

BOTH SIDES  
OF THE  
STREET



IRVIN S. COBB

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

RED LIKKER

CHIVALRY PEAK

ALL ABOARD

THIS MAN'S WORLD

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

COSMOPOLITAN BOOK CORPORATION

BOTH SIDES  
OF THE  
STREET

IRVIN S. COBB

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To THOMAS J. WATSON, Esq.

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# THE FOLKS NEXT DOOR

# Both Sides of the Street

## *Chapter One*

### *WE REDISCOVER SOUTH AMERICA*

As I see it, the chief reward of being a discoverer, next to making the actual discovery, is the joy of coming back home and telling about it. In fact, I'm not sure but what the latter is the greater gratification of the two.

Of course both phases may be overdone and frequently are. A chronic discoverer is apt to wear his welcome out at either end of the line. He ceases to be a sensation among the natives abroad and he becomes a common nuisance among the folks at home.

It will be recalled that even so distinguished a discoverer as Christopher Columbus made one round trip too many, the consequences being that he returned from his last voyage in chains and on arrival was met by a reception committee consisting of members of the police force, who escorted him to the county jail and heaved him into a damp and smelly cell without removing his ironware. He clanked around that way for quite a spell before his gracious sovereigns decided to let bygones be bygones and turned him loose, a discredited and broken failure, upon the community which he had enriched.

History may tell us what it pleases regarding that affair, but my own idea is that Columbus was guilty of the high crime of bragging too much on what he'd seen and what he'd done in foreign parts.

Me, I aim to avoid falling into the same grievous error. Still, one ventures to hope that in this case a certain exuberant delirium may be pardoned. If I over-stress my enthusiasm, if I seem hysterically lavish with the adjectives, it will be because I am so full of my subject. For I have discovered South America.

This is not the first time South America has been discovered but it is the first time that I discovered it, and that, with me, is what counts. As I sit down to fire off the opening broadside of this, my little travel journal, I have just returned from the rediscovery of that continent and am in a state of mind where I crave, if so be I may, to make some of my fellow countrymen in the

upper part of the New World better acquainted with some of their neighbors of the lower part of it.

For, if I am one to judge, it is to South America rather than to Europe and Asia and other main divisions of the earth's surface that, in the succeeding years, we must look for the best markets for Yankee-made goods and find the choicest playgrounds for Yankee-born pleasure-seekers. Because South America is the land of the future. It is the one land which not yet has been fully explored for sightseeing purposes nor completely exploited for commerce, but for the most part remains an unspoiled land, still awaiting the peak of its development, as the materialists understand that word, still abounding in glamour and color and novelty for the romantically inclined and the sportsman.

Quite a few years ago Theodore Roosevelt said the nineteenth century belonged to North America but that the twentieth century would be South America's. In the light of recent personal observations I claim Roosevelt was a true prophet. I'd say, if you asked me—and, without waiting to be asked, I do here and now say it—that South America is on the eve of coming into her long-delayed inheritance. And if North Americans are to have a proper and natural share in that harvesting, we increasingly must turn our eyes and our steps and our energy and, most of all, our good will toward the nations lying below the Isthmus and, as it were, just next door to us.

Throughout my gipsyings I enjoyed the valued company of two chosen friends whom, for convenience, I respectively will call Mr. Will Hogg of Texas, and Mr. Dean Palmer of New York. Sundry others joined us and after a time quitted us, but these twain endured to the happy end.

I didn't appreciate it at the outset, but, as interpreter, Mr. Hogg was to prove a veritable perambulating treasure trove. Yet he had only about fifty Spanish words, words which in his youth he had picked up along the Mexican border while curing himself of fallen insteps by the brass-rail treatment. It wasn't so much the extent of his vocabulary as it was his method of putting it over that made him a linguistic success.

Marking his work, I was sorry I never shared in those earlier educational advantages at Juarez and Tia Juana which he had enjoyed. Even so, I believe the gift of tongues may be overworked. It is all well enough to have a working knowledge of one or two tongues besides your own, but it is my observation that if you go on acquiring more and yet more until you become fluent in seven or eight languages, the best you can hope for in your maturer

years is to get to be carriage-starter at a continental pension hotel named for somebody named Bristol.

Mr. Palmer was inspired by a motive other than the mere desire to look upon new scenes and new faces. He went along to acquire material for the final volume of his monumental life work to be entitled, "Around the World with Knife and Fork." At finding desirable food and consuming the same, Mr. Palmer yields the palm to none.

Freely, at this early stage, I admit his mastery, and I'm no slouch at a table at that. With age my figure may have expanded in a way that is very hither and yon, and my hair has worn thin on top and turned gray at the temples but, thank heaven, I have kept my boyish gastric juices.

In such companionship, then, I gadded about, going down the West Coast, across the Andes to the East Coast, up the East Coast to Rio and thence north by east and north by west to the starting point, bearing with me a large sheaf of letters of introduction. My letters of introduction are still virgins. I brought all of them back with me and all with their seals unbroken.

In this instance good-hearted souls were inspired with a generous desire to make me acquainted with other good-hearted souls down yonder, but as a generality it may be set forth that a man who wouldn't give you a dollar bill if you were hungry, or an old shirt if you were naked, will write a letter to anybody at a remote point testifying to your worth and social desirability in terms of the highest. Next to being "in conference," dashing off glowing letters of introduction for visiting pests appears to be the chief occupation of our great captains of industry. So I flatter myself that I showed a gentlemanly restraint by keeping my bundle of these well-meant vouchers where I figured they properly belonged, namely, in the top tray of my steamer trunk.

In such fine companionship also I found out so many things that the prospect of summing them up even sketchily takes on the aspect of a formidable and a daunting task. For one thing, I found out this, and for emphasis I wish every reader would reread the statement at least once: I found out that, taking us by and large, we, here in North America, know far too little and think too little about those people in South America—our ignorance touching on their culture and their institutions and their possessions is as colossal as it is criminal—and they, on the other hand, know entirely too much about us that isn't true, and think entirely too much about us along erroneous premises. Let me put it this way: Because of hostile propaganda which largely is inspired and fostered through European

sources, because of prejudices which are perfectly plausible once you come to know how those prejudices have been built up, the average South American is prone to misread the purport of our national attitudes toward his half of the hemisphere and more often than not is likely to misunderstand our national characteristics and ambitions, especially with regard to our Latin neighbors, of whom he is one.

On the other hand, many an average North American—meaning by that a most insular individual, which he is—even to this bright day is apt to draw his conclusions and base his brain etchings on the fiction—and the Lord knows most of it was fiction and nothing else but—which he read in his boyhood, with the outcome that, in addition to confusing Central America with what lies below it, he pictures the typical South American scene as a flowering jungle abounding in monkeys and parrots and boa constrictors and, on its human side, largely populated by picturesque but highly temperamental bipeds ranging in complexions from *café au lait* to *café noir*, who spend most of their time when not engaged with revolutions in picking guitars under the barred windows of languishing demoiselles or taking naps in hammocks swung beneath the fronded palm trees; except that on Sunday they rouse up for long enough to go to a bullfight.

Throw in a few gallant Anglo-Saxon soldiers of fortune, provide a landing party of United States marines coming to the rescue of the imperiled heroine and her sweetheart, add some raw bananas and a few orchids for garnish, and the vision is practically complete. I may be exaggerating a little, but I claim not much.

As for the run of the South Americans, their mental photograph of present-day North Americans likewise is heavily distorted. This largely is due to the treatment of the news in certain South American journals, although there are various contributory factors, including some of the weirdly exaggerated moving-picture films that find their way to the far southern clime. We may not need national censorship for all the movies that are shown at home, but I am convinced that we do need it for some of the films that go to foreign parts.

Let one of our philanthropists give a huge fortune for charity or for scientific research or education or whatever commendable object, or let one of our inventors produce a device which will benefit all humanity, and the news of it is slurred over and ignored in sundry newsprints. In at least one English-owned and English-written newspaper which I have in mind the event is likely to be taken as the text of an editorial squib sneering at “Yankee ostentation” or “Yankee pretension.”

According to these professional libel-mongers it was entirely commendable for the Prince of Wales to make a good-will tour, so called, to the principal South American countries. Well, it was an entirely commendable act from every viewpoint. But when our President-elect, Mr. Hoover, did precisely the same thing his motives were questioned and his presence was resented by more than one jealous scrivener of Britannic or Germanic or Gallic antecedents.

In such a sheet, the manifestations of the baser side of our life invariably are played up and given full prominence. A gang-massacre in Chicago, a payroll robbery in New York, an exhibition of senseless folly by a group of rich fools somewhere along the North American gold coast, a particularly unsavory divorce scandal, a lynching or, better than any of these, an indiscreet outbreak by some hay-eating jingo who waves Old Glory in the face of the world and beats the bass drum and generally makes a star-spangled idiot of himself—ah, there is fine front-page grist for the anti-Yankee journalistic hopper.

The reader, especially if he be South American, is given a poisoned conception of our social complexion and our national coloring. Every effort—sometimes it's a clumsy effort and sometimes it's a subtle one—is made to cause him to regard us as a race of conscientious dollar-snatchers—a race which is greedy and lawless and ungodly at heart but hypocritical and smug and bigoted on the surface. Uncle Sam is depicted as the “Octopus of the North,” covetous to dominate and eventually to possess the weaker republics of the hemisphere. His benevolence is called the benevolence of the python, his appetite is likened to that of the ostrich and the swine.

These campaigns fail of their purpose in Brazil and in Peru, where we are honestly liked; but they have their effect on the public mind elsewhere.

Nevertheless the fact remains that South America and North America must, before long, form between them a firm and enduring friendship, if the trade balance is to be maintained on mutually advantageous foundations and the political solidarity and integrity of the hemisphere against outside aggression of whatsoever sort is to be insured. But you can't honestly like a fellow unless you know the truth about him and the truth about the aspirations and the ruling motives of his soul—and not always then. Still, you must have the truth before your joined affections can bud and blossom. And, as the thing stands, the South American doesn't know the full truth about us, and we fall a thousand miles short of even faintly appreciating his background and his environment and his position in the planetary scheme. It would be laughable if it were not so serious.

On our side the main trouble is easily to be seen. The main trouble with us is that while the average educated or well-to-do citizen of these United States—sometimes he's both educated and well-to-do, but that is aside from the issue—has been to Europe at least once in his life, he probably hasn't been anywhere else to speak of. He has missed the opportunity of looking in upon the admirable civilizations that have grown up between the latitudes which ring this globe due south of us.

Tell him that just down yonder are sundry self-controlled, self-motivated republics modeled on the constitutional pattern of our republic, having many organic functions in common with us and a good many features which we might borrow to our own governmental advantage, and he opens his eyes in astonishment. Tell him about a few of the climatic and topographic peculiarities which make that continent unique among the principal geographical divisions, and he opens them wider, not sure in his mind whether you're a practical joker or just a plain liar.

Tell him that Buenos Aires is not only one of the largest cities in the world but one of the handsomest, and one of the cleanest and one of the most modern. Tell him moreover that in Buenos Aires and likewise across the water in the near-by city of Montevideo the scale of living for the extravagant classes is pitched on a level more luxurious and more costly than New York or London or Paris can offer or, for that matter, can afford, and he is startled but unconvinced.

Tell him that Rio, in Brazil, is incomparably the most beautiful city in the world—the single city familiar to me where man has neither marred nor destroyed the natural gorgeousness of the setting but has, by the work of his hands, enhanced and adorned it, and he may go so far as to admit that he has heard somewhere that Rio did have a mighty good-looking harbor and some pretty driveways and nice public buildings. Tell him that in Brazil is a second city which is a real metropolis in its proportions and aspect and importance—a city called São Paulo—and possibly he'll say he didn't catch the name.

Tell him that Santiago, in Chile, is the magnificent capital of what potentially, and in certain respects actually, is one of the most promising countries anywhere—the fast-growing, forward-looking home of a sturdy and an independent and a progressive people—and he murmurs a polite but incredulous murmur.

Tell him that Lima, in Peru, is rapidly becoming the loveliest small city—and not such a dog-gone small city, at that—in either South America or

North America; that it already is a little Paris without the attendant drawback to the visitor of having to put up with the little Parisians—and aren't some of them little, especially the waiters and the shopkeepers?—and he may not believe you or then again he may, in the order named.

Tell him that South America has developed a real and distinctive literature and is rapidly developing a worthwhile art to march along with it, and he says, “You don't say so, really now?”

Tell him that behind the dense green curtains of tropic growth there stretches down through the interior of this amazing continent a chartless domain which, roughly measured, is the length of the United States from Canada to Mexico and, roughly, from a third to a fifth as wide as the United States is, where white explorers have not been—or if they did go there, rarely returned to tell the story. It remains an unmapped empire in which somewhere the boundaries of sundry countries are supposed to meet but none knows, by a give-and-take margin of hundreds of miles, where those boundaries do meet; an area given over to wild things and wild tribesmen, but surely incredibly abundant in mineral stores and gems and oils and asphalts and in the wealth that springs out of the soil; a vast tract which is believed to be threaded with navigable rivers and known to be clothed with splendid forests and out of which there now and then trickles down to the frontiers of the settled territory some alluring tale of dead and buried cities of the aborigines, or of hillsides of gold and mountains of silver or of fantastic prehistoric monsters wallowing in the primeval slime. It is the one remaining great stronghold of untracked wilderness on the globe, and it lies there awaiting the coming of the pathfinders who will penetrate its mysteries, and the engineers who will drain its swamps, and the road builders who will open it to traffic, and the scientists who will make it sanitary and healthy as our people did at Panama. It then will yield up no telling what material rewards for the enrichment of mankind.

Tell him this much—it's merely sketching in a few of the high points—and let it all soak into his system. Tell him—oh, tell him, to go to thunder. He's too untutored in the elementals for his own good, but, to make the application direct, no more untutored than I was until I had journeyed thither.

For definite details, for facts and particulars, you might send the dazed party of the second part to persons having technical information under various heads. To me, statistics considered as such are but boring confusion and botheration. The more I con them the worse off I am. I'd rather reread Joyce Kilmer's poem on “Trees” than have the entire history of

the wooden toothpick industry in six large hand-tooled volumes autographed by the author and delivered free at my address. But I take it that any good patriot and notably this imaginary brother of ours, the average domestically-minded American, ought to be interested in what experts in this or that specialized field of endeavor could impart to him.

For example, any well-informed export agent could prove to him that, taking its first really notable spurt at the beginning of the World War, the volume of our business with South America has grown and grown until now substantially ninety per cent of the motor-driven vehicles in use there—automobiles, busses, trucks and tractors—are of North American manufacture; the percentage in one country rising to approximately ninety-six; so that the voice of the Lizzie forever is heard in the land.

And, by the same token, an overwhelming majority of all the moving-picture films shown in South American countries come from us. We are selling to the South Americans practically all their telephones and their sewing machines and their phonographs, to cite a few lines out of many. In sales to them of locomotives, structural metals, canned commodities, sanitary appliances, sporting goods, school equipments, cameras, and scores of other varieties of utilitarian and industrial products we have gone far ahead of our European competitors, who formerly had control of these markets but are now sea-green with envy and chagrin. And finally, thanks to our supremacy in mass production and our increasing adaptability and efficiency in merchandising methods, and despite our unpopularity as a breed in certain quarters, each day we are broadening and thickening and strengthening our trade connections down there, and incidentally are building for ourselves and for her against the nearing day of South America's infinitely greater expansion.

The returned diplomatist could tell our inquiring friend that because our big concerns are now sending resident managers and selling agents and concession-seekers of a uniformly higher and more cultivated and more dependable type to represent them in South America than was formerly the case, and also because the desires and the temperaments of the buying classes are now being intelligently studied and intelligently catered to, the cause of harmony and mutual trust is agreeably promoted and our national relationships generally are bettered.

Commerce breeds the real ambassadors of friendship these times, you know, and the sample case follows the flag. Juggling of fine words by polished legates is all well enough and perhaps stuffed prophets and boiled shirts and tail coats have their political functions—though sometimes it is

permitted to ordinary people to doubt it—but in the final analysis confidence in the word of the salesman and belief in the reliability of the goods he peddles and ultimate satisfaction on the part of the groups who have bartered with him, are the peaceful, infiltrating, cementing forces which draw countries more closely together and lead to enduring interracial alliances.

We were a long time learning our commercial lesson in South America but we seem to have learned it. It is to be hoped that the spokesmen who in the future profess to outline our ethical policies for the existing administration and the self-anointed apostles who from time to time inevitably will rise up on the floor of Congress to explain our motives and our intents with regard to the Monroe Doctrine may divinely be prompted to let North American statesmanship take pattern from North American salesmanship—which is something that the mouthpieces of several past administrations did not exactly do.

By the way, I'll work around to the Monroe Doctrine business in a subsequent chapter of this book, even at the risk of bringing grief to a few of our well-meaning publicists who continue to labor under the fond passionate delusion that the said Doctrine is as popular among its supposed beneficiaries of Latin America as it is for a topic of disputation and alleged elucidation with certain spouting human geysers down at Washington, D. C.—gentlemen, some of them, who since the abolishment of free passes on the railroads haven't been any farther away from the Corn Belt or the Cotton Belt than they could travel on their mileage allowances, and yet who profess an ability to deal authoritatively with foreign affairs and foreign problems.

Here at home we may pay little or no heed to these fodder-fed bucolics. In fact, we rarely do pay any heed to them. Their eloquence languishes and dies on the overburdened air and is entombed in the pages of the Congressional Record. The damage is done abroad and notably is done in South America where alien propagandists of European origin and Yankee-phobic orators and journalists ever incline a greedy ear for just such fulminations, to the end that the individual mouthings of some Balaam's Ass of a senator or a house member may be misinterpreted to their audiences as the inspired utterance of the White House or the truly voiced attitude of the people of the United States.

The returned student of economics would tell our friends that such countries as the Argentine Republic and Chile have dealt on sane grounds with the immigration question, which we so sadly bungled, first by letting nearly everybody in, regardless of his or her potential capacities for

citizenship and usefulness, and then, when the damage was done, by flying to the other extreme and shutting nearly everybody out.

In those two countries rational inducements for colonization are offered to the selected and specified stocks of certain favored European countries, and rational barriers are interposed against the suspect and the unfit. The newcomer who is industrious and strong-bodied, who is willing to work the land, has governmental aid from the hour of his landing until he becomes self-sustaining. By a wisely administered screening process, the doors are closed on the other kind.

The returned theologian, if fair-minded, would tell him that in practically all the important countries of South America and in one or two which are not rated as being important—but all of them countries, mind you, where an overwhelming majority of the populace are professed Catholics or anyhow are baptized Catholics—there is prevalent a tolerance in religious issues which is by way of offering a refreshing contrast to the sentiment prevalent in some sections of our country.

To begin with, the well-bred South American—and generally he is well bred or at least he instinctively has good manners even though his station in life be humble—is not to be drawn into a controversy with you merely because you happen to differ from him on any item of dogmatic faith, be it social or moral, political or spiritual. He leaves you to your opinion, no matter how erroneous he privately may think that opinion is; and he reserves the right to preserve his opinions from smoking-compartment debate or street-corner discussion. In short, he doesn't set himself up to be his brother's keeper—and that, I think, is a beautiful virtue common in his land and, by contrast, exceedingly rare in a certain land which I might mention.

You see, politeness with him is a prenatal gift: his ancestry probably was Spanish. And—marvel of marvels in this day and time—he is acquiring efficiency without the sacrifice of his racial courtesy; is furthering his own business by the simple plan of not stopping to mind yours for you. You may call this indifference, if it so please you, but surely it softens the friction and the attrition of casual human contact.

In the second place, there is a fine something about the South American temperament which saves its owner from manifesting prejudice against another man's conscientious convictions. Without surrendering his own beliefs, he nevertheless has an inquiring mind for any good which may bide in the stranger's church, however preposterous that church may, on the surface, seem to him to be. More than anything else, this, I think, helps to

explain the agreeable phenomena which are met with here and there and, as you might almost say, everywhere down there.

For instance, it is by law forbidden that the essentials of any creed shall be taught in any public school in the Argentine. Most of the pupils have or have had Catholic parents and Catholic rearing. No doubt in some rural schools all the pupils are Catholic-bred. But because Protestants or freethinkers or Mohammedans or Jews or what-have-you's contribute through taxation to the support of these schools and because their children are sent to these schools, the teachers are required—yes, are strictly compelled—to refrain from inculcating religious dogmas of any sort or under any guise into the minds of the scholars.

There are lessons in morality, lessons in the Golden Rule. There are no lessons, though, from your catechism or somebody else's; no readings out of your Bible or mine.

Paraguay, which by repute is held to be a backward country, offers an asylum to any and all outlawed and proscribed sects, so that the followers of divers strange and mystical cults, having been driven out of professedly more enlightened nations than Paraguay, dwell in peace with their Paraguayan neighbors.

Nor is there a solitary one of the major republics of South America but stands ready to welcome the missionaries of any recognized and orthodox persuasion. Your Methodist training school or your Baptist college or your Presbyterian hospital is sure of governmental cooperation in the furtherance of its good and godly intents, and oftentimes may have been the recipient of financial aid by the government and of voluntary contributions and earnest moral support on the part of progressive native citizens. In South America it would appear that one may be non-Protestant without being anti-Protestant and vice versa, which I maintain is quite pleasant for all concerned.

But, after all, the best way for our typical North American to observe these details would be for him to do as we to our great profit did, and that is to go discovering and observe with his own eyes and at first hand. He will find that he can make the voyage most comfortably and in such degree of luxury as his tastes demand or his purse permits, because nowadays whether the tourist be bound down the West Coast or the East, he has a choice of large, well-found, fast, clean, smart steamers.

The various lines which ply between our ocean or gulf ports and South American ports, including a number of Yankee-owned lines, already offer excellent schedules and first-rate service on fully equipped, speedy vessels,

and some of these lines are planning or actually building still larger craft, inasmuch as passenger traffic and freight-carrying steadily grow. So our man will have interesting company and comfort and good food on the trip down, and no matter where he lands, I guarantee will behold sights worthy of his undivided attention and his admiration as well.

Not by that, though, neither by what has been written before, would I seek to leave the impression that all is sweetness and light on our sister continent. There are things which ought to be changed—and some of them are being changed. There are primitive things, pitiable things, deplorable things—evidences of ignorance and of dire poverty cheek by jowl with signs and portents of enlightenment and prosperity. There are things which may strike the stranger as being comic and curious, since the peculiar institutions of any land nearly always seem comic and curious to the man hailing from another part of the world.

But this much I do maintain: The North American who goes thither with an unbiased judgment and a vision unjaundiced by insularity will see in that land which dangles from the grip-handle of the Isthmus like a great gold-and-green treasure-bag, the land wherein the sun of material glory that is sinking on Europe will before many years rise and shine its very brightest.

## *Chapter Two*

### *NOSING THROUGH THE TROPICS*

Just as South America is different, so going to South America is different too. If you embark at New Orleans, as we did, you begin to feel the difference the moment you've mounted the ship's side.

The bustle, the crowding and the jamming, the mad rushing to and fro, the hullabaloo of getting aboard and getting left, the whooping of good-bys over the rail, in fact, the general vain excitement and confusion which mark a departure from any of our large eastern ports—these features are pleasantly absent. It is as if everyone present was in a conspiracy to make you feel that you are now on the point of setting out for lands where climate and custom ordain that things shall be taken easily and without so much of all this shoving.

Besides, in comparison with New York or even with Boston or Philadelphia, New Orleans is a calm town, a town with a placid dignity, a town with some politeness about it. It doesn't have to be a case of an overcrowded lifeboat to induce a New Orleans man to get up and give his seat to a lady. He'll do that on a streetcar just as promptly.

Also, when you have climbed the inclined stage-plank, you are not greeted by a whole flock of stewards who are more concerned with sizing you up to figure out about how much you ought to assay in tips than they are with making you feel at home. An officer greets you, a lesser member of the crew takes your hand baggage and then, as a part of the regular ritual, the officer invites you to have a banana or a whole lot of bananas.

Right there at the head of the gangway is a table hospitably laden with fresh ripe bananas, because this happens to be a comfortable steamer of the United Fruit Line; and to state that the United Fruit Line rather specializes in bananas is a mild way of putting it. Coming back, the holds will be bursting full of them and the lower decks will be piled with the fat bunches. Now, going away, bananas are always available along with other tropical or semi-tropical fruits in the state-rooms and in the dining hall and everywhere.

When we reached Havana we thought we should do something by way of testifying to the skipper our appreciation of his kindness. So two of us bought a dozen nice bananas and had them done up in a fancy package and sent to the boat, and then in the presence of a group of the passengers, we

presented them to him with an appropriate speech. He seemed touched when he undid the wrappings and found what was inside. Or maybe he was sort of stunned. He practically was stricken speechless, I know that.

Quietly, almost stealthily, the boat draws off from the dock and heads into the wide and muddy Mississippi, bound for the mouth. For the sake of tradition and for the sake of beauty as well, it's too bad, I think, that one's last view of New Orleans, as the boat glides downstream between those endless flat green banks which stretch to the Gulf, should be a view of clustering skyscrapers fading into the misty distance yonder behind one.

Commercially speaking, skyscrapers may be a necessary detail of the modern metropolitan picture. At least the architects and the owners seem to think so. But it does seem a pity that they felt it incumbent upon them as a civic duty to Brooklynize New Orleans' horizon line, which anciently was so low and so picturesque and so altogether characteristic of her. I'd say that the old New Orleans has as little reason to be proud of the first skyscraper rising in her midst as a Ziegfeld show girl would have for a wen sprouting on her brow.

Here's another thing that impressed me as we were starting: I don't know how it may be on other trips, but on this trip we had aboard no representatives of the ultra-noisy, ultra-flashy groups that send their picked delegates to travel on every big transatlantic steamer. Practically without exception, our fellow passengers were of the types we like to mix with at home and are not ashamed of when we run into them abroad—business men, professional men, tourists more intent on seeing and learning than on showing off before foreign eyes; and with these a sprinkling of gracious, soft-voiced residents of Central American countries.

One of the most attractive individuals in the lot was a veteran Jewish commercial agent—a “drummer,” if you care to put it that crude way—who had been trapesing through the Caribbean Sea and along the old Spanish Main for thirty years and had taken time while earning a living to cultivate what must have been an innate love for artistic things and lovely beauties.

Another was a college president from a middle-western state going to the jungle to indulge a fad for botanizing. Another was a distinguished mining engineer, a walking reservoir of both technical and general knowledge and an authority on the pirates and the buccaneers who once infested these waters.

Then we had along the inevitable set of honeymooners, the little bride preening the fine feathers of her trousseau and the young groom creaking

about in the same pair of musical patent-leather shoes in which he'd walked up the church aisle.

Not until we reached Havana did we take aboard any typical New York City sportsmen. There were three of them, the names being Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego. They were going on with us to Panama but what they might be going on to Panama for, unless it was to buy a hat, the rest of us couldn't figure out. They didn't seem to be the sort who would be interested in a canal.

Offhand, you would have said they could find diversions more suited to their temperaments in Havana than on the Isthmus, for Havana at that moment was having winter racing over her magnificent race-course that is like unto an emerald set in a topaz circlet; and there were abundant facilities for indulging in other winter games and pastimes, such as roulette, baccarat and *chemin de fer*, not to mention our own contributions to the world of chance—stud poker and craps.

You know that Havana is getting to be a great winter-time playground. In fact, it already is all of that. Moreover, what with impressive public buildings and gorgeous driveways and parkways, it has been refashioned into a perfect gem of a city and yet the historic old Havana of Spanish times has been preserved very much as it was.

The island of Cuba may practically be bankrupt as a result of our tariff regulations touching on her exports of sugar, which, excusing tobacco and cigars, is her one really important crop for exportation to the States, but the capital itself shows no outward signs of financial or economic depression.

My guess is that before long, as a resort for rich Yankees and a site for their winter palaces, Havana is going to out-Palm-Beach Palm Beach. For one thing, you don't have to get it through a bootlegger in Havana. It's delivered openly at the front door. And putting down a few simoleons on a likely colt is not by law forbidden as an evil thing but, on the contrary, is encouraged and facilitated. And everything agreeable like that. Watch Havana Grow! Here's the Place to Raise a Thirsty Family! Buy a Villa Plot in Bacardi-hurst-by-the-Sea!

I'm just dashing these sample specimens off on the spur of the moment. Any good, up-to-date Long Island realtor will be able to think up twenty better slogans than mine.

To get started down the West Coast of South America, which was our chosen route, we must go by way of the Zone—not that we minded going by

way of the Zone; on the contrary, we enjoyed it—so, after Havana, the next port of call for us was Cristobal at the eastern entrance to the Strip.

It may be recalled by the reader that from time to time some few faltering and furtive, not to say clandestine words of praise for our national achievement in building and operating the Canal have been penned by native writers and have shrinkingly crept into print, so that now the sum total of this laudatory literature amounts to quite a tidy chunk—say, about enough literature to choke the Congressional Library. Therefore it would seem superfluous for this modest pen to add its feeble sputter to that swelling volume.

In passing, I merely would say that while Uncle Sam has qualified down there as a ditch-digger and as a policeman and as a sanitary inspector and as a lock-keeper and a lockup-keeper and as a garbage collector and as a mosquito-hunter and a fly-swatter and in quite a number of lesser administrative rôles, as a hotel proprietor I regard him as more or less of an awful flop. I won't say a complete flop, because he gets a fifty-fifty break. We have two government-owned hotels in the Zone, one on the Atlantic side and one across on the Pacific side; and one of them, besides being new and modern, is admirably managed, everything considered, but the other, distinctly and emphatically is not.

Still, there are extenuating circumstances; I'll have to admit that. To begin with, the latter establishment is a typical example of the early Chester A. Arthur school of applied design for wooden-built summer hotels, a survivor of, or rather a throwback to, an architectural period now happily extinct, which means that in it are great wide open spaces at points where space is not really required, and by the same lamentable and stupid token, deficient and insufficient guest-room accommodations on the upper floors.

In the second place, and probably through scarcity of available supplies of domestic labor, it is staffed with West Indian colored bell-hops and porters and such like. The average West Indian bell-hop is slower than the Muir Glacier, and why an ever-bountiful and prodigal Creator ever gave him a head is a mystery to me, because he doesn't wear a hat on it—at least not very often. What's the big idea in having a thing that you never use? Nature is full of these mistakes.

But even so, and making all due excuses and allowances for conditions which presumably are past controlling, I could see no good reason why the menu during the week we stopped there was short on the distinctive dishes of the country.

All signs told us that we were in the very midriff of the hemispheric jungle belt. The verdure, the frequent and sudden torrential showers, the gaily painted birds, the humid heat that encompassed us when the sun was up, the soft, balmy sweetness that descended on the world after the sun went down—plenty of shoddy days they have down there but the nights are as velvet: all things and everything advertised the tropics. Naturally, the tourist would like to sample strange tropical dainties. The novelty of them would appeal to him and he might like the flavors: probably he would. Many of those exotic fruits and those curious-looking vegetables are delicious.

In the main, though, we were served such meals as we might have had in Grand Rapids or Topeka, while all the time the Panama City market a mile or so away abounded in what, to our eyes, were fascinating oddities. I counted on one stall five separate varieties of plantains and bananas and I was told that this assortment was by no means complete, that there were five or six more varieties. I saw peculiar sea foods and land foods that were new to me—purple yams, for instance, and some huge knobby black tubers and slick-skinned wild fruits of the mango family and one sweet-potato-looking vegetable of a prevalent palish hue that was streaked—like the coffin for the unmarried lady who lives so careless a life—with flecks of heliotrope here and there.

However, giving credit where credit is due, I must own up that under the shingled mansards of this hotel I made the acquaintance of the papaya. I met it there and immediately contracted an affection for it which lasted all the way down South America and back up again on the other side, and in retrospect fondly lingers with me yet.

Impious slanderers have dubbed it an edible gourd, which is a deliberate insult. It is a smooth-faced melon-like thing that grows on a tree. If it be of the papaw breed, as naturalists assert, only a sense of restraint deters me from referring to it as the heavy sugar papaw of the Southland. It is greenish or yellowish without, and within it is all salmon-pink meaty lusciousness and little beady black seeds.

Science may have its say about the papaya's evolution and ancestry, but taking its appearance with its savor I prefer to appraise it according to a softer, more sentimental theory of my own. I claim it is a love-child.

Once, long eons ago, beneath the ardent tropic moon while an amorous night wind whispered in the fronded palm leaves, some lusty cantaloup led astray a trusting sapodilla. Dear, yielding, rosy-cheeked papaya, which takes after both parents, was the outcome.

Eaten at the beginning of a meal, it is an appetizer of merit; eaten at any stage of the meal it is a prime digestive, since it is rich in pepsin. It hops right in and digests whatever else you put in your hoppers; that's what they say for it. Since it stands shipment, I'd like to bring one up North and match it against the kind of Maryland fried chicken they have in those Dixie restaurants run by Greek immigrants on New York side streets. If it wins that battle it can win anything.

And the taste of it! The mango, to which it may be distantly related, tastes like turpentine when it doesn't taste like scented soap, and the common papaw smells like a sanitary barber and frequently acts up among your insides like the Wrath to Come; but with the papaya, pretty is as pretty does, and it certainly does sit mighty gracefully on the tum-tum after laving the palate with its gentle fragrant juices on the way down.

I had the thrill of picking my breakfast papaya off the laden bough when we went from Panama City back inland to Barro Colorado Island and spent a Christmas Day in what undoubtedly is the most unusual and, to a biologist, the most interesting compact of isolated jungle on earth.

I would recommend an isolated jungle to anyone desirous of spending a quiet Christmas. No postman staggering in laden with Christmas cards; no embarrassing gifts arriving from friends you have forgotten or slighted when sending out your gifts; no overlooked janitors turning up with palms outstretched and the eager Yuletide look in the eye: nothing but gorgeous greenery and innumerable wild things and tons of orchids, and flowering trees of an incredible beauty, and a solitude and a satisfying quiet. Particularly would I recommend Barro Colorado Island.

This Barro Colorado used to be one of the tallest and most inaccessible of the densely wooded pigmy mountains on the Isthmus. When, in constructing the Canal, we dammed the Chagres River, it became the largest island in Gatun Lake. As the pent-in waters rose and spread, the creatures which swarmed in the lowlands retreated to this convenient elevation, with the result that today there is here such a concentration of tropical life as is to be found in no like area anywhere.

To the layman it is a combination of a marvelous botanical garden and a vast zoölogical garden without the drawback of the smells which plague other zoölogical gardens.

To the naturalist it is just heaven, that's all. He can go out any time and discover a new species of something. And when a naturalist, all by himself, discovers a new species of something his utter joy is the most utterful joy

known to man. Alongside of him a young mother with her first-born is a model of indifference and a figure of chilled and static restraint.

Accordingly the government has set Barro Colorado apart as a preserve and a breeding-ground and an observatory, and hither come scientists from our country and from other countries as well, to pry and to pick, to collect and to classify and incidentally, on the side, as it were, to go into babbling convulsions of sheer joy.

Once in so often, visitors who are not scientifically minded are suffered to intrude upon this magic menagerie. Two of us were so favored. In thirty-six happily crowded hours I learned a lot about a jungle.

For instance, I learned that about all of my previously conceived notions of what a Central American jungle is like were wrong. No noxious insects assailed me. That was disappointing. I'd counted heavily on the noxious insects, because I wanted to brag about my escape from the dirty low-downs when I got home.

I'd come in the wrong season for the tick and the "red bug" or chigger, whose beauty is precisely skin-deep; and thanks to Uncle Sam's never-ending warfare against him, the mosquito is an exceedingly rare beast of prey along the Zone, and the house fly is equally scarce. The pesky swarms of moths and beetles which I thought from my readings on the subject must invariably infest the tropic night, didn't show up at all. Even after the lights were lighted in the sleeping tents, they failed to appear. Tropical entomology would be a boon to Long Island, where I spend my summers.

Under expert guidance I went on a prowl into the remoter recesses of the island. It was then, and with a profound shock of astonishment, I found out that the deeper you get into a jungle the less you see of what is going on within it.

You walk through an eternal green gloom with swaying impenetrable curtains shutting you in. You hear beasties stirring and scurrying ahead of you and on either side of you but you can't see them; the coverts of ferns and vines and clingers and bushes and the trunks of the trees along the trail are too thick. You hear an occasional bird but most likely he is invisible as well. The anticipated choruses of screechings and yowlings and hootings and boomings are not in operation. The prowling jaguar is on vacation and the fretful peccary and the tapir are off week-ending somewhere.

I had expected tumults and crashings and uproars. Instead, all was peace and all was silence except for those few subdued and muffled sounds, with a

brooding, cathedral-like calm encompassing us. Only if you paused and harkened could you hear the jungle itself growing as creepers crawled down or crawled up, according to their kind, and new leaves thrust themselves forth and whispered in the upper air currents, and a myriad of exuberant parasitic growths fought for breathing space on earth or tree trunk where every inch already was taken. Literally you could hear it—or anyhow that was my fancy.

But I beheld the bared soul of the jungle when after three miles of a twisting course over cut-out paths, we came to a height of land and climbed three ladder flights to a perch at the top of a wooden lookout. We were above the tree tops now. They spread below us, unbroken, compact, like billowing clouds, like soft green clouds for the most part, but here and there would be a blossoming-forth of flame color or of pure white or of rich purple or of glowing pink.

Over and through and in and out of this tight massing of foliage and bloom, toucans streamed, grotesquely shaped and marvelously gaudy, and flocks of trogons and motmots flew past; and parrots, most gaily tinted, and chattering parrakeets went whizzing by like flights of painted arrows; and almost within arm's reach of me darted hummingbirds that were like winged refugees from some jeweler's shop window, for the sun on their feathers turned them into tiny shimmering bits of enamel and into living emeralds and rubies and brilliantly-glowing topazes.

The true voice of the jungle came up to me then—the melancholy distant remarks of howling monkeys, the nearer gruntings of a drove of wild pigs, the weird shrill chatter of some creature which must have passed directly beneath our watchtower but never once showed itself. And suddenly there was a scream of mortal terror and mortal pain quite near by and a great thrashing in the undergrowth. A wilderness tragedy had been enacted behind the walls of the wilderness.

We perched aloft for two wonderful hours. I felt that I could be happy—yes, not only happy but entertained—for a solid week there. Descending we threaded through a comparatively open space, stepping on mats of sensitive plants which on being touched shrank up and folded in.

A little later and a little farther along, we came upon a procession of the so-called umbrella ants marching by countless thousands and each one carrying over its back a tiny dancing segment of a green leaf. People used to believe these ants fed on these leaves. Now we know better. Deep in their underground nests, they spread the little scraps in warm soft layers and on

this humid mass there sprouts a fungus which is the real food of the gatherers.

These are not fodder-eaters; these are scientific mushroom-fanciers. We played a trick on them. We laid half-burnt match stems across their line of march. Immediately the legions halted. The ants whose way had thus been barred touched the huge barriers and backed away from them. A wave of indecision—a visible wave—rippled rearward through the endless battalions that stretched behind those front-line scouts.

But this hesitation continued for less than a minute. The word was being telegraphed back to headquarters and immediately there came hurrying forward from somewhere divers unburdened ants, the engineering corps of this efficient organization, and these sappers and miners set to and hauled the smelly timbers off the track and the army moved again.

If you are also an amateur student of the idiosyncrasies of the human mammal, the civilized portions of the Canal Zone offer a fertile field for sociological research. You may study the quaint ways of the “Army crowd” as contrasted with the “Navy crowd” or the “civil service set” or the “political set” or the “medical set,” sensing wheels within wheels, cliques within cliques, jealousies piled on jealousies, ambitions conflicting with rival ambitions, intrigues and envies and gossipings and yet, overriding all else, a common desire to carry on a complex and tremendous job for our country with efficiency and dispatch and thoroughness.

Nor is there any excuse ever to confuse a resident civilian with a mere transient. By these signs shall ye know them: The visitor always is wearing a Panama hat. Upon arriving, a Panama hat is the first thing he buys. Whereas the resident wouldn't be caught dead with one on. He'd rise up long enough to snatch it off. He sticks to the stiffer blocks of the New York or London hatter. I think there must be something in the official regulations about it.

Anywhere in either Colón or Panama City, once you have crossed the line out of United States territory, a veritable ethnological congress stews and seethes before your eyes. The big ditch has drawn to its extremities colonies of all nations. You might call them the *Canaille* of the Canal. But of course afterwards you'd be ashamed of having done it.

You see Panamanians of Spanish blood and Panamanian Indians and mixed bloods; thousands of black West Indians; Japs, Chinamen, Lascars, East Indians; a mixture of all the peoples of the Levant and Asia Minor and the Near East.

The curio trade largely is dominated by these Easterners. Bill Hogg and I encountered one peddler of Oriental jimcracks who puzzled us when we tried to figure out what race he belonged to. He was ambushed up to the cheek bones and as far down as the waistline in the longest, widest, thickest, gaudiest set of whiskers I ever saw. In those whiskers were splashes of red and streaks of gray and touches of white and patterned splashes of yellow all superimposed on a black background.

We thought at first he might be an Armenian. But on second thought we said: “No, he can’t be. An Armenian is a man with a rug. And this fellow is one.” So we just called him a bosky dell and let it go at that. It was a reasonably hot and steamy day and we thought of hiring him to go round with us a while. He had such a cool, woodsy look, lurking there behind his foliage.

In Colón is one whole district and across in Panama City a long lively street wherein certain North American types predominate—the types which naturally would flee from Prohibition, so called, to find an asylum on more congenial soil and to go on ministering to the national appetite for wines, ales, liquors and whoopedede.

The ladies and gentlemen who run the dance halls for the entertainment of our sailors and soldiers and our tourists are, almost without exception, exiles from Broadway or South Clark Street. Old-time barkeepers abound; so also do old-time saloon-owners. About all of them who did not go into bootlegging after the Volstead Act passed—or should I say “passed on”?—appear to have gravitated down here.

I ran into one venerable bar-fly whom I hadn’t seen since my old Park Row days of fifteen years back. His face no longer was familiar to me but I recognized his vest—that same vest which somebody had once said would make an excellent sign over a Bowery short-order restaurant with a placard on it stating that everything on this garment was served inside.

And I recalled the time when a lot of us went to a shore dinner and he declared himself in on the party inasmuch as he still did odd reportorial jobs. That was before he discovered that work was the curse of the drinking classes and gave it up. After he fell asleep in the sunshine a jovial spirit was inspired to hang a pasteboard around his neck inscribed as follows: “The Glory that was Grease and the Grandeur that was Rum.”

