



when it's  
cocktail  
time  
in Cuba

Basil  
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*When It's*

COCKTAIL TIME IN CUBA



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WHEN IT'S  
*Cocktail Time*  
IN CUBA

*Illustrated*



BY BASIL WOON

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*New York: Horace Liveright: 1928*



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To  
CUBA'S BAD BOY,  
JOSÉ ESTRADA PALMA,  
IN  
MEMORY OF THE VISIT I DID *not*  
PAY TO HIS RANCH



## AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

THIS book was not written as an "impression" of Cuba, nor as a guide. I have merely amused myself by setting down on paper what the tourist to Cuba will see, do (and drink) in a land where personal liberty and climate are blended in just the right setting of beauty and romance.

I should like here to acknowledge the help I have received from, and recommend to the reader visiting Cuba:

*Terry's Guide to Cuba.*

*Mr. O'Brien's Times of Cuba.*

*The Havana Post.*

*The Havana Telegram.*

*The Havana News.*

and publicly to express my thanks to the following gentlemen for their invaluable assistance: Mr. John McEntee Bowman, Mr. Charles F. Flynn, Mr. E. B. Jouffret, Mr. Robert J. Kennedy, Mr. Conrado W. Massaguer and Mr. Roy C. Hurlbut.

BASIL WOON.

*57 rue de Maubeuge, Paris, France.*

*July, 1928.*



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*When It's*

COCKTAIL TIME IN CUBA





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THE PATIO, HOTEL CAMAGURY





THE YUHURI VALLEY

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LEAF TOBACCO ON ITS WAY TO THE CURING SHEDS

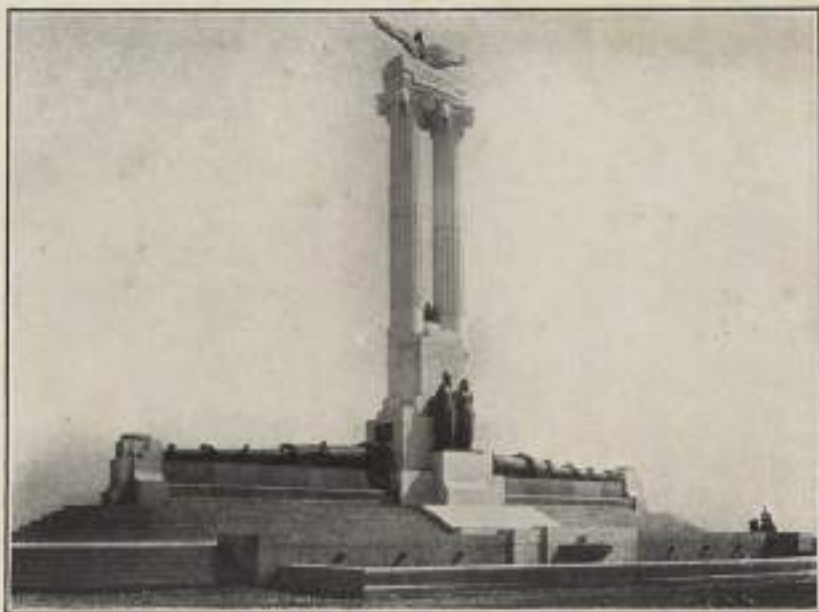




THE CATHEDRAL, HAVANA

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MAINE MONUMENT



## CHAPTER I

### HAVE ONE IN HAVANA

#### I

ICE coats the backwash of the Hudson. In Chicago the price of coal has gone up for the second time. On Fifth Avenue the tops of the "busses are vacant of humanity. In the ornate show-windows that the "busses pass woollens and tweeds have insinuated themselves in the place of gabardines and light-weight worsteds. The drug-stores display pyramids of cough-and-cold remedies, doctors complain of overwork, and "GRIPPE EPIDEMIC GROWS" menaces subway crowds reading their favorite thriller.

Father, developing opposite symptoms from those which send him to Europe or the Adirondacks in Summer, persuades his doctor to prescribe a Southern climate.

Down in Havana Fred Perry, the Elk City Flash, Father Fate's hired assistant at the Casino, has gone on the water-wagon. Charles Francis (Napoleon) Flynn, Grand Instigator of Activities, who can turn himself off and on like an electric ice-box, is seen at



the Jockey Club at 2 p.m., at the Sevilla at 2.05 p.m., and at the Casino at 2.15 p.m., notwithstanding the fact that these places are, even in a Cuban taxicab, twenty-five minutes apart. Old Man Jackson heralds the advent of the season by ceremoniously bringing in to the Sevilla Bar the first free hot lunch of the season, thereby occasioning the first reunion of the Old-Timers' Club. The taxicab drivers have hunted up their "English Spoken" signs and the stores on the Prado have busily affixed brand-new price-tags. Around the corner from the American Club a swarthy gentleman, proud because he is called "Sloppy," smilingly oils his cash-register.

Out in Marianao roses are blooming, and the out-lying *fincas* are sending the first ripe strawberries to market.

A pair of plus-fours appears on Obispo Street and, as if they were only awaiting this sign (as perhaps they were), swarms of Syrian bead-merchants invade the streets, Cuban counterpart of the insistent rug-vendor of Europe.

Two shrewd blue eyes behind round spectacles appear in the Sevilla lobby and their owner is followed by gentlemen with camera, pad and pencil. "Bobbie" Kennedy, ace in the publicity pack, has arrived—and so, we may presume, has the season:

It's cocktail time in Cuba.



## II

"Have one in Havana" seems to have become the winter slogan of the wealthy. The bells of Santa Clara are sounding auspiciously in Northern ears. It is becoming fashionable to follow in the footsteps of Columbus. So thronged with Americans has the Riviera become that these same Americans are turning nearer home for something more satisfyingly foreign, realizing suddenly that only sixty miles from their own shores is a city so completely exotic that they may be as superior as they please.

An American abroad is not happy unless he can feel thoroughly superior and a *sine qua non* of this superiority is that the country he visits should have a language different from his own. The natives can thus be berated for their ignorance and dullness of comprehension. In Cuban educational circles a movement is on foot to so contrive it that every child speaks English on graduation from high-school. This is a movement upon which the tourist commission of Cuba should set a heavy, unscrupulous heel. If the Cuban children speak English, they will unconsciously ape the American and succeed at last in thinking and acting as the American. The boys will begin to think cock-fighting cruel, and turn to baseball, and the girls will no longer seriously consider



motherhood at the age of thirteen. I assure you that I wot—a lot—of what I am saying, and it is my solemn opinion that the future of Cuba touristically depends not so much upon its climate, as is fallaciously believed, as upon the fact that Cuba is a foreign—a very foreign—land.

### III

Cuba at present has four very distinct appeals to the American tourist, and I list them in order of their importance, knowing well that practically every reader will think I err in not putting Number Two first:

1. It is utterly foreign.
2. It has "personal liberty" carried to the Nth degree.
3. Its climate is among the finest in the world.
4. Its history is the colorful history of romance and adventure.

How foreign is Cuba may be gauged from the fact that, despite its size, it has only 6,000 permanent American residents—and opportunities for twenty times that many. Many an American has come to Cuba with great ideas and a fortune to be made. He will show them. The trouble with these people is, they're too lazy. They won't work. They



haven't any incentive. What do they need money for—with meals growing on wayside trees and hardly any clothes necessary? They are thriftless. They won't save because why pile up a fortune when one day they will win the lottery? They loaf around, and can't get anything done. But he will show them. He is an American.\* Twenty years later you meet him fanning himself as he sits in his undershirt on his porch. Fortune? Who in hell wants a fortune in this country? He's got enough, hasn't he? Enough to keep a wife and a flock of kids and make an annual (summer) trip to New York. Well, what more does a man want in a country where the breakfasts grow on trees and no overcoats are necessary? He's no hog—besides, he may win the lottery. Yes, sir. Have a drink!

As to personal liberty, it depends upon what your definition is of that useful commodity. There is a tradition that if an American should stretch his idea of personal liberty so far as to playfully drive his fist against an innocent passer-by's nose, the policeman arriving, instead of arresting the American, would merely conduct him back to his hotel and gently but firmly put him to bed. During the months that I was in Cuba I always meant to test out this theory,

\* Americans in Cuba are requested to consider these remarks as applying to the other fellow.—B.W.



but somehow the appropriate moment never presented itself. I would go along the street, thinking: "Here's the man I'd love to hit," and then on closer view he would turn out to be another American from Weechaukec, Wis., who had bought me a drink only that morning. I would spot a nose simply aching for a skillful right-cross, merely to be restrained by friends who pointed out that the owner of the nose was the chief of police and that therefore my experiment, beginning as it did on a biased subject, would have no real value.

Not that I should have been afraid to go to the Havana jail. It is one of the principal tourist sights of Havana and is quite inviting, outside, while contiguous to the guest-chambers is a first-class bar. Moreover it shares with the Sevilla Hotel the honor of dominating the Prado.

Whatever the truth anent the legend of the kind Havana policeman may be, it seems that personal liberty in Cuba may be interpreted as meaning:

1. You may drink as much as you want to.
2. You may buy as many drinks for your friends as you wish.
3. You may chance your luck at the lottery.
4. You may lose as much money as you desire in the Casino.



5. You need not carry your marriage certificate with you.

6. You may stare at the pretty señoritas because such staring in Cuba is a compliment—not a crime.

7. You need no *visa* to your passport to enter Cuba; no identity card if you remain.

8. You must not hit the Chief of Police on the nose.

Personal liberty is capable of a great many interpretations. The Spaniard, for instance, thinks Cuba a land of oppression, because bull-fighting is forbidden. But the Cuban laughs at him. Bull-fighting! That cruel sport! Why cannot the Spaniard be satisfied with cock-fighting? There is, after all, nearly as much blood. . . .

When we come to the consideration of climate we must strive toward absolute truthfulness, because we know what a boomerang this climate business can be. With a Californian or a Floridan it is only necessary to get in the first word, to say: "Well, how's your *wonderful* climate?" and all the wind is taken out of his sails; he has nothing more to say. We must be very circumspect. If we say that the Cuban climate is perfect our readers won't believe us, and rightly, for what is a perfect climate anyway? Personally I think a touch of snow underground and a tang of



frost in the air doesn't hurt anyone, providing it doesn't happen too often; but then that's only my viewpoint. I think the New York winter climate is great, but my wife—Lord, she will freeze to death there. Stevenson circled the globe looking for the perfect climate, and died in a South Seas island infested with mosquitoes. In my youth I heard that a certain port in Ecuador boasted the finest climate in the world, but when I got there I was not allowed to land; there was a quarantine since the third plague had set in.

There has been no plague in Havana nor Cuba during the past fifteen years and there never will be again, unless God invents something new to worry us with, thanks to American sanitary astuteness. There are few mosquitoes in Havana and what few there are have, it appears, first passed inspection by the Cuban Health Department and had their fangs drawn.

Speaking of mosquitoes, as one will in the tropics, it is well to consider a great factor responsible for their annihilation. This is the wind. The wind in Cuba is not like any ordinary, common-or-garden wind in the North. It has no individuality, few caprices. It is so regular at certain seasons that the Cubans set their watches by it. In Oriente province, at the extreme east of the island, they build their



houses to present solid walls to the northeast, knowing that during ten months of the year the wind will invariably come from that direction and that it will never, no matter what the storm, blow from the southwest. In Havana the trade winds blow with a regularity surprising to the newcomer, but so reliable are they that the local aviation 'drome, Columbia Field, has no "T" to show pilots in the air which way to land; by the time of the day the pilots know which way the wind is blowing.

During the summer the sea-wind blows steadily in Havana all day, but towards six in the evening you will see the inhabitants leave their porches for screened interiors; the wind is about to drop and mosquitoes may be feared. But at a quarter past nine back they come to their porches and, sure enough, the mosquitoes have all gone: the land wind is blowing until dawn.

It is occasionally cold in Havana, especially to residents and persons accustomed to warmth. One day last season the mercury actually dropped to  $46^{\circ}$  above zero! Every waistcoat in town was in use, and at night one saw overcoats. This happens about ten times during the months of December, January and February. On every other day in the year sea-bathing is a pleasure not to be denied. The average temperature of Havana is  $81^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit. In sum-



mer the strong night breezes bring coolness, and in fact the hottest month seldom exceeds in heat the average temperature of a New York August, and sultriness is unknown.

On the south coast of the island the temperatures are considerably higher and the vegetation in consequence much more tropical. Santiago, sheltered by the Cobre mountains from the trade-winds, is completely a tropical city. Yet twenty miles to the north the palm trees of Nipa Bay are bent uniformly to the southwest, living evidence of the persistence and force of the winds which forced Columbus southward so that he discovered the Antilles instead of the mainland of North America.

Cuba's is essentially a lazy climate, but thanks to its constant sea-breezes the heat has no enervating consequences. It is the ideal climate for the invalid, seeking saline air for recuperation without chill. The aged find in it a new hold on life. The sun shines in Havana on an average three hundred and fifty days in the year.

#### IV

The history of Cuba is the romance of the New World, for Columbus did not discover the United States, the mainland of North America; he discovered Cuba. True, he died believing that Cuba



was part of the mainland of Asia, but that was because he was himself a romanticist, and set too much store by the writings of a certain Marco Polo.

The story of Cuba is the most recent of the romantic histories, for the full chapter of discovery cannot be written until roads and railways are built which permit its proper exploitation.

Two gallant pages there are in Cuba's history, one of them the discovery and settlement of the island by the courageous Spanish adventurers; the other the glorious war for Cuban freedom in the dying days of the old century. One black page there is, when the splendid mantle of the early discoverers fell to tyrannical Spanish grandees, most of them sent to Cuba as good riddance from their own land, grandees who brought the black curse of slavery to a free people whom they pillaged and tortured in the name of a king and government which shut their eyes and ears to the crime.

Christopher Columbus sighted Cuba on October 28, 1492. On his return to Spain he reported the discovery of a continent, and Sebastian de Ocampo was despatched to investigate further. He circumnavigated the island and took possession in the name of Spain. Priests landed by de Ocampo in Santo Domingo subsequently went to Cuba and in Santiago



established the first Spanish Mission in the New World.

The actual conquest of the island commenced under Diego Velázquez in 1511. Velázquez landed at Baracoa and immediately set about the pacification and settlement of the island by Spanish soldiers. He founded the cities of Bayamo, Santiago, Puerto Principe, Sancti Spiritus, Trinidad and Havana. That is, he founded these cities in a civilized sense; they existed, most of them, as Indian villages. Puerto Principe, for instance, was an Indian fishing village now known as Camagüey, which long before Columbus came was a town of importance and the capital of the island.

Before the first Englishmen were colonizing Virginia Spanish immigrants, enticed by the tales of limitless wealth brought home by Velázquez, were settling in Cuba. Among the most intrepid of these were the priests. The first farms, dairies and schools were established by the priests. Their ascendancy over the settlers was complete.

Cuba was the starting point of the expeditions which gained for Spain an Empire. In 1518 the gay and intrepid Hernán Cortés set sail for the conquest of Mexico, which he effected with six ships filled with soldiers drafted from the colonists—the most adventurous expedition perhaps in the annals of his-





COLUMBUS CATHEDRAL



tory, for so afraid was Cortés of being ordered back to Spain with the conquest of this rich country only half begun that he burned his ships, a magnificent gesture which has echoed down the ages. And in 1539 De Soto, discoverer of the Mississippi, sailed an armada from Havana harbor to the conquest of Florida, which had been discovered by Ponce de León in 1513 in that navigator's credulous quest for the Fountain of Eternal Youth.

These expeditions so drained Cuba of able-bodied men, horses and oxen that labor became practically unobtainable. The native Indians were put to work in the mines and fields, but they were not numerous enough, and in 1523 occurred the blackest event in America's history—the beginning of the slave trade. To remedy the shortage in labor Negro slaves from the coast of West Africa were imported into Cuba through Santiago harbor. When these blacks became sufficiently numerous, in 1544, the native Indians were facetiously "emancipated." Breeding of the slaves was a scientific operation with the Spaniards; fertile Negroes were accorded as many as twenty wives and were flogged if the resultant number of children seemed disproportionately few; children were set to work almost as soon as they could walk.

The piratical period, most colorful of Cuba's history, began in the sixteenth century and continued



until 1825, when the future Admiral David Farragut won his spurs in the so-called "mosquito fleet" which drove the pirates from the Caribbean. I say "continued until," but even now these waters are filled with rum pirates, and a new "mosquito fleet" of armored coastguard boats vainly endeavors their suppression.

The headquarters of the "buccaneers" and "pirates" were at Tortuga and Providence, in the Bahamas Islands, which today are the liquor storehouses for the supply of the United States.

As in these days, there were pirates and pirates. There were few "legitimate" pirates—skippers whose hand was lifted against all and sundry, whatever their nationality. Most notorious of these were Howel Davis, Bartholomew Roberts and Major Stede Bonnet, a planter of Barbados whose quiet life irked him so that he fitted out a ship and began to rob and sink other ships on the high seas. He was hanged in Charleston in 1718, but not before he had accounted for seven Spanish, three American and two British ships, and twice raided isolated ports on the coasts of Cuba, Haiti and Porto Rico.

There were, however, plenty of "buccaneers." The original buccaneers got their name from their trade, forbidden by the Spanish, with the cattle-raisers of Santo Domingo. These natives were ex-



pert butchers and their slaughterhouses were termed "boucans"—hence the name buccaneer. Soon the term spread to mean anyone whose hand was lifted against the Spaniards. The Spaniards earned the hatred of all the peoples of the West Indies by their refusal to permit free trade. By law the colonists had to sell for fixed prices to their Spanish masters, the products going to Spain. As a result of this a number of free-traders sprang up, and as these were summarily executed on capture by the Spaniards it became the custom for them to kill any Spaniards who came into their hands. From that to organized expeditions which stormed and captured Cuban ports, and looted and sank every galleon they could find, was a short step. As Spain was constantly at war with England and France these nations covered the exploits of their buccaneers with high praise. Though many of them were in fact plain pirates, they were lauded as heroes.

The most famous buccaneers were Mansfield and Morgan. Henry Morgan was an amazing character who had been kidnapped as a boy in Wales and sold to slavery in the Barbados. He escaped from slavery to Jamaica, where his bravery distinguished him in the eyes of the English governor, who, needing some Spanish prisoners, one day gave him the command of a small expeditionary force to Cuba. Mor-



gan, with only 500 men, sailed for Cuba and, arriving there, took Puerto Principe and looted it. From then on Morgan was constantly looting Cuban ports. He formed an alliance with Mansfield and together they stormed and looted Havana. He would land with a handful of men and fight his way to the rich Cuban capital of Camagüey, where the Spaniards had elaborately strengthened an old Indian fort with the special idea of resisting him. That fort is now the Camagüey Hotel.

Morgan continued his exploits even though England signed peace with Spain, and for his pains was brought back to England under arrest. Finding that he was a popular hero, however, the King released him and then knighted him, appointing him Governor of Jamaica (and was secretly glad, probably, to see the Atlantic Ocean between them). As Governor of Jamaica Sir Henry Morgan openly aided the buccaneers, especially his own brother, the notorious Charles Morgan, who was probably the worst scoundrel of the lot. It was Captain Morgan's custom to "marry" his female captives and when he died he had 116 children, descendants of whom are said to throng Jamaica today.

Another famous buccaneer of the Caribbean was Captain Kidd, who is credited with the invention of the "jolly roger." After sailing under the skull-



and-crossbones a number of years, generally in ships he had captured, he turned privateer, and, after ravaging Cuba in 1690, was appointed by the British colonial government on a special mission to chastise the pirates of the Indian Ocean, who made their headquarters at Madagascar. Kidd went to Madagascar but threw in his lot with the pirates instead of suppressing them; hearing that an expedition had been sent to capture him he set sail in his ship, *Queedah Merchant*, for the West Indies, hiding in the mountains of Cuba for a year. At the end of this year, under promise of safety, he returned to New England, but was arrested there, sent to England, and there hanged, in 1701. Part of Captain Kidd's fabulous fortune, of which £14,000 has been recovered, came from his marauding expeditions on the coast of Cuba.

There were some fifty buccaneers in all with ships of their own. They ravaged the West Indies, Panama, the Pacific Coast of South America, and carried their activities into the South Seas. Tortuga was their headquarters. Among those constantly assaulting Cuban ports were the Frenchman P'ollonais, who is alleged to have slain 90 Spaniards the same morning with his own sword; John Coxen, Sawkins, Sharp and Walting, who later transferred their activities to Panama and Peru; John Cook, the famous pirate of



the South Seas, and his successors Edward Davis and Captain Swan, and John Townley. Descendants of Townley live in Havana today.

To the imaginative tourist the ghosts of golden galleons ride at anchor in Havana Bay, and, looking up at the frowning walls of Morro Castle and Cabañas Fortress, one has a glimpse of these walls belching flame and round cannonballs as the ships of daring marauders land their ruffian crews. As the boat from Key West or New York docks a few yards from the spot where the *Maine* was sunk, may you be dominated by your imagination rather than by your thirst. Four centuries of romance are concentrated in the quaint old city which awaits the pleasure of you and your friends, latest in the long list of invaders of the Spanish Main.



## CHAPTER II

### THE DAY BEGINS AT THE SEVILLA

#### I

THE Sevilla-Biltmore is to Havana what the Ritz is to Paris, headquarters of the wealthy pleasure-seeker. It is one of those rare hotels with what people like to call an "atmosphere."

Atmosphere in the case of an hotel is an intangible thing to define and is almost always accidental; but it is a very definite asset. Weighed against dollars and cents it surpasses anything else that the hotel may have to offer in the way of superlative comfort or food.

There are many varieties of "atmosphere." The old Knickerbocker Hotel in New York was an example; the somewhat antipathetic personality of the man who made it a model among hostelryes—Regan—was no real factor in the success of a hotel which was really made famous by its clients. On the other hand, the personality of its directors may count for more than any other factor in a hotel's "atmosphere," as witness the Waldorf of before the war, or the Stéphanie at Baden-Baden.



Extreme sophistication makes the Paris Ritz unique among hotels, a sophistication earned by the gathering there of the bored and blasé of the earth. It is a sophistication somewhat awesome to the average newcomer with a wholesome viewpoint on life, but the visitor ceases to feel intimidated when he finds that the Ritz folk are only people who lack his own capacity for enjoyment because, having exhausted every thrill, they are reduced to gossip and champagne.

The "atmosphere" of the Sevilla has something of the sophisticated *chic* of the Ritz, and something also of the cosmopolitan smartness of the Hotel de Paris at Monte Carlo—one scents the feverishness in the air that comes from gambling; eyes here and there have that same brilliant hardness one grows accustomed to in the casino cities of Europe. The topics are of racing or roulette: "*Jock Meyer brought home two today.*" . . . "*I had that good one in the fourth.*" . . . "*What'd you do to them at the Casino last night?*" . . . "*Lost like a fool, that guy Bétancourt has all the luck!*"

But there is another something in the Sevilla atmosphere that gives it individuality, a subtle something born on the threshold of the Tropics. You are at the gates of



*. . . these lands where the downings  
Are poured from a seething mould  
And the billowing crest of the jungle  
Is drenched in a flood of gold. . . .\**

Over the hum of conversation and the chink of ice in glasses you hear subconsciously the cry of gay-hued parrots, the chatter and scream of monkeys, the monotonous beating of savage tom-toms, the thousand-and-one mysterious noises of the coral-bounded islands where romance and adventure outweigh the scales against disease and death.

And—not so far away as you may think. Overnight from Havana lies the impenetrable jungle; overnight only, and you are on one of the world's last frontiers. And the tom-toms of Voodoo land are still the chief instrument in Havana's orchestras. Here and there through the patio and the long bar-room are men with calm eyes but restless spirits, their bronzed faces lined with the scars of recurrent malaria, their lean bodies toughened and muscled by long battling with the tropical wilderness; men who have sunk shafts for minerals with death at their heels, others who have tamed long stretches of steaming jungle with steel rails, others who have fought and conquered in humanity's own eternal battle with disease. They are men with the Tropics

\* Randolph Atkin's "The Spell of the Tropics."



in their blood. Many times they have sworn, each man of them, that *this time* they will "get out and stay out," but always the lure wins and here they are, on the fringe of it all again.

Havana is a meeting-place of the world's adventurers and headquarters of the tragic order of Tropical Tramps, and between quests the aristocrats among them haunt the Sevilla patio and bar. It is a strange mingling this, of worldly-wise men and women and bronzed travelers of the never-never lands; of monocled men and beautifully-dressed women of fashion and somber, stern-faced pioneers of the jungle. Parsimonious with their talk, shy of reminiscence, most of these latter are, but every now and then you hear a phrase or two: "*Down in Bogotá that time with Suarez . . .*" "*Oh, Bill went native—got a Chula up from Guayaquil . . .*" "*Jim bought a farm in Ohio? The hell you say! But I saw him last March in St. George's on his way to Caracas . . .*" "*Me? Oh, I'm headed for Maracaibo; there's a road buildin' over to Altagracia and they wired for me to come . . .*"

## II

The Old-Timers' Club meets twice a day at the Sevilla. They are a fine bunch of men and if the limitations of space and acquaintance did not forbid



I would like you to meet them all. Presiding over the long mahogany are the two whose acquaintance it is probable you will make first of all, for they are the bartenders: Eddie Woehlke, who came to Havana from New York via Paris, who has a French wife with a modiste's shop, Marcelle's, of her own in New York, and whom pre-war residents of Paris will recall as thirst-dispenser at the Plaza-Athenée; and Fred Kaufman, originally of Liverpool, but a traveler of the Tropics so long that he talks English with a Spanish accent. Kaufman is never happy unless he is on an island. He was born on one, and has since worked in Funchal, Madeira, and the Canary islands. Kaufman is the inventor of several cocktails in which pineapple juice is the chief ingredient, and Eddie's mint-julep, with the ice-chunks clinging to the glass outside, is a drink to cause any Southern gentleman to yelp the rebel yell.

You may see James ("Jim") Ellis, a heavy-set Floridan of imperturbable dignity, who came to Cuba in '98; Francis A. Kinsey, a Camagüeyans who looks like Abraham Lincoln; the courtly Charles Echevarria of the United Fruit Company, who knows Havana since '84; Colonel Robert E. Hollingsworth, attorney and Georgian, known to his friends as "Holly," a sparkling after-dinner talker and a resident of Havana since 1898—thinks Havana and



Atlanta are the only towns that count; Enrique Berenguer, Rotarian and plus, with the physique of a giant and a Napoleonic head, a scintillator at public receptions and a favorite with the ladies; or Charles A. Dwinnell, with the Sphinx look of an Italian prestidigitator, who is always leaving Cuba but as always coming back. A man whom his friends call too respectable.

You may see A. D. ("Pop") Roberds, an Indianan who was a newspaper man in the county-seat fights of Kansas, and a pal of William Allen White, and who still writes editorials for his *Evening News* with a six-shooter handy—from sheer force of habit. "Pop" came to Cuba in 1900 and has done some trenchant things for Havana in an editorial way. The Platt Amendment is his decalogue. With his old straw-hat on the back of his head he looks like Benjamin Franklin but talks like a mining-camp hotelman. "Pop" Roberds is the man who called Joe "Sloppy" and made him famous, and I hope Joe is properly grateful. But I'll bet he isn't.

There is Roy Hurlbut, a tropical wanderer anchored at last with a beautiful wife and a baby. Roy has mined in the Andes, harvested rubber in Honduras, built railroads in Costa Rica, held surveyors' stakes in Peru, prospected for diamonds in South Africa and Brazil, soldiered in the Philippines



and Mexico, and was in a Chilean port when the first rain for six years fell and Hurlbut, broke to the wide, insisted on and ate the free meal promised by the hotels there "on any day the sun never shines." Hurlbut says he was so hungry he took in every hotel in turn. "That day," he says, "the desert turned green and ships' captains making the port thought they had missed their way." Hurlbut fought for Cuban independence, and now has the business end of several publications. He knows more about Cuba than any American I talked to.

We have spoken of the railroad-builders of the Tropics. Here is one of the greatest: Albert B. Jekyll, formerly of the famous firm of May, Randolph and Jekyll. May was the financier, John H. Randolph the iron-jawed man who sent the steel through, Jekyll the estimator and builder. Theirs was no ordinary railroad building. They levelled the grade through thick jungles, over hitherto impassable mountains, where the foot of a white man had never trod before. They had the scarcity of skilled labor, the difficulty of unknown terrain, the hostility of savage tribes to harass them, but chiefly their enemy was the fever and its attendant agent the Bottle—if one did not get the white men who worked for them, the other would. They opened up thousands of square miles of virgin territory in



Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Ecuador and elsewhere. Wherever there was a job of railroad building no one else would tackle they sent for May, Randolph and Jekyll, and these three put the job through, bearding the wilderness with a tool in one hand, a gun in the other, and their pockets filled with quinine. They built the Madeira-Mamora railroad in Brazil, 2,700 miles up the Amazon, to join the Amazon with the Tapajos so goods could be shipped south to the River Plate, one of the most terrible engineering achievements in all history. Fifty million capsules of quinine were used during the building of the road and it was said that when finally it was finished there was a dead man for every cross-tie laid.

May has been dead these seven or eight years, but Randolph and Jekyll are alive yet, and the latter, white-haired now, has only recently felt the call again, quit the island of 600 acres that he owns in Camagüey province, and gone off to Brazil again. Another contract, another job of work to be done. "He'll leave his bones there," said the old-timers when they wished him an affectionate farewell.

During your weeks in Havana you will meet many more of the old-timers who have helped make Cuba and the Tropics fit for the white man to live in. It



is fitting that their names and records should be written plain for future generations to know.

## III

Through the Sevilla lobby at "tea"-time (one or two Havana visitors do actually drink tea) flows the social tide, as colorful and brilliant here as Europe at its gayest, especially during those all-too-few weeks that have come to be known as "the season."

The season is lengthening year by year and in time to come will probably last from November to April, for during these six months the weather is dry and well-nigh perfect. The snobbery of society, with its restless insistence on change, will always have a "high" season, however, and this begins shortly after the New Year and culminates at the end of March. The most notable month is February.

Havana is crowded with tourists and visitors from the opening of the racing season, on or about the ninth of December, to the closing night of the Casino in March. During these months the Sevilla, the Casino, the Jockey Club, the Almendares, the Yacht Club, the Country Club and the Biltmore Yacht and Country Club do not yield to any similar places in the world for fashionable *chic* or gaiety.



Havana is not, like Palm Beach, a parrot-cage of ostentation. It is rather, like Paris, a city of definite attraction where smart people go to be amused. The gaieties of Paris have never *exiged* a password and neither have they in Havana. It is not necessary to bow to the edict of a few rich matrons who in Palm Beach consider themselves leaders of society, and whose rule is passively submitted to by a crowd of wealthy sycophants who have succeeded in turning the world's loveliest playground into a vulgar community for the display of yellowbacks. You need no card of membership to Havana's attractions any more than you need a chemist on your staff to sample the champagne that you drink. Cosmopolitans accustomed to the democratic atmosphere of European resorts breathe freely in Havana; there is an absence of snobbery about the place that is one of the chief charms of Cannes and Monte Carlo. You need money—surely—but beyond that your social status does not count.

It is for this reason that Havana is becoming a second home for that section of the smart set which formerly spent its winters on the Riviera. People whose names mean front-page as well as society-page news are returning winter after winter. A promenade down the crowded Sevilla patio, which some people find sufficiently entertaining to pass





THE MALECON



whole afternoons there, would quite likely reveal Mrs. Vincent Astor at one table, Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney at another, Lord Rothermere at another, Major A. J. Drexel Biddle, the Stanley Joyces, the Rhinelanders Stewarts, the Oliver Harrimans, the Edwin Goulds, the Harry Cushing Thirds at others.

Will Rogers makes the patio a stamping-ground annually; so does Samuel G. Blythe, Cyrus H. K. Curtis—whose yacht is a familiar sight in Havana Harbor; Nina Wilcox Putnam, Mayor Jimmy Walker, Thomas Chadbourne, Irenée Du Pont (who purchased part of Veradero Beach for a Du Pont Country Club), George Ade, E. R. Oliver, William E. Corey, the steel king, and S. W. Gumpertz, "mayor" of Coney Island.

You may see the Costello sisters, Dolores and Hélène, or Florence Vidor; Mr. and Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt are constant vistors; so are Ed. Bruns, E. L. Annenberg and Al Johnson, to mention only three members of the New York Stock Exchange who like to play in Cuba. Charles A. Levine and Mabel Boll, "Queen of Diamonds," were there one season, the same that saw Charles Lindbergh and Clarence Chamberlin guests of the city. The Duke and Duchess of Sutherland and the Duchess of Torlonia come there, and it is rumored that the Prince of Wales is to be a visitor in the extremely near



future. You may see Anita Loos, and her husband John Emerson; or George Olsen, tsar of syncopation; or Colonel E. A. Deeds, the Dayton sugar magnate. Joe Kirkwood plays over the three Havana golf courses; Harry Frazee, who owned "No, No, Nanette" and many other successes, is an annual visitor; one saw, last season, Dwight K. Morrow, Charles Evans Hughes and Oscar W. Underwood, American diplomats, and Dr. Marcel Knecht, most American of Frenchmen and brilliant director of the *Paris Matin*.

George B. Christian, former secretary to President Harding, was there, and James Gillroy, of the General Outdoor Advertising Company, Bill-Board King of America. And Sam Rosoff, subway builder, who created a diversion by bringing his goat mascot into the patio; and John J. Lyons, a former secretary of New York State; and Albert Howell, Democratic leader of Georgia; and "Cap'n Billy" Fawcett, publisher of nine magazines and assiduous foe of prohibition. Truly Warner, who makes hats, was there. So was George Le Bouteillier, executive of the Long Island Railway; and John J. McGraw, manager of the Giants; and Thomas Bryden Pratt, financier; and Hiram R. Mallinson, America's biggest silk magnate; and Warren Banks, well-known clubman. And, of course, America's own Nell



Gwynne, the beautiful and alluring Peggy Hopkins Joyce.

It's a generous, chattering, comfortable sort of crowd. They like to see good horses race and they see no objection, now and again, to a little flutter on the wheel. They are all foes of hypocrisy and cant and the silly snobbery of America's self-elected society, even though they are members of that society.

They do not come to Havana because of the city's fine churches—but neither do they come for a weekend splurge. They like the town because of its friendly, tolerant atmosphere; because it is, perhaps, the closest thing to Paris in a season when Paris is not available.

And one can forecast the summer fashions in Havana months before they are known on Fifth Avenue.

#### IV

The managerial genius of the Sevilla-Biltmore is Edward B. Jouffret, ably seconded in a social way by his wife, one of the most beautiful women in Havana.

Jouffret is a small, darkish, nervous man of vivacious temperament and French ancestry. He has a hard job keeping up to Biltmore standards in Havana, for everything the hotel uses must be im-



ported, and running a purely American hotel in a foreign city is always a difficult proposition. That he has succeeded so signally is a great measure of the man's ability. Aided, perhaps, by Bowman's lucky star, Jouffret has turned the hotel into society headquarters, not only for Americans but for Cubans as well.

A word about the hotel, since you will spend so much time there. It is the tallest building on the Prado and is built along Cuban lines, the rooms with high ceilings, tiled floors and various ingenious contrivances to ensure a constant draught of fresh air. For even in January it can be pretty hot during the daytime in Havana.

The head waiter (you already know the bartenders) of the Sevilla is Charley, who combines the build of a prize-fighter with the urbanity of a concert-manager. Head waiters are almost always important to the traveler, and this one has the grand manner. You will find that Charley has a great faculty for remembering your name—and it might be as well for you to return the compliment and "remember" him.



