Vagabonding Down the Andes Being the Narrative of a Journey, Chiefly Afoot, From Panama to Buenos Aires

Harry A. Franck

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VAGABONDING DOWN THE ANDES



In the *Monte Grande*, the "Great Wilderness" of Bolivia, the commander of the first garrison insisted on sending a boy soldier, with an ancient and rusted Winchester, to "protect" me from the savages

VAGABONDING DOWN THE ANDES

BEING THE

NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY, CHIEFLY AFOOT, FROM PANAMA TO BUENOS AIRES

BY

HARRY A. FRANCK

Author of “A Vagabond Journey Around the World,” “Tramping Through Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras,” “Four Months Afoot in Spain,” “Zone Policeman 88,” etc.

ILLUSTRATED WITH 176 UNUSUAL PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR, WITH A MAP SHOWING THE ROUTE



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A FOREWORD OF WARNING

A few years ago, when I began looking over the map of the world again, I chanced to have just been reading Prescott's "Conquest of Peru," and it was natural that my thoughts should turn to South America. My only plan, at the outset, was to follow, if possible, the old military highway of the Incas from Quito to Cuzco. Every traveler, however, knows the tendency of a journey to grow under one's feet. This one grew with such tropical luxuriance that before it ended I had spent, not eight months, but four full years, and had covered not merely the ancient Inca Empire, but all the ten republics and three colonies of South America.

A considerable portion of this journey was made on foot. The reader may be moved to ask why. First of all, I formed the habit of walking early in life, developing an inability to depend on others in my movements. Then, too, the route lay through many regions in which no other animal than man can make his way for extended periods. Moreover, there was the question of caste. It is one of the drawbacks of South America that a white man cannot efface himself and be an unobserved observer, as on the highways of Europe. Social lines are so sharply drawn that he who would be received in frank

equality by the peon, by the great mass of the population, must live and travel much as they do. Merely to ride a horse lifts him above the communality and sets a certain barrier, akin to race prejudice, between him and the foot-going hordes among whom my chief interest lay.

At best these lines of caste are a drag on observant travel in South America. The “gringo” can never get completely out of his social stratum. His very color betrays him. It is always “Goot mawning, Meestear,” too often with a silly, patronizing smile, from the “gente decente” class; among the rest his mere appearance makes him as conspicuous as a white man among West Indians. Never can he be an inconspicuous part of the crowd, as in Europe. To get in touch with the “common people” requires actually living in their huts and tramping their roads. The dilettante method of approaching them, “slumming,” will not do. The disadvantages of the primitive means of locomotion in wild regions, such as the Andes, are obvious. But the advantages of walking over more ordinary methods of travel are no less decided. Though the means be more laborious, the mind is far sharper for facts and impressions while on foot than when lolling half asleep on a horse or in a train. The mere pleasure of looking forward to his arrival, subconsciously building up before his mind’s eye a picture of his goal complete in every detail, not to mention that of looking back upon the journey from the comfort of his own armchair, is ample reward to any true victim of wanderlust. Thousands of men, supplied with all the comforts money can buy, roam the earth from top to bottom—and are supremely bored in the process. It is the struggle, the satisfaction of physical action, the accomplishment of something greatly desired and for a long time

seemingly impossible, that brings real pleasure, that makes every step forward a satisfaction, every little success in the advance an enjoyment. For after all, real travel is real labor. He who journeys only so far as he can without exertion, who shirks the difficulties, will know no more of the real joy of travel than he who lives without toil, seeking pleasure only and finding but the cold, dead body thereof, without ever realizing the joy of life itself.

As in ancient times, so it is in the Andes to-day; distance cannot be covered without fatigue. On the other hand there is the compensation of knowing completely the country through which one passes, storing away in the mind a picture of each long-anticipated spot, indelible as long as life lasts. The Andean traveler will know the pleasures as well as the drawbacks of the journeys of earlier, more primitive days, the joy of evening hours, when suddenly, from the summit of the last toilsome ascent, he discovers, spread out in its smiling valley below, the peaceful village in which he is to take his night's repose, or when he perceives from afar, gilded by the rays of the setting sun, the towers of the famous city so long sought,—hours of a vivid joy that few experiences can equal.

Thanks again to the barriers of caste, he who would really know the masses of Latin America should not only live with them, but should dress as plainly as they do. It is hard at best to get into more than superficial contact with the South American Indian, and to some extent his traits, like his blood, run through all classes. The upper-caste Latin American is by nature a masquerader; he treats a "distinguished stranger" as a real estate agent pilots a prospective buyer about the streets of some "New

Berlin," cleverly sidestepping the drawbacks; he shows his real self only when he is not on parade, before he learns that he is under observation, and claps on the mask he always has instantly at hand when he wishes to show "himself"; and he rates every man's importance by the height of his collar and the color of his spats, cloaking himself in pretense accordingly. He who does not wish to know the truth about a Latin-American country should attire himself in a frock-coat, a silk hat, and appear with letters of introduction to the "people of importance." His hosts will take him in regal style along two or three of the best streets and into the show-places, will gild every garbage-can that is likely to fall under his august eye, and will shield him from all the unpleasantnesses of life as carefully as the guardians of the princess in the fairy-tale. Hence the mere lack of ostentation, the mere appearance of being one of the negligible masses, goes far toward giving the unassigned wanderer a vast advantage in getting at the unmasked truth, in avoiding false impressions, over men of more brilliant mind and better powers of observation.

My purpose in journeying through South America was primarily to study the ways of the common people. I am no more fond of the unsavory, either in physical contact or on the printed page, than are the rest of my fellow-countrymen. But every occupation has its drawbacks. No traveler through interior South America with whom I have yet spoken has found conditions better than herein indicated; though for some strange reason it appears to be the custom to shield readers from this, to tell intimate facts only privately and to falsify public utterances by glossing over all the crudities. The fact is that the man who has spent four years afield south of the Rio Grande,

and has come back to tell the tale, can only shake with laughter when an exponent of the "germ theory" speaks. Explorers with millionaire fathers-in-law tell us that the out-of-the-way traveler to such a country should take with him numberless supplies, from sheets to after-dinner coffee. It is the best plan, for those whose aim is to live in comfort—or a still better plan is to remain at home. Far be it from me to censure the man who journeys southward for other purposes for taking with him all the comforts he can carry; but he who seeks to know the people intimately must not merely tramp their trails; he must become, in so far as is possible, physically one of them. We should care little about the impressions of a European studying life in the United States who lived in his own tent and subsisted on canned goods he brought with him, however much we might admire his foresight.

It may be argued that by following the plan I have outlined I saw only the lower class and do not report conditions among the more fortunate inhabitants. Yet after all, the peon, the Indian, the masses, comprise nine tenths of the population of South America. There are fewer persons of pure European blood between our southern boundary and Cape Horn than in the state of New York; and by no means all of these live in even comparative comfort. The well-dressed minority of Latin America has often had its spokesman; numerically, and on the whole, the condition of these is of as little importance in the general scheme of things as are the doings of our "Four Hundred" in the life of our hundred million. I have, therefore, summed up briefly the ways of this small, if conspicuous, class, and its ways are so monotonously alike throughout the length and breadth of Latin America that this lumping together

is not difficult. The chief problem in any country is the status of the great mass of population, the condition of the common people, and it is to this that I have almost entirely confined myself in the ensuing pages.

"Have you read ——'s book on Brazintine?" a noted French traveler once asked me. "He says all the brazintinos are immoral and dishonest. You and I, who have been there, know this is true. But those are things one tells to a circle of friends, that one shares over a pipe at the club, *mais, enfin, ça ne s'écrit pas*"!

It is due, I suppose, to a lack of Gallic finesse that I have never been able to grasp this point of view. Why the plain truth should be reserved for the fireside and personal friends, and should be kept from one's friends of the printed page, is beyond my fathoming. At any rate, I have made no attempt to follow that plan. I tried not to expect everything in South America to be exactly as it is in the United States—I should, indeed, have considered that a misfortune. After all, I went south to see the Latin American as he is, not with the hope of finding him another American merely speaking another language. I have tried to judge him by his own ideals and history, fully aware that in the latter he did not have a "fair shake," rather than by our own. Yet the traveler cannot entirely lay aside his native point of view; that would imply that he was not convinced of the wisdom of his own way of life, and the question would arise, Why not change? Neither the Latin-American nor the American point of view is all right or all wrong; they are simply different. Because we criticize does not necessarily mean that we claim superiority, though I am reminded of the American resident in South America who asserted that were he

not convinced of his superiority to his neighbors, he would forthwith tie a mill-stone about his neck and jump in where it was deep. But the traveler who does not express his own honest opinions, “loses,” as the Brazilians say, “a splendid chance to keep silent.” I have, therefore, set down my real, heartfelt impressions. These may be false, even worthless; the reader has full right to reject them in toto. But at least they have the virtue of frankness.

Moreover, South America has had its fair share of apologists. Virtually every country publishes at intervals a luxurious volume of self-praise that resembles in its point of view the year-book of a high school or college class. Trade journals are constantly painting things South American in the rosiest of colors. It has been the traditional policy of certain branches of our government to cultivate Latin-American friendship by a myopic disregard of all the shadows in the picture. In our own capital there exists a criminally optimistic society for the propagation of emasculated information concerning our neighbors to the south. Among “distinguished strangers” from our own land who have visited Latin America there seems to have been a conspiracy to whitewash everything, an agreement to have all they see or experience bathed, barbered, and manicured before permitting it to make its bow to our public. The enormous majority of descriptions of South America resemble the original about as much as a portrait resembles the sitter after a professional photographer has finished with it.

I do not know what the Latin American may have been in other years—perhaps he was the splendid fellow many make him out. I am merely telling, as charitably as possible, how I found him. I am not

interested in winning or losing his friendship, in selling him goods, or in gaining his “moral support” to our governmental activities. I am interested only in giving as faithful a picture as possible of my experiences with him. There are good things, praiseworthy things in South America; if, in the telling, these have been overshadowed by the less laudable, it is because the latter do so overshadow in point of fact.

Obviously, the experiences of four years, even in Latin America, cannot be crowded within the covers of a volume or two. I have, therefore, confined myself within certain limits. History, for instance, has been almost completely eliminated. I have taken for granted in the reader a certain basic knowledge of South America, though in the case of many even well-educated Americans this seems to be taking much for granted. I have passed as briefly as possible over those things which are already to be found within the walls of our libraries, confining myself so far as possible to that which I have personally seen or experienced. I have, however, dipped as freely into the literature of each country as into the life itself, and in the few cases where I have made use of facts so acquired, I have not taken of my cramped space to acknowledge the debt in words. For similar reasons, though it may seem ingratitude, I have not taken the reader’s time to thank individuals by name for personal kindnesses. They were many; but the doers know that their deeds were appreciated, without thanks being detailed here; or if they do not, it is the fate of those who lend passing assistance to world-roamers to take their reward in inner satisfaction.

The modern reader is prone to tire quickly of mere

description; but nature is so important a factor in the Andes that it cannot be briefly passed over. Personally I like an occasional sunset, like it so much that I sometimes go to the unrequited toil of attempting to paint one. The reader who prefers his stage bare, as in Shakespeare's day, can easily glide over those pages. If he does without stage-setting, however, and relies only on his imagination, his picture is apt to be false, for the imagination has very faulty materials from our school-books and the tales of wandering Münchausens to work upon. Yet after all, even with all one's effort, it is sad how little of the splendid scenery, the atmosphere, the charm of it all—for in spite of its drawbacks, South America has charm—one can get down on paper.

This was not a voyage of discovery; or rather, if there was discovery, it was only of a different stratum of life, and not of new lands. My plan was not so much to find unexplored country in the ordinary sense, as to go by hitherto unmentioned paths through inhabited and known regions, the out-of-the-way corners of familiar cities and the undescribed gathering-places of mankind. In that sense South America is still chiefly "unexplored."

Lastly, let me give fair warning that this is no tale of adventures. I would gladly have had it otherwise. I sought eagerly for experiences that would make the story more worth the telling; I tried my sincerest to get into trouble; all in vain. In Mexico I marched peacefully about between two falling empires. In Guatemala I strolled nonchalantly among Estrada Cabrara's band of hired assassins. In Honduras I chatted with the leaders of the latest revolution. In Colombia I met many cripples of the civil war but recently ended. In Ecuador I found only peace and

apathy in the very streets through which an ex-president and his henchman had been dragged to death a few months before. In Peru all was love and brotherhood—until after I left. In the Bolivian Chaco wild Indians wiped out a company of soldiers not a hundred miles from where I was passing in placid unconcern. In the Paraguayan capital I sat with the man who not a year before had captained a particularly bloody coup d'état. In Brazil I passed through two sections virtually in anarchy, and in one of its state capitals watched a riot that came perilously near being a revolution. In Venezuela I strolled serenely through the very ranks of revolters mere days before the leader and many of his band were killed. Yet hardly once did I knowingly come near personal violence. The fact is that South America is atrociously safe. Dangers are mostly those of popular novelists, from the pages of travelers who succumb to the natural temptation to "draw the long bow," after the fashion of Marco Polo.

It may be that there was a better way to have told this story than as a day-to-day narrative. But even at that, it could not honestly have escaped a certain monotony; for monotony is ingrained in the fiber of South America. Not to have reported the journey chronologically would have made for succinctness, but at the expense, perhaps, of truth. It may be wearisome to hear of virtually every night's stopping-place; yet as the traveler through the interior must stop at almost every hut along the way, the sum total of these is a description of the whole country. If the story appears sketchy and piecemeal, it is because I have denied myself, erroneously perhaps, even the Barrovian privilege of transposing or inventing enough to make a smoother and more interesting story. A book of travel cannot have

something always happening; that is the privilege of fiction. The novelist can forge his materials to his liking; the travel-writer is very limited, even in opportunity to amalgamate, his material being very hard and nonplastic. Even to transpose and combine incidents is often to falsify, for what is true in one spot may never have been so a hundred miles further on.

The necessity of suddenly abandoning this task for other and more important duties has made it impossible to give it final polish, to eliminate much that should have been eliminated, and to improve much of what remains.

HARRY A. FRANCK.

Plattsburg, New York, August 1, 1917.

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VAGABONDING DOWN THE ANDES

CHAPTER I
UP TO BOGOTÁ

When we had “made a stake” as Canal Zone policemen, Leo Hays and I sailed from Panama to South America. On board the Royal Mail steamer the waist of the ship, to which our tickets confined us, was a screaming pandemonium of West Indian negroes, homeward bound from canal digging, and a veritable chaos of their baggage and household goods—and gods—ranging from tin trunks to pet monkeys, from battered phonographs to plush-bound Bibles. We preëmpted deck space for our suitcases and sat down upon them. It chanced to be the same day on which, eight years before, I had set out on a “vagabond journey” around the world.

Twenty-four hours after our last Zone handshake we marched down the gangplank among the little brown policemen of Cartagena, Colombia, and fought our way through a mob of dock loafers to the toy railroad train that eventually creaked away into the city. Our revolvers and cartridge belts we wore out of sight; uniforms and nightsticks no longer figured in our equipment. But the campaign costume we had chosen,—broad felt hats, Norfolk jackets and breeches of olive drab, and the leather leggings

common to the Zone—were evidently more conspicuous here than we had suspected. For about us wherever we moved sounded awe-struck stage whispers:

"Psst! Policía de la Zona!"

The ancient city and fortress of Cartagena—and for America it is old indeed—squats on a sandy point jutting far out into the blue Caribbean, with a beach curving inland on either hand. A sea-wall beside which that of Panama seems a plaything, of massive weather-tarnished, ocean-lashed stones, brown-gray with age, with stern, dignified old gateways, encloses the city in irregular form. On its top is a promenade varying in width from a carriage drive to a manoeuver field. Outside, down on the languidly garrulous beach, little thatched huts have drifted together under the cocoanut groves. Inside, the dust-deep streets have long since lost most of the cobbled paving of their Spanish birthright; the narrow, inadequate tile sidewalks are far from continuous, and the rules of life are so lax that only the constant sweep of the sea air accounts for old age amid conditions that should bring death early and often.

Long before we reached our hotel we regretted our penuriousness in scorning cabs and carriers. Not only did the weight of our suitcases double every few yards in the leaden tropical air, and the labyrinthian way through the city elude us at every turn, but at least a score of ragged boys trailed respectfully but hopefully in our rear with the anticipatory manner of an opera understudy waiting in the edge of the wings for the principal to break down at the next note. A generous percentage of the population crowded the doorways and children raced ahead to summon forth their families to behold what was apparently the

most exciting thing that had taken place in Cartagena in months. Evidently a *caballero* bearing his own material burdens was a strange sight in South America. The populace stared fixedly, in as impersonal a way as ruminating oxen, and every few yards half-naked children, evidently abetted by their elders, swarmed out upon us with shrill cries of "Wan sheeling!"

We were soon reminded that we had left behind our power as well as our emoluments. The proprietress whose oily Hebrew smile greeted us at the hotel door was none other than one long "wanted" on the Zone on the charge of running a disorderly house. The room she assigned us was enormous, but the furnishings were scant and thin, the beds mere strips of canvas, as befits a country of perennial midsummer. While we unpacked and shaved, a ragged brown urchin slipped in with the Barranquilla newspaper. In a characteristic burst of generosity Hays tossed him double the price demanded—only to discover just after the vendor was out of reach that the pauperise little sheet was twenty days old. It was a "bunco game" so aged it had grown new again. Maria, the chambermaid, already in the sear and yellow leaf, shuffled in frequently, supremely indifferent to our scantiness of attire. Now and then several younger females of decidedly African ancestry strolled by as nonchalantly, one by one, to inquire whether we had any soiled clothes to wash, and loitered about in a manner to suggest that the question was meant to be taken figuratively. This friendliness was the general attitude of all the town. Outwardly at least we were shown no discourtesy, and there was little confirmation of the reputed hatred of Americans. Yet almost from the moment of our landing we noted that Colombians seemed to

avoid speaking to us beyond the requirements of business or the cut and dried forms of their habitual politeness. Still, with only an anemic candle to flicker its pale shadows on the enclosing wall of the droning tropical night, we settled down to the conclusion that Colombia, alleged the deadly enemy of all things American and “heretical,” was less black than she had been painted.



One of the wood-burning steamers of the lower Magdalena, on the route to Bogotá



Along the Magdalena we halted several times each day for fuel, the villagers looking idly on

while the crew carried many a
woodpile on board across a
precarious gangplank

We had reached the land of easy money. Merely to step into a bank with a $5 bill was to emerge with a bulging roll of $500. We could not repress a millionaire swagger when we tossed a hundred-dollar note on the counter to pay for a pair of socks, though it quickly wilted when a few nickel pieces were tendered in change. Hays dropped into a dingy little hole-in-the-wall to buy a cigar, but though it was certainly the only $5 cigar he had ever strutted behind, he soon tossed it away in disgust. The newcomer is apt to be startled when he hears a Colombian casually mention paying $10,000 for a mule—until he realizes that the speaker is really talking in cents. The Colombian notes, even those of the intrinsic value of our copper coin, are elaborately engraved, and the wonder grew how the Government could afford to print them.

For those who will exert themselves, even in the tropics, there is a splendid view of all Cartagena from La Popa, a hill standing forth Gibraltar-like above the inner harbor, on its nose a massive old church and fortress combined. From it the cruder details of the town, the startling pink and sky-blue of newer walls and balconies, fade to the general inconspicuousness of the more age-mellowed houses. The ancient red-tile roofs blend artistically into the patches of greensward and the light pink of royal poinciana trees; the whole city, edged by the landward-leaning cocoanut palms, is framed by a sea stretching away on either hand to the world's end.

The half-grown Colombian of forty in charge of La

Popa and the telescope and telephone by which incoming ships are reported, changed gradually from canny distrust to garrulous curiosity and invited us to inspect his entire domain. The purely academic dislike of Americans we soon found was overcome with little effort by those who addressed men of his class in their own tongue. Conversation at length drifted to sanitation in Panama, Colombia's "rebel province," as he called it. The fort-keeper listened to our tales in loose-jawed wonder and summed up his opinions of such gringo superstitions with:

"But here we do none of those things, señores! The mosquitos prick us every day, yet we are well."

Our strange notion that disease could be carried by a mere insect was as absurd to him as was to us his own habit of relying for health on the plaster saint in the vaulted fortress church.

Even in Panama information on travel in Colombia had been almost as lacking as trustworthy reports on the interior conditions of Mars. Only once in my five months on the Canal Zone had I run across even an ostensible source of knowledge. He was a native of Cali, and his answers had been distinctly Latin-American.

"Does it rain much in your country?" I had asked him.

"Sí, señor, when it rains it is wet. When it doesn't it is dry."

"Is it cold?"

"Sí, señor, in the cold places it is cold, and in the hot places it is hot. *No hay reglas fixas*—there are no fixed rules."

"How far is it from Cali to Popayán?"

“Ah, it is not near, señor.”

“About a hundred miles, perhaps?”

“Sí, señor, just about that.”

“Isn’t it rather about three hundred?”

“Pués, sí, señor, perhaps just about that.”

There the matter had stood when we sailed.

Once arrived in Cartagena, however, we found that a toy train left next day for Calamar on the Magdalena and that a second-class ticket to Honda, wherever that was, cost $2000! We had barely crammed ourselves into two seats of the little piano-box car next day when Hays started up with a snort and thrust the morning newspaper across at me. Done into English the item that had drawn his attention ran:

“SOME ONE

who merits our entire confidence, informs us that yesterday there were in the city, taking photographic views of our forts and most important edifices, two foreign individuals who wore clothing of military cut of the cloth called *khaki*, and felt hats with wide brim. This costume, as it has been described to us, is that of the army of the United States! Can these really be American soldiers, or has a great outward similarity caused the suspicious imagination to see that which in reality did not exist? We cannot assure it!”

We had hardly aspired to be taken for a hostile invasion from the dreaded “Colossus of the North.” It was characteristic of Latin-American thinking processes for the paragrapher to fancy that spies—for such the item covertly dubbed us—would appear in uniform. We had yet to learn, however, that the makers of newspaper, and of public opinion, in so far

as it exists, in South America would often rank in our own land as irresponsible and poorly trained school-boys.

The miniature train, ambling away in a morning unoppressive in spite of the tropical sunshine, wound through a thin jungle, sometimes climbing, more often stopping at languorous, staring, thatched villages, in a region suffering from drought but of fertile appearance. By and by the jungle gave way to what might almost have been called prairie, slightly rolling and used only for grazing. Toward noon, beyond some swampy land, we clattered into the carelessly whitewashed town of Calamar, drowsing on the sandy bank of the Magdalena, here a half mile wide. Even before we jolted to a halt, the car filled with a struggling mob of beggars, shrill-voiced boys, and tattered men, eager, in their indolent tropical way, for some easy errand. Such unwonted energy soon evaporated. The population was of as mongrel a mixture as the yellow dogs that slunk about in the shade of trees and house walls, and appeared to hold identically the same attitude toward life.

At length, in the cool of the following evening, the “Alicia” began to plow her way slowly upstream. She was a three-story craft with a huge paddle-wheel at the stern, her lower deck crowded with unassorted freight, domestic animals, engines and wood-piles, with deck hands, native passengers, pots and pans and unattractive habits. Among the most conspicuous of the latter were those of an open-air den that served as general kitchen. Twice a day a small tub of rice, boiled plantains and some meat mystery, all cooked in a single kettle, was carried out on one of the barges alongside, where it was fallen upon not only by the lower-deck passengers but by

the even darker-skinned deck hands, dressed in what had once been trousers and the wear-forever shirts so popular in this region. A few owned spoons and others a piece of cocoanut shell, but these were no handicap to the majority, armed only with the utensils of nature. Little had we suspected the meaning of “second-class” on the Magdalena!

Luckily the English agent of the line had been so shocked at sight of our tickets, particularly, perhaps, in the hands of Hays, who was in appearance the hero of any of our modern romantic novels stepping bodily forth from the cardboard of any of our popular illustrators, that he had ordered the steward to overlook the color thereof and treat us as cabin passengers. On the upper deck the steamer was open from stem to stern, a dining table stretching along her center and the sides lined by frail, box-like “staterooms.” The little canvas cots, narrow as the *charpoys* of India, used alike by passengers and the unlaundered youths that passed for stewards, were dragged to any part of the craft that suited the whims of the sleeper. Our drinking water was the native Magdalena, sometimes carelessly filtered through a porous stone. There was even a shower-bath—when the paddle-wheel was elevating enough of the chocolate-colored river water to permit it to “function”—but it generally took most of the morning and all the stewards to find the misplaced key.

Frequently for days at a time there were only the two of us to occupy the cane rocking-chairs that embellished the upper foredeck. Here day after day we watched the monotonous yellow bank unroll with infinite slowness, like a film clogged in the machine. The country, flat, considerably wooded, and

characterless, stood only a few feet above the river, its soil sandy, though not without fertility, with occasional clearings and many immense spreading trees. Here and there on the extreme edge of the stream hung a few scattered thatched villages, all apparently engaged in the favorite occupation of doing nothing, living on the few fruits and vegetables that grew themselves and drinking the yellow Magdalena pure.

At such times there was nothing left but to while away the languid hours in perfecting our plans for the journey ahead. For once I had chanced upon a traveling companion who had actually started when the hour of departure came, and who bade fair to pursue the expedition to the bitter end. Leo Hays had first seen the light—such as it is in Missouri—six months later than I, but had overcome that initial handicap by deflecting the sun's rays in many a varying clime. The schools had early scowled upon him—or he upon them—and he had retaliated by gathering in his own way much that schools have never hoarded away in their impregnable warehouses. The gleaning had carried him far afield, in social strata as well as physical distance, but it had left him unburdened with the bric-a-brac of life so dear to the bourgeois soul. Wasteful of money and the petty things of life, he was never wasteful of life itself. He was of those who look at the world through a wide-angle lens. There is a breadth of vision gained in an existence varying from "hobo" printer and editor in our pulsating Southwest to sugar estate overseer in the Guianas, from the forecastle to the Moro villages of the Philippines, that makes a formal education seem cramped and restricted by comparison. To those who did not know the Canal Zone in its halcyon days a mere corporal of police

demanding of himself the ability to converse intelligently a half hour on any subject from astronomy to Norse literature, from heraldry to Urdu philosophy, may seem a fantastic figure. To the experienced “Zoner” it is commonplace.

On Sunday morning the entire village of Zambrano, headed by its curate and dressed in every imaginable misfit of sun-bleached gaiety, swarmed on board and subjected us to a leisurely detailed examination that gave us the sensation of being museum exhibits. The “Alicia” was soon off again and we came to the conclusion that the town was migrating en masse. A few hundred yards beyond, however, we tied up to the bank once more and waited a long hour while all Zambrano took leave of the priest. Every inhabitant under fifteen kissed his hand, which each of the women pressed fervently, some several times over, after which the men approached him in procession, padre and layman throwing an arm about each other’s neck and slapping each other some seven times each between the shoulder-blades. It was only the customary Colombian *abrazo* and the formality of seeing the curate a little way on his journey. Meanwhile our half-Indian boy captain stood smilingly by, twisting the two tiny sprigs of mustache that gave him so striking a resemblance to a Chinese mandarin turned river pirate. He was far too good a Catholic to cut short the leave-taking even had he guessed that anyone on board chaffed at the delay. The day was much older before we crawled out into the middle of the stream again. But no man journeys up to Bogotá hastily. The Land of Hurry was behind us.

When we addressed him, the priest answered us courteously enough, then dropped the conversation

in a manner to suggest that he did not care to pursue it further. Like his fellow-countrymen in general he seemed to have no hunger for knowledge, no notion that he might learn from others. The attitude of all the upper-deck passengers was as if an edict had gone forth to dislike Americans. Individually none had any grievance against us, collectively they seemed banded together in a species of intellectual boycott, which none of them vented to the extent of losing his reputation for politeness. Their manner suggested pouting children, unwilling to declare their fancied grievances and fight them out like men.

There were a half dozen of us at table that evening, with the priest in the place of honor at the head. The meal passed without a spoken word, at racehorse speed. It recalled a placard I had seen in a Texas restaurant on my journey southward: “Eat first, THEN talk,” and amid the opening chorus Hays’ memory harked back to a sign that once embellished a Bowery institution: “Soup should be seen and not heard.” That we paused for speech between mouthfuls seemed to fill our companions with a mixture of disgust and amazement. It was perilous, too, for ragged, barefooted waiters more numerous than the diners, hovered over us, quick to snatch away the plate of anyone who dared raise his head. How unlike the sociable meals of Spain was this silent wolfing!

Their own parents could not have distinguished one meal from another. The soup was always of the general collection variety, the two vegetables incessantly the same; the beef varied from the hopelessly tough to the suspiciously tender; for the system on the river steamers of the Magdalena is to slaughter a steer on the lower deck the first morning

of the voyage and serve it twice daily until passengers are unanimous in leaving their plates untouched, then regretfully to lead another gloomy, raw-boned animal forth to slaughter. Yet no one could have complained on the score of quantity. We no longer wondered at the sallow flabbiness of those about us in spite of their life in the open air.

The voracious engines of the “Alicia” required more halting than movement. Barely had we left the faint lights of Calamar astern when we tied up for hours before a woodpile in the edge of the jungle, and never did a half day pass without a long halt to replenish the fuel. The sight of a bamboo hut or a cluster of thatched shacks crouched in a little semicircular space gouged out of the immense forest was sure to bring a shrill scream from the whistle and in the soft air of evening we crawled up to a tiny clearing where perhaps thirty cords of wood lay awaiting a purchaser. They were heavy slabs some three feet long, the piles separated by upright poles into divisions called *burros,* the conventional load, perhaps, of one ass. On the utter edge of the bank hung a miserable little hut swarming with dogs and equally unwashed human beings. There were the usual endless manoeuvers to a mooring, then the entire crew went ashore on the heels of the captain, armed with his measuring stick. He and the woodsman, a sturdy, bashful fellow, gave each other the customary greeting pat on the shoulder, then stood a long time, each with a hand on the woodpile, discussing the details of the imminent financial transaction.

But they could not come to terms, and at length the steamer population returned on board and for ten minutes with much ringing of bells and screeching of

whistles the “Alicia” went through the pretence of getting under way. The woodsman held his ground, though his wood looked as if he had already held it several years. At length we returned to the same mooring and a wash-basin of boiled beef and plantains was carried ashore as a peace offering. This time we struck a bargain, and the two populations exchanged places. The countrymen, of all ages and both sexes, many with evidences of loathsome diseases, one limping on a foot white with leprosy, swarmed into every corner of the craft, gazing open-mouthed at her unbelievable magnificence, sitting cautiously down in the deck chairs, thrusting their fingers into the saucers of dessert that had been set out an hour or two before meal time to give the flies fair play, passing from hand to hand anything that caught their fancy. Their protruding bellies suggested that the hookworm was prevalent. The men wore over one shoulder a satchel-like pouch called a *garniel*, for their clothing was not such as might safely have been entrusted with their minor possessions.

Meanwhile we had taken advantage of the opportunity to stretch our legs ashore, for whatever their faults these jungle people are not addicted to thievery. Under the edge of the forest, into the dense green depths of which we could wander a little way amid a wealth of woodland aromas and the fitful songs of birds, was planted a little field of corn, the stalks a full ten feet high, even the ears in many cases well above our heads, though the jungle was thick between the rows and there was no sign of other labor than the planting. A bit of sugarcane grew as luxuriantly, and behind the hut stood a crude *trapiche*, or cane crusher, a mere stump and lever above a dug-out trough. Palm, gourd, mango,

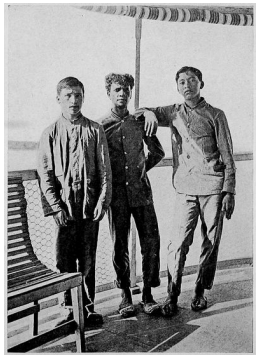
and papaya trees, the females of the latter heavy with fruit and the males gay with yellow blossoms, suggested that the spot might have been one of the most flourishing gardens on earth had the inhabitants any other industry or desire than to roll about on their earth floors. From a corner of the patch the stewards cut long reeds and made trumpets of exactly the sound of army bugles.

The houses of the region are very simply built. Four posts, some six inches in diameter and rising as many feet above the ground, are set at the corners of the house to be. Halfway between these are set four smaller upright poles, giving each wall three supports. Along the tops of these, saplings about four inches in diameter are tied with green vines, after which pole rafters are raised. Across these, six to eight inches apart, are laid strips of split bamboo, also tied with vines. The roof is then thatched with dried banana leaves, laid lengthwise with the slope of the roof, those underneath secured by being bent over the bamboo strips, and layer after layer of them piled on until the thatch is a foot or more thick. Two poles, tied some distance apart with green vines, are then thrown over the peak of the roof to keep a sudden gust of wind from lifting the shelter off the dwellers' heads, and the residence is ready for occupancy.

The deck hands, each wearing on his head a grain sack split up one side, stood in file beside the diminishing woodpile. When his turn came, each grasped the end of his sack in the right hand and held the arm at full length while others heaped it high with cordwood. As soon as he had what he considered a reasonable amount, the carrier threw a rope held in his left hand over the load, caught it

deftly in the already burdened right and, pulling it taut, marched down some twenty feet of perpendicular sandy bank and across a wobbly eight-inch plank without a quiver. We envied them the exercise at every landing, but even to have carried a stick on board would have been not only to lose our own caste but to jeopardize that of all our fellow-countrymen.

Nothing would be more futile than to attempt to describe the tropical sunset, exceeded in beauty, if at all, only by sunrise, as it spread across this flat jungle and forest country, the curving river and woodlands. On into the night the languid wood loading continued, lighted up in irregular patches by the lamps of the steamer and flickering oil torches ashore. Long after dark, as the last of the *burros* was disappearing, the jungle dweller came on board in person and fixed upon me to figure up how much he had coming, openly putting his faith in a foreigner in preference to a native. There were 119 burros, for which he was to receive fourteen cents each. It totalled $16.66, or, as it sounded to him, $1666, and by and by the purser, who would no doubt have beaten him a few hundred dollars in the multiplication but for my pencil, came out of his cabin with an Australian gold sovereign and an immense handful of Colombian bills. I asked the recipient how long he had worked to get the pile together and received the expected South American answer:



The stewards of the “Alicia” in full uniform



Hays catches his first glimpse of the jungles of Colombia

“Ay! Muchos soles, señor,—many suns,” which of course was as exact as he could be about it. Strangely enough he resisted the wheedling of the ragged stewards to exchange his fortune for the cheap straw hats and brass rings they carried for sale and got safely ashore with the entire handful of what, in

these wilds, could not have been of any great practical value.

As we pushed off, the captain announced that we had wood enough to last until the following noon. One would have fancied we had enough to last to the seventh circle and back. Here we could still "march" all night, for the river was deep in spite of its great width. As we sat in solitary glory on the upper deck watching the blood-red moon come up out of the jungle, Hays suddenly broke off a dissertation on the philosophy of life of Marcus Aurelius to exclaim:

"We ought to swear off on this. If we're going to walk along the top of the Andes we'll need all the chest expansion we've got," and suiting the action to the word, he chucked his half-smoked $5 cigar overboard. It was not until late next morning that I saw him light the next one.

"But I thought you'd sworn off?" I reminded him.

"That's the great value of resolutions," he answered, "you make them to break them and feel the genuine freedom of life. But to-morrow I'll swear off in earnest"—which he did, almost daily as long as the journey lasted. Meanwhile, my birthday making a good date for it, I gave up the habit definitely myself, none too sure of its effect in the lofty altitudes before us.

We moved at about the speed of a log-raft towed by a sunfish. Whenever there was danger of our making a reasonable Colombian distance the whistle was sure to sound and we drifted inshore to tie up for hours before another woodpile. Sometimes the flat, disappointing banks of the river were sheer for miles, with unbroken stretches of swamp grass six feet high so dense it did not seem that a snake could have

wormed its way through it. The cerulean blue skies were equal to any of Italy, the light clouds wandering lazily across them sometimes forming in battle array on the rim of the horizon. Here and there were considerable fields of sugarcane about a thatched village; but the vast fertile territory was almost entirely virgin and uncleared. One morning a cry of “Caimán!” called attention to a point of sand on which lay a score of alligators, most of which slid sluggishly off into the stream as we approached. Thereafter we had only to glance along the banks to be almost sure of seeing several.

For some days Hays and I had made up the deck passenger list unassisted, sitting through our meals in dignified silence with some half-dozen waiters to miswait on us—when we could get their attention—headed by the chief steward, who never tired of boasting that he had once made cigars in the shadow of Ancon police station. His underlings received six dollars a month, such food as they could forage, and the right to wear what the passage of years had left of misfit cotton uniforms, to be turned in at the end of the trip. They were obliged to pay for all breakages, and life was indeed slender with only two economical gringos as passengers. The arrival of a new *pasajero* was in consequence always an exciting event. Five days up, in the region known as the Opón country, there appeared on board a native trapper of wild animals, who had been shot through the face by an arrow of the savage Opones, but had performed the rare feat of making his escape. Colombia includes within her confines several tribes of Indians not only uninfluenced by the government, but without an inkling of its existence. The Opones live far back along the tributaries of the Magdalena, descending them only in certain seasons, and attacking any

human beings they come upon. Armed with a species of arch-bow, they shoot an enormous arrow with a point of iron-hard black palm barbed both ways, that can neither be pushed through nor pulled out of the body of the victim. The arrow the trapper brought with him could barely be forced into his long trunk after being broken in two, and five cruel barbs still remained after several others had been cut off and left in the body of his former companion. A few weeks before, he reported, a harmless fellow fishing somewhat back from the main river had been made the veritable pincushion of thirty-two such arrows. The trapper had it that the Opones were cannibals, asserting that a recent expedition into the Opón country had found a Colombian woman of good family who was being fattened in a cage of bamboo, but whom the savages had not yet eaten because of a suspicious sore on her leg.

Gradually low shadowy mountains began to appear in the far blue distance, with suggestions of higher ones in the clouds behind them. On the seventh day a long rugged chain, the Sierra de Peraja in the Province of Santander, had grown so near that separate peaks and suggestions of villages could be picked out of the sunlit distance. Next morning we were half surrounded by deep blue ranges, and the banks were broad natural meadows with hundreds of cattle knee-deep in rich green grass. Magnificent spreading trees now stood out against the sky and ranges. The nights had grown so cool that we took to sleeping in our “stateroom”—with barely room enough left to sneeze when our cots had been dragged in. Here we began to go aground frequently, for the tendency of the Magdalena is to spread out more and more as her sandy banks keep falling into the river. At our speed the experience was hardly

hair-raising, and generally in the course of a few hours the "Alicia" worked herself loose again. There were almost no other water craft, except an occasional *canoa*, a dug-out log crawling along the extreme lower edge of the forest wall. Now and then we passed large *balsas*, rafts of hundreds of immense cedar logs, with the Colombian flag at the prow and the crew camped aft with mat beds, primitive kitchens, and sometimes their women and a numerous progeny. Great trees, which the captain called *ceibas*, rose slim and clear more than a hundred feet, to end in a parasol tuft of branches. Frequently a flock of parrakeets screamed noisily by overhead. In places we crawled along between sheer sand banks, gigantic trees of the dense forest hanging on the brink of miniature Culebra slides as the river washed under them.

Higher still the stream grew so shallow that we could "march" only by day, anchoring at dark. One night we tied up to the bank on an inner curve of the river, where the forest cut off the breeze completely and left us to toss in our cots until dawn. Its first glimmer of light showed that we had reached Pureto Berrío, where a little narrow-gage starts—I use the word advisedly, for it never gets there—for Medellín, second city of Colombia. The "port" itself suspended whatever it was in the habit of doing to stare at us in long silent rows from the doorways. Its male population not only wore no shirt but did not even trouble to conceal that fact by buttoning its tattered sun-bleached jacket. All the natives seemed obsessed with the notion that, as gringos, we could not speak Spanish. As often as we addressed one, though our Castilian vocabulary was as ample and our pronunciation far less slovenly than his own, he refused to believe his senses until the sensation had

been several times repeated.

We were off again by noon. It had been raining in the highlands beyond and the visibly rising river was half covered with patches of thick scum. Now and then it bore by on its swift silent surface a fragment of forest snatched from somewhere above. We were now some hundreds of feet above sea-level, and the forest air was fragrant and unfevered. All day long nothing but forest trailed by. We passed timber enough in a week to supply the world for a century and rich soil enough to feed a large section of it permanently. But only very rarely did a little bamboo hut, roofed with leaves, dot the monotony of virgin nature. The river had narrowed down to a placid powerful stream; the weather was peerless, though an almost invisible gnat began to make life less motionless.

In the purple gloaming a forest-built village of some size stood out more picturesquely than usual on the nose of a land billow jutting forth and falling sheer into the river, only to have the interminable forest swallow it up again. Yet there were signs that we were approaching somewhere or other. Hays sat with his feet on the rail, discoursing on the relative merits of Turgeniev and Galdós, the point of his “last” cigar glowing in the darkness, when the captain passed with a package wrapped in the customary inefficiency of Latin-America.

“Here, I used to be one,” said Hays, reaching for the bundle and rearranging it.

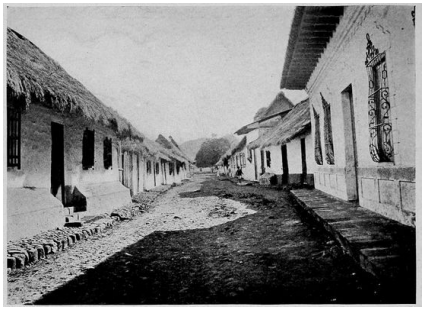
“Used to be what?” I asked, as he handed it back.

“I was walking along the street of—of—well I don’t remember the stage setting, but it must have been in the States and a long time ago,” he began, lighting a

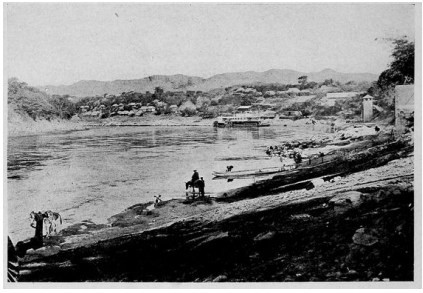
second cigar from the butt of the first, “for I know I hadn’t been to sea or in the army yet, when I saw a sign in a window, ‘Bundle Wrapper Wanted.’ I had to pass up a hundred per as outside man for a medicine faker to take it, but it was something new and ...” and he rambled off into one of those experience sketches which, jumping erratically over the face of the globe, frequently enlivened the voyage.

In the last hours of June we bumped against the wharf of La Dorada, several hundred yards of tinware building along a sloping river front with a childish attempt at paving, its main street a forlorn pathway near the water’s edge, dying away in the forest-jungle on either hand. Here we took our leave of the “Alicia,” for cataracts make this the end of the run for steamers plying the lower Magdalena. Next afternoon a train even more diminutive than that to Calamar wound away in a half circle into the forest, with now and then glimpses of hazy, far-off Andean ranges, and three hours later set us down in Honda. To our surprise we found it a city, the first since Cartagena, as aged and intricate, as full of its own local color, including many blind and leprous beggars, as any town of old Spain. Piled close along the Magdalena, here a series of rocky rapids, it is divided by a gurgling tributary across which three picturesque bridges fling themselves. Scores of aged stone buildings, quaint walls, and steep streets of century-old pavements give it an air reminiscent of Bruges or Nürnberg, or of some of the ancient towns of Mexico. Its narrow streets are crowded with laden mules and sunbrowned arrieros of both sexes; its patios seem primeval forests, and mountain ranges cut its horizon close off in every direction. A muleteer pointed out to us the ancient trail to Bogotá where it crossed a high red bridge and climbed

steeply away up one of the natural walls of the town on the way to Facatativá on the lofty plateau above. But for our baggage we should have struck out for the capital on this route of centuries.



A village on the banks of the Magdalena



Jirardot; end of the steamer line and beginning of the railroad to Bogotá

We went on by rail in the morning. Every woman and girl in the car—not to mention Hays—was smoking the jet-black cigars of the region. The little engine with its topheavy smokestack consumed wood as gluttonously as the “Alicia,” and halted even more

often to replenish its supply. Colombians fancy railroads will work the complete regeneration of their torpid country, but such as we had seen were only miniature samples of the real thing, of slight practical value even were they extended all over the republic. The natives had no notion, however, that the word train did not stand for the same tiny contraptions the world over as that to which they applied it.

On all sides were enormous stadiums of mountains, not yet high but already bulking and rock-strewn. Drought had left the country desert-dry and fine sand drifted in and deposited itself upon us in shrouds, as in crossing Nevada. The landscape suggested a cross between the tropics and a western prairie choking for rain, as did even the towns with their frontiersman disarray, their burros, mules and broken-down horses drooping in any patch of shade. Tattered boys and diseased loafers swarmed into the cars at every stop, drinking from the water jars, washing in the bowls of the first-class coach, making themselves completely at home without a suggestion of protest from the trainmen. Even were there laws against such actions, the languid officials would have lacked the moral courage to enforce them.

The railway ended at Beltrán, where we boarded the steamer “Caribe.” A dreary, sun-baked collection of sheds and a few choking huts made up the town, completely surrounded by desert, with plenty of bushy trees, but a desert for all that. The wind that swept across the steamer at her mooring was not the cool one of the lower Magdalena, but one laden with red-hot sands that stung the cheeks like tiny insects. When the passengers had gulped their *almuerzo*, the dishes were piled in the alleyway, where beggars and

gaunt boys from the shore came to claw around in them, after which they were roughly half-washed. There is a fetching democracy about the road to Bogotá. He who travels it, be he vagrant or man of wealth, must go through the same uninviting experiences. It speaks poorly of Colombians that they still endure this medieval method of travel from the outside world to their capital. Wealthy *bogotanos* journey to Europe in luxurious style—once they are on the ocean. It would seem wiser for them to return steerage and gradually accustom themselves to what they must endure from the landing in their own country to the arrival in Bogotá.

All day long we sat in the sand-burning winds of Beltrán while barefoot and half-naked stevedores dribbled down the steep bank with all manner of cargo. There was barbed wire from Massachusetts, corrugated iron from Pittsburg, boxed street-car lines that clattered and crashed as they fell, and finally, though by no means last, four pianos from Germany that were rolled heels over head down the long stony bank. Although we had real cabin tickets this time, neither of us had influence enough to get a cabin. We dragged our cots out on the open deck and, indifferent to social rules, marched through the multitude in our pajamas. This turned out to be entirely comme il faut, for even the son of a recent president of Colombia soon appeared similarly clad and strolled about the deck chattering with his fellow-passengers of both sexes, as nonchalantly as if in full dress.

We were not off until dawn, into which the volcano Ruiz, first of the long row of snow-clad fire-vents of the Andes which we hoped in time to see disappear over our shoulders, thrust its aged head. Rock cliffs

along the banks recalled the Lorelei. Fields of corn undulated like wind-snatched hair on the summits of rounded hills, at the base of which sweltered the banana groves of the tropics. As the sun was setting we passed a *chorro* at the foot of a low range around which the river had swept in a half-circle so many centuries that its bank was a sheer rock wall surely sixty feet high. The "Caribe," with the nose of a washtub, panted for life against the current, spitting showers of live coals from her wood fires, seeming several times about to give up the attempt in despair. But she gained the calmer water above at last and soon after dark landed us in Jirardot.

We spent the Fourth of July in Jirardot. Not by choice, but because the train to the capital leaves only three times a week. The town swelters by day on the edge of the curving river, here hardly fifty yards wide, where for more than a mile stretches a vista of donkeys laden with kegs of water, bands of women, all more or less African in ancestry, bathing, washing, and incessantly smoking immense misshapen cigars, as do even the children of both sexes that paddle stark naked about the bank in complete immunity to the blazing sun. The place seemed the headquarters of contented poverty. At least half the inhabitants either had not enough sun-bleached garments to completely conceal their dusky skins, or had laid them away for more gala occasions. Beggars, halt, blind, misformed and idiotic, were almost as numerous as in similar towns of India. Even the less miserable inhabitants were dull, neurasthenic, utterly devoid of energy, anemics with incessant smoking, bad food, and worse habits, given to living entirely according to their appetites and never according to will power and reason.

It was not without misgiving that we turned our faces toward Bogotá next morning. The crowd which the train from the plateau had landed the night before had been half hidden under the rugs, blankets, and overcoats they carried, and not a native of Jirardot could speak of the capital without visibly shivering, some even crossing themselves as often as they heard it mentioned. The train left at sunrise. By the rules of the line—the "Ferrocarril de Jirardot"—we were obliged to check our baggage containing all extra clothing. For the first few hours we were surrounded by mountains, though still on a slightly rising plain between them. The land appeared fertile and there was considerable Indian corn, yet it was surprising to find here in the capacious New World such swarms of beggars as in Egypt or India. The population along the way, increasingly Indian in blood, was extraordinarily slow-witted. In a window near us sat a commercial traveler who tossed at every one he caught sight of along the way a pictorial advertisement of an American panacea. The tail of the train was always well past them before a single one gathered his wits sufficiently to pick up the treasure.

Near noon we were ourselves picked out by a mountain-climbing engine, made in Schenectady, its boiler well forward and flanked by the water tanks, a small upright coalbin behind. As we began a series of switchbacks, I caught a breath of virile white man's air for the first time in a half year, and the taste of it was so delicious that the sensation reached to my tingling toes. Regularly the vista of gouged-out valleys surrounded by rough-hewn, cool, blue ranges spread to greater distances. Passengers began to turn red-nosed, to put on overcoats, blankets, rugs, ponchos, gloves, to wrap towels about their necks.

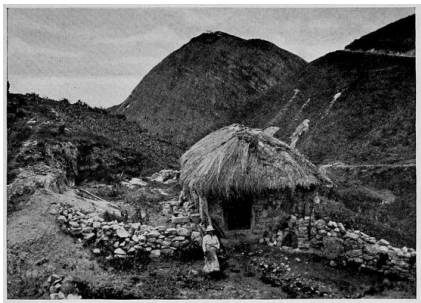
To me the temperature was delightful, but Hays, who had been long years in the tropics, took to applying other adjectives.

Now the landscape of meadows and grazing cattle backed by towering mountains suggested Switzerland. Beyond the one tunnel of the line we entered an immense valley walled by row upon row of blue ranges. Higher still, the bleak, stony highlands resembled a more rugged Scotland in late October, though cultivation was almost general and roads numerous. It struck us as strange that human beings should shiver and toil for a scant livelihood in such surroundings when a day's walk would bring them to perpetual summer and nature's well filled larder. A plant must remain where it chances to be born, but why should man also?

By four, the train had finished its task of lifting its breathless passengers into the thin air of Facatativá, and scores of half-frozen barefoot children and ragged adults dismally wandered the stony streets. A policeman muffled to the ears assured us with what seemed a suggestion of pride that Facatativá was even colder than Bogotá, for which Hays gave fervent thanks. Evidently the heat of the tropics was yet in my blood, for I still felt comfortable.

An hour later we were speeding across a broad plateau by the "Ferrocarril de la Sabana," a government railroad equipped with real trains of American cars. All the languor and ragged indifference of the tropics seemed to have been left forever behind. The conductor was as business-like—and as light in color—as any in our own land. We stopped briefly at towns boasting all the adjuncts of civilized life, somehow dragged up to these lofty realms. Here was a country built from the center

outwardly; the nearer we came to its capital, the further we left the world behind, the more modern and well furnished did it become. It recalled fanciful tales of men who, toiling for weeks through unknown wildernesses, suddenly burst forth upon an unknown valley filled with all the splendors of an ancient kingdom.



A typical Indian hut on the outskirts of Bogotá



Indian girls and women are the chief dray-horses of the Colombian capital

Yet we could not but wonder why, once they had

reached this lofty plateau, the discoverers had not halted and built their city, instead of marching far back across it to the foot of the enclosing range. A full thirty-five miles the train fled across the *sabana*, an immense plain in appearance like one of our north in early April, intersected here and there by barbed-wire fences. Broad yellow fields of mustard appeared, spread, and disappeared behind us. Great droves of cattle frisked about in the autumn air as if to keep warm. Well-built country dwellings flashed by, stony and bare in setting, but embellished with huge paintings of landscapes on the walls under the veranda roofs. The sun had barely smiled upon us since noon. Now as the day declined I began to grow cold, bitter cold, colder than I had been since descending from the Mexican plateau seven months before, while Hays' hat brim shook with his shivering. Our fellow-passengers looked like summer excursionists unexpectedly caught in straw hats by grim, relentless winter. Then as evening descended the plain came abruptly to an end, and at the very foot of a forbidding black mountain range spread a cold, smokeless city of bulking domes and towers. We had reached at last, after eighteen days of travel, the most isolated of South American capitals.

CHAPTER II
THE CLOISTERED CITY

Our entrance into Bogotá was not exactly what we had planned or anticipated. The crowd that filled the station and its adjacent streets in honor of the thrice-weekly linking with the outside world was dressed like an American city in February, except that here black was more general and choking high collars and foppish canes far more in evidence. Wherefore, seeing two men of foreign aspect, visibly shivering in their strange feather-weight uniforms, descending upon them, the pulsating throng could be dispersed only with difficulty, and excited urchins raced beside the horse car that set us down at last before a recommended hotel. Hays, who was nothing if not self-conscious, as well as tropical blooded, lost no time in putting on every wool garment his baggage contained and dived under four blankets vowing never to be seen again in public.

We seemed to have reached the very center of this incongruous civilization of the isolated fastnesses of the Andes. Our suite took up an entire second-story corner of the hotel. There were carpets in which our feet sank half out of sight, capacious upholstered chairs, divans in every corner, tables that might have

graced a French château, pier glass mirrors, gleaming chandeliers, lamps with double burners, in addition to electric lights. Our parlor, its huge windows resplendent with lace curtains, opened on a balcony overhanging the street, as did also the adjoining bedroom, as richly furnished and with two old-fashioned colonial bedsteads heaped high with mattresses, their many blankets covered with glossy vicuña hides. We were far indeed from the frontiersman steamers of the Magdalena. When the hunger of the highlands asserted itself, we sneaked down to a luxurious dining-room to find the menu and service equal to that of some travelers' palace on the Champs Elysées. The sumptuous breakfast that a maid placed beside our beds next morning was a humorous contrast to those we had endured on the "Alicia." Yet all these luxuries, borne to this lofty isolation by methods the most primitive known to modern days, were ours at the paltry rate of $1.50 a day. Truly, the cost of high living had not yet reached the altitude of Bogotá.

It was evident, however, that if we were to live here as anything but public curiosities we must patronize a clothing store. The Zone costume, so splendidly adapted to our future plans, was, unfortunately, original for *bogotanos*; and nowhere does originality of garb cause greater furore than in the mountain-cloistered capital of Colombia. When we summoned up courage to venture forth, Hays dodged into the first tailor shop that crossed his path, and instantly agreed to take whatever happened to be offered him, at any price the tailor chose to inflict—and returned to remain in hiding for the ensuing twenty-four hours until the articles were altered. Meanwhile I sallied forth from a ready-made establishment, inconspicuous in a native shirt that came perilously

near being born a pajama and a heavy, temporarily black, suit of “cashmere” with a misgiving tightness across the trousers.

On second thought it was not surprising that this far away city of the Andes should be so exacting in dress. Virtually cut off from the world, it was supremely eager to appear cosmopolitan. The result is a tailor’s paradise. No one who aspires to be ranked among the *gente decente* ever dreams of permitting himself to be seen in public lacking any detail of the equipment, from derby to patent leathers, that makes up the *bogotano’s* mental picture of a Parisian boulevardier. At first we took this multitude of faultlessly dressed men to mean that the city rolled in wealth. As time went on many a dandy of fashion we had fancied a bank president, or the son of some prince of finance, turned out to be a side-street barber, or the keeper of a four-by-six book-stall, if not indeed without even so legitimate a source of income. It is due, no doubt, to some misinterpretation of the European fashion sheets that the main street corners were habitually blocked long before noon by men and youths in Prince Alberts, who spent the greater part of the day leaning with Parisian nonchalance on silver-headed canes.

The women of the better class, on the other hand, are never seen disguised as Parisians except on rare gala occasions. At morning mass, or in their circumspect tours of shopping, they appear swathed from head to foot in the black *manto*, a shawl-like thing of thin texture wound about head and body to the hips and leaving only a bit of the face and a bare glimpse of their blue-black hair visible. To us the costume was pleasing in its simplicity. Bogotanos, however, complain that it is *triste*—sad, and in time

we too came to have that impression, as if the sex had gone perpetually into mourning for the ways of its male relatives.

The great underlying mass of the population has no requirements in the matter of dress. In general the *gente del pueblo*—the "men of the people"—wear shoddy trousers of indeterminate hue, *alpargatas*,—hemp soles held in place by strips of canvas—without socks, a soiled "panama" always very much out of place in this climate, and, covering all else, a *ruana*, or native-woven blanket with a hole in the center through which to thrust the head. Their women rarely wear black, but simple gowns of some light color, at least on Sundays, after which its whiteness decreases. They go commonly bareheaded, often barefooted, and always stockingless. Every scene from street to Cathedral shrine is enlivened by the bare legs of women and girls often decidedly attractive in appearance—to those who have no great prejudice for the bath.

To be nearer the center of activities we had taken a room in the third story of the municipal building, on the site of the palace of the viceroys. Down below lay the main plaza of Colombia, Tenerani's celebrated statue of Bolívar in its center, the still unfinished capitol building cutting it off on the right. Across the square we could look in at the door of the ancient Cathedral—and shake our fists at its constantly clanging bells. Beyond, much of the city spread out before us, the thatched huts of misery spilling a little way up the foot of the dismal black range that filled in the rest of the picture.

The altitude of Bogotá—it stands 8630 feet above the level of the sea—seldom fails to impress itself upon the newcomer. Many travelers do not risk the sudden

ascent from Jirardot to the capital in a single day, but stop over between trains at a halfway town. During the first days I was content to march slowly a few blocks up and down her slightly inclined streets, and even then found myself with the faint third cousin of a headache, several mild attacks of nose bleed, and a soreness of all the body as if from undue pressure of the blood. Until the first effects wear away, energy is at its lowest ebb and time passes on leaden wings. The change in mood is as marked as in the character of the permanent inhabitants. From the moment of his arrival the traveler feels again that foresighted, looking-to-the-future attitude toward life common to the temperate zone. All the light, airy, gay and wasteful ways of Panama and the tropics fade away like the memory of some former existence, and it is easy to understand why the bogotano is quite different in temperament from the languid inhabitants along the Magdalena. Unlike many regions of high altitude, however, Bogotá is not a "nervous" city. There are lower places in Mexico, for instance, where the nerves seem always at a tension. Here we felt serene and unexcited all day long as in the first hours of waking from long refreshing sleep.

Except in the actual sunshine, the air was raw even at noon. The wind from off the backing range or across the sabana cut through our garments as if they were of cheesecloth. The thermometer falls much lower in other climes, but here artificial heat is unknown, and a more penetrating cold is inconceivable. By night the bogotano wears an overcoat of the greatest obtainable thickness, he dines and goes to the theater in a temperature that would make outdoor New York in early November seem cozy and hospitable. Well dressed men in gloves and overcoats and women in furs walking

briskly across the square below our window on their way from the electric street cars to the theater or the "Circo Keller," gave the scene quite the appearance of a similar one in an American town in the first days of winter. Yet this was July and we were barely five degrees from the equator. Beside us lay the latest newspapers from New York, half way to the north pole, bristling with such items as: "Wanted—Cool rooms for the summer months." "Four Dead of Heat Prostration." It is a peculiar climate. Flowers—of some Arctic species—bloom perennially, and the poorer people, inured to it from birth, seem to thrive in bare legs and summer garb. Frost is virtually unknown, not because the temperature does not warrant it, but because what would be frost elsewhere evaporates in the thin air. Once the sun has set, nothing seems quite so attractive, whatever the plans made by day, as to read for an hour huddled in all spare clothing, then to throw open the windows and dive under as many blankets as a Minnesota farmer in January. The bogotano does not, of course, believe in open windows. Though he scorns a fire—or has never thought to build one—he has a quaking fear of the night air, against which he charges a score of diseases headed by the dreaded pneumonia of high altitudes. Those who venture out at night habitually hold a handkerchief over mouth and nostrils. Yet at least this can be said, that nowhere is sleep, if properly tucked in, more sound and refreshing.

Within a week we found ourselves acclimated—or should I say altitudinated—and took to exploring the city more thoroughly. The air was still noticeably thin, but there was enough of it to furnish the lung-fuel even for the five mile stroll up to the natural stone gateway where the highway to the east

clambers away through a notch and begins the descent to Venezuela. Looking down upon it from here, the misinformed traveler might easily fancy the broad sabana the sea-level plains of some northern clime, never guessing that forty miles to the west the world falls abruptly away into the torrid zone. For Bogotá is chiefly remarkable for its location. Taken somewhere else it would be like many another city of Spanish ancestry. Its streets are singularly alike, wide, straight, a few paved in macadam, more in rough cobbles, many grass-grown and all with a central line of flagstones worn smooth by the feet of generations of carriers. The chiefly two-story houses toe sidewalks so narrow that two can seldom pass abreast, and for those who know Spain or her former colonies there is nothing unusual in the architecture. The streets cross each other at solemn right angles, and those which do not fade away on the plain fetch sharply up against the rusty black range that backs the city. The system of street numbering is excellent, that of the houses clumsy, and the former is marred by the habit of the volatile government in changing familiar names as often as some new or forgotten patriot is called to its attention. Thus the Plaza San Augustín had been the Plaza Ayacucho up to a short time before our arrival, yet before we left it had become the Plaza Sucre in honor of a new statue of that general unveiled on Colombia's Independence Day, July twentieth. In like manner the Plaza de Egipto was transformed before our very eyes into the Plaza de Maza. This weakness for honoring new heroes is characteristic of the whole country. Not only are its provinces frequently renamed, but in the short century since its independence, the nation itself has basked under a half dozen titles,—to wit: "La Gran Colombia"; "Nueva Granada"; "Confederación

Granadina"; "Estados Unidos de Nueva Granada"; "Estados Unidos de Colombia"; and, since 1885, "República de Colombia"—and there are evidences that it is not yet entirely satisfied.

It is less in its material aspects than in the ways of its population that the traveler finds Bogotá interesting. About every inhabitant hovers a glamour of romance. Either he has always lived in this miniature world, or he has at least once made the laborious journey up to it. The vast majority are born, live, and die here in their lofty isolation. Shut away by weeks of wilderness from the outside world, alone with its own little trials and triumphs, it seems something long ago left behind up here under the chilly stars by a receding wave of civilization. Small wonder its people consider their city the center of the universe. Those who travel a little way out into the world see nothing to compare with it; the scant minority that reach Paris are credited with fervid imaginations, if indeed the picture of what they have seen is not effaced during the long toilsome journey back to their own beloved capital. Perhaps no other city of to-day is more nearly what a newly discovered one must have been to the happy explorers of earlier times. Now and then there comes upon the traveler the regret that it is not entirely cut off instead of nine-tenths so. A region fitted for the development of its own customs, had it been left to its aboriginal Chibchas it might have evolved a civilization entirely its own, altogether different, and not this rather crumpled copy of familiar world capitals.

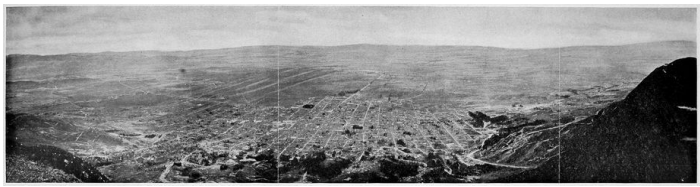
Bogotá is decidedly a white man's city. Indeed there is hardly another of its size south of the Canadian border in which the percentage of pure white complexions is higher. On rare occasions a negro

who had drifted up from the hot lands below sat huddled in the main plaza in all the blankets and ruanas he could borrow, but his face was sure soon to be numbered among the missing. Brunettes predominate, of course, but blonds are by no means rare. The bootblack who served us now and then was a decided towhead. Red cheeks are almost the rule. Slight atmospheric pressure, bringing the blood nearer the surface, no doubt largely accounts for this, but there are many other evidences of general good health. At this altitude the violation of most of the rules of sanitation are lightly punished. The temperature, cold enough to be invigorating yet not so cold as to require our health-menacing artificial heat, combined with its simple, placid life, makes Bogotá a town of plump, robust figures, particularly among the women, unmarked by the dissipation common to the males. Many of the former may frankly be termed beautiful, in spite of a wide-spread tendency of the sex to wear distinctly noticeable black mustaches. Unfortunately the men of the well-to-do class are not believers in exercise, or the systematic caring for the body. Scorning every unnecessary physical exertion, letting themselves grow up haphazard, they are noticeably round-shouldered and hollow-chested. An American long resident in the city seriously advised us to “get a hump into your shoulders so you won’t attract so much attention.”

Even the descendants of the Chibchas, that make up much of the population of the outskirts and the surrounding country, have a tinge of russet in their cheeks, and are by no means so dark as our copper-skinned aborigines. Daily they swarm into the city that was once theirs. Short, yet sturdy, muscular carriers and arrieros, as often female as male, pass

noiselessly through the streets with the produce of their country patches. Girls barely ten, to old women, many of comely features in spite of the encrusted dirt of years, more often so brutalized by toil as to seem hardly human, dressed in matted rags, their feet and legs bare almost to the knees, plod past under burdens an American workman could not carry a hundred yards. Early in the wintry plateau mornings they set out from their *chozas*, cobblestone or mud hovels thatched with the tough yellow-brown grass of the uplands, that are huddled in the mountain passes or strewn out along the wind-swept sabana, driving a bull—rarely a steer, since the former animal loses much of his belligerency at this altitude—on its back a load little larger than that which the female driver, with a strap about her brow, carries herself. They are all but indistinguishable from the men who tramp beside them. A patchwork skirt instead of tattered trousers is almost the only difference in dress, and their manner is utterly devoid of any feminine touch. Brawny as the men, they march through all the hardships of life as sturdily and uncomplainingly as our early pioneers, asking sympathy neither by word nor look. It is a commonplace sight in Bogotá to see a mere girl in years grasp the nose-ring rope of a bull and throw him to his knees, or lay hold of a cinch-strap in her calloused hands and, with one foot against the animal's ribs, tighten the girth with the skill of an experienced arriero. Girls and boys alike are trained from their earliest years to this life of bovine toil, never looking forward to any other. Of the existence of schools they have hardly an inkling. To them life is bounded by their cheerless hovels and the *chicherías* of the city, numerous as the *pulquerías* of Mexico. In every corner of the capital these low

drinking shops abound, masquerading under such misnomers as “El Nido de Amor”—“The Love Nest,”—and overrun by their besotted votaries of both sexes. Yet the bogotano Indian drunk is quiet and peaceful compared with the Mexican, for *chicha* seems chiefly to bring drowsiness and contentment with life as it is.



Bogotá and its *sabana* from the summit of Guadalupe



The central plaza of Bogotá from the window of our room. In the center is the famous statue of Bolívar by Tenarani; on the right, the new *capitolio*; in the middle foreground the Cathedral, backed by the peaks of Guadalupe and Monserrate

Ever since our arrival Hays and I had been threatening to patronize one of the two public bath houses with a first-class bogotano reputation rumor had it existed in the capital. But in a land where the temperature rarely reaches fifty, and the floors are tiled, it takes courage, and we had been satisfying ourselves and our duty to humanity by bravely

splashing a basin of icy water over our manly forms each morning on arising. By dint of strong resolutions often repeated to be up at six and visit one of the *casas de baños*, we did finally manage one morning to find ourselves wandering the streets by eight, with towel and soap under our arms, and stared at by all we met. We discovered "La Violeta" at last, next door to a blacksmith shop. The keeper we woke up told us we might have a cold bath, but that the sign on the front wall: "Hot Baths at all Hours," was to be taken with a bogotano meaning.

A few mornings later we did actually find the other establishment open. We entered a large patio, the most striking of several buildings within which was a round, or, more exactly, an eight-sided house, and in time succeeded in arousing the place to the extent of bringing down upon us a youth hugely excited at the appearance of a crowd of two whole bathers all at one time. It turned out that each of the eight sides of the strange building was—theoretically—a bathroom of the shape of a slice of cake, with a frigid tile floor and an aged porcelain tub in which a bath cost only $10. At the back was a larger, though none the less dreary, chamber with a *regadera*, or shower-bath. The youth assured us there was plenty of hot water. I won the toss and was soon stripped. But the shower was colder than the ice-fields bounding the pole. When I had caught my breath I bawled my repertory of profane Spanish at the youth, who could be seen through a hole above pottering with some sort of upright boiler and firebox and now and then peering down upon me. Suddenly the water grew warm, hot, boiling, then, just when I had soaped myself from crown to toe in the steam, it turned as suddenly cold again, and an instant later stopped entirely. My eyes tight closed, I shouted at the youth above.

“Es que el agua caliente se acabó,” he droned. “It is that the hot water has finished itself.”

There being no deadly weapon at hand, I turned on a tap of ice-cold water and raced to the dressing-room still half soaped. Hays, scantily clad, was gazing fiercely at the youth through a hole in the door.

“Then there isn’t any more hot water?” he demanded.

“Not now, señor, but there will be soon.”

“Good. How soon?”

“Early to-morrow morning, señor.”

“But I want to bathe now!”

“Ah, you want to bathe?” repeated the youth, with wide-open eyes.

“No, you cross-eyed Son of Spigdom,” exploded the ordinarily even-tempered ex-corporal, “I came here and stripped to an undershirt that I might dance in my bare feet on this tile floor in honor of José María de la Santa Trinidad Simón Bolívar! Get up on that roof and fire up or ...”

The youth was already feverishly stoking armsful of wood under the upright boiler, and by the time I left for home Hays was shadow boxing to keep warm, with a fair chance of getting a bath before the day was done.

As is to be expected from its isolation, the Colombian capital is a deeply religious, not to say a fanatical, city. An infernal din of church bells of the tone of suspended pans or broken boilers makes the early morning hours hideous and continues at frequent intervals throughout the day. Here, contrary to the custom in most centers of the Latin race, the men as

well as the women go to church. College professors and literary lights of no mean ability seriously contend that the shinbone of some saint in this shrine or that “temple” has miraculous power; but the superstition of isolation hangs particularly heavy over the uneducated masses. Of late years the Liberals and the Masons have grown nearly as powerful as the Conservatives, and do not hesitate to express themselves freely in public, knowing that in case of attack any representative body of the population includes fellow-Liberals who will come to their rescue. Every public gathering is pregnant with possibilities of an outburst between the two divisions of society. The very school-boys talk politics—here inextricably entangled with religion—and the foreigner who wishes to hold the attention of a Colombian for a conversation of any length must have some knowledge, or at least a plausible pretense of knowledge, of interior political questions. It was a bare three years since a Protestant missionary had been stoned by the populace of Bogotá, though he now held his services in peace in what, despite the lack of outward signs, was really a church. Policemen armed with rifles liberally besprinkle every meeting in theater, cathedral, or public square. Shortly before our arrival a dozen officers and citizens had been killed in a religious riot in the bullring.

Were they less hump-shouldered, these policemen of Bogotá might easily be taken for Irishmen, and an absent-minded American fancy himself back in the New York of a decade ago. The uniform of the day force is a copy of that of our own metropolis before the helmets were abolished. At night the scene changes. In every street spring up officers in high caps and long capes who might have stepped directly

from the arrondissements of Paris, with even the short sword in place of the daytime "night-stick." They are a well disciplined body of men, quite unlike the childish, inefficient guardians of law and disorder so familiar from the Rio Grande southward. The bogotano officer would no sooner be seen sitting, lounging, or smoking on duty than would one in our own large cities. As in all Latin-American countries, however, the chief drawback to a really efficient service is the caste system. The policemen are of necessity recruited from the gente del pueblo, and though they have no hesitancy in arresting one of their own class, the sight of a white collar paralyzes them with their ingrown deference to the more powerful rank of society. The result is that a well-dressed person can commit anything short of serious crime under the very eyes of the police. The officer may keep the culprit under surveillance, but rarely summons up courage actually to arrest him until he has definite orders from a white-collared superior.

There are curious local customs in Bogotá. Her small shops, for example, have a system of signs intelligible only to the initiated. A red flag announces meat for sale; a red flag with a yellow star, meat and bones; a white flag, milk; a green one, vegetables and grains. A cabbage or a lettuce-head thrust forth on the end of a stick marks the entrance to a cheap restaurant; a tuft of faded flowers, a chichería. The bogotano sees nothing incongruous in a building that announces itself a "Primary School" above and an "American Bar" below. On week days the pedestrian slinks through many of the chief residential streets apparently unseen; on a gala Sunday afternoon the same stroll is to run an unbroken gauntlet of feminine eyes. For then the señoritas who are seen, if at all, during the week,

hurrying to mass all but concealed in their mantos, don their most resplendent garb and, with cushions under their plump elbows, lean in their window embrasures oggling and being oggled through the iron *rejas*.

A native of Medellín, where envy of the capital and her self-seeking politicians is rife, had assured us as far away as Panama:

"All they do in Bogotá is study and steal."

We had only to glance out our windows to find basis for the first part of the assertion. The plaza below was always alive with students from the local institutions of higher learning for males marching slowly back and forth conning the day's lessons. The fireless houses are cold and dungeon-like, particularly in the morning, and the city long ago formed the habit of studying afoot. The racial dislike of solitude and the eagerness to be seen and recognized by their fellows as devotees of learning may also have some part in a practice that many a bogotano continues through life. It is commonplace to pass in almost any street men even past middle age strolling along with an open book in one hand and the inevitable silver-headed cane in the other.

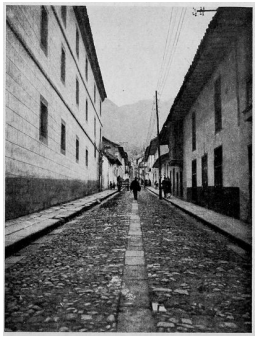
In colonial times Bogotá won the reputation, if not the actual position, of "literary capital of South America." Her speech is still the best Castilian of America, with little of that slovenliness of pronunciation so general from the Rio Grande southward. To this day the city has a considerable intellectual life, wider perhaps than it is deep. "Everyone" writes. He is a rare public man who has not published at least a handful of "versos" in his youth. Poets, writers, painters, and musical composers are more numerous than in many a far

larger center of civilization. The placid isolation of life in Bogotá, almost completely severed from the feverish distractions of the modern world, makes this natural. There is nothing else to do. Then, too, lack of opportunity to compare their work with that of a wider world no doubt gives the “literatos” of Bogotá a self-complacency that might otherwise be slighter. The cheap local printing-presses pour out a constant flood of five-cent volumes of the local “poets,” those same “cachacos” and “filipichines” in frock-tailed coats who lean with such Parisian grace on their canes at the principal street corners. The youth who sees his smudged likeness appear on the tissue-paper cover of the weekly pamphlet seethes with ill-suppressed joy at his entrance into the glorious, if crowded, ranks of the “intelectuales.” It is chiefly a dilettante literature, rarely of material reward and of no visible connection with life. But a considerable stream of flowery verse, languidly melancholy in its temperament and not overburdened with deep thought, flows constantly, and the boiling down by time has left Bogotá credited with a few works of genuine worth.



A *chola*, or half-Indian girl of

Bogotá, backed by an outcast of the "gente decente" class



A street of Bogotá. The line of flaggings in the center is for the use of Indians and four-footed burden-bearers

A lecture was given one evening at the Jurisprudence Club on the momentous subject of "The Necessity of a Legal Revolution in Colombia." Hays reneged at the last moment, but I accepted the invitation issued to the "general public." I was the only foreigner among the hundred present, yet no American audience could have been more universally white of complexion. Indeed, the gathering was strikingly like a similar one in our own country—on a March evening when the furnace had broken down or the janitor gone on strike. All wore overcoats and kept constantly bundled up. The solemn whispering of the

audience as it gathered, the unattractiveness of the women, all of whom had long since left youth behind, the staid mien of the men in their frock coats, gave the scene the atmosphere of a meeting of "highbrows" in a corner of far-away New England. But there was superimposed a pompous solemnity and a funereal tone peculiar to the Latin-American, to a race that lays more stress on the correctness of its manner than the weight of its matter. A misstatement or a palpably erroneous fact or conclusion, one felt, might pass muster, but not a slip in the "urbanities" of society or the incorrect knotting of a cravat.

It was a "lecture" in the French sense. When the president had taken his place and all was arranged in faultless Parisian order, the speaker removed his neck-scarf and began solemnly to read from typewritten manuscript. He was a man of forty, wearing glasses, with the perpendicular wrinkles of close study on his brow. A score of countries could have reproduced him ad libitum. He read drearily, monotonously, with constant care never to spill over into the merely human. The discourse based itself on the narrow national patriotism common to Latin-America. Yet at times the speaker talked plainly, admitting that Colombia is 88% illiterate and that half the remainder can barely read and write. The Church he assailed bitterly for its shortcomings, yet never mentioned it directly. In time, as is bound to happen sooner or later in any public meeting in Colombia, he drifted into the great national grievance and whined through several pages on "the wickedness of taking the rebel province of Panama away from us, a weak and helpless people"—here I caught several of the audience gazing fixedly at me, as if they fancied I had taken some active part in that

debateable action. Through all the latter part of the lecture the church bells across the way kept up a constant jangling that completely swallowed up whatever conclusions he had gained from his laborious dissertation. It was strangely as if the voice of religion and superstition were trying by din and hubbub to drown out that of reason and reflection, as it has since the first medicine-man danced howling into the circle of elders in conference in the Stone Age.

On the "Panama question" the attitude of the Colombian man in the street is not exactly that of the Government. A well-educated native holding a small post, though clinging to the same convictions on the "taking" of the "rebel province" as the bulk of his countrymen, expressed himself to me as follows:

"We ordinary citizens feel that our country should be paid for the loss of Panama, and the slight to our national honor. But we hope very much that your United States will not pay our government a large sum of money in cash, as contemplated by the proposed treaty. For almost all of it would go into the pockets of the dozen politicians who hold the reins of government. Give us *obras hechas*,—finished works,—a railway from the coast to Bogotá, or a perfected harbor with docks and modern facilities."

One day soon after our arrival we strolled over to the *Biblioteca Nacional* to begin the Colombian reading we had planned. It was wasted effort. We brought up against a heavy colonial door bearing the announcement: "Suspended until further notice, by order of the Ministry of Public Instruction."

An American resident interpreted it to mean, "Oh, some of the readers have been stealing books again"—and we recalled the cynical native of

Medellín. Days later, however, when we gained unofficial admission for a few moments, we found that the 5000 volumes bequeathed by a Colombian "literato" not unknown to a wider world—Rafael Pombo, who had recently died in Paris—were being catalogued. Several frock-coated pedants were smoking innumerable cigarettes and deceiving themselves into the notion that they were at work arranging the books. But the National Library remained hermetically sealed to the public as long as we remained in the capital. It was by no means the first nor the last time we met a similar disappointment in South America.

We had put it off a long while before we gathered courage and all our woolen garments and hurried through the wintry night to Bogotá's main theater. As in other restricted societies, entertainments are frequently "got up" here, chiefly with local talent. It is a long way to any other talent in Bogotá. This one was a *velada* in honor of that same Rafael Pombo. Fortunately the audience was large enough to keep the place moderately warm. Every detail, every movement, the very *toilettes* of the distinctly good looking, if mustached, ladies in boxes and stalls were as exact a copy as was humanly possible of similar scenes at the opera in Paris, a copy in miniature bearing the earmarks of having been taken from some novel of the boulevards. Señora la bogotana used her lorgnette exactly as she had read of her Parisian counterpart doing; the men, in faultless evening dress down to the last white eyeglass ribbon about the neck, strove to act precisely as they conceived men did on like occasions in the wider world. Again all was burdened by the solemn artificiality of the race. One after another six men burst genteelly upon the stage and declaimed

something or other in that painful, flamboyant ranting so beloved of the Latin. All the cut and dried forms of “cultured” society were solemnly carried out. Flowers, some one had read, were always presented to the performers, and even the podgy, pompous old fellow who forgot his “piece” several times had solemnly thrust upon him by a stage lackey in gorgeous livery two immense wreaths of blossoms.

In one matter at least these bogotanos were at an advantage over amateurs of other lands. Natural declaimers and reciters from babyhood, their tongues always eager for utterance, almost devoid of that bashfulness that works the undoing of the less fluent but perhaps deeper thinking races, they seemed seasoned actors in those points which called for strictly histrionic ability. In another theater a few nights later we saw several Spanish comedies presented by a company of local amateurs, and were astonished at the excellence of the work. That of a few of the principals would have won praise on any stage.

Three railways leave Bogotá, though none of them gets very far away. First in importance, of course, is that to Facatativá, connecting with Jirardot. Another runs through the flower-decked suburb of Chapinero, past Caro, with its cream-colored castle on a hill above a cluster of thatched mud huts, to Nemecón, a sooty adobe town of surface coal mines where the sabana is cut off on the north. Back along it to Zapiquirá the excursionist tramps ten miles in autumn coolness, hardly realizing he is near the equator, between fields of half-grown maize, broad grassy pastures dotted with white clover, with dandelions, daisies, cowslips, and brilliant yellow

"smart-weed." Blackberry bushes here and there edge a field in which scamper plump cattle and horses; others are confined by fence posts of stone with four holes carefully drilled in each through which to pass the *alambre de púas*,—barbed wire from our own land. Zapiquirá is remarkable only for the bulking hill beside it, almost solid rock salt. The mouths of a score of small tunnels lie in plain sight somewhat up the slope. The salt rocks are beaten fine, dissolved in water, evaporated, pressed, and packed into two-bushel bags that are carried away by toil-stupefied women and girls with a band across their foreheads.

But the excursion par excellence is that to the falls of Tequendama, the theme of at least one poem by every bogotano writer. The unholy clatter of church-bells helped me arouse Hays one morning in time to catch the early train on the "Ferrocarril del Sur." Some twenty miles out we descended at the isolated little station of Tequendama and struck off through a region wholly unwooded and almost desert dry. As the road mounted a bit from the bare sabana a hardy vegetation appeared, here and there a small grove of eucalypti, and a bushy natural growth thinly covering the sides of the low mountains among which we were soon winding. Before long we fell in with the narrow Bogotá river, idling placidly along, little guessing what a tremendous tumble it was due to get a bit later. Tradition has it that a god or an Inca, desiring to drain the lake that once covered the sabana, opened the gap through which the stream drops. By and by there appeared ahead a whirling mist cloud which grew until we found ourselves completely enveloped in a great fog out of which rose a dull, never-ending roar of indistinct location. Directed by a peasant, we descended through a rustic gate and for some yards down a field of heather and

deep-green grass speckled with white clover blossoms and scattered with massive protruding rocks. The face of the one of these a Bogotá merchant had disfigured in impertinent American fashion with an advertisement of his “superior coffee.” We had reached the “Niagara of Colombia.”

Yet so far as seeing went we might as well have been in our cozy beds back in the capital. An ordinary brown stream some forty feet wide flowed down through bulging rocks, pitched over in a short fall on to a stony ledge at our feet, then off into the mist-blinded unknown. A mere country brook in which we could dip our fingers here, a foot beyond it was forever gone. It was as if a whole world of mystery lay below and about us, yet the curtain of swirling gray mist into which the river plunged to be seen no more hid all from view.



Celebrating Colombia’s Independence Day (July 20th) by unveiling a new statue of Sucre and renaming a plaza in his honor



Meanwhile in another square the populace marvels at the feats of “maroma nacional” of an amateur circus. Note the line of policemen in holiday attire

We had shivered through our lunch, finding it difficult to believe that we were five degrees from the equator in the month of July, when suddenly the wind rose, and for a moment the mist thinned until we caught a hint of an immense chasm untold depths below; then closed in again. The excursion seemed to have been a failure. We strolled on down the highway in the fog and loafed awhile on a bushy hillside. But as we turned homeward, the mist was wiped away as suddenly as a curtain drawn aside and all Tequendama lay before us. I slid down a steep bank to the edge of the bottomless chasm and sat down where I could remain, as long as I kept my feet braced in the sod, before one of the finest sights in the world—or let them slip and drop to sudden death. From the upper ledge the stream fell a sheer unbroken thousand feet in which the entire river seemed to turn to spray and whatever was left when it struck was beaten into mist which, rising like steam from the yawning gorge as from some immense caldron, hid all the face of the adjacent

country. Immeasurably below, a much smaller stream could be seen picking itself together again and winding its way dizzily off through a vast rock-faced cañon on the perpendicular walls of which clung a few hardy plants; and while we remained in the cold autumn world above, the river flowed away into the tropics, into the coffee country, the land of bananas, and the perpetual summer of the Magdalena, to help float Colombia down to the outer world.

Of the many views of Bogotá the best is that we had at the end of our stay, from the summit of Guadalupe. A bit of the backing range juts forth in two peaks, each with a little white church on its top, that seem almost sheer above the city. We climbed to the higher in something more than an hour, massed clouds breaking away now and then to flood with sunshine the ever widening sabana and the hazy, far-away mountains that seemed to cut off the world completely, and came out at last on a grassy platform where we could look down, like the astonished Conquistadores, on all the vast plain, and, unlike them, on the city they founded. North and south, as far as we could see, stretched the bleak, treeless range on which we stood. At our feet this fell abruptly away to the suburban huts of the city and her encircling Paséo de Bolívar. Every plaza and patio, many green with a clump of eucalypti, every window and roof-tile, was plainly visible. The people were so tiny we had to look for them carefully, as for insects on a carpet, before we could make them out by hundreds crawling along the light-brown streets and specking the squares. Near the brick-walled cemetery the disk of the bullring, filled now with the tents of the “Circo Keller,” seemed a canvas cover on a small squat pail. Factories, as we understand the

word, being unknown, not a fleck of smoke smudged the dull-red expanse of the stoveless city. Its noises came up to us very faintly, at times borne wholly away on the wind, and from this height even the diabolic din of church-bells sounded soft and almost musical.

A recent census sets the population at 122,000. Looking down upon the City from Guadalupe, this seems at first an underestimation. But gradually one realizes that not only are its houses low, often of a single story, but largely taken up by interior patios. Then there are more than a score of churches, innumerable chapels, eight large monasteries, several seminaries, and many residences of the Church authorities. Add to this the many government buildings, and bit by bit the traveler grown skeptical from experience with Latin-American figures, begins to wonder if these are not inflated. There is not a wooden building in town. Treelessness governs the architecture, for the surrounding country is above the timber line, though the imported eucalyptus rises in groves here and there and flanks roads and railways.

A distinct line divides the city from the sabana, spread out like a rich brown carpet, cut up into irregular fields by adobe wall-fences often roofed, like the houses, with aged red tiles. In many places the sheen of shallow lakes recalled that the Zipa of the Chibchas built his Teusaquilla here on the lower skirts of the range to escape the winter floods of the plain. Off across it were dimly seen several flat towns, and here and there a farm-house or a cluster of them in a grove of the slender Australian gum-trees which merely accentuated the treelessness of the vast expanse of world. Six highways sally forth

from the city, to march waveringly across the plain, mere threads lost at last in the enclosing range, broken, gnarled, pitched and tumbled into every manner of shape, bright peaks and valleys standing sharply forth where the sun strikes, great purple-black patches marking the shadows of the clouds. Beyond all else, at times lost in clouds, at others plainly visible, lay the central range of the Cordillera over which we must pass on our journey southward. Though more than a hundred miles away, it bulked into the sky like some vast supernatural wall, the broad snow-capped cone of Tolima piercing the heavens in the center of the picture.

CHAPTER III
FROM BOGOTÁ OVER THE QUINDIO

The people of Bogotá refused to take seriously our plan of walking to Quito. It was not merely that the Ecuadorian capital was far away; to the inhabitants of this isolated little world it was only a name, like Moscow or Lhassa. Those who had gone to school as far as the geography lessons had a nebulous notion that it lay somewhere to the south, and that no sea intervened; but their imaginations could not picture two lone gringos arriving by land. To seek information was simply to waste time. The nonexistent cannot be described. The best we could do was to pore over a page map in a foreign atlas, whereon a match, according to scale, was 300 miles long. Quito lay nearly three match-lengths distant "as the crow flies," without considering the very mountainous nature of the country between. Yet the hardy Conquistadores had somehow journeyed thither, and in other parts of the world we had both traveled routes that the natives considered "impossible."