Now he did what a veteran journalist nearly always does upon meeting a working newspaperman—he made a touch. Just to hear him intimating that a temporary loan of about ten dollars would tide him over until next Saturday

night, when he was expecting a remittance, brought back thronging memories of those old care-free fraternal days. On parting, he told me he liked Panama. There was a larger freedom to the life, he said, a lingering trace of the real Bohemianism which sumptuary legislation had driven into exile out from our own colder northern clime.

On our last afternoon we motored out to the ruins of old Panama City over a modern road constantly menaced by the encroaching jungle growth. They say that even a cemented road, if left unused and uncleaned for eight months, will within that time become entirely hidden under the masses of vine growth crawling across it from the edges. That ought to give you a rough idea of the luxuriance and greediness of a Central American creeper. A Zone official told me he knew of a section where if you stooped down and stuck a seed in the earth you immediately must jump sideways to avoid being pronged by the sprout. That, however, may have been a slight exaggeration of the true facts. Maybe you could just step away in a dignified manner.

Historically speaking, old Panama has values, but when you give it credit for its wealth of associations there's not a great deal more to be said. It will be recalled that Sir Henry Morgan sacked old Panama. Sir Henry was a painstaking person, by all accounts, and here is proof of it. When he sacked a town it stayed sacked; and what ruins he left in this case the jungle has pretty well swallowed up.

We made the trip in an open car and on the way in were overtaken by one of those terrific downpours which in the tropics come up so abruptly and without prior warning or, as you might even say, provocation. Bill Hogg was wearing a black featherweight coat and the tailor who sold it to him said it wouldn't shrink. The scoundrel lied, though, because when Bill got back to the hotel he seemed to be in his shirt sleeves but wearing a black Windsor tie.

That evening Palmer joined us. With his arrival our expedition was complete and before midnight we were steaming out into the Pacific aboard a smartly run, oil-burning Grace Liner.

Now then, the task of rediscovering South America might be said really to be under way. Thus far, in Cuba and in Panama, we had constantly been within the spheres of Yankee influences and Yankee systems where our institutions were mounted upon the older Spanish foundations, and the customs of the two cultures interlapped. But from here on, it would be for us another world than the one we knew—a world full of romance and drama

and surprises, a world where the spice of adventure yet endures, and the stranger coming for the first time may fancy himself both an argonaut and an explorer.

We stood well out to sea, rounding the bulge of the hunched westerly shoulder of the Southern Continent. Behind us, along that verdant wry neck of the hemisphere which we were quitting, was the problematical and only vaguely identified height of land where Balboa, viewing the waters of the Pacific, claimed the whole of that somewhat commodious ocean with all and sundry of the islands in it and all the shores it might lave, wheresoever located, in the name of the Spanish Crown, thereby establishing a record as the world's champion claimer which would stand for more than four hundred years until Mr. John J. Raskob took over the management of the Smith campaign.

Below us, nestling beneath Colombia, would be Ecuador—the little-traveled and still secluded republic of Ecuador, in whose mysterious interior the head-hunters live. But, for one, I had no desire to seek out the head-hunters in their lair. In my time I'd seen hundreds of them in Naples, where the lady head-hunters abound—sitting in doorways on sunny days and pursuing their tribal sport before the eyes of the passer-by.

For us, the swing of the steamer carried us out and away on blue waters and when next we sighted land it was after we had passed over the equator and had raised the Southern Cross on the horizon below us, and the land we saw then was Peru, at the top of that vast domain of the progressive up-and-coming South America which so gladly welcomes the Yankee's developing hand and mind and at the same time remains still so distrustful of the Yankee's national and ultranational policies.

## Chapter Three

### LIMA, THE JEWEL BOX OF PERU

Lima, where have you been all my life?

Behold, here is a jewel box of a city. Whether you are a student of the olden civilizations of the New World or a mere casual sightseer, Lima has, in compact forms, all that a city should have to offer you, all the beauty you could ask for, all the quaintness and picturesqueness, all the physical and spiritual essentials, and enough historical background to satisfy anybody.

As to its lately remodeled sections, it is an admirable conglomerate of modern ideas and modern ideals and yet is in all ways individualistic, this last being due, I should say, to the fact that of the major South American capitals it remains the most Spanishized both as to architecture and as to the modes and moods of the people.

Go into its newly transformed parts, and what with the impressive government buildings and public buildings, the sweeping, beautifully paved boulevards, the nobly planned system of squares and parks and parkways and the swarming automobiles and taxicabs, there is about it a suggestion of Washington.

Then step around the corner and you might fancy yourself in Seville or Valencia—women in mantillas slipping in and out of some crumbly old church; *cholos* leading laden donkeys along narrow, rutted streets where the house eaves in perspective seem almost to meet overhead; sidewalk markets with the sellers squatting upon the bricks and the buyers picking their winding way through a teeming, vociferous, colorful confusion; shop fronts draped and crowded with gay and curious wares; priests and soldiers; ragged aborigines and dapper municipal guards; a volume of rippling Latin voices mingling with the harsher, strangely accented patois of the Indian out of the interior—the *barbaro*, as they call him.

Mostly, though, and especially with regard to its central portions where the principal shopping district is and the chief civic improvements of the last decade present themselves, Lima has rather the savor and the aspect of Paris: a Paris in miniature, a charming bijou of a Paris, let us say, but glory be, a Paris in which there are no swarming beggars, no greasy degenerates with vile photographs for sale, no rat-eyed “guides” importuning you to go with them to witness spectacles of unutterable depravity, no taxicabbists who

insult you if you fail to tip them thrice as much as anybody else tips, no shopkeepers who fawn on you if you purchase and sneer at you if you decline to purchase.

The tradespeople, like all the rest of the people of Lima whom I encountered, were courteous and gracious. They'd rather lose a trade than lose their dignity; and therein, you will allow, they are not at all like Parisians. And so far as my superficial survey revealed them to me, they are a reasonably orderly people. The tribal trait naturally intrigues a man hailing from a country where about the only law consistently obeyed is the law of gravity.

Now then, picture this altogether fine little combination of Paris and Washington—with that piquant dash of Seville thrown in for seasoning—as embowered in a gorgeous semi-tropical setting nine miles back from the salt water, with the towering ramparts of the Cordilleras, which are the most westerly chains of the intertwining Andean ranges, rearing themselves behind her. Think of her as crowning a gently sloped coastal plateau whereon rain, as we know rain, almost never falls, but where irrigation ditches, carrying the volumes of impounded mountain streams, produce from a sandy volcanic loam so much of lush, rank richness that the long-staple cotton grows on trees instead of on plants, and the sugar cane is thick and tall like bamboo, and the flowers, including the imported flowers of the North Temperate Zone, attain to an unbelievable size and luxuriance, and, in addition to an enormous variety of native fruits and vegetables, such familiar delicacies as strawberries and green corn and watermelons may be had practically the year round at exceedingly low prices.

See Lima in the midst of her summer, which is our midwinter, since the seasons in South America are exactly the reverse of the seasons with us. See this city then, I say, when the flowering locust trees, which line the streets and the roads everywhere, are just beginning to spill their wistaria-like blooms so that the grass beneath every tree is deeply carpeted with blossoms that have fallen, and each vista is flanked with great clumps of blossoms that have not yet been shaken off; and the honey-colored Peruvian sunshine is gleaming through the masses of it all, embroidering the whole visible face of the earth with alternated bandings of royal purple and the purest, yellowest gold.

See Lima, in that regally brocaded dress of hers, as we did, and murmur to yourself, as we did: “We North Americans are supposed to be the most insatiable flitabouts of the universe—forever poking into far corners of the planet on the quest after what is worth while and what is delectable. And

here is this town of Lima lying, so to speak, at our very threshold, and yet for every one of us who has looked on Lima there are thousands who have been to Paris and have done London and have seen Berlin or Rome or Florence or Vienna.”

Lima, what do you mean by it—hiding yourself away from us like this? You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Or maybe we’re the ones who ought to be ashamed!

A stop at Lima is surely the climax of the journey down the West Coast, but what befalls before then and what follows afterward have much to allure the newcomer.

The sea voyage is unlike any other I’ve ever taken. If from Panama you sail late at night, as we did, you arise next morning to find yourself out of sight of land. You are gliding over a placid sunlit course, with the flying fish flashing in and out of the lazy waves alongside like flights of silver teaspoons, and maybe a sea-lion to show its twisting body like a huge, slick worm.

If you have the same luck we had, the Pacific will live up to its name and general reputation during the entire trip. That suits this subscriber. The poetic rooter who stood on the side lines urging the deep and dark blue ocean to roll on was not related to our family. Any time the waters take his foolish advice my ballast begins to shift and the water-tight compartments seem to give way, and it’s ho and away to man the after rail, and if the women and children want to be first they’ll have to hurry.

With us there was none of this pitching and tossing stuff, but instead a ship as steady as a rock and as comfortable as one might ask for. We slid over the equator and had the usual visit from Old King Neptune and his tarry court, the usual initiations of the novices, those who never had crossed the line before, with the usual horseplay—young women being handcuffed and marched up for their ordeal; reluctant young gentlemen being dragged to the slaughter.

We had deck games. We had leisurely opportunity to get acquainted with our fellow travelers, finding them for the most part good company. There was an atmosphere of romance and drama to the adventure now: tales of strange places and strange peoples circulating; talk of curious customs and novel sights, such as llamas and live volcanoes, and of mysterious native products with fascinating, alien-sounding names.

Later on we should have exciting events aboard—a wedding, with the captain officiating and a misguided wag pushing a commandeered baby carriage ahead of the embarrassed couple in the impromptu parade around the steamer before the ceremony; and also a birth, or rather, a double birth.

We had with us a German couple returning from the Vaterland to their present home down the coast. The story was that they had timed their return to the end that the wife might have the services of our ship's doctor and our ship's trained nurse. So, while this lady was about it, she had twins. You just must give the Germans credit for being thorough.

Through long restful days while the nimble trade winds blow, and through cool pleasant nights, you go lazying down the latitudes. On a morning which afterward remains memorable, you come up on deck to find land crowding close upon either side of you.

On the left, the bleak Peruvian shore line lifts in a great naked palisade straight from the surf. On the right are barren islands, seemingly endless strings of them, streaked and mottled with white where the deposits of the precious guano lie. The sun casts soft lights—violet and blue in the shadows, cobalt and pink and brown in the clear—on every mounting pinnacle and every seamy cliff-face; and as the ship goes treading her narrowed route between the mainland just yonder and the shielding archipelago out beyond, her bows are crossed by swarming columns of sea birds—gulls and gannets, terns and cormorants—swift, streamy hordes having no beginnings and no endings.

I myself counted nine million, two hundred and seventy thousand, eight hundred and forty-one separate birds passing in front of us, and then I happened to look back and here came the main flock. Trying to take a bird census in the Pacific certainly is a discouraging job for an amateur.

From now on, the liner hugs the coast, is rarely out of eye reach of that great mountainous parapet which, for the most part, rears up and up sheer from the water's edge but occasionally retreats a space so that a sandy marge intervenes between the sea and the unclothed heights.

As the generality of men reckon such things, it's not a friendly shore. It is appalling, frequently almost terrifying in its tremendousness and in its austerity; and it is hard to make oneself believe that on the farther side of that mighty mountain system of which this sierra is the skirmish line, a humid, fecund jungle hides the headwaters of the Amazon.

All the same, it gives the landlubber a vague sense of contact and comfort to have the earth always within view. Then, too, at intervals which grow more frequent as the days pass, he may put foot on solid soil while the boat is calling for half a day or maybe a whole day at this or that up-country port to discharge cargo and to take on sugar or cotton or oil or minerals or what-not.

Going ashore, there are one or two things he does well to remember. The Peruvians are most hospitable to visitors and most liberal in the matter of import taboos, but about matches they are fussy. Vending matches is a government monopoly, and the transient who lands with a box of his own matches on him may get into a jam with the tariff regulations.

I can appreciate why the custom-house people are strict about matches, but why should patent lighters be included in the embargo? What I say about the average patent lighter is that it provides a form of healthful light exercise and cuts down the smoking habit.

Also, the tourist should be careful about slinging Peru's currency around carelessly. It has a solidity which leads to embarrassment if it is handled with recklessness. Two dollars in change, dropped suddenly into the pocket, will pull your pants right off. In Brazil you have to be even more careful. One dollar in change will do the trick there.

We briefly visited one town—a lovely little town in an oasis of greenery with sterile desert all about it—where they told us there were thirty churches. But they are building some more and soon there will be churches for all. In the dusty small plaza of another town I looked upon the first of the countless array of monuments and statues which thereafter would pass in review before these dazzled eyes.

South America leads the world in statues. For its population it has infinitely more statues than we have, or than Europe has, but the palm for rearing homely statues still belongs to the United States; there we beat 'em all.

At that, I insist this statue we saw in this small Peruvian town has its claims any time the committee is trying to pick out the homeliest statue on earth. It was done—I could tell that much at a glance—by a Teutonic sculptor, probably a graduate of the Krupp works, and it represented Liberty with the dropsy and water on both knees, in the act of saving sundry symbolic groups from servitude or tyranny or something. But these parties seemed hardly worth saving—they were all in the last stages of elephantiasis anyhow.

From a third town—Trujillo is its name and Salaverry is its neighbor—we drove out to visit the ruins of the Inca stronghold of Chan Chan.

These original dwellers of the coast were not the incomparable stonemasons who set up their marvelous citadels that will endure forever in the clefts and on the slopes of the higher Andes. The interior tribes builded for all time; they were the Indelible Incas. Down here near the ocean their cousins fashioned the temples and the citadels and the houses and the burial places from mud-dried bricks, and only a few years back there was a sort of cloud-burst and Chan Chan was almost washed away.

In this coastal country a sure-enough rain is a catastrophe and a calamity. Luckily for the citizens in the adobe villages it rains hard not once in a lifetime; but when it does, a *cholo* is due to find his late place of residence running down the road at six to eight miles an hour. Centuries of exposure to the sun had not materially altered the outlines of Chan Chan, but that one disastrous downpour melted much of it right back into the landscape.

I did not linger long among its crumpled walls. A member of a vanishing species is made melancholy when he looks upon the last stand of an extinct species. So I knew it was no place for an old-line Democrat to be tarrying about in; and I shed a few understanding tears and returned to Trujillo to sample the favorite drink of the populace—a kind of rum punch which gives the customer the sensation of having swallowed a lighted kerosene lamp. It goes down like a lamb but fights back like a lion.

Here, as elsewhere along the line, our party of three created a distinct impression. Dean Palmer was thirty pounds heavier than Bill Hogg and Bill Hogg was fifteen pounds heavier than I was, and I was—and am—no tricky sprite myself. So these slender and frequently undersized townspeople used to stand aside in a stricken silence to watch us single-filing along the narrow pavements. On their faces were awe and speculation. I guess they were wondering what had become of our mahout.

Even in so metropolitan a place as Lima we commanded the silent respect of the populace. A sort of startled hush would mark our approach; a subdued murmur would rise in our wake. In the noble old cathedral, which surely abounds in wide spaces, our advent created a distinct effect.

We went there for a special reason. I long ago gave up cathedral-stalking, just so. We went to see the bones of the great Pizarro.

As a discoverer and a conqueror, Pizarro bulks among the impressive figures of the past but as a cadaver entombed in a glass case, he is not

particularly impressive. For one thing, the assassins under whose blows he fell on the ancient plaza outside smashed him up considerably, and besides that he has been on display a long time and is getting shopworn.

If I was slightly disappointed in Pizarro's skeleton, I was disappointed in nothing else that I saw in the city which he founded. Lima in retrospect slides past the eyes of my mind as a vivid and altogether delightful panorama—the old commingled with the new in just such proportions as appeal in the visitor's imagination and yet provide him with the luxuries and the conveniences which modern taste demands.

You see, it was like this: Lima was one of the first of Latin-American settlements to attain the size and the dignity and the authenticity of a real capital; and it was one of the last of them to surrender the ancient traditions. The Inquisition flourished here after it languished in Spain. The old restful indifference to outside influences, the old respect for the backward, cumbersome institutions of a shadowy antiquity lingered on after a quickening spirit came to Santiago and Valparaiso, on the south of her, and to Buenos Aires and Rio, slantwise across the continent from her.

Traces of this ancient slothfulness, this veneration for what is gone and generally outlawed, still may be discerned in out-of-the-way corners. For instance, Lima is the only major city of South America that still supports the bullfight. Just about the time we arrived, the principal bullfighter of Lima was being disciplined. He bit an obnoxious critic who had written disparagingly of his art, and while he was trying to bite somebody else in order to take the taste out of his mouth—a perfectly natural desire which any playwright or any novelist who has had experience of professional reviewers will appreciate—the authorities fell upon him and took his sword and his other playthings away from him.

But the bull ring is dying of dry-rot and for lack of patronage, and about once in so often the proletariat, disappointed by the indifferent sport provided there, tear up the benches and set fire to the wooden amphitheater. Sunday afternoons the crowds preferably go to a magnificently appointed race-course which is but one of a considerable number of splendid race-courses scattered through those countries; and the numerous fields in and about the city where young athletes play at association football draw their thousands upon thousands of spectators also. Sport—the sort of sport in which youth takes part rather than sits to watch paid gladiators perform—has done an enormous part in refashioning the habits and the modes of thought in all the important republics of South America.

The influence of sport first, and next the influence of the Yankee-made moving-picture film—these, I gather, have been the greatest factors for remaking sentiment and fashion among these Latin brethren of ours. Lima, though, in striking contrast with some of her sister cities, refuses to become commonplace. Her underlying patterning is all her own.

Here the awakening may have come tardily but it came with a rush once it got under way. In this revivification the North American and the European capitalists who pioneered the development of the country's resources had a considerable hand, but from what dispassionate observers told me, I would say that a certain individual who weighs less than a hundred pounds and stands about five feet two in his high-heeled boots is the person deserving of the greatest measure of praise for the stabilizing of the government, the adornment and beautification of the city itself, and finally the creation of a most ambitious program for improved education, for sanitation and hygiene, for road-building and for the economic and intellectual emancipation of his people in various directions.

It is merely another indictment of Yankee insularity that while all of us have read about Mussolini and most of us can tell offhand who Lloyd George is or Cecil Rhodes was, the name of A. B. Leguia, president of Peru, remains unfamiliar to the masses. Here is one of the outstanding empire-builders of the age, a statesman whose personal history is astounding and fascinating, whose record of vision and of accomplishment in ten years has been stupendous—and even so, millions of us probably never heard of him.

It was Leguia who secured United States naval officers to train his sailors, German military sharps to school his soldiers, and Spanish experts to drill his police forces. It was Leguia who, out of a meager treasury, found funds to inaugurate a plan of public driveways and highways which would do credit to a country ten times as rich as his in developed resources, and which, being completed, is going to form an essential link in the continuous road that, as sure as you're alive, will one of these days bind Southern Chile to Northern Canada and make it possible uninterruptedly to motor the habitable length of the Western Hemisphere.

It was Leguia who dreamed dreams of railroads, of colonization of the empty interior, of proper drainage for the cities, of enlarged irrigation for the rainless coast, and, most of all, of the social and material rehabilitation of the Indian, as a real factor in the national life by means of a more equitable distribution of the land—and he is making most of these dreams of his come true. Since his return to the presidency in 1919, he has crowded a lifetime of monumental achievement into the compass of a decade and always and

constantly against strong political opposition and strong economic prejudices, plus, as he himself has said publicly, “the inertia of our temperament.”

Naturally, I was anxious to meet this big little man of South America. That highly efficient and practical veteran of diplomats, the late Alexander Moore, arranged the meeting—arranged it by telephone in a couple of minutes. The interview took place on one of those frequent days when President Leguia sits to give personal audience to any of his constituents who have a grievance or think they have—the widow of a soldier whose pension has been delayed, the peon who complains of mistreatment—in short, anybody however humble or obscure who desires to ask for something or suggest something or demand something. But when Ambassador Moore and I informally were ushered into the Executive Palace, there was no suggestion from anyone that his Excellency might be pressed for time.

What there is of Leguia is all whipcord and drawn steel. He made me think of a dynamo packed inside the case of a wrist watch. Out of what he said—and in forty minutes Peru’s ninety-odd-pound giant said much—several utterances stood out in my memory as having particular significance.

He said this: “Our Indians always from the coming of the white man have been underfoot. They have become a broken people, a people without spirit. I want my administration to give them aspiration, courage, hope—but, most of all, hope. Because hope means faith and faith means performance and performance means salvation.

“Not long ago we paved a road leading back into a district inhabited almost exclusively by an Indian populace. In the year before that road was rebuilt, one thousand bags of potatoes came over it to market. In the year since it was rebuilt, one hundred thousand bags of potatoes came over it—an annual increase in one commodity of a thousand per cent.

“To do such things as this we could not count on the support of the collective conscience of the nation, for a truly collective conscience has not yet formed, although it is forming. We have had to go against the currents of popular opinion rather than with them. But in our campaigns for good roads we found aid in an unexpected quarter.

“Do you know what has helped to awaken our people to the imperative necessity of decent highways? It might interest you to know. All classes of our people patronize the cinema. On the screen they saw fine cars flitting over smooth highways, bearing well-dressed persons swiftly from place to

place. In remote neighborhoods the demand arose for such North American roads as our citizens saw pictured in the theater.”

Again he said:

“Certain atavic ignorances and superstitions inherent in our race have operated against us. With these fetishes, as with more tangible and definite oppositions, we have had to contend. We have had to give honor and dignity to work, to make men feel that work is honorable and is dignified—that honest labor honestly performed pays dividends where vain oratory and the music of fine meaningless words pay none. We have to break down the barriers that hedged in an almost feudalistic group, a land-owning aristocracy which feared the loss of its ancient privileges. We are breaking down these barriers without undermining the financial fabric of this country—and that’s not easy.”

And toward the close of the interview he said:

“Here at least is one South American country which wholeheartedly is friendly to the United States. There may be others who are genuinely friendly to you. I know we are. We are grateful for the enormous aid in development of our resources which in the past has come to us from the North where you live. We need the money you are lending us and the constructive brains you are sending us. We welcome the investors and the organizers who come here. The bugaboo of ‘Yankee Imperialism’ does not frighten Peruvians.

“And let me add this: I am honestly convinced that the anti-American propaganda which flourishes in some of the geographical divisions of this continent is not a spontaneous propaganda but is inspired and financed by certain of your business rivals in other parts of the world—in short, by those who are jealous and resentful of your growing commercial relations with these republics down here below the equator.

“Here in Peru we are greedy to have better acquaintance with you North Americans. I hope in turn that North Americans may increasingly desire to know what we have to offer in entertainment for the visitor and in opportunities for development. There is a profound ignorance on both sides. In some ways we are very close together—North and South America—and in other ways we still seem so far apart. Well, we must cure all that.”

I cannot put it too forcibly: If you are seeking for what is engaging in the life of a people or for what is fecund in auguries of big things coming or yet bigger things to come afterward, or for what is heavy with promise for an

infinitely richer development of artistic and creative impulses—literary and otherwise—than this people heretofore have experienced, Lima, I'm sure, will satisfy you.

Yes, I'll use a stronger word: I'm sure Lima will enthrall you. You must come to realize here as you will come to realize almost anywhere else in Peru, or in fact almost anywhere in South America, that the wealth of the land both on the cultural side and the material side hardly has been tapped.

You hear the breathing of only half-awakened giant forces, some still entombed in the earth, some already pointing and sharpening the creative faculties of the race. Mañana-land no longer is content to drowse in the sunshine. The old Land of Do-It-Tomorrow is transforming into the new Land of Start-It-Today.

I'm not trying to be epigrammatic; I'm not even trying to be prophetic. Merely I'm trying to put into words the impulses I could feel astir all about me.

Here on the West Coast the chances for rich and previously untapped markets for Yankee-made goods are obvious even to a man who is himself not concerned with business affairs. So many elements contribute to the agreeable situation—the fact that the cultural influence of Europe is not so overwhelmingly strong as on the Atlantic side; the fact that, generally, the people are friendlier to North American ideas and less suspicious of North American ideals than are some of their easterly neighbors; the fact that so much reasonably accessible territory still awaits the commercial developer; any number of lesser facts and factors.

Here, for example, is one possibility for expansion which was outlined in my hearing by a distinguished international authority on industrial relations.

It has been claimed that in our own country the automobile market is nearing the point of saturation. The South American cities are crowded with Yankee-made automobiles, the percentage of domestic cars as against all European cars ranging from about eighty-five to ninety-six. But the South American countryside lacks good highways. Once you pass beyond the city suburbs, you encounter indifferent dirt roads. Increase the facilities for traveling and the demand for cars increases in equal or greater proportion.

Out of a very high quarter, the suggestion has been advanced that if the automobile interests of the United States could see their way clear to financing bond issues for the building of adequate systems of linked-up

highways in such a country as Peru, for instance, their underwriting activities would be welcomed by the government—that much is known; the interest payments and the ultimate retirement of their bonds would be guaranteed, and the market for their products would be greatly enlarged.

That is merely one concrete and specific illustration as drawn from a great conglomerate of merchandising opportunities. Already we sell to South America nearly all its automobiles and trucks and busses. We sell it a great share of its purely utilitarian appliances and structural supplies and manufacturing equipments. Some judges who are conversant with the needs of the South Americans think that we should sell the West Coasters the bulk of their ready-made garments, their luxuries, their articles of convenience and adornment, and that we could sell all these to them, provided our manufacturers in increasing number would send thither representatives endowed with the patience and the tact to study the prospective buyers' commercial ways and customs.

Looking back on it all now, I can think of but one item wherein Lima disappointed me. As all students of our national psychology admit, the Anglo-Saxon is never at a loss for casual conversation with the casual acquaintance so long as he has, to fall back on, two subjects for comparison and discussion. When all else fails, he talks about the weather and, that absorbing topic being exhausted, he talks about what he had for breakfast—better still, what he likes to have for breakfast.

But what, I ask you—what is he going to do in a town where they never have any weather and nobody eats breakfast—unless you impiously would apply that noble title to a cup of black coffee and a roll, which, lacking tools, can be pried open only by one of these talented parlor magicians who tear a pack of cards in two with their fingers?

We bade the Peruvian mainland a reluctant adieu after we had seen Arequipa, down the shore line a short two days' run from Lima. On its own merits Arequipa is distinctly worth while. To reach it, you must go into the harbor of Mollendo by launch or rowboat over the lusty, slick-backed ground-swells from where the steamer lies at anchor in the roadstead half a mile out, and then, having been hoisted in a chair-sling to the dock, you board a train of clean, comfortable day coaches, and for one hundred and seven miles until you come to Arequipa, seven thousand feet and more above sea-level, you climb up, up the haunches of the mountains on a breath-taking journey.

Scenically, every inch of it has something to offer—plains as bleak as Sahara, cultivated valleys as green and rich as Eden's garden, glimpses of the ocean—that's at first; yawning cañons most brilliantly mottled; snow-pollled peaks, distant glistening glaciers, wide stretches which in certain lights are banded with blending rainbow colors like the Painted Desert of Arizona; and at the last Arequipa, a quaint town, an old-fashioned town, a very Spanish town which is snuggled into a verdant cleft on the pocked face of the Andes, with the exquisitely symmetrical Mount Misti at its back, and almost equally beautiful and equally impressive mountains to right and to left, and on beyond, until they melt into the cloud mists, still other mountains past counting.

Before you get there, at a point approximately midway between the city and its outlet at Mollendo, you meet the justly renowned walking and talking sand dunes of La Joya. This feature alone is worth the price of admission.

Here is a considerable plateau floored with a coarse brownish lava grit too heavy to be stirred by ordinary winds, and scattered over this surface are countless heaps of light, ash-colored sand. In size they vary from babies no more than five feet tall and perhaps thirty feet across, to big fellows that tower twenty feet aloft and measure one hundred feet from tip to tip. You must measure them from tip to tip because every dune, regardless of its bulk, is a perfect crescent shape, smoothly rounded on its back, delicately incurved at the front.

It is so shaped for the reason that the breezes blow always from a given direction, with the result that the grains are constantly being stroked up the convex side and over the crest to drift down the hollowed side of the half-moon. And they travel, all of course in the same direction, at a rate of from forty to sixty feet per annum or a trifle faster than a Canal Zone bell-hop. Sometimes, especially at dawn, there is heard a sound like the noise of faraway drums, and that is the voice of billions of particles eddying along the fluted caves of these *mendanos*, as the Peruvians call them. But there was no conversation going on while we passed through.

At Arequipa we met the first llamas we'd ever seen outside a menagerie. These llamas were fulfilling their natural and ordained function as beasts of burden.

You know—you must know—the marvelous fact about the llama? Put exactly a hundred pounds of weight upon him and he carries it all day without a murmur. Put one extra ounce—one puny, trifling ounce—more

than that hundred pounds on his patient back and he lies right down in his tracks and hopes he may die if he'll move an inch until the load is lightened. There is only one drawback to this universally praised evidence of a poor dumb beast's incredibly accurate sagacity, and that is that there isn't a dog-goned word of truth in it.

Arequipa being so Spanish in practically all its outward aspects, Palmer thought we ought to show our familiarity with the customs of the motherland overseas. He said in southern Spain when you met some pretty girls it was regarded as the proper thing to address a flowery compliment to them; he said they expected it and were disappointed if you failed to utter it. He recalled one favorite remark: "Blessed be the mothers that bore you!" So we picked out a couple of handsome candidates and we sidled up and as they came abreast of us we said it together in our best Spanish.

But the thing was a total failure. The young ladies' expressions showed that they were still being bored.

## *Chapter Four*

### *YOU'D LIKE CHILE*

Making use of a somewhat timeworn but graphic bit of slang, and taking into consideration the physical shape of the country and its immediate prospects, you might say that Chile is the shoe string which is destined to grow into the tannery.

It stretches along the West Coast like a frayed and narrow ribbon. Its meridian length—that's not including the bays and the outjuts—is considerably more than twenty-five hundred miles. Its greatest breadth, measuring from the interior boundary on the crest of the Andes to tide marks, is two hundred and twenty-eight miles. Its average width, though, is only eighty-seven miles.

By reason of this geography and this topography, by reason also of the influences of the Humboldt Current and the trade winds, and what with a lofty altitude at one side of the divide and a total lack of evaporating surface on the other—but we won't go into that now because it would take me all day to tell about it and then I'd probably be wrong—northwestern Chile is a moistureless expanse, whereas in its southern parts stretching on down to the extreme tip of the Fuegian archipelago, it's cloud-bursting 'most all the time. So you can have your pick of practically any variety of climate you crave—hot and dry, or balmy and dampish, or wet and cold and exceedingly breezy.

There is the desert where nothing grows except through artificial stimulation by difficult irrigation. There is a great central valley lying between the mountains and the foothills that front on the Pacific, and here you find fine cities and fruitful farms and noble vineyards and gorgeous orchards and all the products of a temperate zone. There is next a considerable area of lakes and steamy dense forests where plenty of rain falls, and below this, in turn, you strike the real old Cape Horn weather, and nobody yet has had a really kind word for the sort of weather they have around Cape Horn.

So if you labor under the delusion that all Latin-Americans take a siesta in the shade after luncheon, and wish to follow the custom of the country, you should pick your locality with some care. Otherwise you'll either be

sunburnt to a deep magenta in twenty minutes or else, as in the case of a sound sleeper, you'll probably drown before you can wake up.

However, there is no valid reason why you should labor for long under that delusion. The Chilean isn't given to the languid siesta thing; not so you'd notice it. They call him the Yankee of South America.

If by that they mean to imply that he has energy and snap and the determination to get ahead in this world, the title is deserved. He is an up-and-coming chap who keeps both eyes open and both feet on the ground and unless this amateur observer's calculations are entirely wrong, his republic will, before so very long, be one of the most talked-about and thought-about republics of either hemisphere. And what a whale of a market it should make for Yankee merchandisers—if so be they watch their step and mind their *P's* and *Q's*.

Regardless of what cultural and political development the future may have in store for the Chilean, these things already are true of him: He is shrewd and strideful and aggressive in business. He is a stout and gallant fighter, none stouter or more gallant; what his army, and more especially his navy did in the War of the Pacific proved that. He is cockily proud of himself and of his race and his language.

Out of his own nature and out of his environment he has wrought a strong and assertive nationalism, so that there is no confusing a Chilean with a citizen of any one of the neighboring countries. In short and in fine, and any way you take him, the Chilean is quite a person and our business men and our political leaders would do well to cultivate his acquaintance more closely than they have in the past.

Assuming that you follow the route which we followed, you will stand close in and pass by a seemingly endless and for the most part a tenantless strip before you reach Valparaiso, which is the water gate to Santiago, which is the heart and capital and the metropolis of Chile. But for us the cruising was not in the least monotonous. Because of the frequent stops at the nitrate ports and the copper ports, and because of what happened on board while the steamer was paying each call, this tail end of the long ride from Panama southward took on quite a holiday aspect.

The program rarely varied. The ship, swinging shoreward where an indent in the land made a harbor of sorts, would bring up and halt half a mile or so out, there to lie heaving to the inevitable ground swell for a day or maybe half a day.

Yonder on the sun-baked, dusty rise above the huddled wharves and docks, lay the town, its houses flat and ugly and characterless, its dull fabrics merging into the dun and sterile slope against which it was plastered. Here and there were feeble-looking little splotches of green where some ambitious citizen with a precious trickle of prisoned mountain water had coaxed a debilitated tree or a sickly vine to live; and these made you think of scraps of wilted spinach garnishing a most scorched and overdone beefsteak.

Wealth, tremendous wealth in mineral resources from the heights above and behind, has poured and will continue to pour out of these lone lorn coves but beauty doesn't abide hereabouts. Beauty rarely does abide in the spots where man wrests her richness from the patient earth.

Before the anchor chains were out, a whole flotilla of tugs and launches and bumboats were alongside us, the tugs towing barges for lightening cargo off or cargo on, the launches bearing visitors to us and—if the owners had luck—to make the trip pay double profits by taking passengers ashore, the rowboats oared by venders of caged song-birds and parrots or fruits or furs or native weaves or what-not. And oh, the bumping and the crowding and the jockeying and the bickering and the geysers of fluent Spanish profanity about the bottoms of the lowered gangways!

Unless the port were a port of size, such as Antofagasta is, we tourists exhausted its sightseeing possibilities in half an hour or so. We briefly examined one such town in which for years and years there have been six Anglo-Saxon residents. There were six of them at the beginning and there are still six. Think of what six Belgian hares would have been able to accomplish in that time!

And there was another town where I venture to say that after spending half a day you'd have been glad to run into Grover Cleveland Bergdoll. Need I say more?

With the reek of the nitrates still in our noses or with our imaginations daunted by the task of trying to compute the value in dollars of the slabs and billets of raw copper which we had seen piled for shipment, we would return out of the bleak streets, having at least stretched our legs, and be ferried back to the boat to find her filled with strange faces and strange voices and an atmosphere of gaiety and high spirits pervading her upper decks.

For, while we were ashore, the English-speaking residents, men, women, children and babes in arms, had been scurrying aboard. Here for them was brief opportunity for contact with the life in the lands whence they came.

There was something pathetic in the eagerness with which these exiled Nordics swarmed up our side; something comic, too, about the rapidity with which tea parties and cocktail parties and impromptu dancing parties formed. And at once the orchestra would be playing reminiscent airs by some popular composer.

And the captain and the officers would be circulating busily the while they extended the hospitalities of the ship to all and sundry. And in the bar the Japanese boys were working the shakers overtime. And oh, how reluctantly the local troop went down the laddered gangway when the blast that gave warning of imminent departure roared out of our whistle valves.

Lacking the variations in accent to guide us, it still would have been possible to distinguish one of our breed from one of the English breed among these transient guests of ours. The Yankee looked forward to the day when he would be summoned back to the States; the Englishman was afraid that some day he'd have to go back where he came from.

Both, secretly, might be homesick; both probably were; but the difference was that the Englishman, having worked up to a post of responsibility and importance here, knew if ever he were recalled to the home office he must sink back into the so-called middle class from which he had escaped, whereas the American, having no caste prejudices to hamper him, craved the promotion which would land him in a better berth at headquarters. Anyhow, that's how I diagnosed the run of the two groups.

Up the line we took on one Englishman of seemingly enormous consequence, a person who plainly was not of the head-clerk type at all but instead was of the gentry; probably the resident grand mogul for some big British nitrate concession or some big British copper company. We didn't have to hear him speak in order to know this; we had only to look at his luggage.

He was going down the coast to spend a week-end, I think, so about all he brought out with him in the way of luggage was one skiff-load, including portable tea caddy, shawl roll, seven or eight bags, gun carrier, hatbox, framed steel engraving of the "Death of Lord Nelson"—we figured it for that—spat case, walking stick with collapsible seat for a handle and probably designed originally for use while watching pork-pie hunts at dear old Molton-Mobray, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

To Antofagasta, which is by way of being a thriving small city, water is carried down by pipes from the mountains of Bolivia. Also in places the lifeless soil has been scooped away and the excavation filled with earth

brought in sailing-ships from the south of Chile, hundreds of miles away. The result of this tremendous undertaking is that handsome public gardens and a series of green plazas adorn what otherwise would be a shadeless community on the verge of an utter desolation. It's a characteristic exhibition of Chilean pluck and Chilean enterprise.

It was at Antofagasta that we made the acquaintance of the edible whiskered sea-urchin. Before leaving his native element the edible whiskered sea-urchin resembles a meat-ball whose mother, at a critical period, was badly frightened by the House of David baseball team. In that state he carries in a convenient orifice in his tum-tum a tenant or lodger, the same being a little, fat, dark-gray crab with large soft-blue Irish eyes.

Being captured, he is turned over to the official executioner, who pries into his bristle-covered surface with a special tool and dispossesses the boarder from her snug retreat, taking care not to damage her in the operation, and then slices off the urchin's pale pink feelers. These are served raw, with lemon and vinegar, to the customer and on the plate with them, poor little homeless Colleen Bawn is brought along for proof that the old boy was alive and in good health up to the moment of his decease.

Some native epicures like to eat her while she's still kicking. But, being beginners, we didn't go that far. We let her scuttle off to safety while we tried the main delicacy.

But not with any great enthusiasm, I must confess. We were able to control our appetites. A feeler, on being prodded with the fork, would shrink slightly, and when you got it in your mouth it seemed to wriggle a little, but perhaps that was just my morbid fancy. Be that as it may, I got one bite down and now I am able to report what a sea-urchin tastes like. It tastes like a sea-urchin.

But the Chilean lobster tastes like an angel. You may order him anywhere, boiled, broiled or cooked most appetizingly according to a tricky local recipe, and along with him a wide range of equally delicious sea foods. And the Chilean cherry is something to write home about and eke the Chilean grapes and likewise the wines which are made from those grapes.

I think it was at Antofagasta that we heard about the pressed-tin chandeliers. It is a tale which has become traditional, dating to the bygone day's when North American manufacturers paid less attention to the needs and the demands of their South American patrons than they do now.

Up in the remoter interior towns there was a vogue for these gaudy, glittery gas chandeliers; there still is, for that matter. So, from away back somewhere in the hinterland of Bolivia a dealer ordered, through a Yankee port agent, one dozen of a certain specified and unusually ornate type of light-metal chandelier. The correspondent in turn transmitted the order to the factory in Connecticut or New Jersey or wherever it was, adding specific instructions as to packing and boxing.

But the smart young efficiency expert in charge of exports was not to be swept off his feet by the foolish whims of a poor nut in the back country. What was good enough for Gallipolis or Mobile was good enough for any foreign sucker that ever lived; thus with himself he reasoned. Accordingly he put those twelve fragile gold-bright chandeliers in pasteboard cartons and consigned them on their long journey.

A steamer carried them for a matter of several thousand miles to Antofagasta. Then, in rope hoists they were lifted out of the hold and, with the hearty good will which ever characterizes the manipulators of rope hoists on steamships, were dumped down into a lighter. The lighter took them to the dock and again in slings they were heaved up to the dock and slammed upon the planking.

After that they rode for a while on a mountain railroad, changing cars several times, and then on mule-back over a rocky trail, and then for another precipitous stretch on the backs of llamas and—well, anyhow, to make a long and painful story short, when they finally reached their destination they were entirely unsuited for chandeliering purposes but would come in handy any time somebody was going to help celebrate a tin wedding and wanted some suitable confetti to throw at the happy couple.

That sort of thing couldn't happen now, our business men having learned their lesson, but it does seem to me that entirely outside the widening fields of our commercial dealings with these West Coast lands, there still remain opportunities for further expansion which have been neglected and which might respond to the sort of stimulation at which we are supposed to be past masters. For example, the football match is the favorite sport of the young men. The English brought football hither and it took an immediate hold on the fancies of the peoples. But why hasn't baseball been introduced?

I'm willing to lay a small wager that if the dealers in sporting goods had the forethought to send two picked teams of big-league players on a hippodroming tour of South America to play games in every principal city, the result would be an enormous broadening in the markets for their wares.

I'm sure the theatrical speed, the fire, the shifting drama of baseball would appeal to the South Americans, just as it has appealed to the Cubans and the Japanese and the Filipinos.

And if I were an architect of swimming pools—there must be swimming-pool architects—or if I were a professional builder of swimming pools, I'd likewise look over the South American prospect before I was many months older. They're going in rather extensively for swimming pools down there—swimming pools for clubs and for schools and for wealthy private individuals. I was told that the influence of the movies is responsible for that vogue, too.

Here are two suggested items; an industrial statistician or a live consular agent could name you fifty others. Indeed, you scarcely can think of a standard line of Yankee-made products which could not find, as so many of them already have found, a broadened market below the equator.

One of the numerous errors regarding South Americans under which we labor here in the northern continent is that since their ancestors had a common origin on the Iberian peninsula, they must still be alike, no matter what political divisions may divide them into separate countries now. As a matter of fact, the typical Argentinean isn't at all like, let us say, the typical Uruguayan, and, of course, the Brazilian, being of Portuguese descent, is in all racial ways dissimilar to any South American of Spanish antecedents.

To one traveling as we did from Peru into Chile, this distinction as between the peoples of these adjoining republics is especially marked. The difference starts at the bottom and goes right up through the social strata to the top.

Take the Roto; by the way, that's not short for Rotarian. The Roto is the laborer, the peasant, the bearer of burdens. Sometimes he is of mixed blood, part Spanish, part aborigine, but more often he is of unmixed Spanish stock. About him there is no whit of the hopeless beaten look one sees in the Indian peon of Peru. He neither is resigned to his lot nor, apparently, is he rebellious of it.