## CHAPTER III

WHERE EVERYONE IS DRINKING AND NOT A SOUL IS  
DRUNK!

### I

HAVANA never was what one might call a rendezvous of prohibitionists. Back in 1912, in those incredibly remote days before the world stopped and started again, I set out to "do" every island in the West Indies, and Havana to my recollection was a tolerably thirsty town even then.

Prohibition in the United States may have added to the number of "American" bars, but the corner *bodega* has always flourished. A *bodega* is part grocery, part tobacco-shop, and part saloon. Generally it is a restaurant as well. Someone once said that there were more seats in Havana's restaurants than there were people in Havana, and there certainly are an incredible number of them. Existing strictly as restaurants they would lose money, for only a few of them are filled at any hour of the day, but the bar saves them.

Every restaurant and nearly every grocery in Havana is a barroom. There are, it is said, 7,000 of



them. Undoubtedly this is why the Havanaïs are a sober race.

Out in an Arizona mining town once I asked a local character to have a drink and was astonished to have the white-haired old fellow decline. "No, sirree," he said, "I don't drink no more."

"How's that?" I asked. "You don't look like a local-optionist."

"No, sir. I don't hold with local-option. I ain't got no quarrel with liquor *as* liquor. It's this way. When I first came to this town there weren't but one liquor e-stablishment—old Slim Long's, what died last year, that false-fronted shack down near the deepot. Well, ev'ry so often I'd sort of go on a bust and it used to be my boast I could drink more liquor'n anyone in town. And I could, sir—I could!

"But thar was a fellow hereabouts at that time what was jealous of my soo-premacy in this liquor-drinkin' line an' one day he sort o' sneered an' said as how I was gettin' to thinkin' I could drink the hull town dry. I was just fool enough to take him up. I bet him a hundred dollars I *could* drink the town dry, between sleeps.

"There weren't but the one saloon, and Slim didn't sell nothin' but rye, there being no one in town at that time who'd ever heard of any other kind of liquor, except maybe spig stuff like mezcal or



aguardiente. But the Mex. saloons was all across the Line. It was stipulated that they didn't count, so all I had to do was drink Slim's place dry.

"Well, sir, Slim had sixty quarts of rotgut stowed away in that shack of hisn, which was about thirty quarts more'n I'd counted on. But I was a pretty hefty drinker, 'n' a few quarts more or less didn't make much difference. I started in on them sixty quarts of fire-water on a Wednesday afternoon and by Friday mornin' the town was full of spectators and I was down to the last five bottles. I'll admit I was a mite wobbly by this time.

"I began on the first of the five bottles at ten a.m. Friday, with some ham and eggs. There was three bottles left when I sat down to supper, and only two when the boys began pilin' in from Ma Jones' place, where they et. I uncorked one of the two bottles and took my first drink. For th' benefit of the gallery—they'd been ridin' in from the range for a hundred miles around—I smacked my lips. 'Boys,' I says, 'that liquor shore tastes good.'

"Well, I finished that bottle and was just uncorkin' the last and final bottle when a dee-version occurs. There's a noise outside and in walks a chap all lathered with horse-sweat and covered with alkali. He sees me sittin' at the table with the bottle an' come right over.



"'Gimme a drink,' he says, his throat soundin' like it was dry leather crackin'.

"'You-all kain't have no drink here,' says Bud Jordan. 'Ain't nobody drinkin' except Whitey here.'

"The stranger ups and looks at Bud Jordan mighty solemn, what you could see of his eyes lookin' all red with blood beneath the alkali.

"'Lemme get this straight,' he says, in his cracked voice. 'I done rid three hunnerd miles since sun-up yesterday mornin'. I killed two hawses. I ain't had a drink in twelve hours, nor nothin' to eat in forty-eight hours. I'm saddle-sore an' weary. I'm cravin' a drink wuss'n any man here ever craved a drink in his hull life. An' you tell me seriously,' he says, 'that I kain't have no drink here because this gent's goin' to drink it all up? Boys,' he says, 'hit don't make sense.'

"'Nevertheless,' says Bud, 'that's the idee. Whitey here, he says he can drink the camp dry. We-all has bet a hunnerd dollars he kain't. He's done drunk fifty-nine quarts, 'n this is the last bottle. Ef he drinks it, he wins.'

"The stranger gets very quiet. 'Does I unnerstan' you c'rectly?' he asks. 'This here is the last—the very last bottle of rye in this camp, which is the nearest town in forty miles, 'n' this gent here allows



he'll drink it after havin' drunk *fifty-nine* other quarts? Boys,' he says pleadin'-like, 'hit ain't reasonable. You knows it ain't.'

"That's how it stands,' says Jordan—but he ain't quite got it out when the stranger goes for his guns, trains one on the boys and the other on me. Then he reaches over with his head, clamps his jaws on the neck o' that last bottle o' rye, and tips it up. There's a long gurgle, 'n then the bottle falls and breaks while a few of the gents present shot the stranger."

The old man paused, as if his tale was finished.

"And you haven't had a drink since?" I said.

"No. The boys allowed I hadn't won the bet, havin' had help, and that I'd have to do it again. An' before the next load of liquor come into the camp they double-crossed me. Jordan, he ups and starts another saloon.

"I could drink a lot of liquor in them days, but I knew when I was beat. I knew I couldn't drink the town dry with *two* saloons—so I quit drinkin'."

Something of the same philosophy may be what makes Havana such a sober place. You can't drink 7,000 saloons dry, so what's the good of trying? Moreover, you never need hurry for that second drink because there's another around the corner.



There is no possibility of the liquor stocks in Havana ever running short.

## II

It is a fact that Havana is a place where practically everyone likes his little drink or two, but where nobody ever seems to get drunk. Slightly woozy, perhaps, and it may be that now and again a visitor may even find himself a wee bit foozy, not to say joozy, but it doesn't happen often and anything beyond the joozy stage is practically unknown.

The earnest drinkers of Havana have certain preferences in the way of refreshments. The most popular and most healthful drink is called *daiquiri* and is merely bacardi with lime-juice, shaken up until the shaker is covered with frost.

The original cane-planters of Cuba and Louisiana had a drink which they made out of rum and squeezed limes, ice, a dash of grenadine, and siphon-water. It was drunk out of tall frosted glasses and was called "Planter's Punch."

Planter's punch was the usual drink of the Cuban Americans, but down in Santiago where a group used to meet in the Venus bar every morning at eight o'clock it was modified to exclude the grenadine and siphon-water, and was made in a shaker. Instead of Jamaica rum the pure Cuban bacardi, distilled in



Santiago from molasses, was used. The boys used to have three or four every morning.

Most of them worked in the Daïquiri mines, the superintendent of which was a gentleman named Cox—Jennings Cox. One morning in the Venus Cox said: "Boys, we've been drinking this delicious little drink for some time, but we've never named it. Let's christen it now!"

The boys milled around a bit and finally Cox said: "I'll tell you what, lads—we all work at Daïquiri and we all drank this drink first there. Let's call it a *daïquiri*!"

The *daïquiri* is now the best-known drink in Cuba. This recipe for the real *daïquiri* was given me by Facundo Bacardi and confirmed by one of the men who was present at the christening: half one lime, squeezed onto one teaspoonful of sugar; pour in one whiskey-glassful of bacardi; plenty of ice; shake until shaker is thoroughly frosted outside. Meanwhile, chill a tall wine-glass of the kind known as *flute*, fill it with shaven ice, and pour in the mixture. Must be drunk frozen or is not good. The "bacardi cocktail" and pronounced "bacARdi," common in New York and Europe, is unknown in Cuba. The proper pronunciation of the name "Bacardi" stresses the last syllable. Later on, in Santiago, we shall see how the rum is made.



The two other cocktails mostly in demand in Havana are the *presidente* and the *Mary Pickford*. The *presidente* is made with half bacardi and half French vermouth, with a dash of either curaçoa or grenadine. It is the aristocrat of cocktails and is the one preferred by the better class of Cuban. The *Mary Pickford*, invented during a visit to Havana of the screen favorite by Fred Kaufman, is two-thirds pineapple-juice and one-third bacardi, with a dash of grenadine. Both cocktails are sweetish and should be well shaken. The pineapple juice must be fresh-squeezed.

## III

The most famous bar for the sweet mixed drinks so popular with the Cubans is La Florida, behind the Asturiano Club on Montserrat Street. Drinks here, although the place has the appearance of an ordinary *bodega*, are as expensive as at the Sevilla or the Almendares. The bar, which is also a restaurant and grocery, sprang into vogue due to the remarkable talents of the head barman, Constantino, a saturnine individual whose peculiar gift consists in his accurate, though seemingly casual, measurements of drinks. Six of you visit the Florida and order *Mary Pickfords*. A boy is put to work squashing and squeezing the pineapple. Meanwhile another boy



fills six glasses with ice to frost them. When the pineapple juice is ready Constantino pours it into a huge shaker, takes the bacardi bottle and, without looking, pours a quantity in the shaker. Then, still apparently without a glance at the shaker, he does the same with the curaçoa or grenadine. The drink is shaken by throwing it from one shaker and catching it in another, the liquid forming a half-circle in the air. This juggling feat having been performed several times, Constantino empties the glasses of ice, puts them in a row on the bar, and with one motion fills them all. Each glass is filled exactly to the brim and *not a drop is left over*. It's worth a visit to Havana merely to watch Constantino operate. I told him that he could make his fortune in Paris. He smiled. "I no do so badly here," he said.

As in Paris, the newcomer to Havana soon "discovers" his own favorite bar and thereafter stoutly defends it against all others. There is plenty of choice. One of the famous places frequented by the younger set of rich Cubans and by American habitués is the Paris Bar, which is really only a serving bar for the Paris restaurant. The Paris restaurant is owned by an old Creole from New Orleans and is famed for its Creole cooking.

A place convenient to the Sevilla Hotel—it was in fact once the Sevilla bar—is the Winter Garden,



owned by George, who used to be barman in the Biltmore Hotel in New York. George is an Englishman. One block up the street is "Sloppy" Joe's, so George calls his place "Sanitary George's." He has a large trade with American business men resident in Cuba.

One of the curiosities among Havana bars is Donovan's, back of the *Telégrafo* Hotel. Donovan was proprietor of a bar in Newark, New Jersey, when prohibition came. Most of the other saloonkeepers in Newark swore a little, then philosophically either closed their places, turned bootlegger, or sold soft-drinks.

Not so Donovan. That Irishman had been too long in the saloon business to quit it then. So he packed up his entire bar—chairs, tables, hanging sign, mirrors and bar itself—and moved it down to Havana. Newark people entering the place rub their eyes and feel transported backward ten years.

If you are a winter visitor to Havana mark January 29 on the calendar with red ink. That day is Donovan's birthday—and drinks are free.

The Plaza Bar, in the Plaza Hotel, is a much-frequented place, especially in the tourist season. It probably does more business than any bar in Havana except Sloppy Joe's and the Sevilla. The Inglaterra Bar and Patio is a place for polite drinking, fre-



quented by society after the Opera. Around the corner from the Inglaterra is the Café Sazerac, owned by Constantino and Pete Economides, and famed because Constantino, when he was chief barman of a place on Forty-second Street near Times Square, was known for his interpretation of the Ramos gin fizz. Theatrical men visiting Havana often make the Sazerac a stopping place. The Economides brothers talk English, Spanish, French, Italian and Yiddish, but they are originally Greek.

Sloppy Joe's place does the largest tourist business and during the season is filled from noon until after midnight. It never closes. It was originally a corner *bodega*, with sawdust on the floor and boxes for the customers to sit on, and the only help was the proprietor, Joe, and his brothers, Raymond and Valentine. The place owes its amazing vogue partly to luck and partly to Joe's ability in pushing that luck when it came, and mostly to its name.

The lucky part came when the Havana city government some years ago appointed a "sanitary commission" to inquire into the cleanliness of the *bodegas*. The less said about the actual workings of this commission the better. But it happened that "Pop" Roberds, proprietor of the Havana *Evening News*, and Joe were having a little squabble about this time over a matter of advertising. "Pop"



thought Joe should advertise with him, and Joe thought differently about it. "Pop," being an old-style newspaper man, very properly thought himself affronted, and forthwith wrote an editorial in which he suggested to the Sanitary Commission that they might with profit extend their investigations to include "a place on Zuleta Street which should be called 'Sloppy' Joe's." The name caught on almost at once, and Joe, although privately peeved at "Pop," realized that he had a good thing. He enlarged his place, and at a moment when drinks in Havana were costing seventy-five cents apiece (it was just after the Volstead Act became operative in the United States), suddenly cut the price in half. The resultant business forced him to enlarge his place again. "Sloppy Joe's" became a byword and Joe used the slogan on his saloon sign and in his advertising. Distinguished writers from New York and further afield wrote about the place and money came in so fast that Joe again enlarged. He now employs eleven bartenders. He advertises in *The Evening News* and "Pop" Roberds is a regular client. The place is big, noisy, has an almost exclusively tourist trade, and is frequented for refreshments after the theater. It has little really Cuban about it and might before the war have been on Third Avenue, New York.



It's never *mañana* when it comes to drinking in Havana. You need never put off until tomorrow the drinks that should cool you today. Sugar, seegars and señoritas form the background, and rum, so to speak, the foreground. If they had lived in Havana the Governor of North Carolina might never have spoken to the Governor of South Carolina at all.

So many more or less excellent life-saving stations exist in Havana that practically every reader of this book will know of at least one we haven't mentioned. Some will wonder why we do not rhapsodize over the Ambos Mundos pilsener; others will insist that the comfortable bar of the Almendares Hotel supplies the coldest and tastiest martinis; others will wish to visit Pat Cody at Jigg's Uptown Bar; still others will urge the merits of sundry drinks and sun-dried bartenders at the big *bodegas* neighboring Central Plaza. To these I say I'm sorry; I would like to make this stroll around the camel's milk dispensaries really complete, but there are other things to Havana besides booze. In fact, liquor in Havana is nothing more than accessory before, during and after the fact. It easily and gently lubricates one's path through the fascinating labyrinth of Cuba's pleasures. In the course of this book we shall, like every visitor, return—now and again—for another drink.



Night, for example, is a very thirsty period, and requires a special knowledge of certain places where the lights flare brightest. We shall—never fear—visit these places. But just at the moment there is something nearly as important as drinking to be done.

I refer to the matter of food.



## CHAPTER IV

### BUT ONE MUST EAT

#### I

EATING in Havana, except for the Casino, the Restaurant Paris and one or two other restaurants, and certain of the clubs, is a matter of hotels.

The hotels may be classified as either American or Spanish. Most of the American hotels have French chefs; some of them are very good and some astonishingly bad. Likewise for the Spanish—or Cuban if you like—hotels. A few of these are superlative in cooking, cleanliness and service. A majority are indifferent, and a few do not bear investigation. The case, in short, of any large city.

There are two hotels of the quality known abroad as *de luxe*—the Sevilla-Biltmore, which offers you a menu like that of the Biltmore, New York; and the Almendares, built by that great Cuban family the Mendozas, a large hotel with perfect appointments, managed by Alfred Gamard, and presenting a cuisine of high standard. The Sevilla is in Havana itself; the Almendares is about five miles from the



heart of Havana toward the Casino, with its own Country Club and golf links. A distinguished hostelry for those who like quiet combined with quality.

The Sevilla has two restaurants and a charming patio for tea-or-cocktail and dancing. The luncheon restaurant is downstairs, adjoining the lobby, and is seldom used at night when the kitchens and staff are moved up on the roof. An exceptional view of Havana can be obtained from this roof and nightly it is a scene of gaiety, with dressing-for-dinner a requisite. The waiters and chefs come from other Biltmore hotels and collaborate in the special style of food and service which has come to be associated with the name of Bowman. The wines and liqueurs are chosen by John McEntee Bowman himself on his annual visits to Europe. Privately I think this loving selection of his Havana liquids must be Jack Bowman's principal recreation in life. Certainly he qualifies as a connoisseur. An orchestra directed by a gentleman with a passion for cock-fighting, Mr. Victor Rodriguez, supplies dance music during dinner and supper, and I know of few things more exhilarating than a waltz with a sweet young thing over the floor of polished tiles, with all Havana winking at you from the windows. The Sevilla Roof is never noisy, but then, thank God, neither is it ever sedate.



It is a very human restaurant where the world meets his wife and chucks her under the chin.

The Almendares Restaurant is very smart, very *chic*, and on its frequent gala nights it can be very Cuban and very gay. The Almendares teas, in the beautiful patio, are high-lights socially on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. The flower of Cuban beauty is there, and the flower of Cuban beauty is a beguiling blossom.

Slim young señoritas, whose fathers are literally "sugar daddies," are very alluring in their Paris frocks. They walk as they dance, with instinctive grace. One longs to be presented to them so that one may float, like these Cuban dandies, into the dreamy heaven of a Cuban *danzón*.

But one generally has to be content with watching them, for these gazelle-like young creatures are chaperoned with an adequacy unknown in Paris or New York. You don't just walk up and ask a Cuban girl to dance, even if you have been introduced. You ask her mother, or her aunt, or her elder sister, or whoever happens to be guarding her fragile and precious personality. Only if you are undoubtedly eligible will you be permitted to more than pass the time of day with her—in the hearing of her elders.

These Almendares and Country Club dances are too tantalizing for me. The flappers are there—but



they won't flap for you. They are shy, adorable—and unreachable. Their incomparably wistful eyes hint at Olympian heights of romance, but you'll never climb those heights. The promise of liquid brown eyes will not be confirmed by ruby, rosebud lips.

I know a man who came to Cuba for a fortnight's stay and went to one of those Almendares teas and saw a girl and fell in love with her at sight and raved about her for days. He was an absolute nuisance around the hotel; the only subject he knew was this adorable creature and the only thing he lived for was to meet her. His fortnight came and went and he still hung around, using every guile and subterfuge known to the lovesick swain since *Pamour* was invented. Two months afterward he was still there, and as far away from making the young lady's acquaintance as he had been at the beginning. He spoke rashly of bearding President Machado in his palace and asking him for an introduction. Finally, by extraordinary exertion and questionable means he got himself invited to her house. Her mother, fat, formidable and forty, received him. During a terrible twenty minutes the miserable man sat in that splendid Cuban home, sipping tea and talking to Mother. He never saw the girl and never was in-



vited again. It seems he blurted out in his nervousness that his wife lived in New York.

But even to an unwed and entirely eligible young man a Cuban beauty is nearly as inaccessible as the stars. He could be invited to sing Sweet Adeline with President Coolidge easier than he could get in her home.

So be warned. Look your fill, drink in this admirable panorama of dark, seductive beauty until your pulses leap, but don't be foolish. Don't fall in love. You'll only have to fall out again and it may hurt.

If you are very susceptible it may be wise for you not to come to Havana at all, for at least two out of every three girls on the street there are pretty, and half of them, if you like the lissome, languorous, warm-eyed, dark-skinned, vividly-colored type, are beautiful. And even this percentage is beaten by Santiago and Cardenas, not to mention Matanzas and Trinidad. There are positively *more* beautiful girls in Santiago—well, the wife, who is brunette herself, said she would never let me go *there* alone. Don't however, ask me what these beautiful girls look like when they are ten years older. I did not stay long enough to find out. God, when he made the world, should have provided that death should coincide with



the failing of beauty—for what else has a woman to live for?

## II

We have listed the two *de luxe* hotels, which means that they have French menus, bathrooms with every bed, and superior employees. It may be that the new Spanish-style hotel being built by the Bowman interests at Jaimanitas is completed when you come to Cuba; if so, count three to the list. There is a great need in Havana for more *de luxe* hotels and only the shortness of the season prevents these being built. But there are several very fine hotels which are first-class and only fall short of the *de luxe* requirements by a narrow margin.

Among these are the Plaza, first of the "American" hotels; the Inglaterra, leader among the Spanish houses; the Telégrafo, like the Inglaterra situated on the Central Plaza at the top of the Prado; the Florida, a favorite among the old-timers; the Lafayette, with an exceptional reputation and a Mexican restaurant—I heard of this hotel in Paris; the Royal Palm, a first-class American hotel; the Pasaje, one of the oldest and best of the Spanish hotels; the Regina, on Industria Street, with six *de luxe* suites and a Spanish Tavern in the basement; the Bristol, a central hotel with a good roof-garden, at-



tractive entertainment and American cooking; the Ritz, favorite among wealthy Cubans; the Astor, a small but good house; the Perla de Cuba, much favored by the Cuban and Spanish visitors; the La Union, with 200 rooms modernly equipped; the Cecil, out in the residential section and quiet; the Presidente, which opens for the first time during the 1928-29 season, and of which William Davis is manager; and the Maison Royale, the only French hotel in Havana.

The Plaza Hotel is the home of the Rotary Club, of sundry other clubs needing a weekly luncheon-place, and is usually selected by Americans on conducted tours. It is a first-class hotel with a familiar American aspect, a good bar and smoking-room, and one of the most energetic managers I have ever known—Fausto Simon. He looks a little like his first name, and he knows his business. Every year he travels through the United States spreading publicity for Cuba on fertile ground. When you dine on the wonderful Plaza roof-garden, with the music of the band in Central Plaza coming faintly to your ears and the balmy breeze of the Caribbean cooling you after your dances, take note of the lovely Ophelia, the Plaza's star dancer, a Mexican whose mother was eaten by a shark. Señor Simon has wisely made his program on the roof as Cuban as



possible. Here you may see the Cuban *danzón* danced as it should be danced, and even a wee suggestion of the forbidden *rumba*, that most suggestive of dances, reminiscent of the jungle, when instead of the woman trying to charm the man it's the other way about, and the man by his gestures and his grace endeavors to seduce the woman. And if you happen to be dining on the Plaza roof one evening when *coupe Plaza* is on the menu, why, order it—if you like crushed strawberries iced with custard and helped out by ice-cream.

You always see a good show on the Plaza roof because the same company owns a theater nearby.

The Inglaterra is a house where tradition is built of reputation, or vice-versa. It was for years the only good hotel in Cuba and today is in advance of any hotel I know in Madrid. The rooms each have private baths and telephones and are decorated in the attractive Spanish style. The restaurant is excellent.

The Telégrafo forms another angle of the Central Plaza and has a famous restaurant with a special menu naming 100 kinds of ice-cream—mostly of the sherbet variety. Some people—among them Samuel G. Blythe and Horatio S. Rubens—consider the Telégrafo the best restaurant in Havana and certainly if you eat there you will not be disappointed.



Their crabs—*cangrejos*—are famous and so, around Christmas, is their roast suckling pig.

Between the *Telégrafo* and the *Inglaterra* is a long narrow restaurant celebrated for its sea-food. You have to come to Havana to realize how profuse the sea really is of edible varieties. More than six hundred different fish found in Cuban waters can be eaten—not all at the same season. A fisherman in Cuba needs expert knowledge. With some varieties a male can be eaten at certain seasons and a female during other months. Of the dozens of different crabs found on the coral reefs only four are worth eating. Sea-urchins and *langouste* abound. The red snapper is the most popular Cuban fish, with the *pargo* a close second. The *pargo* is a versatile fish; on some menus it figures under five or six different names, and in certain restaurants even masquerades as sole. Shark,\* if boiled with plenty of salt, makes excellent eating, and so do the eggs of jellyfish, remarkable for the delicate tracery on their white shells. Turtle are found everywhere along the coast of Cuba and a tender turtle steak at the *Telégrafo* or the *Pasaje* is worth traveling miles to eat.

\* Man-eating sharks are almost unknown off the coast of Cuba, although a smaller species—called by fishermen "gull sharks"—abound. Cases of these attacking human beings have been known, but are rare. The shark is a deep-water fish and seldom approaches the shore.



Cubans usually cook their fish with a sauce made of green and red peppers, onions, peas and other vegetables. *Guaguanchos* (smelts) are served in fritters. Fish fried until it is nearly dry and served with hot rice is a favorite. Some restaurants feature fish baked in paper-bags.

Aristocrat of Cuban restaurants is the Restaurant Paris, owned and managed by a famous Creole cook, Alfred Petit. Several fair Italian eating-places exist.

## III

The Cuban menu suits some palates but most Americans prefer it only as a change. Generally speaking the cooking is too dry; the use of onions in everything, monotonous. The national dish is called *ajiaco criollo*, and is a sort of fried stew made of jerked beef, pork, corn, peppers, and every sort of vegetable. Sometimes fish is added also. The commonest dish throughout Cuba is the Basque specialty "arroz con pollo." Thick *sopas*, or soups, with several kinds of meat and vegetables in them, figure on most Cuban home menus. *Lechoncito asado*, roast suckling pig, is the Cuban's Christmas turkey, and is perhaps the most delicious dish to be found in Cuba. Aristocrat of the vegetable list is the *aguacate*, or alligator pear, which is nothing more formidable than the vegetable marrow to be found



on every English dinner-table. There are a number of native vegetables, some of which are tasty, and a long list of fruits, few of which figure on the average restaurant menu because, as they grow wild, nobody thinks it worth while to pick them, and most of which are too sweet for the average taste. In the summer the Cuban mango is worth sampling, and the Cuban bananas, cocoanuts, caimitos and grape-fruit are the finest to be found in the West Indies.

Cocoanuts, mangos, bananas and mameys (a sort of tough-skinned apricot) grow wild, in such profusion that they are more a nuisance than a blessing. Another wild fruit is the guava, called *guayaba* in Cuba, which like the mango has a very distinctive taste of its own—a taste nearly baffling definition, resembling as it does, when cooked, the peach, strawberry, raspberry and apple! Guava is put up in two forms—guava jelly and *caseo de guayaba*, a sort of marmalade. As a jam it probably has the most unusual flavor in the world; once eaten this flavor is never forgotten and there have been instances of people crossing the ocean merely for another taste of it.

The Cuban menu is made of all these things, and usually Spanish wine is drunk as a complement; it seems to fit in better than the suaver French wine. There are a great many fraudulent Spanish wines in



Havana and the visitor should be careful of his choice and where he orders it. The Inglaterra has one of the finest cellars in Havana. For ordinary purposes the traveler will not go wrong if he orders a Rioja wine—red (tinto) or white (blanco)—which is a fair substitute for the light dry Bordeaux wines. Cubans consider *Marques de Riscal* finest of Spanish wines. One glass of tawny Amontillado sherry is a marvellous *apéritif*, but here again ordering must be subordinate to knowledge and taste. There are few things more awful in life than a bad sherry.

Wine is made by descendants of French emigrants in a section of Oriente province but is not exported and cannot be found in Havana. The miraculous *malvoisie* wine of the Canaries should be treated, if you are lucky enough to find it—not much is made each year and very little of that is sold except to private owners—like the liquid gold it is.

Sometimes on a Cuban menu you may be puzzled by the appearance of dishes whose names have apparently no derivation in either English or Spanish.

Under the head of soups you may, for instance, read "aristu." This, if you take a chance on ordering it, you will discover to be Irish Stew. A beef-steak is "bisté" and fresh green string beans are "aricober"—viz., *haricots verts*. Cuban cooks are nothing if not literal.



## CHAPTER V

### AND NOW FOR THE RACES

#### I

AFTER lunch one goes to the races. One can go by tramway, motor-bus or taxi, but generally one hires a big car from the Sevilla door-keeper and is driven out in style.

The race-track is about twenty minutes from the heart of Havana in the suburb of Marianao. Its official name is Oriental Park, though the only Orientals about the place are the Chinese laundrymen and vegetable-growers who flood the cheap enclosure every Sunday, three or four of them going shares on a two-dollar ticket.

Oriental Park was founded in 1915 by H. T. ("Curly") Brown, owner now of Arlington Park, Chicago. The present vice-president and general manager, Charles F. Flynn, was manager of the track under Brown. About eight or nine years ago Brown sold the track to Charles Stoneham. Havana, however, had not yet got into its stride as a tourist resort. The track made money, but not much money. It needed improvements which Stoneham did not think justified.



Meanwhile Charles Flynn, when he left Oriental Park on Brown's selling the place to Stoneham, had become identified with the Bowman interests and had persuaded John McEntee Bowman to buy a building in the heart of Havana which had been a hotel but which was then known as the Sevilla office-building. This building Flynn had transformed, under circumstances which may be related later, into a modern hotel—the Sevilla-Biltmore.

In 1925 Flynn broached an ambitious program to Bowman, who was steadily becoming more enthusiastic on the subject of Havana. He suggested that the Biltmore group form a separate company and acquire the race-track and the National Casino from the concessionaires, these things being really only a preliminary in Flynn's mind to the real scheme he and Bowman had discussed years before—the creation near Havana of an American Monte Carlo.

The new syndicate was formed and the gambling concession, together with leases on the race-track and Casino, was purchased by a Bowman group known as the "Cuban National Syndicate" from Carlos M. de Céspedes and Senator Cortina, to whom the concession had passed from Stoneham. Bowman became president of both enterprises, and Flynn vice-president and general manager.

The 1925-26 season saw the new owners in the



saddle, and almost at once extensive improvements, begun by Stoneham, were completed and others planned. Backed by the foresight and imagination and money of John McE. Bowman and the amazing vision and energy of Charles F. Flynn, the race-track has become a great money-maker. The daily average turnover of the mutuels alone for the season of 1927-28 was \$40,234, or an increase of nearly ten percent over the preceding season. The mutuels handled, in fact, no less a sum than \$3,822,276. And as the profits of the track include the book-makers' percentages and the rake-off from the gambling-rooms it will be seen that Messrs. Bowman and Flynn have a tidy little affair.

The opening in December, 1928, will see extensive improvements, the Jockey Club building being extended 100 feet toward the paddock. The restaurant now seats 400 persons for lunch without crowding and the capacity of the terrace and gambling-rooms has been increased threefold.

When you go to Oriental Park you will of course become a member of the Jockey Club, which makes the track the most exquisite little racing-plant in the world. You will therefore hunt up James F. Milton, the famous Maryland starter, who is assistant manager, and start in motion the process by which membership in the club is achieved. Member-



ship for the season costs \$100, but it is possible to visit the club by paying a daily admission fee.

As you enter the clubhouse you traverse a short lobby and then find yourself in the main dining-room, where the cream of visiting and local society lunches on Saturdays and Sundays and dines and dances on Tuesday nights. An orchestra plays during lunch and at tea-time; between races, you may dance.

On the other side of the dining-room is the famous terrace, from which members view the races. This terrace is like no other race-track grandstand in the world. On it you sit with your party at little tables, a waiter hovering nearby to catch your order and a pari-mutuel or bookmakers' agent passing to take your wager. From your table you have a full and complete view of the entire track. It is actually possible, in such splendid fashion has this track been constructed, to see your horse's *hoofs*, and certainly read his jockey's colors, throughout the race. I know of no other track in the world where this is possible—where you can lunch, dine, and bet from your table with an unobstructed view of the course, and between races dance or gamble.

Beneath the main dining-room and terrace is a grill-room and bar and several pari-mutuel machines for those who like to do their betting themselves.



Here, at the bar, you will find Jake Mueller, who has been a race-track bartender since he was in short breeches, and his assistant Dave Jordan. What these two boys don't know about racing isn't worth knowing, and naturally neither is a millionaire—yet. Jake and Dave can call the names and drinks of nearly every famous racing personality in the United States.

Some pretty big men may be seen following their fancy out at Oriental Park. You'll see Chicago O'Brien very busy totting up sums of five and six figures, and Al Johnson and Harry Frazee know a good thing when they see it. There are plenty of daring sportsmen in Cuba, too, as they have learned in Deauville and Monte Carlo. Milton Hershey and Frank Steinhart and General Bétancourt, and Lorenzo Quesada are generally to be found watching the prices, and John J. McGraw never misses a day at the track. An important man is Johnny Walters, the betting commissioner and the man who makes the prices for the books; and Skeets Garner, once a very well-known jockey indeed, will be found scurrying between the paddock and the ring.

Garner was head jockey for John W. Gates. He comes of a famous racing family and his brother Guy is a rider and trainer in France. I asked Skeets who was the biggest racing man he'd ever known.



"Johnnie Gates," he said, unhesitatingly, "the whitest, squarest sportsman the world ever knew."

"He was called 'Bet-a-Million Gates,' wasn't he?" I asked. "Did he ever bet it?"

"Not that I know of. He never found anyone who would take him up. But he would accept any part of the million and once a horse I rode for him carried \$600,000 of his money."

"Kind of nervous riding, wasn't it, Skeets?"

"Yes, *sir!* It ain't no cinch riding a horse as heavily backed as Gates would back his. There were—plenty of propositions. There were even one or two—accidents. But you know why I loved Gates? It was because of his *confidence* in me. He trusted me to bring his horses home. He used to call me his 'best horse.' Yes, *sir*—a square guy and a great gentleman. I sure *loved* that man."

## II

Rum, roulette and racing form a fascinating combination. You might think it the most dangerous combination in the world, and Havana, which stretches "personal liberty" to the point of permitting all three to operate in one and the same spot, a "wild town."

But as a matter of fact Havana is not a "wild town." You do not hear guns popping in the streets



nor see hilarious gentlemen "shooting up" barrooms. That phase of Havana's history belongs to the past. Today even the police are polite.

And the Havana-American Jockey Club is sedate, smart and select, not wild, woolly and whoopin'. Prettily dressed children play in a part of the grounds reserved for them—Havana's is the only race-track catering to infants—beautiful ladies in summery creations from Paris sip cool drinks on the terrace or saunter on the lawns—there to be trapped by the society photographer—and quietly dressed gentlemen with thick pocketbooks and international reputations walk hither and thither, not raising their voices to bet.

Between races they throng the roulette rooms, and here again is quiet and order. Nobody is loud. The croupiers, unlike their Monte Carlo confrères, do not go through the picturesque but useless jargon of the game: *faites vos jeux, messieurs . . . vos jeux sont faits? rien ne va plus . . . Le sept, noir et impair*. No; the Havana croupier spins the ball in bored fashion, allows you to bet until the ball has actually fallen into a socket, and then, instead of giving tongue, points gently to the number on the board that has won, and in another gesture pays the winners and scoops in the losing chips. You are supposed to know that seven is black, odd, in the first dozen and



in the first column. The result is that where the Monte Carlo croupier does one spin to the two minutes the Havana croupier spins the ball every twenty or thirty seconds.

The strained, unhappy looks of the players, the fevered atmosphere, are absent at the Jockey Club tables. One has clearly the impression that here are a company of generous gentlemen and ladies who, having won on the racing, have taken pity on the syndicate and are here handing back their winnings in a quiet, refined way. Doubtless if they went to Mr. Flynn and said: "Dear Mr. Flynn, I'm so sorry, but I actually won on that third race—quite a disgusting amount of money. Here, take it, won't you—with my apologies?" Mr. Flynn would feel insulted and refuse to accept charity. So these kind-hearted people, not wishing to hurt his feelings, go into the gambling-rooms and quietly leave the money on the roulette table.

Which reminds me of an incident at the Casino last year, with George Olsen, the "jazz king," as hero. George had a bad evening. He played craps, and sevens were frequent between points. He indulged in a little poker, and couldn't make a pair. He doubled up on the birdcage, and two of the other five numbers came up. He sat down at baccarat, and not an eight or a nine came his way in an hour. He guessed high at hazard, and there was a run at



low. So George repaired to a roulette wheel, where I found him ten minutes afterward. George's expression was sad.

"How's luck?" I asked.

"Luck?" repeated Mr. Olsen, as though puzzled.

"Luck? What's that?"

He explained that during ten minutes no red number had once come up. He had been betting on red.

