played upon here and there, for most of the Jamaica girls of the better classes have been taught to play. But except the tinkling of the piano, there is hardly any sound to be heard in one of these suburbs; and there is no public promenade in Kingston, no place like the Prado in Havana where young and old, rich and poor, may assemble to drink in draughts of the sweet evening breeze and to listen to the music of the band. Oh, no! in a respectable Kingston neighbourhood life is at a dead level of dulness. You pass through it with me; you see the houses closed in the day and opened at night, and at night you see the lights shining through them, but only the family is indoors as a rule. There is very little visiting done amongst this class in Kingston. I have sought for the reasons, and I think I have found some of them. I think the climate has something to do with the lack of movement amongst the people; the climate which beats the energy out of one, which makes languor delightful and exertion a bore. But the climate is not the only reason. Havana is tropical too, and so are the cities of the French West Indies, and yet what a difference between those and the city of Kingston! No, it is not climate, it is class which largely accounts for the quiet, uneventful life of the better-off people of Kingston. They are all estimable and kindly. All Jamaicans are kindly. But, you see, it is like this: If you have twenty houses in one street in a “respectable neighbourhood,” it is quite possible that you may have twenty families representing twenty different classes in that street. The thing may sound incredible, but it is true. The class difference may be based upon several grounds. Differences in style and manner, differences in wealth, differences in position. The heads of some families receive £500 a year, others may be limited to a salary of £250. But money, to be just, does not really constitute a formidable social factor: position does so far more. It is the English idea. A shopkeeper earning £300 a year, for example, would not be the social equal of an accountant receiving but half that salary. Everything counts, everything is a factor in this problem of respectable society which no one can solve. No one attempts to solve it. Respectability in a British West Indian community means the acceptance of ruling conditions, ideas, and notions which have come over from England; and if you take the better classes of a West Indian city and bring them up upon British social customs, traditions, and ideas, what can you expect but minute class distinctions? I think it would be different if there were a public promenade; I think

that outdoor tropical life is a corrective of ideas that flourish naturally in those peaceful, orderly suburbs of the large English cities, where the houses in one street are all so much alike and where every street has its own class of houses and its own class of people. And some day it may be different, but, meantime, a sleepy quietness broods over and pervades a Kingston suburb where the better classes live.

In the lower part of the city, the principal business portion, silence reigns after darkness has fallen and the stores are closed. The cars go by at regular intervals, the policemen move slowly upon their beat, the gas lamps flicker and gleam, lighting up the empty thoroughfares. Now and then a solitary figure moves mysteriously along, so mysteriously, and with so obvious an attempt at concealment, that you guess at once it is a detective. He does not want to be known, and so great is his anxiety that he straightway betrays himself. He is on the watch for burglars, but we are not ; so we leave this deserted quarter of the town and go northwards. And here we see some signs of life : see groups of people standing at the corners of the streets, and public-houses cheerfully blazing with lights, and bands of men and women holding religious meeting, and knots of persons passing to and fro.

This is the outdoor life of Kingston after the day's work is done.

Kingston has no theatre. It had one before the earthquake, and that, of course, was destroyed. Since then there have been some serious arguments on the legitimacy of building another theatre out of the public funds, the real hindrance being, apparently, that there are no public funds. But, in the meantime, argument is entertaining, and so you may be sure that you will not walk about the streets of Kingston on any night without hearing the theatre problem discussed.

I heard it discussed one night in a bar-room. The chief speaker was a man of about fifty who had reached a stage of sobriety from which he gazed out upon the world from a strictly moral point of view. Emptying his fourth glass of rum and water, he gravely laid down the proposition that dramatic performances were destructive of morals, and then asked his hearers if they would be willing to spend public money on building a church ? He admitted that he did not go to church himself, but said he believed in setting a good example. Then he called for another glass of rum and water, and I left, feeling that he must be a great force for good in the community.

These bars are provided with very few seats, sometimes with none at all. They are not *cafés*, for *cafés* are unknown in Jamaica. Why should they abound in other countries so near to this island, and yet not be found here ? Well, there are no *cafés* in England, and Jamaica is an English island. In such little matters you perceive the force of custom and tradition : four thousand miles away from the "mother country," this little colony still tries to follow the example which it believes the mother country has set. And so it has bars, whose doors are

kept closed and which are provided with but a few seats, instead of bright, open *cafés* with their numerous little tables and their atmosphere of convivial cheerfulness.

There is hardly any part of Kingston where, if you listen intently, you will not hear the sound of singing at night. Following the direction of the sound, you will soon come upon one of the religious meetings I have mentioned, a great gathering of perhaps five hundred people; and you may be sure that a score or more of these meetings are going on at the same time all over the city.

Picture this gathering to yourself. Two wooden poles are placed near one another on the ground, and on the top of each of these is fastened a large tin lamp filled with kerosene oil and having three great wicks, which, when lighted, give off a great blaze of light and a huge curling volume of thick black smoke. Standing by these lamps may be some five or six women dressed all in white, and with high head-dresses of white lawn upon their heads. These look like turbans, and are twisted into fantastic shapes: white is the sacred colour of West Africa, and though it is a century since the slave trade ceased, we find white the sacred colour of the West Indian revivalists.

One woman is the leader of the rest. She opens the meeting by reciting a verse of a well-known hymn in a shrill, loud voice, moving slowly a few paces to and fro as she utters the words. Her walk, her look, her gestures are all self-conscious; vanity is expressed in her every movement; clearly she is determined to make of herself sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal to-night.

She pauses after reciting the verse; then commences to sing it, and her sisters in white take up the tune. Shrill, shrill and ear-piercing, the hymn is intended as a call to the neighbourhood to come out and be saved; and the neighbourhood does come forth, not to be saved, but to enjoy itself by singing. Gradually the crowd thickens, a fair sprinkling of irreverent boys hanging upon the outskirts of it and passing the time by sticking pins into each other's legs. But the sisters pay no heed to any interruption; they proceed with their exposition of spiritual truths in a manner they have learnt from the Salvation Army.

"Jesus is coming!" exclaims their leader; and she shakes a little whip she holds in her right hand vehemently towards the skies.

"Jesus is coming!" repeats her followers in fervent tones, and amongst the crowd a few old women re-echo the words.

"Oh! my brothers and sisters," she continues, "are you prepared to meet Him on the Judgment Day; are you ready for the Bridegroom, you who are standing on the blazing brink of hell? The devil is waiting for you! Oh, prepare, prepare, ere it be too late—too late, too late, too late!"

As she speaks her voice falls into an impassioned chant and she sways her body to and fro. The sing-song rhetoric pours forth in a surprising volume. You would not have believed her capable of speaking like this. She is encouraged

by the cries that come from the audience, and continues to emphasise the words "too late," till, moved as it would seem by a common impulse, the crowd bursts into singing, "Too Late, Too Late, shall be the Cry."

And so the meeting goes on, and the passers-by proceed upon their way, paying but little heed. And the bright flaring lamps light up the motley crowd and the shining faces of the white-clothed women who are preaching Christian evangelistic doctrine with primitive fervour, the fervour that caused the priests of Baal to gnash themselves with knives in an ecstasy of spiritual possession.

But you must not imagine that the congregations are at all seriously influenced by these meetings. They attend them in much the same spirit as I do, and they listen with great good-humour, for there is no more good-humoured crowd than the Jamaica city crowd. I have attended similar open-air meetings in London, and the preachers at those meetings did not talk one bit more sensibly than these Kingston street-corner preachers. I remember one man I heard in Hyde Park who kept his eyes tightly closed all the time he talked, and mostly stood upon the tips of his toes. He preached upon Predestination, and his point was that we are all predestined to be saved or lost before our birth, but that we could prevent our souls being lost if we tried hard enough. The logic of his argument was bewildering, and I do not think you would find any Jamaica street preacher making the same kind of blunder. The truth is that the Jamaica street preacher usually possesses a keen sense of what is forceful and direct in religious oratory. You may think she is talking nonsense if you refuse to listen to her. But listen, and you will find that she will quote you Scripture for everything she says.

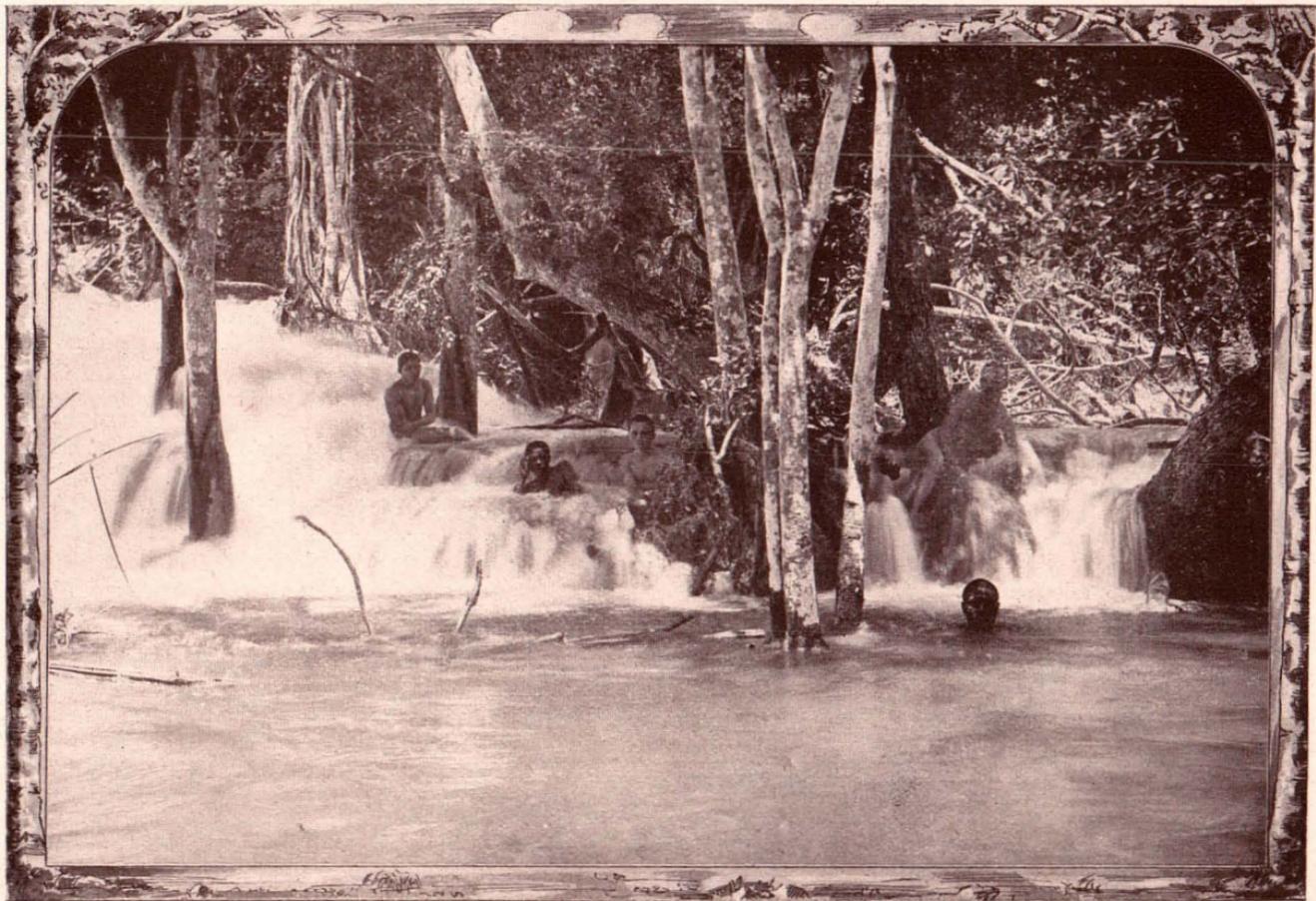
I want you to understand, too, that the distinguishing characteristic of the working classes of Kingston is their good humour. Because they are good-humoured many a superficial observer has said that they are thoughtless and thriftless and careless of the morrow. But I wish to enter a protest against such a sweeping condemnation. How can people be thrifty if they have little or nothing to save? I shall show later on that the peasantry of Jamaica are decidedly not thriftless; but the town folk are not in the same position as the peasantry; they are wage-earners, and their pay is never more than enough for them to live upon. Their condition may improve later on; even now there is talk of providing better homes for the workers by public effort, and many an earnest public man is thinking of what may be done in this connection. I should also like to see the wages of the Kingston working classes increase, for, believe me, as a rule those classes work hard and well. I have seen Englishmen, Americans, and Frenchmen at work in their respective countries. I have seen the Kingston artisan and labourer rebuilding the city of Kingston. And I say I have never seen Englishmen, Americans, or Frenchmen work harder—you may think I exaggerate if I tell

you I have never seen them work as hard. Just watch the labourer toiling early and late building the concrete structures that are rising all over the lower part of Kingston. See him emptying huge buckets of cement into wooden frames, or flinging bricks up and down. Watch the women breaking bricks for hours at a time in the blazing sun, and chatting contentedly as they do so. The men sing and whistle as they work, and five o'clock comes and passes, and still they work on. I have heard them singing in the darkness as they strove to finish some bit of work, and all the time their cheerfulness and good-humour have appealed to me as wonderful. And I will say one thing more about these workers. They always remember their old parents, and their mothers especially, wherever they may go. They will not willingly leave them to want. Now I do not call that thoughtlessness: I call it a fine exhibition of genuine human feeling. And I know of nothing finer than the enduring love of the old people and their children, a love that displays itself in cheerful, untiring service.

Only those who know the Jamaica lower classes intimately can know how strong is the affection that binds mother and son together.

I think, too, that the poorest classes are amongst the happiest people in Kingston, all the circumstances considered. They have a hard time of it, but they endure their hardships bravely and with patience. They are wonderfully kind to one another. Not one of them would let another starve if he or she could prevent it. It is this kindness of disposition, the wish to share in one another's joys and sorrows, the delight in pleasures which all can enjoy: all this it is that helps to make their happiness.

I love the Kingston workers, whether men or women. For they laugh in the face of misfortune, and endure with uncomplaining resignation an everlasting struggle with adverse fortune.



ROARING RIVER, JAMAICA.

CHAPTER VI

THE AMUSEMENTS OF JAMAICA

ONE hears and reads continually that the French and Spanish have stamped their national characteristics upon the alien peoples among whom they have settled, and have established in distant and tropical countries the customs and habits that flourish "at home." The implication is that the English have not succeeded in doing likewise ; and you would imagine from this that the tropical possessions of Britain are as much unlike the mother country as they possibly could be. Now, they are unlike in many respects. That is inevitable. But, as I have hinted in dealing with the suburban life of the better classes of Kingston, the points of similarity between Jamaica and England are strongly marked in so far as social customs are concerned : in a hundred and one different ways you will find the influence of England here, and the influence of English institutions. American manners and ideas are now entering into conflict with that influence, and it is hard to say whether the American or the English example will eventually prevail. America lies very near to Jamaica, and thousands of Americans visit the island annually. The Jamaica newspapers are got up after the American style ; the hotels are steadily following the American plan ; some of the Jamaica girls step out briskly in the streets as they have seen American girls do ; and in Port Antonio I have noticed that the working classes have adopted the brief, direct style of speaking beloved by Americans. Thus a sort of competition is maintained in Jamaica between the English and the American manner ; but, as yet, what is fundamental in the civilisation of the Jamaican is indubitably of English origin. His sports and pastimes are of English origin. His Sunday, unquestionably, is of English origin.

The British Sabbath is said to be an invention of the English Puritans, who went back to the Old Testament for their ideas as to what a Sunday ought to be, and how it should be spent. The rules and principles they laid down then have not been seriously modified since, and in Jamaica you will find them honoured and respected ; for Sunday in this island is kept as quietly and almost as sadly as it is in any part of the United Kingdom. In their contest with a latitudinarian spirit, the Churches

have won up to now. Their victory is hardly more than sixty years old. Even in the early part of the nineteenth century, Sunday was a day given over to marketing, for on Sunday the slaves came into the towns to sell the surplus of the produce they were allowed to cultivate for their own sustenance. A little patch of land was given to each able-bodied man, and he and his family grew their food upon it, and sold to the town people what they did not require : it was in this way that many of them obtained the money to redeem either their children or themselves out of bondage before the emancipation took place. The town markets were but open, unroofed spaces in or near the centre of the towns, and in these the noisy, chattering crowds would sit for hours, keeping the Sabbath Day unholy, but gaining a goodly harvest by doing so. As few persons went to church in those days, this Sabbath desecration did not sit heavily on anybody's conscience : only a few dissenting ministers were scandalised by it. But the triumph of these came when slavery was abolished in 1838, and when, in their special capacity as the protectors of the freedmen, they could lay down rules for the guidance of the latter. Sunday trading was decreed illegal by the Legislature, and most sinful by the clergy. Sunday was to be a day of rest and of prayer, the ministers further insisted. Nothing loath, the people agreed that it should be a day of rest : they agreed that work should be suspended on the first day of the week, and that no one should think of pleasure or enjoyment on that day, even if he did not pray or attend any place of worship. And thus the British Sabbath was established in Jamaica, and remains established to this day.

Sunday dawns silently in the towns and the city ; silently in the little villages nestling between mountain peaks or dreaming in beautiful valleys. Saturday night is the busiest night of the week. All the smaller shops are open and lighted up ; all the servants or the workers are moving about making their purchases and preparing for the morrow. The markets hum with noise, and at the stalls the battle of the barterers proceeds. Just opposite the Central Park on its western side is the busiest market of the city of Kingston, and there, on a Saturday night, you can hardly move about so great is the crowd. The streets around it are thronged, the side-walks are thronged ; the gas lamps light up the animated scene but faintly, and so, where great spaces of shadow fall, you feel rather than see your way about.

Shouts assail your ear : " Quattie for this ! " " Penny fee this ! " " Gran'mamma want to go home ! " These and similar cries come as an appeal to you to buy the things the sellers have to sell. You will notice that " grandmamma wants to go home." You will find that that is one good reason given why you ought to buy what the vendor has for sale ; but as grandmamma may be a bright-looking little girl of fourteen, and you yourself may be of any age, you wonder why she should appeal to you with so bland an assumption of old age. She could not tell you herself : she merely knows that the cry, " gran'mamma want to go home ! " makes a good business motto and is used by every one. The true reason is this : the West

Indian peasant respects old age, and a plea in the name of old age will scarcely pass unheeded. You buy from the older folk with the purpose of sparing them the trouble of remaining out late, and so the little girls also call themselves "grand-mamma." And they all address you as "me love" and "me sweet" with the most charming frankness. And so the hubbub goes on, the cries continue, the crowded shops do a good trade until midnight comes.

Midnight, and Saturday is ended. Sunday has begun.

At one o'clock on a Sunday morning I have stood in the streets that but an hour before re-echoed with strange, loud, entertaining noises. How swiftly the crowd disappears, and silence falls upon the scene! The little bowls and baskets are quickly packed, the tired but good-natured buyers and sellers quickly depart. The law is severe on Sunday trading, so there is no attempt to remain selling in the streets or in the shops after the policemen have given the signal that business must cease. Grandmamma goes home, and, whatever be her age, she surely deserves the rest that Sunday brings her.

On Sunday morning the usually quiet streets of Kingston and the other towns are still more quiet: it is as though the very air were drowsy and everything slept. And everything does sleep longer on Sunday morning than on any other morning in a West Indian town. In the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches a few persons are taking early communion; but the services here begin at eleven o'clock, so no one thinks about early rising to-day. We are all leisurely: we eat a heartier breakfast than on any other of the six days of the week; for if we do accept the Puritan idea of Sunday as a day of rest, and possibly of prayer, we certainly refuse to make it a day of fasting. On this point we compromise with the Roman Catholic Church and regard Sunday as a day when we ought to eat the best we can afford; so Sunday is a feast day in Jamaica. The humblest family has some little delicacy on that day, and—mark this—the humbler classes love to offer to their friends and neighbours whatever good things they may be enjoying. Part of their pleasure is derived from the exercise of this generous impulse. I think, indeed, that if the average Jamaica peasant were compelled to be mean he would be supremely miserable. The better classes cannot "offer" as the working classes do, but they, too, have the same characteristic of generosity—the wish to give must surely be generated by the climate, so universal is it. It may not be very much that any one has to offer you, but you will not enter a working-class or a lower middle-class habitation on Sunday without being offered something. This may signify some carelessness as to thrift in the opinion of some persons. But it makes for social happiness amongst the poorer classes, and social happiness has a humanising effect upon them.

At some time after ten o'clock the church bells warn the faithful of the approaching service, and from all parts of the town or of the city do they come. And lo! I show you a miracle. For many of these nicely-dressed men and women are the same that you saw last night in dingy working garments in the

shops and in the streets. What a change ! White, you will notice, is the principal wear of the women : white lawns and muslins worn with sashes of pink or red ribbon. Sometimes the dresses are of some pink or blue flowered stuff, but the material is almost invariably light ; only the elderly women wear heavy dark clothes, as befits their age. And their head-dresses ? Hats. Once, a generation ago, the women wore gay-coloured turbans, as they still do in the French West Indian islands ; and such head-dresses you will find in common use amongst the people of the country districts during week days. But the people of the towns have given them up, and Kingston has set the example.

Some of the fashions worn in Jamaica will seem to you, if you are a new-comer, a little old : they are not such as you have left behind. What was the fashion a few months ago, or even last year, in London and Paris, may be the fashion in Kingston to-day, except among the wealthier people who may just have returned from a trip to the mother country. You understand the reason ? It is not entirely financial. True, we cannot afford to change our dresses so often as they do in the centres of fashionable society, especially those of us who are not wealthy. A dress costs something to buy and something to make. We may have been saving for weeks and months to buy this one, and we shall wear it until it gets out of fashion here. But there is another reason why, to a stranger, we may seem out of the fashion. London and Paris are far from us. It takes some time before what is the fashion there comes out to us as a pattern to follow. Distance makes all the difference in the world ; but, so long as we are in the fashion here, what does the difference matter ?

So you see us this Sunday, gay with bright ribbons, looking cool in our light frocks and bodices : you see us by the hundreds in the streets, in the cars, and you see at once that this is a country where the people do go to service. In fact, we are fond of going to service.

A Jamaica church-going crowd is of all classes and complexions : white, black and brown, and of all the intermediate hues. There is absolutely no attempt at separate churches for different colours : such a thing would, I think, bring about a rebellion. There is no division of the congregation according to colour, and there can never be any. I have been rather startled once or twice upon entering a Jamaica church to observe the darker members of the congregation either sitting all to the back, or to one side of the building. I have made inquiries : " Those pews are rented at so much," I was told, " and those at so much ; you see." I saw. The division was based upon solid financial grounds : it was cash, not colour, that made the difference I observed. Nor was this a mere supposition, for in this His Majesty's island of Jamaica, where every one is absolutely equal before the law, and knows it, and where the population is chiefly coloured, no church or other place of a public or a semi-public nature would think seriously about colour discriminations. Here also, as in Cuba, you find no unpleasant feeling existing between the white and the coloured population.

Because courtesy has superseded force, you will find your black storeman polite and courteous, and ready to give you his seat in the car if you are a woman. And you will find him as ready to accommodate you in church. Only, in church, you may not recognise him as the man you saw labouring in the store yesterday. For he is now clothed in a pair of grey trousers and a waistcoat of the same material, and perhaps he wears a black or a blue-black jacket and a pair of carefully polished brown boots, and a soft felt hat, or hard "derby." There are hundreds like him in the several churches of the city on Sunday, and hundreds of a better-off class. They may not be "members." They may not even be "adherents." But they do like to attend the churches, and so, along with their women folk, you see them trooping into the numerous places of worship which are to be found in Kingston and the other towns of the colony.

A Jamaica church service, whether Anglican or Nonconformist, is the same sort of service you will hear in the churches in England or any other English colony. In the country districts, however, it may last, with variations, almost a whole day. I once went to a country church at ten o'clock in the morning, and never left until about four in the evening. It was a Wesleyan Church, and no sooner was one part of the proceedings over than another was begun; there were scriptural lectures by the elders, and admonitions by the old women, and then the whole ceremony resolved itself into Sunday-school classes. The reason was that the church stood at some distance from the surrounding villages, and so Sunday was made the most of by the teachers and the preachers. I was much impressed by the simplicity and the economy of the plan. But I have not attended a Jamaica village church since.

But if the number of persons that goes to church is large, the number that does not go is much larger. One reason for this is interesting. It was given to me by an acquaintance of mine, a journeyman barber, who regards the world, the flesh, and the devil with cheerful friendliness.