On his stout back he takes things as they come. He is a hard worker and—on occasion—a hard drinker. Hence the stringent laws against, and stiff punishment for intoxication in the cities. On slight provocation he grabs his Rotocita and breaks into his native dance.

This dance has a name which an Anglo-Saxon's stiff tongue pronounces as if it were spelled "Quaker." But there is nothing about it to suggest that

one of William Penn's boys first thought it up. On the contrary—oh, very much on the contrary. I would say that the much-vaunted tango of the Argentine must have been invented by a couple of chafed letter carriers, but a public dance hall on a back street in a Chilean town is no place for a lady to take a nervous husband.

In Lima you find plenty of Old World touches in architecture and in the ways of the people. But Valparaiso is as modern as fresh paint and so, in only slightly lesser degree, is Santiago. Both of them are kept amazingly and beautifully immaculate too—regular Spotless Towns they are.

However, the same thing may be said for any important city in every important South American country that was visited by us, and we visited five such countries. Uniformly it is as clean as the average city of like size in the United States or in England or in Germany. Invariably it is cleaner and has a better smell to it than any corresponding city in Italy or Spain or France. Its street cars are clean; its railroad trains are clean; its alleyways are tidy.

Valparaiso claims for itself the finest panoramic setting on the continent. Here I would rate Rio as first for any continent, but certainly Valparaiso, on its merits holds second place in South America. Scenically it is superb, lying as it does in a sweeping natural amphitheater. Its toes are in the salt water but its head is in the mist on the mountains. That's not trying to be poetic, that's trying to be literal.

It is a new city and looks the part. The great earthquake of 1906 rocked it into shards. The gritty inhabitants immediately set to and rebuilt it on extravagantly handsome lines. It is a great seaport, a naval base, a tremendously popular summer resort for residents of the superheated interior. Location and environment, and a climate which would turn a Floridian or a Californian as green with envy as a string bean, make of it a combination of shipping point, distributing center, market place and playground.

I think the handsomest villas I ever saw are in its waterside suburb of Viña del Mar. The Sporting Club is a model for the world. Horse-racing, polo, football, cricket, tennis, riding, aquatic sports—they're all here, and all, in their seasons, heavily patronized. The hotels are excellent; the food is marvelous in its variety and its excellence.

In the city proper, the names on the shop fronts attest the cosmopolitanism of the population; the jam and roar of traffic over the principal streets bespeak prosperity and activity; the presence of plenty of

municipal guards, most trimly uniformed and drilled to a high efficiency, proves that the civic fathers know what they are about. The Chilean cops are not only the most smartly dressed cops on the entire hemisphere but they are the snappiest in their movements, and the politest. It must be a positive pleasure to be arrested by one of these boys.

Santiago, lying one hundred and sixteen miles inland on the Mapocho River is, in many ways, a duplication of Valparaiso on a much larger and a more luxurious scale. For both of them it may be said that they are alive and that they are alert and—alas!—more or less standardized. The regimentating influence which, thanks to rapid transit and the radio and the movies—but most of all to the movies—has laid hold on the greater part of the civilized globe, is doing its work away down yonder, too.

Indeed, I think it is because in their present temper the people of the A B C republics are so avid to seize on and to adapt unto themselves whatever is in other lands regarded as fashionable and desirable, that these new mass ideas are more quickly welcomed by them than by their fellow mortals in certain older countries. They have a sensitive pride in themselves and in their tribal institutions and in their growing literary and artistic development, yet at the same time lack the pride—and the foresight—to advertise and to exploit their native commercial products on their merits as such.

This readiness to imitate imported wares, this impulse to deprecate what good material things their own people have evolved, is, I'd say, one outstanding defect in the South American temperament. I believe time will cure it, though—time and the attitude of the tourist trade demanding souvenirs produced by domestic craftsmanship.

At any rate, the Santiago scene is much the scene to be observed in any modern metropolis. The women, some of them, may have the melancholy faces which we associate with the Spanish, but they follow the styles in dress which their sisters in Europe and North America follow with so sheeplike a devotion. The only long skirts I saw in Santiago were worn by the clergy, and I'm sure the sight of a mantilla on a shopping street there would create as distinct a sensation as it would on Broadway.

You sit in one of the squares, and the familiar shapes of North American-made cars and taxicabs and busses flash unendingly past, carrying passengers who, so far as their costumes go, could have arrived but yesterday from Fifth Avenue or Fourteenth Street, as the case might be. Bobbed-haired maidens and slick-haired youths promenade past, just as they would in Central Park or on Michigan Boulevard.

Through the trees along the footpaths go bounding sinewy athletes in shorts, wearing the harassed look so customary among members of track teams everywhere—the look of young men who have just remembered where they left their pants and are now hurrying back for them. English sparrows are chipping in the street. Voices speaking German, voices speaking Italian, mingle with voices speaking Spanish.

Across the way is a huge department store, the replica of just such a department store as you have seen in London. But the smart little specialty shop in its shadow might have been transported bodily from Paris. The big restaurant next door is as German as Berlin. Let me interpolate here the fact that Santiago has two of the best restaurants in the world—one featuring German dishes, the other specializing in a glorified French-Spanish cuisine.

The prevalent architecture of the long row of fine stone residences on up the sweeping boulevard unmistakably is borrowed Romanesque. That big cinema palace on the corner surely belongs in New York, and the film which it is showing today has just been received from Hollywood. The lottery hard by is South American, though. Wherever you go in South America there's a lottery shop hard by.

Howsomever, by what I've just said I'd not have you think Santiago lacks for an individuality essentially its own. The universal courtesy of the people—for these people have become efficient without surrendering their gracious manners; the two baby mountains, tropically wooded, which jump up right out of the midriff of the municipality; the surrounding terrain which, being exceedingly green in some spots and exceedingly sterile in other spots, is strikingly reminiscent of southern California; the feel of an ambitious striving for betterment and growth—all these help to create that mysterious thing called atmosphere.

At present a heavy percentage of the revenue of Chile is derived from her nitrate beds and her copper mines; these being largely in the hands of North American and British concessionaries. But those who should know say the day is approaching and is not so very far off, either, when her greatest sources of income will be yielded up out of agriculture and lumber and cattle and the like.

This prediction is predicated on the steadily increasing agrarian development in the heavily timbered lake districts of the south-central area where the soil, once it is cleared for the plowman and the rancher, shows an amazing productivity. It is into this belt that a highly desirable type of European labor is flowing.

In common with her neighboring republics, Chile has sanely devised ordinances governing immigration. By rational systemization settlers are drawn from various countries, notably Germany and northern Italy. Preference is given to sturdy, hard-working, law-abiding breeds. For such as these, special concessions are extended and a measure of public aid sometimes is advanced. At the same time, steps are taken to bar out the turbulent and the unfit and the weaklings.

There is nothing paternalistic about the process. The administration holds by the intelligent theory that a little help in the way of cash advances and land allotments for the prospective colonist at the beginning will shortly be yielding dividends of the most substantial character by the development of lands now untenanted and untilled, and by the incorporation into the social fabric of an orderly, progressive and industrious class of citizens whose progeny will intermingle their blood with the Latin strains to the ultimate betterment of all concerned.

I was told that extensive areas have become pretty well impregnated with Germanic influences. The prospect appears particularly to appeal to Teutonic home-seekers. These newcomers bring with them the German's instinctive love for orderliness, for regularity, for self-control, for group education; which qualities, being interfused with the inherited Spanish traits of the older ethnological stocks, should produce a race at once practical and romantic, a people energetic in their habits but having impulse and inclination for a high cultural development.

Even to the casual observer it seems certain that with these yeasty, forceful ferments at work Chile, despite her smaller population and her lesser area as compared with the Argentine and Brazil, is destined to become one of the most powerful and progressive republics in the whole world, as already she is one of the strongest of the New World. It is time for the rest of us to quit thinking of these South American nations as nations wherein the political destinies of the masses lie at the mercy of demagogic leaders and military upstarts, where revolutions and uprisings ripen like bananas, where toy governments are set up only to be knocked down again.

Especially is it time to quit thinking after this fashion of Chile. In all her history as a self-functioning country, Chile has had precisely as many civil wars as we ourselves have had—which is to say, one. And, speaking offhand, I would say that at this writing Chilean institutions seem to be about as solidly based as our own; and going still further, I also would say that, in the cities and the towns which I visited, I judge that a man is just as

safe in the possession of his life, liberty, limbs and pocketbook as he would be in any city or any town of like size in the United States—maybe safer.

Furthermore, here a courteous and rarely failing consideration for the stranger, a sort of natural politeness and a natural gentility appear to be the common attributes of practically all classes. We had been warned in advance that the Chilean was more inclined to rudeness and brusqueness than his fellow Latin-Americans. We did not find it so.

I heard of one incident illuminative of patience and forbearance under strong provocation which reflects highly upon the Chilean temperament. I do not vouch for the truth of the tale but, as it was thrice repeated in my hearing by three separate English-speaking residents none of whom could be accused of anti-Yankee bias, it had at least plausibility. However, so far as I know, the story never before has been printed either in Chile or elsewhere.

When the Hoover party, in December, 1928, reached Valparaiso the town of course was on its best behavior and in its best bib and tucker to welcome its principal guest, our President-elect and his family and his traveling companions. By the same token, the crew of the battleship which had brought him this far likewise were under strict discipline. But after the Hoovers and their entourage and the press group had departed for the interior, the Utah remained in port a short time and then it was, or so I was told, that a few high-spirited bluejackets rather went on the loose one night, no doubt being encouraged by the still tolerant attitude of the authorities and the citizens toward the sailors of a friendly power.

According to my information, a roistering band of gobs figured that it would be indeed a quaint conceit to fall upon one of the local traffic cops and take his sword and his pistol and his baton away from him. Then, emboldened by his smiling docility under this mishandling, the merry-makers decided that it would round out and polish off the joke to perfection did they likewise relieve him of his uniform—which they did, leaving him to proceed to his barracks in the embarrassing state of being peeled right down to his undies.

According to one version, a second cop was subsequently subjected to the same treatment. Officially, nothing came of the affair; the police heads did not report the indignity to the commander of our war vessel and in that same quarter an effort was made to hush the whole thing up.

Let us try to picture the same happening with a domestic setting: Assume that a Chilean cruiser came to New York bearing a Chilean President-elect on a good-will tour, and assume that following his reception

a squad of frolicking Chilean sailors on shore leave and in a mood of joyous abandon should undertake to strip a Broadway cop of his weapons and outer raiment. Can you imagine what that outraged cop would do? Can't you hear the night-stick crunching on those whimsical Chilean skulls? Can't you catch the clamor of the gong on the ambulance coming to gather up the casualties? Can't you see the list of injured and missing in next morning's paper?

At the same time permit me, by way of friendly warning, to add that what happened last winter in Valparaiso should not be taken as a blanket invitation for Yankee sailors while visiting that port under different circumstances to go and do what their compatriots are alleged to have gone and done. The average Chilean policeman may be somewhat under-statured but he makes up in spunk and sinewy development what he lacks in height and girth. So, any rollicking seafaring lad of ours who feels that he just must emulate the historic example here recorded would be well advised to spend his spare hours beforehand practicing holding a lily in the hand.

Coming down the coast, somebody had told me that the most limpidly-flowing Spanish was spoken by the Peruvians, but it struck me that the language of the Chileans was every whit as liquid and as musical. One afternoon during a motor trip the driver of our car picked up at the roadside a fledgling song-bird which had fallen from the nest or had been forgotten by its mother or something.

A mile or so farther along we gave the tiny frightened foundling to a little peasant girl and the flood of endearing, bird-like sounds which she poured upon her captive might well have been words which the birdling knew. At any rate, the small creature quit fluttering and settled down contentedly in the cup of the child's eager warm palms.

It was in Chile that Bill Hogg qualified as a master of modern tongues. We had along with us at that time another member of the party who was reputed to speak the purest Spanish—the tongue of the *grandees* and the *hidalgos* of old Castile. But when he undertook to interview a waiter or a cabman or a porter, there seemed to be a bar against a perfect understanding somewhere in the negotiations. I reckon the trouble was that so few of the waiters and the cabmen of South America are Castilian *ex-grandees*.

Whenever such an impasse occurred, that was the signal for Mr. Bill Hogg to step forward and take charge of the debate. His special vocabulary consisted, as I have said, of about fifty words of pidgin-Mexicanese which he had acquired along the Texas boundary in the days of his youth, but such

was the force of his personality, such his wealth of gestures, that never once did he fail to get satisfactory responses.

“Bonos notches,” he would say, with a sweeping bow, at parting, and the party of the second part would realize that Bill was bidding him a kind good night. Or he would request the taxicab man to convey us to a “fiasco” and the latter would take us direct to the nearest dance hall. But that was easily fathomed—in almost any land, that which is advertised as a fiesta is likely to turn out a bust.

Once, in Buenos Aires, he delivered himself of a pantomime so graphic, with a few misbegotten nouns so effectively interspersed, that the waiter instantly caught his meaning and presently returned to us proudly bearing exactly what we desired; namely, helpings of barbecued lamb for Bill and me, and as a special order for Mr. Dean Palmer, our compatriot—who among ourselves was now known as the Ultimate Consumer—a shote sandwich, consisting of one roast suckling pig between two slices of baker’s bread. Mr. Palmer was especially fond of a shote sandwich before retiring.

But I still think Bill’s crowning linguistic triumph was reached on the hot afternoon in Montevideo when he craved a double order of ice cream, which down there goes under the general name of “*helardos*,” and got it by the simple expedient of holding up two fingers and singing out to the attendant: “Hey, bo, dose halitosis!”

My one criticism of the Spanish language is that it does not lend itself to short cuts as our harsher, more guttural and infinitely less melodic mother tongue does. As an instance of this I beg leave to spread upon the minutes the record of a most moving and vivid passage which I encountered on the menu of a restaurant in a suburb just outside Santiago.

This restaurant was German-owned but rather went in for American food, so the proprietor got up his bill of fare in a double-barreled design. The left-hand column was devoted to a list of the dishes of the tray printed in English. The parallel column carried the same list translated into Spanish.

On the noonday when we were giving this establishment our patronage, one of the dainties particularly recommended was that ancient and honorable standby of the North American rabbit-fiend, to wit: “Golden buck.” My eye strayed to the corresponding entry on the Spanish side of the docket and was held spellbound by a sentence of considerable length. I do not guarantee the spelling—the printer hadn’t done so—but, in full, that pregnant paragraph read as follows: “*Tostado Avierto de Queso Derretiro con Hueva Escalfados*,” which, by free interpretation, might be said to mean:

“Disarranged Cheese Openly Arrived At on Toast in Connection with a Poached Egg,” or words to that general effect. Highly illustrative, you’ll concede, and fully explanatory but not terse, not condensed.

I’d love to read the flood of literature which would ensue any time the conscientious word-painter who achieved that descriptive outburst undertook to wrestle with chop suey.

## *Chapter Five*

### *LOOKING IN ON THE ARGENTINE*

To go out of Chile into the Argentine is rather like going at one jump from southern California to western Nebraska by way of the Grand Cañon, the Royal Gorge, Yellowstone Park or what-have-you! For jumbled-together scenic contrasts and abrupt changes, both climatic and altitudinal, I'm sure there is no stretch of topography on the planet to equal the stretch which may be covered by rail between the time you leave Santiago on a morning and the time you chug into Buenos Aires late the next afternoon.

You arrive so surcharged with stored-up thrills that for days you go about burbling forth feeble and totally inadequate attempts at describing what you saw during that incredible journey and especially that part of it which you saw while boring through the lofty gap of the Continental Divide—that magic gateway which, like Mohammed's coffin, sits up in the clouds of the sky.

Terrestrial marvels cannot be described by word of mouth, anyhow, or, for the matter of that, by word of pen. Millions on billions of humans have tried it but I doubt whether anybody ever really succeeded in making the picture at second hand a true likeness.

And what are you going to do, with only eighty or ninety thousand adjectives and nouns and things in the dictionary to rely on, after you have seen—and all within the scope of a few hours—so many terrestrial marvels shuttling past with such kaleidoscopic and scene-shifting rapidity that the brain balks at the mere task of keeping tally on them? All you can do is sit down and call for help. That's what I'm doing now.

For myself, I only can state that never in my wanderings to and fro in the world have I had so breath-taking and mind-daunting an experience. Colorful? My good Lordy, yes! Terrific? All of that. Stupefying in the limitless magnificence of its scope? You tell 'em. Eminences that lose themselves in the swim of the high heavens, and abysses that sink to seemingly bottomless depths in the general direction of Hades? Any number of either. For a summing-up let it go at that.

From my memories of that trip on the transandean route, one particular image sticks up. We came upon it just after we had crossed the summit of

the riven-out pass, eleven thousand feet up, and were approaching the curiously symmetrical natural bridge called Puente del Inca.

On my left a great serrated pinnacle of a peak, naked and sharp, rose to the everlasting frost line. Immediately under that snowy, icy cap was a triangular outcrop of exactly the same dazzling and incandescent green that you see on the neck of a mallard drake; and below that, in turn, was a second belting which, by reason of another freak in the mineral stain, resembled in hue and roughly in shape a vast, tawny panther's pelt.

These were not softened, pastel tones; they were vivid and strong. But all the visible rest of that mountain, except for its poll, which was glacially white and glary, and except for its base, which fell away into deep purplish mists a mile beneath us, was as gray as you please.

I looked on the spectacle until a turn of the train on its winding roadbed wiped it out, and in a dazed sort of way I said to myself that that one view had been amply sufficient for any and all of my emotional demands. So I went on into the dining-car for the table-d'hôte dinner, and a powerfully good dinner it was, too, with about seven or eight different meat dishes on the menu, not including the fish, the cold game and the caviar, as is the prodigal South American custom.

Next morning when I was roused up and looked out of my window, I had a sensational jolt. The transition from mountains to prairies had taken place while I slept but to me, on waking, it seemed so very sudden. We were crossing the famed pampas, that tremendous terrace which by imperceptible gentle degrees slopes downward and eastward from the foothills of the Andes to tidewater.

By rights, phalanxes of gay Gauchos, those Argentine equivalents of our cowboys, should be galloping hither and yon through the tall plumed rushes, swinging their ball-ended lassos athwart the horns of half-wild cattle and pausing ever and anon for one of their nice, bluggy knife duels. That was what, from my still-remembered juvenile readings, I had been led to expect.

But this was what I beheld: Dirt roads running in straight lines and crossing at acute angles, just as they do on our own commonplace plains; frame sheds and barbed-wire fences and occasional groves of planted trees; and, at the stations, grain elevators with galvanized-iron roofs and prosaic wooden loading chutes for cattle; and between the stations, wide wheatfields beautifully cultivated, and sweeping ranges running to the horizon whereon matched breed cows—white-faces and Herefords, Alderneys and Jerseys—grazed upon the green meadow grasses; and every now and then, long

narrow sloughs most strikingly reminiscent of portions of our midwestern country, from which, at our clattering approach, there rose enormous swarms of waterfowl.

And the customary garbing of the native herdsman was the blue-overalled uniform of Kansas and Minnesota farm hands, with the same guarantee on the back straps against ripped seams or buttons coming off; and nobody was carrying a dirk—at least not in sight. Almost I expected somebody to open the car door and announce that the next stop would be Grand Island. And I knew that one more fondly cherished boyhood illusion had gone completely blooey.

Only the sight of an occasional South American ostrich, so called, picking his high-stepping way along, or a roseate host of pink flamingos lifting themselves from their marshy feeding grounds lent to the scene the exotic touch which alone distinguished these fecund but flattened and unpicturesque vistas from the vistas which are so tiresomely familiar to anybody who has traveled from the Mississippi toward the Rockies or vice versa. So among ourselves at breakfast we said if Central Argentina was like this, what reasonably could Buenos Aires be like when we got there—Kansas City or Omaha?

But as it turned out, Buenos Aires wasn't in the least like the average Corn Belt town. If anything, it had a Parisian look about it; certainly in many of its aspects it most pronouncedly revealed itself, under our more or less superficial survey, as having a Parisian flavor. Here is the world's most conspicuous example of how a purely man-made city may be planted upon an uninteresting and unromantic terrain and yet, through discretion and good taste, be wrought into a beautiful city with a special and individual charm to it and a personality essentially its own.

Of all the principal cities at the lower end of the hemisphere, Buenos Aires is the only one which has neither fine seascape nor commanding landscape—nor both, as is the favored case with Rio and with Valparaiso—to adorn and set it off. But despite the handicaps of spreading over a smooth and unrelieved plateau and facing on one of the widest, muddiest, ugliest, busiest rivers on earth, it still achieves a distinctiveness, as long ago it achieved a size and a commercial standing which qualify it to rate among the greatest of the metropolises.

Notably in one respect Buenos Aires reminded me of New York. I don't mean physically. Physically there is no common resemblance. I mean by the constant employment of superlatives to express the proportions or the

importance of this or that outstanding feature. Such and such a thing is the biggest in the world or the handsomest on the hemisphere or the most costly on the continent.

Well, looking at it that way or, for that matter, looking at it any other way, the Argentine people have, in their capital, a lot to justify bragging on their part. There is a clubhouse—it houses the enormously wealthy Jockey Club—which, for lavishness and an utter disregard for expense, will compare with any clubhouse anywhere. There is an opera house to match it. There is a great and magnificent plenitude of public buildings and semipublic buildings, places of entertainment, town houses and outlying villas.

There is a port—a succession of ports, rather—where the shipping of the seven seas is so densely packed that the landsman is moved to wonder how a vessel ever gets into this harbor or, having got in, ever gets out again. There is a shopping district which has no counterpart in South America and which, for smartness, is quite up to the New York or the London or the Paris standard. There is a system of boulevards and driveways, connecting plazas and squares and playgrounds and parks; botanical gardens and zoölogical gardens; art galleries and museums and the like, which startles you by its immensity and its beauty and its completeness.

There is a cemetery—right in the heart of the city it is and one of the sights of the city—where money past computing has been squandered upon tombs and monuments and chapels and mausoleums, upon black marble and white marble, upon solid bronze and polished silver, upon obelisks and memorials, in such close-ranked profusion as these dazzled eyes of mine never before rested on. There are stupendous plants for housing Buenos Aires' two great institutional newspapers, both of them dailies which cover the news of the globe as the news of the globe is covered nowhere else.

There is on every hand a display of opulence and extravagance which, however, is governed by more of restraint and characterized by less of vain gaudiness than one would expect to find among a race who, relatively speaking, are but newly come into a position of world-importance and world-influence. One is moved to wonderment not that the citizens here should boast so much of what they have, but that they should boast so little.

There is about them a thoroughly cosmopolitan bearing which is the more easily understood when one comes to learn that less than fifty per cent of the residents are of Spanish ancestry. Italian stocks make up a formidable

proportion of the population; German stocks make up another big group, and there is a lesser admixture of British blood in the mass.

The well-to-do person here is no provincial. He has been everywhere in Europe, at least, and has seen everything there. As a rule, he has not seen our country, but then, on the other hand, only a comparatively few of us have seen his country. So his cultural background is adapted and adopted European, and to France he looks for his fashions, and to Italy mainly for his artistic concepts. He goes to Europe when pleasure-seeking, and frequently he educates his children in European schools.

From us he gets solid material wares just as from him we get a share of his raw products; but in the relationship which makes for a mutual appreciation of each other's national viewpoint, the United States and the Argentine Republic are still far apart, and this helps to explain why, commonly, he is distrustful of our policies and inclined to lend an attentive ear to the Europe-inspired anti-Yankee propaganda which flourishes so abundantly in his domains. He buys from us, not because he particularly likes us as a nation, but because we have the goods he requires and because he has found the individual Yankee who deals with him to be trustworthy and intelligent and companionable.

For Buenos Aires it is claimed that one may live decently on a lesser outlay of money or, by the same token, may spend more for living than in any other of the great cities either on this side of the Atlantic or on the other side. By what I saw of the markets and the shops in the poorer quarters and in the richer sections, I judge this must be true. Food—good, fresh, nourishing food—is amazingly cheap on the side streets and not so very dear in the principal restaurants. But if you crave the luxurious best, things will cost you aplenty.

The latest wrinkles in French fashions—you know, those exceedingly costly wrinkles so beloved of woman-kind—reach eastern South America half a year in advance of their appearance in eastern North America; that's because the seasons are reversed and next summer's modes are sent from Paris to the South American ladies while their North American sisters still are wearing this winter's creations. At least, that is what they tell you down there, and I am prepared to testify that I never saw better-dressed, better-groomed women anywhere than I saw in Buenos Aires. Or, for that matter, better-looking women.

The best place to watch the passing fashion show is on that fine thoroughfare of the retail section called simply "Florida." From the middle

of the afternoon until twilight, a mile and a half section of this most sumptuous avenue is closed to vehicular traffic, and everybody and his girl friend go marching through it, filling it, sidewalks and roadway alike, from house front to house front.

Almost without exception these promenaders are well-dressed; many of them are beautifully dressed. It is a good-natured but a decorous and rather quiet crowd that pours back and forth in opposing streams.

Here let me interpolate the generalized essence of an observation: Almost universally, South Americans are soberer, more self-contained and more serious in their public demeanor than we ourselves are. Except in Brazil, they have an innate dependable gravity which seems curiously out of place to one who has been nurtured on the mistaken idea that the Latin temperament invariably is volatile and lightsome and effusive. Especially would I say is this characteristic reserve marked in the Buenos Aires populace.

The Italian may be given to gesticulation, but not so his brother of Spanish blood. A Spanish-American can say more with a shrug of his shoulder or a quirk of his eyebrow than an English-speaking orator could with a megaphone; and usually he is content to express himself thus rather than with swinging arms and explosive exuberance.

There are drinking places at conveniently frequent intervals along Florida and they are moderately well patronized, but you see practically no drunkenness. These South American cousins of ours labor under a strange delusion. They don't know that intoxication is the main aim and the principal end of drinking. With the new ethics of Prohibition for our guide, we could teach 'em a lot there, couldn't we, boys and girls?

About every third male adult is reading snatches of a newspaper as he drifts bumpingly along. They're great hands for reading newspapers here. If Buenos Aires supports two of the greatest of newspapers, it likewise supports a seemingly numberless assortment of small bad ones; which is but another civic idiosyncrasy suggestive of Paris, where small struggling journals of a political type likewise abound in the utmost profusion. Men sit at tables on the pavements in front of cafés reading papers. Arguing with fellow sitters, they rap with rolled-up newspapers; and news-boys are thick as spatter.

I figured that Florida should make a happy hunting ground for the idle sons of the rich, those highly shellacked and profligate youths who are so frequently met with along the Rue de la Paix and in the swagger dancing

places of Montmartre; and who, in those parts, have made the name of their breed a synonym for profligacy and wanton extravagance. But in my ambles I encountered only one typical specimen; his brethren, if any, must all have been abroad. However, I must say for him that he was a resplendent and prize-winning variety.

Sartorially speaking, he was altogether—how shall I put it?—well, altogether winsome. Alongside him the lilies of the field were still in the bulb state. In a thrall I watched him while he took a gold vanity case—indubitably a vanity case—out of his pocket and, using a shop window for a mirror, nonchalantly retouched his lips and then anointed with some aromatic goo a pair of delicately arched eyebrows before resuming his triumphant stroll, moving in a rich aroma of strong perfumery.

It wasn't enough merely to see him; to get a full appreciation of his merits you also must smell him. Fascinated, I trailed him for blocks. He left a scent like an anise bag at a Long Island drag hunt; but if his hoidenish beauty worked any devastation in the hearts of the staid damosels among whom he elbowed his path, I failed to detect it. Maybe they were used to him.

He belongs, I am told, to a species which is doomed to early extinction. Almost invariably he is the degenerated son or grandson of some sturdy pioneer who established one of those great ranches—“*estancias*” is the local word—which dot the plains of the Argentine. He is presently engaged in the congenial task of squandering the noble patrimony which has come down to him.

He isn't of a particularly numerous breed; never was, in fact. It is his behavior which makes him conspicuous. For every one like him there are nine sturdy upstanding young men who handle the ancestral fortune—wheat or cattle or linseed or what-not—intelligently and with some degree of personal restraint.

Be that as it may, he is allowed to borrow money against the pledges of his thousands upon thousands of acres until his debts approximate in value the inherited collateral. Then the banks close down on him and presently, following a policy which has the hearty approval of the government and the forward-looking groups, one more great property has been cut up into holdings for small individual farmers and stock raisers, the answer being that in the long run the land, instead of remaining in the hands of a feudal aristocracy, will have been parceled out among industrious cultivators.

One feels that the world can spare these vanishing and purely ornamental spendthrifts, but when the big estates go—if ever all of them do go—a vivid splash of romance will have been erased from the national canvas.

We drove out from the city to visit one of them—the Estancia San Juan—a duplicate in miniature of the typical old-style place. That's what they said it was—a small-scale model; but to me it seemed sufficiently large and entirely complete in all ways.

Inside the gates we toiled for miles along well-kept roads; we passed polo fields and breeding stables and a private race track; we inspected herds of splendid cattle and we viewed prize-winning stallions and champion bulls until we were tired; we saw mansions and a chapel, a beautiful inner park; an artificial lake and a winding ornamental lagoon; hothouses and gardens; a shooting preserve; big groves of planted trees; whole villages for the housing of the working staff—and after that they still kept on saying to us that this really was not a working *estancia* but merely a sort of practical exhibit to show what the real article was like. The Argentinean certainly has broad ideas.

Well, he lives in a broad and liberal country, and that means literally and figuratively as well. The laws of his land are tolerant to the transplanted members of all creeds and of most races; and the common attitude of the citizens accords admirably with the spirit of their laws.

The anti-North American prejudice which manifests itself hereabouts is not religious but political. It is based on a distrust for the historical attitudes of the United States toward Spanish-American countries—a distrust which a section of the domestic press deliberately fosters. Formerly there was another reason, but that reason happily has been eradicated.

A distinguished member of the Argentine senate, a gentleman of cosmopolitan training and wide experience in statecraft and office-holding, said this to me:

“Until 1914 your countrymen, generally speaking, rather ignored and neglected this commercial market. The bulk of our imports came to us from Europe—notably from Germany, Great Britain and France. But the outbreak of the war shut off those regular sources of foreign-made supplies and almost, as you might say, against their wills your jobbing and manufacturing interests began to invade these parts in force.

“There descended upon us from the United States a horde of hastily recruited selling agents. A great many of these men, perhaps a majority of them, were ignorant of our racial peculiarities and biases. Few of them spoke Spanish; fewer still among them understood the Latin character. Their main object was to sell as many goods as possible in as short a time as possible.

“Some of them did not seem to have the idea that building up good will is an essential part of the business of selling. Some of them were unscrupulous or, putting it charitably, they were careless. They left a bad impression behind them.

“Eventually the condition remedied itself. Today, high types of gentlemen represent American houses as resident managers, as you must have noticed during your visits to the American Club. Our people know now that the word of the man on the spot may be depended upon; that the delivered commodities will be up to sample and equal to specification.

“What is the result? Since the war, the volume of our economic dealings with European countries has increased materially, but the volume of our dealings with the United States has increased tremendously, and proportionately is increasing every day. The American industrialist who is willing to study our needs and cater to our merchandising principles, is assured of an interest in his wares and a hospitable reception for his salesmen and has every prospect of strengthening a mutually profitable relationship.

“Your mastery at mass production is a factor here. Your present willingness to make the package and its contents conform to the South American’s fancy—a thing which the less adaptable and more conservative Britisher was rarely willing in the old days to do, and even now in the face of rising Yankee competition is still sometimes unwilling to do—has been an even more important factor. You are selling us a lot of your products—you ought to be selling us more of them, though, than you do sell.”

A little later, when the subject had been changed, this same gentleman dropped other significant remarks.

“Within comparatively recent years,” he said, “we have become a sport-mad people and it is a good thing for us in more ways than one. When I was a young man we knew almost nothing about outdoor sports. A youngster sought his pleasure in dissipation—not so much in drinking as in amorous pursuits. He gave entirely too much of his energies and his thoughts to the sex side of life. Morally and physically, it was an unhealthy attitude.

“Now, though, there is an athletic field for every schoolhouse, city or rural, and there are football teams and cricket teams, track teams and gymnasium classes in almost every town, however small and obscure. Our people have learned to play and play hard—and, what is best of all, to take a licking when they are fairly licked. The beneficial effect of that last upon our political complex has been incalculable.

“You must remember this,” he went on. “The theory of representative self-government is newer, much newer, among the Latin races than among the Nordic races. The Anglo-Saxon, with his racial craving for independence, had centuries of contact with and conduct of the experiment before we tried it out. It was in our blood to favor the music of flowery oratory rather than the less showy but more dependable power of plain everyday logic. Rhetoric meant more to our masses than simple reason did.

“By slow and painful degrees we had to produce a type of leader willing to work anonymously, if need be, for the public weal. It was difficult to uproot those who, in season and out, stood ready to seize on power and place. The self-effacing brand of statecraft was rare at first with us, whereas the self-advertising, self-profiting variety was prominent in our affairs. The personal, greedy ambitions of a few men have been responsible in times past for most of our political misadventures.

“Well, we began playing games. We began to understand and appreciate—and accept—the rational discipline which is the greatest by-product of competitive sport. And as I say, we began, here in South America, to learn the finest lesson of all: namely, that to take in good humor a defeat when honestly administered, to abide by the referee’s decision and to set to work to make a better showing next time, is the very essence of sportsmanship.

“I claim that the perpetuation among us of stable republicanism, the steadying of our federal and local institutions, the increasing interest of the citizen at large in the privilege of the franchise, the enhanced willingness of our peoples to submit domestic differences to the arbitrament of the ballot rather than by resort to force and violence, and to submit their international differences to arbitration—I claim that all these qualities are in great measure the outgrowth of the newly developed sporting instincts among the masses in the lower part of this continent. In short, as you North Americans put it, we finally in this present generation have learned how to play the game.”

For one, I’m inclined to think my good and wise friend, the senator, was right about it. But he overlooked specific mention of one outstanding sport

peculiar to the Latin-American taxicab driver—the sport of pedestrian-hunting.

Me, I thought in my ignorance that I knew a little something about wild driving and wild riding. Among my intimates it is an open secret that under the professional name of Dare-devil Dugan I used to win practically all the Indianapolis speed races; also that just for the fun of the thing I formerly doubled for Tom Mix and Bill Hart in the movies. The chariot race in the cinema version of “Ben-Hur” was a direct steal from my technique.

What’s more, I have as a passenger ridden in taxicabs in Chicago, in Los Angeles, in San Francisco and in Paris and in other cities where traffic regulations are, as one might say, sketchy and impressionistic. So you would have said, as I did, that my iron will was panic-proof, that my fortitude in the face of danger was as tempered steel. Huh, that just goes to show how wrong both of us could be.

From my dedicatory automobile trip through the crowded and peril-fraught marts of trade in Buenos Aires, I returned in a state of partial collapse, all palpitant and aquiver like a tuning fork, and still deliriously murmuring over and over again the word “*despacio,*” which is Spanish for “slowly.” I was so glad I knew that word; I think yet it helped to save my life.

As a good patriot and one anxious to see us get ahead in foreign ports, I hate to say this but I must: All East Coast Latin-American taxicab chauffeurs should be encouraged to buy our motors but discouraged from driving them.

The moment an East Coast taxicabbist takes hold of the wheel, he appears to lose all control over the more reckless side of his nature. He likes to get away with a flying start. A visitor acquaintance of mine told me—I went to see him at the sanatorium where he was slowly recuperating—that the first jolting surge of getting under way snapped his suspenders, stopped his watch and caused his glass eye to crack all the way across. But it was when the youth who drove him tried, in an impulsive moment, to go through a crowded tramcar instead of following the usual procedure of passing it on the wrong side at eighty-five miles an hour, that my poor fellow tourist’s nervous system really sustained the shock which landed him in a rest cure.

It must have been a twin brother to his chauffeur or anyhow a member of the same family to whom I entrusted myself for a pleasant spin over the boulevards on the evening of our arrival. He was of the school who depend entirely on the brake for the perpetuation of their own lives. Right away I

realized that, and as we bored into the traffic with the gears shrieking in their agony and the lesser mechanism underfoot chipping and squeaking and squealing until I had the sensation of traveling in a portable bird-and-animal store, there came to me through a flood of conflicting emotions the lines of the poet in a slightly paraphrased form to suit the needs of this occasion:

“Brake, brake, brake on these cold gray stones, oh gee!  
And I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me.”

But my tongue couldn't utter them. Besides, along with the thoughts, a lot of organs were arising in me and sticking fast in my throat.

All about us were other cabs—millions on millions of them, so it seemed to me—all flitting in and out with the glad free unruléd roguishness of a school of sunfish; now flashing from left to right; now, at the dictates of some sudden whim or mere vagary, surging back again from right to left; now quitting the thick of the jam to chase a member of the lower or pedestrian classes up a shade tree; now shaving the buttons off a woman's frock, or the mudguard off a privately owned car; now turning a curve on two wheels; now on some convenient straightaway picking up to a nice steady touring gait of about a mile and a quarter a minute. In short, all the drivers of those other cars were behaving exactly as the driver of my car was behaving.

So far as I could observe, the only regulations governing the pastime were that if a fleeing foot-passenger succeeded in hurdling the curb and getting entirely on the sidewalk, he was regarded as being out of bounds and could not be put back in play again until somebody pushed him off.

Even after he has passed the corporation limits and is bumping over rutty going, the chauffeur continues his exciting game of trying to force the upper end of your spine through the top of your skull. No hillocky hazard, however formidable, abates his zest for this diversion of his.

We found that out when we went to the Estancia San Juan. The city itself is abundantly provided with modern streets and some of its suburbs are, too, but once outside the municipal zone, the roads almost always are only indifferent where they are not downright rough and bumpy. I have heard that the reason why there are so few good highways in the back districts is that the British-owned railroads exercise their potent influence against good-road programs.

It would appear that these absentee proprietors have not yet discovered what the American railroad people aforetime found out: namely, that the

building of crossing or even paralleling automobile highways eventually stimulates business for the steam cars instead of injuring it. However, the Republic of the Argentine is a country of enormous distances and the prospect of cobwebbing its vast interior mesa with paved roads must be a daunting one even to a people as progressive and as enterprising as these people have become.

My craving for hair-lifting and heart-stopping excitement was so fully satisfied by various taxicabbing adventures that I had but small zeal left for seeking out the night life of the continental metropolis. Besides, I reckon maybe I'm getting too old for that sort of thing.

I used to like the throbbing night life of Paducah twenty-five years ago but when, in my maturer years, I sought it in Paris and Vienna, it seemed somehow to be stale and flat. And as for Berlin—well, I was first in Berlin in 1913, shortly after the Kaiser had decreed that his worthy burghers must go in for night life, presumably to catch more of the tourist traffic; and like good and obedient subjects, they had obeyed the command of the All Highest. At least they had tried to do so but in all fairness I could not bring myself to look upon the concerted effort as being altogether successful.

It's hard to be merry and bright to order; especially is it hard for Germans. This night-life stuff which they were putting on then had all the riotous abandon, all the unbridled spontaneity of a trained-elephant act.

With shadings of meaning, I fain would bring the same blanket indictment against the Buenos Aires night life. To begin with, we were there in the off season for cutting-up, and in the second place, the men of Argentina in considerable measure still hold by the old Spanish doctrine that after nightfall home is the place for the wife and the daughter. So the ladies of the best families do not patronize the public dancing places.

If they go out at all they go to private entertainments at private homes or to formal and discriminate functions. Indeed, most of the ladies we saw in our search for the night life obviously belonged to a very old profession and some of them were expert practitioners at it, too.

A good jazz orchestra from below Mason and Dixon's line ought to make a fortune in the Argentine, for down there they still cling to the tango—that strange tribal rite in which a couple embrace and give a slow and straddle-legged imitation of two galled telegraph linemen pushing each other in and out of first one corner of the room and then another. But the music is cheery and stimulating to the pulse, and savory food is provided at practically every stopping place.

As a conscientious volunteer observer of the habits and customs of other races, I spent an entire night, until the twinkling stars had paled, in a painstaking effort to fathom the true sources and the underlying inspirations of Argentine night life. But when I limped back to my hotel room in the dawning, the melancholy conviction was strong within me that, after fifty, the quest for gaiety is not for the average man. All I needed, to be a stately ruin, was to have some ivy growing over me.

## *Chapter Six*

### *URUGUAY FOR THE URUGUAYANS*

If I were backed into a corner for comparisons, I think I'd probably call Uruguay the Massachusetts of South America, just as I'd call Brazil its Florida, and Chile, potentially speaking, its Pennsylvania, and the Argentine its Nebraska.

I'm sure I'd call Uruguay's capital the Boston of South America. There certainly is something very, very Bostonesque about the attitude of Montevideo toward mortals who labor under the misfortune of having been born somewhere else; something emphatically Bostonese in the complacent opinion which her citizens have for themselves as the superior occupants of a vastly superior bailiwick.

In area, Uruguay is the smallest of the South American republics—a veritable pocket-borough of a land—and its nationals are proud of the fact.

They are made proud by reason that, despite its comparatively puny size, it is, squared mile for squared mile, one of the richest of countries; proud also because their chief city is one of the handsomest and one of the best-groomed cities on the hemisphere; and proudest of all because they are Uruguayans, a race conservative, aloof, different and amply sufficient unto themselves.

The difference between them and their continental kinsfolk is emphasized in so many ways. Their constitution largely is framed and their legislative forms more or less are based on the Code Napoléon, so that the legal procedures resemble those of the French, whereas all about them such things follow after a Spanish modeling. French literature appeals to them rather than Spanish but their social ethics are Spanish without the admixture of that liberalization which one observes in Chile and the Argentine, for notable examples.

Rarely is foreign capital courted, and such development projects as are financed and managed from foreign countries aren't encouraged with what might be called any marked enthusiasm. Mainly the politicians oppose the projects of the outlanders, and English-speaking investors and concessionaries allege discrimination against them, which however does not check the Britishers and the North Americans in their campaigns of commercial penetration and commercial infiltration.

These industrial invaders declare that their operations are hampered and their legitimate profits reduced by laws and regulations aimed especially at them—but they keep on coming, just the same. No fly ever shunned the sugar barrel even though the flytrap was set for him hard by.

Anti-Yankee propaganda flourishes on a congenial soil richly mulched with a racial dislike and a racial distrust for us. When our party dropped in, Sandino was a popular idol because he happened to be swapping shots with United States soldiers in the Nicaraguan jungle. Indeed, had Mister Sandino guessed how exceedingly popular he was in Montevideo he could have moved down there with his ragged battalions and had a perfectly beautiful time of it, I'm sure, and that would have left the marines free to come on back home and try to clean up Chicago.