As far away as Panama the horrors of this proposed

tramp had been impressed upon me. At dinner one evening a typical, stage Englishman, accent and all, and an incurable monopolist of the conversation, proved to be the owner of mines in Colombia, and I managed once to cut in with a query about travel in that country.

"When the steamer lands you in ——," he began, "you buy your mules, ten or twelve, hire your mozos and carriers and...."

"But I plan to walk."

"Walk!" exploded my fellow-guest, "Why on earth should a man wish to walk?"

"It keeps the girth reduced," I might have replied.

"It cahn't be done," dogmatized the monopolist. "Absurd! Why—why—a man cahn't travel on foot in Colombia. His social standing depends on how fine a mule he rides. If he walked, he'd be taken for a bally peon, lose his caste entirely, y' know, and all that sort of thing."

"Horrible!" I gasped.

"Besides, you've got to have a mule-train to carry your tent and bed and supplies and.... Why, what on earth would you eat?"

"Huts ..." I began.

"Eh? Of the natives? Of course, but they haven't a blessed thing to eat, y' know. They live on corn cakes and beans, and bananas and bread, and that sort of thing. Now and then a chicken perhaps, but you'd starve to death. And if they saw a white man coming, they'd know he had a lot of money and rob him. Bandits and that sort of thing, y' know. And how are you going to cross the rivers—?"

“Swim—” I tried to say, but the sentence was drowned in his cataract of words.

“And the mud! Why, bless me, one time a party was going along the road in Colombia and they saw a hat, an English hat, lying in a mud-hole. One of them started to kick it, when a man’s voice shouted:

“’Ere, stop it! That’s my bally ’ead!’

“‘What on earth are you doing down there?’ said the party.

“‘Sitting on my mule, to be sure,’ said the voice.

“Why, bless me, I wouldn’t go on foot in Colombia for all the gold in the bank of England!”

It was the end of July when I tiptoed out of the American Legation of Bogotá, bearing at last a letter from our magnificent chargé d’affaires—a splendid representative of Harvard, but not, thank God, of the United States—and carried it over to the government building opposite. The Minister of Foreign Affairs to whom I made my way through a line of typewriters on which cigarette-clouded officials were pounding out great international matters with two fingers, was one of those rare persons who know why a man should wish to walk, though, being a Colombian, he had never dared do so himself, and was, moreover, certain that Quito could not be reached by land. I was soon armed with a gorgeous, if misspelled, document in which the Government of Colombia permitted itself to recommend los señores americanos therein named to the authorities along the way—should any such turn up.



SOUTH AMERICA

The genuine traveler sets out on a journey by tossing a toothbrush into a pocket and strolling out of town. But even Hays had suffered somewhat from that softening of the vagabond's moral fiber that is the penalty for dallying with the bourgeois comforts of civilization. We both had the American hobo's disgust for the "blanket stiff" who "packs" his own bed; yet the Andes offer no proper field for orthodox hoboing. The journey of unknown duration and possibilities before us was sure to have variations in climate making extra clothing indispensable; moreover, we could not take the photographs along the way unless we carried with us means for developing the negatives. Our first plan was to buy a donkey and drive him between us down the crest of the Andes. Among the many reasons why this fond dream could not be realized was the certainty that we should have chased the animal off his feet within a week. Observation and reflection suggested that we should do better to follow the ways of the country and hire a human beast of burden. For one thing, if the latter ran away or dropped dead we lost nothing, except perhaps our tempers; if the donkey came to a like end, we would be out ten or twelve dollars. Hays

abandoned the plan with double regret, for with it went the hope of some day reporting the journey under the arresting title, “Three Uncurried Asses in the Andes.”

With hundreds of animated bundles of rags trotting about the city ready to lug anything from a load of hay to a chest of drawers for a mere five-cent piece, we were certain there would be scores of native carriers eager to see the world and to substitute a dismal and intermittent hand-to-mouth existence for a steady job. We quickly discovered, however, that we were wrong in ascribing our own temperaments to the Chibcha Indian. There was not a youth among the swarming *cargadores* of Bogotá who had the faintest desire to see the world; the bare thought of getting out of sound of the clanging cathedral bells filled them one and all with terror. For the first time we had struck the basic economic fact that the South American aboriginal prefers to starve at home rather than to live in comparative opulence elsewhere. In prehistoric times the Indians worshipped the natural phenomena about their place of birth; each village had its cave or tree, its stone or hill, on which it depended for protection; and the dread of getting out of reach of these still courses through their primitive minds.

By dint of repeated packing and throwing away, we reduced our fundamental necessities to little more than the contents of two swollen suitcases. Word of our nefarious project to contract a carrier to bear these to some far-off, unknown world reached the last hovels of the suburbs. But the cargadores we approached quickly named an exorbitant wage and fled at the first opportunity. It was not a question of load, but of road. Hays inticed a sturdy fellow

upstairs one day and pointed out our baggage on top of an enormous chest. The Indian calmly picked up chest and all, murmuring cheerfully:

"A little heavy, señores, but I can do it. Where to?"

When we suggested a long trip, however, horror crept into his eyes, though his unemotional Indian face showed none of it, and naming an impossible fee, he slowly and silently slid backward through the door.

To our surprise, a man captured late on the day before we planned to start did not show this customary fear. He proved to be a native of the *tierra caliente*, eager to get back to his tropical home, and asserted his ability to carry four *arrobas* (100 pounds) day after day. Our baggage weighed far less than that.

"Why not take a contract to go with us by the month?" I suggested.

"Cómo qué pagarán los señores?" he queried reflectively.

"We'll pay you," I answered, setting the sum high so that Hays, to whom money was always a minor detail, could not charge me with losing this eleventh-hour opportunity, $1200 a month, and food.

We could see that he "fell for it" at once, and was merely procrastinating in the hope of getting more. That dream vanished, he announced that he must have a new hat and *ruana* for "so important a journey." We agreed to supply these—when he turned up at six in the morning ready to start.

He did not turn up. When we had shivered into our clothes and gone to hang over our *reja*, cargadores male and female were already plentiful in the wintry,

mist-draped plaza below, squatted inside their ruanas or wandering aimlessly about with a rope over one shoulder. Out of regard for the proprieties we beckoned to none but the men. It was some time before one—who, perhaps, had not yet heard our plans—appeared at the door. We were careful to mention only the first town, a short day's journey away, and offered fifty cents, at least twice what he averaged in daily earnings. Convinced we would give no more, he accepted. This time we took good care he should not escape. When he had bound the load with his rope—the cargador's one indispensable possession—we put him outside and went to breakfast.

On our return we found him waiting—naturally. He prepared for the journey, not as we of the north would expect, by balancing the suitcases on opposite sides, but by slinging them both on his back, the rope cutting deeply into his shoulder, and set off bent so low, with the weight chiefly on his hips, that he seemed some deformed creature shuffling along behind us.

At last we were off, marching out of the main plaza of Bogotá at eight on the morning of August first. In our flannel shirts, even with our coats still on, we set all the capital staring as we passed. Hays carried a kodak in one pocket and Ramsey's Spanish Grammar in the other; my own apparatus and the overflow from my suitcase swung from a shoulder in a *mochila*, or woven hemp bag. Even our "One-Volume Library," consisting of a few favorite bits in a half-dozen languages bound into a single book, we had been forced to pack away on the carrier's back. We had exchanged instructions to cover any unexpected outcome of the journey, those which Hays had

handed me consisting chiefly of the command, “In the event of death with boots on, do not remove the boots!” The morning paper that overtook us near the statues of Colombus and Isabel announced that we had left for Quito the day before, but failed to specify on foot. Readers would have taken it for a printer’s error, anyway.

Hays volunteered to shadow the carrier for the first day. Both experienced enough to know that the pleasure of traveling together is enhanced by traveling apart, we each set our own pace, letting our moods take color from the landscape, drifting together now and then when hungry for companionship, or often enough to assure ourselves of each other’s welfare. Epictetus says, “As the bad singer cannot sing alone, but only in chorus, so a poor traveler cannot travel alone, but only in company.” Hays, having a mind of his own to feed on, was by virtue thereof an excellent traveling companion.

At first the way was lined with houses of sun-baked mud, and peopled by dull-eyed, respectful Indians and haughty horsemen. A bright sun, frequently clouded over, made it just the day for tramping in full garb. The Indian crawled along so slowly that I soon forged ahead. Beyond the outskirts the broad upland plain was cut into irregular fields by adobe walls or fences, often tile-roofed, with massive adobe gate pillars. Fields dense with green Indian corn alternated with yellow stretches of ripening grain. Here and there potatoes were being planted. Masses of big red roses, of geraniums and daisies and unfamiliar flowers, frequently beautified the scene. Two hours away I caught the last view of Bogotá, backed by her black, mist-topped range; then the

cloistered city sank forever from our sight as the road dipped down from the slightest of knolls on the all but floor-flat plain.

We had not set out to rival champion pedestrians. When appetite suggested, I stretched out at the roadside with my pocket lunch, reading Swinburne the while and scattering him page by page on the gusty winds of the sabana. Hays and our baggage drifted languidly past. All the day we followed a massive stone highway, built by the Spaniards of colonial times, now raised well above the flanking dirt roads preferred by the soft-footed travel of to-day. A large stone bridge of clumsy lines lifted us over the little Funza river which waters the sabana, and not far beyond we entered the ancient town of Mosquiera, on a main corner of which stood a statue of the Virgin, unusual only for the fact that she was jet-black of complexion as any African chief. To the South American the color line is not sharp, even in his picture of the after world. Some time later, having drifted together again, we met an ox-cart headed for Bogotá. The half-Indian driver, struck suddenly wide-eyed at sight of our strange garb and the burdened carrier behind us, cried out in consternation:

“Cómo! No hay más función en Bogotá?”

We appreciated the implied compliment. He had mistaken us for performers in the “Keller Circus,” a little fourth-rate affair playing in the capital. Having, no doubt, saved up his billetes for weeks and started for town at last with the price of admission to this wonderful “function,” he was quite naturally dismayed to meet what seemed to be the show trekking southward before he arrived.

At three we strolled into Serrazuela, officially named

Madrid. Hays' pedometer registered seventeen miles. In the little one-story "hotel," gaping with astonishment at our appearance, we were assigned to a mat-carpeted room opening on the patio, and furnished with two wooden beds exactly five feet long, with very thin reed mattresses over the board flooring that took the place of springs. In this climate there was little gain in traveling leisurely and arriving early. Except for a few hours near noon, it was too cold to lounge along the way; once arrived we could only wander aimlessly about among stupid villagers, uncommunicative as their baked-mud walls. By dark it had grown too wintry to sit reading with comfort, even had there been any other light than the pale flicker of a small candle. There was nothing left but to go to bed, and that had little of the pleasure the phrase suggests to American ears. When Hays set his feet against the footboard, his lips nearly reached his miniature pillow. He complained of feeling like the victim of a "trunk mystery." Sometime in the night I awoke to hear him growling, "No wonder these people are crooked!" My own was a folding bed—in that I had to fold up to get into it.



A section of the ancient highway, built by the Spaniards more than three centuries ago,

leading from the *sabana* of Bogotá down into the hot-lands of the Magdalena. It was not designed for wheeled traffic, hence is laid in steps, with a slope to carry off the rains



Fellow-travelers at the edge of the *sabana* of Bogotá

Though we were afoot at chilly six, at nine we were still seeking a cargador. The one from Bogotá had fled during the darkest hours. Moreover, he had evidently spread startling reports of our plans. In a town swarming with gaunt and ragged out-of-works we were a long time finding a man who admitted that he sometimes plied the vocation of carrier. His attitude was that of an heir to unlimited wealth whiling away the days until he came into his own by an occasional choice and easy task. After an endless oration in which he assured us times without number that he was “poor but honest,” just the man required for our “very valuable baggage,” which the “expensive leather boxes” proved it, and which in his hands would be perfectly safe among the robbers that swarmed in the road ahead—providing we

walked close beside him—he admitted his willingness, as a special favor, to accompany us to La Mesa, eighteen miles away, for the paltry sum of $200. We offered fifty, and he left in well-feigned scorn.

At the alcalde's office that official had been due only an hour or so, and naturally had not yet arrived. We spread our resplendent document before his hump-shouldered secretary, demanding a cargador at once. That's the way the haughty traveler always did in the accounts we had read of journeys in the Andes. But Serrazuela was evidently ill-trained. The secretary stepped to the door and beckoned a few haughty rag-displays nearer, suggesting in a soft voice that perhaps, as a great favor to him personally, one of them would go with los señores and carry a "very light little bundlet." One by one they replied in as solemn tones as if they fancied we believed them, that they were already engaged for the day, that they had a lame knee, or a sore back, or an exacting spouse, or were in mourning for a mother's third cousin, and faded silently away. Among the last to go was our original "poor but honest" applicant, who paused to ask whether the offer we had made was $50 paper or $50 gold, because if we meant the latter he....

Just then the alcalde's perfume gladdened our nostrils, and one of the men, rounded up by a soldier, having accepted what was still an exorbitant day's wage, we were off at last. The day was bright and sunny. Behind, across the sabana, masses of white clouds hung over unseen Bogotá and her distant black range. I could keep pace with "Rain in the Face," as Hays had dubbed our new acquisition, only by holding each foot a second or more before

setting it down. If I paused to let him get a bit ahead, he was sure to wait for me a few yards beyond. Ten cents spent in a little wayside drunkery gave him new life, but only for a short half-hour. Once he fell in with a friend driving an “empty” donkey, and for a space we moved a little less slowly. Then the friend turned off toward his village and with a groan “Rain in the Face” took up his burden again and crawled snail-like behind me.

Soon after we came to the edge of the world. The sabana had ended abruptly. Before us lay only a great swirling white mist into which disappeared the old Spanish highway that led in broad, low steps down and ever down into an unseen abyss. The carrier began to tremble visibly. The year before, he confided in a choked whisper, he had been held up here by bandits, who had killed and robbed his employer. Only when one of us went close in front and the other at his heels could he be induced to move forward and downward.

Now and then a group of Indians, men and women as heavily burdened as their pack-animals, loomed forth from the clouds and toiled slowly upward past us. An hour down we came upon a rock grotto into which bareheaded arrieros were crawling with lighted candles.

“It is,” explained one of them, “that San Antonio once appeared here, and all caminantes stop to pray, because he aids, protects, and betters us.”

“Are you sure?” I asked, curious to hear his answer.

“Sure?” he cried, staring at me with startled eyes, “Señor, I have been arriero on this road since I was a boy, always bringing a candle for San Antonio; in all those years I have been robbed only three times—

and then I had no money."

He crossed himself thrice in the intricate South American manner and sped noiselessly away into the clouds after his animals.

It may have been our failure to offer tribute to the saint of the grotto that all but brought our expedition to grief thus early. The mist had thinned and the landscape that opened out became more and more tropical. A single palm-tree, then clusters of them, grew up beside me. Banana plants and clumps of bamboo, like gigantic ferns, nodded sluggishly; a spreading tree pink with blossoms added the needed touch of color. Suddenly I realized that my companions were not with me, and sat down to wait. A half-hour passed. I strolled back along the road, then hurried upward at sharper pace. Fully a mile up I sighted Hays, driving the wabbly-kneed Indian before him. They had already tiptoed on the edge of an adventure. Barely had I passed from view when there had fallen in with them, one by one, four evil-faced fellows carrying sugarcane staffs. As thirst came, each fell to peeling and munching his cane. Hays, lost in some problem of Urdu philology, was suddenly recalled to the material world by a throat gurgle from "Rain in the Face." He looked up to find the four wayfarers, long sheath-knives in hand, still ostensibly engaged in peeling sugarcane, but closing in around him and the shivering cargador. Hays had taken for fiction the stories of dangers on the road, and his automatic was packed away on the carrier's back. But he had been too long a soldier to betray anxiety in the face of danger. The quartet continued their innocent occupation, crowding ever closer, but had not quite summoned up courage to try their fortunes against so stern-featured a gringo when they

fell in with another group of travelers, and the four gradually faded away behind. Thenceforth we took care to wear our weapons in plain sight.

“Rain in the Face” had with great difficulty been coaxed to his feet again. When darkness fell, he was still wheezing slowly onward far from the day’s goal. The abrupt, stony descent was broken now and then by sharp rises, and we stumbled and sprawled over uncounted loose stones and solid boulders. At length white huts began to stand dimly forth from the night; the voices of unseen groups in the doorways under faintly suggested thatch roofs fell silent with astonishment as we passed; and in a climate in pleasant contrast to that of night-time Bogotá we entered at last the little hotel of La Mesa. “Rain in the Face” set down his load for the last time with a stage groan, grasped his fee after the customary plea for more, and with the parting information that he was “poor but honest,” raised his wreck of a straw hat and disappeared to be seen no more.

Morning found us in a long town on a shelf-edge overhanging a great tumbled valley, still a mile above sea-level, again facing the problem of how to make our baggage get up and walk. When we had tramped a hot and stony half-day without getting a yard further on our journey, we returned to the hotel. Hays stretched out on—and over—his bed and drew out his faithful Ramsey, bent on drowning his worldly troubles in study. The first sentence that stepped forth from the page, inviting translation into Spanish, asserted:

“In South America are many arid regions through which travel and the transportation of baggage is difficult.”

Yet there are those who hold that text-books are not

closely related to practical life!

Well on in the day, however, we did get two feeble youths to agree to carry a suitcase each to Jirardot for $180 and third-class fare back to La Mesa. At this rate we could soon have better afforded to build a railroad. Indeed, we had already reduced to an absurdity the experiment of trying to mix the tramp and the gentleman. “A sahib,” said Kim, “is always tied to his baggage.” It dominates every movement and is, after all, of scant value in proportion to the burden it imposes. Hire a carrier and he is always intruding upon your dreams and meditations, and with all the expense and trouble no article of the pack can you lay hands on during all the day’s tramp. Moreover, I am not of that kidney that can make a beast of burden of my fellow-man. I soon found that a cargador toiling under my load behind me made me far more weary than to carry it myself. We decided to revert to type at the next halt and play the “sahib” no longer.

The road, now chiefly *deshecho* (“unmade”), descended swiftly into the genuine tropics and the next afternoon we sweated into Jirardot on the Magdalena, a month from the day we had left it to ascend to Bogotá. For all our resolutions, however, neither of us contemplated with pleasure the prospect of turning ourselves into pack-animals. We set afoot word that we would pay a high monthly wage to any lad with a stout back and no particular grade of intelligence who would consent to leave home. But the youths of Jirardot were even less ambitious than those of the capital. We set a time limit, advanced it, and at last fell upon our possessions with the rage of despair. What we did not succeed in throwing away we made into two

bundles of the maximum weight allowed by parcel-post and sent them down the Magdalena to Panama and Quito. We were forced to sacrifice even the "One-Volume Library," which did not matter, for we had found it more convenient to buy native novels and toss them away leaf by leaf, thus daily reducing our load. Moreover, we had resolved to read thenceforth only the literature of the country in which we were traveling. Even then there swung from our shoulders some fifteen pounds each, besides the awkward developing-tank filled with films and chemicals with which we alternately burdened ourselves, when we crossed the little toll-bridge over the Magdalena and, leaving the department of Cundinamarca behind, struck off into that of Tolima.



Approaching the Central Cordillera of the Andes. A typical Andean *camino real*, or "royal highway," with a pack-train bound for the capital

An extensive plain, half desert with drought now, blazing hot and sandy, spread far away before us. At first, mud huts were frequent, and many country people passed driving drooping donkeys. Curs

abounded. Here and there a leper, squatted beside the trail, languidly held out his supplicating stumps. Everywhere were the rock-hard hills of termite "ants," sharp-pointed as the volcanoes of Guatemala, while trains of stinging red ones crossed the road at frequent intervals. Fields of tobacco and corn stood shriveled beneath the unclouded sun; troops of horses and mules laden with the narcotic weed, rolled into *cigarros de Ambalema* and wrapped in dry plantain-leaves, shuffled past in the dust before their shrieking and whistling arrieros, bound for Jirardot and modern transportation. The *camino real*, still a "royal highway" in spite of its condition, passed now and then through clumsy swinging gates that marked the limits of otherwise unbounded haciendas. We met several haughty horsemen in ruanas and the conventional wealth of accoutrement, and once a cavalcade of men and women, the latter lurching uncomfortably back and forth on their high side-saddles. The half-Indian peon dog-trotting behind them carried on his back a large chair with a sheet over it, only the squalling that accompanied him suggesting what it concealed. The caste system was noticeable even here on the broad plain. When we had carriers behind us, natives afoot raised their hats and horsemen gave us friendly greetings. Now, with our possessions on our own backs, we received only frozen stares, except from an occasional peon who grunted at us as equals. A few miles beyond the Magdalena we came to the parting of the ways. One sandy trail led south to Neiva and Popayán; the other, with which we swung to the right, struck off for Ibagué and the Quindío pass over the Central Cordillera of the Andes. We took this longer route to Quito that we might traverse the great Cauca valley.

The pedometer registered a mere ten miles when we

halted at an adobe hut that to the natives was a "very fine posada." A bedraggled old woman pottered nearly two hours over a stick fire in the back yard before she brought us two fried eggs and a small dish of fried plantains, as succulent as wooden chips. Our "bed" she prepared by throwing a reed mat on the hardest earth floor known to geography, and by no means as level as the surrounding plain. My shoes and leggings did poor service as pillow, and Hays charged Ramsey with lack of foresight in not binding his grammar in upholstered plush. We were awakened from the first nap by the hubbub of a group of fellow-travelers, nearly all women, who piled their bundles in a corner and stretched themselves out on such floor-space as we had left unoccupied. Yet the ethics of the road are such in Spanish-America that we felt no misgiving in leaving our unprotected possessions on a bench at the door.

With the first hint of dawn our fellow-lodgers stole silently away. Hays was still abed when I struck off in a gorgeous morning across a sea of light-brown bunch-grass, surrounded on all sides by far-off mountain ranges. Behind, blue-purple with distance, the face of the plateau on which sits Bogotá in its solitude, stretched wall-like across the eastern horizon, high indeed, yet how slightly above the earth as a whole. Ahead, the snow-clad rounded cone of Tolima stood sharply forth above a nearer range that cut off its base, while a tumbled mountain landscape beyond promised less monotonous if more laborious days to come.

A native carpenter working on the new toll bridge over the brawling Collo river assured us he would much rather be on the road with us, but that "unfortunately," he was contracted. For a time

broken ground and rocky foothills cut down our progress. Soon we were back again on a level plain of vast extent, a bit higher than the preceding, a garden spot in fertility, though largely uncultivated, with mountains on every hand and Tolima close on the west. As I had already found in Honduras, these upland plains, perfectly level, covered with grass but for a threading of faint paths all following the same general direction, afford the finest walking in the world. Never hard, always high enough to catch a cool breeze, often shaded, generally winding enough to avoid the monotony of a straight road, they make the journey like strolling across an endless lawn or through some vast orchard. Now and then we passed a tinkling mule-train, a horseman, or an Indian short-distance pedestrian, but never a vehicle to disturb the reflective peace of a perfect tramp. Every hour or two we drifted together, generally at a hut selling *guarapo*, a half-fermented beverage of crude sugar and water, tasting mildly like cider and extremely thirst-quenching. Every species of pack-animal appeared,—mules, horses, donkeys, steers, bulls, women, children, and even men, all toiling eastward. Often a dozen horses marched in a sort of lockstep, the halter of each tied to the tail of the animal ahead. Many had one or both ears cropped short, not by some accident or gratuitous cruelty, as we at first imagined, but as a system of branding. Now and then a shifting load brought an arriero running to throw his ruana over the animal's eyes, blind-folding it until it was prepared to go on again. One mule-train of more than forty animals was loaded with large boxes marked "Ausfuhrgut; Antwerpen, Colon, Buenaventura." German goods consumed in Bogotá often make this roundabout journey,—to Panama, by ship to Buenaventura, by train over the western

range, and more than half way across Colombia on pack animals, all to avoid the exorbitant rates of English-owned steamers up the Magdalena.

The haciendas of this region, producing chiefly tobacco, are owned by absentee landlords and managed by *mayordomos*. The peon laborers are paid twenty cents a day with food. Arrieros on the road average fifty cents a day and "find" themselves. A few of the latter paused to inquire our destination and otherwise satisfy a fathomless curiosity. Our usual answer,—"Al Cauca," always brought forth a startled,—"Cómo! Por tierra?" (By land?). In the Andes the expression is used with no thought of the sea as an alternative, but as the opposite of "A caballo" (On horseback). Occasionally we purposely astounded an inquirer by telling the whole truth. After a speechless moment in which his face clouded over with an unspoken accusation, he usually answered that though we might perhaps fancy we were walking to Quito, we were misinformed, and hurried on after his animals without even the customary "Adios."

Now and then we met a lone arriero, "singing his troubles to the solitude," as a Colombian poet has it, and once I was overtaken by a man who cried breathlessly as soon as his voice could reach me:

"Ha visto, señor, un muchachito con un burro vacío," to which I could only reply:

"No, I regret to have to tell you that I have not seen a small boy with an empty donkey," and watch the distracted fellow race on over the horizon.

We early discovered the uselessness of asking countrymen of the Andes that simple little question:

"How far is it to—?"

Ramsey himself could not have catalogued all the strange answers we received, even in the first few days. A few of them ran:

“Perhaps an hour, señor.”

“Only an hour?”

“No more, señor, but because there is much cuesta (ascent or descent) perhaps it is two or three hours.”

Or the reply came:

“How far? On foot or on horseback, señor?” Or, more often, “By sea or by land?” Some, tossing their heads toward the sun, replied:

“At evening prayers you are there,” or shook their heads with: “No alcanzan—you will not arrive, señores.”

“Todavía ’stá lejos—It is still far.”

“How far, more or less; an hour, or three days?”

“Between the two, señores.”

“Three leagues, then?”

“Ma-a-a-a-a-ás, señores,—Much more.”

“Sigue no más—Just keep on going; Al otro ladito—On the other little side; A la vueltita no más—Around the little corner no more; Arribita—A little above; No más bajita queda—Just down below it remains”—and so on through all the gamut of misinformation; never a simple “So-many miles.” Above all, it was fatal to ask a leading question. The misinformant was sure to agree with us at all costs, evidently out of mere politeness. One might fancy the ancient rulers of the Andes demanded an affirmative answer from their subjects on penalty of death; and the supposition would account for many

of the stories of miraculous appearances, of place names and the like, gathered by the Conquistadores. At best, we were assured:

"No hay donde perderse—There is no place to lose yourselves"—and were almost sure to strike, within ten minutes, a misleading fork in the trail.

With fifteen miles behind us I slipped gratefully from under my awkward thirty pounds before one of a cluster of thatched huts called "Hotel Mi Casa," on the earth floor of which two broken-legged cots were placed for us. Water to drink was doled out grudgingly; washing was a luxury none indulged in. Hays was busy consuming six home-made cigars, called "tobacos comunes," that had cost him a sum total of one cent. As we sat before the hovel watching the sunset throw its reflections on the red cliffs of the range behind us, the day went out like an extinguished lamp and the stars came suddenly forth in striking brilliancy. The north star of our home sky was now below the horizon, and many a long month was due to pass before we should see it again.



Hays, seated before the "Hotel Mi Casa" and behind one of his $5 cigars, watching the reflection of the sunset on the dull-red, broken range we had

climbed during a long, stiff day



A bit of the road by which we mounted to the Quindío pass over the central range, with forests of the slender palms peculiar to the region. The trail is more prone to pitch headlong up or down the mountainside than to follow a flank in this orderly manner

The plateau ahead was even vaster than it seemed. I had walked hours next morning by one of those easy haphazard upland trails, and still it lay endless before me. Clumps of short, squat trees flecked it with shadows here and there, but for the most part it was bare alike of the planting of nature or man. Cattle grazed on every hand, and mule-trains went and came frequently. In every direction stood row upon row of jagged mountain ranges, fading away into the haziest distance. They seemed of a world wholly cut off from the whispering stillness of the broad brown plain. Turning, I could see untold mile upon mile behind me. The blue Central Cordillera that shut off the valley of the Cauca lay piled into the sky ahead. Like a hair on a colored glass, I could make out our sharply ascending trail of the days to

come crawling upward toward the Quindío.

On the rim of the mountain lap that holds Ibagué, spread about a bulking church at the base of the first great buttresses of the chain, I came upon Hays in the shade of a leper's hut. Before the marks of his ailment came upon him the outcast had climbed with his mules for many years back and forth over the great barrier, and something like a tear glistened in his eye as we turned our faces toward the land of his youth. The "Hotel Paris," in the town below, looked a century old with its quaint wooden rejas of colonial days to peer out through—and also in at, as a half-intoxicated ibagueño demonstrated by thrusting his face in upon us while we were battling with the stains of travel. When I took him to task, he answered wonderingly, "Why, every one does it, señor," and refused to take any hint short of a basin of water.

Ibagué, capital of the province of Tolima, claims 2300 "souls." The count takes much for granted. It is a peaceful, roomy little town on a gentle, grassy slope where every resident has ample space to put up his chalky little straw-roofed cottage, yet all toe the street line, as if fearful of missing anything that might unexpectedly pass. Square-cornered, with almost wholly one-story buildings, its *calles* are atrociously cobbled, the few sidewalks worn perilously slippery and barely wide enough for two feet at once. A stream of crystal-clear water gurgles down each street through cobbled gutters, lulling the travel-weary to sleep—and furnishing a convenient means of washing photographic films. We drank less often, however, after we had strolled up to the edge of the mountain and found three none-too-handsome ladies bathing in the reservoir.

On a corner of the grass-grown plaza the nephews of Jorge Isaacs, greatest of Colombian novelists, run a clothing store. But it was our misfortune to find them out of town. On another corner I made my way up an aged stone stairway of one of the rare two-story buildings of Ibagué to the alcalde's office. It was lined with dog-eared documents, all hand-written, each batch marked with a year, before which lounged clerks incessantly rolling cigarettes. When he had read our government paper in a stage whisper, the youthful mayor at once put the town entirely at our disposal. I suggested schools.

"Señor Ministro de Instrucción Pública!" he called out, with long, oratorical cadences.

Instantly there tiptoed into the room a long, tremulous man of fifty, almost shabbily dressed, though of course with what had once been a white collar, with a pedagogical cast of countenance and a chin barely an inch below his upper lip. He bowed low at the alcalde's orders and answered that the matter would be attended to at once—mañana.

Toward ten next morning the Minister of Public Instruction, who had evidently laundered his collar during the night, left a long line of people waiting and set off with me.

"They are only teachers, waiting for their appointments or salaries," he explained.

We halted before a large building. The Minister knocked meekly with his cane on the heavy *zaguan*, the door to the patio, and was finally admitted by a square-faced, muscular, unshaven priest, who listened to our request at some length and at last led us to an older churchman, suave, slender, outwardly effusive, and of that perfectly polished exterior that

marks the Jesuit. He was also French. When time enough had elapsed to give warning of our coming, he led the way into a room of first-grade pupils,—all boys of six or seven, except two full-grown Indian youths. An exceedingly young priest, giving an excellent imitation of surprise at our appearance, snapped a sort of wooden hand-clapper, and the entire class rose to their feet bowing profoundly. Some other formality was imminent when I begged the teacher to go on with the lesson just as if I were not there. He exchanged a glance with his superior at this extraordinary gringo request, then lined the class up in military ranks and set them to reading aloud. The theme was strictly religious in nature and most of the words of four or five syllables. As often as the clapper sounded, the boys changed to "next" and read with such fluency that only the tailend of a phrase here and there was intelligible. The priest made no corrections or criticisms whatever, "taught," indeed, as he might have turned a hurdy-gurdy handle. I fancied the pupils extraordinarily well-trained—until I strolled down the room, to the evident horror of the adults, and noted that almost none of them had the book open at the page they were "reading."

In a higher-grade room I was asked to choose the lesson, and suggested geography. A youth passed a pointer swiftly over a wall-map, spinning off a description, learned by rote, of the principal cities, the youthful priest lifting him back on the track whenever he forgot the exact language of the original and came to a wordless halt. Little helpful hints accompanied each question. A boy stood before the map of Colombia, on which the capital was printed in enormous letters.

“What city did Quesada found in 1538?” asked the priest.

Blank silence from the boy.

The priest: “Bo—bogo—”

“Bogotá!” shouted the boy.

My fellow-visitors smiled complacently at his wisdom.

“And what place is this?” quizzed the teacher, pointing to a strip of land that curved like a tail up into a corner of the map, “Pa—Pana—”

“Panamá” shrieked the boy, “A province of Colombia which is now in rebellion. The....”

He was evidently going on with still more startling information when the all but imperceptible twitching of an eye of the Jesuit superior turned the pointer to other climes.

The teacher never lost an opportunity to give a religious twist to the proceedings. A boy whose pointer hovered over the Mediterranean mumbled:

“And another of the cities is Nicea....”

“Ah,” cried the priest, “And what celebrated event in the history of mankind took place in Nicea?”

“The great Council of the Church in which ...” began the youth, and rattled on as glibly as if he had been there in person.

When we had turned out into the street, the shabby little Ministro became confidential, explaining that the colegio toward which we were headed had once held a large student body, “but now, señor, owing to political changes....”

“Before the priests interfered I had an excellent

experienced normal graduate in charge of that first class," he sighed as we parted, "and now we have that boy in a cassock. Bah!"

We left Ibagué by taking the wrong road and had to crawl for miles along the steep bank of a mountain stream almost back to town before we were set right. Then began one of the greatest climbs of our joint careers. Round and round, in intoxicated zigzags, went the trail, as if dizzy at the task before it, down into several gullies until at last, finding no other means of escape, it took to clambering laboriously upward. At first the weather was hot, then gradually cooled as far-reaching views of Ibagué and its surroundings spread out below us. The buttresses of the range ahead were enormous, as if nature, planning to build here such a mountain chain as never before, had started the outcropping supports on her most gigantic scale. Toward nine I realized that I was out of the sunshine and no longer sweating, despite the swiftness of the ascent; at ten I paused to pick wild strawberries along the way. It did not seem possible to mount much further, for there was nothing higher visible. But like Jack of the Beanstalk, I climbed on entirely out of sight—into the clouds that wholly shut off the world below. At noon, when I stretched out on a swift slope to read a few pages of "María," immense reaches of mountains and cloud-stenciled valleys, half-hidden by masses of snow-white mist, like drapery that concealed yet revealed their plump, feminine forms, lay everywhere below and about me. Over all the tumbled view were scattered little huts of mountaineers, each in a setting it seemed possible to have reached only on wings.

The hovel where we planned to spend the night

refused us posada, and, as dusk fell, we faced an all but perpendicular mountain wall, up the stony, half-wooded face of which the trail staggered. The few groups of men we met carried ancient rifles loosely, as if constantly ready for action. At dark I toiled to a summit to find Hays standing before a mud *rancho* arguing with the crude mountaineers who would have sent us on into the night with the threadbare Spanish prevarication, "Only a little further on there is another house all ready to receive you." In its utter lack of comfort the place resembled the mountain hamlets of northwestern Spain. The people were shy, yet, once won over, kind-hearted. "There is no bed," they explained, "but there is perhaps a leather you can sleep on." By and by the woman called us into the kitchen for a bowl of *caldo*, hot water with chunks of potato and an egg dropped in it, served with coarse corn-bread. Then the man led the way into a cell made entirely of mud, even to the bench along the wall, on which he laid a hairy, sun-dried cowhide. Fortunately he returned a little later with several aged gunny-sacks, a tiny girl lighting the way with a rope-like native candle, or we should not have slept even the bit we did.

Streaks of pale day were beginning to steal through the chinks in our chamber when the woman appeared with black coffee and a stony corn biscuit, and we were off for another day of stiff ups and downs. Stalking down a knee-breaking descent, I heard a shout of astonishment from Hays ahead. What looked like an ordinary mountain stream cut across the trail at the bottom of a sharp little gully. But the water, coming from the bowels of Tolima that stood somewhere above us in the mists of morning, was almost hot. We had both been on the road in many a clime, but never before where nature

was kind enough to heat a morning bath for us. We lost no time in stripping for a luxury rare to the traveler in Colombia.

Not far beyond we came to the edge of the valley of the Toche. Away below, like a miniature painting, reposed a peaceful little vale wholly shut in by sheer mountain walls, a thread-like stream meandering the length of it. It took us an hour to make the swift, stony descent. Not all get down so safely, as the skeletons of a horse and a mule, their shoes still on, testified. The valley floor, watered by the rock-broiling stream, was a fertile patch of earth, and the steep mountain flanks were planted far up with little perpendicular patches of corn. All the scene seemed as far removed from the wide world as if on another sphere.

A rocky trail climbed abruptly up out of the valley again from the further end, higher than ever, past rare houses, built of the red boards of a tree called *cedro*, from the doors of which stared shy, half-friendly people in bedraggled tatters. The Quindío pass lies only 11,440 feet above the sea, but that by no means represents the climbing necessary to surmount the Central Cordillera of the Andes. What is so called is really a long series of ranges, and no sooner did the road reach some lofty summit than it dived as swiftly and roughly down again. It was not a planned road, like the highways of the Alps, but one grown up of itself. A jaguar once wandered over the Cordillera, a man followed, and to-day the route holds to the same course. Toiling like draft-animals, gasping for breath in the rarefied air, we fancied a score of times that we had reached the summit, only to see the trail take another switchback and disclose the perfidious fact that it had found another ridge to

surmount.

A few hundred feet above the Toche began clumps, then entire forests of a tall, slender wax-palm, a species named by Humboldt on his journey over the Quindío. Having only a tuft of branches at the top, these were often torn off by the winds that rage down through the gullies, leaving a thing as unromantic as a telegraph-pole. The valley below opened out until half a world, dull-brown with a tinge of green, lay below and around us. Words are hopelessly inadequate to describe this bird's eye view of range upon range, climbing pell-mell one over the other, as if in terror to escape some savage pursuer, and fading away into the dimmest misty-blue distance.

The sun was low when we came out on as far-reaching a view ahead and saw the morrow's task laid out before us in the form of a thread-like road twisting away out of sight over a great mountain barrier draped in clouds, the "puro Quindío," or chief range, at last. As night descended, we entered "Volcancito," an unusually large adobe building on a bleak slope. The dining-room, which was also the back corredor, was overrun by a large family, chiefly small girls, each in a single, thin, knee-high cotton garment, despite the wintry mountain air. Chickens, dogs, and gaunt, self-assertive pigs wandered everywhere without restraint. In a corner slouched a woman sewing garments too small for the smallest child in sight. Our plea for lodging she treated with scorn. "Volcancito" was a posada, not a hotel, the difference between the two in Spanish-America being that in a hotel the traveler is permitted to expect certain conveniences while in a posada he accepts with smiling gratitude whatever fortune chooses to

furnish him.

“We have only two guest rooms,” snapped the woman, when we persisted, as if the mere giving of the information was an unusual favor. “One this señor has with his wife and baby. The other belongs to the arrieros.”

The successful guest was an actor on his way from the Cauca to Bogotá, a handsome fellow much over-dressed for such a journey, with a strikingly beautiful young wife, as we noted at a glance through the door.

“But there are five rooms on this side of the house,” I suggested.

“Family rooms,” shot back the woman.

“And this little room in the corner?”

“Belongs to the servant,” she mumbled, projecting her lips toward a slatternly young female who was at that moment pursuing a thieving pig from the dungeon-like kitchen.

“Anything will do,” sighed Hays, gazing abstractedly after the servant.

But the landlady was in no mood for crude jokes.

“There is a fine house with rooms and beds just four cuadros on,” she lied, after a long silence. Fortunately this was by no means my first experience with the favorite trick of Spanish-speaking races to be rid of importunate guests, or we might have tramped all night on the mountain top in a cold as penetrating as that of January in our own land. I slipped surreptitiously from under my pack, assuming the ingratiating manner that is the last resort with the apathetic people of the Andes. We

were resolved to spend the night there, though it be in walking the floor. Nothing is more fatal than to appear anxious in such situations, however, and we affected indifference and a pretense of having accepted her verdict.

What fine, red-cheeked little girls she had, so pretty and healthy. (Indeed, they looked like Irish children). Was she not from the Cauca? She was. Ah, the magnificent Cauca, the most beautiful.... She was soon lost in a panegyric of her native valley, as she shuffled from kitchen to sewing-machine and back again.

“Magnificent, indeed,” I agreed, “and in only a day or two we shall be there. So what matters a night of freezing in the mountains? By the way, la señora can perhaps sell us a bit of coffee and a bite to eat before we set out to tramp all night?”

She grunted assent and a half-hour later we were seated before a plentiful, if not epicurean, meal. Before we had finished it, she remarked casually that we might “arrange ourselves” in the room with the arrieros. The mule-driver is seldom a pleasant bed-fellow, but compared with a night out of doors, probably with rain, at more than two miles above sea-level, any arrangement was welcome.

We fancied lodging had first been refused us because we were foreigners. Soon after supper we were undeceived. Out of the darkness came the sound of horse’s hoofs, and as it ceased there burst in upon us a handsome young Colombian, of somewhat dissolute features, in the ruana, false trouser-legs, ringing cartwheel spurs, and the other hundred and one details of equipment the rules of society require of a Colombian of “gente decente” rank who travels ahorse. He gave greeting in the explosive speech of

his class and requested lodging.

"*No hay*," answered the woman, in the identical cold monotone she had used toward us.

The newcomer began dancing on air, waving his ladylike hands, on which gleamed several rings, above him. Eloquence worthy of a world congress poured from his lips; his eyes seemed to spurt fire.

"*No hay*," repeated the landlady, in the same dead voice.

"But señora, it is imperative. I have a lady with me! Anything will do—such as these rooms."

"Family rooms," snapped the caucana, as if reciting a learned dialogue.

"But your guest rooms?"

"One this señor has with his wife and baby. The other belongs to the arrieros—and also," jerking her head slightly toward us, "to these two caballeros."

"But what am I to do?" shrieked the Colombian, "and a lady with me?"

The woman muttered a "Quién sabe" with a careless shrug of the shoulders and continued her sewing without looking up. After a last vain oration the Colombian dashed off angrily, his horseback garments standing out at excited angles, and rode away into the night the way we had come, toward better luck perhaps among the huts at the bottom of the valley.

Bedtime comes at about seven in these wintry, fireless, lightless regions. The landlady, now thoroughly mollified, broke off some story of the wonders of the Cauca to say:

"Next to the room of the arrieros is a harness-room

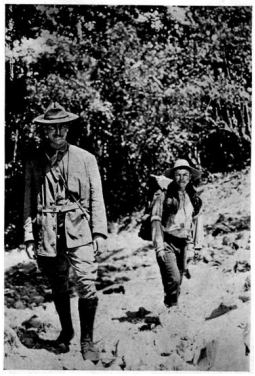
where you can sleep alone. Many ingleses—all light-haired foreigners are “Englishmen” to the rural Colombian—have slept in it.”

Why had she not offered us this upon our arrival? Lack of confidence, probably, common to these simple people as is the good-heartedness that can be unearthed by a few simple wiles and flatteries. The dungeon-like room was narrow, but long and high, strewn with the *aparejo* of mules and the crude implements of husbandry, with harnesses, pack-saddles and a chaos of trappings, but with space left to spread on the earth floor several tar-cloth wrappings of mule-loads. Moreover, the woman sent us a blanket. Later a boy entered carrying a candle and a little round hard pillow which he delivered with a speech apologetic with diminutives, after the fashion of the country people of the Andes, “Aquí tienen u’te’es una almohadita para poner la cabecita.”



On the western side of the Central Cordillera the trail drops quickly down into the

tropics again, here and there through lanes of immense fern-like bamboos. Hays, in the middle distance, has his turn at carrying the developing-tank



The first days on the road; showing how I would have traveled by choice, in contrast to later illustrations of how I did travel by necessity

For all these unexpected luxuries, I can hardly say we slept well. Before an hour had passed, a polar winter began to creep up through the earth floor, through the tar-cloth, through our flesh and bones, and what with the aching of hips and other salient

points that fitted the uneven earth poorly, the night passed in an endless series of dream-fights against death in the polar seas. As my legs grew cold beyond endurance, I found a pair of *zamarras*, the false trouser-legs of impervious cloth worn by horsemen of the region. But my glee quickly evaporated, for they proved to be designed for a half-grown boy. Humboldt spent ten days in passing the Quindío, we sincerely hoped he had been better supplied with blankets, even though his journey was in the summer season.

For once we felt no anger when a hoarse rooster at last greeted the first graying of the darkness. The entire night had been a half-conscious battle for the *cobija* that had covered us alternately. With creaking legs I stepped out into the icy dawn, and washed in a wind that cut through me as a rapier through a man of straw. It was still gray-black, and vast seas of half-seen mist lay in the bottomless chasms roundabout. Far away to the east, where the dawn and the warmth come from, was a triangular patch of sky, low down between two ranges and roofed with black clouds, in which the brilliant sunshine of the *tierra caliente* was already blazing red. One of the bravest acts of my life was the stripping and changing to road garb, after which we joined the family and our fellow-guests, huddled under shawls and blankets, with folds of woolen cloth about their throats and over their noses. The landlady, still abed, issued orders from within to her bare-legged girls and the servant. One of these threw into a pot of boiling water a mud-ball of native chocolate, swirled the mess with a stick, and served it to us with a dough-cake mixture of mashed corn and rice. It was no homeopathic food, but none lasts long in this thin, exhilarating air, while climbing swift mountain

flanks. When we inquired for our bill, the woman called out that we owed twenty cents each, and bade us Godspeed to her beloved Cauca.

The road was heavy and slippery with the rain that had fallen during the night; the air still sharp and penetrating. We had all but spent the night on the summit of the Quindío, for the highest point was but three miles beyond, though three miles of climbing without respite. Most of the world was shut off by great cloud-banks, out of which came frequently the bawling of arrieros cursing their weary animals upward. Now and then we stopped on knolls above the trail to watch these Andean freight-trains pass. Many of the pack-animals were bulls and steers, of slight strength as such compared to the horse or mule, but the surest, if slowest, cargo-beast in muddy going. The arrieros, almost without exception, wore as ruanas what had once been United States mail-sacks, the stripes and lettering still clear upon them.

There were several ridges so nearly alike in altitude that the exact summit might easily have been in dispute; but at last we reached the dividing line between the departments of Tolima and the Cauca, marked with a weather-blackened post planted roundabout with scores of little twig crosses set up by pious arrieros and travelers. We were so completely surrounded by impenetrable swirling mist that we could see nothing whatever but the patch of cold, wet ground underfoot, a few dismal dripping bushes, and here and there a dishevelled shivering flower of some hardy species. Not a glimpse was to be had of snow-clad Tolima that must lie piled into the mist somewhere close at hand. It was the highest either of us had ever been in the world. While we appreciated the eminence, it was no place for men

gifted with profane vocabularies to linger, and we were soon legging it down the western slope out of Cloudland.

CHAPTER IV
ALONG THE CAUCA VALLEY

On the Cauca side, like the French slope of the Pyrenees, the Central Cordillera of the Andes descends almost abruptly to the valley. As we emerged from the clouds, a brilliant sun lighted up vast landscapes of labyrinthian hills and vales mottled with cloud shadows, bits of our road ahead scratched here and there on salient, sun-polished knobs and slopes far below. With noon appeared the first broad view of the rolling Cauca valley, nestled between the central and the western ranges, a bare thousand feet above sea-level, still deep-blue as some mountain-girdled lake. The little town of Salento, in the lap of an undulating, bright green plain, rose slowly up to meet us. We marched to the alcalde's office in a weak-kneed building of compacted clay, only to find the alcalde, like beds for travelers, out of town. A stupid clerk in a room full of musty papers of varying antiquity admitted it was too bad Salento was so *atrasado*, but made no move to decrease that backwardness.

"And strangers who arrive?" I asked.

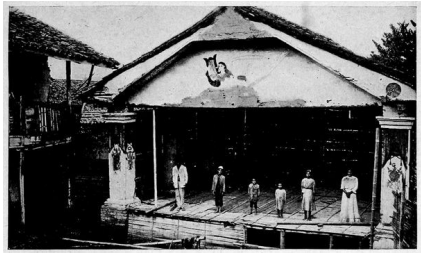
"Generally bring their beds with them," he replied, "or, if not, they do the best they can."

We took the hint and forcible possession of an empty room opening on the plaza. When, after a basin bath, I strolled out into the town to mention our strange exotic desire for sleeping accommodations, a dozen of the most influential citizens also admitted it was too bad and—and where did we come from and where were we going? Hays for once had better luck. Having left the mention of beds to simmer in the mind of one Sanchez, who amused himself at shopkeeping on a corner of the square, he was called over at dark and offered the use of several woolly white blankets that hung for sale from the blackened beams of the shop ceiling. Sanchez was shocked beyond measure when we started to carry them across the plaza ourselves. He called for a boy, nine responded, and the winner expressed great gratitude when we rewarded him with a ragged paper cent. We improvised seats and sat gazing out through the wooden reja. Far away on a fuzzy hillside our road of the morning grew dim and faded out, like an unfixed photograph, and a night lighted only by stars quickly settled down. Out of its black immensity came, a little later, the jangling of tiny bells. Across the plaza filed a half hundred boys in column of twos, weirdly lighted by flickering torches, utterly silent in their bare feet. From another direction came a similar half-seen procession of girls; the two columns joined at the door of the little bamboo church, the pagoda-like twin towers of which stood dimly forth against the background of darkness, and passed within together. For an hour a weird infantile chanting in chorus sounded almost unbrokenly, then the congregation filed forth again and melted away into the humid summer night. The faint silhouette of the priest showed him leaning over the reja of his second-story *casa cural*, the fitful glow of his

cigarette the only light in town, until that, too, died out and left only the brilliant tropical stars above.

Beyond Salento a rolling fertile land lay on every hand. In the great forests spreading far up the range beside and behind us, the most conspicuous of the flora was the *yarumo*, a white-leaved tree that stood forth everywhere like blotches on the green landscape. The slender wax-palm of the eastern slope had not passed the crest. The dense-green uplands of the valley were still all but covered with virgin forests. It set us reflecting what might have been had the "Mayflower" turned southward and peopled this land of rich soil and unrivalled climate, instead of that bleak and rigorous country we had left behind. Or would this peerless climate have made us, too, salentinos?

At the hut where we paid two cents for great bowls of creamy milk, there was a decision to make. One branch of the trail led to Pereira, the other to Filandia. We tossed a coin. It fell "tails" and we struck off to the left by a soft dirt road. Filandia was a quaint old place with a wonderful gingerbread church, on a hilltop that rolled languidly away on all sides to far-off mountain ridges. The town seemed never to have seen a foreigner before. Perhaps travelers hitherto had all gone by way of Pereira. When I attempted to take a picture, the entire population, men, women, and the very babies, crowded so close around me that I could not fight them back to a focal distance.



Like those of the days of Shakespeare, the theater of Cartago consists of a stage—of split bamboo, with a tile roof—inside the patio of the "hotel." The more expensive seats are chairs in the balcony of the second story; the populace stands in the barnyard



Cartago watching our departure. Two of the doors show no occupants only because these had dodged inside to call the rest of the family

By the next afternoon we were in quite a different country,—down in the tropics again, with coffee-trees, bananas, and endless lanes of bamboo, that

giant fern, as useful as it is beautiful, which nature so unkindly denied the North. It was not a temperature for the preserving of undeveloped films and I paused with the tank beside the first clear stream. The sun gave out before I had more than hung the strips up to dry, drops of rain began to fall, and night came on apace. I pushed on, grasping a wet film in either hand. To my dismay the road turned to a narrow path through thick weeds, thigh-high, and for a long five miles, with eighteen already in my legs and thirty pounds straining from my shoulders, I tramped swiftly forward, striving to hold the films out of reach of the weeds. The natives, blacker and blacker as we descended, stared with amazement from their little bamboo shelters along the train to see a strange being scurry by, holding high above his head two black strips, like Tibetan prayer-sheets. Small wonder they crossed themselves in superstitious awe.

The night had grown completely in about me, when Hays hailed me from an unseen doorway. He had already bespoken supper and engaged a room with a bed of split bamboo and a quilted straw mattress. For me was brought what a hard-earned candle proved to be a canvas cot, made of a U. S. mail-sack. In the "dining-room" was a lounging chair of the same material.

"Where did you get it?" I asked the woolly-haired host.

"What, that fine, strong cloth? Oh, the government always has plenty of that to sell," he replied placidly.

The same damp, pulsating jungle fenced us in all the next morning. Far ahead, across the heat-steaming spread of the Cauca valley, the jagged blue line of the Western Cordillera, that cuts it off from the Pacific, stretched to north and south as far as the eye

could command, in some places five ranges visible one behind the other. At noon, suddenly topping a jungled knoll, we caught sight of the long-sought town of Cartago, reddish with the hue of its roof-tiles in the center of town, dying away in whitish and straw-colored lines of outskirt hovels. It was hours later that we reached the level of the valley floor, and strolled in heavy grass through a bamboo-built suburb into the weedy central plaza.

With a populous graveyard before the keel of the "Mayflower" was laid, Cartago has not yet advanced to what any "mushroom" town of our West can boast at the age of three months. Negroes were everywhere, though there was no sharp "color-line," and pure whites were rare. The Cauca is to Colombia what our South is to the United States. In colonial times slaves were imported in large numbers up the Atrato river, and to this day the shiftless, happy-go-lucky African lolls in his ragged cabins, speaking a Spanish it was hard to believe was not English, so exactly did their slovenly, lazy-tongued drawl resemble that of our southern states.

The hotel advertised "Comodidad, prontitud y esmero"—"Comfort, promptness, and specklessness,"—the three things above all others a South American hotel is surest not to have. There is never an office in these hotels of the Andes. A peanut vendor somewhere up the street is manager, and all the town "assists" while the traveler makes his bargain, if, indeed, it does not gather en masse to watch his ablutions. The rooms are commonly stark empty, and are furnished to order, as one selects a chicken on the hoof for the evening meal. We had to implore each and every requisite, from cots to water, separately and individually several times over before

they were supplied. When we insisted on two towels, the young but toothless landlady, muttering something about the curious ways of *los gringos*, tore an aged sheet in two, and as long as we remained made us feel that guests were an unmitigated nuisance. Among the luxuries of the town was wheat bread. When we demanded it with our meals, a six-foot "boy" of polished jet-black skin—and little other covering—was sent wandering down to market with a bushel basket on his arm, and in the course of the afternoon came slouching back with three tiny buns lost in the bottom of it.

But for all the slovenliness of its habits, antiquarians would have found Cartago's hotel interesting. The barnyard patio into which we flung our wash-water formed the parquet, or stalls, of the village theater. At the back of it was an open, tile-roofed building of split bamboo floor and sides, violently painted, forming a stage quite similar to that of Shakespeare's day. A score of bottles hung by the neck, like corpses at some medieval wholesale hanging, fringed the outer edge of the platform, the ends or drippings of what had been tallow candles showing that they had served as proscenium footlights. The second-story veranda, our dining-room, was marked with the numbers of "boxes" around its three sides, from the unspeakable kitchen to the even more unmentionable servants' quarters. When plays were given, the masses stood in the yard below and the well-to-do looked on from their chairs along the veranda. Unfortunately, histrionic talent seemed to have completely died out in Cartago. Only the languid tinkling of a *tiple*, or native guitar, marked the long evenings in which we watched the golden moon rise over the bit of mossy, old-red roof and the tops of two lazily swaying palm-trees framed by our

balcony window.

If my knowledge of Cartago is meager, it is because I spent most of my days there in mailing a notebook. The post-office was the lower story of a compressed-mud building cornering on the plaza. When I first made my appearance, its heavy wooden doors, studded with immense spike-heads, were securely bolted.

“Is the *correo* closed to-day?” I asked a lounger-by.

“Sí, señor, the mails only came in yesterday. But you can knock and perhaps....”

Knocking brought no result. An hour or more later I tried again, with no better luck. Early the next afternoon, however, I found my way in by an inner door of the patio, though the place was still officially closed.

The two rooms looked much like a garret of long standing, but by no means like a post-office. Scattered everywhere, over floor and baked-mud window seats, on decrepit chairs and crippled tables, lay fat mail-bags, all stout and new, from the chief countries of the globe. The outgoing Colombian correspondence was already packed in aged grain-sacks. Pieces of mail of all sizes lay tumbled and littered over the entire two rooms. Fully half of it was from the United States, particularly pamphlets and packages from patent medicine houses. Four middle-aged men, dressed in great dignity and in Cartago’s most correct attire, with gloves and canes on chairs beside them, were seated around a table, smoking cigarettes. I handed one of them the wrapped notebook. It passed slowly from hand to hand, each feeling it over, not so much out of curiosity, though that was by no means lacking, as

absent-mindedly striving to bring his attention down to it. Then all four fell to perusing a Postal Union rate-sheet, but found everything except the information needed. Finally one rose and referred the matter respectfully to a man, evidently a superior, seated in state at a corner table. The rate was found to be one peso for each fifty grams. The official turned back and wandered for some time at random about the two rooms, fingering the parcel over and over and scratching his head in a vain effort to recall what he had set out to find.

He discovered it at last,—an ancient postal-scales—tried it, found it too small, tried another, and spent an ample five minutes juggling with the odds and ends that served as weights before he computed the balance. Then he drifted languidly back to his companions in inefficiency, opened his mouth to speak, closed it again, and rambled once more across the room to the scales. He had forgotten the weight! This time he took no chances, but announced the figures aloud and wrote them on the parcel,—"320 grams." Those who do not know the South American will have difficulty in believing that the division of this by fifty, without troubling for fractions, presented a real problem. All four began pencilling long lines of figures on as many sheets of paper. Several minutes passed before one of them ventured to show his result. The others compared, and amid a sage shaking of heads one announced solemnly, "Seven cents, señor," while the rest gazed dreamily at me out of the tops of their eyes, as if wondering whether I should weather the shock of so great an expense.

"And registered, seventeen cents?" I added; for I did not care to have the parcel lie a month or two about

the earth floor of Cartago's post-office, or find its final resting-place in the back yard. When the suggestion had penetrated, one of the quartet sat down to enter the grave transaction in a large ledger. I still needed a two-cent stamp. The oldest of the four shuffled to the opposite side of the table, sat down, adjusted his legs, and slowly pulled out a drawer stuffed with every manner of rubbish,—tobacco, rolled cigarettes, half-empty phials of patent medicine, everything that may come by mail,—and finally dug up a battered pasteboard box that had once held No. 60 American thread. From this he fished out a small sheet of two-peso stamps, carefully tore one off at the perforation, first on one side, then on the other, put the sheet back in the thread-box, the thread-box back in the drawer, carefully closed the latter, and handed me the stamp. I tossed before him a silver ten-cent piece. He opened the drawer again, clawed out of a far corner a wad of those ragged, germ-infested one-cent bills indigenous to Colombia, laid out eight of them, counted them a second time, sat staring at them a long minute while his attention went on furlough, asked one of his colleagues to count them, which the latter did twice at the same vertiginous speed, and finally pushed them toward me with a hesitative movement, as if he were sure he was losing somewhere in the transaction, but could not exactly figure out where.

Meanwhile, he of the ledger rose from dotting the last "i" of an entry that stretched in nicely shaded copybook letters entirely across the double page, begged me to do him the honor to be seated, dipped the clumsy steel pen into the dusty inkwell, and, with a wealth of politenesses, requested me to sign. When I had done so, he gazed long and dreamily at the signature, longer still at space in general, and

finally put the parcel carefully away in a drawer with neither stamp nor mark of identification upon it.



Along the Cauca Valley we met not only peasants bound to town with a load of wood and carrying their prize roosters, but now and then the corpse of a woman being brought in for Christian burial service, after which it would be carried back and buried in her native hills



In places the Cauca Valley so swarmed with locusts that they rose like an immense screen before us as we advanced, struck us in the face in scores,

and made a sound like that of a
distant waterfall

"But," I protested, "Do you give no receipt for registered mail?"

Great excitement arose among the officials and the half-dozen persons waiting ostensibly to buy a one-cent stamp. A long conference ensued.

"It is, señor," said the postmaster himself, rising and turning to me with regal courtesy, "that no blank receipts have been sent from Bogotá yet this year. However...."

He called aside the custodian of the precious ledger and gave him long whispered instructions. The latter hunted up a sheet of foolscap, stamped it carefully with the office seal, and wrote out with long legal flourishes—for penmanship is still an art in Colombia—a receipt for the parcel. This he tore off and carried across to the postmaster who, carefully preparing another pen, signed it with his full name, not forgetting the elaborate *rúbrica* beneath it. Then he read it carefully over once more, seemed dissatisfied with something, and finally called the attention of the writer to the rough edge he had left in tearing off the paper, instructing him to lay it under a ruler and trim it with a sharp knife. The subordinate did so and at last delivered to me a memento I still have in my possession.

To one unacquainted with Latin-American ways the episode may seem overdrawn. I have told it, however, without exaggeration. From the moment I handed over the parcel until I emerged, receipt in hand, there had elapsed one hour and twenty minutes!

Nor is such a scene unusual. From the Rio Grande southward, government offices are filled with just such human driftwood, and it is common experience to see several staid and pompous men in frock-coats spend more than an hour doing what an average American boy would accomplish in two minutes.

Swinging due south next morning through the perpetual summer of the flat, grass-carpeted Cauca valley, we fell in with a straggling band of nearly a hundred youths. They were conscripts recruited under the new military law of Colombia, *antioqueños* chosen by lot to make up the quota of the Province of Antioquia, bound south from Medellín for six months compulsory service. The majority were crude-minded countrymen. Some, dressed in the wrecks of "European" suits, were undeveloped boys of the towns, hobbling painfully along on bruised and blistered feet, bare except for their cloth alpargatas. Among the latter was one Policarpo, a devil-may-care young fellow of high intelligence and considerable education, who had a very clear notion of the weak spots in his native land, though no inkling of a workable remedy. Another carried a *tiple*, as well as a pleasing baritone voice, and struck up at every opportunity the languidly mournful music of the region.

The highway now was a series of interwoven cross-country paths, fording the smaller streams, crossing the larger on little bamboo bridges with faded thatched roofs. It was hot, yet not of the oppressive heat our most northern states know in mid-summer. All along the way were flowers of many colors, and broad vistas of greenest grass stretched far across slightly rolling plains wherever woods and jungle did not choke it out. Bands of butterflies, often of the

most gorgeous hues, flickered here and there across the face of the landscape. Insects hummed contentedly and lizards scuttled away through the fallen leaves. Singing birds of many kinds abounded; flocks of little parrots, brilliant green in color, flitted in and out of the bamboo groves, shrieking noisily at their games. Here and there *quinchas*, fences of split bamboo of basket-like weave, shut in a little cultivated patch; and all day long the distance-blue Western Cordillera, with its wrinkled folds and prominences, stretching endlessly north and south, seemed to cut off the Cauca like a world apart.

Then for a space there were no habitations, except an abandoned hut or two and the ruins of several razed ones. The recruits murmured something about an epidemic, but none appeared to know anything definite concerning it. At length we descended through a shallow valley, and from then on, locusts called *chapul* in the Cauca, rose in vast clouds as we advanced, covering the ground before us and veiling all the landscape as with a great screen, new myriads rising at every step, until they struck us incessantly in the face and filled our ears with a sound as of some great waterfall at a distance. In Bogotá we had wondered to find an important government department entitled “Comisión para la Extinción de la Langosta”; now it seemed small, indeed, to cope with the problem. At intervals cactus hedges bounded the way, and the organ-cactus of desert lands stretched forth its stiff arms into the brilliant sky. The Cauca was suffering one of its periodical droughts and the accompanying scourge of locusts, after which it would bloom again like a tropical garden.

The recruits so monopolized accommodations at the

village of Naranjo—which had not the remnant of an orange-tree to explain its name—that we had to share a room with three none-too-white natives who permitted no ventilation whatever. At four they rose to light candles and feed their mules, and sat vociferously discussing nothing at all until daybreak. They spent more time harnessing themselves than their animals; for the Colombian never dreams of riding in anything less than the complete outfit demanded by local convention. A wide-brimmed "Panama" hat—"sombrero de junco," or the finer "jipijapa," he calls it—covers his head. Over his usual clothing, which must include coat, vest, cravat, gloves, and white collar, no matter how far he may be from civilization nor what the temperature, he wears a ruana, a garment similar to the *sarape* of Mexico, or the poncho. In the vicinity of Bogotá this is of heavy wool and dark in color; in the Cauca it is the *ruana de hilo*, of light-colored cotton, generally gay with stripes. Beneath this the horseman wears *zamarras*, ample false trouser-legs held together by strips front and back, and legging-like at the bottom. Sometimes these are of sun-dried cowhide, or goat-skins shaggy with long white hair, reminiscent of the "chaps" of our cowboys. Far more common are those of *tela de caucho*, "rubber cloth," consisting of two thicknesses of canvas and rubber woven into an impenetrable yet flexible material nearly an eighth of an inch thick. Then come his *chilenas*, huge wheel-like spurs; his *rejo*, or lariat of twisted rawhide hanging from his wrist; his *alforjas*, or leather saddlebags between his legs; his *cuchugos*, a long soft-leather pouch arched over the cantel of his saddle like a cavalryman's blanket-roll; his long, shoe-shaped stirrups; and usually a parasol or umbrella hanging at his side, if, indeed, it does not

shade him as he rides. No Colombian caballero who aspires to retain his rank as such would venture to mount a horse while lacking any item of this equipment. One trembles to think what might happen to a *caucano*, needing to ride instantly for the doctor, who could not lay hands on his *zamarras*, or who had mislaid his gloves.

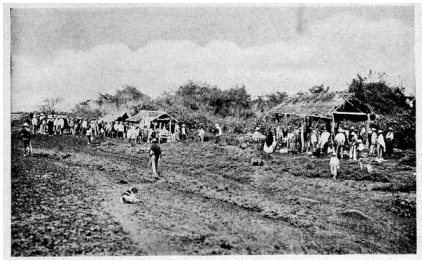
The Cauca was now a broad, dry, treeless region without streams, though little humped bridges lifted us across the waterless beds of what would be such at other seasons, and which still retained the name of "river" in local parlance. Arrieros of this section put red bands about the brows of their horses and mules, perhaps only for the purpose of identification, but giving the animals the coy appearance of coquettish girls. As we advanced, the long drought grew more and more in evidence. Across the sun-cracked valley floor lay scattered the bleached bones of scores of cattle that had died of thirst. Policarpo and I, falling behind, were in danger of suffering the same fate; for the band of recruits, like another locust horde, drank the world ahead wholly dry. The rare hovels and amateur shops along the way were prepared to feed and minister to the thirst of only the customary few daily travelers; not to the ninety-four of us that suddenly descended upon them out of the north without warning. Hays and I were forced to stride on past the sponge-like avalanche of humanity for self-preservation.

Here and there we got huge glasses of *chicha*, the favorite native beverage, at a cent or two each. So many travelers have pictured the making of this by toothless old women chewing yuca and spitting it into a tub to ferment, that the impression should be corrected at the outset. That custom does exist, but it

is found only among the untamed tribes of the upper reaches of the Amazon, scarcely trodden by one in ten thousand South American travelers. All down the great Andean chain this nectar of the Incas is made chiefly of maize, though also of other grains, berries, and of almost any vegetable matter that will ferment, by just as agreeable processes as any other cooking operation of the same region. The notion of cleanliness is, at best, rudimentary among the country people of South America, yet the brewing of chicha certainly compares favorably with the ways of our average cider-mill. A well-made chicha, indeed, resembles somewhat in taste the best cider, and is the surest thirst-quencher I have yet encountered, distinctly superior in this respect to beer. Many were the chicha recipes I gathered along the Andes. For the interest of those who wish to temper a hot summer day with an excellent heritage from the ancient Inca civilization, let me translate the most common one.

“Chicha de morocho:

Take hard, ripe corn” (*morocho* is one of the several excellent species of maize that, like certain grades of the potato, has never been carried from its original Andean habitat to the rest of the world) “shell, and boil for two hours. Let it cool, then grind, or crush under a stone, sprinkling from time to time with some of the water in which it has been boiled. Keep this mass in a well-covered jar. As it is needed, mix with water; one soupspoonful of the prepared mass to one liter of boiling water; add cloves, a very little vanilla, and as much sugar or *rapadura* as is considered necessary. Mix with an equal amount of cold water and place in jars to ferment. Once fermented, it is ready to serve.”



Worse than the locusts was the flock of recruits that, until we outdistanced them, ate and drank up everything the amateur shops, tended by leprous old women, afforded along the way



The market-place of Tuluá, with the cross that protects it against all sorts of calamities—except those which befall it

We reached Zarzal, beyond a blistered, red-hot plain, soon after noon, with nineteen miles already behind us. It was thus we would always have arrived; the day's work done early in the afternoon, to wash, eat, and loaf awhile on the canvas cots in our cell-bare room; then to loll in the rawhide chairs on the broad tile-floored veranda before our door, reading the

literature of the country, languidly watching the afternoon shower, and taking a stroll in the evening for exercise. In the Andes, however, the itinerary is subjected to a haphazard arrangement of stopping-places that make so ideal a plan impossible. We gave orders for dinner and supper upon our arrival. The ignorant, good-hearted old landlord literally hung over us as we ate, fingering our dishes and even our food. The place might, with entire justice, have advertised “personal services.” At two we finished a heavy dinner. At three-thirty our host waddled in to announce that the “large supper” we had ordered was ready! We managed to plead off until five, but for that concession were obliged to eat the meal cold as an abandoned hope.

A heavy rain during the night—our coming seemed to have broken the long drought—made the going lead-heavy for the first few hours, until the blazing sun had dried up the “gumbo” mud. A richer region appeared as we advanced. Once or twice it seemed as if the central and western ranges were about to join hands and cut us off, but the “unmade” road always found a way through with, at most, an occasional dip, or a slight winding climb. During the hot afternoon we picked up a recruit straggler, complaining of fever. The entire company was scattered for miles along the valley, as often panting in a patch of shade as hobbling forward on their blistered, light-shod feet. Magnificent trees stood out here and there across the rich bottom lands. Often the way led through dense *gaudales*, bamboo groves that waved their gigantic plumes lazily in the summer air. Here and there the vegetation vaulted entirely over a “river” into which filtered only a few rays of sun, as through the roof of an abandoned ruin. Occasionally we came upon a *chacra*, a little

farm with a tiny thatched hut faded with age, its floor of trampled earth, surrounded by coffee bushes, *papaya*, *chirimoya*, and other fruit trees of the tropics, the sometimes recently white-washed dwelling furnished only with a few crude leather stools, a wooden bench, a lame table, and a few *cántaros* and dishes of native pottery. Pigs and chickens treated the family with perfect equality; under the trees meditated old donkeys, broken down by a lifetime of toil under heartless drivers. We were indeed approaching the scene of "María" in all its photographic detail.

We prepared to leave Tuluá early, but we reckoned without our host, who was a half-negro of nasty temper and stupid wit, and no faith in gold coin. Hays offered him a $5 gold piece in payment of our bill, but he demanded "paper of the country." We had none left, and a mulatto boy was sent out to change the scorned yellow metal. An hour elapsed without a second sight of him. When another had drifted into the past, a search party was organized. Investigation showed that the emissary had tried to change the coin in a couple of shops, and had then faded away. It was nearly noon when he reappeared, the coin still in his clenched hand. He had fallen into a game with other boys and "forgotten" his errand.

We took the task upon ourselves. One after another drowsy, wondering shopkeepers looked the coin over as a great curiosity and handed it back, announcing that the changing would be "muy trabajoso"—"very laborious"—for the speaker, but that we could get it changed "en to'as partes"—"anywhere," which, as usual, meant nowhere. At last a merchant suggested that it would be changed wherever we bought anything. We called his bluff by picking out a

notebook on his shelves, and had heaped up before us nearly $500 in ragged “billetes del país” of chiefly one and five-peso values. The wad was burdensome, but to be caught on the road in the Andes without small money is often to go hungry, if not, indeed, thirsty. This particular shopkeeper prided himself on a knowledge of geography and the affairs of the “exterior,” the outside world, above the average of his fellow-townsmen. As we turned away, he called after us:

“By the way, do los señores come from New York, or from the United States?”

It was a subtle distinction we had not, to that moment, recognized.

The ancient city of Buga, one of the largest in the Cauca valley, was already familiar to us from the pages of “María.” But seeing is too often disillusionment in these “cities” of the Andes, particularly those in which the imagination has already dwelt. To have seen one long, cobbled, unswept street of Buga was to have seen them all. Checkerboard in plan, the monotonous line of its continuous house-walls, all standing close to the street in a strict “right dress,” broken here and there by a massive *zaguan*, stretched away out of sight in both directions. At first glimpse, it seemed unduly modest in claiming only ten thousand inhabitants; when we found that every dwelling had a patio and a garden of its own within, we realized that a one-story Andean town is by no means so large as it looks. The place was stagnant as a frog-pond, its main plaza a splendid study in “still life.” Yet Buga was old before Boston was founded, and is favored with a soil and climate superior to the best of New England. In a region where fruit should have been

unlimited, the only shop that offered any for sale was slightly stocked with a few green samples. The old woman who kept it bestirred herself to finger over several of her wares, and advised us to come back mañana or the day after when they had had time to ripen. Perhaps it is unjust to expect of Buga the energy and movement of a white man's town. At least it has unrivalled evenings in which, after the sun has set gloriously over the western range, the traveler can lean over the parapet of the massive old Spanish bridge of many arches—how the Spaniards built to stay, yet stayed not—watching a half-moon rise and listening to the chatter of the shallow, diamond-clear little Guadalajara de las Piedras that flanks the town on the south.

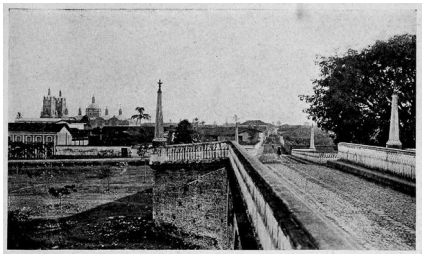
Buga is a holy city. Far above all else bulks a modern Gothic church of real bricks—and bricks transported from overseas are not cheap—called "De los Milagros," filled with more religious trophies than any Hindu temple. We were accosted in the nave by a long-unshaven priest who inquired our desires with a brusk "Qué se le ofrece?" that plainly revealed his knowledge that we were not of the "faithful." His familiarity with the outside world was on a par with that of most Colombians. When we answered his question of nationality by announcing ourselves Americans, he replied complacently, "Ah, yes, Englishmen." Finding unheeded his strong hint to leave, he at length led the way up a ladder to a cell above and back of the altar. Here he lighted a candle and fell on his knees before the "miraculous" crucifix, the figure of which was smeared with red paint to simulate blood. Pilgrims flock to Buga from hundreds of miles around. To the *bugueños* themselves, however, their "miracle" seems to offer little more than a means of easy income, through the

hawking of crucifixes and holy lithographs to their pious visitors.

Like Puree, Benares, or Lourdes, the holy city is more holy at a distance, than to those who loll through life in its shadows, and it was only at El Cerrito, a day's march beyond, that we heard the story of the Milagroso de Buga in all its details. In a faintly lighted corredor we sat with three old women, the natural authorities on such subjects, who told the tale in low, awed voices, their eyes glowing in the night with the miracle of it, their tongues breaking in frequently with a "Qué le parece!"—"What do you think of that!"—as the miraculous recital proceeded.

Long years ago, more than two centuries, when Buga was nothing but a row of thatched *casitas* on the bank of the babbling Guadalajara de las Piedras, a very poor and pious woman used to come every day to wash clothes at the river brink. The clothes of others, that is, for you must know that she had long been trying to get together sixty cents to buy a crucifix to set up in her hut, where she had nothing whatever to pray to. At last she economized the sixty cents and was toiling away on the bank of the Guadalajara, dreaming of the joy of setting up the crucifix in her *casita* on the morrow, when a poor lame man of Buga came by and told her he owed sixty cents to a rich caballero, and would be put in prison for debt if he did not pay it that very night. The poor washerwoman drew from within her garments the silver she had so carefully hidden away and gave it to the lame man to pay his debt. The next day—or three days later; here a great dispute arose among our informants—as the poor woman was washing and praying that she might some day gather together another sixty cents, there floated squarely

into her open hands and mixed itself up with the garments—of others—she was washing, a *cajita*, a little box in which there was....



A view of the “sacred city” of Buga, with the new church erected in honor of the miraculous Virgin



A horseman of the Cauca in full regalia. In addition to his town garb, coat and all, he would be a social outcast who did not wear a “Panama” hat; gloves; a *ruana*, or poncho light in color and weight; *zamarras*, or false trouser-legs of rubber-canvas, and *chilenas*, or huge wheel-like spurs. His other possessions he carries in his *cuchugos*, the long,

soft-leather pouch on his cantel;
and inserts his feet in heavy,
fancily carved brass shoe-
stirrups

Only a simple little cross, the spokeswoman said, but she, having at that moment to step into the shop to sell two corn-and-cheese biscuits, the others assured us in hoarse whispers that this version was entirely erroneous; it was not a simple cross, but a crucifix with a Cristo attached, just exactly the same that you see to-day in El Milagroso de Buga, only very tiny, *chiquitito*, in fact. This momentous point in Buga's history I am forced to leave unsettled, reporting merely what I heard half-whispered in the dark corredor of El Cerrito. The woman took this cross—or crucifix—home and set it up on the wall of her *casita*. To her surprise and alarm, the crucifix—or cross—began to grow. "Qué le parece!" It grew even during the night! And the noises of its stretching kept her awake. When it had grown to twice its original size, she became so alarmed that she went and told the village curate. The padre scoffed at her story, saying such things were not possible nowadays—O ye of little faith!—for miracles were no longer done. But when she showed him the thing, lo, it was even then growing! So the priest took it away with him—as priests will—and still it grew. It grew until it reached the size you see it to-day in El Milagroso de Buga. Then the padre had an intimation from the Blessed Virgin that a church should be built on the spot where the *cajita* had been found, and he called all the people together to build it. They put the miracle behind the altar, and there it remained more than two hundred years, in the church which is to-day the carpenter-shop beside El Milagroso. Then, in

1902, the great temple of bricks was raised, for it had long been that those who would worship and be cured by the Miraculous One could not get into the old church. And the Milagroso was moved to the new temple as easily as if it were a mere image of wood, though all the world well knows that it moves only when it wishes, and if it does not, all the horses in the Cauca cannot stir it.

“And is it true that El Milagroso has cured many invalids?” I asked.

All three exploded in the Colombian manner of expressing great world-wide truths, such as, “Is Buga larger than Tuluá?” “Is it colder in Zarzal than in El Cerrito?” Why....

But from an embarrassment of proofs of the miraculous power of the Milagroso of Buga, I have space only for this:

A woman of Sonson had been bed-ridden with rheumatism for twenty years. At last, when they had grown large enough, her sons carried her to Buga and placed her in a chair before El Milagroso. As she prayed, she leaned forward and touched the toe of the Miraculous One, whereupon she at once rose up from her chair perfectly well and walked home to Sonson, many miles away. That, every one in the Cauca valley knows, for it happened only the other year.

“And also,” put in another of the old women, bent on rounding out the story, “El Milagroso can turn a woman young and beautiful again, back to the day of her marriage and the age of fifteen.”

“Eh!” began Hays, sitting up, “Then why ... But, no, the question would be unkind. It is too personal.”

It was in El Cerrito that we first began inquiries about Jorge Isaacs. Those who have sought information of Carlyle in Chelsea, or of Goethe in Frankfurt will be surprised to know that the people of El Cerrito had heard of the author of "María," though the corner chicha-seller and his neighbors spoke of him with something of the scorn active men of the world always feel for mere men of letters, even though they were not averse to basking in the sunshine of his fame. Some one led us to the little bridge below which the village gossips and washes its scanty clothes, and pointed away to the east. Far across the valley, on the lower skirts of the central range, we could see plainly the "novela casa"—"the story house," a mere white speck on the distant mountain flank.

There were few spots in Colombia to which I had looked forward with more interest than this scene of South America's greatest novel, and the life-long home of its author. With the first graying of the night I was astir, and we were off by sunrise along a grass-grown trail at right angles to our route to Ecuador. Several times this seemed to lose its way, and split up in hopeless indecision. But the "house of my fathers," gleaming steadily on the skirt-hem of the central range, piloted us forward. The only building to be seen, except those on the floor of the plain, it stood just high enough to gaze out across the great valley, a single evergreen tree, slender as a church-spire, close beside it. The sun shot down its rays as if bent on setting on fire all that the foliage of the trees did not defend from its rage, when we came to the edge of the plain, broken by ravines in which we separated in an attempt to keep together. There was nothing left but to strike an unmarked course for the goal. My own soon plunged down into a gully

hundreds of feet deep, thick in jungle, a stream, the Zabaletas of "María," monologuing at its bottom. I wandered long beside it before I could tear my way across, and longer still before I found the suggestion of a path by which to climb out again. Beyond were slightly sloping brown fields, with grazing herds and immense black rocks protruding from the soil, and behind, the indistinct, prairie-like valley, majestic and silent, stretched mile upon mile to the deep-blue wall of the Western Cordillera. Over the crest of the Andes above hung, like an immense veil, dense masses of fog, from which the winds of the Sierra above snatched rags of clouds that floated lazily away to the westward. Then, all at once, the modest little white house appeared close at hand, in a grove of evergreens backed by the *yarumo*-dotted mountain flank. I climbed a stone wall and, mounting through another brown field, pushed open a heavy rustic gate, to find myself at last at the home of "María."

A woman of olive complexion, with streaming hair—for in this corner of the Cauca, far from the "royal highway," travelers, to say nothing of foreigners, are rare, indeed—watched me in speechless amazement as, dripping with twelve miles of struggle, I mounted the steps of the house. On the veranda I was met by a veritable delegation of women and children, headed by a man who announced himself as Camilo Durán, hacendado, entirely at my service. The family was of the well-to-do farmer class of the Cauca, a bit awkward, yet proud of their rank in society, lightly clad in rural dress, and decidedly excited at the extraordinary event of a visit by a foreigner from far-off Europe—or America—who presented a document from the alcalde of Bogotá, signed by none other than the nephew of that same "Don Jorge" for whom their home was famous. A wide-eyed negro boy

whom one might have taken for "Juan Angel" in person, his woolly head protruding through the crown of what had long since been a native straw hat, came running with a chair. As I sat down in the cool corredor, surrounded by the admiring family, Durán called for glasses and a bottle, and just then Hays' head appeared above the stone fence of the inner corral and his always leisurely legs brought him up the steps to be introduced as that very "Lay-O-Ice" whom the valued communication from Bogotá mentioned—when read by natives. The aguardiente, which was "ardent water" indeed, arrived a moment later, and when Durán had drunk our health and we his, we turned to look about us. Would we see *la novela casa*? We would, indeed, and rising, entered it.

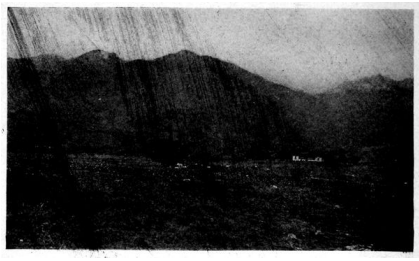
The "story house" was a more modest dwelling than the imagination pictures during the reading of "María." But then, all the Cauca and its ways and people are simple and unassuming to the American point of view. Typical of the hacienda houses of the region, it was of one story, arranged with due regard for the natural resources and the needs of the place and climate. Built of stone and adobe, it gave evidence of being periodically disguised under a coating of whitewash. The long, deep veranda was flanked by two corner rooms and, like them, floored with what the French call *dalles*, dull-red tiles that remained cool even at Cauca noonday. Its thick walls were shaded by a low, projecting tile roof. Over the entrance—a genuine Latin-American touch—had been painted in what Hays referred to as "box-car letters" the information:

"Aquí Cantó y Lloró	"Here Sang and Wept
Jorge Isaacs"	George Isaacs"

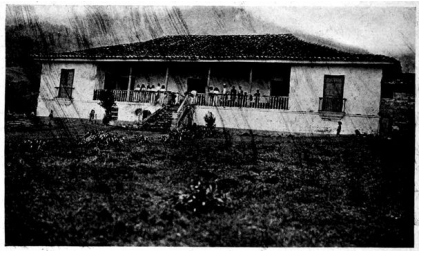
The main hall, or parlor, took up the entire depth of the house from the front to the back veranda, the "corredor de la montaña" of the novel, and was fitted with heavy hand-made furniture, of which an immense dining table of rough-hewn construction formed the center. Flanking this chief chamber were the half-dozen private rooms of the family. That at the right-hand corner of the house, encroaching on the front corredor, had been the room of "Efraín," the hero, and of the novelist himself. Back of it came the sewing-room, the writer's picture of which was so photographic that we were almost startled not to find "María" and "Emma" and her mother busy with their sewing. At the back, across the main hall, stood the *oratorio*, a small chapel with the same simple image of the Virgin, perhaps, before which "María" had so often prayed in vain for a happy life. Behind the back veranda stood a wing, barely connected with the house proper, with a kitchen, hive-shaped clay bake-ovens, and the staring white eyes of negro servants of all sizes that seemed gargoyle-like ornaments of the smoke-streaked and blackened place. The entire dwelling was as densely inhabited as a New York tenement. Besides the dozen boys and girls of olive tint and several women of the Durán family, servants and negroes swarmed, and piccaninnies peered from every opening and corner.

The way led through the sewing-room across the now weedy garden to the "pila de María," a crystal-clear pool in the bed of the *arroyo* that sprang from rock to rock down the swift, light-wooded gorge at the foot of which the "story house" is situated. "María" with her unbound tresses, was no longer here; instead, several dark-skinned boys snatched their garments as we approached and sought quick shelter. The "pila" was a rock-walled basin of sandy

bottom, some four feet deep and as many times larger than the less romantic bathtub of civilization, constantly renewed by the stream that wanders languidly away across the valley of the Cauca. Because of the dip of the garden, the “pila” is out of sight from the house, but from his corner room “Efraín” could, even as the novelist has pictured, see the girls as they returned from their morning dip, pausing to pick a flower here and there along the way. Durán gave us leave to take a plunge. But though few things would have been more welcome after our dripping climb from El Cerrito, it would have seemed something verging on sacrilege, something like smoking a cigar with our feet on Juliet’s balcony, to have profaned with our dusty, prosaic, vagabond forms the pool about which seemed still to flit the spirit of adorable “María.”



The scene of “María,” most famous of South American novels, and once the residence of its author. It lies some distance back from the *camino real* against the foothills of the Central Cordillera



The home of “María”; and a typical *hacendado* family of the Cauca. The lettering over the door reads: “Here sang and wept Jorge Isaacs”

According to the people of the region, Colombia’s chief novel is little more than the autobiography of its author, polished into the ideal love-story in vogue a half-century ago. Isaacs, like the hero “Efraín,” was the son of an English Jew, born in Jamaica, who came to Colombia as a young man, married, and embraced Christianity. Like “Efraín,” the author had a sister Emma, in real life the recently-deceased wife of a doctor of Popayán. “Carlos,” who first offered his hand to “María,” still lived on his hacienda a few miles out across the valley. “Juan Angel,” the slave-boy of “Efraín,” was said to be still living in Cali, an old, old man. The bear and tiger hunting, the country weddings, the simple and patriarchal household, the life and scenes of the Cauca, had all been things of reality, deftly lifted into the realms of the imagination by the hero-author. Even the evil stroke of fortune that had befallen the family on that dismal night in the “hacienda of the valley” was no story-book tale, but a stern fact that had left the novelist without patrimony and brought into the hands of strangers “the house of my fathers.”

We took our leave in the early afternoon, drifting down through sloping meadows past the great black rock to which "María" used to climb to watch for the return of "Efraín" from the valley, which here spreads out in all its rich expanse, majestic and silent, to the dim Western Cordillera. Hays, long lost in meditation, broke it at last to announce that he had found the end of his wanderings; that he would return to the Zone to earn a new "stake" and come back to end his days as the owner of the "novela casa." He was given to catching such enthusiasms—to have them die during the succeeding night. It was, indeed, the most splendid spot in all the magnificent Cauca valley, this simple dwelling set where it could see and be seen from untold leagues away, from the very crest of the western range, yet never standing forth boldly and conspicuously. Framed modestly among its evergreens, just a little way up the first easy slope of the Andean range that piles into the clouds behind it, it seemed as unassuming and removed from the hubbub of the modern world as gentle "María" herself. All the day through our eyes were drawn back to it at frequent intervals, and as long as the light lasted it stood forth plainly in this clear air, though it shrunk to a house in miniature, then to a mere speck on the skirt-hem of the central range.