"It stands to reason, don't it," said George, "that red's *got* to come up some time." He placed a pile of chips on red.

"Roulette never stands to reason," I told him. "And there's black—again."

"Aw," said George, despondently, "I guess I'm hoodooed all right tonight. If I stay at this table red never will come up. Unless, of course, I switch my bets to black."

He placed his last pile on red and turned away. "I won't watch," he said. "I'll go over here and talk to Perry. I *know* black's gonna win again, and it'll break my heart."

Five minutes later I found Olsen after a hunt through the rooms. He was having a beer in a corner, unutterable melancholy clouding his usually happy face.

"George," I said, "you were wrong. Red came up."

Mr. Olsen did not seem particularly interested.



"It did, did it?" he said. "Well, where's the dough?"

"Where's what dough?" I asked. "You didn't tell me to do anything with that bet. It was your money, not mine."

"D'you mean to tell me," howled Olsen, "that you *left* that dough lying on red? Why, you—"

Just then an employee of the rooms came up.

"Mr. Olsen, Sir," he said, respectfully, "the croupier wants to know whether you still want maximums on red. It came black last time."

Olsen went to the table in a daze. The croupier greeted him with a smile.

"Still want to bet the limit?" he asked.

"If black came up I got no more dough," said Olsen.

"What about this two grand?" asked the croupier.

The maximum at roulette is \$1,000 on the colors. Red coming in sequence had piled George's chips from the original \$125 bet to the maximum in three spins. Three times red had won for him with \$1,000 at stake, and once lost. So he had won nearly two thousand dollars by going away into a corner and drinking a glass of beer.

But I don't recommend the system as infallible. George never tried it again.

The Jockey Club runs mostly to roulette and





THE HAVANA AMERICAN JOCKEY CLUB.



hazard, which with baccarat, *chemin-de-fer* and *trente-et-quarante* are the aristocrats of games of chance. Such low games as craps, in the quiet precincts of this temple, are not encouraged.

But the Jockey Club sees some very heavy play, occasionally. Frank Steinhart, whose amazing story is told hereafter, and Hershey, the philanthropic chocolate king, amuse themselves and a gallery now and again with maximums. Last season a Chicago broker, famed for his plunges in the grain pits, won \$60,000 in one afternoon, most of it at hazard. A real-estate man from New York took \$25,000 away from the roulette game. A wealthy Cuban plunger, halving the zeros with the maximum, saw the blank arrive four times in succession. The biggest winnings are "luck" plays. There is not much system-playing at Havana, chiefly because most systems require that a table should be in operation continuously over a stated number of hours for an average of plays to be struck. In Havana tables only operate as long as there are players; although one player, if he wishes, can sometimes have a table to himself.

The players in the Jockey Club appear to me to be substantial men of the business type, not the gambling kind at all. What they win doesn't make them reckless, and what they lose won't hurt them. They are down on vacation and "a little fling now and then



won't do any harm." Their wives are getting a thrill at the "ladies only" table.

Gambling vultures of the predatory sort are not seen in Havana as in the casinos of Europe. No painted lady will lean over your chair and murmur: "*Mettez cinquante louis pour moi dans votre banque, Monsieur?*" Ladies of loose morals may be about, but at least they are circumspect.

Of course, once in a while a gentleman who has "parked the wife" in Palm Beach or Miami arrives, a bundle of lace and ribbons on either arm. They are hilarious for an afternoon or so, while the "sugar daddy" gives his friends a few thousands to bet with, and they put two-thirds away in a safe place and bet the remainder—always, of course, losing. Then they disappear and managers, bartenders and croupiers breathe easier. But these amateur joymakers on a winter spree mean and do no harm.

In general, the atmosphere of the Jockey Club is one of casual elegance and is clean of the crookedness, tragedy and unwholesomeness that characterize the principal casinos of the old world.

### III

This result has not been achieved without considerable hard work and forethought on the part of the promoters.

The racing itself is "on the level." The orders



of Jack Bowman, himself a horseman and a horse-lover since his earliest days, were categoric on that point. "*The first man found crooked gets a ticket to the States.*" That goes for jockey, trainer, owner or employee. The result is that the Havana race-track is a clean plant where every horse has a chance.

That Mr. Bowman's orders are obeyed is ensured by a qualified and adequate staff, all the way from Charley Flynn himself down to the smallest official. The mutuels, for instance, are managed by Milton Meffert, a man whose record places his name above suspicion. Mr. Meffert, whose title at the track is that of Auditor, manages six meetings a year in Canada, including Duffrein Park and Long Branch at Toronto, and the famous Kenilworth track at Windsor.

The presiding steward is M. Nathanson, the associate steward and racing secretary is W. H. Shelley. Dr. F. W. Ashe is associate steward and L. Dean is starter. The clerk of scales is S. S. Bender, the timer A. C. Niehaus, and the four judges are C. Cornchlisen, R. S. Shelley, C. F. Henry and W. W. Lyles. The handicappers are M. Nathanson, W. H. Shelley and C. Cornchlisen. To racing men these names alone are a guaranty of a square deal.

There are usually one hundred or so strings of horses at the track, there being 1,100 stalls in the



stables built to accommodate them. Twenty-five or thirty of the owners are Cuban. President Machado himself has the largest individual string, with the famous ex-jockey Winnie O'Connor as trainer.

Among the American owners is Tom Cheek, who in 1928 was one hundred and three years old. He usually gets a vociferous "hand" when he wins a race. Other old-timers include Barney Scalm and Clarence Farrell, sheet writers; Harry Dore, "Chicago" O'Brien's clocker; Frank Bacciooco, formerly commissioner for Julius Fleischmann; Mark Elias, one of Bat Masterson's close friends; Herman Radtke, once one of America's greatest jockeys and now a sheet-writer; T. K. Lynch, Billy Myron, Billy Duane, Bert Johnson, Harry Hentricks, Eddie Waugh, Billy Davis, Ed Colell, Peter Doll, who attended Abraham Lincoln's funeral; Joe Lefkowitz, Joe Healey, Oscar Weikert, a "native son"; Markie Stearn, Ike DeWilde, Frank Koergh, Benny Levy, Pete Blong, Wash Wilcox and Shaum Gilmartin.

Some great boys are riding at Havana now. Two of them particularly will be heard from in no uncertain fashion in the future—C. Meyer and T. Root. Others wearing the silks are R. Mozer, J. Gwynne, H. Thomas, J. Frederick, Shropshire, K. Gleed, Cheatham, J. Guerra, O. Pernia, J. O'Malley, F. Moon, P. Cogan, S. Palumbo and J. Ford.



Trainers include C. Ferraro, F. Walker, G. Alexandra, Jr., A. Miller, G. M. Ridge, W. H. Schwartz, E. B. Ogden, J. F. Patterson, J. Driscoll, W. E. Fairman, J. Switcher, M. E. Thompson, J. Y. Christmas, A. Smitha, W. Cedar, A. S. Eastman, H. T. Palmer, R. Robertson, G. K. Allen, W. Martin, S. McNeill, M. Katz, F. A. Hyde, J. Conway, J. Corujo, R. Guciardo, L. Clous, H. Torriente, J. F. Hynes, J. A. Grey, H. Herdel, J. Reed, L. E. Fine and H. A. Magee.

Some remarkable times have been made on this track, which is oval with two bad curves. Among the track records are the following:

DIST.	HORSE	AGE	WT.	DATE	TIME
2 fur.	Dy. Hall .....	2	115	Jan. 24, 1919	1:22
	Azarna .....	2	111	Jan. 29, 1919	1:22
	Mordue .....	2	118	Jan. 21, 1927	1:22
3 fur.	Helmet's Daughter ..	2	113	Jan. 21, 1916	1:34 3-5
	Princessita .....	2	115	Feb. 4, 1927	1:34 3-5
3½ fur.	True Flier .....	2	114	Feb. 11, 1922	1:41 1-5
½ mile	Princessita .....	2	118	Feb. 18, 1927	1:47 2-5
5 fur.	Fort Churchill .....	3	100	Jan. 10, 1920	1:59
5½ fur.	Extreme .....	5	126	Feb. 13, 1927	1:55
6 fur.	High Gear .....	6	102	Jan. 8, 1920	1:58
	Money .....	6	104	Jan. 11, 1920	1:58
	Right Angle .....	5	116	Jan. 25, 1920	1:58
	Zuker .....	5	116	Jan. 11, 1927	1:58
7 fur.	Bucky Harris .....	5	109	Feb. 9, 1928	1:57
	Wenonah .....	4	105	Jan. 16, 1917	1:57
	Pierrot .....	8	105	Jan. 13, 1917	1:57
	Chief Sponsor .....	4	101	Dec. 5, 1920	1:58
1 mile	Senator James .....	8	103	Feb. 12, 1918	1:59
1 m. 20 yds.	King David .....	4	96	Jan. 28, 1928	1:40
1 m. 70 yds.	George Kuffan .....	5	104	Mar. 1, 1924	1:43 4-5
1½ miles	Zululand .....	3	92	Feb. 1, 1918	1:44 1-5
1½ miles	Boon .....	4	102	Jan. 21, 1928	1:44 1-5
1½ miles	Buford .....	6	103	Jan. 13, 1920	1:59 4-5
1½ miles	Walnut Hall .....	6	102	Jan. 1, 1920	1:57 4-5
1¾ miles	Herron .....	4	118	Jan. 30, 1921	2:03 3-5
1½ miles	Caribe .....	8	105	Feb. 13, 1927	2:14 2-5
2½ miles	J. Alfred Clark .....	6	107	Mar. 23, 1923	1:29 2-5



One of the interesting men about the track is Charles C. Cook, whose business card proclaims that he is "Photographer Extraordinaire to His Majesty King Horse," and who has been a race-track photographer for thirty years. He is known as being perhaps the best "finish" track photographer in the world, but his principal claim to fame to me would seem to be the fact that, although he has scarcely missed a day's racing in thirty years, and knows more about the game than almost anyone else in it, he has yet to place his first bet.

The photographer the society folk must pretend to dodge is Steiglitz, who has an eye for the photographic possibilities of a pretty woman rivaling that of Georgie White or Samuel Goldwyn.



## CHAPTER VI

### WHEN TWO IRISHMEN GET TOGETHER

#### I

MORE than thirty and less than forty years ago a group of lumbermen sat outside the trading post of a log settlement in the far north forests of Ontario, wondering when and whether the mail would get through.

For two weeks it had been blowing a blizzard. Word had come through that the trail south was impossible for anyone unless traveling on skis. The mail was carried in fast sleds driven by horses in summer and dogs in winter. From Toronto north it went a short distance by train, then a longer distance by road, then many hundred miles across unbridged rivers, unmapped lakes and virgin forests to the outlying settlements. Getting the mails through was distinctly a man's job. On this occasion it looked like a superman's job, and fifty to one odds were offered that the mail would not arrive.

A bearded, red-shirted woodsman came toward the group on skis, shouting and waving his hands.



"The mail's comin', the mail's comin'!" he cried, "*an' it's driven by a kid!*"

Astounded, the loggers watched the sled draw up and swing to a sweating, snarling halt. The dogs were dead-beat, red-fanged, their feet caked with ice. On the sled was the mail sack and sundry packages, and a sinister bundle covered with blankets—the mail driver.

A diminutive figure detached itself from where it had been loosening the traces on the off-side. It wore snow-shoes and carried a rawhide thong. As the figure divested itself of the cumbersome parka the assembled men first stared, dumbfounded, then swore.

The "man" who had brought the mail through with the real driver badly injured was a boy of fifteen! His name was Bowman—Jack Bowman. The mail route belonged to his father and uncle. The driver incapacitated, it had been up to his father's son to get the mail through.

## II

At approximately the same date, in the woods of Northern New England, another boy of fifteen was getting his first experience of the lumber business. He was learning to know timber, to judge the worth of this and that monarch of the forest, to understand



the process by which the trees came by way of flume and log raft from forest to mill, and from mill to lumberyard.

One day in Boston the boy had an interview with his father, an Irishman in the lumber business there.

"It amounts to this," said the father, "I'm giving you your choice. Either you can come in the lumber business with me or I'll put up the cash and send you to college. You're a smart boy and quick at figures and you ought to get on, either way. Which is it?"

"Father," said the boy, "let's leave college out of it. I want to be a builder like you."

*A builder like his father.* Sweet words in a parent's ears!

Young Charley Flynn got his wish. He became a builder.

### III

Now it happened that up in the North a change was taking place in the wilderness. Railroads were being pushed through the virgin forests, automobile roads built where hitherto had been but trails.

The business of the old mail carriers dwindled correspondingly with the march of civilization. Young Jack Bowman, at school in Toronto, saw the fortunes of his family reach their peak and then



reverse. College for him became out of the question; work a necessity.

So it was that one day in the nineties a young towheaded Canadian boy, with an Irishman's fighting jaw and an Irishman's sense of humor to support him in adversity, came to New York. In his pocket were a few dollars and a letter of introduction given him by a friend of the family to an executive of the Hotel Manhattan.

The Hotel Manhattan executive kept him waiting much longer than any ambitious, headstrong Irish boy would wait, and when he finally sent for him Bowman was gone.

Twenty-five years later he again entered the Hotel Manhattan—as owner.

#### IV

The intervening time saw him in many jobs. His first was a strange one for a youth born and raised in the wilderness. An acquaintance asked him if he wanted a job. Bowman said that not only did he want a job, but that he'd mighty soon have to have a job—or starve.

“What can you do?” asked the man.

“Ride any horse, rope cattle, break trail, cook for lumbermen, and so forth,” replied young Bowman.



"Well," said the man drily, "I'll give you a job, then."

He made him clerk in a Yonkers haberdashery store.

Dispensing "Gents' Furnishings" soon palled on the Canadian boy and he went traveling. In the South he worked in tourist hotels, and finding the business to his liking, adopted it, going to an Adirondack hotel for a season.

Then he heard the call of horses again and, returning to New York, became an instructor at Durland's Riding Academy. That went until one day the boss tried to make him wear a uniform. Bowman quit on the spot. He was no man's hireling to wear livery. A few weeks later he opened his own riding academy, with a tiny store of hardly saved dollars and two horses.

Bowman is now perhaps the most prominent man in the American horse world. He is President of the United Hunts Racing Association, which August Belmont called "the cradle of racing," and during his presidency attendance at United Hunt meets has increased from 300 to 12,000. He is President of the National Horseshow Association of America; is the American Judge at the Olympia horseshow, and is M.F.H. at Golden's Bridge. He founded the Westchester Racing Association and built their beau-



tiful track—Bowman Park. He is known as an "angel" of international polo matches and aided in bringing the British-Indian four over in 1927. As a sportsman Bowman's rise has perhaps been even more spectacular than his skyrocketing career as a hotel financier.

One of Bowman's clients at Durland's was Gustav Baumann, owner of the Holland House. Baumann thought so much of Bowman's ability and integrity that he persuaded him to sell the riding academy and come in with him as an assistant. From being in charge of wines and cigars he rose to be Baumann's secretary.

For years he continued in this position, all the time continuing his riding with prize-winning horses, and then he persuaded Baumann to build the Biltmore Hotel. Baumann built the hotel, installed Jack Bowman as manager, and then died—leaving the young Canadian solely in charge of his large interests.

V

Meanwhile another Irishman was carving out his destinies in another part of the world—Florida. Charles Flynn had made Jacksonville his home for ten years now, working first in lumbermills as a foreman boss, then as his own manager in a building business he started.



He took an interest in politics, too, and when a program of good roads was at last decided upon by the State of Florida, Flynn was elected Highway Commissioner. In this capacity he built the first macadam road in the State—from Jacksonville to St. Augustine.

His herculean energy and his ability as a builder and estimator—Flynn has always been a wizard at figures—widened his reputation to include the whole southeast. To him came one William Candler, of soft-drink fame, who lamented Atlanta's lack of a first-class hotel and offered to back one if a competent organization could be found to run it and if Flynn would put his experience and knowledge into its construction.

"Wait," said Flynn, "I think I know how this thing can be worked. There's a little Irishman up North that I met once who's by all odds the best hotel man in the country. Suppose we go see him?"

They went to New York and Charles Francis Flynn introduced William Candler to John McEntee Bowman.

Candler offered to put up most of the money, Bowman agreed to build and staff and manage the hotel as one of the Biltmore group, and Flynn was given the job of supervising the construction.

The two Irishmen had got together.



## VI

In the meantime Bowman had been having his troubles. Not without tremendous difficulty had the immense Biltmore chain been built up. Baumann's death found the New York Biltmore in very delicate financial shape. Every creditor came down on the new President with urgent demands that they be paid.

Bowman called a meeting of creditors and faced them.

"Gentlemen," he said, "what is all the panic about? Didn't you know an Irishman had this thing in tow? You'll get your money. Now—go home and be good."

They got their money. Bowman went forth into the money market and talked it out of the men who had it—notably the Armour's of Chicago.

This was just before the war. With his initial success at the New York Biltmore Bowman became known as the astutest hotel financier in the country. Millionaires no longer had to be begged to lend him money—they sat on his doorstep with their wallets in their hands.

## VII

Charles Francis Flynn was now an active executive in the brilliant army of John McEntee Bowman.



Bowman recognized in Flynn the vision and driving ability which in the hotel business means genius.

Flynn suggested to Bowman, who was becoming interested in Florida, that a good hotel might profitably be built in Havana, which prohibition in the United States and the Florida boom had suddenly transformed into a city of great touristic possibilities.

Together they visited Havana and arranged to buy the Sevilla office-building and turn it into a hotel. Flynn, the former boss of Florida lumbermen, was told to go ahead with the job.

How he did it is one of the epics of hotel building. The deal to buy the building was done in the summer of 1919, a few months before prohibition became effective. Bowman wanted the hotel to open that winter. It was Flynn's job to get rid of the tenants of the building, some of whom had long leases, and this he did—partly by an Irishman's blarney and partly by finding them premises elsewhere.

Then redecoration of the hotel began. In New York Bowman did his part and ships began to arrive in Havana harbor filled with furniture, beds, tableware, carpets, glassware, silverware, sheets, blankets—everything needed to start the hotel.

A few weeks before the hotel was to be opened, on New Year's Eve, 1919-20, the longshoremen of



Havana went out on strike. Ships loaded with necessities lay in the harbor, at anchor, unable to unload. It was as much as one's life was worth to visit the docks.

But Flynn had to have those supplies. So he organized a miniature army of strike-breakers, promising them unheard-of wages, and himself led the assault on the docks. A few heads came near being broken but the ships were unloaded—all but one.

This ship could not enter the harbor because of a storm. And it contained all the tables for the hotel!

The day before the hotel was to open everything was in place except—there were no chairs or tables. It was a situation to daunt anyone, and a local Spanish newspaper satirically announced that, as was predicted, the new hotel would not open.

Flynn sent a messenger to the paper demanding a retraction. "The hotel will open as scheduled," he stated.

Then he set a gang of men making chairs and tables out of packing-cases on a vacant lot.

The hotel was opened exactly to time. An Irishman had laughed at fate again.

#### VIII

From then on the association of John McEntee Bowman and Charles Francis Flynn, of the Canadian





THE TWO IRISHMEN

John McEntee Bowman

Charles Francis Flynn



Irishman and the Boston Irishman, became hard and fast. Together they built the immense Miami-Biltmore at Coral Gables, which for the next decade almost certainly will remain the world's finest hotel. They built other hotels in Florida.

Then the Florida boom showed signs of collapsing and the astute Bowman and no less astute Flynn again turned their attention to Havana.

Havana, they were convinced, would one day be the greatest tourist winter resort on the North American continent. It had everything—personal liberty, wonderful climate, good hotels, a foreign atmosphere and a friendly welcome. The Riviera was becoming overcrowded. Bowman, in his semiannual visits to Europe, had watched the tourist business develop there with a keen eye. At one time he had thought of hotels in London and Paris, but wisely he decided to concentrate his energies on his own continent.

Flynn, in Havana, negotiated for the gambling concession and acquired the racetrack and the Casino Nacional from Carlos M. de Céspedes and Senator Cortina. These deals were put through and Bowman, the horseman, found himself proprietor of a racing plant.

Then the two Irishmen went one step further. They announced that near Havana they would build



the town of Biltmore, which would be to the United States what Monte Carlo is to Europe.

The new resort would be, they said, the most luxurious in the whole world. In it would be palatial clubs, hotels, golf, polo and tennis grounds; a casino; and a port of entry for yachts.

Also, although they did not say so, the building and success of the Cuban Monte Carlo would prove the truth of a certain adage well-known in the New World:

*When two Irishmen get together something is apt to happen.*



## CHAPTER VII

A JUG OF RUM BENEATH A COCOANUT TREE,  
A DINNER-DANCE, AND THOU

Do you remember the embarrassment of the fundamentalist Sunday-school preacher whose small pupil persisted in wanting specific data on Heaven?

"Is it hot?"

"Always nice and warm, sonny."

"Then there ain't no skatin'. Nor tobogganin'. Who wants to go there?"

When therefore I present to you a purely individual version of Paradise it must be understood I fully acknowledge that there *are* people in the world whose idea of a home is a moss-grown manor in Surrey, or a staid, respectable mansion on Commonwealth Avenue, or a farm in Virginay—or Kaintucky—or Ioway.

Didacticism is not a fault of mine. Every Heaven has its drawbacks. Home is where the heart is. Home also is the address the tax- and installment-collector knows. Conversely, any Paradise can become a hell if you—or your wife—don't happen to like it.



So I will ask your patience only while I draw a little picture.

Imagine, please, that you are the possessor of a mission-style "cottage" standing in its own grounds some ten miles west of Havana. The house has bathrooms, telephones, electric ice-boxes and, like any other real home, a servant problem. It has God's own central heating which you cannot turn off and on at will, but which you can humor in part by skillful adjustment of dress, nourishment and temper, and frequent supply of ice-cold drinks.

The interior of this "cottage" differs in few fundamental details from any gentleman's residence the world over. That is to say, you sleep in beds of your own choosing, you eat from dishes and tables of your own purchase, and the rest of the furniture is according to your individual taste—or that of your wife.

The floors will be of tile, washed off every day. With frequent washings the tiles take on a pleasing gloss. They serve the double purpose of helping to keep the house cool and of discouraging the ants from explorations in the Hepplewhite highboy.

The windows, too, will look a little odd to northern eyes. They will be smaller than the kind mostly seen where you come from, and each small pane will



be equipped with individual shutters and a little door, which you can open or close according to how much air you feel you need. These shuttered windows do not make the rooms any lighter than they should be, but they certainly discourage heat.

The house will be plentifully provided with terraces, porches and balconies, and these in turn will be furnished with large, comfortable rocking-chairs, the one essential piece of furniture in Cuba. A Cuban family moving into an unfurnished house buys the rocking-chairs first, then the kitchen stove.

Around and about this exceptionally pleasing house grow various exotic blossoms, magenta bougainvillea, Chinese hibiscus, pink coralillos, or climbing tea-roses, for example. In the garden grow tall, graceful coconut; royal palms, stateliest of trees; royal poincianas—lovely but a bit of a nuisance for the gardener; bottle palms and corozo palms; bamboo trees, banana trees, mango trees, star-apple trees, chirimoya (Cuban custard melon) trees, custard-apple trees, grape-fruit trees, orange trees, lime trees, guanabana trees, avocado (aguacate: alligator-pear) trees, mamey-apple trees—oh, and a lot more if you like fruit; you have but to plant them.

The vegetable garden (the month is January) reveals ripe garden vegetables of the usual kind—carrots, lettuce, cabbage, potatoes, corn, asparagus,



romaine—and a few Cuban vegetables, some of which are very tasty indeed.

All the year round the garden will provide you with fresh vegetables and fruit. If you are lucky or forehanded enough to possess a guava tree you may also have preserves—the most delicious known to man.

At the end of the back garden—beyond the banana grove and the chicken-house, past where the peacock is screaming and the turkeys are strutting—a little gate in the wall gives on to an eighteen-hole golf course built by Donald Ross.

Just outside the front gate is a stretch of sandy beach. The beach is washed by cool, not-quite-tepid crystal water, kept from being too rough by a double reef of pink-and-white coral gleaming out there in the sunshine, a reef which does not keep out the swarms of small fish on which it can, if you like, be your daily pleasure to feed.

Having dashed from your practically-open-air bed into a sea not cold enough to chill, you slip into any-old-thing and plod around a few holes to warm up for breakfast. Breakfast is a wonderful thing. If you are wise—or like your evening rum—you will start it off with iced coconut milk. Then an orange or grapefruit or pineapple from your own garden. Then some hot coffee—straight from the



coffee plantations near Trinidad—some ham-and-eggs—eggs but lately laid by your own hens—and you are ready for the work of the day. If you *have* to go to town, now's the time. Otherwise—letters, accounts, bills.

Business being finished, how about five or six holes before lunch? Then a run down to the Club for a cocktail? And, after lunch, what price a set of tennis or so? And don't forget, at dusk you're taking the launch out after some sailfish. They're biting a few miles off-shore.

Then another cocktail—being politely attired in white now—at the Mango Grove. Afterward—a cool and lazy dinner served out on the terrace, with a few assorted guests—or maybe you'll want to dine at the Club or the neighboring hotel? Just as you like—the boy with the bicycle-chair will take you there in a minute or so.

And after dinner, with its accompaniment of good French or Spanish wines, there are multitudes of things to do. You may, for example, go to bed! Or you may indulge in another game of tennis, under the electric lights. Or you may decide to put on formal dress, invite a beautiful companion in a Paris gown, and, at intervals of roulette or baccarat, sit over a quart of champagne on the Casino terrace, looking into her eyes. . . .



If you like dancing, Broadway syncopation awaits you in Club, hotel or Casino. In the latter building is the Opera—*which of the Marys is singing tonight: Garden, Lewis or McCormic?* Over under the mango trees is the open-air motion-picture theater, with first-run pictures straight from the studios.

The cement-walk bordered Lagoon, with its fine ladies and gentlemen—fellow-seekers with yourself of the Ultimate in relaxation—promenading in bicycle chariots, is dotted with gondolas, and from an island in the center comes the enchanted music of a string orchestra, playing the dreamy music of the South: *La Golondrina, La Paloma, Alejandra, Maria-Marie*. Or perhaps *la chanson hindoue* is wafted in all its Slav melancholy across the moonlit surface of the palm-fringed lake.

Over across the Bay are the thousand-and-one lights of Havana, the "diamond necklace" of the Malecon gleaming faintly its myriad reflection into the dark waters of the sea. Havana, with its theaters, bands playing in the plazas, and its cosmopolitan life teeming its streets, is thirty minutes away.

The children's playground shows faintly on the beach to the right of the Clubhouse, but the children who have thronged it throughout the day are safe in their screened-porch beds now.

You wonder what to do now. Shall it be Havana



and the fleshpots?—Or just another whirl in the Casino?—Or a moonlight bathe between the reefs?—Or one more bottle of wine with the Lady in Green?—Or shall it be bed?

You decide on a bathe and *then* bed, and say as much to the Lady in Green, who nods, vanishes, and reappears shortly, her slim form clad in a bathing-suit. Together you cut through the silent waters or lazily float listening to the lagoon orchestra, which out here in the darkness sounds a mystic melody from fairyland. And afterward, "Good-night" to the Green Lady—and the luxury of dreams in a scented, tropical night. . . .

Just a picture and nothing more? Not at all. . . . The Clubhouse is built. . . . The lagoon is completed. . . . The lazy, rambling, flower-covered hotel awaits the magician's wand which will set it teeming with life. . . . The beach, the reefs, the mango-groves, the perfumed splendor of the Tropics is there, waiting for you. . . . The golf, the tennis, the bridle-paths are ready. . . . The first seekers of the blue-bird are there, in their hundred-thousand-dollar "bungalos." . . . Biltmore is a reality. The Cuban Monte Carlo is achieved.

*And two Irishmen chuckle as they stand, arm in arm, on the Clubhouse terrace, surveying the scene.*



## CHAPTER VIII

DO YOU COUNTRY-CLUB? AND WHAT *is* CÉSPEDES?

### I

As we leave the home-made Heaven inadequately described in Chapter Seven we turn our car into Country Club Park, the most exclusive as it is the most beautiful suburban residential district of Havana.

Country Club Park, developed and managed by the Trust Company of Cuba, is an illustration of the skill of the landscape artist in turning to advantage the natural attractions of the Cuban scenery. What was merely a pool of water—and a muddy pool at that—has been transformed into a crystal-clear lagoon fringed by green lawns and various exotic shrubs, beneath which children play and ducks strut. Around the lagoon is one of a series of smooth boulevards along which are built some of those magnificent houses which have given to Havana the reputation of being "the City of Beautiful Homes." The architecture is Cuban, which is part Spanish, part Native and part Modern, and resembles closely



the style generally followed in Southern California. The houses are usually of two stories and stand in large grounds covered with flowers which bloom throughout the year. One of the largest houses, a show-place, is occupied by Noble Brandon Judah, American Ambassador to Cuba succeeding General Enoch Crowder. In this house Charles Lindbergh was entertained by the American colony after completing his epochal tour of Central America and the West Indies in February, 1928.

Another large and rather peculiar-looking house is the residence of George S. Ward, the American master-baker. Mr. Ward, it appears, had an organ. It was a large organ and would have done credit to a big church. So when he decided to build a home in Havana he called the architects together and showed them the organ.

"Build me," he said, "a house to fit this instrument!"

The result is the commanding mansion in Country Club Park, which visiting architects have been known to spend hours just looking at. Part of the house is Spanish. Part is Norman. If you look at it from one quarter, it holds reminiscences of the Tudor period. If, however, you walk around to the other side, you spot the influence of the American Colonials. The net result, although curious, achieves



distinction and—who knows—may be the beginning of a "period."

Mr. Ward, to occupy himself and his popular son Walter Ward, founded a dairy in Havana.

Not far from the Ward house is the amazing residence of Julio Blanco Herrera, owner of the Tropical Brewery, where visitors are given all the beer they can drink, free. If the Ward home follows three styles, the Herrera house follows none at all. It is unique.

At the entrance of Country Club Park, on an eminence, is a tall Norman house occupied by Carlos Miguel de Céspedes. Before arriving at the Céspedes mansion you may turn off to the right toward Havana, passing on the left the new *jai-alai frontón*, which in summer-time is the Casino, and on the right the Casino Nacional—which, it being daytime, we shall not visit now.

Just beyond the Casino Nacional is the Country Club, with its splendid golf-course occupying an undulating valley in front of the clubhouse.

The Country Club on Sunday afternoons is the rendezvous of Havana society. There are nearly 1,500 members, part Cuban and part American, and these with their guests are nearly all to be found taking tea on the terrace of a Sunday afternoon as soon as the races are over.



The Country Club dates from 1912 and owes its inception to a small group of Americans led by an energetic man named Frederick Snare, who is still the abiding genius of the place. Snare was formerly senior partner of the world-renowned firm of Snare and Triest, and is now head of the Frederick Snare Corporation, but for some years practically his only interest in life has been the Country Club and its links. These latter have a par of 73 for eighteen holes, or 7,300 yards, and some of the holes are very sporty. They are particularly sporty inasmuch as none of the players quite knows what the hazards may be from one week to the next; Mr. Snare has a habit of moving traps which displease him overnight, all of which adds to the gaiety of golfers in general.

The clubhouse, besides the wonderful terrace where one dines and dances, has a comfortable smoking-room and bar, a library, a large locker-room and a swimming-bath.

## II

You are now, as you may imagine, in the "smart" district of Havana. You have just come from Biltmore, have traversed the beautiful Country Club Park, have had a look at the Casino, and now here you are at *La Playa de Mariano*, adjoining which



is the fine Yacht Club, with the most distinguished Cuban membership of any club in Havana.

By all means exhaust every subterfuge and every friendship to obtain a card of admission to the Yacht Club on one of its famous gala nights. It is like no other club in the world. One dances and dines on a terrace overlooking the Caribbean and midnight bathing is a feature.

Touching the elegant Yacht Club on the Havana side is *La Playa*, or beach, Havana's Coney Island, which is another of the enterprises owned and managed by the syndicate headed by those omnipresent Irishmen, Bowman and Flynn. Here are restaurants, bars, and of course gaming-rooms, and one may bathe throughout the year, but it is in summer, from May onward, that one sees the Cubans bathing, and then not before sunset.

The Cuban has an absurd superstition to the effect that there is a season called "winter" in Havana. Accordingly, on the first of November, even though the temperature be 85° Fahrenheit, all Cuban gentlemen put on their dark suits and stiff collars. They can do it doubtless without danger to the collars, being Cuban. If this writer tried it he wouldn't, as the saying is, *have* no collar. . . . However—

Not until the hot, coppery skies of May succeed the wild winds of April do the Cubans concede that,



possibly, winter is over, and reappear in white. Flannels and worsteds being too hot they wear white duck, crash linen, Palm Beach, lightweight gabardine or alpaca.

It may be noted here that the visitor to Havana in winter will please wear his coat. He may leave his vest at home if he wishes, but the coat is *de rigueur*. Otherwise he may be thought to come from Miami, and suffer ribald sarcasm from the Havana Americans to whom Miami has about the same status that St. Paul has to Minneapolis, San Francisco to Los Angeles, or Mentone to Cannes.

Between the *Playa* and Havana now stretches one of the very finest boulevards pridefully pointed to by any city in the world. It is called by two names: *Avenida Carlos Miguel de Céspedes*, after the man who built it; and Fifth Avenue. It stretches, wide and straight, from Biltmore to Havana, which it enters at the Malecón. Its two roadways of hard coral rock are separated by lawns and flower-beds and it is bordered by Australian dwarf pines. Toward Havana it passes through the suburb of Miramar, which was built mostly during the Dance of the Millions by a wealthy old Cuban whose money had been made from printing lottery tickets, and who was alleged to have committed suicide before his grandiose plans for a luxury-development were com-



pleted. At his death the Mendoza family and Carlos Miguel de Céspedes carried on the job.

At the end of Fifth Avenue as it crosses the bridge over the Almandares River into the Vedado section is the old Céspedes homestead, inhabited now by Señor Céspedes senior. It has its own private yacht basin.

A block toward the sea from the tall Presidente Hotel is the Ruston School, which has an international reputation for excellence.

Since wherever you go in Havana you are bound to hear the word "Céspedes" repeated as though it were some universal panacea, you may be tempted to ask "*what IS Céspedes?*"

Well, Céspedes, first, is a descendant of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, who was one of the greatest figures in Cuban history. He was that combination of personalities which made celebrities in those days—soldier, lawyer, poet, patriot. Mr. Terry says that he was to Cuba what Manuel Hidalgo was to Mexico. In 1868 at his sugar plantation at Yara he voiced the famous Grito de Yara, a turning-point in the struggle for a freedom which was not to come until thirty years later. However, he was the head of the revolution of that time, became its president, and remained in this office until captured and shot six years after his *pronunciamento*.

The present Carlos Miguel de Céspedes is to



Havana (*not* to quote Mr. Terry) what Haussmann was to Paris. He is, as Secretary of Public Works, the master-builder in whose brain has been conceived most of the great beautifying projects carried through in recent years. General Wood imagined and built the first lap of the Malecón, but it remained for Céspedes to carry the work to completion at the cost of nearly herculean energy. To him also is owed Fifth Avenue. And it is Céspedes who is hurrying on the Central Highway which is to link the western end of Cuba with the eastern end. Until Céspedes forced through the law providing for the construction of the Central Highway no politician in Cuba had dared vote the funds necessary, and automobile traffic within the island remained impracticable through lack of roads and bridges.