Also, at the time of our visit, the leaders of opinion were inclined to favor the Hispano-American movement, which originated in Spain and has the indorsement of the Spanish crown and the Spanish press. Possibly their liking for it was enhanced on the theory that the strengthening of sentimental ties with the ancient motherland would militate against any tendency toward increased friendliness on the part of the man in the street for British or Yankee influences and institutions.

Howsomever, from the trading standpoint, our business adventures have nothing to fear from this source. In her present reduced state, poor old Spain doesn't seem to produce much in the line of finished goods for export except guitars and middy-blouses for bull-fighters.

Mind you, I'm not scolding at the Uruguayan for entertaining the prejudices which admittedly he does entertain. We have to give him credit for being inspired by a properly patriotic and laudable desire to maintain, untainted and unimpaired, a national unity and a national integrity which appear to him highly desirable.

Nor would I have the reader think that the Yankee alone is singled out as the living text for hostile criticism in the papers and in the utterances of the politicians. The wealthier classes hold themselves above their fellow South Americans, claiming to be noticeably more refined and more gently bred than the Argentine people south of them; claiming to be infinitely more so than the Brazilians who neighbor them on the north. They run their household without concern for what the family next door may think about it.

For instance, the Argentine Republic has immigration laws which, while generous enough in most regards, are designed with a view to shutting out radicals and professional malcontents. On the other hand, Uruguay

practically lets the bars down to all comers, with the result that Bolsheviks and anarchists find a convenient harborage in Uruguay while awaiting opportunity to smuggle themselves across the Plata River and spread their pestiferous doctrines in the forbidden land on the farther side. Anyhow, that's what the fretful citizens of Buenos Aires said about it.

What they said, though, doesn't deter them from flocking over the wide estuary to enjoy the sea bathing on the lovely Montevideo beaches and to dance all night on a terrace under my bedroom window and, since, by law, miscellaneous gambling has been suspended in their own country, to patronize the casinos in the two big state-owned resort hotels of the smaller city. And the Uruguayans welcomed them with open hands and took their money away from them in large gobs because, be it known, on the luxurious side Montevideo is about as expensive a place to abide in as you'd find anywhere.

As a matter of fact, though, the private biases of the people do not affect their public treatment of the stranger. Everywhere there is manifest a politeness which must be inherent in the masses. They certainly do know the art of hospitality just as they know—and follow—the practice of courtesy. It may be only a surface courtesy but it does smooth the pathway of the transient tourist.

Until we moved on up the coast to Montevideo we thought that Buenos Aires must surely lead the rest of South America—and the world at large—in the steepness of prices for exotic commodities and services, in the prevalence of speed-madness among taxicab drivers, and in the profusion of statues, monuments and memorials. But in these specified details, Montevideo, as we speedily decided, took supremacy over any community anywhere.

So far as our cursory explorations disclosed, every available spot where a statue might stand had a statue standing on it, and handsome statuary some of it was, too. In process of erection was one statue about which there appeared to be some mystery. Among ourselves we finally decided that it must be a statue erected in memory of the individual who until now had not had a statue erected in his memory—a unique personage therefore and highly deserving of the honor.

Two of us—Mr. Dean Palmer and myself—stopped at a hotel out on the beach where they charged us each sixteen dollars and a half a day for a small and indifferently furnished bedroom with a dark and shabby bathroom to be

shared between us. After nightfall the trip to or from the municipal center cost us around seven dollars for taxicab fare, exclusive of the tip.

Remember, please, that this meant seven Uruguayan dollars; and Uruguay is the only country I know of where the American dollar is at a discount as compared with the local brand, its value on an exchange basis being then approximately ninety-seven cents; and likewise I would have you know that Montevideo is the only city I ever saw where anybody's dollar—theirs or ours either—buys even less than it buys in New York.

However, we were always so glad to reach our destination alive and whole, and always had so many narrow escapes from destruction to brag about next day, that we counted the money spent on a taxicab journey as money well spent. The same benign Providence which protects idiots and drunkards elsewhere has South American taxicab drivers under its particular care. Why, some of them probably live to be nearly thirty years old.

While we're on the subject of finances I'd like to cite one or two small instances in illustration of the gallus fashion after which the customer is assessed for this and that by the resident hotel managers. For a manicure—not a fancy manicure but just the common, stock manicure—I paid a grandniece of the late Jesse James the sum of one dollar and seventy-five cents. In the same establishment one of my companions had a hair cut and a shave and a shampoo and a shoe shine and the total came to right around five dollars.

He told the affable and gentlemanly brigand in charge that he was going downtown to raise some more funds on his letter of credit and would then return for a facial massage. But he said it in English and maybe that explains why the proprietor didn't flinch under his searching irony.

One evening Palmer and I reached our hotel just about ten-thirty. We had dined downtown but Palmer thought that before retiring he'd slip into the dining saloon and have a helping of vanilla ice cream.

It was an unusual thing for Mr. Palmer to be caught without the makings of a snack on his person or in his billets. Out sightseeing, we would miss him but we always knew where to find him. Around the corner he would be standing englamoured before the art exhibits on display in the shop windows of the district devoted to delicatessen stores. And he would lug so many canned edibles and so many cuts of cold meats to his room, to dispose them about his couch in case of a touch of hunger during the night, that his bed looked like a new grave in a Chinese cemetery.

But on this occasion he unaccountably was without an available store of sustenance and anyhow he particularly craved ice cream. So he went and had it and when he got his bill there was an entry of two dollars and fifty cents—two dollars for the single helping of ice cream and fifty cents additional for some mysterious service charge. When mildly he complained at this, the cashier explained that while meals were included in the regular tariff, the complainant had entered the dining-room a matter of some three to five minutes after the regular dinner hour officially ended; hence \$2.50 extra and over and above.

So Palmer paid it. We were getting used by then to paying. Besides, we knew we were not being singled out for extortion merely because we happened to be foreigners. The prosperous Uruguayan is perhaps the most care-free spender in existence. He has plenty of cash and he lets it go in a golden stream, and the local purveyors of the luxuries and adornments of life naturally govern themselves accordingly.

It is not in prices alone that urban Uruguay rates high. For years past, Montevideo has been able to boast—and boast truthfully—of having a greater mileage of modernly paved streets than any other city of like size on earth.

The country itself has as nearly perfect an all-the-year-round climate as you could ask for, since there is a practical uniformity of temperature. Likewise it is said to be the healthiest climate of them all, endemic diseases being unknown and epidemics exceedingly rare.

The city markets are famous for their picturesqueness—a picturesqueness which in this case marches hand in hand with excellent sanitation. The city streets are handsome; the homes of the wealthier folk are in many instances of majestic and expensive proportions.

There is a municipal gallery dedicated in considerable part to examples of national culture but personally I did not visit it. Following my usual custom when in foreign parts, I sent one of my agents to view it and file a report in writing. However, his report, on the whole, seemed slightly inadequate. Next time I go abroad I'm going to buy my agent a book telling all about art.

For the members of our party, the architectural ambitions of an Italian-born gentleman named Salvo furnished a fascinating game when sightseeing palled. We would sit at sidewalk tables drinking cups of the most delicious coffee we had ever tasted—not even in Brazil is better coffee brewed than in Uruguay—and hour after hour we would look across an ornamental and a

well-kept square to where one of the strangest edifices of creation reared against the soft-blue skyline, and wonder what the big idea was.

It seemed that this Salvo, being a person of great wealth and eke a person of great secretiveness, bought a commanding site in the center of the city and cleared it and then telling nobody what his ultimate purpose was, started putting up a handsome structure which might have been intended for an office block or for a hotel or for an apartment house. At the front was a tower effect in concrete—all concrete.

Well, so far so good. But when the main building was roofed over, the tower kept on climbing, floor by floor, toward the zenith. In obedience to the owner's fancy, it now blossomed out with curious bulbous excrescences like warts or goiters. It kept on ascending and it kept on putting forth those awesome concrete wens.

When we arrived, it was not yet completed but already it was said to be the loftiest all-concrete structure on earth. Certainly it was by odds the tallest thing in town. It morbidly dominated the horizon; was visible for miles and miles up and down the splendid half-moon beaches on Montevideo's harbor side. And still nobody knew to what usages, if any, it would finally be dedicated; but guessing about it had become the favorite local pastime.

Right here would be a good place, I think, to scold my compatriots who are holding down jobs in South America, for remaining so characteristically insular. As business mercenaries they are highly successful but they so cling to the typical Yankee habit of devoting their energies exclusively to the task of mastering the tricks of their own trades that they neglect to acquaint themselves with what lies outside their particular orbits.

From the average English-speaking resident of any given South American country you can in one hour get more well-meant, innocently offered misinformation touching on things in the country next door than you could derive from a week's study of an encyclopedia entirely made up of erroneous statements. He seems to look on a fact as a clumsy steeplechaser looks on a cross-barred gate—as an obstacle either to be hurdled over without touching or, failing there, to be knocked flat.

Let us take my own experience in endeavoring to learn a few rudimentary truths about that gawky, long-legged, long-necked bird which is the most characteristic living feature of the Argentine pampas. From various sources I elicited these details: He is a rhea; he is not a rhea, he is an emu,

and therefore very popular among the originators of cross-word puzzles; he is neither a rhea nor an emu but a true ostrich.

He is liked by the rancher over whose fields he ranges, because he feeds on the ticks which infest the cattle; he is universally hated by the ranchers because he tramples the grain and never by any chance eats a tick. He has three toes; he has four toes; some authorities think only two toes or possibly just one, but aren't dead sure about it.

His wing feathers are quite valuable; on the contrary, his wing feathers are of practically no value at all. When pursued he hides his head in a hole in the sand; he never hides his head in the sand, because once he did that and got a severe kick in the pants. He remains mated for life, which would seem to bear out the theory that he is, indeed, a true ostrich; he is an incurable polygamist, which would tend altogether to upset the theory. And there you are!

That brings me to another small cause for criticism of my fellow countrymen. We have gone a good distance in building up a code of commerce diplomacy in South America but there is crying need for a school where the domiciled North American might learn what points of interest the visiting North American would in all likelihood enjoy seeing.

Animated by the best intentions in the world, he crams you into his car and scoots away with you to the plant or the factory or the warehouse or whatever it is that he's managing. En route there, he hurls you headlong through a picturesque street with such impetuosity that the yellow houses and the white houses—most of them are painted either yellow or white—merge together in a sort of succotash effect. He whirls you past a whole pack train of llamas or a quaint open-air market or a local religious procession which fairly drips with local color.

Wistfully you murmur a hint that perhaps it might be advisable to slow up a bit and look the adjacent territory over. But he waves that aside:

“Just a lot of native junk,” he says; “stuff that goes on all the time here. You just wait—I'm fixing to show you something worth while—something that'll make you homesick for the U. S. A.”

And presently, having halted at the spot where his company operates, he is, with pride in his voice and joy in his gleaming eye, saying to you:

“Now, just look at those smelting works, will you? Why, boy, you can stand right here and imagine you're in Youngstown, Ohio, can't you? Isn't that a wonderful sensation, though—to land away down here, a thousand

miles or more below the equator, and be able to see something and smell something that's just like a slice out of good old Youngstown, or even Pittsburgh?"

Something ought to be done about this right away. Something ought to be done about quite a number of things in which our country has an actual interest already and a growing potential interest. Far be it from this unworthy scribe to endeavor to project his feeble and halting dogmas into the realm of statecraft and international politics, and farther be it from him to try to tell our captains of industry how to run their foreign branches and their foreign agencies, and most of all far, far and farthestmost be it from him to meddle in the ticklish and sensitive field of religion. All the same, I feel it a bounden duty to offer for consideration to whom it may concern the fruits of a few free-hand observations, to wit, viz., as follows:

If I were in charge of the present plan of bringing annually to the United States picked students of South American schools and universities, I'd broaden the program on reciprocal lines, and organize parties of North American students to visit South America and see the countries whose destinies, political, commercial, cultural and sentimental, must inevitably be interlocked with our own destinies.

If I were the father of a promising son—and could afford the expense—I would regard it as an essential part of that son's education to send him on a tour of lower South America. I think I'd send him there in preference to sending him to Europe even, because if that son, on growing up, is to go into any large phase of business, there will almost surely be angles and slants to that business in which some knowledge of South American affairs will prove of value to him in the shaping of his course and the framing of his judgments.

If I were a distinguished director of public relations—or, in other words, a glorified press agent for Big Business—I would regard it as a patriotic obligation to endeavor to interest my principal clients in a financed campaign for offsetting and counteracting the anti-Yankee propaganda which certain European nations—or at any rate, certain European interests—carry on, day in and day out, in sedulous efforts to undermine our trade relations with South American buyers and discredit our prevalent standards of honesty there.

If I were a clergyman scheduled for service in South America, I would endeavor to cultivate a tactfulness which, according to what I heard not once

but several times, often is lacking among our theological brethren down there.

Religious bigotry, as we know it, is not a frequent attribute of the educated citizen of Argentina or Chile or Brazil or Peru or Uruguay, to cite the most progressive nations. Barring the hostility of certain ultra-clerical groups—groups which tend to lessen in number and in political influence—the apostle of whatsoever faith is given full free opportunity to set up his covenant and preach his creed and, if so be he can, to win over some disciples.

But while he is proselyting it behooves him, I would say, to refrain from uttering loud-mouthed criticisms of institutions which under the ministrations of another church centuries ago rooted themselves on that soil. I'd try to picture what almost inevitably would happen if foreign-born Catholic priests established themselves in any solidly Protestant community in the United States and instead of attending to their proper jobs proceeded openly to animadvert upon Protestant ideals and Protestant theories.

In other words, I'd try putting the shoe on my own foot—and that is a mental gymnastic which many non-Catholic North Americans residing in South America say is by no means the general rule with the gospellers who have gone from here to labor in the vineyards of the sister continent.

If I were a resident Yankee I'd refrain from vain yawpings merely because our great news-distributing agencies send the South American papers subscribing for their cable services reports of crimes, race-troubles, divorces, religious rows and other unpleasant events occurring in the States. The managers of our press bureaus are good Americans. They are not inspired by any desire to give the United States a bad name at home or abroad. But news is the commodity which they have to sell and they would not dare to censor that news in the case of a publisher who, having bought all of it, is entitled to receive all of it.

To begin with, they would lose a patron, and in the second place, the paper would employ other means of getting the news; and in such event it possibly would be colored and distorted to the hurt of our reputation as a nation. European rivals would be glad to peddle to them in twisted shapes the current information which our press associations sought to withhold from South American readers.

If I were an educator of national influence, I'd set afoot a movement having for its chief purposes, first, the teaching of Spanish as a language course in our public schools and our colleges, giving it the call over French

if not over German; and second, the use of textbooks which would give to our youth a fuller picture of South America, its history, its various nationalities, its resources and its possibilities—in other words, a movement to stimulate in the classroom a healthy curiosity concerning the countries which are affiliated with us and are sharers in the moral, the intellectual and the physical elements of this New World civilization.

Finally, and most important of all, if I were a mouthpiece for our governmental policies, I'd work in season and out to impress upon the Latin-Americans a true conception of the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine. I'd seek to make them understand that primarily the Monroe Doctrine is a shield for our own national and their hemispheric defense and not a naked mandatory sword held at their throats.

I'd strive to convince them that the United States is not the "Octopus of the North," forever plotting to extend an imperialistic overlordship at the expense of less strong Pan-American nations, forever plotting forcible domination of our sister republics. And this is going to be a hard job.

The average reasonably well-informed adult among us may be hazy regarding the methods employed for bringing Florida and Texas and California into the Union and for bringing Cuba and the Philippines and Porto Rico and the Panama Zone into our sphere of control, but every grammar-school youngster in South America will tell you that almost always our territorial and extraterritorial boundaries have expanded at the expense of Spanish-colonized countries, giving dates, names and circumstances. He knows that part of the story by heart, and especially well does he know it in the lusty, ambitious Argentine Republic and in little compact, jealous Uruguay.

In either of these countries it will be difficult indeed to convert the citizen to the knowledge that our dreamed-of conquests are the peaceful conquests of business; that our aim is to take unto ourselves power by trade and not by bayonets, and that in putting him behind the buckler of the Monroe Doctrine, we are not regarding him as a policeman might regard a rebellious and naughty boy, not as an overzealous and bullying nursery governess might regard a wilful child, but instead are taking him on as a full partner in a plan for the joint and mutual protection of us all against armed aggression or threat of armed occupation from without.

It will, I repeat, be a difficult undertaking but, I maintain, an undertaking made to order for the spokesmen of this present administration and of succeeding administrations as well.

Right along here I would like to speak a good word for the types of visitors from the United States that we met in our wanderings through South America.

Almost without exception, they impressed us as being high-grade and hand-picked. I take it the other kind haven't discovered yet that some of the travel lanes run south; to the chagrin and the sorrow of the rest of us, who have cruised with them, they know only the lanes which run east and west. Those who go down the hemisphere are well-mannered and intelligent persons seeking to broaden their spiritual horizons, not merely persons trying to show off.

As a matter of fact, I recall just one out-and-out pest of the home-grown variety who crossed our trail—but only one, thank God for it. On a liner bound for Europe he wouldn't have stood out so conspicuously, for there would have been plenty more like him; there always are. Here, though, on the steamer bearing us along the West Coast, he enjoyed the exclusive pesting privilege.

Need I add it?—he was from New York and, to hear him tell it, very prominent there. He went diligently to and fro interfering with persons who craved to enjoy the sunshine and the air, demanding to know what about having some amateur theatricals and what about a fancy-dress ball and what about this, that and the other, while the South American passengers, too polite to speak out, eyed him with aloof, cryptic glances, and behind his back gave expressive shrugs.

That wasn't the worst of our nuisance, though. You heard him in the smoking room commenting in clear-ringing tones upon the woeful deficiencies and shortcomings of every other nation as compared with the United States. You heard him referring with a loud voice to the peoples of these parts as "spigotties." You heard him saying to some fellow countryman: "Say, bo, next time you're in N'Yawk look me up and I'll sure show you the sights. You won't have no trouble finding me: My name's in the telephone directory." You got the feeling that the telephone directory was practically written around him. His conversation abounded in capital *I*'s until it made you think of a picket fence around a vacant lot.

Going ashore at a nitrate port above Valparaiso, he fell overboard from a launch. The water was good and rough, too, with a swift tide running, and he couldn't swim, so for just a minute things looked brighter. Why is it that people can't mind their own affairs? Some meddlesome, officious busybody had to go and save him.

Other crops may fail, but our own fair land may always be counted upon to produce a fine annual yield of the blatant, boastful, bumptious breeds of tourists. A strange thing is that you don't seem to find them in any abundance at home. They're like the tumble-weed of the western prairie, which doesn't begin to draw unfavorable attention until after it starts traveling.

Still, I'd not have the reader getting the impression that I claim our country has a monopoly on this plagueful harvest. I'd say that the international championship goes to our English cousins. There is a type of Englishman, lower submiddle *clarss* to start with, I reckon, and rarely encountered on English soil but frequently met with abroad, who specializes in the art of being bad-mannered.

He's not crude and raw and self-taught in impoliteness, as our American variety generally is; he has been educated in bad manners. There's a certain finish, a polish, about his work which stands out.

On your first trip elsewhere you run into a typical specimen and to yourself you say that the only sure way of admiring the yeoman stock of old England is to read their history but avoid meeting any of them personally. Then some day you stop by in England and find out that these *narsty* ones aren't often seen there—that they flourish best, as ours do, under distant skies.

I'm grateful that a majority of ours go to Europe rather than to South America. South America should also be grateful for this blessing, along with her many other blessings.

One concluding historical fact about Montevideo: Once upon a time, the British forces took it, but owing to the excitement, forgot to serve tea that afternoon and so the whole thing was declared null and void.

## *Chapter Seven*

### *“B” STANDS FOR BRAZIL AND BEAUTY*

Do you think our country is a melting pot? Give Brazil a look, then. With us the human atoms have not thoroughly fused; generally you can tell t’other from which. But down there under the tropic sun the intermixing of white and red and black goes on so furiously that the composite type is not a rarity but a commonplace, and a new race unlike any other race is being developed.

Brazil today is one vast ethnological experiment. In spots the experiment has become a perfected demonstration. Most of us would call it a mongrelizing process. By the philosophy of the Brazilians it is an amalgam evolved out of the needs and the conditions of the land. He looks on miscegenation not as a social error but as a social necessity.

For proof that he has come nearer than any to solving the color problem which so vexes us, he points to the incontrovertible facts that mulatto statesmen have helped to shape his national destinies; that half-breed Indians have made capable generals and admirals for his army and his navy; and finally that out of this welter and flux of bloods, a brilliant and luxuriant literature has arisen, and a school of true national humor begins to emerge, and a harmony and tolerance as between the various elements—call it a homogeneous harmony—commonly is prevalent.

By contradiction though, the leading pure-strain Caucasians, while preaching the beauties of a system of political parity and cultural equality, nevertheless take steps to maintain for themselves and among themselves an unmixed circle within these greater circles. So there are groups and cliques and, resolving the equation to yet closer dimensions, family divisions across the barrier lines of which no person of a darker skin pigmentation may enter in.

Certainly Rio is no negroid community, although it has, in proportion to its Aryan stocks, a formidable negro population. And of a certainty, Rio is the most beautiful city and the most volatile and vivacious city I ever saw or ever expect to see. Romance and lightheartedness abide with her as likewise they abide throughout the tremendous domain of which she is the chief city. “Rolling down to Rio”—why, the very sound of it has allurements.

Here was the last stand of royalty in the New World. Here was the last stronghold of African slavery in the civilized world. Here, on the threshold, as it were, of the last great area of unexplored wilderness left in the whole world, sits a fair metropolis, modernized and sophisticated and pleasure-loving, and yet, in nearly all regards, unique and peculiar. Here is where you get your black diamonds, your rare spices, your scented woods, your talking parrots, your chattering monkeys, your biggest butterflies, your smallest hummingbirds.

On such rhapsodic prospects as these the appetite of the traveler is whetted; nor is it to me conceivable that he possibly can be disappointed in the feast provided. I guarantee that his first impression will be no disappointment provided he approaches Rio from the ocean side and slips in through her matchless harbor.

We amply were thrilled, although our itinerary brought us in at the back door by way of a prosaic railway station. In fact, we had enjoyed a whole week of preliminary thrills, seeing that we already had peeped in on Santos, the great coffee-port, and on São Paulo, the inland center of the coffee-growing industry and the home of the coffee barons.

Now be it known that Santos has its merits and São Paulo, as a rich and resplendent and bejeweled city, the capital also of what is practically an independent state, has enough merits to keep a careful statistician busy for quite a while. There is a certain vista of parks and palaces to be seen from a certain commanding height; and there is a sort of cocktail that they make out of pineapple rum at the Automobile Club—but hold, this is no chapter out of a guide-book, but merely a sketch out of a sketchbook.

The moment you touch foot on Brazilian soil, that same moment all things begin to be different from what you've seen and felt before. Elsewhere in South America your eardrums were soothed by the softly falling melodies of the Spanish tongue, but here they are speaking Portuguese; and Portuguese, when heard so soon after so much Spanish, seems a choppy and a roily, yea verily, a muddied and muffled language. A Brazilian in brisk conversation made me think of Mrs. Minnie Maddern Fiske trying to conduct an auction sale and swallow a mouthful of hot mush, both at the same time.

The people are more frolicsome, more care-free, seemingly more irresponsible than their neighbors across the boundaries. Gone is all suggestion of that heavy Spanish gravity. These folks are as unlike the hard-

working Argentines, say, or the staid Uruguayans as San Franciscans are unlike Brooklynites—which is to say, very unlike indeed.

Essentially, Brazil is a land of sharp contrasts, of acute paradoxes. Outlanders domiciled among them will tell you that the Brazilians are prone to grow excited during small emergencies but become placidly fatalistic in the face of a real danger. I can well believe it. And they have a way of stepping around bothersome technicalities, whereas we of the Nordic stocks are so prone to butt headlong against them.

Going up through the mountains from Santos to São Paulo over the famous “gold-plated” railroad with its hand-polished roadbed, I observed a graphic illustration of this flexibility of disposition.

At a small station where we stopped, a smartly got-up rural guard had just made a prisoner of a truculent-looking peasant. From inside his tunic he produced a length of stout cord and with it proceeded to bind the fellow’s wrists together behind his back, leaving one end free to serve for a tether.

To a fellow passenger, a British resident, I said: “That policeman appears to be pretty well equipped in the matters of uniform and pistol and sword and everything. I should think he’d carry a pair of handcuffs for cases such as this one.”

The Englishman smiled. “Well, you see,” he explained, “there’s a law against putting irons on a person who has not yet been convicted of a crime. Irons are regarded as ignominious. So when an officer arrests a customer who might turn unruly or try to escape, he just gets around the formality by using a bit of rope. It’s quite a common sight.”

I spoke, a few paragraphs back, of abundant contrasts. I think of one striking contrast that we noticed in São Paulo.

Motoring through a smart residential suburb, we turned a corner into a handsome avenue and met a double funeral procession that was so ornate, so elaborate, so tricked out with colorful details and with such a brilliantly attired brass band in attendance, that offhand you’d have said that they must be reinterring Barnum and Bailey. It couldn’t have been anyone else—not with that street parade.

As we watched the cavalcade rolling along, I happened to glance sideways. The raggedest black man I ever saw—bareheaded, barefooted, bared to his waist—was alongside us, carrying on his back a coffin. It was of flimsy, unplanned, unpainted wood, that coffin. On the lid of it was tacked a narrow strip of luridly purple cheesecloth, faded and frayed.

With my eye I followed him as he quitted the broad sidewalk and went down a small declivity and through a beaten foot-trail leading across a weedy common to a tumble-down shack before the door of which a cluster of tattered children—his own children presumably—awaited his arrival with his pathetic burden. Through the dust his naked heels showed as dots of that leprous-looking pink which so often blotches the skin on the extremities of a very black person.

In New York, in London, in any great city, one who seeks may find riches strutting side by side with direst poverty, but somehow this particular spectacle seemed to me tremendously typical of conditions in this particular land where there is so much natural wealth and so uneven a distribution of it. Still, who would say the wealth of any country is fairly distributed?

No visit to São Paulo is regarded as complete unless one has seen the state-endowed snake farm a few kilometers distant from the city proper. Accordingly we paid it a call. It's a great place to go if you are fond of snakes. Every variety of venomous reptile which the hinterlands of Brazil can offer—and they can offer a widely assorted stock—is present, either as a sample or as living material for the manufacture of antitoxic serum.

To me, however, the open-air pits and dens were not so thrillsome as the building where you behold the work of skilled modelers who in wax most realistically colored, and with no excruciating detail missing, have reproduced step by step the progressive effects of serpent poisons upon human tissue. But it is not a place to go just before a meal. Or just afterward.

We descended upon Rio, three of us, in the middle of the week before Lent began, when the Carnival was getting under way. So we saw Carnival from beginning to end and now I would say that while everybody with an eye for loveliness should see Rio at the earliest opportunity, the best time to see it is during Carnival when the true temper of this gayest, most natural, most entirely unselfconscious and spontaneous of races is revealed under circumstances not, I'm sure, duplicated anywhere else, and not with such utter spontaneity and joyous irresponsibility displayed here excepting at this particular season.

To the girls of good families Carnival means such freedom as they enjoy in no other part of the year. For in Brazil generally and even in Rio with its more advanced social conventions, the ancient Portuguese rule that before their marriage young women must lead rather cloistered lives still prevails among the conservative groups. The barred window through which the

immured maiden harkens to the sweetheart on the sidewalk below may be seen in the districts where the old-school, old-fashioned aristocrats live.

With their faculty for making fun of everything, including their most cherished institutions, the Brazilians call the devoted youth a “lamp-post lover” in the first stages of the courtship, when he is supposed to station himself at a short distance from the home of his lady love, casting languishing but respectful glances in her general direction. Later on, after he has dared venture nearer and, with upturned eyes and craned neck is pleading his suit beneath her casement, the popular name for him is a Portuguese term meaning “He who gargles his throat.”

But from Wednesday of the week before Lent until midnight of Saturday the unwed damosel of whatsoever estate may by right go forth, with or without chaperonage as the case may be, and romp to her heart’s content. It is a sanctioned right of hers and, take this witness’ word for it, she exercises it.

For three days and three nights, almost without cessation, an entire populace on terms of perfect democracy gives itself over unreservedly and wholeheartedly to merrymaking. If during that time anybody sleeps—which I much doubt—somebody else fills the gap left by that drowsy absentee.

Practically all who are under the age of thirty—and a great many who have passed that age—turn out in fancy dress. For the overlapping succession of elaborately staged parties which the high-born and the wealthy classes patronize, magnificent costumes are worn. In the unorganized frolics which constantly go on in every side street in every hiving quarter of the poorer people, in every out-of-the-way corner, a scrap of parti-colored rag tied about the head or a tattered and faded suit of pajamas serves the wearer as well as satin and fine plumage and makes of him or her a part of the picture.

I saw one strapping big negro man who wore a single smocklike garment of jute bagging to which he had fastened fronds of green leaves, with an ancient frayed feather duster for a headdress, and he was having a perfectly gorgeous time.

Well, for that matter, everybody else was. Until I had seen it with my own eyes, I did not believe it possible for the people of a big city to enter so wholeheartedly into holidaying without indulging in hoodlumism or rowdyish excesses. We witnessed no exhibitions of vandalism or viciousness. Everywhere there was unbridled liberty but nowhere, so far as we could see, was there unbridled license.

We saw nobody who was in a bad temper. We saw no citizen who refused to enter into the tempo of the thing. We saw nobody who would deliberately hurt your feelings or interfere with your own conception of the proper way to celebrate a festival. We saw little or no intoxication, barring the riotous, harmless intoxication that was born of sheer exuberance. The Brazilian may be a coffee drunkard and an addict to sticky, sweetish, fruit-juice concoctions, but he is no alcoholic.

There wasn't much music of bands or orchestras. These naïve folk made their own music—with laughter, with singing, with catchwords and catch phrases and, in the neighborhoods inhabited by those of African antecedents, with improvised instruments such as cigar-box drums and homemade fifes and flutes.

And, to be in the spirit of true enthusiasm, you must throw confetti and you must fling festoons of those gayly colored paper strips called *serpentinās* at everybody and everything, and you must carry with you a supply of *lancas*, meaning by that long metal siphons containing water mildly flavored with ether and a sickish perfumery—they look rather like overgrown tubes of tooth paste, these weapons—and from them you must squirt pungent, spraying streams in the faces or over the heads of all and sundry, so that they will be half-blinded and half-drowned, and will gape and gasp and blink, just as you yourself are doing. And if it rains—and during the greater part of the Carnival days when we were there it did rain, and rain hard—the fun goes on just the same.

To us, the culminating features on Saturday night, which were the parades of four big politico-social organizations, proved the least fascinating of the spectacles. Those huge, cumbersome, over-gilded floats, burdened with mechanical effects and lighting devices, and lumbering ponderously and creakingly through the street, while the papier-mâché monsters which encumbered them melted and fell to pieces under the torrential downpours, and the pretty ladies who adorned them became draggled and drippy, were plainly the crowning achievements of a studied preparation, whereas what went before had the charm of an impromptu and unprogrammed jollity.

I liked best the spirited sights to be seen every afternoon and evening, regardless of weather, on the great wide Central Avenue, known also as Rio Branco. Endless, close-ranked processions of privately owned or chartered automobiles—cars rent for fabulous prices during Carnival—moved up one side of the bowery driveway and down the other, hour after hour; and every car had its top thrown back and every car contained twice or thrice as many passengers as the builders thereof had originally intended that car should

carry. They perched on the flattened-down hoods, they straddled the radiators, they clung precariously to the running boards—young men, young girls, children, adults—and every single one of them was in gala finery and every one singing or shrieking or shouting.

Here would be a tossing, vociferating, living bouquet of girls all dressed to match, as violets or orchids or peonies; there a palpitant and vocal bevy made up as sailorettes or as harem ladies or as pirates; then others dressed to represent savages with towering headdresses, or fairies with tinsel crowns and spangled gauzy wings; or ballet dancers with flaring skirts; or galley slaves with crimson jerkins on their slender young bodies and ornamental chains jingling from their wrists and their ankles.

And young men past counting who were got up as girls, and girls past counting who had borrowed their brothers' clothing. And wherever the eye strayed, *serpentin*as were whirling through the air to festoon over tree limbs and to trail behind automobiles; and confetti was flying in pink and blue and yellow snow-squalls; and your own garments carried a persuasive odor of perfumed ether which would linger there for hours.

From this unceasing, always shifting and altering pageantry you had only to turn aside into the nearest byway or alleyway to come upon a breath of barbarism, a vision lifted bodily out of the untamed and untamable soul of the tropics, as here typified in the persons of half-nude, coal-black men and women, tricked out in crude trappings of grass skirts and glass beads and tin armllets and anklets, making tom-tom music and shaking gourds with pebbles in them to rattle, the while they deliriously chanted some weird gibberish and pranced and strutted and shuffled to a nightmarish meter which surely came out of the Congo forests with their slave forebears.

That sense of an imminent wild life prevails even when Carnival is not in progress. You may be anywhere you please in Brazil, with evidence of civilization all about you, and still and notwithstanding, there comes to you the feeling that near at hand the jungle is hiding from you its mysteries and its tragedies and all its store of treasures and wonders as yet untapped and unplumbed. Even in Rio you get it, full-measured and heaping over.

In Rio you get so many esthetic sensations that afterwards it is hard to sort them out in your mind. To begin with, the sheer beauty of the place is overpowering, almost numbing. It leaves you vainly searching for metaphors competent to sum up the impressions implanted on that lobe of your brain where the bump of appreciation sprouts.

This, I think, helps to explain why about every other articulate sightseer who ever looked on Rio has striven to express in words some notion of the conception, some adequate idea of the composition of the whole effect, and also why nobody ever has succeeded at the task. In the face of this universal record of failure, let me be presumptuous enough to try to etch a shadowy, ragged outline of the picture:

There is first of all a harbor that is studded thick with islands big and little. Some of these islands rise out of the salt water as rounded symmetrical domes; some are steep, tall spires—the barren tips of sunken foothills; one is a tremendous, perfectly shaped granite sugar loaf; and nearly all of them, from their bases where the waves slap brine on the green leaves clear up to their polls, are clothed with a blossomy, impenetrable tropical growth.

Your steamer comes treading a tortuous path through this verdant archipelago. She rounds a flank of the sugar loaf and there before you, spread along the shores of a scalloped inner bay, lies Rio. Before her are beautiful beaches, miles on miles of them, now deepening into sheltered coves, now sweeping landward in the noble crescent which forms the main waterfront. Behind these beaches are low sea walls; behind these in turn is a continuous system of magnificent parkways and driveways, and then on beyond begins the city proper, which in part covers a flattened plateau and in parts lifts itself, tier on tier, upon terraces that are edged and outlined with rows of enormous royal palms.

Right out of the heart of the town jut up various sheer peaks which rise to considerable heights, so that a man's front yard may be practically at ocean level and his back yard may extend up to an altitude of upwards of a thousand feet. For a background in the distance are the real mountains of the coast range. Off to the right, across dancing blue waters, is Nictheroy, the capital of the state of Rio. To the left, hidden behind a rocky outjut which thrusts forward to break the shore line into twin miniature gulfs, is Copacabana, a resort for bathers and a place for aquatic sports.

And here, brethren, is the most wonderful part of all: Approaching, you see not a single man-made blemish in the entire scope of the scene—no gas tanks, no coal tipples, no freight docks, no grain elevators, no factory chimneys, no switch yards. These necessary but homely things are tucked away out of your sight in landlocked basins or along the banks of concealed canals.

The exquisite beauty of the vista is unmarred and unutilized. It was made perfect and perfect it remains—or anyhow, almost perfect. I am trying

to forget that one minor blotch on the panorama is an electric sign advertising a Yankee brand of automobile tires, which blazes after dark on one of the waterside terraces.

The criminal guilty of perpetrating that atrocity should be condemned to confinement for life in a corral of North American billboards and for a cell-mate he should have the misguided Frenchman who, despite protests from the local beauty-lovers and at the instigation of the mayor, was lately engaged in cutting away century-old trees to make room for dinky reflection pools and stupid gravel walks and foolish replicas of formal Parisian gardens, all interspersed here and there along the ocean parkway. But these be small and inconsequential exhibitions of bad taste.

When I remember how, in most great cities, the waterfronts have been ravished and despoiled and disfigured with ugly utilitarian things, and how natural loveliness has needlessly been sacrificed for mistaken economic advantage, I shall turn my admiring thoughts to Rio. I shall think of the gorgeous sweep of seascape and landscape she offers by day and I shall think of the encircling half-moon diadem of jeweled spangling lights which she wears by night. They call her the "Queen of the Tropics." She is all of that and more than that. Compared with any other metropolis I have visited or with all of them lumped together, she is, to my way of thinking, the queenliest city that ever was created anywhere.

It is not as though she grew up haphazard. It is more as though in her growth nothing was left to chance—as though a great wisdom dictated her planning, as though inspired artists wrought out on paper her drives, her parks, her streets, her beach lines, before these physically were executed. I maintain that it is entirely in keeping with the eternal fitness of things that in Rio the royal palm attains its supreme glory. It is regal plumage for a most regal head.

As I said before, the jungle comes right up to the back door. Indeed, it crosses the threshold and creeps inside. We found that out when we rode to the top of Tijuca, which is one of the loftiest of those freakish wooded pinnacles that spiral up out of the municipal plain. There's a trip for you!

We thought that, superficially at least, we had seen the cream of what Rio had to offer—the Central Avenue with its wide sidewalks done in curious swirling patterns of varicolored tiles and mosaics; Ouvidor, that narrow teeming street of the original old city, from which vehicular traffic is barred; avenues of lordly palms; gardens and palaces and estates and beaches; fruit markets and fish markets; rows of houses showing the ancient

Portuguese influence, some being finished off as to their fronts with designs of bright, slick tiling, and some painted in designs reminiscent of the band wagons of Gentry's Dog and Pony Show; barracks and hospitals; theaters and churches and a country club pitched in a setting of indescribable beauty; the American Naval Mission, for Brazil's sailors are being schooled by a picked group of our men; the strands by the Atlantic and the luxurious mountain retreats to which the smart set flees at the height of the summer.

We had looked upon all these and much besides, and then we climbed Tijuca, and after that anything else or anything more would have been anticlimactic.

Dizzily revolving around abrupt turns, we went up and up a fine road cut into the steep faces of the cliffy hillock like threads in a screw. All at once it dawned upon us that the hiving town which creeps along the lower slopes of this strange eminence had been left entirely behind us. Behind us also were the last of the hillside villas which we had been passing these past few minutes, and now, except for the paved road twisting on ahead of us, we might have been in the midst of a subequatorial jungle a hundred miles from anywhere.

The interlaced verdure had closed in on us, thick and dark and formidable. A lovely little waterfall was smashing down over rocks into a pool buried in dancing greenery at the head of a brawling small river. Enormous blue butterflies with enameled wings were all about us. We heard wild monkeys chattering in the tree tops and we caught a glimpse of a flock of wild parrots flashing past like green-and-yellow darts.

It was raining hard when we got to the end of the driveway and, peering over the parapets on the side toward the city, there was nothing to be seen except cloud rack rising from beneath to meet other clouds rolling down from above and enveloping us in a dripping obscurity. So, on the advice of our chauffeur, we waited a little while.

Presently the shower stopped as quickly as it had begun, and on that, suddenly, the curtains of mist below us were rent asunder and the torn edges rolled back to right and left, and there beneath us, eight hundred feet down, lay Rio bathed and glittering in brilliant sunshine, with her beaches showing like curling strips of silver ribbon, and on past these the island-studded ocean, all so calm and deep blue.

The best souvenir post card that ever was printed couldn't begin to give you an adequate conception of that view. And where a souvenir post card

showing the typical view of something or anything fails to satisfy one's artistic longings, who am I to try to tell you what it was like?

As for the inhabitants of Rio, they seem to have taken their spiritual coloring, their social overtones, their mental complexes from their surroundings. I am sure they are the friendliest people, the most joyous people, the most unaffected people, and innately and instinctively the politest people that live. And what, selfishly speaking, is more to the point, they like us here in North America.

Already there is an abundance of bonds between these twain, one the most powerful and the largest republic of North America; the other the largest and, potentially if not already actually, the most powerful republic of South America.

Rio buys our automobiles and our movie films and various other wares almost to the exclusion of purchases from other countries. We absorb, up to ninety per cent in some years, the bulk of her coffee crop, which at present is her main crop for export. She doesn't fear our designs or suspect us of imperialistic intentions. Counting mainly on us for the opening-up and the development of her as yet unexploited resources—for the Yankee engineering and the Yankee organizing which shall put her to the forefront as a producer of diverse sources of wealth, agrarian and otherwise—her government and her ruling classes invite North American capital, and her people are graciously hospitable to the North American tourists.

She shares with us a unique distinction among New World nations—a certain facile sense of humor which leads her, even as it leads us, to take a joke at one's own expense, to poke fun at one's own political and social idiosyncrasies, to endure with good nature well-meant criticism of almost any racial shortcoming or tribal folly.

I am mighty glad, looking back on it, that we saved up Brazil for the last, and that our farewell picture was the picture of Rio softly fading into nothingness behind us as our steamer bore us out to sea on the long homeward lap.

For the sake of emphasis, I'd like to repeat what I said at the outset of these writings: If Europe is finished, if yesterday belongs to Europe, and if today still is North America's day, then surely the opportunities and the promises of tomorrow are the heritages of South America; and if we as a manufacturing nation and a bartering nation are to find new markets on this side of the ocean, as our older markets on the other side of it contract, it behooves us as it never behooved us before to cultivate the friendship of

South America, not only for the sake of the dollars rolling in, but for the infinitely greater cause of a hemispheric solidarity against all the rest of creation.

# THE FOLKS ACROSS THE WAY

## *Chapter One*

### *TO BE TAKEN BEFORE SAILING*

This year a large number of us will be going abroad on pleasure, as the saying is, bent. Many more who were worse than bent during the recent unpleasantness of the latter part of 1929 in Wall Street will forgo their plans for going abroad and will remain on at home doing the best they can with such white chips as they may have left. Just lately I heard about a gentleman who had meant to take his own car over for a tour of the Continent but now expects to be driving another gentleman's car for forty dollars a week—and glad to get it. There must be quite a group in the same fix. I'm merely citing an instance which came under my personal notice.