All the hot afternoon we plodded onward. Some miles after falling in with the *camino real* again, we passed "La Manuelita," the "hacienda of the valley" where Isaacs' father had set up a sugar factory while the son was still a student in Bogotá, and where took place, both in the novel and real life, that pathetic scene that marked the ruin of the family. To-day the estate is the property of Russian-Americans, and its products are known throughout all Colombia.

Beyond the little Amaime river the way led through a forest of bamboo, then across a monotonous and dusty *despoblado*. The great Cordillera Occidental, now like a badly wrinkled garment of sepia-brown hue, drew ever nearer, as did a line of bright-green trees marking the course of the Cauca river. The central range all but faded away in the east, leaving a broad expanse of fertile country longing for the plow. Further on, a broken bridge or two adorned a waterless stream, and an occasional ox-cart, the first thing on wheels we had seen since crossing the Magdalena, crawled by in the sand. The after-curse of African slavery was everywhere in evidence. In little cabins thrown together from jungle rubbish lounged swarms of ragged humanity, black or half-black in color. Yet somehow they seemed less lazy than in our own land, perhaps because the activity of their few lighter neighbors gave less contrast. Swift tropical night was spreading its cloak over all the Cauca when we sighted the sharp church-spire of Palmira, where we were soon housed in the well-named “Hotel Oasis.”

In mid-afternoon of the day following we broke out suddenly on the bank of the Cauca river. A *barca*, or ferry, moored to wires that sagged from shore to shore, set us across, and with sunset we plodded into Cali. Our arrival was well timed. The chief commercial city of the Cauca valley was en fête. From end to end, on the Sunday morrow of our entrance, the place was crowded with happy, rather dusky, throngs, and gay with the chiefly yellow flag of the nation and the bishop’s banner and mitre. For on that day the ancient church of Cali became a cathedral, and one of her “sons” a bishop; dividing a territory ruled over for centuries by the chief ecclesiastic of Popayán. The name of the “hijo de

Cali" about to don the purple blazed forth from the façade of the church in enormous electric letters, like that of some Broadway star, and by sunset fully half the visible population was reeling drunk in honor of the honor that had fallen upon their native town.

"What you don't look for in Cali, you won't find," runs a local proverb; which is a Colombian way of saying that its shops offer for sale anything man may desire. In a small and Colombian sense this is true, except on those frequent occasions when the stock is exhausted. Connected with the Pacific port of Buenaventura by seven hours muleback and four hours rail—it was hard to realize that we were again only four days from a Zone police station—the place is in more or less constant connection with the outside world. But the transportation facilities of the country are so lax that the merchants of Cali are accustomed to announce the receipt of a shipment from Europe or America with a sarcastic placard:

"POR FIN LLEGARON!" (At last they have arrived.)

The city's rôle is chiefly that of distributing center for the vast territory about and behind it, and on the heels of this first announcement appears on the chief shop fronts the information, of interest only to arrieros and the owners of mule-trains:

"HAY CARGA PARA—There is a load for" this or that town of the interior.

Life in Cali is largely governed by placards, as if she had but recently discovered the art of printing and were making the most of it. Hardly an establishment but is adorned with its set of rules. Among those of our hotel were two of purely Latin-American tone:

"Correct dress is required of anyone presenting

himself in the salons of this establishment.

“All political or religious discussion is absolutely prohibited.”

Among the orders to the *sepultero* of the local cemetery were several that reflected the customs of the place:

“1. Receive no corpse without a ticket from a priest.

2. Keep three or four graves ready dug for bodies that may present themselves.

3. Make each adult grave 1½ meters deep and one wide. Relatives may, upon request, have it dug deeper.

4. Remove no bodies without the permission of an inspector or a priest.”

Why was man, whose enjoyment surely would be so much greater, denied the power of sailing freely out over the earth, as the birds circled away across the great valley of the Cauca, tinged to sepia in the oblique rays of the setting sun? When I reached the modest height that stands so directly over Cali that I could count every dull-red tile of its roofs, the little river racing over its rocks below was still alive with bathers and laundresses. A breeze from off the mountains lifted the drooping leaves of the palm-trees of the city; beyond, lay a view of the entire Cauca valley, clear across to the now hazy central chain of the Andes, the dot that to whoever has known “María” will ever remain “the house of my fathers” plainly in sight, as were many of the scenes back to Cartago and on over the range toward Bogotá that I should never again see, except in imagination. If only this magnificent valley, climate and all, were in our land! Or, no; it is better as it is.

For then there would be spread out here in the sunset a great colorless stretch of plowed fields, factories sooting the peerless Cauca heavens with their strident industry; there these velvety hillsides would be covered with the gaudy villas of the more “successful” of an acquisitive race; a great, ugly American city of broken and distressing sky-line, without a single dull-red roof, would cover the most featureless, because the most “practical,” part of the valley, utterly destroying the beauty of a landscape which nature is still left to decorate in her own inimitable fashion.

CHAPTER V
DOWN THE ANDES TO QUITO

From Cali a broad “road,” still fresh with early morning, led forth to the southeast, skirting some foothills of the Western Cordillera. Really a meadow, bounded by two cactus hedges and interwoven with an intricate network of paths, like the tracks of some great railway terminal, it was excellent for tramping. Birds sang merrily in the branches of the scattered trees; a telegraph wire sagged southward from bamboo pole to pole. Groups of ragged women, balancing easily on their heads a *machete*, a coiled rope, and a rolled straw mat, were already off to gather Cali’s daily fire-wood. Others we met market-bound, bearing, likewise on their heads, loads of a large leaf that serves as wrapping paper in the shops of the town. Here passed a man leading two pigs—except on those frequent occasions when the leadership was reversed—there a haughty horseman, and beyond, mule after donkey laden with everything from milk to alfalfa. We strode lightly forward this time, for the developing-tank had been turned over to a “drummer” from Chicago, bound to Ecuador by sea.

Before long the character of the country began to change, with a promise of mountains to climb far ahead in the hazy day-after-to-morrow. Mud-holes appeared; streams without bridges, though often with stepping-stones or the trunk of a bamboo thrown across them, grew frequent, and the sky took to muttering ominously far off to the eastward. A strong young river, bright yellow in color and flecked with spume, sped by beneath the first roofed bridge, with news of last night's storm somewhere up in the Cordillera. Before the day was done we had several times to strip to the waist to ford torrents that had decorated themselves with leaves and flowers and the branches of trees snatched along the way.

Next morning the foothills began to crowd in upon the trail, now a haphazard hunted thing scurrying in and out over *lomas* and knolls and ever higher hills, from the tops of which we several times caught what we fancied was the last view of the great Cauca valley behind us. Slowly the mountains themselves closed in. We waded a river, toiled up a long slope, and came out far above a beautiful little vale completely boxed in by perpendicular hillsides. Only two houses were to be seen on its grassy floor, spotted with scores of grazing cattle. Over it, several hundred feet above, hung a broad column of locusts, surely a mile long, moving slowly northward with a humming whirr that we could plainly hear far beyond, and shading the country beneath like some enormous veil. Beyond, we descended again to the Cauca river. Here there was no ferry, or rather, it was out of order. Tons of merchandise lay heaped along the bank, while cursing arrieros chased their snorting mules into the stream. The negro who set us across in a long dugout collected five *billetes* each for the service, but this was evidently exorbitant, for the

woman of his own color who went with us paid only four green plantains for herself, a piccaninny, and her load.

Luckily we had a long draught of *chicha fuerte* before facing the notorious *subida de Aguache* on the third day, for the stories we had long heard of this fearsome climb had not been exaggerated. High above anything we had seen since passing the Quindío, we came out suddenly on a "platform" on the edge of one of those bottomless ravines that abound in the Andes, a mighty hole in the earth, blue with the very depths of it. Just across, at the same height, hung in plain sight the wavering trail we could only reach by undoing all the climbing of days past and doing it all over again in one single task. Hour after hour we descended a mountainside so sheer that the struggle against gravity was like a battle with some hardy wrestler, only to face at the bottom what seemed the full unbroken wall of the Andes, the red trail zigzagging into the very sky above. All the blazing afternoon we climbed incessantly, to gain at evening a height equal to that of the morning, only a few miles further south. A task that would have seemed impossible a month earlier struck us now as amply rewarded by the indescribable panorama of mountains that spread away from the summit in every direction.

For once the trail held for a time the advantage it had gained, passing through Buenos Aires and Morales, two-row towns of thick adobe walls. Though still in the tropics, we were now in the temperate zone. Oaks abounded, and the weather was like that of our northern states in early autumn. The population was still dark in color, but negroes had faded away with the open-work architecture of

the Cauca. For the first time since descending from the plateau of Bogotá we met full-blooded Indians. They were of the Guajiro tribe, dull-brown of color, sturdy, thick-legged fellows in white pajama-like garments reaching only to the knees. All, male or female, young or old, greeted us in a sing-song as we passed.

On the last of August, four days from Cali, we pushed more swiftly forward, for we were nearing the famous old city of Popayán. A forced march, dipping down through a mighty gully and panting upward through swirling dust, brought us at noon to the dry and wind-swept hilltop village of Cajibío. The population was almost entirely Indian, and the dusty central square swarmed with the Saturday market. Guajiros of both sexes and all ages, flocked into town from scores of miles around, sat with their bits of produce under woven-reed shelters, or in the open glare of the equatorial sun. Some had already exchanged their wares for the weekly chicha debauch, and staggered about maudlin and red-eyed, or lay tumbled in noisome corners. The village priest, the only visible resident of European blood, wandered in and out among the hawkers with a *mochila* on the end of a rod over one shoulder. Gazing away across the sepia hills and distant blue ranges, as if his mind were utterly detached from this world, the padre paused before each hawker, turned his back, and punched him—or, more often, her—with the end of the stick until a contribution to the parochial larder had been dropped into the sack.

The sun set amid corn-fields, wrapping itself in grayish-purple clouds in the crimsoning west, and still Popayán was leagues away. We plodded on into the night. There is, however, a sort of reflected light

in these high altitudes, where the very mountains seem low hills, a sense of being *on top* of the world, with the sun just out of sight around the curve of the earth. Fires, evidently of Indians burning off their *chacras*, dotted the night on several sides of us. The road grew broader and took on that atrocious cobbling which follows the Spaniard everywhere, growing worse as it approaches a town. Now it stumbled down to a river, across a long stone bridge of the massive type of long ago, and into a two-row village. For a time we imagined we saw at last the lights of the famous city. It was mere illusion. Not only did we tramp another footsore hour, but when we did finally arrive, there were no lights. The place had grown up about us in the dark before we realized that we were no longer in the open country. The pedometer registered 35 miles, and our feet and appetites several times that, when we halted undecided in what some sixth sense told us was the central plaza.

Most famous of all the cities from Bogotá to Quito, boasting itself a "cradle of savants," long the capital of a large section of Spain's American colonies and still that of the great department of the Cauca, Popayán had seemed to promise at least the lesser comforts of civilization. For days we had slept on tables and mud benches, wrapped in the fond hope of making up here for the cold, hungry nights on the trail. We had even feared there might be difficulty in choosing from a plethora of accommodations, and had gravely set down, somewhere to the north, the name of the "Hotel Colón" as of about the grade of luxury fitted to our fortunes. It was to laugh. Though it was barely eight in the evening, Popayán was as dead as a graveyard at midnight—and darker. Later we learned that the famous city does have lights,—a

few street-corner kerosene lamps that burn out within an hour, unless a puff of wind blows them out first. Having been a city, in the Spanish sense, only 376 years, it was too much to expect the place to have learned already of the existence of electricity.

We hobbled over slippery cobblestones along monotonous two-story streets and in and out of dimly-seen thatched suburbs for what seemed hours before we caught a man emerging from a candle-lighted barber-shop.

“Hotel?” he ruminated, as if striving to recall a word he had heard somewhere long ago, “You want a hotel?”

“No, you Spiggoty dolt,” growled Hays in English, nursing his blistered feet by standing on one at a time, “We only asked that because we wanted to know who won the pennant this year.”

“Hotel,” went on the musing *popayanejo*, unheeding, “Ah-er-where do you come from and where are you going? You will be italianos? Alemanes?”

“No, we’re Chinamen,” I snapped, “and looking for a hotel.”

“Pués, Señor Chino,” he replied, cleverly returning the sarcasm, “There is no hotel in Popayán. But if you go down this street four *cuadras* in this direction and three in that and knock at the door of the second house beyond the fountain, you may find them willing to give you lodging.”

They were not, however; nor were those to whom they in turn directed us. A long hour more we winced along the uneven, slippery streets of Popayán, begging for a bite to eat and a plank to lie on as in any Indian village, only to be turned away

from some of the most distressing holes ever man offered to sleep in on a wager. But the Spanish-speaking races have a proverb that "*Perro que anda hueso encuentra*," and we stumbled finally upon a billiard-room in which several young bloods of the town were upholding their reputation as night-hawks. One Señor Fulano, cigarette-maker by profession—when he was sober enough—and "dope-fiend" by habit, as were several of his companions, took us in charge and led the way uncertainly to a cubby-hole of a room in his barn-like ancestral home. There, my dreams of the comforts of Popayán forever shattered, I resigned myself to sleep once more on a wooden table posing as a bed. Hays was little more fortunate, for though he drew an aged divan, he fell asleep quite literally several times before he abandoned himself to the floor which fate seemed bent on forcing him to occupy.

In the morning Fulano's garrulous old mother made more formal arrangements for our housing. She did not pretend to run a hotel—though she had no hesitancy in charging hotel rates—but she served two greasy meals a day to several clerks from the government offices and, "out of charity," seated us with them. But alas, however easily he may spend the day, the Latin-American leads a hard life at night. In a huge and all but empty front room was an enormous bedstead of viceregal days; but this, too, was wooden floored, and the diaphanous straw-mat that did duty as mattress had had all life crushed out of it years before. Nor did the single blanket have much influence over the penetrating mountain air of early morning. The deep window embrasures were built with steps for the use of occupants who would engage in the favorite *popayanejo* pastime of gazing out through the reja; but no provision whatever had

been made for another convenience essential to all well-regulated households. In this respect the house was on a par with all the rest of the famous city.

"Founded" by Benalcazar, in the Spanish sense of having a scribe record under a name bristling with reference to the saints—which as usual failed to stick—an Indian town ruled over by a warlike *cacique* named Payán, the capital of the Cauca has, according to its latest census, 4326 men and 5890 women, a disproportion that is reflected in its customs. If its own assertion is to be taken at par, it is "notable for its fine climate and its illustrious sons." Of the climate there can be little criticism. Just how illustrious its sons might have been in a wider world no one who has come to see where and how they lived can be blamed for wondering. Of them all, the town is evidently most proud of Caldas—a statue of whom adorns the central plaza—the tobacco-chewing savant who discovered how to determine altitude by boiling water—no one who has cooked his eggs in the Andes is long in making the same discovery—and who taught the revolted colonials how to make gunpowder—only to be shot in Bogotá for his pains.

So aged is the town that it has not a red roof left; all are faded to a time-dulled maroon. The place bristles with ancient religious edifices, mementoes of its importance in colonial days. Hardly a block is there without its huge church of cavernous and dilapidated interior. The silent grass-grown little "Universidad del Cauca," of the aspect of some bent and toothless old man, is famous now only for its age, though in its dotage it fondly fancies itself still one of the principal seats of learning in the New World. Over its unadorned main door may still be read a crumbled

inscription:

"Initium Sapientae
Timor Domini"

Summer vacation had left it uninhabited, but there was evidence of practical training in at least one respect,—the beds of its dormitory were narrow wooden boxes some five feet long.

If Popayán is dead by night, little more can be said for it by day. Languid shopkeeping is almost its only visible industry, and the population seems to live on what they sell one another. The ways of its merchants are typical of those in all the somnolent towns of the Andes. With few exceptions they treat the prospective purchaser in a manner that seems to say, "Buy at this price, or go away and let me alone. I want to read last week's newspaper, finish my cigarette, and day-dream, and I don't want you here in my store disturbing my meditations." Too often, in the shops, the mañana habit prevails,—in that it is always the *next* place that has what you are looking for. The mortality of white ones being high on Andean trails, I entered a *tienda* to ask:

"Do you sell blue handkerchiefs, señor?"

Shopkeeper, recovering from what was really a sleep, though ostensibly awake: "Ah—er—buenos días, señor. Cómo está usté'? Cómo está la familia? The señor wishes—er—ah—what was it the señor requested?"

The chances always are that he has heard the question in his dreams and, if given time, will recall it:

"Handkerchiefs, is it not, señor?"

“Blue handkerchiefs, please.”

“Ah—er—cómo para qué cosa?” (What for, for instance?)

This question, which is seldom lacking, being ignored, the shopkeeper turned to let his eyes wander dreamily over his shelves, striving in vain to bring his attention down to the matter in hand. Finally he took a stick from a corner and fished from an upper shelf a paper-wrapped bundle. Opened, it disclosed a half-dozen pairs of faded red socks, made in Germany.

“But I said....”

Shopkeeper, suddenly, but not unexpectedly, without a pause between the questions: “Where do you come from where are you going?”

The traveler answers according to his character and mood. Meanwhile the merchant had fished down a bundle of red handkerchiefs.

“I said blue, señor.”

“But this is blue, a beautiful ultramarine blue, mira usté’—just look,” and he held it up to the reflected sunlight that streamed in at the only opening to the shop,—the doorway.

“No, señor, I want blue.”

Shopkeeper, dreamily, “Ah, señor, *no hay*—there are none. But you can find them *en to’as partes*—anywhere. You are French, perhaps, señor?”

“Perhaps.” Here I caught sight of a bundle of blue handkerchiefs in plain view on a lower shelf, and pointed them out. “How much?”

Shopkeeper: “Te—Fifteen pesos, señor.”

"You must take me for a tourist, or a gringo. I'll give you five."

"Very well, señor, muchas gracias, buenos días, adiós pués."

Or perhaps the stranger wishes to visit some local celebrity and pauses in a shop-door to ask:

"Can you tell me where Dr. Medrano lives?"

"You mean Dr. Medrano de Pisco y Miel?"—That is the only Dr. Medrano in town, as the merchant well knows, but the matter must be clothed in all customary formality—"His house is the second door beyond that of Dr. Enrique Castro y Pelayo, señor."

"Yes, but I am a stranger in town and I don't know where Don Enrique lives."

"You don't know? You don't know where Dr. Enrique Castro y Pelayo lives! Why—er—but everyone knows the house of Dr. Enrique. Why—er—just ask anywhere. They can tell you *en to'as partes*—anyone can tell you."

This happy-go-lucky way of life is not without its advantages. Having occasion to cash a traveler's check, I dropped in upon a native merchant who played at being a banker. After the usual extended formalities, he took the check and looked it over with a puzzled expression, for he knew no English.

"As a banker you are, of course, familiar with the system of traveler's checks?" I put in.

"No, señor, I have never before seen one."

"Well, it is just as good as money and...."

"Oh, of course," he replied, hastily, "since the señor offers it. How much do you want for it?"

"Only its face value; ten dollars in American money."

"I shall be pleased to take it. How much is that in our money of the country?"

"Only a thousand pesos, señor," I replied, disdaining the temptation to multiply by ten.

"Muy bién, señor," he replied, and making out an order to his cashier for that amount, tucked the check away in a drawer.

"It is not good unless I sign it," I suggested.

"Ah, no?" he asked, producing it again for that purpose, "A thousand thanks. Pués, adiós, señor. Until we meet again."

So unlimited is the faith in "ingleses" in these regions that he had no hesitancy in accepting from a stranger a check which he would not have dreamed of cashing for one of his fellow townsmen without ample proof of its value.

One evening three men in frock-coats and the manners of prime ministers dropped in upon us and announced themselves editors of the newspaper "Sursum." They had only an hour or two to spare, however, and by the time the introductory formalities were over they bowed themselves out with the information that they would come and *tertuliar* (interview) us—mañana. Two days later I chanced to meet one of them again.

"Did you say 'Sursum' is published every week?" I asked, having had no visual evidence of its existence since our arrival.

"Oh, yes, indeed!" cried the editor, rolling another cigarette. "Every week. Ah—that is, last week it did not appear, it is true; and the week before the editor-

in-chief was *al campo*, and the week before that he was very busy, as his sister was getting married. But it is sure to come out next week, or if not, then the week after. And I am myself coming to interview you —mañana."

It was in Popayán that we found *coca* leaves for sale for the first time, and met Indians whose cheeks were disfigured by a cud of them. Long before the white man appeared on his shores, the Indian of the Andes, unacquainted with the tobacco of his North American brother, was addicted to this habit. The leaves—from which is extracted the cocaine of modern days—are plucked from a shrub not unlike the orange in appearance, that grows down in the edge of the hot lands to the east of the Andean chain. Once dried, they are packed in huge bales, or crude baskets made on the spot, and sold in the marketplaces by old women who weigh out the desired amount in clumsy home-made scales, or in handfuls by eye measure. The Indians thrust the leaves one by one into their mouths, and as they become moistened, add a bit of lime or ashes, dipped with what looks like an enlarged toothpick from a tiny calabash which, with a leather pouch for the leaves themselves, constitutes the most indispensable article of the aboriginal equipment. How harmful the habit may be, it is hard to gage. Its devotees are, it is true, languid of manner and slow of intellect; but they show no great contrast in this particular from the "gente decente," their neighbors, who rarely indulge in the leaves, except on some long and wearisome journey. So marked is this languor in Popayán that, as in most Andean towns, brawls are rare, despite the half-anarchy that reigns. Youths merry with liquor or its equivalent raced their horses up and down the roughly cobbled streets, forcing

them to capriole until Hays took to cursing his loss of police powers; street women may,—though few find it necessary—ply their profession as openly as vegetable hawkers. Even when a dispute grows noisy, there is no interference. A policeman may wander up in curiosity, like any other bystander, but he is almost sure to find that the contender is some "authority," or the second cousin of the alcalde, or a grandson of the bishop, or wears a white collar, and wanders away again, lest he get himself into trouble.

So we remained in Popayán until it had dwindled from the romantic city of the past our imaginations had pictured to the miserable reality—though in after years, veiled by the haze of memory, its charm and romance may return—and one evening asked to have our coffee served at a reasonable hour in the morning.

"Siempre se van hoy?" cried our hostess, when we appeared in road garb next morning, "You are really going to-day?" It was not so much that she was striving to cover her failure to have the coffee ready; her Latin-American mind could not conceive of so definite a resolution outliving the night. "Why do you not remain until to-morrow and rest?" she rambled on.

An hour later she stood staring after us from her doorway, an act in no way conspicuous, since all that section of Popayán was similarly engaged. The entire town had expressed its sympathy that we must go "all alone and so laboriously—tan trabajoso" over the wild mountains and valleys to—well, wherever we were bound; for not a single popayanejo took seriously our assertion that we really hoped to reach Ecuador.

Pasto was said to be something like a week distant

"by land," and the route "very dangerous," though from what source was not clear. For the first lazy hour a good road led gradually upward. But like an incorrigible small boy getting out of sight of home, its good behavior ceased at the hilltop where we caught the last view of the "cradle of savants." Ever more winding and broken, across ravines and streams with bridges and without them, now and then seeming to drop completely out of the world about us, only to gather its forces again far below and scramble to even greater heights over a saddle of a mountain wall beyond, from the summit of which the trail of twenty-four hours before stood forth as clearly as across an alleyway between tenement houses, it struggled uncertainly southward day after day. At the hamlet of Dolores, amid rugged and tumbled mountains piled into the sky on every hand, we came to a parting of the ways and had the choice of continuing by the temperate or the torrid zone. One route went down into the Patía valley, hotter than Panama, reputed the abode of raging fevers and the breeding-place of those swarms of locusts that devastate the Cauca. The other, by way of "los pueblos," lay cool and high, with frequent towns, though it was two days longer and much more broken and mountainous.

We chose the temperate zone. The way turned back for a time almost the way we had come, then climbed until a whole new world opened out beyond, towering peaks piercing the clouds and strangely shaped masses of earth lying heaped up tumultuously on every hand. For once the trail showed unusual intelligence in clinging to the top of the ridge, fighting its own natural tendency to pitch down into the mighty valleys on either side, and the constant struggle of the ridge to throw it off, like an ill-

tempered bronco its rider. We were following now what the Colombian calls a *cuchillo*, a "knife," treading the very edge of its blade. Along it, miserable mud huts were numerous; and every Indian we met had a cheek distorted and his teeth and lips discolored by a coca cud. It struck us as strange that even bad habits have their local habitat and that the magnificent mountain scenery gave the dwellers no inspiration to better their conditions.

Evidently the region held foreigners in great fear. As often as we paused to ask for lodging, some transparent excuse was trumped up to get rid of us. The naïveté of the inhabitants was amusing. At one village hut two women met our plea for posada with:

"No, señores, los maridos no están" (the husbands are out).

"We are not interested in the husbands, but in a place to sleep."

"Yes, but the husbands will be out all night and they would make themselves very ugly" (se pondrían muy bravos). Further on my companion tried his luck again. Two plump girls, not unattractive in appearance, bade him enter. Could they give us posada? They thought so; mother usually did, but she was out just then.

"All right," said Hays, sitting down, "I'll wait for her."

Some time had passed when it occurred to him to ask:

"When will mother be back?"

"Oh, perhaps in a week," answered the innocent damsels, "She went to Mojarras with a load of corn."

It was as useless to try to get a meal without the loss of several hours as to hope to eat it without the entire village squatted around us. Either there was nothing to cook, or no pan to cook it in, until the woman next door had baked to-morrow's corn-bread, or the stick fire in the back-yard refused to burn, or some other unsurmountable drawback developed. Hays constantly labored under the delusion that money could expedite matters, and was given to drawing forth his worldly wealth in one wad to flourish it before the languorous cook and, incidentally, all the gaping town. The result was often a doubled or trebled price, if not an inducement for some of the village louts to lay in ambush for us somewhere up the trail, but never an earlier meal. If they could stir up their lethargy to serve us at all, it would be only at their own good leisure, whatever the price. Many a time there occurred a scene similar to that at San Miguel. Hays shook a $50 *billete* in the face of a bedraggled Indian woman who had, perhaps, never before seen so large a sum at one time, offering it all if she would prepare a meal at once. She would not, but after long argument served coffee, corn-cakes, and eggs—which might easily rank as a meal in the Andes—and collected a bill of seven cents.

For days at a time we tramped "aguas arriba." The trails of the Andes are fond of this means of crossing a mountain range. High above it we caught the gorge of a river, and wound upstream in and out along the towering wall that shut us in. It was no mountain-flanking road of easy gradient, such as abound in the Alps, but one that had chiefly built itself; so that all day long we climbed and descended stony buttresses of the range, until they grew like the constant nagging of a querulous old woman, the gorge of the

brawling river ever far below. Here and there a hut and clearing hung on the opposite mountain wall, or above us, in places where plows were useless. The Indians cultivated their “farms” by burning off a bit of the swift slope, threw a brush fence about it, dropped their seeds into carelessly dug holes, and sat back to wait for whatever nature chose to send them. At length, in the course of days, the trail having kept the same general level, the diminished river rose to meet it; for hours more the path jumped back and forth across the ever smaller stream, until this had dwindled to a mere brook racing down a rocky gorge from its birthplace up under the snows. Then, when there was nothing else left for it, the trail girded up its loins and scrambled alone up out of the valley and over the backing range.

Far above I could make out the rough-hewn wooden cross that marked the summit, masses of clouds scurrying past it, as if pursued by some enemy beyond. Once I passed a half-wild Indian girl with a baby on her back, who ran away down an unmarked, break-neck place in a way to suggest that she had taken me for the Fiend in person. No doubt the resemblance was striking. Higher still, two or three groups of the same tribe came down at a queer little dog-trot, the heavy loads on their backs supported by a shawl knotted across their shoulders, the plump breasts of the women undulating under their dirty, one-piece garments. In mid-morning we stood at last on the summit of the famous Ahorcado—the Hanged Man—range, so named from some episode of the Conquest, a “knife-edge” indeed, where the god of the winds seemed to have his chief warehouse. For once the view was entirely free from mist. To the east, the V-shaped valley up which we had come lay far below, twisting away to the left, to be lost at last

between hazy mountain chains. There were many more farmers here than in the rich and level Cauca valley, either because the government is too far distant to drive them out by its exactions, or because the Indian is in his element among these lofty ranges. On every hand the steep mountain sides were flecked with little farms of all possible shapes, colored by green or ripening grain or corn, a tiny hut in the center of each patch, minute with distance, but as clearly visible as if only a few yards away. To the west lay a pandemonium of mighty valleys, pitched and tumbled peaks, gigantic saw-toothed ranges, seen and suggested into the uttermost distance.



The market-place of Cajibío, in the highlands of Popayán. In the right-center is the village priest, with a pole attached to a bag under his arm, demanding contributions of each hawker. Though the region is decidedly cold at night or in the shade, the unclouded sun burns the skin quickly, hence the woven-reed sunshades

But one could not stand long in so icy a wind to admire even such a scene. A few yards below, the road forked, one branch stumbling headlong down into that chaotic jumble of wooded hills and valleys, the other striking off through the forest along the flank of the range. A mistake at that height might mean hours or even days of extra toil. We chose at random and trusted to luck. The soft, almost level road plunged away through a dense green forest, as truly "bearded with moss" as any in our North, yet rich with parasites and ferns. Great oaks littered the ground with acorns. I drew ahead and marched on through utter solitude, the stillness broken only by the cold wind from the south, immense vistas of dense-wooded Andes now and then opening out through a break in the tree-tops. Where the forest began to give way, my misgivings were set at rest by a group of dull-eyed Indians of both sexes, their mouths stained with coca-leaves, plodding upward in single file, still maudlin with the fire-water that marked the vicinity of a town. All wore heavy, cream-colored felt hats, and bore varying burdens, the women carrying the heavier loads and in addition a baby slung across their breasts by a cloth knotted behind the neck.

Not far beyond, I burst out suddenly upon a full view of Almaguer, almost directly below, perched astride a narrow ridge between two mountains, serene in its precarious seat despite the raging wind that seemed constantly threatening to blow it off into oblivion. Then, as suddenly, it disappeared, and I was almost within the town before I caught sight of it again.

Here we caught one Barbara Diaz red-handed in the act of feeding her swarming family, and refused to be driven away. Lodging, however, seemed

unattainable. A woman seated on her earth floor before an American sewing-machine run by hand carelessly admitted that she had a room to rent before she thought to say “further on.” But on second thoughts she decided that it would be “muy trabajoso” to prepare it for us—in other words, very tiresome to get up from the floor and produce a key. The alcalde was out of town; the one woman who owned a vacant little shop asserted with an air of finality that her husband was not at home. I turned to the court of last appeal, the village priest. He was a long-unshaven but pleasant fellow of forty, educated in the seminary of Popayán, occupying, with a discreet but attractive young “housekeeper,” the second-best building in town—the best being the mud church adjoining. His well-stocked library, in Latin and Spanish, with a few volumes in French and English, was a feast for the eyes in these bookless wilds. During our long chat the good padre asserted that all the Indians for a hundred miles around were good and faithful Catholics, and that almost all of them could read and write! He had long planned to learn English, but had “such a fearful lot of work to do, so many masses to say every day and confessions without rest.” He took down a book and requested me to read some English aloud, “just to hear how it sounds.” Casually, somewhere during the interview, I brought in a brief reference to lodging, and the padre forthwith sent across the plaza a small boy who soon returned and led us to the same woman who had last turned us away. Now that the padre ordered, she had no hesitancy in overlooking the absence of her husband. The lodging cost us nothing, which was exactly what it was worth. It was the usual mud cavern, with a floor of trodden earth, cold as a dungeon in contrast to the blazing sunshine outside,

and, having once been a shop, was all but filled with a dust-carpeted counter and yawning shelves curtained and draped with cobwebs. Hays drew the counter, but I found room to stow myself away on one of the higher shelves, though with neither mattress nor covering and a wind as off the antarctic ice sweeping at express speed across the thin *cuchillo* between two bottomless Andean gullies, we did not look forward to darkness with pleasure.

The only water supply of Almaguer, attached to the world only by the "royal highway" at either end, was a little wooden spout projecting from the hillside. The *estanquillo* had no lack of aguardiente, however, and as to washing, Almaguer avoids what would otherwise be a difficulty by never having formed the habit. The making of candles is its chief industry. A bluish wax is gathered from a "laurel" tree which abounds in the region, and even the acting alcalde spent the evening making candles by dipping pieces of string again and again into a bowl of molten wax. That worthy was also village school-master and purveyor of patent medicines to Almaguer; a lank, ungainly man in an habitual lack of shave, with a handkerchief knotted about his neck like a Liverpool wharf-rat. Before the sun had set he had given us a score of commissions, chiefly in the patent medicine line, to be fulfilled when we returned to the "Europe." Then he fell to talking of a "Meestare Eddy Sone" and his inventions. For some time we fancied the personage in question was some local celebrity, and not until the patent-medicine-schoolmaster-alcalde had turned the conversation to a "Meestare Frunk Lean," who was also, it seemed, a great gringo electrician, and answered to the surname of Benjamin, did we catch the drift of his monologue. He had brought up the subject, it turned out, because

he had long been curious to know whether the Meestares Frunk Lean and Eddy Sone often met to plan their work together, or whether, as so often happened among the great men of Almaguer, they were unfortunately rivals and enemies.

It is always a long time night in this Andean land of no lights and little covering. The read-less evenings seem interminable. Small wonder the inhabitants are ignorant and priest-ridden when they can only sit and gossip after the sun goes down. The traveler eats supper—if it is to be had—takes a walk, talks awhile with some one—if he is gifted with the medieval art of conversation—comes "home," sits around awhile on the earth floor or an adobe block, thinks over his past history and future plans—if any—wishes he smoked, and, finally deciding to go to bed, looks at his tin watch to find it is almost seven! In Almaguer there were none of these drawbacks. For, as I lay abed,—on my upper shelf—the "laurel" candle gave sufficient flicker by which to make out the dimly printed pages of a Bogotá masterpiece—so long as I kept wide enough awake to balance the candlestick on my forehead.

It is not far from Almaguer to its twin city of Bolívar; yet they are far apart. On the map one could stroll over in an hour or two, pausing for a nap on the way. So could one in real life but for a single drawback,—the lack of a bridge. Both towns, the largest between Popayán and Pasto, lie at about the same 7500 feet above the level of the sea; but between them is a gash in the earth which does not reach to the infernal regions simply and only because these are not situated where ancient—and some modern—theologians fancied them.

For days now there had been persistent rumors of

salteadores, highway robbers, reputed experts in the art of shooting travelers in the back from any of the countless hiding-places along the trail. Every town, in turn, asserted that its own region was eminently safe; the danger was always in the next one. Each traveler we met—and they were never alone—carried a rifle or a musket. Once, at an awkward defile, we suddenly caught sight of an ugly-looking group of ruffians on a knoll above, and our back muscles twitched reflexively until we had climbed out of range. The fact that our own weapons hung in plain sight may have been the cause of their inaction. Again, in San Lorenzo, of especially evil repute, several shifty-eyed fellows showed great interest in our movements. When we took the opportunity to oil our side-arms and demonstrate their quick action, however, the group assured us that the robbers never troubled foreigners, and faded gradually away.

The danger, if it existed, was multiplied by the fact that we were forced to canvass the town until we had changed our money into silver. We were about to enter the half-autonomous Department of Nariño, southernmost of Colombia, where the paper bills of the central government have never been accepted. Yet the department has no money of its own. Silver coins of whatever origin have a fixed worth, according to size rather than face value, those with holes in them losing nothing thereby. Pieces of the weight of our silver dollar were known as *fuertes*, and valued at 36 cents. Our quarter, or an English shilling, was accepted as “dos reales,”—seven cents. Among the hodgepodge of coins that came into my possession was a two-peseta piece of old Spain, dated 1794 under the profile of Charles IV. The shopkeeper with whom I spent it valued it at two *reales* because

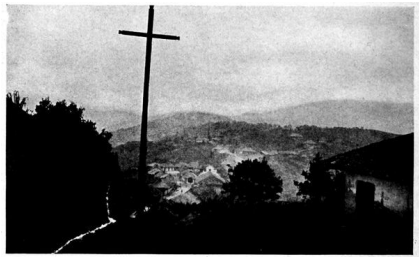
it was somewhat smaller than the four-real piece, but after an argument accepted it as four. The twenty dollars we each gathered made a sackful nearly as heavy as all the rest of our baggage.

The landscape, too, had changed. Instead of the hot, dry, repulsive ranges behind, we were again in deep-green woods and fields, the trail climbing from bamboo-clad valleys where ran cold mountain streams so clear we could not see the water, but only the bottom of the bed, to wind-swept oaken heights. In places there were slight outcroppings of coal. Then a lung-bursting road rick-racked for hours up a wall-like mountainside, now and then, when we were ready to drop from exhaustion, bringing us out on a little level space, like a landing on an endless stairway, then scrambling on up still steeper heights. When at last we stood on the blade-edge of the Cuchillo de Bateros, dividing autonomous Nariño from the rest of Colombia, Bolívar, two days behind, lay as plainly in sight as a house across the street, the immense peak beside it sunk to an insignificant knoll. To the west we could look down into the misty valley of the Patía—and wonder whether we would not have done better to have taken its more level route, for all its fevers.



Crossing the Cauca River with a pack-train by one of the typical

“ferries” of the Andes



A village of the mountainous region south of Popayán

At dusk we came out on a headland and saw, so directly below that a false step would have pitched us, or rather our mangled remains, down into its very plaza, the mathematically regular town of San Pablo, in the floor-flat river bottom of the Rio Mayo, with rich meadows stretching east and west to the rocky mountain walls that boxed them in. The descent was so steep that we could only hold our own by wedging our toes into the shale and keeping our thigh-muscles taut as brake-rods; so swift that the trail often split to bits from its own momentum. In the town we were startled to have the first boy we met admit that posada could be had. His own mother had a room to rent. He laid aside the hat he was weaving and, picking up a bunch of enormous keys, stepped toward an adobe building across the street. But at that moment a patched and barefoot man rushed down upon us, likewise offering us posada in a startling burst of eloquence. For a time it looked as if, for once, instead of having to fight for lodgings, lodgings were going to fight for us. We settled the dispute by the simple expedient of asking each his

price.

"One real," answered the boy, defiantly.

"In my *oficina de peluquería*," said the man, haughtily, "it will cost you nothing. Moreover, foreigners always lodge there."

Behind his bravado he seemed so nearly on the point of weeping that we should no doubt have chosen his "office of barbering," even had there been no such gulf between the rival prices. He thanked us for the favor and, producing from somewhere about his person an enormous key, unlocked one of those unruly shop-doors indigenous to rural South America, above which projected a shingle bearing on one side the information that we were about to enter the "Peluquería Cívica," and on the other the name of our host, Santiago Muñoz. The keyhole was of the shape of a swan; others in the town, as throughout Nariño, had the form of a man, a horse, a goose, and a dozen more as curious. These home-made doors of Andean villages, be it said in passing, never fit easily; their huge clumsy locks have always some idiosyncrasy of their own, so that by the time the traveler learns to unlock the door of his lodging without native assistance, he is ready to move on.

This one gave admittance to the usual white-washed mud den, with a tile floor, furnished as a Colombian barber-shop, which means that it was chiefly empty and by no means immaculate, with two wooden benches, three tin basins and an empty water-pitcher, a home-made—or San Pablo-made—chair, a lame table littered with newspapers from a year to three months old, a scanty supply of open razors, strops, Florida water, soap, and brushes scattered promiscuously, a couple of once-white gowns of "Mother Hubbard" form for customers, and in one

corner a heap of human hair, black and coarse. Then there were the luxuries of a clumsy candlestick with six inches of candle, and a lace curtain worked with red and blue flowers to cut off the gaze of the curious, except those bold enough frankly to push it aside and stare in upon us. Santiago gave us full possession, key and all—we tossed a coin to decide which of us should burden himself with the latter—and informed us that a woman next door to the church sometimes supplied meals to travelers.

The benches were barely a foot wide, but they were of soft wood, and we were so delighted to find accommodations plentiful that I was about to make a similar suggestion when Hays yawned:

"Let's hang over here to-morrow."

Late next morning the barber wandered in upon us.

"Last year," he began, "another meestare"—in the Andes the word is used as a common noun to designate not only Americans, but Europeans and even Spaniards—"stopped here. You perhaps know him. His name was Guiseppe."

We doubted it.

"Surely you must know him," persisted the barber, "he was a foreigner, also."

As he talked, Santiago kept fingering a crumpled letter. Bit by bit he half betrayed, half admitted, that he gave free lodging to *estranjeros* because he wished to keep on good terms with the "outside" world in general, and in particular because he was seeking some means of sending six dollars to that strange town beyond the national boundaries from which all foreigners came. When he had explained himself at length, he turned the letter over to us. It was in

correct Spanish, mimeographed to resemble a typewritten personal communication, and told in several pages of flowery language what I can perhaps condense within reasonable limits:

CHIROLOGICAL COLLEGE OF CALIFORNIA

Inspiration Point,
Echo Park,
Los Angeles,
Cal. U. S. A.

Muy señor mío:

With great pleasure we send you a pamphlet on “Secret Force,” because we know that it contains information which will be of vast importance to you, as a means of being able to obtain that secret knowledge of the human character and of personal influence permitting you in a moment to know and understand the life of all other persons, to know their desires and their intentions, their habits and deficiencies, their plans and all that can be prejudicial to you. Following our system, you can read the character of your neighbors as an open book; if you possess the system “Natajara,” there will be no one who can deceive you; by means of it you can know beforehand under all circumstances all that others intend to do, and can direct them to your own entire satisfaction. By means of the system “Natajara” you can know exactly how much progress, how much love, how much health, and how much happiness the future has in store for you; and if it does not reserve for you as much as you desire, you can change its course to suit your ambitions.

Never, in the present century or those past, has a more potent knowledge been given to the world. It teaches precisely when and how to use the magic force by means of which one obtains the realization of all desires; it places those who possess it in a sphere superior to the generality of mankind, makes them masters of destiny.... I dare not tell you all the advantages of this knowledge, but I assure

you it is what you need that your life convert itself into a true success. I beg you to read the "Secret Force," letter by letter, and to send at once for the system "Natajara." Remember that the sending to you of the system for a mere $6 is only a special offer that we make, and if you wish to have the privilege of being the first in your locality to possess these great secrets, you ought to send this very day.

Without further particulars, etc., I take great pleasure in signing myself

Your grateful and affectionate servant,
(Signed) A. VICTOR SEGNO,
President per
Sec.

Dictated to No. 1 S.

There was no doubt that Santiago had followed the injunction to read the pamphlet letter by letter. Thanks to his Colombian schooling, that was the only way he could read it. But how was he to send the mere $6 to Inspiration Point without his fellow-townsmen knowing it and perhaps forestalling his opportunity to be the first in his locality to possess the powerful secret? There is no postal-order system between Colombia and the United States. He dared not send the cash, even if so large an amount of Nariño silver could be enclosed in a parcel the post would carry. So he had hidden the letter away and lain in wait for the rare foreigners that drift into San Pablo. While we read it, he sat on one of our "beds" nervously fingering his toes. When we had finished, he begged us to find some way of sending the money, imploring us, on our hopes of eternity, not to whisper a word of the secret to his fellow-townsmen. We promised to think the matter over.

"When are you going to open the shop this

morning?" asked Hays, as our host turned toward the door.

"Oh, I shall not trouble to open to-day," said the barber, in a weary voice, and wandered away with the air of a man who sees no need of common toil when he is on the point of becoming the dictator of fate in all his locality.

We hatched a scheme against his return. If we fancied he might forget the matter, we were deceived. Nothing else seemed to be weighing on his mind when he turned up again in the evening, dejected and worried. To have tried to explain the truth to him would have been only to convince him that we were agents of some rival house, sent down here purposely to ruin his chances of imposing his will upon San Pablo.

"If you feel you must have this system," I began, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I have some money in a bank in the Estados Unidos, and I will give you a personal check for $6 that you can mail to the Chirological College."

"Magnífico!" cried the barber, instantly transformed from the depths of gloom to the summits of glee, "A thousand thanks. That will be $600 in billetes of Colombia. I will get it at once...."

"It will be simpler," I suggested, "to wait until you hear the check has arrived; then send it to me. Naturally I am running no risk in trusting one of the chief men of San Pablo. Anyway, it would only be in payment for our magnificent lodgings."

The Colombian rarely needs much urging to accept a favor, and his formal protests soon died away. I sat down to write the check:

The Fake Bank,
920 West 110th Street
New York, U. S. A.
Pay to the order of the
Chirological College of
Los Angeles, Cal.,
the sum of six dollars ($6).

BARON MÜNCHAUSEN.

The barber carefully folded the valuable document and hid it away in his garments, promising to send it at the first opportunity—in a plain envelope, unregistered: "For," he explained, confiding to us a nation-wide secret, "the post-office officials always steal any letter they think has money in it, and to register it makes them sure it has."

The plan was cruel, but we could think of no other. No doubt Santiago waited many anxious months for the arrival of the "system"; certainly no longer than he would have if he had managed to send real money. Meanwhile, as Latin-American enthusiasm shrinks rapidly, it may be that he grew resigned to his failure to become the dictator of San Pablo and took up again the shaving of its swarthy faces and the cutting of its coarse, black hair.

Every house of San Pablo is a factory of "panama" hats. The "straw" is furnished by the *toquilla* plant, a reed somewhat resembling the sugarcane in appearance, which grows in large quantities in the valley of the Patía. If left to itself, the plant at length blossoms or "leaves" out in the form of a fan-shaped fern. Once it has reached this stage, it is no longer useful to the weaver of hats. For his purposes the leaves must be nipped in the bud, so to speak,—gathered while still in the stalk. The green layers that would, but for this premature end, have expanded

later into leaves, are spread out and cut into narrow strips with a comb-shaped knife. The finer the cutting, the more expensive the hat. Between the material of a $2 and a $50 “panama” there is no difference whatever, except in the width of the strips. Boiled and laid out in the sun and wind, these curl tightly together. They are then bleached white in a sulphur oven and sold to the weaver in the form of tufts not unlike the broom straw, or a bunch of prairie-grass. The Patía produces also a much heavier leaf, called *mocora*, from which not only coarse hats but hammocks are twisted.

The weaving of the “panama” begins at the crown, and the edge of the brim is still unfinished, with protruding “straws,” when turned over to the wholesale dealer. Packed one inside the other in bales a yard long, they are carried on muleback to Pasto. There, more skillful workmen bind in and trim the edges. They are then placed in large mud ovens of beehive shape in which quantities of sulphur are burned. Next they are laid out in the back yard of the establishment—with chickens, dogs, and other fauna common to the dwellings of the Andes wandering over them, be it said in passing—to bleach in the sun; they are rubbed with starch to give them a false whiteness, and finally men and boys pound and pound them on blocks with heavy wooden mallets, as if bent on their utter destruction, tossing them aside at last, folded and beaten flat, in the form in which they appear eventually in the show-windows of our own land. The best can be woven only morning or evening, or when the moon is full and bright, the humidity of the air being then just sufficient to give the fiber the required flexibility.

The local names for the entire process are:

"*Tejar*"—the task of the weaver.

"*Azocar*"—the drawing together and trimming of the protruding "straws."

"*Azufrar*"—the baking over burning sulphur.

"*Bañar en leche de azufre*"—washing in a sulphur bath.

"*Limpiar con trapo*"—scrubbing with rags dipped in starch.

"*Mazatear*"—beating with mallets.

"*Darle forma*"—pressing the hat tightly over a wooden form to give it the final shape, after which it is folded and ready for shipment. The complete process from buying to shipping costs the wholesale dealer about a dollar a dozen.

Virtually every inhabitant of San Pablo is, from childhood, an expert weaver of hats. We had only to glance in at a door to be almost sure to find the entire family, large and small, so engaged. They squatted on their earth floors, leaned in their doorways, wandered the streets, incessantly weaving hats; they gossiped and quarreled, they grew vociferous in political discussion, and still they went on weaving. They shouted across the plaza to the two "meestares" that were the guests of Santiago, the barber, a "Where-do-you-come-from-where-are-you-going-what-is-your-native-land?" in one single flow of words, without a pause for breath, but their fingers continued to weave hats as steadily as if they were automatic contrivances. We were told that in all the history of the town only one boy had been too stupid to learn to weave. He was now the priest of a neighboring hamlet. Some make a regular business of it and weave several hats a week, as many as one

"común" a day. Only the rare victim of an artistic temperament prides himself on putting his best efforts, and from two weeks to a month of work, into an article of fine weave, to receive a small fortune of eight or ten dollars in one windfall. It is in keeping with Latin-American character that only a very few choose this extended effort, instead of the short, ready-money task of weaving "comunes." The government telegraph operator of San Pablo—who probably averages a dozen messages a week—had a record of one hat a day, six hats a week, the year round. That was probably at least double the average output, for very few worked with any such marked industry. The overwhelming majority are amateur weavers, making one hat a week merely as an avocation in the interstices of their more regular occupations of cooking, planting, shopkeeping, school-teaching, and loafing. The boy in need of spending money, the village sport who plans a celebration, the Indian whose iron-lined stomach craves a draught of the fiery *caña*, the pious old woman fearful of losing the goodwill of her cura, all fall to and weave a hat in time for the Saturday market. Had they not these desires, unimportant though they may be, those in far-off lands who wear such head-dress would pay more dearly for a scarcer article. The more thrifty and ambitious begin to braid next week's hat on the way home from market. By Sunday noon the hut is rare in all the land around in which at least one "panama" has not begun to come into being; by Monday even the liquor-soaked have begun to see the necessity of getting busy, on penalty of suffering a dry week-end. The result is that the traveler can almost tell the day of the week by the stage of development of the hats he meets along the route.

The center of the Nariño hat industry is Pasto. Not that its inhabitants are weavers, but here orders are received from the outside world and distributed among the towns of the province. Thus Jesús Diaz, local agent of San Pablo, receives one morning a telegram worded:

"Suspend 12–15; start 11–13."

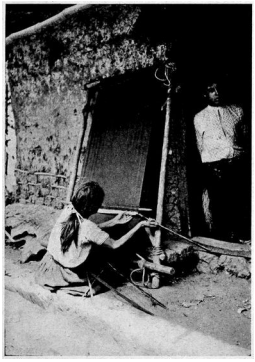
The figures refer to centimeters of brim and crown, the only variation of style being in the comparative width of these. "Castores" are made for the American trade; "parejos"—"equals," of which brim and crown are of the same width,—go to Spain; the "ratonera," of very narrow brim, finds its market in Habana. The weavers of San Pablo can seldom be induced to make the wide-brimmed hats for women, since these can be sold only in the United States and the market is very uncertain, "because there," a woman confided to us, "the style is always changing, as if they do not know their own minds." Unless they can be sold in our own land, these broad-brimmed hats are worthless, for the women of Nariño wear only what we would consider "men's styles." Those worn in San Pablo are of a square-topped, ugly form, roughly woven, as if each consigned to his own head those so carelessly made that they cannot be sold.

His telegram received, Jesús sends his subagents out through the hamlets with the new specifications, here and there to prepay something on the new order. For so from hand to mouth do many of the weavers live that they are frequently unable to buy the materials for the next hat without the agent's "advance." The "straw" for one hat costs from one to forty cents, depending on the fineness. The high price of the better grades is chiefly due to the long labor involved in the weaving, with, of course, the

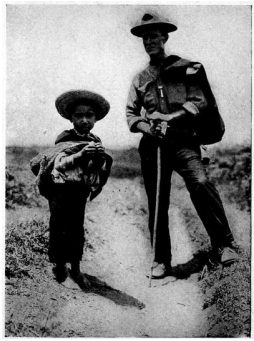
usual heavy middleman profits between maker and ultimate consumer. The daily hat of the telegraph operator brought him from ninety cents to a dollar; the final purchaser in the United States would pay $4 or $5 for it. The name “panama” is unknown in Nariño in connection with hats. None were ever made on the Isthmus; they took the name by which we know them because Panama was long the chief distributing center. To their makers they are known simply as “hats,” or, if it is necessary to specify, as *sombreros de paja* (straw hats), or *sombreros de pieza*. The best hats in all Colombia were said to be made in La Unión, a little town lying in plain sight on a sloping hillside to the east; but in spite of their patriotism, many admitted that the best on earth are those of *jipijapa*, made in Manabí, Ecuador. An old woman of La Unión had won many prizes and awards in national and even international expositions, not merely for her hats, which sold for a hundred *fuertes* here, and for $100 in Europe or the United States, but for aprons and other garments woven of the same “straw.” The people of San Pablo complained that the Japanese, especially of the Island of Formosa, were capturing much of the world’s trade with a clever imitation of Colombian hats, very fine and light, but of an inferior “straw” that has little durability.

Dawn, the next morning, found us clattering away down the cobble-stones of San Pablo, the gigantic key protruding from its swan-shaped hole until Santiago, the barber, saw fit to awake from his dreams of future glory. At the top of a range beyond we met the first *pastusos*, solemn-faced horsemen in winter garments and heavy ruanas of army blue. On the further slope and the rich uplands beyond there were many Indian hamlets, each thatched house in a

little field of its own. The golden-brown grain of our homeland, the almost forgotten wheat, began to appear in patches on the hillsides, with little fenced threshing-floors of trodden earth, round and round which the peasants chased their unharnessed horses. Every family had its patch of wheat, corn, or potatoes, according to the altitude. Among the latter were many species unfamiliar to us of the north, some with red, pink, or purple blossoms, whole acres of one color; for we were nearing the original home of the potato. In his own slow way the Andean Indian still cultivates as in the days of the Incas many varieties unknown to the world at large, among others one shaped like the “double-jointed” peanuts of baseball fame, almost liquid inside.



An Indian woman weaving *teque-teque* or native cloth, by the same method used before the Conquest



Hays, less considerable weight, and a fellow-roadster

Higher still grew quinoa, somewhat like our burdock in appearance, the top full of seeds not unlike the lentil,—a palatable grain which for some strange reason has never been carried to other parts of the world. Under progressive farmers and modern methods, the region of Pasto could be the richest agricultural section of Colombia. But the Indian clings tenaciously to the ways of his ancestors, though in this autonomous department he is a free or community owner and lives far more comfortably than do the estate laborers to the north. An American farmer would gasp at the laborious methods in vogue in a Colombian wheat-field. At harvest time, the phases of the moon being propitious, the saints and ancestral gods placated, men, women, and children wander out to the fields to cut the grain stalk by stalk, tie it into bundles as leisurely as if life were ten thousand years long, and, with a sheaf or two on their backs, toil away over the hills to their huts. There it is threshed by hand, or under the hoofs of animals; the chaff is separated by tossing the grain

into the air with wicker-woven shovels, after which the wheat is spread out on a mat in the sun for days, turned over frequently and carried into the house by night. Once dry, it is ground by hand under a stone roller, beaten into flour, and baked over a fagot fire in crude adobe ovens of beehive shape. Small wonder the two soggy little loaves of bread a woman raked out of one of these, and which I went on tossing from hand to hand, cost twice what a real loaf would in the United States.

A valley with a decided tip to the south drew us swiftly on, as only easy going can, after steep and toilsome trails, and the afternoon was still young when we halted at San José, twenty-two miles from the barber's door. Here it "made much cold," and we were warned that it would make even more so in Pasto. But native information on this point is seldom of much value to the traveler. In the Andes, climate varies not by season but by location or altitude, and very few of the country people have any notion why one town differs in temperature from another. Accustomed all their lives to the fixed climate of their birthplace, they consider "bitter cold," or "de un calor atroz" (of atrocious heat), a neighboring hamlet where the mercury really falls but a few degrees lower or rises a bit higher. They accept the variation with the same passive indifference that governs their lives from mother's back to the grave, their Catholic training stifling the query "why." The fact remains; the reason—"sabe Diós porqué."

It was September thirteenth, the first anniversary of the beginning of my Latin-American journey, when we swung on our packs again. In spite of our resolutions, the proximity of a city had the usual effect of increasing our ordinarily leisurely gait.

Sunrise overtook us striding down the great San Bernardo valley, a vast, well-inhabited gorge, cultivated far up the mountain sides. Sugarcane mottled the landscape here and there with its Nile-green. Every hut had its *trapiche*, a crude crusher with wooden rollers operated by oxen, or a still cruder one run by hand. Bananas were plentiful; oranges lay rotting in thousands along the way. As the sun rose higher the pastuso arrieros and horsemen threw the sides of their ruanas back over their shoulders, disclosing the bright red linings. Once it had crossed the river at the bottom of the valley, the road—and it was a real road now, speaking well of the industry of Nariño province—swung round and round the toothlike flanks of the mountain wall, rising ever higher for many miles, yet so gradually that we were scarcely conscious of climbing. Here at last we found ourselves in the Andes as the imagination had pictured them,—dry, mammoth, treeless, repulsive, wholly infertile mountains piled irregularly into the blue heavens on every hand. Under our feet the road suddenly began a buck and wing shuffle, and leaving it to its vagaries we scrambled and slid—particularly Hays in his smooth-bottomed moccasins—down toward the Juanambú river, to the pass where General Nariño fought one of the great battles of the war of independence. Two hours beyond, we came out on the nose of a cliff with a sheer fall of thousands of feet—which we took care not to take—affording a view of the country we had crossed for days past, the trail of forty-eight hours before climbing away into the sky at what seemed but a rifle shot away.

At Boesaco a woman agreed to prepare food if I would give her an “advance” sufficient to buy the necessary ingredients. When Hays arrived, we sat

down to a dinner so plentiful that we rose again with difficulty. Life is like that in the Andes. The traveler must feed to bursting when the opportunity offers, and starve at times without complaint. We had already done a reasonable day's tramping, but the nearness of Pasto overcame our better judgment. A few miles out, a group of pastusos, of almost full Caucasian blood, rode by me with silent disdain. Evidently they disapproved of our mode of travel. Just beyond, the road broke up into many faint paths across a meadow, the stony old trail of colonial days toiling up the face of the mountain to the right. I drew an arrow in the sand lest Hays, lost in some reverie, should fail to note the shod feet by which we tracked each other so easily in a world where all who walk go barefoot. A mile or two across the meadow I fell in with an excellent new highway, well engineered, that took to scolloping in and out along the flank of an enormous range, with a steady rise that never for an instant ceased as long as the day lasted. Here and there a clear, cold stream trickled from the still unhealed mountainside piled into the sky above me. The visible world was wholly uninhabited now, with cold, bleak winds sweeping across the vast panorama of ranges below and above; while ahead, great patches of mist half-concealed the dense, bearded forests through which the road climbed doggedly. In these solitary Berruecos ranges General Sucre was but one of many who had been murdered by brigands or conspirators, and every turn of the lonely road offered splendid ambush. Indeed, it seemed strange that Colombia had proved so free from highway violence, with no other policing outside the capital than, in the larger villages, an occasional mild-eyed youth in one piece of uniform, carrying a chain-twister or a home-made

"night-stick."

Toward nightfall a horseman overtook me. Six weeks on the road had left me in excellent condition, and in spite of the miles in my legs his animal could barely hold my pace. For a long time we mounted almost side by side, a new stretch of solitary highway staring us in the face at every turn, cold night settling down in utter solitude. It had grown wholly dark when we reached the summit, damp with the breath of the forest, an Arctic wind sweeping across it, with dense black night and a suggestion of vast mountain depths on all sides. The silent, gloomy pastuso was evidently suspicious of my intentions and refused to ride ahead. Nor was I too sure of him. The dislike of having an unknown traveler behind me had persisted since my tramp through Mexico, but there was no other choice than to take the lead. On the further side the road was poorer, with a sharp grade and hundreds of fine chances to sprain an ankle. Colombians do not travel by night when they can avoid it, and we met not a sign of life. The stony road descended so swiftly that I had difficulty in judging its pitch and a constant struggle to keep from falling on my face. Suddenly, at a chaos of paths, rocks, and jagged holes, as of some earthquake, I cross an unseen but noisy stream by a sagging log and, leaving the cautious horseman behind, saw him no more.

On and on the rough and broken world dropped before me, with never a moment of respite for my aching thighs. I was concluding I had lost the way entirely, when suddenly there burst upon me all the electric lights of Pasto—actually electric lights, forty-two of them, as I could count from my point of vantage, each of what would have been sixteen

candle-power had each had some fourteen candles to help out. I slipped on my coat in anticipation of entering a hotbed of civilization, for was not Pasto the largest city between Bogotá and Quito?

I have ever been over-hopeful. A city it was, to be sure, in the South American sense, but travelers, other than those of the mule-driver class, come rarely to Pasto, and those who do arrive decorously by day, and seek the homes of friends. I had been given the name of the "Hotel Central." The first passerby directed me to it, but added the information that they no longer "assisted," that is, gave meals.

"But they have rooms?"

"No, they never did have rooms. They were only a hotel."

Words have strange meanings in the far interior of South America.

All that was left me was the posada, an ancient, dark, and gloomy one-story building around a patio, full of the scent and noises of mules and horses, and of arrieros wrapped in their blankets. Even the corner policeman advised me to keep the "room" offered me and be thankful. It was fortunate that Hays had not arrived, for both of us could scarcely have crowded into the damp, earthy-smelling dungeon, to say nothing of occupying the plank "bed." Evidently he had found lodging somewhere along the way. During the day I had laid forty-two miles behind me, yet so fresh had I arrived that I went out for a stroll before retiring to pass a night almost as cold as in Bogotá, dressed in every rag I owned, with two adobe bricks as pillow, and as covering against the bitter cold that crept in even through the closed door—the privilege of hugging myself.

I had taken my coffee and wandered the streets of Pasto for an hour next morning when I suddenly sighted Hays, accompanied by a ruana-clad native. Usually as immaculate as conditions permitted, he was now unwashed, unshaven, bedraggled, drawn of features and generally disreputable, with a sheepish look that turned to relief at sight of me. He had a sad story to tell. Lost in some dream, he had overlooked my arrow in the sand and taken the old stony road over the Berruecos range. It was a shorter route in miles, and had the doubtful advantage of leading him past the very spot at which Sucre was assassinated; but the now abandoned trail of colonial days was in such a condition that he had several times come near breaking a leg, if not his neck. Limping at last into town, late at night, he had wandered the streets for some time in vain, when two natives asked if he was looking for lodging. Congratulating himself on his good fortune, he fell into step with them. A square or two further on one of the pair disclosed a policeman's "night-stick" hanging from his arm. Hays excused himself and turned away, only to be halted with the information that the law of Pasto required that any stranger arriving after eight at night be taken to the police station. The ex-corporal of the Zone, accustomed for years to order his subordinates to lock up other men, was appalled at the notion of being himself locked up. His affronted dignity favored the pair with some of the most expressive Castilian to be found within the covers of Ramsey. All in vain. At the station the lieutenant, who rose from a troubled sleep with a towel around his head, was courtesy itself, explaining that Pasto would not dream of subjecting so distinguished a foreigner to arrest. But as the night was late and the streets cold, they were doing

him the favor of lodging him, not in jail, but in the police barracks. Looked at in that light, and at that hour, the affair assumed a new aspect. Hays voiced his thanks and slipped from under his pack. A policeman led him to the squad room, gave him a reed mat to spread on the floor beside the score already asleep, and covered him with one of the red and blue ruanas of Pasto. On such terms I would gladly have spent the night under arrest myself. At midnight there had rushed into the room all the policemen on duty in town. Each dragged his relief to his feet and at once dived into the vacated "bed," leaving Pasto for a half-hour at the mercy of the lawless. At dawn the order to muster was sounded. The policemen each and all turned over for another nap, and only rose when the querulous little chief of police came to give the order in person, even then after considerable argument. Hays had started to take his leave, but was called back to give his pedigree. The government paper was in my hands. The chief apologized for the necessity, but put him in charge of the ruana-clad detective until he could examine the document in question.

We planned to spend several days in Pasto, but our efforts to get better lodgings did not meet with rosy success. We were once even on the point of renting a two-story house on a corner of the plaza—only to find that though it had room enough to accommodate a score of persons, it was furnished simply and exclusively with the wooden-floored bedsteads indigenous to the Andes. Meanwhile, the bridal chamber of the posada was vacated and we fell heirs to it—at nine cents a day each.

The capital of Colombia's southernmost department, claiming a population of 16,000, sits in the capacious

lap of the extinct Pasto volcano, seeming, in spite of its 14,000 feet elevation, a mere hill, for the city itself is more lofty than Bogotá. By no means so backward and fanatical a mountain town as described by its rivals to the north, it proved the most lively and progressive place we chanced upon between the Cauca and Ecuador. A highway links it with the outside world by way of Tuquerres and Barbacoas, thence by boat to the island port of Tumaco on the Pacific. Yet there remains much provincialism and a stout clinging to the ways and the medieval faith of colonial days. With few exceptions the entire population kneels in the street when any high churchman moves abroad. In one of the many overgrown churches is a glorified letter-box with a sign exhorting the "faithful" to write to San José, reputed to have his dwelling-place near the town, requests for those favors they wish granted, and enclosing something for José's coin-box. Once a week the letters are removed by a monk and, the worldly offering having been extracted, are burned before the statue of the saint. Wheeled traffic, of course, is unknown in Pasto; virtually everything of importance comes up from the sea on muleback. The most ambitious native handicraft we found was the making of *tiples*, crude guitars of red cedar and white pine.

At first sight Pasto has the aspect of a mighty mart of trade. Every street is lined from suburb to suburb by the wide-open doorways of shallow shops crammed with wares incessantly duplicated. To all appearances, there are more sellers than buyers. Pride in hidalgo blood, however diluted, is evidently so widespread that no one works who can in any way avoid it, all preferring to sit behind a counter in the hope of selling ten cents' worth of something a

day to earning as many dollars in some productive labor at the risk of soiling their fingers. Most numerous are the food-shops, run chiefly by women, who find ample time between clients to do their housekeeping in a Colombian way. An inventory of one display, sloping from sidewalk to ceiling, is a description of all. Large, irregular bricks of salt, pinkish in color, and rectangular blocks of the muddy-brown first-product of the sugar-cane, form the basis of every heap. Next in order are cones of half-refined sugar, a variety of home-made sweets, long slabs of yellow soap from which is cut whatever amount the purchaser desires; baskets of small potatoes, of shelled corn, and *quinoa*. Then there are oranges and bananas of several varieties, plantains, mangoes, strings of onions, heaps of one, two, and four-cent loaves of wheat bread, or *pan de queso*,—a mixture of flour and grated cheese—the largest of which barely attains the size of a respectable American biscuit. An abundance of canned goods, largely from the United States, invariably forms the top of the pyramid. These imported wares seem to have little sale among the natives, being kept in stock apparently in the fond hope of the arrival of stray gringos exuding wealth at every pore. To the townsmen, indeed, the prices are almost prohibitive. A can of “salmon,” filled with pale and ancient carp and deteriorated coloring matter, cost 65 cents; a five-cent box of American crackers was valued at 36 cents! “Tabacos,” as the black stogie of local make and consumption is called, a few iron-heavy cups and saucers, odds and ends of gaudy dishes, and small edibles and trinkets, fill in the interstices of every display.

Almost as numerous are the hawkers of strong drink, likewise women, who fall back upon their sewing

between customers. Competition is livelier in this line, and prices correspondingly lower. A bottle of Milwaukee beer sold at 40 cents. Countless cloth-shops, with bolts of cheap grade and of every color of the rainbow piled high in the doorways; *boticas*, or dingy little drug-stores of breath-taking prices; and establishments offering everything that can by any stretch of the imagination be rated hardware, appear to be the chief male pastimes. Like so many towns of the Andes, Pasto does not seem to indulge in any form of intellectual recreation; unless the art of conversation, so diligently practiced, can be rated such. There is not a bookstore in town. In a few shops are piled, among other wares, stacks of religious volumes and Catholic propaganda, including school-books dealing chiefly with the lives of the saints; but nothing more. It is a "changeless" town. There were once plenty of *medios* and, earlier still, *cuartillos*, we were informed; but these small pieces had all been given in alms to the Church. The smallest coin still in circulation is the *real*—the word *centavo* disappears at the department boundary. He who buys a lump of sugar or a salt rock must take home a needle, an onion, or a banana in change. At the post-office, where the *real* is accepted at something less than in the public markets, the purchaser may take his change in stamps, though the pastuso custom seems to be to give it to the clerk as a "tip."

High as it lies, Pasto is but two days muleback from the great *montaña*, the hot lands and the beginning of the Amazon system. Just out beyond the cold mountain lakes of La Laguna comes a quick descent to Caquetá and the great jungles of eastern South America. Hence we saw in the streets of Pasto not merely the now familiar "civilized" Indian of the

highlands, plodding behind his no more stolid bulls laden with the produce of his chacras, but also no small number of “wild men” from the wilderness. These have a free, happy, independent air, in marked contrast to the manner of the dismal mountain Indian; none of the cautious, laborious, canny attitude toward life of those subject to the environment of high altitudes. They appear to hold the domesticated Indian in great scorn, and mix far more freely with the other classes of the population. Dressed in what could easily be mistaken for the running pants of an athlete, their marvelously developed bronzed legs are bare in any weather. A light ruana covers their shoulders. A few wear a gray wool skullcap; most of them only their matted, thick, black hair, cut short across the neck in “Dutch doll” fashion. There were always several women in each group, but one must look sharply to make sure of the sex, dressed identically like their male companions, bare legs, hair-cut, and all.

We took leave of Pasto four days after our arrival. That night—Hays having his usual luck in winning the single wooden bench—I slept on a hairy cowhide on the earth floor of an Indian hut beside the Ancasmayu, or Blue River, about the northern limit of the Inca Empire at its height; and all night long guinea-pigs kept running over me, squeaking their incessant treble grunt, gnawing at anything that seemed edible. Besides the llama, and, perhaps, the *allco*, a mute dog that is said to have been exterminated by the hungry Conquistadores, the only domestic animal of the Andes at the time of the Conquest were these lively little rodents so absurdly misnamed in English, since they are neither of the porcine family nor known in Guinea, being indigenous to South America. The Spaniards more

reasonably called them *conejos de India*—"rabbits of India." To the natives they were, and still are, known as *cui* (kwee), the origin of which term is evident to anyone who has listened to their grunting squeak through an endless Andean night. In pre-Conquest days—the llama being too valuable an animal to eat, even had the herds not been the personal property of the Inca—the cui probably constituted the only meat, except wild game, of the Indian's scanty diet. To-day every hut in the Andean highlands is overrun by them. The gente decente facetiously assert that the Indians keep them for two purposes,—to eat, and as a means of learning the art of multiplication.

Next day the road was all but impassable, or we should have reached Ipiales on the frontier that evening. Not that it was a bad road, as roads go in the Andes, but rain had fallen most of the night, and we skated down each slope in constant expectation of a mud-bath, to claw our way almost on hands and knees to the succeeding summit. Once we tobogganed thousands of feet clear through a town in which we had planned to eat, literally unable to stop until we brought up against a luckily placed boulder on the edge of a stream in a roaring gorge far below.

At Iles, where Hays, hurrying on in quest of cigarettes which he detested only next to smokelessness, for once arrived before me, I found dinner already preparing and my companion burdened with the key to a lodging. A tinsmith had left off work for the afternoon that we might have undisputed possession of his shop, stocked with a few ordinary articles of tinware, but given over chiefly to the fabrication of tin saints. Strange to say, once they had been sanctified by the priest, the results of his labors were as sacred to the tinsmith as

to his fellow-townsmen. Iles was just finishing a huge new church. The only implements of the workmen were shovels, for the whole building was of native mud, even to the roof-tiles. The entire Indian population, male and female, impressed into service by the padre, trotted in constant procession from the spot where the clay was mixed with mountain grass and trampled with bare feet, carrying on their heads tiles filled with the material, the women bearing also their babies slung on their backs. The free labor system of the Incas, inherited by the Conquistadores, is still in vogue in the isolated towns of the Andes, the taskmaster of to-day being the village cura.

As we neared the frontier, population grew less and less frequent, and there were long stretches without an inhabitant. In the afternoon we turned aside from the "royal highway" to visit the "Virgen de las Lajas," the most famous shrine in Colombia. To it come pilgrims from all the Republic, from Ecuador and even further afield, to be cured of their ills. On the way down to it we fell in with an old man driving an ass, and heard the simple story of the founding of the sacred city. Centuries ago the Virgin had appeared here and given a small child a statue of herself—"descended straight from heaven, because it has a real flesh-and-blood face that bleeds if it is pricked, or if hair is pulled out." Then she had ordered the Bishop of Riobamba to build a chapel in the living rock of the mountain on the site of the apparition. Our informant was vociferous in his assertion that the Virgin daily cured victims of lameness, blindness, barrenness, and a hundred other ailments; but he offered no explanation of the fact that though he had lived in Las Lajas all his life, he was almost sightless from ophthalmia.

The village, stacked up the sheer wall of a gorge in the far depths of which roared a small but powerful stream, had about it that something peculiar to all "sacred" cities,—an intangible hint of unknown danger, perhaps from fanaticism, of ignorance, something of the sadness that comes upon the traveler at such evidences of the gullibility of mankind. Several "posadas de peligrinos," crude copies of the *hospices* of Jerusalem, and many little shops and stalls like those of Puree, town of the Juggernaut, furnish pilgrims with lodgings, food, blessed trinkets, and tons of English candles to burn before the miraculous image. Ragged boys left off their top-spinning to beg "una limosnita—a little alms for the Virgin," as we descended through the town and went down by the sharpest zigzags to the white, four-story temple with its twin towers, hanging on the edge of the rocky gorge like encrusted foam of the waterfall that pitched into it. Though they make long journeys to implore her favor, the pilgrims have not reverence enough for their Virgin to reform their unspeakable personal habits, and every story of the holy edifice was an offence to eyes and nose. The worker of miracles was the usual placid faced doll in rich vestments and gleaming jewels—or more likely paste imitations of those which the monks keep safely locked away in their vaults—behind a thick glass screen against which sad-eyed Indians flattened their noses in supplication.

The rolling hills of Ecuador lay close before us when we strode into Ipiales, the last town of Colombia and the coldest place we had known since our last northern winter. At this rate the equator would prove ice-bound. The place was said to have much commerce with the neighboring Republic, but the

only signs we saw of it were a few troops of shivering donkeys. A mere five miles separates Ipiales from the frontier, and we had soon left behind the land of "Liberty and Order" and entered that of the equator. The road, crawling dizzily along the face of a death-dealing precipice, descends to a collection of huts called Rumichaca—Quichua for "rock bridge," which it is, indeed, for the boundary river, Carchi, races under a huge natural arch across which the camino real passes without a tremor. To our surprise, there were no frontier formalities whatever. Ecuador was not even represented; the two Colombian customs officials, diffident, slow-witted, but kindly pastusos, asserted that no duties were collected on goods passing between the two countries, unless they were of foreign origin. Their task was merely to keep account of whatever passed the boundary; for what purpose was not apparent, unless it was to provide a sinecure for political henchmen.

An hour later we were surprising the Ecuadorians lolling about the bare, sanded plaza of Tulcán. Only a lone telegraph wire had followed us over the frontier, yet the two countries blended into each other so completely that an uninformed traveler would not have guessed that he had crossed an international boundary. In the *cuartel* were housed a half-hundred soldiers, rather insolent fellows despite their Indian blood, their gaily colored ruanas giving Tulcán a needed touch of color, engaged in the rather passive occupation of protecting their little wedge-shaped country from the pressure of the larger one above. By the time I had lessened our burden of silver by changing it into bills of the country, Hays had fallen in with the *jefe político*, the commander-in-chief of all the canton, who bade us

make our home in his bachelor parlor as long as we chose to remain. The room was the most magnificent we had seen since Bogotá, with long, solemn rows of upholstered chairs, straight-backed and dignified, framed family portraits that would not have gladdened an artist's heart, and two long but sadly narrow sofas covered with a horse-hair cloth that, after weeks on the planks and trodden-earth floors of Colombia, seemed elusive luxury personified. The jefe bade us keep our hats on, and left us with the Quito newspapers of a week back, our first touch with the outside world in some time.

I suspected that Tulcán's chief dignitary had not treated us so regally out of mere kindness of heart; and the suspicion was duly verified. We had stretched out on our elusive couches, and Hays was already asleep—or feigning it most successfully,—when the jefe arrived from a merry evening with his aids and drew me into a conversation that promised to have no end. Under the guise of giving me information, he set himself to finding out, entirely by indirection, what might be our real motive in entering Ecuador by the back door, unannounced. Though he never for a moment suggested his suspicions openly, it was a late hour before he gave any evidence of being convinced that there was nothing sinister and perilous to the welfare of his country behind our simple story. Then he grew confidential and announced that, as men who had, and might again be, wandering in foreign parts, we were sure to run across two miscreants on whom he would like to lay his hands. One was Deciderio Vanquathem of Belgium, described as a ferrotype photographer and a sleight-of-hand performer of no mean ability. He had married a cousin of the jefe and borrowed a thousand sucres of our host to start a

magic-lantern show, only to disappear a week later leaving his wife, but not the thousand sucres, behind. The impression left by the jefe's complaint was that if he had reversed the process, there would have been no hard feeling. We were asked to keep an eye out also for one Francisco Fabra, boasting himself a Frenchman, who had written from "Ashcord" (Akron?), Ohio, proposing marriage to one of the jefe's sisters, but who had dropped out of sight upon receipt of her photograph. "No se debe burlarse así de las mujeres—no man should play such jests on a woman," cried the jefe fiercely.

Had we not fallen in next morning with two Indians likewise bound, I am not sure we should ever have reached San Gabriel. We were soon engaged in an utterly unpeopled series of páramos, lofty mountain-tops swept by icy winds, covered only with tufts of yellow bunch-grass and myriads of "frailejones," clumps of mullen-like leaves on a palm-like stem from six inches to two feet high, that peered at us through the mist like shivering, diffident mountain children. Our companions assured us that the plant was thus known because of its resemblance to a priest in his pulpit, and that the leaves were highly efficacious against headache. There was also the *achupalla*, a kind of wild pineapple with sword-like leaves that gave it the appearance of that form of cactus known as "Spanish bayonet," the heart of which, resembling a large onion or a small cabbage, is sold as food in the markets of the region. Then, for a long way, the trail led through a moss-grown forest reeking in mud, which we could only pass by jumping from bog to bog and clinging to trees along the way.

San Gabriel sits conspicuously, and apparently

unashamed, on the summit of an Andean knoll, its streets falling away into the valley on every side. In the outskirts we came upon a game new to both of us. In the irregular field that formed the plaza before a bulking mud church, a half-hundred barefoot Indian men and boys, each in a ruana of distinctive gay color reaching to the knees, were pursuing a sphere about half the size of a football. Each player had bound on his right hand, like the *cesta* of the Spanish *pelota* player, a large, round instrument of rawhide, of the form of a flat snare-drum or a double-headed banjo. The rules of the game were evidently similar to handball or tennis. Hoping for some suggestion of aboriginal originality, I asked a player what the game was called.

“Pelota (ball), señor,” he answered laconically.

I might almost have guessed as much.

“And that?” I persisted, pointing to the banjo-shaped instrument.

“Guante (glove),” he replied.



Quito lies in a pocket of the Andes, at the foot of Pichincha, more than 10,000 feet above sea level

A really bright man might have guessed that, also. Evidently the tongue of the Incas had left little trace in San Gabriel. Suddenly the bell of the whitewashed church whanged. The players piled their "gloves" hastily in the form of a cross, and every living person in the plaza, male or female, snatched off their hats and poured into the place of worship, from which arose some weird species of music as we pushed on into the town.

A letter from the jefe of Tulcán gave us the entrée to the parlor of one of his relatives. The fortnightly mail had just arrived, and Don Manuel was dictating letters to his daughter, who wrote slowly and painfully in a school-girl hand, dipping an ancient steel pen into a medieval inkwell between each word. When we returned at dark from a dingy little shop in which supper consisted chiefly of *quimbolos*, —a kind of corn pudding wrapped in corn-husks—we found Don Manuel, his wife, and four daughters all gathered in a family conference over the letter, each offering suggestions, not as to its subject matter, but on the dotting of the "i's" and the crossing of the "t's," a controversy which raged long and vociferously. Then there came marching into the room a huge mattress under which, on close inspection, we made out the feet of an Indian boy, and the family announced that they were going to visit a *pariente*—a polite subterfuge to withdraw and leave us free to go to bed. The parlor was typical of the "best room" of well-to-do rural South Americans. A forest of chairs in shrouds and a chaos of gaudy bric-a-brac cluttered a chamber musty with little use. On the walls were framed portraits of the pudgy family ancestors back to the days of ruffles and powdered wigs, all draped with mourning crêpe. The family library consisted of barely a half dozen books,

all of the general style of Tomás á Kempis' "Imitación de Cristo," except for a copy of an agricultural journal in Spanish, published in Buffalo.

There are three routes from San Gabriel to Ibarra. To our surprise, we learned that all of them, far from following the high plateau, descended again into the hot country, for the valley of the Chota cuts a mighty slash entirely across Ecuador a bit north of the Imbabura volcano. The Indians told us the road was *pedroso*. It was the most exact information we ever had from men of their race. Anything more stony would be difficult to imagine. During all the afternoon there was not a moment in which we were not descending swiftly, our thigh muscles set with the tautness of brake-rods, by an ever more stone-strewn road that curved in and out along the flanks of a barren range, forming loops as perfect as the written "m" of an expert in penmanship; on our left an enormous gash in the earth, dreary, desert-brown, with no other vegetation than the cactus—strangely enough called "méjico" in this region,—on our right, so close it all but grazed our elbows, the tawny, shale mountainside, seeming to rise and grow as we descended. Where the cold winds of the highlands turned tepid, Indians disappeared. For a long space there was no sign of man. With every turn of the road the heat grew more tropical. A green spot appeared almost directly beneath us, hazy as a crumpled green rag with an indistinct light shining behind it. Then two negroes passed, the first we had seen since leaving the Cauca. The road pitched headlong down a slope, donkeys and more negroes appeared, and the green patch developed into fields of sugarcane. Beyond them, by a wooden-roofed bridge, we crossed the Chota river and found ourselves at sunset in the "Caserío de la Chota."

Tropical huts of reeds and thatch, quite unlike the thick-walled adobe dwellings of the highlands, even in form, lay scattered along the further bank. The entire population was jet black in color; the life of the place as different from the plateau above as if we had suddenly been transported to another continent. Boisterous laughter broke often on the thickening dusk; above the chattering tongues resounded frequently the screams of an exploded jest or a sudden quarrel. A piccaninny bawled lustily, startling us into the realization that we had never yet heard an Indian baby cry. The insolence of these descendants of the slaves once imported in large numbers for the sugar plantations of Ecuador, who in the half century since the abolition of slavery had drifted into this tropical valley to bask in the sun, was in striking contrast to the obsequiousness of the Andean Indian.

Beside the two rows of straw and reed shacks of the negroes stood a government building of stone and mud, one end of which was the telegraph office. In it the operator, who had left two days before to “visit some relatives for a few hours,” had locked two kids that bleated incessantly. The open portion of the building was a shambles. Thirty-two miles from the top to the bottom of the Andes had left our feet no fit standing-place, even after soaking them in the Chota; yet we hesitated long before attempting to clear a space to lie down. Luckily, I still had a candle-end in my pack. In a far corner some energetic traveler had built a cot of reeds laid across two sticks, but it had long since rotted to uselessness. Rumor had it that the negroes of Chota were skilled assassins, and the demeanor of the hamlet was by no means reassuring. We laid our weapons beside us on the stone floor, but dared not close the door for fear of drowning in

our own sweat. All the night through I woke frequently with the sensation of some one creeping in upon us, but dawn broke without any definite proof that the peril had been anything worse than the offspring of an overheated imagination.

It would be task enough to climb from Chota to Ibarra on the strength of a hearty meal; to make it from a lazy negro village, where not even a swallow of coffee was to be had, approached torture. Hour after hour we toiled upward through a choking desert of sand and broken stone, pitched at the angle of a steep stairway. There runs a story of the Chota, suggestive of the barrier it presents to modern progress. Archer Harman, the American who lifted the railway of Guayaquil to the plains of Quito, strolling along the streets of the Ecuadorian capital one day, chanced to meet M——, one of his American engineers.

"M——," he said, shifting his cigar to the other cheek, "get out of here to-morrow morning and see what the chances are for a railroad to Bogotá."

The engineer sallied forth next day on muleback, with such equipment or lack thereof as can be had in Quito in a hurry. Three months later he rode back into the city of the equator.

"Well, you're back, eh?" said his chief. "What'd it cost us to run her through the Chota valley?"

"About seventy miles of 6% grade in shale," replied the engineer.

"Hum!" said Harman, "There won't be any railroad to Bogotá."

Which is one of the many reasons why the nebulous "Pan-American Railway" still exists only in the minds

of inexperienced dreamers.

Hours up, we began to pass groups of meek, well-built Indians, easily distinguishable by their costume from the tribes to the north. They spoke a guttural yet sibilant language that could be none other than Quichua, the ancient tongue of the Incas, and I took occasion to test the vocabulary we had gleaned, by putting an unnecessary question:

"*Maypi ñan Ibarrata?*"

To which the oldest of the group replied at once in fluent, though accented Spanish, without the shadow of a smile:

"Sí, señor, this is the road to Ibarra; derechito—straight ahead."

Before noon we were sharing a gallon of chicha at the top of the range, several world-famous volcanoes thrusting their white heads through the clouds about us. Ibarra and her fertile green slopes were plainly visible; a dozen villages dotted the far-reaching landscape, and the two roads to Quito wound away over the opposite flanks of cloud-capped Imbabura, towering into the sky beyond and cutting off half the southern horizon. Below us spread the famous Yaguarcocha, the "Lake of Blood." At the height of his power Huayna Ccápac, thirteenth Inca, had pushed his conquests over the equator, when the Caranquis, a warlike tribe of the valley before us, revolted. The army sent against them exterminated the Caranqui warriors and threw their bodies into the lake, "turning its waters blood-red," according to the legend, and giving it the name it bears to this day. Its shores were white with encrusted salt and, like so many lakes of the Andean highlands, so completely surrounded by reedy swamps that we

were forced to abandon the swim we had promised ourselves before entering the principal city of Ecuador north of the capital.

Ibarra is a still and dignified old town of some 12,000 inhabitants, founded in 1606 under the Spanish viceroy from whom it took its name, as a residence for the white men of the region between Pasto and Quito, on the site of the old Indian village of Caranqui. In spite of the extreme fertility of the surrounding valley and its peerless climate, many of its houses stood empty, and several buildings of colonial days were still the ruins the great earthquake of many years ago had left them. The keeper of the little eating-house that actually and publicly announced itself, abandoned to us her own quarters, densely furnished with photographs, frail chairs, tables, sofas, cane lounge, and an immense canopied bed, to say nothing of the extraordinary luxury of a newspaper only two days old. To offset the pleasure of the first real bed in weeks, however, the town kept us awake most of the night with a local fiesta. We had been so lacking in foresight as to arrive on the day sacred to the “Virgen de la Merced.” The celebration began early in the afternoon. An endless train of Indians in a bedlam of colors trooped across the town under great bundles of dry brush gathered far away in the hills, a haughty chief on horseback riding up and down the line giving his orders in sputtering Quichua. Men, women, and children deposited their loads on the bare plaza before a weather-tarnished old church, and ambled away for more. Five immense heaps had been laid out in the form of a cross when a priest sallied forth to sprinkle them with holy water. In the thickening dusk the entire town gathered amid a deafening din of battered church bells, the explosion

of thousands of home-made fireworks and “cannon crackers,” the blare of a tireless band, and the howling of the populace and its swarming curs. The brush cross was lighted by a priest in rich vestments, and a pandemonium that may have been pleasing to the sleepless Virgin raged the whole night through.

The driftwood of the festival, in the form of chicha victims sprawled on their backs in streets and gutters, littered the town when we set out to climb to the frozen equator at Cayambe. A wide highway strode up through the Indian town of Caranqui, birthplace of Atahuallpa, best loved son of Huayna Ccápac and of Paccha, daughter of the conquered Scyri who once ruled the territory of the Quitus, and away due southward over the left shoulder of Imbabura. For the first miles it was so crowded with Indians in crude red blankets, heavy, gray felt hats, and bare legs, that it seemed the migration of some tribe from another world. All sidestepped like Hindu coolies and even the women touched their hats to us as they passed, greeting us sometimes in Spanish, but more often in Quichua. To the west rose the snow-topped peak of Cotacache, sharp as a dog’s tooth, and the view of Ibarra and her fertile valley opened up below and behind us like an unfolding map. Then a ridge wiped out town and jogging Indians, and left us only the gaunt, spreading mountain world to look upon.