"The older I grow," he said, "the more I find myself drifting away from the Churches."

"Why?" I asked him.

"Their teachings are funny. Look at what Science says about the flood. Then I hear that they are giving special copies of the Bible to school-children in England."

He shook his head as if not quite satisfied with this last thing. Then he repeated: "Their teachings are funny."

My friend is a man who reads the newspapers and who has learnt, though at second-hand, something about the Higher Criticism and the views of the Agnostics. This has troubled his mind a little; not enough, of course, to make him unhappy, but quite enough to cause him to drift away from the Churches with an intellectual excuse. I think he would have done so without the excuse. Yet I have heard others express the same vague discontent with the teachings

of the Churches; so I gather that in Jamaica, as in so many other countries, a rationalistic tendency is making some progress.

After service on Sunday in Jamaica—what? More service. Most of the Churches hold services in the evenings as well as in the mornings, and as there is no Sunday evening promenade, and no theatrical performances, these services are well attended. But there are already some signs of change. The Puritan idea still holds; but on a Sunday afternoon you will see the cars filled with brightly dressed people going for a ride to the botanical gardens at Hope, six miles away from Kingston, or to the Rockfort Gardens beyond the eastern boundary of the city, and by the sea. Both places are beautiful. At Hope you have the mountains to the north and to the east, great, impressive piles towering grandly to the sky, and at the foot of them are the gardens with their numerous varieties of tropical plants, their wonderful orchids and lilies, and their smooth green lawns. At the Rockfort Gardens you have the mountains and the sea. The mountains form the background, the sea is in front, blue and sparkling as always; and a little farther to the east is the old fort which the English conquerors built to defend the eastern approaches of Kingston. And to this place and the Hope Gardens come bands of working-class girls and young men on a Sunday afternoon. But most of the people remain at home. It takes some courage to go to the pleasure gardens on Sunday, for the excursion is of the nature of enjoyment, and enjoyment is not considered proper on Sunday. The utmost that the average member of the middle classes allows herself to do on a Sunday afternoon is to go for a ride in a buggy or on the electric car. I say herself, for the Sunday rules are maintained by the women of Jamaica, and the men acquiesce perforce.

It is the British Sabbath all over again.

Nevertheless many members of the artisan class are putting the Sunday afternoon to social uses; for then they visit or are visited by their friends. Sometimes when passing through a suburb like Allman Town, to the north-east of Kingston, where large numbers of the more prosperous working people live with a fair degree of comfort, I have heard the sound of a harmonium, and singing; and looking in through the open window I have seen a group of men and women enjoying themselves with hymns, and I know that biscuits or cake and aerated waters will be handed round to make the evening pass more cheerfully.

This progress in the amenities of life amongst the humbler strata of society is not even suspected by a large number of educated persons in Jamaica. These mainly see the poorest classes and their poverty; they do not know that above the servants and the common labourers are more than one class of persons who, on a smaller scale, try to live much in the same manner as the better-off people. Many of these are my personal acquaintances, and it is a pleasure to talk with them, so shrewd are their observations upon life, so true their penetration

to the reality underlying the appearance of so many things they see. They are critics of life.

The shrewdness and humour of the working classes of Jamaica are shown to us in one or two chapters of a book by a local author, "Tom Redcam." In his "One Brown Girl" this writer has given us some conversations by representative types of the poorer classes on church, society, and kindred questions, and those conversations are the best of their kind to be found in any book on West Indian life. In that book, if one likes, one may read the Kingston worker's own thoughts and opinions on life as he sees it day by day, and one will learn that the servant and the labourer are social thinkers and observers. Their teachers have laid down rules for their guidance, and in their youth they have learnt those rules. They are word-perfect in them. Apparently, they accept them without question. Actually, they do not. "What is good for you is not necessarily good for me" is often the outspoken comment they make upon all the fine precepts laid down for their guidance. Their philosophy in this regard is summed up in the proverb, "Rock stone at river bottom never feels sun hot." What is this but another way of saying, with Becky Sharp, that it were easy to be virtuous on five thousand pounds a year? Your washerwoman or cook sits in the same church with you and hears the same admonitions, but she knows her position and she knows yours; and silently, almost unconsciously, she makes the comparison and draws the deduction that what may be easy for you is impossible for her. And she discusses the problem with her friends with astonishing logic. The view the wealthier classes take of social questions, however, is being taken by members of the tradesmen and artisan class whom Fortune has treated well and whose social life is in some way a reflexion of the life of the better classes. So I pass through the suburbs on Sunday afternoons, and I hear playing and singing, and I know that the inmates of the houses on either hand are making the most of life in a tropical colony where the British Sabbath is an established institution.

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Cricket and tennis played under a flaming sky mean strenuous exercise, yet they are "sport," and so are popular in Jamaica. Horse-racing, garden parties, dancing: those are popular pastimes too; and I think that the most popular of them is dancing, with racing a close second.

It is at a Jamaica meet that you see the Jamaica women at their best. The Grand Stand is crowded and every woman wears a new frock (the best she can afford), and consciously tries to look her handsomest: the meet is a parade of fashion and of frocks, of bodies, of eyes, of hats—of everything that a woman has and thinks about; it is a show of women: the best that Jamaica can put forth.

I think a racecourse is a place where you see much that is typically Jamaican

Let me describe a meet as I have seen it on the Kingston Course, when thousands of people were present, from the Governor to the truant from school. The Grand Stand was to the west, and this was filled to overflowing with women and men. Walking amongst them you perceived two things: first, that the island of Jamaica is one of those spots of the globe where all or nearly all the different races of the British Empire are represented; next, that class and colour are meaningless terms at a great public function such as this. Black men and women of comfortable position sat side by side with tourists from England: Hindoos elbowed officers of His Majesty's Army; Chinese from Hong Kong, dressed in European costume, sat silently looking down upon the course beside enthusiastic Jamaica girls whose deep brunette complexion and rapid gestures betokened the mixture of white and black blood in their veins. The price of admission was the same for every one: four shillings. So clerks and shopmen, well-to-do artisans, prosperous merchants, professional men (clergymen excepted), Government officials, planters, and others, all had come with their wives, daughters, and sweethearts, and all were in the Stand; for not to be in the Stand was an open and visible confession of poverty; it was, in truth, to write yourself down a plebeian and be counted amongst the people of the course.

The Stand was crowded, the paddock below it was crowded. The sun shone fiercely, lighting up an animated scene. What colours the dresses were! pinks and blues, white, silver-grey, maroon, purple—I cannot run through the catalogue. And the men? Well, at a race-meeting in Jamaica a striking costume for men is considered to be "the proper thing," so we wear flannels and red neckties, and rakish hats, and all the other paraphernalia of "sportsmen," and we all discuss the merits of the horses with an assumption of deep knowledge and a keen understanding of equine characteristics. Friends nod cheerfully to one another, and even acquaintances speak with but a moderate show of restraint, for racing is supposed to relax class distinctions during the time that it lasts. There is a buzz and a murmur of conversation. Very small boys go about making very large bets: and every one is hot and perspiring, and pretends to be desperately happy. Or, perhaps, does not pretend. Perhaps everybody is happy, happy in a respectable sort of a way. Down below on the open sward, however, where the green grass and the yellow flowers are underneath one's feet, and the blue sky and the sun are above—there, where all restraint is thrown to the four winds of heaven, is one of the merriest and noisiest crowds in the world.

The course is studded with numerous booths, and everywhere you turn your eyes you will see a tiny column of smoke curling up towards the sky. Fire-places of a few loose bricks have been built all about, and on these hundreds of pots are boiling and scores of frying-pans hissing and spluttering. Benches are near, and boxes filled with plates and knives and spoons; and sitting on these benches or squatted on the green sward are laughing girls, black and brown; while perhaps stretched out at full length upon the ground

are their admirers—stalwart young men who have come to enjoy themselves at the races, and who take a special delight in describing themselves as “bad men.”

A “bad man” in Jamaica means one who will stop short at nothing in the way of ruffianism. As a matter of fact the most of these young men are entirely harmless. But at the races you are supposed to be ready to proceed to any extremes; consequently every man and boy upon the course is armed with a huge stick which he flourishes at intervals by way of establishing his claim to be considered bad. The girls, their voices raised to a scream at moments of excitement, talk of the races and bet in threepenny-pieces upon their favourite horses. Meanwhile they eat; for in the pots and pans all about are viands beloved of the Jamaican working classes: rice boiled with red peas and flavoured with cocoanut oil, and fried salted pork; boiled salted fish seasoned with lard or cotton seed oil, and served with yam and cocoa and large flour dumplings; stewed beef, with rice and yam. A portion of any of these dishes you may have for 3d. or 6d. according to the quality of the food and the status of the temporary restaurant.

The course is studded with vendors of all sorts. The “pindar boy” with his basket of parched nuts, the ice-cream seller pushing about his little cart, women with tubs filled with bottles of “cool drink,” women with trays of iced sponge cakes (known as “race cakes”) big carts filled with cocoanuts at a penny each—all Kingston’s population of itinerant vendors is here to-day, and the young men and the women buy from them, and the little boys follow their movements with wistful, longing eyes.

Little structures rise here and there upon the course. They are bars and they are always filled. Temperate as the Jamaican is by habit and nature, many a man feels that he will not do justice to himself and to his friends to-day unless he becomes mildly intoxicated and offers to fight you on the slightest suspicion of disagreement on your part with any opinion he may care to express. Betting proceeds gaily; and now and then a wild scattering of the crowd proclaims that a combat is taking place. This is known as a “stick licking,” for it usually begins with one irate gentleman of villainous aspect leaping two feet into the air, calling upon the Almighty to strike him dead first and blind afterwards, then coming down with his stick on—his opponent’s head? That was his intention. But the other man has a stick also, and he deftly fences off the blow; after which stick encounters stick in a series of rapid flourishes, the men and women friends of each of the combatants grow frenzied with excitement, the women shriek “Murder!” and implore the men to “Hold Johnny!” “Tek ’way Richard!” while the men to whom the appeal is made, show their desire to shine as peacemakers by advising each of the respective fighters to “lick him to—!”

That being their own intention, it looks as though murder were imminent; but the sudden appearance of a policeman on the scene puts the whole party

to flight. I have known one or two astute gamblers escape paying a bet by rising fiercely in their wrath and threatening to "cripple" all and sundry in their immediate neighbourhood. This threat, accompanied by some lightning-like movements with a stick, has a salutary effect upon timorous persons. The ordinary Jamaica "stick-licker," I have also observed, usually has something the matter with one eye. Perhaps that is the result of his oft-expressed wish to be immediately struck blind.

Meanwhile the bugle summons the horses to the post, and the races are run, and the crowd in the Stand cheers and applauds with enthusiasm. And in the circular course the variegated thousands roar themselves hoarse with a noise that beggars all description. Then the sun goes down and darkness comes swiftly on, and the Stand empties and the ladies and gentlemen go home. But in the course itself a thousand lights flare out, and cooking proceeds, and drinking, and an all-night picnic under the stars begins. Many of us will camp out to-night, laughing and singing and enjoying ourselves. The race will last three days. And Christmas is near: Christmas which begins with the races.

I walk about amongst the booths. The odour of food pervades the air, the hissing sound of pork frying is heard everywhere. "Me sweet young gentleman, buy a race cake from you own darling," says one girl to me. "Me love, don't you want some cool drink?" asks another.

I reply, laughing, and they laugh in return; and so all night the bantering and laughter go on in the light of the moon and the stars.

Jamaica has only one city, and but two or three towns of any importance, and in these I find to-day a restlessness, a desire for amusement, for excitement; an impatience with conditions which make garden parties organised by the Churches almost the only form of outdoor entertainment available to the middle-class population.

This restlessness finds expression in a steady emigration of the better-class youths, and even the young women, to the cities of the United States. Many of these are forced to go away in search of work, for Jamaica is now producing a population that she cannot find employment for. But one of the impelling causes of emigration is also the desire for a fuller, livelier life, a wish to move amongst animated crowds, to see the thousand blazing lights and hear the roar of the modern city—in a word, "to live."

The number of Jamaicans of the middle and upper classes who have visited England and America is astonishing. The island is no longer cut off from the world as it was in the days when travelling was expensive and when it took many weeks, and even months, to go to England. And those who go and return tell their friends of the cities they have seen, of the life they have glimpsed; and so, year by year, a larger number of young men and maidens are thinking of Boston and New York—of America, the land of opportunity—and are bending all their energies to one effort—emigration.

"It is so dull," they say; and even the working people are beginning to say that now. Yet they at any rate are affected by none of the restraints which make West Indian middle-class life an undisturbed stagnation from youth to extreme old age. The call of the city is felt by the peasant toiling in the far-off recesses of the mountains, and he tells you that the wish of his life is "to go foreign," to go "over-sea." Where to, he hardly knows and does not care; "over-sea" represents to him an undiscovered world of strange delights, and some day he will probably find himself in Colon, of which town I shall have something to say later on. Meanwhile he enjoys himself as best he can, and she—for the women also feel this craving for movement and excitement—she, too, tries to make the most of life; and both find their chief pleasure in dancing. Dancing, which is the joy of all Jamaicans.

There are all sorts of dances. In the tourist season, which in Jamaica lasts from January to April, the big hotels give balls to which hundreds of fashionable folk are invited. At these balls one meets a representative crowd of people belonging to the upper classes of Jamaica society, and the gathering is, I think one of the prettiest things that Jamaica has to show.

The ball-room is bare, but near it will be shrubs and palms and other growing things, and outside one looks upon green gardens or on the phosphorescent sea. Out of the velvet blackness of the sky the stars pour down their rays. Everywhere are groups of richly dressed women; women with delicate pink-and-white complexions, women with skins of golden hue and with large flashing black eyes. The night is cool, the languor of the day has disappeared. Every one is alive, and as the band bursts into sound these lithe forms, and the stouter forms of the men, glide over the polished floor with ease and grace. The doors of the room stand open; lights are everywhere, and you hear the sound of laughter. This is a bit of the tropics transformed into fairyland! And as you go about the city or the town you will find here and there a house from which the sound of music comes, and in which men and women are dancing. And if you go into a suburb or a lane where the poorer classes live, you will also find dancing going on, though here the polished floor has given place to the hard earth, and for roof one has the sky.

There is something pathetic about the pride of the West Indian peasant. The effort to keep up appearances, which is supposed to be unknown to him, is in reality maintained by him, and that effort finds expression in his words and in his acts. He will not marry poorly, if he marries at all. He sees how those above him carry it off at a wedding; how their carriages roll through the streets, how the bridesmaids are dressed and the guests, and what a feast there is. And he, on his part, will not have his wedding different: he, too, must have carriages and wedding toasts, and all the rest of it. So, too, he will not die happy if he thinks that his funeral will be poorly attended, that the hearse will be shabby, and that the mourners will have to walk behind it instead of

driving in carriages. A good wedding and a good funeral—behold the two great social ambitions of his life! Some writers have laughed at this, have put it down to mere childishness; why, I have never been able to find out. To marry well, to be buried well, is a wish that is almost universal, and it is shared to the full by the Jamaica peasant. But he does not stop here; he wants to do other things well. If he gives a dance, he wishes it to be a good dance; and as your cook and coachman cannot afford to make a good dance except at long intervals and on the subscription plan, they call the dances they do have by a name which suggests a compromise with pride. They call them "practice dances." The theory is that these dances are for learners. But those who attend them are for the most part experts. Yet no one would speak of them as dances pure and simple, for that would be some reflection on one's social life. A dance must be given in a house; dancers must be properly dressed; there must be refreshments. A "practice dance" may be given in a yard, takes place every week, and you may go to it in your working clothes. You are formally invited, of course. "Ladies 3d., Gentlemen 6d." is an intimation that you cannot enjoy the privilege of attending the dance without paying. Sometimes the legend runs thus: "Gentlemen 6d., Ladies free." In any case, some one has to pay. The "master of ceremonies" is very explicit and emphatic on that point.

The dancers may number as many as forty or fifty. Three or four storm-lanterns hung on nails against the fence and against the side of the low tenement structures light up the scene faintly, and for seats there are boxes and empty barrels about the yard, while a few of the tenants may bring forth chairs for their own personal convenience. The chief musical instrument is a concertina, and the next is usually a mouth-organ; sometimes a guitar is added, and on special occasions there may be a violin; but the violin is rare. The band is arbitrary and insists upon having its own way; it only plays what it likes, not what the dancers like, and the latter must needs be content. Is it a waltz? The concertina leads on with a series of rapid shrieks, and in a minute some twenty couples are wheeling round enveloped in a cloud of dust. Shall it be quadrilles? A preliminary flourish of trumpets (please read concertina and mouth-organ) warns the dancers to "form heads and sides." And you will understand that all the rules are obeyed: at the beginning of the dance you bow to your partner here as you do in the ball-room of the Titchfield Hotel, and she curtseys in the manner approved. And continually I hear the command, "Through!" "Change!" "Chassé to your partner!" and in the dimly lighted darkness I perceive the flying forms of men and women, and I hear their laughter, and, at the end, their shouts of merriment which show how thoroughly they have enjoyed themselves.

And are there no "native" dances? Yes; a dance which came over from Africa and which is to be found, not in Jamaica only, but in all the West Indian Islands, on the Continent of South America, and even in Portugal and Spain. It is a phallic dance, a dance in which a frank appeal is made to

the passions. Or rather, a dance in which such an appeal may be made, for it all depends upon how you dance it. It consists of slow movements of the body, and the point of perfection is reached when, as in Hayti, the dancer never allows the upper part of her body to move as she writhes and shuffles over the ground. You dance with your partner alone. If you are refined, your motions may be a trifle suggestive—hardly even that. If you are not refined, they may be coarsely, brutally, blatantly vulgar. Known as the *mento*, the *bamboula*, the *chica*, you will find this dance wherever the African was taken as a slave, and you may see it danced in many a West Indian drawing-room without the slightest suspicion that what you are hearing, or even dancing, is a sublimated West African phallic dance.

As I am writing these words, I hear a piano in a house near by playing a Spanish song, "La Paloma"—"The Dove." The origin of the air of that song is to be sought in West Africa. In Jamaica the dance I speak of here is known in all its many varieties as the "shay shay" (a corruption of the French *chassé*) or *mento*, and every now and then a new dance makes its appearance, no one can precisely tell how.

This *mento* forms an important musical item in the repertory of the Jamaica peasant, and is invariably accompanied by words. Every one is very like its predecessor, while the song is simplicity itself. And when the song is at the height of its popularity it is sung and whistled all over the island, while the air is played at every "practice dance."

Once these *mentos* were danced from one hour to another by the Jamaica peasant. Many a peasant girl refuses to dance them in these days. And they are by no means the staple of any respectable dance-party given by the working classes now. They are popular, but, even so, at your open-air "practice dance" you will have two-steps and waltzes and lancers in plenty. The lascivious dances of West Africa have taken second place.

I regret to say that sometimes these "practice dances" do not end peacefully. In every crowd there are quarrelsome persons, and where two or three such are gathered together there is certain to be a row. I witnessed a very entertaining fight between four belligerent men at one of these dances one night. As usual, so that no feature of a Jamaica fray should be lacking, three or four of the women shouted "Murder!" and then threatened to assist in committing what I had thought they were anxious to prevent. Whilst the excitement was at its fiercest, the "master of ceremonies," who was also the "agent" of the yard, rushed in with the intention of promoting peace and harmony, and, as an expeditious way of achieving his end, he laid about him with a huge stick he held in his hand. Order being restored, he addressed the crowd with great dignity.

"See here; you fancy this is a nagar yard,¹ no? Well, I will has you to

¹ Negro yard: a place where negroes alone live.

know that I am a gen'emán, and I not goin' to allow any nagar noise here. You is dam forward! You come into a man place and you raise you' voice and want to bring policeman in upon me! In fact, I am not havin' any more dance here."

Being a gentleman, he would not listen to any argument. And for quite two weeks he kept his word. Then he relented, for, after all, the subscriptions of the dancers were sure.

On public holidays there are great dances held at well-known places in the city and the villages and towns. Flaring placards inform you that "A Grand Unique Star of the West Picnic will take place at Wildman Penn on Thursday, King's Birthday: Mr. Johnny's Band in attendance. Admission: Males 1s., Females 6d." You go, and you find hundreds of persons—I saw quite two thousand on one occasion—dancing on the sward and in the shade of the trees.

To be well-dressed at a picnic of this sort a girl will save for months. And she will dance all day until she is perfectly exhausted and wet through and through with perspiration. Then home she will go, to talk about the events of the day with her relatives and friends; to relate quarrels, tell of compliments, and to declare how "I enjoy meself."

This wish to enjoy oneself, so strong in the Jamaica working classes, finds expression in a score of different ways. Attending funerals is one of them. It is an actual pleasure to be able to go to the house of mourning to condole with the relatives of the departed, and afterwards to sit waiting until the funeral shall move, the interval being employed in a quiet but animated discussion on any subject that may happen to be of present interest. It is a pleasure to sit in a cab—better still, a carriage—and thus follow the hearse to the cemetery. For then the enjoyment of a ride, during which you are conspicuously exposed to the public view, is seasoned and picked up with the knowledge and feeling that by attending this funeral you are performing an eminently social and respectable act.

Funerals are a form of social diversion which, however, in the nature of things, are comparatively rare. One cannot always be dying. And christenings do not usually admit of a large gathering of friends and acquaintances. Yet if any one does enjoy a christening it is the Jamaica peasant mother, and she will almost prefer her baby to go unchristened than let it go to church without the conventional lace hood and embroidered cloak. So the little one is clothed with the proper garments, and bedecked with pink ribbons lacing up its sleeves, and has a touch of powder on either cheek, and wears brand-new woollen pink-and-white baby boots. The outfit costs something, and is, the circumstances considered, in the nature of extravagance. But then, think of the pleasure the christening gives! Think of the pride of the mother! Think, too, of the self-denial which may have been practiced in order that maternal fondness should have adequate satisfaction. The baby may want for things afterwards, but at least it has had a good christening. It is launched upon life with a due observance of all the recognised forms and ceremonies.

What is the future of these children? They will grow up somewhat precariously, taking their chances with poor nourishment and infantile diseases. At five years of age they will become useful, for they can then carry messages for their mothers, and even look after the baby. A little later on they may go to the elementary school, and from seven to about fourteen years of age they will battle with reading, writing, and arithmetic, attending school, on the average three days out of five; and then, their schooling accomplished, they will drift into such occupations as there are in a West Indian community. The boys become labourers or are "put out to learn trade." They become good tradesmen or not, according to their individual aptitude. The girls become "schoolgirls"; that is to say, they go to work with some woman or other who is able to feed them, and who clothes them scantily, paying them no wages, but making up for that by constantly reminding them of her great kindness and care. Under her tuition they learn to become useful, and afterwards they join the ranks of the domestic servants, the washerwoman, the cake-sellers, thus following in the footsteps of their mothers. But here I speak particularly of the children born in the city or the towns. For the people of the country districts a somewhat different fate is reserved.