Even so, the annual exodus from these shores to those shores will be of impressive dimensions. Come good times or bad times, it always is. With us, the wanderlust has become a tribal attribute. Included among the travelers will be quite a lot who have not hitherto visited foreign parts. It is to these individuals who gird themselves for the Great Adventure, that I would address myself with a few hints, suggestions, and well-meant admonitions.

My opening bit of advice is as follows:

Before setting out, be sure to provide yourselves with copies of the standard guide-books which deal with the countries you mean to visit. Carefully read these guide-books from cover to cover, paying particular attention to the names of places, points, and buildings cited as being of prime importance to the sightseer. A good idea is to have at hand notebooks in which to set down the cathedrals, churches, palaces, art exhibits, famous ruins, etc., etc., etc. That is highly essential unless one is able to memorize the complete list and have it constantly on the tip of the tongue.

This knowledge will enable you to know what to avoid. It is terribly important to know what to avoid—especially art galleries and cathedrals. I claim it is possible to make a complete success of the average transatlantic vacation by religiously staying away from at least fifty per cent of the spots which the guide-books say one should view. Staying away from them gives you time for observing the people of a strange land, their customs and manners, their habits and their deportment, what they eat and how they eat it, what they wear and how they wear it, where they go and why they do go—in short, gives one a picture of a race rather than a confused, incomplete

jumble and a hodgepodge of hasty impressions of show-places which very frequently offer nothing symptomatic of the color and temper of that race.

For years and years and years, the efforts of the foreign publishers of guide-books to make the American people art-gallery-conscious have been consistently carried on. To a considerable extent this campaign has succeeded. Countless thousands of travel-worn, weary-legged Americans, obeying the herd-instinct, have allowed themselves to be rushed headlong from one art-gallery to another like sheep going down a loading chute, when, if the truth were known, perhaps not one in ten of them is at heart interested in art galleries purely as such. There is a belief fostered by those fiends in human form who get up the guide-books that the tenderfoot lumbering at top speed through an art-gallery thereby acquires culture. But you wouldn't expect a youth to acquire an education by crossing the Yale campus on a pair of roller-skates, would you? Well, then?

For an example of what I am trying to prove, put the shoe on the other fellow's foot: Let us conceive of a European as landing from his ship. It is his first visit to the States. His time is limited. He can give but one day to observing the wonders of New York because tonight he must be on his way to Chicago and all points west. This provides ample time for a British writer who is compiling material for a book on those quaint creatures known as Americans. I once knew a distinguished British author who spent three weeks leaping, like the chamois of the Alps, from place to place, getting as far west as Indianapolis and as far south as Washington, and then went home and embalmed the fruits of his impressions in a large volume dealing exhaustively with this republic, and pointing out on practically every page where we had failed and come short. The work was most favorably received on the other side. George Bernard Shaw had a regular fit over it, and the British press hailed it as a graphic likeness of the souls of an inferior species of mammalia addicted to horn-rimmed glasses, chewing-gum, and gang-killings; and, as I recall, Dean Inge said what else could you expect from a gang of lousy non-conformists anyhow?

But our imaginary visitor happens to be neither essayist nor novelist but merely a reasonably intelligent visitor motivated by a rational and proper desire to give our folks an honest if hurried once-over. Let us assume he adheres to guide-book ritualism. So he spends the forenoon at the Aquarium, which is all right if he is by profession a fishmonger or by choice a fish-fancier or even if he just naturally likes fish; but really it does not give more than a superficial insight into the characteristic traits of the American nation. And after the Aquarium he rides in a cab, eating a sandwich on the way, up

to Grant's Tomb for an exciting hour or so; and he rounds out his day at the Hall of Fame. Would you, or would you not, say that, his haste considered, he had carried away with him a fair impression of life in New York City? Or would you say that by a stroll along Broadway and a stroll along Fifth Avenue and a ride through Harlem and a peep at the East Side, and a casual conversation with a policeman and a chauffeur and with Grover Whalen—Grover would be sure to be bobbing up sometime during the day—he might have gathered, in at least a sketchy sense, a swift impression of the metropolitan cross-sections?

You would! Then why not try to develop the same viewpoint when the matter becomes personal and you are making your first trip abroad and your itinerary is briskly scheduled and somebody insists on shooting you in and out of a mess of art galleries instead of giving you a chance to see for yourself the tremendously dramatic everyday things which really count?

What is true of the guide-books and the guides with regard to European art galleries likewise is true of them with regard to their churches and their cathedrals. If this or that historic church is a shrine of the faith which you accept, or, on the other hand, if you are a lover of ecclesiastical architecture or of ecclesiastical decorations, why, then that's a different matter. In the one instance you should be permitted to worship there at your leisure; in the other, you should have opportunity—or should take it—for as prolonged a period as you please in study of the details and the effects which interest you. But, presumed that you are neither of these types but are just an ordinary layman, why should you be driven, like a dumb beef-critter in the stockyard, from one stately—or, as the case may be, crumbly pile to another at the dictates of a perfectly silly custom?

Nevertheless we submit to it. In nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand, we dumbly submit to it. I did—the first time I crossed. That's a good many years behind me, but the painful memories of what I underwent abide with me yet. I recall as though it were but yesterday how I scoured the art galleries of France and Italy seeking out their treasures. All of them contained art treasures and most of them needed scouring. But from now on, so far as I am concerned, somebody else may enjoy those concessions. I took the treatment, and I was cured and still am cured.

Possibly there was some excuse for me. In all modesty I may say that I had a classical background. In my youth I was the Younger Bohemian Set of Paducah. I drew pictures; I dreamed of growing up to be a cartoonist. The first money I ever earned with my pen was not by writing. I got a dollar—a whole big dollar—for a pen-and-ink sketch which I sold to an illustrated

weekly called Texas Siftings. It died shortly thereafter; I guess the prices paid to outside contributors proved too heavy a drain upon its finances. I was about fifteen then or maybe sixteen. With old Mr. Kane, our leading house, sign, wagon, and portrait painter, I constituted the artistic group or circle on our side of town. There was a gentleman who at intervals invaded the neighborhood taking orders for enlarging photographs—a large crayon enlargement absolutely free if the customer signed up for the handsome gold frame with the red plush insets—but he was a transient and in a measure an interloper, and I doubt whether you could call him a true creator. Old Mr. Kane and I really made up the resident ant-colony. But long before I met Europe face to face, I had learned that whatever my future medium of expression might be, it certainly wasn't going to be the pencil or the brush. All the same, I suffered myself to be cantered past countless miles of Old Masters and Young Messers. I may have pretended that I was enjoying myself but that was merely a pose. Secretly I was bored stiff, and, Lawsy, how my poor feet ached! When I took off my shoes at night I used to yelp—partly from anguish and partly from joy—until the people in the adjoining rooms must have thought somebody on that floor had smuggled in a coon-dog. As I look back on it all, the sole net result of value that I can remember having gleaned from the pictures was my discovery that St. Lawrence the Martyr by right should have been the patron saint of Harvard's football team. He was always dying on a gridiron.

So when I got home again and the chiropodist was through with me after making as thorough a job as he could hope to make with the damaged goods he had to work on, I took a solemn resolution. I said to myself:

“Never again will I permit anybody to drag me weary leagues to look at paintings just because somebody thought they were paintings and put frames on 'em and hung 'em on a wall. In future, when I go on tour to alien climes I largely shall give myself over to study of the most interesting and vital things on earth, to wit: human beings.”

I feel the same way about the run of cathedrals and the run of churches. To be sure, there are for me exceptions to the rule—exceptions which only make the general rule more binding. Whenever I am in Rome I go to St. Peter's. I don't care what your religion may be, indeed you may profess that you haven't any religion whatsoever in you, but the sheer glory, the overwhelming grandeur of that vast pile, inside and out, is an everlasting treat to the soul. The beauty of the Baptistery at Florence is a spiritual uplift to anybody except a member of the Low Forehead Club. Westminster Abbey will do something of an emotional nature to you, especially if you are of

Anglo-Saxon or Celtic descent. But that at the behest of the hired guide or the official guide-book, and only because these things are marked with asterisks, I should go madly galumphing from moldy crypt to smelly grave—that, brethren, is no longer for little Irvy. It won't be for you, either, if so be you harken to the voice of reason and the lesson of experience as here laid down by one who long ago took every degree in the whole dadgummed lodge and who knows that the chief rewards are vexations and water-blisters.

Nearly everybody of importance in Europe appears to have been dead for several hundred years; you'll be forcibly struck by that. Then why not let the late lamenteds rest in peace where they're comfortably planted, while you go out on your own hook, unaccompanied by official guidance if possible, and look up something worth while among the living? Why should any normal-minded Yank feel called upon to work up a bogus sentimentality upon viewing the last resting-place of Rollo the Norseman or Uric the Acid or any of those old-timers? Why should he try to summon up memories of the misty past by lingering at some ancient tomb which in the matter of janitor service has been neglected for five or six centuries? If only he'd stop to think, he'd realize that it would be just as appropriate for him to get all steamed-up and weepy because it's going to be seventeen long years before those dear little seventeen-year-locusts come back again.

As for me I've been enlightened and I freely admit it. If I had but a few hours to spend in a foreign city which I never before had seen, I should ask that first of all I be taken to a public market, a pawnshop, and a prison. Then, if I saw nothing else, I should at least have an idea of what the inhabitants of this city were like, for I'd know what their favorite food-stuffs were and what valued possessions they hocked when they were hard up and how they treated their jailed malefactors—in short, I'd have peeped behind the scenes of their private life.

Continuing to make the point direct and personal, take me, say, when I'm sojourning in Paris. It's a pleasant afternoon in the springtime, and the horse-chestnuts are in bloom. Some ass—a well-meaning ass, mind you, but nevertheless an ass—comes to where I sit in one of those pleasant sidewalk cafés, with a stein on the table and a good cash-register ringing clear, and suggests I ought to revisit Notre Dame and prowl its endless furlongs of aisles. Do I do so? I do not. To that misguided person I speak substantially as follows:

“Sucker, listen: For several years I lived on West One-Hundredth-and-Tenth Street within easy panting distance of those heights which are

crowned with the imposing profile of the Cathedral of St. John the Unfinished. I've seen that great edifice mounting toward the heavens stone by stone—sometimes, on very busy days, two stones—and I've heard it very highly spoken of by lovers of scaffolding. When I resume my round of cathedral viewing, if ever I do, I shall begin by giving that majestic structure my trade. I believe in patronizing home industries.

“Besides, sitting here without distractions except for the occasional necessity of shooing away a swarm of beggars, and about once in so often brushing out of my lap one of those gentlemen who think that merely because I'm an American I yearn to buy a stock of dirty postal-cards or go and see twenty beautiful virgins dancing without any clothes on, I can see the streams of the boulevard life flow past—can study the manners of these folks and philosophize upon their attributes. And that's entertainment enough for any creature who's constituted along my general lines. Hour by hour, I can sit here keeping the throat properly moistened, and wonder why so many of the French females are so *chic* and why so many of the French males think they have to be *chic*, too. I can ponder upon the intricacies of the Paris traffic laws, if any such there be other than the Law of the Survival of the Flittest, and say to myself that surely it frequently must be necessary to bury one of these taxicab boys along with a lamp-post owing to the difficulty of telling which is which. By the way, my dear saphead, if you ever succeed in locating the Tomb of the Unknown Chauffeur, you'll let me know, won't you? It must be around here somewhere, and I fain would go there and stand beside it and shoot off some sky-rockets.

“But for the present peaceful moment I'm happy and I'm comfortable. You toddle along to Notre Dame, if you feel that you just must, and leave me here, alone but satisfied. *Garson, garson, encore le tall beer, see voo play!*”

That's me. Oh, yes, I have my relapses, as who does not? Everybody succumbs to foolish temptation and slips about once in so often. Once in Lisbon, being beset by a strange, morbid craving, I made a laborious pilgrimage to what is vulgarly known as the Church of the Pickled Kings. In former times the Portuguese used to preserve their dead kings, including several who passed away rather mussily, and kept them on file in this church for exhibition purposes. Kings do not make very good preserves—I found that out. Another result was that for several days my appetite wasn't so good.

And then again—only last winter it was and down in Panama—I suffered a kindly volunteer to waste hours of his time and my time trying to

find for me the ruins of a certain Spanish building boasting a certain freakish architectural feature. What I really craved to do that hot morning was to return to the picturesque waterfront or to the shopping district of the older quarter of the city with its congress of all nations. But, no, I let him lead me around and around until he stumbled on the building with the famous flat arch to support one of its upper walls. Wasn't that stupid—when at that very moment I was myself the possessor of two of the flattest arches in the known world? And wasn't bragging about them, either.

How much better two of us managed our itinerary when three months later we reached Spain! Crossing from South America, we disembarked at Cadiz. By now, we rather fancied that we knew our minds and we proceeded to prove it. First we went to see one picture in which both of us had an interest, and then, separating, each followed more or less aimlessly his own peculiar fancy. My companion, as it happened, was interested in mural ceramics. By keeping his eye peeled, he immediately discovered that a peep into almost any doorway, no matter how dingy and crumbly and weather-beaten, would yield displays of the most marvelous old painted tiles—few patterns alike and nearly all of them beautiful patterns. He had a perfectly wonderful time and came back to the hotel that night burbling deliriously of what he had seen.

Whereas I enjoyed myself to an equal extent through a very different sort of quest. After exploring various obscure and odorous byways, I succeeded in tracing a path to the open-fronted studio of the genius whose specialty was embroidering the rumps of the local mules, and through a fascinated afternoon I watched from the narrow sidewalk while with shears and scraper he produced designs—now a simple bit of scrolling done in hair raised from the shorn pelt, and then again an intricate, involved decoration which started at the hind quarters of the favored mule—evidently some plutocrat's pet—and spread over his withers and up his flanks and along his back clear onto the shoulders. This quaint custom prevails nowhere, apparently, except in Cadiz. Once in a while you see a muleteer passing with abashed head held low, and humiliation writ upon his countenance. He's so poor or so lost to pride that he hasn't even his sweetheart's initials embroidered on his mule's south-end. But such sights are rare. I beheld only one such party, and he seemed to be hurrying home to hide his shame.

On reaching Seville we gave the exposition grounds but the briefest of surveys. To begin with, the exposition was in an unfinished state, and besides we had a feeling that when it was finished it would be pretty much like all the other expositions that ever were. We passed up the chance to

make the round of the nine cigarette factories, each one of which is the authentic cigarette factory where “Carmen” worked as a cigarette-maker before she started making Andalusian whoopee; and likewise the twenty-two separate barber shops, each being guaranteed as the shop of the original “Barber of Seville.” Instead of following these ordained and tiresome routes we put in the better part of a fruitful week soaking up and absorbing the local color of a lovely city wherein the influences of the tourist trade, the radio, and the movies had not yet standardized the people. Here were women of all classes in the mantilla, the flowing skirts, the tall shell comb, the unbobbed hair, of Old Spain; here were men—not peasants, either, but aristocratic-looking persons frequently—who jauntily wore the flat-topped sombrero which is the father and mother of our cowboy hat, and the short jacket with the big silver buttons on it, and the broad sash and, to top off, a great flapping cape in lieu of a prosaic, hand-me-down overcoat.

Then, having rhapsodized over Granada—which deserves on its merits to be rhapsodized over by Washington Irving and everybody who has ever followed in his footsteps—and having by painstaking investigation gleaned the information that Valencia appeared to be the only town in the world where the tune called “Valencia” never had been played or sung or whistled or hummed or even heard of, we moved along to Barcelona; and at Barcelona we enriched our education by going to a prize-fight. Being Lent, it was the wrong season for bull-fights although we did hear that over in Madrid the ladies were talking of getting up one to raise funds for establishing a branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. So we went to a prize-fight and there we learned this interesting truth: They don’t fight there according to the Marquis of Queensbury’s ritual. They use the rules laid down by another distinguished member of the British nobility, namely: the late Lord Chesterfield. Not even in Madison Square Garden, where so frequently the scrappers of the main bout refrain from antagonizing their opponents, have I seen gladiators so polite to each other in and out the ring, so scrupulously careful to avoid giving offense by word, look, or deed. Never again can anybody come around telling me that the Spanish are a bloodthirsty race, because I’ve been to one of their prize-fights.

You see, such independent scouting about as this carries with it the lure of being an explorer and a pathfinder, I remembered how it was with me—and my wife—on that first visit of ours to England. At the outset, being greenhorns, we followed the beaten trails, which perhaps was as it should have been. We saw St. Paul’s, the Embankment, Windsor Castle, Parliament, Buckingham Palace, the Abbey—the orthodox box of tricks. We visited the

Tower of London, where one of Mrs. Cobb's high-born ancestors is said to have been executed, and also Tyburn Hill, where some of my forebears doubtless got what was coming to 'em. But presently, having developed initiative, we branched out as free lances, so to speak. Next only to the day which I spent sitting entranced in Bow Street Police Court studying an unending procession of East End types and admiring the dispassionate justice of the English system of administering the law to petty offenders—next to that, I say, the biggest thrill, for me at least, came on a day when the two of us hired an automobile—a considerable undertaking back in 1913—and with it a friendly, wide-awake cockney youth as driver, and bade him take us for a spin through rural England, off the beaten tourist routes. Late in the autumnal afternoon we passed a pleasant, grassy, meadowlike expanse through which a small brook went placidly meandering. The peace and kemptness of the spot stirred my admiration, and I poked our driver in the back and asked if he knew whether this particular brook had any particular name.

There was a kindled twinkle in his eye as he glanced over his shoulder.

“Ow, yuss, sir,” he said, “it 'as a nyme. Possible you might 'ave 'eard its nyme. The nyme is Runnymede.”

Why, we felt like a couple of Christopher Columbuses! Unawares, as it were, with no preliminary bally-hooing or press-agenting to take the edge off our expectancy, we had happened upon the cradle of Anglo-Saxon liberty, the birthplace of Magna Carta, the very place where the nobles wrested from a craven tyrant the precious guarantee that Britons never shall be slaves except to catarrh.

According to my best observations, these three be the chief incentives which, on the occasion of his or her first voyage over the seas, inspire the average American.

First—To be able to send souvenir post-cards to envious stay-at-homes.

Second—To be able to brag on return of having visited the Old World.

Third—To be able to say when somebody mentions an art-gallery or a cathedral or a castle or what-not: “Oh yes, I've been there.”

But I, for one, should rather boast of having looked upon some spot which the schools of the human shad have never seen and probably never will see—some scene which gave me an insight into the comedy and tragedy of life abroad—than to have to admit that I'd seen only what millions before me had seen; what millions after me would be content to see.

Wouldn't you?

So I beg you not to let these guide-book sharps sweep you right off your feet. Believe me, you'll be needing those feet before you get through.

## *Chapter Two*

### *I'M THE MAN THAT BROKE THE BUNK AT MONTE CARLO!*

Or at least I trust I am now helping to do so. If Providence will but deign to use me as an humble yet willing instrument in the busting-up of some of the romantic and glamorous flapdoodle which for so many years has enveloped the overtouted and altogether bogus cheese-works known as Monte Carlo, I shall feel that the time spent on my latest trip to Europe was not entirely wasted.

Those who know me best may well understand that it was imperative business and not the mere idle quest of pleasure which took me abroad during the month when the black bass were biting with an enthusiasm seldom or never excelled. I went with reluctance. I returned with an eager alacrity, for I brought to the American people a ringing message.

Monte Carlo is the bunk! Such, briefly, is the message I would bring you.

As I grow older I become more and more convinced that a writer should write always with some worthy purpose in view. Merely to get the money should not be his sole aim. I used to think that; especially along toward the approach of the first of the month did I think that. But with increasing years has come wisdom. Literature must bear a torch.

I have only to regard the shining examples about me: O. O. McIntyre no longer is content to work for the joy of being able, on the day after pay-day, to walk into a tailor's and pick out something suitable for a fancy vest and then order a whole suit made out of it. He has a far nobler mission—to puncture the shams of an effete metropolis, to expose the follies of a national administration which has a habit of going Republican too darned often to please him or me, either.

Once upon a time, Rupert Hughes believed the chief end of a Rupert Hughes was to write popular novels. Now he realizes he was put here on this planet to make the Father of His Country hard to ketch.

Among the playwrights there is my friend Channing Pollock. To turn out box-office successes may formerly have been his main outstanding ambition, but consider for a passing moment what monumental labors now

engage our Channing's facile pen—one season doing a play to put an end to war, another season doing a play to cure us all of religious intolerance, and this season writing one that will stop pyorrhea!

And so it is with me. Regardless of the check which may drift in as a result of my endeavors, I feel I have a patriotic duty to perform in the present task of telling the truth about this Monte Carlo business. If no publisher will buy what I'm writing, I'll probably have it printed and circulated at my own expense.

It is an obligation and a responsibility which I owe to thousands upon thousands of my countrymen who, for aught I know to the contrary, may at this very moment be saving and scrimping to go to Monte Carlo and have one mad delirious glorious fling at the Casino so often described in fiction and the guide-books; so often pictured on souvenir post-cards and by the movies; so often painted in such glowing colors by temporarily infatuated friends and relatives writing back from abroad. What I want to do is to induce them rather to stay at home and see Coney Island and really get the worth of their money.

To begin with, I didn't intend to work up the Mediterranean shores into France. Northern Italy was as far as I expected to go. But when I landed, on a Sunday, in Genoa there was a telegram, sent two days before from a point about a hundred and fifty miles away, and, in accordance with the quaint continental custom, just now being delivered, which bade me shove along without delay to Nice and await further orders. So I caught the next train.

It was a train that was afflicted with the stammers. It stopped at every way-station and at every likely-looking place where the engine-driver thought there should have been a way-station, and between stops faltered constantly, and carried no dining-car but expected the passengers to get out and forage on the country, which was a thing I, in my ignorance, had not the wit to do. But practically all my fellow travelers did, because being Italians and therefore, by some miraculous racial inheritance, cinder-proof, they rode with their heads sticking out of the doors and windows and so could spot a huckster with his slender stock of sandwiches or his fruits or his what-nots while still upwards of a quarter of a mile and fifteen minutes from him.

Thus time wore on until, about two weeks from next Thursday, we diffidently neared the frontier. Eventually, but I cannot definitely or even approximately say when, because having mislaid my pocket calendar I had by now lost count, we were through the customs and over the border and, come Michaelmas, we were on board a French train also addicted to

stuttering and with a slightly different smell from the Italian train but an equally fascinating smell, at that. And so at last, but none too soon for poor little famished me, we did actually arrive at Nice, backing into the station ten or twelve feet at a burst to avoid giving offense to anyone.

Faint from hunger and fatigue, I was watching with a wan and almost despairing eye for the good monks of St. Bernard to come toiling across the wastes with their trusty dogs bringing succor, so I never did find out who won the hat-pool in that last day's run.

It was by now long past midnight of some date or other. I was escorted for a mercifully short distance along a street named for the twenty-seventh or the twenty-eighth or the twenty-ninth of September, I forget which, to an hotel. By dumb-play and by opening my mouth to show how empty and resounding I was, I succeeded in getting a cold snack. I then retired to a repose well-earned, as you will no doubt agree. The bed was according to official regulations respecting hotel beds in provincial Europe. When you have stopped at a few of the hotels you realize why the country roads are so badly paved. All the available asphalt has been needed to stuff mattresses with.

After a night upon the soothing and restful macadam I felt myself a giant refreshed. Pending the arrival of the rest of the party I decided to take a skirmishy survey of the gilded wickedness of the little principality of Monaco which, as my recollection of my geography told me, must be somewhere in this neighborhood. As a matter of fact, I had skirted through it on the way up, but probably owing to starvation and exhaustion, had not taken cognizance.

I rang the service bell, which, with a loud explosive clangor, seemed to go off just outside my room. It brought a waiter, though, and to him I tried to explain that immediately following breakfast I craved to go, preferably by automobile, to the scene of those sinful revels which from time to time I had read so much about. For quite a spell I worked on him but without making any real headway. This part of France, as you know, has a very dense population. But this waiter must have been about the densest one of the whole lot.

He had a hare-lip and an upper front tooth missing so that as we wrestled there before the Lord, I could look right on back into him and observe his mental processes, so to speak, at their sources. At present, though, they utterly were failing to function.

Over and over again, very patiently and most painstakingly, I named the place which I wished to visit, to wit: Monaco. The trouble, as I later realized, was that I pronounced the word American style, thus: “*Monaka*” to rhyme with “*Kanaka*,” whereas the customary way, locally speaking, is to call it “*Mon-a-coe*” with the emphasis pretty evenly distributed over all three syllables. My other mistake was in not just saying “*Monte Carlo*,” because even though you use the accenting commonly practiced in Paducah, where, as a boy I picked up most of my conversational French, it is very difficult for a native to avoid an understanding of what you are driving at when you say *Monte Carlo* to him. He may try to evade the issue—probably will try—but sooner or later you force him, however much against his will, to surrender.

The thickness of this person irritated me. It put me on my mettle. I swore a private oath that I’d invade the citadel of his comprehension if it broke a leg. For, mark you, I had before now enjoyed my little linguistic triumphs. I enjoyed one on the voyage over—when we anchored at Gibraltar to let off two passengers and to take on some. Several bumboats hastened out from shore with fruits and notions for barter. I came along as a group of first-cabin passengers were hanging over the rail of B deck and by gestures vainly striving across an intervening space of forty feet to make one of the venders understand that they craved ripe figs, of which he had a small store, instead of half-ripened grapes, of which he had a great many. Seeing me, a very pretty woman exclaimed:

“Oh, here’s Mr. Cobb, he’ll help us out! Mr. Cobb, won’t you please tell that stupid creature in that skiff down below that it’s figs we want?”

At this critical juncture it flashed to my mind that somewhere I had heard how the historic old fortress out in San Antonio derived its name from the fact that fig trees or cottonwoods or something once grew within its walls. So without a moment’s hesitation I advanced to the guard and in a confident masterful voice called out: “*Hey, bo, los alamos!*” Whereupon the peddler cried out, “*Si, si, señor,*” and began sending baskets of figs up his rope trolley amid murmurs of admiration from all sides for my ready command of tongues.

I immediately withdrew. For I had observed that a second boat—one loaded with knick-knacks—was drawing alongside, and the only other Spanish words I could at the moment recall were “*toreador*” and “*mañana*,” so unless somebody wanted a bullfighter for delivery tomorrow, which didn’t seem so very probable, as an interpreter I would be far out on, as you might say, a limb.

With the memory of this recent victory still fresh in my brain I became more than ever resolved to convey my meaning to the open-faced waiter. But after awhile, seeing that we were getting absolutely nowhere, I had recourse to the sign language. I have always regarded myself as quite an adept at sign-talking. “*Attendez-vous!*” I commanded, and then I imitated the action of an automobile moving with speed toward its destination and next its arrival there and the debarkation of its occupant and then—even more graphically—I imitated the croupier as he whirled the roulette wheel and the violent spinning in the opposite direction of the little ball and, finally, I smiled the large, opulent smile of a gratified gamester and with both hands scooped in a vast amount of imaginary winnings.

Presently I could observe, well back within his being, the beginnings of the dawn of reason. It was plain that conscious thought soon would be working toward the surface. Noting this, I repeated the illuminating calisthenic exercises, meanwhile saying to myself:

“This, now—this shows what a born pantomimist can do when he lays himself out to it. Pantomime is perhaps the most tricky and elusive of the dramatic expressions but, by Jove, I’ve got it! Beyond doubt I could journey to the most remote corners of the globe and merely by the use of this great gift of mine, procure anything I wanted. Just look what I’m doing to this dumb-bell . . . Come on, Bunny, and take a long lead off third—that’s it! Now slide for home, dad-gum you, *slide!*”

And he slid. All at once he smiled a delightful three-cornered smile of complete understanding and cried out “*Oui, oui, m’sieur,*” several times and darted from the room—and came back in ten minutes with a double order of scrambled eggs.

What are you going to do with a person as rabbit-headed as all that? I ask you!

Still, the loss was not total. I ate the eggs and I drank the coffee which accompanied them, or rather I drank a jorum of that deplorable ink-colored mystery tasting of chicory and Japanese shellac which the French persist in calling coffee. It only goes to show how an otherwise nimble-witted race can keep on, year after year, deceiving themselves about a thing which on the face of it is so utterly preposterous. Despite all proof to the contrary, they continue to claim—the French do—that that black stuff they drink for breakfast is coffee. Still, I suppose every great nation has its abiding and besetting delusion. Not even we Americans, constituting, as we freely will concede, the most intelligent and the most progressive and the most efficient

race on earth, are immune. We think we have personal liberty. Us poor simps!

Anyhow, having washed the taste of the coffee out of my mouth with some corrosive sublimate which I happened to have in my pocket, I went down-stairs and met the concierge or drum-major, who luckily spoke English, and I had speech with him, the result being that shortly I found myself hastening toward the revels in an automobilette which I think must have been built expressly to order and to measure but was thrown back on the maker's hands because it seemed to cramp the prospective purchaser, who was one of Singer's Midgets; and thence it drifted into taxicabbing channels and now had been chartered by the day to me. I overflowed it until I felt like a charlotte russe out riding.

The driver had his own little peculiarities, too. It was his custom to drive comparatively slowly and with a marked reticence on the infrequent straight-aways, but, throwing off all restraint, to tear at mad speed around all the sharp narrow curves, of which, between Nice and Monte Carlo, there are nine thousand four hundred and seventy-four. And here was another funny thing about his system: He never loaded up with more than a pint and a half of gasoline at a time. He would halt at some wayside shrine which had been turned into a service station and buy a pint and a half, no more and no less, and feed it in, and then proceed on his careening course until the supply ran low and his pet began uttering complaining fretful sounds and then he'd stop again and give the little thing another pint and a half. I think he was trying to wean it.

Thus, with many halts and with the hair-lifting swings already enumerated, we raced along, and to make sure it was not all a dream I would say to myself as I pinched the part which bulged out most prominently above the tonneau:

“So this, off which I am liable any minute to kerplunk eighteen hundred feet into the placid Mediterranean—this is the far-famed Riviera so celebrated in song and story! It's all too wonderful! To think of my being here! And to think where I'll be if Ben-Hur makes a miscalculation of about a quarter of an inch going around the next bend! But no, I mustn't think of that—that would be verging on the morbid.”

Through one of those miracles by which the Almighty occasionally shows that when a human creature is to be preserved that he may perform a great service for mankind, the same shall be done, we reached Monte Carlo and I spent the rest of the day and evening there in a preliminary spying-out

of the land. I was fortunate to secure a competent conductor in the person of an old acquaintance of mine, a member of an old New York family—one of the Hirsch boys.

No doubt my reader has heard of Hirsch Brothers, proprietors of the Anglo-Saxon Quick Delivery Mail-Order Company. There are four of the Hirsch boys—Gordon, Irving, Tudor and Plantagenet. This was the youngest one, Plantagenet. Every year he goes across for the house, and quite naturally spends most of his time at Monte Carlo investigating business conditions. He is a true and typical Knickerbocker—affable, fluent, a free spender, and abounding in the most graceful gestures. He showed me about the place and when I went back to Nice late that night I was prepared in my turn to act as a guide and mentor for my party. The better to fit the rôle, I familiarized myself with intermediary objects of interest. The consequence was that on the return trip next day I was amply qualified to point out and explain the various sights encountered en route.

As we cruised along the Grand Corniche over a roadbed originally laid out by Augustus Cæsar, now riding high upon the skyline, now swooping downward into a rugged gorge, then back again upon the crest, and always traveling with a panorama of incredible beauty—Alpine landscape behind us, Mediterranean seascape before us—a beauty so splendid that not even miles on close-set miles of the most atrociously hideous villas ever devised could spoil it or even seriously mar it, I would now and again grow eloquent.

For instance, I would be saying:

“That tiny town just yonder below us where it clings to its craggy peak like a cluster of limpets to a reef bared by the ebbing tides—that is the town of Eze. I have been informed on reliable authority that it probably is the most ancient town in this ancient land that has been continuously used as a human habitation since those days when the Old Line or Standpat Ligurians began refugeeing to these parts. Gaul and Frank and Phœnician and Hun and Saracen and Greek and Latin—by turns they all took it and held it and lost it. It was a dwelling for prehistoric aborigines. It was a pirates’ watchtower; it was a Roman stronghold, and centuries later it was a robber-baron’s fortress.

“Countless times has it been sacked by different breeds, different groups, different clans. I believe the Democrats even carried it once, but that must have been an off year. In the Middle Ages or Pre-Plumbing Period lovely ladies in silks and damasks rustled through its narrow byways, and gallant

swashbucklers dressed in kitchenware clanked down its steep defiles, with a noise like somebody trying to move an anthracite stove single-handed. Alas for romance—not a single swash has been buckled there for the last three hundred years.

“It has other distinctions than its antiquity, has Eze. So far as I have been able to gather, it is the only town along this scenic coast which does not contain at least one so-called villa modeled on the chaste lines of a Missouri smoke-house and with a perfectly poisonous mid-Victorian cupola or silo superimposed on top of it, and with its walls painted in at least four acutely jarring primary tones. It hasn’t even a tourist hotel specializing in the American and British trade—it’s that old-fashioned.

“So much for Eze. And now, turning slightly to the left, you will kindly observe another interesting phenomenon which was brought to my attention only yesterday. Do you see that circular hole or orifice in the face of yon cliff? Well, that was formerly a railroad tunnel but has since retired. The railroad used to run trains through it but the right-of-way was moved slightly inland and so this tunnel was abandoned. And now an enterprising native has taken it over and is holding it for sale, lease or rent to a desirable tenant. Daily he camps there alongside the opening waiting for somebody to come along who is in the market for a second-hand tunnel. Let us, in passing, lift our hats as a tribute to the most magnificent example of individual optimism produced by the present century.

“But then, this is a stubborn and a persistent people—none more so on earth. For evidence of this, cast an eye upon these fishermen whom we may see below us on the shore whenever we swing out to the verge—those elderly bearded gentlemen with their rods and their creels. I’m told that some of them have been thus employed since youth; now they are gray and weather-beaten like the barnacled rocks upon which they perch.

“About once in so many weeks or months one among them snatches out a finny trophy which, had it lived to grow up and nothing happened to stunt its growth or anything, would in its maturity have amounted to quite a fair-sized sardine. The news spreads then and all up and down the Riviera there is excitement, and veteran fishermen of eighty-five or ninety who have been seriously considering quitting the game decide to stick around another year or so because lightning rarely strikes twice in the same place and—who can tell?—it may be their turn next time.

“They die but they never resign. Yet they have no hope of achieving a really substantial reward such as occasionally befalls their brethren, the

venerable anglers who line the embankments along the Seine in Paris, because on his lucky day a Parisian sport may hook onto something of value that a visiting American or Argentinian has thrown away or, if he fishes below the bridge that is so popular for suiciding purposes, may even snag onto a despondent Alsatian.

“How stupid was the German psychology! How could they have hoped to win from a race whose taxicab drivers are so dauntless, whose fishermen are animated by such a dogged and unrelenting pertinacity? And think of the poor Heinies dreaming that even if they did win they could ever crowd the French to the point of accepting an income tax in order to pay off a war debt. Yes, sir, the Germans probably made a lot of money by losing.”

Thus I discoursed. And again when we had swerved across the boundary between France and the infinitesimal morsel of alien territory which on three flanks the greater country encloses, I might have been heard to speak as follows:

“My friends, we are now entering Monaco which, both in area and in population, is the smallest independent country on earth—the smallest and the most prosperous. Its citizens pay no taxes, but then again, on the other hand, they are never permitted to enter the Casino. The late prince was in his time the greatest of ichthyologists or piscatorialists or whatever it is a man is when he knows all about the habits, customs and home-life of fish.

“Well, the present incumbent is no slouch himself when it comes to sizing up fish—a good thing, too, seeing he lives off ’em. He took me for one last evening. Twenty-two hundred francs’ worth. It doesn’t sound like quite so much when you translate it into United States money and deduct exchange at current rates, which around here always seems to operate against the stranger; but still, when all is said and done, twenty-two hundred francs is twenty-two hundred francs. Oh, yes, indeed, the reigning prince is considerable of a fish-fancier as some of his hired hands will take the utmost pleasure in demonstrating to you later on . . . but I anticipate.

“Here is Monte Carlo in a highly unpaved state as you will readily observe; and almost immediately beneath us is the Museum and alongside it the Aquarium and above these the celebrated Terrace, and yonder there, lying upon the beach having its bottom scraped, is Monaco’s navy. No, no, not the nearest launch—that belongs to private parties—but the second one; that’s the navy. As we bear right at the next corner we undoubtedly will encounter some of the standing army. If we have luck we may encounter all twelve of them.

“You readily may recognize a member of the standing army by his regalia—it’s all over red, white and blue, with patent-leather boots and a sword and a pair of pall-bearer’s gloves and a magnificent helmet and about nine feet of gilded hen-chitterlings looped over the shoulder and under the arm and draping down over the bosom. In all the world there is but one uniform which is more brilliantly outstanding and that is the undress uniform worn by a member of the Equadorian Secret Service; he has green parrot feathers down the seams of the pants and when on active duty beats a bass drum or, if at night, sends up sky-rockets. But a military defender of Monaco runs him a close second. Arizona sunsets come third.

“It’s a very affable and accommodating army, too. The commanding general very kindly opened the taxicab door for me yesterday—after saluting. Let us trust he’ll be on the job today. It really gives one quite a feeling of thrill.”

Here, though, a minor disappointment awaited us. It was only a colonel who opened the car door for us. The general was up the street helping change a tire.

But all the rest of the experience was as I in advance had promised my companions it would be—a slow motion-picture of the saddest, the dreariest, the most sordid, most depressing conglomerate of human greed, human callousness, human credulity, bad taste and hopelessness that they or I ever had seen—and we’ve all three been about quite a good deal in our time, at that.

On the side to the sea the Casino overhangs a series of gardens dropping down to the pebbly beach. But this side is usually shunned except by deaf people—the orchestra plays there. On the land side the main structure faces a really fine stretch of park, with circling drives and flower-beds and grass plots, and on beyond the squared houses of the little city banking themselves in circling tiers upon the lowermost slopes of an adjacent Alp. This vista is very fine indeed; it is the only rationally conceived attempt at a decorative treatment in the immediate vicinity.

Here are handsome semi-tropical trees and clumps of ornamental shrubbery and florid blossoms and twinkling lights aglow through the fronded stenciling of the foliage. There is a popular belief—a belief fostered by the busy fictionists who serve as the unpaid press-agents for this overgrown minnow-trap—that every inch of greensward has been dyed red with the blood of some ruined gamester who staggered forth from the tables and cut himself a piece of throat. This report has been considerably

exaggerated. Certainly there have been suicides here—now and then an architect who took one good look at the Casino and became temporarily crazed, or a musician who made the fatal mistake of listening to the official orchestra. But as a rule, persons who go broke bucking Monte Carlo's unbeatable game do not bump themselves off behind the oleanders. They're entirely too selfish to do that. They wire home for more, because, as the statistics show, if you are born a sucker there's no cure and very little hope even of transient improvement.

In the last resort they may sponge on the pension fund maintained by the management for the benefit of permanently stranded sports and sportees. It would be bad for trade if too many of the finished products of the industry were panhandling for sous in the public squares. So the thoughtful proprietor cares for them after a fashion but makes them keep off the premises. He can afford it; he's doing awfully well.

Running past the front elevation of the building is the main street or rue des Pauvres Poissons. Like the bank-roll of the average patron, it starts off ambitiously but peters out very abruptly. Overshadowing and dominating it, stretches the great gambling house. Without fear of successful contradiction, I declare this to be the homeliest large building in Southern Europe. The entrance goes in through a façade so ponderous, so overburdened with the carven figures of full-breasted, dropsical, bloated female deities—titular goddesses, I suppose you might call them—that constantly the whole thing seems on the point of tumbling down of its own weight.

Along the roof to the left are lesser statues allegorically dedicated to distinguished customers of the past. Among others I recognized bronze likenesses of the following: Colonel the Honorable Launcelot Bertram Guy Pilchard, K.C.B., of Anchovies-on-Crumpet, Herts, who believed what the fortune-teller told him; the late Judge Henry J. Mullet of Schroon Lake, New York, who worked out an absolutely sure system for winning at roulette; Professor George W. Shadroe of Dream City, Maryland, who thought because he escaped the card sharps on the steamer coming over that destiny had set him apart for the job of cleaning up at baccarat; Herr Gustav Rolmopps of Sardellen-Belchberg in Lower Bavaria, who was born with a soft place in his crust like a Parker House roll and never got over it; and many more. These monuments are all nudes or semi-nudes, which emblematically is correct. This is the most ideal spot on earth for losing your shirt.

But—I seem to hear the reader murmuring it—but surely this ugly cocoon conceals a ravishing butterfly? Surely, within this monstrous pile

will be revealed, in all its sensuous lure, in all its dazzling and entrancing beauty, the enthralling spectacle so familiar to all consistent patrons of the movie and eke to most readers of popular literature—the titled belles and beaux of the Old World thronging about the tables; the noble patrimonies risked with a debonair fling of the hand, upon a single cast; the king's ransoms lost and won in a twinkling; the myriad lights agleam upon gemmed throats and jeweled wrist; the muffled cry of abject agony as some desperate young profligate of a princely line sees the last nine millions of his inheritance swept from him; the laughter, the music, the feverish gaiety, the costly trappings, the priceless Old Masters? And so on and so forth.

Friend, howcome you to get that way? Come with me. Let us enter this swirling vortex of fashion and danger, this golden palace of chance, this smiling hell, and give it the care-free once-over.

First we find ourselves in the grand salon. It is a large and echoful cave of the winds done in Early Barnum and Bailey—very early, in fact before the refining influences of the Bailey school began to have their restraining effect upon the more florid style of good old P.T. Hitched to the fat pillars in the foreground are glass cabinets containing sample wares of the local tradesmen, mostly scents and toilet articles and jewelry and all very tinselly and gimcrackerish.

Various gentlemanly functionaries in more or less vivid costumes wander about doing nothing with a rapt intentness. Among them the prevalent mode is to wear the thick drooping mustache which is regarded as being quite dressy and is rather impressive except when the wearer has been eating mayonnaise.

Dawdling about or seated upon the scattered sofas are idlers of many nations, including delegations of ladies who obviously belong to a universal sad sisterhood. It is not notably difficult to scrape an acquaintance with one of these. My understanding is that these fair but frail young persons may frequent the tables so long as they have funds to venture. When they have no more available cash they are exiled to the outer corridors, becoming, *hors*, as the French say, *du combat*.