Thirty miles lay behind us when we entered Cayambe, a drowsy, tumble-down place of no great size, the chill of the blue ice-fields capping the great volcano of the same name that bulks into the heavens close beside it, sweeping through the dreary streets unhampered. Next day a long and tiresome eight leagues led across a desolate and parched

country, fissured by enormous earthquake cracks. But for the discovery of a new drink,—*guarango*, of unknown concoction—we might have stumbled across the sand-blown equator in far worse state than those who first pass it within the realms of Father Neptune. A drought had fallen upon the region so long since that even the cactus had given up in despair. All day long Cayambe stood forth clear and blue over our left shoulders, and far off to the hazy southwest the horizon was walled by a vast range, the highest point of which was evidently Pichincha, at the foot of which lay the end of our present journey.

With our goal so near at hand, we found it difficult to hold ourselves overnight in the semi-tropical oasis of Guayllabamba, the sandy streets of which were half paved with the stones of alligator pears. By daylight we had descended to the river and begun the unbroken climb of more than 5000 feet to the top of the succeeding range. A wide highway now led due west between cactus hedges through a country so desert dry that both stock and people seemed to be choking; and the fear came upon us that Quito, too, would be suffering such a famine of thirst that our plan to take up temporary residence there would turn to disappointment. Another steep, tongue-parching climb brought to view all Pichincha and its surrounding world, yet nowhere was there any sign of Quito. The highway swung south, rising and falling gently here and there between dry fields fenced with cactus or mud walls, a town tucked away in the wrinkle of the range beside us. In a shelter at the roadside an Indian woman, selling steaming soup with a bit of meat and tiny potatoes in it, served us in a single earthenware plate with wooden spoons as impassively as she did her own

people. Further on, groups of aborigines were burning off, over brush fires, the bristles of slaughtered pigs that lay in batches of a half-dozen, split open, at the road edge. A carriage passed, the first we had seen in weeks; then an automobile; a man in "European" clothes, wearing shoes, yet actually walking; a *clean* child of well-to-do parents. A motley crowd, chiefly Indians in gaudy ponchos, came and went; large buildings grew up on either side of us; the highway, passing through green groves of eucalyptus pungent with the smell of "Australian gum," took on the name of "18th of September,"—though it was really the 26th—and all at once Quito in its May-like afternoon burst out before us in its mountain hollow, a great grassy mound cutting off the horizon on the south. Fifty-seven days had passed since we had walked out of the central plaza of Bogotá, during fifteen of which we had done no walking. Our pedometer reported the distance thence 844 miles, and we had each spent a dollar for each day of the journey. Hays had set out weighing 180, and I, 160; we arrived weighing 160 and 161, respectively. We may not have presented quite so bedraggled an appearance as the remnant of Gonzalo Pizarro's band on their return from the wilderness of the Amazon, but we were certainly no fit subjects for a drawing-room.

CHAPTER VI
THE CITY OF THE EQUATOR

I settled down for months in Quito. Not only were my Canal Zone experiences to be written, but I had long since planned to become a bona fide resident of a typical small South American capital. A letter of introduction won me quarters in the home of Señor Don Francisco Ordoñez V, in the calle Flores, while Hays hung up his hat in even more sumptuous surroundings around the corner.

But not so fast! Not even whole-hearted "Don Panchito" would have received me in the state of sartorial delapidation of our arrival. The people of Quito are somewhat less rigid disciples of Beau Brummel than those of Bogotá, but they are still far from negligent in dress. Most of the clothes indispensable to our entrance into the ranks of the gente decente had been mailed in Jirardot, the rest had been turned over to the American "drummer" in Cali. The first shock Quito had in store for us was the information that no parcel of any shape or description had come from Colombia in months, the second was the discovery that the traveling-man had not arrived. It was hard to realize that we had outwalked all the established means of

transportation in this equatorial land.

An unavoidable round of the shops wiped out the remnant of my savings as a policeman, and brought me down again to the letter of credit that had lain fallow more than a half year. Except for tailor-made suits, the cost of replenishing a wardrobe was startling. Ready-made clothing for men is rare in the cities of the Andes, and it is far more economical to be fitted to order in one of the *sastrerías* that abound in almost every street,—dingy little rooms, their fronts all doorway, in which sit anemic half-breed youths sewing languidly, yet incessantly, now and then carrying the charcoal-filled "goose" out into the street to blow out the ashes, and as dependent on the passing throng for inspiration as the craftsmen of Damascus. As in the more northern capital, the chief line of demarkation between the *gente* and the *pueblo* of Quito is the white collar. Naturally, the tendency is to make it as wide and distinct as possible. I had canvassed the entire city before I found my customary brand of neckwear—at four times its American price—only to discover that the lowest collar in stock was designed for some species of human giraffe.

"You misunderstand me," I protested, "I did not ask for a cuff."

"This is a collar, señor," cried the shopkeeper.

"Something lower, please."

"But this is a very low collar! It is so low that no one in Quito will wear it, and we are not importing any more of this brand."

In the matter of shoes, I found at last a Massachusetts product that might have served; but when I had beaten the dealer down to about twice the American

price, a seven was found to be the largest size in stock. The merchant seemed on the verge of tears.

“Why, señor,” he gasped, gazing resentfully at the offending member, “there is not a foot in Quito as large as that shoe.”

He did not mean exactly what he said, but it was natural that he should have had in mind only the minority of quiteños who wear shoes. These squeeze their feet into articles of effeminate, toothpick shape for custom’s sake, as they force their necks into collars that come little short of hanging, and have their trousers made sailor-fashion, that their feet may look still more ladylike. One cannot, of course, pose as an aristocrat on the broad hoofs of an Indian. In the end I was forced to submit to *botas de hule*, an imitation patent-leather shoe made in Guayaquil.

Hays concluded that with a general overhauling he could pass muster until our bundles arrived. But on one point immediate renewal was unavoidable. He paused in the doorway of one of the little sewing dens to ask:

“Can you make me a pair of trousers by Saturday night?”

In spite of having pillowed for weeks on Ramsey, Hays never could remember that Castilian trousers come singly.

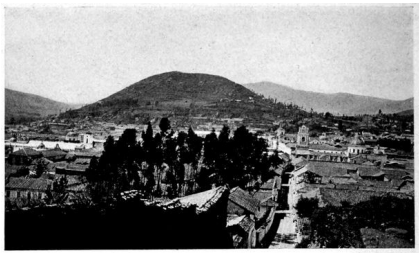
“Un par, señor!” cried the tailor, “Ah, no, that is impossible so soon. I can make you a trouser by then, but not two of them. Then, while you are wearing the one, I can perhaps make the other, if the señor is in such haste.”

“Oh, all right,” said Hays, suddenly recalling that trousers are—I mean is—singular in Spanish, “go

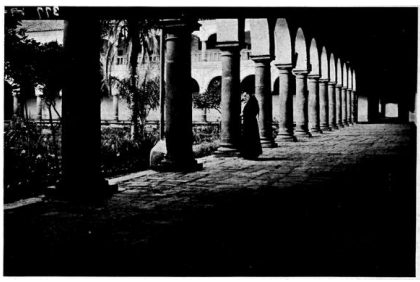
ahead. I'll try to get along with one over Sunday."

The error persisted, however. It was not three days later that he was halted at the door of his lodgings by a whining beggar.

"Una caridad, caballero! Have you not perhaps some old clothes to give a poor unfortunate?"



A view of Quito, backed by the Panecillo that bottles it up on the south. There are six *conventos* in sight



A patio of the Monastery of San Francisco, one of the eighteen monasteries and convents of Quito, said to be the most extensive in the Western Hemisphere

"Sure," said the generous ex-corporal of police. "I'll bring you down a pair of trousers."

He did so, whereupon the beggar growled angrily:

"But you said a pair! Where is the other one?"

Few quiteño dwellings are equipped with bathrooms. I halted a passerby to inquire for a public *casa de baños*, and was directed to the foot of the calle Rocafuerte.

"Hot baths?" I queried, suspiciously.

"Certainly, señor," he answered haughtily; "If you go there any morning about ten, when the sun is shining, you will find them quite caliente."

A crumbling old adobe gate, marked "Baños de Milagro," gave entrance to an aged two-story building of the same material. Passing through this, I was astonished to find spread out before me what looked like an immense outdoor swimming-pool. It was illusion. Nearer approach showed a broad sheet of water barely six inches deep, a half-acre of it warming in the sun. I suddenly recalled that the same word serves in Spanish for all degrees of temperature from hot to luke-warm. About the basin were many little adobe dens, in the center of each a stone basin some four feet deep, with steps leading down into it. The fee was a mere *real* (five cents), for the streams that course down the face of Pichincha are abundant. An Indian scrubbed out the pool with a broom fashioned from a bundle of fagots, and turned it full of a water so clear that I could have read a newspaper at the bottom. But the heating apparatus was not particularly effective. When the icy mountain water had filled the stone basin, cold as only a shaded spot at this altitude can be, the uninured gringo could only grit his teeth, clutch

desperately at his 60-cent bar of imported English soap, and plunge in—and quickly out again. One such experience was enough to explain why Quito shows so decided an aversion to the bath.

My residence in the city was all but nipped in the bud by a mere matter of red tape. Again the shock was administered at the post-office. When I presented the registry slips for the package of notes on which my proposed volume depended, they were all there, sure enough, the seals still unbroken. But as I opened them for customs inspection, the startled employees cried out in horrified chorus:

“Señor, it is against the law to send manuscript by mail in Ecuador!”

“These were mailed in the United States, where it is not against the law.”

“No importa! It is illegal for them to ride in the Ecuadorian mails. They will have to be confiscated by the government.”

“What can the government do with them?” I asked, innocently.

“Burn them, of course,” replied the clerk.

Luckily the laws of Ecuador are not so inexorable and incorruptible as those of some other lands, but I passed a far from pleasant hour before I discovered that saving fact. Just where the line is drawn between “manuscrito” and mere letters, I was never able to learn. At any rate the sender of the offending notes is still “wanted,” I believe, to serve a year in the penitentiary of Quito.

I had not been three days in the city of the equator when I began to feel the necessity for exercise. The “best families” lead a very sedentary and physically

idle existence, virtually spending their lives at the bottom of a hole in the ground, for such the central plaza and the few adjoining squares about which it is customary to stroll might be called. Yet there are innumerable views and picturesque corners to reward him who will climb out; and climb he must, for the city lies in a fold of the skirts of Pichincha, out of which almost every street mounts more or less steeply.

The main plaza is the heart of Ecuador. In its center, instead of the "handsome brass fountain" of Stevenson's day, rises a tall, showy monument topped by a bronze Victory or Liberty, or some other exotic bird, while at its base cringes an allegorical Spanish lion with a look of pained disgust on his face and an arrow through his liver. Much of the square is floored with cement, blinding to the eyes under the equatorial sun and only mildly relieved by staid and too carefully tended plots where violets, pansies, yellow poppies, and many a flower known only to the region bloom perennially. Its diagonal walks see most of Quito pass at least once a day. But neither Indians nor the ragged classes pause to sit on its grass-green benches; nor may anyone carrying a bundle pass its gates—unless the guard chances to be doing something other than his appointed duty. On the east the square is flanked by the two-story government "palace," housing the presidency, the ministry, both houses of congress, the custom-house, Ecuador's main post-office, and considerable else, yet still finding room for several cubby-hole shops under its portico. To the south, siding on, rather than facing the square, its towers barely rising above the roof, is the low cathedral, in which are the tombs both of Sucre and his reputed assassin, Flores, the "Washington of Ecuador." The third and fourth sides

are flanked by the archbishop's palace and the municipality, both with *portales*, arcades beneath which are dozens of little den-like shops, and filled from pillar to pillar with hawkers and their no less motley wares.

Every street of the city is roughly cobbled, with a row of flagstones along its center for Indian carriers and four-footed beasts of burden, and on either side a narrow, slanting slab-stone walk on which the pedestrian whose appearance suggests the lower social standing is expected to yield the passage. Rambling over a rolling, at times almost hilly site, every street is due sooner or later to run off into the air on a hillside, or to fade suddenly away into a noisome lane.

Quito has no residential section. Its chiefly two-story buildings are, with rare exceptions, constructed of mud blocks on frames of *chaguarquero*, the light, pithy stalk of the giant cactus, with roofs of the familiar dull-red tiles. Whitewash and paint of many colors strive in vain to conceal this plebeian material, and many a façade is gay with ornamentation. Well-to-do people, who are commonly the owners of the building they dwell in, occupy the second floor. The lower story of the city is the business section. That portion of the house facing the street is almost certain to be given over to from one to several shops, the patio serving as a yard for the loading and unloading of pack-animals, while the bare adobe cells opening on it house the family servants and Indian retainers. To dwell almost anywhere in Quito is to live in the upper air of a combination of slums and business houses, and whatever the wealth or boasted aristocracy of a family, it is certain to come into daily contact with

the unwashed *gente del pueblo* that inhabits its lower regions and performs its menial tasks.

There are shops enough in Quito, to all appearances, to supply the demands, if not the needs, of all the million and a half inhabitants of Ecuador. These are, for the most part, small, one-room dungeons without windows, flush with the sidewalk, with no other front than the doors that stand wide open during business hours, and present at other times their blank faces ornamented with several enormous padlocks. The quiteño puts no trust in the small locks of modern days. Many a shop, the entire stock of which is not worth a hundred dollars, is protected not only by bolts and bars within, but by half a dozen of those huge and clumsy contrivances that the rest of the world used in the Middle Ages. To "shut up shop" is a real task in Quito, of which the lugging home of the enormous keys is by no means the least burdensome. Naturally, if a real burglar cared to take the trouble to journey to Quito, he would find far less difficulty at his trade than in a city ostensibly less secure.

Besides the establishments of hundreds of men who would rather wear a white collar than work, there are innumerable little holes in the wall, run by "women of the people" in conjunction with their scanty household duties, where chicha and stronger drinks, and the few foodstuffs of the Indians and the poorer classes are displayed—and sometimes sold, though there are barely customers enough to go round. Clothing stores, or more exactly, cloth-shops, are perhaps most numerous, countless useless duplications of the selfsame stock, with hundreds of bolts of as many different weaves piled high in the open doorways. Every merchant, however meager

his supplies, announces himself an “importer and exporter,” and after morning mass manto-wrapped women wander for hours from shop to shop, haggling for a fancied difference of a half cent in some purchase which, in the end, is more apt than not to be abandoned. Business is petty at best; its ethics low, and the native quiteño is a weak competitor of the foreigners that swarm in the city. Italians, especially the wily Neapolitan, and “Turks,” as the ubiquitous Syrians are called in all South America, capture much of the trade. A foreigner remains a foreigner in Ecuador, for the country has but weak powers of assimilation.

A unique note in the life of Quito are the “Propiedad” signs. Revolution, with its accompanying looting, is ever imminent. The native shopkeepers are frankly at the mercy of the looters, who only too often are the Government itself. But the foreigner despoiled of his wares can always lodge a complaint with his home Government; reparation may follow, and even the punishment of the looters is conceivable. To warn these of their peril, and to induce sober thought in times of anarchy, the foreign merchant paints on his shop-front a huge flag of his country, similar to that used by neutral steamers in wartime, with surcharged words conveying the same information to those unacquainted with the colors. Thus the German’s place of business is distinguished with a:

(black)
PROPIEDAD

(white)
ALEMANA

(red)



The family of “Don Panchito” with whom I lived in Quito. In front stands little Mercedes, familiarly known as “Meech,” our house-maid and general servant



Girls of the “gente decente” class of Quito, in a school run by European nuns. The Mother Superior (right) is Belgian; the nun on the left is Irish

Within a few blocks of the main plaza may be noted the following “Propiedades”: “Española, Francesa, Alemana, Belga, Danesa, Inglesa, Italiana, Holondesa, Sueca, Chilena, Colombiana, Peruana, Venezolana, Turca,” and one or two more. The Stars and Stripes and the words “Propiedad Americana” appear only

once—on the door of a small export house.

Apparently every one is entitled to three guesses on the population of Quito. The estimates range from fifty to a hundred thousand, with the truth probably somewhere near the seventy-five thousand attributed to it in Stevenson's day. Its tendency of late years has been to overflow its banks; the suburb of Guarico climbs a considerable way up the skirts of Pichincha, and the huts of Indians have scrambled well up the flanks of the other enclosing ridges. Though more in touch with the outside world than Bogotá, it has much the same atmosphere of a world apart, a peaceful, restful little sphere supplied with a few modern conveniences of a crude, break-down-often sort, but with little of the complicated life of twentieth-century cities. It is a splendid place to play at life, to lie fallow and catch up with oneself, with nothing more exciting to stir up existence than the semi-weekly concert in the plaza mayor. A score of carriages rattle over its cobbled streets; the rails of a tramway line had been laid years before our arrival, but the cars had not yet been ordered. Somewhere there may be a finer climate, but it would scarcely be worth while going far to look for it. Standing at a height which, in the temperate zone, would be covered by eternal snows, the city is sheltered by the surrounding ranges from the bitter chill that descends so often upon less lofty Bogotá. In the Colombian capital we were always suffering more or less from cold in our waking hours, except at midday; in Quito it was possible to sit comfortably on a plaza bench at midnight. With all the stages of nature, from planting through blossoms, fruit, and harvest, existing side by side, its days are like the best half-dozen culled from a northern May. There is a popular saying that it rains thirteen months a year

in Quito. But this is slander. During my long stay, there were, to be sure, few days when it did not rain; but the shower came almost always at a more or less fixed hour of the afternoon, and the resident soon learned to make his plans accordingly. The rain seemed heavier than it was in reality, for tin spouts pour the water noisily out into the cobbled streets, the wide, projecting eaves protecting the sidewalks. Now and then came a day heavy with massed clouds; far more often all but an hour or so was brilliant with sunshine.

Yet an American schoolma'am accustomed to tell her pupils that the people of Quito all dress in white because it lies on the equator, would be startled to see what attention even a woman in light-colored garb attracts in its streets. On rare occasions a man in white cotton passed through the overcoated plaza during the evening concert; but this meant only that the tri-weekly train from Guayaquil had arrived. We met, too, an American "drummer," more noted for his ability as a "mixer" than for his knowledge of geography, who had arrived with a carefully chosen wardrobe of white linen suits—and proved a godsend to the local tailors. Incidentally, he had come down to introduce American plumbing in Ecuador; but that is another and still sadder story. The truth is that moderate winter clothing is never out of place in the city of the equator. Even at noon, with one's shadow a round disk under foot and the sun glaring to the eyes and burning the skin in this thin, upland air, a leisurely climb up one of the longest streets brought no memories of the tropics.

As in all high altitudes, there is a marked difference between sunshine and shade. The first greeting in a quiteño house is sure to be "Cúbrese usted" ("Put on

your hat"), and however impolite it may seem to the newcomer, none but the unwise will disregard the suggestion. Only when one has become acclimated to the room may one uncover with impunity, for to catch cold in Quito is a serious matter, and the road from a cold to pneumonia is short and swift in this thin air. Thanks to the altitude, it is the common experience of newcomers to be either unduly exhilarated or sunk in the depths of despondency.

There is not a chimney in Quito, and no breath of smoke is ever known to smudge her transparent equatorial sky. Factories, in the modern sense, are unknown; cooking is the same simple operation as in the rural districts of the Andes. The quiteño knows artificial heat, if at all, only by hearsay. I chanced to be in the reception-room of the Minister of Foreign Affairs one afternoon when a newly appointed Argentine ambassador dropped in for his first informal call. In the course of the polished small-talk that ensued, the diplomat mentioned a new law in Buenos Aires requiring the heating of public buildings during certain months of the year. The Minister, an unusually well-educated man for Ecuador, stared a moment with a puzzled expression, then leaning forward with undiplomatic eagerness, replied:

"Why, I suppose you *would* have to have some kind of artificial heat in those cold countries!"

From the center of the city itself not one of the snow-clad volcanoes that encircle it like the tents of a besieging army are visible; but a climb to the rim of the basin in any direction leads to some point of vantage overlooking all Quito and its surroundings. Of a score of far-reaching views, that is perhaps most striking from the summit of the Panecillo. The "Little

Loaf" that bottles up the town on the south is well-named; it resembles nothing so much as a fat biscuit, lush green in its covering of perpetual spring. Antiquarians have never agreed whether the Panecillo is a natural hill, or partly or wholly built by man. Geologically it is out of place, for all the rest of the region is rocky and broken, and nowhere else in the vicinity has nature constructed any symmetrical thing. Some have it that an already existing hill was rounded off before the Conquest, as a pedestal for the Temple of the Sun which tradition asserts adorned the summit long before the coming of the Incas. If it is entirely man-built, the construction of the pyramids was an afternoon sport in comparison. Somehow the imagination likes to picture thousands of Indians of both sexes and all ages jogging like lines of tropical ants up and down the sacred mound, with baskets of earth on their uncomplaining backs, as they still trot to-day through the streets of Quito under loads of every description.

A road runs round and round the Panecillo, making two full revolutions in so leisurely and dignified a manner that it would seem almost level did not the city below open out more and more with each step forward. At the summit, across which sweeps a never-failing wind from the south, is a view worth many times such a climb. All Quito lies huddled in its pocket below, like the body of a dull-red spider with its legs cut off at varying lengths. The city is clearly visible in its every detail, from the very roof-tiles of its houses to the gay-colored ponchos of the Indians, crawling like minute specks across its squares and along its ditch-like streets. Along the earth-wrinkle at the base of Pichincha's long ridge are glimpses of small villages, and countless little

green fields, standing edge-up on the flank of the range, seem so close at hand as to be almost within touch. Here the early riser may watch the birth of clouds. At sunrise the Andes stand out sharp and clear, as if the sky had been carefully swept during the night. Then a tiny patch of mist detaches itself here and there from the damp flanks of Pichincha, streaks of steel-gray clouds begin to rise under the warming sun, like a curtain drawn from the bottom; soon the entire ridge is steaming from end to end, and before one's very eyes come into being and float away across the world those masses of clouds that greet the late riser full-grown.

In the transparent air of the highlands the eye embraces far more than the city. The surrounding world, being above the tree-line, is bare of any vegetation other than the brown bunch-grass; as would be the city and its environs, also, but for the thousands of eucalyptus trees imported in the days of García Moreno. Swinging round the circle, one catches sight of a dozen famous volcanoes, all more or less capped with snow. Almost due north rises the glacier-clad bulk of Cayambe, squatted squarely on the equator, perhaps forty miles away, yet seeming just over the ridge beyond the city. Near it, jagged Cotacache pierces the blue heavens. Further around comes Antisana, then Sincholagua, the giant that not many years ago blew its head off in a fit of rage. To the east stands Pasochoa, close followed by Rumiñaui, the "Stony-Eyed," of the same name as the Inca-quiteño general who continued the war against the Spaniards after the capture of Atahuallpa. Over its shoulder peers the tip of Cotapaxi; little Corazon comes next, with Iliniza striving in vain to hide behind it, until finally the eye has swung back to the broad flanks of Pichincha, up which clamber Indian

huts, like captive turtles striving to escape from their enclosing basin. Above them two ragged rock and lava peaks, often streaked with snow, the Rucu and Guagua ("Man" and "Baby") Pichincha, invisible from the city itself, stand forth close at hand against the chill steel-blue of the upland sky. Pichincha is rated a dead volcano, having given no signs of life since 1660; but the early history of Quito is strewn with its ashes and destruction. Quiteños are much given to bewailing their "triste" landscape; yet few of her canvases has Nature painted with so masterly a hand.

Three weeks after our arrival Hays burst in upon me one morning with the information that the bundles we had mailed in Jirardot had come. Well on in the afternoon the post-office officials saw fit to lay them before us. A ragged boy cut the strings and spread out the contents for customs inspection. This over, we were preparing to carry them off, when we were halted by the grunt of an official deep in some long arithmetical process at a nearby desk. By and by he rose and pushed toward each of us a long list of figures:

Mercancías (Merchandise)—8500 grams.	
Derechos (Duty) thereon at $2 a kilogram	$ 17.00
Más 100% (Plus 100%)	17.00
Defensa Nacional	1.70
Aforro	1.57
Muellaje (wharfage)	2.23
Bodega (storage).	.93
Brokerage	2.30
Timbre (stamp)	.15

Total	$ 42.88

“These are personal belongings, chiefly clothing, all more or less worn,” I began, scenting a long controversy.

“True, señor.”

“You surely do not ask us to pay duty on personal baggage? Travelers arrive at Guayaquil every week with several trunks, and pay no duty.”

“Only that is baggage which the traveler personally brings in with him. The charges are $42.88—for each, señores, since the parcels are of the same weight.”

“But you can see for yourself that they are marked ‘Value $7.’”

“The law goes by weight only, señor.”

“Why the 100% addition?”

“The new law requires all duties to be levied twice.”

“And this third item?”

“For the up-keep of the national army and navy.”

“Well, what is this *aforro*?”

“That is the freight from Panamá.”

“But the postage was prepaid from Jirardot to Quito —one dollar. Doesn’t Ecuador belong to the Postal Union?”

“Naturally, señor, but by a special treaty with the United States parcel-post packages pay freight across the Isthmus, and from Panamá to here.”

“And this muellaje—?”

"The landing charges in the port of Guayaquil. Bodega is for warehouse storage charges—"

"But the bundles came through in a mail-bag, without so much as entering a warehouse."

"Those are fixed charges, irrespective of special conditions. The brokerage covers *my* fee here in the office, and the stamp is that which you see on the document here. The total charges are $42.88."

"Keep 'em," growled Hays, turning away. "Make a present of them to your president, or dress up one of your statues of Liberty." Naturally, he spoke in English, for we still planned to live some time in Quito.

As we reached the door, a word from the official caused us to turn back. He was up to his ears in another set of figures.

"We can call it cotton instead of clothing," he said, presenting a new list; "then the charges will be only $12.25."

"Make it *old* clothing," suggested Hays.

"The law mentions clothing, without qualifications," replied the official, with that patient courtesy that is the chief virtue of his race.

"The bundles do not weigh that, anyway," I persisted. "Most of it is in the wrappings."

"The law specifies bulk, not net weight."

"Keep them, with our compliments," growled Hays, turning away.

"I'll tell you what you can do, señores," suggested the official; "Go buy a stamped sheet of government paper at thirty cents and write the Director of Posts —"

"Why can't we write him on ordinary paper?"

"It would not be legal. Go buy a thirty-cent stamped paper and put a ten-cent stamp on it—"

"What's that for?"

"For the up-keep of the national army. Write the Director of Posts reclaiming the duty you have paid —"

"*After* we have paid it?" cried Hays. "Hardly! I have had too much experience with Latin-American governments."

In the end we bought the stamped paper and wrote the director, leaving the letter with the official, who promised to forward it to his chief—to-morrow. As the bundles contained some rather indispensable odds and ends, and because I wished to investigate Ecuadorian government processes to the bottom, I followed the matter up. Next day we called twice at the post-office and finally, late in the afternoon, signed a blank request to be given the packages duty free, without which, it appeared, the matter could not be officially considered. Two days later we were informed that a *junta* had been ordered to meet and pass on the case; there being no precedent for action. A week passed. The junta showed no ability to get together. I took up the quest again—and spent an afternoon in gaining admittance to the sanctum of the Director of Posts. He was courtesy itself, but the gist of his remarks was:

"That is not baggage which comes in by mail. It is only legally so when it crosses the frontier with its owner. However, if you wish, you might call on the Minister of Public Instruction—who happens to be also at the present time acting Minister of the Interior, to which department the matter refers—and

ask to have the bundles passed as baggage."

I spent the better part of two days in the anteroom of the Ministry, a sumptuous pink and blue adobe chamber with a score of bullet holes in the walls—mementoes of the latest request of the populace for the resignation of the president—only to learn:

"The law mentions no difference between old and new clothing; between fresh and soiled linen. All clothing entering Ecuador—except as baggage—pays the same duty; hence I see no way you can avoid it."

I did not succeed in getting the matter before Congress—officially, at least—though I only missed taking it up with the president through an oversight of one of his aids. In the end I paid the $6.25 to which, by some strange manipulation, the post-office official had reduced the charges, and carried the object of controversy home to the calle Flores.

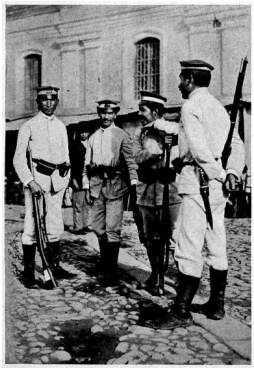
These small countries of tropical America remind one less of nations than of groups of polite bandits who have taken possession of a few mountains and valleys that they may levy tribute on whoever falls into their hands. All of them have imitated larger powers by enacting a "protective tariff," without even the scant excuse that has been bloated into a reason for it in other lands; for here there is no industry to "protect." Here it is not the lobbies of large financial interests that are back of the movement, but the politicians who constitute the "government"; the tariffs are "for revenue only"—largely for the pockets of the politicians themselves. We of more powerful nations hardly realize what it means to live in so small a country as Ecuador, until it is brought home by some such incident as hearing the entire Congress debating several hours on the question of whether two new electric-light bulbs

shall or shall not be placed in front of the government “palace.”

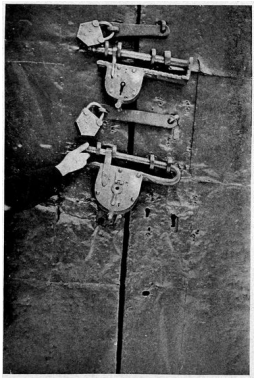
Religiously, Quito is still in the Middle Ages. Looked down upon from any point of vantage, it has the aspect of an ecclesiastical capital. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that half the city is taken up by the Church. Besides its many bulking “temples” and innumerable chapels, enormous sections of the town are swallowed up within the confines of convents and monasteries. The largest is San Francisco, reputed the most extensive in America. The Franciscans got in on the ground floor in Quito. The ink with which the city was founded was barely dry when three monks of that order arrived afoot and breathless from Guayaquil; to be given an immense grant of land running far up the flanks of Pichincha. The great stone cloisters were a century in building; a veritable Chinese Wall of brick, backed by clustered hovels of the poor, encloses what would have been six city blocks, and the holdings of the order in haciendas and other rich properties spread far and wide over Ecuador. During the irruption of Pichincha in 1575, the Franciscans won the perennial worship of the masses by the simple method of raising aloft the Hostia and commanding the flow of lava to cease—and continuing to hold it aloft until the command was obeyed. To-day they still loll under such withered laurels.

Two youths of Quito’s “best families” accompanied me to San Francisco. A monk in brown greeted my companions as befitted their high rank and potential power of beneficence; yet with an undercurrent of insincerity and of dislike for these sons of “Liberals,” which he was unable wholly to conceal. We passed

through several flowery patios musical with fountains and surrounded by pillared arcades, off which opened large, vaulted chambers, to an Elysian orchard under the trees of which a score of well-fed, well-slept monks strolled in pastoral contentment far from the hubbub and cares of the modern world. Cigarette butts littered the floor of a kiosk in the center; scarcely a face was to be seen in which the signs of frequent debauch could not plainly be read. The walls and ceiling of the adjoining church were so covered with gold that the imagination harked back to the ransom of Atahuallpa. My companions whispered that an American had recently offered $15,000 for the privilege of removing what remained of the genuine metal, promising to regild the church so expertly that the transaction would never be detected. The offer had been considered, but declined when some suspicion of the deal reached the public ear. The monks were still open to similar propositions, however. Over a door of the monastery hung an old painting of “María Dolorosa” by a famous Spanish artist. One of my companions, himself a painter of some ability, offered a tempting sum for permission to replace the “dusty old thing” with a brand new copy; and the impression left by a deal of murmuring and pantomime was that the offer would eventually be accepted.



Ecuadorian soldiers before the national “palace”



Quito does not put its faith in small locks and keys. Many a shop containing hardly $100 worth of goods has a half-dozen padlocks and interior bolts

When we asked permission to climb to the tower for a view of the town, however, the monk gave us a quick, sidelong glance and regretted that the Father Superior no longer permitted it. My companions exchanged winks, but found no opportunity to enlighten me until we had taken our ceremonious leave. Once outside I learned—to my astonishment—that not merely foreigners resent having each night's sleep broken up into a series of detached naps by the unearthly din of Quito's church-bells. A few months before, several young men of the well-to-do class had formed a conspiracy to taste the unknown luxury of one night of unbroken slumber. Gaining admission on various pretexts to all the church-towers of the city, the conspirators had stolen the *badajos*—clappers, I believe we call them in English—and got rid of them so effectually that few were ever discovered. The priests were distracted—until their faithful henchmen of the masses had replaced the pilfered property with pieces of railroad iron. Since then the church-towers had been closed to the educated youth of the city.

Not far from San Francisco rises the florid façade of "La Compañía." The Jesuits reached the present capital of Ecuador a bit later than many of their competitors, but they quickly overcame the handicap. They established the first *boticas*, or drug-stores, and brooked no competition. Besides enormous tracts of the most fertile land in the colony, they were granted a monopoly of cattle-breeding and, being free from taxes and the necessity of paying the King's share, and holding the Indians in virtual slavery at less than a nominal wage, most of which returned to their coffers in the form of church tithes and levies, they easily choked private competition and soon outdistanced in wealth even

the Franciscans. Their expulsion from Spanish soil greatly reduced their power and holdings. To-day, what was once a part of their monastery is occupied by the University and the National Library, but they are still scarcely cramped for space. An Alsatian Jesuit, of an esthetical cast of countenance in striking contrast to his Ecuadorian brothers, led me fearlessly even into the belfry. He was a plainspoken man, for all his astuteness—or perhaps by reason of it—and openly bewailed the immorality of the native friars and what he called the "silly superstitions" of the people. The dormitories of the boarding-school within the monastery were divided into small cells by low wooden partitions covered with chicken-wire, like the ten-cent lodging-houses of Chicago. Before I had time to put a question, the Alsatian explained:

"In these countries we must keep the boys locked in their own rooms at night, for morality's sake."

It is more than unusual in Latin-America, but at least one enterprising pupil found it possible to "work his way" through the *colegio* of the Jesuit Fathers of Quito. His fame was still green among the gilded youths of the city. By the rules of the institution each student is required to go to confession once a week. The enterprising lad long relieved his comrades of the unpleasant formality by impersonating each in turn before the perforated disk—at the equivalent of fifty cents a head.

Merced, Corazon, Buen Pastor, San Augustín, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Carmen Antigua, Carmen Moderno, San Juan ... to name all the orders that occupy huge spaces within the city of Quito would be like writing an ecclesiastical directory. Down at the end of the calle Flores the Dominicans dwell in a monastery little less extensive than that of the

Franciscans. Their wealth may be surmised from the fact that in colonial days they held the monopoly of supplying all liquor used in “divine worship” throughout the colony. In the center of the Plaza Santo Domingo is a statue of Sucre, companion of Bolívar in the wars of Spanish-American independence,—a splendid bronze of an imaginary Hercules that should be set up in some gymnasium as a model—concerning which there runs a tale suggestive of local conditions. Soon after its erection an Indian living far up the mountainside above the suburb of Guarico lost his pig. He tried every known means of recovering the animal,—prayed to every available saint with any reputation for miracles, squandered his meager substance in burning candles before every shrine in Quito, and purchased many a priestly prayer. All in vain; the pig was not to be found. At length a quiteño—whether a wag or a sincere believer is not reported—whispered to the distracted Indian that the most powerful saint of all was the new one in the Plaza Santo Domingo. The credulous fellow lost no time on his way to the square, where he knelt with a lighted candle on either side of him before the pedestal of the Hero of Ayacucho. When he looked up from his first invocation he noted that the statue was pointing to the battlefield on which its original defeated the Spaniards, far up the slope of Pichincha, which chanced also to be the location of the Indian’s hut. He hurried homeward and, sure enough, found the pig in a hollow not far from his dwelling. Since then “Saint Sucre” has had a great vogue with the Indian populace of Quito.

It would be out of place to enumerate the many proofs, from personal experiences to matters of common knowledge, from national literature to

frequent notorious scandals, of the moral laxity of the quiteño priesthood. Whatever they may be elsewhere, celibacy and the confessional are undeniably ill-chosen institutions for a race of Ecuadorian caliber. The non-Catholic would not dream of berating the churchmen in any such terms as those which frequently fall from the lips of educated men of Quito. More than once I have heard a devout quiteña mother bewail the fact that she dare not send her daughter to confession, though convinced that the ceremony was requisite to the saving of her soul. One looks in vain for any connection whatever between religion and morality in this typical Andean capital. The sanctimonious old *beatas*, wrapped in their black mantos, who haunt the churches and accompany every religious procession with tears of hysterical ecstasy coursing down their cheeks are not infrequently procurers and go-betweens of the human vultures that dwell in, as well as out of, the monasteries. The street-walkers of Quito are almost all fervent mass-goers. Scores of the same faces that peer invitingly out upon the passerby at night may be seen next morning kneeling on the pavement of the cathedral or walking on their knees around the entire circle of plaster saints, reciting a prayer formula before each. Nor is this hypocrisy. These victims see no incongruity between the evening's doings and the morning's occupation. To the masses, religion is a mixture of idol worship and the performance of fixed ceremonies, wholly divorced from their personal actions. The sins of daily life are wiped out by a quarter-hour in the confessional; absolution is granted for the payment of a fee and the performance of a set devotion. The brain cells where real morality might find a foothold are packed with absurd catechisms that leave no

room for it; and of religion there remains nothing but unthinking *costumbre* and unreasoning fanaticism.

Quito has been called the most fanatical town of South America. Among a score like it, the present archbishop tells the following story in his "History of Ecuador." About two hundred years ago some one broke into one of the churches and stole the sacred wafers, together with the gold ciborium in which they were kept. A few days later the stolen property was found lying in the refuse of a ditch. Amid great weeping, a procession of the entire population bore the sacred emblem back to its church. For weeks the whole town dressed in deepest mourning; the *audiencia* gave all its attention and the police force all its efforts to running down those "vile traitors, bestial swine, and venial sinners," as the gentle archbishop calls them, leaving little misdemeanors like robbery and murder to look after themselves. Not a clue was uncovered. At length a famous Jesuit of the time preached a sermon that lashed the populace into such fervor that the congregation poured forth into the streets beating themselves with chains and scourges, most of them, men and women, naked to the waist—I am quoting the archbishop—in a procession and religious fury that lasted from eight at night until two in the morning. A scapegoat was imperative. The officers of the *audiencia*, in peril of being themselves forced to assume that rôle, redoubled their efforts, and at length found, some distance south of the city, three Indians and a half-caste who were reputed to have confessed to the nefarious crime. The four miscreants were brought back to the city, kicked about the streets by the populace, trussed up in chains in the church while the priest preached a four-hour sermon on "the most atrocious crime in the history of Quito," and were

finally hanged, drawn, and quartered, and hung up, still dripping with blood, in sixteen parts of the town. The priests and their followers dug up a potful of earth where the holy wafers had been found, and deposited it in a heavy vase of solid gold that is still one of the precious relics of the cathedral. Then they caused to be erected over the spot the chapel of Jerusalem, where it stands to this day. “And,” adds the archbishop, “no *fiel* [faithful one] will deny that they met their just fate for so vile and unprecedented a sacrilege.”



A corner of Quito —looking through a garbage-hole into one of the many ravines by which the city is broken up

Ah, but that was two centuries ago. True, but permit me to bring the fanaticism of Quito up to date. Less than a year before our arrival the perennial struggle between the Liberals and the Conservatives, the

latter the church party, had broken out again in revolution. A queer-looking little man, with a white goatee sprouting from a mild-tempered chin, and wearing habitually a hat that would have been the envy of a slap-stick comedian, had for years been president of Ecuador. He had stolen unusually little for a Latin-American president, and had not allowed his friends to steal more than the average. Moreover, he had done the country much service, among other things having induced an American to complete the railroad from the coast to Quito. Also he had curtailed some of the unbridled graft of the church; and strangely enough the church had resented that species of reform and turned the power of the Conservatives against him. To be sure, the queer little man had objected to surrendering his office to a newly elected incumbent; but that is a common South American peccadillo. When the populace rose and drove him out, he went down to the coast and gathered an army of his fellow-*costeños*. But luck had deserted him. After a few battles he was captured, together with several sons, nephews, and henchmen. The Conservatives were triumphant. The Government ordered the captives to be sent up to Quito. The general in command at Guayaquil protested that such action was unsafe until the fury of the populace evaporated. The Government assured him the danger was visionary, and repeated the order. A special train was made up, and set out on the long climb to the plateau. That was on a Saturday. Next morning a priest, noted for his virulent eloquence, preached a sermon that lashed the church-going masses into fury. At noon word came that the train had arrived, and the prisoners hurried by automobile to the Panóptico, the wheel-shaped penitentiary up on the lower flanks of

Pichincha. The populace quickly gathered. The bullet-holes through the false stone walls of the dismal little mud cells, in the narrow corners of which the prisoners crouched, were still fresh when we wandered through the place, months later. Among the most fanatical of the mob were the police and those whose duty it was to guard the prison. In the excitement some twoscore prisoners escaped, and joined the rioters. The little ex-president and his companions, dead or dying, were stripped naked, ropes were tied to their ankles, and they were dragged for hours through the cobbled streets of Quito, the frenzied populace raising the echoes of the surrounding ranges with shouts of, “Long Live the Church!” “Viva la Virgen María!”

I have two photographs taken by Don Jesús, nephew of my host, from the window of what was later my own room, as the bodies of the former president and his eldest son were passing. They show a throng made up exclusively of cholos, those of mixed blood, who constitute the bulk of Quito’s population. Not a white collar of the *gente decente* or the broad felt hat of an Indian is to be seen. On through the entire length of the city the barbaric procession continued. Near the Plaza San Blas a swarm of the lowest women in town descended with knives from their hovels and carried off gruesome mementoes of the orgy. At length the mob reached the Ejido, the broad, green playground of Quito, where they hacked in pieces the bodies of the victims with machetes and whatever implement came to hand. Some carried to their huts as souvenirs the heads of the ex-president and his sons, from which they were recovered with difficulty only after the frenzy had died down and been slept off. The rest was piled in heaps and burned. Such were *los arrastres* (“the draggings”), to

which the educated quiteño refers, if at all, in shamed undertones.

Quito is not so light of complexion as Bogotá. Not merely is her percentage of Indian blood higher, but even those of unmixed European ancestry have a sallow or olive tint, and little of the color in their cheeks frequent in the more rigorous capital of Colombia. Negroes are unknown as residents. There is a careful gradation in caste, yet chiefly a void in place of what, in other lands, would be a middle class. The population is divided rather sharply between those brutalized from carrying ox-loads on their backs, and those who remain soft and effeminate from careful avoidance of any muscular exertion. For even the cholo is economically either Indian or white, depending on his wealth or occupation. To carry even a small package through the streets is to jeopardize one's standing as a member of the upper class. "Don't hurry," a frock-tailed quiteño told me in all seriousness one day. "People will think you are *ocupado*," busy, that is, with vulgar work. It is customary to raise one's hat to every male acquaintance "of your own class or above," to pause and shake hands with every one considered your equal, to ask him how he has *amanecido* ("dawned"), to inquire after his family individually, and to shake hands again before parting; and that as often as you meet him, though it be every half-hour during the day. Americans who have lived long in South America have the hand-shaking habit chronically. The greeting, or more exactly the acknowledgment of the greeting, of one's inferior varies from a patronizing heartiness to the corner tailor to a half-audible grunt to an Indian. The latter is always addressed in the "tu" form, "because," as one of my Beau Brummel

acquaintances put it, “there is no reason whatever to show any respect to the Indian.” During several months’ acquaintance I found no great reason to show any to the speaker; but that, perhaps, is beside the point.

How wholly lacking the place is in genuine democracy is frequently illustrated. I was strolling in the *plaza mayor* one day, for instance, with the grandson of the “Washington of Ecuador,” a youth of American school training and of unusually high standards, when he stepped on the flagging surrounding the central monument. The cholo policeman on guard hesitated, but finally screwed up unusual courage and informed the youth in a courteous, not to say humble, manner that he had been ordered not to let any one walk on the flagging. The descendant of Ecuador’s founder turned a brilliant red, as if his noble house had been vilely insulted, then so white that his blond hair seemed to become dark brown. He strode across to the officer, who was considerably larger than he, caught him by the coat, and all but jerked him off his feet. The policeman abjectly apologized. The “best people” of Quito do not realize that it is not the individual policeman, their “inferior,” giving them orders, but lawful and orderly society speaking through him.

As in the days of Stevenson’s travels, a century ago, “the principal occupation of persons of rank is visiting their estates, particularly at harvest-time.” By far the greater portion of the year they spend in town, however, leaving their haciendas in charge of *mayordomos* little acquainted with modern agricultural methods. The city has so few recreative attractions that it is hard for a man of education to avoid a more or less studious life, be it only as a

pastime. Yet Quito does not even aspire to rival Bogotá as the "Athens of South America." Ecuador is not without her literature, but it has come from other towns more frequently than from the capital. The game of politics, not without its perils, engrosses the attention of many. Then, as in most Latin-American countries, not a few dissipate their energies in the "pursuit of pleasure" of a rather specific kind. So assiduously does the average quiteño devote himself to this from early youth that it is not strange that an old man of the *decente* class is rarely seen. There is a considerable provincialism, even among the best educated classes. I heard often such questions as "What is a sleigh?" "When is summer?" The story is well vouched for that a congressman asked a colleague just back from abroad, "Can a man get to Europe in three weeks on a good mule?"

The women of the well-dressed class in Quito are less given to the display of mustaches than those of Bogotá. Not a few are distinctly attractive, particularly in early youth. In later life too many suggest in their features some years of a rather harrowing existence. Outspoken quiteños lay this condition at the door of the priests and friars, but mere economic pressure probably plays at least as considerable a part. The up-keep of so many enormous ecclesiastical institutions cannot but drain the resources of so stagnant a city. Wealth does not abound, and feminine opportunity to earn a livelihood is narrowly restricted. It is not strange, then, if more than one family still rated in the gentle decente class remains with no other barrier against starvation than the youthful freshness of its daughters. In most parts of the world a glance suffices to distinguish a woman of public life from

her respected sisters. In Quito it is not so easy. Indeed, there seems to be no hard and fast line between the two classes. Certain undercurrents suggest a tacit admission that some families have only one means of tiding over their existence until a lucky turn of politics, or of the lottery wheel, sets them on their feet again. Then, if the girl's career has not been too public, she may be bestowed on a husband of a somewhat lower social level.

Let me not leave the impression of a general laxity among the women of Quito. The sheltered daughters of the most responsible classes are models of modesty and domesticity. But he who dwells any length of time in the city would be blind to overlook certain facts, be they the result of an impoverished society or more directly fostered by those ecclesiastical elements to whom the embittered men of higher rank charge them.

Thus far I have said little of the, if not most numerous, at least most conspicuous class in Quito, —the Indians. Ignoring the very considerable number in whose veins runs a greater or less percentage of aboriginal blood, those in whom it is still without admixture make up perhaps forty per cent. of the population, and give the city most of its color. There is not a house in town, from the bright-yellow, three-story adobe dwelling of the president down, without its Indians,—family servants and burden-bearers huddled in the mud cells about the cobbled patio of the lower story, or homeless wretches who lie by night in any unoccupied corner and pick up a precarious existence by day in competition with donkeys and pack-animals. Their earth-floored kennels form the tassel-ends of almost every street; they scatter out along all the highways, and dot the

flanks of every range and mountain spur in the vicinity.

If they have changed since the Conquest, it is for the worse. In habits and condition they vary scarcely at all from those of the dreary Andean villages through which we had passed. Theirs is a purely animal existence. They have not the faintest notion of any line between filth and cleanliness, avoiding only that which is obviously poison, by an instinct common to the lower animals. I have seen them drink water I am sure a thirsty horse would not touch, and that despite the fact that fresh water was to be had a few yards away. They literally never wash so much as a finger, except on some such occasion as a church fiesta, when they may pause at a pool or mud-hole on the edge of town to scrub their feet with a stone. They speak a debauched dialect of Quichua, the tongue of the Incas, mixed with some words of the conquered Caras, though all understand Spanish, or at least the Indian-Spanish spoken in Quito.



After the bullfight a yearling is often turned into the ring for the amusement of the youthful male population of Quito



A group of the Indians that form so large a percentage of Quito's population. The hats are light gray, the ponchos, skirts, and shawls each some crude, brilliant color

Many consider the Andean Indian a debased Mongolian type, a theory not without its basis in his features. In a curious old book of the National Library of Ecuador—the "History of the Kingdom of Quito," written in 1789, the Jesuit Padre Velasco takes up the question of the origin of the Indian and settles it—at least to his own satisfaction. To begin with, the Church has declared the inhabitants of the New World "rational," that is, descended from Adam and Eve. That point being disposed of, it follows that "the men and animals who were found in America must be descendants of those who emerged from Noah's ark; for does not the Bible say that *all* the world was covered with water? Even granted, for the sake of argument," continues the razor-minded padre, "that the mountains of South America protruded a bit above the surface of those waters, is it conceivable that man could live for months on the highest peaks, eating snow, drinking snow, and sleeping in snow? Could he even have stood up for nearly a year on those pyramids of snow and ice?" I

give it up. Ask some polar explorer. What then remains of the argument of those who still cling to the authoctonomous heresy? Obviously there is no other recourse then to admit that the ancestors of the race found their way to America by the Behring Strait, or across the Pacific from the shores of Asia.

Whatever his origin, the Indian of the Andes is a distinct reality, distinct, indeed, to all the five senses, and he varies little throughout the length of the continent. In build he is stocky and short, very muscular, with the strength of a mule for carrying loads on his back, indefatigable on foot, but weak for other labor. His color is between a tarnished copper and a more or less intense bronze. His head is large; his neck thick and long, his eyes small, black, and penetrating, yet at times strangely suggesting those of a dead fish; his nose is bulky, and somewhat flattened and spread; his teeth are white, even, and always in splendid condition; his long hair, worn sometimes flying loose, sometimes in a single braid wound with red tape, is jet-black, without luster, abundant, perfectly straight, strong and coarse as that of a horse's mane, without even a tendency to baldness. His lips are thick and heavy, the lower one somewhat hanging, giving him a suggestion of sulkiness. His forehead is low, his mouth large, and his prominent cheek-bones and large ears give his face an appearance of great width. He is broad-shouldered, with a chest like a barrel, but slender of leg and small of foot. He grows no beard, and has almost no hair on the body.

Men and women alike, except a rare male with a sole of home-tanned leather secured by thongs, are bare-legged at least halfway to the knees, their feet, like calloused hoofs, marked by stony trails and years of

barnyard wallowing. The male wears a broad, round, light-gray hat of thick felt, a kind of pajama shirt or blouse of fancily colored calico, or *lienzo*, a very roomy pair of "panties" of thinnest white cotton that reach anywhere from his knees to halfway to his undomesticated feet. Besides these garments, he is never seen without his ruana, or poncho, which serves him as a cloak and carry-all by day, and as a bed and covering by night. This is always of some startling, crude color, deep red predominating, with such screaming combinations as magenta and purple, carmine and yellow, though when sufficiently soiled and sun-bleached, the old rose and velvety brown, the brick red or turquoise blue, take on all the soft richness of Oriental rugs. It is this commonly homespun garment, and the corresponding one of the women, that make Quito such a color-splashed city.

The woman, too, copies the dress of her ancestors to remote generations. She wears the same hat as the male—hat-pins are unknown to her, all down the Andes—a beltless waist of coarse cloth, either open, or thin and ragged; several strips of colored *bayeta* (a woolish shoddy) wrapped tightly around her draft-horse hips from waist to calves in guise of skirt, always slit open on one side, showing an inner petticoat—once white—though sometimes in striking solid colors, in marked contrast to the outer skirt; and a blanket, smaller, but as audible in hue as the poncho of the male, thrown round her shoulders like a shawl. She is fond of gaudy earrings of colored glass or similar rubbish, ranging in size from large to colossal; from one to a dozen strings of cheap red beads, often the bean of a wild plant indigenous to the region, hang around her neck; generally brass rings adorn every finger; and often many beads are

wound round and round her bare arms. She is completely devoid of feminine charm. She needs none, for she is amply worth her keep as a beast of burden.

As far as I know, there is no law in Quito requiring an Indian woman not to be seen without a babe in arms, or, rather, in shawl; but if one exists, it is seldom violated. In an hour I have seen, by actual count, more than three hundred female aborigines pass my window in the calle Flores, and not a score of them but bore on her back a child of from two weeks to two years of age, to say nothing of several other bundles and her whirling spindle. When the infant is tiny, it is carried lengthwise at the bottom of the blanket-shawl knotted across the mother's chest. When it is older, it is tossed or climbs astride her broad back, lying face down, with legs spread, while she throws her outer garment about it, ties the knot on her chest—or on her forehead if the child is heavy—and trots along at her work the day through, without the least apparent notice of the offspring. The babe falls asleep, or gazes with curious, yet rather dull, eyes at the world as it speeds by, peering over the mother's shoulder like an engineer from his cab, eats such food or refuse as falls into its hands, or plays with the mother's tape-wound braid. The Indian woman never carries her offspring in any other manner unless, in her rôle as a common carrier, she picks up a load too bulky or heavy to place the infant atop, such as a bedstead, a bureau, or two full-sized sacks of wheat—these are not exaggerations, but frequent cargoes—when she hangs the child in front, in the concave of her figure, like a baby kangaroo in the maternal pouch, knotting the supporting garment across her shoulders.

The youngest baby is already inconceivably dirty, yet almost always robustly healthy in appearance, though the infant mortality of the class is appalling. It is an unusual experience to hear an Indian baby cry. From its earliest years it seems to adopt that uncomplaining attitude toward life that is so marked a characteristic of the adults. Though she treats her offspring with no active unkindness—in all the years I spent in South America I have never seen an Indian mother strike a child—the aboriginal woman seems to endure it passively, like any other burden thrust upon her from which there is no escape, carrying it where it will be least troublesome, and never, at least openly, showing any caressing fondness for it. The child old enough to toddle about the streets often remains on the mother's back, as if to hold the place for the next comer. It is a common experience to hear an Indian child ask in a perfectly fluent tongue for a serving at the maternal source of supply.

There is scant difference in appearance between the two sexes, and none whatever in their labor, except that, if there is only one load, the woman carries it, and the baby in addition. In both the half-breed and Indian classes the women are more uncleanly than the men. Like the latter, they work at all the coarser unskilled tasks, shoveling earth, mixing and carrying mortar, cobbling streets; while in the matters of loads there is nothing under two hundred pounds in weight which, once on their backs, they cannot jog along under at a kind of limping gait that seems tireless. Almost any day the furniture and entire possessions of some moving household is displayed to public gaze as it jogs through town on the backs of an Indian family. The chief water-supply of Quito is a constant string of Indians from the fountain opposite the government palace, with huge, red

earthen jars sitting on their hips and supported by a thong across the forehead. It is a commonplace to meet an Indian carrying the gaudy image of some saint larger than himself. Cheap coffins of half-rotten boards, painted sky-blue or pink and decorated with strips of gilded paper, frequently mince past, secured by the brilliant poncho of the carrier, knotted across his chest. I had occasion one day to transport a typewriter a few blocks. The Indian prepared to sling it on his back with a rope. When I objected to this method, I found that the fellow not only could not carry it in his hands, but that he could not lift it to his head. When I placed it there, however, he ambled away as if he had nothing on his mind but his hat.

Frequently an entire family takes a large job, such as carrying a building from one end of town to another, adobe brick by brick. Such a one passed my window for weeks. All day long they dog-trotted back and forth in single file along the line of smooth-worn flagstones in the middle of the street, their bare feet making absolutely no sound, never a word or a sign of complaint finding outward expression. The man and woman each bore the same number of mud bricks piled on their backs, and the latter always carried the baby in her pouch, though they made a hundred trips a day. Why the infant could not have been left at one end or the other of the journey it was hard to guess. Two children, one a little fellow of five with one brick on his back, his brother of seven or eight with two, toiled all day long between father and mother, as if they were being systematically trained for the only life before them.

The Andean Indian is even less like the tall and haughty redskin of our country in manner than in appearance. Compared with him, the Mexican Indian

is self-assertive, bold, and ferocious. Silent and abstracted, he takes no apparent heed of what goes on about him. Of phlegmatic temperament, a truly wooden equanimity of temper, melancholy, taciturn, and reserved, he is noted above all for a distrust that is perhaps natural, but is more likely the result of centuries of privations since the coming of the Spaniards. He has a blind submission to authority, great attachment to the house in which he lives, and is so cowardly that he lets himself be dominated by the most despicable members of other races. A complete outsider in government and public affairs, he is treated by the rest of the population like a domestic animal. The merchant of Quito who requires a carrier to deliver some bundle does not wait for one to offer himself. He steps into the street and snatches the first Indian who passes, though he be on his way to a dying parent, or preparing his child's funeral; and the Indian performs the task as uncomplainingly as some mechanical device, and returns to wait perhaps an hour or two for the few cents the merchant chooses to give him. Only when he is drunk does the aboriginal's manner change. Then he is garrulous and mildly disorderly. But even on a Saturday afternoon, when the highways are lined with Indians of both sexes reeling homeward, the gringo passes unnoticed, in marked contrast with the gantlet of insolence, if not, indeed, of actual danger, which he must run under like circumstances in the highlands of Mexico.

The newcomer's sympathy for the Indian of Quito gradually evaporates with the discovery that he is utterly devoid of ambition, as completely indifferent to his own betterment as any four-footed animal. Pad out this fact with all its details and ramifications, discarding entirely the American's ingrown tendency

to imbue every human being with a striving character, and the hopelessness of the Indian's condition will be more clearly realized. The Government of Ecuador gives scant attention to the education of the aboriginals; even if it provided schools and forced attendance, there would still remain the problem of arousing in these people any interest in, or effort for, self-improvement.

A simple episode will go far toward visualizing the temperament of the Indian of Quito, and perhaps make a bit clearer the ease with which Pizarro and his handful of tramps overthrew the Empire of the Incas. I had gone out for a stroll one afternoon along the road to Guallabamba. Some three miles from town a light rain turned me back. There were no houses near, but numbers of Indians were going and coming. A short distance ahead was a group engaged in noisy contention. Suddenly a handsome, muscular young Indian broke away and ran toward me, his long, black hair streaming out behind him. At his heels, cursing, came three cholos, in the dark hats, more sober blankets and trousers of their caste, with shorn hair and straggling suggestions of mustaches. I was not armed—one does not trouble to carry weapons about Quito—and in my bespattered road garb I had certainly no appearance of protective authority. When he reached me, however, the frightened Indian, instead of running on, turned as sharply as about a corner, and pattered along close at my heels, breathing quickly. I continued my stroll, while the drunken half-breeds, far more muscular than I, hovered about ten steps in the rear, crying:

"Ah, coward! You run to the señor for protection!"

Yet not a step nearer did they approach during the furlong or more that the procession lasted. Then, as

we passed the entrance to an hacienda, the Indian suddenly sprinted away up its avenue of eucalyptus-trees faster than the cholos could follow. When they overtook me again, one protested in plaintive tones:

"Ah, señor, *ese sinvergüenza de Indio* did not deserve your protection."

Then they fell behind, while I, who had been an entirely passive actor in all the scene, strolled on into the city. It would be hard to imagine a similar incident in Mexico.

This Indian's older daughter knocked at my door one day to say that, as it was "Don Panchito's" birthday, the celebration in the *sala* next my own room would probably keep me awake all night anyway, and had I not better join the party. By eight the beating of the piano had begun. When I appeared, "Don Panchito" took me on a tour of the guests, seated in solemn quadrangle around the four walls of the room, the sexes segregated. The South American has a custom which might well be imported into our own land, to the relief of frequent embarrassment. As he was introduced, each man rose, bowed profoundly, and announced his own name in clear-cut tones, —"Enrique Burgos de Perez y Silva, servidor de usted." The women remained seated, but made their names similarly known. A professional pianist, a patched, dishevelled, and hungry-looking young man of some Indian blood, had already begun a very nearly continuous performance at fast time, with barely two-minute intervals between the half-hour dances. In a corner sat motionless all the evening two professional chaperons—for "Don Panchito" was a widow—sour-faced, sleepy-looking old women of none too immaculate habits, wrapped in black mantos from which only nose and eyes protruded.

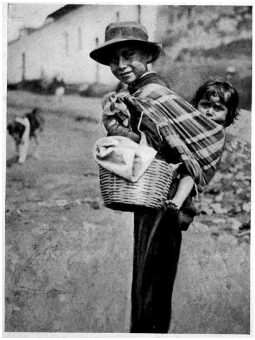
There were no dance cards. Each pair started in or stopped when they saw fit, quite irrespective of the others. A man stepped across the room, held out his gloved right hand to a girl, without a word, and she rose to accept an invitation that apparently could not be refused—at least, not one failed to accept it, though some of the more attractive were led out upon the floor at least fifty times in the course of the evening. Evidently it was "bad form" to carry on a conversation out of hearing of the chaperon. Neither dancer visibly spoke a word until the girl wished to stop, when she murmured "gracias" and was at once returned in silence to her seat. As the evening wore on, several young fops dropped in, alleging conflicting engagements as an excuse for their tardiness, and joined the celebration without removing their lavender gloves, which, indeed, the chilliness of the room pardoned. One of the newcomers, in particular, stirred up the ladies to almost human expressions of interest. He was son of the Minister of the Interior, just back from Paris, and lost no opportunity to display the wisdom he had gleaned in the "Capital of the World,"—a rather sharp-cornered French and an authoritative knowledge of new and more complicated manners of hopping about the floor to music. At frequent intervals our eight-year-old Indian slavey, Mercedes, familiarly known as "Meech," arrived with fiery drinks in which we toasted "Don Panchito," even the young girls tossing it off without a tear. At midnight the festival raged at its height. At one o'clock we sat down to dinner in a temperature far from agreeable to those of us who did not dance. Then the celebration broke out anew, though the chaperons and pianist, and even "Don Panchito," had disappeared. The young fops removed their gloves

and took turns on the stool. The clock was striking four when I retired, and little "Meech" was still serving liquid gladness as uncomplainingly and expressionlessly as ever. When I awoke at eight, she had just finished tidying up the *sala*, and was beginning her regular daily labors.

Gradually we made the acquaintance of various celebrities. There was "Chispa," for instance, the little Spanish bull-fighter who gave a benefit and "last final performance" in the plaza de toros each Sunday. The royal sport of Spain is, at best, a gloomy pastime in Spanish-America. Even when skilled toreadors from across the Atlantic are to be had, the bulls raised in the Andean highlands are so *manso* that the game degenerates into little more than public butchery. The killing of horses is forbidden in the bull-ring of Quito, both by law and because of the high price of those rare animals, and the toreador is not permitted to stir up a sluggish bull by exploding *banderillos de fuego* on his flanks. "Chispa," however, who was just such a "spark" as his *apodo* suggested, would have enlivened the most dreary entertainment, though his companions were local amateurs, so clumsy that he was called upon to save the life of each a dozen times during each corrida. Each succeeding "despedida" had some new feature to draw recreation-hungry Quito within the circular mud walls. One Sunday the program announced the engagement of "Hombres de Yerba" and "Hombres Gordos" ("Men of Hay" and "Fat Men"), and the inventive Spaniard was all but forced to lock the gates against the tailend of the throng. One of his amateurs was bound round and round with green alfalfa and set in the center of the ring. The bull, however, either was not hungry or in no mood for jests, and tossed the helpless fellow scornfully from

his path. The “Hombres Gordos” were made up with clown faces topped by silk hats, their bodies padded to enormous size with excelsior. Still the protection was not sufficient. One was thrown so savagely that the audience agreed he had been killed—until the evening paper announced he had merely broken a leg and several ribs. The fat man is no more beloved in Quito than elsewhere, and the merriment went on unabated. It is quiteño custom for the matador to *brindar* (dedicate the death of each bull) to some celebrity or person of means in the audience, tossing the favored one his cap to hold during the killing, and expecting it to be thrown back with a roll of bills in proportion to the skill of the *coup de grace*. Toward the end of the “last final performances” the supply of local “personages” grew so low that the eye of “Chispa,” roving around the circle, fell upon Hays; but even as he opened his mouth for the speech of dedication, the ex-corporal faded from public view.

Then there was Umberto Peyrounel, our first really and truly, flesh and blood “andarín.” Derived from the Spanish word *andar* (to walk), the term is used in the Andes to designate a foreigner who travels on foot, without any particular excuse for traveling at all; a peculiarly Latin type of tramp, loving to attract attention and making his living by so doing. We ourselves had often been styled “andarines” on the journey from Bogotá, though this genuine article scornfully rated us “excursionistas.” The distinction seems to be, not whether a man “andars” on foot, but whether he makes his way without using his own money, if such he possesses.



Probably not his own in spite of the circumstantial evidence against him



The undertaker's delivery wagon. The coffin is sky-blue with gilt trimmings

We saw Umberto first at a Sunday night concert, where he was inconspicuously amusing himself by running races with several hundred newsboys and

bootblacks around the plaza mayor. A stocky fellow, tall as Hays, of middle age, he was modestly dressed in a suit of sky-blue corduroy, leather leggings, and a velvet cap of the Dutch fisherman or Quartier Latin style. Across his chest hung a row of large medals; a flaring, wax-ended mustache all but touched his ears, and his luxurious black hair hung loose almost to his waist. When he called on us next morning his coiffure was done up in a simple maidenly knot at the back of his head. On closer examination the gleaming brass medals seemed to be glorified tobacco tags. He announced himself the son of Italian parents, born in the Argentine, of a sect corresponding to the Huguenots of France, known as the "martyrs of Piedmont." Leaving home three years before, he had walked across his native land to Chile, thence to Quito, where he was preparing to push on to Bogotá. To the people along the way—and even to us, until he caught the gleam in our eyes—he announced that two great dailies of Buenos Aires and New York had offered him a prize of $100,000 to make the journey on foot from the door of one to that of the other. On the road he was accompanied by a dog, wore silver-plated spurs as a sign of his rank as a *caballero*, and carried, in addition to a revolver and rifle, some forty pounds of baggage, most of which consisted of bulky ledgers filled with hand-written statements of his arrival and departure on foot, signed by every corregidor, alcalde, or native official of whatever species, by merchants, lawyers, and editors of every place, large or small, he had visited, each adorned with its official seal. This collecting of signatures was no mere whim; it was the customary excuse of his fellows for surreptitiously appealing to charity. At every hamlet he opened the ledgers—ostensibly to give the

residents the pleasure of adding their names to the roll of honor—and at the psychological moment slipped into their hands a printed card bearing a subtle plea for assistance in winning his great "prize." All genuine "andarines," Umberto assured us, did the same, and he berated us soundly for not having adopted the custom.

"How can you prove to the public that you have made the journey on foot, if you do not have the testimonials of distinguished persons along the way?" he cried, scornfully.

"The public has its choice of believing it or jumping off the end of the dock," Hays answered for both of us.

In plain English, Peyrounel was a beggar, though he would have been shocked beyond words to hear us say so. He called himself a "Champion of God," a bitter enemy of the priesthood, and in each town of importance gave a lecture on his journey and, later on, "if the population showed enough intelligence," a sermon. The religious fanatic so often proves, sooner or later, to be in a sexually neurotic state that we were not surprised when, several days later, Peyrounel burst out, apropos of nothing:

"Why do girls always become enamored of strange travelers? No sooner do I enter a town than several maidens fall desperately in love with me. I can't be expected to satisfy them all, can I? One has one's work to do."

"Wooden-headed ass that I am!" growled Hays. "If I'd only thought to grow curls!"

"Between you and me, as men of the same profession," went on the collector of signatures, "I don't mind telling you that I ride now and then by

train through a bad piece of country. What's the use of walking hundreds of hot desert miles, when the people will never know the difference? For instance; here, under the seal of ——, it says that I walked all the four hundred miles from ——. Well, I did—on a steamer most of the way."

In short the argentino's mental equipment was somewhat out of repair. One could not exactly put one's finger on the loose screw, but it could frequently be heard rattling. The following Sunday we attended his first "lecture." On the dismal daytime stage of Quito's hitherto lifeless Teatro Sucre sat Peyrounel, utterly alone but for the faithful dog at his feet, thrown into silhouette by an uncurtained window at the back, his sky-blue uniform looking more absurd than ever, his hair hanging in long, wet, careful curls about his broad shoulders. Quito has so few entertainments that it will endure almost anything particularly if no admission is charged; and some three hundred men were scattered about in the painfully upright seats, when the "andarín" rose. He read first some incomprehensible rodomontade on the power of the will, then drew forth a manuscript purporting to give an account of his journey, in reality strictly confined to a list of the towns he had visited, with the height of each above sea-level. The "lecture" was doubly unsuccessful, for when the speaker ended with an appeal for funds to continue his statistical journey, the gathering stampeded so effectively that all but a few had escaped when he reached the door, and the reward of his labors was a bare six dollars.

"Next Sunday," he announced, when we met him in the plaza that evening, "I am going to give the public of Quito the benefit of my conclusions on suicide.

Suicide, I shall prove, is always a prompting of the devil. Therefore it cannot be the prompting of God. Ergo, a man should not commit suicide, because he should never yield to the promptings of the devil."

Truly a Solomon of pure reason had come to Quito. Yet somehow the authorities, always backward in such matters, failed to take advantage of this splendid opportunity to give the Teatro Sucre another free airing.

Never since those days in Quito have I heard the oft-repeated word "andarín," than the picture of Peyrounel and his curls has not come to mind. However, he had undoubtedly covered long distances on foot, and we exchanged many a practical hint of roadway information. He planned to visit all the important cities of the United States, and to reach New York within three years. His letters of introduction already included many to American officials; he carried, for instance, one to the mayor of Seattle. Being an experienced traveler, all may have gone well with him south of the Rio Grande. But beyond it lay dangers he did not suspect; for some unromantic justice of the peace, unable to distinguish between an "andarín" and a common "vag," between the honorable profession of gathering seals and signatures, and mere begging, may have the cruelty to reward him with the notorious "year and a day."

On October tenth there was an eclipse of the sun, total at the Ecuador-Colombia boundary, and visible in all the southern hemisphere. In the days of the Scyri and Incas such a phenomenon was taken as a threat that the end of the world was at hand; a sign that an angry god was abandoning his erring people. On this occasion many of the less-educated classes

remained in the streets all night, for an earthquake had been prophesied. The local observatory had assigned a scientist to “note the peculiar actions of the populace and the lower animals during the eclipse.” It came toward seven in the morning. Gradually the brilliant sun disappeared, until only the slightest thread, of crescent shape, remained visible; the world grew dark as at early dusk on a heavily clouded evening, then slowly lighted up again in all its equatorial magnificence. Observers reported that a few fowls returned to roost; the curs slinking about the plaza seemed for a time undecided whether to seek their nightly lairs. But the actions of the populace were confined to the incessant smoking of cigarettes and to making the most of an excuse to put off their day’s task as long as possible—neither of which was unusual enough to be worthy of note. The majority, unsupplied with smoked glasses, found this no handicap, for the reflected eclipse in the plaza pool served the same purpose. World scientists had been sent to many of the larger South American cities with elaborate photographic equipment, only to find their long journeys wasted because of clouds. They would have done better to have come to Quito, where two unscientific vagabonds caught excellent pictures of the phenomenon in mere kodak snapshots.

It was on the morning of November eighteenth, five months from the day we had sailed together from the Canal Zone, that Hays and I set out along the muddy, cobbled highway to the railway station, carrying in turn a bundle of the size of a suitcase. By 7:30 the former corporal of police had taken his wooden seat in the dingy little second-class car, and had stowed his belongings under it well out of sight of the collector; for extravagant as are its fares, the

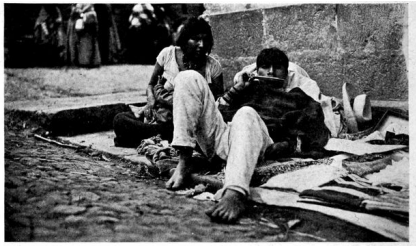
Guayaquil-Quito Railway allows a second-class passenger only fifteen pounds of baggage. At eight the tri-weekly train let pass unnoticed its scheduled hour of departure. Several stocky Americans of the type easily recognized as “railroad men,” and as many English-speaking negroes could be seen shouldering their way in and out of the motley throng. The engineers were leathery-skinned Americans; the conductors fat, burly Americans; the collectors gaunt, stringy, dense-looking young Englishmen, and the brakemen West Indian negroes who spoke a more fluent Spanish that their superiors, and were better “mixers” among the native passengers. After a time they decided to repair the last coach, and lay for some time under it, tinkering at a brake-shoe. Rumor had it that this was only a ruse; that the engineer assigned to the run had been arrested the evening before, and that the train could not leave until his trial was over.

Whatever the cause for delay, it ended at last, and with a great snorting and straining and blowing of steam the little old “Baldwin” began to drag its four *wagones* out of the station compound. First came a box-car, crowded inside and on top with gente del pueblo; then, behind the baggage and mail car, the densely-packed second-class; and finally the coach-de-luxe with a dozen passengers, most of whom would hasten to take their lawful place in the car ahead as soon as they could escape the eyes of their fellow-townsmen thronging the station platform. The Indian of Ecuador still commonly walks, a fact easily explained by a glance at the exorbitant rate-sheet. It was only by dint of much struggle that the railroad, reaching Quito four years before, had finally settled the point that even “prominent persons” shall pay fare; now it has taken the offensive, and collects

cartage even on the bundles and fruit the passengers are accustomed to stack in the car about them. The engine panted asthmatically to surmount a two-foot rise, scores of Indians and cholos running alongside, screaming farewells to their outward-bound friends, some visibly weeping for the quiteño of the masses considers death itself little less dreadful than departure. Then at length the train swung round the sandbank cutting and, catching a down-grade, was off in earnest, and reluctantly I saw "Señor Lay-O-Ice" disappear from my South American adventures.



Almost everything that moves in Quito rides on the backs of Indians



An Indian family driving away dull care—and watching me take the picture of a dog down the street

The attack of roaditis had seized him the day before. With no task to hold him in Quito, he had been for a time content to spend his days at his favorite occupation of sitting on a plaza bench. He had even paid his rent well in advance, that he might have an anchor to windward. But it had proved a rope of sand when the road lure came upon him, and he had feverishly tossed together his indispensable junk and turned his face toward other climes. From Guayaquil, "unless Yellow Jack or Bubonic beat him to it," he planned to push on to Cajamarca and Lima, chiefly by sea, then to strike overland to Cuzco. Beyond South America lay various nebulous projects,—a year around the Mediterranean, a journey through Spain, or perhaps a return to the Zone to earn another "stake" with which to journey to the Far East, there to adopt the yellow robe and settle down to the tranquil life of studious inactivity he loved so well.

Thus life moved on, even in Quito. "Chispa" of the bullring had taken the same train, feigning a first-class wealth until out of sight of his quiteño admirers. Peyrounel, the "andarín," too, was gone, dog, gun, hair, medals, spurs and ledgers, to carry back to Bogotá the map that had piloted us southward. Only one lone gringo descended to the city in the folds of Pichincha, to renew the task that still forbade him to listen to the siren that beckoned him on over the encircling horizon.

To pass over in silence its uncleanliness would be to give a false picture of Quito. Only its altitude saves the city from sudden death. Its personal habits are indescribable; I do not use the adjective to avoid the labor of finding one less trite, but because no other could be more exact. If I described in detail one fourth its daily insults to the senses, no reputable

publisher would print, and no self-respecting reader would read it. The city is surrounded by an iron ring of smells which the susceptible stranger, accustomed to the moderate decencies of life, can pass only in haste and trepidation. The condition of the best kitchen in Quito would arouse a vigorous protest from an American "hobo." However foppish a quiteño family may be outwardly, anybody is considered fitted to the task of washing its dishes or waiting on its tables. Among all the tramps of the United States I have never seen one so filthy as the human creatures that hang around hotel dining-rooms, or, in the one or two higher-priced establishments, are at least to be found just behind the scenes, kicking about the earth floor the rolls which the waiter a moment later religiously lays before the guest with silver-plated pincers. Yet clients in frock-coats and outwardly immaculate garb are never known to raise a voice in protest. There is exactly one way to escape these conditions in Ecuador, and that is to keep out of the country. A modern Crœsus would be forced to endure the same, for though he brought his own servants and even his food-supplies with him, the Ecuadorian would find some means of reducing him to an equality of condition, if only by opening the supplies in customs and running his unwashed hands through them.

Among our table companions were lawyers, university professors, newspaper editors, commonly with several rings on their fingers; yet rare was the man whose finger-nails were not in deepest mourning, or whose manners were not befitting a trough. On the street the passing of the women was usually marked by an all but overwhelming scent of the cheap and pungent perfumes to which all the "decente" class, male or female, is addicted, and

though their faces were daubed a rosy alabaster, it was rare to see one with clean hands, or without a distinct dead-line showing at the neck. The city is gashed by several deep gullies with trickling streams at their bottoms, which serve as general dumping-grounds. Not even the carrion-crow mounts to these heights, and the city is denied the doubtful services of this tropical scavenger. Though the world hears little of it, the death-rate from typhoid alone in the capital rivals that of "Yellow Jacket" in Guayaquil; and no precautions whatever are taken against it. When he has noted these customs and worse, the visitor will be startled into shrieks of sardonic laughter when he runs across a large two-story building bearing an elaborately painted shield announcing it the "Oficina de Sanidad."

Yet the quiteño is extremely jealous of any offer of other races to do for him that which he gives no evidence of being able to do for himself. Once out of Colombia, we had hoped for relief from the perpetual growling at Americans, chiefly in fiery and ill-reasoned newspaper editorials. Barely had we crossed the frontier, however, than we found Ecuador raging with a new grievance. The Government had recently invited the doctor in charge of the sanitation of Panama to inspect Guayaquil and bring his recommendations to the capital. A strict censorship on cable messages keeps the outside world largely in ignorance of the real conditions in the "Pearl of the Pacific." Inside the country, however, the real state of affairs is more nearly common knowledge. One could pick almost at random from the local newspapers such items as:

Guayaquil, 22d. Yesterday forty cases of bubonic plague broke out in Public School No. 5. There are seven survivors.

The resident, too, soon learns the real motives that hamper the sanitation of that pest-hole. Once it is "cleaned up," argue its short-sighted merchants, foreign competitors will flock in upon them. As to themselves, they are, with rare exceptions, immune to the two plagues for which the port is famous, having recovered from them at some earlier period of life. Those who have not recovered have no voice in the matter. There are even foreign residents who bend their energies to upholding this barrier to competition.

These interests now, abetted by unseen European elements fostering the discontent, and the eagerness of the opposing party to make political capital out of any cloth, whole or otherwise, had stirred the noisy little native papers into a furor, genuine or financed, against the Government. The people, in their turn, had worked themselves into the conviction that the invitation was only an opening wedge of the "Colossus of the North" to gain a hand in the rule of the country, which it is always the part of the opposition papers to paint as imminent. We had not been long in Quito when the attitude of the populace grew so serious that a joint meeting of both houses of congress was called to explain the government view of the transaction. The diplomatic corps was present in force, and as much of the public as could find standing-room after the two houses had been seated in the largest chamber available in the government palace. The diminutive old Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had lived abroad long enough to acquire a point of view, explained the exact truth of the situation as clearly as a disinterested foreigner might have done. But neither congress nor the populace would hear his reasoning. The latter hooted him vociferously, calling him "Yanqui!" and accusing him

of being in the pay of the United States. The congressmen rose one after another to charge him with fostering a conspiracy to surrender Ecuador to the Yankees, with many references to the "beegee steekee," and the meeting ended with the roar of a bull-necked senator:

"Undoubtedly, Señor, we want Guayaquil sanitated; but we want it sanitated by Latin Americans."

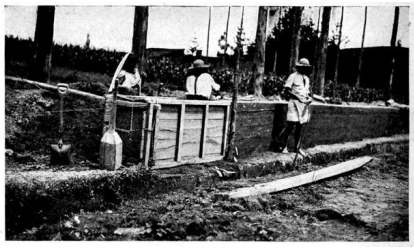
The *pesuña* and other evidences of sanitary notions of the crowd that hemmed us in gave the speech a ludicrousness that none but an enraged partizan could have missed. But that night the little Minister of Foreign Affairs resigned, and when morning broke he had disappeared.

For all the handicap of the complete absence of factories and street-cars, Quito might easily lay claim to the world's championship in noise. The din from its church-towers alone would bring it one of the first prizes. It is pleasant to sit out on a sunny hillside listening to the music of ringing church-bells as it is borne by on the Sunday morning breeze; but in Quito they are neither bells nor are they rung. In tone they suggest suspended masses of scrap-iron, and there is not a bell-rope, as we understand the word, in the length and breadth of the Andes. Barely has midnight passed, when Indians, hired for the nefarious purpose, and mobs of street urchins eager for the opportunity, climb into the church-towers and, catching the enormous clappers by a rope-end, beat and pound as if each was vying with the others in an attempt to reproduce the primeval chaos of sound, ceasing only when they drop from exhaustion. No corner of the city is free from the metallic uproar. Santa Catalina tower was a bare hundred yards above my pillow, and I know scarcely a block of the

town over which does not rise at least one such source of torture, hung with at least half a dozen bells—to use the word loosely—of varying sizes and degrees of discordance. Once awakened, the city is never permitted to fall asleep again. By the time it has begun to doze off once more, the ringers have recovered, and, taking up their joyful task with renewed vigor, repeat the performance at five-minute intervals until sunrise, and often far into the day.



The street by which one leaves Quito on the tramp to the south. In the background the church and monastery of Santo Domingo



Long before Edison thought of his poured-cement houses, the Indians of the Andes were

building their fences in a similar manner. In the regions where rain is frequent they are roofed with tiles or thatch; on the desert coast further south the tops afford a place of promenade sometimes miles in length

This has disturbances of its own. The game-cocks, which no self-respecting cholo would be without, challenge one another shrilly from their respective patios; that moment is rare when a child is not squalling at the top of its voice, the mother, after the passive way of quiteños, making no effort to silence it; cholos whistle all day long at their labors or pastimes; men and boys habitually call one another by ear-splitting finger-whistles; ox-carts, mule-trains, or laden donkeys refuse to move unless several arrieros trot behind them incessantly screaming and whistling; droves of cattle are led through the streets by an Indian blowing a *bocina*, a horn-like, six-foot length of bamboo; unoccupied youths like nothing better than to kick an empty tin can up or down the cobbled street; every school-boy on his way home or to school twice a day takes a big copper coin, or in lieu thereof an iron washer, and throws it at every cobblestone of his route in a local game of “hit it”; the barking of dogs never ends; every Indian who loses a distant relative, or who can concoct some other fancied cause for grief, sits on the sidewalk just out of reach of the contents of one’s slop-bucket, rocking back and forth, and burdening the air with a mournful wail that rises and falls in cadenced volume; for unbroken hours iron-tired coaches clatter over the uneven cobbles; every native on horseback

must show off to his admiring friends and the fair sex in general by forcing his animal to canter and capriole up and down the line of flagstones in the middle of the narrow street; three blind newsboys, brothers indistinguishable one from another, appear in succession, pausing every few yards to bellow in deepest bass a complete summary of the day's news, as if they were reading all the headlines of the papers they carry for sale; and to it all the church-bells add their never broken clanging. Apparently there is no law against disturbing the peace; without the power to silence the church-towers it would be useless, at best.

In those rare moments around midnight when the city threatens to fall silent, it is the police themselves that tide it over. An officer's whistle screeches at a corner, to be answered down block after block, until it all but dies out in the distance; then back it comes, and continues unbrokenly until the church-bells drown it out. Not only that, but he is a rare policeman who does not while away the night and keep up his courage by playing discordant tunes on his whistle whenever it is not in official use.

To add to its discordance, Quito's voices, due perhaps to some climatic condition, are often distressing, particularly the shrill, raspy ones of the women of the masses, who have somewhere picked up the habit of shrieking whenever they have anything to say—which is often. Unlike Bogotá, Quito has a very faulty pronunciation. The sound "sh," for instance, is frequent in the Quichua dialect of the region, and though not all quiteños speak the aboriginal tongue, the sound has crept into their Spanish, and they tack it on at every opportunity —"A ver-sh, Nicanor-sh." "Le voy á llamar-sh." As in

all South America, the town has the unpleasant habit of hissing at any one whose attention is desired, and the word “pues” has been cut down to a mere “pss” to be hooked on whenever possible:—“Si, pss! Va venir-sh mañana, pss.” The “ll” has become a French “j,” as in Central America and Panama, so that a street is not a *calle* but a “caje,” a key is a “jave,” and the newcomer will have difficulty in recognizing the place mentioned as “Beja-Coja,” however familiar he may be with the Bella Colla. Many localisms and Quichua words have found place in the general speech. A baby is always a “guagua” (wawa), frequently corrupted with a Spanish diminutive to “guaguita”; a boy is more often a “huambra” than a *muchacho*; and the traveler who does not know the aboriginal term “huasi-cama” would have difficulty in referring to the Indian house-guard and general servant of the lower patio.

But when its noise grows overwhelming and its picturesqueness pales to mere uncleanliness, the stout-legged visitor has only to climb over the outer crust of Quito in almost any direction to revel in the stillness and feast his eyes on vistas of rolling valleys and mountains, fresh spring-green to the very snow-line. A path, for instance, zigzags up the *falda* of Pichincha, steeper than any Gothic roof, through the scattering of red-tiled Indian huts called Guarico, and climbs until all Quito in its Andean pocket sinks to a toy city far beneath. Another road mounts doggedly round and round mountain-spurs and headlands until it is lost in clouds, and only the immediate world underfoot remains visible. The air grows almost wintry; oxen and Indian women, and now and then a man of the same downcast race, come hobbling down out of the mist above, with bundles of cut brush on their backs. Far up, the road swings around

on the brink of things, pauses a moment as if to gather courage, then pitches headlong down out of sight into a light-gray void, as through a curtain shutting off the “Oriente,” the hot lands and unbroken forests of eastern Ecuador, a totally different world, where the Amazon begins to weave its network, and “wild” Indians roam untrammeled.

CHAPTER VII
DOWN VOLCANO AVENUE

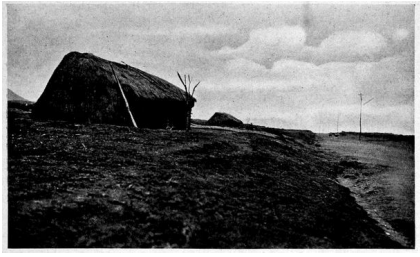
On the morning of February eighth, “Meech” called me at five. I had already been some time awake, such was the excitement of so unusual an event as going on a journey. The morning mists had only begun to clothe the flanks of Pichincha when I broke the clinch of “Don Panchito’s” last *abrazo* and creaked away down the cobbles of Calle Flores and across the Plaza Santo Domingo in the hob-nailed mining-boots suited to the long, stony trail and the rainy season ahead. The remnant of my letter of credit I had turned into gold sovereigns and sewed them in the band of my trousers; on my back were my worldly—or at least my South American—possessions, including the awkward bulk of the developing-tank packed with films and chemicals. That day had passed when I dreamed of driving an Indian carrier before me, and experience had taught me not to risk the assistance of the mails. Thus the world roamer must leave behind in turn each dwelling-place, after growing somewhat attached to it, for all its faults, to go its way alone again as in the past, glad—or merely sorry—when once in a while the cable brings him a whisper of it, as from some former half-forgotten existence.

It was a familiar route for the first few miles. Now and again I overtook Indians carrying enormous loads of *tinajas*, dull-red earthen jars and pots of all sizes enclosed in a kind of fish-net, often topped by a great roll of *esteras*, mats made of lake-reeds which serve the carriers as beds. Men and women alike raised their hats to me and mumbled some obsequious greeting. They were bound for Latacunga market, several days distant from their villages; yet even on so long a journey, rare was the woman from whose load did not peer the head of a baby. Lower down, inhabited haycocks and huts of swamp-grass centered in beautiful potato fields, red or purple with blossoms. A cherry-tree, here called by the Quichua term *capulí*, producing a fruit larger but not unlike our "choke-cherry," alternated with what looked like the Canadian thistle.