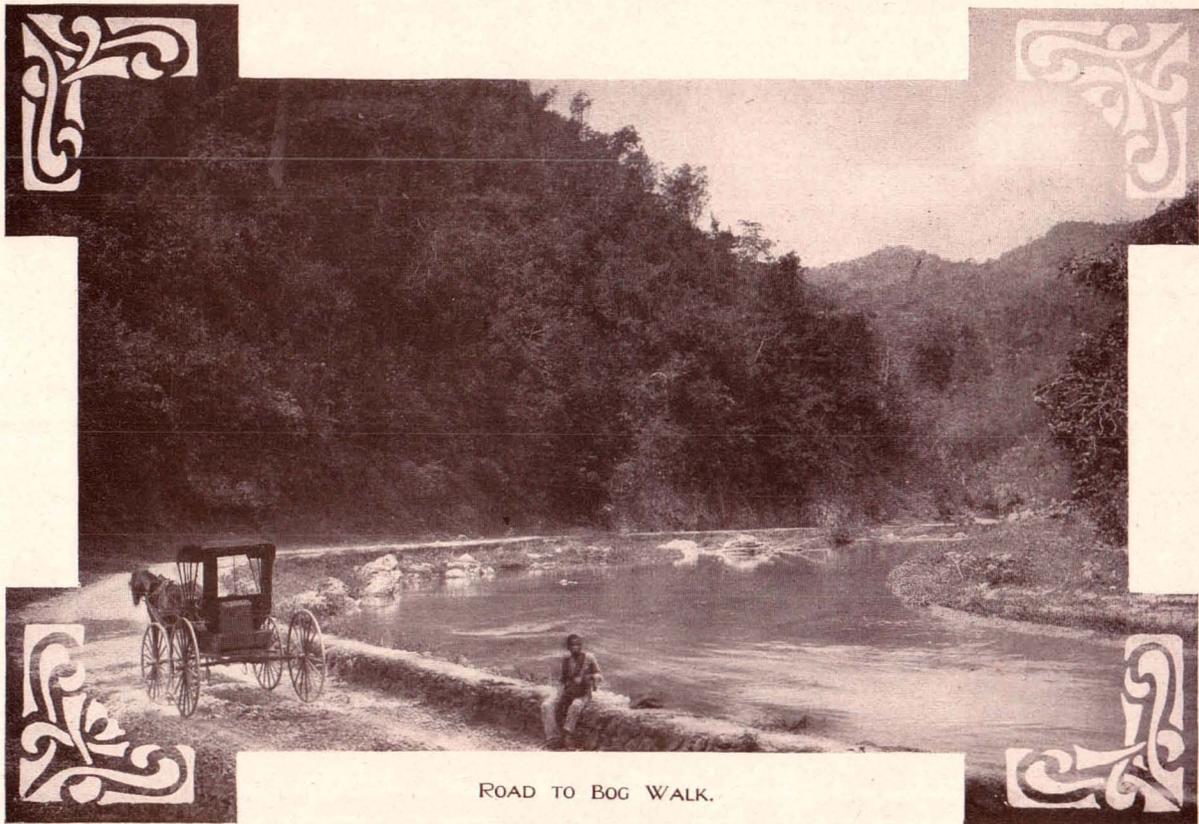
But all of them, whether of the country or the town, are children of song and laughter, and content for the most part in the simple enjoyment of the day. It will never be different, for though there is poverty in Jamaica, there is no cold, no piteous unceasing struggle with the awful winter. The sun shines always, and, in its rays, the peasant people are happy; and that is well; for the tropics seem made for joy and for delight. Some one has said that there is a sadness in the West Indian hills, an echo of pain heard faintly amidst the vast silence of the mountains. It is true; I, too, have felt that sadness, have heard that echo; yet light and laughter and song find a home in these islands also, so full of sunshine are they, so luxuriantly green and wondrous beautiful. And, for the majority of the people in Jamaica, life is well worth living, so long as one is warm and one can sing. And the future seems always full of promise—a promise of better things.

CHAPTER VII

PEOPLE AND POLITICS

WITH Cuba, the republics of Haiti and Santo Domingo, and with Colombia and Central America so near to her, Jamaica may be thought to breath an atmosphere of politics. Every now and then news comes to her of a revolution that has broken out near by, and time and again she has seen some Haitian or Spanish-American President seeking refuge in her capital, and perhaps making it his permanent home. Jamaica is in some sort a revolutionists' headquarters. Many an uprising in the neighbouring "free and independent" countries has been planned in Kingston, and many a filibustering enterprise has secretly started in Jamaica waters. Here, therefore, one might think, is an island full of picturesque politicians, the type of politician that tropical countries are supposed to produce. One's mind goes vaguely back to the days of the pirates, and to memories of George William Gordon and Paul Bogle, who were hanged for sedition and treason and other high political crimes in 1865. One, perhaps, has read that the white inhabitants of Jamaica live in constant fear; that they feel they are always on the edge of a volcano: I have read something like that myself. So you naturally conclude that this island must be a place where politics are most interesting. The spice of danger supplied by the political volcano gives a pleasant thrill to the romantic soul.

"The negro wears a mask," said one newcomer to me not long ago. "You can never know what he is thinking about," said his companion, who has evidently been reading of "the unfathomable depths of the native mind." Such beliefs make life worth living, no doubt. It is a pity to disturb them. But I remember that once there was talk of a grave political crisis in Jamaica. The Governor had done something which most persons thought he ought not to have done, and there was much discussion upon it. The newspapers were vehement in their protests; there were threats of a thousand public meetings. Then somebody asked a leading Jamaica politician (retired) what he thought of the crisis, and that gentleman wrote to the newspapers to say that he believed that "the crisis existed chiefly in the columns of the newspapers." That remark



ROAD TO BOG WALK.

fell like cold water on newspapers and politicians alike, and so the crisis passed away with a sentence.

Yet one hears the word "crisis" very often in Jamaica. Englishmen settling in the island use it as frequently as any one else. "A crisis in the affairs of the island," "a crisis in our political history," "a crisis in our development"—they follow one another so fast that to be without a crisis of some sort would, I imagine, be something strange in Jamaica. But the great mass of the people, the toiling peasants, the workmen, the women—they are unmoved by all these rumours. They never hear them. The crises of their lives are all connected with food and clothing and the payment of taxes, and the doings of the legislators in Kingston concern them little. They know something about the Government. They know that the tax-gatherer and the police are its agents. These they dislike, but nevertheless obey. They have learnt the wisdom of obedience.

What is the Jamaica peasant's real attitude towards the Government and the law? He regards them as something outside of and apart from himself. They are something imposed upon him which he is obliged to respect, but which he does not consider himself identified with, and which he is sometimes inclined to think of as oppressive. The laws are "backra laws," laws made by white men; and though he knows that white as well as black men are supposed to obey them, he is never quite sure that the white man will not be specially favoured in some way. He doubts the absolute impartiality of the law. He is quite satisfied that the policeman will readily arrest him, while leaving his master to go free, though their offences may be the same. Consequently he is no stalwart admirer of the laws or defender of the Government; he accepts them as he does the other inevitables of life, but his freedom-loving, undisciplined nature chafes against the monotony of law and order and the payment of direct taxes. Although peaceful by nature, he would like to see less of the policeman; although liberal, he has a strong objection to the paying of taxes.

Yet let him leave his native land and go to another country, and you will find him taking a deep interest in all that concerns Jamaica: you will find him praising its Government, defending its institutions, extolling its laws, and decrying everything that is not Jamaican and British that he sees everywhere. Many a Jamaican labourer has been fined in Costa Rican courts for making insulting comparisons between the judges of Jamaica and the judges of Costa Rica. Many a Jamaican labourer in Panama has been cursed by his American boss because he has with great dignity pointed out to the latter that he is "a British subject." There can be no doubt that the Jamaica peasant considers himself superior to all the people in the other islands and in Central America. He regards himself as the product of an altogether higher civilisation. So I take it that though his habitual attitude towards the laws and institutions of his country is that of a suspicious neutral when he is at home, there is deep within his mind a consciousness that those laws and institutions

are good on the whole for the country, though he does think that they should view his particular case with leniency and favour.

The peasant does not really want to meddle with politics. If he is a direct taxpayer to the extent of ten shillings a year, he is entitled to a vote, but he is not exalted by its possession. At a general election he may go to the poll if sufficiently attracted by the personality of the candidate who is appealing to him for his support, and for a few days he may even allow himself to be persuaded into believing that the man he elects will be able to accomplish great things. But, in his way, he has a shrewd appreciation of facts. He may know nothing of constitutions and policies, but he has heard of the King, and he knows that the local Government represents the King. And the King is strong, the Government is strong, and what they want done must be done. He never forgets that fact. He recognises that the Government of Jamaica is based upon force, and he does not trouble his mind with theories of representation and the effect of public opinion upon Governments. He leaves that sort of thing to the better-educated classes. Chiefly, he wants to be let alone to live his own life; he wants decent wages, and light taxes, and leisure.

This is not the type of man who wears a mask, or who, in the mass, constitutes a volcano. To become dangerous he must have a real grievance. He will have a grievance if you are robbing him, or if he thinks you are. But even then his anger is not political, and has not the slightest connection with politics. The history of the riots that have taken place in Jamaica shows only too clearly that politics had little to do with them, though dislike of the police may have sometimes led to disagreeable consequences.

Above the peasants and the peasant proprietors of Jamaica are the classes that do show some interest in politics: these are the artisans, the shopkeepers, the planters, the professional men. But at best their interest is mild. There are exceptions, of course. I know one man, a white man, who told me one day that he would prefer to be living in Russia than in Jamaica. His reason was "a general discontent with political conditions." He could think of no specific grievance at the moment, but was quite satisfied that Russia was a political paradise compared with Jamaica. There are other persons, educated, intelligent, earnest, who wish to see the island and its people progressing towards self-government. But they remember the past, they remember that the Jamaican is not a politician, and they very much doubt if he will ever become so.

Political enthusiasm in Jamaica blazes forth suddenly, then quietly dies away. "I don't business with politics," is an expression that has become classic amongst the city people of slight education but of much common-sense. The phrase means much: it means, amongst other things, that politics are not profitable. "Politics don't pay," is another expression used by the mercantile classes. "What can they do for me?" said a cabman one day when I asked him if he were going to vote at the coming City Council elections. He added,

“What can they do at all?” This is the practical way of looking at politics, and the average Jamaican concludes that if nothing is to be got out of them, it really does not matter whether his elected representatives have more or less power in the Legislative Council.

On the whole, so long as the Governor is impartial, he is satisfied that the Government should be the paramount power in the land. It is when he thinks that the Governor inclines to favour some special class that he becomes bitterly distrustful of him and all his works. In every small community, as in every large one, there is a good deal of class jealousy, and so a Governor of Jamaica has to be particularly careful as to what he says and does, for his critics are to be found in every class.

Englishmen who have come to the island for but a few years ; planters, merchants, artisans, shopkeepers : they all unite to criticise the Governor, but for different things and from different points of view. Hence they are divided in aim, and so are never really formidable.

The Englishman who is but a sojourner in Jamaica takes, as a rule, no active part in political affairs, though he may identify himself with public movements of a non-political nature. If registered as a voter he may go to the polls at some special election, but he will not greatly trouble to register his name. Coming from a country where political issues and parties are clearly defined, he finds no interest in the questions that a West Indian community has to consider. He thinks them of no importance ; he believes that if the Governor will only govern with strength and firmness, every important matter may well be left to him to decide. Many others besides the English residents think so too ; but, of course, everybody believes that the Governor should do what he himself imagines he would do were he in the Governor's place.

The result is that as there are no really great questions before the Jamaica public, as there are no political parties, as there is no political unity, and as each section of the people looks to the Government to protect it against injustice and to act with impartiality, it is the Government that is always on its trial. All Governments are, for the matter of that ; but the Jamaica Government never goes out of office ; it has a majority of one in the Legislative Council, and though nine out of the fourteen members elected by popular suffrage can veto a Government financial proposal, the Governor can over-rule that veto, in his turn, by declaring his proposal a matter of paramount importance to the welfare of the island. Thus, with fifteen official and nominated supporters in the House, and with the power to carry through a financial measure by fiat, a Governor of Jamaica is in a position of considerable authority, and it would be something extraordinary if a system which gives him such power were not a source of irritation to many who feel that a Governor may do much harm, and may show much favouritism, if he likes. But even amongst these there are very few who seriously suggest drastic changes. Their discontent does not

go so far as the proposition of radical remedies. It stops short at strong and sometimes effective criticism.

This discontent with the working of the system of government obtaining is not a new symptom of the political life of Jamaica. "Twas ever thus." It will always be so. I cannot imagine a system of government that could give general satisfaction in this island. The present one is known as a semi-representative system. It superseded government by a Governor invested with autocratic powers and assisted by a Legislative Council nominated by himself. That form of government was bitterly denounced while it lasted, and the officials who were appointed under it were stigmatised by impassioned orators as "barnacles from abroad." But nobody calls an official a barnacle from abroad nowadays; for most of the officers of the Crown are natives, and it would not even be good taste to describe them as "barnacles at home." And as the elected members of the Legislative Council can and do exercise some check upon the financial schemes of the Government, it is not easy for the orator to attack the Government's extravagance without also attacking the people's representatives. As to the old form of government which Jamaica possessed, and which the politicians themselves surrendered in 1865 after a peasant uprising in one of the parishes, that certainly did not work satisfactorily. A handful of electors returned forty-seven members to a House of Assembly, and the members of this House quarrelled amongst themselves and with the Governor and his Council. There was hardly ever any peace. And on one or two occasions the House had to be reminded by the authorities in England that it was the English Government that had the last word to say in the administration of Jamaican affairs. Anthony Trollope was in the island a few years before the abolition of this House of Assembly, and he gives such an amusing description of a debate he once heard there that I cannot refrain from transcribing a part of it:—

"I was throwing away my cigar as I entered the precincts of the house. 'Oh, you can smoke,' said my friend to me; 'only when you stand at the doorway, don't let the speaker's eye catch the light; but it won't much matter.' So I walked on and stood at the side of the door, smoking my cigar indeed, but conscious that I was desecrating the place.

"I saw five or six coloured gentlemen in the house, and two negroes—sitting in the house as members. As far as the two latter men were concerned, I could not but be glad to see them in the fair enjoyment of the objects of a fair ambition. Had they not by efforts of their own made themselves greatly superior to others of their race, they would not have been there. . . .

"The subject under debate was a railway bill. The railway system is not very extended in the island; but there is a railway, and the talk was of prolonging it. Indeed the house, I believe, had on some previous occasion

decided that it should be prolonged, and the present fight was as to some particular detail. What that detail was I did not learn, for the business being performed was a continual series of motions for adjournment carried on by a victorious minority of three.

"It was clear that the conquered majority—of, say thirty—was very angry. For some reason these thirty were exceedingly anxious to have some special point carried, and put out of the way that night, but the three were inexorable. Two of the three spoke continually, and ended every speech with a motion for adjournment.

"And then there was a disagreement among the thirty. Some declared all this to be 'bosh,' proposed to leave the house without any adjournment, play whist, and let the three victors enjoy their barren triumph. Others, made of sterner stuff, would not thus give way. One after another they made impetuous little speeches, then two at a time, and at last three. They thumped the table, and called each other pretty names, walked about furiously, and devoted the three victors to the infernal gods.

"And then one of the black gentlemen arose and made a calm, deliberate little oration. The words he spoke were about the wisest which were spoken that night, and yet they were not very wise. He offered to the house a few platitudes on the general benefit of railways, which would have applied to any railway under the sun, saying that eggs and fowls would be taken to market; and then he sat down. On his behalf I must declare that there were no other words of such wisdom spoken that night. But this relief lasted only for three minutes.

"After a while two members coming to the door declared that it was becoming unbearable, and carried me away to play whist. 'My place is close by,' said one, 'and if the row becomes hot we shall hear it. It is dreadful to stay here with such an object, and with the certainty of missing one's object after all.' As I was inclined to agree with him I went away and played whist.

"But soon a storm of voices reached our ears round the card-table. 'They are hard at it now,' said one honourable member. 'That's So-and-So by the screech.' The yell might have been heard at Kingston, and no doubt was.

"By heavens they are at it,' said another. 'Ha, ha, ha! A nice house of assembly isn't it?'

"Will they pitch into one another?' I asked, thinking of scenes of which I had read of in another country, and thinking also, I must confess, that an absolute bodily scrimmage on the floor of the house might be worth seeing.

"They don't often do that,' said my friend. 'They trust chiefly to their voices; but there's no knowing.'

"The temptation was too much for me, so I threw down my cards and

rushed back to the Assembly. When I arrived the louder portion of the noise was being made by one gentleman who was walking round and round the chamber, swearing in a loud voice that he would resign the very moment the speaker was seated in the chair, for at that time the house was in committee. The louder portion of the noise, I say, for two other honourable members were speaking, and the rest were discussing the matter in small parties.

“‘Shameful, abominable, scandalous, rascally!’ shouted the angry gentleman over and over again, as he paced round and round the chamber. ‘I’ll not sit in such a house; no man should sit in such a house. By G——! I’ll resign as soon as I see the speaker in that chair. Sir, come and have a drink of rum and water.’

“In his angry wanderings his steps had brought him to the door at which I was standing, and these last words were addressed to me. ‘Come and have a drink of rum and water,’ and he seized me with a hospitable violence by the arm. I did not dare to deny so angry a legislator, and I drank the rum and water. Then I returned to my cards.”

There may be some exaggeration in Trollope’s description, but not much. It is interesting to observe, too, that in these days every one talks about the superior worth and ability of the old legislators of Jamaica, the present lot of men not being considered to belong to the same high category at all. But in these days legislators do not thump the table, or call one another names, or drag you off to have a glass of rum and water. It is true that on one occasion I met an elected member coming rather hastily from the committee-room of his colleagues, and, on my asking him what was the matter, he told me, “My dear sir, they are raising h—— in there. They are like a parcel of old women. They don’t know what they want.” But the committee-room is not the Council chamber, and I don’t remember having witnessed any scenes in the latter.

In the early days of Jamaica’s history as a British colony the island’s Parliament met in Port Royal. The chronicler tells us it was sitting when the great earthquake occurred and the ground opened and swallowed up all the debating members. Afterwards the House of Assembly sat in Spanish Town, a place thirteen miles from Kingston, and it was there that Trollope listened to its debates. It met in a special yellow-painted building which is in existence to-day, standing opposite to the mansion where the Governors of Jamaica once lived. Then (over forty years ago) the Governor’s residence and offices were moved from Spanish Town, and the Legislative Council has since found a home in a fine old building in Kingston which was once the residence of the officer commanding the troops in Jamaica.

The Council meets in a spacious hall on the first floor, the Government forces sitting opposite to the elected members, and the Governor, who is

President of the Council, sitting on a raised platform to the north. A long table is placed between "the two sides of the House," as the elected and nominated members are called, and behind a railing some chairs are placed for spectators, usually gentlemen who are not immediately employed in any remunerative occupation. Each member has the title of Honourable, and no one can address another by his name: he must speak of him as the member for such and such a parish, or, if the gentleman he is speaking of be a Government nominee, though not an official, he must mention him as "the honourable nominated member, Dr. (or Mr.) So-and-so." It is all very formal and courteous, but the country as a whole does not appear to take the Council very seriously. And, to do them justice, most of the elected members are not at all puffed up with any extravagant belief as to their own power and consequence.

They deliver speeches—not to deliver speeches is considered a fatal defect in Jamaica legislation. They criticise the Government's proposals, for they recognise that their function is to be largely a critical one. Sometimes they vote in a solid body, with the intention of forming a powerful Opposition, sometimes they split into two parties, which naturally pleases the Government. They can introduce no proposals for the spending of money, and there are certain appropriations which they cannot touch. They make up for that by long speeches, for when one cannot act, one talks. On the whole, they serve a useful purpose; but their power is strictly limited, and the knowledge that public opinion may now be on their side and now with the Governor has often a paralysing effect upon them. There is scarcely one of them who is not affected by the general feeling that there are no politics in Jamaica, that there is no deep political interest. They say so themselves. Yet they stick to their posts, many of them doing so, I am personally convinced, through a sense of public duty.

There are times, however, when a wave of public feeling sweeps over the island: that is when the general elections take place. Then we sing the praises of our respective candidates, and talk of their talents in terms that would make Solon and Socrates blush. It is then that the politician by temperament is seen at his best; and in Kingston he is seen at his very best, usually in the Central Park, or near it. The Park is a great political institution in its way. Ordinarily it is used as a meeting-place for those who wish a quiet discussion on theology, but there are occasions when theology pales before politics, and then the talk is bright and fresh, if not exactly illuminating.

You see us seated upon a bench under a great green tree, and looking idly at a fountain playing somewhere in the centre of the gardens. Not having anything particular to do in the way of work, we—there are five or six of us gathered together—discuss the published manifestoes of the candidates with point and circumstance. It is true we may have no votes, but that is not of

any particular consequence from our point of view; for, after all, we attend all the public meetings and give great encouragement to the speakers by our presence. What we are chiefly anxious to know is, whether the man is sincere. "Is he for the people?" That is the question. For if we suspected he was likely to be on the side of the Government, we clearly could have nothing to do with him: he must be for the people—that is our main stipulation. We decide that he will be: the next question is what will he do? The obvious answer is that he will do little, since, in the circumstances, there is so little to be done. But that answer would be discouraging, so we will not even face it amongst ourselves. We simply conclude that he will "do good," and as the things coming into the category of the good are almost endless, we are satisfied with this decision. Then we strengthen ourselves with the reflection that "the voice of the people is the voice of God"; we say, "Let justice be done though the heavens fall"; we declare that "Great is truth and it will prevail," and we are immensely pleased with our own wisdom. As for the real voter, he does not trouble himself with much discussion, but he goes to the poll if you send for him. He very rarely becomes excited, for he does not see there is anything to be excited about. He may enjoy an election, but mildly. As for fighting—well, that is not his *métier*.

In the French West Indian Islands people are shot during the elections. In the near-by Spanish-American republics, an election is often preceded by a revolution. In Jamaica, during the elections, there may not be a single arrest for disorderly conduct. Partisan feeling does not run high, and though the crowd may cheer when the candidates say unkind things about one another, and though the crowd may refuse to hear a speaker to whom it is opposed, it hardly ever proceeds to violence. It has a keen sense of the ridiculous. Give a man a name, a name to be laughed at, and you will almost kill his chances with a Jamaica gathering. But if there is one thing the crowd admires it is pluck. Show a bold spirit and you will win its respect.

The mask theory, the political volcano theory, is utterly absurd. The average Jamaican may be thinking of a thousand things, but politics will not be first amongst them. He is not thinking of "rising," for he knows that that would be madness; besides, he is not so oppressed with a sense of grievances as to wish to rise. If you told him he has burdens heavy to be borne, he would straightway believe you. If you told him he should make a great effort to throw off those burdens he would applaud your stirring words to the skies, cheer you to the echo, then quite peacefully go home, with a great admiration of your eloquence, but with not the slightest intention of doing anything that might bring him within the clutches of the law.

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Outside of Kingston there is never much talk about politics, though now and then the other two important towns of the island, Port Antonio and Montego



BANANA PLANTATION.

Bay, wake up suddenly to a temporary enthusiasm about public men and things. Unlike Cuba, Jamaica is not a country of cities. Kingston has about 60,000 inhabitants, Montego Bay may have about 5,000 and Port Antonio 2,000 less. Because of its size and population, Spanish Town might perhaps claim to be the second urban centre of the island, for it has some 5,000 people; but it is not a seaport town, it is no longer the capital of the island; and if I have called Camaguay the city that is sleeping, I might almost call Spanish Town the city that is dead. Built upon the western bank of the Rio Cobre, called St. Jago de la Vega by the Spaniards who first colonised the island, still called so by a few old inhabitants, the old capital dozes in the bright tropical sunshine from one year's end to another, dreaming of its former greatness and dwelling on the days that are gone. In its way it is interesting, this old place with its small iron-railed park still lighted with kerosene oil lamps; with its four massive blocks of almost unused, yellow-coloured public buildings standing to the north and south and east and west of this park; with its cathedral close by, and its narrow streets, and low wooden houses, and its brick walls which lean as though they were about to fall, so old and so weak are they.

An interesting place, and a silent: grass grown in the streets where the huge yellow buildings stand; open spaces filled with rank weeds and grass and the remains of foundations show where houses once stood; goats wander about and shops are open here and there. Even in Jamaica it is known as the city of the dead, so little of life and movement is there in it, so far removed from the activities and anxieties of life its people seem to be. This impression is not altogether a true one, and the inhabitants of the town resent it; yet I think it might in truth be called a city of ghosts, for what is it now but a ghost of its former self, and living on its memories and traditions? I walk about its square and remember that here the Governor once lived, and some of the chief officials. I remember that here the House of Assembly met, that here the great celebration that marked the emancipation of the slaves took place. In the churchyard of the Cathedral lie the remains of men connected with the history of the island; in the church itself are tablets and monuments erected to those who lived and died in this country in the days when Jamaica was of more importance than she is now, and when she was thought to be a land of gold. All, all seems to be in a state of decay, and this former capital of Jamaica is to-day but the chief town of a parish largely given over to banana production; a town still proud of itself, but conscious that it is not remembered much by the rest of the island, and sometimes resenting that.

This Spanish Town, too big by far for the number of persons that inhabit it, is next in size to Kingston; but Port Antonio really ranks second to the capital in point of commercial importance, and Montego Bay comes next. And in these towns, as I have said, there is sometimes something of a political stir, but at long intervals only, and never for any great length of time. It is Kings-

ton that leads in politics, as in other departments of public activity in the towns outside of Kingston one finds oneself in semi-rural surroundings, in country towns where the talk is chiefly of the weather and the crops ; of the price of bananas, of who was in church last Sunday, of the newest family that has come to the parish, and of the Government—yes, of the latest acts of the Government, and whether the Governor will retain his popularity, and whether the labourers will ever learn to work as their employers would have them work. One city, a few towns whose total population does not amount to half the population of the city : you see at once from this that Jamaica is not an island where there can be much political life. Politics thrive more in cities than among green hills and valleys and under the vast open spaces of the sky.