When this road is completed automobile tourists will find a new Mecca, for the interior of Cuba is today almost as it was centuries ago—as unspoiled, as unknown, as picturesque, and as wild.

Dynamic Céspedes and mercurial Flynn are valuable citizens to Havana and to Cuba. "Cuba for the Cubans" sounds fine as a war-cry, but just now, with sugar at three cents, tourist dollars are badly needed. Being the genuinely great men they both are, Céspedes and Flynn have their share of enemies engendered by the petty jealousies of politics and prejudice.



## CHAPTER IX

### COCKFIGHTS AND THE CARNIVAL. A NIGHT AT "JAI-ALAI"

#### I

THE Cuban is nothing if not a sport. But he does not consider a game worth playing unless he can bet on it.

He is a gambler born. He will bet, literally, on anything, and when he has no more money left he will bet his other possessions, one by one.

The papers are full of examples of the dire straits to which his fatal proclivity can drag the Cuban sportsman. Today *El Mundo*, the greatest of the twenty-six daily newspapers of Havana, mentioned a typical case. A Cuban lady had appealed to the police to arrest her husband. He was, she said, about to pawn their bed.

"It is all we have left," she said, rather piteously. "First he pawn his pay for months ahead—and they fire him. Then he sell our house. Then he sell our furniture, room by room, bit by bit. Now he want to sell our bed and make us sleep on the floor."



The experienced and ever-gentlemanly Cuban police found the man and held a conference with him. In the end he agreed, so the paper said, to go to work and spare the bed.

The Cuban gambler is a perpetual optimist. He always believes that his luck will change—that to-night he will pick the winners at *jai-alai*, that Sunday his cock will vanquish his opponent, and that within the ten days he will win the Grand Prize of the lottery.

He will go on believing these things all his life, though his choice at *jai-alai* be monotonously defeated, though his best cocks bite the dust, though none of his numbers in the lottery return him a dollar.

He will shrug his shoulders disconsolately at first, but in a moment his face will be alight again and he will laugh.

"I lose, *sí*, but next time I win—next time—*mañana!*"

Every grade of native Cuban gambles. President Machado has his racing-stable and his private ring for cock-fighting. Some of the most daring gamblers in European casinos—*vide* Hannibal de Mesa and Matias Alfredo de Bétancourt—are Cuban born. And the rank and file of the Cuban populace, from proud white to unblushing black, will literally and



frequently bet its only shirt on anything on which it sets its fancy.

The Cuban national game is supposed to be *jai-alai*, and judged by its popularity it perhaps is. But it is not Cuban in the sense that baseball is American or cricket English. *Jai-alai* is only another name for *pelota*, the Basque game played from Bilbao to Bayonne for centuries.

Moreover, *jai-alai* is a purely professional game. It is not intercollegiate or played by amateur clubs. It is played in the huge *frontóns*, which cost a lot to erect because of their peculiar shape, by teams of professionals many of whom come annually from the Basque coast for the purpose.

The Cubans claim, some of them, that *pelota* was originated by the Aztecs, and that Hernán Cortés took the game with him when he returned from Mexico to Spain, but variations were played in Europe long before Cortés was born. Notably the French *jeu de paume*, the Italian *pallone* and the British *fives* closely resemble the game as it is now played, except that in *pelota* the player sends the ball from a sort of basket (*costa*) attached to his wrist, instead of hitting it with his hand alone.

The balls, *pelotas*, are launched by the players in teams of two against concrete walls between 35 and 40 feet high, and must be caught on the rebound



by the player of the opposing team. Points are scored according to the skill in catching and re-launching the ball. Thirty to thirty-five points generally decides a game.

Hundreds and sometimes thousands of Cubans throng the big *frontóns* for hours during the *jai-alai* season, for matches are played all day and far into the night. The play is incredibly rapid and the players often incredibly fat, and the wise onlooker finds a seat well-removed from the field of play, which is called *el piso*, because the balls, harder than those used in tennis, are sometimes sent, with terrific velocity, into the audience.

But these thousands of enthusiasts do not play *jai-alai* themselves, although they know every fine point of the game and the record of every player. For them *jai-alai* is merely another excuse to get a bet down, and the total of such bets, taken at betting booths as at the races, is enormous.

There is a Cuban saying that there is more in *jai-alai* than meets the eye—a play on words which means that not only is the ball sometimes hit so hard that it cannot be seen in flight, but also some of the *losing* plays are so rapid that they cannot be judged. Unless you wish to trust wholly to luck or are “in the know” it is wise to stay away from the betting booth at the *jai-alai* game.



A feature of the game of *jai-alai* which sets it apart from all other endurance tests—and *pelota* is probably after ice-hockey the fastest game in the world—is the peculiar method of training followed by the players. These never exercise, eat everything they like, which is usually a lot—and consume several bottles of wine, to say nothing of *juntador*, per day. The Basque "Chico" once told me that he drank two bottles of Spanish wine to a meal; and he looked it; but he was the fastest man on his feet I have ever seen in action.

## 11

Cock-fighting, while undoubtedly cruel and in a way stupid, seems to me to be a much more legitimate "sport" than *jai-alai*, because once two cocks are in the ring, spoiling, each of them, to annihilate the other, not a man in the audience can predict the outcome.

Even at cock-fighting there are ways to cheat, but these are all well-known and guarded against. The thighs, for instance, may be treated with a preparation which toughens them, so before the birds enter the ring they are carefully sponged, and if there has been any cheating the preparation shows. The bone spurs fitted to the claws are measured and each cock's seen to be of the same length. They must



balance each other in weight. A cock that runs away is beaten.

There is more actual science to cock-fighting than to bull-fighting, which was forbidden in Cuba by General Brooke in 1898. The pedigrees of the cocks are as carefully watched over as those of thoroughbred race-horses. A whole section is devoted by *El Mundo*, on Mondays to cock-fighting.

The training of the birds is undertaken by men who earn large sums. If a gamecock show cowardice in battle he is summarily executed, and not only he but all his brood as well, so that the race may not be contaminated.

Gamecocks are trained from infancy to fight but are not allowed to hurt themselves except in legitimate battle. Of mornings they are kept hours running up and down a long boarded trench, to toughen their thighs and muscles. They are permitted to fight and slay a few minor birds before they actually enter the ring.

Gamecocks are valuable. By his possession of one or more you will know a Cuban sportsman's wealth. Some gamecocks of exceptional breed and many victories have sold for as much as a thousand dollars, and sums of five hundred dollars are quite frequently paid. An average gamecock will cost one hundred dollars trained.



Cock-fighting differs from every other sport in that not only the owner's money but the life of his bird itself is risked. A few minutes may be sufficient to decide the fall of a cock worth hundreds of dollars and the loss of a large wager.

The popularity of such a cruel sport as cock-fighting is inexplicable to anyone who has not studied the sport. It is, however, wrong to lay it down entirely to the innate strain of cruelty that is in certain men toward animals.

The sport is a science. In a day of, say, fifty fights very often no two of the gamecocks will have fought alike, used the same tactics.

There are the birds which resemble Dempsey in their manner of fighting—quick to the clinch and then all in-fighting; never giving the other bird a chance to take breath. A "clinch" in cock-fighting is achieved by one bird putting its head under the other's wing.

There are other birds with tactics that recall Tunney's—these reserve their skill for final moments when they shall have tired out their opponent by continually avoiding his rushes.

Still other birds are adept at ruses. They will pretend to run away and then, as the other cock is hot after them, turn suddenly and catch him un-awares. One lucky dig of the tiny bone spur may



be sufficient to kill or cripple a cock. A fight may be over in the first minute or it may last for hours.

To an American witnessing a cock-fight for the first time the spectacle is less revolting than it sounds. There is practically no blood, and feathers do not fly for the reason that all the small ones are carefully plucked out beforehand, leaving only the strong wing and tail feathers.

It is not until a cock has been downed and is obliged by its owner to continue fighting although crippled, in the hope that a lucky stroke of its spur will kill its opponent, that the sport becomes obviously cruel. Until then the cocks have seemed to enjoy their scrap and not one gamecock in a hundred will run away. And there is something human and appealing about the way a winning cock, bloody and bedraggled, will plant its claw on the inanimate body of its conquered opponent and utter a loud crow of triumph. In much the same spirit did a *chasse* pilot during the war cheer through blood-sweating lips as he saw his enemy crash to death.

More than one lesson can be learned from cock-fighting, from the cocks that fight as well as from the tense, absorbed, swarthy men who train them and bet on them.

Cock-fighting in Havana is legal and takes place in a ring opposite the Havana Electric Railway sta-



tion on Jesús del Monte Street. There are matches Sundays, Mondays and Saturdays, from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

As a spectacle or as an object-lesson *one* cock-fight should be seen and it will be found of passionate interest. To reach your box you must cross the arena itself, even though a battle may be in progress at the time—but don't worry; the cocks are too busy with each other to bother about you, and they never attack humans anyway.

The din is deafening. Nearly everybody has taken sides, faces glisten with sweat, bets are tossed to and fro, odds are offered; the owners of the birds have leaped into the ring urging their respective birds on with gesture and pleading profanity. It is bedlam. Of a sudden, there is a long-drawn-out "Ah-h-h!" and—silence. One of the cocks is down. Then, in the stillness there sounds the triumphant crow—more often it is a croak—of the victor. He is picked up lovingly and almost kissed by his proud owner. . . . As for the losing bird, his disgusted owner picks him up by his feathers and throws him ignominiously into a sack. He'll be eaten that night—and tough eating he'll make.



## III

Not only will the Cuban bet on the least provocation but he will make merry on the smallest pretext. Like the Niçois he believes in the gospel of carrying things with a smile.

The Cubans have the sun in their hearts. They work, play, eat, drink, gamble, make love and fight with the same *insouciance* that once was the heritage of every Latin. They love money, but only because they find so much pleasure in spending, betting or giving it away. They make a game of everything, even their daily labors; a Cuban housewife, drudge and maternally overworked as she may be, has always a song on her lips.

There is something Celtic about the Cuban that commands the affection of those fortunate foreigners who really know them.

They are generous until generosity with them becomes nearly a vice. They are improvident. They are frugal only during their periods of poverty. The humblest laborer in Cuba is a poet, and there is that within the soul of every Cuban which reaches down and plucks the stark fundamentals of life: one is born; one must live; one *must* die—let us make the best of what is inevitable and have a good time!

Despite the warm suns under which they propa-



gate and despite also the fantastic miscomprehensions of Northern intellects, there is nothing vicious in the Cuban nature. Sexually a Cuban girl blossoms earlier than her sisters born in colder climes; but maturity in her case comes earlier also, and, mature, no woman is so utterly and fatalistically domestic as the Cuban. Her subsequent babies come with a shrug—not, as is often the case with the Northern female, with a grimace. Being nearer the fundamentals of nature she is also nearer its truths. And no nation on earth adores its children as the Cubans adore theirs.

It must be realized that the Cuban is a race apart. A Cuban is more a Cuban, if anything, than an American is an American. He has as distinct an individuality as he has a nationality. It may at times be difficult to distinguish between Panamanian, Honduran, Ecuadoran, Costa Rican or Venezuelan, but the Cuban, as the Mexican, stands alone. That is why patriotism to the Cuban is such a precious thing. It is a nationality christened by the blood of thousands to whom "Cuba" meant "Mother." Their blood is Spanish, but Spanish far removed. The blood of Cuba came from the heroic days of Spain.

The temperament of the Cuban, then, is gay, amorous, generous and sentimental. The philosophy of his existence is written in blank verse to the be-



guiling strains of the *danzón*. Life to him is less of a laugh than a poem.

He is, intensely, gregarious. He loves to foregather with his fellows, to rival them in rhythmical speech. His very language lends itself to the poetic expression of his thoughts, and he is not chary of words nor of phrases. He is at his best over food and drink and loves nothing better than to empty his eloquent soul at the banquets which are so vital in Cuban public life.

He is most serious when he is speaking of his country; sentimentally, Cuba to the Cuban is mother, wife, mistress and child. When it comes to that other passion nicknamed love he is incurably sentimental, but a laugh lies always behind his sentimentality. Love to the Cuban is not a serious business—why should it be? It is life—it is happiness—it is wine!

Unfortunately the average visitor is not a student of psychology. The tourist has few chances of penetrating the Cuban mask—for mask the Cuban has been obliged to wear in intercourse with the foreigner, in self-defense.

But there is one period of the year when the Cuban abandons his mask and light-heartedly wears his temperament on his sleeve. That time is Carnival. Of all the countries in the world I know of



none which has so successfully retained the spirit of Carnival as Cuba.

## IV

Carnival-time is when the Cuban takes life with both hands—great joyous handfuls of it—and scatters it wastefully, royally, prodigally.

The drab business of life is forgotten, thrust far into the background. Gaiety alone rules. By the measure of your gaiety a playful god adjudges your rank in the realm of happiness.

Carnival usually commences the Sunday before Ash Wednesday and continues until Easter, but occasionally the season is advanced. It is a period of *fiesta*, of grand balls, of gay parties, and of Carnival parades on Sundays in which the whole town, visitors and all, joins.

To be in these parades you must, first of all, attune your soul to the spirit of the thing. Then, choose an open car. Thirdly, find the prettiest girls you know to sit in the car with you—and steel your heart against jealousy when handsome Cuban boys make open, ardent love to them, with a mocking smile for you.

You can have your revenge when an automobile-load of Cuban beauties creeps alongside your own, and you flirt no less openly and outrageously with



them. Carnival-time, remember, is the only time when the Cuban girl is allowed out without her duenna, her mother or her maid. Make the most of it!

At the National Opera House carnival balls you will find Cuban society and such a wealth of pulchritude as may dazzle your unaccustomed Northern eyes. One of the biggest balls is that of the artists, when police regulations regarding costumes (or lack of them) are temporarily suspended. The life and soul of these artists' balls is Conrado W. Massaguer, the famous caricaturist, one of the glories of Cuba.

Massaguer is a moving spirit of *La Minorité*, a club of the Cuban *litterati*, for Cuba has her distinct place in the world of literature and arts. Beltran y Masses, the famous portrait-painter, is Cuban, and so are many other celebrities of books and pictures. Members of *Le Minorité* include Fernandez de Castro, the much-feared critic of *El Diario de la Marina*, oldest daily in Cuba; Marinello, the poet; Ychazo, one of the editors of that extraordinary publication which calls itself after the year of its publishing—at present it is called "1928"; Cattorno, the artist whose modern murals have been widely commented upon; Bens, the architect with a Parisian background; Roig de Leuchsenring, writer, who is also a lawyer; George Manach, Harvard man and



critic for *El País*; Masique, leader of the *avant-garde* of Cuban writers and editor of *Atuei*; Bartolome Soler, the novelist who wrote *Marcos Villari*; Dr. Juan Antiga, whose active career has included selling newspapers, being a homeopath in Cuba, a doctor in Venezuela, a diplomat elsewhere, who has been a champion baseball player and who frequently, for political reasons, has been under the eye of secret police; and Octavio Seigle, writer, poet and dramatist.

These men, editors of or contributors to the various newspapers or magazines—*Bohemia*, *El Figaro*, *La Semana*, *La Política Comica*, *Revista Bimestra*, *Archivos del Folklore Cubano*, *La Semana Comica*, *Carteles*, *El Social* and many others—constitute the nucleus of the temperamental crew which Massaguer gathers around him annually to promote the Artists' Ball. Massaguer's own magazines, *El Social* and *Carteles*, are possibly today the best-known publications printed in Spanish anywhere, and this chiefly because of the caricaturist's own prolific talent. He publishes in winter a magazine in English called *Havana*.

Go to the Artists' Ball and such of the other *bailes* as you can, by all means. You will there see the true Cuban *danzón*, softest, dreamiest, most delightful of all ballroom dances, and the costumes will amuse and dazzle.



## CHAPTER X

\$100,000 FOR \$29—IF YOU ARE LUCKY

### I

THERE are just twenty-five thousand chances against your winning the Cuban lottery if you should be so foolish as to buy a ticket, so let nothing in this chapter persuade you to buy one.

However, it may be difficult to heed this advice if you come to Cuba, for apparently every unemployed man, woman and child in the island sells the tickets when he or she has nothing better to do.

They throng the streets, strings of tickets in one hand and a hopeful, pleading look in their eyes as they intone the number of the ticket they are sure, so they will tell you, will win the grand prize. Why, if this is so, they do not keep it themselves, is another of those pleasant but perplexing little mysteries which constantly beset one's path in Cuba.

The lottery tickets are issued by the government at a fixed price of twenty dollars, but they are not sold to the public at that price, and this fact is the chief argument opponents of the lottery have. The tickets are apportioned between members of the gov-



ernment, from the president down, each having one or more collectors' districts. The tickets are then sold to the collectors at about \$25 each, the difference representing the profit of the governor or legislator. The collector, in turn, farms out the tickets to the agencies, and these pass them on—always at a profit—to the retailers, who may be store-keepers or plain hawkers. Thus when you or I buy a ticket it costs us anywhere from \$27 to \$30, only \$20 of which has actually gone into the kitty. Of course this deplorable system materially increases the odds against you.

The tickets are divided into 100 parts and one can buy one or more of these. Usually one buys them in blocks of ten.

Gerald Brandon, the brilliant newspaper man whose great feat was the discovery of Pancho Villa when all of Mexico was looking for him in vain, and who lives in Havana, told me of a speculator, a Chinaman, who found himself with three whole tickets a few hours before the drawing. He was panic-stricken, for the tickets represented an investment of sixty dollars, considerable for him.

After a night of hectic salesmanship he got rid of all but two tickets and just before the announced time of the drawing he met a compatriot who offered to buy one of the others. His preference went for



a number which the ticket hawker himself rather fancied, and he said so.

"Either that ticket or none," said his client, firmly.

Finally they tossed and the client winning was given the coveted ticket. *The other one won the grand prize* and from being a simple hawker of lottery tickets the Chinaman who had been unlucky in the toss, as he thought, became instantaneously a man of wealth and importance.

## II

Twenty-five thousand tickets are issued every ten days. Of the half-million dollars thus obtained 30%, or \$150,000, goes to the Treasury. The remaining \$350,000 is paid back in *premios*, or prizes.

The prizes are generally as follows:

1 prize of .....	\$100,000
1 prize of .....	40,000
1 prize of .....	10,000
5 prizes of .....	2,000
10 prizes of .....	1,000
16 prizes of .....	500
200 prizes of .....	200
993 prizes of .....	100

In addition, two premiums of \$1,000 each are paid to the holders of the numbers anterior and posterior



to the ticket winning \$10,000; two premiums of \$500 each are paid to the holders of the numbers anterior and posterior to the second winning number; 99 premiums of \$200 each are paid to holders of tickets in the same hundred as the grand prize, and 99 premiums of \$100 each to the holders of tickets in the same hundred as the second number.

There are thus 1,429 chances to win *something* as against 25,000 tickets issued. No other gambling game in the world holds such a percentage *against* the player.

### III

The Cuban National Lottery is "on the square." It couldn't well be anything else, with so much money involved, but notwithstanding this excessive efforts are made to convince the public of the honesty of the draw.

The actual draw is made in public under the supervision of a committee appointed by the President, in a building formerly occupied by the Cuban national bank. Two small children, old enough to know figures but not old enough to understand what it is all about, are picked from the public orphanage,\* by

\* This orphanage, in which every baby has an individual nurse, is one of the sights no tourist should miss. It is situated on the Maceo Plaza. Mothers unable to support their children may come to the orphanage at night, place their baby in a specially contrived window,



hazard, at each drawing. Each of them takes a pill from the giant cages when they have been twirled and reads it aloud. The number is then read loudly by an official announcer and inscribed by the secretaries. There are several secretaries and each newspaper has a representative.

Part of the payment of the government officials and deputies is in lottery tickets, but this is not considered as payment but as a perquisite. They are free to sell or keep their tickets as they please. This explains why so many grand prizes fall to officials, a fact which is responsible for practically all the suspicion with which the lottery is regarded by the ignorant.

"It is nearly always some rich person or member of the government who wins the grand prize," you will be told.

After some investigation I found no justification for this oft-repeated statement. The President's wife won once, and one of his relatives won once. Five of the present government have won large prizes, but not the grand prize. On the contrary six of the grand prizes during 1927 went to comparatively poor men, and the remainder, except for four,

ring the hell, and go away without ever having been seen from within. At any time thereafter they may reclaim their baby by proving its identity.



were divided by numbers of persons who had bought shares of the lucky tickets.

It is the exception for the *grand prize* to be won by any one person, though the event happens frequently enough to help along the legend of easy wealth.

Facundo Bacardi, vice-president of the famous Bacardi distilling firm, won the grand prize in 1927, having made up his mind and sent a servant to buy a ticket just at the last moment.

"What did you do with the money?" I asked him.

Señor Bacardi's eyes opened wide in astonishment at the question. I was, it seems, naïf.

"Why, I went to Paris, naturally!" he said.

Those are the two dreams of the Cuban gentleman—to win the *grand prize* and go to Paris.

#### IV

Hundreds of tales, some of them quite thrilling, are told of "lottery luck."

There is the famous story, for instance, of the gambler who lost all his earthly possessions at cards on Christmas Day. After mature consideration he decided that the only thing left to do was to kill himself. So he sent out cards to all his friends announcing his sudden demise, said good-bye to his



family over the telephone, and then pointed a revolver at himself and fired.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, his aim was bad, and he merely succeeded in ploughing a trench along one side of his head. It stunned but did not kill him and he awoke the next day in hospital.

Two days later the annual Christmas lottery was drawn and he was found to have the winning number of the *grand prize*—which for this annual event is \$300,000.

Then there is the story Conrado Massaguer tells, of the woman whose landlord threatened dispossession because she could not pay her rent.

"Give me two more days and I will pay you," she said.

"How will you pay in two days?"

"On that day the lottery is drawn."

"What does that matter?"

"I shall win it."

"What is the number of your ticket?"

"I have no ticket yet."

"But if you have no ticket how are you going to get one—when you have no money?"

"Oh—I shall find one in the street perhaps."

And that one of the poor man who passed a beggar on the street. The latter besought alms.



"Alas, poor man," he said disconsolately, "I have no money but—here, I have just spent my last pesetas for a lottery ticket. I will give you a tenth share."

The ticket won fifty thousand dollars.

A Cuban sugar planter was being foreclosed by his bank. He borrowed thirty dollars, bought a lottery ticket, and won the grand prize. An American, after losses in the gaming clubs, shot himself, leaving behind him a pocketbook in which was a lottery ticket which won \$10,000 two days later.

Another man, desperate, shot himself, leaving to his destitute widow only an I.O.U. given by a friend for \$50. The debtor, approached, had no money, but was willing to go halves in a lottery ticket he possessed. The ticket won the second prize and instead of \$50 the widow got \$25,000.

Tourists have won two grand prizes and many minor ones. One grand prize fell to ten sailors of a United States battleship, who had put \$3 each to its purchase. One of the ten had lost his share prior to the drawing at poker. Incidentally these sailors did not know of their luck for several weeks, their ship being on a cruise. I do not know whether all nine deserted forthwith.

A high official of the Cuba Railroad told me that he never let a drawing go by without buying at least



a tenth share in a ticket. "I have two brothers," he said, "one of whom has won \$50,000 and another \$10,000; and my sister, she has won \$5,000 twice. So I think it is my turn next!"

On the other hand you can talk to many people in Cuba who have been buying lottery tickets ever since the lottery began and who have never won anything at all.

They are in the majority.

v

One warning word before we leave the fascinating subject of the National Lottery and get on to the Casino, where the percentages are less (but still against you): Do not, should you be tempted into buying a ticket, carry it with you into the United States.

You will be breaking the law if you do.



## CHAPTER XI

THE CASINO: "WHERE THEY GET YOU COMIN' AN'  
GOIN' AN' MAKE YOU LIKE IT"

### I

MEETING Mr. John McEntee Bowman in the smoking-room of the *Leviathan* one July evening, he told me with enthusiasm of his projects in Havana.

"Go down there and take a look for yourself," said Mr. Bowman, "but don't go and lose your money in that Casino. Gosh, I've done it myself, and I'm one of the owners. You can't beat that game."

In Havana Mr. Charles Francis Flynn took me over to the Casino the day before it opened.

"Don't you go and play here, now," he warned me. "You can't beat that game."

On the opening night I was standing behind a pile of chips at the hazard game, anxiously fingering a thinning sheaf of bills in a trousers-pocket. A hand gripped my shoulder and a pleasant voice smote my ear.

"What," demanded Mr. Fred Perry, manager of



the Casino, "are you doing there? Looking for miracles? *You can't beat that game.*"

Twenty people besides myself heard him say it, but we didn't believe him. We figured he must have some deep, dark, unguessable reason for wanting us to quit playing. Maybe he thought we might win. A-ha! That was it. He was afraid we might win.

Well, if he was afraid he needn't have been. . . .

So while I satisfy my conscience by telling you to visit the Casino, by all means, but *not to gamble there*, I am moderately certain that once you see that wheel spinning and those dice rattling and feel that roll in your pocket itching you'll forget all about me and my book, let alone my advice.

And if you are one of the players that Dame Fortune thinks can be kidded, and count your money next morning to find that, indubitably, not only have you made enough to pay for your dinner and all expenses but are money in pocket as well, you may feel yourself justified in taking your copy of this book and giving it a heave out into the Prado.

"What does *that* man know about it?" you will say, contemptuously. "Why, anyone can beat those games with a bit of luck."

Ah, that "bit of luck."

Luck is very simple. Anyone can understand luck. If you have just twenty dollars to your name, and



you walk into the Casino straight to the nearest wheel, lay the twenty dollars on Number Thirteen, and Number Thirteen wins—that's luck.

If you stroll into the baccarat room and hear the croupier at the *chemin de fer* table droning, "A bank of a thousand dollars, gentlemen; a bank of a thousand dollars . . ." and you interrupt him with a single word, "*Banco*," not knowing how often the bank has won to reach that amount, and you then draw two cards the sum total of which make nine, then—that's luck.

If, never having seen electric poker before in your life (this happened to me) you pay a dollar to a helpful gentleman behind the desk, who takes it and puts it away as if for keeps, and then press five little buttons in succession and make a straight flush—well, that's luck too.

And if you are down to one dollar at roulette and cross over to the craps table and place your dollar on the field, and win, and then place it on the point, and win, and then keep on placing it and winning (as also happened to me) until you have one hundred dollars in front of you—that, also, is luck.

It is really too bad that there should be *two* kinds of luck—your own and the house's. Especially since the house's luck isn't luck at all, but mathematical percentage.



## II

The Casino Nacional during January and February is the smartest place on the American continent, and I am counting Florida as being on the American continent at that.

I say that, having known fairly intimately (too intimately some of my creditors would say) Deauville, Biarritz, Cannes, Monte Carlo, Touquet, Vichy, et cetera.

I say that, having also known Palm Beach. I will concede anything about Palm Beach you like except that it is as smart as it thinks it is. I will concede that it is the most beautiful resort in the world. I will concede that it has some of the finest homes in the world. I will concede whatever you wish concerning its hotels, privately believing the White Hall to be the best. I know all about the Everglades, the Jungle, the Country Club, and so forth. I realize that the wealth of America meets itself there during six snobbish weeks.

But, bless you, *smartness* is one thing in the gory lexicon of present-day society, and *ostentation* is another. In Palm Beach you take a thousand-dollar bill and pin it on your hat and say: "Look-ee here what I got!"

In Havana you take the same thousand-dollar bill,



smooth it out reflectively, and murmur: "Gee, look what's left outa twenty grand!"

## III

During the evening one thousand diners sit down in the Casino Nacional, which is exactly the number accommodated by the Ambassadeurs at Deauville.

Having plenty of money to spend the Havana Casino naturally acquires the best dancing orchestra obtainable from Broadway, and for the Cubans keeps a special band playing alternate *danzóns*. The only place in North America where the tango is properly danced is in Havana. You may say: "Who cares for the tango?" Well, sir, begging your pardon, jazz *does* become a bit gloomy after the fiftieth successive one-step, all sounding the same.

Also, the *danzón*, the tango and the waltz intermingled judiciously with the one-step hits of Tin-Pan Alley help out the *chic* foreign atmosphere which has been growing on you from the moment you first heard the click of the roulette balls in the mysterious rooms beyond.

Performers from New York or Europe—one pair of ballroom performers, in accordance with the best traditions, and not a "cabaret"—help out, too. But mostly it's the hum of foreign languages, the dark



skins, the exotic band, the French-speaking waiters, which create the atmosphere.

The food is excellent, of course—Mario, *maître-d'hôtel extraordinaire*, sees to that. The wines are as fine as you could procure in France—probably finer, for like Cuban cigars the French wines are best in export. At least they are less expensive, for there are no embarrassing *taxes-de-luxe* to cope with here.

A Frenchman knowing my failings warned me against going to Havana. "The cooking there will kill you, who are used to the best we have in France," he said.

I have a sample menu from the Casino Nacional which might surprise my friend the Frenchman. Here it is, textually:

Celeri en branche	Olives de Sevilla
Radis Roses	Amandes Assorties
Caviar de Sterlet sur Canapé	
Consommé Double Florida	
Paillettes Hongroises	
Turbotin de l'Océan au Champagne	
Pommes Olivettes	
Médailillon de Ris de Veau Périgueux	
Neige Siberienne au Kumel	
Poitrine de Volaille au Beurre	
Haricots de Lima, fines herbes	
Pommes Marquise	



Cœur de Palmier Haitienne

Bombe Selika

Mignardises

Moka

Champagne

Liqueurs

The first, second and third chefs of the Casino, as of the Sevilla and the Jockey Club, are French.

A wise rule which preserves the dignity of the Casino is the insistence on evening dress. During the season this huge room with its cosmopolitan gathering, its jeweled women and immaculate men, is an impressive panorama of wealth out to amuse itself.

Beautiful women of all grades of society seem to drift to Havana as naturally as they do to Paris. The Casino, the flowers, the luxurious tropical setting, frames them as they love to be framed. Mrs. Renée Lewis, when she was called upon to plan the interior decoration of the Casino, had the good taste to avoid anything approaching the garish. She was given *carte blanche* and used it, and a combination of her exquisite taste and knowledge and unstinted funds have produced a Casino interior which stands comparison for beauty and elegance with any in Europe. The general note is gay, but sober velvet portières tone down the effect to one of dignified luxury.



Such a setting framed the Princess Xenia one night last season, and I remembered this lovely woman as I had seen her in her habitual European background—first as a radiant bride of "Billy" Leeds in the Russian church of the Rue Daru, later in a ball given by Grande Duchesse Marie at the Cannes Cercle Nautique, again at a Sunday night gathering in the Ritz at Paris. . . . Older and more mature in her American beauty, Duchesse de Torlonia sat at a nearby table. . . . Mrs. Noble B. Judah, née a Patterson of Ohio, and the most beautiful woman in the Diplomatic Corps, gave a party to twenty at a long table near the center. . . .

Peggy Joyce, that amazingly beautiful woman with more of her sex jealous of her than any woman in the world, chose Havana as the spot to wear for the first time the famous diamond worth \$300,000, the history of which begins with her. Did you know that was why Peggy bought that diamond? Great jewels are immortal, you know, and all had "histories" except this oblong-shaped gem but recently discovered and said to be the largest pure-water diamond in the world. So Peggy bought it, and ten thousand years from now the woman who wears it will begin its story with, "It was first worn by a great American beauty, Peggy Joyce, in Havana, Cuba." Thus, at the expenditure of \$300,000, Peggy



has assured herself a measure of immortal fame. Wages indeed for the penalty of owning the stone, for she must be followed by detectives wherever she goes and because she possesses something every crook in the world would like to have, she goes in daily fear of her life. Is the reward worth the sleepless nights, the days of anxiety? Peggy thinks so.

Another woman whose passion is jewels, and especially diamonds, uses Havana as a frame for their display—Mabel Boll. She flew to Havana with Charles Levine, and dazzled the diners at the Casino with such a display as they had never seen. Where Peggy Joyce wore one stone of her collection (with possibly better taste) the "Queen of Diamonds," whose aviation adventures had amused the world, wore nearly four hundred diamonds of all sizes, covering her arms, her breast, her ankles and her hair. She explained that she was sorry to appear with so few jewels, but they weighed so much that Mr. Levine had made her leave half of them at home. . . .

Diamonds and pearls. Diamonds and pearls. Diamonds and pearls *and the monotonous click, click, rattle and click of roulette balls dropping into numbered sockets.*



## IV

Some of the most beautiful women entertaining in the Casino are Cuban. The Cuban is very nearly the perfect hostess.

Take Mrs. Conill or Mrs. Truffin—Havana's social dictators.

Julio Blanco Herrera, with the wife who seems made of precious jewels. Pebito Echarte, always host to many. Penino, the "marble king."

Or Count Rivero, owner of the *Diario de la Marina*, a distinguished gentleman.

Cuba's French colony is often seen in this, to them, familiar setting. Ernest Gaye, agent for the French Line and one of Cuba's richest men, for instance. Or the jovial and popular Marcel La Bourdette, six feet two inches tall and blond, with the lovely wife who even recently was Marian Miller, daughter of ex-Governor Nathan L. Miller of New York State.

There are many Mexicans and Central Americans; a few South Americans and a sprinkling of Europeans, with the English in the majority.

The beautiful woman over there was the "Nun" in the Miracle—Lady Duff-Cooper, who was Diana Manners. She is dining with Mrs. Vincent Astor. The Duke and Duchess of Sutherland are at another table. Lord Rothermere, glum and soundless, is



listening to epigrams uttered by his handsome and monocled editor, Ward Price, of the London *Daily Mail*. Madame Frances Spingold, once the most expensive dressmaker in the world, has a table nearby. Lord Northesk is dancing.

The pale young man with the long face and longer hair talking to Lady Duveen is Jascha Heifetz, most-traveled of violinists, and in the group of Cuban society near the orchestra is Rosa Ponselle. Benjamin Gigli was here last week. The Cubans love good music. Every year the Metropolitan Opera House of New York has a season in Havana. Its principal backer, Otto Kahn, is here tonight.

And so it goes: diamonds and pearls, diamonds and pearls . . . *and always the click, click, rattle and click from the rooms beyond.*

## V

Nine games of chance are played in Havana Casino Nacional. They are baccarat, *chemin-de-fer*, roulette, hazard, craps, birdcage, electric poker, bookmaker and wheel-of-chance.

Baccarat is the biggest game. The bank is not put up for auction as in Europe but is usually held throughout the season by the concessionaire—a proceeding of doubtful value to the latter, who thus cannot "burn his bank" if he strikes a losing streak.



Baccarat is played by any number of players, usually eighteen seated, against one banker. The banker deals cards from a *sabot* to two *tableaux*, one on each side of him. He deals but one set of cards to each *tableaux*, the players taking them in turn for the others, and one set of cards to himself. Two cards are dealt first, the dealer giving them first to *tableau* one, second to *tableau* two, thirdly to himself, one at a time.

The play is to hold cards totaling nearer to nine than the banker. All tens count zero as do all face cards and combinations of ten. Thus, 6 and 5 are not eleven, but one. With such a hand the player has the option of drawing a third card, which he will not do if his hand exceeds five. According to whether the players take the optional third card or not and the amount staked on each *tableau*, the banker knows whether to "draw" or "stand" himself. If a player has 8 or 9 on the first two cards he shows them face-up at once and all on his *tableau* win unless the banker equals or betters. Equals are standoffs. If the banker has 8 or 9 he wins from both *tableaux* unless either of them equals or betters before the draw.