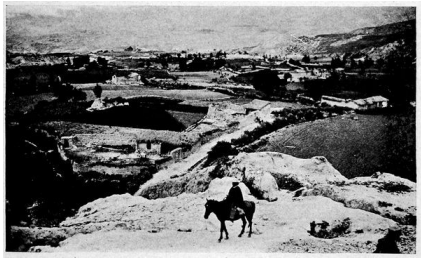
Three hours later, near the eucalyptus grove of the Flores estate that marks Quito's southern sky-line, I topped the ridge that marked my hitherto furthest south. The long pile of Pichincha, its three peaks now standing sharply forth, still lay close beside me, the rolling green lower ridges subsiding into the mountain lap where Quito, like a tiny ant's city, still lay visible, the Panecillo that bulks so large from the central plaza sunk to an insignificant mole-hill. Beyond, far across it, hovered the hazy-blue ranges of the north; Cayambe resolutely astride the equator, pointed Cotacache, streaked near the top with new-fallen snow, piercing the transparent highland sky. For a long time thereafter, as often as I topped a land-billow, I kept getting little broken glimpses of the town from the ever-rising world, until at last, toward noon, as a mighty mountain wave tossed me high on its crest, the view of the city of the equator flashed forth a moment more; then Quito and all its

surroundings sank away into the irretrievable past.

Before me lay a new world. With the leisurely dignity of its builder, García Moreno, the highway descended into a great distance-blue *hoya*, one of those saucer-shaped valleys that abound all down Ecuador's avenue of volcanoes. Occasionally a horseman in shaggy goatskin trousers stared curiously at me; now and then there passed a file of donkeys under sheet-iron roofs,—a cargo of corrugated iron, the importer of which still prefers this primitive transportation to the more hasty railroad with its startling freight charges. Dandelions and white clover flecked the evergreen fields; frogs sang their bass chorus in many a brook and *pántano*. Here the way followed more or less the route of the great military highway of the Incas. There were two of these; one of the llanos, or lowlands of the coast, and this more famous one along the crest of the cordillera, built during several reigns and finished under Huayna Ccápac.



Typical huts of the *páramo* of Tiopullo, a bleak, bare mountain-top across which the highway to the south hurries on its way to the warmer valleys beyond



Beyond the *páramo* of Azuay the trail clambers over broken rock ledges into the town of Cañar

Near the village of Macachi, twenty-one miles from the capital, I turned aside to the hacienda of a quiteño acquaintance. He was a boy of eighteen, scion of one of the old “best families” of Ecuador, who have kept their Spanish blood free from mixture, to whom had recently fallen the ownership and management of an enormous tract of his little country. Educated in our own land, he spoke a slow, pedantic English. Among his equals, he was soft-spoken almost to the point of diffidence. But his voice was commanding enough when he gave orders to his *mayordomo* or *escribante*, or to any of the hundred Indians who lived clustered about the central hacienda house, all of whom addressed him as “Su Merced” (Your Grace) and kowtowed as often as he looked at them, as their ancestors might have done to the imperial Scyri. Before the sun set, we had time to ride across a part of the estate. It lay somewhat too high for wheat, distinctly so for corn. Except for the cattle that flecked the upland fields far and wide, the potato was most at home. Fourteen distinct varieties of this native tuber of the Andes, several of them unknown in the North, grew on the

hacienda. In one field women were digging potatoes large as small muskmelons, though nearby were other patches still red or purple with blossoms.

The average wage of the Indian peons was five cents a day, with *huasi-pongo*,—space for their miserable *chozas* in which the only furniture consisted of a few odds and ends of home-made pottery and some sheepskins which, spread on the earth floor by night, served the family, its guinea-pigs and mangy curs, as bed. The women and children worked for nothing, wages being reckoned by family rather than individually, except that the women who milked the cows were each paid a dollar a month. In reality, the Indians were serfs of the estate. When first hired, they are *enganchados*, "hooked" by a labor agent, and having spent their "advance" in a prolonged chicha debauch, must often be arrested and forced to carry out their part of the contract, usually remaining for years, if not a lifetime, in debt to the hacendado. It would be an error, however, to look upon their condition from our northern point of view. Any custom taken out of its native environment has a far more serious aspect than the reality warrants. The Indian, trained during many generations of Inca rule to avoid all personal initiative or responsibility, accepts by choice this patriarchal arrangement. The majority had been attached to the hacienda since birth; giving the community the aspect of one immense family. Each household had its little plot of ground for its own garden, and the privilege of pasturing a small flock or herd. Yet the owners have the best of the bargain. Nearer the capital were estates where *enganchados* Indians made adobe bricks at ten cents a day, with huasi-pongo and food, making daily some three hundred each, which the owner sold at seventy-five cents a hundred.

The snow-peak of Sincholagua and the rugged, ice-capped ridge of Rumiñaui faced the hacienda. Though little higher, the place was infinitely colder than Quito in its mountain pocket, for here we caught the full sweep of the winds off the ice-fields. By dark, we were both huddled in the hacienda dining-room, bleak and comfortless in spite of its extravagant trinkets from the outer world. The peons, for all their awe of their youthful lord, could not deny themselves the pleasure of grouping noiselessly before the door as we ate, listening to the strange tongue—not Quichua, stranger still, not even Spanish—which their erudite master spoke with this traveler from unknown parts, who came on foot, carrying his own load, like any Indian. The crack of the door grew ever wider, the broad, expressionless faces ever more numerous, until a draft of the bitter mountain night air caused “His Grace” to glance up in annoyance. Both crack and faces disappeared silently and suddenly, but came again many times before we each crawled early under four heavy blankets.

Next morning the highway, no longer cobbled, but wide and smooth, without wheeled traffic, soon brought snow-clad Illinaza into full sight before me. So skillfully did it bear me upward that by noon I was crossing the great *páramo* of the Nudo de Tiopullo, without the consciousness of having climbed at all. The Andean *páramo*, for which we have no exact English word, is not the sharp mountain peak my imagination had pictured, but is used of any broad plain so lofty that not even the hardy Indian will live upon it, where *quinua*, most cold-blooded of domestic plants, refuses to grow, a drear treeless upland covered only with a tough brown bunch-grass that gives it somewhat the aspect

of our virgin prairies. To a northerner in motion, it was not uncomfortable by sunshiny day, but no one passes these lofty plains at night by choice. Only a rare shepherd's shelter of stones and *ichu* dots the cold-brown immensity. The shivering highway hurried due south across it, bringing to view another sea-blue *hoyo* and, barely pausing for a last glance back at the faint peak of Cotacache and the long bulk of Pichincha, grown mere parts of a broad, hazy, tilted horizon, raced downward into the softer valley.

Some seventy-five miles south of Quito begins a veritable desert. From a distance the ranges to right and left seem green, yet the ascending valley grows so dry and arid that even the scanty scrub trees die of thirst. At the top of a barren divide I met head-on, panting harder than I, and moving no faster, the little tri-weekly train from the coast, crowded with dust-laden, weary passengers. Almost sheer above me stood forth the beautiful cone of snow-clad Cotopaxi, equalled in symmetry on all the earth's surface only by Fujiyama. To the left the hoary head of Tungaragua, far away in the blue haze of the hot, tropical Oriente it looks down upon, rose gradually higher into the sky. Then the highway descended and went ever more swiftly downward into a half-arid hole in the ground, and by three I was tramping the cobbled streets of Ambato, the "winter" resort of wealthy quiteños, a mere 8000 feet above sea-level. To one accustomed to loftier Quito, it had a tranquil, half-languid air; its people were more friendly, lacking that suggestion of belligerency common to quiteños. There was, indeed, something pleasing about it that I had never yet seen in Ecuador. It reminded one mildly of Egypt, in air and odor, and the dust sweeping across from the barren, arid hills that wall it in. The market of this town, hung

midway between the tropics and the temperate zone, offers the fruits of both—*aguacates* and mangoes side by side with apples, pears, peaches, and cherries—the native capulí, at five cents a peck—beside raspberries and blackberries, and the perennial "fru-u-u-till-a-a-as!" (strawberries) that are singsong daily through the streets of Quito. It was from the market-place of Ambato that I caught my first glimpse of Chimborazo, the giant of the Andes, just the crown of its long, saw-like glacier ridge brilliant white against the steely highland sky, as it stood on tiptoe peering over the barren ridges of Carhuairazo.

Barely had I entered the hotel when its dishevelled boy-servants crowded around me to ask if I were an "andarín." Peyrounel, it proved, had once favored the establishment with his distinguished, if financially disadvantageous, presence. I pleaded too colorless garments to merit the title. To these Andean village youths the arrival of so romantic a being was what that of the yearly circus is to our towns of the far interior. Yet when I offered any of them double his present wage to accompany me and carry a few pounds of my pack, they shook their heads and shrunk fearfully away.

It is not, as I gradually learned to my growing astonishment, merely because they know no better that the people of the Andes sleep on wooden beds. In Quito I had found many who refused to use the imported springs, and I know at least two doctors who prescribed wooden beds for kidney trouble. Here in Ambato a perfectly respectable spring-bed had been completely floored over, and the unsuspecting gringo, instead of landing on a soft and yielding mattress, found himself on such a couch as a thinly carpeted floor might be. Nor was this by any

means the last bed out of which I pulled the lumber and spread the woven-reed *estera* above the barrel-hoop springs.

Ambato claims the title of "Athens of Ecuador"; and, indeed, four of the country's principal writers lived and died here, which is more than can be said of the capital. The place of honor in the main plaza, gorgeous with geraniums of every shade of red, is occupied by the statue of Juan Montalvo, commonly rated the country's chief literary light. In Ambato Juan León Mera wrote his "Cumandá," the accepted classic among Ecuador's novels; and one may still visit the family of Luis Martínez, whose "A la Costa" is worthy a place in South American literature, if only for its magnificent descriptions of tropical scenery.

I left Ambato on a morning so cold that gloves would have been welcome; one of those mornings, frequent in Ecuador, when the sun rises like a beauty of the harem pushing aside the soft, white curtains of her alcove, when the mountains, at the bases of which dense masses of clouds and mist have gathered, seem gigantic altars on pedestals of marble. Soon the sun grew ardent and imperious, capriciously burning away the mist-curtains of the night, blazing down unrestrained on the rolling plains of Huachi, so arid and monotonous. The road lay deep in sand across a half-desert, with no other adornment than the fences of *cabuya*, of the cactus family, that replace the dividing ditches or mud field-walls further north, to mark the limits of the poor heritages of the Indians. The chief industry here is the weaving of a coarse cloth from the fibers of the *cabuya blanca*. Here and there a capulí tree persisted, and impenetrable, bushy clumps of the thorny *sigse* bristled

aggressively. The few planted fields were sparse and drear, though near the town, where the thirsty *arenales* had been transformed by irrigation into patches of green on which the desert-weary eyes rested gratefully, grew the strawberry, large and fragrant.

Higher and higher rose the world, though so imperceptibly that the ascent was noted only because the landscape opened out to ever greater vistas. It was a day of climax in volcanoes. Around the circle of the spreading horizon the white crests of no fewer than eight of the great vent-holes of the earth grew up about me, until I paused on a high ridge to study them. To the right, for a time looking like a single mass of rock and snow, stretched long, saw-toothed Carhuairazo, with Chimborazo rising behind it; then gradually the great, glacier-blue dome of this Everest of America detached itself and stood forth in all its immensity. Far behind, yet perfectly clear in spite of the blue haze of some forty miles distance, cone-shaped Cotapaxi, once so savage in its destruction, reared itself into the sky-line like an occidental twin sister of Fujiyama. To the left, in military precision, three snow-clads stood shoulder to shoulder—Sincholagua, Antisana, and one above which rose a column of smoke that marked it as Sangai, most active of the western world, but a few days before in destructive eruption. Then came the glacier-clad, rounded cone of Tungarahua, keeping its eternal watch over the tropical Oriente, and to the south, noblest of all, peering forth first in the early mists, and growing in grandeur all the morning, stood dreaded El Altar, its beauty now completely unveiled, a fantastic mass of peaks and pinnacles, like some phantom city of ice.



Indians carrying a grand piano across the plaza of Cañar on a journey to the interior



The Indians of Ecuador draw their droves of cattle on after them by playing a weird, mournful “music” on the *bocina*, made of a section of bamboo

For hours the snow-peaked horizon continued. Across the sands of Huachi travelers had been few; toward noon they grew plentiful. Around every turn appeared Indians and their four-footed competitors, with such monotonous persistency that I needed a cudgel to drive out of my way the asses which, expressionless and impassive as their masters, were inclined to march serenely on, irrespective of human obstacles. The rare *chagras*, or tawny countrymen,

who live in their *chozas* along the way, were interesting only as evidence of how clod-like man may become. At Mocha, where I halted in the early afternoon, the deep-blue ice-fields of Chimborazo lay piled into the sky overhead, a mountain still, though the town stands more than two miles above the sea. All the following morning its arctic dome towered close on my right as I plodded along its gentle slope not far below the snow line, often waist-deep in the ruts which generations of pack-animals and Indians had worn in the brown, uninhabited páramo, dreary with long, slightly rolling stretches of bunch-grass, across which I only now and then overtook a mule-train, the drivers wrapped to their ears in their heavy ponchos. Behind, across a hazy valley, now more than forty miles away, the symmetrical cone of Cotapaxi gleamed faintly forth in a new dress of snow that had fallen during the night. A cobbled highway ran along the bottom of a slight hollow some distance off, but travelers had scorned it so long in favor of the rutted páramo that grass was grown high between its cobbles; and at length, as if it resented the abandonment, it swung off in the direction of Cajabamba and was gone.

The dozen ruts across the páramo finally joined forces to form a kind of road that, turning its back on Chimborazo, around whose white head a storm was brewing, struck off toward a long, undulating, hazy valley backed by blue heaps of ranges. Gradually I descended to almost a desert again, by a road deep in sand, rising and falling over countless sand-knolls, the peaked, grass-covered huts of Indians tossed like abandoned old straw hats far up the flanks of the drear mountainsides on either hand. At one of these I found the first use for my new revolver. An enormous dog, plainly bent on destruction, bounded

out upon me without a sound, halted abruptly with a faint yelp as I pressed the trigger, turned a complete somersault, and fell feet upward, like a captive turtle, not two yards from me.

Ordinarily there is little to be feared from the sneaking curs of all colors that swarm about every hut throughout the length of the Andes. Before the Conquest, tradition has it, the Indians had only the mute *allcu*, now exterminated—at least, it is certain that none of those that remain are mute. These degenerate descendants of the animals brought over by the Spaniards rival the original chaos of sound as they rush out in cowardly packs upon any stranger—especially a non-Indian, for as the white man's dog abhors an Indian, so do these a white man—while their masters gaze stolidly on, without so much as attempting to call them off. The Indian of the Andes does not raise dogs; he has them merely because he is too passive to get rid of them. The curs are never treated as pets; the only caress they ever receive is a kick or a prod from which they retreat sluggishly with a cowardly yelp, even if the weapon misses its aim; they are never fed, but exist on such offal as the Indian himself disdains. A mountaineer to whom I put the question once briefly expressed the viewpoint of his race:

"How can we help having many dogs, patrón? They breed so often!"

From the village of San Andrés, picturesquely backed by the ice-palace of El Altar, architecturally as diffuse as the Castle of Schwerin, a spreading highway, bordered by endless cactus hedges, led toward a great sandy plain far ahead, a small forest of eucalypti that marked the site of Riobamba giving it center. Further on, for all the aridity, was plenty of

half-grown corn, with numberless peaked, thatched huts peering above the vegetation on either hand. At the entrance to Riobamba I saw the first llamas of my South American journey. Once an Indian passed driving a llama and an ass hitched together; further on several of these absurd "Peruvian sheep," pasturing beyond the cactus hedge, craned their long necks to gaze curiously after me. Times without number I had been assured that not only was the llama never a draft or a milch animal, but that it could never be ridden; that it would carry exactly a hundred pounds and would irrevocably lie down if another ounce were added, and that it could under no circumstances be urged beyond a slow, dignified walk. Imagine my surprise, then, when suddenly I beheld a llama bestridden by a full-grown Indian come down the road at a brisk trot, and watched them fade away in the eucalyptus-lined distance beyond. In the town beyond there was one llama for every two donkeys.

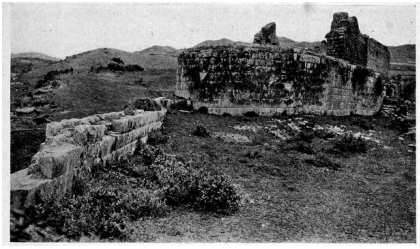
Riobamba, chief city between Quito and the coast, is commonly described as "lying at the foot of Chimborazo." The description must not be taken too literally. I had imagined a cold, haughty little town snuggled together in a lap of the high Andes; but if Riobamba lies at the foot of Chimborazo, so, in only somewhat lesser degree, does Guayaquil. The traveler turns his back on the glacier-clad giant of the Andes and tramps a long half-day before he comes to what, in situation and general appearance, might be a town on the sandy prairies of western Nebraska. Its monotonously right-angled streets are unusually wide, painfully cobbled, and swirling with sand; its architecture is drearily like that of any other Andean city. It has been several times destroyed by earthquake; were it not, like Quito, more than two

miles aloft, it would be even more often destroyed by its personal habits. At sunrise thrice a week most of the town turns out to watch the trains that have "overnighted" here leave for Quito and Guayaquil respectively; whence its suggestion of some frontier village of railroad hotels in our Western states. Unlike Quito, Riobamba has a street-car. It is a platform on wheels with a flat roof supported by gas-pipes, under which are some crosswise boards that are called seats with the same Latin-American tolerance with which a place to lie on the floor is called a bed, and a place the traveler may possibly be able to make his way through is called a road. Like some Andean newspapers, it appears "every now and then," when a pair of blasé, world-weary mules drag it across town to the station and back, usually only on train days. Many ride, and the more poorly dressed seem to pay for the privilege; but the Indians take good care not to be caught on any such risky, new-fangled contraption.

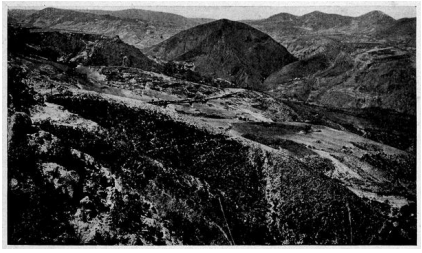
There is commonly not a "sight" to be seen in Riobamba, unless it be the stern, white face of Chimborazo looking down upon the city from the middle distance to the north. The traveler who chances upon the town of a Saturday or Sunday, however, will find it a place of interest. Then the Indian population of a thickly inhabited region comes from thirty or more miles around to what is rated Ecuador's greatest market. The sandy plaza, larger than an American city block, is so densely packed with stolid thick-set men and women in gray felt hats and crude-colored blankets that only by constant struggle can a purchaser thread his way across it. From my room on the corner above, not a foot of open ground was visible. The scene was like a swarming of myriad ants of many colors; like a great

Oriental rug undulating in the sunshine. As one crowds along between the rows of hawkers, all the products of the region seem to pass in procession. Here were entire families who had jogged many miles to town under the produce of their chacras; there, a man with only a half-grown chicken or a gaunt pig for sale; beyond, a woman sat all day long selling bit by bit, at a net total of perhaps ten cents, the bushel of native cherries which, together with her babe, she has carried at least twenty miles. Here was a pile of ugly native shoes—of very limited demand—there, homespun blankets and ponchos in colors that scream audibly, before they mellowed by sun and rain and the habits of their wearers. Every domestic animal and fowl known to the Andes of to-day was displayed; cheap knives, tin spoons, trinkets from foreign lands, native plants and bulbs; herbs that still make up the aboriginal pharmacopœia, as in pre-Conquest days; tiny packages of dyestuffs that are doled out a penny-worth at a time; corn bread and barley bread, even a few soggy wheat biscuits—though the price of the latter is all but prohibitive—cherries, strawberries, oranges, *aguacates*, a hard native taffy known as *alfeñique*, pears, apricots, peaches, a hard little apple that never matures, pineapples, nearly all the grains and vegetables known in our own land, and even a greater variety of corn and potatoes; and a countless confusion of other products that sell for what would seem far less than the cost of bringing them to town. Beyond, was a *tercena*, an open-air butchershop, where Indian women hacked into bits the cows and sheep that had succumbed to amateur butchers, at the same time fighting off the fifteen dogs which, by actual count, prowled about the stand. In one corner scores of tawny, bare-legged Indians squatted beside heavy

grass-wrapped loads of snowy ice, Riobamba's only means of cooling her beverages. If one knew enough of the bastard Quichua of Ecuador to ask its origin, the stolid fellows threw an expressionless glance toward the icy dome of Chimborazo. About them hovered something akin to the glamour that surrounds the Arctic explorer. All day long was an endless motley going and coming through the adjacent streets and plazas, amid which the imagination could easily drop back four centuries and fancy what this Andean world may have been before the coming of the white man.



Ruins of the fortress of Ingapirca, near Cañar, where the Inca Huayna Ccápac is said to have received the first news of the landing of white men on the coast of his Empire



A mild example of the “road” through southern Ecuador. The trail pitches and rolls over earthquake-gashed, utterly uninhabited regions, sinking far out of sight in the *quebrada* in the middle distance, then climbs away across the world until the hill here seen sinks to a dot on the landscape

It was so brilliant a Sunday that Chimborazo seemed to hang almost sheer above the town, and the whole bulk of snow-clad Tungarahua loomed clearly forth from its tropical home, when I set out after midday for what I had been told was an easy half-day’s tramp. Within an hour—so sudden are the changes in weather zones here—an icy rain was pouring down upon my shoulders bowed with the weight of a hundred-pound pack. At last I sprawled to a summit with an all-embracing view of the entire district of Riobamba, the city itself a mere fleck far below in an opaque-blue landscape roofed by purple-black clouds through which the unseen sun cast a single faint shaft, as from a weak spotlight. The rain, which in Ecuador falls in zones sharply cut off one from another, ceased abruptly at the top of the barrier. Here were two roads from which to choose, and for hours thereafter I could not know whether the one that descended a sharp valley beside a tiny stream led anywhere near where I wished to go. Well down the bone-dry vale were scattered hamlets of grass and mud huts of a half-wild tribe of Indians, the men in white goatskin trousers that gave them the appearance of shaggy-legged Greek satyrs, the dwellings often hung far up the steep walls that

enclosed the growing stream. Many of the inhabitants ran away at my approach; the rest stared at me from safe heights as I sped on down the valley. Ugly white curs abounded; in the scanty trees a bird sang now and then; but for the most part only the sound of the stream leaping from rock to rock broke the mountain-walled silence.

Cold darkness fell, and still the broken trail descended swiftly. At rare intervals a corner of the moon peered through the clouds. Then, in the blackest of nights, the road forked again, giving me another random choice. A wild, windy, uninhabited hour beyond, the path fell suddenly away under my feet and I found myself involved in a labyrinth of *quebradas*, holes and chasms large as two-story houses, as if the region had been wrecked by a long series of earthquakes. A score of times I climbed down hand over hand into immense ruts with walls high above my head, certain I had lost my way, yet with no other choice than to press on. Two hours, at least, this riot of the earth's surface continued before there appeared suddenly the lights of a considerable town, dimly seen through the night across a wet, blurred valley backed by an all but invisible mountainside. A trail picked itself together again under my feet, pitched headlong down to a roaring little river straddled by an aged stone bridge, ghostly white in the pallid moonlight, and led me stumbling into the railroad village of Guamote, still booming with the tomtoms of the Sunday fiesta that had left its scattered débris of drunken Indians through all the length of the town.

From Guamote I followed the silent but well-kept Quito-Guayaquil Railway through a landscape like that of southern Texas, winding in and out between

dreary hills peopled only by a rare weather-worn shepherd in goatskin trousers; then across broad stretches of sear-brown, slightly rolling desert scantily covered with bunch-grass, the sand sweeping over it in clouds. From Palmira,—two dismal little station buildings at some 11,000 feet elevation—the railroad drops steadily for all the more than a hundred miles to the coast. Some way down the descending valley, the land turned almost suddenly from dreary brown to the green of another rain-belt that gradually climbed the ever-higher mountain walls that shut me in. Beyond Alausí next morning I made a swift descent, even swifter by sliding down the face of the notorious "Devil's Nose," where the track mounts in three sections, one above the other, and reached the little town of Huigra in time for "breakfast." Here, in a green valley between high hills falling abruptly into a prattling stream, are the main offices and hospitals of the railroad, and an American atmosphere, tempered with whiffs of England and Ecuador, to which the fever and bubonic of Guayaquil do not mount, nor the ills of Quito descend.

At Huigra my route was to turn southward over the enclosing mountain wall. But I had no objection to coasting down into the tropics on a side-trip to Guayaquil—except Guayaquil itself; and when the chief engineer promised a screened refuge from sun to sun, I accepted the invitation gladly. All that is necessary to travel from Huigra to sea-level is to get something on wheels of the right gage and "let her slide"—or rather, let her slide within very definite limits, lest one reach the bottom far sooner and in poorer condition than was planned. With a native employee behind, the two of us sat on the sheer front edge of the track automobile, the experienced hand

of the chief on the brake, and roared in and out and ever down the mountain cañon, the towering walls on either side rising higher above us with every yard forward, a foaming river keeping us a not much slower company. Huigra is at kilometer 117. At 110 we suddenly reached the tree-line. Forests in striking contrast to the bare upland plateau of Ecuador grew up about us as if by magic. Foaming mountain brooks dashed down from either towering wall to join the river—and to save the company the expense of building water-tanks. Swiftly the trees changed in species,—from hardy highland shrubs to voluptuous tropical growths, till the airy bamboo, noblest of ferns, bowed to us in graceful dignity from the crowded forest as we screamed past.

Before noon we swung out of the gorge I had followed from Palmira, and halted at Bucay. It had been like dropping in two hours from May to a dense and heavy July, from a northern scene to one like that of Panama, with the same sticky atmosphere, negroes, and outdoor life. Here we took possession of the empty pay-car on the rear of the day's passenger-train and sat with our feet on the back railing, watching the dead-flat tropical world run away and shrink up to nothingness behind us. The track lay straight as a cannon-ball's course through the tunnel of forest and jungle. Indians and their gay garments had disappeared; here were only the colors of nature. Along the way, thatched houses of split bamboo slouched in languid attitudes, half-black and slightly dressed families peering from their sort of hole-in-the-wall verandas behind partly raised blinds hinged at the top. For all the lazy languor of the scene, jungle products succeeded each other swiftly. Cacao, then palm-trees gladdened the eyes; the air grew heavier; now and then a great field of sugar-cane

broke briefly the endless tunnel of forest; beautiful bamboo groves alternated with immense tropical trees cutting into the sky-line.

The natives, afoot or ahorse, used the track as a trail, for all else was impenetrable wilderness. Here and there the jungle crowded so close that it side-swiped the car, though along the way were many section-gangs fighting it back with machetes, the favorite tool and weapon of the *costeño*, who saluted us—or, more exactly, my companion—as we sped past. Pineapple fields grew numerous; at stations the fruit lay in piles at the feet of indifferent chocolate-colored vendors. The brown castor-bean on its small green trees appeared; splendid cocoanut palms, heavy with nuts, heralded the sea; maidenly slender rubber-trees; broad fields of light-green rice, growing arm in arm with Indian corn; the plebeian bread-fruit tree, with its broad leaves fancily cut as with scissors in the hands of an inventive child; and always gigantic tropical trees cut fantastically into the sky-line of the light-gray day above. Behind, always, fixed as fate itself, the dim and clouded range of the Andes, a giant wall, blue and unbroken, shut off the world beyond. Here and there a hoary peak showed above the clouds, so high one could not believe it possible. Far off in the heavens like a great cloud, Chimborazo stood white and immovable. As in the forest one sees only trees, so only down here, looking at the chain as a whole, could one realize the loftiness of those realms where one had been living for months more than two miles above the sea.

Naked brown babies, huts on ever longer legs, hammocks, grew numerous, and languid loungers to fill them; here and there appeared a Chinaman; some large towns, bamboo-built and all on stilts, like a

thin-shanked army; buzzards circling lazily overhead amid scents that whispered of plague and sudden death. Then on either hand began to appear the low, dense-wooded hills of Durán, more properly deep green islands in this flood-time. Fluffy white flowers in myriads smiled bravely above the black waters that would soon swallow them up. The vast mountain wall across the world behind had grown a shade bluer when we drew into Durán on the banks of the Guayas, and brushing both clear with housewifely care of any lurking mosquito, dodged through the double screen-doors into the railroad quarters. Here were shower-baths and phonographs, New York papers, a frequent nasal twang, and only outside and seeming far off as in some distant place, the scent of Ecuador.

Sudden death is reputed to fly chiefly by night along the Guayas. So only when the sun was high did we venture across to Ecuador's metropolis and far-famed death-trap, Guayaquil. Outwardly, the low, heat-steaming city looked far cleaner than Quito. But here filth grants no immunity. During three hours we saw the black funeral street-car pass nine times—and by no means all the population can afford so splendid an exit from the world. Yet here were electric tramways for the first time since Bogotá, larger shops and more ambitious displays than in Quito, and signs of greater commercial activity. The houses were of wood or split bamboo, low and earthquake-fearing, all the windows with wooden blinds hinged at the top, from behind which peered half the female population, seldom seen on the streets. Compared to Quito, it was a town of no color at all. Among the foreign residents was a curious indifference to local dangers, always seeming greater at a distance than on the spot. Americans yawned at the mention of

"Yellow Jack" and Bubonic and went about their business with as little apparent worry as a New Yorker of death by a street accident. Nothing in the attitude of the people suggested an unusually precarious hold on life—except that ever recurrent black funeral car, electrically operated, as if horses were not fast enough for its incessant labors. Long before the sun had lost its mastery of the situation, we had retreated again to Durán. The lone traveler in far-off lands runs many perils, but if I must succumb to one of them, let it be with a fighting chance, not this insidious, sneaking death that flies on all but invisible wings.



Cuenca, third city of Ecuador, lies in one of the most fertile and beautiful valleys of the Andes

Next morning the passenger-train lifted us back to Huigra, where a new experience awaited me. That evening I sat writing in the railroad quarters. Two fellow-countrymen were parading the broad, second-story veranda of the light wooden building. The only other sound was the muffled chatter of the stream below. Suddenly the heavy table beneath my arm began to move as at some spiritualist séance, the windows took to rattling as if in some sudden terror

to escape from their frames, the wall decorations swung back and forth like pendulums, and for what seemed a long minute the entire building shook as with a paludic fever. I opened my mouth to protest against what I took for a moment to be physical exuberance of the veranda paraders; but I closed it again as I realized that I had passed through my first earthquake, and had gone on writing for a line or more before I recognized the good fortune of being in a wooden house. Outside, the strollers had not even interrupted their chat, except to remark, “Pretty good one, eh?” and when the natives in the town below had left off shouting, evidently in an attempt to scare off the dreaded spirit within the bowels of the earth, life returned to its customary languor, the silence broken only by the stream still prattling on through the darkness. In the morning the telegraph wire brought word that the instruments of Durán had registered seven quakes, and that several houses and a church had fallen in the adobe interior.

On the morning of February 24th I crossed the little bridge over Huigra’s garrulous stream and, trailing away up the mountain wall that shuts off the railroad valley on the south, disappeared from the modern world. All but twenty pounds of my baggage I had turned over to a native *fletero*, proprietor of a mule-and-jackass express company that operated as far south as Cuenca. It was in the nature of things, however, that even under a light load I should pay for my descent to Huigra by much sweating toil, before raising again its paltry 4000 feet to the two miles or more of the Andean chain. In the valley a brilliant sun set me dripping; above was driving mist to chill me through if I dared to pause, and out of which now and then floated the gentle exhortations of unseen arrieros to their toiling animals:

"Anda, macho! Mula, caramba! Vaya, sinvergüenza!"

An experienced gringo had assured me I was approaching the most impassable region in Ecuador, a place where it rained steadily and heavily a hundred and four weeks a year, where my mules would sink to their ears in mud and be left to perish, where I myself would infallibly die of exposure if my caravan were overtaken by night out on the lofty páramo. I easily forestalled the peril to my mules, and the second I resolved to avoid by not letting night overtake me.

It was not, certainly, an ideal road. There were places where the writhing trail was for miles a series of earth ridges with deep ditches of mud and water between, like an endless corduroy road, and these made hard going indeed for laden animals. For as often as one of them set foot on one of these *camelones*, as they are called in the Andes, it slipped off into the muddy ditch between, as likely backward as forward, giving a very exaggerated imitation of the gait of a camel. In fact, it is this constant slipping and sliding of passing pack-trains that turns certain wet regions of the Andes into camelones. In places the mud-reeking slope climbed steep mountainsides through narrow trails worn twenty feet deep, down or up which horses or cargo mules stumbled and sprawled constantly, threatening to smash their packs against the side walls or underfoot.

But it was a route far worse for horsemen than for a man afoot. I stepped blithely from ridge to ridge, not only dry-shod but at my regular pace, easily leaving all four-footed competitors behind; and while there were germs of truth in the warning that a mule and his cargo, slipping and falling upon me in one of the gullies, might bring my journey to a halt, the very

simple remedy for that possibility was not to be found loitering beneath an animal when he fell. Donkey carcasses and the rain-bleached skeletons of mules and horses were frequent along the way; and always, now broken, now for a time incessant, came out of the blind mist the raucous bawling of arrieros: “Anda, mula, caramba!”

The dense, heavy fog turned to pouring rain. Indeed there were evidences to verify the assertion that this was one of the zones of Ecuador where the rainy season reigns perennially. In mid-afternoon I passed a few Indian hovels. I had been warned to stop for the night in the last of these rare habitations, if I would not end my wayward career out on the arctic páramo of the Nudo de Azuay. But the stolid-featured native assured me there were others a half-league on, and I had climbed twice that distance across a dismal stretch of bunch-grass without a sign of life, except a scanty herd of wild, shaggy, rain-drenched cattle, before I realized that the Indian had told the old lie to be rid of an importunate guest. Within me there grew the conviction that, in spite of my best intentions, I should some day shoot a large, round, soft-nosed, 38-caliber hole through some Indian for sending me “further up” into the uninhabited night.

However, there I was, exactly where, of all places in Ecuador, I had so often been warned in several tongues not to let night overtake me. The gray walls about me dimmed like a lamp turned out. These páramo trails being, even by day, only a straggling of interwoven paths often effaced, it was not in the order of things that I should keep the route long in unmitigated night. For a time I stumbled along an irregular, rock-littered ground, full of leg-breaking

holes, picking every step ahead with my stick, like a blind man, and even at that now and then sprawling on all fours. As to direction, I could only trust to luck. Then I felt water-soaked bunch-grass under foot, and all efforts to find the trail again were wasted. Vaguely I felt that I had come out on the nose of a mountain. Through the rain-drenched night there came faintly to my ears the sound of a waterfall, and from somewhere far off the dismal howling of a dog rode by on the raging wind. The ground under my feet took on the angle of a steep roof; it required stick, hands, and extreme vigilance to keep from pitching headlong down into the bottomless unknown. I felt my way inch by inch several hundred feet downward without finding a level space as large as my hand. In the end I could only sit down on my bundle in the mud, brace my feet against a tuft of bunch-grass and, piling my most perishable possessions in my lap, button my llama-hair poncho over my head, sup on a three-inch butt of bread, and settle down to keep my precarious seat until daylight.

He who fancies an Ecuadorian mountainside a pleasant night's lodging-place, merely because it is near the equator, has still something of geography to learn. Strangely enough, it might have been worse. The poncho was almost impervious to cold, entirely so to rain. As the Scottish chieftain of earlier days soaked his tartan before lying down for a night in the highland heather, so the wetness of all about me seemed to add warmth. The rain redoubled, yet I should scarcely have known it but for its pelting above my head. I dozed now and then into a nap. After one of them I peered out into the wintry night, to find the mist alive with hardy fireflies so large that those which started up near me seemed to my

dull fancy the lanterns of some prowling band. Twice some animal, perhaps a wild mountain-horse, romped by me. When I looked out again a bright moon was shining, yet I felt too comfortable as I was to take advantage of it to push on, and fell asleep again, not without a drowsy misgiving that some diligent hunter might try a shot at my huddled, shaggy form standing out in the moonlight against the swift mountainside; until I remembered that no native ever ventures out upon an Andean páramo except in the full light of day.

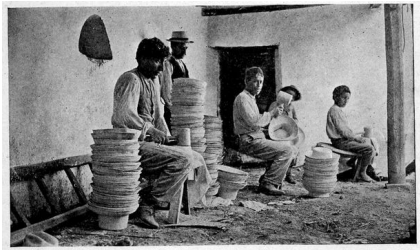
Dawn showed the lost trail zigzagging in three branches down the face of the mountain. The waterfall lay directly below me, yet so steep was the slope on which I was perched that I had to crawl back again up the trail on all fours and descend with it. Far away across a valley so deep I could not see its bottom, lay in plain sight what I knew to be the town of Cañar, a mere white speck halfway up the great mountainside beyond. It is chiefly noted for its outlook upon the world. From a distance, it seemed to hang upright on the vertical mountain flank; once arrived, I found it occupied the flat top of one of the countless hills that pile higher and higher into the sky, to culminate in a great Andean chain. Here was a land of stone. Everywhere, in field and valley, rocks lay more profusely and far larger in size than on any abandoned New England farm. If the tumble-down old town of Cañar had any features at all different from hundreds of others down the crest of the Andes, it was its large proportion of stone buildings over those of sun-baked mud.

It is perhaps the existence of stone, rarer to the north, that accounts for the presence near Cañar of the first ruins of unquestionably Inca origin. Their

victorious march to the north, too, was so quickly followed by the arrival of the Spaniards, that the Children of the Sun left no permanent works about Quito and beyond. The imperial highway from Cuzco to what is to-day Ecuador, built by a race less fearful of the lofty places and mighty cañons of the Andes, was more direct than the modern haphazard route. Where it descended from the páramo of Azuay and climbed out of the gorge beyond, there was built a fortress and a *tambo* for the housing of the imperial cortège that is known to-day as Ingapirca, which some believe to be that same Tomebamba where Huayna Ccápac, the Great, was born, and where the news of the landing on the coast of a strange tribe cut short his journey southward in his old age.



A detail of the “Panama”-hat market of Azogues. The hats are bought unfinished and the wholesalers pile one after another on their heads until their faces are all but concealed by the protruding “straw” ends



Arrived at the wholesale establishments of Cuenca, the hats are finished,—the “straw”-ends tucked in and cut off, the hats beaten with wooden mallets on wooden blocks, given a sulphur bath and sun-bleached, then folded flat for shipment

He who would visit Ingapirca must have either a guide or a working mixture of Spanish and Quichua. I lost myself a dozen times in a labyrinth of paths, each leading to an isolated Indian hovel. One might have fancied the aboriginals had surrounded the sacred Inca relics with a conspiracy of silence, for I was forced at last to drag an old man forcibly out of a cluster of cobble-stone huts before he pointed out to me a path that wound away upward and disappeared over the edge of the world. Along it I came at last in sight of Ingapirca. The “Castle of the Gentiles,” as it is locally known to-day, sits silent and grass-grown on the summit of a rock-knoll from which the eye ranges in every direction over a tumbled labyrinth of valleys and ridges. They built high, the Incas, as men who preferred to see with their own eyes what was going on about them, and they seem to have gloated over the unbroken sweep

of the cold, invigorating Andean wind. The chief ruin is that of a fortress, an oval wall with a sheer rock face to the north, and symmetrical stone steps leading up to the entrance on the south. Of large cut stones, and with ornamental blind doors, or niches, it is so like the monuments of Peru as to leave no doubt of its Inca origin. Even on the curves, the stones are so nicely fitted, apparently without mortar—though Humboldt reported the discovery of a kind of cement between them—that there are few joints for which a modern contractor would berate his workmen. The walls are double, with earth between them, the inner wall less carefully constructed; and undisturbed centuries have filled the interior of the fort to a grass-grown level. Above this rise the remnants of a building, only adobe walls with some cut-stone doorways still standing; but the many wrought stones to be found in fences and in the scattered heaps in which dwell the modern inhabitants of the region, suggest that the adobe walls had once a complete casing of cut stone. Slight as are the remains, there is still sufficient setting for the fancy to picture Huayna Ccápac striding back and forth upon his lofty promenade, looking upon his "Four Corners of the Earth," and halting in his meditations to watch the imperial *chasquis* racing toward him across the rugged landscape with news of the landing in his imperial domains of a pale-faced tribe with hair on their faces.

Hours of strenuous toil, piloted only by my pocket-compass, brought me back to the main route. For a space it was a real highway, faced with stone, but soon degenerated into a writhing chaos of ruts and rocky *subidas*, like a road in the throes of an epileptic fit. The sun was still high when I caught sight of Biblián, its famous sanctuary standing out white and

clear against the dull mountainside above the town. But it was only in the thickening dusk that I finally climbed into it.

A youth replied to my first inquiry with a “cómo no!”—just as unexcitedly as if strangers came to Biblián every year or two. In the dingy little shop to which he led me, an old woman whose greedy face warned me to prepare for exorbitant charges, even before I learned she went to church four times a day, hunted up the enormous key to an immense room above. In a corner of it stood a bed at least a century old, covered with a marvelous lace counterpane, but harder than macadam. While I sat at meat—or, more exactly, at vegetables, since Biblián kills its weekly beef on Sunday and by Monday it is gone—the customary delegation of citizens came to offer their respects. The town, it proved, was oppressed with a great worry. The earthquake of a week before had not merely tumbled down several mud church-towers of the region, but had given new life to a prophesy that clanged deafeningly at two-second intervals without a break, ex-Biblián could not sleep of nights and the priests were reaping a rich harvest. All night long I lay like a Hindu ascetic on his couch of nails, listening to the exquisite torture of a broken-voiced church-bell that clanged deafeningly at two-second intervals without a break, except for a frequent wild, hellish jangling of several minutes’ duration. When dawn broke, the entire population had already crowded into the church for early mass. A bun was not to be had with my morning coffee, because my hostess had locked up the shop to attend the second ceremony. I ordered “breakfast” for eleven, and a boy came to inform me that I must eat it at nine, since from that hour on señora la patrona would again be at church.

Biblián is a city of pilgrimage. By morning light it proved to be surrounded on all sides by fields of corn, with countless capulí-trees and masses of geraniums lending it even more color than the variegated blankets of its inhabitants. The cup-shaped valley was scattered with scores of tiled cottages of the half-Indian peasants, the hillsides a network of paths and trails to their huts and tiny farms. The chief road climbed to the *Capilla* on a crag well above the town. It was a costly, three-story structure richly decorated within, though a dismal mud hut served Biblián as school. The Virgin of Biblián is noteworthy among a host of her sisters in not having come personally to pick out a spot and order the building of her shelter. Perhaps her history is still too recent for the successful concoction of such traditions. In 1893 the valley of Biblián was choking with drought. The local cura, alive to his opportunity, set up an image in a grotto on the mountainside and, consulting his barometer, implored rain. The drought was broken. In honor of the feat the image was named the "Virgin of the Dew," and pilgrims began to flock to Biblián. In the volume which he has prepared for their instruction the foresighted cura bewails the fact that "We cannot tell in one book the countless cures, assistances, protections and life-savings the Blessed Virgen del Rocío has done for the faithful from all over Ecuador." In the face of the appalling mass of proofs before him he confines himself to none. But he does mention the miraculous fact that the first chapel had been completed by August of the following year, and that two years later the present "sumptuous, rich, divine" sanctuary was sprinkled with holy water.

Barely was this dry when "the troops of the Liberal party, like the barbarians at the gates of Rome,

threatened the afflicted capital of the Azuay, bringing inevitable ruin"—such, for example, as the curbing of the power of the Church—"when the powerful Blessed Virgen del Rocío was borne from Biblián to beleaguered Cuenca with fitting reverence and in the midst of the most crowded and pompous procession in the annals of that Catholic city" ..., whereupon the Liberal troops faded quickly away, and redoubled the fame of the Virgin and the income of Biblián parish. The Minister Plenipotentiary of the Vatican has seen fit to grant a hundred days' indulgence to whoever visits the sanctuary, "which indulgence may be applied to souls in Purgatory." The trip to Biblián is worth at least that. Lovers of justice will rejoice to know that the foresighted cura bids fair to enjoy for long years to come his divine—knowledge of barometers.

It is only a league from Biblián to Azogues; an hour's stroll along a slight river through almost a forest of capulí-trees, the wild cherries hanging in bunches something like the grape, though with only a few ripe at a time. Then comes a sudden drop into summer; for the climate of Azogues is soft and bland, with little rain. About the town were hundreds of tile and thatch-roofed cottages among rich, green cornfields, spreading far away up one valley and down another; and beyond these were tawny mountain flanks mottled with every color from sandy brown to sun-drenched green.

The town of Quicksilver is rather that of "panama" hats. As in San Pablo, Colombia, men, women and children were braiding them everywhere; shopkeepers and their clerks made hats in the intervals between customers, and even while waiting on them; Indian and chola women wove them as

they tramped along the roads with a bundle, and perhaps a child, on their backs, as European peasant women knit, or those of other parts of Ecuador spin yarn on their crude spindles. I was assured that every living person in Azogues knew how to *tejar sombreros*. The fops themselves were so engaged somewhere out of sight.

The weekly hat-fair of Azogues began on the Friday evening of my arrival. As the afternoon declined, there streamed in from every point of the compass, from every hut among the surrounding corn-fields, men, women, and children, each carrying a newly woven hat, bushy with its uncut "straw" ends. A dozen agents from Cuenca bought these as they arrived, never at the price demanded, but after a heated bargaining to which, in the end, the weavers always meekly yielded. Each buyer seemed to confine himself to some particular grade or style; this one to coarse "comunes," that to large sizes, another to small, and only two or three to the finer weaves. As he bought them, each agent piled the hats on his own head until his face was completely hidden behind the protruding ends, from the depths of which the bargaining went on unabated.

Saturday, however, is the chief market day of Azogues. As I strode out along the highway to Cuenca next morning, throngs were pouring into the city from every direction. For a full two hours I passed an endless stream of Indians as close together as an army in column of squads, the women carrying on their backs every product known to southern Ecuador. The men, for the most part, were burdened only by a half-dozen hats, one atop the other, the untrimmed ends hiding their faces as under shaggy straw-colored beards. The scene recalled the Great

Trunk Road of India, yet was of vastly less interest and variety. He who had once seen an Ecuadorian Indian had seen all the procession. A few were weaving the last strands of their weekly hat as they hurried by. Most “panama” hats are completed on Friday night or in the gray of Saturday’s dawn; for the maker, frequently overcome by indolence during the week, must bestir himself to have his product ready in time for his weekly debauch. Before he sallies forth to squander his week’s earnings, however, he carefully lays away enough to purchase another tuft of “straw,” lest he have no nest-egg from which to hatch next Saturday’s celebration. The procession had thinned considerably before it occurred to me to count the passersby, and even then 132 persons passed me in a minute, each and all bearing something for the market of Azogues. During most of the two hours the number had easily doubled that, and this was only one of the many roads and trails leading to this little-known town far from modern transportation.



My home in Cuenca, with the Montesinos family. The well-to-do classes of this city live in unusual comfort for Ecuador, and have the custom of decorating the walls under the

projecting roofs, or those of the patio, with exotic scenes painted on the wall itself



Students of the *Colegio* of Cuenca, which confers the bachelor degree at the end of a course somewhat similar to that of our high schools. Misbehavior is punished by confinement in the upright boxes in the background

Every house of southern Ecuador has a cross in the center of its ridgepole; here they were so elaborate, so covered with devices symbolic of the religion they represent, that it was only by a stretch of the imagination that one could make out the cross itself beneath. Late in the morning I came again to the Azogues river, and a typical bridge of the Andes,—opportunity to wade thigh-deep for all who travel afoot on this main highway to southern Ecuador. Not far beyond, there cantered by me several wholesale buyers from the Azogues market, the saddlebags of each bulging with a hundred or more hats, stuffed one inside the other. Mile after mile the broad river-valley of Cuenca is forested with *capulí*, eucalyptus,

and a Gothic-spired willow. Red, tile roofs stand strikingly forth from deep-green corn-fields, and thousands of fertile, cultivated acres are shut in by barren, sand-faced hills, though there are no imposing peaks south of Cañar, and I had seen none snow-clad since leaving Riobamba. With no census for twenty-five years, the metropolis of southern Ecuador, third city of the republic, and capital of the rich province of Azuay, estimates its population at 45,000. Some have it that this great *cuenca*, six leagues long, gouged out of the Andes, was the original Tomebamba, birthplace of Huayna Ccápac. Like Riobamba, the city is flat, its wide, cobbled streets, crossing at right angles, stretching their chiefly one-story length away in both directions almost as far as the eye can see. The buildings are almost all of the sun-baked adobe mud that everywhere dominates the architecture of the Andes; though some of the “best families” have striven to decorate their dwellings outwardly with huge mural paintings on the eaves-protected walls of patio and veranda.

CHAPTER VIII
THROUGH SOUTHERN ECUADOR

As susceptible Don Giovanni falls under the succeeding spell of every pretty face, each blotting out those that went before, so the traveler down the backbone of South America frequently concludes that he has found at last the climate copied from the Garden of Eden. Such a spot is Cuenca, dimming by comparison its latest rival, Quito, and I find in my notes of the exuberant first day there the assertion: "Of all the earth, as far as I know it, Cuenca has the most perfect climate." Always cool enough to be mildly invigorating to mind and body, yet never cold, it is unexcelled as a place for dreamy loafing. The sunshine vastly exceeds the shadow, and its situation is peerless—not in the scenery of its surrounding mountains, which are distant and low, but in the rich fertility of this great vale of Paucarbamba ("Flowery Plain"), as the Incas called it. Cuenca has no fitting excuse for not being one of the richest agricultural cities on earth. Yet its only "hotels" are dirty little Indian eating-houses without sleeping accommodations, and the traveler must fall back on the prehistoric system of hunting up a

friend's friend. For once this roundabout method brought handsome results; at the home of the Montesinos brothers I found my most home-like accommodations south of Quito, in a highly cultured family with no scent of the public hostelry about it. My front door opened on a vista across the patio and the long market plaza, usually shimmering with Indians and clashing colors, to the blue hills and a strip of Dresden-china sky to the west; and it is only fair to the Andes to mention that this extraordinary family had erected in a back patio a well-appointed lavatory, stoutly padlocked against the Indians of the household.

The Montesinos brothers, sons of a former governor of the Province of Azuay, were lawyers, as well as professors in Cuenca's colegio, leaders in the intellectual life of the city, excellent examples of the best grade of "interandino." One was a teacher of French and English, which did not seriously mean that he could speak either of those tongues. In 1899 this bookish, somewhat effeminate man had started a revolution against the Alfaro government in the person of General Franco, a bloodthirsty half-negro from Esmeraldas, who had been made governor of Azuay. It proved unsuccessful, and the instigator had been forced to fly to the jungled Oriente and live for months among the head-hunting Jívaros Indians. I had hesitated to believe my own convictions on certain conditions in Ecuador, but this frank and outspoken native outdid anything I might have said. His attitude was in striking contrast to that belligerent "pride" of Latin-American governments and their led mobs and self-seeking politicians. To him the thrice-beloved "patriotism" of his hot-tempered fellows was rubbish. What he wanted was an efficient government and a chance to live a free

life, whether he remained a subject of the particular strip of territory known as Ecuador, or of the gigantic "Yanqui-land" so many seemed to fancy imminent. He asserted that the police of Cuenca were its worst criminals; all thieves and ruffians who could not be openly convicted were sentenced to serve as policemen. Except in the collecting of taxes and as a place of reward for its henchmen, the central government leaves Cuenca and the south of Ecuador virtually abandoned, and that tendency, so general in Latin-American countries, for the more distant parts to break away and form a free, or at least autonomous state is here marked. The region labors under a thousand petty annoyances. For instance, Quito has a parcel-post service with the outside world, but Cuenca has none, nor any money-order system, and about one piece of mail in three ever reaches an addressee in the capital of the Azuay. A package mailed from abroad to a cuencano lies in Guayaquil until the addressee appears in person, or appoints a lawyer, to lay claim to it, to pay the fees and grease the wheels of the legal and illegal formalities necessary to set it on its way to its destination.

To our modern notions Cuenca is not much of a city; yet here in the almost untracked wilderness it seemed enormous. So rarely do strangers visit it that, large as it is and in spite of my entirely conventional appearance, I could barely pause in the street without all work in the vicinity ceasing and a crowd gathering about me. Hungry to behold a new face as the crew of a windjammer that has gazed only upon themselves during long months at sea, their attitude seemed to say, "We can work to-morrow, but there is no certainty that we can have the pleasure of looking at a stranger." It is hard for Americans, with their

wide outlook and accustomed to the complicated existence of our large cities, to realize the narrowness of life in these placid old adobe towns hidden away in the Andes. Virtually cut off from the outside world, the cuencanos are a peculiarly bookish people. “We do not know,” said Montesinos, “that there are places on the globe where men live in freedom and decency, except from books.” Yet in spite of being rather uncertain of their dignity, like all isolated peoples, the educated classes were as well-meaning, as *simpáticos*, as any I met in Latin-America. Two things only were necessary to join the upper caste,—a white collar and visiting-cards. The former above a patched “hand-me-down” was more effective than a new $100 suit worn with a flannel shirt; and the man who has his name printed on bits of cardboard, to exchange with regal courtesy and profound bows with every upper-class acquaintance, is instantly accepted as of gente decente origin. Indeed, visiting cards should be as fixed a part of every Andean traveler’s equipment as heavy boots.

One could not but pity these ineffectually ambitious mortals, kept down by leaden environment and isolation. He who does not deal in “panama” hats has hardly an opening in Cuenca, except to study medicine, law, or theology in the local colegio; hence there is a plethora of “doctors” who can only wear their titles and live the life of enforced bookworms, forbidden by the rigid rules of caste even the privilege of turning their hands to some useful occupation. As in Bogotá, the very isolation and lack of opportunity has driven many to their studies, and Cuenca numbers many writers among her “sons,” producers chiefly of that languid, half-melancholy, pretty poetry, full of the “fine writing” the divorce from life and unlimited leisure to polish their gems

of thought gives. In all Cuenca there is only one mean little bookshop, selling religious tracts and translations of American and English "penny dreadfuls." The *intelectuales* can only, as it were, feed upon each other and form mutual admiration societies, where admiration soon palls from too constant familiarity and lack of new blood. Few, even of the "best families," have ever been out of the *cuenca*, or basin, in which the city lies, and its isolation has given the place something of the atmosphere the traveler is always seeking—commonly in vain—of a world wholly removed from outside influence.

Their ineffective eagerness to learn was pathetic. The most nearly educated young men of the town had rented a second-story hall near the main plaza and decorated its façade with huge letters announcing it the "English Language Club." Here the score or so of more or less English-speaking residents of the male sex gathered together several evenings a week.



The "English Language Club" of Cuenca in full session



An hacienda-house of southern Ecuador, backed by its grove of eucalyptus-trees. The owner or the *mayordomo* occupies the two-story structure, while the rest of the household string out in regular caste gradations to the kitchen and outhouses

For years, however, there had not been a genuine English-speaking person living permanently anywhere near Cuenca. In their eagerness to capture an authority the club drafted me at once, and whole delegations were always ready to go about and show me the town and vicinity—provided it was a not too distant vicinity, for they had as great a dread as the quiteño of getting far from the central plaza. I was received kindly and eagerly by the educated men anywhere, so long as it did not involve my intrusion on the Moorish seclusion of their family life, and became a sort of honored guest of the town, even if I was not presented with the key to it, which by comparison with the door-keys would have been a burden indeed. They were not “spenders”; money comes slowly and with too great a strain in these parts, but they were ever on the lookout to do me little kindnesses.

Barely was I settled, therefore, when I was hurried

off to an evening at the “English Language Club,” convoked in special session. For an hour I sat like the chief buffoon in a comic-opera ensemble in the center of a horseshoe circle that included a score of doctors—Cuenca swarms with doctors, home-made and book-trained—the grandsons of presidents, sons of ministers to Washington and the court of St. James, while the whole gathering, like self-conscious school-boys, got off a sentence or two in more or less English in regular rotation around the circle, until some shining genius suggested that, as they had so illustrious a guest with them, it was merely a “social evening” and not a regular meeting; hence the rule demanding that only English be spoken was not in force. With a veritable explosion of relief the entire club burst into Spanish, and Alfonzo was himself again.

Later experience proved that the rule was largely a dead-letter even at regular meetings, and only to be enforced when the arrival of an illustrious stranger put the club on parade. The walls were hung with several mottoes in English, and they had gathered together some belated American magazines and a billiard table. There the members gathered several evenings a week to play “pocar,” and to practice very intermittently such English as they had learned from the printed page, forming their sentences and—what was worse—their pronunciation from the rules books had to offer, and mixing in with it a bit of a similar brand of French, as if any foreign language answered more or less the purposes of the club. The rules forbade the use within the club-room of any tongue than our own, but after the first few set greetings of “goot nig-ht, how do yô do?” the gathering settled down to an uproar of Castilian, broken only by the few phrases of Cuenca-English which custom had

stereotyped. The majority came to play “pocar,” not so much because of the opportunities that pastime offered for one of the Latin-American’s chief failings —for pockets were seldom bulging—but because it smacked of the United States, the stepmother of the “English Language Club” of Cuenca. The son of a former Ecuadorian minister to Washington, who had spent a year or two in “Yanqui-land,” shared with “el Señor Doctor Montesinos, profesor de inglés en nuestro colegio,” the position of final authority on the tongue, except on those rare occasions when a traveler brought the real, dyed-in-the-wool article with him. Even the authorities were not faultless. They said “díssiples” for pupils, used habitually the expression “I can to go,” and clung tenaciously to similar choice bits of their own convictions, and, what was worse, drilled them into their fellow-members with that dogmatism strongest in those who are wrong. But the minister’s son had made the most of his American residence in learning “pocar” so thoroughly that he was as real an authority on that art as he fancied himself in English. Unfortunately, the combined efforts of the club had not unearthed among all the dog-eared classics that had drifted together in generations of Cuenca’s flirting with English the mention in print of that fascinating pastime. Whence they had been forced to adopt their own spelling and home-made phrases. On the wall appeared a warning placard, “Those which play pocar are speaking English,” and each game was sprinkled with a rapid-fire of Spanish, punctuated by fixed phrases of near-English. Thus the expressions “You bid,” or “You open,” had been concocted by the simple means of literal translation from the Castilian used in similar pastimes, and became “You speak.” Amid the crack of billiard-balls and the rattling of

home-made chips the conversation ran on much as follows:

“Cordero, you are serveeng. Y hombre, ya le dije que la muchacha no . . .”

“Fife cards; all ze workeengs, Carlos.”

“Lindísima, hombre, pero su mamá. . . . Enriquito, you speak.”

“No, señor, equivocado, *I* am speakeeng.”

“Caramba! Es verdad. Eet ees true. And for how much are you speakeeng?”

“No, et ees meestake. Ze doctor is speakeeng, because he is sitteeng by ze side of Juancito, which ees serveeng ze cards,”—and with deep solemnity the doctor proceeded to “speak” by throwing two Cuenca-made chips on the table, the game rattling on until Muñoz broke in upon an oratorical description of the latest event of the *vida social* of Cuenca with a:

“And I am nameeng you now, Carlitos; with ze house full of ze whole kettle,” and throwing down a “full house,” he scraped the entire pile of chips to his corner of the table.

There were two dentists in Cuenca at the time of my visit. One of those present was not there in person, because he had gone away on a week’s journey two months before; the other had not yet arrived, though he appeared nightly at the “English Language Club,” because his instruments of torture and gold-plated diploma were still somewhere on the road from Guayaquil. Had they both been unqualifiedly present in the flesh, the wise man would have continued to endure any degree of toothache rather than submit to their amateurish mercies. The chief raison d’être of the city is its commerce in “panama” hats, though

virtually none are made there. The agent sent to Azogues or other neighboring towns pencils in some cabalistic code on the inside of the hat the price paid the weaver—or as near that price as his conscience makes necessary—and delivers it to his employer. In the city are many "factories of sombreros," from behind the downcast mud fronts of which sounds all day long the pounding of wooden mallets, and from which exudes the constant smell of sulphur. At the establishment of a club-member we posed for a local photographer in acres of hats, in various stages of the finishing process, which ranged from the huge Gualaquiza products from the Jívaros country on the east, to those of so fine a weave as to be inferior only to the famous *jipijapa* of Manabí.

It is just over the range from Cuenca that are to be found the Jívaros, the widely renowned head-hunters of the upper Amazon. Montesinos had lived long months among them at the time of his mishap, and knew their ways well. A proud, untamed race engaged in almost constant warfare with the neighboring tribes, they consider the white man an equal, and treat him as a friend so long as he does not transgress their strict tribal laws. The Andean Indian, with his slinking air and his heavy clothing, they look down upon as a weakling and a very inferior being. Having despatched an enemy, the Jívaros cut off the head well down on the shoulders, extract the skull by a vertical cut at the back, sew up this and the lips, and, by the insertion of hot stones and a process only imperfectly understood by any other than the tribe itself, reduce the head to the size of an orange, with the original features easily recognizable. In this state it is said to be of little use to its rightful owner, even if recovered. The desiccated head must, according to tribal laws, be

kept until after the yearly ceremony to appease the spirit of the dead man, after which it is hung up as a trophy over the entrance to the successful hunter's house, or, what is far more usual of late years, traded to some passing white man for a rifle or a supply of cartridges. One traveler I met had been so eager to obtain one of the dried heads that he offered a Jívaro chief two rifles. The chief replied sadly that, though he would do anything possible to get a rifle, unfortunately it happened that the tribe did not have a single dried head on hand. "But," he cried a moment later, his countenance brightening visibly, "could you wait a month or so?"

A few years ago a tall, lanky German arrived in Cuenca and went down among the Jívaros to study their customs, and especially to find out exactly how they shrink heads. Month after month passed without a word from him, but cuencanos knew the Teuton way of pursuing an investigation step by step in all its details and ramifications, and thought nothing of the prolonged absence. Then one day, more than a year later, there was offered for sale in the market of Cuenca a splendid specimen of shrunken head, with long, blond hair and beard and a scholarly cast of countenance. The investigation had been thorough; but the outside world still remains in darkness on the art of shrinking heads among the Jívaros.

To the stranger, perhaps the feature of Cuenca that will remain longest in his memory is her street lights; certainly, if it happens to be his lot to have to find his way home on a black night after a sad, candle-lighted "comedy" in the local theater—the school-room of the colegio. The laws of Cuenca require that every resident in the principal streets set up a candle before his house. But as the two-cent *velas* which are

satisfactory to the law are short and not particularly inflammable, and the wind is given to blowing its hardest during the first hour after dusk, the city changes long before eight from long, faintly-guessed lanes between unseen house-walls to a medieval inky blackness. The inhabitant who stirs abroad carries a square glass box containing a flickering candle, or is accompanied by a "link-boy," in true medieval fashion. The stranger who, being no smoker, chances not even to have matches with him, feels his way homeward for an uncertain number of blocks by counting them with his fingers, at last discovering the plaza on which he lives by hugging the corner of it. Shivering with uncertainty as to whether his lodging is the third or the fourth door from the butchershop with the protruding hook, here and there stumbling over a piece of sidewalk or into a puddle, he finally coaxes his gigantic key to fit its lock with something far more potent than satisfaction.

Thus life runs its placid course in this far-off city of the Andes. Those who come there after the railway from Huigra reaches Cuenca, if long-pondered plans some day mature, will no doubt find it different, more blasé and less likable, no longer one of the rewards of toiling over the world's byways. Even electric lights are threatened, and before them will flee one of its most nearly unique characteristics.

The hope of securing an ass to stagger out of Cuenca under my possessions had melted day by day during my week there. In what I had been assured was the best donkey-market in Ecuador, those animals proved both scarce and high in price. Toward the end of my stay the baggage I had sent from Huigra had arrived, both developing tank and tray broken,

in spite of the vociferous promises of the *fletero*, though still serviceable with elaborate manipulation. It was chiefly picture-taking that forced me to turn packhorse; had I been able to abandon everything connected with photography, I might have pranced along like a school-boy under his knowledge. A pack of nearly fifty pounds remained, in spite of a rigid reduction and a desperate throwing away which included even my medicine case, bequeathed to Montesinos, for ever since crossing the Rio Grande into Mexico seventeen months before I had been burdened with it, without a single excuse to swallow one of its myriad pills. If only Edison would take a day off to invent a baggage on legs that would trot, dog-fashion, after its owner—just a modest little baggage of, say, fifty pounds—it would revolutionize life.

Distinguished visitors to the cities of the Andes are, in all accounts extant, met upon their arrival and sent on their way by a cavalcade of horsemen including all the local celebrities. For the first time in my Latin-American journey I was accompanied by a guard of honor as I plodded heavily out of Cuenca on March tenth; that is, Montesinos, the master of "English," strolled with me across the ancient cobbled bridge over the Matadero and a mile or more beyond, until he met the sun coming up from the jungled montaña of the Jívaros and turned back with the market-bound Indians to his scholastic duties. The broad highway was dry and hard as a floor. Prepared in my heavy boots for the usual Andean trail, I could have walked it in dancing-pumps. The great cuenca shrunk to an ever-narrower, fertile valley, stretching southward along a little stream called the Tarqui. A score of Indians were plowing a single field with ox-drawn plows

fashioned from forest trees. So scant is his individual initiative that the Andean husbandman works well only in company with his fellows, and the experienced mayordomo conducts his farming in a succession of “bees” in which all the employees join efforts, as in the days of the Inca.

The Andes grow higher and more mountainous to the south. Beyond the hacienda and the hamlet of Cumbe next morning, the valley closed in and forced the highway to scale, like an escaping prisoner his walls, the great Andean “Knot” of Portete. Bit by bit it shrunk to a narrow road, then to a rocky trail, like a man about to begin some mighty task, with no longer time to consider his personal appearance, reducing himself to the bare essentials. Through clumps of blackberries and frost-bitten corn it climbed, then shook off even these, and split into faint, diverging paths across another of those lofty, wind-swept, solitary páramos of the Andes, broken here and there, only scantily covered with the dreary dead-brown *ichu* bunch-grass of the highlands, and low, bushy *achupallas*.

It would have been more to the point if the sympathy the old woman of the hacienda behind had taken the form of *fiambre*, a roadster’s lunch, with which to follow up the coffee and diaphanous roll of an Ecuadorian *desayuno*. By ten I was starving. By eleven I had eaten even the rose I wore in a button-hole; during the next few hours I found three blackberries, hard and green, and shook dice with sudden death by eating a handful of a wholly unknown and even more tasteless páramo berry. The one Indian I met during the afternoon misinformed me, before he sped on out of reach, that Nabón was a bare two leagues beyond; and all the rest of the day

my imagination persisted in heaping up mighty banquets that toppled over and faded away as I prepared to fall upon them.

Suddenly the páramo ended as if it had been hacked off with a dull gigantic machete, and the way-worn, haggard trail stumbled blindly down into a labyrinthian chaos of jagged white rocks, like an arctic sea in upheaval, an earthquake section as split and smashed and broken as if the world had come into collision at this point with another planet or a celestial lamp-post. When at last I sighted Nabón, long after I had entered it a score of times in imagination, it was still a mere speck on a broken edge of the earth's crust which I reached by dusk only by dint of a herculean struggle.

It was a cornfield town of thatched mud huts, of universally Indian blood. The alcalde was not at home, but the priest's word was law, and I was soon dropping my bundle from my grateful shoulders in the "best room" of an Indian dwelling. My unwilling host removed the bedclothes and piled them on the uneven earth floor in an adjoining room, for himself, wife and child, and left me the wooden-floored bedstead. The mud walls were embellished not merely with the gaudy colored chromos of various "Virgins," but with scores of the advertising pages of American magazines, chiefly pictorial, for the family could not even read its own tongue. I did not succeed in discovering how these exotic reminders of home had found their way to this unknown village of the Andes. The Indian and his wife kept me awake half the night with their alternating prayers and responses before a candle-lighted lithograph in the adjoining room, each prayer beginning, "Blessed Santa María, give us this; Blessed Santa María, give

us that." One would have thought María ran a department store.

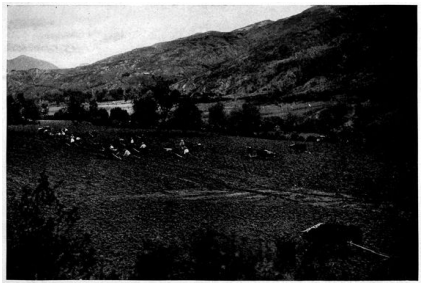
It is only eighteen miles from Nabón to Oña, but no mere words can give any suggestion of the labyrinthian toil that lies between them. Down in the bottom of the mightiest chasm of this tortured section of the earth sits an isolated peak shaped like an angular haycock. From the lowest point of the day's tramp I could not see its summit; when I looked back hours later upon the immense stretch of gashed and tumbled world behind me, the peak had sunk to a mere dot on the landscape. Yet in a way it was an ideal tramp. A sun-flooded day in the exhilarating mountain air passed in absolute silence without even the sight of a fellow mortal, except very rarely a lone shepherd so far away on a bare brown mountainside as to be merely a tiny detail of the scenery. There was one drawback, also; for the spider-leg trails split and spread at random across the world above at every opportunity, and for several hours at a time I was not at all certain I was going to Peru.

At length I rounded a lofty spur, and another great valley opened out before me. An hour later I prepared to present my note to the cura of Oña. His two housekeepers, attractive chola girls, received me with the customary coldness of their class toward strangers, and the information that the padre "had gone to the mountain." "Ya no más de venir—he should be back at any moment"—murmured one of them; which might mean, of course, that he would be back in an hour or a week. There was no one else in this shelf-like hillside of mud huts around a dead plaza surrounded by cornfields who would be likely to house me, and I could only wait in hungry patience. Night was falling like a quick curtain at the

end of a dismal act, when one of the stupid damsels admitted "probably he will not be back to-night," but that they would serve "a little something to eat," if I could wait awhile. I was already accustomed to that occupation. On a worktable of the earth-floored and walled corredor, among the parrots that kept calling the cholas by name, a chained monkey of homicidal tendencies, and other cural odds and ends, a meal of several courses was at length set before me as rapidly as the single tin plate could be washed and refilled. Oña does not eat bread, but so large a helping of *mote* was served that I succeeded in filling a coat pocket with it, well knowing that no other provisions would be forthcoming for the morrow's uninhabited trail. As a food, this mess of boiled kernels of ripe corn, chief sustenance of the Andean Indian on his travels, is like those medicines that are worse than the ailment they are designed to cure. Then there was a plate of black beans, a corn tamale, and a tasteless preserved fruit, all stone-cold, but red-hot with the *ají*, or green peppers, with which all food in the Andes is enlivened.

Hours later a group of horsemen rode up out of the night and halted before the casa cural. I rose from a cramped doze on a corredor bench to find the priest dismounting. A brawny man of massive frame, more than six feet tall, with well-cut features and a powerful Roman nose, dressed in a black robe reaching to his spurs, and a huge "panama" hat of exceedingly fine weave—a present, no doubt, from some fond member of his flock among the surrounding hills—he towered far above his companions. A cigarette smouldered between his lips, a week's growth of dense black beard half-covered a face that bore testimony to long and deep experience in worldly matters, and his voice boomed

like Quito's largest church-bell. Yet his manner was that syrupy courtesy, accompanied by a whining speech, peculiar to the region. He fawned upon all who approached him, addressing them with maudlin words of endearment,—"Ah, compadrecito!" "Oh, my dearest of friends!" "Oh, Josecito cholito, hijito mío!"—with a long-drawn, rising and falling inflection that made his speech seem even more false and insincere than it was in reality. Me he greeted in the same tone, like a long-lost "amiguito," and assured me the casa cural was henceforth my personal property, expressing his deepest regret that he had just sent to Cuenca, where he was about to be transferred, his two phonographs and "diez mil pesos" ($5000 worth) of other toys. It was a typical cural residence of the Andes. The rough adobe walls of his cluttered study, with mud benches in the form of divans around them, were almost completely covered with large lithographs advertising various brands of whiskey and cigarettes, more than half of them showing nude female figures. Under his table was spread out to dry a six-foot square patch of tobacco, and at frequent intervals the padre reached under it for the "makings" of a cigarette, without taking his eyes off his visitors nor ceasing the flow of his cadenced endearments.



Plowing for wheat or corn on the hacienda of Cumbe. The Indians work best in “bees,” as in the time of the Incas. The plows are mere crooked sticks without a vestige of iron, the yokes are fastened in front of the horns with rawhide thongs

Two men, chiefly of Indian blood, soon joined us, one the jefe político, and the other what might be called in English chairman of the town council. The former carried a guitar, the latter a quart bottle of aguardiente, and both a stimulated gaiety even greater than that of the priest. During an affectionate three hours the trio toasted each other alternately in large glasses of this double-voltage concoction, after suffering two or three rounds of which I was forced to allege a sore throat. The moving spirit of the feast was the priest, whose powerful frame carried his liquor well, and the evening raged on amid a riot of chatter and the savage thrumming of the guitar, little more than the flushed faces visible in the dense-clouded atmosphere of cigarette smoke within the tightly closed room. The cura spoke French readily, having been in earlier years an inmate of the French monastery of Riobamba, and affected it with me all the evening. The jefe político was childishly eager to hear us speak that strange tongue; the town councilor roared with anger as often as either of us uttered a word of it, charging that we were abusing him under cover of “that cursed Castilian of the gringos.” The cura maliciously added fuel to his wrath, unostentatiously keeping the bottle moving meanwhile, sending a boy to replenish it as often as it was emptied. The enraged councilor ended at last

by staggering out into the night and across the plaza, shouting drunkenly that he was going for a gun or a machete. The other two followed him, and for some time a maudlin bellowing, intermingled with the wheedling of a velvety voice of rising and falling cadence, awoke the echoes of the night, gradually subsiding until at length silence fell. The priest at last came slowly back without a suggestion of intoxication, which he seemed to lay aside as he might his long black robe, reached under the table, rolled a cigarette, and explained apologetically that, as his recent companions were the chief civil authorities, he must keep on good terms with them "whatever his own tastes and desires." Then he implored me to spend the following day in Oña, promising that we should visit on muleback the many historical spots in the vicinity, and launching into a learned dissertation on the history of the region. Oña, he asserted, was the oldest town in Southern Ecuador, and the treaty of peace had been signed by Sucre in this very house after the battle of Tarqui. In spite of the impression that the invitation was mere surface courtesy, I finally promised to remain. He threw his arms about me in an affectionate *abrazo*, showering upon me endearing terms, all ending in the Spanish diminutive *ito*, and called upon the housekeepers to spread a mattress for me on a mud divan in the study. Then the cura, who at least had the virtue of living his life frankly, retired with the two comely cholas to an adjoining room in which, it is true, there were two beds, and silence settled down over the Andes.

In the morning I turned over for another nap. An hour later the priest and his unofficial family marched in upon me, and it was some time before I could get sufficient privacy and liquid mud to shave

and dress. From that hour until night I had little more than silent suffrance from the cura and his household, and heard not a reference to those "many points of historical importance" he had painted in such enticing terms in his ardent condition of the night before. Tomás á Kempis says: "A sad morning often follows a merry evening," or words to that effect, but the cura of Oña had evidently overlooked that particular quotation. An almost constant stream of Indians and half-Indians came to inquire in soft cadenced voices for "tayta curita," who sat in his fly-swarming den smoking countless cigarettes and whining unlimited endearments and blessings on all comers, but resolutely squelching all applications for coin of the realm or the material things of this world, and reaching at frequent intervals for the replenished quart bottle. About eleven the two of us, and a "carpenter" who had been pottering about the house all the morning fitting together two boards that were destined never to fit, sat down in a corner of the wide back corredor of the casa cural to a substantial dinner at which cat, dog, parrot, and monkey helped themselves to every dish as freely as we. The meal was adorned with a jar of *pulque*, a drink which the cura had taught his cholas to make after reading of it in an account of Mexico. The rest of the day drowsed slothfully away amid the screaming of parrots, the barking of dogs, the shrieks of the monkey rattling his chain in all but successful attempts to rend and tear some unwary visitor, and a swarming of flies that sounded like a distant waterfall,—a typical parish-priest life of rural Ecuador, punctuated by the occasional chanting of the velvety, singsong voice in the mud church next door, as my host hurried through a mass for some departed soul. Toward sunset the household was augmented by a third

plump and youthful chola who had been home on a visit to her parental mud hut among the hills. It seemed strange that the casa cural was so ill-kept and slatternly with so generous a supply of housekeepers.

At the summit beyond the chaotic chasm into which the world falls away below Oña, the nature of the country changed. From an endless vista of barren and often soilless rocks, the entire landscape was transformed to a heavily wooded region of hardy undergrowth, somewhat like small, bushy oaks, at times almost approaching a forest, a shaggy world rolling away as far as the eye could follow in every direction. Here and there was a larger bush completely covered with pink blossoms. Then the half-forested mountain-top took gradually to rocking, like a ship approaching a tempestuous sea, until all at once it spilled itself, like the cargo of an overturned freighter, into another enormous hole in the earth, hazy with the very depths of it. The trail pitched over the edge with the rest, like a bit of flotsam from a wreck, helplessly at the mercy of the waves. Thousands of little green farms, chiefly of corn, with an Indian hut set in a corner of each, hung at sharp angles about the enclosing walls of the valley. I had reached the famous Vale of Zaraguro, the Land of Corn,—*zara* is Quichua for maize—to climb at last into the scattered grass-grown village itself.

Ensconced in the great *hoyo* of Jubones, dividing the Azuay from the province of Loja, Zaraguro is a little world of its own. The great majority of its population is Indian, but a new type of Indian, of darker skin and more independent manner than those to the north, still humble to the gente decente when facing

them singly, but verging on insolence when gathered in groups with chicha at hand. Here each owns a little patch of land and refuses serfdom. His dress is somber, in marked contrast to the gaudy colors of his quiteño cousin. In place of the loose white panties, he clothes his legs to the knee with a close-fitting coffee-hued woolen garment, and covers all the rest of the body with a poncho of the same color. He wears an immensely thick, almost white, felt hat of box-shaped crown, the brim drooping about his face, and his long, jet-black hair, instead of being confined in a tape-wound braid, is commonly flying about his head and shoulders. He buys nothing from the outside world—except masses and indulgences—shears his own sheep, the wool of which, usually black, his women spin and weave into the heavy cloth that provides the somber garments of both sexes. Besides supplying its own wants, the valley of Zaraguro exports by way of Puerto Bolívar a bit of coarse cascarilla bark, basis of quinine, at about five cents a pound.

Zaraguro assured me that the road to Loja was “todo plano”; but level has strange meanings to a people accustomed from birth to the steepest of mountains. One of the best engineered highways in Ecuador looped ever higher to the “realms of eternal silence” of the Acayana-Guagra-uma “Knot,” but from the dense-forested summit, where I had looked forward to the corresponding pleasure of looping as leisurely down the opposite flank, an atrocious trail stumbled headlong downward to the narrow valley of a small river. From the hamlet of San Lucas a long day, pouring incessantly with rain, followed the stream, the trail mounting and descending rocky headlands with the monotonous regularity of a flat car-wheel. Even where the landscape opened out again at last,

the plain was calf-deep in mud, and it was only by dint of a constant struggle that I dragged myself, mud-caked and drenched, on the second evening into the southernmost city of Ecuador.

Loja, 380 miles from Quito and capital of the province least in touch with the central government, lies exactly on the fourth parallel south, in the delta of the little Zamora and Malacatos rivers, insignificant bits of the Amazon system. It is a low, flat, rather featureless town, surrounded by a fertile, fruit-producing soil, and though 7000 feet above sea-level, of a humid, semi-tropical climate that is kindly even to bananas. Birds, among them one much like the robin, make the place reminiscent of American summers. There are only rolling hills near at hand, though not far off is that "labyrinth of mountains" of Prescott's fancy, blue-black now with the rainy season, high up among which, according to local assertion, are still to be found remnants of the great military highway of the Incas. Lojanos seemed a dull, torpid people, laborious of mind, and the town has little of the picturesque, even in costume. The pure Castilian type is well represented, but Indian blood, chiefly in the mestizo form, is still supreme, though by no means so general as to the north, and the population includes a few negroes and more *zambos*, —mixtures of Indian and African blood. More than eighty lawyers hover in their mud dens, ready to pick the bones of the 8000 inhabitants, largely poverty-stricken illiterates. There is some weaving of "panama" hats, and in an attempt to stimulate that industry "profesores" of the art have been imported from the Azuay to teach it, particularly in the orphan asylums. But it remains at best a dilettante occupation, foreign to the soil. The chief industry of the region round about is the raising of mules and

cattle that are shipped chiefly to Peru. Lima subsists largely on Loja meat, which is, no doubt, the reason she gets virtually none herself, even when it is not some Catholic day sacred to starvation. Zaruma and Portovelo, two muleback days to the west, boast the chief American mines of Ecuador, but gringos are seldom seen in her streets.

In one matter the town is in advance of more populous Cuenca,—it has electric lights. As long ago as 1897 Loja brought in, by way of Peru, the first dynamo known to Ecuador, a sign of "progreso" of which her inhabitants never tire of boasting. Scattered in sixteen-candle-power bulbs here and there along the streets, the system did not reach as high as the littered lumber-room in which I spent the nights on a platform on legs, where the customary candle winked weakly through the humid darkness. I was overjoyed, however, to come upon a placard announcing that the municipal library was open to the public even at night! As it promised to open first at one of the afternoon, I was not surprised to find it still locked when I arrived at two. I waited a half hour, peering greedily through the bars of the reja at the long shelves of books and maps. Then I began inquiries. The adjoining shopkeeper expressed unbounded surprise that there were persons so ignorant as not to know "the government is so poor it cannot pay the librarian any more," and that the institution had been closed for months.

Loja was once the center of the commerce in *cascarilla*, the bark of a tree not unlike the cherry in appearance, that abounds in the ravines of the mountains to the eastward of the city. Nearly three centuries ago a missionary to the region found the Indians grinding the bitter bark in their stone

mortars and swallowing it as a specific against intermittent fevers, as they do to this day. When the wife of the Conde de Chinchón, viceroy of Peru, lay ill of a fever in Lima, the corregidor of Loja sent to her physician a parcel of the powdered bark. Upon her return to Europe the condesa carried a quantity of the magic powder with her, whence it was for a long time known as *chinchona*. Meanwhile Jesuit missionaries of Brazil had sent parcels of it to Rome, whence it was distributed among the brotherhood, nothing loathe to add to their reputation for miraculous powers and to the income from their drug-stores, and the name "Jesuits' bark" became widespread. The tree, however, has always been known to the Indians by the Quichua name of "quinaquina," and in time the refined product took on its modern name of quinine. The tree in its original habitat has been ruthlessly treated, being often felled merely to avoid the labor of barking it standing, and to-day, with large *chinchona* plantations in India, southern Ecuador has but a fraction of the income it might have from one of its most valuable indigenous products. It is typical of Latin-American conditions that a capsule—or more commonly an *oblea*, like two saucers stuck together —of quinine, reimported from Europe and paying heavy custom duties, costs four times as much in the boticas of Loja as in the United States.

In one of the quaint two-story houses with an air of decayed gentility, facing the main plaza and grazing ground of Loja, lives Augustin Carrión, inventor of the "celífono," by means of which a piano can be played by electricity and given the soft, long-drawn notes of an organ. He is the chief "sight" of the region, yet held in a certain ill-concealed disdain by the mass of his fellow-townsmen, even while they are

basking in the sunshine of his fame; a striking example of those rare mortals who struggle to raise themselves above the low level of their deadening environment in these buried cities far from the moving modern world.

I found him in his rambling parlor, of undusted efforts at grandeur, its walls decorated with large maps of Paris and New York, both of which he had once visited in an effort to patent and place his invention, interspersed with the customary inartistic family portraits draped with aged mourning crêpe. A member of one of Loja's chief families, of pure Spanish blood, speaking a cultured Castilian with the diction of a man of books, he was in appearance a ludicrous mixture of the typical inventor of the comic supplements and of the Latin-American stickler for formal dress. Scraggly gray whiskers pursued themselves about his unimpressive face; a hair-cut months overdue emphasized his narrow shoulders and flat chest. His hands, thin almost to transparency, suggested something weak and harmless in need of protection. His once stiff white shirt was innocent of buttons, and with his energetic, or, more exactly, nervous movements, frequently opened to disclose a flaccid skin and a Catholic charm hanging low about his neck. A collar, buttoned only at one end, was adorned with a cravat that was not a cravat, but only a strip of black ribbon that floated here and there about his throat. His frock-coat, sine qua non of Latin-American respectability, was gray with dust, trousers unacquainted with the pressing-board were spotted with the mementoes of laboratory accidents, and the slender aristocratic shoes, possessing in common three buttons, had been worn completely heelless. Here, in the bosom of his disdainful family, he wore

a greasy old cap; later in the day I met him promenading under the portales of the plaza in the same costume, but for the added glory of a "stove-pipe" hat of at least twenty years of harried existence.

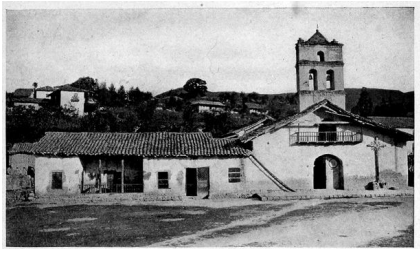
His *taller*, or workshop, overlooking the main square, was a chaos of odds and ends gathered by a man who had given his life chiefly to the study of physics, and who was alternately tinkering at a score of inventions. In the absence of a real source of supply his apparatus was almost entirely home-made, or, as he himself put it, "Loja-made," a collection fashioned from cigar boxes, string, tin cans, and whatever makeshifts fell in his way, resembling nothing so much as the playthings of some isolated but inventive farmer's boy. A shoemaker's needle, on the plan of a sewing-machine shuttle, that was designed to revolutionize the making of footwear, had been constructed from the shell of a rifle cartridge. Of as plebeian materials he had built a little transparent box to place above the needle of a phonograph, to do away with the metallic sound of that instrument—but in Latin-American fashion his phonograph was out of order and did not "function." Another crude apparatus he pointed out as a proof that "a sphere *can* revolve on two axes at once,"—a ball of yarn representing the earth was twirled by a tiny dynamo, and at the same time given a rotary motion by a string belt—and so on through all the realms of physics, which he taught here in his taller several times a week to the boys of the local colegio. The Loja-made original of his most important invention was out of order, and I was not favored with a test of the "celífono" on which he had tinkered intermittently more than thirty years.

His inventiveness did not confine itself to merely physical matters. Before I left, he pressed upon me a pamphlet of which he was the author. It was entitled "The Virgin María in America before its Discovery by Columbus," wherein the writer "proved beyond question," to use his own words, "that the Blessed Virgin was not an unknown personage in America when it was discovered by the Spaniards." Beginning a visionary journey in Canada, he descended step by step through all the western hemisphere, "proving" by shaky tradition, by the doctored yarns of early missionaries, and by personal lucubrations that "all the Indian tribes had the tradition of Adam and Eve, of the serpent and the apple, of 'original sin,' and of a god born of a virgin." The fact that the city of Loja had published this masterpiece fully describes its mentality.

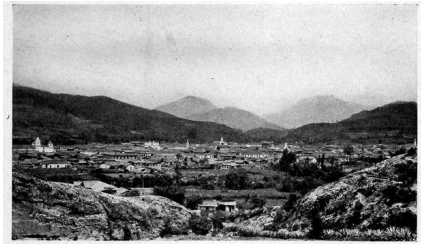
I had known him three or four days before the inventor took me into his confidence and whispered that the invention of the "celífono" had been merely a means to an end; that he had taken it to New York and Europe in the hope of raising funds to pursue his "really important invention," which he had thought on for forty years and already perfected "in his mind," though he had not yet begun its construction. This was a "flying machine that is neither balloon nor aeroplane, perfectly safe and commercially practicable." As nearly as my unmechanical faculties grasped the situation from his elaborate explanation, it was a close replica of that of "Darius Green," whose fame has never reached this corner of the Andes. Fortunately there is no building in Loja high enough to bring the inventor to serious grief, should he ever succeed in collecting the materials essential to the actual construction of this perfected child of his imagination. But his hope was still youthful, and

he besought my advice as to how a poor inventor could get his masterpiece before the world without being despoiled of the fruits of his labors, as in the case of the "celífono," by the "practical business men" of that great universe beyond his mountain-bounded horizon. I regretted my ignorance of any panacea for that condition.