And what is the future of this island where the British peace obtains and where black and white and brown live side by side in harmony together ; what is the future of its people, and to what section of those people will the country belong in the future ?

I have said that Cuba will be in time almost entirely a white man's country ; that gradually but surely black will change to dark brown, and dark brown to orange and to ivory. I prophesy for Cuba an elimination of the darker strains ; she will be an almost white island in the Caribbean Sea. But Jamaica ? The resident in Kingston or in any of the other towns looks about him and sees all shades of complexions, among which black predominates no doubt, but not so greatly as to hide the fact that a considerable intermixture of races has taken place in the island, and that the people specifically called "coloured," the people of mixed blood, are a large and important factor, in the island's population. They are everywhere : they are merchants, professional men, high Government officials ; they are shopkeepers, carpenters, clerks ; they are planters too, they own land ; they probably number one hundred and fifty thousand in a country of nearly nine hundred thousand souls. They are of comparatively recent origin. One goes back two hundred years or more, to the year 1673, when the inhabitants of the island were first classified. One finds the whites put down at 7,768, the negroes at 9,504. The numbers are almost equal, and perhaps, even then, counted amongst the blacks, there was a sprinkling of people of mixed blood. The number of these must have been insignificant, but steadily it grew, and steadily also grew the numbers of the black population. In 1834 a numbering of the people gave the slaves as 311,070, the free blacks at 5,000, the coloured at 40,000, the whites at 15,000. We find to-day that the blacks have little more than doubled their numbers since 1834, that the coloured people have more than trebled theirs, that the whites are what they were in 1834, if not indeed fewer. The conclusion leaps to one's mind—these people of mixed blood, it is to them that the future of the country belongs. Their numbers will grow, they will increase amongst them-

selves, they will increase by the mating of white and black, by the mating of black and coloured ; they will form a new race, they will—

But I stood one day on one of the great main roads of the island and watched the stream of human beings pass. Men rode by on horses or seated upon carts, women trudged hardily along driving before them their sturdy little donkeys, and chatting pleasantly and brightly as they passed. Little girls and boys followed their mothers, and, in the huts and cultivations near by, men and women and children moved about. Amongst them not a single coloured face, not a single white. A few miles farther on, I knew, it would be somewhat different ; but there, in the very heart of the country, where travellers are few and the monotony of life is so rarely disturbed by any unusual event—there I saw the pure-blooded descendants of the men and women who were brought over from Africa some generations ago, and who are in the majority to-day. And as I watched them it came into my mind that it was to them and not to any people of mixed blood that the future of the island belonged. It was these, the labourers, the peasant proprietors, and not the men of lighter hue, that would eventually form, as even now they form, the large majority of Jamaica's population.

Once, a little over a hundred years ago, the white inhabitants were twice as many as they are to-day. They have dwindled : economic crises, the freeing of the slave, the rise of the coloured man—all this has had its effect upon them, and may continue to have its effect. The white man will never disappear from Jamaica—from no part of the world can he be entirely absent. But he can only remain in a tropical country in the capacity of a governing class or an employing class, and as competition sets in, his numbers, few at most, become fewer still. He finds all the subordinate and many of the superior positions filled by "natives"; to a large extent his work is done. But in Jamaica the coloured man will also find that he, too, has become for many purposes unnecessary ; he is finding to-day that a country without manufactures, a country with but one city, with over a hundred thousand peasant properties, and with large plantations requiring for the most part large gangs of unskilled labourers, has little use for crowds of men who cannot labour with their hands.

That is the economic problem which the coloured man in Jamaica has to face. He sees it, and so what has already taken place amongst the white population is taking place amongst the coloured also. Quietly, without complaint, accepting the inevitable, they are emigrating to other lands. Canada, America : to those countries they go in ever-increasing numbers. But it is not by emigration alone that the former rate of increase amongst the mixed-blood population of Jamaica will be lowered. In almost every civilised country in the world to-day the birth-rate is falling, and it is falling amongst the better-educated classes, amongst the classes accustomed to comfort or craving for luxury. The better

classes, the urban classes, of Jamaica cannot fail to be affected by the prevailing custom. And so what with emigration, and with smaller families, their number will not increase as it has hitherto done. In another twenty years the black inhabitants of Jamaica will have triumphantly demonstrated that miscegenation has already done its utmost in the production of a coloured element in the Jamaica population.

But I am not greatly concerned with the future now. The present relations existing between the different classes of the people of the island are of more immediate interest. Are they cordial? More cordial, perhaps, than anywhere else where black and white and brown live side by side; yet, of course, you do not forget that in this little island there are many colours and classes: you cannot forget it. The social hierarchy in Jamaica has many grades; so many, indeed, that two hundred families may constitute quite fifty classes or "sets." This makes social interest something of a problem at times: as I have hinted in a former chapter, it largely accounts for the dulness that one observes among the middle-classes of Kingston. Still there is no rigid colour line between white and coloured, between coloured and black. Personal association between the different elements of the population is not confined to public or semi-public functions only. Once they were; to-day the relations existing between coloured and white depend largely on position, wealth, education, refinement: it does not exclusively or even chiefly depend upon colour. And if we go right down to the poorest elements of the people, we find brown and black in the same class, in the same position; and all this prevents any acute class distinctions based upon colour, though distinctions based on colour undoubtedly exist.

Gradually the acerbity of feeling that once existed between white and coloured and coloured and black has softened down. Prejudice and jealousy remain, but these are not bitter hate. The white man has not "given up the struggle" in Jamaica so much as adapted himself to the prevailing conditions. The black man knows that his path upwards has been a difficult one, but he sees men of his own race winning to comfort and respect, and this prevents him from growing dangerously bitter. To-day, in Jamaica, he elects white and coloured men to represent him in the Legislative Council. And that to some extent does show that violent racial antipathies do not exist in Jamaica.



JAMAICAN PEASANTS IN THE FIELD.

CHAPTER VIII

ON THE ROAD

THE dusty road stretches away to the north, going towards the hills and, climbing up amongst them. To the south it merges into a street that slopes gently till it reaches the seashore ; and this street is the longest in Kingston, and is perhaps the most typical and characteristic of all the city's streets. In it you will find every type of structure to be found in Kingston : a wharf at the end of it ; new warehouses on either hand ; temporary structures of corrugated iron and wood ; a ruined synagogue, old houses that were once the residences of wealthy people, but now fallen into decay and transformed into tenements ; little "front houses" ; shops ; the principal market of Kingston ; lodging houses ; then villas, and then the great road that sweeps upward, forming one of the arteries of the island and one of the means which bring every part of the country into close and constant communication with the city.

I am walking on this road to-night, have indeed just crossed the bridge where the street ends and the road begins. The dust is thick beneath my feet, a fine white powder ; and the road would be dark, in spite of the light from the electric lamps hung on the trolley wires of the electric cars, but that the stars are out and that a half-moon is glowing above. The day has been hot, but it is cool enough now ; a light wind comes down from the mountains, and this makes walking pleasant.

It is still early, only nine o'clock I think ; but already some of the lights in the straggling, low, dilapidated houses are being put out, for one retires early in Jamaica. The larger shops here and there are closing, for the law commands that they should at this hour ; but in tiny little shops where fruit or bread is sold the sellers still bravely hold out in the hope of doing some trade, since the things that they sell will not keep for long.

Tiny tin lamps burn in these tiny places, where not more than one person at a time can move easily about. A little square has been cut in that part of the shop which faces the street, and the bit of board sawn out has been hung on hinges, so that when pulled downwards inside until it is perfectly horizontal,

it forms the counter of the shop, and when pushed upwards until it is perpendicular, it forms a shutter. I make this explanation because this kind of shop is very common in Jamaica; it is, so to speak, an invention of the people, who have been practically driven out of the retail trade by the Chinese immigrants, but who are apparently determined that they shall hold their own in the matter of bread shops.

These shops are kept by women chiefly, and I should think that with five shillings you could buy the contents of almost any one of them. A few loaves of dust-covered bread, a few ripe bananas; three or four hard coconuts, a plate half-full of fried sprats, four pints of porter and three of kola (value 1s. 9d.), a few pieces of cane: with these you have a well-stocked counter, and if there are shops with a larger stock, there are also others that could be bought out entirely for 1s. 6d. Their owners sit contentedly in them, waiting for a customer that never seems to come. They could earn four or five shillings a week as domestic servants, but this would mean a surrendering of freedom, and there is no Jamaica peasant living who does not prefer freedom with a little to servitude with much. This preference it is which largely explains the servant problem of Kingston. To be one's own mistress, to feel free; to rise when one likes, do what one likes, live as one likes—this wish pulls at the heart of every peasant woman, and there are some who manage to gratify it in a way that appears to me remarkable. But I do not stop to think upon this matter now, for constantly I hear the sound of singing, and peeping into the yards as I pass I see groups of children sitting in a ring and playing in the light of the moon. They are chiefly girls, their ages ranging from eight to sixteen. Bareheaded, barefooted, laughing, singing, happy (for they are happy), they are playing a game that consists of striking one stone with another and in chanting this verse:—

“Go down Emanuel Road—
Gal and boy—
To go broke rock stone—
Gal and boy—
Broke them one by one—
Gal and boy—
Broke them two by two—
Gal and boy—
See how the stone dem roll—
Gal and boy—
See how the stone dem scatter—
Gal and boy—

and so on for an hour or more, and then another song and another chorus until bedtime comes.

On either side of the long yard runs a range of low rooms, and in front of

each room there is a box or small table, and there may be a little shelf nailed under the shutter window that serves to keep the air out of the room at night when tightly fastened. Each room may have two of these shutters, which are but rectangular pieces of board cut out of the sides of the room. There may also be two narrow jealousy windows, and if even these were left open, the room might be kept fairly well ventilated. But in the virtues of fresh air the Jamaica peasant does not believe. He is not logical. He will expose himself all night to all the four winds of heaven, he will sleep in the open air. But once indoors, a mortal fear of "catching cold" possesses him, so he sleeps in a stifling atmosphere. There is yet another reason for the closing of every aperture in the room. Ghosts exist, and the lower classes of Jamaica know only too well that ghosts are malignant, except when they happen to be near relatives. And even the spirit of a near relative peeping in upon you at dead of night may have unpleasant effects. You hope to meet the dear departed ones in heaven, but meantime the very briefest of interviews would be most undesirable. So though you are well aware that a ghost is not hindered by barriers of wood and stone, and would just as quickly use the keyhole as anywhere else as a convenient means of entrance, you nevertheless think it best to take no chances, and so bar everywhere. But on the shelf, or on the table just beneath the shutter and close to the door you place a few things which you know will require air and dew: little plants in boxes or in old condensed-milk cans, so that a tiny garden blooms beneath your window: a garden of but a few geraniums or pinks, with a spray or two of lace plant—a faint, pathetic touch of colour glowing in the midst of drab and squalid surroundings.

Small, hot, built low to the ground, so situated that what goes on in one room may be heard in another, these rooms in the lanes and suburbs and neighbourhood of Kingston shelter thousands upon thousands of people. You will understand: they are not lived in; they are slept in at nights. All or most of one's living is done in the yard; the women gossip there, cook there, often eat there. They fix their tubs by the side of their rooms or by the water-pipe, and there they wash for hours, singing all the while at the top of their voices. They beat the clothes with flat, paddle-shaped pieces of wood, they rub them vigorously, and all the time they sing or quarrel, for washing is not disturbed by a row.

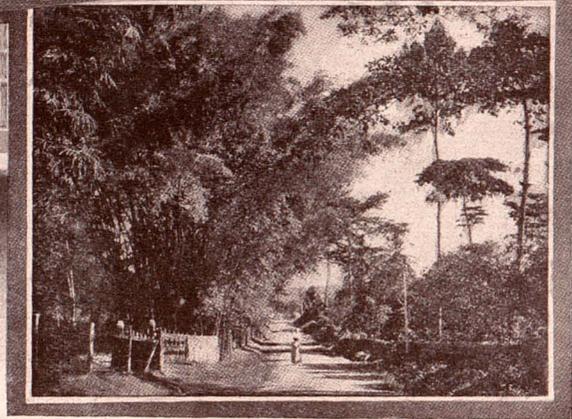
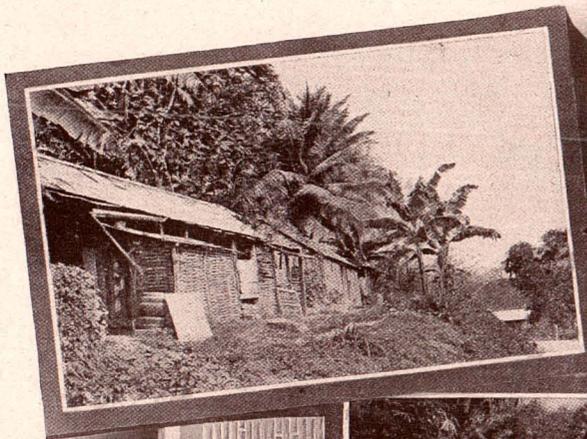
But not these people in the yards, nor the houses they live in, nor yet the little shops along the road and the sellers in them, interest me so much as the people I see passing downwards in twos and threes, in still larger groups, and sometimes singly. There are hundreds of these upon the road to-night, and all of them are walking with swift, springing steps and easy gait, and talking as they walk. Nearly all of them carry large baskets on their heads, and these baskets are piled high with yams, potatoes, cassava; with oranges, bananas, with plantains and other fruit and vegetables. Some of these burdens may weigh quite forty

pounds, yet they are balanced on the head and carried as though they weighed nothing—a wonderful feat when one comes to think of it. All these people are women, and amongst them there may be girls of fifteen years of age; and these, too, carry little baskets on their heads, and sometimes hold a cane in one of their hands. Many of the women are leading donkeys and mules, each bearing a pair of panniers which are filled with the same things which the baskets are packed with, and which are grown in the numerous little peasant cultivations far away in the mountains.

From all distances these people are coming; from places ten, fifteen, twenty miles away. You might think they would be exhausted by now, but they step out as briskly as when they started, and their laughter rings so merrily that surely they cannot be fatigued. Now and then one sees a boy amongst them, but the sight is rare. The boys and men have been left to take care of the house and the "field" while the women of the family trudge down to market to sell the produce and buy supplies for Sunday and the rest of the week.

The stream of human beings seems endless, and indeed it will continue all night, and far into the morning of Saturday. All night and at different hours these country folk will start from their homes, some of them setting out just at the break of day. Stony Hill, Manning's Hill, Golden Hill, Lawrence Tavern, Gordon Town; from these villages and from others they come; and if you stood to-night on either of the roads to the east and west of Kingston you would see large covered carts moving slowly towards the city, and other peasants such as these. But by far the greater number comes by this northern road, which I think to be the busiest in all Jamaica.

All these peasants and their children are barefooted. Their heads are tied with great head-kerchiefs of many colours; for the most part, their bodices are of some white material, and their skirts are made of printed calico, cheap stuff sold in the shops at from threepence to sixpence a yard, and of glaring greens and reds, and flaring patterns. The upper part of their skirts, petticoats, and other garments are drawn up into a sort of bundle round their waists, so that their legs may move freely as they stride along; thus there is a great, circular bulge just above their hips, for the Jamaica peasant woman wears any amount of underclothing. This is a matter of pride with her. Just as the working woman of Kingston loves to have any quantity of crockery and glassware, for which she may have but little use, so the woman from the country districts will spend much money on underclothing which will be trimmed with any amount of embroidery, finished with broad crochet, washed to perfect whiteness, and ironed with care. Fond as she is of showy dresses made according to a fashion which sometimes causes the people of the city to stare, she is yet fonder of the garments that can only be seen when she lifts her skirts as she crosses the road that runs through her village, or as she passes in to church. But this rich underclothing of hers, and the multitude of it, are not chiefly for show: it is a matter



THREE JAMAICA SCENES.

of self-respect with her that she should have these things—she would not feel as she thinks a woman should if she were without them.

So, clothed with many garments, she marches down to Kingston, and behind her meekly walks her donkey or her mule, on which (much to her displeasure) she has to pay taxes, but which she could not conveniently get on without. In the light of the moon I see her large, rolling black eyes gleaming with good humour, her white teeth shining as she laughs. But I notice a peculiarity: she and any number of her sisters have lost some of their teeth. You would almost think the teeth had been extracted on purpose, yet that is not so. Often the gap in the mouth mars the appearance of these women when they laugh, and I prophesy that the time will come when, good fortune permitting, they will do what the city folk do—resort to the dentist for false teeth.

Ten o'clock and eleven passes, and still at intervals large groups of these peasants pass downwards. All other sign of life has disappeared; the electric cars have ceased to run, the people living on either side of the road have long retired to rest. A thought strikes me; I will join this group of four women, two girls and a man—yes, there is actually a man with the others—and make the journey to Kingston with them. I salute the group with "Good evening," for not to do so is to be accused of bad manners, and that is an accusation of the gravest in the eyes of a peasant of Jamaica.

I am cheerily greeted with "Good evening" in return, and soon I ascertain that they have been talking about the origin of earthquakes.

"An eart'quake is a funny ting," sagaciously remarks one of the women. "Dere you are, stan'ing 'pon de groun' an' all of a sudden de groun' begin to jump. What cause it?"

"God to tell!" piously ejaculates one of her companions, who is quite prepared to leave the elucidation of the problem to the higher powers.

But this does not satisfy us. So, "Don't you think dat eart'quake is a judgment on de land?" asks the man.

As this question is addressed to me I am obliged to hazard an opinion. I suggest that an earthquake is something natural: "Like the rain," I add, by way of illustration.

"But, massa, de rain don't kill nobody! De rain come quiet. But when you see mountain shake you must know it is somet'ing funny goin' on." Thus the first woman. Then a thought strikes her: "I wonder if it is de debil doin' it? Him is a bad man, you know."

"Well," says the man, "I hear somebody say de oder day that de worl' have four corner-stone, and when one of dose corner-stone slip, everyt'ing shake up."

"Lord! I don't know what man dem won't try to tell we 'bout next," says the first speaker, who seems bent upon rejecting all rationalistic explanations of earthquakes. "Don't you see," she continues, "dat if Big Massa God didn't want de corner-stone to slip, it couldn't slip? 'There is not a sparrow falleth to the ground, but our Heavenly Father knoweth and approveth thereof'" (as she quotes the words she pronounces her "th's" perfectly). "Dat show dat eart'-

quake is sent by de Lord. I don't care what anybody say, I am holdin' on to dat.'

"Beast! beast! Alice!"

The shriek comes from behind, and we scatter to right and left. The cry of "beast" is intended to warn us that a mule is close upon our heels, Alice being the name which the noble animal bears. Alice seems to have got a little out of hand, or her owner has been a little careless, for, according to all the rules of the road, Alice ought to have been behind and not before the person who holds her rope. This we point out to Alice's owner with much emphasis, for we, not having either donkey or mule, are annoyed that any one possessing the evidences of superior wealth should endeavour to take what we call "a great liberty" with us.

The earthquake, of course, is forgotten. In its place a campaign begins at once between ourselves and the party amongst which is the owner of the mule: there are no direct references, but indirect allusions of an uncomplimentary nature are frequent—this is known as "throwing words." Such a form of quarrelling is in high repute, for though it is a bit cowardly it is usually safe; for instance, you laugh loudly and make sneering remarks about the moon, and, as no names are called, nobody can easily take offence. So "throwing words," we swiftly eat up the road, pass into the street, and in a few minutes we are before the large iron gates of the two ranges of wooden buildings which the Municipal Council has provided as a night shelter for these country folk. We see many persons inside, but we do not enter. True, the charge per person is but a penny for a night; yet a penny is not an amount which any of us can afford to spend without thinking; thus we make up our minds to sleep upon one of the open piazzas of the city, and so continue on our way.

Under the projecting eaves of the numerous little shops, under the corrugated-iron covering which in the daytime serves to keep the rays of the sun from the side-walks and piazzas of Kingston, huddled up together on the hard concrete pavement and sleeping soundly are scores of women and girls. Near them are their baskets, and sometimes their heads rest upon these. On either side of the street they lie, tired, travel-stained, snatching a few hour's rest before the day's work in the market begins, and the long, upward journey home. This sleeping upon piazzas is prohibited by law, and the police may order these people away if they like. But they don't, for in the West Indies one does not trouble one's head about cast-iron regulations, but simply decides to take life easily. How could one live otherwise?

And here I leave my friends for the present, and saunter back to the night shelter to see what may be going on there.

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* * *

Daylight was yet far off; the stars still hung low in the sky. Still it was morning, and at this time of the morning everything is indistinctly seen, every object looks a ghostly shadow.

When I arrived at the night shelter I found the gates closed, and the whole place buried in profound silence. I lingered in the neighbourhood, and after some five minutes, I was startled by the sound of a tremendous rapping. The noise broke loudly on the morning stillness, yet it was all made by a lodger in the night shelter who wanted to get out. As the man in charge was evidently asleep, the lodger had to continue knocking for some time, a proceeding not at all to his taste. Loudly he aired his views on Government institutions in general, and the night shelter in particular. "But wah dem mean fe¹ do wid a man doh?" he enquired, presumably of the buildings, for there was no human being to answer him. "It's de wus in dem place ya,"² he continued, "dem tek you' money an' don' want to attend to you praperly." Rap, rap, rap. "A who in ya?" Rap, rap, rap. "But you can't hear?" Rap, rap, rap. "Good Lord!" Rap, rap, rap. And so the alternate expostulation and rapping went on for some time, till at last, apparently wearied out, our friend crossed over and went up to the door of the house in which dwells the janitress. The gentleman rapped but once and then rose a shrill female voice which in tones of anger demanded the reason of the unwarrantable intrusion. "A want to go out, Missis," said our friend, a bit nonplussed. "Well, what have I got to do with that?" demanded the lady. "Why don't you go to the janitor? It seems that you are forward. You have no respect for your betters."

"Heavens!" said I to myself, "he's caught it now." The poor fellow evidently thought so too, for he made incontinently for the gate. In the meantime the janitor, whose sense of hearing had been impervious to the loud rapping, had been awakened by the lady's fierce volubility. Like a modern knight errant he rushed to her rescue. He, rightly guessing that our friend the rapper was the reason of her loud distress, demanded the cause of the gentleman's impertinence. This was too much for our friend's patience. He was no coward. Therefore he let them know that "de whole lot of dem was noten but a parcel of damn fool"; and he straightway demanded to be let out.

I have frequently remarked that a bold attitude is more efficacious with certain persons than a soft answer. It was so in this case. The gate was immediately opened, and out went the rapper. Then peace reigned again.

I soon got tired of waiting alone. There was no sign that the people in the shelter would shortly be stirring. Presently an idea occurred to me: I would take a walk down to the market; maybe there was something to be seen there. So I strolled down, and when I stood before the market I was fairly delighted.

¹ To.

² Here.

Was I in Kingston, or in some out-of-the-way part of the country? The scene before me—was it real or only an illusion? At first it seemed to me to be unreal, for here, in the very heart of the metropolis, from one side of the square to the other—in the middle of the street—by the walls of the Court House—everywhere in fact—were crowds of people, some sleeping, some already making their preparations for the day's work. Yes, some were even dressing.

The gentle hubbub of voices charmed me. There was no unnecessary noise; everybody seemed gently depressed in spirits. Many carts were drawn up on each side of the street, huge things pulled by strong mules, and piled high with bananas, or canes, or other produce. The mules had been unharnessed, and one or two men had even spread some grass on the ground before them; but an unsympathetic policeman chanced to come up a few minutes after, and thereupon he caused "every blade" of it to be gathered up.