Bets are usually in chips of denominations of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000. General Bétancourt, who held the bank during the 1927-28 season, had a



limit of \$5,000 on a single bank, which is to say that if all the players bet the maximum he would have to pay out \$90,000 a deal if he lost to both *tableaux*. This did not often happen.

The percentage at baccarat mathematically speaking is reckoned at about three percent, but this percentage varies according to the skill of the banker and players. General Bétancourt is believed to have had a losing season. The biggest players against him were a player from New York named Letendre and Mrs. Herman Rawitzer. Both are well known as maximum players in the big games of the Continent.

*Chemin-de-fer*, played usually only by players who know it from Europe (baccarat and *chemin-de-fer* are the only games allowed in French casinos), is a variation of baccarat except that each player in turn takes the bank, playing against all the others as long as he wins. When the bank loses it passes. A player can voluntarily "pass" the bank while still winning, but he may not "drag" any amount of the pot.

Chips are the same as at baccarat and \$50 is the minimum bank allowed. "Punters" may bet as low as \$5. The percentage in favor of the bank is about the same as at baccarat, but the house takes five percent from every winning bank, thus destroying the percentage and making the game wholly one of luck.



Roulette is fairly well understood and can facilely be comprehended by watching the game. There are thirty-six numbers and two zeros. Eighteen numbers are red and eighteen black. One may bet on any one number, or on two, three, four, eight or twelve contiguous numbers; on the first, second and third dozens; on the three individual columns; on the red or black; on the first or second eighteens; and on the odd and even. The last three are even-money chances. The columns and dozens pay two-for-one. Numbers *en plein* play thirty-five-for-one, this ratio diminishing according to the number of squares covered by one unit. Zero and double-zero pay only those squares.

The numbers are apparently haphazardly arranged around a wheel so that numbers next each other on the board are never next each other on the wheel. The wheel turns slowly in one direction; the ivory ball is sent spinning in the other. It spins for about five seconds, then falls into a number. If it should be number 1, for instance, black, first dozen, first column, first eighteen and odd win, and also the combinations zero-one, zero-one-two, one-two-three, one-two-three-four-five-six, and one-four.

The percentage at roulette in favor of the house is figured as five and one-quarter, but this again varies according to the player—a system player may



lose his money slower than a player who buckshots the board. The limit is \$25 on a number and \$1,000 on an even chance.

Hazard is a game which attracts big players. Like roulette, there is a numbered board, but the chances and combinations are fewer. The highest odds are 180 to 1, paid when three aces, three twos, and so on, show up on the three dice. When this happens all bets except on that particular chance lose. It constitutes the house percentage, which is considered two and seven-ninths. The main play at hazard is on high or low. If the total of the three dice is ten or under, low wins. If eleven or over, high wins. Even money is paid on high or low. The dice are placed by the dealer in the top of a cup-like contrivance and this is lifted when all bets are made. The numbers to be bet on are from 4 to 17, each carrying its own percentage.

The limit at hazard is \$500 on the even-money chance, diminishing accordingly.

The house-game of craps is according to the same rules familiar to any doughboy or pullman porter, except that betting on the "come"—the next throw of the dice for a point—is not allowed. On the other hand, there are more combinations to bet on. One may bet with the player, on his point. One may bet on the "field," which includes the numbers 2, 3, 4,



9, 10, 11 and 12. One may bet on the 6 or 8 to come before 7. One may bet on "craps," which pays seven-for-one. One may bet on 11, which pays fifteen-for-one. One may bet on 7, which pays four-for-one. The field and the points pay even money. The percentage against the point is the same as in ordinary craps, the 2, 3 or 12 on the first roll, and the 7. The numbers against the field are the 5, 6, 7 and 8. The mathematical percentage of house-craps is only one and one-half percent, but in actual practice this is considerably increased owing to the varying bets on the board.

Birdcage dice carries a percentage in favor of the house of seven and one-half. Three huge dice are tossed in a birdcage. Players bet on numbers 1 to 6. If the number they bet on is on one or more of the dice when they have finished rolling they win. If not, they lose. Even money is paid and, as at craps, silver dollars are used. The minimum at all games except baccarat and *chemin-de-fer* is one dollar, with the sole exception of roulette wheels for women only, when a minimum of twenty-five cents is allowed.

Electric poker was first installed in 1927-28, and is an ingenious contrivance paying the house ten percent. A number of push-buttons are grouped in an area about the size of a soup-plate and for a dollar



one pushes five of them in succession. As each button is pushed a card falls in an indicator-frame resembling a bells-indicator. Odds are paid from two pairs up and one pair entitles to another shot. Thus, seven-to-one is paid on a straight. Such is the ingenuity of the mechanism that after each button is pushed its combination changes thus making it impossible for anyone to push twice the same series of five with the same resulting hand.

The percentages at wheel-of-chance and bookmaker's wheel have not been figured out very closely. They are probably in the neighborhood of eight percent. Bookmaker's wheel is another new game in which a large rubber ball runs slowly around a turning wheel with a number of spokes dividing numbered chances from 1 to 10. Every other number is 1. The numbers to be played on are 1 (even money), 2 (two-for-one), 5 (five-for-one), and 10 (ten-for-one). The game is not exceptionally interesting as no combinations are possible and it is slower than other games.

The "wheel-of-chance" is the familiar huge wheel of county fairs and is not very popular.

At all of these games a player *can win* if he is lucky. But always remember that luck never lasts and that *you can't beat a percentage game for ever*. That average, seven and one-half, which is the



Casino's "rake-off" on all the games combined *will get your money in the end.*

To echo Manager Perry's advice: "Don't play unless you are looking for miracles. You 'can't beat that game.'"

I did not take his advice, of course, and neither will you.



## CHAPTER XII

### JUST A LITTLE BOY RAISED FOR THE CHURCH

#### I

"THE noblest work of God," said Uncle Hezekiah, "is a good woman.

"An' after that," he added, "a square gambler."

"A gambler," said Mark Twain, "is a person with a contempt for money."

"Sometimes a gambler gets closer to God than a preacher," said Bat Masterson, remonstrating with a cowboy who'd "got religion" and was threatening to shoot anyone in a Denver gambling house who didn't go to church.

Those who knew Nevada in the old days will recall a tall, gangling, frock-coated stud-dealer called "Preacher" Caldwell. Caldwell ran a gambling house in Elko on every day except Sunday. On Sundays he turned the place into a "meetin' house"—there being no church in town—and led in prayer. He was a good preacher, too, was this week-day gambler, and rumor had it that he had been ordained.



A "square gambler"—and there is no other kind, for a gambler who is crooked is no gambler at all—nearly always has more than his share of the valuable human qualities of faith, hope and charity. He has faith in his friends and often in his God, hope for his luck in the game as much as for the hereafter, and charity for every man who can spin a hard-luck tale.

He is a spendthrift because he has learned the exact worth of money, which is: nothing. He has the easy-going philosophy of the prodigal because that way to him lies happiness. He would rather spend money than make it because to him that's what money is for.

A man who is honest in his gambling is usually honest in all things, even his sins. A man who will not cheat at cards and makes cards his living will not cheat in the larger issues of life.

A gambler is always a sterling friend because he would never put friendship in the scales. He knows nothing can be weighed against it.

Neither does he lightly give his friendship, as he gives his purse. He understands the psychology of his fellow men and is a better judge of character than a "bad" woman. The friendship of a gambler is worth having because it means that you have been judged by him and found "square." And "square-



ness" to a gambler means honesty, sentiment, unselfishness. What other men call "honor."

## II

Fred Perry is a "square gambler."

## III

Charleston, W. Va., 1889. A frame house of some pretension, painted white. A God-fearing man of gentle features paces anxiously the porch. Suddenly he halts; sweat breaks out on his forehead; there is a faint—becoming lusty—cry from within. A woman hurries out and beckons, speaking softly: "It's a boy."

Nineteen-hundred. Another house but the same gentle-faced man speaking to his small son.

"Boy, you are to be raised for the Church, to follow the vocation of your father. It may be that when you are older you will not feel the Call. In that case you will go your own way in life, remembering the stock you spring from. You'll remember that your grandfather was Colonel Flintlock Perry, a hero of the war. You'll remember also that your father was a gentleman, and that you must always be a gentleman, in whatever paths your life may lead you.



"A gentleman, Fred, means *honor, trustworthiness, decency, charity*. Never forget that."

Fred Perry never has. He never "felt the Call" and never entered the Church, but if he failed in this ambition of his father's the testimony is overwhelming that he has planned his life according to the other.

"How in the world," I said, "did you ever become a gambler—raised in that atmosphere?"

Perry was meditative.

"Well," he said, "I guess it just *had* to be, that's all. I must have been a throw-back to old Flintlock Perry, who was some lad if all I can gather is true. Gambling fascinated me the more because it was so strictly condemned in my home.

"Why, my home was the strictest you can imagine. My mother wouldn't allow a card or a drop of alcohol to cross the doorstep. One day she was failing and the doctor prescribed malt beer. She was horrified. She said she would rather die than touch a drop.

"My father regarded drinking and card-playing in the same light as murder, adultery, or the other deadly sins. That's why it happened, I guess. It's an old story. Being forbidden certain things, I set out to find out why they were forbidden, and found I liked them."



Perry hesitated a moment. Then he said:

"I think if father had known these things himself his attitude towards them would have been different. Playing cards can't be a sin, because it isn't dishonest in itself, it's just your skill against someone else's, your luck against his. All life's that, if you really come down to it. The principles of life are the same that a fellow goes up against at poker or craps.

"And I've known men in the gambling business who were just as honorable, to their way of looking at it, as my father was in his own view. None of the gamblers I played around with for years would take money from a man if they knew he needed it. Lots of times I've seen them give it back to a man when they found out he'd a wife and kids at home."

"Perry," I said, "when did you *start* to gamble?"

The fair-headed, smooth-cheeked man thought a moment.

"Well," he said, "it wasn't in the Epworth League—though there was a kid there who—but we needn't go into that. I think the first time I ever saw a gambling game was when I was a page in the State legislature. The pages used to shoot craps behind the scenes.

"I liked to be thought a 'good sport' in those days,



and I got to be a pretty good crap shooter. Then I started playing pool—and father found out.”

“That was the beginning?” I said, gently.

“Yes. There was a row, and I left home when I was nineteen. Went to the Jamestown Fair with a fellow. Carl—he was my pal—and I were both pretty fair with a cue and we drifted from place to place making our living in the pool-rooms. Then we met a civil engineer who offered us a job over in Joplin, Missouri. That was my first real trip away from home. I’d never even been inside a theater until then.

“Over in Joplin, which was a pretty wild town, there was an old man with a white beard named Hanley. He was a professional poker player. He saw the way I was drifting and tried to get me to go home. But I wouldn’t. I was willful—and scared.

“‘Well, boy, if you will be a gambler you’d better be a good one,’ old man Hanley told me. And he taught me the tricks of the trade.

“Hanley was the one who taught me to respect the viewpoint of the other man. Always to look behind the words of a man, and not go butting in with my own half-baked ideas. He said the first thing a gambler had to be was square, because if he wasn’t he’d be shot, sooner or later.”



Perry, first with one pal and then with another, drifted around the Middle West and finally "made a killing" which brought him East again. He and a gambler named Eddie Young became great friends. Eddie was from his part of the country.

"A good deal of what I know about human nature I learned from the gaming tables," said Perry, "and most of what I know about gambling I learned first from Old Man Hanley and secondly from Eddie Young."

He looked up from where we were sitting in the Casino and, seeing a man passing, called to him.

"Oh, Eddie!" he said. When the man, short, stockish, with clear, quizzical eyes, came, he introduced us.

"Sit down, Eddie," he said. "Eddie, I want to see you two meet. . . . This is Eddie Young of West Virginia, my best pal and my right-hand man."

Mr. Young and I shook hands.

"Eddie," resumed Perry, "this gentleman wants to write about gambling and gamblers. Do you think we should let him, Eddie?"

Mr. Young was deliberate. "Wa-al, now," he said, finally, "I don't know why he shouldn't. Gambling's a business, just like any other. It's a tolerable clean business, too, nowadays. As clean as any I know of."



"Not only clean, Eddie," said his chief, "but it's the only business in the world that's *got* to be clean. If we tried tactics here that some businesses they claim are 'honest' do we'd be out of business in a week."

Mr. Young nodded. "That's whatever," he said.

"To get back to the subject," I said, "what happened after you had become a full-fledged gambler?"

"Oh—I don't know. Just drifted around. Ran a place here and there. Worked awhile in New York. Got to be quite a boy at golf."

"Golf!" I said.

"Yea, golf!" repeated Perry. "America's greatest gambling game after poker—and Wall Street, of course."

"He was an amateur champion golfer once," said Mr. Young, with a grin.

"Eddie here thinks it's funny," Perry explained. "Gamblers didn't use to golf much in those days."

After "driftin' around" Perry became manager of the club at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. There he made his reputation, and it was there that Messrs. Bowman and Flynn found him and appealed to him to come and run their casino.

"It's a nice little show," said Perry, "and I've got a fine bunch of boys working for me—starting with Eddie here."



"The boys would go to hell for him," said Eddie, aside.

I found that this was literally true. Perry has collected dealers and croupiers from all the reputable houses in the States,\* men whose reputations he knows. Many of them are gray-haired, veterans of the old open days of California and the Territories. Some worked for Tex Rickard in the old Concordia Club; others were dealing faro in Tucson and Phoenix when the Forty-eighth State, puffed up in brand-new statehood, prohibited public gambling. Men like Holladay, Billy Stewart, Barton, Barry, Andy Ginter, Cap'n McKeen of Texas, Frank Jones.

"See that little fellow there?" asked Perry, pointing to a small man whose manner of walking denoted the horseman, and whose frank smile and courteous ways I had noticed before. "That's one of America's best amateur polo players, Herbert Wynn. He's not a rich man, though, and you have to be rich to play polo. So now he's one of my right-hand men." He called to Mr. Wynn.

"Herbert," he said, "I was just telling this gentleman about you. He's going to put us in a book. Do you mind?"

\*I asked Perry how many "reputable" gambling houses there were. "In the entire United States," he said, "there are not more than five places worth a good gambler's time."



"If I was ashamed of my job I wouldn't be working here," said Mr. Wynn, easily. "This is as good as any other job—as good as selling bonds, anyway."

"And as hard," put in Mr. Young.

"Is it really hard work?" I asked. I had always heard gamblers referred to as "soft-fingered idlers."

"So hard," said Perry, "that an hour at a time is a long time for a dealer to deal without relief. Short of stoking a battleship—and that shift's two hours—I don't know anything so hard as that."

"A dealer has to be wideawake every minute," explained Young. "It may look easy, but a good dealer is so fast that it takes a lightning calculator to keep up with him. And he can't make mistakes. If he does, the house pays for them many times over. Making mistakes at dealing is often worse than being downright crooked."

After watching some of the dealers awhile, seeing how deftly they estimated the number of chips in front of you without counting them, noting how they made change and paid winning bets without an error, I was inclined to agree with him.

Young took me to a table and gave me a number of chips.

"Stack 'em up on the hazard table over there and ask Joe how many you've got," he suggested.



I did so. Joe glanced at the stacks with a casual eye.

"One hundred and sixteen dollars, sir," he said. "Will you take cash?"

Eddie smiled. "Count 'em," he urged. I counted. One hundred and sixteen dollars!

## IV

A man walked into Perry's office in the Casino. He wanted to cash a check for two thousand dollars. His name meant nothing to Perry. He offered his card—with a small middle-western town as address.

"Stranger," said Perry, "if I walked into your place of business at home and asked you to cash a check for \$2,000 when you didn't know me, would you do it?"

The stranger stammered, cleared his throat, finally thought he would.

"You wouldn't," said Perry. "Here's what I'll do. I'll gamble with you. Make this check for a thousand and I'll take a chance."

Another man walked into the office, in a towering rage.

"What's this hundred-dollar limit stuff?" he sneered. "Say, this is a cheap joint!"

Without a word Perry fished out a coin from his vest pocket.



"So you want a gamble, do you?" he said. "Well, in the game you were playing, there's five percent for the house. I'll tell you what I'll do. We'll toss this coin and you can call it heads or tails. Or you can toss one of your own coins. And make it any limit you want. How much is it? Five—ten—fifty thousand? I'm right here to accommodate—and no percentage."

The man grinned sheepishly and withdrew.

Sitting with me over supper, Perry watched a woman enter the gaming rooms. He looked a little disgusted.

"Back again!" he said. "Wait a moment." He called an assistant. "Bill, that lady is not to play," he said. Then, to me: "We have two of her checks from last year. She can't afford to play. She only has a small income and it goes in a night at the tables. We don't want that kind of money here."

On another occasion, when a certain big gambler from New York objected to a croupier's rapidity, Perry took him into the private room and showed him a roulette wheel, a hazard-board and other games. "Name your limit," he said, "and I'll deal for you myself—and no percentage. Anything you like up to a million. Or, if you prefer, *you* can deal, and *I'll* play."

. . . . .



A famous humorist lay on his back in a hospital. The appendicitis operation hadn't quite succeeded. There had been complications.

"Haven't been able to work for three months, Fred," he said. "Tough on the wife."

An hour later the wife returned and saw a slip of paper on the bed. She read it, and blanched.

"Fred Perry's been here!" said her husband.

"I know," she said. "He left this. We got to send it back."

It was a check for ten thousand dollars.

. . . . .

I asked a man in business in Havana about Perry. Never have I seen worship so absolutely flood a man's face.

"Listen," he said, "I'd go to hell for that guy, see? You know when I started this place I didn't have much capital and what with one thing and another things didn't look too good. Sugar had crashed and nobody was spending.

"Then the wife took sick, and after that *I* had to get sick too. All my savings looked like being swept away. It certainly seemed my finish.

"Then one night I met this man Perry. 'Hello, George,' he said. He'd known me in New York—not well, as a friend—only casually. 'Hello, Fred,' says I. That was all. But he must have seen by my



manner that I was in a hole. Next day he comes to my place and looks me straight in my face.

"'George, you damn' fool,' he says, 'why didn't you put me wise? How much do you need?' I tried to protest. 'George,' he continues, 'I could poke you a swift one, you're so dumb! How much do you need?'

"Well, the long and the short of it is that Fred Perry pulled me out of a damn' tight hole. You couldn't say 'no' to him. 'Shucks,' he'd say, 'what do you think it's good for, anyway?' That's how he thinks of money. Something to help out his pals with. And I wasn't even a real pal."

A night club in New York. A bit of "fluff" is "giving her line" to the "boy from the sticks," the "free-handed spender."

Fred Perry looked at her with a smile.

"Sister," he said, "you tell me that you've got a dying mother, a crippled sister, and a brother in jail, not to speak of the younger brother you're puttin' through school."

"It's true, Fred," said the girl, her voice quavering professionally. "It's true, s'help me—"

"Gosh, girl," said the tall man, "I'm not asking you if it's true or not. You tell it—that's good enough."



The man who told me that story, one of New York's best-known sporting writers, said that an hour or two later they found the girl all alone in a corner, weeping over a thousand-dollar bill. "C'n you beat it?" said the sport-scribe. "She wanted to give it back! Said he was too decent a guy to bilk."

. . . . .

I taxed Perry with these and other crimes and he merely smiled, his blue eyes looking into mine humorously.

"Just put me down as a damn' fool and you'll have said it," he said.

It was like the man not to try to deny the tales. A less honest man would have done so, or pretended to.

When it comes right down to it I don't know of any man whose hand I'd rather shake, whom I'd rather call friend, than "the Elk City Flash"—Fred Perry, gambler.



## CHAPTER XIII

### NAUGHTY-NAUGHTY NIGHTS

#### I

HAVANA having a hot climate and being Spanish by inclination and temperament, most of the life of the town goes on after sundown. It is then that, in summer, the people flood the beaches; it is then that, in winter, they parade the streets, fill the *bodegas* and *cafés*, and play their games.

But of that particular species of "night life" for which Havana was formerly noted there is little enough. The "*distrito de tolerancia*"—"district of tolerance"—was closed by an outraged government several years ago. The argument was that such open encouragement to immorality was having disastrous effect on the birthrate.

Those narrow streets in the San José dock area, where carmined ladies were wont to tug at your coat-tails as you passed by, with subtle whisperings of delights within, are now given over to legitimate trade, and vice is no longer rampant in the "Pearl of the Antilles."



There was this to be said for the old way, however. It *was* open and unashamed—and segregated. Today places given over to the world's oldest business exist in Havana—any public chauffeur has a list of addresses—but they are not confined to any one quarter and are spread out over the city. Animas Street is infected with them. Being hidden, they are also less subject to supervision and therefore more reprehensible. Still, the Havana police force make the best of a bad job.

A word about the Havana police. They are worth a mention, for they have made Havana the cleanest city in the Americas and have reduced crime almost to a minimum.

They are a fine body of men—tall, lithe, athletic, and so handsome that the Northern ladies go into rhapsodies over them. The two words courtesy and efficiency are their gospel.

Their system of directing traffic is itself a poem. Watching them, one is tempted to ask the name of their dancing-master. Imperturbably smiling, they stand at intersections and motion the cars to stop and proceed with little graceful motions of wrist and hand. It is as though they were doing it to music. But traffic flows smoothly, and despite the numbers of automobiles in Havana's downtown district there is seldom any congestion, and what accidents occur



are usually the fault of speeding auto-busses in the suburbs.

These jitney-busses are a serious problem to Havana. There are a score of companies all competing with each other, most of them having Ford or Chevrolet converted trucks. The conductors lean from the front entrance calling to passers-by on the sidewalk to come and be customers. "Enter, enter—we go the fastest!" they cry, and should you be so injudicious as to heed them they will make good their boast. Speed-limits with them are made to be broken, and often two competing busses will race to where one solitary customer awaits the first of them under a lamp-post. They are often in smashes and quite often the nickel fare they charge is a straight pass to the morgue.

Havana police are twice as numerous for the size of the town as is usual in an American city, and they are drilled and trained as soldiers. They are invariably clad in spotless uniforms and one of their cardinal rules is politeness. In winter a special force wearing white helmets exists for the sole purpose of directing tourists, these speaking English. They are taught to consider themselves acting-hosts of Havana and their mission is to make the tourist feel at home.

Should you have imbibed a little too injudiciously



and have difficulty in navigating late at night it is quite likely that a friendly policeman will call a taxicab and himself conduct you to your hotel. There are even instances, they say, when they will take you to your room and put you to bed.

This being the case you have little to fear during any explorations you may make in quest of Havana's night life. You run much less risk of being told to stand and deliver than in Chicago or New York.

The night life itself, however, has little to recommend it. Some of the cabarets are lively, and there is plenty of opportunity to dance, but at this writing there does not exist a dance-café with any pretension to smartness.

The Pirates' Club at Cojimar Beach, thirty minutes in a taxicab from Havana, is a picturesque cabaret installed in an alleged "pirate ship" moored on the beach. One may dine, dance and sup and there is a more or less cabaret. Bellamar Inn, near the Casino and the Playa, is an interesting place decorated in Moorish style, serving tea, dinner and supper in a fairly refined setting. The orchestra here customarily is good.

Infierno is the awe-inspiring name of a gaudy cabaret in the downtown region which advertises "plenty of pretty Cuban and Spanish dancing-girls." This place is usually filled with *chulos*—Cuban



equivalent to the European *gigolo*. The Spanish Tavern in the basement of the Regina Hotel is an exquisitely decorated place featuring Spanish singers and dancers and serving Spanish meals. It is rather expensive.

The largest of the cabarets is Montmartre, which has an ambitious "revue" of American girls, and where champagne is served *à la Parisienne*. This is purely a tourist place and might be more amusing if the "revues" were better. "Tokyo" is another downtown cabaret.

Two interesting road-houses, where one dines and dances to orchestras under mango trees, but which present no entertainment, are Cacolota and Geyer's Garden Restaurant, both on the Central Highway at Arroyo Arenas, about fifteen kilometers from Havana. The drive out is beautiful.

Hotel Bristol usually has an excellent little show on its cool roof-garden. Villa Martin at Mariel, "The Naples of Cuba," thirty-two miles from Havana, is a restaurant featuring sea-food and chicken dinners.

La "Vista Alegre," on the Malecón, and "El Ariete," cater to the younger set of Cubans after the theater. They are lively.

The classic Cuban cabaret is La Verbena, which has two orchestras and is open all night at Avenida



Columbia, Marianao. It is a huge place, filled with señoritas alluring in face and figure who will dance with you at your nod. The proprietor is Emilio Salas, an old Cuban revolutionary who has, they will tell you with bated breath, killed two men. The manager is Billy Moran, a little New Yorker with experience in such cabarets throughout Europe and Central America.

La Verbena is to Havana what Zelli's is to Paris or Texas Guinan's to New York. It is supposed to be a very "tough" place and tourists go there rather fearfully, expecting to see the lights shot out at any minute. But nothing of the kind is likely to happen and the only thrill guaranteed is that gained from watching the extremely frank gyrations of the dancers. There are two shows, one at midnight which, as Billy Moran unblushingly admits, is "a little off," and one at three in the morning, which Mr. Moran prefers to let you qualify yourself. One is shown the *rumba* and the *danzón* of the Cubans, a traditional "hoochee-koochee", and few of the girls wear any clothes to speak of. This is the "naughtiest" public show in Havana, although downtown there is a theater which is not allowed to admit women or children, so risqué are its shows; while, hidden here and there, are so-called "French" motion-picture shows (manufactured in Germany as





LOOKING DOWN THE PRADO TO MORRO CASTLE



a subtle propaganda against her ancient enemy) which charge as much as \$10 admittance.

As an indication of what a "night out" in Havana is likely to cost—apart from the Casino—here are a few prices copied from La Verbena's price-list: Champagne, \$8 a quart; Burgundies, \$6 a quart; Rhine wines, \$5 a quart; Spanish wines, \$5 and \$4 a quart; cocktails, .60; beer, .40; liqueurs, .50 and .40; Cognac, .60. These prices are typical of the cabarets.

The average tourist will not want to spend more than one or two nights studying the cabarets. They are, practically without exception, second or third grade.



## CHAPTER XIV

### CHARACTER AND CHARACTERS IN CUBA

#### I

No country nor town is greater than its citizens and by the personalities whose achievements have helped to build it shall the ultimate judgment of a town be drawn.

Many histories, biographies, romances and guide-books tell the romantic story of Cuba through the careers of its great men and this is no attempt to overstep the line of the contemporary sketch into their distinguished province.

If we here devote a chapter to a few—a very few, limited by space and by acquaintance—of the Americans and Cubans one may expect to meet in Havana, it is because the most important matter for the visitor, after his comfort, is the type of man he may expect to meet and the kind of acquaintance he may make.

The persons mentioned hereafter are, most of them, business men of the pioneer type. Among the Americans are many who before coming to Cuba ad-



ventured in other fields, on other frontiers—Texas, Wyoming, Montana, Canada, Central America. They live in Cuba because it suits them.

Many whose names should rightfully be given herein we have left out, either through ignorance or because space forbade. We apologize for this—an inevitable fault in a summary of this kind, which is neither a Who's Who nor a telephone directory. We have confined ourselves to those whom we ourselves met—some casually, some by design—whose personalities and careers seemed to justify their being better known to the visitor and future settler whose seat they have been keeping warm.

## II

The outstanding American of Cuba is Frank Steinhart.

The career of this man has been so colorful, in many respects so extraordinary, that it provides material for an exciting volume. We can only here give its glossary, but one day a competent biographer will do justice to a great American, no less a great American for the fact that he was born in Germany.

At one time Frank Steinhart had more influence in Cuba than any man in the island, and this would not be far wrong even today. He is credited with being the power behind the scenes who named govern-



ments, elected presidents, and above all was the high intelligence which maintained for years the necessary liaison between the United States and Cuba, both political and commercial, in such wise that the rights of neither country suffered in years of crisis that were fraught with danger.

Coming to Cuba as an enlisted soldier of the United States Army, never rising above the rank of a chief clerk, this remarkable man yet found the confidence of generals, of the Secretary of War and finally of the President himself, and that despite the red tape which of necessity binds the ambitions of the non-commissioned officer.

Part of this he achieved by his integrity and efficiency, which made him the leaning-prop of the American administration, and part by the tact and intelligence which made of him a consummate politician.

Steinhart was born on May 12, 1864, in Munich, of a middle-class German family. When he was twelve years old he was taken to the United States. Six years later he joined the Tenth U. S. Infantry as a private; immediately became a bugler, and *barely more than a year* afterward was already a sergeant-major with the title of chief clerk. In 1884 General Bill Sherman made him his chief clerk in Chicago, a post he held under Generals Sherman and Brooke,



among others, until 1898, the year that was to mark the turning-point of his career.

With General Brooke he went to Chicamauga and from there to Porto Rico, where he stayed only long enough to be ordered to Cuba. He participated in the landing at Santiago and a few weeks later found him in Havana.

In December, 1898, he was made chief clerk to the Military and Civil Administration. In this capacity he practically managed the military administration under Generals Brooke and Wood. Many times he was slated for a commission, but he steadfastly refused this promotion, rightly thinking his position of chief clerk—in other words, general manager—to the Administration held greater promise for the future.

This viewpoint was speedily justified. General Wood publicly called him "my right-hand man." Secretary Elihu Root, presiding over the War Office, sent for the amazing sergeant, and, when he arrived in Washington, informed him that he had been appointed assistant chief of the Insular Bureau. Some time later, however, Secretary Root again sent for him and spoke to him somewhat in this wise.

"Steinhart—are you happy here?"

"No, sir."

"Like your job?"



"No, sir."

"Where would you rather be?"

"Cuba, sir."

"If you stay in your present responsible position you will have great opportunities and may rise to be a cabinet officer. How does that strike you?"

"I'm not suited to a Washington job, sir. Rather be in Cuba."

"Well," said Root, thoughtfully, "I'm not so sure but that you're not right. We'll see."

The Secretary of War "saw." A few days afterward Steinhart returned to Cuba as Special Agent for the War Department. This position he held until March 13, 1903, when he was a natural selection for American Consul General.

Steinhart was Consul General in Havana until 1907. He had great faith in Cuba and invested largely in its resources. Among other interests he held a number of shares of the Havana Electric Company, and in November, 1905, becoming impatient with the administration of this company, wrote a letter to its board of directors suggesting certain improvements.

The board replied caustically and briefly. When Mr. Steinhart, it said, held sufficient shares to vote on the directing board, he could make suggestions—not before.



This made Steinhart mad.

"All right," he said, "I'll get the shares."

He set about collecting proxies and a few months later marched into a directors' meeting of the Havana Electric with a voting majority of shares.

The situation of the company was worse than he had bargained for. It owed \$800,000 and had practically no assets. When it wanted supplies it had to pay cash for them in advance. The service was poor, the rolling-stock antiquated and the employees demoralized.

Steinhart voted out the directors who had insulted him and took control. His friends thought he had gone mad.

"Why saddle yourself with a bankrupt concern?" they demanded.

"It won't be bankrupt long," said Steinhart grimly.

When he began to seek the loan necessary to pay off the \$800,000 debt he found that he had got himself a real job. It was the year of panic—1907. Money hadn't been so tight in the United States since the Civil War.

Steinhart went North. To bankers in New York he put his question. They laughed at him.

"Why, we may close our own doors next week,"



they said. "You couldn't get a nickel out of Wall Street, not if you had gold bars for security."

"*Somebody's* got money," said Steinhart obstinately. "It hasn't just vanished."

He set himself to find who this "somebody" was. Eventually he found that the only organization in the United States with ready money to invest was the Catholic Church.

Accordingly, he went to the Catholic Church. And sold \$800,000 worth of bonds to them.

At the same time he went to some of his old political friends in Washington. To each of them he made the same proposition.

"Give me a thousand dollars. I'll make you rich."

They laughed at him but they gave him the money because they liked him and believed in his ability.

The stocks they bought at 9 and 10 in 1912 were worth 140. Steinhart kept his promise. He bought in outstanding stock at 140 and acquired the business for himself.

Now he is one of the principal owners of The Havana Electric Company, with a healthy financial position, but he owns besides interest in the Polar Brewery, La Alianza Insurance Co., and is vice-president of La Cubana Insurance Co.



He has taken a large part in all Havana's social activities. He was president of the Jockey Club and belongs to most of the other principal clubs. He is accounted the richest man in Cuba.

He has three children, Florence, Alice and Frank, Jr. All of them have made successful marriages. Frank Steinhart, Jr., is assistant treasurer of the Havana Electric Company and shows evidence of the abilities which distinguish his father.

The Steinhart home on the Prado, on the right-hand side going from the Malecón to the Central Plaza, is one of the show-places of Havana.

### III

And some of the other Americans you'll meet:

*Frank McNenny.* Born in Ireland in 1845. Came to Cuba in 1865. Father of nine children, one of whom married Murray Hurlburt of New York City. Has nineteen grandchildren; confesses to two hundred pounds, and sports a white goatee. To be found daily at Ambos Mundos café.

*Joseph Springer,* vice-consul since 1869. "Uncle Joe" wears snow-white mustache, long goatee and black campaign hat. Dean of the American Club, native of Maine, and a Son of the American Revolution.



*Charles Echeverria*, United Fruit Company, one of the courtly, kind men who are immensely popular without seeming to be aware of it. American Club. Cuba since 1884.

*W. M. Whitner*. Real estate and insurance. Came to Cuba in 1898, but has not yet acquired any bad habits. Large family. Well-known writer on economics. American Club.

*Frederick Snare*. Founder, builder and life and soul of the Country Club, with a passion for changing bunkers. Founder of Frederick Snare engineering corporation. Suave, courteous and erudite.

*G. C. Fitzgerald*. An Oregonian who came to Cuba in the 1898 army and liked it so well he stayed. Was a major in the A.E.F., is head of the Cuban Knights of Columbus, looks like General Miles without a mustache, is much-loved, and may be found at the American Club.

*Rev. Father Moynihan*, Cuba's most popular priest and primest teller of anecdotes. Plays golf with Masons and Mohammedans and seems to like it. Has been in Cuba twenty-seven years.

*Lawrence B. Ross*. Handles popular automobiles and is credited with having made more than a million in doing it. Tall, wiry, energetic, prodigal; gives \$5,000 banquets at the Jockey Club and is known as the David Harum of Cuba. New Yorker



with Wyoming experience. Charming wife and children.

*E. F. O'Brien.* Knows more about Cuba than Terry's Guide. In *Who's Who*. Editor, *Times of Cuba*. Portly, witty and clings to sarcasm. Quotes Elbert Hubbard and says, "What's the big i-dear?" Belongs to Masons, Shriners, Odd Fellows, Elks, Moose and nearly everything except Knights of Columbus, and is even a Circumnavigator. Authority on tourist traffic, often at American Club, and in leisure moments can be seen tracing ancestors back to *Mayflower*.

*James Ellis.* A Floridan who came to Cuba in '98. Constructor. Heavy-set, dark and very dignified. American Club and Sevilla-Biltmore, but mostly at his much-loved home.

*Benjamin Projan.* Enterprising Jewish lad from New York on his way to becoming Cuba's biggest merchant. Great favorite with the Irish. Athletic. Champion chicken-eater of Cuba. Can be seen eating his lunch at Telégrafo Hotel.

*George V. Walsh,* contractor. Down-East Yankee, in Cuba since 1907. Good company; clean ethics. Formerly of American Steel Co. and now superintending bridge construction for the Central Highway. Catch him lunching at Hotel Florida.

*J. Henry Steinhart.* No relation to Frank Stein-



hart. Deals in marble fittings. Socially much liked. With wife one of Havana's best entertainers. Prefers Hotel Inglaterra.