Carrión is but a type of those "closet" geniuses who live, toil, and fade away unknown in the dim recesses of the Andes, men in some cases who might have ranked high among modern inventors, writers, or artists, had their lot been cast in happier climes than in this leaden environment of impracticability, burdened by enervating superstitions, denied the simplest materials for their purposes in a land where even twine and wrapping-paper are commonly unobtainable, and so lacking in that grasping self-assertiveness so necessary to front modern society successfully that even the scant fruits of their labors go to swell the already swollen pockets of more "practical" men of the world, while they dream on like this gray-haired boy pottering among his home-made toys.



The church, and the dwelling of my host, the priest of Oña



Loja, southernmost city of Ecuador, backed by her endless labyrinth of mountains

CHAPTER IX
THE WILDS OF NORTHERN PERU

I had been a full half-year in Ecuador when I turned my attention to the problem of getting out of it. That disintegration, that tendency for neighboring countries to hold no communication between each other, at which the American cannot but marvel in South America, was here in full evidence. Ecuador seemed as completely cut off from the country just over her southern boundary as from Europe. The cura of Oña had assured me that the one way to reach Peru from Loja would be to walk to Puerto Bolívar on the coast, take a *costero* to Guayaquil, then a "big steamer" to Paita or Pacasmayo! Only he who knows South American geography well can appreciate the unconscious humor of such advice. Even the rare lojanos who admitted it might be possible to go to Peru "by land" asserted that I must walk to Piura, which would have been to cross a burning tropical desert far out of my way, to that well-traveled coast I was purposely avoiding. The government map of the province of Loja was as faulty and scanty of information as the American one I carried. It showed a road leading south from the

provincial capital into that blue-black "labyrinth of mountains," through the villages of Vilcabamba and Valladolid; but all the town was agreed that no one could travel in these modern days along the remnants of the great military highway of the Incas, crawling along the crest of the Cordillera Oriental through regions for days utterly uninhabited; and well I knew that Prescott's "hanging withe bridges over awful chasms" were sure to be out of repair in these effeminate Latin-American times, even where they ever existed.

At length a few bold lojanos admitted that I might be able to push on to the frontier by way of Gonzanamá, though they persisted in calling it a "terrible undertaking," even for a man who claimed to have walked from Quito. That route led far west of a line drawn through Huancabamba to Cajamarca, and there was nothing to show that it would connect with any trail beyond the frontier. The best I could do was to hope I might be able to struggle across to Ayavaca, in Peru, where I could perhaps get Peruvian information. Then there came a complete division of opinion as to the road to Gonzanamá, and Loja split into two irreconcilable factions, the one contending that I should take the road due south from the west side of the plaza, the other insisting on that due west from the south side. In the end they all washed their hands of the matter. The rainy season was nearing its height; sure death lurked along the bandit-infested frontier; none but amphibious animals and crack-brained gringos would stir forth from the cozy little city.

On the morning of April twentieth I finally took the south road. It climbed leisurely over the low interandean *nudo* shutting in Loja's concave valley

and, falling in with a hurried mountain stream, raced with it all day, crossing its branches sometimes by one-log bridges, more often by knee-deep fords. The few arrieros I met carried rusty old flint-locks, suggesting the dangers of the frontier; the huts along the way grew more and more rare, and degenerated from thick adobe walls to upright reeds carelessly stopped with mud. Beyond Malacatos, among its banana groves, where I spent the night on a plank bench in the casa cural of a young French priest who had already lost the habit of speaking anything but Spanish, the trail climbed relentlessly up through a scrub-wooded region as uninhabited as an undiscovered sphere. The afternoon was middle-aged before the world opened out again and gave a brief glimpse through the trees of Gonzanamá, set out in three rows on a tiny plain untold depths below. Raging rains had torn and gullied the further slope until the five miles downward was like descending the ruins of a giant's stairway.

Gonzanamá was in fiesta. Hundreds of near-Indians and mestizos, with very little color in their garments, squatted about the church and casa cural. They were a people as simple and unsophisticated as children. It was Viernes Santo (Good Friday), and all the town gathered around to see me eat the meat a pious old woman served me with a shrug of her shoulders when I scorned her warning not to "anger the saints," and dispersed prophesying an early calamity to me on the road ahead when I arose apparently uninjured. The son of the teniente político in whose house I was the honored guest, in so far as their means made honoring possible, proved to be an old acquaintance, a second-year medical student of Quito, home on his vacation. He was already the chief practicing physician of the region. On his

journey from the capital he had performed a score of operations, among them one with a butcher-knife for abscess of the liver. The room I occupied, which was also his place of consultation, the family parlor, the municipal offices, and his own sleeping quarters, was invaded by a constant stream of uncomplaining infirmities. Outside, the entire population marched in procession until midnight, attended a two-hour service in the adobe church, and wandered the three streets with throbbing tomtoms and the gaiety imbibed from bottles until the eastern horizon paled to gray. The practicing medical student did not take to his bed until four, and an hour later he arose to set me on my way, forcing upon me, with regal eloquence, a can of salmon from "Europe, your own land," to be opened only on Easter Sunday.

Only those rare mortals who have jaunted cross-country in the Andes can have any conception of the stone-quarry heights I scaled, the dense-jungled, bottomless quebradas through which I tore my way, the brush-tangled streams I forded, and the paths that faded out under my feet during that day. One of these last had dragged me remorselessly over every manner of ruggedness when, well on in the afternoon, it disappeared at the door of a mud-plastered hut. The trails of the Andes do not run merely from town to town, but from hovel to hovel, like foraging soldiers, giving the traveler a zigzag course that at least trebles the distance. I was prowling about this apparently unoccupied human kennel, striving to pick up the scent again, when I was set upon by three unusually large, aggressive curs. I did my best to drive them off with sticks and stones, but when there remained no other alternative I drew my weapon and sent the largest to his happy hunting-grounds. Instantly a crashing of the bushes

sounded high up in a jungled patch above, and the angry voice of an unseen countryman screamed in the dialect of the region: “Scoundrel, you’ll pay me for my dog, caramba!” Crime is frequently immune so near an international boundary, and I rounded the hillside cautiously, my cocked revolver in hand; but the bellowing of the invisible native was soon swallowed up behind me, and only the oppressive silence of the mountain solitude surrounded me once more.

It was evident that I should not reach the frontier, perhaps not even shelter, before dark, when, at some distance off, in a setting of primeval forest solitude I was astonished to catch sight of a large hacienda house, a gaunt, rambling building that suggested some starving creature lost in the wilderness. Almost as I reached it a thunder-storm broke with a crash, and set a hundred brooks tearing their way down the swift mountainside on which the building clung. The house was locked and unoccupied. Two Indian boys of eight and twelve were huddled under the projecting eaves of a half-ruined outbuilding across the cobbled yard. For a full hour they answered my every question with “El patrón no ’stá,” uttered in the dull, monotonous voice of some mechanical instrument. I cajoled them at last to start a fagot-fire on the earth floor of the outbuilding, and to heat a pot of water into which I dropped three eggs they were prevailed upon to produce from a hiding-place in the thatch, and beat the mess up with a stick into a “caldo de huevos.” The smaller boy finally accepted a bribe to crawl out through a hole in the wall into the drenching downpour and snatch a half-dozen *cholos*, ears of green corn, which I roasted, or, more exactly, burned here and there over the scanty fire.

Prowling about the hacienda house when the storm slackened, I found in one end a room that was "locked" with a piece of string. According to the now less speechless boys, it was the hacienda "school," in which at certain seasons an employee of the "patrón" taught the male children of those peons who paid $2 a year tuition. Like an old lumber-room or garret in appearance, the place was furnished with an ancient desk and a massive chair, as crude as if they had been carved out of tree-trunks with dull machetes, and a dozen faded copy-books and medieval inkwells hung about the walls. The school-master evidently made his home here during the school season, for in the far end of the room stood a log-hewn bedstead with a rough board flooring. Dusk was thickening into wet night when the Indian boys crept up to where I sat on the broad veranda overlooking a far-reaching, yet indistinct vista of wooded mountains and valleys, to assure me I should be killed and robbed during the night.

"We are all so poor here that when a rich man like your Grace passes everyone tries to rob him," asserted the older, with unusual eloquence for his race. "Here all the people are robbers Hace pocos días—it is only a few days since a traveler was killed down in the valley there. Last month—"

I glanced over my travel-worn and bespattered form in vain for the evidences of wealth so patent to other eyes, yet I could not but recall the carcass of a dog a few miles back, and the golden weight of the band of my trousers reminded me that several evil-eyed fellows had halted awhile under the hacienda eaves during the height of the storm and slipped away somewhere into the night. Moreover, the prophesied destruction of all Ecuador by earthquake was at

hand, for the morrow would be—if it ever came—Easter Sunday. Plainly, all the signs pointed to an exciting night.



The guinea-pigs on which I feasted upon breaking out of the wilderness on the Peruvian frontier—and the cook. The *cui* has furnished the principal meat of the Andean Indians since prehistoric days



The Indians of Zaraguro are different, both in type and costume, from the meeker types of Quito and vicinity

My small faith in prophecy did not, however, hinder me from making sure that my revolver was well-oiled and hung on a bed-post. The window of the school-room, high above the ground, but only a few feet from the roof of an old ruin, was heavily barred —with bars of wood! The massive double-leaf plank doors had no lock. The log-like pupils' bench, topped by the old colonial teacher's chair, piled against it, however, promised racket enough to wake me in case of attempted intrusion. I found several old sacks to serve as "mattress" and, stripping off my sweat-heavy day garb, slipped into the woolen union-suit and socks that made up my sleeping costume. However much I might reduce my load in my indifference to outward appearance, I would not have been without this complete change for the night

if I had had to make two trips to fetch them. I had no matches, and the boys had been unable to produce a candle. The rain had died down and everywhere utter stillness reigned. I rolled up in my poncho and fell asleep.

A suspicious noise woke me in what was probably a few minutes. Scores of mice were scampering over the uneven floor, squeaking hilariously. By the time I had grown accustomed to the sound, I had dozed off again. From a chaotic dream of crowded and varied incidents I came gradually to the consciousness of a rattling at the wooden window-bars. I sprang across the floor and peered out into the unfathomable mountain night; but I have never been certain whether the sound I heard was the hurrying of bare feet in soft mud and the tail of a whisper, or the creature of a startled imagination. With thirty half-perpendicular miles in my legs I was in no mood to sit up waiting for trouble, and making sure once more that my revolver was within easy reach, I set the bed-floor creaking again. My next consciousness was of a dawn bright with the promise of an unclouded day peering in upon me through the window-bars, and of the Indian boys whispering through the barricaded door to know whether I was still alive and ready for the two raw eggs they had collected.

An erratic mountain path that it was not easy to distinguish from the beds of mountain brooks, and generally deep in mud, clambered without apparent direction into dripping-wet wooden mountain ranges, sometimes plunging headlong down through bottomless valleys, sometimes flanking them in enormous horseshoe curves. How I pushed on all the morning without getting lost I do not know, for

certainly there were a score of times when there was no plausible excuse for picking the right one of a half-dozen paths. I sighted several miserable huts, and once a village, but these were never near the trail; and when I decided to apply for food at the next one, another of those sudden changes of climate left the dripping forested mountains behind me, and underfoot was a desert-dry world which even the hardy dwellers of two decrepit knock-kneed huts had long since abandoned. In southern Ecuador and northern Peru the Andes break up and all but disintegrate. There are still plenty of mountains, but, true to their Latin-American environment, they lack team-work, and do not stick together sufficiently to give the traveler footing upon them. Directly before me Ecuador fell unfathomably away to the Macará, like an auburn hair across a painted landscape, while beyond, to appearances unattainable, Peru lay piled pell-mell into the southern sky. It was as if the Carpenter of the Universe had said: “Let here be the dividing line between two distrusting nations,” and had smote the earth with His mightiest tool. Over all the scene was a sun-baked, utterly uninhabited silence, as of some valley of desolation from which all life had forever fled.

The trail down which I jolted had exploded into a score of barely visible paths that spread in every direction over the drear, furnace-hot hills. It seemed as if, once near the frontier, every traveler either dashed blindly forward to get quickly across it unseen, or lost his courage and fled back into the interior. I set a due course for the thread-like river almost directly below. At high noon, my every joint jarred loose, I stood at last on the extreme edge of Ecuador, the reddish-brown waters of the Macará lapping at my blistered feet, and on every hand a

blazing, utterly unpeopled desert, with nowhere the vestige of track or trail.

The river, nearly a quarter-mile wide, swollen by the rains above, raged swiftly by, a barrier of unknown possibilities. Its surface, covered everywhere with ripples, suggested that it was less deep than broad. I piled my baggage on the shore and, stripping to the waist, waded in. The powerful current all but swept me off my feet and the water quickly reached my upper garments. I returned to strip entirely, strapped my revolver about my chest and, picking a stout stick from the undergrowth, fought my way inch by inch to the opposite shore. But I had to go back to Ecuador for my possessions. It required five crossings, trusting only a few of them at a time to the treacherous current, and more than an hour of unremitting vigilance, before I had landed my bedraggled belongings at last on the shores of Peru, more forlorn than at the landing of Pizarro and his fellow-adventurers. By careful calculation, checked by native record, I was 466 miles south of Quito and 630 from the Colombian border.

Under some barbed bushes I picked a sand-burr spot as nearly shaded as could be found along the desert bank, and, having shaved, that I might enter the new republic in disguise, dipped up a can of coffee-colored Macará and fell upon the lead-heavy *rapadura* the Indian boys had sold me, and the can of salmon which I had preserved for Easter Sunday only by the exercise of sternest will-power. It was three fourths full of a pale, watery, soup-like liquid in which floated dejectedly a few small lumps of what had once long ago been carp or dog-fish. Luckily there was a difference in the size of the cans, so that I could generally tell whether I was drinking salmon

or the Macará. Then, when I had written up my notes, I proceeded to turn the meal into a banquet in comparison, by reading that chapter of Prescott recounting what Pizarro and his fellow-tramps did not find to eat on their first landing. Being far from mortal ken in an uncharted crack of the earth, it may be fancied I should have been eager to hurry on. Somehow, now I had reached Peru, there came over me a languorous indifference to further advance. The sun was low before I rose and turned my attention to the task of discovering my whereabouts.

I found myself gazing along a dreary, sheer mountain-wall, grown only with sparse, bristling cactus shrubs that refused a hand-hold, seeking a place to insert my toes and start southward. Leisurely, but decidedly, I grasped the first possibility, and for an hour or more might have been seen—had there been eyes to see—playing goat along the face of calcined hills that fell so abruptly into the racing Macará that they came a score of times uncomfortably near taking me with them. During that hour I advanced fully five hundred yards —in a direction I did not care to go—gathering cactus thorns at every step, and ended down at the edge of the river again, exactly as far into Peru as when I had begun the struggle upward an hour before. Here were a few yards of level shore, and when I had drunk the stream perceptibly lower, I made my way along until I came upon a labyrinth of cow-paths. That one which most nearly agreed with my compass turned due east and crawled off through the bushes, as if fearful of being followed, and left me standing pathless in a maze of barren, cactus-grown hills. Tearing my way over them by dead reckoning, now struggling to a thorn-barricaded summit from which stretched vistas of more thorny-

jungled hills, now crashing with lacerated skin down into another desert valley, where a few wild jackasses browsed on the scanty leaves of bristling bushes, I surmounted again and again the same identical scene of dreary nothingness as far as the eye could see beyond.

The region was waterless. Evidently I was doomed to suffer that hell of the desert traveler, an all-night thirst; for dusk was already thickening. The very leaves of the invariably thorny bushes were shrivelled and brown. Even the air seemed wholly devoid of moisture. Then suddenly, as I tore my way to another tangled summit, there sounded faintly, far off to the right, the sweetest music known to the tropical wanderer,—the babble of running water. I plunged down through the militant vegetation to where a clear little river was hurrying down along a bed several times too large for it to join the parent Macará. Enormous boulders and tumbled rocks bordered the stream. In the tail of the day I stumbled along up it, jealous of being separated from it as from a beloved being; and when night called a halt I stacked my belongings and spread my poncho on the stony bank with its prattle in my ears, that it should not escape unheard during the night. The brigands reputed to infest the frontier had faded away into the nebulous realms of fiction. I would almost have invited robbery for an opportunity to inquire my whereabouts. But the stream muffled my movements and the munching of the lump of crude sugar, and when I had listened awhile to the singing of the tropical night, and watched the fireflies coming with their lanterns to look me over, I fell asleep, uncovered and but slightly dressed, so warm was this sunken chasm of the Andes.

The fate of serving as banquet-board to platoons of tropical insects robbed me of the sound sleep the lullaby of the stream should have afforded. Dawn found me emerging from a dip, and when I had disciplined a stomach that seemed sure to have its plaints unheeded for the rest of the day at least by eating bit by bit the remaining lump of rapadura, I took up the serious problem of how to get somewhere else. The ghost of a path crossed the stream not far above, but soon played the stale joke of fading to a goat trail, then into thin air, and left me to tear my way back to the stream. This, I noted, came down more or less from the south, and I set out along it, determined to push as far up country as possible. For several hours I had explored my way more or less southward, crossing the wandering stream every few yards by goat-like jumps from rock to rock, when I was suddenly startled by the sight of human beings. A sun-scorched Indian woman in some remnants of garments, a child astride her back, a boy at her heels, appeared from nowhere in the boulder-strewn river-bed. With a laconic greeting, she led the way up-stream. Once she took to the jungled plain beside it, and sent the boy up a tree to knock down some half-green oranges. Down in the river-bed again the god of the Incas poured down his perpendicular rays like molten lead. At length the woman mumbled a few words in a monotone, pointed out a faint path up the face of the eastern sand cliff, in which hundreds of screaming parrakeets had their nests, grasped the coin I held out to her, and glided noiselessly away into the wilderness. The path disappeared even sooner than I had expected. I clambered up several more perpendicular miles, only to descend and lose myself in a jungle-tangled quebrada. Inch by inch I tore my way through the

densest wilderness of briars and brambles, struggling to release the bundle on my shoulders after I had myself escaped, ever on the watch for snakes and wild animals. Without real food for days, burning with tropical thirst, my hand to hand conflict with the jungle was near a dead-lock when there appeared far above me three scattered Indian huts. A precipitous ravine, armed to the teeth, lay between. I dived down into it, to emerge almost an hour afterward, torn, bleeding, and smeared with earth, at the edge of another and hitherto unseen jungled chasm, backed by a nearly impassable patch of uncultivated sugar-cane. My legs were as ropes of sand when I approached an Indian in his hut door, but I set up a stern outward appearance to suggest what might happen if he refused me food and drink.

Though expressionless as all his race, he proved unusually tractable, and soon brought out to where I sat in the shade against the eastern hut-wall a steaming gourdful of the ordinarily despised yuca, and what seemed to be very young pork. I had half-emptied the dish before a bone too tiny for such an origin caused me to look up inquiringly.

“Cui,” said the Indian laconically.

Though I had often heard them squeaking about the earth floors of wayside huts, it was my first taste of guinea-pig, to this day the chief meat of the Andean Indian. I think it was not entirely due to my prolonged fast that I found it more palatable than pork; but small, distressingly small, even after the Indian’s mate had added several *choclo tandas*, steaming rolls of crushed green corn wrapped in husks.

The *camino real* to Ayavaca lay in plain sight across the gully, and the town, according to the Indian, was

but two leagues off. But the Andean traveler must learn not to let his hopes grow buoyant and playful, and to remember that two leagues from the lips of an aboriginal is as apt to mean a hard day's travel as an hour's stroll. Never once did the "royal highway" pause in its climb into the lofty range ahead. My spirits rose and fell with each opportunity to inquire the distance. Within two hours I had been answered: "Two leagues," "six leagues," "four hours," "ya no 'stá lejos," "Todavía 'stá retiradita," "Ah, it is far away, patrón," and "More than two tambos"—a *tambo*, from the Inca word for inn, or rest-house, seems to mean about a half day's travel. Sunset found me far up on a great bleak tableland, a rolling, broken world, wherein was no suggestion of a town, stretching away on all sides as far as the eye could reach even in the transparent air of these heights.

Beyond, the trail passed close to a large tiled house where a barefoot man of Indian type, though white of skin as myself, answered my request for posada by silently spreading a small square of cloth on a log under the projecting eaves, and went on with his task of mending with an adz the crooked stick that served him as plow. An enamelled sign on the house-wall, announcing it an "Estanco de Sal," was the only outward evidence that I had left Ecuador behind. In Peru, salt, like tobacco, is a government monopoly, sold only in licensed shops. Near me several thinly attired women were balling newly dyed yarn, and children were sprawling about the ground with goats, chickens, and yellow curs. A heavy rain was falling. Uncomfortable as was my position, I could do nothing else than keep it. It was not that the family was indifferent or hard-hearted, merely that I had reached what, to their apathetic way of life, was a happy state,—sitting on a log under the eaves, and it

would hardly have been possible to explain to them that something else would have been needed for perfect comfort. The man was plainly of kindly temperament, with some education, of a sort, yet I was left to squat on the log until black night had settled down, without even an opportunity to remove the outer evidence of the gaunt and strenuous days behind.

Well after dark a half-Indian girl set before me a little wooden box, covered it with a cloth, and served me an egg soup, followed by a hot stew of yuca and beans. Gradually the family advanced from self-conscious silence to Latin garrulousness. By the time I had been invited inside and given one of several bare divans of reeds set into the mud walls, the conversation I had sought in vain to set going during the first hours ran on unchecked until long after I would have been asleep.

A dense fog enveloping the mountainside turned to rain as I waded away in the morning. Only by waiting hours could I have gotten anything more than the “aguita,” a cup of hot water with a bit of rapadura melted in it, on which I set out for whatever the new day had in store. I had only half-suspected the height of the world before me. For hours I strained upward into ever cooler, green mountains, reeking mud underfoot, with some travel, yet always a sense of solitude, even just over the next knoll beyond a passing group. Once I met a blind traveler picking his way quite swiftly with his stick along the slippery, descending mountain road. By noon I was far up where the rivers are born, fog and clouds hiding all but the immediate world about me. All the hunger of the past days seemed to have accumulated, until I felt like some starving beast of

prey, ready to pounce pitilessly upon whatever fell in my way. Just beyond the *abra*, the cold, fog-swept pass at the summit of the climb, I came upon a house of considerable size. Half skating, half wading down to the door, I found an old and a young woman of much Indian blood squatting in the earth-floored kitchen near a large steaming kettle over the familiar three-stone cooking-stove of the Andes.

"No hay absolutamente nada," they replied unfeelingly.

I stepped in, swung off my load, and, showing Peruvian silver, announced that I had come to stay until they had sold me food. The women sat motionless, with that passiveness the Indian so often depends upon to drive off importunate persons. I offered any reasonable price for one of the chickens wandering about the room. The older woman mumbled that clumsy, threadbare lie, "Son ajenos" (they belong to someone else). To my suggestion of roasted plantains she answered that she was ill. When I inquired the contents of the kettle, both took refuge in the exasperating silence that is the last weapon of their race. A certain amount of patience is a virtue; too much is an asininity. I picked the kettle off the fire, raked from the ashes one of the roasting plantains, found a tin plate and a wooden spoon stuck behind a sapling beam of the mud wall, and retired again to the block of wood on which I had been seated. The pair watched me in stolid silence. When I had filled the plate the younger one rose to carry off the kettle. I requested her, in the voice of an ill-tempered general commanding a widely scattered regiment, to leave it where it was until I had had my fill, and the pair fled precipitously from the room, flinging over their shoulders some threat of calling

the man of the house. I knew the Andean Indian too well to fear trouble, but turned my face to the door and loosened my revolver in its holster. The kettle contained a boiling-hot stew of beans and corn, sufficient to have fed a dozen men. Six of them might still have feasted on what was left when I tossed a *sol*, easily four times the whole kettle's worth, into the empty plate and marched on down the reeking mountainside.

Had I but known it, however, I might have avoided resorting to force. Barely a mile beyond appeared Ayavaca, a dismal and orderless collection of gloomy adobe, tiled houses, sprawling on the edge of what evidently would have been a great valley on a clear day, and literally running with red mud. I skated down into the plaza and, marching into the open office of the subprefect, sent the bedraggled soldier on guard to announce my arrival. A gaping group of awkward, mud-bespattered mountaineers quickly surrounded me, but with them arrived several white men in modern garb, one of whom announced himself subprefect of the province of Ayavaca, entirely at my service. I displayed my American and Ecuadorian documents, requesting him to take official cognizance of my entry into Peru, and expressed my august desire to rent for a day or two a room with bed, table, chair and water supply—experience teaches the Andean traveler to specify in detail—and to be handed the menu card.

"Here you are in your own house," replied the subprefect, assuming the attitude of a sovereign receiving credentials from an ambassador; "You have only to ask."

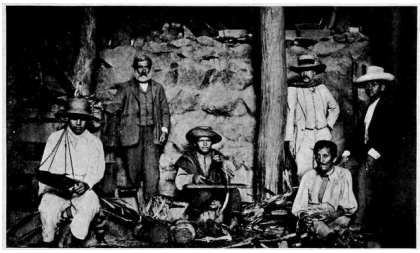
A cloth was soon spread on the official government desk and, less than an hour after requisitioning

rations in the mountain hut, I was sitting with the provincial commander and his assistants before an abundance of native viands that included even the luxury of wheat bread. For I had chanced to arrive just in time for the “banquet” offered by the town to its new ruler in honor of his inauguration.

But alas, I had gained nothing in comfort by coming to Peru. The available chamber in “my own house” proved to be a den adjoining the subprefect’s quarters, the provincial harness-and-lamp room. It was only by much cajolery that I finally got it furnished with a narrow five-foot plank bench and a pair of ragged horse-blankets. But at least I could read by night such literature as I chanced to have with me—by depriving the town of one of its few street-lamps when a soldier came to distribute them in the evening.



In the semi-tropical Province of Jaen, in north Peru, sugarcane grows luxuriantly. Lack of labor and transportation, however, renders it difficult to make full use of the fertility



The sugar that is not turned into *aguardiente*, or native whiskey, is boiled down in the *trapiche* into crude brown blocks, variously known as *panela*, *chancaca*, *rapadura*, *empanisado*, *papelón*, etc., weighed and wrapped in banana-leaves, selling at about 5 cents for 3 pounds

Life was dismal at best in Ayavaca. The cold and clammy downpour continued unabated. While I developed my exposed films in water supplied by an eavestrough, the population blocked the doorway of my "room," making every exit and entry like boarding a subway train in the rush hour. There were no real shops in the dreary mountain town, but only gloomy mud huts where a few products were unofficially sold. The one sidewalk was taken up by drenched and downcast asses, forcing pedestrians to splash through the unpaved street. The products of the soil were not high priced: A guinea-pig—next to children the most plentiful product of the town—cost five cents; a live chicken, fifteen; but it was always easier to pay the price than to find the chicken for sale. Commerce was on the friend-to-friend basis, and he who would purchase must be well acquainted

with the seller, or a protégé of the all-powerful subprefect. Only liquor was to be had in abundance. The provincial officials, from my host down to the village school-master, were more or less intoxicated from mid-morning to midnight. In that state, frankness protruded through their racial courtesy, and they were divided in their assertions between the opinion that I was a spy sent out by my government and the conviction that I had been offered some colossal prize for covering the world on foot. It was with difficulty that I avoided sinking into the general intoxication. Whenever two or three are gathered together in Peru, it is the custom for one of the group to fill a glass from the inevitable bottle—and Peruvian aguardiente is no harmless nectar—then ask permission to drink the health of Tal Fulano on his right. “Muchas gracias,” says Tal Fulano, and proceeds to drink next—from the same glass—the health of his nearest companion; and so on round and round the circle to infinity and complete insobriety. The inexperienced gringo who fails in the etiquette of this custom, whatever the number of rounds, is looked upon with much the same contempt as the American who lets his saloon companions “set ’em up” repeatedly without offering to do so himself; and runs the risk of having an incensed subprefect, too far gone in frankness, turn upon him and invite him to make his home elsewhere.

Every minute of the day following my arrival it rained, slackening somewhat at rare intervals, only to begin again with a roar that sounded like an avalanche down a nearby mountainside. Twenty-four hours later my films were as wet as when first hung up. Water and mud invaded even our minds. Rivers of liquid mud raced down every street and across the

broad, half-cobbled plaza. Not once during the day did the eye catch a hint of the great valley on the edge of which Ayavaca is perched. The few residents forced to go out of doors wore *suecos*, wooden clog overshoes, something like the rainy-day footwear of the Japanese, that increased the wearer's height by a half-foot or more. The majority huddled in their dreary mud houses, crowding into the low doorways to stare after me when I passed, commenting aloud on my raison d'être.

The postmaster of Ayavaca was a comely young woman of considerable Indian blood, her office scattered promiscuously about the baked mud-dwelling of her parents. I had concluded to mail the films and notebooks on hand, rather than risk their loss or destruction in what promised to be difficult going ahead, and having ransacked the town for the necessary wrapping paper, and tied the package with government tape, I presented it for registry. It seemed better to make a clear breast of the matter than to risk the Pandoric curiosity of the Ayavaca postal system, and I explained that, while the contents was of vast value to me and the future history of Peru, it was of none whatever to anyone else. Stamps were at length found in the right-hand drawer of the hand sewing-machine on the earth floor, a native ink was brewed over the fagot-fire in the kitchen for the imprinting of the official seal, dug out from a chest of stockings and feminine small-clothes, and after a social call of more than an hour's duration I shook hands with the entire family, twice with the post-mistress herself, and left with her repeated reassurance ringing in my ears:

"No tenga cuidado—lose no sleep over it, señor; it will go safely to Europe and the United States

without being lost."

Some time after dark, the rain having at last left off with sullen grace, I was limbering up my legs for an early start in the morning when I chanced to pass the *correo*. The door was closed; but this was one of the few houses of Ayavaca boasting a window—though without glass, unknown to most towns of the Andes—barricaded with wooden bars. Inside, gathered about an apathetic candle, sat the post-mistress and her entire family, the open package in her lap—passing my films from hand to hand and puzzling in vain over my notebooks, with a leisureliness that showed they had settled down to make the most of a long evening's entertainment. My first impulse to snatch open the door was succeeded by reflection. Knowing the extreme sensibility of these Andean townsmen, I suspected that, were my discovery known to her, the post-mistress would be more than apt, out of pique, to lose or destroy the cause of her undoing before I could recover them from government possession. I swallowed the impulse and splashed on through the night.

Months afterward I had word that the package reached the addressee in perfect condition, though in disorder.

With little more information than that the next town I must hunt out of the wilderness was Huancabamba, I slid down the red slopes from Ayavaca, now and then glancing back to wonder what excuse even Spaniards could have considered sufficient to found a town in such a location. The subprefect, far from providing the Indian guide and carrier he had so often promised in his cups, had bade me "adiós" from his bed, with the cheering assurance that I was bound soon to lose my way and perish. My load was

several pounds heavier than on my arrival; for I had added to it not only a block of rapadura and seventeen loaves of bread—Ayavaca size—but a huge chunk of fresh beef. Even my money had become a burden again, for instead of the bills of Ecuador my "road-change" must now be carried in silver. The semi-monthly daily of Ayavaca had appeared the evening before with an astonishing history of the town's distinguished guest, honoring me with the title of "that intrepid explorer," a designation which the subprefect made use of in his official orders to his subordinates along the way, and which, copied from one document to another, was destined to cling to me all the length of Peru. My eye never fell upon it that I did not recall the native dishes I was so often forced to delve into during the journey.

Gibbon asserts that the civilization of a country may best be gaged by the number and condition of its roads. If so, northern Peru is sunk in the depths of barbarism. The Incas swung bridges of withes along their great military highways, the Spaniards built some of stone; the modern inhabitants of this region merely let their roads grow up of themselves, like brambles in an uncultivated field. At a mountain summit, beyond a raging mountain current in which I all but lost my possessions, immense gray curtains of fog left me only instinct and my compass by which to choose between the faint sandy paths that split and forked at every opportunity. The trail I happened to take zigzagged quickly down into the bed of a snarling mountain stream between sheer rock walls, choked with tough, thorny undergrowth, along which it sprang back and forth from rock to rock, dragging me in pursuit through an endless tangle of vegetation, often by vaulted tunnels through which I could only tear my way by creeping

on all fours. By dusk it had widened sufficiently to give the path foothold along one bank, and when darkness brought me to a halt, I found space under a scraggly tree to spread my poncho. In my pack the seventeen loaves of bread had amalgamated with the crude sugar and formed a coating about the boiled beef. I stowed away in my hat, for safekeeping, the few more or less whole loaves, and fell upon the pulp that remained. It was a dry meal, for all the rain. Though the stream close below sounded tantalizingly in my ears all the night through, an impenetrable jungle cut me off from it, and only the few wild lemons I had picked along the way ministered to the after-thirst of a long day's tramp.

The pleasure of dressing at dawn in garments still dripping wet was enhanced by the discovery that a colony of red ants, appointing a night-shift, had formed a bread-line from my hat to their neighboring village and reduced me to a breakfast of river water where the trail again touched the stream a mile beyond. Three solitary hours later I came upon a miserable little shack of open-work reeds and upright poles topped by thatch. On the ground beside it a slatternly female was cooking for several horsemen. Two rivers ahead were reported greatly swollen, and I accepted an invitation to wait and accompany a youth bound for his employer's hacienda. Wait I did, a full three hours, amid the usual fauna of an Andean hut, while the travelers took final leave of each other a score of times in as many rounds of *aguardiente de caña*, a native concoction of distilled sugarcane, each swallow of which is to an ordinary mortal not unlike a sudden blow on the head with a spiked war-club. In the end, a calabash of yuca stew rewarded my patience. The youth staggered aboard his shaggy horse at last and we descended quickly into a dense,

damp-hot valley with a broad, swift river. I mounted the horse's rump to cross two arms of the stream and a stretch of swamp between, in constant peril of tobogganing down the animal's tail, my load dragging heavily from my shoulders. The moment I slipped off on dry land, the youth, still distinctly under the influence of concentrated sugar-cane, demanded a "peseta" for his services. Long, hot hours we marched along thick-jungled river beds in narrow, fertile valleys enclosed by sterile, though green-tinted mountainsides bristling with cactus. The trail panted frequently over a steep desert hillock, the crupper of the animal saving me much time in disrobing at a dozen smaller brooks, between which my companion rode at my heels in gloomy silence. At a larger stream he collected a *real* and announced that the fee for crossing a river ahead would be another "peseta." As the effects of permitting the unbridled drinking of his health wore off, he recalled the *fiambre* in his saddle-bags, and paused to offer me, with the patronizing air befitting a horseman toward a man afoot, a handful of parched corn and a rag of sun-dried beef. Gradually he became less taciturn, then garrulous and gay. He was by no means a peon, being assistant mayordomo of the estate toward which we were headed, and even wore shoes. Yet when I photographed him, it required considerable explanation to give him any clear conception of what the result would be of "pointing the foolish little machine" at him.

"Y su aposento, donde está?" (Where is your lodging —*i.e.*, native land?) he inquired.

When I had answered, he rode fully ten minutes in puzzled silence. Then he called out over his shoulder:

"Y ese país suyo, ese Esta'os Uni'os, es pueblo ó

hacienda?" (That country of yours, is it a village or a plantation?)

The world, as he knew it—and his knowledge was on a par with that of thousands of dwellers in the Andes—was made up of those two divisions.

We left a curving river, labored over a divide, and descended to the Aranza, a furlong wide, roaring angrily. At sight of it the youth regretted the bargain he had made, fearing his horse could not breast the swift current under the weight of both of us, and suggested that I strip and swim, letting him carry my clothing and bundle. There seemed to be no way to avoid risking the wealth in my trousers; but these simple countrymen of the Andes are commonly more reliable in matters of trust than appearances suggest, and a well-directed bullet would avert any tendency to decamp. I strapped my revolver about my head and plunged in for a ten-minute struggle with the current, but it was not without relief that I landed beside the exhausted horse and regained my possessions. We were already within the territory of the "Hacienda San Pablo," though still miles from the dwelling. On all sides, as far as the eye could strain, the river valley and the mountains above were unbroken wilderness, utterly uninhabited. Yet the region was rich in produce. The *chirimoya*, that vegetable icecream of the tropics, hung in car-loads from the trees; small, but compact and juicy wild lemons, carpeted the trail. Parrots and screaming bands of parrakeets flitted in and out of guayaba and sapote trees; here and there the dense-green dome of a mango tree shouldered its way up through its punier fellows of the forest.

It was nearing dusk, and I was near exhaustion under my load and the pitiless tropical sun of seven

unbroken hours of swift, rough tramping, when my companion pointed out far ahead, where the wall of the Central Cordillera shut off the horizon, a red dot in the green immensity,—the hacienda house. Black night had fallen when we reached the half-constructed building, and we stumbled on for some time more before we came upon the rambling thatched ruin in which the owner still lived. He was Eduardo Medina, once a law student in the University of San Marcos of Lima, a sane, well-read, earnest man, contrasting strangely with the uncouth countrymen about him. His wife, a handsome limeña, was the first woman of education I had so far seen in rural South America. This extraordinary Latin-American couple, noting the swarms of lawyers that vegetate in provincial capitals, had renounced the uninspiring fleshpots of the cities, and purchasing for a song some twenty-five square leagues of semi-tropical solitude, had come to start life anew in this wilderness with the shaggy world piled up on all sides, and set their race a much needed example. Here was such a welcome as the wilderness traveler often dreams, but seldom attains. Not merely did they offer the accommodation Andean custom requires all hacendados to furnish travelers, each according to his caste, but their hospitality was genuine and active. The adobe lean-to into which I was led, for the astonishing Andean purpose of “washing up before supper,” had not only a real bed, mattress and all, on springs of split bamboo, but the first sheets and pillows and suggestion of civilized comfort I had seen in Peru. It did not require the reminder that the morrow was Sunday, and Medina’s assertion that they were famished for civilized conversation, to make me accept his invitation to prolong my stay. My

companion of the day never recovered from his astonishment at seeing the “patrón” seat at his own table and treat as an equal a man who traveled on foot; and as often as I caught his eye among the group that hovered about the door all the evening, he gazed at me in a manner that seemed to implore me not to mention the reals he had collected under the impression that I was a mere man, and not a caballero.

Fertile tracts of valleys and mountains twenty-five miles square can be bought in this section of Peru for $250. Yet this does not mean that wealth awaits the purchaser. “Faltan brazos,” as the Peruvian puts it; “arms” are lacking. The scanty population has no stimulus to exertion in a region where nature supplies their simple wants almost without labor, and to Medina life was a constant struggle for employees. In days of fiesta, when money was needed to pay the priest or celebrate a festival, many came to contract their services and accept an “advance,” but with no representative of government at hand, there was no means of forcing them to do the work for which they had been prepaid. Some labored languidly and intermittently a few weeks a year, none more than half the days that were not sacred to some festival and general drunkenness. On the hacienda were a scattered score of *arrendatarios*, native families who rent a patch of ground on which to build a hut and plant a bit of yuca and corn, with the right to pasture a few cattle on the estate, all for a yearly rental of $2, which was commonly as hard to collect as labor. The almost total lack of transportation gave no market for any excess of produce, and here was the extraordinary case of a university-educated man and wife owning what would be with us an entire county, living a hand-to-

mouth existence very little above abject poverty. Oranges, which the owner asserted he would be only too happy to sell at five cents a hundred, rotted under the trees faster than the hogs could eat them; mangoes lay where they fell, and the splendid chirimoya was a mere worthless wild fruit no one took the trouble to gather, except as personal appetite prompted. The sugarcane they succeeded in raising they were glad to get any price for, after it had been squeezed in *trapiches*, crude presses run by hand, and the *guarapo* boiled down into blocks of rapadura and wrapped in banana leaves. Most of it was turned into aguardiente that could occasionally be sent to town.

My postal experience in Ayavaca recalled to Medina one of his own. Before they left Lima to take up their newly acquired residence, the couple had found there were two post-offices, at Ayavaca and Pacaipampa, about equal distance from it,—two days on muleback. It chanced that Señora Medina had ordered her "Modas Femininas" sent to Ayavaca, while her husband gave Pacaipampa as his address to the subscription department of the daily "El Comercio." After the first few numbers only one or two copies of the newspaper adorned the weekly mail-bag of the hacienda. La señora also noted that she was not receiving her fashion journal regularly. The hacendado started an investigation. He found that the comely post-mistress of Ayavaca had recently acquired a considerable reputation as an authority on up-to-date fashions. In Pacaipampa he discovered that the government mail service was in the hands of an old man unusually well versed in the politics of the day. Husband and wife wrote to Lima ordering "El Comercio" sent to Ayavaca and the "Modas Femininas" by way of Pacaipampa. Since

then both had received their respective journals as regularly as transportation conditions in these primitive regions made reasonable.

“You have no inconvenience in riding?” asked my host, as we set out on horseback to visit the estate on Sunday.

“Not at all, señor.”

“Then I shall furnish you a mount to Huancabamba,” he announced.

I declined. It seemed foolish to besmirch my long, unbroken record afoot. But he insisted on at least sending a peon to carry my baggage and to serve as “guide,” and actually kept his promise!

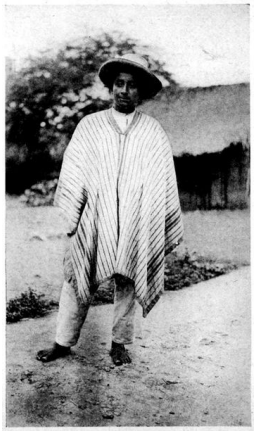
“It dawned raining,” as they say in the Andes, but the peon assigned the task, because his rent was in arrears, was already astride a good saddle-horse when I stepped out into the storm. Another debtor had been ordered to furnish a boiled chicken, the cook, a bag of rice. With few respites we zigzagged all day up into the Cordillera Central, ever vaster views of the valleys about San Pablo opening out, though advancing little except upward. Relieved of my load I seemed to have wings, and in the steeper places had often to wait for the horseman. Barely a hut and not a traveler did we pass during a day which ended with a perpendicular climb to a miserable mud hovel on a high and wintry pampa. Alone, accommodation might have been refused me, but my companion was distantly related to the two crabbed females who, with their tawny flock of half-naked children, existed in this cheerless spot, and I was passively suffered to remain. In their mud den, where the usual fagot-fire was blazing under an ancient and enormous kettle set on three stones, I sat

down on a sort of short trough with six-inch legs, one of the "chairs" of this region, when any exist, and some time later we were served in bowls made of gourds a boiling-hot mixture of potatoes, *habas*, and some mountain mystery. Still unsatisfied, I drew out my bag of rice. Válgame Diós if that lazy cook of the "Hacienda San Pablo" had not delivered it to me uncooked! I followed the custom of the place and circumstances by presenting the women with enough of the grain to feed her entire family for a day or two, then asked that a bowlful be cooked for me.

"Now hay manteca—there is no lard," mumbled one of the females.

"Eureka!" I cried, "Then for once I can have it cooked as it should be."

"There is no other kettle," said the woman in a faint monotone, projecting her lips toward that containing the stew.



The *teniente-gobernador*, or "lieutenant-

governor," of Jaen,
whose duty it was,
at sight of my
official papers, to
find me lodging,
food, pasture, and
make himself
generally useful



The two of us.
"Cleopatra" and I
in the hungry
jungles of Jaen
some forty-eight
hours after the last
glimpse of a
human being

"I will wait until it is empty," I replied cheerfully.

With no other excuse to offer, she took refuge in silence. An hour passed before I broke it again.

"And the rice, señora," I suggested.

"No hay manteca," she repeated in the same dull monotone, and the conversation went on again around the same vicious circle. For more than an hour I coaxed and cajoled, for a single harsh or loud word to these unwashed mountain-dwellers can undo a day's careful pleading. As constant dripping of water in time wears away even stone, so my incessant return to the subject at length became even more painful than the stirring from their customary lethargy. The younger female rose languidly and took from the wall in a dark corner a perfectly sound kettle just suited to the purpose and, after deftly stealing about half of it, set to boiling what I had kept for myself.

The adjoining den had not only an earth floor, but the hillside had not been levelled before building. The peon spread a saddle-blanket and one of his own ponchos for me as solicitously as a valet preparing his master's quarters; yet in as impersonal a manner as he might have herded his sheep into their corral for the night. With this protection, and my own garments wrapped about my head, I passed a tolerable night, virtually on the ridge of the central range of the Andes. My peon, the two women, several children, two half-Indian youths who had arrived long after dark, at least six dogs, and a score of guinea-pigs all slept in the same room—all, that is, except the *cuis*, which spent most of it squeaking about in the dark, and now and then running over my prostrate form.

On the bleak, rolling pampa of sear yellow bunch-grass, dotted by a few shaggy wild cattle, across which howled wintry winds, I was not uncomfortable afoot; but the peon from the "tierra caliente" of his native valley was blue-lipped and chattering with

cold, even with his head through several heavy blankets and a scarf about his face. I was passing back over the Cordillera Central for the first time since Hays and I had traversed it by the Quindío pass. Not far below the arctic summit we sighted the Huancabamba river, born a few leagues to the north, its broad, swift-sloping valley-walls spotted with little green *chacras*, and gradually dropped into summer again. Trees grew up about us, birds began once more to sing, cultivated fields shut in by cactus hedges bordered the trail. When at last we sighted the town of Huancabamba from far off, the peon halted and asked to be allowed to turn back. He seemed to fancy his services had been chiefly those of "guide," instead of baggage-carrier. I refused to take up my burden again merely for what I took to be a whim to be back lolling in the shade of his own mango tree. It was not until later that I realized that, like most country youths of his class in Peru, he dreaded entering the provincial capital, lest he be held and forced to serve in the army.

The swift Huancabamba river we crossed astride the peon's horse, though not both at a time. When I had dismounted on the further bank, my companion called the animal back by a peculiar sound, half whistle, half cluck, and not long afterward we clattered into the famous city of Huancabamba. Once dismissed, the peon left town at once, though darkness was already at hand. Medina had insisted that I pay him nothing, as he owed the hacienda more than two years' rent—namely, nearly four dollars.

On the map Huancabamba seems of about the size and importance of Philadelphia; on the ground it is a moribund mud village in a half-sterile hollow

between barren, towering mountains. Historically it is famous. Prescott assures us that "Guancabamba was large, populous and well-built, many of its houses of solid stone. A river which passed through the town had a bridge over which ran a fine Inca highroad." How times do change! Officially, to be sure, it is still a city; but a "city" in this region is a place where bread is made, as those who wear shoes are white, and those who wear bayeta are cholos or Indians. Picturesqueness of costume there was none, this having disappeared near Cuenca along with the Quichua tongue. Indians of pure race and distinctive garb had been rare south of Zaraguro; here was still plenty of Indian blood, but only in the veins of "civilized" mestizos. It is not far from the watershed of the Andes. The town of Huarmaca, just up on the ridge of the Cordillera above, has a church one side of the roof of which sends its waters to the Pacific, and the other to the Atlantic.

There was no suggestion of hotel. The subprefect studied my papers in great curiosity, with half the town looking over his shoulder, before he answered my most important query with:

"Ah, it is impossible to-day, on such short notice. But to-morrow—"

"I need it to-day," I protested, knowing it was only a question of insisting, to overcome the racial apathy.

"Then I will give you *my* bed and sleep on the floor!" cried the subprefect.

In that pompous moment, with a large delegation of huancabambinos looking on, no doubt he would, but such Andean self-sacrifice quickly fades away, once the limelight is switched off.

"I prefer to rent a room of my own," I persisted.

"Ah, *now* that is impossible. But to-morrow—"

I bowed my way out, throwing over my shoulder the information that I would go down to the bank of the river and sleep on the ground. It would be softer, and there were bathing facilities. Horror spread over all faces. A man, an estranjero who came with the recommendations of great governments! Impossible! The city of Huancabamba could not permit it! When word of it reached the outside world...! Soldiers were sent scurrying in all directions—and two minutes later one of them found a room for rent in the home of one of the "best families," exactly across the street from the subprefectura.

It can hardly be that I was the first stranger to enter Huancabamba since Hernando de Soto was sent by Pizarro to reconnoiter the region after the capture of the Inca. Yet one might have fancied so. Whether it was due to some canine sense of smell we of less favored lands lack, I never succeeded in getting within ten yards of a huancabambino before he was staring at me with bulging eyes and hanging jaw, all work, movement, and even conversation ceasing as I drew near. If I passed behind a group on a street corner, their necks went round with one accord, like those of owls, and they stared after me in unbroken silence as long as I remained in sight. Men and women, well-dressed and outwardly intelligent, dodged back into their house or shop as I appeared, to call wife or children as they might for a passing circus parade. The few sidewalks were really house verandas, sometimes roofed, and on all ordinary occasions pedestrians strolled along the center of the street. Now there was a stranger in town, virtually all took pains to cross to my side of the way, and though it required a distinct exertion to climb up to and

down from this few yards of raised sidewalk, every inhabitant seemed to find some excuse every few minutes to wander by my door at a snail's pace in his noiseless bare feet. If I began any species of activity, —to write, load my kodak, read, or even to wash my hands, the human stream was clogged like a log-raft against a snag and the population stacked up about my door until a well-aimed anything broke the keystone log, and gave me again for a moment light and air. It was the hospitable huancabambino custom to give me greeting, even when I was busy well inside the room, and to repeat the phrase in a louder and louder voice until I acknowledged it. Those few who passed on the further side of the street never failed to shout "Buenos días" across at me, though they might have looked in upon me a bare two minutes before. Now and then a more friendly member of society wandered complacently into the room, to peer over my shoulder, or to handle with the innocence of a three-year old child such of my possessions as took his fancy. Some drifted in even at night, long after I had retired, for, there being no other opening, to have closed the door would have been to smother.

In the far recesses of the Andes the simplest matter may become complex. My flannel road-shirt had at last succumbed to its varied hardships. Now, buying a shirt may seem too trivial an experience to be worthy of mention; in the wilds of Peru it is a transaction of deep importance. Huancabamba is overstocked with cloth-shops; but what Latin-American shopkeepers honestly believe a "very heavy shirt" would fall to pieces in three days under the exertions of a society darling. One garment promising moderate endurance I did find, but the combined jangling of all the bells of Quito was as

nothing compared to its color scheme. Beside it the good old American flag would have looked dull and colorless. I set out to find a woman willing to make a new shirt on the pattern of the old. Most of them did not wish to; most of the others were too tired; two or three had less commonplace reasons, such as being in mourning, or having a pan to wash before Sunday, or a son to be married next week, or not having gone to confession recently. Toward noon I caught a shoemaker's wife unawares, and had her promise to undertake the task before she could think of a plausible excuse. She thought a just price, I to furnish the cloth, would be twenty cents!

I canvassed the shops for heavy khaki. The stoutest on sale was flimsy as a chorus-girl's bodice, its color plainly as evanescent as her complexion. I chose at last from a bolt of cloth designed for afternoon trousers, adding a spool of the strongest thread to be had. Experience had long since taught me that the tailors of Latin America use a thread so fine that a deep breath is almost sure to burst a seam or two. I delivered the materials and retired for a belated almuerzo in the mud hut where the daily cow sacrificed to Huancabamba's appetite is sold in half-*real* nibbles. Now and then an urchin entered, clutching a nickel in one besmeared fist, to say in the uninflected monotone of a "piece" learned in school:

"Media carne, media vuelta," (2 cents worth of meat, 2 cents change), to which the answer was almost sure to be:

"No hay vuelta" (there is no change), whereupon the emissary wandered homeward still clutching the coin, and the family evidently passed another meatless day.

Barely had I returned to my room when a fever fell

upon me. At the height of the attack, when every movement was a mighty effort and every motionless moment an hour of deep enjoyment, an urchin appeared with the spool of thread I had provided, saying it was heavier than Huancabamba was accustomed to use and that I must supply a spool of No. 60. I reached for the brick that held back one of the leaves of the door, and he disappeared from my field of vision. An hour later he came back to report that the seamstress had broken a needle and refused to risk another. I suspended him by as much of a garment as he wore long enough to promise to cut off his ears, to have the subprefect put the seamstress in prison, and to bring down another earthquake upon Huancabamba unless the contract solemnly entered into was fulfilled before sundown; and I was not sharp-eyed enough to distinguish his little brown legs one from the other as he sped back to the zapatería. At dusk the shirt was delivered, an exact copy of the original, which was bequeathed to the miniature messenger.

A diet chiefly of quinine soon had me ready for the road again. My load was more burdensome than ever. A long stretch of wilderness ahead required the carrying of many pounds of food, and on down the valley of the Huancabamba I wobbled like an octogenarian. Most of the day lay across a desert of mighty broken chasms, leprous-dry under the blazing sun, scarred, gashed, and split with scores of lines, almost any of which might have been mistaken for the trail. Somehow I chanced to pick the right one and brought up at dusk at the hut of Alexandro Bobbío, far up the chasm of a small tributary.

Bobbío was a wiry man of fifty, son of an Italian, though officially a Peruvian, speaking only Spanish,

but well-read, and of infinitely more industry and initiative than the natives. Unlike our own immigrants, those to South America retain for generations a distinct evidence of their origin; to the society about them they are still known as “hijos de italiano, alemán, inglés,” and the like, and the traveler is almost certain to find the man thus designated of far more worth than his neighbors, though commonly inferior to the race of his fathers. Bobbío was a government employee, stationed here in his thatched hut to check the cargoes of leaf tobacco that “salen pa’ fuera,” or pass out of Jaen province in large quantities for Huancabamba and the coast in leather-wrapped bundles on horses, mules, and cattle. Like several of Europe, the Peruvian government retains the monopoly of tobacco. For an official load of 69 kilograms it pays $10, and in some remote districts only $8.50. Each kilo produces twenty packages of cigarettes, selling for thirty centavos each; in other words the 69 kilos bring the government $208 gold. This system is directly inherited from Spain and colonial days. Stevenson found that the King purchased tobacco at three reals (three-eighths of a dollar), and sold it at $2, though much was spent on *fiscales*. It remained for republican Peru to open a truly enormous gulf between producer and consumer.

“I wish I could buy a burro, even a half-size one,” I sighed, half to myself, as I was straightening up under my burden next morning. Had he been an unalloyed Latin-American, Bobbío would have shrugged his shoulders and murmured something about life being a sad matter at best. Instead, he cried “Why didn’t you say so?” and, stepping out into the sunshine flooding the arid world like a shower of gold, waved his arms in some local code of

wigwagging at a hut hung high up on the desert hillside across the "river." Not long after there drifted up before the corredor where we sat in the shade a sun-scorched mestizo youth leading a small donkey, shaggy as a bear just emerging from his winter's den. It proved to be a female of the species, about sweet sixteen as donkeys go, and due in the years to come to double in size; moreover, she was *chúcaro*, in other words had never yet contributed to the labor of the world, and appeared to the youth to be worth twelve *soles*. There ensued the usual verbal skirmish before we compromised at ten. Clipping an effigy of the King of England from my waist-band, I held it out to the mestizo. He shied at it like a colt at a flying newspaper. The Incas, we are told, forbade the common people to possess gold. Whether it is due to that prohibition, passed down by tradition to the present day, or to mere contrariness, the countrymen of the Andes still insist on doing their transactions in silver. Indeed, "plata" is the most common word for money in all the region. Bobbío had no prejudice against gold, however, and taking ten silver "cartwheels" from a hairy cowhide chest in a far corner of his hut, he dropped them into the youth's outspread hands, and the latter sped away up the sun-flooded hillside to his hovel, leaving me in possession of a No. 4 size donkey and the ancient hawser with which it was moored to a post of Bobbío's dwelling.

The first necessity was a name for the animal. Her startling beauty against the background of the Egyptian landscape made "Cleopatra" obvious. Then came the problem of the furniture without which no Andean donkey will carry even a man's load. Bobbío donated an old grain-sack. Over this went my poncho. Thirty centavos seemed a just price for a

corona, a donkey "saddle" of wood of saw-buck shape. For another sol I became the legal possessor of a large and stout, if rather aged, pair of *alforjas*, or cloth saddle-bags, in which my forty pounds could be evenly balanced. Around these, donkey and all, Bobbío wound with the intricacy of long experience several yards of rope, and at blazing ten I was off at last—to have my entire worldly possessions immediately dash away up the hillside into a jungle.

When they had been recovered, a nephew of Bobbío volunteered to pilot my new ship out of harbor. With the tow-rope and a cudgel in hand he got the craft under way, then gradually the cudgel sufficed both as rudder and throttle. A mile from home he turned the command over to me and away we went alone up the narrowing valley into the Huazcaray range, "Cleopatra" waltzing ahead of me up the slope like a school-girl on a holiday. It seemed ridiculous that any traveler with a donkey should ever have had difficulties—unless he expected a bag filled even in the middle to lie contentedly on the animal's back. With only a slight shift to one side or the other every hour or two the alforjas rode like a cavalryman.

We zigzagged high over a range, coming out above what was evidently an immense valley, heaped full of white clouds as the basket of a plantation-picker with cotton, and began to go swiftly down through reddish mud ruts deeper than "Cleopatra" was high. Then we picked up the Tamborapo river near its source, and descended along a grassy valley walled by bushy hillsides.

In this region of northern Peru, the Andes break down into great sweltering gorges and tropical wildernesses instead of the unbroken high pampas the range seems to promise. The traveler so foolish

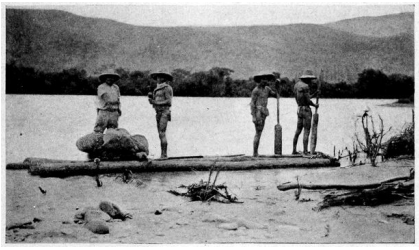
as to journey through it catches the valley of a river as it tears its way across the jungled mountain wilderness, follows it as far as possible, then fights his way across a divide, to descend or ascend another stream. Neither waterway is likely to run in anything like the direction he would go, but by tacking like a ship against a head wind he advances bit by bit, with an exertion out of all proportion to the actual progress, toward the nebulous goal he has set himself. The distance between two hamlets a hundred miles apart is often three hundred miles in this labyrinthian province of Jaen, officially a province of Peru, but still disputed by Ecuador, as the boundary was between Atahuallpa and Huascar at the coming of the Spaniards. So low is the region that the local expression for entering "la Provincia," as Jaen is known locally, is "Va pa' dentro—to go down inside," as might be designated the entrance into the realms of the unrighteous departed.

Perfection, alas, is not of this world. Now that I might have added a plentiful supply of foodstuffs to my pack without increasing my burdens—for "Cleopatra" had been sold under a guarantee to carry a hundred pounds—I had reached a section of the world where food is under no circumstances for sale. Furthermore, with a thousand miles of road just suited to donkeys behind me, it must be my fortune the morning after at last acquiring one to strike the worst possible road for them. Strictly speaking, there was no road; but for certain spaces trees enough had been felled to make passage through the forest possible, and the rainy season and tobacco-trains had combined to turn these clearings into unbroken miles of *camelones*, those corduroy-like ridges of hard earth with a coating of slippery mud, alternating with ditches of liquid mud from two to three feet deep. A

pedestrian, even with forty pounds on his back, may trip along the tops of these as blithely as a youthful opera company counting the ties from Red Cloud to Chicago. But to attempt to drive a half-grown jackass, laden with all the driver's earthly possessions in far from waterproof cloth sacks, through mile after monotonous mile of them, under an endless tropical downpour, is an experience to stir the most blazé and world-weary soul. Those steps at which the uncomplaining little brute did not slip off into the ditch behind the ridge on which she had set her feet were those in which she fell with a still more far-reaching splash into the ditch ahead. Usually each pair of feet was divided in its allegiance, and reduced the animal to that artistic performance popularly known in pseudo-histrionic circles as "splitting the splits." More times than I could have counted, "Cleopatra" fell down lengthwise, crosswise, front-wise, and hind-wise, on her head, on the side of her neck, on her bedraggled tail, on every part of a donkey known to anatomy, showering me with mud from the crown of my hat to my inundated boots, soaking my possessions in seas of mud, now and then frankly lying down in despair, as often attempting to shirk her just portion of this world's troubles by dashing into the impenetrable dripping jungle and smashing my maltreated belongings against the trees. From time to time she became hopelessly entangled with a train of pack-animals "going outside," forcing me to wade in and lift her bodily, pack and all, out of some slough above which little more than her drooping ears were visible. In short, when this "royal highway" waded across the barnyard of the "Hacienda Charapé," it did not require a particularly sincere invitation to cause me to spend the rest of the day there.



The main street of the great provincial capital of Jaen, with the flagpole to which I tied "Cleopatra" before the official residence of the local governor



The government "ferry" across the Huancabamba, with the *balseros* imbibing the last Dutch courage before attempting to set the *chasqui*, or mail-man, and me, with our baggage, across the flood-swollen stream

The hacendados of this region, owning whole ranges of mountains and valleys, live scarcely better than the Indians in their hovels. Both father and son in this case wore shoes and read the Lima newspapers—from a month to six weeks old—yet their earth-floored and walled dining-room swarmed with

unspeakably dirty peon children, and pigs all but uprooted the table as we ate. The slatternly female cooking over three stones in an adjoining sty served us boiled rice mixed with cubes of pork in a single bowl from which we all helped ourselves indifferently with spoon or fingers. Father and son slept on a sort of home-made table covered with a pair of ragged blankets in a mud den overrun by domestic animals and littered with all the noisome odds and ends of a South American harness-room. Yet their speech was as redundant with formalities as that of a Spanish cavalier in the king's court.

Though I knew there was a long, foodless, and uninhabited region ahead, I could add but little to "Cleopatra's" nominal load in preparation for it, for to offer to *buy* supplies would have been considered an insult to my hosts equal to an attempt to pay for my accommodation. *Costumbre*, inbred for long generations, forces these rural hacendados of Peru to consider it beneath their dignity to sell anything, except the rapadura and home-made fire-water they look upon as their legitimate source of income, yet they are too miserly to give much. The best I could do was to accept, with signs of deep gratitude, two small cotton sackfuls of *chifles* and *charol*; the former, bone-hard slices of plantains warranted to keep forever in any climate and taste like oak chips to any appetite; the latter, hard squares of fried fat pork of the size of small dice. Then, of course, there was the inevitable slab of crude sugar wrapped in banana leaves.

The "road" was worse than that of the day before. Times without number I concluded the end of the journey had come for one of us, yet somehow the maltreated little brute sprawled forward through the

pouring rain. Dense, dripping, unbroken forests, abounding with the red berries of wild coffee, crowded close on either hand. Below, the swollen Tamborapo roared incessantly close alongside, adding to the constant fear of losing all my possessions the continual dread of reaching some impassable stream. Toward the end of a day during which we had forded a dozen difficult tributaries, we were halted by a raging branch, plainly foolhardy to attempt. I chased "Cleopatra" up through the jungle alongside it, until darkness came on and forced us to camp in a tiny open space, my perishable possessions hung in the trees against destruction by ants, and the donkey tied to the trunk that formed my bed-post. All night long the animal walked round and round over me, though without once stepping on my prostrate form or the heaped-up baggage. In the morning we tore our way far on up the tributary before we came in sight of a "bridge," that is, two poles tied with vines to a tree on either bank. I had piled my garments on top of the load and was just dragging my reluctant baggage-car into the stream, when a half-naked youth appeared on the opposite bank, making wild signs to me across the uproar of waters. By the time I had regained the shore, he arrived in abbreviated shirt by way of the "bridge," carrying a stout staff and a rope. With these he dragged the donkey, stripped stark naked, into the stream and, fervently crossing himself twice, fought his way with it into the torrent; while I made three trips monkey-fashion along the tree-lashed poles with the baggage that would infallibly have been washed away but for this experienced jungle-dweller. His particular saint did not fail him and, having delivered the drenched and disgusted animal to me on the further bank, he accepted a *real* with a

gratitude that suggested he considered himself well-paid for risking his life.

Slowly, monotonously, day after day, we pushed on through the Amazonian jungle—Amazonian not only in appearance, but because the Tamborapo, soon to join the Marañón, forms a part of the great network of the Father of Waters. The unpeopled forest, draped with vines that here and there, like broken cables, dipped their ends in the stream, seemed to have no end. The absolute solitude of the region, ever shut in by impenetrable jungle, with never a view of the horizon, with no sign of the existence of humanity and no other sounds than the occasional scream of a bird and the constant roar of the stream, had a peculiar effect on the moods. One felt abandoned by the world, and came to look upon all nature as a cruel prison-warden determined that his prisoner should never again be permitted to pick up the threads of his existence, nor even communicate with the world that had abandoned him. The very silence added to the gloom, until I felt like screaming, "Well, speak, burro!" It was a relief not to sweat under my own load, but it was distinctly more laborious to drive it before me. Day after day I beat up "Cleopatra's" rear from dawn to dusk without a pause, yet covered scarcely half the distance I might have plodded alone. Even where the trail was level and dry, the docile, yet headstrong brute could not exceed two miles an hour; wherever a bit of slope, or stones and mud intervened, she picked her way with the cautious deliberation of an old lady entering a street-car. Insects swarmed. My unshaven face and all the expanse of skin from crown to toes were blotched and swollen with their visitations. The chifles and charol gave out and left only the lead-heavy rapadura and river-water as hunger antidotes.

On the third day even the last chunk of crude sugar disappeared, and still the two of us plodded on, equally gaunt and lacking in ambition and energy.

I had lived on river-water for more than twenty-four hours, and lost my way several times on forking trails that climbed to nowhere far above, or were swallowed up in the jungle, when I guessed again at a path that climbed up out of the valley of the river. By and by it sweated up to a hut of open-work poles, where lived a *vaquero* in charge of the stock of a vast hacienda of the wilderness. Only a little girl of eight was at home, and she did not know that roads were meant to lead anywhere. Tying "Cleopatra" in the shade of the eaves, I sat down to await adult information. Starvation seemed to have danced its orgy for weeks before my weary eyes when the child came out with a fat, ripe chirimoya, to lisp in a shaky voice, "Le gu'ta e'ta fruta?" Hours later a gaunt, tropic-scarred man appeared, and at sight of me shouted the stereotyped greeting of all his class to any visitor ahorse or afoot:

"Apéase—dismount, señor."

When I declined with the customary formalities, he opened preliminary inquiries as to my biography. I broke in upon them to suggest food.

"Entra y descansa, señor," he replied, "Sientese."

The rural Peruvian would invite one to enter and take a seat—on a block of wood—if he came to put out a fire. He produced a glass made from a broken bottle and insisted on my partaking of his hospitality to the extent of drinking his health in the aguardiente into which he turned his sugar-cane in a little thatched distillery down in a hollow nearby. But my every hint of a desire to buy food was

diplomatically ignored, except that he accepted readily enough a real, and sent the child "upstairs"; that is, to crawl up to and along the reed ceiling, to fetch me a leaf-wrapped chunk of rapadura.

The invisible trail he pointed out pitched down a leg-straining and almost perpendicular *bajada* of loose stones to another stream, then struggled breathlessly upward through unbroken forest over the Guaranguia "range," a jungled mountain spur, from the crest of which there spread out before me the vast panorama of an upper-Amazon *hoya*, the Tamborapo far below squirming away through its steep dense-wooded valley; and all about it half-barren hills of varying colors that gave the landscape the appearance of a tempestuous sea turned to jungle earth. Red cliffs, like our western *buttes*, flashed their faces in the sunset, and as far as the eye could reach in any direction was no sign that man had ever before entered this trackless wilderness.

It was nearing dusk when the world fell away before us into a great wooded quebrada, its bottom unfathomable, but with a trail in plain sight fighting its way up the opposite slope. The path underfoot melted away, and where "Cleopatra" led, I followed, certain she knew the way as well as I. The ghost of a trail she had chosen turned to a perpendicular cow-path down which the animal sprawled and stumbled, bumping her load against the trees, but unable to fall far through the dripping forest that grew up impenetrably about us. Dense, black night found us at the bottom of a V-shaped valley. I sought the corresponding path on the opposite side of its small stream by feeling with both feet and hands, but it was as intangible as the "straight and narrow path" of theological phraseology. To cheer things on, it

began to rain in deluges. I made the most of a genuinely Peruvian situation by halting for the night where there was at least drinkingwater. So sharp was the valley that there was not even a flat space large enough to stretch out, and I could only curl up in the muddy path that had brought us to this sad pass, tumbling my soaked baggage somewhere beside me and tying the exhausted animal to something in the dark, where there was neither a leaf to eat nor a spot for the brute to lie down in.

By morning light I found that "Cleopatra's" inexperience and asinine judgment had led us to a place where wild cattle came to drink, and we were forced to struggle back to the crest of the hill, and descend again by another trail that linked up with the one we had seen the afternoon before. At its foot was a field of swamp-grass, in which the starving animal spent the rest of the morning in regaining strength for the climb ahead. Above, a new style of landscape spread out before us. A vast, bushy plain was passable only by following the windings of a sandy and stony river-bed, and wading with monotonous frequency the stream that swung back and forth across it, like a person utterly devoid of a sense of direction or power of decision. Beyond, we tramped monotonously on through endless chaparral, thorn-bristling, bushy woods where reigned an utter solitude only enhanced by the mournful cry of some unseen bird. The most constantly recurring form of vegetation was the *tusho*, a sort of cottonwood tree with a trunk swollen as a gormand's waist-line. Endlessly this dismal wilderness stretched onward from dawn to dark, until the traveler could fancy himself in solitary confinement for life, and in danger of losing the mind for which he could find no employment. The region would have been more

endurable had I been able to stride forward at my own pace; but "Cleopatra" sentenced me to a monotonous, unchanging snail's gait that gave sufficient exercise only to my right arm and the cudgel it bore. Hundreds of red centipedes littered the ground; the dead, dry silence was broken only by the rhythmic mournful cry of a jungle bird. But here the going was smooth, and for long distances our pace was so unbroken that there ran through my unoccupied mind for hours at a time the paraphrase of an old refrain:

"Two jacks with but a single gait;
Six feet that walk as one."

Next to the *tusho*, the tree that most often repeated itself was the *guaba*, producing a fruit like large brown bean-pods filled with black seeds, the white pulp of which had thirst-quenching qualities and a taste mildly resembling the watermelon.

I had lost account of days entirely, but subsequent checking up proved it was a Sunday afternoon when I halted at the "Hacienda Shumba" and, spreading out my mouldy garments on the thatch roof of its only hut, awaited the owner. He proved to be the teniente gobernador, the lieutenant-governor of the region, in the sun-bleached remnants of two garments and a hat. Having turned "Cleopatra" into a pasture, he settled down to spell out the documents I presented. Strictly speaking, he was not the hacienda owner, but only an "arrendatario." Though I had not suspected it, I had been traveling for days through estates which, as *beneficencias* or *cofardías*, belong to the bishopric of Trujillo, and it is partly the heavy hand of the Church that keeps this region so solitary and uninhabited. The so-called owners are really agents who administer them for the tonsured

landlords, collecting a rental from the few families who raise a bit of rice, cacao, and cattle. The region is far less rich than it is locally reputed. The soil of the river-valleys is fertile, but the mountains are rocky and often arid and, especially in this section, poorly served by the rains. A government official himself, my host complained bitterly against the government tax on tobacco, liquor, sugar, salt, and matches. The first, he asserted, was no longer worth planting. All non-Peruvians were "gringos" to the teniente gobernador. A fellow-countryman of mine, he asserted, had spent a night with him recently—hardly two years before. He was—let's see—an Italian; no, a German. Though he could read and write, laboriously, and had long been a government official—on compulsion and without emoluments—the world, as he conceived it, consisted of Peru and another very much smaller country, with several towns of more or less the same size and conditions as the two villages of Jaen and Tocabamba he had seen, named Germany, Italy, Estados Unidos, and so on, from which came the various types of "gringos."

Indeed, he wished to know, "Is Germany in the same country as the United States?"

"What do you call a native of Jaen?" I chanced to ask him in the course of our conversation.

"A Jaense, to be sure," he replied. "Just as you call a native of Italy an italiano, or a man from the town named France a francés."

But if his knowledge was slight, it was no less tenacious, and he could no more be talked out of his geographical conceptions than out of his conviction that all the world lives in reed-and-mud huts with earth floors, goes habitually barefoot, and considers its dwellings fit breed-places for guinea-pigs. When I

asked him if the road beyond Jaen was good, I was startled to hear the assurance:

"Ah, yes, indeed. There are no bad roads in Peru!"

A divan of reeds, set into the mud wall of the single room and covered with a hairy cowhide, was quite soft enough as a bed for one who had long since left effeminate civilization behind. Until long after dark we two men and a woman squatted in home-made chairs fitting to a doll's house, and fed ourselves over our knees. Yet the conventions of society are quite as fixed in these hovels of the wilderness as in any palace of aristocracy. It was quite à la mode, a sign of good breeding, in fact, to ask for a second helping of the bean and yuca stew—which is invariably served so boiling hot that even the experienced "gringo's" teeth suffer—but under no circumstances for a third. When they had been emptied a second time, the gourd bowls were piled up on the floor in a corner, to be washed when the spirit moved, and, as if at a signal that there was no second course, the one glass in the house, tied together with a string and evidently regarded as a great treasure and heirloom, was filled with irrigating-ditchwater and passed around the circle, beginning with the guest. The feeble imitation of a candle soon flickered out, and by eight we were all scattered along the walls of the hut on our reed divans, quarreling pigs shaking the house as they jostled against it, and the rain that fell heavily all night long dripping upon us here and there through the thatched roof.

"Cleopatra" was so nearly *rendido*—"bushed"—next morning that, even under her slight load, she wabbled drunkenly and kept her footing chiefly because the heavy, glue-like mud clung to our feet like pedestals to a statue. For one considerable space

the way led through a swamp, where I was several times forced to wade knee-deep to carry out the load and lift the bemired animal to her feet. Yet drinkable water was not to be had, and the choking tropical humidity was the more tantalizing as rain broke every few minutes, and everything in sight was dripping wet, though the sandy soil swallowed each shower as it fell. Toward noon the now considerable trail split, marking an important parting of the way; for the branch to the left leads quickly down to Bellavista on the bank of the Marañón, whence rafts descend to Iquitos and the rubber country, and so by the Amazon to the Atlantic, while I, bearing to the right, plodded on along the highlands of the Andes. In the dead-silent woods a few decrepit and weather-blackened huts grew up, several drowsy, half-naked beings in human form gazing languidly after me from the doorways, and before I knew it I was treading the streets of the provincial capital and "city" of Jaen.

CHAPTER X
APPROACHING INCA LAND

Small wonder that the traveler who has splashed and waded a long week through the mournful wilderness, living chiefly on fond hopes salted with the anticipations of an unschooled imagination, and washed down with river water, should fetch up in Jaen with a decided shock. Occupying a large and distinct place on the map, this provincial “capital” proved to be a disordered cluster of a half-hundred wretched, time-blackened, tumble-down, thatched huts, the roofs full of holes, the gables often missing, scattered like abandoned junk among the weeds and bushes of a half-hearted clearing in the selfsame gloomy forest and spiny jungle that had so long shut me in. The barefoot, half-clothed, fever-yellow inhabitants of mongrel breed stared curiously from their mud doorways as I stalked past, smeared with dried mud from head to foot, sunburned, shaggy with whiskers, and dragging behind me by main force an emaciated donkey trembling with excitement at the unwonted sights, or with fear at the unknown dangers of so vast a metropolis. From one hut in no way different from its neighbors issued the city school, the “teacher” with a ragged cap on his head and a drooping cigarette smouldering

between his lips, to stare after me with the rest. Every building in town, the church included, consisted of a single mud room with an unleveled earth floor, windowless, and with a small reed or pole door giving entrance, exit, and such air and light as could force admittance. The “government palace,” before which I tied “Cleopatra” to the official bamboo flagpole in the geographical center of the capital, was closed. With a flourish of my papers I summoned the “authorities” to step forward and make themselves known; but the manoeuver brought only the information that the subprefect was “away for a few days, but he’ll soon be back, next week, no más, or the week after, at any rate. Entra y descansa—come in and sit down.”

The gobernador was likewise among the indefinitely missing; whence the mantle of power descended upon the shoulders of the alcalde. That worthy was soon produced, somewhat the worse for concentrated cane-juice, but remarkable for at least two features, —that he wore what might still with some stretch of veracity be called shoes, and alone of all the town could have passed for a white man, had he seen fit to remove a stringy little Indian mustache. When he had read aloud to the congregated male population all my credentials in Spanish—a task not unlike that of a one-legged man walking without his crutches after spraining his ankle and suffering a stone-bruise —he requested me to name my desires. They were modest,—room, bed, table, chair, water, food for myself and pasture for the other one of us until day after to-morrow. Slowly and bit by bit, but none the less surely, my requirements were met. A key was found that manipulated the creaking padlock of one of the thatched mud-caves with sagging reed divans around its walls. A crippled table was dragged in,

and a squad of soldiers sent for old newspapers to cover it. In due time, and with the assistance of the entire population in a house to house canvass, a gourd wash-basin was discovered, then a gourd with a hole in one end, from which one drank and into which the half-Indian boy thrust a finger to carry it, after filling it at the chocolate-brown stream at the edge of the town; a chair was unofficially subtracted from the government palace and, last of all, a four-inch mirror was pinned to the mud wall. I had barely removed the hirsute adornment of a week by such light as Jaen, massed in and about the door, left me, when a barefoot female glided noiselessly into my den and, announcing herself the owner, carried off the glass as too precious a possession to be long out of her sight.

The first stroll disclosed the hitherto unsuspected fact that several of the mud-dens were shops. One of them posed as a restaurant, but its restorative powers were at best anemic. Jaen is probably the hottest, and certainly the hungriest, provincial capital in Peru. To retain its rank as a "city," it fulfilled nominally the test as a place where bread is made,—a tiny, soggy bun selling for the price of an American loaf. Milk and fruit, which might easily have been superabundant here, were unknown luxuries, and the customary food of the populace included nothing a well-bred dog would have touched in any but a ravenous state. A dozen of us without families, including the alcalde, were dependent upon the "restaurant," and we agreed upon a fixed ration of bread and eggs, the supply of which never approached even the normal demand. But the alcalde quickly formed the habit of sneaking over before the hour set and, by virtue of his official powers, consuming most of the provender. To forestall him,

the rest of us took to arriving earlier, until it grew customary to appear for the noonday meal at about nine, and to sit down to supper toward three, eyeing each other ravenously, and jealously watching the cook's every movement. He who is accustomed to complain of the "high cost of living" should try the antidote of a journey down the Andes, where the high cost reigns supreme, without the living. In these languid corners of the world where life is reduced to its lowest terms food and lodging assume the first place of importance, and the mind is never free from these primitive apprehensions; no sooner does one eat than the worry arises as to where the next meal will come from, as each day's pleasure on the road is tempered by wondering what hardship the night will have in store.

There were some evidences of negro blood in Jaen, though that of the aboriginal Indian tribe of the region was universal, in the percentage of one half to a far smaller fraction in varying individuals. The men wore home-made garments of the cheapest cotton, patched and sun-faded, generally no shirt, with merely a kerchief knotted about the neck above the undershirt, and *sombreros de junco*, hats woven of a species of swamp-grass or reeds, which a few weeks of sun and rain gave the appearance of a badly thatched roof. The women wore no hats, combed their raven-black hair flat and smooth, without adornments, and let it hang down their backs in a single braid. Like all the cholas and half-castes of the sex in the Andes, they dragged their misshapen skirts constantly in the mire of the streets and the "floors" of their huts, and were habitually even less cleanly in their habits than the men. The stage of education may be gaged from the fact that the government telegraph operator assured me I could not reach

Cerro de Pasco by land, but must “cross the sea” to Lima and take the railroad from there. Jaen’s chief pastime for speeding up the monotonous stretch between the cradle and the grave is the consumption of the native “cañazo,” and only those who rose early were likely to find a completely sober man. A sort of harmless anarchy reigned. A man merry with cane-juice might sit outside the mud school-house and keep school from “functioning” all day long, without interference. An amorous youth, going on a drunken rampage among the huts or the washerwomen on the banks of the irrigating ditch, was avoided if possible, but was never forcibly restrained. As is frequent in tropical towns, there was little evidence of religion, pseudo or otherwise, which thrives best in the high, cold regions of the mysterious páramos. The mud church, with its tower melted off unevenly at the top, like a half-burned candle in a wind, had long since lost its cura, and served now as provincial jail, by the simple addition of a few poles set in adobe across the door and a few languid soldiers lolling in the general vicinity whenever they had no particular desire to be somewhere else.

On the afternoon of my arrival the rumor floated languidly over the town that the weekly cow was to be butchered next morning, but it was denied later in the evening. I made the most of my day of leisure by acquiring a bar of native soap, of the appearance of a mud-pie and the scent of boiling glue, and spending some two hours in the irrigating ditch, stringing across the main street, from a telegraph pole to a rafter of “my house,” all the garments that could be spared from use in an unexacting society. Nothing was more certain than that I should start again at daylight of the second morning—until news arrived that the river eighteen miles south was impassable

until the waters receded. It was evident, too, that I must deny myself the companionship of “Cleopatra.” She hung wilted and dejected in the town pasture, and at best there was no hope that she would last many days further, even if there were any means of getting her across the swollen river. I accepted the alcalde’s offer of $3 for the animal and her “furniture,” and felt a glow of satisfaction, tempered with regret at the loss of a good companion, for all her faults, that I should no longer have to drag my feet behind me at her snail’s pace, and be dependent on my right arm for advancement.

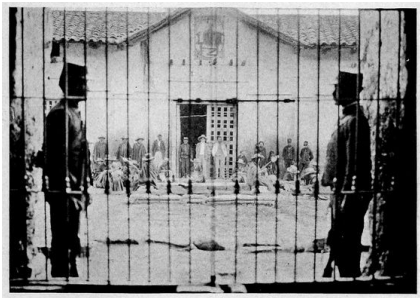
On the morning I should have started, the rumor again ran riot that the town was going to *pelar un res* —“peel a beef.” This time matters went so far as to lead the octogenarian victim out into the main street, where the population gathered in an attitude of anticipation, a dozen or more armed with home-made axes and knives, the rest with pots and gourds. For a long time the languid hubbub of some discussion rose and fell about the downcast animal. Then gradually the gathering disintegrated and scattered to its huts, each pausing at sight of a face, to drone in that singularly indifferent monotone of the tropics, “No hay carne hoy”—(there is no meat to-day). Some misanthropist, an agent of a neighboring hacienda, it turned out, had offered $9 for the animal, and Jaen did not feel justified in squandering any such fortune for mere food. My rosy dream of again tasting fresh meat and of carrying supplies on my journey was once more rudely dissipated.

The east was blushing from the first kiss of the bold, tropical sun when I sallied forth on the morning I had concluded to start, river or no river, and went to

wake up the “restaurant” keeper, sleeping on his dining-table with the precious bread-box under his head. The alcalde appeared almost at the same instant from the direction of the irrigation ditch, his towel about his neck. He greeted me with forced courtesy. His solemn promise to arrange to have my baggage transported to the river in consideration for the low price at which he had acquired “Cleopatra” had gone the way of most South American promises —into thin air. Now I reminded him of it, he would order a soldier to accompany me at once. The earth swung a long way eastward on its axis without any other sign of activity. Then some one came to say that a soldier would not be sent, because Anastasio Centurión, returning to his “Hacienda Algarrobo” forthwith, would be delighted to carry my belongings on his mule. An hour later he declined to carry them, then he was prevailed upon by his *compadre*, the lieutenant-governor, to renew his offer; then he again concluded the weight was too great, and finally sent an urchin for my saddle-bags. Before they were loaded, however, a dispute broke out over the ownership of a “silver” spur that had been picked up in the sand of the main street, and the town followed the alcalde to the mud hut that served as court of justice. It was also the city bakery, and the wife of the justice, who had put off baking the morning before, and was not yet mixing the dough, ceded a corner of the kitchen table to the court, which in the course of an hour settled the case in the customary Latin-American way—by deciding that the disputed property should remain “in the hands of justice.”



A woman of the jungles of Jaen preparing me the first meal in days at the typical Ecuadorian cook-stove. She declined to pose for her picture and is watching me dust the kodak



Peruvian prisoners earn their own livelihood by weaving hats, spinning yarn, and the like. As in the debtors' prisons of Dickens' day, the whole family may go to jail to live with the imprisoned head of the household

A soldier was at length sent to round up one of the donkeys grazing in the main plaza. Gradually the disgusted animal was fitted with my former donkey-

furniture, amid the contrary suggestions of the populace, and the alcalde furnished me an order to the ferrymen at the river to set me across in the name of the government—and to return donkey and *aparejo*. A winding, narrow, stony path, that wet its feet at the very outset, squirmed away through the desert-like forest. "Down there," said Anastasio, wrapped gloomily in his maroon poncho and viciously kicking the spur on one bare heel into the side of his heavily-laden animal, "is the camino real, pero da mucha vuelta." How it could "give more turns" than the one we were following, it was hard to imagine. My pack-animal this time was a matron of forty, comparatively speaking, and correspondingly set in her ways. Within the first mile "se me escapó," as the natives have it; that is, she suddenly bolted into the thorny wilderness at the first suggestion of an opening, and left me dripping with sweat and speckled with the blood of a dozen superficial lacerations before I again laid hands on her in an impassable clump of brambles and cactus. Anastasio tied her tow-rope to his saddle, and for an hour or so she seemed completely resigned to her fate. But evidently there is no trusting the sex at that age. No sooner was she paroled than she bolted again, and led me a skin-gashing chase of several miles through a wild and waterless solitude. Yet, after all, manipulating a donkey is a splendid apprenticeship for dealing with Latin-Americans; no better training could be suggested for the prospective salesman south of the Rio Grande.

The going ranged from *quebradita* to *muy quebrada*, now along the stony bed of a meandering "river," yesterday all but impassable, to-day so bone dry there was only a bit of running mud to quench the thirst; now over a sharp knoll bristling with jagged,

loose stones. At red-hot noon we reached the Huancabamba river, now grown to man's estate, where it swings around to join the Marañón and divides the never-to-be-forgotten Province of Jaen from that of Cutervo. A laborious two hours up it brought us to the long-heralded Puerto Sauce, where the government maintains a "ferry,"—five small logs bound together with vines and manned by three *balseros* housed in two reed-kennels. Here we squatted out the day, watching the coffee-colored stream race by on its long journey to the Atlantic with all the impetuosity of the rainy season. The government *chasqui* had been sitting here nearly a week, his mail-sacks stacked and his horse tethered close at hand. Only out on the extreme edge of the bank, where an occasional breath of tepid breeze tempered the lead-heavy heat and thinned the swarms of stinging insects, was life endurable. My skin was a patchwork of mementoes of all the minute fauna of the past week, and an itching like the constant prick of myriad red-hot needles was relieved only briefly by each dip in the stream. During one of them I advanced well into the river, and it seemed I could have crossed it; that even the Peruvians might have made the passage, had they male blood in their veins. But then, had they been men they would long since have built a bridge. All through the night there kept running through my head, amid the sweep of the waters, that illuminating remark of "Kim," "A sahib is always tied to his baggage"; and in my half-conscious condition I resolved when morning broke to cast away all but a loin-cloth and a hat, and travel henceforth in comfort *al uso del país*. But, alas, the least formal of us cannot rid himself of all the adjuncts of civilization; and there was photography, to say nothing of food and

covering for the highlands ahead, to be considered. When dawn turned its matter-of-fact light upon the scene, the dream quickly faded and I settled down to watch another day drag by into the past tense beside the racing brown waters of the Huancabamba. The feeling was rampant that nature had played me a scurvy trick. I had bargained on following the cool and pleasant crest of the Andes, and they had crumbled away beneath me and forced upon me this unsought experience of the tropics.

Not until the morning of the third day did the balseros conclude to attempt to pass over the "government people,"—the mail-man and this impatient gringo with the official order from the alcalde. The raft had been dragged well up-stream, where we waded to it through bristling jungle and knee-deep mud. The chasqui's horse, long experienced in these matters from years of carrying the mails over this route, was driven in and forced to swim to a sand-bar well out in the stream. For a long time the animal stood like a prisoner at bay against the shouting and stoning and shaking of cudgels of those on the bank, but at length, seeing no other escape, it set out to attempt the main branch. Its brute instinct would have proved a better guide than the opinions of more rational beings. Struggling until its snorting echoed back from the surrounding jungle, it fought the brown, racing waters, gradually nearing the further bank, yet swept even more swiftly along by the inexorable stream, amid foam-caps from the rocky passes above, strained savagely to reach the strip of beach that served as landing-place until, swept past it without gaining a footing, it seemed suddenly to give up in despair, and only its head, swinging slowly round and round with the current, was seen a short minute more, tiny against

the race of the yellower waters, before it swept on out of sight down the jungle-walled torrent.