Beyond to the left and visible through a huge doorway elaborately scrolled and finished off in a tasteful combination of band-wagon golds and fire-engine reds, is the public salon free to all and sundry who want to get something for nothing, as who among us does not? But should you desire to be exclusive, to be set apart from the common herd which tends rather to whiskers for one sex and frequently for both, and which uses garlic as a

perfumery, you invade a small bureau or cubby-hole hard by and apply for admission to the *salons privés*, which are supposed to be reserved for the truly aristocratic.

In the top bureau drawer a middle-aged gentleman sits, like St. Peter at the Gate, in solitary charge. Above his head is a sign on the wall warning you in four languages that, without assigning any reasons therefor, the management reserves the right to blackball a candidate on sight or to cancel his privilege after it has been granted. But pray, don't let that detain you.

It's almost as hard to penetrate the inner sanctuary of Monte Carlo as it is to get into Grand Central Station. The procedure calls for twenty-five francs (approximately seventy-five cents) and the following impressive formalities. You tell the gentleman your name. He looks puzzled. You spell it; his bewilderment increases; he seems dazed. You show him your passport or, better still, your letter of credit or your sheaf of travelers' checks—anything to convince him that you are still solvent. He studies your signature closely and then on a square card good for one continuous day's session, he writes with a bad pen an engaging series of typographical errors and hands it over, simultaneously accepting your current dues, and, as is customary in case of Americans, a little something on the side for himself.

If, in tendering payment, you slip him one of those big mauve-tinted notes of a large denomination, the ceremony is prolonged considerably. He opens a bin and takes out a wooden box. The box is full of thumbed and frayed manila envelopes. He opens one of the envelopes and takes from it a wad of crumpled paper bills—pale purple, lavender, magenta and some with just a dash of heliotrope. He opens another envelope and gets out some more of the pastel currency. He opens yet a third envelope and shakes from it a collection of very small, very grubby, rumbled notes and an assortment of copper and nickel coins of various sizes.

He then works out the arithmetic of the problem in his head, counts down what is coming to you, recounts it, checks it up once more to avoid any possible mistakes running against the house, gives it a swift parting caress, passes it over to you and spends the ensuing five minutes putting the funds away, each batch in its own respective envelope. This was the way Charlemagne made change and what was good enough for Uncle Charley is still good enough for any continental cashier.

This routine, mind you, is required for securing a card good for day and date only. You may—or you might at the time of our call—get a week's card for so many francs, or a monthly card for so many more. Personally, I

preferred doing business retail. If it took that long to get a card for one night—well, make your own calculations!

Armed with your precious pasteboard, you traversed the drafty acreage of the foyer, passed crosswise through the public gambling-hall, which also is of a wide and barn-like aspect; followed along a corridor and under another of those Adam Forepaugh portals, and were ushered into the somewhat smaller and presumably classier precincts of one of the several private salons where they lie, with a bar and a restaurant and private dining-rooms, at the farther end of the wing. But the principal distinctions, so far as I was able to judge, between the two grand divisions were that while you might not smoke in the outer chamber, you might freely do so while patronizing any inner one; also, the latter had upon its lofty panels an enhanced number of oil-paintings, chosen, I think, by the same genius who picked out the stage-settings for the first Black Crook company; but otherwise was as illy devised, as cheaply done, as vulgarly ornate, as dull and idealless and neglected-looking as the public room.

Finally there was this to be said as marking a difference: In the seclusion of a *salon privé* you got enmeshed up in fewer bosky beards than in the other place, and saw great numbers and varieties of gold-mounted cigarette-cases and low-cut evening gowns, and dinner jackets and monocles and slave bracelets on gentlemen.

In neither place did anybody—while I was there—laugh right out. You got the feeling that nobody ever had laughed aloud and heartily; that nobody ever would. Only at rare intervals did anyone smile; this thing was too serious for smiling. I did see one woman, having made a small winning, bend lovingly toward the little heap of brass counters and celluloid plaques which had been shoved to her and audibly croon—croon as a mother might over the cradle of her first-born, or as an Englishman might over a grilled kidney. But she plainly was a novice and of the *bourgeoisie* besides; she had not the restraint born of refinement or long practice at Monte Carloing. To right and left, her neighbors, all case-hardened habitués, snooted her.

Instinctively you lowered your own voice as though you walked through a burial vault; instinctively you trod softly on the polished floor; you helped to preserve the hush of the dismal and depressing atmosphere of professional gambling carried on as a sober and a grim and an all-engrossing science. The shuffle of nervous feet; the low-pitched, monotonous, clacking reiterations of the game-keepers' calls; the rattle of the little wooden rakes as the deft *croupiers* hauled in or paid out bank-notes and the big red disks and tokens—for you might play either with cash or with chips; the sibilant

hissing of decorous whispered interchanges; the discord of an occasional dispute quickly stilled—these were the only sounds that disturbed, however slightly, the brooding calm.

For me the scene had all the unbridled jollity, all the lilt and lure and frolic note of a rainy Sunday at the Morgue. I'm not exaggerating in the hope of scoring an effect. I'm telling you the honest truth about my reactions. I filled up with a sudden deep loathing; yet as regards chancey pursuits I have no conscientious scruples; I have been known to take my little fling.

It was true that occasionally a green patron—an American, usually—strove to be jocular and jaunty and debonair as he went about the business of swapping dollars for experience. But the attempt was pitiable and died quickly. Invariably the mock care-freedom fatally was frowned upon by the regulars. Lightheartedness didn't match in with the aura of the Casino—even a make-believe lightheartedness.

The general feeling of being in a funeral parlor was enhanced by the bearing and the appearance of the staff. The *croupiers* and the dealers and the lookouts and along with these certain unidentified employees all were appropriately attired in slick white collars and black ties and long black coats of a most mournful aspect, cut undertaker style. I watched one of these mercenaries as he served his drawn-faced, purse-lipped, knotty-browed, desperately-in-earnest practitioners and I thought of the simile of a mortician's assistant silently ministering to the unburied dead while they staked for copper slugs with which to weigh down the pale lids on their corpsy eyes.

No eating went on; and there was no drinking nor anything to drink, that I could see. Well, I'd no quarrel with that restriction—embalming fluid would have been the only suitable tittle for this merry company. It needed a Hogarth or a Doré to paint the picture; a De Quincey or an Edgar Allan Poe to describe it.

The corps had expressions suitable to their calling. They mainly were flabby, pallid men wearing the unmistakable look of men who lived by unwholesome and confining pursuits away from the air and sunlight and laboring for long hours under artificial lights. Without exception they were keen-eyed, imperturbable, low-voiced and gravely courteous to all and sundry. They knew their manners.

Here would be one with a perpetual sad mechanical grimace upon his face like a painted smile that is glued on; there another who achieved a faint

and doubtless unconscious touch of comedy by roaching his oiled black hair high off the forehead after a model which on our side of the ocean became rare almost to the vanishing point when Prohibition came—and went, and took the old-time barkeeper with it. If it weren't for lion-tamers and tight-rope-walkers, we'd forget in America that swirling effect. But at Monte Carlo, among the grave-diggers, it still is fairly common.

The characteristic types among the players resolved themselves into certain oft-recurring specimens. Multiply each set by twenty or a hundred and you'd have a fairly comprehensive, composite photograph of the whole. Here they were:

The American male tourist, prosperous, sometimes openly amused, sometimes apparently disgusted, who had been drawn hither, as he went about Europe on his boring sightseeing itinerary, by one of three motives—by idle curiosity or because gambling even against a dead-sure thing appealed to him, or because, having read so much and heard so much about this place, he craved the small vain satisfaction of being able to brag after he gets back to Buffalo or Biloxi about the time he bucked the bank at Monte Carlo.

The females of his species, somewhat fluttered and vastly fascinated; hesitating over their bets and rarely risking any very considerable amounts.

The British male ditto and his womenfolk, slightly more impassive and under stricter nerve control than their Yankee prototypes.

The expatriated, unattached American woman, who for some reason or other, you guessed, practically was a fugitive from her own country; usually haggard, often elderly, sometimes downright aged; inevitably over-painted, over-bobbed, over-jeweled and under-clad; a burnt-out crater of excesses and extravagances, trying now to rekindle those extinguished ashes of passion by the device of risking money on the spin of a silly ball or the flip of a stupid card—an extinct volcano snuggling up to a tallow dip.

The European variant of the same sub-variety and belonging in the same general grouping. (Not so expensively dressed, as a general rule, as her American sister.)

The professional adventurer of the ultra-sophisticated continental breed, which is in nowise to be degraded by comparison with our inferior domestic imitation; frequently monocled; a greedy, appraising, predatory stare; faultless of manner, excusing his impudent leers at every pretty girl;

gorgeously groomed but with an unabashed feminized eroticism permeating his careful foppishness. He smelt of evil.

The successful professional adventuress of almost any nationality you pleased to ask for; beautifully gowned; with an eye like an eagle for the main chance, and as hard as a jail door.

The unsuccessful professional adventuress, a slightly shopworn and fading cheaper edition of the foregoing, and more inclined, by necessity, to listen to reason.

The European small shopkeeper type, occasionally replaced by the well-to-do peasant type; usually bearded if a man; usually in old-fashioned garb if a woman; more likely to be middle-aged or elderly than young; wagering five francs (fifteen cents, about) or ten or twenty at a time, rarely putting up as many as fifty francs; scarcely breathing during the play; their meager, stunted, diseased souls looking out through their squinted eyes, and their fists involuntarily clenching and unclenching, and their tongues licking their dried and grinning lips; in their postures the abnormal fixity of the addict; with the insane patience to sit on for hour after hour silently gloating if their winnings pyramided, silently grieving if their stakes melted tragically away; like drug-fiends, these were, and very numerous.

And all or nearly all industriously scribbling down on scratch-pads or forms of ruled paper obligingly provided for that purpose by the management, a tally of every winning number, every winning color, every winning combination.

Indeed, this was an inevitable feature of the business—this bookkeeping was. At least ninety per cent of the regulars and many of the dabblers kept score on the results. Paper and pencil at the right hand of a player, chips or money or both at the left—this was the common rule. No doubt in the years to come, reading over these treasured dope-sheets will provide a congenial means of spending the long sultry afternoons of the summer solstice out at the county poor-farm.

And here was another thing that would smite you with a jolt: I know it smote me with one. During my three visits of inspection I saw but one person—and he an American—who played for really sizable sums. It produced a sensation which brought onlookers thronging from other tables when word spread that some daring speculator had won as many as two thousand francs—nearly sixty dollars, as reckoned our way—upon a single roll.

Of course, through a streak of continuing luck, a fluke running counter to the law of averages, fortunes have been won at Monte Carlo. When this happens the canny administration sees to it that news of the coup is exploited abroad, thereby spreading more molasses to snare more flies. By the same token, individual fortunes are lost, but mainly the money is won or lost—usually lost—by driblets; a dreary, wearing, languishing thing.

If I am one to say, judging as I do by personal observation and by the testimony of more seasoned students of this particular phase of mortal idiocy, it is not the flung-away dollars of the wealthy and the well-to-do, not the bullion of the rich waster, that make up the dividends for the shareholders in this nice little, tight little drum of a Casino. It is the pennies of the incurables which enable the chief owner of the plant to have his palaces and his yacht and his flunkies in livery and yet leave enough over for a split with the French. It is that which so prospers the stolid burghers of this petty-larceny realm that they exist, plump and fat, and pay never a stiver for the upkeep of their make-believe toy government. The Casino doesn't live by cracking vaults or tapping tills; it lives by robbing a poor-box.

Finally, there is this to be said—from the better's standpoint the whole proposition, as is mathematically provable, presents an absolutely impregnable front. Roulette is far and away the favorite game at Monte Carlo. And roulette is the one game, of all widely known games, where the odds against the player and correspondingly in favor of the bank are the longest. Constantly, unceasingly, the rule of percentages which is as absolute and arbitrary as the attraction of gravitation, works against him and sooner or later it will eat him up.

Take the numbers: Bet on a number and win, and the gamekeeper pays you at the rate of thirty-five for one, which sounds attractive if you don't stop to think. But against your chance of winning there are thirty-seven chances—the thirty-sixth number plus the zero. Then again, should the ball land at zero on a spin when you have bet upon the color, or upon odd-or-even, or upon the main divisions, your money is cut in two—half back to you and half to the house—or, if you prefer, it is impounded and on the next turn, even though your choice shows as winner, you get back your original stake and nothing more. You've had your troubles and your pains and your heart-disease for nothing.

By spreading lesser sums to protect the larger stake you may guarantee against total loss, but granted a sufficiently extended period of play with the averages running not freakishly but regularly, and roulette will devour any bank-roll even though it be as big around as a wash-boiler.

On the other hand, there is baccarat, where one gamester risks his coin at evens against another gamester's, and the house acts merely as gamekeeper. That, on the surface, sounds fair enough. But the house takes its cut for its trouble—roughly, five per cent of the total—out of every pot regardless of its size. And the plays come very quickly—infinately quicker than at poker or even at craps. A kitty run for the benefit of the house is at best about the greediest little animal that lurks in the jungles of chance, as any professional sport will tell you, but by comparison, baccarat's kitty makes any other kitty seem a vegetarian.

Approaching my conclusion, I am prepared to state once more without peril of being controverted, that so far as picturesqueness goes, so far as the counterfeit carnival spirit goes, there is more life—if so spurious a thing may be called life—at Tia Juana or at Juarez, down on our Mexican border, in a single hour than there is at Monte Carlo in a solid month. And as for dashing and audacious and adventurous play—well, I'll risk the further assertion that on any good brisk night in Bradley's deadfall at Palm Beach ten times as much real money—yes, twenty times as much—will be played for as is played for on any good brisk night at the Casino; another difference being that Bradley's has only a short season during the height of the winter run of the gudgeons from the North, while Monte Carlo goes on day after day, season in and season out, grinding up the fingerlings into little profitable pieces.

So that, my brethren, is Monte Carlo—Advertising Done It! Outside on the Terrace is the velvety blue of the Mediterranean night, the soft sky above you, and below you the soft and tideless sea which never in hue or texture is the same for two hours on end but which always is incomparably lovely; and about you are the scents of the magnolia and the mimosa and, caressing you, the gentle sweet breeze, and, whispering to you, the palms and the cypress and the murmurous bushy-headed pines. Inside, there is the heat and the smoke, the everlasting hopeless struggle against a perfect machine, and permeating all of it, like the reek of some strong essential oil, the sweated and squalid greed which is the bowels of the cheap, nasty, penny-snatching, cheese-paring thing.

Oh yes, I was near forgetting one farewell item. Close by the Casino and under the same paternalistic direction, they used to have pigeon-shooting. Coop-reared birds, tame and torpid and fat and heavy of wing, were forced out of pens, one behind another, and forced to flounder up into air; and a few yards away stood gallant heroes armed with scatter-guns to blast the poor bewildered creatures into frowsy chunks of carrion as they rose. It was a

noble sport. Between bouts with Lady Roulette it provided relaxation for a jaded gentry. And so typical was it of the general tone of the place that you might have figured it would go on perpetually as it had gone on for so many years in the past.

But only lately it was abolished—not for humane reasons, though. My theory is that someone in authority, perhaps His Princely Highness himself, made the belated discovery that after all this was not strictly in accord with the spirit of Monte Carlo—once in a while a pigeon got away without leaving all his feathers behind him.

## *Chapter Three*

### *THIS HANDS-ACROSS-THE-SEA STUFF*

The other day when we were talking over this chapter, a friend of mine suggested that a very good plan for starting off might be by telling the somewhat antiquated story of the persistent gentleman who crashed a party to which he had not been invited; and twice they threw him out and each time he rallied and went right back in again; so the third time they belted him across the dome with a heavy wooden sign inscribed "Welcome" and then heaved him through a convenient front window without taking the trouble to raise the sash first; and as he sat upon the sidewalk and combed the particles of shattered glass out of his thatch, he pensively remarked to himself:

"Say, I begin to see it all now—those fellows in there don't want me at their party!"

My friend thought the above story should furnish an apt introduction for a chapter dealing with the way Americans are being treated in Europe since the war, and I sided with him, and here it is. But we both agreed that on one point the comparison fell down and that was that while the young man who went to the party finally realized the true state of affairs, the Americans who go to Europe haven't caught on yet and there is nothing to indicate that they ever will, either.

Then, as a former amateur after-dinner speaker, I reverted back to those old sinful days before I had reformed and taken the veil, and I likewise was reminded of a story; but mine had rather a bearing, I thought, on the prolonged controversy between this country and France touching on the question of the ultimate debt settlement, if any.

My story was that on a peaceful Saturday afternoon in the springtime when all nature seemed glad, a citizen passed along a shaded street bound for his home, when he heard the sounds of what he took to be a very bitter and violent discussion. Looking about him to discover the source of this disturbing clamor, he saw upon the vine-clad porch of a lovely little white cottage two persons—a man and a woman—who shook infuriated fists in each other's red and irate faces and used harsh, strong, threatening words.

The passer-by was shocked and quite properly so. So, being at heart a good Samaritan, he did not hesitate because instinctively he knew wherein

his duty lay. He opened the gate and hurried up the walk.

“Tut, tut, tut, my friends!” he was exclaiming, “Oh, fie, for shame that \_\_\_”

But the man of the house interrupted him. That person broke off what he was saying to the woman and swung on the well-meaning intruder.

“Where’s the big idea?” he demanded. “Who give you the right to come *tut-tut-tuttin’* in here like a broke’-down gas-engine?”

“It is true,” explained the citizen, “that I am a stranger to you although a neighbor. But oh, my dear friends, what a deplorable thing it is, at the end of the work-a-day week, with the holy Sabbath impending, that a worthy couple such as you plainly are should indulge in so unseemly a debate or, I might say, quarrel!”

“Hold on jest one minute,” stated the husband. “You’ve got us all wrong. This ain’t no debate and what’s more it ain’t no quarrel, neither.”

“But the language you were using—the threatening gestures?”

“Never mind that part of it. Now then, since you’ve been so prompt about shovin’ your nose into other people’s private business, you answer me one question: To have a debate there’s got to be a difference of opinion, ain’t they?”

“To be sure, but—”

“Well, they ain’t no difference of opinion here—absolutely not. My wife thinks I ain’t goin’ to give her none of my week’s wages—and I know dam’ well I ain’t!”

The second story may diverge slightly from the main track of the subject, which is this hands-across-the-sea stuff, although it is, I claim, pertinent to the issue of the French attitude with regard to the little matter of adjustments; but the first one bears a direct relation. The subject is by no means new although of late it has assumed an altered phase. As a matter of history, the first hands across the sea were hired hands. They were Hessians, so-called, and King George III rented them at so much a head from their princely proprietors and shipped them over here to fight against the Colonists during our American Revolution. But it no longer is good form to refer to that regrettable incident.

The old breach between the Britannic motherland and her rebellious offspring long, long ago was settled and orators on either side of the Atlantic are constantly reminding us that the English-speaking peoples are after all

one people—although many English purists refuse to admit that what we speak here and in Canada is really English or even a plausible imitation of it—and other orators refer to the well-known biological fact that blood is thicker than water, whereupon some on both shores are piously moved to thank God for three thousand miles of the water. And only now and then does a British taxpayer so far forget himself as to refer to Uncle Sam as “Uncle Shylock”—that doesn’t happen oftener than a few hundred thousand times a day, probably.

And just recently we were being advised by an affectionate and solicitous British press that, as fellow Anglo-Saxons and sharers in the same blessed heritages, we must not take too seriously any little things Mr. Rudyard Kipling might have to say about us in a poem he just had written. Well, we didn’t. For, while Mr. Kipling married amongst us and for years lived amongst us, and while his books enjoy a larger sale amongst us than they enjoy in his own land, it has long been an open secret that, taking us as a nation, he is not excessively addicted to us—in short, he doesn’t like us. And besides, there appears to be a growing tendency in both countries to look upon Mr. Kipling as that most melancholy of literary spectacles—the cross-mark X, showing where a vanished genius was last seen.

We may therefore dismiss as mutually distasteful and outlawed by the statute of limitations, the sources of the original phrase and come right down to its present-day aspect.

I insist that the hands across the sea are, generally speaking, of two sorts—the hands that are held open with the fingers eagerly clutching, with the palms itching, to receive the millions upon millions of American dollars which annually we bestow upon European shopkeepers and European innkeepers; and the hands, frequently the same hands, that behind our backs are clenched into hard and angered fists for expression of a profound disapprobation of American tourists, their personalities, their manners and tribal customs, their method of speech and all which pertains to them, including their ox and their ass.

But the fists rarely wave until after we have spent the money—put that down as practically the universal rule of conduct on the part of our transatlantic brethren. Much has been said and written during the past few years upon the topic of the gratuitous insults alleged to have been visited on American transients in various foreign countries, but notably in France. But have you heard of any American who got insulted until after he got through spending? You have not. And you never will.

It matters not what private convictions of disesteem a Paris shopman may entertain for the Yankees who take abroad the money they earned at home and slather it there in large, delectable, prodigal gobs upon him and his kind. As a true Parisian, he will manage to conceal his feelings until the buying is all over and done with. Then, the transaction being closed, he may or may not let himself go. It depends upon whether the customer has anything left. The Gallic temperament is explosive, but it does not explode in such a way as to do any material damage to the owner of the said temperament. There is no record of such a tragedy.

I take it there will be no contradiction from any authoritative source of the assertion that in financial dealings, and particularly in financial dealings where he stands to gain, the French tradesman is constantly in a state of magnificent self-control. Not even during a war such as the late one was, a war for the preservation of his own country and his own liberties, could he entirely divest himself of this frugal instinct. From what I saw along the Western front and behind it in 1914 and again in 1917 and 1918, it seemed to me that the run of the Frenchmen, and to a considerable degree the run of the Belgians, nursed mental characteristics which were alien to certain of their allies and to at least one of their enemies.

Take an average Britisher or American or German—yes, a German. As I interpreted his moods and tenses, such a one in effect said, and by his actions proved this:

“My nation is in this mess to win if it can, to lose if it must. As a loyal unit of my nation I’m in it for all that I am and all that I have and all that I’ve ever hoped to be or to have. I’m risking my life, which is the most precious thing I possess, in defense of my flag and my principles. I’m willing to sacrifice it, if my government requires the sacrifice of me. And since my life is at stake, why should I concern myself with infinitely lesser things such as monetary considerations? Here’s my money, all of it. Let that go, too, if needs be. In a time like this, of what value is my money or anybody’s money except to be spent in the supreme effort to lick those other fellows and lick ’em good and thoroughly?”

Now, on the other hand, the average Frenchman, as I for one studied him and as I figured him, thought differently. Please do not misunderstand me when I say this. He was as gallant as any, and more gallant than some I might mention. He fought with a bravery and a resolution and a fortitude which compelled the admiration of the whole world, his foes included. He died like a soldier and a Frenchman—died gloriously and uncomplainingly, died by the millions literally. He endured incredible material losses—losses

in territory, losses in man-power, losses in wealth, casualty losses, all sorts of losses—and never whimpered, never dreamed of quitting, never lost or let grow dim the essential spark which traditionally and racially always has been his. That’s all history.

But up in the lines and back of them, it struck me, time and time again, that facing the very furnace-glare of the conflict, the Frenchman somehow carried a divided consciousness. One element of his being was entirely addressed to the dirty, grim, needful job in hand; but there persisted in him another element and that canny element devoted itself to the proposition of making this war pay him some personal dividends in cash. He had ever an eye open for the main chance and the main chance resolved itself into this:

“Can I, without injuring my cause, make a few francs for the enrichment of my own purse out of this grievous and lamentable business? Can I collect ground rent from somebody? Can I exact payment for this or that as we go along? I can. Then believe me, I will!”

It was as though one lobe of his brain was entirely dedicated to patriotism but the other lobe was dedicated to bookkeeping. He alone, of all those concerned who came under my observation, was altogether a hero and yet at the same time remained an expert accountant.

I contend that the Debt of Lafayette was paid—with compound interest—in the first week after the first overseas contingent of the A. E. F. landed on French soil and began changing American dollars into francs. The doughboys paid it and they kept right on paying it. Ask the next ex-private you meet.

If in war the Frenchman was so, why shouldn’t he continue to be so and more so in the peace—if we may call it by that fantastic name—following after the war? The question answers itself. He is.

Moreover, since 1918 he has a resentment for divers and sundry of his lately federated associates and notably he has a resentment for us; privately I always did contend that all of us—English, Yanks, French, Italians—made a great mistake during those last few months of the war in wasting our concentrated hate upon the Germans. We should have saved up part of it for the nations affiliated with us—in case we won. And some of us did save some of it up. Some of us certainly did do that very little thing. As subsequent events abundantly have shown.

Our unpopularity with the French is based upon a very sound and a quite understandable foundation. They owe us for borrowed money, a lot of

money. We believe they ought to return us at least that portion of it which was loaned to them after actual hostilities had ceased. They don't feel that way about it at all.

“My wife thinks I ain't goin' to give her none of my week's wages—and I know dam' well I ain't!”

The lion and the lamb may lie down together, as the Scriptures put it, although if the full facts were known I'm inclined to think the lamb stayed down—unless the lion had indigestion afterwards. But a debtor and a creditor rarely make happy bunk-mates. And in a spirit of fairness and yet with a respect for verities it may be added—and now and herewith is—that your typical Frenchman is not in the least like Kin Hubbard's lady friend who bought an instalment piano because she was so passionately fond of payments.

As a matter of fact, the French at heart never did like us. This in nowise marks them as exceptions to a cosmic rule. No rightly organized, strong nation ever entirely loves an equally strong or a stronger nation. Under the surface there always are mental reservations born of racial differences between them, and especially do these mental reservations exist where a confusion of tongues figures in the equation of contacts and intercourses. I'm not trying to philosophize; I merely am stating an admitted and self-evident fact.

They never did like us, then; and at this moment they constantly are liking us less and less—and in some instances openly have begun to show it. I might speak from my own recent continental experiences in illustration of this premise, and a little further along in this article I will. Or I might speak of what lately has befallen others. A sporadic display of ill temper here and there may not indicate a definite conclusion to be drawn; but when upon every side one hears of unprovoked slights, snubs, indignities and incivilities undergone by returned American visitors, the total of cases begins to constitute something in the nature of a blanket indictment.

Two ladies of my acquaintance—both of them well-bred, sophisticated, amiable ladies—spent a week at a small but first-class Paris hotel. On their arrival they enthusiastically were welcomed. They had no fault to find with the hospitality or with the service. They registered no complaints of any sort. They obeyed the rules of the establishment. So far as they might judge they antagonized no one connected with the place. So far, so good.

But at the end of a week they moved elsewhere—not to another hotel; that might possibly have accounted for what ensued; but to an apartment

which they had leased. Having in advance given due notice of this intention, the two guests on a certain morning went to settle their account. The same gentleman who so warmly had greeted them on their first appearance now sat behind a high counter. He did not offer to rise at their approach. Instead he somewhat ostentatiously picked up a paper and pretended to be reading it.

Slightly puzzled by this behavior but as yet suspecting nothing, the departing ones halted at the desk. The purse-bearer coughed gently. The reader cocked an indifferent eye in her direction, then withdrew it and turned to a fresh page.

“I’d like to pay our bill,” she said.

He gave no heed. It was as though he had not heard her. With an air which now was deliberately offensive, he heaved both his feet up on the desk and calculatingly presented a pair of broad soles right in her face.

“I said,” she repeated with a rising inflection, “that I wished to pay the bill.”

Still no answer.

“Are you deaf?” demanded the second lady, beginning to lose her temper.

“Certainly I am not deaf,” he snapped.

“Then suppose you show a little common courtesy to a couple of women—if you can!”

As slowly and begrudgingly he heaved himself upright, he uttered certain words. They were in French but these women knew enough French to make out the purport, which was nasty. He jerked the statement across the desk, checked its items, snapped out the amount, accepted the money the enraged ladies tendered, and stood glowering at them as they passed out of his presence and his hotel—forever and ever, amen.

“I was mad all over, but I was not particularly surprised,” said one of the victims in detailing the episode to me. “Similar incidents happened a good many times in Paris that summer, not always to me but to other tourists whom I encountered. I couldn’t understand it—I can’t understand it yet. As soon as they got our money for something—and heaven knows the prices were extravagant and outrageous because when the franc dropped, prices for Americans went up and never came down any more no matter what the acrobatic franc did next—as soon as they got our money, so many of them

quit smiling and became downright rude. With no provocation either, mind you!”

She sighed gently and added: “I’ve found out one thing, anyhow. When a Frenchman isn’t engaged in being polite, he can be the impolitest creature on this earth!”

Four years ago I spent a fortnight in a small villa at Cap Ferrat a few miles from Nice. One afternoon I was hoofing it along the Grande Corniche enjoying the soft Mediterranean air and the glorious Mediterranean scenery and trying to accustom myself to the fantastic but uniformly atrocious architecture of the Riviera. I came to where an elderly beggarman sat by the roadside with his ragged hat extended for alms. He did not appear to be crippled or even physically incapacitated; I take it that begging was a profession with him rather than a necessity. His chief stock in trade was an appealing expression—gentle and pathetic and long-suffering and patient.

As I neared him, a gentleman who plainly was a native of these parts went by and dropped a coin into his hat. When I ranged alongside I got a view of it. It was a fifty-centime bit.

The mendicant thanked the donor gratefully—yes, effusively. He still was thanking him although his benefactor had passed on by the time I got within range. He aimed the batteries of his faded, humbly entreating eyes upon me. I raised the entry by one hundred and fifty per cent. I gave him a two-franc piece.

I hadn’t strained my philanthropy to any serious extent. At the rate of exchange then current, two francs summed up to between seven and eight cents in our money. Still, I had coughed up to the extent of four times the amount which the other man had bestowed. But, you see, he belonged there and I was a stranger, and moreover an American.

Did the beggerman call down the blessings of benignant Heaven upon my head also? He did not. His mask of gentle submission dissolved. He grunted disdainfully and shot a contemptuous look at me, scooped my gift and the lesser one into his pocket, put his hat on his head, reared himself to his full height and, presenting the broad of his back to me, stalked, with a moderately firm tread, out of my life. He was wearing garments infinitely too large for him. He bagged all over but especially his rear elevation was bagsome. And as he went away from there he—or his costume, rather—added insult to injury: the seat of his pants kept making faces at me.

I was accustomed to being treated churlishly by continental waiters did I fail to add a doubled or tripled augmented tip to the ten per cent bonus customarily assessed by the management ostensibly for distribution among the staff of the service department—most American visitors to Europe do get used in time to such treatment in restaurants and drinking places—but this was the first occasion for me when a street beggar broke down for long enough to exhibit the national repugnance against my breed. It was a most complete betrayal, too, of an estimate for me and my race that was as unflattering as a passport photograph, and that, I maintain, is about as unflattering a thing as there is.

During that trip I did not invade the British Isles. So this witness cannot speak authoritatively and from observation of the treatment casually accorded fellow citizens of mine in those realms, but I heard at first-hand of some occurrences—small, trivial, inconsequential occurrences, I grant you, but nevertheless straws, as it were, to show how the wind blew.

For example, two mannerly young women asked a policeman on duty at a crossing out Kensington way for guidance to a certain address. Although traffic for the moment in that immediate vicinity was light and the officer seemed to have plenty of leisure, he did not deign either to look down upon them or to make his somewhat involved directions intelligible to them. Staring into space above their abashed and puzzled heads, he uttered what to his hearers was a confusion of hoarse, rapidly gabbled sounds.

“I beg your pardon,” said the spokeswoman for the pair, “but would you mind repeating that, please?”

“I told you once—ain’t that enough?” he answered. One of these women told me he snarled it. The other said he spat the words out of the corner of his mouth.

“But we didn’t hear you—at least, we couldn’t make out—”

“Ow, you Americans! Americans!”

For the repetition of the distasteful word he twisted his own cockney accents into what he probably regarded as a creditable imitation of the proverbial Yankee twang, as heard on the English stage, and made a snooty nose at them. It was, they both told me, an upturned nose anyhow, and therefore one admirably adapted for snooting purposes. “Wot mikes you so stoopid, you Americans?” he continued in the same pleasant vein. “I’m fed up with you!” And with that he strode off, leaving them aboil with a futile—and as they subsequently confessed—a comic indignation.

But think of that from a London bobby who, the world over, and by all peoples, always has been regarded as the very embodiment of a respectful and self-respecting chivalry!

From a varied assortment of kindred reminiscences, as recounted to me by acquaintances whom I regard as eminently reliable and truthful individuals, I'm culling just one more particularly choice and fragrant specimen. A party of four tourists from these United States who were on a sightseeing expedition down the Thames, stopped their car for a midday bite at a waterside inn below Richmond. In contrast to most English establishments of this type the interior, as they promptly noted, was not particularly tidy. In fact, they declared it had distinctly a frowzy air about it. But they were hungry and they decided to stay; perhaps the food would be good.

The one waiter in evidence was evidently so fond of boiled mutton that he liked to wear some on his vest. They could excuse him for his souvenirs, but they felt they had a right to take exceptions to an exceedingly spotty and disheveled-looking luncheon cloth. Mildly enough the head of the party suggested it might be conducive to good appetites on the part of the patrons if the gravy-loving waiter kindly would freshen the table linen.

This unaccountably was a cue for that person, who burst into a violent tirade against Americans in general and this quartet of Americans in especial. In his bluff, bull-doggy British way, he proclaimed that Americans—all Americans—were a fault-finding, conceited, arrogant lot and that there was no satisfying them and for one he didn't purpose to try any longer. He had had quite enough of their nonsense and they could get out, with his compliments, and if he never saw them again that would be much too soon, or words to that effect.

The indignant motorists asked for the landlord, meaning to complain of their mistreatment, whereupon the waiter informed them that he was the landlord and what did they have to say to that—if he might be so inquisitive? From this it will be seen that the British lack the innate tact which distinguishes their neighbors across the Channel. However great the stress of his inner emotions, a French waiter would have managed to exercise a surface diplomacy until after the obnoxious patrons slipped him his tip.

There doesn't seem to be much room for doubt that the so-called lower classes of England have absorbed the passionate anti-American doctrines which a few jingo journals over there frequently preach. Very promptly their

government took steps to pay its debt to us. Britain always does pay her debts. But the masses can't forgive us for accepting the money. We are a crew of boastful, greedy, dollar-grabbing, cheese-paring usurers who have fattened on the economic necessities of the rest of civilization and expect to continue so to fatten. We crave our pound of flesh. We are skinflints, braggarts, purse-proud upstarts. We were late in getting into the World War, weren't we? In short, they are saying about us exactly what the press of England united in saying when, somewhat tardily, we did get into that war—but with the reverse English now, if you get what I mean?

The Italians, among whom I spent some time, seemed outwardly, at least, more friendly and more gracious than certain of their neighbors are reputed to be. I strongly am inclined to the opinion that the Italians come nearer to cherishing for us a downright liking than do the rest of the folk of southern and mid-Europe. With authority I may testify that they manifest a lively and a smiling appreciation for our willingness lavishly to tip, and patiently to put up with petty extortion and petty grafting, and obediently to pay without haggling twice or thrice as much for a given article as anyone else will pay.

Privately, and in common with most of the Continentals, they may regard us as a weird, outlandish, freakish breed; in fact, I'm pretty sure of it. Foreigners, generally, so regard us. To them we are a group apart and should be treated as such. Moreover, according to reports widely circulated and widely credited over there, we are all millionaires and don't care what we do with our money so long as facilities are provided for us to get rid of it.

During the two months of one fall that I spent on Italian soil I experienced only one display of a downright racial antipathy, and then I must confess that probably I was as much to blame as the other fellow was. It befell at a waterfront café in Naples. To us, where we sat, came a vender who evidently had the run of the place and he was bearing trays of seafood. For this occasion he was featuring a platter of the little crinkle-shelled native oysters. He insisted that, free of charge, I should try one. He said it was just out of the bed. In a manner of speaking, he was right, I think. But the one I tried was just out of a sick-bed. It had been indisposed, I should say, for quite a while and was still feeling low and embittered.

Either my remarks or my somewhat hasty manner of rejecting the invalid must have given affront to the pedler. For he used language copiously. In fact, we had heated words. Here he had me at a decided disadvantage. My retorts, being framed in an unfamiliar tongue with which I had but a rudimentary and fragmentary acquaintance, doubtless lacked point.

Besides, his gesticulatory powers were more highly developed than mine. Neapolitan Italian is not so much a language as it is a calisthenic exercise.

There was a scene, and before he went away he told me with considerable freedom of speech exactly what sentiments he had for Americans. A gentleman at the next table very kindly volunteered to translate such of his statements as were unintelligible to my unschooled ear. However, I am inclined to believe this was a sporadic and not a typical case of national disapproval for the Yankees as a whole.

I recall also an incident to prove my claim that the Italians look upon us as a unique and a peculiar people for whom there is a special code of conduct. This came to pass when an American living in Italy and I were driving across country from Genoa to Florence. Perhaps this is as good a place as any for me to state that traffic regulations in Italy—both rural Italy and communal Italy—are somewhat sketchy. There appears to be but one firmly grounded principle. About once in so often a polite but determined member of the constabulary darts out of ambush and fines you twenty-five lire.

A vehicle may be sent along on the right side of the road or on the left side of the road or through the middle of the road, just as one pleases. One may turn this way or that, according to the whim of the moment. Frequently the peasantry add to the thrills of travel by steering their horses or mules through the power of mental suggestion solely; that is to say, they drive without reins or bridles or guiding ropes or any artificial means of control whatsoever. Bicyclists—who swarm innumerable—and foot-travelers likewise offer many easy and tempting marks for the motorist's aim. Even in the cities the populace for some reason or other have a profound antipathy against walking on the sidewalks. No matter how wide the pavements or how narrow the road, the average pedestrian by preference quits the former and trudges down the public highway at imminent and exciting peril to his life and limbs.

The Italian cyclists constitute a separate but equally fascinating species. Along with the goldfish, they share the habit of circling about at a high rate of speed while seemingly sound asleep but with the eyes open. Where the path is clear your Italian bike-rider darts along as care-free as the swallow, but should an emergency arise he follows a common procedure.

Let us say that he is approaching you coming from the opposite direction. He has his head down, in a pleasant day-dream. You toot your horn in warning. Instantly panic overcomes him. He behaves exactly as

though no such crisis ever before had confronted him, seasoned veteran though he may be. A look of horror blights his countenance. In a frenzy of desperate irresolution he wobbles wildly. Then, as is customary, he frees one foot from the pedal, thrusts it into the spokes of his front wheel and falls off. Oftener than not, in a fine sacrificial spirit of accommodation, he falls directly in front of your machine so that you have no difficulty in running over him.

At night-time he carries a light. There is an ordinance to this effect. But as a rule it is not a regular bicycle lamp that he carries but a bit of candle enclosed in a homemade paper cone which he clutches in one hand. Here also a noble unselfishness is shown. In the darkest night, with his tallow dip he makes such a bully target that it's your own fault if you miss him.

So much for that. As I was about to say, my companion and I had turned inland from the coast and were bowling along a dusty and bumpy but exceedingly scenic stretch of comparatively deserted country thoroughfare. I remember that the afternoon sun shone with a dazzling brilliancy, bringing out faraway objects in sharp relief.

In the distance, moving toward us, we presently saw a rig. Drawing nearer, it revealed itself as a two-wheeled cart. It was drawn by a large white Tuscan mule—with many jangling bells upon his towering neck-yoke but with no bit in his mouth—and behind it a second mule was being towed along by its halter. At first glance it would appear that this vehicle was empty. It was immediately to develop however that it contained two passengers—a pair of young ruralists who were lying on the bed of the jouncing cart, presumably enjoying a nap.

Now for miles and miles except at the precise place of passing, the road was abundantly wide. But there, in the stretch where we all met, the road narrowed in, for there a stone bridge spanned a mountain brook. When we were almost abreast, the white mule suddenly gave way to a fit of intense excitement. It is fair to assume that in the course of his active career as a mule he had seen thousands of automobiles, but all at once he decided that this was the one automobile in the world which wished to leap upon him and bite him. It did have rather a bug-like aspect, that small, heavy-laden car of ours.

By a miracle possible only to mules, he instantly swapped ends with himself and yet stayed in the traces, buck-jumping. My companion braked down hard and swerved out as far as he could swerve, which wasn't far because of the stone guards of the bridge. There was a crash of glass, a

rending, tearing, ripping, hissing sound, a series of startled shrieks from the occupants of the two-wheeler, and we slid along for about sixty feet before our machine stopped, with one shaft of the cart sticking through our shattered windshield and a strange white mule riding in my lap.

I had to induce the third passenger to shift his rump somewhat before I could climb out. Our car was a fairly complete wreck—the hood ripped partly off, one tire burst, a mudguard crumpled, and one door dented; both of us were covered with splinters of glass and I had a nasty cut, which bled freely, on the back of my left hand, and was sprinkled over with mule hair and mule perspiration. While we were unharnessing the mule to keep him from kicking the car to pieces and to save him from broken legs or split hoofs, the peasant boys departed themselves according to their separate natures. One of them fainted away from shock where he lay. The other leaped over the tail-gate of the cart and ran to and fro, tearing his abundant hair and at the top of his voice calling upon Heaven to witness that a mule was a “free animal”—he used that term repeatedly—and that no human agency could be held accountable for what a mule might choose to do.

After the younger of the pair had recovered from his swoon, and when comparative calm had been restored, the two of them were at first most solicitous for us. They united in commiseration for me because of my spouting wound; in chorus they loudly regretted the damage to our property and they sorrowed deeply over an accident for which they declared they were in no regard to blame.

Very soon, though, it dawned upon them that we were Americans. Until then, probably because my travel-mate spoke almost perfect Italian and was dark and was wearing a Basque cap, they had mistaken us for Spaniards. It was the first time in any land that anybody ever thought I was a Spaniard.

In the light of this new discovery their attitude underwent an immediate change. They hooked up their mule and they climbed into their cart and straightway they departed, with shrugs of the shoulders which conveyed more eloquently than words their altered viewpoints. If Americans were the victims of the disaster, why, what of it? Who could fathom the mysterious workings of an American mind? And didn't Americans have so much money that a smashed and crippled automobile, more or less, meant nothing in their lives? But had we been responsible for damage to their belongings, what a different story I should have to tell!

We merely paid the penalty—that's all—of having been born on this side of the ocean instead of on their side.