*Francis A. Kinsey.* Camagüey mostly. Looks like Abraham Lincoln. Tells droll stories in Hotel Florida. Explored Colombian mountains. Cuba since 1901.

*Walter H. Armsby.* General manager of the Cuban Dominican Sugar Co., and member Cuban Sugar Defense Board. Yankee. When sixteen distinguished himself guarding (with sawed-off shotgun) Wells-Fargo bullion shipments out of Mexico City. Cuba since 1902, since when has become bald. Sevilla-Biltmore and Hotel Florida.

*George B. Harris.* General Sugar. A good man and popular and a dream in a dress-suit.

*Clarence C. Capdeville.* Louisianan and known as "highest-priced office-boy in Cuba," but reason obscure. Much liked.

*Clyde M. Sheehan.* Was captain in France. Large capacity for life and everything else. Can be seen—asleep—during siesta-time at American Club. Scotch.

*S. S. Friedlein.* Came to Cuba in 1898-99 when American Army developed usual thirst for beer. Represented Schlitz, but, America going "dry," transferred devotion to Johnnie Walker, which he



helps to "go strong." Iron-gray hair and might be a retired French cavalry officer. Won't drink rum.

*Joe King.* Havana, Santiago and way-stations. Short, fat, likable and blood-descendant of Ulysses S. Grant. Chivalrous, charitable, may be rich if sugar ever goes up.

*Frank Robins.* President of company of that name. Virginian and once an actor. Lives in roof-garden atop his building, favors mint-juleps at Sevilla-Biltmore, liked by the younger set, refuses to grow old.

*Robert E. Hollingsworth.* Colonel. Attorney. Never in army but inevitably "colonel." Generally to be found at American Club "rising to remark." Says "suh."

*Alexander W. Kent,* attorney specializing in divorce. Touch of Irish. Keen mind and mostly popular. To be seen at La Reguladora Café.

*Ralph W. Crain,* typewriter agent. Twenty-five years in Cuba. Always sober. Tall, dark, and often spoken of by opposite sex. Spanish War veteran.

*J. Z. Horter.* Machinery. Looks as if always poised for flight. Great golfer but greater pessimist. Country Club, anywhere on links.

*L. E. Brownson.* Head of contracting firm of Purdy and Henderson. A 'Ninety-eighter. Has built most of Cuba's biggest buildings, is very



wealthy and is leader of American social set. Belongs to all the clubs. Has lovely home.

*Charles Train Beeching.* American Steel. Fast talker and popular oracle. Looks like John Drew did, and radiates efficiency. Authority on Interior. Not a bore. To be found at Hotel Plaza at spare times.

*F. W. Koop,* of Cienfuegos. Was standing in Inglaterra lobby when tremendous shock apprised him that *Maine* had been blown up. Had then been in Cuba six years. Inglaterra always.

*Wiley D. Stephenson,* sugar exporter. Cuba in 1903. Sugar. Fine type of old Southern gentleman. Knows Cuba like a book.

*James W. Egan,* of Antilla, Oriente. "Jimmy" is not the best-looking sandy-haired Irishman in Cuba but he is one of the best. First man to enlist from Cuba for World War and first American soldier wounded in France while serving with American unit. Hotel Florida and American Club.

*George B. Hayes.* Attorney. Thirty-two years ago was catcher for New York Giants. Deliberate. Impressive.

*William Anderson.* Cuba in '98 as private. American Clubber. Serious, refined. Contractor now and a good one.

*Robert S. Torrance.* Civil engineer. American



Club. Takes the world and himself seriously. Former American Legion Post commander. Cuba 1899.

*George T. Street.* Insurance. Captain in France. Ohioan. Only man in Cuba who can make a speech on a glass of buttermilk, and speech is likely to be: "Yes, by G——, by the time this Administration gets through fiddling there won't be any Cuba left, by G——, to fiddle with. I've been here twenty years and I know this country!" All clubs.

*Charles Berkowitz.* Storekeeper. A 'Ninety-eighter. Strives to have Cuba use clean paper-money, but so far vainly.

*Nathan I. Heller.* Also Jewish. Fine chap and great story-teller. Known as "Fat." Sells tires and talks like a Cuban.

*Walter M. Daniel.* Head of company of that name. Cuba in 1899 after sundry enterprises in Central America. Six feet, 220 pounds. Looks somewhat like Chief Justice Taft but cannot chuckle like Taft.

*T. C. Ulbricht.* Fine type of Rotarian. Immaculate. Purrs. Popular at American Club.

*Charles Thrall.* Connecticut. Cuba in 1890, and assisted Karl Decker in contriving escape of Evangelina Cisneros in 1897. President of Sugar Club. Was held by Cubans as prisoner of war in Cabañas



fortress. Small but big-hearted. Charter member of American Club. Dinner at Telégrafo. Lunch at Florida.

*Thomas R. Towns of Holguin.* Wealthy farmer in Oriente province. Amateur pantomime actor. Six feet tall and could be picked anywhere as a tropical resident. Hasn't had a drink in fifteen years. Good neighbor.

*Hugo Hartenstein.* Slight, energetic, efficient and popular. Cuba in 1899. Saw the only snowstorm in Cuba, in Pinar del Río mountains in 1900. President of American Chamber of Commerce. Electric engineer. A good citizen.

*Frank L. Getman.* Once a state road commissioner in New York. Slender, wistful, big-hearted, generous. Sells automobiles. President of Cuban Importing Company. Likes bright ties. Gives great parties at Hotel Pasaje.

*George H. Moore,* general manager of Thrall Electric Co. Fought in Honduras and Cuba. Big, burly, popular, lodge-member. Does a lot of quiet charity. American Club always.

*R. B. Van Horne.* Son of Sir William, who built Cuban Railroad. Weighs about 275 pounds and was once an artist on *Life* and a clever one. Loves Havana. Sevilla-Biltmore.

*George Bush.* Cuban American Sugar. English,



but graduated from Princeton as well as Cambridge. Usually to be found discussing an eccentric preference for orange gin with Belchazzar Seco, the American Club's gifted bartender. Very popular.

*Ronald D. Stephenson.* An American missionary's son with the best command of Spanish in the Diplomatic Service. An out-of-door man often to be found on the beach at Jibacoa playing with the sharks.

*Henry W. Catlin.* The Warwick of Cuba. President Machado's warmest American friend. A Virginian with a lifetime's experience in the Tropics. Sixty-four years old, vice-president of the Electric Bond & Share Co. To see him with a lady you'd never guess his age.

*Cushman A. Rice.* Son of ex-Governor A. E. Rice of Minnesota. Better known as "Cush" Rice to friends in Central America, Mexico, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, China and elsewhere. Left college in 1896 and almost immediately thereafter appeared as brigadier-general in Guatemalan Army, but when he returned to America for Spanish-American war service they only made him a captain—of the Thirty-Fourth U. S. Volunteer Infantry. Had a good record in the Philippines, especially because he bought, owned and operated the first automobile ever seen in the Islands. Since then has been mixed up in various Central



American revolutions, it being said that whenever the munitions business was a little low "Cush" Rice would disappear from New York and soon thereafter the President of some small republic would lose his job. For some years now has "settled down" to leisurely tours of the world. Has cattle ranches in Cuba, homes in Paris and Shanghai and New York, and \$6,000,000. Is also a Major of Aviation, U. S. R., and was one of America's first pilots.

*Frank Morgan.* Of the firm of Morgan and McAvoy, printers of periodicals. Originally and still from Texas. Frequently the "life of the party." Can ride steers.

*Roy W. Chapman* of West Texas. All his life in the saddle. The best horseman in Cuba. With two friends gives an annual Rodeo when 2,000 people are entertained at his ranch. Has five children. Once licked the famous rough-and-tumble fighter Mayfield Damon in Camaguey in 1914.

*Samuel W. Hamilton Jones.* Canadian, late of Princess Pats, with an entire war's service on Western front and Gallipoli. Son of a minister. Tells French-Canadian dialect stories. What men call "regular."

*Walter Luther.* Luther-Quinlan Automobile Company. A Dutchman from Maryland, where he met his lovely Irish wife. For 12 years a scout for



General Motors in Europe and South America. A solid, conservative man of affairs with an itch in his foot.

*Francis Quinlan*, his partner. Also a General Motors man. *Sometimes* plays poker at American Club. Clever at business. Takes his "Cuba Libre" \* only occasionally.

*César Diaz*. Cigar and cigarette man, very wealthy. Married a Miss Sharon of San Francisco. Popular and polished and with his wife a great entertainer at Jockey Club.

*A. E. Stuntz*. Better known as Eddie. Tall, auburn and writes better than Mencken, but will not believe it. Will be less idealistic later on. A young Cornell man who will one day be famous. His father is a Cuban pioneer.

*Dean Sanborn*. Editor of the *Havana Post*, clever sport writer and an authority on racing. An able man.

*Gerald Brandon*. Column-writer on *Havana Post*. Born in Panama. Once wrestling champion of Mexico. Knows globe. Found Pancho Villa. Brilliant writer. Once spent four years in Foreign Legion.

\* *Caba Libre*: a highball contrived of coca-cola and bacardi rum.



## CHAPTER XV

### CHARACTER AND CHARACTERS: 2. THE CUBANS

#### I

THE Cuban home, like the French home, is well-nigh impregnable, unfortunately, to the average tourist. It is regrettable that a wealthy and well-meaning traveler may come to Havana, stay a month, and return without ever having seen a Cuban *intérieur* or met with any Cubans excepting those whom he is obliged to meet in the ordinary course of business. It is doubly unfortunate because the traveler thus returns from Cuba having no real insight into the character and customs of the Cuban people, especially the Cuban gentlefolk, and is tempted to generalize on the Cubans—waiters, shoe-blacks, taxicab-drivers and what-not—whom he *has* met.

The principal barrier is the barrier of language. In addition Cuban home-life is more or less sacred. No Cuban would think of telephoning to his wife, half an hour before dinner, "Put on an extra plate, I'm bringing a friend home." Without actually



sequestering his wife and daughters, he keeps them rigorously apart from his everyday business life. To be invited to a Cuban home you must be indeed a tried and true friend. A foreigner may know a Cuban gentleman intimately for years and yet never catch sight of his wife and family except at a distance.

There are a few notable exceptions to these rules, chiefly members of the Country Club and others who have lived long years in the United States or England. The Havana-Biltmore Yacht and Country Club, in its palatial quarters just opened at Biltmore, is making a genuine effort to effect a desired "mixture" of the nationalities. The Commodore is Cuban, but the board of directors include an American, an Englishman and a Spaniard.

The board of directors of the Yacht and Country Club includes John McE. Bowman, President; José Emilio Obregón, Cuban representative of the National City Bank of New York, Commodore; Fernando G. Mendoza, Secretary; Nestor G. Mendoza, Vice-Secretary; Miguel A. Suárez, Treasurer; Charles F. Flynn, Henry Catlin, H. C. Stapleton, José Gómez Mena, Alberto G. Mendoza, Juan R. Arellano and Guillermo F. de Zaldo Jr., Directors.

The new club, which is really the nucleus of the Cuban Monte Carlo without being a part of it, will



be the most exclusive on the Island of Cuba. It has palatial quarters at Jaimanitas.

In the few pages to follow an effort has been made to group a few representative Cubans as ones whom the American traveler in Cuba is likely to meet socially. The author acknowledges that this in no wise constitutes a list of Cuban society, this function being excellently performed by the Cuban Blue Book, published annually.

The manner of selecting the names to follow was this: The author himself spent a certain time in Cuba, and combined his own experience and acquaintance of Cubans with those of a number of friends who likewise spent a limited time in the Island. It was curious to see how little the lists varied.

## II

*Gerardo Machado.* President of Cuba. Native of Santa Clara province. Often referred to as "the Roosevelt of Cuba." Dominates an unfortunate political situation with tact and energy and has a program providing for determined extension of public works combined with sensible coöperation with American finance. A veteran of the Cuban War of Liberation, 1895-98, Machado rose from being a humble country lawyer to be a brigadier-general.



He is a consummate politician and dominates a very comprehensive political machine. Is generally popular and his term of office is likely to extend until 1935.

*Dr. Luis Machado.* Young Cuban attorney. Although a Cuban, young Machado is reckoned the best speaker in English in Cuba. Dynamic. Has a big future.

*Carlos Miguel de Céspedes.* Hereinbefore dealt with. Cuban minister of public works. The most energetic man in Cuba. Is responsible for most of the beautification projects in Havana and for the Central Highway. By many considered a certain President of Cuba.

*Rafael Itturalde.* Only pro-Spaniard of revolutionary period who has held office in Free Cuba. Efficient and a born executive, but not popular.

*Mario Menocal.* Ex-President of Cuba. Lives with beautiful wife and family at Santa Marta sugar mill in Camaguey province.

*The Palma Boys.* These three irrepressible young men are much loved of the Cubans, especially the younger generation. As sons of the lamented First President of Cuba they have the freedom of the Island. They speak English as Americans, are internationally educated, and are altogether charming. The men the American traveler is most likely to meet



of all Cubans. *Joe Estrada Palma*, the eldest of the "boys" (he has a grown daughter and his youth is chiefly noticeable in his soul), has a cattle ranch near Bayamo, in Oriente province, where he lives in his *hacienda* as a Cuban country gentleman. His trips to Havana, though, are frequent, and he will be found in the Sevilla-Biltmore Hotel. *Ralph (Rafael) Estrada Palma*, another much-loved *enfant terrible* when he is in Havana, lives in New York, but often goes South. Generally in the Sevilla lobby, talking to a beautiful girl, or (later) in the Vista Alegre Café. *Carlos Estrada Palma*, the quietest of the trio. A fine, courtly specimen of the young Cuban type. Also the Sevilla—although all three brothers on occasion may be found in the small and singularly ill-equipped bar back of the Paris restaurant, which Alfred Petit intended for a serving-bar but which has been preëmpted by the young Cuban, perhaps because it is not open, like the other bars, to the street.

*Martinez Ybor*, a Tampa-born Cuban with a remarkable gift for spread-eagle oratory. A devoted admirer of the late Theodore Roosevelt. Was a friend of General Leonard Wood.

*Julio Blanco Herrera*. Owns the Tropical Brewery, in the gardens of which tourists may drink as much as they wish for nothing. Owns a house in



Country Club park which looks, so one man remarked, "a cross between late North German Lloyd and early Pullman." Rich and a sportsman.

*Fiol Caballero*, of Cienfuegos. Ford agent, but newspaper editor and owner also. Small, energetic, and a good speaker in English. Ardent automobilist.

*Dr. Antonio Sanchez de Bustamente*. International lawyer. Was a President of the League of Nations.

*Colonel Eliseo Cartaya*. President of Cuban Portland Cement Company "El Morro," with huge works at Mariel. Daughter married "Cap" Tillinghast L'Hommedieu Houston of the New York Yankees. Popular with Americans.

*George Reno*. Cuban Department of Agriculture, born an American and a nephew of Robert G. Ingersoll. Once a famous actor on Broadway. Now one of Cuba's most useful citizens. Has a marvelous farm with equally marvelous caves not far from Havana.

*Dr. Pedro Pablo Kohly*. President of the Society of Economic Federations. Descendant of a German general captured by Napoleon. General, escaping from Napoleon, reached Cuba and founded a family.

*Alfredo Zayas*, President of Cuba 1921-25. Suffered frightfully as prisoner of war of the Spaniards



on North Coast of Africa. One of Cuba's greatest men. Has written a book on prison experience to be published after his death.

*Massaguer, Conrado W.* Probably the best-known Cuban, internationally speaking. Is considered one of the three greatest caricaturists in the world. Owns several magazines in Havana, including *Carteles* and *Social*. Always to the forefront in Cuban-American questions. Leader of Cuban intellectual "Minorité." A brilliant man and very popular with Americans. Talks American like a native.

*Massaguer, Joe.* Sporting editor of *El Mundo* and almost as popular as his brother. An international authority on sport, especially horse-racing.

*Mendoza, Dr. Claudio G. de.* Head of the famous Mendoza family, which very nearly runs Havana. Banker, statesman, economist, capitalist, farmer. Has six sons, five of them married: Fernando, Mario, Nestor, Luis, Alberto and Raul, each of whom have distinguished themselves in some specialized branch of activity. They are the richest family in Havana and have vast holdings in real estate. Several of the families live together in the picturesque Villa Rosa at Marianao, which has its own church and school. There are so many grandchildren that sometimes they arrive at the bathing-



beach in a private omibus. To the civic pride and energy of the Mendoza family is due in great measure the latterly considerable progress of Havana city. In all there are nearly a hundred Mendozas in Havana, about twenty of whom are leaders in their respective professions. Nicolas Mendoza is the developer of Reparto Miramar.

*Carlos Alzugaray.* Lawyer. Organizer, especially of political parties. Likes to damn the United States, but doesn't mean it, and is personally liked by Americans.

*N. Gelats.* Banker. Opinion often sought by Americans but seldom given. Once said there were 92,000,000 hoarded dollars in Havana. Banking expert.

*Enrique Fontanills.* Society editor of Cuba's oldest daily, *El Diario de la Marina*. Higher paid than Cholly Knickerbocker. Is a social arbiter of Cuban set and one of the most flowery writers in the Spanish language. Comes from Catalan.

*J. M. Barraque,* Secretary of Justice. Distinguished jurist and scholar. An authority on the Code Napoleon. Loves Paris.

*Rogelio Zayas Bazan* of Camagüey. Formerly interior minister. Known to man in the street as "Zayas Ba-Ta-Clan" because once he closed a Paris



Ba-Ta-Clan show in Havana owing to the scanty clothing of the ladies. His greatest achievement the closing of the Vice District.

*Jose Almeida.* Oriente province. Former cowboy. Became multimillionaire during "dance of the millions," but it didn't last. Loved a "high old time" in those days, but subdued now. A great character and an honest one.

*Dr. Arturo Aballi.* Famous baby specialist and obstetrician. One of world's greatest. Friend of William Gorgas, who drove yellow fever from Cuba. Author of many textbooks used internationally

*Dr. G. E. Agramonte,* the doctor to whom most Americans go when they get ill. Formerly specialized in New York. A good fellow too.

*Captain Eduardo Laborde,* Cuban army. Fine aviator, horseman, gentleman. French ancestry. Speaks perfect English.

*Manuel de la Guardia.* Handsome, humorous and the best-dressed man in Cuba.



## CHAPTER XVI

### "SMOKE?" HOW GOOD CIGARS ARE MADE

#### I

KIPLING notwithstanding, there are left some women in the world who reduce the best cigar to the level of a mere smoke. But *after* a woman, is there anything so absolutely satisfying to the male appetite as a good cigar?

This being the case it is surprising that there are only four parts of the world where *good* cigars are made. One is Cuba. One is Florida. One is Porto Rico. One is the Philippine Islands. And Connecticut is the only other cigar-producing country which can even faintly reproduce, to the connoisseur, the appearance *and* aroma of a Havana cigar.

Of the four great producers—we exclude Mexico owing to the fragility of the delicate leaf which, like the mango, will not stand another climate—Cuba, of course, is in the lead, although Cuba does not produce more than one percent of the world's cigar supply.

The main reasons for this Cuban supremacy in quality despite inferiority in quantity is that the



Cubans were first in the field—the tobacco plant like the vine requires decades of development—and have therefore had a longer time to cultivate that valuable ingredient *tradition*; the Cuban growers and manufacturers have centuries of experience behind their product; they still have more or less of a trade conscience in an epoch when this is a rare commodity; they have a world-wide reputation to live up to; being the center of the high-class tobacco trade Cuba draws the most skillful graders and workmen; finally there is, apparently, something in the hot, moist climate of Cuba which cannot be duplicated anywhere else. In fact, in only portions of Cuba can the “divine weed” be grown with success, and climate is as much a necessity for the process of manufacture as it is for the cultivation itself.

This goes for the smoking, too. Cubans say that a box of good cigars will spoil in twenty-four hours in New York if left open. The Cuban who makes the cigars should be a judge, but the Englishman does not think so. The English believe that a cigar should be ripe (i.e., dry) before smoked. They call this process “mellowing.” The Cuban says that the mellowing should be *before* manufacture and that the cigar when smoked should be green (i.e., new).

The so-called “civilized” palate demands the light cigar—the *claro* or the *colorado claro*—and these are



almost the only cigars exported. The Cuban, on the other hand, wants his smoke black, loose-rolled and moist—*colorado*, *colorado maduro*, or *maduro*. The latter is almost black. It is not necessarily stronger than the light-colored cigars, but it has a decidedly fuller flavor. The *claro* and *colorado claro* tobaccos are artificially produced—are grown under cheese-cloth, acres of which stretch across the great weed-growing district between Havana and Pinar del Rio.

## II

Choosing a cigar demands nearly as much knowledge as choosing a wine. As with wine, the only certain test is to taste—light—it. There are relatively few sure rules to judge by.

High-class wrappers being expensive, they are naturally only used on higher grade cigars. That is to say, where a high-grade wrapper is used, the filler is of good quality and carefully rolled. It is wise therefore to select a cigar with a good wrapper.

A good wrapper may be of any color, but the weave of the leaf is finer and there is a subtle silken touch discernible to sensitive finger-tips. It should not be spotty or uneven. It is usually finished off with exceptional care and the joints are not roughened. The cigar should be smooth from one tip to the other.



In selecting a cigar one should pass it from tip to tip between thumb and forefinger, squeezing gently. The cigar should have the same resistance throughout. It should not be too solid. Neither should it be firmer anywhere than elsewhere. Soft spots mean unequal rolling, and unequal rolling means uneven smoking and a disappointing smoke.

The color of the wrapper does not indicate the strength of the cigar. Light-colored tobacco can be just as strong as dark, and vice-versa. However, most light-flavored cigars made for the American and European trade are light-colored, either *claro* or *colorado claro*.

The strength of a cigar cannot be told except by an expert from the cigar's appearance, and the fresher a cigar is the stronger it is. The strongest cigar in the world is probably the Cuban *brevas*, made by Villar y Villar, or else *La Flor de Cuba*, made by M. Valle y Cia. Six-tenths of cigars made for export are light in color and flavor; therefore in buying a cigar in Havana it is wiser, if you prefer a mild smoke, to buy a brand popular in the United States.

The skill required of the cigarmaker varies according to the size and shape of the cigar made. The shape demanding the cleverest workmanship is the long, fat torpedo shape, sealed at either end.



As examples, the *cesares* of Cabañas, the *excepcionales* of Villar y Villar, the *sobresalientes* of Corona, the *cesares* of Murias y Cia, the *Albas* of Villar y Villar, the bloated *perfecto fino* of Bock y Cia and the *admiral* of Henry Clay.

Another shape demanding excessive skill in the making is the long, straight cigar such as the *coronation de luxe* of Romeo y Julietta, or the fine straight smoke made by the Upmann and Ramon Allones firms.

Very large cigars and the shapes mentioned above are usually made of finer leaf than the small shapes, because the experts who make them are too valuable to be wasted on cheap cigars. This is why the size and price of a cigar is an indication of quality.

Generally speaking, in choosing a cigar, it is wise to follow the following rules:

1. See that the box is freshly opened, and that it bears the *green label* which is the trade mark of all Havana cigars.
2. Examine the cigar you take to see that its wrapper has not been cracked by the nail of some other purchaser.
3. Gently squeeze the cigar throughout its length to be certain there are no air-pockets which will make the smoke uneven or hot. These air-pockets, caused by faulty rolling, occur at times in the most expensive cigars.
4. If the shape you like is straight, examine the end



to be lighted. The interior of the cigar should be evenly but not tightly rolled.

5. If you choose a perfecto or a larger torpedo-shape, feel gently the end to be lighted and make sure that it is firm everywhere. Otherwise the fire from your match may run down through an air-hole and reappear at the side, in which case an expensive cigar is spoiled.

6. For the Cuban taste a cigar should be a little moist and pliable. For the English taste, which the Cuban cannot understand, it should be so dry that a light crackling is heard when rolled between thumb and forefinger close to the ear. (Although the Cubans decry the English taste in dry cigars they admit that the best cigars they make are shipped to London.)

7. The band has nothing to do with the cigar. Quite often the best cigars—the *exceptionales* made by Villar, for example—do not have bands. In others the band is a modest affair plainly printed.

8. Similarly the size and finish of the box need not necessarily mean that the cigars within are good. Some very ordinary smokes are put up for certain trades in rich mahogany boxes, whereas the very finest cigars, without exception, are *always* packed in first-grade cedar.

9. If the cigar is dry, use a clipper. If little twigs come off in the mouth the cigar is bad. If the cigar is moist, push in the end of a wooden match or simply squeeze gently until the wrapper cracks at the end.

10. To light a cigar evenly the match should be well aflame and held an inch from the tip. The smoker should pull slowly but evenly on the flame, seeing that it covers the entire tip. Jerky puffs will mean a badly-lit cigar. If



a cigar burns unevenly due to bad lighting, pull very gently on it for a moment or two and it will even up.

11. *Never* light a good cigar with anything but a wooden match—above all, never a gasoline lighter, the fumes of which destroy the fine aroma.

12. Remember that a cigar should be kept alight, for a cigar relit is never good.

13. Close the box promptly after choosing.

### III

Cigars were smoked in Cuba by the natives before Columbus arrived and the first smokes carried back to Europe were by members of his expedition. Some say that the weed came to America from Asia, but of that there is no proof.

Cigar-smoking has been popular only about a century, and common less than fifty years. It is now, however, one of the world's dominant trades. There are eight thousand cigar factories in the United States alone—reason for the high protective tariff.

Against this tremendous competition Havana cigars have more than held their own, the connoisseur the world over choosing no other kind. The reasons for the superiority of the Havana cigar are the same factors which influence the excellence of wine. The most important are the soil and the climate. Secondly, the growers must be expert, as the art of cutting is to know how old a plant must be



to ensure the leaf being at its best. Thirdly, the process of fermentation and curing demands the skill and practice of years of experiment. Fourthly, the Cuban knows best how to store the tobacco once it is cured, and manufacture it once it is ripe.

One concern, nicknamed the "Trust," manufactures sixty million cigars a year. One cigarmaker will make an average of one hundred cigars a day, for which he is paid from three to six cents a cigar. Some cigars take much longer to make, especially those huge ones made for kings, millionaires and others who can afford them.

The Kohinoor, which Pedro Murias y Cia make for Mr. John Pierpont Morgan, is six inches long and is packed in individual cedar boxes. It takes an expert cigarmaker twenty minutes to make and retails at \$1.50.

Every cigarmaker has a cigar like the Kohinoor, pride of his factory. Quite often they are only distinguished by their size; many smaller makes have better flavor. But only the finest leaf is used in the production of these super-cigars—leaf from the Vuelta Abajo region in the province of Pinar del Rio.

One well-known American millionaire has a standing order with the Romeo y Julietta firm for a certain kind of cigar and for twenty years one old cigar-



maker has been employed exclusively on this order. The millionaire is said to be such a connoisseur of tobacco that once when the special maker was absent, ill, and a substitute took his place, he was able to pick out the cigars made by the substitute without smoking them.

There are one or two old cigarmakers in Havana who work only for a limited list of clients. One of these told me that he works alone, with no assistant except his wife. He personally buys his leaf from the growers and cures it in a way known to him only. He will not make more than twenty cigars a day. He charges an exorbitant price but for many years now has refused to increase his list of clients. He says to do so would mean increased output and consequently diminished quality. He spends forty to fifty minutes sometimes on a single cigar. One of the personages he supplies is the King of Spain.

But there are fewer of these old limited-output makers now than formerly. They die and cannot, in this materialistic age, be replaced. Their knowledge usually is buried with them.

Most Havana cigars—in fact all that are on the open market—are made by one or other of the numerous factories. There are thirty-four large factories in Havana itself, eight of them owned by the so-called "Trust" controlled by the American



Tobacco Company. The factories included in the "Trust" are the Henry Clay & Bock, Cabañas, Carvajal and Villar y Villar; El Aguila del Oro; Henry Clay and La Carolina; La Corona; L. Suarez Murias; and two cigarette factories.

The most important among the other firms are Allones, Ltd., producing the Eminencia and Ramon Allones cigars; Alvarez y Hermanos; Julio Armas; Arronte, Flores y Cia; Azcano, Anselmo; Behreno y Cia; Castaneda; Cifuentes, Pego y Cia; Compania Cubana; Dosal y Comp; El Rey del Mundo; Fernandez y Palicio; F. E. Fonseca; F. Garcia y Hermanos; R. Hinojosa y Hermanos; M. Lopez Fernandez; Lopez y Cia; Florentino Mantilla; Martinez, Hermano y Cia; Angel Menendez; Montero y Cia; C. del Peso; Por Larrañaga; Rocha y Comp; Romeo y Julietta; Rodriguez, Mendez y Cia; Murias; Herederos de José Gener; Trinidad y Hermano; H. Upmann; Villaamil, Santalla y Cia.

Any cigars taken from boxes bearing the above names and a Cuban revenue stamp are genuine Havana cigars. The biggest factories outside the Trust are the Romeo y Julietta, the Larrañaga, the Upmann, the Cifuentes, Pego y Cia, who make Partagás cigars; Rocha y Cia; and Torres, Gener Hermanos, *Herederos de José Gener*.



There are forty-one dealers in leaf tobacco.

Not all Havana cigars are made in Havana, many being made from Cuban leaf in Florida and elsewhere and packed in Havana boxes. Many cigars made in Key West and Tampa are of first quality, however, and can stand on their own merits.

The United States is Havana's chief client for leaf-tobacco and cigars, but not for cigars alone. Great Britain imports an average of two million Havana cigars monthly; the United States only an average of one and a quarter millions. But the United States imports twenty to twenty-five thousand bales of leaf every month as against Britain's bare fifty bales.

The biggest customers of Havana cigar factories outside of Great Britain and the United States are Spain, which imports sometimes more than Great Britain, though of an inferior quality; France, which smokes half a million Havana cigars every month; the Canary Islands, Australia, Belgium, the Argentine and Germany.

The largest individual orders given various Havana factories come from the fighting services of Great Britain, the United States, France and Spain. The officers of the United States Navy annually smoke several hundred thousand *Carolina*



*perfectos*. Other big orders, apart from dealers, come from clubs, each big club having its own special brand.

There are more than twenty thousand different brands of cigars, each with its own wrapper. Any one willing to order, say, ten thousand cigars at once may have his own wrapper. Some of the big clubs of New York and London order cigars in fifty thousand lots.

There are not as many shapes of cigars as there are brands, but there are far too many to enumerate. The different shapes have no definite name; that is to say, an *excepcionales* may be one shape with Villar y Villar, and another shape entirely with Corona. A *perfecto* is nearly always rounded at the mouth end and shaped like a thick blunt pencil at the other. A *bouquet fino* with some firms is the same as a *perfecto* only smaller and thicker at the smoking end than at the other. The *invencible* is generally long and generously thick, and the *panatella* is longer and thinner. Other marks include the *diademas*, *especiales*, *cesares*, *albas*, *eminentes*, *non plus ultras*, *regalias*, *imperiales*, *admirals*, *regentes*, *Jockey Clubs*, *ideales*, *golondrinas*, *deidades*, *generales*, *colonelos*, *favorecidos*, and *almirantes*.



IV

Cigarmakers work in vast and well-lighted halls at benches not unlike school desks. Each has his particular brand to make. Sometimes he will finish the cigars himself; sometimes he will have a finisher, sitting beside him.

The process is to take the long, narrow leaves and put them one inside the other, carefully eliminating with the *hoja de lata* (tin knife) all strings and twigs. This is the filler. It gradually grows thicker under the practiced fingers and finally assumes cigar shape. The filler-leaf is then wrapped with a leaf of stronger and usually lighter texture, this is twisted at either end and gummed.

The cigar is then trimmed at either end and is ready for smoking. The wetting of the wrapper to the filler is still generally done with the tongue despite all efforts of sanitary commissions to make the use of sponges obligatory. The sponges are on every desk, the makers are threatened with fines if they do not use them, but habit is hard to break. At any rate it is known that no germ can live on tobacco, and the general health of tobacco workers is astonishing. They almost never catch contagious diseases and are almost immune from tuberculosis. In the old



plague days men and women chewed tobacco as a preventive.

Most of the cigarmakers are men, but there are some women among them. In the center or at one end of the big room, on a sort of throne, sits the reader, who is paid by the workers (twenty cents per man per day) to read to them while they work. He reads newspapers, magazines and occasionally books. He has no especial preferences and the taste of his hearers is never consulted. Anything that comes to hand is read. As a matter of fact the cigarmaker seldom listens to the reader to understand him. A murmur penetrates his consciousness; that is all. But the moment the reader ceases to read he finds his tongue and a babel of chatter arises all over the room. For this reason the companies encourage the reader, since it is known that a cigarmaker will work twice as fast silent than talking.

The cigars when made are inspected by an expert, who grades them. They are then packed in their cedar boxes by girls, some of whom are very comely. The boxes are packed in tin-lined crates to protect them from the climates *en route*.

From tobacco field to tin-lined box takes a cycle of several months. The tobacco has been dried, cured, fermented, dried again, wetted at the fac-



tory, rolled and packed. Now it is ready for the smoker.

Somewhere in the world the concentrated aroma distilled by the Cuban sun and enclosed in cylindrical weed will mean a fragrant half-hour for a lover of the best. It will quiet his nerves, soothe his spirit and perfume his thoughts.

Who knows what inspiration may not be born as the blue smoke curls aloft?



## CHAPTER XVII

### A LIVING HISTORY BOOK

#### I

ONE day in the eighties, when the magnificent cry of "*Cuba libre!*" first touched the heart-chords of a sympathetic world, a beardless boy of twenty walked diffidently into the New York law office of Elihu Root.

A scowling head clerk eyed him. What did he wish?

"I want to see Mr. Root," said the boy. "I am going to work here."

The head clerk sniffed.

"I didn't know we needed *students* in this office," he said.

One year later the scowling chief clerk left for other fields and the beardless boy took his place at Mr. Root's direction.

At twenty-one Horatio S. Rubens was the youngest lawyer's chief clerk in New York City.

He was not a chief clerk long. Before the beard had time to toughen he had hung out his own shingle and was a specialist in a day long before



specialists were common. His specialty was Spanish-America.

How this came about was simple enough. He had made a friend of a young Cuban, refugee for political reasons from Spain. This friend introduced him to cafés frequented by Spanish-Americans, and often he received invitations to visit their houses.

"Their talk was mostly of oppression," says Rubens, "and their hatred of Spain governed their every phrase. They told me things I did not think possible of Spain's cruelty to her New World possessions. As a matter of fact I only half believed them. In the sane and quiet atmosphere of New York such tales seemed romantic inventions. They smacked of barbarism. *A day came when I knew them to be true.*"

One evening he was invited to the house of his Cuban friend, Gonzalo de Quesada.

"Tonight you are going to meet the greatest Cuban living," he was told, "a man who has dedicated his life to the freedom of his country."

This man was Martí, the immortal patriot. Rubens says of him:

"To hear the story of this man's life was to think of Washington, Cromwell, *Vater* Jahn, and all those great revolutionary leaders of history. But to see him and to listen to him was to think of Lincoln—



Lincoln the brave, the gentle, the far-seeing, the sad.

"I felt reborn when I listened to this man. His was the simple, inspiring logic of the patriot to whom argument was as nothing compared with the Cause. He was a great orator—one of the greatest Cuba, home of oratory, has bred—but his words were not the words of an orator that night. I remember thinking as I listened to him, *If Christ lived he was a man like this!*"

Marti honored Rubens by his friendship. He had heard that Rubens was a singularly successful lawyer for one so young. Rubens was sufficiently bold to ask the Cuban exactly what the "Cause" was.