The chasqui gazed after the lost animal for a long moment, shrugged his shoulders with the resigned "Vaya!" of a confirmed fatalist, and took his seat beside me on our baggage, tied securely near the back of the frail craft. The three brown balseros, naked but for palm-leaf hats and a strip of rag between their legs, each crossed himself elaborately, and took a deep draught at Anastasio's quart bottle of cañazo. Then they pointed the nose of the raft up-stream, pushed off, snatched up their clumsy paddles with a hoarse imploration to the Virgin, and fought for dear life and the sand-bar. This gained, we disembarked and manoeuvered to the further side, then pushed off into the main stream. It snatched at us like some greedy monster. The sand-bar raced away up-stream at express speed, the further bank sped past like a blurred cinematograph ribbon, the paddlers, urged on by their own and the mail-man's raucous shouts and imprecations, battled as with some mortal enemy, stabbing their paddles in swift, breathless succession into the brown stream, and following each dig with a savage jerk that tore the wound wide open and brought out the lean muscles beneath their dingy skins like steel cables under leather coverings. The rules of caste are more important than life itself in South America, and both the mail-man and I had been refused paddles. Relentlessly the further shore galloped by. The bit of clearing required for landing approached, beckoned to us tantalizingly, flashed on, and the raft sped swiftly after the lost horse. The balseros, abetted by the chasqui, increased their efforts to a screaming uproar, in which I caught here and there a fragmentary "'nta Virgen . . . 'yuda!" Fortunately

they did not put all their trust in superhuman assistance, and their paddles tore at the stream with a viciousness that drenched us with its aftermath. Bit by bit we strained nearer the hurrying wall of verdure. Every lunge seemed to lift the paddlers into the air; the cords on their necks stood out like creepers on a forest tree; their yells, hoarse and savage enough to have frightened off any malignant spirit of the waters, came strained and broken now, from lack of breath. Now we could all but touch the racing forest-wall. I snatched in vain at a sapling bowing its head in the stream. With a last faint gasp and a spent stroke, the balseros dropped their paddles on the raft, and all five of us grasped at the vegetation that tore and lacerated us in its struggle to escape our desperate embrace. When we had each gathered an armful of it, we clung so stoutly to this last hold to earth that the raft was all but swept from under us before we swung it up into a bit of cove, where the balseros, falling at once into their racial apathy, drooped like wilted rags at the bow, while one of them panted weakly, “A little more, señores, and we were gone *sin noticias*.”

As lazily as they had been energetic in the crossing, the ferrymen coaxed the raft up along the edge of the forest to the little clearing, where I swung my saddle-bags over a shoulder, waded to dry land and plodded on along the blazing hot bank of the Huancabamba. Slowly my shadow crawled from under my feet. In this sweltering desert valley, now staggering through hot sand and a dwarf vegetation savage with thorns, now clambering constantly over steep headlands that broke into cliffs at the river’s edge and stumbling down again through veritable quarries of loose stones, my burden, augmented with *chancaca*, a sack of rice and a roll of sun-dried beef, as well as the

lead-heavy tropical sun that seemed to lean physically on my shoulders, became unbearable. I resolved to pitch camp in the first open space and wait, till doomsday if necessary, for some pack-train susceptible to the glitter of silver coins. Puerto Sauce was probably not more than seven miles behind me when I found, between trail and river, a narrow sand-strip sloping down to the racing brown waters and backed by a barren, stony cliff-face over which the "road" promised to bring out in relief against the *turquí* sky anyone who might pass my way.

Grass could not find sustenance on this sun-baked spot, but centipedes and a score of other venomous things might exist. Scattered along the bank were many sapling poles, the wreckage, evidently, of some hut that had been swept here by the raging river. I gathered an armful of these and laid their ends on two small logs, covered them with such brush and branches as were without thorns, and had a far more comfortable couch than the wealthiest hacendado of the region. Over me hung a wild lemon-tree, the fruit of which made the yellow Huancabamba more nearly drinkable. About its trunk, within instant reach, I strapped my revolver, and lay down almost in the "royal highway," fully prepared for anything except a sudden burst of rain. Across the river in dense, half-cultivated, greener jungle were the huts of several natives; but they might as well have been in another world, for I could not have heard a whisper above the roar of the Huancabamba had they stood on the opposite bank screaming across at me. I possessed a maltreated copy of Prescott, and there is great compensation for the hardships of the trail in golden moments snatched like this; for nowhere does the mind grip the printed page so firmly as at the end of a day on the road, after long turning the

leaves of no other page than nature's.

The afternoon passed, faded to a violent sunset, and blackened into night, without a human sight or sound. I took another swim, careful not to lose my grasp on the shore, and turned my lounge into a bed. There had been many rumors of bears and "tigers" in these parts. The real peril was the incitement to suicide caused by the swarming insect life whenever the breeze failed for an instant. In my dreams the roar of the Huancabamba turned to that of New York, and I fancied I had suddenly left off my journey down the Andes to run home for a single day, at the end of which I should take up my task where I had left off.

When dawn awoke me I refused to rise. But hour after hour passed without a break in the drear monotony of the arid landscape. In mid-morning patience exploded and, throwing my load over a shoulder, I toiled on. When, at the end of some fifteen miles, my legs refused to push me further, I struggled through the jungle to the river-bank; but there was not a cleared space sufficient to sit on, much less to lie down in. By wading chest-deep I reached the breezy nose of an island in the Huancabamba, and made my bed on the damp beach-sand. But I had chosen poorly, if choice it might be called. Without even leaves to spread under me, the night was one of unmitigated torture. Myriads of crawling, stinging tropical life made my entire frame a pasture and playground, and at best I got only a few half-conscious snatches of sleep, troubled with the threatening rumble of the river. For safety's sake I had hung many of my belongings in the branches of trees; but not enough of them. Daylight showed a populous colony of enormous

black ants in possession of all that lay on the ground. They had not only eaten to the last crumb the chancaca I had lugged for two blazing days, and left me barely a spoonful of rice for breakfast, but they had all but destroyed the home-made cover of my kodak, had decorated my hat with a fringe, and had bitten into a dozen pieces my auto-photographic bulb, scattering all the vicinity with crumbs of red rubber.

Another lone day we struggled up-stream. I say we, —that is, myself and I; for—a point for psychologists —since taking up my own load again I could not rid myself of the fancy that I was two distinct persons, one of whom was forcing the other to make the journey. In the night I often started up fancying the other fellow—the one who did the walking and carried the load—had escaped. Could he know the truth beforehand, no sane man would sentence himself to tramp this route of the Andes, to suffer almost incessant hardships, the monotony of the same experiences over and over again, the dreary intercourse with a people so stupid, so low of intelligence that long contact with their childish minds brings with it the danger of one's own faculties turning childish, like that of a lifetime of school-teaching. Only the American habit of carrying out to the bitter end a plan once made could force him on.

Late the next morning the most exciting event of several days happened,—I met a human being. He was lolling before a slatternly hut of reeds, inside which a half-caste woman squatted on the earth peeling *camotes*. On such a journey the civilized traveler unconsciously builds up a certain pity for himself which he feels should be shared by others.

But he is sure of a rude awakening among these clod-like inhabitants of the wilderness. Should a living skeleton crawl into an Andean hut announcing he had not tasted food for a fortnight, had seven species of tropical fever, and had been bitten by a baker's dozen of venomous serpents, the greeting would be the same motionless, indifferent grunt and drowsily mumbled "Vaya!" with which this female acknowledged my presence. No offer of money would have brought her to her feet, much less have induced her to cook one of the chickens—or even yellow curs—that overran the place. As I picked up my burden in disgust, however, she murmured through her half-closed lips, "Se irá usté' almorzando?"—in other words that I might wait, if I chose, to partake of the camote stew she was lazily concocting over the stick fire in the center of the floor. On the surface this stereotyped invitation looks like genuine hospitality. At bottom it is less so than a habit, tinged with superstition and fear of malignant spirits, and above all the impossibility of an uninitiative race daring to, or even thinking of varying a custom of all their known world. It was no time to stand on my dignity, however, even had the foodless days behind left me any such support, and I sat down again. A ravenous two hours dragged by before the mess of native roots and herbs met the approval of the expressionless female, who tasted a wooden spoonful of it now and then and tossed the residue back into the kettle. Several peons had drifted in, genuine human clods, apparently as devoid of intelligence as the hogs rooting about under their hoofed feet, and gathered about a flat log raised a bit above the earth. With a steaming calabash of the tasteless, red-hot stew before each of us, and a single bowl of *mote* mixed with bits of pork

rind into which all shovelled at once, we finished the meal in utter silence. Then the first peon, wiping his horny hand across his mouth with a disgusting sucking sound, mumbled “Diós se lo pagará,” a formula repeated by each as we rose to our feet. However much he may prefer to liquidate the matter himself, rather than to leave it to so uncertain and unindebted a source, this “God will pay you for it,” is the only return the traveler who sits in at their tasteless repasts can force upon these mongrel people of the Andean wilderness.

How far out of my course I had mounted the Huancabamba when I picked up a rock-strewn tributary along the cliff-face, only a professional geographer could say. Through the hot-lands of northern Peru direction yields to the accidents of nature, and Jaen had been as far east of a line due southward as Ayavaca had been to the west. When early sunset fell in the bottom of the deep valley, I had mounted several hundred feet above the level of the Huancabamba, and with a welcome coolness came more human manners, heralding the highlands again. Both Fructuoso Carrera and his far younger, though no less cheery wife, treated me more like a prodigal son than as an importunate guest who had fallen upon them out of the unknown. Amid the culinary operations suited to my case they gave me in detail the recipe of the *choclo tandas*—Quichua bread, probably used before the Conquest—that finally rounded off our repast late in the evening. For the benefit of housewives permit me to pass on the information:

Cut off the kernels of green corn while still small and fairly soft. Crush them to a pulp—under a round stone on a broad flat one out beneath the thatched

eaves, if it is desired to keep the local color intact—sprinkling water lightly on the mass from time to time. When the whole has been reduced to a somewhat adhesive dough, wrap in corn-husks rolls of the stuff about the size and shape of an ear of corn and tie with strips of husk. Sit down on the earth floor in a corner of the hut—driving off the persistent guinea-pigs with any weapon at hand—and drop these packages one by one into a kettle of boiling water supported by three stones. Let boil from twenty minutes to a half hour—depending on the energy with which fagots have been gathered during the day—taking care that none of the gaunt curs prowling about between the legs of the cook and through other unexpected openings thrust their noses into the kettle, as they would be sure to be burned. Those who succeed in beginning the task while daylight still lingers should also beware any of the family chickens climbing to a convenient shoulder and springing into the pot, as this would result, not in choclo tanda, but in *choclo tanda con gallina*, which is a far more expensive dish. Zest is added by a successful attempt surreptitiously to get into one's saddle-bags a couple of the choclo tandas for the land of starvation that is expected ahead.

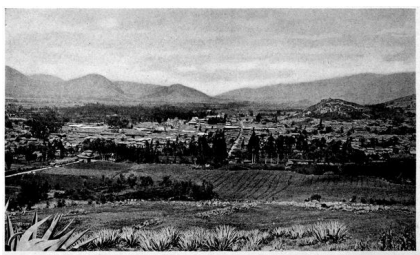
Several times during the night I descended to alleviate my insect-bitten skin by a plunge in the clear, cold mountain stream that sounds in the Carrera family ears 365 days a year. In the morning I was forced to dress under my poncho, with far less convenience than in an upper Pullman berth; for la señora was already grinding coffee for my desayuno on the flat stone under the eaves beside me. To my diplomatically framed question as to what I owed him, Don Fructuoso replied:

"For what should you owe us anything?"

All that day the trail, wandering back and forth across the rock-boiling "river," first by little thatched *pachachacas*, or earth-covered pole-bridges, then, as the stream dwindled, by precarious stepping-stones, climbed ever higher, at times through stretches of mud where dense overhanging forests had retained the rainfall. Mankind grew more frequent in this more habitable, rising world. Thatched cottages were tucked away here and there in forty-five-degree patches of bananas and coffee, and the pilfering of the tandas to weigh down my load proved an entirely gratuitous felony.

The very air of Tablabamba, where I slept on dried cane-pulp in an unwalled *trapiche* hung well up the side of the new constricted valley, as humid and green as Jaen Province had been desert-brown and arid, teemed with stories of robbers and assassins among the mountain defiles ahead. The only visible danger I encountered, however, was the notorious "Sal-si-puedes—Climb it if you can," the terrors of which had grown daily more persistent for a fortnight past. This was one of those endless zigzags by which Andean trails climb from one river system, when near its source, to another, revealing its nefarious purpose only bit by bit, and subtly enticing the traveler ever upward in an undertaking he might not have the courage to face as a whole. A rut piled full of loose rocks, down which trickled enough water to suggest what the climb might have been on a rainy day, carried me into the very sky above and, taking there new foothold, scaled doggedly on into the "realms of eternal silence" where even birds were no longer heard and sturdy, squat trees, sighing fitfully as if struggling for breath, at length gave up

in despair and abandoned the scene to huge, black rocks protruding from a soil that gave sustenance only to the dead-brown ichu-grass of Andean heights. “Hay mucho silencio y mucho matador,” my host of the night had mumbled lugubriously, but I was aware only of the music of the wind and the joyful realization that the broken mountains had gathered themselves together again under my feet and raised me once more to my accustomed temperate zone. By cold noonday a tumbled, blue world lay about and below me, only an insignificant dent in it representing that overheated hell locally known as the Province of Jaen. Like life itself, what had seemed at its base a mighty climb proved here at the top to have been only an insignificant little knoll down in the valley, and only when one had reached the real summit, and could look back upon the region as a whole after all was accomplished, did each little struggle and petty suffering assume its correct proportion.



The ancient city of Cajamarca, in which Pizarro took the Inca Atahuallpa captive and later executed him, lies in one of the most magnificent highland valleys of the Andes

Another step forward, and before my glad eyes spread one of those broad, green interandean valleys, backed by serrated black ranges, their brows wrinkled and furrowed with age, the clouds trailing their purple shadows across a panorama of little cultivated valleys, into which I descended from the unconscionable summit by a natural stairway. The blue-gray peaks turned to lilac in the last rays of the chill highland sun, then faded away into the luminous sky of night as the mountain cold settled down like an icy poncho, and with dusk I tramped through a long adobe street into the central plaza of Cutervo.

My legs seemed to have pushed me again into the outskirts of civilization. Not only did the subprefect drive off of his own initiative the open-mouthed throng that gathered about his door, rather than read my papers aloud to them, but here at last was a Peruvian town that actually recognized the existence of strangers with appetites, and a large adobe hut publicly admitted itself a *fonda*. Cutervo was, in reality, monotonously like any other town of the Sierra. To one coming upon it out of the trackless wilderness, however, it seemed at first sight a place of mighty importance, and only gradually dwindled to its true proportions. Like a man just returned from long months in the polar ice, I had an all but irresistible desire to rush in and buy everything in sight, as I wandered past its long line of open shop-doors. The capital of a department recently cut off from the neighboring one of Chota, it was the first place in Peru where any appreciable number of the inhabitants could unreservedly be called white, and boasted the first specimens of beauty among the fair sex. Even the Lima newspapers were there, to give me a skeleton sketch of the activities of a half-

forgotten world.

There is a reserve of strength in the human body which few suspect until they tax it in an emergency; but it is only after recovery that the traveler through the rough places of the earth realizes how weak he has gradually become from hardships and lack of real nourishment. The invigorating air of the temperate zone and the meat of Cutervo's fonda, however, had soon given me new energy, and seemed to have reduced to half the weight of my load. Hope, brutally felled to earth, ever crawls dizzily to its feet again. I could no more rid myself of the fond dream of some day ceasing to stagger under my own baggage than a leper can shake off his affliction. Yet the solemn promise of the ruler of Cutervo to furnish me a carrier resulted only in a lost day, and I struck off across the rolling mountains and valleys beyond, convinced at last, so I fancied, that I should dream no longer. So persistent had been the promise of foul play on this day's route that, despite a lifetime of disappointments, I could not but peer hopefully into the many splendid lurking-places of the wild, rock-strewn upland I followed in utter solitude all the gorgeous day from Cutervo to Chota, the next provincial capital. Only once did I catch sight of fellow-beings. A group of arrieros with laden asses paused dubiously near the top of the range where they caught the first glimpse of me, then ventured forward and halted to ask anxiously:

"Are the robbers not attacking this morning?"

My answer they greeted with a fervent "Ave María Purísima!" and, crossing themselves ostentatiously, that the saints should not by any chance overlook their devotion, pushed hurriedly on toward Cutervo.

Early in the afternoon I came out on the upper edge

of an enormous, wide-spread valley just across which, in the lap of a rolling plain sloping toward me and the hair-like winding river at its bottom, lay the end of the day's journey,—Chota; a tiny, dull-red patch in a green-brown immensity of sun-flooded world, the two towers of its not too conspicuous church pin-pricking the horizon. In the transparent air of the highlands it seemed at most a short two hours away. In reality I had not in that time picked my stony way to the bottom of the rock-scarred valley, and it was long after night had cast its black poncho over all the world that I stumbled at last into the elusive town.

Chota, "8000 feet, 4000 inhabitants, 3000 doors"—and no windows, nearly as cold as Quito, is a provincial capital with well-cobbled streets and a broad expanse of plaza, all tilting to the north, by far the largest Peruvian city I had yet seen, almost the equal in size of Loja in Ecuador. The stock of its many little shops comes in by way of Pacasmayo and the railroad to Chilete, showing that I was "over the divide" and approaching Cajamarca. On August 30, 1882, it was destroyed by the Chilians—"los malditos chilenos," as the inhabitants still call them —but Andean building material being plentiful, it soon rose from its mud ruins. The cura was even then superintending the cholos tramping together with their bare feet the clay and chopped ichu-grass that was to be a new church. There were numerous fondas, as befitted a great capital; that is, mud dens with a reed shanty in the barnyard behind serving as kitchen, kept by well-meaning but unprepossessing females who wiped the inside of each plate religiously on their ample hips, those same draft-horse hips on which they squatted on the earth floor to fill the receptacles similarly placed, while driving

off with the free hand the curs and guinea-pigs and the chickens perching on the edge of the kettles. There were even oil-lamps in a few of the more pretentious shops and mansions, though almost all without chimneys, not easily imported from the other side of the world by ship and muleback over breakneck trails. Haughty, belligerent roosters stood tied by a leg before half the doors in town, so that each street was a long vista of pugnacious cocks frequently submitting to the anxious ministrations of their proud owners. Even without them I should not have slept unbrokenly. Official assistance had gained me lodging on the home-made counter of an empty shop hung with cobwebs and perfumed with the mustiness of several generations, the door of which, flush with the narrow sidewalk, of course, was the only source of air. There, as often as a night-hawk passed on his way home from the local "billar," he paused to beat me awake with the rapping of his cane and to sing-song in that dulcet voice of the Latin-American, mellow with late hours, "Your door is open, señor; I will close it for you." And if, instead of reaching under the counter for my revolver or a convenient adobe brick, I did not summon a patient courtesy I do not possess and answer, "Mil gracias, señor; no, thank you, leave it open, please," and then rise and open it again, because he fancied his ears had deceived him, I should have lost the rating of "simpático," and been branded a rude and discourteous gringo.

Bambamarca, an atrociously stony half-day beyond Chota and its surrounding bowl, like a mosaic of little farms where female shepherds, bare to their weather-browned knees, incessantly turn the white, brown, and black fleece of their flocks into yarn on their crude Incaic spindles, reported the trail ahead

"the worst road in Peru"—which is indeed strong language. They were certain, too, that, though I might—with the accent on the verb—have arrived from "La Provincia" alive, the marauders beyond would see to it that I did not reach Cajamarca in that condition. A cold rain fell incessantly from sullen skies during a day of unbroken plodding, first up the cañon of a small river, crossed now and then by thatched bridges, until it dwindled away and left me to splash at random over a reeking mountain-top. I had been lost for hours, and was dripping water at every pore, when I spied, toward what would have been sunset, four little Indian boys huddled under the ruin of a hut, and signed to them to give me information. Instead, they took to their heels, as if all the evil spirits of the Inca religion had suddenly crested the water-soaked range. I set after them, but my best pace under my load being barely equal to theirs, I drew my revolver and fired twice into the air; whereupon they halted and awaited me in ashen fear. The one I chose as guide led me over a rolling páramo deeply gashed by rain-swollen streams, and abandoned me within sight of the imposing estate-house of what turned out to be the "Hacienda Yanacancha." In the corredor, just out of reach of the drenching rain, stood a white man in khaki, monarch of half the visible world, and so little like the uncouth illiterate I expected that he replied in faultless Castilian to my remark about the absence of roads:

"Yes, unfortunately South America fell to the Spaniards, whereas it should have been settled by Anglo-Saxons."

Here, for the first time in Peru, was an hacendado who had trained his dogs and servants to some

understanding of their respective spheres, and had even given the latter an inkling of that thin, gray line between cleanliness and its opposite. A trivial incident will demonstrate to what lowly point of view my recent experiences had brought me. When my host showed me into a large guest-room, I caught sight, in the semi-obscurity, of a reed mat on the floor, and through me flashed a thrill of joy that I should have this to sleep on, instead of the cold, dank tiles. Whereas, on closer view this proved to be the foot-mat before a huge colonial bedstead, regally furnished with soft mattresses and spotless woolen blankets. My host even apologized for the absence of sheets. As if I should have recognized that forgotten flora, even in its native habitat! Yet my misgivings of playing the rôle of Hugo's maltreated hero materialized. Whether it was due to the fever within me struggling for existence, or to the all-too-sudden return to luxury, I tossed sleeplessly well into the night, and it was rolled up on the mat on the tile floor that the cold, steel-gray dawn creeping in at the wooden-barred windows found me.

The "road" across soggy highland meadows and past those fantastic heaped-up peaks and splintered ranges of black rocks that give the "Hacienda Yanacancha" ("Black Rocks") its name, was largely imaginary. At first, within sprinting distance of the house, were a few inhabited haycocks of shepherds, like Esquimaux dwellings of weather-blackened *pajonal* in place of snow and ice, with a hole to crawl in at on all fours. Then the visible world, straining ever higher, spread out into a rolling mountain-top, a totally uninhabited region where was heard only the mournful sighing of the wind across a boundless, rolling, yellow-brown sea of the dreary bunch-grass of the upper Andes. Across it the often invisible way

undulated with such regularity that I was continually descending into or climbing out of hollows trodden to a mud pudding about the cold streams that wandered down from the scarcely more lofty heights. There were myriad hiding-places behind the jagged gray rocks piled erratically along the way, from which evil-doers might have picked me off. So notorious is this region for its mishaps to travelers that natives rarely cross it except in large groups. But the wholesome respect in which a "gringo," especially one who carries a shooting-iron prominently displayed, is held is the best protection in Latin-America, far more so than an escort of native soldiers, the presence of which is apt to imply to the lurking bandit an admission of inability to depend on one's gringo self, even if the soldiers do not prove confederates of the outlaws or run away at sight of them.

On and ever on the cold, desolate, inhospitable despoblado rose and fell in broad swells or billows, the barren, yellow, uninhabited world sighing mournfully to itself. This long day is obligatory on all who come to Cajamarca from the north, for there is no halting-place in all the expanse of puna south of Yanacancha. I should have covered the thirty-five miles before the day was done, had not a long dormant or newly acquired fever suddenly broken out in mid-afternoon. Every setting of one leg before the other was as great an effort as jumping over a ferry-boat, yet I must prod myself pitilessly on, for to be overtaken by night on this inhospitable, wind-swept puna would have been worse than fever. With infinite struggle I came at last to where this broadest of páramos began to fall away toward the north; then the slope contracted to a gully that gathered together the score or more of separate but not distinct paths

that make up the “highway” across the lofty plain, and brought me before sunset to the first of a scattered cluster of stone and mud kennels. A leather-faced old Indian, speaking the first Quichua I had heard since Cuenca, gave me a handful of ichu-grass to sit on outside the smaller of his two huts, and left me to the company of his prowling yellow curs. Night had fallen completely before a woman brought me a gourd of boiling potato mush, but at length the chary old Indian, overcoming his racial indifference and distrust, opened the door of the hut against which I lay and let me into a sort of Incaic warehouse. In it were heaps of the huge balls of yarn spun by the Indian women on their prehistoric spindles, a supply of páramo grass I might spread on the earth floor, and several large bolts of homespun cloth of coarse texture and cruder colors with which I might feather my arctic nest, once it was late enough to hope the owner would not catch me at it.

In the adjoining family hut a baby had been crying incessantly for an hour or more. The after-chill of the fever was settling upon me when a young Indian entered, bearing the infant, and a handful of twisted grass as torch. Without preliminary he requested me, if I understood his language, to spit in the child’s face.

“I don’t get you,” I replied, in my most colloquial if imperfect Quichua.

“Do me the favor to spit in its face,” he repeated, and by way of illustration spat swiftly and lightly, with the point of his tongue between his lips, a fine spray in the face of the squalling infant.

“But why not do it yourself?” I protested.

“Manam, viracocha; it must be some one the

guaguita does not know."

When it had become evident that there was no other way of being left in peace, I rose and sprayed the infant. To my astonishment it ceased its wailing instantly, stared wide-eyed into my face until the father turned away, and was not again heard during the night. Floor-walking benedicts may adopt this bit of domestic science from the ancient civilization of the Incas free of charge.

There were but nine miles left to do in the morning, but the mere numeral gives little hint of the real task. Both road and bridges continued strikingly conspicuous by their absence; for hours the atrocious trail zigzagged unevenly, at times almost perpendicularly down what was left of the mountainside. Then it forded waist-deep the Cajamarca river, and joining a Sunday-morning procession of market-bound Indians with a clashing of colors almost equal to those of Quito, picked its way around stony foothills along a slowly widening valley gradually checkered with the varying greens of cultivation. The cool summer air and a more passable road drew me ever more swiftly on; the sound of church-bells, musically distant, floating northward on the breeze, located vaguely somewhere among the eucalyptus trees ahead the end of the third stage of my Andean journey. Huts turned to houses, thicker and thicker along the way, until they grew together into two unbroken rows. The air grew heavy with the scent of the "Australian gum"; I passed under an aged, whitewashed arch straddling the street, and on April 27, at the hour of the return from mass, found myself creaking along the canted, flagstone sidewalks of famous old Cajamarca, the first real city, even in the South-American sense, I

had come upon in Peru. Armed and bedraggled, with an alforja hanging heavy over one shoulder, I presented no conventional sight. Yet the cajamarquinos gave me comparatively slight attention. No doubt they were accustomed to such apparitions; Pizarro and his fellow-roughnecks could have been little less way-worn and weather-bleached when they rode in upon Cajamarca over these same hills. According to careful calculation I had walked 1773 miles from Bogotá, 929 from Quito. Of the 79 days from the Ecuadorian capital I had spent thirty in the towns and hamlets along the way, and the remainder in whole or part on the road.

As far back as Ayavaca I had begun to hear praises of the "magnificent hotels" of Cajamarca. The disappointment was proportionately bitter. The "Hotel Internacional" was a defunct lodging-house, the "Hotel Amazonas," further on, merely a row of rooms opening on the second-story balcony. They were tolerable rooms, with flagstone floors and wooden bed-springs, and had the extraordinary advantage of being in the second story, out of reach of staring passersby; but they were furnished only with the bare necessities and were covered everywhere with a half-inch, more or less, of dust. This was hardly to be wondered at. Pizarro and his band of tramps must have raised a deuce of a dust when they perpetrated the Conquest of Peru and took Atahuallpa into their tender keeping in the great plaza a short block away, on that Saturday evening, 381 years before. Strangest of all, the hotel rates were posted in plain sight, where even foreigners might see; forty cents a night, or thirty if the room was occupied a month or more. Evidently another fussy gringo had been here before me, for the printed rules contained the following bylaw:

"The señor passenger who shall desire to use two mattresses on the same bed will subject himself to the payment of ten cents above the ordinary pension."

The original motive could not have been Hays; for the notice was yellow with time, and the manager-chambermaid, though he gave me many details of the doings of my erstwhile companion as he gradually got my indispensable requirements together, with great care not to remove the historic dust anywhere, did not mention any such gringo idiosyncrasy. Every non-resident of Cajamarca, be he a tawny, soil-incrusted Indian from up in the hills, or the representative of some ambitious European house, eats in one of two Chinese *fondas*, or take-your-chances restaurants, not far off the main plaza. The transient enters a Celestial general-store, passes through it and a dingy room, crowded with tables about which barefoot Indians, male and female, their aged felt hats on their heads, are helping themselves with spoons or fingers, and through another doorless door into a smaller chamber with a single long table covered by an oilcloth of long and troubled history, where he is sure to find a place because of the requirement of shoes. During the process he will pass close by the open kitchen with its iron cooking-range —the first I had seen in South America— manipulated by a grizzled old Chinaman. The service is à la carte and, but for the shoes and oilcloth, identical in both dining-rooms. Here one will find a greasy strip of paper with a printed menu, easily comprehensible to anyone with a Spanish and Quichua dictionary, a treatise on Peruvian coast slang, and some smacking of Chinese in Spanish misspelling; or which, in the very likely event of the client being unable to read, the barefoot waiter will

recite in Shakespearean cadence and breathless continuity. Indeed, but for the language, one might fancy oneself back on the lower Bowery as the waiter bawls to the kitchen:

"Un churrasco!"

"Un bisté fogoso!"

"Hasta cuando esos choclos?"

The high cost of living, like the railroad decreed by congress in 1864, had not yet climbed over the range into Cajamarca. The dishes are 2½ or five cents each. There are, to be sure, a few ten-cent ones, but these are what terrapin would be with us, and their consumption is not encouraged, being above the tone of Cajamarca. The first price covers a dozen delicacies, such as "patitas con arroz—pigs' feetlets with rice," fried brains, liver, or *chupe*, the Irish-stew of the Andes. At five cents the epicure to whom money is no object may have a breaded "bisté" with onions, rice, and potatoes, a "baefs teak paí," "rosbif de cordero—roast beef of mutton—" "a beefsteak of pork," and a score of even more endurable concoctions. Chocolate, which is native to the region and excellently made, is 2½ cents; a cup of coffee, which no one in Cajamarca knows how to make, costs twice that. Eggs "in any style" are two cents each, and a loaf of bread, of the size of a biscuit, one cent—for in Cajamarca the traveler first finds the huge copper one-cent and half-cent pieces. The greatest gourmand sailing the high seas could not spend more than fifteen, or possibly twenty cents, for a dinner in Cajamarca—and a "tip" is unknown.



The only wheeled vehicle I saw in Peru during my first three months in that country



One of the many unfinished churches of Cajamarca

I had been duly warned that the table-manners would be on a par with those of Colombia and Ecuador. Before I left Quito, Hays had written, “In Peru soup is eaten with brilliancy, the high notes being sustained with great verve.” The same table utensils reached both the shod minority and the Indians under their hats; the table de luxe was supplied, after that democratic South American manner, with one drinking-glass, the only washing of which was what it inadvertently received during its varied service.

Cajamarca, as everyone whose historical education was not criminally neglected knows, was not

founded; it was found; and like anything else picked up by the Spaniards of those days, was never returned. It lay already—but unprepared—spread out in the extreme northwest corner of its long, fertile valley when Pizarro and his merry men came riding down upon it across the same broad páramo, and they caught much the same view of it as I, though in those days it was not half-hidden by the adorning eucalyptus trees of to-day, nor distantly musical with church-bells. The famous town, now capital of a department, which is to Peru what a state is with us, is more or less oval in shape, some ten by twenty blocks at its widest and longest, not counting the huts that straggle out at both ends along its principal "highway" and dot the outskirts and the widening plain. It is seven degrees below the equator and somewhat warmer than Quito. It stands 2814 meters above the sea, with some half-dozen inhabitants for every meter. In all but its history it is tiresomely like any other city of the Andes. The streets, monotonously right-angled, are rudely cobbled, with open sewers down the center, the sidewalks narrow, smooth-worn flagstones on which he who would walk must jostle Indians, donkeys, and stagnant groups of less useful residents. The adobe houses, often two-story and always toeing the street-line, are red-tile roofed and anciently whitewashed. Dingy little shops of odds and ends below, the flower-decked patios of even the best-provided families are surrounded on the ground floor by the dens of servants and the ragged and more numerous population, as in Quito. It was the first place in Peru where I had seen window-glass. By night its streets are "lighted" with *faroles*, miniature kerosene lamps inside square, glass-sided lanterns that are given to succumbing to the first strong puff of breeze, even if

those whose duty it is to light them do not have more pressing engagements. The central plaza is enormous, square in form, but coinciding more or less with the triangular one in which Pizarro and the Inca collided on that dusty Saturday evening of an earlier century. Flower-plots, tended with less monotonous formality than those of Quito, bloom chiefly with geraniums, and among them the historically informed inhabitants point out the stone on which Atahuallpa succumbed to the *garrote* amid the heaven-opening ministrations of good old Father Greenvale. As in Quito, there remain almost no monuments of pre-Conquest days, for the Incas seem to have built here chiefly of adobe. The most intelligent of Cajamarca's monks doubted whether there was even a Temple of the Sun or a House of the Virgins to transform into monastery or convent. Not far off the main plaza, however, set cornerwise in the center of a modern block, is the room that was to be filled with gold for Atahuallpa's ransom, said to be of massive dressed stone, like the palaces of Cuzco. Stevenson, who was in Cajamarca just a hundred years before me, found still visible around the wall the mark that was to measure the height of the treasure, and the room, the residence of a cacique. To-day it is an orphanage, where a German nun was teaching a score of female "orphans" to earn a livelihood on American sewing-machines, and the treasure-mark, as well as all evidence of stone structure, had been whitewashed out of existence, as something of "los Gentiles" not worth preserving.

The unique characteristic of Cajamarca, and almost her only stone buildings, are her half-dozen splendid old churches, soft-browned by time as those of Salamanca, and having the appearance of being half-ruined by earthquakes. The natives asserted,

however, that they were left incomplete because in colonial days every finished building must pay tribute to the King of Spain. Whatever the cause, their condition gives an unusual architectural effect that could not have been equalled by any design of man, and all who find pleasure in the "picturesque" must hope that Cajamarca will never grow wealthy enough to finish them—a misfortune that is not imminent. The Chilians came in August, 1882, and, taking a note from Pizarro's note-book—or, more exactly, from that of his secretary, since the swine-herder of Estremadura was not fitted to keep his own—stole all the gold and jewels of the churches, even the laboratory equipment of the schools, and anything else that chanced to be lying around; though they found no one worth holding for ransom. One of the principal churches bears an inscription, now all but effaced by the ubiquitous whitewash, announcing that "This santa eglesia was erected at the cost of one million pesos and fifteen centavos," the extra seven cents being the cost of bell-ropes. In the great monastery of San Francisco, facing the main plaza, some forty amiable but ignorant friars loll through life, chiefly in the breezy "retiring kiosk," carpeted, like that of Quito, with burnt matches and cigarette butts. They knew nothing of the tomb of Atahuallpa, but the Spanish organist, who looked like a ninth-inning baseball "fan" on a hot day, led me to the church and played in my honor on "the largest and best pipe-organ in Peru" not only our national air, but several Spanish fandangos and a recent Broadway favorite that is seldom admitted to ecclesiastical circles.

The Indians and gente del pueblo of Cajamarca have nearly as much color of dress as those of Quito, and are even more ragged and abjectly poverty-ridden.

Filthy, maimed beggars adorn the façades of churches, and the aboriginals speak a mushy, mouthful, dialect of Quichua, though all know Spanish. None of the Chinese residents have families; yet every now and then one passes a child with quaintly shaped eyes that testify to the ingratiating manners of the Celestials. The “upper” classes struggle to keep the theoretically white collars and the dandified shoes that mark their caste, and dawdle through life as shopkeepers, lawyers without clients, doctors whose degrees furnish them little but the title, or at any makeshift occupation that will spare them from soiling their tapering fingers with vulgar labor. Opportunity is a rare visitor, yet in a century, perhaps, there has not been born in Cajamarca a boy with the initiative and energy to tramp three days over the western range and stow away for somewhere that he could make a man of himself. As to personal habits: a drug clerk graduated in Lima pours out of their bottles the pills he recommends, and plays them idly back and forth from one unwashed hand to the other before returning them to the shelf. Yet it was a relief to loll away several days in civilization, even Peruvianly speaking. If the passing stranger was not entirely free from the open mouth and vacant eye, he could pass a corner group without all falling silent and craning their necks after him, and might even sit down at the fonda table without all interrupting their noisy eating to mumble over their mouthful, “Where do you come from and where are you going?” But even a Peruvian department capital has not yet reached that stage which makes photography easy, or the coarsest sarcasm effective. As often as I opened my kodak, some “educated” member of society was sure to crowd close to me, keeping persistently in front of

the lens; and when I had at length manoeuvered and tricked him out of the view, more or less, I was seeking, he was certain to bleat with his blandest smile, “Sacando una plancha, no, señor?” If I made answer, “No, my esteemed friend of ancient and noble blood, I am building an aeroplane on sleigh-runners to cross the icy stretches of the Amazon,” the half-baked son of the wilderness might reflect solemnly a moment or two before making some such inane reply as, “Yes, it *is* a long way to the Amazon.” Almost at the hour of my arrival an enamored youth of Cajamarca committed suicide, leaving a letter in which he declared life was a farce. Had he been with me through the Province of Jaen, he would have found it more nearly a melodrama. Only those who have endured the hardships of a long trail can know the compensating pleasure of a return to even comparative comfort, like the burgeoning of spring after a hard winter. But, after all, the joys of the trail in the Andes are chiefly those of anticipation, and the sense of accomplishment, of *exclusiveness* in tramping where few men have tramped before. For there can be slight pleasure of intercourse in towns where the youths of the “best families” follow the foreigner with cries of “Goot neeght. Awe right,” broken by snickers of silly laughter; and where dreams of long hours in something resembling a bed are rudely dispelled by the din of church-bells, the whistles of lonesome policemen, and all the thousand and one noises with which the Latin-American can make life hideous. In the matter of libraries and book-shops Peru is even less advanced than the countries to the north. There was, to be sure, a department library in Cajamarca, but “for the present” it was closed. In despair I canvassed the town for a book. A clerk whom I asked why no

printed matter was to be had, replied:

“No hay aficionados á la lectura en estas partes, señor.”

“Amateurs of reading,” indeed! As one might say, aficionados of billiards, “fans” of cock-fighting; merely an amusing game to pass the time.

“But what on earth do people do with their minds?” I gasped.

“They go to church, señor,” replied the clerk.

But the best of Cajamarca is her wonderful green and checkered valley, as seen from the rocky hillock ten minutes above the main plaza, now serving as a quarry of soft, whitish stone, but on which, if anywhere, must have been the fortress historians tell us overlooked the Inca city. There is, indeed, to-day the remnants of a cobble-stone and adobe building on the summit, and cajamarquinos who climb there to enjoy the widespread view asserted that Atahuallpa used to watch from this height the rising and setting of the sun. Prescott might almost have sat on the rocky hillock in person when he wrote:

“The valley of Cajamarca, enamelled with all the beauties of cultivation, lay unrolled like a rich and variegated carpet of verdure, in strong contrast with the dark forms of the Andes that rose up everywhere about it. The vale is of oval shape, extending about five leagues in length by three in breadth, and was inhabited by a superior population to any the Spaniards had yet seen; with ten thousand houses of clay hardened in the sun and some ambitious dwellings of hewn stone.” The valley, stretching away south-southeast, is not so extensive as the reading of Prescott leads the imagination to picture. Except in one place, where it spreads out like the

arms of a cross, it is surely not more than a league in width. But the suave spring view across it, green with the deep green of the cactus, and clumped now by the Australian eucalyptus in contrast to the treeless days of the Incas, is in certain moods and aspects the most beautiful of the Andes, though lacking the surrounding snowclads that add so much to the vale of Quito. Here I came often to sit above the murmur of the town, until the God of the Incas, after his daily journey around the earth to see that all was well, sank behind the broad páramo of Yanacancha, blotting out the valley stretching away to the southward where the trail following the old Inca highway down the backbone of the continent, was already beckoning me on.

CHAPTER XI
DRAWBACKS OF THE TRAIL

Tramping down the Andes is like walking on the ridge of a steep roof; there is a constant tendency to slip off on one side or the other and slide down to the Pacific or the Amazon. The Latin-American is only too prone to follow the line of least resistance, and that line is *not* along the crest of the Andes where the more manly Incas traveled. The villager obliged to journey to another town of the Sierra a hundred miles north or south will ride muleback something more than that to the nearest port, take ship to another harbor, and ride another hundred miles up into the interior to his destination. Hence the excellent highway that might have been built down all the backbone of the continent, or at least the Inca one that might have been kept up, does not exist. Each community is confined to its own valley and cut off from the rest by almost untrodden mountain ranges, or by trackless bare ridges where only sheep and their hardy shepherds can live. Under the beneficent rule of the Incas means of intercommunication were infinitely better than to-day; then, roads and bridges were kept in constant repair, and in all exposed parts, at intervals along the cold punas and among the mountain gorges, were

government *tambos* with shelter and food for both man and llamas.

To journey from Cajamarca to Lima would have been easy; I had only to hire a mule to Pacasmayo and catch a passing steamer. But to reach there by the route I had proposed to myself was another matter. Even Raimondi's famous map of Peru, in 25 folios, over which I spent a morning in the prefect's parlor, offered scanty information, a few faint lines representing trails leading almost anywhere except where I would go. The only route at all suited to my purpose seemed to be one through Huamachuco and Huraraz, and along the valley of the Santa river. Near the source of this it looked as if I must turn back almost due north and climb over the uninhabited, snowclad Cordillera Central, whence it might be possible to reach Cerro de Pasco. Local information was not even equal to the assertion of Prescott—who had never been nearer South America than the southern coast of Massachusetts—that "the messengers of Pizarro from Caxamalca to Cuzco followed the elevated regions of the Cordillera through many populous towns, of which the chief were Guamachuco, Guánuco, and Xauxa." At best I had to leave the scene of Atahuallpa's undoing with little knowledge of where I was going, except southward.

Certain preparations were essential before I plunged again into the all but unknown. The trip from Loja—the longest sustained hardship I had ever undergone—had left me a sadly depleted wardrobe. Especially were my walking-boots in the last stages. The shops of Cajamarca had no heavy ones among their stock, but I had hoped, with the assistance of the prefect, to buy a pair of the shoes manufactured for the use of

the garrison-police. The department chief, however, put off wiring the president, or laying the matter before congress, until it was too late. A friendly shoemaker advised me to apply privately to a soldier or policeman.

“But they have only one pair each,” I protested.

“True,” replied the zapatero, “pero se roban entre ellos—they steal from each other.”

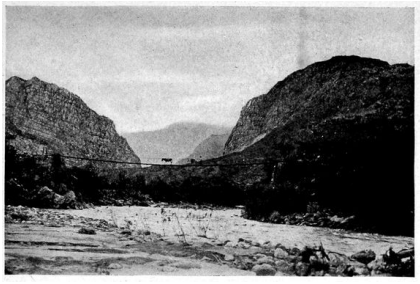
This hint also had been too long delayed, and I was forced to trust to native patching to carry me over the indefinite region to the next source of supply. As to socks, I had found that the best for tramping the Andes were none at all; that is, a better substitute were the “fusslappen” of the German soldier,—a square of cotton flannel on which to set the foot diagonally, fold over the three corners, and thrust it into the boot. The small silver pieces that came to me each time I threw down a sovereign on the Chinaman’s counter, I had laid away for the road ahead, spending the heavy coppers and the cartwheel *soles*. This petty point is extremely important in the Andes, for even the man able and willing to toss out gold for every banana he buys often finds villages of the Sierra where the yellow metal will not be accepted; and those who might otherwise be willing to change a large coin are frequently afraid to show that they have so much money on hand. The rucksack style of carrying had proved burdensome. For the load that remained I made a leather harness, not unlike suspenders, with half my possessions balanced against the rest. Then, having squandered 21 cents in the greatest banquet known to the Chinaman’s back room, I climbed the fortress hill to watch for the last time the interwoven colors of the setting sun across the rich vale of Cajamarca.

It was the seventh of May when I struck southward again along the valley floor. A wide highway sidestepped out of the city; but barely had the scent of this been left behind than a shallow river took possession of the entire width of the road. There is a sort of lawlessness both of man and nature in the Andes, and many is the hacendado who thus calmly makes use of the public highway as his irrigation ditch. When Hernando de Soto was sent with fifteen horse to visit the Inca at his baths a few miles south of the city, “they followed a fine causeway across the plain and came to a small stream with a bridge, but, distrusting its strength, dashed through the water.” An hour from town I, too, was dashing through the water, boots in hand, not because I distrusted the bridge, but because there was not the vestige of a bridge left to distrust.

Beyond the stream were the famous “Baños del Inca,” now owned by the city of Cajamarca. In the barnyard of a stone and adobe hacienda a chola woman sent an Indian boy to open for me an adjoining baked-mud room, in the floor of which was a rough-stone swimming-pool nearly ten feet square. Into this steaming sulphurous water was pouring. But as a group of Indians were washing themselves and their rags in the source of supply outside, I was forced to relinquish the rare pleasure of a hot bath, even in so famous a setting. Historians report the existence of an ancient stone bathtub that was used by the Incas, but the woman was certain there had been none in the vicinity during her career as caretaker.

The road she pointed out emerged from the back gate of the hacienda and mounted the steaming brook. Higher up, where I thrust a hand in it, the

water was just hot enough to be bearable. The valley of Cajamarca, stretching far southward, had promised level going for a day or two. But though there was plenty of space for it on the valley floor, the camino real, true to its Andean environment, preferred to clamber up and down over stony, barren, broken ridges. Before noon it had raised me to a páramo where several cold, blue lakes swarmed with wild ducks that were not even gun-shy. An Indian I fell in with said they were never hunted, "because when they fall there is no way to enter the water and get them." Evidently, like his forebears of centuries ago, he had never heard of a strange invention called a boat.



One of the few remaining *simpichacas*, or suspension bridges, of the Andes. In Inca days they abounded, often sagging from one mountain-top to another over appalling gorges. To-day steel cables take the place of the woven willow withes of pre-Colombian times, but the flooring is often missing and the swinging contraptions uninviting to man or beast



A typical shop of the Andes. On the right, eggs and *chancaca*, the brown blocks of crude sugar wrapped in banana-leaves; in the doorway, pancake-shaped corn biscuits; on the left, oranges, green in color though ripe, and the wheat-bread only too seldom to be had even in this form

Two days of stony going, now between hedges of ripe tunas, now over high ridges, gashed and tumbled, by a trail thirsty despite the frequent fording of luke-warm streams gray with decomposed rock, brought me to San Marcos in a tropical and fruitful valley withered by a long drought. On the façade of the little drygoods shop and government salt-store of the absent gobernador hung a huge sign beginning "SOCORRO PEONES," implying that the owner was also a "hooker" of workmen for a German-owned sugar estate down on the coast. When I presented my order from the prefect of the department, the wife of San Marcos' chief "authority" ordered her cholas to prepare me dinner at once.

"I did not come to the gobernador that he should

personally furnish me accommodations," I protested. "I only want him to use his authority with those who make a business of lodging strangers."

"There is no such place in San Marcos," replied the woman, locking up shop and leading me into her parlor, musty with disuse, "but all travelers are welcome here."

Behind the divan to which she motioned me stood a life-size figure of the Virgin, flanked by another of Saint Somebody. In honor of the arrival of a stranger, perhaps, the matron soon reappeared with several serving-women and, stripping the "Madre de Diós" to her bamboo-structured nudity, reattired her in four gowns, each of which was far more costly than those worn by any of the living beings present. Then she set a newly polished crown on the head of the image and, falling on her knees before it, began to rock back and forth imploring her intercession in a monotonous singsong. With dusk appeared the gobernador, accompanied by two traveling salesmen, and having ordered the three mules picketed, he spent a long evening bewailing with them the rising cost of commodities "of first necessity, even our very aguardiente and pisco, señores." In the act of looking over my papers, his eye was caught by a typewritten document in English.

"Ah, los yanquis!" he cried. "They are so up-to-date they even avoid the labor of writing by having their letters printed. But how can they afford it?"

"Una máquina para escribir," I explained.

"A writing-machine!" he gasped. "Is there such a thing? I must have one at once, for I never *can* spell things right."

The village church having lost its roof, most of the

old women in town gathered with my hostess in the adjoining parlor and droned for hours before her bamboo saints. For a long time the gobernador gave no heed to the uproar, though it forced him to raise his voice almost to a shout. Then suddenly he broke off an enumeration of prices with an angry:

"Hágame el favor!" (In the Andes the expression corresponds closely to our colloquial "What do you know about that?") "Por Diós, those beatas would pray a man insane!" and dashing into the parlor, he broke up the meeting forthwith, and sent the manto-wrapped women scurrying out through the zaguan like startled crows.

For all her religious duties my hostess found time to set down in my note-book the recipe of the most potent beverage that has come down from the Inca civilization,—the *chicha de jora*, at the making of which that served with the evening meal proved her an adept. In a laborious school-girl hand, and with a wealth of misspelling that suggested that she, too, could have used a "writing-machine" to advantage, she wrote:

"Take ripe, shelled corn, cover with water and leave a week or more until the kernels have sprouted. Dry in the sun two or three days. Crush to a mass, boil, and place, when cold, in jars three-fourths full, adding sugar sufficient to cause fermentation."

Despite her piety and attitude of Moorish seclusion, she entered into the conversation with a frankness peculiar to the Latin race. Not the least startling of her naïve questions was:

"How many children have you?"

"I am not married," I answered.

"Of course you are not married," she replied, "being a traveler all over Peru and the outside world, but have you really no children at all?"

At daybreak the gobernador sent a boy and a horse to set me across—and all but spill me into—a rock-strewn river below the town, "because it is very dangerous to wet the feet in the morning." Ichocán, two leagues beyond San Marcos, sits high and cold on an eminence. Behind it the trail sloped languidly upward, then pitched headlong down through a stony, desert-dry wilderness, inhabited only by cactus and wild asses, to the Condebamba river, its lower valley of densest-green a relieving contrast to the dreary, arid mountain flanks. Across the roaring gorge a bridge of steel cables, supported by railway rails, has taken the place of the *chaca* of woven willow withes of Inca days. But it still looked frail and aërial enough, swaying high above the racing stream that would quickly have swept a stumbling traveler through rock-walled hills to the Marañón and the Amazon, and the few arrieros who follow this route have no easy task in driving their donkeys across it.

A pole-and-mud hut on the dreary slope of the further bank housed the guardian of the bridge, a fever-laden skeleton who was barely able to crawl after an unbroken year of *paludismo*, the intermittent fever of the Andes that lurks in all such sunken valleys as that of the Condebamba. I might better have spent the night on the hillside beyond, than to have tossed it through on the hut floor, swarming with some species of shark-jawed insect. Luckily I was not offered the first bowl of chicha before I found the guardian's female companion concocting the family supply, for her method was little less

disillusioning than that of the yuca-chewing Jívaros Indians. When it had been boiled in a huge kettle that spent its days of disuse as a nesting-place for the family curs, the liquid was poured off into a long, shallow tub, like a small dug-out canoe, the same one that would serve another purpose on wash-day. Squatted on the ground beside it, the woman was stirring it slowly with a stick she had caught up at random. Bit by bit two gaunt and mangy curs slunk nearer, until their noses all but touched the steaming liquid, whereupon the woman left off her stirring long enough to rap them over the head with the ladle. The dogs retreated a yard or two with cowardly yelps, only to repeat the advance over and over again. The chola's vigilance, it turned out, was not due to any unwonted sense of cleanliness; she was merely bent on saving the animals from burning themselves. As soon as she judged the liquid cool enough, she gave a sign, and the curs fell upon the tub and greedily lapped up the scum. Thus saved the labor of skimming it, the female crawled to her feet and set the stuff away in earthen jars to ferment.

One barren, stony ridge after another in pitiless succession carried me much higher before the following noonday. My course now lay well east of south, for I had caught the swing of the west coast of South America. One last mighty surge and the world fell away before me, disclosing almost within shouting distance the provincial capital of Cajabamba. But it is a good rule in the Andes never to sit down in the plaza until you reach the town. Between me and the day's goal lay hidden one of those mighty holes in the earth that mean the undoing and repetition of all the toil that has gone before. The shadows were beginning to climb the eastern wall of Cajabamba's valley before I reached

the century-polished cobbles of the street that had swallowed up the converging trails.

The plump young subprefect, who was awaiting me in state upon my return from the Chinese fonda to which a soldier had piloted me, would have been rosy-cheeked had not some careless ancestor faintly clouded his family tree and given a quaint kink to his hair. He returned my papers with a regal bow and bade me make my home in his office as long as I chose to honor Cajabamba with my presence. The "bed" was a blanket on the yielding, earth-covered floor; but I had twenty soldiers at my beck and call, and what mattered it if, each time I would make my toilet, I must go to jail? Luckily the rust-hinged doors and chain-weighted gates creaked with as pompous humility and dignified alacrity for my exit as to admit me, though there were those within who had not passed them in twenty years.

By the time I was city-dressed, the subprefect, pomaded and be-frocked within an inch of his life, fluttered into my boudoir to ask, in breathless oratorical periods, if, inasmuch as he had just been married last week, or during the night, and mother down on the coast was dying to know what the new acquisition looked like and there were no photographers in Cajabamba and it was a pity Peru was so backward, would I not have the fineza to take fifteen or twenty pictures of him and his novia and deliver a few dozen finished and mounted prints for him and her and their relatives and friends and compadres and associates within an hour or two? As the carelessness of my American agent had left me almost filmless, this was neither the first nor the last time I was put to the unpleasant necessity of "faking" a picture. To have refused his request, even with

humble apologies and laborious explanations, would have been to win the ill-will of Cajabamba's ruler and all his dependents, had it not resulted in the trumping up of some transparent excuse to turn me out and refuse me official assistance in finding other lodgings. A photographer speaking some Spanish could pick up much silver down the crest of the Andes; it would have been a kindness if he had made the trip a few days ahead of me. To be sure, these official requests were always useful, in a way. While the powdered and perfumed "authorities" were puffing themselves up to the requisite pomposity, the town was sure to gather alongside, and as neither the fancied nor the real subjects were well enough versed in mechanics to know whether a kodak operates endwise or sidewise, I caught many a nonchalant pose of some really worthwhile bystander that I might have begged for in vain. On this occasion the novia, having spent a few hours in completely disguising herself, as women will under the circumstances the world over, appeared at last, deathly pale with rice powder, and the pair assumed a score of fetching poses under my direction. True, it was dark by that time. But the subprefect saw no reason why a photograph should not be taken by the light of three sputtering candles. He preferred it, indeed, to embracing his newly-won treasure in the public glare of day. But the night had grown aged before he feigned to understand the impossibility of immediate delivery, and he accepted only sulkily my promise to send the finished portraits back from the next city, "if they turned out well."

During my morning stroll about town I was accosted in English from the zaguan of a building of dilapidated adobe splendor. So often had I heard a laborious "Goot mawnin, seer, how do yo do?" from

some silly youth whose knowledge of foreign tongues began and ended with that phrase, that I nodded and passed on. I have too much affection for my mother tongue to hear it gratuitously maltreated; moreover, it had lain so long idle that to speak it had come to seem an affectation.

This time, however, the speaker continued with faultless fluency:

“I hear you are an American.”

“Just so.”

“I am Carlos Traverso, at your service; graduate of an American university.”

“Which one?”

“Michigan.”

“Indeed! So am I.”

“Válgame Diós!” gasped the youth, betrayed by astonishment into his native tongue for a moment. “Can’t you come around to my room, your own house, as I should say in Peru. You probably haven’t seen the latest copy of the ‘Alumnus’?”

“Nor the twenty latest ones. With the greatest of pleasure.”

In spite of myself I found my tongue translating the set Castilian phrases I had so long been using, instead of falling into the colloquialisms of my own land. When I was ensconced in an American armchair battered with the evidence of a long journey and of the crude unloading facilities of West Coast ports, surrounded by walls hidden under banners and photographs that seemed to turn the adobe chamber into a college dormitory transported to the wilds of the Andes, the youth went on:

"The government of Peru gives four *betas*, that is, sends yearly an honor student to each of four American universities, with an allowance of a hundred dollars a month...."

"That is, you had $4800 for the course at Michigan?"

"Yes, with traveling expenses. You probably had about the same allowance?"

"Fortunately not, or I should long since have been gracing some home for inebriates. And is this just a present from the government?"

"No; on our return we must serve the government for three years at the same salary. I am superintendent of schools in this and the neighboring province of Huamachuco."

The son of a Scandinavian father, Traverso had evidently overcome the handicap of an allowance the spending of which would have consumed the entire energies of a full-blooded Latin-American, and had brought back a real education. His shelves were filled with the latest treatises on pedagogy, in several languages, and a brief acquaintance was enough to show that he was earnestly striving to instill some new life into the moribund system of his native land.

"But what's the use?" he concluded gloomily, casting aside a carefully worked out plan of study. "A man's wings are clipped before he can start to fly. Theoretically I have full authority over school matters in my two provinces; practically I can't alter by a hair the benighted medieval routine of studies, interwoven at every turn by the lives of the saints, that Peru has stumbled along under for centuries. I can't fire a fifteen-dollar-a-month numskull up in one of the mountain villages, even though he doesn't know whether Chile is in New York or in Europe.

The priests have their wires attached to every government leg and arm in the country, and I feel like a man lying by, bound hand and foot, watching our children being criminally assaulted. The money the government spends on us might as well be chucked into the Pacific."

"To say nothing of squandering on one student what would easily suffice for three," I put in.

"Caramba, it is true! In Ann Arbor life is calm and quiet; but you ought to see what some of the betados who are sent to Paris and Rome bring back with them! Válgame Diós!"

The valley of Cajabamba leans decidedly to the west, whence the next day was largely one of mounting. But the region is so high that climbing was not laborious in the invigorating mountain air that cuts into the lungs like strong wine; and even a man inclined to that frailty could not have felt lonely with so much of the world spread out in plain sight about him. There were few long spaces without houses or pack-trains. Once I fell in with a government chasqui driving a horse and an ass laden with sacks of mail, among which stood out one marked conspicuously:

"U. S. Mail
Foreign."

The correspondence, he assured me, was not bound for the "exterior," but was merely local matter between towns of the route that had been farmed out to him, a statement that was confirmed at the next post-office.

A mighty crack in the earth, into and out of which the trail zigzagged like some badly wounded creature, marked my exit at last from the department of Cajamarca into that of Libertad. The ancient Inca highway is said to have followed this same route

over these high, undulating plains, but there were no certain vestiges of it. In the late afternoon I burst suddenly out upon a broad view of the famous old city of Huamachuco, much like Quito in setting, though more dreary, backed by a ragged, black range, half cut off by a nearer slope, that might have been Pichincha itself, the two peaks streaked with the first snow I had seen since leaving central Ecuador.

Traverso had given me a note of introduction to his compadre, Dr. Alva, the *médico titular* of Huamachuco. As government doctor, the only physician, indeed, within two hard days' ride in any direction, he drew—theoretically, at least—a salary of $150 a month, exceeding even that of the haughty subprefect. The "son" of a hamlet far up in the hills, he was a plain, earnest, little man with a heart several times larger than the average of his fellow-countrymen. From his lips the stereotyped "Here you are in your own house" had real meaning. His library included Spanish editions of Taine, Nietzsche, Emerson—and Roosevelt; his phonograph was of high grade and his records well chosen. Edison was his ideal of manhood—indeed, a straw vote in the Andes would certainly show the "wizard of Orange" the most popular American—and he was wont to boast jokingly that his own name was the same as one of those of the inventor, "showing that some of our ancestors were the same." Toward the end of my stay I discovered that the doctor, having installed me in his well-furnished "guest-room," was himself huddling out the cold nights on a bag of straw and a wooden table in the mud den behind his "office."

It was not until we had grown rather well acquainted that Dr. Alva confided to me the fact that he had

"worked his way" through the medical school of Lima, "even acting as waiter, señor, in a fonda, and working in the summer like any peon. But don't whisper a word of this to anyone in Peru," he implored, as if he suddenly regretted having taken me into his confidence.

"Up in my country those of us who did that are inclined to boast of it," I laughed.

"Ah, sí, señor, I know," he answered in an undertone, glancing cautiously about him, "I know; even Tomás *Alva* Edison was a newsboy. But if Huamachuco ever hears of it I shall be a social outcast, ranked with the Indians of the market-place."

Huamachuco derives its name, if local authority is trustworthy, from the Quichua words *huama* (snow) and *chuco* (cap), the peak behind the town having in earlier centuries been completely snow-topped. It is the "Guamachuco" of Prescott, to which Hernando Pizarro was sent soon after the capture of Atahuallpa, to investigate the rumor that an army was being raised to rescue the imperial prisoner. Even to-day its population is largely Indian, among whom the chewing of coca leaves is general—the first place south of Almaguer in Colombia of which this could be said.

But the Huamachuco of to-day does not exactly coincide with that of Pizarro's time. The effete descendants of a more hardy race have crawled down into a sheltering valley, leaving uninhabited the ancient "city of the Gentiles" on the mountain above. A local editor, apparently for no better reason than the pleasure of basking in a gringo smile, offered to serve me as guide. A stony road flanked ever higher along a perpendicular rock-wall, then rose and fell over lofty undulations, and at some six

miles from the modern town brought us to the first ruins. Far below, across a deep quebrada, lay, like a relief map, the great rectangle of a ruined city, in perfect squares, the roofless stone gables standing forth in fantastic array above a forest of low trees. This was Viracochapampa, or "Plain of the Nobles," the resident city at the time of the Conquest. Through its broad central street passed the great Inca highway from Quito to Cuzco.

But that was the least important part of ancient Huamachuco. Here on the barren mountain-top stood in olden times Marca-Huamachuco, protecting the dwelling-place on the stony plain below. Above the modern town are still to be found remnants of the *cuchilla*, or stone trough by which the ancient race brought water to this lofty summit by some system that has been lost in the haze of time. About us, as we advanced, rose ruin after stone ruin of what had evidently been an elaborate series of fortresses. These spread mile upon mile across the rugged, undulating tableland, some densely interwoven with brambles and impenetrable thickets, all surrounded by the utter silence of a world long since abandoned by man and brute. Indeed, the place was less remarkable for its construction than for the vast extent of the ruins. Several large edifices, square or triangular in shape, were built of huge blocks of stone, still in the same form in which they might have been found as mountain boulders, and, unlike the fortress of Ingapirca, nowhere nicely fitted together. On the contrary, nearly every joint was filled in with chips of stone, and in the thick interior walls had been used a sort of crude concrete, now mere gravelly mud that could be picked out with the fingers. Whether Marca-Huamachuco was built by an earlier people, or by a more careless tribe of the race

that left behind the cut-stone palaces of Cuzco, their method of construction did not make for durability. The ruins were all serrated and tooth-shaped, with only here and there a jagged point suggesting the original height, the whole cutting the far-off horizon with a fantastic, broken sky-line. An enormous wall had evidently once surrounded the entire peak, and beyond, set close together, was a series of almost round fortresses, each of three stone walls, one inside the other. One more carefully constructed edifice gave evidence of having been the chief palace, and from it stretched an unobstructed view of all the surrounding landscape, in which an advancing enemy might have been sighted league upon league away in any direction.

It was in Huamachuco that the first hint of what later proved to be amœbic dysentery overtook me, recalling to memory the medicine-case I had abandoned in Cuenca as a useless burden. A disturbing lack of energy settled upon me, my appetite failed—a startling symptom, indeed—and I felt as if I had inadvertently swallowed one of the largest ruins of Marca-Huamachuco. It was with no rousing pleasure, therefore, that I set off, laden with hard-boiled eggs and a supply of the stony local bread, on the lonely twelve-league tramp that intervenes between the residence of Dr. Alva and the next town.

Four leagues south, the well-marked road swung to the right and, wading the shallow Huamachuco river, I struck off for Trujillo and comparative civilization on the coast. The faint path to the left bore me even higher across an uninhabited world, dreary with its endless expanse of dead-yellow ichu. Here were distinct remnants of the old Inca highway. For

several miles across the undulating páramo the way lay between two rows of stones, set upright a considerable distance apart, and enclosing a space wide enough for six or seven carriages, had they existed, to pass abreast. If, as the inhabitants of the region assert, this is a good example of that great military highway of the Incas, the descriptions of chroniclers and historians have far outdone the reality. Gomara reports it "twenty-five feet wide, cut in a straight line from the living rock, or made of stone and lime, turning aside neither for mountains nor lakes." Prescott speaks of "highways carefully constructed of cut slabs of freestone and porphyry," which only proves how incompetent to judge things South American is the most competent man who has not been there in person. Those who have visited Spain know how easily the title "camino" is granted, and the Conquistadores, like the Peruvians of to-day, having in many cases probably never seen a real road, had no means of comparison. Certainly this Inca highway had nothing to justify the extravagant praise of those who compared it to the old Roman roads. The most that had been done in the way of road building was to clear the plain of loose rocks—in conspicuous contrast to the modern Peruvians, who look upon a road as a convenient place to toss the stones picked up in their fields. Stone-heaps here and there along the Andes mark forever the routes of travel of Inca days, but they are chiefly *achapetas*, piles thrown up by travelers, who tossed upon them, as votary offering, a cud of coca. Of the *tambos*, rest-houses maintained at frequent intervals by the imperial government, like the *dak bungalows* of India, not even the ruins of one in a hundred remain standing, and the traveler of to-day is far more exposed to the elements than in the times of the

Incas.

The Andes rise ever higher from north to south and from west to east, whence I was far above Huamachuco when I dragged myself into the "Vaquería Angasmarca," a cluster of cobblestone hovels barely four feet high, home of an Indian cow-guard, in one of the most dreary, stony settings in South America. Unable to get even hot water, I dared not eat the heavy *fiambre* I carried. I had huddled for hours on a stone under the projecting roof when, after dark, the *vaquero* himself rode in from Huamachuco. Having been a soldier, trained to a bit less immobility of temperament than his mate, he was partly cajoled, partly deceived, into ordering her to serve me a gourdful of potato soup, prepared under circumstances better imagined than described. For a long time he replied with dogged, apathetic persistence that he "only gave posado in the corredor," but I succeeded at last in inducing him to furnish me a ragged blanket in a corner of his own sty, on the earth floor of which huddled the entire family and the customary menagerie of small animals.

The traveler who crawls out, blue with cold, after a night in one of these cobble caves of the highland Indian, to squat against the eastern wall until a gourd of warm water, savored with corn and the dung-fuel over which it is slowly half-heated, is thrust out at him, no longer wonders that the aboriginals of the Andes worshipped the sun. Every step of that day of excruciating climbs and stony descents, across dreary páramos on which I several times lost my way, was a bitter struggle; for all the demands of the will, my legs could not push me forward two miles an hour, and ever and anon they

seemed to turn to straw and dropped me suddenly to the ground. All the visible world lay high and treeless now, with touches of snow on several black, shark-tooth peaks of the Cordillera to the eastward. During the day I had passed several more remnants of the old Inca highway, two continuous lines of weather-blackened upright stones set far apart on either side of a space a full half-block wide. Toward sunset the trail began to descend into a stony river-valley, far down which I made out a tiled building among eucalyptus trees. A passing horseman carelessly answered my question, while more engrossed in my appearance, by assuring me it was the hacienda house I was seeking; and I toiled a half-hour up the mountainside to it, only to have the solitary Indian female who occupied it point out far below, in the valley of the river, the "patrón's" house of the "Hacienda Angasmarca."

It was the most imposing country dwelling I had yet seen in Peru; a large village and two churches clustered about it, the entrance like that to some rough old medieval palace, the swarms of dependents carrying the mind back to feudal days. Around an immense flower and shrub-grown patio, in which Indian hostlers were struggling to unload a score of mules and horses, were some thirty rooms, each with a number above the door. I did not learn whether it was the custom of the owner to collect hotel charges, but the establishment was conducted in as heartless and impersonal a manner as if he did. He was a snarly old invalid who crawled about with a cane, growling orders to his cringing Indians, and too much taken up with his own infirmities to waste sympathy on others. With a grunt he thrust my letter of introduction into a pocket, ordering an Indian to unlock one of the numbered rooms. Stagnant with

the atmosphere of a cheap hotel, it contained a bed with leather springs, a billowy mattress, and a sack of ichu as pillow, and only after a long struggle did I obtain a bowl of soup filled with tough beef and half-cooked yuca and potatoes, a dish barely endurable to a strong man in full health. It was late next morning before infinite patience won me a bowl of hot milk, and I dragged myself away almost due north. Across the world south of "Angasmarca" yawned a bottomless valley, beyond which a rocky mountain-wall rose to the very heavens. The road which should have followed in that direction was left to sneak out like some hunted thing for a vast detour, even before it began to crawl away eastward at right angles to the way I would have gone. At the outset was a laborious, stony climb, from the summit of which the "Hacienda Tulpo" lay in plain sight, but across one of those heartbreaking gashes in the earth so frequent in the Andes. On the left stood sharp, stark snow-peaks of the Cordillera, which seemed to grow mightier with each day southward. Noon had long since passed, yet there were barely eight miles behind me when I entered the general store of an hacienda building forming a hollow square around a dreary barnyard. The shopkeeper announced himself the owner of the estate—plainly by poetic license. There is a careful graduation of caste in the Andes that makes it easy for the experienced traveler to set any man's place in the local society. This fellow's dress, color, his familiar yet commanding manner toward the Indians who sneaked in all that Saturday afternoon to dawdle about the counter and buy bits of trash, draughts of native "rot-gut," anything the place afforded except what might have been of some use to them, generally on credit, thus lengthening their slavery to the estate, all gave the lie to his

assertion. But for all his posing, he turned out a kindly fellow. He not only sold me a half-dozen eggs —in itself a great kindness in the Andes—but dragged down from a shelf a sort of chafing-dish and light-boiled them. When I had drunk these, surrounded by a solid wall of stony-faced Indians who seemed to consider the feat remarkable, I still could not bestir myself to push on. By and by my eyes, wandering aimlessly over the stock that covered two walls to the ceiling, caught sight of a familiar ten-cent can of American tomatoes. I bought them at sixty cents. Long after an old woman had carried off the precious empty can, the shopkeeper spent all the leisure left him by the sluggish flow of now half-intoxicated Indians in thumbing over great sheaves of foreign bills of lading, and at length handed me thirty cents, with the announcement that he had inadvertently charged me for the "whole shipment"—of two cans!

When the dreary afternoon had at last dragged its leaden way into the past tense and chill sunset was creeping across this lofty world, I mentioned to the shopkeeper that I needed a spot on which to spend the night. The idea evidently had never occurred to him. The estate was mine, and all the wonders thereof—but for all that two more endless hours passed before a drink-saucy Indian led me to an icy harness-room and pointed out two bare saddle-pads on the earth floor.

Certainly that man is a fool who sets out on a trip down the Andes for pleasure; for after the first joys of roughing it have worn off, no more monotonously pleasureless existence is conceivable. There is, to be sure, a certain feeling of exclusiveness, a certain satisfaction in living through hardships, of moving

by one's own efforts over those parts of the earth where modern means of transportation are unknown; but even this soon wears off, and with the dreary sameness of each day the journey becomes chiefly a waste of time and effort, and a never-ending disappointment.

In the morning I crawled away along a world growing ever higher, until suddenly it fell abruptly into a chasm out-chasming anything I had yet seen in my worst nightmares. Across it, so high even from this height that it seemed not of our world, a town was pitched on the very tip of a gashed and haggard range. Fortunately my route seemed to lead off down the valley, and I was finding some grains of comfort in not having to ascend to that heavenly dwelling-place of man, whatever it might be called, when a passing horseman sapped my last drop of ambition by telling me it was Pallasca—exactly the place in which I must spend the night!

A long time had passed before I coaxed myself to creep slowly on, avoiding the view of the task before me as a criminal about to be executed might shade his eyes from the scaffold. An unconscionable distance down in the bottomless intervening valley, yet still high, I met the first foreign tramp I had yet seen on the road in South America. He was an Austrian of fifty, looking in his matted, lusterless hair and beard, and his drooping rags, like a corpse that had arisen for a stroll.

"Gehen Sie nicht weiter—Go no further south," he pleaded weakly. "There everyone is dying of dysentery. Turn back with me to Trujillo and humanity."

His illness had reached that stage when the invalid sees the leering head of disease rising on all sides,

and fancies he may run away from what he carries with him. I could not, naturally, abandon a plan of years' standing merely because of a temporary disability, and when we had exchanged some bits of road information each crawled slowly on his way.

In the hamlet of Mollepata, near the bottom of the quebrada, an old woman stirred herself to brew me some herb tea, into which she put a branch of *ajenjo* (wormwood) with the assurance that this was a quick and certain cure for my ailment. The descent had been bad enough; the climb out of that breathless gash in the earth was probably the most dismal experience of my career; I had not, to that day, nor do I expect again during this life, to accomplish a more bitter task than that struggle in intermittent rain, under my leaden load and Turkish-bath poncho, from the *tablachaca*, or earth-covered stick-bridge across the gorge-cut river forming the northern boundary of the department of Ancachs, to heaven-hung Pallasca. To make matters worse, the natives were united in the assertion that the source of my trouble was my habit of drinking at streams along the way; that at this altitude the water was not only too cold, but held in solution many minerals that made it unsafe. Long afterward I had reason to believe that this had little to do with the matter. But ready at the time to grasp at any straw, I threw away the film-tin that had served me as drinking vessel, resolved that not another drop of "raw" water should pass my lips—or at least my throat. The resolution called for every ounce of will-power. One of the chief pleasures of a walking trip had always been to quench my thirst whenever opportunity offered. Now the mountain rivulets that babbled down across my trail were tantalizing beyond belief, and I would gladly have given a gold sovereign—as long as they

lasted—to have been able to drink my fill at each with impunity. Worst of all, there were no substitutes for water to be had, neither fruits, prepared drinks, nor any other relief from torture. On the day we sailed from Panama a Zone doctor had warned Hays and me, as the first and primary rule of the journey before us, always to boil our water. He little guessed the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of obeying that apparently simple commandment in the Andes.

Black night had long since fallen when I dragged myself into the central plaza of Pallasca, silent and dark except in the densely packed, candle-lighted church. A dimly illuminated shop on a far corner proved to be a tavern. My thirst had reached the point where drink was imperative, though the sentence were sudden death. I ran my eye over the shelves.

“There is wheesky cuzqueños,” wheedled the wooden-brained keeper, “and rhum jamaïca, or French absinthe, or ...”

“Have you anything non-alcoholic?” I croaked.

“Cómo no, señor! There is wine, and beer from Lima....”

In South America anything short of forty-percent alcohol does not count as such; even the law does not rate beer and wine “alcoholic liquors.” There being nothing better, I pointed out a bottle bearing the stamp of a Lima brewery.

The sentence was not exactly sudden death, but that may be because I had grown calloused to similar hardships. This Peruvian imitation of a German “dark” beer was thick and black as crude molasses, bitter as cascarilla bark, and more nauseating than old-fashioned medicine. With only the edge of my

thirst blunted, I forced the rest of the bottle upon a bystander, not maliciously, but because I knew that a lifetime in the Andes had hardened him to anything; and turned to the question of lodging.

“You come right along with me,” cried the grateful bystander, smacking his all-enduring lips. “You will stop with the señor cura, like all travelers of importance.”

But the señor cura was in no condition to receive guests. In his large, over-furnished parlor around the corner the padre lay on a couch, the slouch hat over his red-bandaged head and a two-weeks’ lack of shave giving him a startling resemblance to the Spanish bandits of operatic fancy.

“No, compadre; I am sick, and I cannot give lodging,” he replied to every plea of my officious sponsor.

The several persons in the room entered into a whispered conference. Some time later I was aroused from my lethargy, and my cicerone and a light-haired youth led the way across the black plaza and up a steep, cobbled street which my legs all but refused to navigate under my heavy load—for though he would not leave a man who had treated him to the luxury of a glass of beer from the capital at a fabulous price until he had seen him safely housed, neither the bystander nor his companion could sink their baggy-kneed caste to the depth of carrying a bundle in the public street, even on a dark night.

When morning dawned I found myself rolled up in a heap of blankets on the earth floor of a long-disused parlor. Hours passed without a human being appearing. I pulled myself together and shuffled out

into the patio of an immense, dilapidated house at the tiptop of the town, overlooking half a world and swept by all the winds of heaven. Pallasca has been likened to *alforjas*, so like a pair of saddlebags on the rump of a pack-animal does it hang down the two sides of a lofty nose of the range. Across the void, deep-blue in spite of the penetrating glare of the Andean sunshine, the Cordillera had tumbled her mountains recklessly in a tumultuous heap, as if the Builder of the world had left here his surplus of materials. The Andes have little of the color and varied charm of the Alps; but in awesome grandeur, and repulsive, savage mightiness they dwarf the latter by comparison. In a room down on the sunken street on which opened the patio zaguan, the light-haired youth and his brother kept the town drug-store. They were the sons of a German who had married in Peru, yet only their more robust frames and greater physical virility distinguished them from the common run of natives; in temperament they were as thoroughly what the Canal Zoner calls “Spig” as the most enemic of their fellow-townsmen. The older was an amateur doctor—with the accent on the adjective—the only one for scores of miles around. He prepared me a half-dozen *obleas*,—those saucer-shaped capsules of the Andean pharmacopœia—of bismuth, prescribed a diet of *chochoca molida*—the Quichua-Spanish name for a thin cornmeal gruel—which might be substituted by chuño inglés, a sickly-sweet liquid starch—or wheat or rice soup, and assured me that I would be completely recovered in the morning. All the articles of diet were contingent on the possibility of getting the ingredients, which in the Andes is a distinct contingency. For thirst I was advised to take only boiled water with cinnamon or *cimarruba* bark; but even to get the former cost a

constant struggle with the apathetic servants, and the necessity of dragging myself down to the stream on a corner of the plaza to cool the boiling pot.

Later in the day, while I lay contemplating the immense distance across the room, a young rag-patch came to say that the cura wished to see me. The mere novelty of a man of the cloth desiring my presence was so astonishing that it lent a bit of stiffness to my legs. I rose and wandered down across the main plaza, from the further side of which the world falls precipitously away into unfathomable void.



Detail of the ruins of “Marca-Huamachuco,” high up on the mountain above the modern town of that name. They are reputed to be at least 1000 years old



Pallasca, to which I climbed
from one of the mightiest
quebradas in the Andes, sits on
the tiptop of the world and falls
sheer away at a corner of its
plaza into a fathomless void

The unshaven papist still wore his slouch hat, and by day his bandit-like aspect was increased by a complexion like unpolished chamois-skin. He motioned me to a chair beneath the lithograph of a ravishing nude figure advertising a foreign brand of cigarettes, and trusted, with all the smoothness of which the Spanish tongue is capable, that I had not misunderstood his inhospitality of the night before. Gradually I turned the conversation to the history of his native region. He had made a serious study of the pre-Conquest period, and was sure that the Indians lived in just such unwashed misery under the Incas, as to-day. Only, as each group of ten had its commander, who set its tasks and carried his investigations into the very bosom of the family, they were not then so unspeakably lazy. I had started to take my leave after some desultory remarks on my journey, during which he desired to know if I had walked all the way from Europe, when the priest remarked:

“Before going you will allow me to give you a little remembrance?”

“Cómo no! Gracias,” I answered, fancying the good-hearted old fellow was about to favor me with a tin crucifix or a bottle of holy water.

He sat up slowly and, pulling open a drawer of his massive home-made desk, took out five silver *soles*

($2.50), and held them toward me.

“Mil gracias, no, señor,” I cried in astonishment.

“Tómaselos—take them as a memento,” he persisted, attempting to thrust the coins into my pocket. Plainly he regarded my refusal a mere preliminary formality to save my face. So ingrained is the Latin-American notion that no man exerts himself physically, except under compulsion, that, for all my explanations, he still cherished the idea that I traveled on foot because I had not the means to travel otherwise. Nor did I avoid his proposed charity without a great waste of flowery Castilian, and for all that left him somewhat offended. Even the sons of the misled German could not be made to understand why I had refused the proposed benefaction. “Andarines” of the Peyrounel variety have given these isolated towns of the Andes the impression that all foreigners arriving on foot were “living on the country.” Tramps, in our sense of the word, are unknown in the Andes. The few foreign “beach-combers” who reach Peru rarely get beyond Lima, and the Indians still cling to the Inca rule—though they may no longer know that an Inca ever existed—of each man sticking pertinaciously to his own birthplace. It is as impossible for the American to realize the absolute lack of anything approaching wanderlust in the Andean, and his dread of moving away from his native pueblo, as it is for the Indian to understand why the American is so far from home. Even among the more or less educated officials I could not shake off the title “andarín.” More than one rural “authority” showed himself aggrieved because I did not ask for his testimonial, seal, and signature, fancying himself slighted as of too little importance. Many another assured the gaping bystanders:

"Ah, ganan un platal, esa gente—Those fellows win a wad of money! When he gets back, his government will give him a great prize, at least 300,000 soles for the trip, señores."

A prize, indeed! As if there were not a prize at every turn of the winding trail, in every new vista of tumultuous nature under the clear metallic blue of the highland sky!

I determined to push on next morning, for Pallasca was no nearer recovery than my journey's end. The diluted Germans had promised to have an Indian carrier ready at dawn. But they were true Peruvians. The morning was half gone when I gave up in disgust and set out alone. At the zaguan, however, a fishy-eyed Indian rose to his feet to say that he had been sent by the gobernador to "assist" me, and I piled my bundle upon him forthwith.

Though Pallasca seems to perch on the very summit of the world, the trail managed to find another range to climb. Scores of cold, crystal-clear streams babbled tantalizingly across my path. A cosmic wilderness of gaunt and haggard mountains, here throwing forward bare and repulsive outliers, there weirdly decorated with shadow-pictures of clouds and jutting headlands, lay tumbled on every hand as far as the eye could range. The Indian chewed coca constantly, pausing frequently to dip a bit of lime from the gourd he carried at his waist, and appeared to have as little energy as I. When we had crawled some six miles, and a scattered hamlet was visible about as far ahead, with a deep gash of the earth between, he began to complain of pains, and finally lay down in the trail. I did not regret the halt, but when I had waited a half-hour and his groans still sounded, I sought to urge him on. It was useless.

Whether he was really ailing—and Sunday may have left him with what is technically known in sporting circles as a "hang-over"—or was merely taking this means of shirking an unwelcome task, now we were far enough away so that I was not likely to return to complain to the gobernador, arguments and threats moved him exactly as they would have the rocks on which he writhed. Consigning him to the nethermost regions, I struggled to my feet under my harness and staggered on down the stony bajada.

Hours afterward, utterly exhausted by the short dozen miles, I entered the mud hamlet of Huandoval, expecting a miserable night on the earth floor of some icy dungeon hut. It was not quite so bad as that. At the first doorway where I paused to inquire for the gobernador, a half-Indian young woman of unusual Andean intelligence offered me lodging where I stood. The baked-mud den was as dreary as usual, but in a corner stood a bare slat bedstead, half-buried under an immense heap of potatoes. Early as it was, I spread my poncho and lay down, anticipating a welcome repose—only to discover that I was lodged in the Huandoval telephone exchange! On the wall hung an aged Errickson instrument, the strange vagaries of which brought the chola in upon me as often as its jangle sounded. The place, too, like telephone exchanges the world over, was exceedingly popular with the young men of the town, and when my rest was not being broken by some mistaken call from another exchange, it was disrupted by the labored wit of some rural Lothario.

It is but eight miles from Huandoval to Cabana, capital of the province; yet it required nine hours of the most concentrated effort, both mental and physical, to drive myself over the low, barren ridge

that separates the two towns. The story of the next few days, trivial in detail, I give in no spirit of complaint, but merely because it sheds so direct a light on the character of the Andean Peruvian. I had learned that there was a hospital in Huaráz, the department capital, and requested the subprefect of Cabana to use his authority to help me hire a horse, as he was in duty bound to do by the official orders I carried.

"Pierda cuidado," orated the thin, angular fellow, peering at me with his short-sighted squint, "the government will furnish you a horse and all that is needed."

Nobody wanted the government to furnish me anything, but I did not stop to argue the matter. My entire attention was taken up just then with resisting the efforts of the "authorities" to throw me into a dank mud den, under the allegation that it was a lodging. Fortunately there was some one else than Peruvians in the town. It was through the village priest that I won at last a second-story room above the prefectura, of mud floor in spite of its elevation, supported on poles that yielded to the tread. He was a tall, powerfully-built Basque of fifty, with a massive Roman nose and, in memory of his mountain-land, a *boína* set awry on his head and matching his long, flowing gown only in color. He had suffered from the same ailment during his first year in this foreign land and was sure he knew an instant cure—and instead of merely talking about it, like a native, he sent a man to prepare it. This was a half-bottle of wine boiled with the bark of a mountain tree called the *cimarruba*; but whatever effectiveness it might have possessed was offset by the impossibility of keeping to a proper diet, or even

of getting boiled water to drink. There was no doctor in Cabana; yet all Cabana posed as physicians. Now some fellow would drop in to say, “the very best thing you can eat is pork-chops,” and he would scarcely be out of sight before another paused to assure me that pork-chops would kill me within an hour. “Eat the whites of eggs,” cried another. “You can eat almost anything,” asserted the next comer, “except the whites of eggs.” Again the room would be darkened by a shadow in the doorway, and a man would step forward to say, “Now here is an old Indian woman from up in the mountains whose grandfather’s nephew died of dysentery, and....”

All night the town boomed with fireworks, the howling of dogs, the bawling of drunken citizens, and the atrocious uproar of a local “band,” for it was the eve of something or other. Far from finding the promised horse waiting for me at dawn, I did not see the shadow of a person until after ten. Then a stupid, insolent soldier came to ask if I wanted “breakfast.” At twelve he had not returned. I dragged myself down to the plaza. The subprefect and all his henchmen were making merry in a *pulpería*. I requested him to have some one prepare me food, at any price. Price? They were horrified! Of course they could not think of letting me *pay* for anything. I was the guest of Cabana. They would *obsequiar* me a “magnificent meal” at once, cried the subprefect, tying himself in several knots in his excess of courtesy. What would I like, roast lamb with eggs, a fine steak with.... No, I would be completely satisfied with a bowl of gruel. Ah, certainly, I should have it at once, and a basket of fruit, and ... and there they dropped the matter, until the priest, discovering my plight, well on in the afternoon, sent up a dish of rice gruel.

Everything does not come to him who waits in the Andes, and I descended again to mention the word "horse" to the now reeling subprefect.

"Have no care," he hiccoughed, "the government will attend to all that."

Knowing he was merely showing off before his fellow-townsmen, and that he would really let me lie where I was, or at most furnish me some crippled Rozinante to carry me to Tauca, three miles away, I refused his putative charity. He turned to the crowd about us with a pretense of being hurt to the quick, then sent a boy to summon the half-negro gobernador, likewise maudlin with the celebration.

"Since this señor has declined my offer to furnish him all that is needed," stuttered the offended subprefect, "you will have a *paid* horse, with saddle and bridle, ready for him—to-morrow."

"But why not to-day?" I protested.

"Absurd, señor! To-day is the great Corpus Cristi procession and you would not wish to miss that, even if you could get an Indian to go with you."

The procession, set for mid-morning, started soon after my return to my room. From the altar of the church it encircled the plaza and returned whence it had come. The route had been carefully scraped and swept—evidently for the only time during the year—by ragged Indians, forced to contribute this pious labor by the several grades of labor-dodging "authorities" howling over them. Then it had been spread with a long strip of carpet, after which came scores of barefoot women to cover it with a fixed design of flower-petals of all colors. Then forth from the mud church issued the Basque priest in cream-tinted vestments, his boína and incessant cigarette

gone, four Indians protecting him from the dull, sunless day by a rich canopy. Proceeded, followed, or surrounded by all the bareheaded, drink-maudlin piety of Cabana, the distressing "band" blowing itself wobbly-kneed, he moved slowly forward, only his own sacred feet touching the carpet, women and children pouncing upon the flower petals behind as rapidly as they were blessed by his number-eleven tread, and carrying them off as sacred relics. Outwardly he seemed sunk in the profoundest depths of devotion, yet twice, at a sign from me, he halted the procession, as by previous understanding, until I had caught a picture. Over the door of the towered mud-hovel into which the throng crowded after him were the half-effaced words, "HAEC EST DOMUS DEI ET PORTA CIELI." No doubt they were right, but it would have been easy to have mistaken it for something else.