I am not quite so much of a partizan that I would profess to say the fault for these prevalent conditions is altogether of European making. Not all of the vast horde of tourists we send abroad every year are apostles of sweetness and light and good manners—not all by any manner of means. We have our share—sometimes I think more than our share—of boorish, blatant, noisy vulgarians and it appears to be a lamentable fact that sooner or later such persons go to Europe. Everywhere one goes one sees them. And hears them! And is ashamed of them and for them and because of them!

Some their ignorance covers as with horse blankets. They aren't sure whether Basel is a musical instrument or a dish peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland. All they know about Siberia is that it's the country where there was an old monk of. Why they should venture abroad to make a laughing-stock of themselves and give other races a false and misleading opinion of the average of American intelligence when they could remain comfortably in their homes and flaunt their ignorance amid congenial surroundings is a mystery which neither can be understood nor forgiven.

Then there are the persons who object to European institutions because these institutions differ from American institutions. Of these there is a vast multitude. They prowl hither and yon, complaining loudly that there isn't a decent Boston baked bean to be found in Switzerland or a hot-dog emporium in all of Norway. And why don't those people over there show gumption enough to fix up a rational currency based on the decimal, and use dollars and dimes and cents instead of sticking to their lire and their francs and their kronen and things? This, mind you, coming from representatives of a land that staidfastly refuses even to consider adoption of the metrical system of weights and measures!

Some, having money to spend, insist on spending it with loud clanging sounds. And some—but why prolong the painful category? Anyhow, we are not the only race on earth that permits its least attractive residents to venture into foreign climes. We may say that much for ourselves at least. And another thing we may say in defense of ourselves: Taking us as a racial group, we endure gouging and profiteering and overcharging and price-raising with a much better grace than do the others. We may be gullible but, in the main, we are good-natured about it.

On the other hand, a very large proportion of our overseas voyagers are cultured people, modest in their demeanor, interested in refining and elevating spectacles, genuinely intent on bringing about and maintaining amicable relations with their fellow creatures in other parts of the world. Merely because there's a lot of coin still due us twelve years after the war

ended, why should these persons, who take incalculably large sums to Europe and leave them there be flouted and scorned and caricatured and despised by the very beneficiaries of their spending proclivities?

For the situation which has arisen within the past few years I have a remedy. Nobody is going to try it, but still I propose to state it. For one season let the American sightseers remain at home and inspect the wonders and the beauties of their own continent and their own hemisphere, or let them go to South America, as in the first part of this book, I advised them to do. One season of staying away from Europe will do the trick—one season of cutting off the luscious golden stream—at least half a billion, according to the most conservative estimates, and nearer a billion by the figures of other statistical sharps—which annually goes out from America, in the pockets of American tourists, to be distributed among the shopkeepers and innkeepers of Europe.

That will be sufficient and amply sufficient. Before that season passes, they'll be cured of their hostility; they'll be begging us to come back and give them one more chance to show us what kindly, hospitable, appreciative people they are and how grateful they are for our patronage and how, by fairer treatment and an unfailing courtesy, they will hereafter endeavor to deserve it.

# THE FOLKS HERE AT HOME

## *Chapter One*

### *GOLFITIS; ITS CURSE AND CURE*

This witness knows a certain golf club. As golf clubs go—and they certainly do, don't they?—this is a very old golf club. You'll get the notion better when I tell you that as an incorporated club, with a charter and a feud in the house-committee and everything, it dates back to the old Red Sandstone Period of golf before making a decent golf score became one of the practically impossible undertakings, and while golf was still regarded, in some quarters at least, as a sport, pastime, diversion, or athletic recreation.

This club's original membership was composed almost altogether of conservative business men and financiers, with a sprinkling of conservative professional men; mainly they were middle-aged and elderly men, and among them there were a few downright aged men. Its president was very highly thought of. He passed away only recently, and right up to the very last remained a firm believer in the divinely inspired infallibility of the Hoover administration. That ought to give you an idea. They mourn his loss. He was the last stand of the North American side-whisker on the Eastern Seaboard.

When the founders bought the land and began laying it out, country-clubbing, even in the East, was still practically in its infancy. These gentlemen were among the pioneers; so naturally they made some of the mistakes which pioneers are so apt to make. For instance, they cherished the delusion, quite common in these prehistoric days, that golf was a game. Golf was just becoming popular, and people referred to it as a game and spoke of playing it as though it were a game, and in certain respects it did at that time somewhat resemble a game. As a matter of fact, it never was actually a game, as I shall prove, but nevertheless this was the delusion which prevailed.

There weren't any golf-course architects at that time, or, if there were any, they were still under cover awaiting a more suitable hour for leaping forth upon their hapless prey. And there weren't any high-pressure golf-club promoters working on commission and prowling around from place to place armed with fountain-pens and application blanks and a persuasive line of applesauce. There were just beginning to be a few, but only a very few of those husbands and wives who talked of the necessity of getting into the right kind of country club so the children could have the proper background.

Why, I can remember when a kid's background was not mentioned in polite society, at all. It was largely used for spanking purposes, anyhow.

So, just as was to be expected, these primitive organizers went about their task of converting a series of cornfields and cow-pastures into a playground for themselves and their families and their guests in the primitive old-fashioned way. They enlisted the amateurish services of a squad of members who came from Scotland or had been to Scotland on visits and made them the golf committee; and this group, working more or less at haphazard and filled with the delusion that golf was a game, mapped out a nice, easy, comfortable course—first a nine-hole course but later adding nine more—a course such as a near-sighted, gimpy-legged, slightly brittle gentleman rising of sixty, say, could play over and not come staggering in with his arteries all creaking and his poor old heart broken, and the salty hot tears of anguish spilling down upon his nose-glasses.

And out over the gently rolling links on the bright sunlit days, there was comradeship and there was friendly talk and there was smiling and good will for all the world—yea, even was there outright laughter once in a while. And nobody seriously objected to sparrows chirping within a hundred yards of a putting green or a swallow flitting by occasionally. And worm-casts hadn't become our most burning national problem. And the pro-Australian Creeping Red Bent crowd on the greens committee had no bitter quarrel with the anti-Australian Creeping Red Bent crowd, because there were no such factions and naturally there could be no such quarrel. Merely describing it sketchily, that way, is enough to make me think it surely must have happened centuries and centuries ago, isn't it, now?

Well, the pregnant transforming years rolled by, and we had the Great World War, with all its horrors, including the Y. M. C. A. entertainers, and special correspondents at the front, and Newton W. Baker touring the battle-lines in a tin helmet and a Prince Albert coat. And the boys came home from overseas to discover that after all they needn't have gone clear to France to see what No Man's Land looked like after a heavy bombardment. They could have stayed on at home and got substantially the same morbid sensation by dropping out to the golf club and looking things over there.

The particular club to which I refer caught step with the march of progress. It may have been a trifle late in getting started but once under way it made up for lost time. Many of the earlier old-timers had passed away, but still a majority of the members were men who had passed the point where the average man begins to swap his emotions for symptoms, or, to put it brutally, had reached middle age. They might be getting along in years but

they had their pride with them. It chafed them to have people sneering around, saying they had a golf course with holes which anybody could play, while all about them were golf courses with holes which nobody at all could play. So they followed the splendid example that was being set for them by the rest of the golfing world. They took steps.

They enlisted the expert and expensive aid of a specialist; they rebuilt their links to conform as nearly as the nature of the terrain would permit, with the fashionable mode. They spent a fortune, but the results were worth it.

Their old Number Four Hole, with its pleasant sloping meadowlike approach and its hospitable putting green, which nestled amid snuggling folds of the land like a dimple in nature's fair cheek, is no more. In order to make it over it was necessary to blast down a small hill and from its jagged and formidable fragments to reconstruct that hill in the middle of the fairway; also to divert a twinkling runlet from its course and dam it up in order that there might be a wide, deep, dangerous water hazard, having the additional advantages of an unscalable crag on one side and a bottomless morass on the other; likewise to excavate a series of bunkers so deep and so dismal and so numerous that the cup, which now hangs, as it were, on the sheerest flank of an imitation Pike's Peak, has the appearance of being entirely surrounded by the gaping mouths of old mining-shafts. But it was money well spent. Number Eleven, formerly often referred to as Happy Glade is now renamed—and justly so—the Slough of Despond. And Number Six, being altered, is known as the Valley of the Shadow, and careless caddies have been lost there and the bodies never recovered although dragged for. And Number Twelve is Hell's Half-Acre now, and Thirteen is the Devil's Spine. But Number Fourteen, the Port of Missing Men, as they call it, is the crowning masterpiece of all, presenting as it does a completed project in engineering that is calculated to make Bobby Jones feel low and suicidal in his mind. Hardy explorers who've been up there and got back alive report that it is perhaps the most indescribable vista of isolation and desolation to be found this side Mohave Desert.

Thanks to these improvements and modifications, the links of this club will compare favorably with the links of any of its neighbors. Thanks to them, it is now possible to pursue thereon the melancholiac calling of golf as we have learned to know it should be pursued. Middle-aged habitués wander its corrugated heights and fall off and cripple themselves; and penetrate its terrible jungles looking for lost balls which they never find; but they do find rarer specimens of the fur-bearing mammalia of this hemisphere, such as the

Canadian bobcat, the cross-beaver, and the barred wolverine, which is almost extinct in its former habitat in the Northern wilds but now claims sanctuary on our golf-links; and they risk drowning in the artificial bogs and torrents; and they agonize over unattainable “pars” and unconceivable “birdies,” and damage their fragile limbs and exhaust their stiffening bodies and weep and rave and swear off, but don’t mean it, and swear on, and, at the end of the day, either must confess shameful failure or else perjure their immortal souls. The victim who lets his conscience be his guide when it comes to adding up the strokes, is sunk before he starts. Secret remorse may gnaw at the gizzard, but outwardly happier is the guilt-steeped wretch who compiles his score with a touch of that spirited and fanciful romanticism which inspires the genius who makes up the passenger-train time-tables for the Florida railroads in the winter season—and that gifted spirit, whoever he may be, I regard as the most care-free and unhampered writer of purely imaginative fiction in the realm of American letters.

The job of making golf, in this country, practically impregnable against the assaults of any except about seven or eight supermen, went on unnoticed by me. I was taking a few Sabbatical years off.

Along about 1916 I gave my clubs away to a man for whom I cherished a secret hate and left the thing flat. I found I wasn’t making any headway. I was like a man I know who went to California to cure himself of lung trouble. He got well of the consumption but contracted Hollywood. If I cured myself of one fault I caught a dozen others to take its place. If I kept my head down, both my legs went up at an inopportune moment and spoiled the drive for anybody except a student of Swedish gymnastics. I tried high-church golf, with strict adherence to all the outward ceremonials, which got me nowhere except into fresh difficulties. I then became a non-conformist, just hauling off without regard to ritual and trusting for general results, and that set people wondering why a man would deliberately go out on a golf course and practice to be a circus contortionist.

In all that period—and it covered years—I was praised for my work only twice. The professional at Sleepy Hollow once told me that my form was correct in one detail anyhow—I did wear golf stockings. And I shall never forget the day when an old G.A.R. veteran, after watching the repeated execution of my celebrated world’s championship slice in and out and back and forth through the densest woodland in Westchester County, approached with tears of grateful reminiscence in his eyes and said he wanted to thank me. He said it reminded him so of Grant’s Wilderness Campaign.

So finally I just up and quit and began leading a better life. But here not so long ago, having moved back to the country, I found myself with a lot of spare hours on my hands, and in sheer defense I went in again for golf and became—if I do say it myself—an outstanding figure, especially if viewed while standing sideways to you. Then it was I discovered that while I was out on parole, the task of turning golf-links into unbreachable fortresses and golf holes into inner citadels had gone universally on and on. I discovered that constantly multiplying millions of my fellow creatures were doing what I was—endeavoring to perform an achievement meant only for a few demigods. Nobody was seeking to make golf easier for amateurs to master. Everybody, it seemed, was in a conspiracy to make it increasingly harder, even for the professionals.

Take the course where I spent most of my leisure—God save the mark!—afternoons these past two summers and where, unless reason ceases to totter on her throne and I recover my sanity, I shall probably spend my afternoons during next summer. I am given to understand that originally this course was an amiable friendly course—a trysting-place for blithe foursomes and merry-hearted twosomes. But they rebuilt it under the direction, I think, of Miss Anna Peck and Gertrude Ederle working in conjunction with Commander Byrd. Now it's the haunt of gruesomes and lonesomes and wearisomes, not to say loathsomes.

Observe me as I set out from the golf house followed by my special deaf-and-dumb caddy. Practically all caddies are dumb, but I keep under retainer one who is deaf and dumb as well, so he can't laugh out loud. I am carrying my compass, my iron ration, my miner's lamp (to be worn while down in the deeper bunkers), my lineman's spurs, my machete or brush-hook for the roughs, my pressing case for divots—I already have one of the largest private collections of specimen divots in the United States—my bedroll, etc., etc., etc. As necessity arises I am constantly adding items to my equipment, but this partial summary will serve to give you a general notion. I am full of hope. I figure that at last I have licked this damnable thing called golf. Away I start, leaving word behind that unless I fail to return by dark the rescue expedition is not to set out.

Well, what happens? Just as I am driving off of Number One tee, a wren comes stamping across the grass and throws me off my game, and of course I hook the ball, and next thing I am down at the bottom of that hand-excavated gorge or pitfall at the left, and persons passing along the inner side of its rim and not seeing me, but only hearing me, are to be excused for

figuring that what they are listening to is an imitation of the Last Ravings of John McCullough.

The pride of our founders is our geographical hole Number Nine. It is one of America's scenic marvels, and to look at it you'd never guess it was all done by hand. You approach it by way of Death Valley, and after skirting the Dismal Swamp on one flank, you traverse a corner of Yosemite, thence advancing upward until you stand upon the edge of the Grand Cañon. Having come thus far without loss of life or limb, you have an iron shot across the Missouri River, and if your ball doesn't stick against the side of Mount McKinley, on the right, or bounce into Whirlpool Rapids, on the left, and be swept off and away by the raging current behind one of the Thousand Islands, you should then be within easy putting distance of the cup—say, about two long shrill puts followed by three sharp short ones.

Others have done this. In time to come others may do it. But I haven't and I shan't. When I get that far I call it a day and turn back further to examine the Moundbuilders' relics that I unearthed with my mid-iron while chopping my way deep into the hitherto unexplored forest primeval adjacent to Number Three. My golf has greatly enriched the realm of early American ethnology. Because when I'm at the top of my slicing form I often go where the foot of civilized man never before has trod. The Museum of Natural History has a whole case full of my golf trophies. What price a silver loving-cup beside stuff so precious to the cause of historical research?

The science of archeology also profited greatly through the ever-memorable trip I made two falls ago out to the Canadian Rockies. On this side of the international boundary the air was full of political clamor and I craved to get away from it all. So, having first done my duty as a patriot and a Democrat by coming out for Smith, I crossed the line and headed for the sunset, and where I landed was joined by Mr. Robert H. Davis, the Putting Demon of West Fifty-eighth Street, who's so good that when they see him on the green the boys of St. Andrew's yell: "Issy Putnam?" And the answer is, he is.

We played over the course at Jasper Park several times. That's one course from which, playing over it, I have derived genuine pleasure and where I have done real execution. To begin with, it lies at several thousand feet above sea-level. In fact its altitude practically corresponds with the score for the full eighteen holes that I made on my best day out there. As an engineering and an architectural achievement, it likewise is unique on this hemisphere. They'll tell you how the designers had to climb up the precipitous slopes of the encompassing mountains because the forest growth

below was too thick for them to make plats; and from those elevations, with cameras and surveying instruments, literally they mapped the course on the tops of the trees. I forget how many millions of sticks of timber they had to cut down then and how many thousands of carloads of earth were transported for hundreds of miles in order that the fairways and greens might have the right sort of top-dressing upon the rocks and the soil already there. Statistics only make me dizzy, anyhow.

What appealed to me was the setting of the picture—the links meandering in and out of a gorgeous valley with white-poled peaks rising on every side and, above the timber-line, the naked crags, and, lower down, first the belts of evergreens and then the birches and aspens and such like in their autumnal girdles of yellow and gold and maroon; and maybe a snow flurry powdering the hanging glacier behind Old Man Mountain; but on the flat below, bright strong sunshine and air blowing as spicy as a winesap apple. Of course a real golfer has no time for the beauties of nature, but I'm not that far along yet.

As a lover of our Fauna—I don't care so much for Flora but I'm wild about Fauna—I likewise enjoyed the daily contact at close hand with the big four-footed natives, Jasper Park being, among other things, a Dominion sanctuary for wild life. Lordly moose stand at the edge of the thickets, projecting profiles like those of Old Testament characters, and watch you drive and then go stalking home to tell their little meece what a dub you are. Placid, unafraid mule-deer with long ears and twitching bobtails elbow you aside at the springs where you halt to drink in water of nature's providing; and beaver putter about the verges of the frequent little sapphire-colored lakes, scarcely lifting their round heads as your straying ball plumps into the pool and is lost forever. Probably they're used to that plumping sound by now, or anyhow they should have been before I left.

One morning we were held up at the first ball while a six-hundred-pound black bear waddled athwart the fairway on ahead. Another time there was a sly and grinning coyote who thought to have the laugh on me by flattening himself in a bunker just as I was making an approach shot for the hole appropriately known as "Bad Baby." He little recked that he was dealing with the undisputed bunker-king of the Western World. I beaned him right in his foolish face. And he now enjoys the distinction—if it's any pleasure to him—of being the only permanently pug-nosed coyote in Canada.

Out there where they've chiseled their eighteen holes out of the flinty heart of the Rocky Mountains, and where, if so minded, you can use the back side of a snow-clad peak for a trap and a glacier-fed torrent for a

hazard, it is not necessary to call in a specialist for the purpose of increasing the supply of pitfalls and handicaps. Even so, I might add that when I got through, the adjacent landscape was much worse rumbled up than it had been before I started in. Turn me loose in the rough, with my strong right arm and my trusty niblick, and I leave scars behind me which only time can heal—a whole lot of time, at that.

Please get the point that I'm not quarreling with Nature's handiwork. What I fain would complain of is the mania for making vital areas of the average course resemble the track of Sherman's March to the Sea, as it looked in 1865.

However, I have my own theory about that now generally prevalent notion. I contend that it is not a newly born conception but merely a revival of an ancient plan which is bed-rocked in the very foundations of golf itself. Let us briefly look into the history of this matter:

Tradition has it that it was the Dutch who devised golf in a crude and rudimentary form; and that the Scotch, an equally serious-minded and sober race, took it over from them. I do not know what they gave the Dutch in exchange for it, but it's a cinch they didn't lose anything on the trade. And what did the Scotch do then? When they got it, it may remotely have suggested a sport or pastime designed to make glad the heart of man; but they mighty soon cured it of that weakness. After they had invented a lot of clubfooted tools and had thought up funny names for all those curious-looking malformations of iron and steel, they set about reforming its principles so as to rid the proposition of the last lingering possibility for deriving human relaxation or inner comfort from it. A thorough and a painstaking breed, those early Scotch. When they got through improving golf, it was no game, although it was a number of other things, to wit:

An involved mathematical calculation.

A complicated problem in trajectories.

A defiance of all natural and physical laws, because in order to smite the ball according to rote, it was necessary for the devotee to strike a strained and artificial posture and then to perform a series of convulsive evolutions which were entirely contrary to his inherent inclinations and his prior training. You must never hit a golf ball the way you'd hit anything else; that was the great idea.

A system whereby you didn't really pit your skill against the opponent's skill or lack of it, but on the other hand were called upon constantly to strive

against your own natural weaknesses and your own natural impulses, which was bad for your nerves and your disposition and your peace of mind and your sense of honesty, because it is a well-known fact that a man who plays against himself almost invariably makes a bad loser and sometimes a crooked one.

When the Scots were through reorganizing golf and getting it on a straight Calvinistic basis, about all you could say for it was that it did keep you out in the open air. But being a sea-gull keeps you out in the open air. And who wants to be a sea-gull?

Now, when Americans began to take it up, they labored under a misapprehension. They thought the real design of golf was to make the people who took it up light-hearted and cheerful and optimistic and eventually to make them pleased with their athletic prowess. Under that misapprehension they reduced golf, as first presented in this country, to a softened and emasculated and pleasure-giving abasement of the original article. This degeneration persisted and continued for years, and during that period even novices were known to turn in satisfactory scores. Men didn't go about despairing of their faulty golf. They went about with their chests shoved out and the proud light of achievement in their eyes, proclaiming their proficiency at the new art. They were chronic braggarts, not chronic mourners in heart-breaking pursuit of the impossible and the utterly unattainable.

This—from the Scotch standpoint—deplorable state of affairs prevailed in the golf world until we began to have an influx of genuine professional Scotch golf-course experts. Psychologically, their advent into our country was appropriately timed. They came later than the English sparrow and the German carp and earlier than the Mexican boll-weevil and the Mediterranean fruit fly. Under their ministrations, golf in America has been—and still and constantly is being—restored to its ancient model of direct kinship with the dogmas of predestination and a physical Hell.

Do you ask proof other than that furnished by your own experience? Very well, here it is: From diversions out of which they get real joy, men and women distil romance and rhythm and music. Around horse-racing, plays have been written—plays which became epics of the stage. There is a whole literature on the subject of fox-chasing. Love stories, novels even, have been centered about lawn-tennis. Artists paint pictures of polo players, and we hang them on our walls. Sculptors find joy and inspiration in modeling the form of the pugilist. There is both drama and melodrama in football. There is abundant and bubbling comedy in baseball, as witness the humorous

masterpieces of Ring Lardner and the late Charley Dryden and the late Charley Van Loan. To baseball likewise are we indebted for one of the deathless poems of our language. No big-league banquet is complete unless DeWolf Hopper, the Husband of His Country, rises up some time during the evening and recites “Casey at the Bat.”

But where are the joyously lilting rhymes about golfing? What deathless classic of versification has sprung out of golf? I pause for a reply. The pause ends. There is no reply. Jokes about golf? Yes, that I concede you; thousands of ‘em and more acomin’. But the funniest jokes in the world are those which deal with morgues and funerals and painful injuries and lingering deaths.

It is a poor physician who, having diagnosed a disease, can point to no panacea for it. Out of my own travail and my own suffering while wrestling with this monster, I have figured a remedy for what ails golf—a remedy which, though I say it as shouldn’t, strikes at the cardinal root of the trouble.

Let us do away with those dour Scotch fanatics who now build our new golf courses and remake our existing ones according to their own peculiar golf orthodoxy. Let us have no more of that typical stern-faced zealot who, full of old-line Presbyterianism and homesick longing for the kind of Scotch we used to have before prohibition, goes spying across the sward, here devising a mantrap which mentally he christens “Original Sin,” there planning an abysmal trench which afterwards he affectionately may think of under the name of “Infant Damnation,” and still farther on, giving orders for heaping up some grim Appalachian Range in affectionate memory of John Knox, who never gave an inch and never spared a sinner.

Let us can these guys, and in their stead, as the designers of our links in future, let us hire a bevy of light-hearted singing Italians—preferably Neapolitan troubadours, care-free blithe minstrel bards all. Then we shall have golf-links that’ll be all fairway and no rough, with saucer-shaped greens funneling down to cups measuring three feet in circumference; links where as you skip gaily o’er the lea, followed by a caroling and rollicksome caddy, unseen orchestras will sing for you from behind violet-studded slopes, and at the end, when you have holed-out in one for a perfect score, a silken bag will automatically open its mouth above you and confetti will descend upon your triumphant form in a beautiful gay shower.

And then, but not until then, will the voice of the turtle be heard in the land and I—and about six million more now hopeless dubs like unto me—will be showing you some golf as is golf.

## *Chapter Two*

### *IS THERE A SECOND TO THE MOTION?*

Sometimes I'm afraid I'm getting to be hopelessly old-fashioned. I try to be sympathetic and liberal and all like that toward the new generation. Yet how often, on viewing the new generation, do I find myself asking myself questions: Why does the average débutante have to look and act as though she were out on bail? Why is it that so many of the younger intelligentsia seem to have so much trouble deciding which sex they're going to belong to, if either?

Admitting, if you please, that youth must be served, why does such a large percentage of our youth insist on being served raw? Why, among the oncomers, isn't a well-written, decent book given half as much consideration as a badly written, dirty one? What does this ultra-modernistic art mean, if anything? Or is it meant to mean anything? Why is it a mark of stupidity to be reasonably tolerant, reasonably courteous? Why is it now good-breeding to appear ill-bred?

Why do they call it the Junior League when the pictures of its members in the rotogravure section prove that it should be the Junior Leg? Not that I have any grudge against the human leg, as such. I heartily indorse it, especially the female human leg, if shapely and not constantly on public exhibition. I like for a leg to dawn on me gradually, like a sunrise, not to come leaping upon me nudely and, as it were, all at once, like a raw oyster or a Dunkard elder's upper lip.

I figure the trouble with me must be that by reason of early environment I failed to develop the proper foundations for the proper viewpoint, and now, by reason of accumulating years, cannot at this late date hope to develop it; which merely is a rather involved way of admitting that one has fallen miles behind the times. I read the advice to the well-dressed man in the theater program and am pained to note that, sartorially speaking, there's nothing correct about me except possibly my back collar button, and I wouldn't swear to that. I read the fashionable intelligence in the Sunday papers and with chagrin observe that somehow I never seem to pick the right places to go to on my vacations.

I read some of the current novels—or try to—and discover that what in my ignorance I've all along been thinking was filth is really beauty. I read

the ablest dramatic criticisms and am thereby forced to admit that when I pine for a revival of such plays as “Peter Pan” and “Pomander Walk” and “Shore Acres,” I must be suffering from a severe attack of pollen in the pod. It’s rapidly making a non-reader out of me. To avoid becoming broody and morbid I have to fall back on the weather reports and the comic strips.

So, beyond question, it becomes apparent that I’m getting hopelessly old-fashioned not only in my personal habits and my personal likings but in my estimates and my outlooks. Very well then, so be it.

But before my sense of judgment begins to ride around in a wheel-chair, before my temperamental arteries have entirely hardened, before I’m assigned to my cell in the harmless ward of the Home for Decayed Intellectuals, I fain would utter one passionate swan-song of protest against the passing of a beloved but now rapidly vanishing institution of our fathers, coupled with a plea for its revival and its restitution, undefiled, incorrupt and uncontaminated, to its rightful enthronement in the affections of all true Americans. Approaching a task, I never felt fainer than I do at this moment.

Friends, I refer to the ancient and honorable game of poker—the noblest game of chance ever devised for the joy of the children of men. And I don’t mean maybe. Nor do I mean dealers’ choice, that abomination of the devil, with its deuces wild and its one-eyed jacks and its joker going at large; its “Ma Fergusons” and its “Spit-in-the-Oceans” and its “Barber’s Itches”; its so-ons and its so-forths, world without end. I mean poker—just plain honest-to-God poker in one or another of its three correct, standardized and orthodox interpretations, to wit: straight draw, jack-pots, stud. But the greatest of these is stud.

Lest someone break in on me here to say I’m getting unduly excited over something which isn’t worth getting excited over, let me point out certain salient facts in connection with this subject. Poker essentially is a product of the finest mentality of the temperate zone of this hemisphere; geographically, it rates as a typical North American institution.

So nearly as we may trace its origins, it came into existence coincidentally with the expansion of this infant republic. It grew in popularity with the growth of the nation. It trailed southward behind the Monroe Doctrine and marched across the Mississippi with the Louisiana Purchase. It followed Lewis and Clark into the untracked Northwest and it went with the boys in blue to Buena Vista and Chapultepec and the halls of Montezuma.

Playing it taught our forebears shrewdness, sharpened their perceptions, schooled them in a native diplomacy, gave them spunk for the taking of desperate and forlorn chances, helped to make them good losers in adversity and impassive winners in success. Our earlier statesmen thrived on it; our pioneer leaders honed their brains on its intricacies and its vagaries; our bygone romanticists builded much good copy out of it.

It runs like a golden cord through our political history and it threads sentimentally in and out of our backwoods fiction and our frontier poetry. How bare would be the traditions of the Old South and of the Wild West without their fabled poker backgrounds. Henry Clay was a famous devotee of the sport, Daniel Webster was another, Sam Houston was a third. In a later period Uncle Joe Cannon was noted for the canny logic of his game, although it is safe to assume he never gave sanction to the aborted and formless variation which bears his name.

There is something about it which is absolutely American, as witness the fact that no Englishman-born, no German-born, no Scandinavian-born ever made a truly eminent poker player, although Chinamen and Colonials and Indians and a few Latins have attained distinction at it. And beyond peradventure it is a man's game just as auction bridge is in essence a woman's game. Almost any woman can recall, after the hands are played, just when her partner led from the wrong suit—and will—but how many women do you know who, without being prompted, chip in or pass out in their proper turns? And how few of them, having once passed, can resist the temptation to come trailing back in upon observing that there has been no raising?

Finally, there is this to be said for it, and it is a thing that can be said for no other game with which I am familiar. It is a game that is played with cards but it really is a game in which your ability at reading human nature is the main requisite—the one game where along with your chips you constantly are matching your wits and your will-power and your abilities as an actor against the other fellow's wits and the other fellow's chips; also the only game where, as in stud, you play the opponent's cards, so to speak, as well as your own cards.

At least it was all of these things before impious moderns began to monkey with its hallowed rules and degrade its high intents with those hideous innovations of which I would complain.

You perchance already have guessed that I love real poker? I do. I learned its blessed rudiments in one of its favored shrines (Paducah,

Kentucky, papers please copy) and I rounded out my education in the Far South where it was born and in the Far West where it tenderly was nurtured and ripened. In other departments of this life I may have failed and come short, but I am a tolerably good poker player and I admit it. Even so, I cannot demonstrate the gifts that are in me unless it be played according to the old precepts and in the light of the olden examples, the ancient ratios, the true percentages, the proper precedents. Nobody else can, either.

With shame I admit that, so far as my researches go to prove a case, the first irreligious attacks against the sacred principles of poker were made in my own neck of the woods, or in any event, hard by. I'm told that it was a Kentuckian—he must have been temporarily besotted—who invented the “little dog” (i.e.: a deuce to a seven without a pair) and the “big dog” (a nine-spot to an ace without a pair) and, with neither rhyme nor reason, ordained that a little dog should beat a straight and that a big dog should beat a little dog, but not a flush.

Inevitably there followed on the heels of these minor initial blasphemies the “little tiger” or “eighty-trey” and the “big tiger” or “eighty-king,” thus making a total of four complete hands in addition to those which the founders, in their inspired wisdom, deemed sufficient for all purposes. The mania having been thus started, spread and multiplied itself until in circles which should have known better, such giddy degeneracies as “blazes,” “skips” and “straights-around-the-corner” likewise found vogue, so that in defiance of the intents of honest poker, almost any five cards a fellow picked up possessed potential value either as a short hand to draw to or as a finished hand to stand pat on.

The basic idea behind these novelties was to make the game more steamy, to give it speed and vitality in those dull periods which almost invariably befall during the dealing of jack-pots when strong pairs fail to mate up and bobtails are curiously scarce. It was a bad idea. It was a criminal idea. It was inspired of Satan and born of iniquity.

In that Down South land of tried and earnest devotees, the height of the madness soon passed, so that with the exceptions of the two dogs and the two tigers, the other false hands fell into the disuse which they so amply merited. Still, the seeds of disorder and disorganization had been sown. Somebody—without knowing, I'll bet it was a woman or a foreigner—some such alien, I say, having not the fear of the Lord God before his or her eyes, conceived the horrible formula of making wild cards of the four humble deuces, thereby giving them vast strength in lieu of their inherent weakness,

thereby weakening the very fabric and structure of the game, thereby striking a death-blow at the heart of poker, which is the bluff.

Before that, having appraised a rival's chances, first by his behavior before the draw, secondly by his draw, thirdly by his conduct after the draw, and then having measured and weighed up his probable prospects as against yours, you might adventure a bet with some hope of scaring off a stiffer hand than your own and raking in the nourishing usufruct, meantime maintaining the air of inscrutable gravity which poetic souls in admiration have called the "poker face."

Therein lay the real triumph of pokerdom, the crowning achievement, the romantic feat which, being accomplished, stamped poker as the chief and the chieftainess and the entire royal family of all card games whatsoever. But what guidance for conduct might the most adept and confident master pattern by if some congenital idiot, having drawn a ten, a jack and a queen of spades to his brace of deuces, could call the ensuing malformation a royal flush and beat your legitimate set of fours or your natural ace-full on kings?

As for one trying to put a bluff over on somebody else under such circumstances—well, Ajax defying the lightning was a model of conservatism when compared to such a one. You'd taken the soul and the vitals right out of the game; you'd turned it into an obscene formula for matching morally monstrous and mathematically impossible hands against equally immoral and equally unmathematically balanced hands, with the consequent elimination of all the nice estimates, all the crafty plottings, all the delectable dissimulations, all the beautiful dramatics which once upon a time in a happier, saner day than this made of poker an art and a science and a gorgeous, glorious, glamorous thing.

Permit me, in illustration of the point I would press, to cite a recent experience: The other night I was invited to the home of a distinguished gentleman here in New York to play poker. The invitation distinctly stated that the company would play poker.

Knowing the gentleman for a citizen of great intelligence and high standing in his profession and in the community generally, and knowing some of the guests as worthwhile persons, I naturally expected to spend a congenial evening playing poker. So I whetted an extra-keen edge on my private snickersnee and dropped around.

What happened? I'm going to tell you. After the stacks had been apportioned, the host stated that, if agreeable, we would play dealers' choice, as offering the spice of variety to the session. A majority of the eight

present immediately concurred in the suggestion. I suffered a small secret shock. Would you ask for variety in rainbows or in properly cooked hot waffles or in a healthy baby's breath or in any other thing which is matchless to begin with? Even so, I was not greatly disturbed. To myself I said:

“These are rational individuals. They'll live up to the honored ethics of a pastime which attained perfection fifty years before the oldest man here was born. They'll elect, as their deals come around, to make it straight draw, or jack-pots, or stud, because to real poker players anything else wouldn't be variety; it would be sacrilege.”

Immediately the first man to deal stated that it would be draw—open on anything at all or on nothing at all—but that at the finish the lowest hand would win instead of the highest. This inwardly was distressing to me, as reversing the proper proportions but not so very vicious a departure from the ritual because it still would permit in a degree of the exercise of strategy and finesse.

Not to be outdone, the next man, with a prideful air—yes, sir, actually prideful—announced we would now play a hand of high-and-low poker, or in other words, on the showdown the man holding the highest hand would divide the pot with the man holding the lowest hand. He said this quaint novelty had been found efficacious for bringing liveliness into a game limited to four or five players and he saw no reason why the same desirable result might not be attained with a full quorum.

What it really brought was undeserved suffering—those who figured they had the lowest hands bucking against those who figured they had the highest hands, back and forth, with raisings and reraisings, until eventually the holders of those hands which neither were very high nor very low had been forced out, leaving one hapless doomed creature hanging on unto the bitter end, with a greedy and determined cinch-player ambushed on either side of him and he trying to call and in too deep now to quit, and they going right on with their alternating boosts.

So they divided his garments amongst them!

Then we had a nice, murderous, bloody and, for all but one of those concerned, highly expensive set-to with the deuces roving loose and free. I was disappointed in the person who made this election. Until then I had held him in high regard—had thought he might amount to something of real consequence in the world. But now I knew this latter-day passion for jazzing up our pastimes to the pitch of maniacal insanity had claimed him for its own. He was afflicted with *dementia pokox*.

After which number four proclaimed that the joker would now be inserted in the deck as a fifth wild card. Fired by this atrocity, the next man commanded that not only the deuces and the joker should be wild but also the two blonde queens and the two one-eyed jacks, a grand total of nine irresponsible cards dashing to and fro and working havoc, and no reliance to be put on any of the old established staple combinations.

This malefactor boasted that the invention was partly his own idea. One-eyed jacks were admittedly an old story, but he claimed that he'd thought up the blonde queens right out of his own head.

Fancy that! What price Newton and Galileo and Watt and Edison now?

Actually the pink ladies were welcomed and especially were they welcomed by the individual who wound up holding two of them, besides a two-spot and the joker. But I was thinking to myself that here was a real menace to organized society. A man with no more reverence in him than that for what should be venerated and treasured—well, I wouldn't put it past him to go pasting up posters for a leg-show on Washington Monument or slip scorpions into a baby's crib.

And somebody else made it "Spit-in-the-Ocean" and somebody else made it "Ma Ferguson," and in poker you can't fall any lower than that because when you get down to that point you're already lower than a snake's stomach in a wagon track.

Oh, they had yet more whimsies in their various repertoires—"Omaha" and "Barber's Itch" and an insane affair called "Irish." Believe it or not, I was the only man of the eight who dealt plain, old-time stud, and whenever my turn to deal came around I could sense a feeling of disappointment among the rest of those who were there. They blamed me for slowing up their sportive massacres.

Their reasons had been so perverted by frequent indulgences in the bad habits which have swept the poker-world along the eastern seaboard that they found it dull to play by the ancient, century-tested rote with properly valued cards. They wanted brutally and blindly to match one pasteboard phase of delirium against another phase of pasteboarded delirium through the long Walpurgis night while the shades of their revered ancestors shrieked in helpless agony over the profanation of shore-nuff poker.

What would any of the Old Masters, those men whose fame is a part of the poker folklore of our country—what would they have thought of such an orgy as that? Could you bring them back to life, what would they say about

it? And how, in a book intended for home and fireside use, would you ever go about even hinting at what they said?

I try to conjure up a picture of that acquaintance of my boyhood, old Colonel Doolove of Alabama, as he would look and act and speak were it possible to fetch him out from Valhalla and show him the debasements of these present times. What a man he was, and what a poker sharp! Lovingly they still will tell you of the day when he conspired with a helper in a Birmingham gambling-house to slip him, at the psychological moment, a stacked pack for the despoilment of certain visiting sportsmen.

But the accomplice, who owed him a grudge, played a low-down trick on my venerable friend. With mucilage he carefully glued all the cards of the special deck into a tight mass; then, beforehand, he tipped off the prospective victims. So when the colonel effected the switch, the others were waiting for what would follow.

Colonel Doolove pitched his ante into the center. He thumbed the top card. Strangely it resisted him. He thumbed again more vigorously. He shook the pack to loosen it up. Then he rapped its edges, top, bottom and sides upon the table, meanwhile coughing to hide a natural embarrassment. Then he put it down.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “man and boy, for going on fifty years, I’ve been running cold decks over on suckers. In my time, I’ve handled probably a thousand cold decks. But, gentlemen, as Heaven is my judge, this is the first one that ever froze solid on me!”

What would Ike English of Louisville, have said about the 1930 brands of fashionable poker—Ike English who was the smartest poker technician I ever knew? Anyhow, he is credited with having effected what I maintain was the smartest poker coup in recorded history.

Here’s how it went: In Cincinnati one night he broke into a strange game. Straight draw was the medium and the blue empyrean the limit, which suited him. The game wagged along awhile and nothing unusual happened. Then Ike, sitting next to the dealer, skinned his hand and found he had four kings and an ace.

He opened with a good-sized bet, not a bet so large as would scare off the customers but just large enough. His immediate neighbor on the left, a party with a dyed mustache, saw Ike’s bet and doubled it. The dealer reraised, and everybody else dropped out, leaving the issue to these three. Ike reraised, Mustaches reraised, shoving in half of a big stack. The dealer

raised once more when his turn came, and Ike went right back at the pair of them. Mustaches lifted her a little nearer the starry blue dome.

By this time upwards of three thousand dollars' worth of chips—a tremendous pot for those times—were scattered upon the cloth. The dealer shook his head. "This is getting too rich for my blood," he murmured. "I guess I'll have to fold up my little trey-full on sevens and leave it to you two to fight it out by yourselves."

Ike, still buoyant, raised again and at this Mustaches called, with the remark: "That's enough, now that we've got the shorts crowded out." The dealer looked toward Ike.

"How many cards, if any?" he inquired. There was something peculiar and ominous, something covert and suspicious, something of the air of the cat that's about to eat the canary, in the way he looked as he said it. It took a genius though to discern the menace—to sense that, the need for concealment being past, a jubilant conspirator had for just one fleeting second let his guard down.

In the brief, the exceedingly brief, space of time between the asking of the question and the answer, Ike English, who was just such a genius, did some lightning-fast thinking.

To himself, all in that flash and in one tiny fraction of the space of time required to set forth in words the sum total of his calculations, he said:

"I'm on now—I'm being jobbed. These two—the dealer and Mustaches here alongside me—are in cahoots. They've worked the old whipsaw back and forth until my pile is nearly all in the middle and now Mustaches will clean me with a straight flush, because it'll take a straight flush to beat me. But he won't hold it pat—it would look too suspicious if four kings and a straight flush were both dealt pat at the same time. He'll draw one card and make the hand that way.

"Yes, that's the wrinkle—he's already fumbling the card he's going to discard. He's letting me see him fumble it, which is the tip-off. Well, there's just one chance in the world to beat these bright boys. If I stand pat, as though I had a full, the card he draws will complete his four-card straight flush at one end. If I draw a card, he'll complete his bobtail at the other end. There's just one chance and here's where I take it."

I claim that for nerve and instantaneous figuring, the thing has never been bested. Ike English looked, with a soft little smile, into the dealer's face and, as he discarded his ace and two of his kings, he said:

“Gimme three cards.”

The dealer’s jaw dropped. Mustaches’ jaw dropped; and Ike English knew he had guessed right. With grief and shock written all over him, Mustaches now took one card just as Ike had deduced that he would. It was Ike’s bet. He looked at his hand. He hadn’t lettered his remaining pair of kings but the first card he had drawn was the five-spot of hearts and the second card was the ten of hearts; the third didn’t matter.

Of course, if the chance of the game had given Mustaches a stray heart of whatsoever denomination or an off-suit card—either a five or a ten—to fill out his straight, Ike still was licked. My hero flipped out a single red chip.

“I didn’t make it,” muttered Mustaches sadly. “You win.”

He tossed his hand down, backs upward, and Ike reached forth and seized on it and turned it over and exposed the faces. There they were—the six, the seven, the eight and the nine of hearts, which the crook had been nursing from the beginning, and the worthless jack of clubs which, thanks to Ike’s sudden stratagem, he had drawn.

There was audacity for you, there was brilliance, there was true science. And they paid delectable dividends to the man who possessed these qualities. But translate the same conditions to contemporary settings and where would Ike English, with all his shrewdness and dash and gallantry, have been? He’d have been in the middle of a bad fix, that’s where he’d have been.