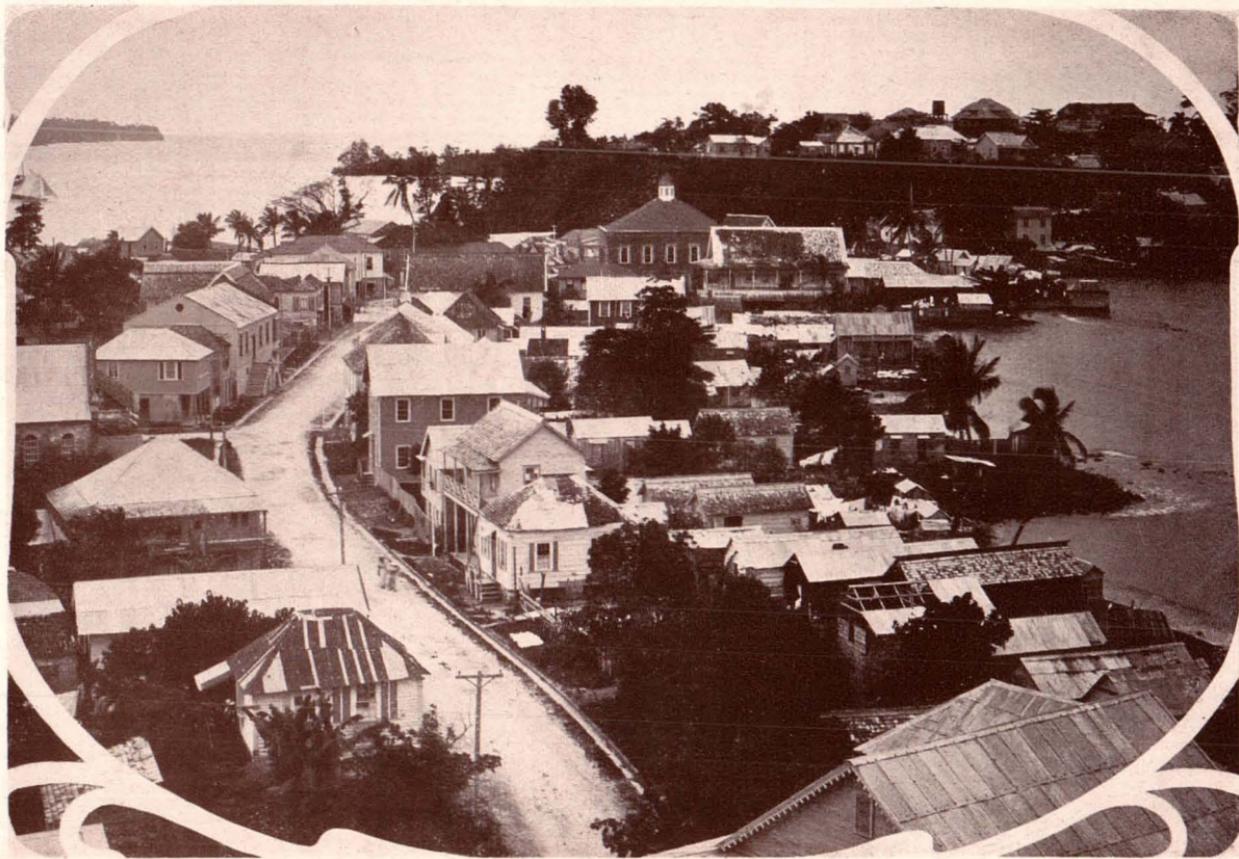
Why were all these people here? Evidently in order to secure a good position in the market when it should be opened. A good stand means a great deal to the seller, and these stout-limbed dames knew that. They had left the comforts of the night shelter to their less robust sisters; they had come to Kingston for a purpose, and fulfil that purpose they would.

I had now been out for several hours. The stars had dimmed, then disappeared; the sky had changed from black to grey, and the grey was now dissolving into brightness. I turned to look at the sky and the sun, but just then a loud declaration, "A¹ not gwine to let go!" fell upon my ear, and sending sun and sky to the winds, I hastened to the spot whence came the emphatic announcement. Here a group of women were standing round some five-gallon cans of "wet" sugar. One woman had seized hold of two of the cans, and it was she who had expressed the unalterable determination that I have recorded above. What was the cause of it? Well, it seems that a countrywoman supplied weekly three or four customers with sugar, which they retailed. That week, however, she was not able to come down to Kingston herself, so she had sent the sugar by a friend. Unfortunately, the amount of sugar sent was less than usual, and the bearer had been directed to supply only three persons and to inform the fourth that she would get her lot next week, and that "She mus'n't vex; she must wait little." But the disappointed dame would not be comforted with mere words. She was depending on the sugar, and would not be put off. Hence her declaration. "And," she said, "after all, conscience is God fren. An' I not gwine to gie up dis sugar." By what particular method of reasoning she managed to arrive at the conclusion that, because conscience is God's friend she was entitled to keep the sugar, I do not know. But this I do know, she kept the sugar, intimating that "Constab will hav' to tek me a² prison.

It was now broad daylight. The mules were rapidly reharnessed to the

¹ I.

² To.



TOWN OF PORT ANTONIO.

carts. Over a hundred women had attired themselves in clean outer garments, and very nice indeed they looked. But there was some perturbation expressed on the faces of them; to perform one's morning toilet completely, you know, one requires water, and, alas! no water was to be had that morning! The fountains in the Central Park were dry, or rather, the water had been locked off the night before. Presently, however, "water came," and with it came peace, joy, and the rest of the beatitudes.

The gates of the market were soon thrown open and the scramble for places began. Shriill laughter, pushing, howling—oh, what a noise was there! Endeavouring to obtain a good point of observation in the market, I was wedged in between two rather large-looking countrywomen. "Poor young massa," said one of them, "dem will kill him in ya." But, after the fashion of old Randolph Murray in the poem, I gave no answer but only groaned aloud. Why, I nearly was killed! I was kept from falling simply because, being so closely surrounded by people, I could not fall; yet at one time I was lifted off my feet.

You must understand, of course, that nearly all the persons who had slept at the night shelter had now begun to arrive. Think of it: there was I in the midst of about one thousand people, struggling, fighting for breath!

At last! I had obtained standing room near one of the iron pillars which support the roof of the market house. Clinging to this I was able to see pretty clearly all that passed. Every five minutes the swift electric cars flashed past, the steady "ding, ding" of the gong warning people out of the way. The sea of human faces constantly moving, the hubbub that swelled into a louder roar every moment, the meek donkeys preceded by their owners who charged through the crowd with a war cry of "Beast! beast!" all this formed one novel panorama. It was fine indeed! But anybody that took any notice of me at all seemed to regard me as an intruder—a stranger in a strange land. Now and then a young woman, strong and humorous, would ask me, "Want anyt'ing to buy, sah?" Some of them, indeed, passed a scornful remark or two on my being there, for personal remarks are made by these "horn-handed daughters of the plough" without the slightest reserve. Yet they mean no harm; rather the opposite. Give them a soft answer, and, behold, their wrath is turned away. Attempt to bandy words with them, and the chances are you will get the worst of it.

You don't know the market? Well, it is a large, roofed building of iron and concrete, with long ranges of stalls which are hired out by the week or month to the higglers. The country people have, of course, to pay a fee to sell in the market. I think they pay sixpence for a donkeyload and threepence for a headload of provisions.

And now the majority of the sellers have settled down to the day's work. Other sellers will be coming soon, but it's difficult to divine where they will sit.

Every inch of room is already taken up ; some persons squat on the bare ground, others have brought a small bench with them. Soon crowds of customers, eager for good bargains, begin to swarm in, and I take my place amongst the moving stream.

A tall black woman in front of me, carrying a large basket on her arm (which basket, for no apparent reason, she will insist upon driving every now and then into various parts of my body), this lady, I say, stops in front of a countrywoman who displays goods of all kinds for sale. Mechanically I stop also. Then ensues the following colloquy—

Lady with basket : “I wonder if anyt’ing wut while fe buy ya?”¹

Countrywoman : “Hi ! yes, me sweetee, you mumma have plenty nice tings.”

Lady with basket : “Cho ! A doan see not’ing dat a like : how you sell dem orange ?”

Countrywoman : “Dozen an’ two fe quattie,² me love.”

Lady with basket : “Wah ! So so dozen an’ two ? A couldn’t tek dozen an’ two at all. You will ’ave to give me dozen an’ four.”

Countrywoman : “Ech, ech ! Noah, me love, I couldn’t do dat at all. Look weh me come fram ! An’ de orange dem so sweet too !”

Lady with basket : “Well, to tell de trute, I can’t tek dozen an’ two. Orange is too cheap now.”

Whereupon the countrywoman swears by all her gods that oranges are dear ; the other swears with becoming vehemence that they are cheap. “Cho ! you too damn tief,” says the seller with the basket. Immediately the seller desires her to betake herself to a certain region renowned for its warmth. Then they both laugh immoderately and—appeal to me.

Lady with basket : “Young massa, don’t you tink dem oranges dear ?”

Countrywoman : “Cho, me sweet massa, don’t you tink dem oranges ya wut quattie ?”

Here is a dilemma ! Woe to me if I should decide either way ! What shall I do ? I determine upon taking up a position of masterly neutrality, and forthwith enquire the price of oranges on my own account. And then the storm clears ; for seeing the chances of obtaining another customer, the countrywoman instantly gives in and consents to let us both have sixteen oranges for a “quattie.”

All around were groups of persons higgling. More lies were told during the first market hour that Saturday than you can think of. And some of them were masterpieces. I fell in love with the ease and perfect candour with which both buyers and sellers made the most astounding assertions. They knew that nobody believed them, and they did not expect to be believed, they told these pleasant tales “all for fun.”

What a wealth of things there was for sale ! Golden oranges, bananas,

¹ Here.

² Three half-pence.

fat custard apples, thin canes, sober-looking melons, purple grapes, yams, potatoes, pease—oh! everything. Side by side with the man who sold ribbons stood the gentleman who will let you have an extraordinary hunk of evil-smelling cheese for "quattie." One gentleman sells ham at 8d. per pound, while near by is a youth of stentorian lungs who retails prayer-books and Bibles. That modest coolie girl will let you have a fine bunch of radishes for 3d., and that man who looks like a philosopher vends ornaments for your dressing table.

Outside the market everything is confused. Carts go driving through groups of people that seem to stand in imminent danger of being run over, but no such catastrophe occurs. The drivers merely thunder out some scornful remarks to the crowd, the crowd merely retorts with some personal allusion. The shops are all gaily dressed up, for Christmas is near; festoons of coloured paper stretch from one part of them to the other, busy shopmen are hurrying to and fro getting things ready for the business of the day. And when, three or four hours later, I go "down town," to King Street where most of the haberdashery and "fancy" stores are, I find many of these country folk walking along the side-walks and admiring the wealth of pretty things exposed in the huge glass windows to attract the passers-by.

I enter one of these stores: it is thronged. Both "town" and "country people" are either buying dresses for New Year Sunday or ribbons and laces to trim their Christmas frocks. And you may be sure that they are laying out a good deal of their savings on this sort of finery. I have known women from the country who have spent from ten to fifteen shillings—a large amount to them—on a hat for a special occasion, such as a harvest festival or a church anniversary.

I approach one of the customers—three women, one elderly, the other two young, are buying a "New Year dress." They are being attended to by a lady server on whose face is an expression of infinite weariness. She has already shown them fully half a dozen different kinds of materials; but they are pleased with none, "dem want to see somet'ing else." The poor girl who waits on them turns to reach another piece of pink stuff. "Here," she says, "is something you will like; it washes well. Now young lady" (turning to one of the grinning damsels) "just look at this! Isn't it beautiful? I have a dress of it myself" (you must accept this *cum grano*). "When it is made up it will look beautiful on you, and your beau will admire you more than ever." The young lady, highly pleased with this allusion to her beau, condescends to cast her eye over the cloth, with the remark, "It don't too prutty." "Oh!" says the server, "I am surprised at you." Then the shop-walker, who has overheard the customer's remark, joins in with, "Oh! my dear, it is as pretty as yourself, and you are nice looking, you know." "My dear's" face is wreathed in smiles; even the old woman is pleased at hearing her daughter praised by "de han'some backra."

The shopwalker sees his chance and presses the girl to buy at once. And now the higgling over the price begins.

"How much a ya'd fo' dis?" asks one of the women.

"Ninepence, my dear," returns the seller; "it's dirt cheap; it used to be a shilling a yard."

"How much you say, ma'am? Ninepence a va'd? dat too dear!"

The attendant falls into a deep cogitation and scans the buyers' faces with great care. "I think," she resumes at last, "that I remember your face: don't you always buy from me?" Instantly the buyers admit that it has been their constant practice to patronise that store: that they have always, so to speak, regarded it as one of their principal aims in life to buy nowhere else. But this is all a pleasant fiction. The clerk has really charged them a little more per yard than the real price of the stuff she is selling. She was obliged to do so, for she knew to a dead certainty that they would endeavour to abate the price. But, of course, she must find some adequate reason for "teking off somet'ing," and this reason is found in what I may call "the old customer dodge." So the price of the material is eventually brought down to 7½d. per yard and the countrywomen depart well pleased.

And now begins the journey homeward, the journey to the village in the hills. The stream this time flows northward, but now the girls and women who have "beasts" ride comfortably on these, perched high above the panniers, each loosely holding the single guiding rope, now transformed into a bridle, in her right hand. The procession begins at about midday and will continue till late. Those women who have no beasts crowd into the cars that will carry them some five or six miles out of the city; then, arrived at the terminus, they will set out on foot upon their homeward march. Higher and higher the land rises as they go; human habitations are passed but rarely; above is the great arch of sky and the stars, around are forests and mountains; below are the steep precipices down into which one peers occasionally as one moves swiftly up along the road. The half-moon glows serenely. A faint, ghostly sheen pervades everything, radiates from everything. Solemn, majestic, grand, the mountain peaks appear, one after the other, bathed and steeped in deep silence and dim light. A village is passed, a collection of thatched huts built here and there near the road, with its single shop and perhaps its little mission church. The village is asleep; only a dog or two rousing themselves to bark lazily at the peasants as they pass. These themselves are silent now, for since last night they have had but little rest, and all day long the fierce yellow sun of the tropics has been beating down upon them. But at last a faint light ahead warns them that home is nigh, and soon a halt is called. It is Sunday morning, and since Friday night they have been altogether some forty miles upon the road. . . . But this is home.



COFFEE PULPING, JAMAICA.



NATIVE BOY PICKING COCOA-NUTS.

CHAPTER IX

THROUGH A BEAUTIFUL LAND

WHO was it that first called Cuba "The Pearl of the Antilles"? History does not tell; but we know that the word Jamaica is of Indian origin and means "the land of wood and water," just as Hayti means rocky or mountainous.

Each of the Great Antilles has physical characteristics of its own; each differs from all the others in its topography, though all of them are the uplifts of a wonderful mountain range that runs from east to west for hundreds of miles beneath the surface of the sea. Think of it! these islands are but the peaks; the topmost portions of a submerged mountain chain. And once, stretching from Central America over a large portion of the Caribbean Sea and into the Gulf of Mexico, covering the area where these islands now stand, was a vast island, an island that has disappeared. One stands on the seashore to-day, and, gazing far out to where the white horses leap and tumble in their pastures of limpid blue, one's thoughts go back to those far-off, prehistoric days when out yonder, where the sea now is, was perhaps a rolling plain, or perhaps a mighty mountain. How did the land look then? Was it drear and vast and wild, or smiling and beautiful? It is hard to think that in these regions the appearance of the country could have been at any time otherwise than rich and luxuriant, otherwise than wondrously green and gloriously purple when the sun shone bright upon the hills. And yet it was probably far different from what our imaginations would fain picture it. It must have been different, that island the larger part of which has for ever sunk beneath the waves. And geologists tell us also that the high mountains of Jamaica are composed of the detritus of some older land, and that Jamaica itself was probably once connected with Central America. So it may be that part of a lost continent still lives in the highlands of Jamaica, and that the peasant walks upon layers of earth that once belonged to another and an older world.

Jamaica differs from her near neighbours, Cuba and Hayti, and is by far the most beautiful of the three. I want to describe her beauty, I want to give you some idea, some notion of this land of forests and streams which

was once so much larger than it is, and which has so interesting a history. But how shall I begin, and, when I have begun, what shall I say? Do you know that no one has ever described Jamaica? Do you know that no one has ever done for her what Kingsley did for Trinidad? Is it that her beauty defies description except by a masterhand? If so, my task is done: I know that what I shall say will leave Jamaica's beauties still unportrayed. And, indeed, to portray those beauties, not the writer's pen alone, but the artist's brush as well is wanted. Those golden sunsets when the western sky palpitates with the quivering heart-leaps of the sinking sun, when great masses of crimson clouds roll into weird, gigantesque shapes against that flaming background, when the heavens above are a delicate blue, tinted here and there with faint streaks of pink, and when, in the east, the silver stars are already peeping forth—surely those are pictures for Turner's brush, are scenes for Ruskin's pen.

I wish that both had seen Jamaica.

But some day, perhaps, there will come a writer who will tell the world of these mountains and hills, of the changing, tossing, sun-suffused sea, the yellow warm sunlight, the wonder of the nights, the glory of the breaking dawn. Meanwhile we uninspired ones must toil and labour with words, lagging immeasurable distances behind those masters of language whose magic sentences recreate the world to the sound of wondrous music. Our picture, at the best, is poor. We cannot give it that last incomparable touch of genius, cannot add—

"the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream."

There is no part of Jamaica that has not something to enchant the eye, no parish without some beauties of its own. Even Kingston, a mere city built on an alluvial plain that stretches from the foot of the Blue Mountains to the edge of the sea, has this of beauty about it; its background of hills on which the sunlight and the shadows continually play from dawn to dusk. But one needs to be out of towns and cities to see the real Jamaica; one needs to gaze down into precipices in the early morning when the dew is still upon the grass and the white mists come rolling upwards like huge clouds or thick volumes of palest smoke; or to stand on mountain peaks and see great stretches of land broken into hills and valleys, studded with innumerable trees, gleaming with streams and rivers, and flashing here and there into brightness as a cascade leaps from a hillside to the rocky depths below.

A land of hills as well as a land of wood and water. A land of roads and bridges which have been building these two hundred years, and which are to-day the pride of Jamaica. No other country in these parts has the roads and the means of communication that Jamaica has; so that travelling, which is not yet easy in Cuba, and is most difficult in Hayti and in Central America,

is easy and delightful here, thanks to the railway and the public ways with which the island is endowed.

I took horse one night and rode slowly up towards one of the old mansions of the country, a house built a hundred and fifty years ago on the top of a hill fifteen hundred feet high, whence you look downward upon Kingston some nine or ten miles away. The road curved like a snake, twisting here and there into spirals, so that from one part of it you looked directly down upon that portion of it you had passed over but fifteen minutes before. Up, up, up it went, one long, continuous climb, and almost all the way the weather-beaten limestone rocks towered high above one's head, while to the left the precipices yawned, verdure-covered to their utmost depths. The road itself is rock, and when portions of it are beaten into holes by the torrential rains of May and October, the menders break the limestone from the mountain side, and with that it is repaired. A simple, effective process, and one that makes travelling safe; so higher and higher I went until, the path turning suddenly, I saw the lights of Kingston gleaming in the distance—a burst of brilliance in the midst of the surrounding darkness.

Thousands of lights down there by the edge of the sea, and thousands of lights in the heavens above. And about the hills themselves, amongst the trees, the bushes, to the right and to the left, before and behind, myriads of fireflies flashing their tiny lanterns of green and gold to make the path a piece of fairy-land.

The darkness was set with diamonds, with emeralds, and with other precious stones, and presently the moon, rising late at this time of the month, came up to flood the mountains with soft radiance, and to pale the brightness of the stars. But, as though to dispute her reign, dark masses of cloud rose in the west, and gradually spread until they covered a vast space of the over-arching sky. Then from the heart of this sombre canopy lightnings flickered forth, followed by the rumble of thunder. But still the moon sailed on, calm, sweet, light-giving, beautiful, and bathing the mountains in an ivory glow.

The effect was magical, wonderful. The powers of light and of darkness seemed struggling for the mastery up above. Or rather, not struggling, for the rain-clouds never swept eastward, the moon was never obscured. A few great drops of rain came down, then almost as suddenly as they had arisen the clouds dissolved and disappeared. Then a sweet refreshing breeze wandered amongst the branches of the trees, and the silence was only broken by the cry of the night insects and the whispering of the wind.

And any night in Jamaica you will see such scenes; night and day Nature clothes herself in rich robes to dazzle and bewilder the eye.

One can travel through the heart of Jamaica in a railway train. The second town of commercial importance, Port Antonio, is but four and a half hours distant from Kingston by train and the journey is one which can never be forgotten by any one who has made it.

I remember my first trip to Port Antonio vividly: it seems to me as if I had made it yesterday and had just returned. I took the train on a Saturday afternoon, after buying my ticket and passing through the iron gates so carefully guarded by railway guards to prevent persons who were not passengers from thronging on the platform. In spite of this precaution, a few friends of the passengers had slipped through, and these stood near to the carriage windows taking leave of their friends. Ten years before they would have wept. For even then there was little moving about done in Jamaica, and to go upon a journey of thirty miles was almost like taking an excursion into the unknown: you hung upon the necks of your friends and cried, and bade them farewell piteously, and implored them to take care of themselves. But now you are quite cheerful: you can travel to Port Antonio, a distance of seventy-five miles, or to Montego Bay, a hundred and thirteen miles from Kingston, in less than a day. The outer world has been brought close to the poorer folk of the city; and the city has drawn near to those in the country, so one now laughs and smiles where one would have wept a few years ago. And, smiling, we pull out of the dark iron-roofed station and soon are speeding upon our way.

We go at the rate of twenty miles an hour, sometimes at fifteen. From Kingston to Spanish Town we go at our maximum rate of speed, for the land is flat and the line runs almost straight ahead. For some time we pass by an ugly, drear, evil-smelling swamp in which rank vegetation grows. The spot is unhealthy, yet it has its uses, for it is here that the land-crabs abound in the first rainy season of the year, and at any time you may see in the soft ground the holes they have dug as places of shelter. Even now if you look closely you will see some of these crabs crawling or running about. Big yellow-white or bluish creatures, and holding their nippers threateningly up, they can fight splendidly when driven to bay; and only the man who has tried to catch them, as I have done, knows how difficult a task it is to hold their claws down with a stick, while, with your free hand, you try to catch hold of the crab by that part of its back where the claws cannot reach.

These crabs are caught at night. Here amongst the swamps you will come upon little companies of boys, one armed with a storm-lantern or a blazing torch, another carrying a large coarse crocus bag, a third with a short stick. All of them assist in the hunting down of the crabs, and when the bag is full to the brim they lug it into town, and in the morning they take their stand outside of the market, proclaiming that they have the best crabs in the world, and that four may be had for a quattie. It is then that everybody says that crabs are poisonous, that they eat the dead bodies in the near-by cemeteries, and that, being scavengers, they must at the very least be unwholesome. It is then that everybody buys crabs and eats them. It is said in Jamaica that when crabs are "in" not much beef and salted fish is sold. It is also said that when mangoes are "in" very little bread is sold. Now the time of the crab is the

time of the mango, and with two dozen mangoes for quattie, and four large crabs for the same, one may live very comfortably on little. The mangoes are delicious; I have a high opinion of crabs myself. Isn't it a blessing when things are both cheap and good!

But while thinking about crabs we have passed the swamps, and now we are rumbling over a high iron bridge that spans one of the large rivers of Jamaica, the Rio Cobre. The Spaniards gave the dull, greenish-looking river its name, and the name remains to-day. But for a few such names here and there, names poetic and appropriate and sweet to the tongue, there is nothing of the Spaniard left in this land. He had not time enough to become part of the country: he worked the Indians to death, he introduced negro slaves; then his day ended and he was driven from the island by English troops. He went to Cuba, and now one hardly ever remembers that he was here. Yet he was once master of all the Great Antilles, and might still have been but for his greed of gold and his incapacity for colonial administration.

Spanish Town we stop at for a minute or two, but before we pull into the station we have passed one of the prettiest sights upon the way. This is the Government's Prison Farm, an institution established for the purpose of teaching short-term prisoners the elements of agriculture: it is a large piece of land, fringed with banana plants and crotons, cut into long rows of hillocks in each of which is planted the sweet potato, a shrub that grows very low to the earth and bears a pretty purplish flower.

This is, perhaps, the best bit of cultivated land in all the island: certainly it is one of the prettiest. You see it there in the sunlight, and here and there about it are the bare-footed, cloth-capped prisoners hoeing the ground under the eye of the warder. The latter is armed, but the pistol does not show. A short staff alone is the visible sign of his authority. Yet the prisoners hardly ever try to escape, and as no one drives them to great exertions—Jamaica is not a land where one drives or is driven—I imagine they are fairly content with their lot. I number some ex-prisoners among my personal acquaintance, and they actually speak in terms of warm appreciation of His Majesty's prisons in Jamaica. They had not been guilty of the crimes imputed to them, of course; some one had "told a lie on them." Still, the prison had not proved so bad a place after all! There may be some bravado in all this, a wish to brazen out disgrace and servitude. Yet harshness being strongly condemned by local public opinion, I do not doubt that many a prisoner is agreeably surprised at the treatment he receives in the public penitentiaries.