"Liberty," said Marti, simply. "The liberty of conscience which is every man's birthright.

"We are about to fight in Cuba for the same Liberty which George Washington fought for in the United States. You threw off the yoke more than a century ago. We are still bound to an ancient kingdom, governed by dissolute nobles whose only thought is to make their fortune from our labor and then to return home.

"The oppression which Washington rebelled against was political, not actual—one of taxation without representation, government by dictation. In Cuba we face more than that.

"During our revolution against Spain which lasted



from 1868 to 1878, every day one thousand natives died of torture and starvation. Women with new-born babies at their breasts were falling dead on the streets for lack of sustenance. Children ten years old were forced to do the work of grown men, under the scourge of whips. And today, half of native Cuba is starving, while the Spaniards are wallowing in plenty.

"Innocent families have been deprived of their homes on the merest pretext and obliged to live in *reconcentrados*, or camps on the plains, with infected water, insufficient food, and no milk. Babies in these camps are born but to die.

"There was butchery inconceivable in the days of the last revolution, all under the guise of military necessity. It is sufficient to be suspected to be shot. One hundred persons, most of them untried, are shot to death every day in the military prisons of Cuba.

"What shall we be fighting for? I will explain. If a Cuban owns ten *varas* of land, half of what he can raise thereon is the tax taken by the King's government. He is obliged to feed the King's army at cost. There are many Cubans who work every year and all year for less than the wages of a slave.

"Yet Cuba is Cuban—it is not Spanish! We were occupied—but we were never conquered. Cuba is as old as Spain itself! We owe no allegiance to a King



four thousand miles away. What has he done for Cuba except to build forts for his soldiers and mansions for his governors? He has built no roads, no railroads, no ports except those for the convenience of his own people. The Spaniards live in palaces, the Cubans in hovels. Thousands die every week from plague because the Spanish King takes the money for himself that should be used for the building of sewers.

"We shall be fighting for the same independence that America fought for under Washington."

Rubens says that made him think. Why, seeing that Cuba was struggling for the same freedom that the United States had won, and with more reason, why did not the United States help?

Marti, the man who was part Washington, part Lincoln, impressed him in a way no other man was ever to impress him. He felt rather than knew that the things he said were true.

And suddenly the young lawyer felt surging through him the same passionate sympathy that brought Lafayette to the aid of the rebellious colonies, that brought Irish hotheads to Garibaldi's staff.

A tiny nation was struggling to throw off the yoke of an old-world oppressor. Perhaps the Spanish King, a boy, had not ordered the cruelties done



in his name, but he and his government were responsible.

Clearly Cuba's was a righteous cause. . . .

## II

It happened that through one of his Spanish-American friends, young Rubens, in the year 1894—one year after he had first met Martí—was briefed to defend a certain General Ereta and his associates, of San Salvador. They were on trial for their lives in San Francisco. The trial has nothing to do with this story; suffice it to note that young Rubens was called a fool for taking the case. In the first place, there was not much money in it; in the second place, the extradition which the San Salvadoran government sought from San Francisco would most certainly be granted. What could Rubens do?

What Rubens did was win the case—on the merest of technicalities which need not be explained here. Ereta and his fellow conspirators went free. And overnight the young lawyer's reputation in Spanish-American circles soared sky-high.

In 1894 Porfirio Díaz, then President of Mexico, sent for Rubens to untangle a nasty knot which had been puzzling him—a knot which is also of no consequence to this story. Before Rubens could complete the job he had a summons from Martí.



In the year that had followed since Rubens had met Marti the latter, indefatigable, had built up an organization called the Cuban Revolutionary Party, whose battle-cry was *Cuba Libre*. Begun in the cigar factories of Key West, the movement spread wherever there were Cubans or sympathizing Hispano-Americans. Clubs were formed, the members guaranteeing to give up ten percent of all they earned to the common fund. When specially emergent funds were needed the club members worked on Sunday, and gave all they earned on that day to the fund.

With the money thus raised munitions were purchased and these were shipped on filibustering boats to Cuba.

Marti met Rubens in New York.

"One of our filibustering expeditions has been stopped in Florida," he said. "The munitions have been seized and most of the men arrested. Will you go there and try to get them released?"

"Yes," said Rubens, instantly.

Marti looked at him keenly.

"We are not rich," he said. "You lawyers are paid big sums for such work. How much will you charge?"

Rubens looked at him. He smiled.



"Señor Marti," he said, "you are organizer and president of the *junta*, are you not?"

"I am," said Marti.

Rubens twisted a long cigar in his mouth. Then, abruptly:

"How much are *you* getting?" he asked.

The Cuban sprang to his feet, his face crimson, his eyes flashing.

"Sir!" he cried. "I ask you to accept a commission and—and you insult me. . . ."

Rubens flicked the ash from his cigar.

"Mr. Marti," he said, "I am not the one who is insulting. *You* have insulted *me*. Why should I be paid for doing my bit in the cause of freedom?"

"Why—why," stammered Marti, "you—you are not a Cuban—"

"No," said Rubens, "but I am an American. And Cuba's fight is America's fight—or should be. I don't want pay, Marti. I'll go down there tonight."

He went to Jacksonville, got the filibusters off and the cargo released, and the munitions finally found their destination in Cuba.

From then on Rubens worked like a Hercules in the cause he had espoused. He became general counsel for the Cuban *junta* in New York. This *junta* was composed of Marti, delegate-in-the-field,



and, after his death, Tomas Estrada Palma; Joaquin Castillo, sub-delegate; Gonzalo de Quesada, secretary; Benjamin Guerra, treasurer; and Emilio Nunez, chief of expeditions. Of them all Rubens today is the only one alive.

Active revolution continued in Cuba for three and one-half years. During all that time Rubens worked as general counsel for the Cuban *junta* without charge. Not only that, he had sold his practice that he might have all his time to devote to the work on which his heart was set.

"It was Marti that made me do it," he told this writer. "I was a youngster—and the cause of freedom spoke strong. I thought of Marti as a god. He was the greatest man I had ever known. I—I loved him. And through him I loved Cuba and the Cuban cause."

The duties of "general counsel" were not so prosaic. On several occasions the young lawyer was himself a filibuster. In the year 1897 the filibustering ship he was on was chased by a Spanish warship, and escaped only after many casualties. Rubens fired his musket with the best of them.

All this time there was functioning in New York and Washington a bureau of propaganda in favor of the Cuban rebels. It was created and financed by Rubens.



When McKinley, urged by the vested interests, tried to impose an armistice on the Cubans, Rubens denounced the plan. He went to Washington and saw the President.

"The rebels must accept," said McKinley. "If they do not it means disintegration or starvation for them. This is a fair offer. The United States will see fair play."

"Sir," said Rubens passionately, "there is no fair play while Spain remains in Cuba! We will consider no armistice—no compromise. As long as there is a Cuban left to die we shall fight for the freedom that should be ours."

"Mr. Rubens," said the President, curiously, "you are not a Cuban. Why do you say 'our'?"

"Mr. President," said the young lawyer, "I was born an American. I was taught to believe in the invincible and inalienable birthright of every human being—liberty. Has this principle now been abandoned by the government of the United States?"

He left the White House and immediately began a tremendous publicity campaign, revealing the horrors of the Cuban *reconcentrados* camps, when whole populations were torn from their homes and shut behind barbed-wire to die. The campaign aroused much pro-Cuban sympathy among the American people.



Then Rubens played a master-stroke. He appealed to one thousand newspapers to ask their readers to telegraph their congressmen one phrase: "This murder in Cuba must cease!"

Telegrams by the hundreds of thousand deluged Washington. The government and the Wall Street interests were nonplused. The country was actually at war heat. And all because of a youngster, hardly thirty years old, who believed in the sacredness of Liberty.

A most fortuitous matter happened at this point. The Spanish Minister most unwisely wrote a letter to a friend in Havana in which he spoke his thoughts against the Washington administration.

President McKinley he referred to as "a weak, pothouse politician catering to rebels."

A Cuban employed by the secretary of war of the Spanish administration in Cuba somehow got hold of the letter and smuggled it out of the country. He took it to Rubens and laid it on his desk.

"This," said Rubens, when he had read it, "is war."

He had two options. He could take it to Washington and show it to Secretary of State Day and the President, in which case it would probably be hushed up, or he could publish it and *then* take it to Washington.



He chose the latter course and the next morning all America rang with the Spanish Minister's perfidy. The Minister was called on for a denial. He refused to deny. He was given his passports.

Karl Decker rescued Evangelina Cisneros.

And then from Havana came the most stupendous news of all.

*The Battleship "Maine" had blown up.*

### III

Rubens' greatest achievement in the Cuban cause came after the declaration and the winning of the war. He dictated a demand for the United States to "declare its intentions" in intervening.

A storm of denunciation swept over his head. Newspapers from one end of the country to the other scourged him editorially. What! Was it not sufficient that American boys were dying for Cuba? How could America's action be misinterpreted?

Rubens was imperturbable.

"Cuba has fought for liberty," he said. "She has overthrown one master and she now asks that she be given a guaranty of the freedom for which her blood was spilled. If the intentions of the United States are honorable, why cannot this guaranty be made?"

The logic was unanswerable, but the anger of the



government was unabated. Who was this Rubens that he should dictate to the government of the United States? Hadn't he got his war? Wasn't Cuba free from Spain? Well, then!

But Rubens fought on. Senator Teller of Colorado, a Republican who had turned Democrat over free-silver, introduced the famous Teller amendment, written by Rubens, which stated that as far as the United States was concerned, Cuba was now free, and by which the United States guaranteed to withdraw its forces as soon as a constitutional Cuban government was organized.

There was a bitter fight made against the Teller amendment in Congress. Inkwells were thrown in the House, in heat of argument. Teller and Rubens found themselves called "traitors" and "unpatriots."

But the Amendment had justice behind it and it passed. Cuba was free—

*Cuba was free forever.* Anti-imperialism had triumphed.

#### IV

Rubens, a sturdy man in the late fifties, spends his winters in Havana, where he is president of the Cuba Railroad.

He has received every honor possible at the hands of the Cuban government. The Joint Assembly has proclaimed him Cuba's "adopted son."



You may see him once in a while at the Country Club or the Sevilla Hotel, with his young and very charming wife.

The cast of his head is like a hewn block of granite, and as you look at him and hear his quiet speech you seem to see the beardless boy who gave up a career for an ideal.

Marti was slain in May, 1895. The others of that glorious band of Cuban patriots have died since. Only Rubens, the American, who built his whole career around an ideal, remains.



## CHAPTER XVIII

"HAVANA ISN'T CUBA." DOWN THE ISLAND.

### I

CUBA is a much bigger island than it seems to be on the map.

As the crow flies the distance between one tip and the other is 750 miles, but as the railroad runs the distance is nearer a thousand miles.

It takes longer to go from Havana to Santiago than from Paris to Monte Carlo and nearly as long as from New York to Chicago. If you leave Havana on the fastest train at 10.30 p.m. you do not arrive in Santiago until 8 p.m. the following evening.

There are only two towns of any size on the way, Santa Clara and Camagüey. Santa Clara, home of the brilliant lawyer who became Gerardo Machado, fifth President of Cuba, is just overnight. Camagüey is reached at noon. From then on the way runs through sugar cane—two hundred miles of it—and cattle-ranches.

It would be unwise for me to allege "all the comforts of home" in traveling through Cuba. No one does quite as much harm to a country or community as the indiscriminate booster. For some years the



traveler in Cuba will not have all the comforts of home, if we interpret these comforts as meaning steel pullmans, luxurious club-smokers, elaborate dining-cars, and thundering *trains rapides*.

This is because a railroad can open up a country, make settlement possible, ensure heavy transportation. But a railroad cannot *develop* a country. Only highways can do that. And Cuba will not complete her highway program until 1935.

When the highways are finished the development of the interior of Cuba will be comparable with that of Southern California. The vast waste areas will be populated. The railroad will begin to make money. You cannot expect luxurious traveling at the hands of a railroad which is only just breaking even. Almost the only revenue of the Cuba Railroad is cane.

At that the kind of transportation offered by the railroads of Cuba is what we called luxurious in the United States only fifteen years ago. There are plenty of pullmans with compartments and drawing-rooms. The beds are harder than those we are used to now, but they are not really uncomfortable. Many a present-day American train has worse.

The trains are kept spotlessly clean except for the dust which will sift in no matter what the porters can do. The springs could be improved, likewise the



roadbed, but on the whole the journey to Camagüey and Santiago is comfortable, particularly if made in winter.

Meals are served to pullman passengers on tables placed between the pullman seats. The meals are plain but the food is good and well-cooked. I have a menu before me. Here are some items, with the prices:

Chicken with rice (arroz con pollo) . . . .	0.70
Pork chops . . . . .	0.35
Stuffed squids . . . . .	0.80
Cold meats . . . . .	0.50
Alligator-pear salad . . . . .	0.20
Asparagus . . . . .	0.40
Pork and beans . . . . .	0.30
Sirloin steak . . . . .	0.60
Ham and eggs . . . . .	0.50
Guava marmalade . . . . .	0.20
Boned chicken . . . . .	1.00
Potatoes to order . . . . .	0.20
Chicken fricassee . . . . .	0.70
Spaghetti . . . . .	0.30
Soups . . . . .	0.30
Omelettes . . . . .	0.40
Coffee . . . . .	0.05
Beer . . . . .	0.15
Rioja and other Spanish wines . . . 60¢ to	1.00
Cognac . . . . .	0.25
Bacardi . . . . .	0.25



Surely variety sufficient to satisfy the hunger of anyone, and at a moderate price compared with the American pullmans. The buffet service also sells cigars, tobacco, newspapers and magazines.

The excellence of the buffet service is largely due to the energy of Señor C. Subirats, general freight and passenger manager of the Cuba Railroad.

## II

There are two main railroad systems in Cuba. One, the United Railroads, an English concern, serves the western end of the island and Havana, its lines extending westward from Havana to Santa Barbara, through the marvelous scenery of Pinar del Río province, and eastward as far as Cumbre, Cienfuegos, Matagua, Santa Gertrudis, Concha, Cárdenas, Matanzas, and Santa Clara, where the Cuba Railroad begins.

The Cuba Railroad serves the entire eastern end and center of the island from Santa Clara on, tapping the richest cane and cattle land and serving such towns as Camagüey, Santiago, Manzanillo, Santa Cruz del Sur, Trinidad, Antilla, Guantanamo, Moron, Ciego de Avila, Gibara, Bayamo and Alto Cedro.

Between them these two consolidated systems, one British and the other American (although controlled



by Cubans), run trains over slightly more than 3,000 miles of track. This trackage is almost doubled by private standard-gauge railroads operated by the big sugar companies. Some of these private railroads operate with the clockwork-like precision of the Pennsylvania. One big sugar company alone has nearly 1,000 miles of standard-gauge track. These private roads take the place of the badly-needed highways. Specially-made automobiles run on the rails.

The first Cuban railroad was built by British capitalists in 1837. It ran from Havana to Güines. This was only ten years after the first steam-railroad was operated in the United States. Spaniards were fond of referring to Cuba as a savage, uncivilized country, but it is a fact that Spain itself did not have a railroad until ten years after the Cuban one was in full operation.

Most of the early railroad development in Cuba was due to English capital and enterprise. Not only the United Railways of Cuba, which is still British, but also the Cuba Railroad (Consolidated Railways of Cuba) was surveyed and built by Britishers. The capital in the latter case was mostly American, but the builder was Sir William Van Horne, who previously had opened up immense tracts of wilderness in Canada.



A few years ago the Cuba Railroad was reorganized and turned over to a Cuban managing board. The President, Horatio S. Rubens, is the only American on the board, and we have seen in a previous chapter that the Cubans very rightly considered him one of themselves.

When the reorganization was effected the Americans associated with the railroad's management retired and their places were taken by Cubans. So far the Cuban management has been voted a success. Trains run on time and there have been no serious accidents. Modern rolling-stock will be substituted for the present coaches as soon as the traffic justifies the outlay.

In 1926 the Pullman Company ran an all-steel *de luxe* train twice weekly from Havana to Santiago. The experiment failed, but in the humble opinion of this writer it failed because it was an enterprise solely managed for tourists. The trip to Santiago took three days, with numerous halts by the way to inspect sugar-mills, cane-fields, cattle-ranches and so forth. The result was that when the tourists arrived in Santiago they were completely tired out. If the train had been run on regular schedule, stopping in Camagüey only long enough for the passengers to have lunch at the wonderful Camagüey Ho-



tel, the train might have been run at a profit. Regular customers of the line would have been able to avail themselves of it.

## III

The tourist bent on "seeing the island" is advised to do so in four different *sorties*. As follows:

No. 1—Havana to Hershey, Matanzas, Cárdenas and Veradero, returning by way of Güines and Batabano.

On this trip, by United Railways of Havana, the tourist will see the Hershey Sugar Mill, a model one in which most of the sugar used by the chocolate firm is ground, and which has its own electric railway to Havana. Milton Hershey is a familiar figure in Havana, especially at the Jockey Club and the Casino. His charities and his bluff personality have made him popular.

Matanzas is fifty miles from Havana and is interesting to the tourist because of its scenery more than because of its industry, which is that of the ordinary port. It is the largest shipping point in Cuba except for Havana, exports being confined to sugar and tobacco. Extensive sisal fields in the neighborhood provide twine for the American Harvester Company.

The scenery is well-nigh as beautiful as any the Tropics provide. The Yumuri Valley, which har-



bors the Bellamar Caves, is a Mecca for painters and lovers of beauty.

Cubans say that the most beautiful women come from Cárdenas, but that is a *question de gout*. The author is inclined to favor Santiago in this regard.

The best hotel is the Hotel Paris, in the new town, with comfortable accommodations and good food.

Cárdenas, thirty-five miles eastward from Matanzas, is a sugar port and of little interest apart from the famous Veradero Beach, fourteen miles away and eleven miles long, one of the finest stretches of sandy beach in North America.

Veradero Beach, or part of it, has lately been purchased by a group headed by Irenée Du Pont and work is progressing toward making the place into a costly private club for executives of General Motors and other Du Pont interests. When finished this will possibly be the largest private club in the world. It will have its own port of entry for yachts, its own private casino, a large clubhouse, and a number of homes will be built there by American executives who will make the place their winter home. Further along this magnificent shelving beach a large tourist hotel and casino will be built.

Within twenty years the entire North Coast of Cuba will be dotted with such enterprises. One



much bruited now is a private beach-resort to be built by a league of Country Clubs of America.

From Cárdenas one travels through cane-fields, cattle-ranches and sisal-plantations to Güines, which was the terminus of the second railway line to be built in North America. Güines is an old city now in decadence. From Güines a train is taken to Saint Felipe, where it is necessary to change for Batabano.

Batabano is on the south side of Cuba directly opposite Havana on the north. It is the port for the Isle of Pines,\* and a visit to this large island is indicated if you have time. Count two days for the trip.

Batabano is a picturesque city of green-painted houses and red-tiled roofs, the whole making a most picturesque panorama from the roof of the Hotel Cervantes, a modern hostelry which serves the famous Morro crabs and *langouste* of the region in many appetizing ways.

But the real industry of Batabano is the sponge. Some of the finest sponges in the world are fished in the shallow bay before the port. They can be bought in the town quite cheaply, a dollar buying four large sponges of the best quality.

From Batabano stretches an interesting road to

\* *Isle of Pines*: One of the most delightful islands in the world. See Terry's Guide.



Havana, one of the best on the island. By automobile the trip can be made in an hour and a half.

No. 2—Cienfuegos, Santa Clara, Trinidad, Cumbre. United Railways and Cuba Railroad.

The Bay of Cienfuegos, on the south side of the island, with its Castillo de Jagua fortress, is worth traveling all the way from New York merely to see. Arrive there just before sunset and you will be given one of the thrills of your life.

Cienfuegos itself, which is 170 kilometers from Havana, is the sea-coast resort of Havana society, and is well provided with good hotels and restaurants. The Hotel Union will be found modern and comfortable and the San Carlos Hotel is also quite good. Cienfuegos is comparatively modern compared with other cities on the island; it was founded in 1819.

Santa Clara, capital of the province of that name, has at present few attractions for the tourist and what attractions there are are counterbalanced by a lack of good hotel accommodation. The Santa Clara Hotel, with flowery patios, is alone worthy patronage.

Cumbre is the junction for Trinidad and is the highest point on the Cuban railroads—683 feet above the sea. It has no other importance for the tourist.

Trinidad, founded by Diego de Velázquez in 1514,



is one of the oldest and most interesting cities in the Americas, and merits a wider renown. The atmosphere is that of a century ago, and were it not that the hotel accommodation rivals the city in point of antiquity the venerable *pueblo* would be a much greater magnet than it is.

The Gran Hotel Canada is probably the best of the several mediocre hotels. Its rooms are clean and airy and its meals good. For an overnight stay the accommodation is sufficient, but luxury is wanting.

The very air of Trinidad breathes romance. Here the lovely girls, with their clear olive skins and deep brown eyes, still wear the high combs and mantillas and gay-colored skirts of ancient Spain. Many of the residents can trace their lineage directly to the days of Columbus. Flowers, fruits and the hundred-and-one tropical birds and insects are everywhere. The architecture is almost pure Andalusian.

Trinidad is the principal center for hunting in Cuba and is a paradise for the sportsmen. Wild deer and duck abound and alligators throng the streams and backwaters. A month would be insufficient to properly explore and appreciate this fine old city were the accommodation for visitors more modern and comfortable.



No. 3—Pinar del Río, Guanajay, Mariel. United Railways.

A classic excursion from Havana of a Sunday is to Mariel beach, via Guanajay. It can be made by railway or by automobile along good roads.

Mariel, sometimes called "The Athens of Cuba," is a fine beach with a café, the Villa Martin. The specialty at this restaurant is *arroz con pollo*, but one can have clam-chowder, native oysters and shell-fish, and wonderful fried *pargo*. Fishing here is excellent.

Guanajay itself has little of interest to offer, but beyond lie the fabulous tobacco fields of Pinar del Río province, called the Garden of Cuba.

Pinar del Río has thermal resorts (San Antonio de los Baños; San Diego de los Baños) which are well known for their treatment of skin and rheumatic complaints. The province is the center for pineapples as well as tobacco, is rich in minerals (copper and iron) and possesses some magnificent scenery. The Cordillera mountains enclose some beautiful little valleys often used for camping purposes by Havana boys' schools.

The town of Pinar del Río has a very good little hotel offering modern comfort—the Hotel Globo.



It is a clean, bustling little city in the very center of the famous Vuelta Abajo Valley, where the best cigar tobacco in the world is grown.

While in Pinar del Río take an automobile to the extraordinary Vinales Valley, in which the tropical verdure contrasts in startling fashion with tall, isolated pillars of gray limestone rock. This valley is known as one of the sights of Cuba, and every hundred yards ventured along it yields a new and enchanting vista.

Such are the three minor excursions to be made from Havana, each demanding from two to three days. The fourth trip is longer and at least ten days should be set aside for it. It is the journey from Havana to Santiago de Cuba, via Camagüey. A new chapter is necessary that the journey may properly be explained.

NOTE: In traveling through Cuba the author found Terry's Guide to Cuba of the greatest service, and it should form a part of the equipment of every traveler.



## CHAPTER XIX

### ALL THE WAY TO BACARDI TOWN. THE GANG AT CAMAGÜEY

#### I

CAMAGÜEY, reached at noon after an all-night journey from Havana, has two things to its credit, both of interest to the casual tourist.

First, it has one of the most wonderful hotels in the world.

Second, it has a tiny colony of grin-and-bear-it Americans who have made of this dusty, somnolent Indian town in the cane-fields a real and a delightful home. Their residence in such a place might have been a martyrdom—the monotony might have killed. Instead, exercising a facility of social intercourse comparable only to that of a remote army post, this handful of Americans, most of them young, have made the best of it to such purpose that none of them I talked to, with the exception of one who sighed for Paris (and he was Spanish, not American), seemed unduly sorry for himself to have to live so far from the amenities of his own civilization.



Nightly they meet, comparing gossip and golf scores, in the bar of the Camagüey Hotel—a bar which would be a *curiosité mondiale* if in Paris or London; Sundays they dine together in the hotel restaurant; every minute they can spare from work or golf they spend in each other's homes, playing bridge, dancing, working the radio and phonograph.

Such communities one finds on the outposts of civilization, especially in British colonizing posts of India and Africa. The American is less given to them, preferring a solitary way; the colony at Camagüey is therefore exceptionally surprising and interesting. I do not suppose that they are twenty all-told.

The stray tourist to them is an event. They need little invitation to entertain him. Ten minutes after one gathers around the cocktail-table in the hotel of an evening one feels one has known them all their lives. More genuinely friendly people I never met.

There's George Walsh, a sturdy pioneer now given to golf, who is said to have lived in Cuba forty years. George, who is a contractor, is solemn up to the seventh *dalquiri*. There are the Reids, Mr. and charming Mrs., whose mission in life is to *import* lumber into a country which uses mahogany for railroad ties! That's one strange thing you'll find



about Cuba: they will use Oregon soft pine instead of native hardwood, which is cheaper; they will eat Chicago beef although Cuba is a ranching country; they will eat Northern fruits in preference to their thousand-and-one much more succulent ones; they will even import pineapples from Florida when Cuban pineapples are the best in the world.

Some Americans will tell you that this is because the Cuban is "jest naturally born lazy—all he thinks of is a woman." His country teems with opportunity which he neglects himself, finally to become resentful when foreigners exploit the riches he should have had.

However—let's get back to the "bunch" in Camagüey.

There are the Trinlers. Newland Trinler was a pilot in the Great War and had his share of air battles. That, to anyone who knows what aviators are like, ought to explain Trinler. It ought, too, to explain Mrs. Margaret Trinler, but it doesn't—it falls far short. Aviators always could pick 'em, but surely few had Mr. Trinler's luck. Mrs. Trinler would be beautiful in any ballroom in the world.

There are the Wilsons. Mr. Wilson has a lovely home and a perfectly charming wife. Strange, how many nice wives there are in Camagüey. Mrs. Laura Wilson is the pianist of the set (which means



that she doesn't get as many dances) but she's very unselfish about it.

Then there are the George Augustus O'Briens. From Mexico and other places. A courteous and jolly couple. And Doctor Jenovsky, who plays a wicked game at red-dog. And Ora Waterman, who writes for the *Times* of Cuba and is the iconoclast of the set.

Decidedly, if you go to Camagüey, I recommend that about 6 p.m. you approach José Fernandez, the picturesque bartender at the Camagüey Hotel (it is said that twice playfully he shot obstreperous customers, but was released without trial on representations by the American colony that he was the only good bartender in town) and whisper in José's ear the name of one of the foregoing persons. If he points to where he is sitting, have not the slightest hesitation in going over and introducing yourself (if you are the sort of man who will buy his share). Set up a round for me.

## II

Hotel Camagüey is owned and operated by the Cuba Railroad Company. It was founded by Sir William Van Horne in January, 1905, Sir William being a gentleman who liked bedrooms-with-baths and a French *cuisine*.



It is such a hotel as you would hardly expect to find in the middle of Cuba. It is, in fact, one of the fifty or sixty *curious* hotels of the world.

The building itself as it at present exists dates from 1849, but parts of it are centuries older. In the seventeenth century Spanish settlers found a fort in Camagüey constructed by Spanish adventurers on the site of an Indian fort which probably antedated Columbus. The settlers used the place as a sort of barracks.

In 1849 Sir Henry Morgan and other notorious privateers made so many successful raids on the town, then the largest on the island, that the Spanish government became alarmed. The old fort was razed, except for the side-walls of the stables (now the dining-room and bar), and a new fortress built on the site. The new building had walls four feet thick, with heavy mahogany beams and solid iron bars at the windows. A troupe of cavalry was stationed there with instructions to chase the next pirate who came to town and hang him from the highest rafter. The pirate, however, escaped, after a running fight to port. The buccancers were nearly as good horsemen as they were sailors—an anomaly which would confound the sailor of today.

Beneath the barracks were—and are—vast storage tanks for water and cellars for provisions. In



case of a siege Camagüey would be safe within its walls. Such a protracted siege never came.

In 1905 Sir William Van Horne, who was then presiding over the destinies of the Cuban Railroad, decided to make Camagüey the center of his activities and to build the railroad's shops there. There was only one difficulty—lack of a decent hotel for the Canadian builder and his executives.

In seeking about for a site for a hotel Sir William's eye fell on the old fort. He had his share of imagination, and shortly afterward the ancient building became the Camagüey Hotel. The stables, with their massive mahogany beams, formed the lobby, dining-room and bar. The barracks were altered and fifty or sixty suites of rooms built around the two patios. Each room had a private bath, something that was then unknown in Cuba—and almost unknown in the United States.

The furniture was constructed on the spot from native woods, some of which are now so rare that certain chairs and tables in the hotel are worth hundreds of dollars each. In the bar each arm-chair weighs seventy-five pounds. This, it is alleged, is because Sir William Van Horne had a son who much enjoyed the wild life of the Cuban frontier, and who was endowed with exceptional stature and strength. So that he could not playfully toss the chairs around,



saith Rumor, Sir William had them made of the heaviest wood obtainable.

The Camagüey Bar in those days was a place where things happened. It was the custom for the surrounding ranchers, instead of hitching their ponies outside, to ride them into the bar, along which they would range, drinking from the saddle. Every so often the bartender would object and be shot, but this became such a frequent occurrence that Sir William Van Horne called a halt. "Boys," he said, "the next time my bartender is shot I'll close the bar!" The threat was enough. Later on the present bartender distinguished himself (with reason and excuse) as aforesaid.

Colonel Cushman Rice, who has a ranch east of town, tells of a horse he had that was trained to put his feet on the Camagüey Bar and drink a bottle of whiskey at a gulp, but this may be only another of the Colonel's stories.

The hotel is still owned and managed by the railroad company and, unlike most railroad hotels, is an excellent place. There is luxury sufficient to please the most exacting traveler—the head waiter comes each winter from Paris—and the place itself is less of a hotel than a home. The rooms are large, screened and comfortable, and a myriad of scarlet and magenta flowers climb about the porches. The



two patios, which are two acres in extent, are planted with every known variety of tropical shrub and tree, a fascinating spot to loaf or dream. For the traveler desiring rest I recommend a few weeks at the Camagüey Hotel, providing he steers clear of the "gang."

Mario de la Cruz is the manager, George C. Morad is the head waiter, José B. Fernandez is the bartender, and Pépe is the waiter in the bar. So now you are fully equipped for a visit to Camagüey.

### III

From Camagüey eastward the road runs through monotonous miles of sugar-cane. Hour after hour the vista hardly changes. Here and there are little towns with wide streets bordered by wooden shanties, recalling the "wild West" sets of the movies. At every station children besiege the train, selling fruit, candies, newspapers and lottery-tickets.

The train passes many settlements of Haitian cane-cutters, black as coal and almost as naked as Adam and Eve—certainly their habits of living must approximate those of our first parents. If you ever feel tempted to think the Garden of Eden a fine place, take a look at these Adams and these Eves.

From Camagüey toward the northern coast there is a branch of the Consolidated Northern Railroad which goes to Morón, Puerto, Tarafa, Nuevitas and



Pastelillo. Of these Nuevitas alone is interesting to the tourist, although the scenery along this route is very fine.

Nuevitas is interesting because it is the place Columbus first set foot on the Western hemisphere—in the belief that he had sailed from Spain to India. The village was then called Caunao and was inhabited by the Carib Indians, of whom few are existent today. It was for a long while the most important port in Cuba.

Near Nuevitas is the island to which Mr. and Mrs. Jekyll, mentioned in a previous chapter, retired. There is fine hunting and fishing, and the port is a center for the hunting and export of turtle.

Not far from Puerto Tarafa, a modern sugar port, is the oldest interior American colony of Cuba—La Gloria. This colony has had an interesting history which has been published in book-form. One of the founders was the indomitable Mrs. Florence H. Kendall, well known for her ambulance work during the war in France.

The tourist wishing to visit Nuevitas and La Gloria had best be prepared for some little discomfort in the matter of hotel accommodation and railway travel.

Eastward from Camagüey the first town of any size is Martí, where a branch runs to Bayamo and



Manzanillo through fertile ranch and cane country. Near Bayamo the eldest son of José Estrada Palma, first president of Cuba, has a cattle-ranch.

At Alto Cedro another line runs northward to Antilla, Nipa Bay, Banes and Preston. This region is almost entirely devoted to the great cane fields of the United Fruit Company, with two mills at Preston and Banes. Preston was named after the president of the Fruit Company who founded it.

Nipa Bay recalls San Francisco Bay. It is almost completely surrounded by mountains. It is here that the famous Cobre saint (patron saint of Cuba) was found. The mountains surrounding are heavily mineralized and important iron and copper mines are worked by the Bethlehem Steel and other companies.

These are side-trips which will mean at least a day's delay for the traveler, who will perhaps find it wiser to proceed directly to Santiago.

Santiago de Cuba, for the possession of which the greatest battle of the Spanish War was fought, is on the southern side of the mountains which rear, rampart-like, around Nipa Bay. The train, plunging down into a fertile tropical valley, follows an incomparably scenic route. To the north the mountains. To the south the Caribbean, with the most glorious bay in the Antilles framed by somber cliffs of (reputedly) solid copper. Set like a gleaming



jewel between Bay and mountains—Santiago, loveliest and most historic city of Cuba.

## IV

Santiago is the worst-paved city in Cuba. It is the noisiest place of a morning I have ever been in. It has three *moderately* good hotels, none of them *de luxe* but all clean and comfortable. Its surrounding scenery is a dream of delight. Its womanhood is worth a trip from Europe to see, as it walks about the bandstand of the Plaza nights.

Of five girls passed on the streets of Santiago four were not merely pretty; they were beautiful. Beautiful but brunette. A blonde would be an anachronism.

They are kindly, too; they will smile at you as you pass (if you smile at them), which is more than the girls of New York will do. But there is something in their gay smile that is a bit roguish; you feel that they are not merely smiling *with* you, but laughing *at* you—you, the funny-looking, white-skinned Northerner.

If you smoke a pipe or wear plus-fours the smile becomes a laugh outright.

The three hotels, in the order of their excellence, are the Casa Granda, the Venus and the Martinez. The Casa Granda is owned by the Cuba Railroad and



is American-managed. The Venus is across the Plaza, with a conveniently low, open-faced dining-room from which you may eye the girls from your dinner-table. It was at the Venus, you will remember, that Jennings S. Cox and others baptized the *daiquiri* cocktail. The Martinez Hotel is a block from the Plaza and is Spanish-owned and managed. It has one personality worth noting: old Don Pancho, the waiter, probably the oldest (and certainly the slowest) waiter in Cuba.

The Old-Timers of Santiago, many of whom came there first with the regulars or Roosevelt, gather twice a day at the two favorite bars, the Casa Granda and the Venus. The Venus is chosen for first-drink. First-drink in Santiago is at the uncivilized hour of 9 a.m. First, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and other drinks in Santiago are the same: bacardi and water, or water and bacardi. To drink anything else stamps you as a newcomer indeed.

The guest at the Casa Granda (which is most efficiently managed by an American gentleman with the contradictory name of Prudencio Bravo) had better not stay out at night. Or, if he does, he might as well stay out *all* night. For no matter what times he goes to bed his awakening will be at the same hour.