With a whole passel of wild cards in the deck, his regal quartet would have been none too good at the start-off. Instead of forming a magnificent breastwork from behind which a good sharpshooter could mow down the enemy with practical certainty of final victory, those four kings, even with an ace on the side for a confidence card, would have been no more potentially than a snare and a pitfall, seeing that any opponent who was fortunate enough to catch a couple of deuces and a one-eyed jack to a miserable, measly two-card sequence of the same suit, would beat his fours on the final showdown.

Science counted in those days; now it’s blind luck, blind ignorance, blind stubbornness, which brings home the mazuma. If you’re going that far, why not go a step farther and play chess with the more outstanding features of ping-pong interpolated? Or shoot craps with Mexican jumping beans for dice? Or play bridge with ten or a dozen jokers added to the original fifty-

two cards? Or professional baseball with three batteries going and three separate batters up, all at once?

Me, I'm praying for a return to normalcy. While praying, I seek to comfort myself with various philosophic reflections: When things get so bad they can't get any worse, there's nearly always a turn for the better. It's darkest just before the dawn. No great race ever remained mad indefinitely, even though spasms of madness possessed them for a season. You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. Thoughts like that throng my mind when otherwise despondency would beset me and utter despair would threaten.

Anyhow, there are rifts in the encompassing gloom. Here and there in my wanderings back and forth across the continent and up and down it, I have found a green oasis in the desert. Out in California the boys—yes, and the girls—hold aloft the banner of poker true and undefiled. In San Francisco I encountered two women—jeweled ornaments of our species—who maintained that old-fashioned stud, which was good enough for their fathers, was good enough for them.

They were willing to agree with me in the observation that by a coincidence which might or might not have significance, but probably did, deuces wild became popular in the same year that woman suffrage became effective. They were loyal to their sex but they were not bigoted in their loyalty; they were willing to be apostles of enlightenment to their own kind.

And down in Tidewater Virginia, and also in Louisiana and Texas and likewise in Montana and Oregon and Arizona, have I encountered stalwart males who stood by their guns in the last ditch and with me chanted the slogan: "If the cards run against me, I may lose my pants, but I'll be derved if I'm going to lose my self-respect!"

Nor am I!

Is there a second to the motion?

## *Chapter Three*

### *WALL STREET'S LEAP YEAR*

Once every four years is Wall Street's year for going jumping crazy. It's the year when we have a Presidential election. Wall Street gets nervous over the least little thing—a sudden change in the weather, a slump in the Navaho rug market, a slackening in the demand for canary-bird bathtubs, a war scare in the Far East where they raise war scares for the export trade, a report that Secretary Mellon has a hangnail, any little thing. When it comes to being nervous, Wall Street is the rabbit's nose. If, as has been alleged, it's the barometer of our national business, then the windflower of the wide prairies is the national emblem.

So, whenever we make ready to elect us a President, Wall Street may be counted upon to give an excellent imitation of a quaking aspen in a stiff breeze. Did it behave otherwise we should be disappointed. With or without provocation, we expect that every fourth year every big operator down there will begin going out of one congestive chill into another and that every little blood-sucking operator, riding along like a wood-tick on the dewlap of financial destiny, will dig in and holler for help.

But why, just because there is to be a general vote on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of that November, should Main Street feel called upon to become frightened or even to get all hot and bothered? That is the question we would ask and pause for a reply.

Wall Street is merely a little deep gash in Manhattan's lower jaw where a bulk of money bides, and money, as we all know, is by instinct spinsterish and cowardly. Money looks under the bed every night for the bad boggy-man. Money pulls the coverlet over her timorous head and quivers when the evening air toys with the shutters. The more money there is, the more scared that money is. In mob psychology there is a perfect genius for senseless panics; yet in that regard money psychology has it beaten a mile.

But Main Street is the country at large and the country at large is doing very well, thank you for asking, and from all prospects will keep right on doing the same no matter what happens, or fails to happen, at the polls.

This thing of getting all excited and unsettled and generally fluttered and flustered over a Presidential election is largely a popular heritage and a popular tradition. It dates back to the time when as a people we took our

politics more seriously than we do now, or at least when we let the politicians upset us to a point where we dropped nearly everything else and suffered our business to languish and neglected our own private affairs for the bally-hoo of the canvass and the exhortations of the spellbinders. All America was a frenzied camp-meeting then.

Ah, brethren, but surely those were the days to stir a patriot's soul. Take the year of the free-silver campaign; in 1896, that was. Two friends of long-standing would meet in the barber shop of a Saturday night. "What do you think of this fellow Bryan?" one would ask. "I think he is the pride of the land and the hope of the civilized world," the other would say. "What do you think?" "I think you are a liar and a scoundrel and a demagogue and the truth is not in you!" And then the first man would try to feed the other his umbrella, a foot at a time, and the other would back off and reach for one of those old-fashioned cast-iron cuspidors and crown him king of all.

I still lacked some months of being of a voting age but I caught the contagion myself. The day after the Cross of Gold speech was uttered I came out flat-headed for Bryan. If I could not cast a ballot I could at least throw rocks and harsh words at the parades of the bigoted and besotted opposition, and if memory serves me aright, I threw quite a few of both. And the entire household quit speaking to the family next door, they being a traitorous Palmer and Buckner outfit. Alongside of them we regarded Judas Iscariot as a perfect gentleman.

Then, three or four years later, the Goebel fight for the governorship came along and my state of Kentucky divided itself off into armed camps and for a long spell we were practically in a state of civil war; at least it amounted to war but if there was anything civil about it I failed to notice it at the time.

And before '96 my boyish fancy was regaled with torchlight processions and an overlapping succession of rallies and ratifications, where silver-tongued orators wore the plating off of those gifted tongues and neighbor quarreled with neighbor; and from April to November people talked politics and dreamed politics and thought politics, and nothing else mattered.

I saw the Cleveland cohorts marching in serried columns by night and chanting, "Burn, burn, burn this letter," and I was present on the interesting occasion when the grand marshal gave the command, "Blow, flambeaux, blow!" and a worthy Confederate veteran and life-long Democrat got confused and, instead of blowing, sucked, thereby imbibing a considerable

quantity of hot kerosene which failed to mix comfortably with his other ingredients.

And likewise do I recall, as though it were yesterday, how on the morning after election when the final returns showed that Blaine and Logan had been licked, our town and our state and the whole Solid South, which was solidier then than it is now, went mad from joy and the stores all closed but the saloons all stayed open and the few resident white Republicans in our parts went into their holes, although protected by the game laws. Through that day and that night, and through the next day as well, nobody worked except the barkeepers and the police force and the hang-over specialists of the medical profession.

For sake of direct contrast let us shift the slide forward to the coming year of grace, 1932: Can you imagine any sizable assortment of business men and artizans and professional men—in short any typical and representative cross-section of our industrial groups—tramping for weary miles night after night to celebrate the nomination of this or that candidate? Can you picture the whole country going raving crazy on the eve of the election and the winning crowd behaving like dancing dervishes when the outcome is known? Can you conceive of any fairly rational storekeeper of your acquaintance letting his business go to pot while he emotionalizes at the market-place and ramps across the public square with a torchlight over his shoulder and a campaign hat on his head?

If you can, there's something wrong with you, too, because nowadays it simply isn't done. The average campaign meeting is as characterless as restaurant lemon pie; the average platform is as sapless as a kipper and could be traded for the adversary's platform without serious loss or noticeable gain to either party; the average so-called rally is as dull as a newspaper account of a Gridiron Club dinner. And the average citizen remains perfectly calm, cool and collected. He does his duty by casting his vote, and if the other side wins he is disappointed and if his side wins he probably will be disappointed later on.

Save for the Washington correspondents and the chronic job-seekers and the self-appointed, self-anointed leaders, nobody, practically speaking, gets steamed-up to the exploding point over the impending crisis, if any. Because, through past experiences having learned that nearly always an impending crisis never comes to a head but takes it out in impending, the business of the country continues to function and Wall Street, emerging from its burrow on the morning following the election, is pleased to note that the

republic shows gratifying signs of enduring for a few months longer anyhow.

To be sure, the national conventions still present colorful imitations of the ancient hullabaloo done according to the old mechanical formulæ. For more than thirty years no convention of either of the major parties has been stamped off its feet either by oratory or by sentiment, but the faithful old-school practitioners of a dead art still crave to spout and whoop and embark on a jamboree. Should the delegates for Tweedledee cheer for forty-five minutes—with the kindly assistance of the crowd in the galleries—at the mention of his deathless name, why then, in such case, the delegates for Tweedledum must cheer forty-eight minutes or return as disgraced men to their home constituencies.

It would seem that your professional politician is like a man whose wife is being talked about—he's the last fellow in the town to hear the news. So the professional politician still nourishes the belief—which events have not justified for upwards of a third of a century—that a miracle may be vouchsafed and his candidate seize the nomination provided only the lung power of his claquers holds out. Accordingly at some period of every convention, the merry coryphees are expected to snatch up the state standards and fall in behind the band and swarm up one aisle and down the next one and carry on regardless.

Personally I cannot recall that a brass band ever yet made a President for these United States or even a vice-president, and if I've seen one snatching-up of the state standards in my time I've seen twenty; but I never heard of a single instructed vote being switched as a result thereof.

Beyond doubt, there will be some sportive displays of standard-snatching at the next conventions—outbreaks that will be about as spontaneous as though Belasco had stage-managed the scenes and Ned Wayburn had taught the class its dance steps and Ziegfeld had drilled the chorus—but not even the performers, let alone the voters, will be deceived. While the nation pauses to read the newspaper accounts and hear the radio accounts of the antics—or the proceedings, if you favor the parliamentary term—there may be a slight and a very temporary interruption in the nation's everyday affairs, but immediately business will catch step again and push forward in its ordinary courses. And election day will be a bump in the road, but no detour.

To account for the current frame of mind along political lines you may take your choice of explanations. Some will say woman suffrage is

responsible and some, on the other hand, will proclaim that Prohibition has produced a rationalizing and a stabilizing influence upon our Presidential years. But I don't know. I favored universal suffrage when that matter was an issue, but sometimes it seems to me we made a mistake to give the vote to the women when what they really craved was a reliable weight-reducer.

If politics notably has been purified or uplifted or even soothed down by the entrance of the lady into the arena as an active participant, the fact has escaped the attention of this humble observer; and it may or may not be a significant circumstance that the magazines catering to women have kept right on printing twenty pages of fashions for every page which they devote to public affairs.

Moreover, under the Volstead Act, it strikes me that the main effect of Prohibition has been to transfer the burden of drunkenness from the competent shoulders of a lot of seasoned and earnest and sincere drinkers to the shoulders of some rank amateurs who do not carry their liquor nearly so well as they might. The corner saloon has vanished, granted. But there's a speak-easy in the middle of the block, isn't there? The liquor we used to drink might knock you down, but it didn't drag you into an alley and beat you up the way this bootleg stuff does.

I can't see that the Eighteenth Amendment has done much more to bring peace and sobriety into our elections than the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments did to bring the colored brother of the Cotton Belt into a pleasant enjoyment of the privilege of the suffrage, which is to say, practically nothing at all. You may call the Constitution a shield and a buckler, but to me it more nearly resembles a flour-sifter.

I'm prepared to believe that the real underlying reason for the growing tendency toward taking our politics sanely lies in the great basic fact that politics no longer is our principal source of amusement and entertainment. We read more magazines and more newspapers than formerly we did and by the same token harken to less eloquence on the hustings. Instead of the stump speaker we have the movie to furnish us our thrills. We have the motorcar to ride about in, the radio to hold us by the fireside in the long evenings. Then too, political figures do not bulk so large in the public eye as once they did.

Always excusing a few conspicuous exceptions which prove the rule, men of outstanding consequence, men of striking personality, men of power, go these times into business or the professions or the arts or the crafts rather than into politics, whereas their approximate prototypes of a previous

generation naturally gravitated into the political field. Or, if occasionally one of our biggest men does tackle politics, it often as not is as a diversion and a side issue that he takes it on and not as a principal cause or a principal source of earning a livelihood and acquiring a reputation.

It grows increasingly difficult vitally to interest the whales in the affairs of the minnows and more especially since the minnows—the poor fish!—decline to give to political campaigning the same measures of intelligence and common sense which go into the preliminary direction and the subsequent conduct of nearly every other sort of national endeavor.

Finally, and summing up, we are confronted by the incontrovertible and melancholy reflection—that is, from the standpoint of a good Democrat, melancholy, and from any standpoint whatsoever, incontrovertible—that on a fair, square, out-and-out count, there are several millions more of Republicans in the United States than there are of Democrats.

Given two orthodox and regulation tickets and for either ticket one of those commonplace interchangeable platforms, and the Republicans will win by a whacking plurality. If the Democrats are to have a chance for victory there must be a tremendous vote-winning personality at the head of their ticket or there must be a split in the majority or there must be a really vital issue which will throw a decisive number of pivotal but ordinarily Republican states over into the Democratic column. There must be in favor of the Democrats one or two or all three of these contingencies provided. Otherwise the result is, as the boys who follow prize-fighting say, already in the bag. A foregone conclusion may be agreeable to a great many persons, but is not calculated to quicken the pulse or upset trade.

Democrats are mighty curious creatures. They are like quail in New England. In the spring you hear them whistling and through the summer you see them scuttling about in large coveys, but when you go to look for them in November they aren't there. Whereas, the Republicans put me in mind of the Oregon salmon. No matter how much bad luck the spawns may be having in the meantime, you can count on them every fourth year to come schooling back in vast hordes. I wonder that it never occurred to the Republican Fathers to choose the sockeye salmon as their party emblem!

What's more, the Republicans always seem to get the breaks of good fortune. If we have hard times during a Democratic administration it is generally agreed that this is due to Democratic inefficiency and Democratic errors. If, however, the depression occurs during a Republican administration, the experts point out that it has befallen as a heritage from

the latest Democratic administration—a retarded Democratic harvest, so to speak—and such explanation appears to satisfy the country at large.

For example, consider how admirably the breaks favored the Harding administration. A cabinet which contained a Dougherty and a Fall and a Denby would have made a load too heavy for any Democratic President to carry without inevitably plunging his party into a terrific defeat at the next national election, but Harding, when picking these three, likewise picks for other posts in his official household, a Hughes, a Mellon and a Hoover, and you have a counterbalance of integrity and competency which wins the popular indorsement at the polls.

And then we Democrats have such superior qualifications for making fools of ourselves at critical moments. There's not a heady act in a barrel of us. The older I get the more convinced I become that most of the smart crooks naturally gravitate into the Republican ranks and that most of the honest idiots naturally gravitate into the Democratic fold where they enjoy the benefits of a fine protective coloration.

The popular verdicts show that, other things being equal, the people would rather trust the destinies of the nation to the party which harbors the competent sharpers than to the party which offers a congenial refuge for so many of the well-meaning but blundering idiots. Their organized machine clicks smoothly and ours grinds its gears and loses its spare parts and breaks down on us in the middle of the traffic. We should travel the political highway with a wrecking-crew in constant attendance.

For myself, I have figured out yet one more reason, and a very important one, I think, why the organization so often gets itself all gummed up. The trouble with our crowd is that so many of us are Irish. I have reached this conclusion only after prayerful consideration and I'm sure I'm right, but even so I should hesitate to broadcast the opinion were I not mostly Irish myself—some Scotch blood in me and a little palish fleck of Welsh interspersed here and there, but mostly Irish.

You see, it's like this: The Irish are a breed of potential generals. The willingness to be a private does not abide in the Irish bosom. Every Irishman is at heart a leader. He may not be actually leading but he is sure he could lead as well as the fellow who happens to be at the head of the line—as well or even better—and he craves for opportunity to demonstrate his fitness as the leader. The only way to insure a St. Patrick's Day parade free from jealousies and internal dissensions would be to find a street wide enough for fifty thousand Irishmen to march up it all abreast.

But the German vote is mostly Republican. Now the German-American has conclusively demonstrated that in peace he makes a good citizen and that in war he is a stout and willing fighter, even though he may be called upon to fight against the armies of the land from whence his forebears came; but he has a genius for regularity, an instinct for taking orders and a racial readiness for obeying them. He doesn't always insist on bring a leader; he's frequently willing to follow another's leadership. If we could swap off a million of our temperamental Irish voters for a million dependable and docile German voters, the Democratic Party might lose in picturesqueness but it would gain in solidarity. We might think about that seriously for the future. On second thought, let the matter drop. The Germans might listen to reason but the Irish, as a matter of principle, wouldn't stay swapped.

It is here and now predicted that the next Republican convention will be a more skilfully managed and a smoother-running affair than the Democratic convention. It always is. Before the footlights under the ardent rays of the summer sun—which in Presidential years can be very ardent indeed when it puts its mind to it—the boys may indulge in their customary sports, frolics and pastimes, such as championship standard-snatching, endurance cheering matches, putting the fourteen-pound bunk, plantation glees and roundelays, etc., etc., etc.

However, these innocent games will be staged for the pleasure of the participants and likewise for the benefit of a nation-wide audience which by past experiences has been taught to expect that men engaged in choosing a candidate for the highest elective office on earth must, at given intervals, behave like hooch-heated freshmen in a campus riot.

But back behind the scenes a handful of wise heads, will be adequately in charge of the actual operations. They'll be on the job twenty-four hours a day, or if necessary even twenty-five or twenty-six hours a day. They'll be right there sifting out the wheat from the chaff, framing a platform couched in such language as will avoid bringing a blush to the cheek of the most fastidious, deftly adjusting the inevitable small bickerings and heart-burnings among the colored brethren from the Cotton States; parceling in advance the patronage, and so on and so forth, not by any means forgetting the essential task of choosing a campaign chairman who in due season can induce the larger campaign contributors as of yore to give down their goodness.

For one, I do not look for such close harmony when the Democrats foregather. Because, say what you will, Democrats will be Democrats. Our

total vote may be smaller than the other fellow's but among ourselves we excel in piling up a casualty list.

Be these things as they may or may not be, the situation resolves itself into this: The two conventions are held. There is considerable straddling on the subject of farm relief; considerable backing and filling on the subject of taxation; considerable tight-rope walking on the subject of Prohibition. From the confusion two tickets are projected forth; by that time Wall Street is practically in a state of total collapse and getting worse every minute.

A few more months pass by, filled with hectic editorializing on the part of the more partizan newspapers and calmer editorializing on the part of the more conservative newspapers; filled also with the clamor of rival chairmen of rival campaign committees, culminating in the last week with widely dissimilar claims which are the fruitage of what the respective claimants hope for, and having no bearing whatsoever upon that result which the current trends, slants, dips, spurs, pockets and angles would seem to indicate.

Then comes Election Day and some slackers stay at home or go hunting or, if the weather suits, go golfing, and the rest of us stroll around to the garage or the barber shop or wherever the sacred temple of freedom has been erected, wearing upon our faces the somewhat sheepish and embarrassed look which most men and most women do wear when being examined for jury service or when trying to dance one of those new dances or when going to vote. We vote, and that night unless the result is very, very close, we know who the winners are, and in any event we know by next morning at breakfast time who they are.

As good Americans we'll accept the result and that substantially is all there is to it or all there should be to it, except that early in March of the following year a retiring President goes out and a new President slips in or a reelected President stays where he is, and, in event of a change, in all probability a Republican First Lady of the Land or, conceivably but not probably, a new Democratic First Lady of the Land moves into the White House and spends the ensuing first few weeks in wondering how in the world the preceding First Lady ever put up with that furniture and those decorations.

For a woman is always a woman, even though she be a First Lady of the Land.

No matter who wins, our domestic affairs continue to wag along about as usual and our international relations and policies—loud cries of “What are

our international relations, anyhow?”—and “What d’ye mean, policies?”—are not seriously affected. In other words, a business-minded people go right on attending to their business. Then why, in the campaign, should we permit the politicians to throw us entirely out of our stride?

## Chapter Four

### LIFE ON THE BOUNDING RED INK

Harken whilst I sing of the amateur yachtsman. With a hey-niddy-noddy or a fol-de-rol-day, or whatever is proper to sing with under the circumstances, I fain would sing his Song of Sorrows, singing not as one yacht-owner to another, for I have never owned a yacht, and if I keep my poverty and my sanity I never shall, but rather as a friendly bystander having understanding of and an abiding compassion for my brother's plight.

It has to be a song of sorrows. Should this minstrel bard strive at ill-advised moments to interject a lighter note into the motif, that merely will be because he is the kind who probably would snicker if something funny happened during a funeral, and has been known to laugh right out at interpretative dancing. The theme is a grievous one, calling for sympathy—yea, sympathy and pity.

For a good many years now I have been studying the varieties of this species. In the psychopathic wards of my mind I have divided the typical cases off into three groupings, as follows:

I. The amateur yachtsman who started in a small way with a *put-put* or a catboat or maybe a skiff, and gradually developed the progressive and successive steps of the disease; usually a hopeless victim unless Wall Street should take a wrong turn and the patient go broke.

II. The fellow who really loves it, not for the sake of showing off before his fellow man but because the germ of the thing was at birth created within him; case nearly always characterized by a complexion like a fumed-oak sideboard and calluses about the size of an English walnut in the palm of the hand and a desire to hang around docks. No grief need be wasted upon this party; to you and to me he may seem quite mad, but he is happy; we see that at a glance; and besides he probably claims, observing our fads, that we're nutty too—as who is not?

III. The rich man, usually a man in middle life and sometimes even older than that, who bought a yacht because he figured it out or somebody told him that when an American citizen reached a certain stage of affluence it was a duty he owed himself and the position he occupied, and society generally, to own a large slick yacht complete with tradesmen's entrances and hot and cold running stewards and, littering up the decks fore and aft,

large quantities of brass plumbing fixtures—anyhow they always look like exposed plumbing to me when they don't look like bass tubas or dentists' supplies.

It's the last-named individual who exhibits the most distressful phase of this prevalent and somewhat frequent malady. He merely is obeying an immutable law which ordains that when the average millionaire is ready, or believes he's ready, to surrender some of the worries and part of the burden of responsibility of active business, he shall dedicate himself to a form of luxury which will give him more worry and greater responsibilities and a heavier load of gross and petty details to be looked after than the cares of business ever did. He still is bound fast to the galley-slave's car, only he has exchanged his chains of galling iron for chains which, although gold-plated and glittering stylishly in the sunlight, are just as galling as the other lot were.

It is recorded that once upon a time a wealthy contemporary said to the elder J. P. Morgan, "Mr. Morgan, I wonder whether I could afford a yacht?" and that wise old financier answered, "If you're not sure you can, you can't!"

But, as I see it, it's not so much a question of affording it to begin with—it's not the initial outlay, but the upkeep and the overhead. Is it to be expected that a man who built his fortune by stopping up leaks and cutting off waste—and I'm told that's the way fortunes are built—will be able to cease from worrying over what appears to him to be needless and fraudulent expense in the maintenance of an alleged pleasure? It is not. My contacts with the breed have taught me that the average plutocrat would rather give you a hundred thousand dollars outright than let you skin him out of one thin dime. That's where he starts fighting you like a tigress for its young. So nine times out of ten, when he buys one of those sea-going pets, he buys a sick-headache. He's up against a game where he provides the chips and somebody else does the shuffling.

For the nonce, let us leave this unfortunate person, promising later to return to him, and take up the two remaining classified groups. Let us devote a brief stanza to the born yachtsman, as the saying is. I repeat that he is not to be commiserated. Nor need he be inordinately well-off in order to gratify his strange passion. If financially unable to support a big craft in the style to which she has been accustomed, he's happy or even happier in the possession of a small one which he can sail and steer. He's of the stuff from which true navigators are fashioned, a son of the tribe of tarry salts, Carlsbad, Epsom, or domestic, as the case may be. When he sets off in his

single-rigger or his motorboat or whatever it is, he doesn't have to have in mind any particular destination or, for that matter, any particular purpose. Along with the drift-log and the bobbing cork and the fish that has been dead three days, he shares the yearning to be afloat. He isn't dependent upon the company of his kind for entertainment; he rolls his own. He probably is addicted to gunning for waterfowl in their season; he's pretty sure to be fond of fishing and to know something of the angler's art—for it is an art. The tug of the tiller, the splash of the playful wave of cold water in his bosom, the dank feel of the wet sit-down place against the seat of his pants, the peeling of the sunkist nose, the smell of bilge water and the smell of stale engine grease—these are as balm to his soul, as precious incense to his nostrils. We may wonder that he should be thus constituted, but there is no occasion for us to be concerned over his mental state, however obviously askew. Spend he much or spend he little, he's getting the worth of his money. What's more, he's enjoying life according to his fancy and that's all, or should be all, any one of us could ask of this foolish world. 'Tis his wife, if he has one, that we should be sorry for. For her days are a solitude and her nights are endured in the company of a comparative stranger who comes home to change his trousers, bringing with him a perfumery like that of a vintage finnan-haddie; and either he falls asleep on the sofa from total exhaustion or he recites to her through the dragging and weary eventide hours the saga of his nautical performances. For boredom, a golf-widow has little if anything on her.

I move that next we take up the case of him who has advanced, step by step, as it were, from humble beginnings as a yachtsman to proud eminence in the profession. Personally I am able to review the triumphant upward progress of a characteristic example. When first he crossed my horizon—which was years and years ago on an inland river down in Kentucky—he owned one of those early-model motorboats of the William Jennings Bryan or Cross of Thorns type. In fact, some of us took to calling her the Great Commoner—she made so much noise in a race but never finished better than second.

There was a theory that the engine of this old-school motorboat could be started by wrapping a piece of rope around the flywheel and then giving the same a sharp, jerky turn. It was only a theory. Often you gave her two or three hundred spins before she even acknowledged your presence by sniffing in a contemptuous manner. Thus encouraged, you kept on winding and jerking, and then, after a while, sometimes she began to cough and spit blood and a hectic flush would come and go in her cheek, and sometimes she just continued to remain in a profound coma. As a last resort you hauled

off with a monkey-wrench or an ax or something and hit her a wallop in her more intimate vital organs, and either she started up, snorting and weeping, and sobbed her way clear out to midstream before she broke down and began drifting, or she stayed dead and stark right where she was, while the rays of the ardent southern sun beat down upon her grilling passengers.

For a couple of seasons the proud proprietor seemed satisfied with his quaint little bide-a-wee. He was his own mechanic. From a cruise which, if he had luck, might have carried him almost across to the farther bank, a distance of nearly two miles, and all the way back again—if his luck continued to hold—he would return smiling happily through a mask of lubricants. And spinning the flywheel helped his wind and enlarged his vocabulary and gave vigor to his back muscles. In those far-gone days we didn't go in for gym work when the sinews demanded toning; there weren't any gyms. The only setting-up exercises we knew anything about were carried on in front of a bar.

But the germs were breeding in my friend's system. As improvements in gasoline engines took place, his ambitions expanded. Also his bank balance was growing, and that helped. In the third year, when our trails again crossed, he had a new boat, a much larger one. It had a regular galley in it, with a two-hole stove and all, and it would have been entirely feasible to prepare a meal while under way, provided he found an asbestos-lined cook who could sit on one of those holes and cook on the other. The crew, consisting of an adventurous colored boy, berthed forward on a bunk cunningly inserted amidst the machinery, and he could have been very comfortable there if only he had been trained to sleep in a tight coil like a rattlesnake. In the cabin there were two beds which could be let down for use at night. I occupied one of them one night. With a few minor changes it was a replica, I'd say, of that device called the rack which the Spanish Inquisition tried to popularize but failed.

The third boat he bought had, in addition to these features, a bathroom with a bath in it that was plenty roomy enough for a six-year-old child if not inclined to be dropsical. If you crowded her, she'd show you nearly nine miles an hour. Or maybe eight. Anyhow, seven. Oh, well, make it six and a half and save argument.

Along about that time I more or less lost track of my old boyhood chum. We drifted in opposite directions. At intervals I heard of him. A born money-maker, he was nevertheless having his ups and downs. He went to Florida and undertook an industrial consolidation along certain lines, but about the time he got the proposition shaped up, the boom burst, and everybody down

there lost his shirt, and that naturally cramped his style because what he was consolidating was the laundry business. Also I have it on good authority that the last time those sinking sensations were occurring in the pit of Wall Street's stomach, he was one of the sensations. So it may be that this present season will find him temporarily retired from the ranks of yachting. But I doubt it. You can't keep a squirrel on the ground and no more can you keep a speed-bug ashore. However, if this contingency should come to pass, it will mark the passing of a pioneer—a veteran who until now has never failed to keep abreast of the march of invention and expansion in his field.

It was along about four years ago, after we moved down on Long Island, that I renewed occasional touch with him and was able to mark how far he had advanced since we last had enjoyed those pleasant earlier contacts. If you are acquainted with the cultural backgrounds of eastern Long Island, and know the subtle shadings of distinction as between the various Hamptons, you get a rough idea of the eminent place to which he had attained when I tell you he was thinking of changing his anchorage from just back of East Hampton to just back of Southampton. You see, it's this way: It takes an athlete to keep out of West Hampton society; East Hamptonites wear Southamptonites' old clothes; and when a good Southamptonite dies he goes to Newport, but a bad one has to spend eternity in Hampton Bays. So he was considering moving on to Southampton with his ninety-foot speedster. He did move on, and that advanced him several points in the rating and made him eligible to meet Otto Kahn and the National City Bank boys.

To me, his that year's yacht seemed the last word in swiftness and high polish. Getting aboard, you could hardly push your way through the brass-work. Riding on her was like being jockey to a comet. But he told me he would get rid of her at the end of the season and buy something faster and slicker. Standard models no longer satisfied him. Every yacht he owned must be built to order. No sooner was one year's experimental masterpiece launched for him than he began to plan improvements and adornments which would appear in her successor—a characteristic symptom of the complaint.

I got dizzy trying to figure approximately how much each of these transactions must cost him, because, judging by what I've been able to glean, nothing that's second-handed loses value so rapidly as a yacht, unless it is false teeth. It costs a king's ransom to build and equip her and a king's exchequer to run her and to maintain her when she's lying in port eating her fool head off; but when you get ready to put her on the market, all of a

sudden she is marked down like Christmas trees on the morning of December twenty-sixth.

Several times this companion of my youth took me out for spins on the present incumbent. As I saw it, there were one or two drawbacks to going out with him. She was so high-powered that when they opened her up wide—and they always opened her up wide—the throb of the engines shook your teeth loose and unbuttoned your clothes, and you traveled so fast you couldn't see what you passed for the spray flying. And since he stayed inside the Sound, you were there almost before you got started from here, as it were. And when you got there, there was nothing to do except wait around while he went ashore and bought a ton or so of highly expensive equipment and supplies from the list which his captain and his engineer and his chef had compiled in such brief intervals as they could steal from their regular employment of eating copiously at his expense. This done, we'd come hurtling back at thirty-odd miles an hour and I'd land with my bridgework jolted all out of kilter, and the crew would go into a huddle and figure out how to turn in some more repair bills.

Only once did we venture into the open sea. The yacht he had that summer may have been built for rough going but her boss wasn't. I'm no social hit myself when the briny deep starts heaving. I'm not one of those who can eat their cake and have it too. And this time, when we ran on past Montauk Point and the ocean got choppy, I didn't feel any too jaunty. I wasn't exactly seasick, understand; I was just sort of homesick. But when I looked across the tilted deck at mine agonized host and saw how he looked, all gussied-up in his regalia and with a complexion like sage-cheese—you know, pale-yellow flecked here and there with green—I laughed until I had to get a couple of fellows to hold my sides.

In the following year he turned up with a yacht that was ten feet longer and two feet narrower and full of even more disorderly conduct than its predecessor had been.

I shall be on the lookout for him next summer. I hope he wasn't entirely wiped out in the market. He's so typical of the tribe to which he belongs that it's a fair treat to study him.

Come we now—that's the way the fancy writers like to put it—come we now to the really tragic figure of the three under discussion, namely, the rich greenhorn who, knowing little or nothing of yachting but actuated largely by a longing to be in the style, buys himself a yacht or has one built, which amounts to the same thing or considerably more.

As I picture the fashion after which the mania lays hold upon its chosen victim, Mr. Nuttin Butt is taking stock of his joys and treasures the while he sits one comparatively quiet evening in the library of his chief place of residence, a room having all the cosy intimacy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. With his eyes fixed reflectively upon the serried rows of uncut first editions in the shelves on the farther wall, a distance of some eighty feet, he says to himself:

“Let’s see, now, what is lacking, if anything, in my scheme of existence? I have a snug city apartment of thirty-four rooms, which members of my family occupy when in town for the opera or to have some dental work done. I have also two or three country houses, each staffed with high-salaried servants who may be deficient in certain respects but whose appetites for food and drink may be depended upon always. I have a villa abroad, a hunting preserve in the South, a racing stable, a private polo field, a shooting-box in Scotland, and at Newport a mere cottage covering a couple of acres. What with hiring new hands and firing the old hands and checking up on household bills and worrying over the harassing fact that in my various domestic establishments there appear to be countless leaks and drains which I cannot dam up, try though I may, I am, for a man who has retired from active affairs, fairly busy. Still, I do have a little time to spare once in a while. For these infrequent spells of leisure I require something else to fret over. Let me see, what shall it be? I have it—yacht, a great big yacht like an ocean liner. Funny I never thought of that before. Fleming, oh, Fleming! Fleming, draw nigh and give heed. Fleming, call up O’Brien and tell O’Brien to notify Rosenbloom to go out right away and acquire a yacht for me. How’s that, Fleming—what kind of a yacht? Pshaw, Fleming, I cannot be pestered with those technical details! Besides, how should I know what kind of a yacht I want? Just tell O’Brien to tell Rosenbloom any kind will do, just so it’s as big and impressive and costly and important-looking as any other yacht belonging to any other man in my set. That will be all, Fleming, except that you might bring me my copy of the Directory of Directors. I feel like doing a little light reading before retiring.”

The vision may be overdrawn but not, I maintain, very greatly overdrawn. As a matter of truth, I happen to know a capitalist who, under much the same circumstances as these imagined ones, took unto himself, sight-unseen, for better for worse, a steam yacht somewhat resembling the SS. Majestic. At the time he rather thought a mizzen was something that came out of a hog’s stomach and that a poop-deck was probably used in playing one of those crazy new card-games. But in less than two years he was vice-commodore in charge of the vice or rear-admiral in charge of the

rear, or something of that general nature, in one of our most swaggersome and exclusive yacht clubs.

So our hero—the one who bids Fleming to tell O'Brien to tell Rosenbloom to get busy—he acquires a yacht and has his tailor make him the proper costumes, replete with special buttons and braid on the cuffs, and he buys him a brass-mounted cap, and fancies he's a yachtsman. He isn't, though; he's merely the rich sucker who owns a yacht, and that, if he but realized it, is a very different matter. Even so, he is no exception to the run of the human breed. On a larger scale he is doing what nearly every lesser mortal does or craves to do. Did you ever stop to think how much of inconvenience and annoyance and brain-fag is entailed by the effort to enjoy almost any elaborated and involved form or variety of alleged pleasure? Well, stop sometime and think—not that it'll do any good.

By the law of averages, the chances are that after the first novelty wears off, cruising will bore the dilettante, since in all likelihood he has not in him that love for salt water which fills the soul of your proper sailorman. Besides, cruising means separation from his favorite musical instrument, the stock-ticker. To the accompaniment of a sharp, poignant throbbing in the nerves leading to his checkbook, he discovers that no matter how much a simple dingus or plain, stock-size gadget may cost when purchased by a landlubber for landlubbering purposes, it costs about nine times that much when purchased by a yachtsman for a yacht; and he discovers that he is annoyed by the enforced companionship with the people he invites to go along with him on a voyage, and that he is left bereft when they have to quit him and return to their trades or callings, the trouble here being that except at our county poor-farms, we have in this America of ours no permanent leisure class.

It's bad enough to be crowded in with one troupe of folks during a prolonged house-party. After the third day, week-end visitors and fish both begin to go bad on you. It's worse when host and guests are jammed up together on a yacht—same faces at every meal, same feet to stumble over, same tiresome stories to listen to—and everybody has enforced opportunity to study the flaws of everybody else until each to the other becomes one large festering mass of overlapping flaws. No matter how big a private yacht is, she's never big enough to provide enough of that precious boon known as a little privacy. Damon and Pythias never went yachting together through a long spell of bad weather or there'd have been a different climax to their historic epic of friendship. I can shut my eyes and see Pythias hot-footing it

over the sands, hurrying, not to save his old pal's life, but to beg the executioner to be sure and make a good clean job of it.

There's a sort of ritual to be followed on these so-called outings—religiously to be followed. Nearly always there is poker or there is bridge. The party is supposed to have been organized for a cruise in the fresh air—fair breezes blowing the ozone down into everybody's lungs and the sunshine and the wind percolating through the gratefully opening and closing pores and filling the body with vigor for the renewal of life's battle. That's the theory. But what are the facts of the average case?

The facts of the average case are that, as soon as may be, the guests and the host coil themselves like a mess of fishing worms about a table down below—they can't play on deck because the draft would blow the cards about—and there they sit all day and often all night, breathing in tobacco smoke, their nerves strained, their forms bent forward in unnatural postures, each, with hostile suspicious eyes, glaring over the tops of his cards at his neighbors, if it's poker, or at his partner, if it's bridge and he happens to have a poor player for a partner.

They come out for their health's sake, so that's what they do, because, after the first few hours, just cruising about palls on the typical land-faring person who, besides, is used to fast traveling in a car and probably chafes at any speed less than forty miles an hour. They do that, and they drink more than is good for them. Nowadays nearly everybody who drinks at all drinks more than is good for him or her when ashore. Afloat, the thirst for liquor appears to increase in ratio to the size of the craft and the generosity of its owner. Drinks at meals—wines and liqueurs; drinks before meals—cocktails and sherries; drinks between meals and copious drinks after dinner and on through the evening and into the wee weary hours of tomorrow morning—that's so often the routine.

Doubtless you recall the time—it's not so far distant—when a man who was really in the know always got his stock from a steward of a transatlantic liner. For a while it seemed that the old-fashioned, land-faring type of bootlegger would be forced out of business. "I have my own steward," your entertainer would say proudly. "This booze is right off one of the boats." And as the stuff went gritting and grinding down your throat, you remarked inwardly, between convulsions, that it must have been a stone-boat.

But among the wealthier yacht-going class this procedure no longer is followed. To do this would date one as outmoded. The proper thing to say is:

“You needn’t be afraid to dip into these goods, old man. I had my captain run her down to Bermuda for a supply of the real thing. Next week I’m thinking of chasing her up to Nova Scotia for some decent Scotch.”

The totaled cost of the liquor consumption on the average rich man’s yacht in the season is enough to stagger the imagination of anybody except somebody who’s accustomed to dealing with national debts and reparation claims and the likes of that.

Thus it goes its merry deadening way along—cards and more highballs than anybody wants or should want, and no exercise and some more drinks, until long past anyone’s normal bedtime. And then, racked in every bone, and perhaps befuddled, you go to bed to tear off a little sleep. Do you get your little sleep! Don’t make me laugh.

I’ve known city-bred folk who couldn’t sleep in the country because of the robins chirping for dawn, and I’ve known country-bred folk who couldn’t sleep in the city because of the traffic and the early garbage man clashing and clanging the ashcans about down in the areaway. But I’ve never known anybody who wasn’t an old hand at yachting—and not many of those—who could enjoy unbroken sleep aboard a sizable, fully-manned yacht after daylight. If it’s not the skipper sounding a foghorn which keeps one awake; if it’s not the maddening lap-lap of the water against the hull; if it’s not the clatter and throb of the machinery, should the craft be off from her moorings for an early start; if it’s none of these causes or a sequence of all of them, it’s morally sure to be a deckhand massaging the deck boards a few inches above your berth. This zealous insomniac, who bounds forth at daylight with his clattering pail and his pounding mop, may invariably be depended upon. If he wasn’t up and heartily at his work by 5:30 A.M. they’d throw him out of the deckhands’ union. And you lie there, counting imaginary sheep jumping over a fence or—more agreeable fantasy—deckhands jumping off a high precipice, and suffer the torments of the slumberless damned.

And today, nine times out of ten, is even as yesterday was and tomorrow, it’s almost certain, will be just like today. So then you who have embarked, let us say, for a whole week of care-free, refreshing, restoring voyaging, get desperate and you think up some plausible lie—a forgotten engagement, a business emergency, a sudden and devastating indisposition—and so manage to get yourself ashore.

Remains this lamentable outstanding fact, that no matter how pestered the yacht-owner may be by the realization that he has picked out the wrong

parties for his sailing mates, he is plunged into a sort of aching void when these misfits skip down the gangway leaving him by himself, and he all decked out in half a million dollars' worth of floating grandeur and nowhere to go and nobody to go with him, either.

The poor, in their ignorance, may be jealous of his favored lot. Some commoner drifts down as near to the yacht club's anchorage as he can get without being arrested for trespass, and there in the offing he beholds the spic-and-span beauty, with her brass-work all aglitter like molten gold, and square-headed sailor lads in spotless middy-blouses swarming hither and yon over her decks, all waiting, did he but know it, with eagerly twitching ears for the dinner gong to sound; and, in effect, he says to himself what the East Side pants-presser said to his wife the first time he looked upon the magnificent mausoleums along Millionaires' Row in Woodlawn Cemetery: "Well, mommer, them rich peoples certainly know how to live, aind't it so, mommer!"

And what of the object of this plebeian's envy? There he bides, the poor forlorn rich man, beneath the fluttering flag which means "Owner Aboard and Awful Lonesome," with naught to do except twiddle his thumbs and add up the mounting costs and presently to harken to the crunching sounds from the crew's quarters as that merry gang eat up about thirty dollars' worth of victuals at a single sitting. There never yet was a hired member of a yacht crew who was on a diet or had a poor appetite. There never will be, either. That's the boy with the dependable mucous membranes.

There, hour by hour, he continues to sit in silent, expensive gloom, wondering where he can dig up a fresh crop of victims to go along on a cruise with him and be bored themselves and help him be bored. He has tried writing letters, he has tried telegraphing and telephoning—there are no takers. Everybody he knows either has already been out with him and still carries painful memories of suffering, or has talked with somebody who has.

The way things are going, I wouldn't be surprised any summer to see ads in the Personal Column reading something like this:

WANTED—Guests for trips on gentleman's private yacht. No questions asked. Bring along white flannel trousers; everything else, including drinks, provided by grateful owner. Address immediately by wire, URGENT. Care Billionaires' Yacht Club.

But the greased-up fellow thumping across the bay yonder in the cockpit of his little one-lunged *put-put* is having a perfectly lovely time. He belongs.

THE END

## TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

[The end of *Both Sides of the Street* by Irvin Shrewsbury Cobb]