And now as we travel on we begin to see more of the staple cultivations of the country. Forests of bananas as far as the eye can reach—veritable forests of bananas. There is no other word to use. Planted in rows some four or five apart, rising to a height of eight or nine feet, the soft trunk of the trees, all fibre and water, ends in a great plume of broad green leaves, each

of them some five or six feet in length. There is no more fragile plant. The cool plume-like leaves split into a thousand ribbons if ever so light a wind passes through them: the tree itself bends to the ground under the weight of its single bunch of green or golden fruit. It bears one bunch only in its lifetime. That done, it must be cut down to make way for the young plants that are springing from its roots. Within a year its whole lifestory is told. Yet what sugar is to Cuba and coffee to Hayti, the banana is to Jamaica.

Forty years ago the value of the fruit shipped from Jamaica was only £3,124. To-day it is over £1,143,000. And but that this fruit came to take the place of sugar and coffee when the price of those went down in the markets of Europe and America, it is difficult to guess what would be the position of Jamaica to-day. The story of the origin of the banana trade has often been told: an American skipper, coming to Jamaica by accident, took a shipload of the fruit to Jamaica. He sold it; people wanted more. So he came back, and as it was the peasants mainly who grew these bananas, he and those who followed him induced these peasants to extend their plantings. Others took up the business, more and more fruit ships came and went between Boston and Jamaica, and Port Antonio was the headquarters of the trade. Then the Boston Fruit Company was transformed into the United Fruit Company, the gigantic American trust that now controls the fruit trade of America, and that owns sugar estates in Cuba, and banana plantations in Costa Rica, Panama, and Jamaica.

Go to almost any part of Jamaica and you will find the banana. I say almost, for the qualification is needed. For once when I drove through the parish of Westmoreland, and thence to Hanover, and through Hanover to St. James, I travelled for miles and miles and scarcely saw a banana-tree. Sugar estates in plenty I passed, and cattle pens. The low-lying lands of Westmoreland were covered with canes, the rolling uplands of Hanover were covered with cattle, big, wide-horned, broad-backed beasts that cropped the grass in the stone-fenced pastures that bordered the road. And in other parishes you will find these; for though Jamaica is the largest banana-producing country in the world, she yet grows other things, and rears horses and cattle; and some of the things she grows are the best of their kind in the world. In the high mountains she grows the best coffee. She alone produces pimento, for the pimento of Mexico and Porto Rico does not count. Her ginger is the best, her rum the best. And some of her sugar lands need fear no comparison with those of Cuba or Java. So one may feel confident that for this island a rich future is reserved, since the time must surely come when its almost undeveloped resources will be made to yield golden profits to men with energy and capital. And men with capital and energy are now turning their attention to Jamaica.

The Jamaica banana goes chiefly to America. But it goes to England

also by the boats of the Imperial Direct West Indian Line, owned by the Elder Dempster Company. The trade with England has not as yet developed as it was hoped it would, yet there are many who firmly believe that within a reasonable time Jamaica bananas will be largely eaten in England. The difficulty up to now has really been the facility with which bananas from Costa Rica and the Canaries can enter the markets of the mother country. These compete with the Jamaica fruit, and sellers of Costa Rican bananas have no hesitation in offering their fruit as Jamaica bananas. Something should be done to prevent this, just as steps have been taken to prevent English publicans from selling inferior spirits as Jamaica rum.

But if the fruit trade with England has not grown as the people of Jamaica hoped it would, there can be no doubt that the Imperial Direct West India Line has done a great deal to bring Jamaica closer to the mother country, to interest Englishmen in this island, and to induce Jamaicans to visit England and thus come into closer touch with English manners, habits and customs, and with English ideals.

Thousands of Jamaicans have visited England by the Direct boats during the last eight years. The Line has had an Imperialistic mission, and has done its best to carry it out. I think it will do more in the future: I think it will be to Jamaica what the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company has been to all the British West Indies.

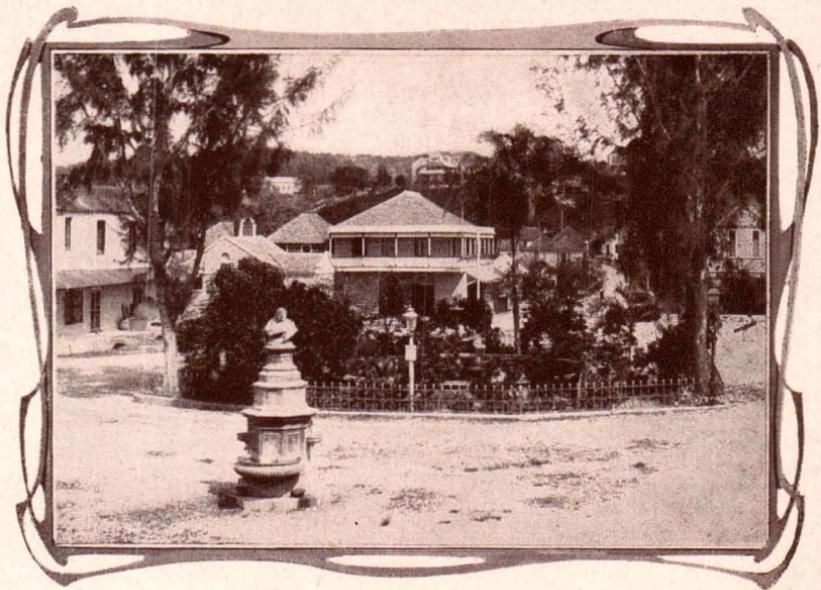
This other great line of steamers has been connected with the West Indies for quite a number of years. Its ships are familiarly known as "the packet" throughout the West Indies, and "packet-day" is a day of note. One hears from England then. There are letters from home. There are new faces from home. How much all this means to an Englishman in a West Indian Island even he himself could not tell. He feels it all as he eagerly breaks the seal of the envelope on which is the old, familiar writing; he feels it as he turns over the pages of a magazine two or three weeks old. And the great big black boats of the Royal Mail, with their splendid service and courteous officers, have become a household word in the West Indies and have been a factor in their civilisation and progress.

Darkness! Thick gloom and a rush of smoke, and a shrieking, thundering, deafening noise. We have been speeding along while I have been thinking of Jamaica's industries and future, and now we have entered a tunnel, the first of the many tunnels on the way to Port Antonio. We soon emerge into light and the soft fresh air again; the noise subsides, and presently we halt at a wayside station, Bog Walk. A Spanish name corrupted, evidently: Boca del Agua, mouth of the water, and now Bog Walk—what a change! The river that we see flowing here is the same Rio Cobre that we passed some miles below, and here again we find one of the great bridges which the English have built in Jamaica. Magnificent structures these are, and built to

last. The rains may fall, the floods may descend, the rivers may rise and overflow their banks, yet still these bridges will remain unshaken. You will find them spanning chasms, the bottoms of which are the beds of rivers, and, as you sweep over these, it seems to you as though you were suspended in mid-air, as though but the slightest swerve to the right or left would send you hurtling to the horrid depths below.

But no such accidents occur; and as you travel on the charm of the journey grows. Look there, a hill rises in front of us. We rush straight towards it; in a moment we are enveloped in darkness. Then out again, and looking behind we see that we have swept through a tunnel cut through the very heart of the hill. Thousands of tons of earth were above our heads a moment ago, and as we look up we can see the hill under which we have passed, and can see little houses here and there upon it, and peasant boys and girls, and these wave to us as we hurry away, twisting and turning like a snake. One half of the train is round the curve. By the time that we round it also, the engine is already disappearing in another direction. We rock from side to side: we look out again: see! we are climbing a hill. Doesn't it seem as if we were likely to slip backwards, a mass of wreckage? Suppose one of the couplings gives way, suppose something goes wrong with the engine, suppose—we are flying downwards now, down, down, down; we are going slowly—ah

Hills rise behind hills, and yet more hills appear. Sheer beneath us a precipice yawns. I gasp: but even as I gasp I look out towards the far horizon, to the sky-line where the azure of the heavens blends with the green of the hills. Miles upon miles of glorious country unrolls itself in a magnificent paronama of green and purple and yellow. The hillsides are cultivated here and there, and here and there you see horses rolling and galloping in the fields, and solemn cattle browsing in the rich pastures, or standing up to their knees in lichen-covered ponds. A country gentleman's red-roofed house nestles in the midst of flowering shrubs, some a deep scarlet, and near it I see orange-trees laden with fruit that "burn like bright lamps of gold to shame the day." Parasites grow upon most of the huge trees I see, sending down long tendrils to the ground. Great silk cotton-trees, covered with parasitic growths, have been killed by these, and now they stand there, withered, dead, yet imposing and gigantic even in their death. We rush on, now between high banks of white and yellow limestone, now between broad acres of wire-fenced banana lands. North and South, East, and West, you see nothing but bananas now. What the Royal palms are in the west of Cuba, the bananas are in this part of Jamaica. The whole landscape is a mass of dark, moving green. The broad leaves of the plants shine in the sunlight, on the hills, on the plains, wherever one's eye is turned. It is striking, this country so picturesquely clothed. I look and look—green, green,



THE SQUARE, MONTEGO BAY.



THE FORT, MONTEGO BAY.

and yet more green. I turn my eyes away; I look again; is that—yes, surely that is the sea—the broad, blue, sparkling sea that bursts upon our view.

It is just beneath us. We are running along the edge of the reef-bound elevated shore. The sands are milky white; pearl-green and pink is the colour of the water we look down upon; green and blue and foam-crested the waves that roll and toss out yonder. We started from the south, we have come to the northern shore of Jamaica. We have journeyed from sea to sea.

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* * *

And now, until we reach the end of our journey, we shall constantly catch glimpses of this wonderful sea view. In a very short time visitors will travel along this part of the northern coast of Jamaica in motor-cars, for a motor company is now beginning operations in Jamaica, and the main road that runs almost parallel with the railway line will make motoring a delight. Already American tourists bring over their motor-cars in the winter, for the fame of the Jamaica roads has spread abroad. Governor Magoon told me three years ago that some of his friends who had motored through Jamaica were loud in their praise of the island's highways and scenery; and I see the time coming when hundreds of motors will be speeding along the uplands and along the great road that runs around the island like a broad, twisting, green-edged white band.

One never tires of the scenery of Jamaica. It is never monotonous. The mountains give to it its appearance of grandeur, the luxuriant foliage clothes it in a garb of soft beauty. As you travel on, there is always something new, always something to compel admiration: if you tire of looking up towards the heights, you may look down into deep chasms where the waters gleam darkly as they lose themselves beneath the overhanging fronds of gigantic tree-ferns. Ferns of almost every variety are here: the delicate maidenhair fern as well as ferns that at first you may think to be small palm-trees. And moss-covered rocks are near to these, rocks covered with moss of a delicate golden green. But I have wandered from my subject a little: let me see, I was speaking of the journey by rail to Port Antonio after one has emerged upon the sea coast at Annotto Bay, a journey that, because of the scenery and beauty of the country we pass through, is one of the most delightful in the world.

All along the line one stops at little stations to take up freight and passengers. At every station there are the inevitable idlers, the loafers who regard themselves as entitled to the consideration of their fellow-men, because they alone have fully realised the indignity of labour. The Jamaica country loafer is in his way a bit of a sportsman. Mankind is his game. Like the lilies of the field he toils not, neither does he spin, and though I cannot say much about the glory of his apparel, which is usually exiguous, I take it that he is quite as happy as Solomon, especially in the matter of wives. His philosophy of life may be set forth in a few simple sentences. Work he regards as the

primeval curse, and he does his best to escape the curse. Honesty he looks upon as the best policy when one is certain to be caught if one steals; but if there is no sure risk of detection, he considers honesty as the virtue of fools. As he expresses it, "Dere is a chance for de bird as well as for de gun." As he is the bird—mark the poetry of the simile—he takes his chances when he goes forth at night to plunder his neighbour's provision ground, and he will sometimes have the effrontery to pass the gun (*i.e.*, his neighbour) next day to ask him how he is getting on.

He and his like are well known to all the village. But they must be captured before they can be accused, and very often they manage to establish a system of terrorism which renders their capture almost impossible. When a man casually mentions that "if anybody ever lie on me" he will commit hitherto-unheard-of murders, what is a poor timorous peasant to do? You will understand, of course, that to report a Jamaica prædial thief to the police is, in his opinion, to lie against him most fearfully. His indignation, he would have you believe, is based entirely upon moral grounds: it is as an upholder of truth that he protests against your act. The police being the natural enemies of all men, too, he feels that you are acting as a traitor to your kind by having him arrested; while if you are a black man he expresses the utmost horror and indignation that you should seek to injure a man of your own race: he says it is a case of "dog nyam¹ dog."

Sometimes he becomes planter. That is to say, he rents a small bit of land on which there may happen to be two or three fruit-bearing trees. These give him the right to have and to sell fruit all the year round, even though no one may have known them to bear. He may even become a strong critic of the agricultural methods of others, for, as a rule, he has a voluminous flow of language, and a magisterial way of delivering his opinions, gained by a frequent attendance at the nearest police court.

I see his type at every railway station, complacently gazing at the passengers in the train. I see the inevitable vendors of bread and cake and fruit, selling to the Lord alone knows whom, for the things they sell never appear to diminish in quantity.

Near the stations are usually a few buggies waiting for their owners who are coming by train and who may live ten or fifteen miles from the station. Some of the traps have an antiquated appearance, but they go over the ground very well, and that, after all, is the chief consideration.

Almost everybody who is anybody owns a buggy and a couple of horses in the country districts of Jamaica. Not to do so is definitely to take your place amongst the working classes or the smaller peasant proprietors; and, if you are a white or a coloured man, you will surely forfeit all claim to respect if you travel the shortest distances on foot. In a tropical country

¹ Eat.

certain conventions must be observed, however unnecessary they may appear to be. To be white and poor is a calamity; to be white, or light-hued, and yet be obliged to do without a servant—that is social suicide. For wages are low in the country districts of Jamaica, and living is cheap so the man whose colour is supposed to give him social rank, but who nevertheless cannot maintain his rank, is contemptuously regarded by the peasants: regarded with good-natured contempt, with a certain amount of pity, and treated a little familiarly.

So galling is this to the proud in spirit that some will go to any lengths to keep up appearances. The steady turning of Fortune's wheel having brought poverty to not a few who once were wealthy, all that may now remain to many a family is the large house built by their ancestors and a few acres of uncultivated land. The house is slowly falling to pieces, the buggy holds together through sheer force of habit, the one man servant on the premises is himself a survival of bygone times. But still he touches his hat to the old ladies, and still they speak to him with consummate dignity. "John," they will say to him of an evening, "drive in the stock." The stock may consist of half a dozen goats and a solitary cow, but the word is pronounced as though ten thousand head of cattle were roaming over countless acres of land. Then, on a Sunday, John harnesses Rosinante to the rickety buggy and drives his mistresses to church. Prim, proud, living in the past, feeling sure that the country has degenerated beyond all hope of recovery, they attend the nearest Episcopalian place of worship to set an example to their inferiors and to maintain the traditions of their family. They feel that they and such as they are disappearing fast: they say that a new order has arisen. . . . As the train leaves the station, and I see the buggies rolling slowly over the road with some representative of the old order of things, I think of John and the stock, and my sympathy goes out to those who have seen the world changing around them without quite knowing how and who cannot understand why it is that they have been left to stagnate in the backwaters of life.

In the train itself are men who represent the new order, and these are journeying back from Kingston to Port Antonio or to some other place along the line. They are prosperous looking, these planters; dressed in heavy tweeds despite the climate (some of them also wear top-boots), they are clean-shaven for the most part, and rather portly if they are over forty years of age. Their talk is chiefly of the coming crop and of the price of bananas, and of the freight rates charged by the railway, which they denounce as infamously high. Some of them are dark men, but the point of view of the white and the dark banana planter is precisely the same; agriculture creates a psychology peculiar to itself, so that one agriculturist thinks much as does another on all questions concerning the colony as a whole.

Living in the country, with his nearest neighbour of like position some five or six miles away, and with a large peasant population looking up to him

as the great man of the district, he thinks that the Government should regard the planter with particular care and solicitude, mingled with deference and respect. He is not quite sure that the Government has not degenerated. "Clerks in the Colonial Office are being made Governors in these days, my dear sir," he sometimes says; "yet once Jamaica had earls and dukes to govern her." Thus far his knowledge of the history of Jamaica may extend; he also has strong opinions on the necessity of the Government's subsidising coolie immigration, "for," he says, "how could agriculture, the backbone of the island, thrive without indentured labourers?" You may agree with him that such labourers are necessary, but may disagree that a Government subsidy is needed. That argument does not move him; he simply repeats the proposition without any qualification whatever: is he not a planter, and must he not know? Withal a kindly and easy-going man in the main, and hospitable to a fault. Conservative, slow-going, genial, he is not at all a bad representative of the character of the country in which he lives.

In the second-class carriages one finds a multi-coloured crowd. Hindoos and Chinamen, black men and black women, coloured men and coloured women, one or two white men and women. The fare here is just one-half what it is in the first-class carriages, and the difference is a consideration if you are poor. Some of the men are smoking, a few may be sleeping, some are talking; and I hear one tell another that "I will not prognosticate you in your discourse, for the terminus of your conversation is drawing to an end." I take it that the speaker means something, though just what I cannot possibly guess. But I know his type, and I find it intensely interesting.

He is a small proprietor who also buys bananas in small quantities from the peasants and sells them to the United or Atlantic fruit companies. Thus he makes money and is at all times possessed by a sense of his own importance. Offend him and he brings you up. He has a liking for lawsuits. He does not object to being brought up himself: rather likes it in fact. "When I done sell me bananas," said one such immortal person, "if I meet a man on me way home I kick him." The idea he wished to convey was that the kicking was to be performed through sheer lightness of heart and in the exuberance of good spirits. Having sold his bananas he would have money enough to pay any fine likely to be imposed by the magistrate, and, that being so, kicking another person might reasonably be regarded as the legitimate enjoyment of one's superior financial position. Happily, he rests content as a rule with knowing that he can kick a man if so disposed. The mere sense of power being pleasant, he does not often actually carry out his threat.

It would be unsafe for him to do so. The lowest Jamaica peasant does not tolerate ill-treatment or abuse. Working when he pleases, and knowing that coercion cannot be applied to him, he has developed a sense of personal independence which leads him to resent even an imaginary insult. So one

has to be careful in dealing with him, for he answers back. Indeed, he warns you at the start that you must not let him "get ignorant." To lose one's temper is to get ignorant, and when one gets ignorant one says unmentionable things, and leaves one's work and makes any amount of trouble. Fortunately, the ignorance does not last. Everybody forgets quickly in Jamaica.

We arrive at Port Antonio at about half-past six o'clock. The number of vehicles waiting at the station shows that this is a busy and prosperous little town; shows, too, that not many persons walk here. But I choose to walk this evening, so, sending on my luggage by the Titchfield Hotel's van, I leave the station yard and strike the high-road that becomes one of the streets of Port Antonio a little further on. In a very few moments I comprehend the character of the place.

It is a thriving town—in Central America it would be called a city—a town where a great deal of money is made in a quiet, leisurely fashion. It is a city set upon a hill, as you perceive when the train is nearing the place. The best residential portion of it is on the top of the hill, a lofty promontory that juts out into the sea. As though it were a castle defending the seaward approaches to the town, the Titchfield Hotel towers above all the other buildings and looks down upon the sea. All the best folk live on the top of the hill or on the sides thereof, letting their lights so shine that they may be seen far away and that men may think well of the good people of Port Antonio.

Port Antonio is the chief town of the parish of Portland, which was named after the Duke of Portland, one of Jamaica's former Governors. The Titchfield lands bear the name of the Duke's eldest son, Lord Titchfield. Thirty years or so ago Port Antonio was but an insignificant village; to-day it is second in commercial importance to Kingston and is the headquarters of the banana shipping trade. It is entirely an American town, a town that has rapidly sprung into existence, that depends upon one industry, and that takes its tone from the Americans who come yearly in their thousands to Port Antonio. As I walk towards the hotel I see shops and lodging-houses all open and lighted, and some of the townspeople moving quietly about, and many buggies driving up and down. The shops are not large but are well stocked; the streets, you observe, are paved with macadam and have concrete gutters; the houses away from "the hill" are low wooden structures, nothing at all to look at, but interesting as types of West Indian town residences of the poorer sort.

A wide street leads to the hill; climbs the hill in fact. As you go up you catch more than one glimpse of the sea on your right hand, and presently you are passing between two rows of comfortable-looking houses; then a turn to the left brings you to the street that leads to the hotel.

Painted wood is the material used for building most of the pretty cottages one sees all around; and each cottage has its low garden fence and its little garden filled with tropical shrubs. Cramped for space as is the town of Port Antonio, it yet has managed to spare some land for æsthetic purposes, and

it has reaped its reward. For "the hill," with its well-kept streets and its holiday atmosphere, is one of the prettiest spots to be found in Jamaica. And as I see crowds of tourists walking or riding in the streets bordered by gardens in which all sorts of colours flame and blend, I understand how it is that the American tourist loves Port Antonio.

It is the American that has made the town. It is American enterprise that has built up the banana industry of the parish. And the great hotel which is the crowning glory of the hill was built, is owned, and is managed by Americans.

It is one of the best hotels I have ever been into. It is better than any hotel in Cuba or in Central America. They are now building an hotel in Kingston, to be opened in January, 1910, which is to be in all respects like the Titchfield, and which is, indeed, to be under the same management. There are also other hotels in the island, and good lodging-houses too; and as Jamaica becomes more of a tourist resort, others will be built. But Titchfield stands first at present, though the Myrtle Bank in Kingston may be its rival later on. And after stopping at Titchfield for a little time I can quite understand its popularity.

It not only provides excellent food and accommodation, but it also caters liberally for the amusement of its guests. Excursions to the picturesque parts of the parish, trips down the river, sea-bathing, balls, horse-riding, motoring—you have these in rapid succession, and it is wonderful to see how the energetic American girls spend hour after hour in a continuous round of enjoyment. The older folk, those who come to Jamaica for rest and recuperation, sit on the verandah of the hotel and look out upon the sea during the warmer portion of the day: they warm themselves in the mellow sunlight and let the cool sea breezes play upon them. The effect is marvellous. They recover their energy in a week, and you see them going about everywhere quite as briskly as the younger people. I wonder, by the way, what an American would do if he lost his energy entirely?

The American, who is not liked in Cuba, is, on the contrary, liked in Jamaica. In this island he is not identified with troublesome political questions. He offends nobody. He is pleased to find a negro population altogether unlike the American negro, and it is sometimes amusing to hear a party of Americans extolling the virtues of a little black boy or brown girl with whom they have been talking. As 65 per cent. of Jamaica's exports go to America, too, the people of the island feel that their connection with America is close. Hence the general good feeling which the American in Jamaica so much appreciates.

But life on "the hill" in Port Antonio, though picturesque and interesting, is but one part of the life of Port Antonio. The other part delights me also. After dinner one night I strolled from the hotel down the hill and then to the big wharf of the United Fruit Company where two ships were being loaded with bananas. Every now and then huge wagons filled with fruit

and drawn by teams of mules came thundering up the road and into the wharf at full speed. The fruit was rapidly checked and heaped into some wooden structures near at hand, and, even while this was going on, gangs of boys and men and women stood in single file, each with a bunch of bananas on his or her shoulder. As each one stepped forward he or she received a brass counter from one of the agents of the company; and the bananas they carried were taken from them by men in the ships and stored safely in the hold. Sometimes they sang as they worked. At intervals you heard the "tally!" of the man in charge as he checked the bunches of bananas carried past him. It was a busy, animated scene, full of interest and of humour and of life.

On the pier itself some amusing incidents were taking place. A huge electric arc lamp lit up the scene. Seated nearly under this lamp was a woman who was selling to the workers sundry delicacies, such as fritters, bread, "lapped fish," &c. Around her was a group of admirers who had collected, partly for the purpose of admiring the seller, partly to admire and cast longing glances at her wares. There was amongst them one young man who was particularly solicitous in his attentions. Two or three times he had even purchased a quattie's worth of her goods, remarking each time as he did so, "See, I deh work fe you."¹ At last, growing bolder he touched her with his foot. She took no notice of this. Then he touched her again. Still no sign from her. Then he touched her a third time; upon which the following conversation ensued:—

Lady: "Boy, what you hab wid me? Me trouble you? Tap! it seem like you farrad!"²

Boy: "But me no do you noten? Me only touch you wid me foot."