The universal alarm-clock of Santiago is the



cathedral bell, which is rung by ringers striking the great copper mass with a sledge-hammer. The gentleman with the sledge-hammer (you wish he would miss and hit his foot) begins work about ten minutes to five in the morning. The boom reverberates across the Plaza, through your room, over to the mountains, and is then flung with sickening violence back from the mountains towards your pillow, which it hits at full velocity. Should you chance to go to sleep after this the sledge-hammer gets going again at six o'clock.

Then, it is true, it ceases. For all the bell-smasher is concerned, you may now go to sleep. But don't you try it. You'll be awakened in ten minutes by the newsboys, shouting the early editions of the morning papers.

The newsboys station themselves directly under your window and shrill their wares until you wish them sunk in the Bay, newspapers and all. One little fellow with a screech like a locomotive only measures three feet and on being questioned alleged he was but five years old. I shudder to think what that lad's voice is going to be like when he is twenty.

The newsboys shout for half an hour. Then *they* stop—or perhaps their noise is drowned by a new din, that of the early motor-busses getting ready to start. These blow their horns continuously and



at once for ten or fifteen minutes, at the end of which the resigned visitor throws aside his mosquito-netting with a vicious oath and patters over the tiles to his bath.

When he appears in the hotel lobby about half past seven he finds it in full animation. Apparently everyone has been up for hours. Over there at the bar L. A. Deakin and Paul Prentiss are confabbing—but not drinking. No, sir. More than an hour to go yet!

The barbershop of the Casa Granda boasts the quickest barber in the world and the best shoe-shine boy in the world. I don't know the barber's name—I only know that he is an artist who should be on Keith time. Lightly soaping your face he presses a stubby thumb against your chin and snaps back your head. Then, with a graceful motion, he makes one stroke of the razor. Gravely humming to himself, he now jerks your head sideways and repeats the motion. Two strokes—you're shaved. It takes one minute and ten seconds by actual count and Paul Prentiss declares that he has done it in under the minute.

The shoe-shine boy is named Manuel, and he has a devoted acolyte named Pépe. Shoe-shining with Manuel is not merely a job: it is an art. His shines last days, for by some secret process (which includes



a liquid he makes himself) the polish takes on a hard look like marble. I have had my shoes shined by Greeks, Italians, Negroes, Mexicans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans and what-not; but never was there a shiner like Manuel. He has been shining shoes in Santiago for forty-five years!

Apart from Manuel the shoe-shine boy (and with due apologies to the affable Mr. Bravo) I think the most important personage in the Casa Granda is Ramón. Ramón—you have guessed it—is the bartender. Since 1928 he has a new, long, glorious bar to attend to. I hope that unlike most Cuban bartenders, he will keep it clean. Ramón, of course, knows the American colony of Santiago as no one else could know it.

You will, inevitably, meet Howard Trumbo—Judge Trumbo—who is a mighty important figure in American Cuba. He is a mining engineer: "Yes, sir, there's enough copper in those hills to provide the whole of the United States for two hundred years!" But his manner is that of a judge. Such a judge as one used to meet riding horses on circuit courts of the Far West. An impressive person, a decided character, and a splendid soul. Should you desire information of this and that: "Ask Judge Trumbo—he'll tell you. Ain't nothin' the judge can't tell you." And it seems that it is true.



We have already met Mr. Deakin, better known as "Deek." Then there are "Gint" Wilson and his father, W. A. Wilson, a great gentleman; and Joe King. Paul Prentiss himself is the oldest-timer of them all. He is a buyer for sugar mills and all his work is done by 9 a.m. But he rises at four.

Jennings S. Cox, before-mentioned, still lives in Santiago, in the big house overlooking the Bay where Richard Harding Davis wrote *Soldiers of Fortune*. Clara Kimball Young was the star in the picture afterwards made in Santiago—do you remember her?

Of other matters you should know of in Santiago, it is perhaps important to state that it was in the Oriente theater that Adelina Patti made her *début*. Just why Santiago was selected for this important occasion I could not discover; it appears that the diva's home then was in Haiti, where she had fallen in love.

Near the Oriente theater is the jail where rooms may be obtained—I am not joking—from two dollars a day and up. It seems that when you are arrested in Santiago your accommodation in the jail befits your wealth. Two dollars a day buys you a fine large room with a real bed. For three dollars they will throw in a servant. Five dollars and, apparently, you have all the comforts of home.



The Santiago Cathedral was the second constructed on the Western hemisphere, but has been rebuilt. On several occasions it was pillaged by pirates, and once it was burned. A worse fate than any has befallen it now. A vandal archbishop named Guerra, who has since been transferred, having in 1917 "restored" the cathedral, utilized the ancient cathedral terrace for open stores, which are rented to haberdashers, talking-machine vendors, picture-post-card shops and so forth. It is even possible to have a drink in Santiago's cathedral. As for the restoration itself it does not merit a passing glance.

On the way to San Juan Hill a great hospital is passed. This is the Clinica Los Angeles, constructed at a cost of \$800,000 by Professor Ortiz, in memory of his wife Angela. The hospital, the entire cost of which was borne by Professor Ortiz, is the most modern in the West Indies.

The Peace Tree, under which the Armistice was signed which gave the combined American and Cuban forces Santiago and doomed the Spaniards to defeat, has a custodian who himself fought at San Juan Hill. His name is Otto Muench—if he is still there. The Cubans have agitated for some time to have a Cuban appointed guardian, some of Otto's incautious remarks anent the part played by Cuban forces in the



battle having been denounced in the local press.

San Juan Hill itself is—well, San Juan Hill. It was the key position to Santiago and has recently been provided with a table of orientation which shows exactly the disposition of the attacking forces and demonstrates how the battle was won—and what a tough place it must have been to take.

The hill is about half an hour's ride from Santiago and is one of four trips you should make while you are in the town. Another is to Cobre, to see the Chapel of the wooden Virgin and the (abandoned) workings of the first copper-mine in the New World. Still another is up the mountains to the north—but this should be taken after a night out, to see the sunrise. There is a little café at a curve of the road. . . .

And the fourth trip, of course, is around the Bay. Miss San Juan Hill, miss Cobre, miss even the "sunrise," as you will, but do not miss the Bay. And go about six of an evening, to be in readiness when the sun sinks, suddenly, a molten ruby orb, shedding long streaks of brilliance which paint the world violet, purple and red.





SANTIAGO BAY

*Am. Photo Studio*



## CHAPTER XX

### THE RUM THAT CURED A KING—AND PICKLED A NATION

#### I

SANTIAGO is the chief bailiwick of that notorious old villain, the Demon Rum.

Here he has his lair, and here he holds court, surrounded by his general staff: Prince Demijohn, Prime Minister Bottle and Jester Tumbler.

He is a clean-living old scoundrel, though, and his living-quarters are much cleaner than many a king's palace. While he can be short-tempered at times, particularly when seen too much of, his nature generally is genial, his outlook sunny and his temperament sweet—as befits one into whose makeup have gone but two ingredients: vegetable juice and the sun.

As a humble visitor to his capital I expected, naturally, to be invited to his headquarters. Accordingly, I called one morning on the High Priest of his temple, a jolly, courteous human named Facundo Bacardi, and was graciously accorded an audience.



"Good morning," I said, "I would have audience with the Demon."

"He'll be honored," said the High Priest, politely. "Come, we'll go out to his home."

## II

From my earliest boyhood rum has exercised a romantic influence over me. I remember at the age of nine reading Stevenson's couplet:

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest—  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!

and for years afterward the thought of a bottle of rum was irresistibly connected with fifteen roistering pirates, the skull-and-cross bones on their cock-hats and double-edged knives in their teeth, sitting on an iron-bound box belonging to a dead man. Only afterward I learned that "Deadman's Chest" was the name of an island, a pirate rendezvous.

At the age of thirteen I met my first bottle of rum. There was an old coastguard, said to have been a smuggler, who lived in a disused lighthouse near a village on the English Channel where we went for our holidays, and he was the man with the bottle. He would sit with this bottle—it was all the time the same bottle, square-faced, black and sinister of appearance—and a large glass, and as he yarned he



would gulp down stuff looking like my grandmother's blackberry cordial.

When he said that it was rum I gazed fearfully around, but saw no dead men nor any sign of a chest, and was afraid to ask.

Later on The Demon Rum began to ornament the bill-boards of the English countryside, appeals to a laggard public conscience by a temperance society. On these bill-boards the Demon was a demon indeed—an evil-faced creature with horns and a horrible grimace, and a tail which curled around the helpless bodies of his dying and despairing disciples.

These posters made a deep impression on my adolescent mind, and on my bad nights—I was troubled with bronchial catarrh—I would dream feverishly of a frightful fiend who would invade my slumbers, brandishing a bottle and grinning horribly.

Then one day, when I had taken French leave of school and had adventured far, I found myself under piles of blankets in a hot country, alternately sweating and chilled to the bone. And the medicine was served me hot and black, a tumbler an hour, and I knew then that even a Demon has his uses.

Later still, in Europe, I found that the Demon was considered an indispensable item in every household. No French wife would be so foolish as to forget always to have on hand a supply of that



sovereign remedy for chills, colds and *la grippe*, Rum.

But it was not until after American prohibition narrowed the field of alcoholic beverages that I made the acquaintance of the Demon's Cuban product—a clear, limpid liquid which, in some secret process, had lost its chocolate color and its pharmaceutical odor, and which could proudly take its place among the whiskeys and brandies of a gentleman's cellar.

Beginning as a thick, dark-brown drink to make pirates drunk, and passing through its phase as a universal medicine, Rum, by the grace of a family named Bacardi and of American Prohibition, had become, in fact, a gentleman's drink.

The Demon was at last respectable!

### III

In the year 1838 a Spaniard from Catalonia named Bacardi settled in Santiago and commenced the distillation of sugar-cane in a small shack which was not only the distillery but his home as well.

His product was considered higher-grade than the ordinary rum of the West Indies because by a secret process Facundo Bacardi had reduced the color from deep brown to light amber, and somehow done away with the disagreeable ammoniacal taste. Pirates were wont to lay in stocks of this new liqueur, and before



very long the fame of the new rum became widespread. Spaniards went back to Spain carrying a bottle or two to show their families. The Governor-General sent a bottle to the King of Spain with his compliments.

There was back of the kitchen where Facundo Bacardi distilled his elixir a tree known as the Moncillo tree. Now, the Moncillo tree is a great favorite with bats, and so is sugar. Bats living in the tree would come with great clattering of wings each night into the kitchen and eat the molasses from which the rum was made.

So many bats there were that the neighborhood began calling the Bacardi product the "bat drink." And Facundo, being a wise man in his generation, and being at that time in search of an adequate trade-mark, used the Bat as a symbol, which is why to this day you will find it as a trade-mark on every bottle of bacardi.

Facundo prospered and died and the business was carried on and vastly extended by his sons Emilio, Facundo and José, who became famous throughout the island for their charity and benevolence. Whenever there was a hospital or a school or a park to be built they approached Emilio Bacardi, and they never appealed in vain. To such purpose that, towards the end of the last century, Emilio had be-



come the best-known and best-loved and certainly one of the richest men on the island.

Emilio's son lives in Paris. Facundo had two sons, both of whom are in the business today. Facundo, the eldest, is vice-president of the firm. The president is his uncle, a Frenchman and a patriarch, Henri Schueg.

The triumph of Emilio's life came when Alfonso XIII of Spain, then a boy, was taken ill with grippe. The king's physician, when all remedies failed, prescribed a bottle of the Cuban sugar brandy, then little-known, and the king was cured. There are two prime treasures of the Bacardi family: the famous "secret," which is known only to the president and vice-president and which is said not to be even written on paper but carried in the head, to prevent theft; and the letter which the King's secretary wrote to Emilio Bacardi thanking him for making a product that had saved His Majesty's life.

#### IV

Just what the "secret" consists of is not even known to the distillery foreman. It is understood that it is a system of filtration through sand, but even that is sometimes denied. Certain other rum firms have spent fortunes trying to duplicate the clear, fragrant liquid, in vain.



The business has grown until now it is the largest single industry in Cuba. In some respects it flirts with the millennium, for out of 2,800,000 gallons of molasses used annually more than three times that volume of bacardi is made and there is still enough residue left over to become a problem. Some of it is used for fertilizer.

After four years' evaporation, however, only sixty or eighty kegs are obtained out of one hundred, which balances the matter a little.

England, Canada, France, Spain and China are the biggest consumers of bacardi rum and the largest quantity is exported to Shanghai—

"For," explains Facundo, "there are more drinkers in Shanghai than anywhere on earth."

## V

Facundo, the jolly vice-president, is a real Cuban, and proud of it. In 1927 he won the Grand Prize of the Cuban lottery—and went of course to Paris.

"Isn't the United States a big consumer?" I asked.

"A lot of rum is smuggled in," he agreed, "but everything with a bacardi label in New York isn't bacardi.

"The last time I went to New York two friends took me out to dinner. One of them said we would



go first to a place he knew which served genuine bacardi.

"We went there and were served, but when I tasted my glass I shook my head. It wasn't real bacardi.

"So the second man said: 'Well, I'll take you to the swellest place in New York. I'm a member there and I *know* they've got the real stuff.'

"We went to this other place, a very distinguished pseudo-club, with thick carpets on the floor, a mahogany bar and a subdued atmosphere. The bartender ceremoniously poured us three drinks out of what certainly looked like a genuine bottle of *carta oro* bacardi.

"But as soon as it touched my lips I knew it was faked. Sadly I shook my head again. 'I'm sorry,' I said, 'but this isn't genuine.'

"The bartender, insulted, called the manager. This gentleman was furious. 'What,' he cried, 'you mean to tell me that isn't real bacardi? Let me tell you I've been keeping bars for thirty years and know the real stuff. That's gen-u-ine bacardi—I've been selling it for twenty years—'

"'I'm sorry,' I said, 'but I've been making it longer than that.'"



## CHAPTER XXI

### ONE THOUSAND SQUARE MILES OF SUGAR. INTO A SUGAR MILL

#### I

SUGAR is Cuba's staple industry and Cuba wishes it wasn't.

The climate of Cuba is not one very conducive to hard labor. It is much easier to sit in the shade with a big cigar and a tall drink and, when one is hungry, pluck a banana or two from a tree.

The importation of the sugar plant was a godsend to the leisure-loving Cubans. Here was a crop which, once planted, needed no further attention, except for cutting, for ten, twelve, fifteen and sometimes twenty years! No cultivating. No irrigation. You just planted a bit of cane and pretty soon a dozen or more shoots came up. A year later you cut the cane and sold it and sat back for another year's wait. And if you didn't want to cut it yourself—why, Haiti was close at hand, with inexhaustible supplies of cheap native labor—the best cane-cutters in the world.

So everyone in Cuba planted sugar-cane and sat



back with the cigar and the drink and waited to get rich. They made a fair living—a very fair living—out of it for many years, and then the big sugar companies began buying in. At first there were only a few big plantations—the small farmers were in the majority as regards land planted. But a year is a long while to wait, especially when you have spent all last year's profits in a month, on a big house, a fine bed and a grand piano, and maybe a trip to Paris for the old lady and the girls. So when the big companies offered to buy—well, why not? Sell now—move somewhere else—there was plenty of virgin land—plant again—and then, perhaps, sell again.

So the big companies got bigger and bigger and the small farmers less numerous, because many of them were taken in by the big companies on a share basis.

Then there came the war in Europe—and gosh! how sugar did sell and soar!

Three cents—six cents—ten cents—twelve cents—fifteen cents—*twenty* cents!

Cuba was the richest country in the world! Every Cuban was a millionaire. A loaf of bread cost fifty cents, a drink a dollar. The landscape around Havana began to be spotted with marble palaces, pink and green and rose and white. The sugar million-



aires invaded New York. They flooded Europe with their easy dollars—this after the Armistice when the lid was lifted and sugar was at its highest premium.

In the casinos of Deauville and Cannes they nonchalantly tossed millions on the tables—won, lost, won and lost again.

They took whole decks of steamships, whole floors in *de luxe* hotels.

Business in Havana was furious, intoxicated, delirious. Sugar at twenty cents!

The sugar millions were dancing.

## II

Suddenly something happened. Sugar dropped. What? Why? How is this?

The sugar buyers in New York, in London, in Paris, in Milan, in Shanghai, impassively shook their heads.

"Cuba does not control the market," the islanders were told. "The war is over now. The beet fields of Czecho-Slovakia and France are competing. The demand is less. Filipino production is increasing. We won't pay you twenty cents any more."

Well, then, fifteen cents—

Yes, but not for long. Sugar had a lead weight on it. It sank—sank—sank. Fifteen cents—ten cents—



The Cubans went to the banks and borrowed. There were two banks particularly which lent—the National City Bank of New York and the Royal Bank of Canada.

They lent to the limit, for the Cubans weren't used to pinching their purse. Many of them had great palaces begun in Miramar, on Fifth Avenue, Havana, or *haciendas* in the country. They had to finish them. Furnish them. Live in them.

To all appearances Cuba still rolled in money. Rolls-Royces, Isotta-Fraschinis, Packards, Hispano-Suizas filled the Prado and the Malecon. Building went on, only a little diminished. Cubans still spent royally, in the manner to which they had become accustomed.

Sugar was still king.

Yes, but the money wasn't sugar-money any more. It was bank money.

Ten cents—eight cents—six cents—four cents—*two cents—*

Disaster! *Débâcle.*

Cuba awoke—too late—to find that somehow the ownership of the cane-fields had changed hands.

They belonged—why, how did you guess it!—to the banks. And first among these banks, of course, the National City Bank of New York and the Royal Bank of Canada. Not a tiny pueblo in the whole



island of Cuba but has a branch of one or both of these banks now. . . .

## III

Something of the explanation lies in the tremendous overproduction of cane, which was the fault of the war. The production during the years was:

	Tons
1917 .....	3,073,010
1918 .....	3,533,090
1919 .....	4,104,205
1920 .....	3,758,347
1921 .....	3,974,116
1922 .....	4,033,455
1923 .....	3,600,210
1924 .....	4,066,642

(Here the shoe began to pinch. Remedy: increase production!)

	Tons
1925 .....	5,120,219
1926 .....	4,872,463
1927 .....	4,508,705

The situation was so serious by now—the more cane that was cut the lower became the price—that Colonel Tarafa, one of the Cuban sugar giants, was sent abroad to see whether he could not get the rival sugar interests to agree to curtail production. They



were willing—suspiciously willing to some—providing that Cuba would do likewise. Cuba would. By Presidential decree the total production for 1928 was cut to 3,979,999 tons.

At this writing the result of the experiment is much in doubt, with sugar still low and money still tight. Curtailed production is not likely to be continued in 1929.

There are 188 mills, or *centrales*, for the grinding of cane in Cuba. Santa Clara is the principal productive center with 56 active *centrales*. Oriente comes second with 46, Matanzas has 29, Havana 16, and Pinar del Río 10.

The largest production of any one mill in 1928 was that of the Manati Sugar Corporation at Manati, Oriente, which ground 662,462 bags of sugar under the decree. Next came the Delicias mill of the San Manuel Sugar Company, also in Oriente, which ground 662,461 bags—one bag fewer.

These figures do not of course tell anything of the strength of the individual companies, some of which have twenty and more mills. In turn, groups of these companies are controlled financially by the banks, the largest individual sugar interest probably being that of the National City Bank of New York.

From one end of Cuba to the other the mills dot the landscape and cane-field succeeds cane-field.



## IV

W. W. Schuyler, general manager of the United Fruit Company in Cuba and a veteran in the service of the company, gave this writer the opportunity of witnessing the cutting and grinding of sugar, which begins in January on a day fixed by Presidential decree. So anxious are the companies to use the allotted time to the utmost that grinding begins one minute after midnight on the date named.

The United Fruit plantations are in Oriente and cover many hundred square miles. There are two mills, one in Preston and one in Banes, the headquarters being in Preston, where Mr. and Mrs. Schuyler (who comes of an old Virginia family) have their fine house.

The United Fruit plantations have their own system of standard-gauge railroads, with a despatching system similar to that on ordinary passenger roads. Passengers from one division to the other are carried on miniature trains and the executives use Dodge cars with steel wheels. There are one hundred and eighty miles of standard-gauge and the rolling-stock, besides the passenger equipment, consists of six hundred and fifty sugar cars and eighteen locomotives. One may journey by train on the



United Fruit plantations for a full day without seeing it all.

The cane is cut—mostly by Haitian Negroes—with a knife called a *machete*. The cutter grasps the stalk of the cane with the left hand and with the right cuts the cane close to the ground. With another motion all the leaves are sliced off, and with another more quick cut the *glucose* part of the cane is separated from the *sucrose*, which in turn is cut into three lengths. The whole operation takes less than thirty seconds.

The cane when cut is gathered up and piled on caterpillar tractors which carry it to the trains. The trains run directly to the mill, where the cane is unloaded on to traveling carriers which carry it to the crushers. There are a series of these, each one finer than the other, and finally the juice is carried to the condensers while the residue of the cane goes to feed the furnaces which provide the power. From the condenser the sugar, now crystallized and brown, is sifted into bags held by Chinamen, one bag being filled about every thirty-five seconds. The whole operation is astonishingly rapid and requires very few hands, but the complication of the machinery is extraordinary and the noise terrific.

In every sense the sugar thus obtained by modern machinery is pure, for no human hand has touched



it since the cutter first grasped the cane and it was loaded on the cars. It goes to the refinery in sealed sacks and there, again, the refining process is by sealed machinery, so that when the sugar arrives on your table it need not have been handled at all.

Incidentally, cane sugar is not fattening, and the ladies who refuse a lump in their coffee for fear of resultant avoirdupois are merely cheating themselves. Sugar fattens only in that it makes more palatable certain starchy foods.



## CHAPTER XXII

### A LOVER'S LEXICON: FIRST AID TO ROMANCE IN CUBA

#### I

THE first action of the average American on arriving in Havana (after he has bought a drink) is to purchase one of those handy little books which attempt to give him "Spanish at a Glance."

By the aid of his little book he may learn in time to say, "I want a room and bath," "What time does the train leave," "Bring me a whiskey-and-soda," "Give me the bill," and such-like phrases, and there is no doubt that these have their uses. But personally when in a foreign country I find myself handicapped by the limitations of these little red books.

It was Corneille who exclaimed: "The secret of every city is explained by the eyes of its women." A visitor to a strange land should not confine his investigations to the souvenir shops and museums, nor even to a limited male acquaintance. He will learn but incompletely if he does. He certainly will not understand.

By all means and any means the American visiting Cuba should get acquainted with its women. Con-



ventionally this is almost impossible, a fact I have to record regretfully. A night at the Yacht Club, surrounded by a thousand girls more beautiful than a composite of all the Atlantic City and Galveston prize-winners, is almost more than I can bear. I am irresistibly drawn by beauty. Particularly I like brunettes. But it is not sufficient for me to look at them. I'd like to talk to them. And that's where my inhibition comes in.

Now, the following lexicon is not for use at the Yacht Club, although it might help if you were once introduced. It is included in this book merely as a gesture of pity toward the forlorn and lonely American bachelors who throng the streets of Havana, looking at the pretty girls but unable to speak to them.

## II

We will suppose that you are young—in heart if not in years—and that you either possess the unquenchable spirit that requires no stimulation, or else have fortified yourself with a few mild *presidentes*—just sufficient to make the blood of the pioneer and adventurer mingle pleasantly in your veins with the blood of the amorous and romantic.

You are walking down a side-street when all at once you receive a shock. Behind a barred window



two lovely, brown, warm, dreamy eyes gaze on you. Framing them is an oval, pensive face.

You hesitate, transfixed. Suddenly you realize that you are staring, and that staring is rude. You pass on, hastily, but a yard beyond the window your steps grow laggard.

*Gee, you'd like to meet that girl!*

You pause, irresolutely. She appears not to notice you at all, but she does, never fear. So also does her mother, in the shadow where you may not see her.

What to do? How may you make the acquaintance of this ravishing beauty?

### III

This is where I step in to supply the necessary technique. You have seen the girl. You have passed, hesitated, and are now standing still pretending to look at a lamp-post.

The thing for you to do, then, is to stroll casually back. As you pass the window you will say, venturing a gay smile into which you have put as much adoration as possible:

*Buenas tardes, señorita!* (Bwaynas tarthys, saynyorecta.)

That means "Good afternoon."

Now, without staring too hard, contrive to watch



the effect of this very carefully. If she gets up and disappears from the window, it will be because she knows her mother has heard you, or that she is waiting for her real sweetheart, or because she isn't that kind of a girl. And you may as well make the best of it and go away. But if, on the other hand, she remains at the window, and even by a slight flicker of her eyelids registers contempt, haughtiness—anything you please, as long as she signifies that she has heard—why, you may take another chance.

You therefore stroll along a few yards and then return—more slowly—as before. When you reach the window you again try to dazzle her with your ardor-filled eyes, and excuse yourself:

*"Perdoname que te hablo pero eres tan hermosa que no me queda mas remedio."* (Perrdo-namy kay tay ahblo payro ayrays tahn airmo-sa kay no may kwaytha rremaythio.)

Which means: "Excuse me for speaking, but your beauty left me with no other remedy."

She will now frown and pretend to turn away. But she will not really go away, unless mother pulls her, because she's curious to know what you are going to say next. But she doesn't answer you.

So you pause, look very earnest, brandish your arms a little, place your hand on your heart, and declaim:



"*Señorita, yo soy un Caballero! Y si te he ofendido vale mas que me pegue un tiro.*" (Saynyorita, yo soy oon Cabayero! Ee see tay hay ofenthitho bally mas kay may payay oon teero.)

You have now made a complete fool of yourself, which is what a girl loves. You have said:

"Lady, I'm a gentleman! And if I have offended you nothing else remains but that I go and shoot myself!"

You note with pleasure that she appears startled, but not displeased. And for the first time she speaks. You will not understand what she says, but we can tell you what it is. She is telling you that she thinks you are *loco*—crazy.

You thereupon grow more ardent, if possible, than before. With a sweeping bow you state:

"*Señorita, si es que yo estoy loco, es porque usted es la cosa mas linda que sobre la tierra existe!*" (Saynyoreeta, see ays kay yo estoy loco, ays porkay oosteth ays la cosa mas leenda kay sobre la tee-erra ayxeesta.)

This makes a great hit, as was only natural, for you have said to her: "Lady, if I'm crazy, it's because you are the loveliest thing on earth!"

She manifests her acceptance of this with a few syllables which probably mean:



"Well, you may be crazy, but you are at least amiable!"

Encouraged by this evidence of progress, you launch out further:

*"Usted me interesa mucho y realmente quisiera tener el honor y el gusto de conocerla."* (Osteth may eenterraysa moocha ee rayalmenty keyseeayra tener el onor ee el goosto day conocairla.)

Which means: "You interest me profoundly, and really I should awfully like the honor and pleasure of your acquaintance."

At which, if she is a nice little girl, she will hesitate. Make her acquaintance! That's easier said than done—in Cuba. However, you venture—

*"Pero puede ser que tengamos amistades mutuas."* (Payro pooairdy sair kay tengam-os amcestadthes mootas.)

She really does look doubtful at that, but it makes her hopeful, just the same, for perhaps—just *perhaps*—you have, as you have suggested, "got a friend in common."

What she says now means:

"A friend in common? But who could that be?"

It is now up to you to rack your brains. Do not commit the final error and say, "The bartender at the Sevilla." She has probably never been inside the



Sevilla. Do not, either, mention "Sloppy Joe's." She doesn't know where that is. Your best bet would be to name somebody known to be dignified and serious and yet young—one of the Estrada Palmas, for instance, or one of the Bacardi boys.

By her frown or smile as you mention these names you will judge whether you are on a right tack. If she smiles, the road is clear, and it only remains for you to find one of the Palmas or Bacardis and persuade him to introduce you. If she frowns, however, it were best to heave a deep sigh and pass on. It's all over.

But there are other windows. . . .

#### IV

It may be, however, that you are a different sort of a fellow. You couldn't get really romantic if you tried, but well—when you go to La Verbena, or Maxim's, or Vista Alegre, or El Ariete, or Tokyo—why, you'd like to be able to say a few words to the beautiful young thing who so obligingly sits at your table.

It may be as well to warn you here that few of these "beautiful young things"—and they are both beautiful and young—are Cuban. Most of them are from Panama or Chile or Ecuador. But they all speak Spanish and only a few know any English.



For your benefit then, you gay old dog, we'll append a few brief and easily learned phrases:

"Will you come for a ride?"—"*Quieres pasear conmigo?*" (Keeayrys passyar conmeego?)

"Give me a kiss!"—"*Dame un beso, chica?*" (Darmy oon bayso, cheeka?)

"Will you sup with me?"—"*Quieres cenar conmigo?*" (Keeayrys saynar conmeego?)

"I love you very much."—"*Te quiero mucho.*" (Tay keeyro moocho.)

"How much?"—"*Cuanto es?*" (Kwanto ays?)

"Let's have another drink."—"*Tomemos otra?*" (To-ma-mos ohtra?)

"Have a cigarette?"—"*Cigarros?*" (Seegaros?)

Money.—*Dinero.* (Deenayro.)

Whiskey.—*Whiskey.* (Weeskee.)

Bacardi.—*Bacardi.* (baCardi.)

Gin.—*Ginebra.* (Ginevra.)

Beer.—*Cerveza.* (Serbayser.)

I think these few practical phrases ought to help.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### CUBA, PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

#### I

ON May 20, 1929, the Republic of Cuba will be just twenty-seven years old. The date of May 20, 1902, for the inauguration of Tomas Estrada Palma as First President of Cuba, was fixed upon by President Theodore Roosevelt and General Leonard Wood. May 19 was the anniversary of the death of the Cuban patriot, José Martí.

In the chapter which speaks of the life of Horatio Rubens we have seen how the Cuban Republic was fomented, fostered and brought into being. We know that following the battle of the *Maine* the Spaniards were driven from the Island, the Americans took their place, work of pacification was actively pushed, and in a much shorter time than was believed possible the Americans kept their word, hauled down the Stars and Stripes from Morro Castle, and sailed away, leaving the infant Republic of Cuba to struggle in its swaddling clothes for better or for worse.

The infant, growing gradually from long clothes into short jeans, from jeans into breeches, and from



breeches into trousers, proved an unruly child, as was natural considering its stormy conception. Twice the Americans were forced to return to Cuba, restore order, and depart.

Children of the sun grow to maturity earlier than others, which is perhaps why they retain through their manhood certain traits of childhood and adolescence. They love life, gaiety, laughter. They are quick to anger, easily carried away by faulty eloquence. They are prone to worship their chiefs one moment and then, like a child with his school-teacher, throw stones at their idol.

In its twenty-seventh year Cuba is still conscious of many faults. But it is growing stronger and wiser. The Cuba of the future will be different indeed from the Cuba of today and that it will be a *Cuban* Cuba is to be hoped and believed.

Practically speaking, Cuba today is politically where the United States was a century ago. She has only just felt her feet. Let Americans too prone to criticize remember the tragic faults of their own early governments before they scorn those of Cuba.

## II

Havana today is a boiling cauldron of a great city in the making. As a suggestion of one side of the picture, we copy Mr. Hurlbut's glowing eulogy:



"Havana has the highest buildings in Latin America north of Panama.

"Havana has more roof gardens than any city in Latin America.

"Cuba has the longest railroad ever built where the builders could not plead right of eminent domain.

"Cuba has the finest highway system in *process of construction* (the italics are not Mr. Hurlbut's) of any country in Latin America.

"Cuba has the copper mine which pays the biggest returns of any mine for money invested.

"Cuba was the first land discovered by Columbus.

"The railroads of Cuba pass over the largest bodies of iron ore in any Latin-American country.

"The railroads of Cuba have more miles of pure mahogany ties under their rails than any country in the world.

"Cuba has melons which grow on trees.

"Cuba is connected with the United States by a ferry system. (Even Mexico cannot boast that.)

"Cuba produced the world's champion billiard player and the world's champion chess player." ("What," adds the writer, "did Panama ever produce except a hole in the ground full of running water?")

Out of the mouth of one of Cuba's most fervent



American boosters we thus have a spirited picture of Havana and Cuba. One is tempted to say that high buildings do not assist, and in fact lacerate, the charm of Spanish architecture; that the highway system should have been begun years ago; that if Cuba exploited a tithe of her mineral wealth herself she would be much richer; that if the railroads use mahogany ties the Cubans themselves buy furniture of American woods; that if the Cubans produced champion billiard and chess players they also produced Picabia, the Dada "artist"; and that, in short, few of these boasts reveal accomplishment which is the father of fortune.

But Cuba is cleaning house. Her curse for years was the professional politician. When President Machado took office and astonishingly enforced his slogan of a "business administration" graft was rampant. Men holding sinecures were paid not on one payroll but on three and four. One chauffeur was a lieutenant of police, an officer in the navy, and a collector of revenue! Machado changed all that. He has done his best to abolish petty graft. Cuba at last is getting a decent government.

Friends of Cuba could wish that the question of taxation were wisely settled; a country which has a public lottery and open gambling should have minimum taxation. The question of diversification of



crops is the most important confronting Cuba now.

Ninety percent of what Cuba eats could be raised in Cuba but ninety percent of what she eats is imported. The soil surrounding Havana is among the finest in the world; even two crops of potatoes a year are possible; yet most of the vegetables used come out of cans. Cuba even imports tropical fruits, of which she has the largest variety of any country except Mexico.

Opportunities to make money are manifold and countless in Cuba, but the Cuban is afraid to venture his slender funds because of the burden of taxation. The foreigner, bolder, steps in, and is charged with "exploitation."

Great things are hoped for from the more modern and sage administration of President Machado, and there is no doubt that imperative reforms are in the offing. They are necessary before Cuba can enter into its glorious heritage.

### III

Fifty years from now the abuses and mistakes we have mentioned will be matters of the past, as will the reforms which will have banished them. Cuba will still be Cuban. Its culture will still be Spanish. But its business methods will be American.

Fifty years from now Havana will be a city of



more than a million people, the greatest port south of New York and north of Buenos Ayres. Dotted the shores of Cuba will be a sequence of luxury resorts similar to the Deauville and Touquet and Biarritz of the France of today.

Cuba will no longer shudder at low prices for sugar, for the salvation of the country will no longer be tied to a sweet reed. Diversified crops and, above all, the tourist business, will have wrought the change.

The tourist army of five hundred thousand Americans annually will be brought to Havana and other Cuban ports by giant ocean liners as luxurious as those which now ply the North Atlantic, and the uncomfortable tubs of today will be in museums. Giant airboats will bring many guests from Long Island to Havana in ten hours, serving lunch on the way.

The north coast of Cuba will be studded with great tourist hotels, some of which will be run by organizations and even corporations for the benefit of their members and employees. Such hotels will be built also at certain points on the south coast—Trinidad, Guantanamo, Santiago.

A network of good roads will make Cuba a real Paradise for the American motorist, and there may even be automobile ferries from island to island of the West Indies connecting with the main highways



of South America. Motoring from Montreal to Patagonia will not be impossible.

These things being inevitable, it behooves the Cuban authorities to pass such legislation as will ensure the preservation of Cuban charm and Cuban scenery, and look to it that such legislation is not of a character to hamper progress.

The children of today will see the Cuba of tomorrow, but for myself I count myself fortunate in having seen the Cuba of today. For all my criticism Cuba is to me the most charming country in the world. In spite of its age it is new, in spite of its modernity it is ancient, and its perfect climate impels the laziness which to a man like me is bliss.

But I shall not stay in Cuba—unless I win the lottery. And by that time, perhaps, I shall be a Cuban, and go to Paris!

For there is no such place as a perpetual heaven on this side of the grave. A far horizon ever beckons. . . . To find one's truest Eden one must leave it for another.

THE END