Lady: "But wah you touch me wid you foot for? A wus in a you Guinea Niger; de moment somebody mek little fun wid unoo,³ unoo feget you'self."

Gentleman (who was standing near-by regarding the scene with a profoundly philosophic countenance): "But I say, why can't you fellahs behave unoo self, eh?" Waxing indignant, he continued: "Ef dat female was my fambly I wud a hole you an' gie you what you lookin' for."

Another Boy: "But it seems like him want to put courting question to de female."

Original Boy: "And why not? Don't question mek to be put?"

Lady: "Yes, question mek to be put, bot not by you."

Here the curtain was rung down. But it must not be thought that the lady's sharp answers meant that she rejected her would-be lover "for ever and a day." Not a bit of it. It was becoming that she should reject his advances at first: that is all. I have no doubt that he finally conquered.

All night long the loading of the ships went on, and day and night the scene is repeated. And this same company that takes bananas to America brings thousands of tourists to Jamaica. As I write I learn that arrangements

¹ "See, I am working for you."

² Impertinent.

³ You.

are being made to replace the present tourist ships with a fleet of splendid pleasure boats, and this should do a great deal to increase the tourist trade of Jamaica. It is as a tourist resort that the island will become best known in the immediate future, and this new arrangement on the part of the United Fruit Company shows that, as usual, the Americans have accurately foreseen the future of Jamaica.

Another pretty little town of Jamaica lies on the north side also—I speak of Montego Bay. I cannot write of it here, but its atmosphere of dreamy repose, its clean white streets, its old-world air of respectability, its quiet pride: all this appeals to me with peculiar charm; besides, it has a future which may be second only to that of Kingston.

Jamaica is awakening. That is the impression that stamps itself indelibly upon one's mind as one notes the changes and improvements that are taking place throughout the island. With its splendid means of communication, its peaceful peasantry, its settled government and its fertile lands, it cannot but continue to develop, especially when the Panama Canal opens and the Caribbean Sea again becomes one of the great ocean highways of the world.

But is this island to be chiefly an agricultural country and a tourist resort? Will it have no manufactures? Manufactures, so far as I can see, will never thrive in Jamaica. A manufacturing country requires a considerable number of disciplined workers, to mention nothing else, and, as Sir Sydney Olivier has shown in his masterly work on "White Capital and Coloured Labour," the West Indian labourer will never allow himself to be regimented into factories and workshops. He will become more and more an owner of the soil, and will sell his spare time to the cultivators of larger properties; but, even so, Jamaica will prosper greatly: for if she does not manufacture things for export, she will be able to grow large quantities of the raw material of manufacture. But I must not be understood to say that she will manufacture nothing whatever, for, as a matter of fact, she is now making for herself things that once she bought from England or America. Thus the P. A. Benjamin Manufacturing Company of Kingston not only supplies the island with a large quantity of the patent medicines and dentrifices used, but has actually established a thriving export trade in these things with Central America, Cuba, and the other West Indian islands. Then all the aerated waters, and a good quantity of the "preserves" now consumed in the island, are made locally and are of excellent quality. But these are as nothing compared with the splendid agricultural possibilities of the country. Jamaica lies almost virgin, awaiting the development that is certain to come. She has some 3,000 square miles of cultivable land awaiting the advent of the capitalist and exploiter. Her mountain tops are as fertile as her rich valleys. There is hardly any product of the tropics that she cannot produce. And, if Cuba is the Pearl, she indubitably is the Queen of the Antilles. That is the title she claims.

CHAPTER X

A VISIT TO PANAMA

“COLON!”

The cry came from a few deckers who seemed to have been watching all night for a first glimpse of the land to which they were bound. For hours I had heard them chattering. Sea-sickness did not deter them, and the loud plash of the waves against the vessel's side only impelled them to violent vocal exertions. A glance out of the porthole of my cabin showed them to me, a group of six, half-reclining on canvas chairs and apparently more comfortable than many a first-class passenger who might then be enduring all the horrors of a sea voyage. The sky above was dark with heavy rain-clouds that hung low and the sea ran fiercely—one vast expanse of slate-coloured water. Not a star, not a light of any kind, and yet the keen-eyed watchers on the deck had perceived in the distance something which looked like a huge cloud on the horizon and which they had instantly guessed to be their destination. By straining one's eyes one could just perceive it; but it was not Colon, for that town lay fully some fifteen miles away. Still it was part of the Isthmus of Panama, and as the sunlight began slowly and painfully to fight its way through the clouds that wrapped everything as with a shroud, you could see stretched out for miles the low-lying inhospitable shores of the country which has one of the most romantic histories in the world.

There the mainland of Panama lay, dreary, ugly, uninviting. One could see the waves breaking listlessly against the shore, just as though the very energy of the water were affected by the terrible, steaming heat which seemed to stifle every one. There was something unspeakably gloomy about the scene, something depressing, and so it was in silence that both deckers and saloon passengers watched the mangrove-covered banks slip by as the ship sped on her way.

A wonderful country and a strange is this Isthmus of Panama, a country of startling contradictions, too, for what is it now some four hundred years after its discovery by the Spaniard? In former times it was one of the great high-

ways of the world, for across it were brought the gold and jewels which the Spanish plundered in Peru. It has been the scene of some of Drake's greatest exploits, it was the place from which Pizarro and Almagro set out upon their conquest of the Empire of the Incas. In later times it has been the bloody battle-ground of the Colombian revolutionary forces and the grave of the reputation of Ferdinand de Lesseps. To-day one finds there a labour force of 40,000 men toiling unceasingly towards the completion of the canal which is to unite the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. And on this narrow strip of land is also to be found the greatest collection of engineering implements ever yet concentrated on one spot and devoted to a single undertaking.

And yet Panama is still largely a country of primeval forests and swamps and undeveloped plains. In the interior uncivilised Indians still roam; there are few roads, few evidences of civilisation; and Nature, wild and untamed, seems always watching for the moment when she shall cover with luxuriant vegetation the last evidence of man's efforts to subdue her to his will. As one travels over the forty miles of country that divides the Atlantic from the Pacific Ocean, and sees how unceasingly the forest creeps in upon the railway track and the rivers menace the settlements, one feels that the struggle between man and nature will never end. For leave town or train but a few yards behind, and around you everything is much as the Spaniards first found it. On the Atlantic seaboard the rains fall in torrents for eight months out of twelve. The rivers break their banks and flood the surrounding jungle. A thousand plants struggle for life where only one or two may grow. This, also, is a region of earthquakes and of terrific storms. Surely it is not in such a place that civilisation can ever come to the fine flower of perfection.

But my fellow-passengers, the emigrants on deck, are not troubling their minds with such speculations. On the contrary, they are viewing the land before them as one of magnificent promise. The Spaniard went to the Isthmus, as to other parts of America, to seek for gold, and he, too, pictured the land as one of promise: in these later times, the West Indian peasant dreams of Panama as the country where fortune awaits him, and where a few months of effort will bring a golden reward.

The deckers who have come over on this ship (one of the splendid boats of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's Line) are all Jamaicans. There is something pathetic about them, though perhaps they themselves do not perceive it. For weeks and months before they left their homes they had been thinking of this voyage and preparing for it. They had saved a little money, but most likely had found it was not enough; so the household gods were sacrificed? the chairs and tables, perhaps even the bed, had to be sold before the necessary sum could be made up to pay for the passage and to lodge in the Treasury the 25s. demanded by the Government for repatriation purposes.

Now the emigrant may not find life easier in Panama, he may find it

harder; but at the very least he will find it different, and that is what he craves. He will return home some day, but never will he forget his experience "over sea"; and in after years the memory of life in a labour camp where the rain fell in torrents daily, or in fetid, unbeautiful Colon, where all night long the shrill shrieks of railway engines broke in upon the silence, and where the squalor of tenements reared upon piles planted in sodden earth was equalled only by the squalor of the streets—this memory will come back to him, and even the hardships of that time will seem to him an experience worth having.

An hour after we first sighted land we came to anchor in the harbour of Colon, and the bad character of the place stood confessed the first moment we saw it. The wharves are mean in appearance, and everything has a temporary, insecure look about it. Low houses painted white and dingy red, with cocoanut palms along the shore—that is Colon as seen from the sea. The palms redeem it from absolute ugliness; but even at a distance one can see it is but a town of sheds and bungalows, a camp set down by the edge of the sea; and yet it is not without interest, for certainly it is one of the most important places on the Atlantic side of Central America.

Colon, the visitor is told to-day, has been greatly improved.

You look about you and feel that there is still much room for improvement; so much indeed that you question whether there has been any attempt at improvement at all. But I remember Colon as it was five years ago, and so I do not need to be told how greatly its appearance has changed since that time.

Imagine a swamp in which all kinds of slimy things lived, and which was covered with rank green shrubs. Then imagine houses resting on piles driven into the swamp, and you have the greater part of old Colon. You stepped from the house on to a plank of wood that led to an evil-smelling and sodden street; that plank was your only road. Flies innumerable buzzed round the putrid animal matter rotting in the stagnant water below, and, as you stepped gingerly from plank to plank at the imminent risk of a mud bath, you wondered how human beings could consent to live amidst such frightful surroundings.

And yet they seemed not only to live but to thrive. The two- and three-storey tenements were crowded to their utmost capacity, six or eight persons herding in one small room. On washing-day the clothes were hung out to dry on lines tied round the verandahs, so that the domestic life of a family was lived in one or two apartments; they slept, cooked, washed, dined within the four walls of a little room and in the very midst of a noisome swamp. They told you, too, that they hardly ever suffered, save from a little fever now and then: that was their story, but the doctor told a different one. The head of the Colon hospital said to me one day that fully 60 per cent. of apparently healthy people in Colon were simply swarming with malarial parasites, and that sooner or later the end must come. Some day the victim would fall un-

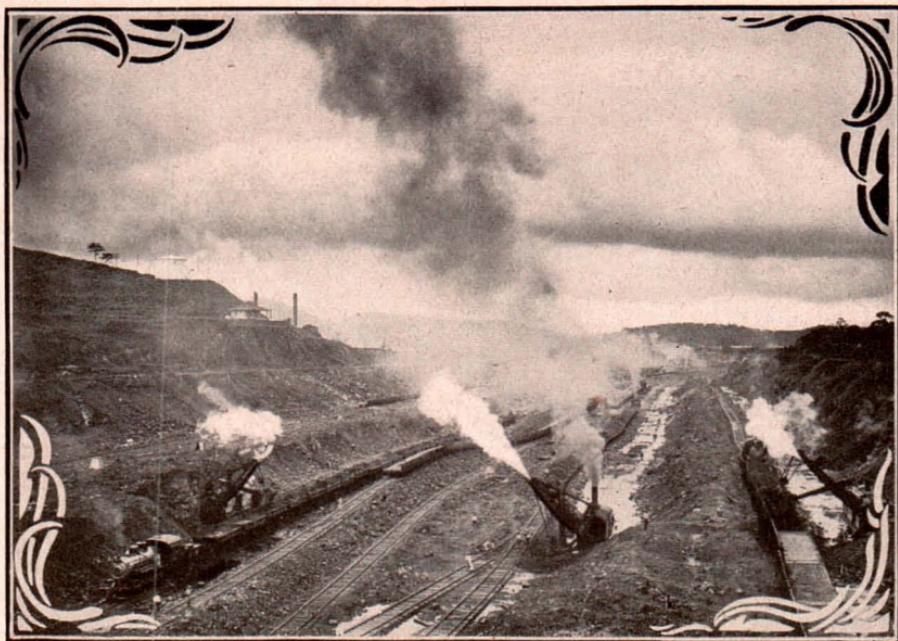
conscious, and be taken home or to the hospital, hardly ever to rally again. Then, periodically, an epidemic of yellow fever would break out, or bubonic plague or smallpox would make its appearance.

It is different now. The people of the place do not exaggerate when they tell you Colon is much improved.

It is true that on this rain-sodden wind-swept strip of partially redeemed swamp, which five years ago was almost wholly under water, there are fifteen thousand West Indian and Panamanian negroes concentrated, most of them entirely ignorant of sanitation, most of them dirty, all of them forced to crowd in barrack-like buildings which a Frenchman has rightly likened to poultry-houses. It is true that all the domestic duties have still to be performed in one or two little rooms. But whereas, in the past, you were compelled to drink water collected by gutters on the roof of a house and stored in a tank, and had to sleep in rooms infested with malarial mosquitoes, you will now find water mains, concrete gutters, sewerage pipes and wire-screened houses everywhere in Colon. Nearly a million dollars have been spent in making the town healthy. Mere figures give but a poor idea of the astonishing work that has been done there, yet it may be interesting to know that in Colon, where but five years ago water-pipes were unknown, seventy thousand feet of pipes have been laid, and fifteen hundred houses connected with them. Then the streets have all been paved and widened, side-walks have been built, and a canal cut through the centre of the town takes the surface drainage to the sea.

And all this has been done in the teeth of difficulties. I have been in Colon while the work of construction was going on, and have seen water being pumped out of trenches even while the rain was steadily pouring down. Stones for paving had sometimes to be dragged from a distance of twenty or thirty miles, the material in the vicinity of Colon being so worthless that it went to powder under the heel of the pedestrian. Still, in spite of all that has been done, Colon is, and will always remain, a town of squalid tenements and filthy liquor saloons.

Front Street in Colon is interesting mainly because of the crowd one constantly sees moving about it. Americans with their jackets flung across their shoulders, negroes without any jackets, Panamanians who seem bent upon shuffling through existence without overmuch exertion, Spaniards and Italians with sallow dirty faces and indifferent mein, an Englishman or two, American women who walk along the few piazzas bare-headed and with rapid energetic steps, Panamanian women with their hair parted in the middle and drawn into a bunch at the back of the head, and with the inevitable black or yellow mantilla round their shoulders; these and other types one will see every day in the main streets of Colon, while in every saloon will be men of all nationalities seated drinking at little square tables, or buying lottery tickets from awful-looking Chinese or Panamanian women.



CULEBRA CUT, ISTHMUS OF PANAMA.



DEE STREET, COLON.

The city of Panama, the capital of the Republic, lies on the Pacific slope of the Isthmus, and even before they began to clean out and reconstruct Colon the Canal authorities had taken in hand the improvement of Panama, which was then one of the unhealthiest spots to be found in all Central America. I was prepared for something unclean when I first determined to visit the city, but my actual experience was far worse than anything I had expected. First of all, the railway station of wood and corrugated iron, painted in some dark, ugly colour, impressed me most unfavourably. Then, as one drove towards the centre of the town, one was greeted by sights and smells which made one shudder. There were no drains to carry off the water from the yards: on either side of the street there were merely shallow gutters that had been dug by a spade, and in those gutters the garbage of the city festered and stank. As you passed some of the poorest classes of dwellings you noticed, too, that the ground floor was somewhat below the level of the street. And through the wide-open doors you caught a glimpse of old chairs and rickety truckle beds of dirt and squalor and confusion, of lazy men and slatternly women, and of children without any clothes.

Even in the centre of the town, where the Cathedral, the Grand Central Hotel and the Municipal Offices are situated, the sanitary conditions were almost as bad. There were no drains, and the rough cobble-stone pavement had been allowed to go out of repair, so that the main streets of the city were full of horrible holes that were pits for the feet of the unwary. All the buildings looked dilapidated; grass grew on one of the towers of the old Cathedral, naked children played upon its steps. The city seemed to be in the last stages of decay, and in its back alleys lurked the germs of yellow fever and bubonic plague. To-day it rivals Havana for cleanliness, has several fine new buildings, and is better paved than any British West Indian city.

It was in 1905 that the Americans first realised what sort of enemy they had in yellow fever. In April of that year yellow fever broke out amongst the employees of the Canal Commission and a wild exodus from the Zone began. But the situation was promptly taken in hand by the Commission. Some four thousand men were immediately employed to fumigate the houses, pave the streets, lay water-pipes and sewer mains, and to connect the houses with these. The water supply of the city was also purified and the reservoir which the French had built some miles away from Panama was cleaned and repaired. A new quarantine station was established, and a new system of inspection instituted which has up to now succeeded in preventing plagues and fevers from being introduced into the city by passengers arriving from South American ports. Then the maintenance of the sewers, the waterworks, the streets, and the quarantine stations in Panama and Colon were handed over to the Canal Commission's Department of Civil Administration, and so, though the Republic is expected to pay for all these works of improvement during the next fifty years, it is the

United States Government that will actually control the sanitary administration of Colon and Panama.

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The town of Colon is the property of the Panamanian Republic; to the east of it, and separated by but a narrow street, is the town of Christobal; and as you enter it the difference between the two places strikes you at once. You are now in the first of the Zone towns and at the Atlantic entrance of the Panama Canal. A broad, well-kept street fronts the sea, and two long lines of graceful cocoanut palms make it the pleasantest promenade in all Panama. Just behind this avenue are the houses of the white employees of the Zone; street after street of them, and all of them painted white, and all with green shutters, and so built that the sea breeze sweeps through them night and day. Those who designed and built them had, clearly, two objects in view. The first was health, for these houses rest on high foundations and have innumerable doors and windows, each of which is covered with a thin sheet of finely perforated metal, which lets in air and light, but which also effectually prevents the mosquito from entering. The other object aimed at was comfort; thus a Zone house for a family man, though it has no yard, has every other convenience; the rooms are all fitted up with electric light; the pantry and the kitchen are a part of the main building (which is not usually the case in tropical countries), while the bath-room and the broad verandahs are models of what such things ought to be in a climate like Panama's.

These houses are all furnished by the American Government. Comfortable wicker chairs and oak tables; spring-beds with mosquito nets; sideboards on which one sees laid out an abundance of glassware and cutlery; a hammock here and there, a child's crib, a piano perhaps—these you will find in almost every one of these Zone cottages. For the single men, huge wooden buildings have been erected, and in these the bachelors have their furnished apartments. Bachelors dine at the Zone hotels which are to be found all along the Canal route, the fare supplied being good and the price surprisingly moderate. Food and clothing are also sold in these Zone towns, the Commissariat being one of the most important of the Canal Commission's departments. The negro and Italian labourers may either buy their raw food stuffs at the commissaries, or, for 30 cents a day, be supplied with three substantial meals each day by the Zone authorities. These labourers are, of course, also provided with quarters, to which are attached bath-houses and kitchens; and these are kept clean and sanitary by a special corps of the Sanitation Department.

I first saw the negro quarter of an American Zone town at night. Picture to yourself long rows of barrack-like houses, and near these some smaller structures in which a score of little fires are blazing. I peep into one: a tall black man is frying an egg, further on something in the nature of a stew

is simmering in a pot. Inside the houses themselves you find groups of men seated round a box playing cards, or listening to one of their number who is playing softly on a fife. Others are already in bed.

These beds are canvas cots fixed on iron frames which can open and shut as required ; each cot-stand is about eight feet high, and has three cots hung on either side of it. Eighty or a hundred men sleep in one of these buildings, which, when crowded, cannot be comfortable ; but if the single labourer has not much in the way of luxury in the quarters provided for him by the Zone Government, the married man has little to complain of. He has a room, and sometimes three or four rooms, for himself and his family. And every house, office or kitchen in the Zone has been made mosquito-proof, with this result : that a death-rate which stood at forty per thousand about five years ago has since been reduced by three-fourths.

Over one hundred thousand persons live on the little strip of land forty-seven miles long and ten miles wide which is known as the Canal Zone, and the Panamanian Government has no authority within that territory. Indeed, not only is the United States supreme within the boundaries of the Zone, but it also has considerable jurisdiction over the affairs of the Panamanian Republic. It is clearly set forth in the treaty between America and Panama that the former can compel the cities of Colon and Panama to comply with the sanitary ordinances of the United States ; and the Zone with its heterogeneous population is not only kept clean and healthy, but is also admirably policed and efficiently administered. There is a Supreme Court with its three judges. There is a Circuit Court which meets regularly at the appointed times. There is trial by jury. These are municipal judges who are also Mayors of their respective districts and judges of the local courts. The judiciary has its own proper officers, is entirely independent of the police, and is said to be fair in its judgments. The judges, too, are well paid, and are appointed by the United States Government.

But the housing of thousands of labourers, the policing of the Zone, the establishment of hospitals, and the cleaning out and reconstruction of the towns of Panama and Colon were, though absolutely essential, but the preliminaries to the mighty undertaking upon which the people of the United States had set their heart. After the Isthmus of Panama had been made fairly healthy, and the labouring force had been provided for, the real work of digging the Canal commenced in good earnest and has up to the present been continued with ever-increasing determination and speed. The Canal construction operations have been divided into four sections. At the Colon end of the Canal, and at the La Boca end on the Pacific Coast, one may see the huge floating dredges incessantly at work deepening the two entrances to the Canal. The slush and mud raised by these dredges are taken away by steam dredging-boats and emptied into the ocean. In the interior, where the problem of taming and con-

trolling the Chagres River has to be dealt with, dredging also proceeds. The Chagres crosses the line of the Canal some twenty-three times, and as its repeated flooding of the country has softened the earth, dredges are employed in the work of excavation along this portion of the Canal route. But by far the most gigantic scene of operations is to be found at the Culebra division of the works, and those who have stood on one of the eminences overlooking the great "Cut," and gazed upon that wonderful spectacle of human energy and enterprise, must surely feel that they have been spectators of a mighty effort which well deserves the admiration of the world.

To reach Culebra you take the train at Christobal, and in three minutes you have left houses and shops behind and are pushing through the dense Central American jungle. No one can walk here with safety, for on either hand are swamps into which you may sink to your knees. Awful places these are, and infested with poisonous snakes and venomous mosquitoes. Tall, rank grass grows in them, and the tree trunks lying here and there are rotting and decayed. Even in the woods where the swamps give place to sodden earth one is not safe.

Alight from the train and wander into those dark depths for a moment, and you will feel that you are cut off from the outer world and civilisation. In the strange stillness every sound takes on a peculiar distinctness, and the cry of some animal or the snapping of a twig will cause one's heart to leap or one's chest to tighten, and will bring to the mind a vague, uncanny sense of fear. Here and there the sunlight struggles through the thick leafy roof, and looking up you may perchance catch a glimpse of the dull blue sky above. Great, beautiful butterflies, larger than your hand, and arrayed in hues no pen can portray, flit solemnly around. Rare insects are here and deadly tarantulas whose bite is certain death. Of a surety the place seems the haunt of the nightmare, and of all the terrors of the unknown.

But in the train we are safe from all danger except such as may threaten the eye when the hot cinders from the engine are borne in through the windows by the rush of air.

And how does the outer world look as we fly along? Dreary and wild. In tropical islands like Jamaica, or even Trinidad, one sees the towering hills clothed from base to summit with glorious vegetation; clothed with beauty by every imaginable tint of green, and touched to softness by the graceful creepers that cling to the giants of the forest, or send down their long tendrils from the branches that gracefully sway with the breeze. Or may be a sudden turn in the road will bring one in full view of the sea, and one catches sight of the breakers hurling themselves upon the shore, while far away to the horizon the water reflects the colours of the sky and shines iridescent in the bright gold and glory of the sun. But here the sky is never a perfect blue and never cloudless. There is no landscape, and on either hand for most part of the way are only the dense forests and the wild jungle and the swamps.

Numerous little stations are passed on the journey, each one much like the other. At all of them you will see a Zone policeman or two, the Force being composed of white and black officers. During the first part of the journey, too, you repeatedly catch a glimpse of the Chagres River sluggishly flowing to the sea; and the engineers will tell you that the finding of an outlet for its surplus waters was one of the pressing problems of the Canal. It is proposed to use these waters to supply the lake now being constructed at Gatun, five miles from the Atlantic entrance of the Canal. The water from this lake will be let into the Canal when a ship is lifted into the higher section of it by the first flight of locks, and the lake is to cover so large an area that it is believed that even the overflowing of the Chagres will not cause any damage to the Canal itself.

From Colon to Culebra the ground rises steadily, reaching its highest elevation at Culebra hill. Alighting at Culebra station, and walking westward for about a mile, you find yourself looking down upon a wonderful scene. Nearly one-half of the hill was cut away by the French, yet the Americans found that they would have any amount of excavation to do before the level of the Canal was reached. So it is at Culebra that we find the largest towns along the Zone; it is at Culebra and Empire (a next door station) that some twenty thousand persons are congregated: here also that the chief offices of the Administration are situated.

Culebra is a little world. In the morning long lines of cars carry the workers to their stations, and, as these crowd and cluster here and there around the rock drills and the steam shovels, the work of the day begins. Both sides of the hill have been carved into terraces. One above the other these terraces rise, and along each of them railway tracts have been laid, and everywhere are the steam shovels. The men at the bottom of the chasm look as though they were being moved and swung about by these great iron monsters. The trains of dump cars come and go quickly, dozens of them moving at the same time, and nothing is allowed to stand in their way. The steam shovel is an engine fitted with a long crane, at the end of which is an iron box with an oblique side which is covered with a lid. The crane swings round, is lowered; the lid opens and the edge of the box is thrust into the side of the hill. Then with a mighty movement it scrapes the dirt and rock until it is full, and the lid closes and the crane slowly swings round to where the dumping cars stand waiting on the opposite side. As each car is filled the train moves forward a little, and when all the cars have been filled they are dragged to a distance of perhaps some twenty miles, and their contents are dumped; then back again they go, and so on with never a halt for hours. And in the midst of the screaming of steam whistles, and the grating noise of rock drills and steam shovels, comes at intervals the heavy detonation of a dynamite explosion. They are blasting the rocks, they are laying new railway tracts, they are boring fresh

holes for more dynamite charges. In a few years the pigmies with their iron instruments will have split the hill asunder and have flooded the chasm and have finished the locks that will lift and lower the ships that shall pass through the Canal. Where men now toil will be the silence of the sea, and the voyager, as from the deck of his steamer he gazes on the scraped cliffs of Culebra, will be able to form no true idea of the wonderful engineering feats that are now being performed within that narrow gorge.

At five o'clock work ceases, and the labour cars begin to emerge out of the "Cut." Negroes and Italians, American bosses, skilled mechanics—one and all they leave their labours, and in an hour or two the stillness of a tropical evening steals over this scene of strenuous human activity. Now and then a dynamite charge may be fired, now and then a belated train screams out its note of warning as it labours along some terrace of the "Cut." But for the most part it is all silence after the day's work is done.

The Americans will build the Canal. Many critics thought at first that they would fail as the French failed; but the French did an immense amount of work in Panama, and they would have carried through the undertaking had they been able to draw upon the public treasury and been content to waste thousands of lives. The Americans have conquered disease, and have completely organised a system of administration suited to the circumstances obtaining in the Canal Zone; besides, they have the money they need, and every type of machinery required for the work is to be found to-day in Panama. An hour spent in the workshops at Christobal or Gorgona, where the steam engines are kept and the great track-shifting machines constructed; a day in the hospitals of Ancon or Colon; a visit to Culebra; a journey along the Canal route: this is sufficient to make one realise that the Americans have gone to Panama to achieve what others have thought about and have even actually attempted. The old French machinery lying in the jungle and overgrown by weeds testify to a former failure. The incessantly moving steam shovels at Culebra are the symbols of success.

It was estimated at first that the Canal with its harbours and defences would cost 185,000,000 dollars in all; it has already cost almost that. And the Chairman of the Canal Commission has said that it might possibly cost 500,000,000 dollars. That is the price which America may have to pay for the great ditch across the Isthmus; but she does not think so much of the cost as of the necessity of uniting the two oceans that wash her eastern and western shores.

CHAPTER XI

HINTS TO TOURISTS

I. "WHAT shall I wear?" is a question one often hears asked in England and America by persons intending to visit the West Indies. "Anything" would be almost a correct answer; yet one must remember that a West Indian winter is warm, and that heavy winter clothes would be an inconvenience in the West Indies even during the months of December and January. Light tweed suits for men, and muslin or linen dresses for women, are excellent wear in these parts of the tropics. White drill suits are affected by some men, but are not strictly necessary to one's comfort.

II. "What sort of food shall I get?" is the unspoken thought of many a visitor. Much the same sort of food to which you have been accustomed at home. The best hotels in Cuba and Jamaica make a special effort to cater for English and American guests, and the result is generally satisfactory.

In Jamaica you pay so much a day at your hotel: the highest amount asked being 5 dollars (£1) a day. This covers everything. In Cuba, as a rule, you pay so much for your bedroom, and so much for what you eat. This system is known as "the American plan." It costs about twice as much to live in Cuba as in Jamaica.

III. The bedrooms in the West Indian hotel are plainly furnished. They look extremely bare. But light, air, and cleanliness are what one chiefly needs in the West Indies, and if these are secured one may well be content. Upholstered furniture in a warm climate where insects thrive and multiply would be something of a nuisance. Wicker chairs and sofas, and cane-seated oak or mahogany chairs, with iron beds, oak or mahogany clothes presses, bureaux fitted with mirrors—that is the sort of furniture used in a West Indian bedroom. Every bed has a mosquito net, of course.

IV. With ordinary precautions one can keep one's health in the tropics as well as anywhere else. Englishmen have lived in Jamaica for thirty or forty years without a day's illness. You must avoid drinking too much; you must take some exercise; you must go to bed at a reasonable hour—say not later

than eleven o'clock. Sunstroke is so rare in the West Indies that one hardly hears of a case. Yet the tourist, unaccustomed to the heat of the tropics, would be well advised not to spend hours walking about in the sun. He would feel uncomfortable if he did.

There is now no yellow fever in Cuba and Panama, thanks to the Americans. Jamaica was free from yellow fever long years before Cuba or Panama was.

Bubonic plague has never troubled Cuba or Jamaica. Lepers are isolated in Jamaica, where they are very few.

There is no smallpox in either Cuba or Jamaica.

V. Destructive earthquakes occur so rarely in the Great Antilles that their inhabitants do not seriously fear them. Since its discovery, the island of Jamaica has only twice been violently shaken. The interval between the first and the second catastrophe was two hundred years.

VI. Cab fares are moderate in Cuba and Jamaica. The principal cities of Cuba are all provided with electric car services. Kingston also has an excellent car service. The Kingston cars go to Constant Spring, six miles to the north, (fare 4d.); the Hope Gardens, five miles to the north-east, (fare 4d.); to the Rockfort Gardens, three miles to the south-east (fare 2d.).

VII. Buggies and motor-cars can be hired by the day, or for an excursion, in Havana, and in some of the other Cuban cities. The same in Jamaica.

Clarke's livery at Constant Spring and Gordon Town, near Kingston, can safely be recommended to those who wish to see in comfort the hill scenery to the north of Kingston. Mr. Frank Bullen, author of "Back to Sunny Seas," went over the St. Andrew hills with the present writer in one of these buggies. The way in which the horses went up and down the hills was a wonder to us both.

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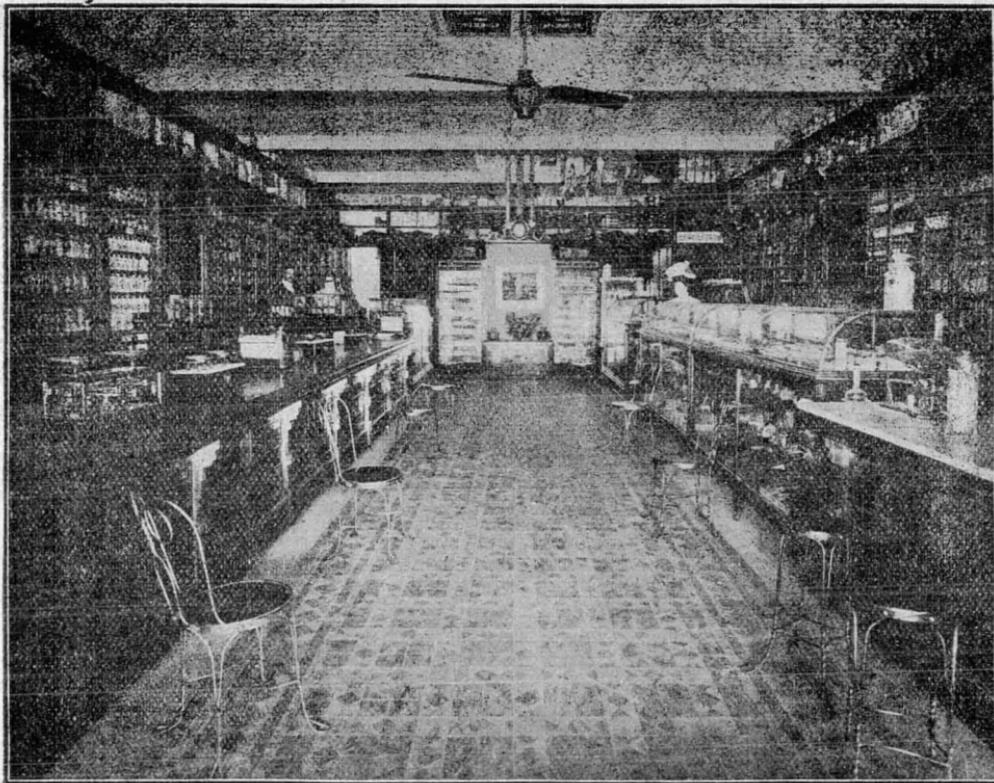
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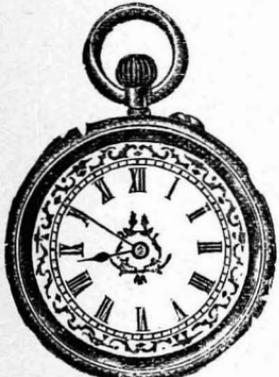
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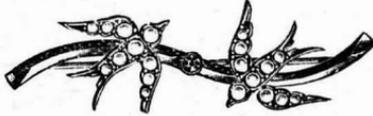
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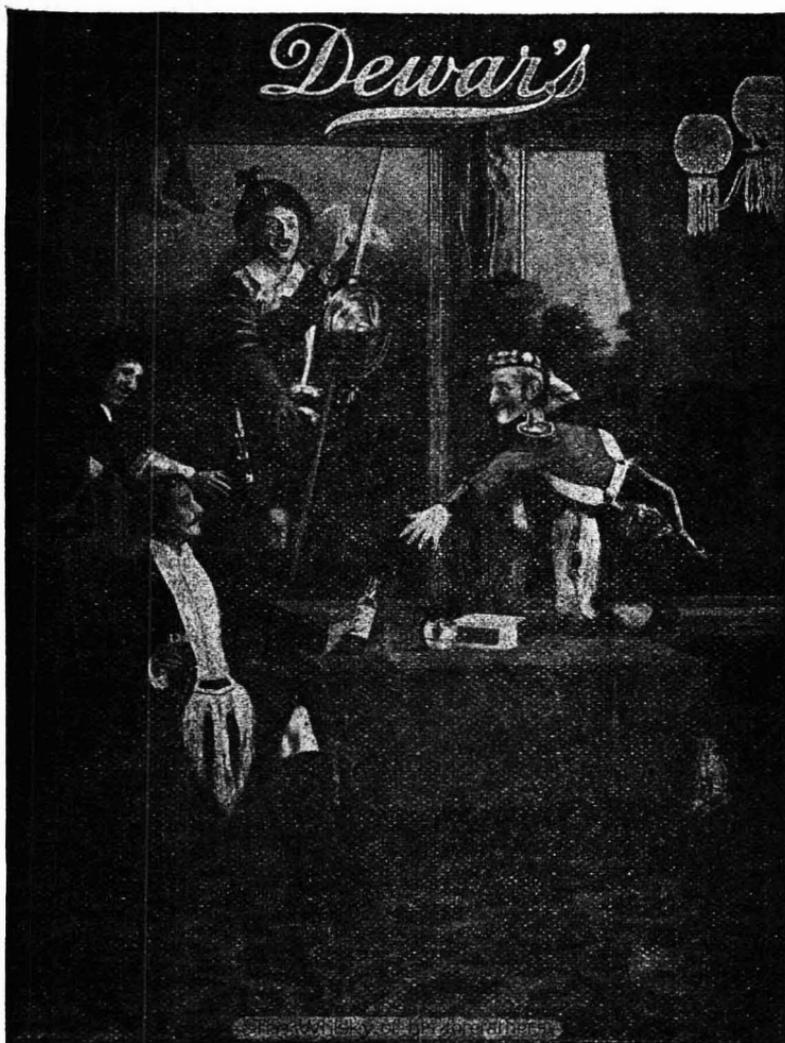
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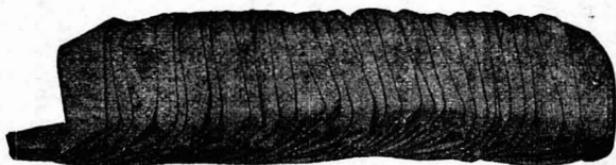
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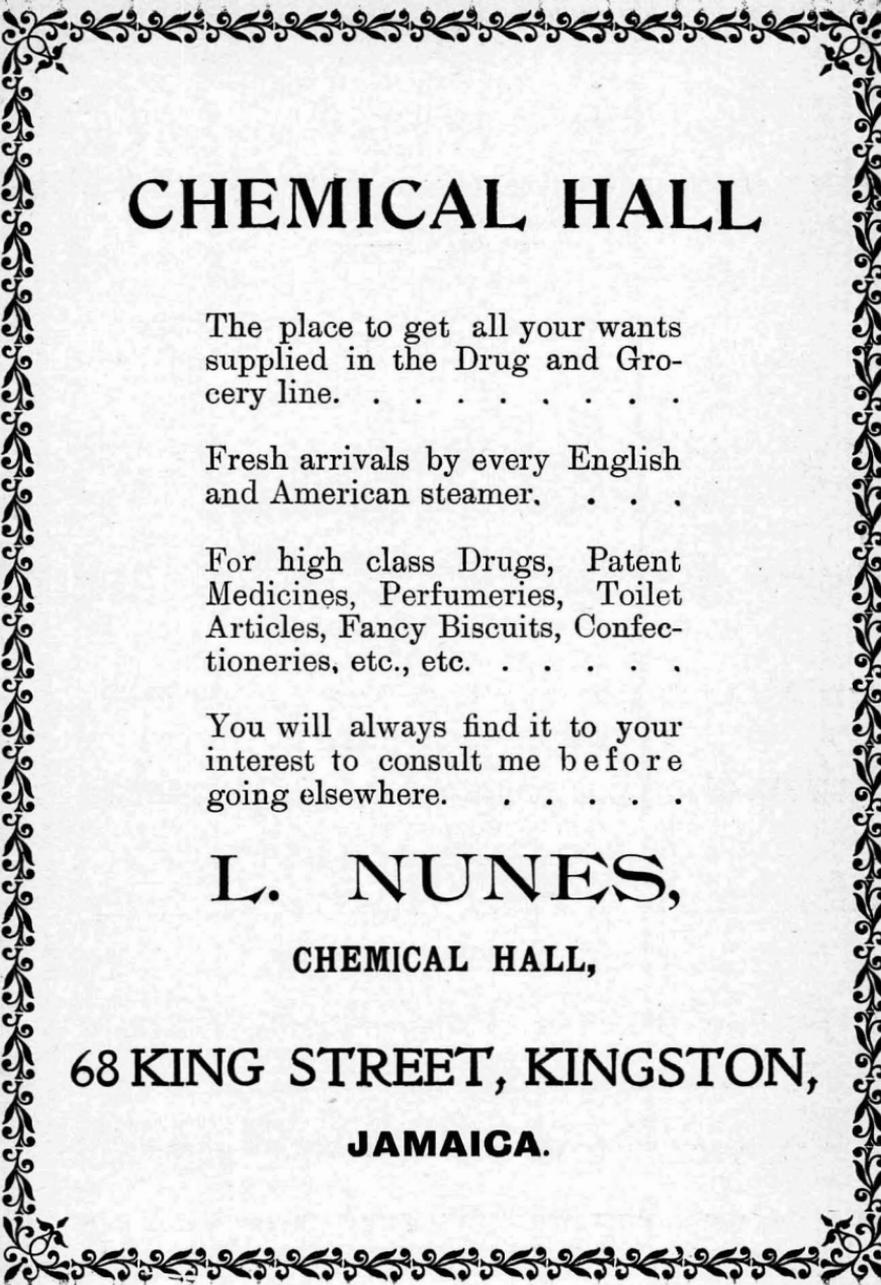
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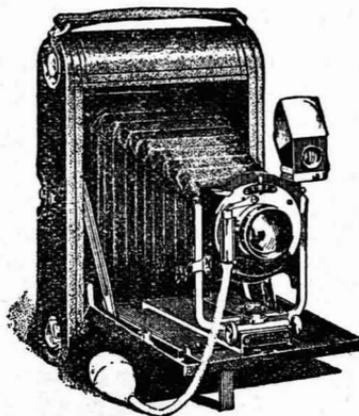
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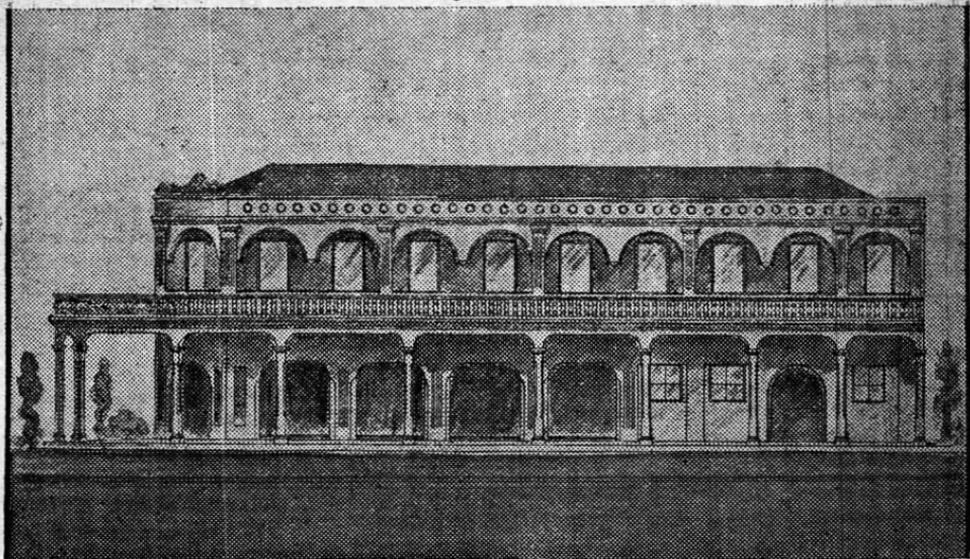
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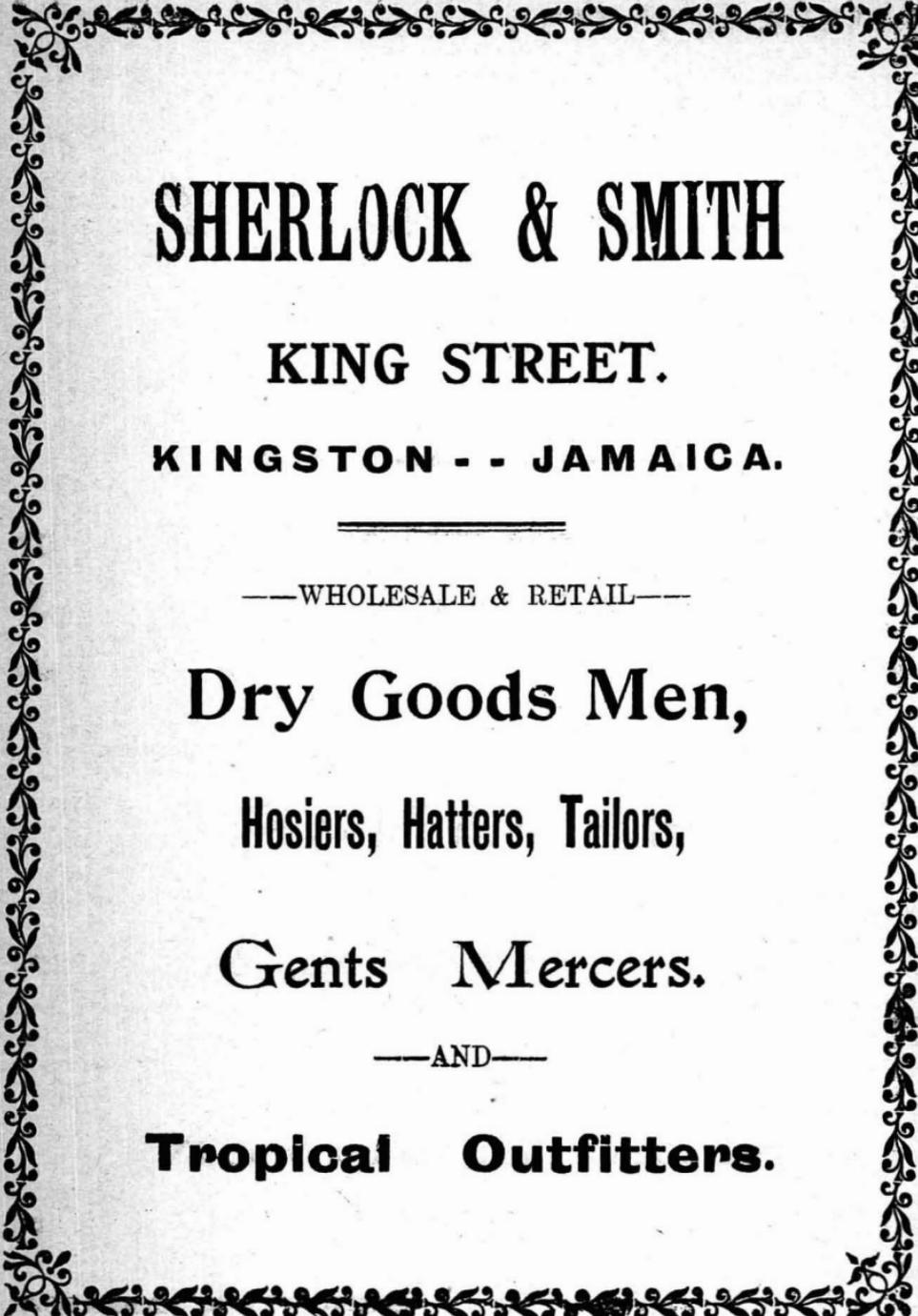
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and LEIBERS.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS MUST BE ADDRESSED

THE "GLEANER" CO., LTD.,

148 HARBOUR STREET,

Kingston : : : Jamaica.

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KINGSTON, ~ ~ ~ JAMAICA.

MAKES A SPECIALITY OF HIGH-GRADE

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**CLOTHING WAY,**

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**Jippi Jappa and Real Panama Hats.**

**SILKS DIRECT FROM CHINA.**

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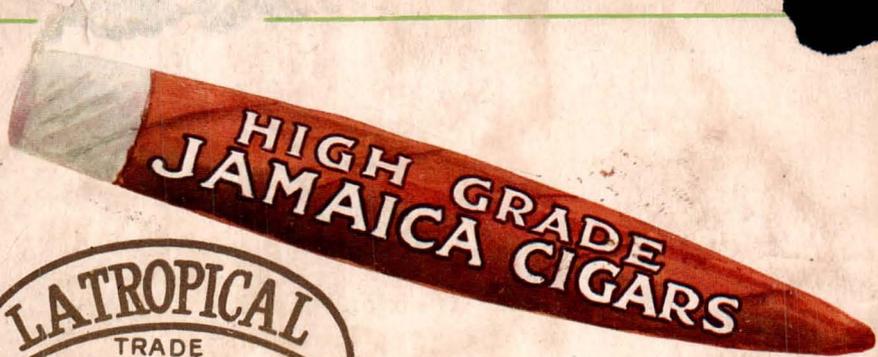
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...Royal "

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### MEDALS RECEIVED

PARIS 1878      LONDON 1881  
AMSTERDAM 1885

ANVERS 1886  
BRUSSELS 1891

JAMAICA, GOLD MEDAL AND  
CERTIFICATE OF HONOR, 1891

COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION 1893

PARIS, GRAND PRIX, 1900  
PAN AMERICAN BUFFALO  
1903

CRYSTAL PALACE LONDON  
1905

COLONIAL PRODUCTS  
EXHIBITION  
LIVERPOOL 1906

THE Cigars known throughout the World as "LA TROPICAL" are manufactured from the choicest tobaccos grown on the Island of Jamaica, and blended by expert Blenders (natives of Havana) of long experience, combined with an intimate knowledge of the finest leaf tobaccos. The Firm manufacturing these Cigars was established in 1875, and are the pioneers of the tobacco industry in the British West Indies. Then they held, and still hold, the reputation of being the only Manufacturers of strictly High Grade Jamaica Cigars.

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