Toward evening the subprefect's secretary brought a wooden-minded Indian and, introducing him as the owner of a horse, called upon me to pay 75 cents at once for the use of it. The moment I had done so he produced a still dirtier Indian and, introducing him as my "guide," demanded that he be paid fifty cents. That over, the secretary mentioned that it was customary to give a "gratification" to owner and "guide," that they might drink my good health for the coming voyage, at the end of which, he further hinted, it was costumbre to grant the "guide" a *real* for alfalfa for the animal, and something for himself for chicha, and ... but by that time I had withdrawn to my quarters.

At six in the morning I was dressed and ready; at seven the "guide" came to know if he really should bring the horse; at eight I burst in upon the sleeping

subprefect to know what had become of his boisterous promise to have food prepared for me at dawn. A soldier was sent to investigate. In due time he came back with the information that the cook was not up yet. At nine the "horse" arrived. It was a wild, hairy, mountain colt, a bit larger than an ass, which had never been shod, curried, or trimmed. The equipment it wore was wholly home-made,—a bridle of braided rawhide, without bits, like that with which our American Indian rides his mustang, a tiny, crude, wooden saddle with one thickness of leather stretched over it, and huge wooden box-stirrups.

"Now let nothing worry you," cried the subprefect, as I bade farewell to the noble city of Cabana, the "guide" trotting on foot behind, "I'll telegraph the gobernador of Corongo and Huaylas and the subprefect of the next province so that he can telegraph his governors and the prefect in Huaráz. No se moleste, señor; everything will be arranged by the government."

Hours of unbroken climbing brought us to a freezing-cold páramo, where flakes of snow actually fell and across the icy lagoons of which a wind that penetrated to the marrow swept from off the surrounding snow-peaks. So small was my animal that I expected him to drop under me at every step, so tiny that his front knees constantly knocked the stirrups off my feet, and so wobbly in his movements that it was like riding a loose-jointed hobby-horse. At last we caught the valley of a descending river, and racked and shaken in every bone, I rode into the plaza of Corongo, the near-Indian population of which seemed to take a bear-baiting pleasure in the predicaments of others. Evidently this was no new characteristic, for Stevenson, writing a century ago,

states, “Corongo is certainly the most disagreeable Indian town I ever entered.”

The gobernador sat gossiping in the mud hut to which the telegraph wire led. He had not, however, received any message from Cabana. As telegrams cost “authorities” nothing, I had permitted myself to hope that at least this promise would be kept. Having no other way of getting rid of me, however, the town ruler led the way to his own hovel, where long after dark his crude-mannered females prepared me a bowl of gruel with which to break an all-day fast.

The language of Corongo is chiefly Quichua, little in evidence since Ecuador, but due from now on to be more general than Spanish. The gobernador ran no unnecessary risk of having me left on his hands, and by six next morning the owner of a new “horse,” an even more striking caricature of what he was supposed to represent than that of the day before, had collected his fee and that of the new “guide.” These paid, he began at once to complain that the animal could not travel far without being shod, a luxury which, like his master, he had thus far never enjoyed. On the advice of the gobernador I added a half-sol for that purpose. Two hours later I raised so effective a protest against further delay that the animal was dragged in, still unshod, as he would be to the end of time, and made ready. The price, more or less exorbitant in honor of my helpless situation and gringo blood, would not have mattered had not each “authority” stood in cahoots with the owners and wasted my time and energy with their clumsy grafts.

Under a brilliant sun we squirmed away out of town, and began a sharp descent into one of the mightiest desert gorges in all the Andes, my “guide,” a stone-

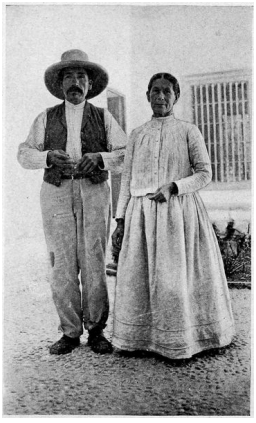
headed fellow, speaking only Quichua, who had plodded at a horse's tail all his days, slapping along behind me in his leather sandals, incessantly feeding himself lime and coca leaves. It would have been difficult enough for a man in the best of health to sit such an animal standing still on the level; let those who can imagine one with barely the strength left to hold himself together riding him down shale hillsides, often at a sharp angle, the stirrups knocked from his inert feet every few yards. Now the entire range cutting off the world on the east was capped with snow, making the scorched and thirsty valley the more tantalizing by comparison. On through blazing noon I clung to that diminutive brute with his murderous dog-trot, over blistered, waterless hills, harsh and repulsive in their barrenness, to fetch up at sunset, more dead than alive, in Yuramarca, a scattered village of far more chicha-shops than respectable inhabitants. Here, instead of the penetrating cold of Corongo, was to be feared the fever of the hot lands. The gobernador was a ragged, barefoot Indian not over eighteen, one of the few in town who spoke Spanish, and inclined to insolence in consequence. He pointed out a mud cave on the plaza as the stopping-place of all travelers. I protested against lying on the bare earth. "No hay más," growled the haughty official. Of course there was nothing more; there never is at the first ten or twelve requests among these pitiless aboriginals. An hour's coaxing and threatening, nicely interwoven, and the gobernador strolled across the plaza and came back with just the thing,—a six by two-foot door, covered on one side with zinc. I ordered the "guide" to place the saddle in the room, lest he decamp during the night, gave him a *medio* for chicha, a *real* to buy the tops of sugar-cane for the

"horse"—for we were far below the alfalfa line—and sent the gobernador with twice the necessary amount to find wheat for a bowl of gruel. To the unspeakable old female he ordered to prepare it. I paid a large day's wages, yet the luke-warm "soup" she delivered long after dark had only a spoonful of chaff in it. In the Andes, cooks, workmen, and servants appropriate as much as they dare of anything they have to do with, and soldier, peon, dog, or cat, each expects to levy his toll on the traveler's scanty rations. We of the north do not look kindly upon this species of charity, feeling that each should have his food regularly from a definite source; yet the means of avoiding a system more deadening in its effect than the "tip" of more advanced communities is yet to be found.



An Indian of Cerro de Pasco region carrying a slaughtered sheep. The women go barefoot but the

men wear woolen stockings and hairy cowhide sandals



Catalino Aguilar and his wife. Fermín Alva, my nurses in the hospital of Caráz

Before daylight of a moonlit Sunday morning we were off again through the same dreary desert. The sun, having first to climb the snow-capped Cordillera, only overtook us as we were crossing the decrepit little bridge high above the Santa river, racing through its resounding gorge on its way to the Pacific. The endless climb beyond was by so narrow a trail along the face of a yawning precipice that my saddlebags scraped continually along the mountain wall, and here and there a jutting rock thumped me sharply on the knee. At scorching high noon we caught sight, between grim, austere mountain flanks,

of a long, tilted valley lightly covered in all its extent with tiled houses among scrub trees, which my peon announced was Huaylas. I had heard such rosy reports of this "city" that my oft-disappointed hopes grew buoyant again before a view delightful to the eye weary with the savage solitudes behind. But it turned out to be but another of those bowelless, stone-hearted mountain towns whose ragged inhabitants remind one of buzzards hovering about a moribund, each snatching what he can, as soon as he dares. "Don Ricardo," an anemic, fishy-handed dwarf of outwardly white skin, owner of the chief shop of Huaylas, ran a sort of amateur hotel at Ritz-Carlton prices. The open-air "dining-room" on the back veranda overlooked—as guests likewise struggled to do—a jumble of ancient and noisome structures and stable-yards, in the most distressing of which a leprous old hag concocted the inedible messes that were poked through a repulsive hole in the wall an unconscionable time after they were ordered. The rheumatic and dismal den to which I was assigned was below the street level, though I could see through the wooden-barred window the brilliant, sunny day outside, and catch a glimpse of the serrated line of snow peaks away to the east. But the good people of Huaylas, informed in some way of my place of lodging, amused themselves by pounding on the window bars, shouting amiable insults in upon me, and now and then tossing in clods of earth and an occasional stone that did not always fall short of their aim. As I had had no quarrel with the priest, he could not have denounced me as a heretic. It must have been simply their racial delight in producing or watching suffering, the same trait that brings them joy during the sorriest moments of a bull-fight, and causes them to gather in crowds to tease and jeer at

an idiot or a cripple. It was “Taco” who finally came to my rescue. “Taco” was a Japanese, chief servant of Don Ricardo, and the only really intelligent or humane person I had met since walking out of the doctor’s house in Huamachuco. It was with deep regret that I paid his worthless master for what the servant really furnished.

The peon who was to start with me at dawn next day was still wallowing among the chicha-shops at blazing ten, and I was weakly urging a start—for the journey was long—when an imposing personage of white skin, wearing a leather cap and real shoes, pushed through the jeering throng and announced himself the congressman for that district. Having heard my tale of woe, he gave me a card ordering the *médico titular* of Caráz to admit me to the hospital there, and in due time prevailed upon the besotted peon to be off. The order was addressed to one Dr. Luís A. Phillips, and vastly buoyed up by the promise inherent in such a name, I endured uncomplainingly the rib-jolting trot to which the delayed start had sentenced me.

Town after town had proved such dismal disappointments that I did not look forward to Caráz with any overwhelming glee. But my hopes rose high when we surmounted one of the countless desert ridges and sighted at last a vast, level, though somewhat tilted plain between the Santa river and the brilliant white snow peaks of the ever higher Cordillera, with hundreds upon hundreds of inviting houses specking with red its many orchards and checkered green patches of cultivation. The Andes rise to appalling heights in these parts, and take on a variety of color and form almost comparable to the Alps in beauty, vastly outdoing them in a certain

wild, somber undomesticated grandeur. Under the declining sun the bold and impressive range turned from tawny brown to deep purple, then to tender violet and soft lilac as they receded, the snowy heads of the peaks seeming to hang suspended in the evening sky. The bridge to the north was in ruins, and I had to ride more than a mile beyond the town to catch the road from the south that carried us at last into the place as the shopkeepers were putting up their wooden shutters. It was almost a city, with evidence of considerable commerce and civilization, great glaciers gazing coldly down from the transparent sky of evening into the neat little plaza.

A considerable percentage of the inhabitants were white in color, but this was apparently only skin-deep. At the entrance to the doctor's patio I was met by his wife, a well-dressed, auburn-haired woman, to all outward appearances educated and civilized. But environment is a powerful factor. She differed not in the least from the Indians of Corongo. Having informed me with an icy indifference that the doctor was "somewhere in the town," she refused even to permit me to enter the patio to wait for him. There being nowhere else to go, I was forced to remain more than an hour astride the animal I could scarcely cling to after eight hours of racking trot. Not a drop of anything could I get for my raging thirst. Instead, the woman's saucy children joined a score of other urchins of the town in crowding around me and concocting all manner of annoyances, even to throwing stones and striking the horse unawares on the legs, while a score of adults looked on from the street corners or their doorways at the "amusement."

At first sight of the doctor, long after dark, my hopes gushed up like a spurting geyser, but they fell

leadenly to the ground as he opened his lips. The son of an Englishman stranded a half-century ago in this corner of Peru, he looked as British as any stroller along Piccadilly; yet in speech, manner, and mental processes he was “Spig” to the core. With a Latin-American eagerness to be rid of anything suggesting labor or annoyance, he asked a few superficial questions, grunted twice after the manner of physicians, and led the way down the cobbled street. My habit of picturing in detail every coming scene had only been increased by my condition, and I braced myself to enter a dismal, barren mud room, with a score of beds filled with foul-tongued Peruvian soldiers, in which the pilfering of my possessions would be the least of the annoyances awaiting me. I was most agreeably disillusioned. The hospital at Caráz was a new, whitewashed, pleasant little building recently erected by a society of well-to-do inhabitants. There were not a half-dozen patients, and in painting my picture I had completely overlooked the Andean rules of caste. However nastily he may treat him otherwise, the meanest Peruvian would not so far forget his training as to put a white man among Indians or negro-tainted soldiers. I was given full possession of a long, tile-floored room, opening on the flower-decked patio and with a large barred window on the street; the best chamber in the building, indeed, except the director’s office. True, the bed was board-floored, and I had to ask the caretaker to remove his champion gamecock from the room—whereupon he tied him by a leg just outside the door—but who could be so cruel as to ask a Peruvian to keep his rooster where he cannot gloat over him as he works?

The doctor came for a minute and a half every morning. The hospital being a public institution and

he a government doctor, he scowled at my offer to pay for treatment. The caretaker and especially his wife, with a seared and weather-worn face like that of a good-hearted old German peasant woman, were kindly if not experienced nurses. I could scarcely have fallen upon a finer spot, as nature goes, to be "laid on the shelf." Caráz, 7,440 feet above sea-level, was at an ideal height as a place of recuperation, its splendid climate tempered and clarified by the snowclads above. An open stream made music by my window; the sun was unbrokenly brilliant from the time it crawled over the snow-peaks to the east till it dropped behind the western ranges. I needed no clock to tell the time of day. It was 7:40 when the first golden streak fell upon the whitewashed wall beneath the window; 12:14 when the golden rectangle that marked the open door to the patio stood upright; 2:20 when the window-bars cast their first shadow on the tiled floor; and 5:10 when these, elongated to emaciated slenderness, faded away into the purple darkness of evening. Two youths of the town dropped in on me one day and brought an ancient book of tales; but it goes without saying that I had no hint of what was going on in the wide world beyond the encircling ranges. The unique feature of the hospital was that no provision whatever was made for patients to wash, even face and hands. Bathing was looked upon as highly dangerous to invalids, and it was only after several days, and at the expense of much argument, that I finally caused a washtub of tepid water to be dragged into the room.

CHAPTER XII
THE ROOF OF PERU

For a week I improved under the doctor's care. I had already strolled once or twice around the neat little plaza, down upon which the massive, snowclad peaks gaze with paternal serenity. But my legs were still in that woven-straw condition that made my feet lead ingots; and no pleasure quite outdid that of lying abed watching the sunshine crawl across the floor, and listening to the keeper's rooster challenging the world to combat. I should have regretted a controversy with that rooster during those days; I am sure he would have worsted me.

On Sunday, the first of June, the doctor did not appear; nor the next day, nor the next. Medicines and tonics ran out. I decided to push on next morning, before what strength I had regained evaporated entirely. But during the night there came upon me a pain under which I could only writhe and stuff my throat with bedclothes. When I had enjoyed this an hour or two, a brilliant thought struck me,—appendicitis! All the night through—for only the rooster slept within shouting distance—I painted fanciful pictures of a grave looked down upon by the paternal, serene peaks through the ages to come. For

it was easy to guess how effectively the surgeons of the Andes would surge—with their butcher-knives, sheep-shears and ditch-water. In the morning I sent the caretaker to summon the doctor before he set out on his rounds. About nine he came back to announce, in a manner suspiciously sheepish, that the señor doctor médico titular was confined to his bed. As the day wore on the fellow overcame his racial lack of initiative to the extent of bringing me a potion from the chief *botica*, but it had little effect. Then all at once "Taco," the Japanese of Huaylas, grinned in on me through the bars of my window, and a half-hour later the keeper of the drug-shop had come in person.

"It is congestion of the bowels, señor," he announced. "These pílduras will relieve it. The doctor was to have changed the treatment on Sunday to avoid this, but—"

"Is the doctor seriously ill?" I asked.

"Señor," said the druggist, after a moment of hesitation, "on Saturday night the médico titular took some liquor at a tertulia. It is fatal to him. He cannot stop. It is now four days that he has lain mareado" (seasick), "and he has not been able to visit one of his patients. Out in the pueblos three have already died; for there is no other doctor."

I had been ten days in Caráz when, in spite of a soreness within and an annoying lack of vigor, I decided to push on afoot. A broad road led south along the green and fertile valley of the Santa, shut in on either hand by the yellow, terra-cotta flanks of barren mountains as between unscalable walls. The way was well-peopled with broad-faced, stolid Indians speaking no Spanish, and a felt hat of tobacco-color was now taking the place of the dingy

"panamas" that had been almost universal since southern Ecuador. It was only a simple day's walk; eight miles to another provincial capital. But it seemed at least twenty, especially as the "perfectly level" road kept mounting steadily, for Yungay is a thousand feet higher than Caráz. The snow-and-glacier mass of Huascarán, king of that magnificent snow-capped range that dwarfs the Alps, bulked menacingly almost sheer above the bucolic old plaza, when I plodded across it in the sleepy silence of noonday to the dwelling of an unusually simple-hearted subprefect.

Next morning Yungay stretched for miles along the half-cobbled highway, and had scarcely ended when Mancos began. This department of Ancachs and the valley of the Santa is the most densely populated region of Peru. The fifteen miles to Carhuáz was what the Peruvians call an excellent road; to a people of wider outlook it would have been recognizable as a broad expanse of loose stones undulating over barren ridges, relieved by the bracing mountain air from off the blue-white bulk of Huascarán, here seeming to hang suspended overhead. The water of all this valley is reputed a source of several dread diseases, among them the warty *verrugas* indigenous to Peru. The bottle of boiled "tea-water" swinging from my leather harness lasted but a few dry miles, and I could only fall back, not without misgiving, on chicha, announced for sale by a little red flag before an occasional hut along the way. The bridge that once lifted the camino real across the swift, cold stream at the edge of the green oasis that marked the end of the day's tramp had gone the way of most Peruvian bridges, and left me to wade waist-deep. Strangely enough, my host of Yungay had kept his word to telegraph the

gobernador of Carhuáz, and I sat down almost upon arrival with the family at a dinner served after the patriarchal manner of the Andes. To those of us at table the wife at the head granted the full meal, from the hot, peppery soup of Ancachs to the dessert of fried plantains in “honey,”—melted crude sugar. To the dozen Indian servants squatted along the wall she dished out frugally the coarser viands, to each according to his station in life, the bedraggled scullion getting only a small gourdful of boiled corn and yuca. During our Sunday stroll in the plaza the gobernador introduced me in the same careful order to every town celebrity, down to the last teniente; after which we of the élite gathered round the town clerk in a corner of the square to hear read the weekly “bulletin,” from the two-line cable of foreign news “via Lima” to the last testimonial to the efficacy of the pills of Dr. Ross as a panacea of all earthly misfortunes.

I was miles south before the first rays of Monday’s sun fell upon me, and even after that was able to sneak along for hours in the shadow of the Cordillera, so closely did it stand above me. Town rapidly succeeded town, with miles of almost unbroken house-walls crowding a damnably cobbled road to barely the width of a wheeled vehicle. Not even along an English highway would more houses have been shops. The male population spoke a more or less fluent Spanish, weedy with terms from their native tongue; but the women either could not or would not use anything but Quichua. The dialect of the region contained a labor-saving devise in the phrase “A ’onde vueno?” serving for the more specific “Where do you come from and where are you going?” of less inventive sections. Not a few took me for a peddler, and called out from their

doorways, “Qué lleva de venta, señor?” and some sent children running after me with a summons to return, lest they miss a precious opportunity for long-winded and chiefly futile bargaining. Ripened corn was being husked in the narrowing fields along the way. The repulsive, flanking ranges crowded closer and closer together, squeezing the stony road ever higher, until the hills closed in entirely, and a precipitous, barren ridge, cutting off the world to the south, left it no choice but to contract to a cobbled street of the department capital. The sun was setting when I halted at a corner of Huaráz’ main plaza, my legs leaden with the twenty-five undulating, stony miles behind me, to inquire for that famous hotel rumor had pictured for weeks gone by.

The conviction came upon me that there would not be a hotel even in Lima. A citizen of Huaráz did point out to me a building boasting itself the “GRAN HOTEL,” but all it offered was a few rooms to let. To me fell that of the zaguan, a prison-like chamber forming a front corner of the building and opening on both the street and the entrance to the patio. It had once been the oratorio of a private dwelling, and the altar and its decorations were still intact, except that the Virgin had flown from her niche. Across the way was a Chinese fonda with the same bill of fare, worse cooked, worse served, and more expensive than that of Cajamarca. This was the gathering-place of the élite among the homeless transients. I had not the courage to investigate the dozen other Chinese and native “restaurants” scattered about town.

Huaráz, capital of the most populous department of Peru and the largest city I had yet seen since crossing the frontier, is really but another mud village of the Andes, differing from the rest only in size. Its adobe

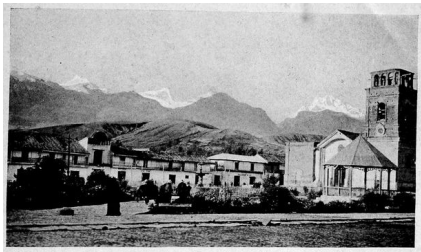
buildings seldom rise above a story and a half in height; its rusticated inhabitants, in ragged, comic-opera costumes, the majority speaking only Quichua, were for the most part ill-bred and disagreeable in manner, especially to “gringos,” whose intelligence or cleanliness they seemed to resent. Even the small percentage of whites—real whites, that is, for there were many who no doubt mistakenly considered themselves so—were gaping mountaineers. Window-glass, to be sure, was to be found, and there were actually three or four clumsy, two-wheeled carts, like the rural wagons of England, the arrival of which was no doubt an event in the town history. Foreign residents were numerous, especially Chinamen, who owned many of the shops of importance, leaving the natives to squat in the street with their few cents'-worth of wares. The town itself has nothing “picturesque” about it, neither in the color and style of its houses nor the rags of its inhabitants; but this is far more than made up for by the magnificent range of snowclad peaks that climb up into the blue all about it, towering close above the town on the east and stretching away into the north, to end in the enormous blue-white mass of Huascarán. Its climate, colder than that of Quito and with a perpetually brilliant sunshine and an invigorating crispness to the air, was delightful. There was even a shelf of books for sale in one of the larger establishments, though the nearest I came to finding literature of the country for the road ahead was Björnson’s “Sendas de Diós,” whatever it may be called in Norwegian.

Rumor had it that the tramp over the icy Cordillera Central that now lay before me would be “impossible,” even to a man in the most sturdy condition. To slip down to the coast and sail for Lima would have been easy, but a racial obstinacy forced

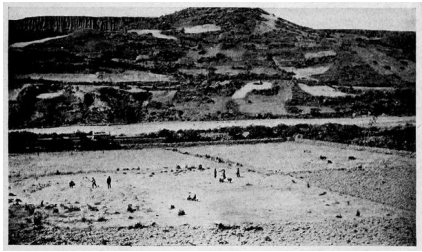
me to pursue to the bitter end the task I had set myself, though it promised only the monotony of familiar experience and further intercourse with a people that had grown utterly antipathetic in habit, feature, and character. An American resident furnished me a horse and a peon for the first day's journey. The prefect had favored me with the customary flowery document to his subordinates along the way, ordering them to "lend me all classes of facilities." It would have been far more to the point had he commanded them more specifically to assist me to acquire an occasional plate of beans. The dusty road close along the diminishing river was well traveled, chiefly by long donkey trains and plodding, expressionless Indians. Huts and even small villages were frequent, the barren ranges crowding ever closer and dwindling almost to foothills, or rather seeming so to dwindle as we mounted ever higher. Beyond the bridge that carried us back to the right bank of the Santa were scores of little wheat-fields, often hanging far up the steep hillsides; and Indians were threshing the grain by driving their animals round and round the circles of hard earth in which it had been spread, and tossing it high in the air with wooden shovels until the wind had carried away the chaff. The monotonous mud town of Recuay, notorious for its horse-thieves, gazed stolidly upon us as we trotted on to Ticapampa, headquarters of a French mining company, the several tall chimneys of which were belching their smoke into the brilliant sky, their ugliness offset by the first suggestion of industry in Peru.

It cost me three days and several tramps back to Recuay to find a mount for the journey ahead. Walking would have been far less laborious. But there were sixteen leagues of bleak, foodless páramos

and two snow-topped ranges separating me from the first suggestion of habitation on the further side of the great glacier-clad central chain of the Andes, that stretched away to north and south further than the eye could command, like an impassable barrier set by nature against the wilfulness of puny man.



Though within a few degrees of the equators, Huaráz, capital of the most populous department of Peru, has a veritable Swiss setting of snow-clad peaks and glaciers



Threshing wheat with the aid of the wind. In the few regions of the Andes that are neither too high nor too low for this grain, the methods of cultivation are the most primitive

Fortunately the wife of an Indian of Recuay celebrated that Sunday so effectually that she brought to bed her companions in a drunken brawl. The gobernador fined her twenty soles. Her husband possessed only ten, and her wails from the adobe cárcel were interfering with the bargaining in the market-place. Summoned by the walking scarecrow who boasted himself the lieutenant-governor, the head of the disrupted household admitted, after a wealth of subterfuges, that he owned two mules in condition for a journey, and the gobernador, pocketing "in the name of justice" the sovereign I handed him, ordered the abject husband to be ready at six in the morning to accompany me to Huallanga.

Some two leagues further up the contracted valley we crossed the now tiny Santa by a bridge of sticks and, catching the gorge of a little stream fed by the glaciers above, plunged due east into the mountains. The sun had burned our faces in the river valley; an hour afterward it was cold as late November. Rain began, but quickly turned to a mixture of hail and snow. Dusk overtook us at the foot of a mighty glacier, though not until we had sighted one of the rare shepherd's huts that huddled in an occasional stony hollow. These miserable Indian *chozas* of the upper heights are built of cobble-stones heaped up to the height of a dog-kennel and covered with brown ichu grass, hardly as large and quite as crude as those the beaver fashions, defending their miserable inmates neither from wind nor rain. A single room, which can only be entered on hands and knees, houses the whole family, whom a sheepskin or two serves as bed, and two or three earthen pots as utensils in which to cook their scanty fare over an ichu or dried-dung fire in the center of the windowless hovel. Totally indifferent to wealth or

comfort, with hardly fuel enough for cooking purposes, the stolid inhabitants slink into their squalid dens as soon as the sun has withdrawn his genial rays, and shiver through a night during which they get almost no unbroken sleep. With scarcely enough food to keep themselves from starvation, the house swarms of mangy curs that curl up among them by night, and which, being never fed, dash greedily at any offal, like the pigs of Central America. Here there was a second kennel, oval in shape, which the woman permitted us to occupy, because she was asked in her own tongue by one of her own people. Both she and her half-dozen children were barefoot and in scanty garb, yet appeared completely indifferent to the icy cold which, if less in degrees than in a Canadian mid-winter, was more penetrating. We carried blankets sufficient to pass the night comfortably, huddled close together, but as often as I stepped out into the brilliant moonlight in which the ice-fields above us stood forth like fissured and fantastic ghost-castles, the very marrow in my bones seemed to congeal.

Hoar-frost covered the earth, and ice a half-inch thick lay on the stagnant puddles when we set out in the bitter cold dawn across a region drear in the extreme. Stiff, stony climbs carried us up to the very edges of immense blue-white glaciers, and through patches of snow that threw the sharp rays of the highland sun into our eyes and faces like a spray of needles. The day was as laborious as any I had ever spent afoot,—thirty-six miles over the wintry, rock-pitched double crest of the Central Cordillera on a mule who jolted my unaccustomed frame to a loose-jointed wreck before I finally slid gratefully to the ground in the bleak mining-town of Huallanga. This was a slight oasis of imported life in a wild, almost

uninhabited region, the Peruvian mine-manager of which was extraordinary from at least two points of view,—he was blond as a Norseman, and so advanced in his customs that I dared even address his wife directly at table.

Next day I joined—for a decided consideration—the caravan of a local merchant whose arrieros were bound for Cerro de Pasco with a troop of cargo-animals. A "civilized" Indian, that is, one who wore shoes and spoke Spanish, called for me with a half-size horse, the crude native saddle covered with a *pellón*, the hairy saddle-rug all high-caste horsemen use in this region, and soon after noon we jogged away down a stony little river. The merchant had duly and honestly warned me that, being only pack-animals, his *chuscos* were gifted with no gentle pace. But he had not warned me that I was joining a way-freight. I drew on ahead in spite of myself, and when, barely eight miles from Huallanga, the shrieks and whistles of the drivers died out behind, I waited a half-hour in vain, then went back some distance to find them lassoing the animals one by one, piling their loads or pack-saddles in a hollow square, and turning them loose with their front feet crudely hobbled. There were nineteen animals, mostly in ballast, attended by four arrieros. Too lazy apparently to unsling their pots and cook supper, the patched and weather-faded quartet munched a bit of parched corn and a sheet of sun-dried beef, and sat all night drinking and wailing maudlin ballads. The "tent" stretched over the packs was so low that I had to lie down on the ground and roll under it, and so thin that the rain dripped in upon me almost in streams.

It was still black night when the water-soaked canvas

was pulled off me, and I found the arrieros already engaged in a riotous effort to round up the animals. This was no simple task, in spite of the hobbles, and the morning was well advanced before the last of the troop had been lassoed and loaded. During the operation I suggested that we prepare at least a pot of tea, but Valenzuela, the chief arriero, dismissed the matter with a grimace and a "neither wood nor grass will burn after the rain," and I could only choke my hunger with a rock-hard lump of bread and shiver under my poncho until I mounted, this time a mule, to spare the animal of the day before.

We followed the river-gorge so long that it turned almost uncomfortably warm. Then suddenly abandoning the highway to modern Huánuco and the roundabout, but warm and well-populated, route to Cerro de Pasco, the arrieros drove the animals pell-mell up a steep gorge between towering mountain walls, by what looked like a spillway from a stone-crusher. This was the very route I should have chosen, for while the longer one would have been more comfortable, this followed very closely the ancient Inca highway. Topping the horizon, we trotted on across an enormous, brown-yellow plain of scanty ichu vegetation that stretched away to the hazy foot of what looked from this height like low hills. Here was just such a place as the Incas, requiring an unbroken outlook over the surrounding world and grazing land for their llamas, chose for their cities. I was not surprised, therefore, to find a long expanse of the páramo covered with hundreds of stone ruins, only the walls still standing, from one to eight feet high, in broken, fantastic disarray. This was "Huánuco el Viejo," which the Spaniards found an important city at the time of the Conquest, but which the less hardy half-breed descendants

abandoned, as in so many cases, for a warmer valley, eighteen leagues to the east. History does not reach back to the origin of old Huánuco, the ruins of which still occupy almost a square mile of the silent, utterly uninhabited plain. The road—a mere interweaving of faint paths across the Andean prairie—passed within five hundreds yards of the ruins, but the caravan pushed on without a halt, as if these monuments of their ancestors were mere stone-heaps, unworthy a glance of attention. I turned and trotted away across the plain, bathed in the cold, glaring sunshine of the Andean plateau, toward the site. Valenzuela, after a shout of protest, stuck close on my heels, whether out of fear that I would decamp with the mule, or lay hands on some old Inca treasure, or from some superstition connected with the "Gentiles," I do not know. There was really little to be seen. Every one of the countless ruins of large and small buildings, arranged more or less in squares, were sections of cobble-stone walls, mere stone-heaps without sign of mortar, as crude as the *chozas* of shepherds, now fallen until, in many places, only their symmetrical arrangement suggested the hand of man. To this there was only one exception. Some three hundred yards from the rest of the ruins was a rectangular fortress of carefully cut and nicely fitted stone blocks, with suggestions of cement, now mere walls, some fifteen feet high, filled level full of earth on which the drear ichu grew as thickly as on the surrounding plain. Except in extent, the ruins were not to be compared with those of Marca-Huamachuco, though the "castillo" closely resembled in construction and stone-fitting the single monument of Ingapirca in southern Ecuador.

We trotted on after the pack-train, and rode for some hours over low ridges, each of which brought to view

a new expanse of dreary, yellowish landscape. Occasionally an arriero broke forth in a mournful song that rose and fell with the same monotony as the undulating páramo. Now and then, as a pack worked loose, one of the muleteers dismounted and, deftly slipping out of his poncho, threw it over the head of the animal and readjusted the load. To my surprise, quickly followed by my disgust, the train soon after noon swung into the cobble-fenced field of a low, cobble-stone hut, similar to, but far more miserable and tiny than those of the ancient city behind. Greeting the barefoot Indian woman who emerged on all fours from the hut, the arrieros began to round up and unload the animals. Though we had not made fifteen miles, we were to stop here for the night. I swallowed my wrath, reflecting that he who joins a freight-train must not expect express speed.

It was too cold to sit, and I took to promenading weakly about the hillside. Down in a hollow beyond I came upon a family preparing their crop of potatoes after the ancient Inca fashion still common to the Andes. This *chuño—chuñu*, in Quichua—is the chief vegetable of Andean marketplaces and the principal food of the Indians of the Sierra. The newly dug potatoes are spread out on the ground at a high altitude, preferably on the bank of a highland lake or stream, and left to freeze by night. They are small potatoes, for the Indian's mode of selection has been to plant only the smallest, eating or selling the larger, until the tubers indigenous to Peru have degenerated to the same low level as their horses and dogs. When the sun has thawed the potatoes, the Indians of the household tread out the juice with their bare feet, then spread them in the sun to dry. This produces the *chuño negro*, or black chuño, which in the time of the Incas was the only kind permitted

the common people, and which to-day forms the chief product of the process. Those who prefer *chuño blanco*, the "twice frozen white chuño" which graced only the tables of the Incas and nobles, put the tubers inside a well of cobble-stones under the surface of a river or lake, and leave them from two to eight days, after which they are dried in the sun. The result is a food that will keep indefinitely, but which has very much the same taste as so much fried sand. The most common method of preparing these frozen potatoes is to grind them in a stone mortar and use the powdered chuño to thicken soup.



Crossing the Central Cordillera of the Andes south of Huaráz, barely nine degrees below the equator. In the foreground is my "guide" of the obstreperous wife

When the head of the Indian household arrived, he opened with Valenzuela a conversation in half-breed Quichua, of which I caught enough to learn that we were to drive a league west in the morning to wait a day for some species of cargo, stop to pick up another load a few leagues beyond, and so on indefinitely. I called the arriero aside and protested

that, aside from the hardships and exposure of lying out on every mountain-side, I was steadily growing worse for lack of treatment. To my surprise he proposed that I ride on alone next day. As he would never have dreamed of making such a proposal to a Peruvian stranger, it spoke well of the opinion he had gathered of Americans from contact with them in the mining town toward which we were headed. A bed of several horse-blankets was spread for me beneath the flap of the canvas covering our packs, out under the shivering stars that stood forth in the luminous highland sky with the unnatural luster of electric bulbs. During the later hours of the night, when I rolled out into the cold, still air, a brilliant full moon was flooding with almost the light of noonday the rolling mountainous world about us as far as the eye could reach.

I knew only too well that a matter settled the night before would have to be argued out anew in the morning. Dawn crept up over the eaves of the east, and the god of the Incas flung his horizontal rays across the empty plateau, but Valenzuela, assuming the customary air in such cases, that we had neither of us meant what we had said the evening before, made no move to prepare for my departure. When I reminded him of his promise, he announced that he would, of course, keep it, if I really, seriously desired it. Only, it would be utterly impossible for a man unacquainted with the route to find his way across the often unmarked punas and pampas ahead. Then, too, it was infested with bands of robbers who at times attacked whole pack-trains, to say nothing of one lone, helpless gringo. If only I would wait until to-morrow, he and I would ride on alone at breakneck speed, and make up for all the delay. I had long since learned the close resemblance of the

South American mañana to a greased pig; moreover, I had no desire to ride at breakneck speed. He muttered under his breath at this gringo obstinacy, and ordered the youngest arriero to saddle a horse and accompany me. The latter refused. Valenzuela shrugged his shoulders with a gesture that meant, "You see it is out of the question." But the experienced Andean traveler can always win his point, if he insists long and hard enough. The chief arriero gave up at last and sent a man to lassoo and saddle, not the "stout mule" he had promised the evening before, but one of the saddest imitations of the genus horse in camp; and late in the morning I rode down through the chuño-producing gully and away over the brown and sterile world spread broad and high before me.

The arriero's first prophecy came quickly true. I lost the road. A stretch of what was evidently the old Inca highway, broad and grass-grown and lined by two rows of stones, pushed straight on over all obstacles in what seemed to be the right direction, but it did not fit the descriptions that had been given me. The well-marked trail I followed led me down into two gaping hamlets that had not been mentioned, and doubled the miles to Baños, somnolent as an Italian village at summer noonday, down in the throat of a gorge. The frowsy chusco already gave signs of not being able to endure the journey. All I demanded was a reasonable walking pace, yet it cost me far more labor than to have made the trip afoot to keep the animal moving a scant two miles an hour. It was evident that, for all my incessant labor, we should not reach before nightfall the hacienda we were seeking, and when it came on to rain and hail in a cold, bleak bowl of mountains, I turned toward a collection of huts that

stood out dimly as an animal of protective coloring on the upper edge of the saucer-shaped hollow.

The Indian men, patronizing and arrogant in their clumsy way, as usual in such situations, offered me the customary six-inch block of wood on which to squat under the eaves of the "corredor." I took weakly to promenading the twenty-four miles in the saddle out of my legs, and furtively inspected the six huts that made up the collection. All were earth-floored dens, roofed with ichu, against several of which immense quantities of dried cow-dung were stacked like cordwood. The women squatting over the fire in the center of one of the huts handled fuel and food at one and the same time. Though they were barefoot and scantily clad, the men wore heavy, home-knit wool stockings to their knees, and crude moccasins of a strip of hairy cowhide, drawn together over the foot with a "puckering string" of rawhide. The males spoke considerable Spanish, but the women knew, or pretended to know, only Quichua. There were attached to the place at least a score of dogs, who set up a head-splitting chorus as often as I stirred, and at few-minute intervals even without that provocation. Across the shallow hollow the long line of snow-clad peaks that had grown up along the entire eastern horizon during the day stood forth in bold and impressive majesty in the light of evening, a light that seemed strained through purple-tinted crystals.

When the mountain cold settled down like an icy sheet, I asked where I might sleep.

"Why, there in the corredor, to be sure," mumbled the Indian.

"We gente blanca have not the indifference to cold of los naturales," I replied.

"Well, then, here in the kitchen," he grumbled.

"How about that casita?" I asked, pointing to a pampa-grass lean-to against the largest hut.

"That is where the family sleeps."

"And that?" I persisted, indicating a structure of beehive or beaver-house shape, built entirely of ichu and with a rounded door not three feet high, that stood forth on a knoll behind the others.

But that, it seemed, was where the watchman slept—though what he watched was not apparent. After a long conference in Quichua, however, this was assigned me with sullen grace; a boy was sent to drag out the "watchman's" bed of sheepskins, and I struggled up to the shelter with saddle, pack, and equipment, and crawled inside on hands and knees. The choza was constructed on the same plan as the wigwams of the American "red men,"—a pole frame set up cone-shaped and covered with mountain grass, through which the bitter wind that swept across this sterile upland cut as a knife through cheesecloth, and so low that even in the center I could barely stand upright on my knees. The chusco had been turned over to a boy who was to watch it all night for a week's wage. It was not that I took much stock in the Indian's assertion that there was horse-stealing in these parts; but I hoped by this arrangement to forestall any rascality he might himself set afoot. The "watching," however, was evidently by some species of aboriginal telepathy; for not only was no sign of a guardian to be seen as often as I crawled out into that interminable night, but when morning came the head of the household greeted me with:

"El chusco se ha perdido—the animal has lost itself."

"Lost!" I cried.

"Sí, señor, but it will be found again. The boy has already been sent to search for it."

How even my long-experienced instinct for guessing aright among a hundred splendid chances to go astray saved me from getting hopelessly lost during that day, I have never been able to fathom. Across the utterly uninhabited and almost untraveled mountain-top the trail was at best faintly marked, and finally, beyond the cold, blue lake of Lauracocha, reputed the real source of the Amazon, it disappeared altogether. For hours I prodded my wretched imitation of a horse forward by compass over hill and dale, and by some stroke of luck fell upon the trail again beyond. Soon the pampa gave way to green and tremulous sod, and a swamp in which I all but mired the animal beyond recovery. Nor did the route hold to the same direction, but frequently sidestepped unexpectedly for no apparent reason, and it was only by the general lay of the hills and the instinct of long practice that I picked it up again. Once it split evenly, and the branch I chose led far up the face of a thousand-foot cliff, the path hewn in the sheer wall growing ever narrower, until the animal thumped my knee against the stone precipice and all but pitched us headlong into the appalling ravine below. To dismount was no simple task, and had the horse been a foot longer I should not have succeeded in turning him around and leading the way back to the fork. On the other side of the peak was a great natural stone stairway, down which the animal slipped and dropped with a painful succession of jolts. The gorge narrowed and deepened; then suddenly, close at hand on the steep flank of the mountain, appeared the first llamas I had seen in Peru, a whole flock of them. From then on they were so frequent that within the next half-hour I

had seen far more llamas than in all the rest of my life. A new costume for men, at first sight ludicrous, came into evidence almost at the same time. Instead of trousers they wore very roomy, dark-colored breeches, cut off exactly at the knee, so that the first glimpse of their wearers at a distance was little short of startling, suggesting for a moment the astounding incongruity of an Indian woman sporting the skirt of a ballet-dancer. Below these garments they wore the long, knitted wool stockings, gray or black, and the hairy cowhide moccasins that had first appeared a few days before, and as they passed me they snatched off their heavy, brown felt hats with some mumbled greeting in Quichua.

While enjoying a racking fever in the comparatively comfortable home of the gobernador of Yanahuanca, I learned that there were two ways of reaching Cerro de Pasco. One was to ride nine bitter-cold leagues across a trackless puna, on which a lone gringo was sure to get lost and die of exposure; the other was to travel about half that distance by a well-marked road to Goyllarisquisca, where los americanos have their coal mines and whence there ran a daily train. I could not believe that fate would be so crude a practical joker as to let a man who had found his way clear from Bogotá go astray on the last day of his journey, but I could easily conceive of the wreck of a horse wilting between my leaden legs somewhere out on the unmarked pampa; moreover, the sight of a railroad would be a comparatively new experience. I decided on the shorter route.

It necessitated the gobernador calling me at two in the morning, before a raging fever had entirely burned itself out. An Indian in flowing breeches, leading a “horse” that was to bring back some arrival

by train, and another astride a pitifully small pony, led the way out into the luminous starlit night. A good road tacked gradually upward through a sleeping village, hanging like some prehensile creature on the swift hillside, where the dogs sang us a rousing chorus, and lifted us in some three hours to the razor-backed summit of a ridge, down the further slope of which sprawled headlong a still larger town, fantastic of profile in the morning starlight. We labyrinthed through it, meeting scores of panty-clad and moccasined Indians and barefoot women and girls toiling marketward under atrocious burdens; for the day was Sunday. Below the town we came out on a road paralleling a stupendous gorge; and across it, so high above that I could scarcely believe it possible a cluster of electric lights, suspended in the night between earth and heaven, mingled with the stars and half blotted out at intervals by the smoke of American industry, marked Goyllarisquisca, a city of the sky, to see which we must crane our necks like countrymen at the foot of man's mightiest monument. The stars went out one by one, like gas-jets turned off by hurrying street-lighters; the luminous night turned to colorless opaque dawn, in which the jagged Sierra stood out flat and featureless as if cut out of cardboard. We went down and ever down into an unconscionable gorge, to cross—such is the ghastly futility of Latin-America—an insignificant stream; then quickly began to climb again. There was a path straight up the mountain-side to Goyllarisquisca, a path which a man unsusceptible to dizziness, and capable of climbing a steep stairway of a hundred thousand steps without guard-rails or a landing on which to pause for breath, might cover in a half-hour. Instead, we wound corkscrew-wise around the entire mountain, through another town,

fantastic in its perpendicular setting as the last, yet reduced in the disillusioning light of day to its drab, mud-built reality; and uncovering others pitched at queer places on unattainable noses and gouged-out hollows of the range in which the shadows still lurked like skulking bandits. The mountains beyond were garbed from head to foot in white robes, and in the valleys lay seas of mist from which emerged crags and peaks like uninhabited, rocky islands. Less beautiful, perhaps, in its aspect than the more colorful Alps, the scene vastly outdid these in its rugged, masculine grandeur. Little by little we fell in with an almost unbroken procession of Indians; here and there one clad in exotic overalls whispered the approach of American influence, and at length our breathless animals staggered over the last ridge into the village of the tongue-loosening name.

Before me lay a small Pittsburgh, not so small at that, with great cranes swinging across the gorges, unsentimental stone buildings roaring and matter-of-fact chimneys belching forth the sooty smoke of industry. Long rows of decent living-quarters were interspersed with longer ones of box and flat cars, and sprawling about the higher levels were native shacks so tinged with the foreign influence that even a stove-pipe protruded here and there from their roofs of wavy sheet-iron. Across the scene floated the sweet music of a deep-voiced American train whistle, and on every hand was the evidence of diligence, masculine toil, and effective *doing* that quickened my northern pulse like a deep draft of wine. It was like coming back to my native world after a long absence. Scores of half-forgotten things I had never before seen in South America surged up about me, and upon me came drowsy contentment that my struggles were behind me and that I had already

virtually set foot in the central plaza of Lima.

I slipped clumsily off the miserable chusco and turned him over, trappings and all, to the Indian who was to deliver him to Valenzuela when he passed through Yanahuanca. My legs obeyed me sullenly, as if weighted with ball and chain, and my physical condition gave to my movements a hesitating, deliberate dignity. At the station was a restaurant run by a Chinaman with Peruvian assistance, where the American influence by no means ceased at bacon and eggs, but had reached the height of butter and sliced bread, and rosy bottles of catsup! In a corner of the room a coal-stove blazed merrily, the first artificial heat I had felt in a long two years. I wandered out upon the platform. At the far end stood a man fondling a dog, a real dog, not an Andean cur, and as I approached he protested affectionately and ineffectually:

“Now you get down; you’re dirtying my pants.”

There was no mistaking that vocabulary, even if the strangely nasal accent that struck my unaccustomed ear rudely had not sufficed to betray the speaker’s nationality. Peruvians do not fondle dogs; nor do they refer to their nether garments in that abrupt and familiar fashion. I was soon seated in a comfortable office-chair, a stack of New York papers beside me. But I gave up in despair explaining how I had come to Goyll—well, pronounce it yourself—without having ever been either in Lima or “the Cerro”; and I fancy I had convinced my host of nothing, except that I was a clumsy and unconscionable liar, before the giant Baldwin rolled in, dragging behind it a half-dozen full-sized American freight-cars, as if some branch of the railways of my own land had pierced this lofty nook of the Andes.

The official business of the line is to transport coal to the mines at Cerro de Pasco, and passengers are accepted only on suffrance. The “first-class” coach was the familiar old American caboose, with a line of leather cushions along the walls and a coal stove in the center. It was empty when I entered, but had I not almost forgotten the ways of Latin-American travelers, I should not have been so surprised when it at length filled to overflowing with noisy, over-dressed native women, a few men of the white-collar class, drummers for the most part, hideous with rings, and every species of bundle and cumbersome baggage. Then two robust American trainmen, genuine as if they had that moment been picked off the top of a transcontinental freight-car, stamped in, climbed into their cupola, and we were off.

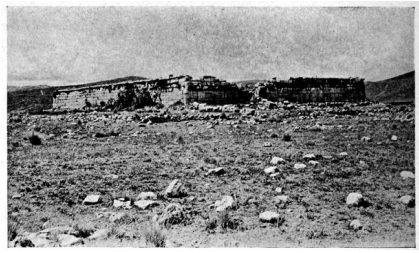
It was the reaction, no doubt, from the straining months behind me that brought on a paludismo that set me shaking even under my poncho. But the unaccustomed artificial heat all but choked me, and when I had accepted an orange, and gravely refused the whiskey, brandy, and black coffee my sympathetic fellow-passengers would have forced upon me as sure cures, I climbed into the cupola. The landscape would not have been joyful under the best of conditions. A bare mountain-top, faintly rolling, its frosty soil cherishing no vegetation except the dreary yellow-brown ichu of the uplands, stretched monotonously away on every hand, its surface flooded with the brilliant, thin sunshine of Andean plateaux and mottled here and there with fleecy cloud shadows. Now and then a flock of llamas lifted their absurd heads to gaze after us as we sped past. Once or twice we stopped at a wind-threshed mud-town, standing out pitifully unsheltered on the treeless waste, halted an hour at grimy, smoke-

belching La Fundición with its smelters, and drew up at dusk in bare and dreary Cerro de Pasco. It was June 22, three months from the Peruvian frontier and 2269 miles from Bogotá, of which I had covered 243 on horseback and twenty-five by rail.

On the train I had been the storm-center of a heated difference of opinion. The Peruvian passengers contended that I should descend by the morning express to Lima, where I would quickly recover under the care of famous physicians of the capital; the train-crew that I should enter the hospital of the American mining company on “the Hill.” There could be no debate between entrusting myself again to the careless inefficiency of native practitioners, and the happy opportunity of entering an institution conducted by men of my own race. When I had found a boy to carry my baggage, I set out with high hopes, if slow steps, for the American hospital.

It was an imposing, one-story building, covering a space equal to a city block and forming a hollow square around an extensive cement-floored patio, on the far edge of the drear and colorless American mining town, well removed from its smoke and swirling dust and disturbing noises. My welcome was not, to be sure, exactly what a morbid imagination had led me to picture, but that was no doubt due to the fact that both doctors were at the moment absent. The head-nurse overcame in time her inclination to refuse me admittance, and sent an Indian boy, closely related in personal habits to the occupants of mountain-top chozas, to show me into a ward. In appearance it was all that a hospital ward should be, its ten imported cots all unoccupied. The boy jerked his head sidewise toward a chair and disappeared. Two empty hours dragged funereally

by. Then another Indian youth, startlingly like a personification of squalor and uncleanliness in a masque gotten up by some stern disciple of the Zola school of realism, burst in upon my feverish dreams, and before I could raise a hand in protest thrust a thermometer into my mouth. Evidently it was his assigned duty to take the temperature of anyone caught on the premises. Had I come into the ward to recane the chairs, no doubt he would have forced a thermometer down my throat, like some automatic machine worked by springs, removed and shaken it, wiped it on the seat of his trousers, and pattered away on his bare feet.



The fortress of the former Inca city of Huánaco el Viejo, far up on the now uninhabited pampa above the sheltering valley in which cowers the modern city of the same name



A typical residence of the Indians of the high *páramos*, built of heaped-up stones and brown *ichu*-grass; so low one cannot stand upright in it. Here the family sleeps on the uneven earth floor, or on a hairy cowhide, with their yellow curs, guinea-pigs, and other domestic animals. Cooking is done outside over a fire of *ichu* or dung

Long after dark the fresh and rosy assistant-doctor dashed into the room. But he had no time to give attention to my symptoms and explanations, for dinner was about to be served, and ordering me to get into a bed, he dashed for the door again. I protested that I had brought with me the unpleasant evidence of long Andean travel, and he jerked a thumb over his shoulder with a parting mumble of “bathroom.” There was one, even as he had indicated, with all modern appliances; but like most new-fangled inventions transplanted to the Andes, it did not “function.” Another example of the Peruvian abhorrence of soap was ordered to bring a half-dozen pails of hot water, which in his haste to be done with the task he translated into the Castilian for luke-

warm; and I crawled at last into one of the cots. Soon afterward the Indian boy came to climb into another, in the same identical rags he wore by day. The dinner was evidently a prolonged and engaging function, for neither the doctor nor any other sign of human interest appeared again during a night in which I tossed incessantly with fever, while the ward blazed with electric lights and the ineffectual steam-pipes thumped and pounded like an adjacent boiler-factory.

I am happy to be able to say that neither the two physicians, whom we will disguise under the pseudonyms of Dr. F and Dr. D, nor the head-nurse, of the American hospital were my fellow-countrymen; they came from further north. Materially an establishment to boast of, its condition in anything touched by the personal equation was incredible. Homeopathic in creed, it put its trust in pills, and left the rest to eight immature Indians, as devoid of human instincts as of supervision. In a second cheerless, bare ward adjoining the one I occupied were a score of injured or ailing Indian workmen; yet no precaution whatever was taken to keep infection from passing from one room to the other. A single thermometer served all alike. Twice a day the automatic youth of the bare feet went the rounds in quest of temperatures, carrying a bottle of antiseptic so low in stock that it did not reach a third as far up the instrument as did the lips of patients; and too indolent to go to the dispensary for cotton, he wiped it after each use on whatever came within reach,—his sleeve, his trousers, or the noisome rag each servant carried over a shoulder in guise of napkin. If the ten cots had been full, instead of the four that represented the maximum of occupancy during my stay, I do not know what habits we might

have adopted; for there were only three cups, three tablespoons, and one teaspoon attached to the ward. The printed rules announced that meal-hours were 7; 10; and 5:30. In practice they averaged: Breakfast, 8:40 to 9, Dinner, 1 to 1:30, and Supper, about 8. The same stern placard called attention to the fact that visitors were admitted only on Sunday afternoons. Yet scarcely a night passed without a mob of Indians or cholos, male and female, friends of the internes or of some inmate, stamping into the ward as soon as darkness had settled down, and often keeping up an uproar until long after midnight. Then it was the unexplainable custom, on those days set for that ceremony, to drag out a fire-hose at four in the morning and "wash down" the ward like the deck of a ship, flooding the floor an inch or more deep in icy highland water, through which patients put to that necessity might wade to and from their cots.

In the sumptuous quarters of physicians and nurses, occupying all the front half of the building, the formal repasts were provided with every obtainable delicacy, and enlivened with music and gaiety. In the wards the ostensibly well-regulated diet monotonously reduced itself in practice to the leathery "green" beefsteaks of the Andes and two or three other articles sanctioned by prehistoric Andean *costumbre*. The Latin-American racial lack of initiative is nowhere more in evidence than in the kitchen. If doctor or nurse prescribed some special dish for a patient, there came back in answer—after authority had disappeared from the scene—that threadbare Peruvian prevarication, "No hay"; which meant that the cook was giving vent to his temperamental grouchiness, was too lazy to set another pot on the fire, or was keeping the delicacy

for himself or some “compadre.” The youthful assistant-physician, trained in the far north, was supremely ignorant of tropical diseases, and, what was worse, had no inclination to add to his professional knowledge. His interests were confined to the contents of a row of unhomeopathic bottles and the manipulation of fifty-two small cardboards at the club-rooms a few blocks away, where he might be found—though not easily called—at almost any hour, ensconced in one of the leather-upholstered lounges before the blazing fireplace. The “gringa” head-nurse chose to do duty by day, and arising every forenoon, came in to smile at each of us about ten, and sometimes again in the early afternoon, before it was time to dress for her daily “bridge” and tea. In a loquacious moment she confided to me that she “just loved” to travel and, having always longed to see “strange foreign countries like Peru,” had been delighted to get an appointment to spend a year or two in it. The assistant-nurse was the most disturbingly beautiful Peruvian it had so far been my fortune to set eyes upon,—and she took the customary advantage of that fact by making no effort to be anything else. Being a subordinate, she was obliged to take the night-shift; but being also a Peruvian, she did not often permit that misfortune to break her night’s rest.

Five days I had studied its ceiling when the morning brought Dr. F, physician in chief, who had been absent on a round of the company’s hospitals, hurrying into the ward. He was a far more successful practitioner than his youthful assistant—in that he made the daily round in about five minutes less than the ten which Dr. D squandered. Two or three mornings later he paused at my cot to grumble querulously:

"It's —— funny you don't get better. It must be you are not making up your mind to. Mental attitude, you know. As soon as you had that purge, these pills should have taken hold at once."

"That what?" I murmured.

"Oh, don't be stupid! The castor-oil Dr. D gave you a day after you turned up here; the basis of our system of treatment."

"I have had only pills."

"Nonsense! Dr. D, what day did this man have his purge?"

"I prescribed it last Monday," yawned the assistant.

"Of course. Now...."

"But I assure you I have yet to know the taste of castor-oil."

"Who gave him the oil?" the doctor flung over a shoulder.

"Señorita ——," replied the subordinate, naming the Peruvian nurse.

She chanced to pass the door in fetching street-garb a moment later, and was called in to confirm the statement.

"Ah, es verdad!" she lisped, in her beautiful nonchalance, "Me olvidé—I forgot," and with a bewitching smile at the physicians she hurried away to her daytime engagements.

Determined not to celebrate my nation's birthday as I had my own, I forced my leaden legs to carry me on an afternoon stroll through the famous mining town. The steel-blue skies of Cerro de Pasco, three miles aloft and boasting itself the highest city in the world,

are clear beyond any description in mere words. Not once during my sojourn there was the penetrating brilliancy flecked by the slightest whiff of cloud. The sun blazed down with an intensity that burned the cheeks as at the open mouth of a puddling-furnace; yet even at blinding noon-time the cold had a power of penetration unknown to a northern mid-winter day on which the mercury falls far lower. Those who ascend "the Hill" from Lima complain of a leaden inertia and pains varying in intensity and duration, brought on by an altitude that is fatal to weak hearts and to victims of pneumonia. Inured to the heights and scantiness of air almost unbrokenly from far-off Bogotá, I had no consciousness of any such effects.

Nearly a mile from the hospital, the American town, of stone buildings and even less attractive structures, such as the "Tin Can," an ugly, red, sheet-iron barracks that houses the garden variety of gringo employees, scattered among bare, protruding rocks of a landscape dreary beyond conception, gives way to the old familiar Peruvian huts and hovels. These, in turn, develop further on into two-story dwellings above and shops below, often quaint and striking in architecture. If any city of Peru may be called "unique" in appearance, it is "el Cerro." Even in the center of the town, roofs of ancient, weather-faded straw alternate with those of wavy sheet-iron; instead of the monotonously square blocks of other Andean cities, its older section is a tangle of narrow streets and misshapen buildings, like a change from our Middle West to Boston. Perched on the summit of the world, with scarcely a knoll overtopping it, or the suggestion of a shrub to shelter it, "the Cerro" is the unhampered playground of icy mountain winds laden with coal-dust, stinging sand, and the soot and smoke and powdered ore from its mines. Bronzed

foreigners and miners in leather leggings and hob-nailed boots, squeaking through the streets afoot, or astride Texas-saddled mules, lend the place an air of modernity, for all its swarms of bovine-mannered Indians. In contrast, droves of llamas, with gaily colored ribbons in their ears, slip past in noiseless dignity, or stand in patient groups before a chichería, awaiting their drivers. The hardware and similar trades offer stocks unknown to those sections of the Andes where the imports depend on transportation "en lomo de mula." Even the pulperías are well-supplied with foodstuffs, testifying to the American influence. From a dust-swirling knoll rising a bit above the rest the eye is gladdened by the glimpse of a cold-blue lake of considerable size, strangely beautiful in its drear and dismal setting. From this point of vantage, too, the stranger becomes aware that "el Cerro" is much more of a city than he suspected, filling the great lap of a repulsive, barren range, and stretching away in several directions under belching smoke-stacks.



The *arrieros* with whom I left Huallanga, and the family inhabiting the hut shown in the preceding picture



The immaculate staff of the
Cerro de Pasco hospital

Twelve days I had tarried in Cerro de Pasco, and had advanced from my original ailment to one distinctly more serious, when I concluded to descend to Lima while I still had strength to do so. The company physician-in-chief collected a fee that more than doubled my expenditures since leaving Quito, and spared himself the annoyance of penning a receipt, or of any other formality beyond that of dropping the handful of gold sovereigns into his pocket on his breathless morning round. The night sky was turning slightly more transparent along the cold eastern horizon when I tottered out of the hospitable Cerro de Pasco hospital on my way to the station. The second-class car was a stoveless ice-box, densely packed with Indians and all the bath-fearing aboriginal is accustomed to carry with him. A glance at it sufficed to dissipate my resolution to save a sovereign from the wreck of my fortune. The first-class coach was an American car scantily filled with white-collar Peruvians and weather-, experience-, and liquor-marked Americans under forty, “husky” in build and untrammelled in manners. The wintry July dawn climbed up over the far edge of the bleak, treeless world, and at Smelter, cheerless beyond words in the new-born daylight, we were joined by

more cold-faced Americans, wrapped, as were also many of the natives, in huge neck-roll sweaters. Dressed even in all the clothing I possessed, I kept my poncho close about me, for the coal-stove in the front end of the car was no match for the frigidity of the vast ichu-brown pampa de Junín across which we were soon speeding. Only by frequently scratching a peep-hole in the frosted window could I gaze out upon the drear yellow world, with its snow peaks rising slightly above it in the distance and its great flocks of cold-impervious llamas feeding along the way between ice-coated streams and pools. Off in both directions stood scattered, stone huts with pampa-grass roofs, before which barefoot (brr!) Indian women stood or squatted, and scantily clad children gazed after the train with the stolidity and indifference to the bitter cold of the adobe images they somehow suggested. Here was the scene of the great battle of Junín in which the soldiers of Bolívar defeated the Spanish host; but it is not likely that either pursued or pursuers dripped with perspiration. A dreary walk, indeed, this would have been across the icy, endless, yellow pampa.

A brilliant sun popped up instantly in a faultless sky, like some jack-in-the-box suddenly released; but though it flooded all the visible world with golden light, it brought slight warmth. Beside each seat of our car was an electric button, and beneath it a list of possibilities, in English and Spanish. One had only to press it and presto! a big black negro—no, my memories of other days deceive me; no big black negro would get this high in the world, unless he were dragged there by main force—a little, dapper, noiseless, inscrutable, white-jacketed Chinaman slipped down upon one and lent an attentive, yet haughty ear into which one whispered the desires of

the inner man, tempered by a subconscious regard for one's purse; calling modestly for toast and coffee, if one were a mere American vagabond who had recently fallen among thiev—beg pardon, physicians; or for the "whole damn works," which meant the same coffee and toast plus a plate of bacon and eggs, if one were an American miner homeward bound, to whom money is as water to the man whose pocket holdeth a quart bottle of concentrated joyfulness. Across the aisle were two such, from whom sounded now and then some pleasant anticipation of homecoming:

"An' when I get back to Pittsburgh I'm goin' into the —— House bar and tell Joe to mix me a real, honest-to-God gin-ricky. An' when he says 'Where t'ell you been these two years, Hank?' I'll jus' say 'Diggin' coal down in Goyllaris—hic—quisca, Joe,' an' he'll call the bouncer to throw me out."

A big, blue lake, Chinchaycocha, on the distant right drew the eyes toward it; then came a brief halt at the town of Junín, an extensive collection of cobble-stone huts and fences, with a two-tower church in their midst and steam rising on the wintry air from the nostrils of every living being. Then at last, after an extended, wandering search, the train found the rocky bed of a small river, and wound and squirmed with it through half-hidden openings in the hills until a long-drawn masculine whistle caused us to scratch a new peep-hole in the frosted window, to find Oroya rising up to meet us.

Here the American train and roadbed abandoned us to the tender mercies of the Ferrocarril Central, theoretically under English management, but in practice dismally Latin-American from cow-catcher to trailing draw-bar. Packed into the far corner of a

seat upholstered only in name, I had frozen from toes to the bottom of my poncho for two mortal hours before the Peruvian engineer came to an understanding with the Peruvian conductor and station-master, and dragged us slowly out of town. From a spot on the earth—and nothing more—called Ticlio, summit of the line, we began the long coast down to the Pacific, through all the customary 65 tunnels, 67 bridges and 16 switchbacks, where for the brakes to lose control would have been to land us in Hades instead of Lima. Hour after hour the arid, savage scenery slid upward. Here the train glided serenely along on the bottomless edge of things; now and again we came out directly above, a thousand feet above, a dusty, rock-scattered town, with rows of stones laid on the sheet-iron roofs to keep them from escaping such dreary surroundings, and zigzagged an hour, often on six tracks one above the other, down to it, only to continue the descent as swiftly beyond. A score of places recalled the story of the young graduate engineer who protested to the American whose name is forever linked with this engineering feat, “Why, Meiggs, we can’t run a railroad along there in that sliding shale!” “Can’t, eh?” the anecdote continues, “Well, young man, that’s just where she’s got to go, and if you can’t find room for her on the ground, we’ll hang her from balloons.”

Bit by bit the Andes began to take on slight touches of green. The Rimac, chattering downward toward the sea, gave us more and more elbow-room, the well-dressed town of Chosica flashed past us like an oasis of civilization, and we sped in truly metropolitan fashion on down the darkening valley, surrounded by whole mountains of broken rock, tufts of cactus and a few hardy willows drinking their life

from the widening stream, on toward the glowing sunset and into the black night. Electric lights, real lights in their full candle-power, began to dot the darkness, then flashed past us, throwing their insolent glare into our dust-veiled faces; the roar of a real city, with clanging street-cars and rumbling wagons rose about us; a long station-platform crowded with an urban throng came to a halt beside us, and I descended in the thickness of the summer night in the City of Kings, three miles below where I had stepped forth that morning into the wintry dawn.

CHAPTER XIII
ROUND ABOUT THE PERUVIAN CAPITAL

It is due, I suppose, to some error in my make-up that my interest in any given corner of the earth fades in proportion as it approaches modern civilization and easy accessibility. To your incurable vagabond may come a momentary thrill, if not of pleasure, at least of contentment, with the feel of city pavements once more under his feet after long hand to hand combat with the wilderness, and the knowledge that to go a journey he has only to signal an electric street-car on the nearest corner. But the attraction quickly palls. Visions of the winding trail soon begin again to torture him with their solicitations, the placid ways of urban man take on a drab and colorless artificiality, and once more the realization comes that to him life offers genuine satisfaction only when he is struggling onward toward some distant and possibly unattainable goal.

Such a place is Lima. The former capital of Spanish America has, to be sure, its points of interest; old colonial palaces where the shades of cloaked viceroys seem still to linger, cloistered walls

inclosing the tonsured and cowled atmosphere of the Middle Ages, narrow streets with long vistas of overhanging Moorish balconies wherein still lurks the charm of other days. But these things are all but buried under the stereotyped conveniences and commonplace manners of the modern world. Upon the romance and air of antiquity of a Spanish city of long ago, transplanted to this sandy coast, has intruded the aggressive urge of commerce; from between the carved mahogany bars of quaint *miradores* peers the face of trade; in and out of massive old wooden street-doors studded with brass come bales of merchandise, often stacked high in the beautiful patios and secluded retreats of former generations. Here, for the first time in South America, were rumors of strikes and complaints of the "servant problem." Workmen and domestics, advanced already to a scale of wages about half that of our own land, were coming more and more to a knowledge of their worth and power, their striving unfortunately taking that ultra-modern form of careless workmanship and insolence. Here, for the first time, the militant "cost of living" weighed down on the mass of mankind like a leaden blanket. Lima's thousand and one restaurants—why do none of them seek a virgin field in the highlands?—serve their clients with the mechanical impersonality of world capitals. Like the population, these show that absence of a "middle class" characteristic of Latin-American society, the marked contrast of the great bulk of sandaled poor rubbing shoulders with faultless Parisian attire; either they are repulsive workingmen's "dumps," or outwardly regal in manner and inwardly of purse-flattening properties, where nothing national and unique is to be found, unless it be some rare local delicacy, such as *asado de*

chivito,—roast leg of young goat. Whatever exclusive and characteristic remains on the surface is grouped in and about the great covered market-place, where long rows of strange indigenous and familiar foreign wares stretch in many-hued and quaint juxtaposition, or hovers about a few surviving customs of bygone days, such as the milkman—who is more often a woman—making his morning round astride horse or mule, with his cans hanging like saddle-bags from between his legs.

He who comes down upon them from above will find the people of the coast more vivacious than those of the chilly upper Andes, where the perennial gauntness of nature inclines to perpetual gloom. The limeño has been likened to the Andalusian in his fondness for dress, variety, and dissipation, in his gaiety and quickness of wit, his open frankness and tendency to extravagance. Certainly his speech has the lisp of Andalusia—"Do' copita' de pi'co, señore'"—and his Castilian has not the purity of that of Bogotá. Yet his gaiety is only comparative. There is an innate gloominess and passive pessimism everywhere in South American society that cannot but strike the visitor who comes direct from more favored lands. The morose Indian of the uplands forms a scarcely noticeable part of the population of Lima. On those rare occasions when he comes down, or more often is brought as a conscript to serve his time as soldier in the capital, he often falls quick victim to the white plague, which finds easy breeding-place in the disused cells of his overdeveloped lungs, built for the scant, thin air of the Sierra. The cholo or mestizo, commonly of a lesser percentage of aboriginal than of Spanish blood, makes up the bulk of the population. Then there is the *zambo*, bred of the intermingling of the

Indian and negro, a robust, stubborn, and revengeful fellow. Merchants from all the varying nationalities of Europe keep shop side by side, with an intermingling of "Turks" and even more distant races, and American engineers stride through the streets at all hours of the day. Yet Lima is essentially a Spanish-American city, for all that; where the pallid, waxy complexion of the gente decente is much in evidence. The women of this caste are often beautiful; so, for that matter, are the men. In a population that may almost be termed cosmopolitan, the Chinaman holds a considerable place. After the abolition of slavery in 1855, large numbers of coolies were imported for the plantations of the Peruvian coast, and Celestials of higher caste have since taken advantage of Peru's open-door policy and the Japanese steamship lines. So that to-day there are temples and joss-houses and opium dens in Lima, and men in "European" dress, who are not Europeans, lean in the doorways of old colonial mansions transformed into Oriental shops. The Chinese of Lima occupy a wider field of activity than almost anywhere else in the Western hemisphere. Not only is a large percentage of the retail and restaurant business in their hands, but scores of *herbolarios*, "herbists," we might say, have stretched their signs across the old-time façades and blinded miradores of what were in viceregal days the residences of haughty families. Only the old men still cling to the national dress, and the pigtail has entirely disappeared. Here, too, the Chinaman sinks to depths not familiar to us of the north, and not only does the race furnish many of the street-sweepers of the capital, but it is no rare sight to see an oval-eyed personification of poverty hobbling along the main thoroughfares "shooting snipes" in

the gutters.

The “masses” of Lima dwell in *vecindades*, which are none the less tenements for being packed together on the ground floor along either side of narrow *callejones*, blind alleys in which all the activities of the household from baby’s bath to the worship of a tin Virgin intermingle, instead of being piled one above the other. The better houses are spacious and airy within, though outwardly monotonous, built of mud and cane and plaster, their façades here resembling marble at a distance, there painted pale blue, or pink, or yellow. In the mud-and-bamboo Cathedral, the most imposing in appearance in Spanish America, the mummified skeleton of Pizarro, the jaws wired like those of some prehistoric creature in a museum, is made a peep-show, after the crude Spanish fashion. The “Cine” has all but driven out the theater and whatever of national or racial the latter brought with it. The visitor who knows no Spanish could easily guess the business of a shop announcing itself a “Plomería y Gasfitería.” The Lima barber, calling his establishment a “Peluquería y Perfumería,” leaves no doubt as to what effeminate fate may befall one who ventures into his den.

This mid-winter season of July and August, they say, is no time to see Lima at its best. The traveler who has been a thousand times assured that rain never falls on the coast of Peru will be astonished to find the streets often slimy and soaking wet with *garúa*, the Scotch mist that turns everything clammy and chill, yet never reaches the point where the shops find it worth while to include umbrellas among their stock. For days, and even weeks, the sun is invisible, and the capital lies heavy under leaden skies and a muggy blanket of mist, cold, dank, and gloomy. That

is a rare day in this season when a brilliant sun makes it worth while to climb San Cristobal hill, a bare, peaked, rock-and-shale pyramid rising close above Lima on the north, from which he who has chosen his time well may catch a view not only of Callao and its island framed by the intense blue of the Pacific, but of the snowclads of the Sierra. The city with its 160,000 inhabitants lies flat in its arid setting, the disk of the bull-ring in the foreground, an irregular triangle with its base resting on the babbling Rimac, without chimneys, almost without smoke-stacks; for its industries are still chiefly confined to handicraft. The red tiles that give the prevailing color to the cities of the Andes are here unknown. The roofs, made of sticks and mud, are flat, like those of Palestine, and are the family promenades and garbage-grounds, and the abode of smaller live stock, especially of roosters, whose raucous saluting of each new day is not to be escaped by the most fortunate resident. Cock-fighting is still the most popular sport of the cholo classes. It is impossible to appear in public without being pestered by a constant procession of *suerteros*—offering *suerte*, or luck—vendors of lottery-tickets who fill the streets with their bawling from morning—late morning, for Lima is no early riser—to midnight.

For all its modern aspect, Lima is still Latin-American in temperament. Dawn brings to light personal habits little less reprehensible than those of Quito. A package of films mailed from the United States cost me two days of red-tape at the post-office, and the charges exceeded the original cost. A dozen bags of mail from the north were lost in Callao harbor through the inexcusable carelessness of the bargemen; the government refused to make

reparation to the addressees on the ground that the law relieved it of responsibility for “unavoidable losses by shipwreck!” An abortive revolution enlivened the last days of July. Strolling into the plaza one evening, I was jostled by a group of youthful roughs firing revolvers into the air as they went. That night the mob assaulted the home of a former president, with casualties of three killed and a dozen wounded, and the executive of a year before was lodged in a cell at the penitentiary. Yet the films at a “Cine” a block away ran on without a tremor, and but for the fact that the shops took down their shutters somewhat later than usual, there was nothing left next morning to recall the occurrence. A few days later the principal newspaper announced solemnly that the ex-president had gone to Panama “for motives of health.”

The national museum was officially open, though unofficially closed, on the day of my visit. But the experienced traveler can always win his point with the doorkeeper of a South American institution, and I was soon treading the resounding halls between lines of a dead world’s relics. Mummies from prehistoric days, their knees drawn up to their chins, a look half of disgust, half of pain on their osseous features, squatted along a wall. Some were still covered with many-colored wrappings, enclosing in clumsy bundles not merely their bodies, but all their possessions, their protruding heads still in fantastic masks and wigs, just as they had been found in the burial caves of the Sierra. Others, reputed Incas, were contained in huge bales in which they stood erect, as befitted their high caste, their heads unmasked, the whole covered with a well-preserved linen-like cloth. The floor of one large room was completely covered with hundreds of skulls in

careful rows. Some showed prehistoric trepanning, irregular holes sawed out of them, and the subsequent growth of the bone proving that the warrior had lived long after his overthrow in battle. A drowsy cholo was breaking up skeletons and clawing earth out of skulls with the expressionless placidity with which he might have sorted potatoes.

The director deigned to show me in person through the gallery of paintings. We paused first before an immense canvas depicting the funeral of Atahuallpa.

“A modern work?” I remarked, merely to make conversation.

“No, no, señor,” replied the director vehemently, “that is antigua. It was painted nearly forty years ago.”

“The fat priest is Valverde, I suppose, and this man with a beard must be Pizarro?”

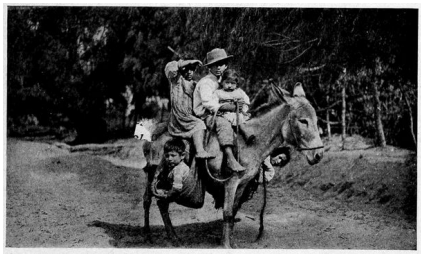
“Just so, señor, and the man behind is Pizarro’s brother, Almagro.”

“His brother?”



The semi-weekly lottery drawing in the main plaza of Lima. Two of the men who turn the hollow spheres are blind, and the boys who thrust in a

hand to draw out a number are supposedly below the age of corruption



All aboard! A Sunday excursion that was not posed, but was snapped just as it came along the road near Pachacámac on the Peruvian coast

But the director persisted in the unhistorical relationship, in which he was confirmed by an assistant, in spite of the fact that the figure in question represented a man some fifteen years younger than the chief Conquistador.

“Why is the back of Almagro’s head missing?”

“Ah, señor,” sighed the director, with a shrug of the shoulders, “What would you? The Chilians cut out this picture and carried it home. It used to be several feet longer, and there were many other caballeros in the group.”

Among whom was the real Almagro, no doubt. I made the circuit of the gallery, then turned an inquiring eye on my companion.

“Ah—er—you are looking for the picture that used to be here?” he stammered, quick to catch my

expression.

“Yes, the famous portrait of Pizarro.”

“Well, it used to hang right here,” said the director, pointing to a blank space on the wall, as at some object of extraordinary interest. “But a few weeks ago the Señor Presidente de la República sent for it, because he wants it in his own house.”

On my return I dropped in at the University of San Marcos, oldest in America and antedating our most ancient by nearly a century. It was pitifully like other Latin-American schools. The rector, having led me through a dozen empty school-rooms grouped about several patios, and having given the history in detail of a collection of silver cups “graciously awarded the University” by the king of this and the emperor of that, expressed unbounded surprise that I should wish to see a class at work. When it became evident that he could not shake me off with babbling courtesies, he pointed out the door of a class in law and disappeared, as if he would not have it known who was responsible for the unusual intrusion. Some twenty-five young men, not so young either, being almost all adorned with mustaches, were lounging on benches of the amphitheater. The professor, comfortably seated in a sort of pulpit, was reading in a languid and utterly dispassionate voice—not a lecture he had himself prepared, but from a book purchasable at a dollar or two, and readable, I trust, by the students themselves. Meanwhile the students napped, wrote letters, exchanged jokes, and discussed with their neighbors the extraordinary advent of a stranger in their midst. No doubt they had some other means and place of acquiring the knowledge indispensable even to a South American lawyer; but what they gained by attending classes

was hard to guess. I had been the object of curiosity for some time before the professor caught sight of me. He left off reading at once, and sparred for time with a string of stale pedagogical jokes until I saw fit to remove my annoying presence. Other class-rooms demonstrated that famous old San Marcos is still in the world of long ago, its methods of instruction as antiquated as its text-books, heritages of a Jesuitical past, unavoidably so because of the rarity of Spanish translations of modern works.

During all July my ambition remained at a low ebb, and my most extended acquaintance was with the medical profession. “Yu Sui, Herbolario de Pekin, physician extraordinary to his Excellency, the Chinese Minister,” assured me I had dysentery, but no fever, and concocted the daily bottle of herbs accordingly. The chief Italian specialist based his treatment on the fact that I had fever, but no dysentery. Fortunately Lima has not yet been invaded by that sect that would have robbed me of the gloomy pleasure of having anything. Every gringo who had ever ventured a hundred miles into the interior had his own individual “sure cure”; and I had reached the point where I would have worn a tin charm about my neck, had anyone asserted it efficacious. Yet when once I had discovered a real physician, Anglo-Saxon in blood and of tropical experience, the remedy—intermuscular injections of emetine—was quickly effective.

A no less potent factor in the recovery, however, was the hospitality of mine own people in Bellavista (“Beyabi’ta,” locally) on the outskirts of Callao. Genuine electric-cars sped across the cool, flat country in a brief half-hour, from the capital to the edge of the Pacific I had not seen since landing in

Cartagena thirteen months before. Here it was often brilliant summer, and from the housetop promenade spread out all Callao harbor, jutting La Punta, and the island of San Lorenzo in their intense blue setting, and perhaps even the snow-white line of the Sierra, while over the capital, a bare eight miles away, hung the opaque, mid-winter blanket of haze and gloom. The beach was near at hand, the sea-breeze constant, and the soporific roar of the surf never silent. The landscape, flat and arid, had a charm of its own, and a network of mud fences, on the broad tops of which one might promenade for miles.

One Sunday during convalescence I visited ancient Pachacámac. Swift interurban cars bore us through morning-misty Miraflores and Barranco to Chorillos, proudest watering-place of the rainless Peruvian coast, where we mounted horses and rode away into the desert by a broad trail that paralleled the shore within hearing of the dull roll of the surf. It was a veritable Sahara, in which the sand, everywhere ankle-deep, lay in wind-blown ridges. The horizon rose before us as at sea, and the mirage of heat-waves seemed rivers flowing landward. The uncorrected imagination is wont to picture the coast of Peru as utterly flat, as well as sandy. It is so only in part. Hills of sand that were almost mountains stretched down to the sea, like buttresses fashioned to support the mammoth wall of the Andes that bounded the horizon on the left. The summits of many were hidden in mists, the garúa from which had given life to the brilliant green *lomas* and patches where flocks feed in certain seasons; and the smiling valley of Lurín, watered by a stream smaller than the Rimac and still cold from the snows above, was as inviting in its contrast to the repulsive, naked

hills as any desert oasis. Down on the floor of the valley this, too, seemed sandy and dry, but the *acequias* that still water it, as in the days of the Incas, sustain a wilderness of scrubby trees, among which a chiefly negro population lolls in open-work huts. Nature seems to have arranged her seasons with foresight here; for when the garúa gives way to blazing summer, the rainy season and the melting snows above swell the rivers to a volume that affords widespread irrigation.

Pachacámac, the Animator of the Universe, not to be confused with the Sun-god of the Incas, had his temple on the edge of this forbidding waste of sand, overlooking the sea that chafes incessantly at its feet. It was the Benares of the ancient Peruvians, not merely because it drew pilgrims from all the surrounding world, but because here those who could brought and disposed of their dead. Conquered by the Incas nearly two centuries before the coming of the Spaniards, a Temple of the Sun was added; but the sun-worshippers, like their conquerors in turn, were too politic to suppress the earlier religion entirely, and merely merged it with their own. “In a room closely shut and stinking,” says Estete, the Spanish chronicler, “was an idol made of wood, very dirty, which they called god, who creates and sustains us. It was held in great veneration and at its feet were offerings.” Different, indeed, from many an Andean place of worship to-day! It is a place of death in a double sense. Scuttling lizards and sand-vipers are the only forms of life that accentuate its silent, repulsive sterility. Human skulls kick about underfoot through all the extent of the ruins, and disintegrated skeletons lie everywhere. Only the earthen pots and *huacos* are of financial value to the looters; the heads of the men who made them are not

worth the gathering. The ruins are extensive, a few of the great terraced temples still moderately well preserved. But being of clay or adobe, dreary, yellow-brown, they offer no contrast in color to the surrounding desert hills, and nothing to compare with the splendid wrought-stone monuments of those wonderful architects, the ancient Peruvians of the highlands.

The year had run over into September before I turned my face upward again toward the Sierra, to pick up the broken thread of my journey. Beyond Chosica the naked hills closed in, and the train climbed all day between barren, echoing walls of rock, the exhilarating mountain air cutting ever deeper into my lungs, as the glorious Italian skies of the cloudless upper plateau spread their ever-broadening canopy above. Snow appeared on far-off peaks, descended to meet us, and spread in patches about and below us. As the air thinned, our faces flushed and tingled; a tendency to sleepiness was succeeded by a feeling of exhilaration and an inclination to grow talkative. My fellow-passengers began to show signs of distress at the altitude, growing more and more red-faced, with bloodshot eyes; then one by one they frankly succumbed to mountain sickness as the train continued inexorably upward. As the experienced sailor struts about among his seasick fellows, so I caught myself gazing with haughty scorn upon the weaklings about me. Obviously a man who had tramped the lofty páramos from far-off Bogotá, often under a heavy pack, was immune to any effects of altitude.

But there is imbedded in ancient literature something to the effect that pride is often closely attended by a downfall. At Ticlio, in the crisp, cold afternoon, I

noted that the mere exertion of lifting my baggage from the main to the branch-line train set my heart in a strange flutter. A more cautious person, too, would not have drunk three cups of black coffee in the miserable little station lunch-room so soon after weeks of rigid diet. Laboriously we climbed to the highest railroad point in the world, flanked by an immense blue glacier, up again on the bare, treeless, silent pampas, among cobble-stone hovels and ichu, the stolid, expressionless Indians of the highlands, and drew up at dusk in Morococha. The cheerless mining-camp, more than three miles above the sea, lay scattered along a dreary, bowl-shaped valley, with a vista of three cold, steel-blue lagoons, across which the enclosing snowclads threw their violet evening shadows. In this breathless region my pulse started savagely at every exertion, but being already arrived, I supposed myself as safe from mountain sickness as a disembarking passenger from mal de mer. In the manager's cozy, stone-walled quarters the blazing fireplace, with its unaccustomed artificial heat and its clouds of tobacco-smoke, threatened suffocation and forced me to step out frequently into the crisp, night air to catch my breath. But no Indian of the highland could have boasted himself in finer physical spirits when we wandered away toward ten, panting considerably, to be sure, even at a very moderate pace, up the slope to the superintendent's dwelling.

Barely had I turned in, however, when I began gasping for breath. Within an hour my host found that I had a respiration of 52 and a pulse of 125. All night long I struggled open-mouthed, with the sound of an accelerated steam-pump in bad repair, my heart engaged in what promised to be a successful attempt to pound its way out through my back, until

my very shoulder-blades ached, and all the valley of Morococha seemed to echo with its thumping. It was too much! To be scarcely recovered from one long, laborious, Andean ailment, only to blow up of my own steam in this absurd land!

In the morning the mine-doctor came with his stethescope, mumbled "soroche" in a weary, unsympathetic voice, left some pills and instructions, and was gone. All day long I lay fasting, the snowclads gazing down upon me with icy, Andean indifference. Gradually the pounding of my heart ceased to drown out all other sounds, and my lungs resumed their accustomed action. On the following morning, though still weak and wobbly-legged, aching from crown to toe, I was able to be about, the day after, I strode slowly about the camp with something of the old-time vigor. In the end the experience seemed to be advantageous, for with every day thereafter I advanced to a faultless physical condition that was to accompany me on all the rest of the journey.

There are a score of theories concerning this mountain-sickness, known throughout Peru by the Quichua word *soroche* and in the basin of the Titicaca as *puna*. Who may be subject to it, what will prevent it, whether or not previous experience will or will not give immunity, are even greater mysteries than those surrounding its prototype, the bugbear of ocean travel. No two persons are ever affected alike by it. Commonly it is accompanied by a raging headache. All foreigners contracted for mine employment in this region are subjected to a rigid physical examination before they ascend "the Hill," yet it is not unusual to make up a special train and rush a victim down to the coast. Among horses, with

which it takes the form of blind-staggers and often renders the animal unfit for further service, it is known as *veta*, from the aboriginal superstition that it is caused by veins of ore (vetas) in the earth.

Morococha, like its rival, Cerro de Pasco, is a little world of its own, exclusively mining in its raison d'être and considerably marked by Anglo-Saxon influence. Though many of the natives still huddle in dismal huts, without windows and with dirt floors, the civilizing effect of the gringo is in some evidence, at least in those superficial matters of small habits, amusements, and clothing. American hob-nailed boots are almost as frequently worn by the Indian men as the *llanqui*, or hairy cowhide sandal. Bitter cold though it is, even at noonday, the Indians of female persuasion go scantily clad and almost universally barefoot.

The miners work nine hours a day, seven days a week, and receive an average of something more than a dollar a day—a high wage from the Andean Indian point of view. The considerable efficiency of both Indian and cholo workmen is curtailed by much coca-chewing and hard drinking. Following each pay-day, and during the many fiestas, a majority of the native miners go on an extended debauch, leaving the mines often so short-handed that operations virtually cease. The effect of the celebration does not wear off for several days, so that enterprise is commonly paralyzed a week or more in every month. The company is powerless to remedy this drawback, and the government—that scapegoat of all imperfections throughout South America—shows no disposition to better conditions, even were it possible. An Indian injured in the mine is more apt to run away than to report at the hospital, and to

appear later as a litigant against the company, demanding—and with government aid frequently winning—a sinecure for life. Even when the injured man is attended by the mine-doctor, and his broken leg bound with splints or his wound properly treated with antiseptic care, he is likely to be found next morning with the bandages torn off, and with coca leaves, or a chicken leg, or something as efficacious substituted.

It must be admitted that his gringo superiors do not set the native miner a perfect example in his chief vice, the excessive consumption of alcohol. In the social vacuum that must necessarily exist in such a community, drinking and gambling are the favorite methods of putting to rout dull care. The altitude soon gets on the nerves, seeming to call for some such stimulant; at least, it is the custom to "lay to the altitude" any species of misdemeanor, or the formation of habits unknown to the subject before his arrival. Somehow it strikes the passing observer as wicked to send these small-lunged, sea-level men of other climes up here to gasp through life at a height fitted only to the barrel-chested Indian and his fellow-beast of burden, the llama. Both physically and temperamentally the effect of the altitude is curious. Water boils at so low a temperature that a finger can almost be thrust into it with impunity. Fireplaces are set in action by nonchalantly throwing two or three beer-bottlesful of kerosene into the blaze. Those accustomed to the heights for generations are far sturdier and less vivacious than those of lower levels. Newcomers, on the other hand, are easily excited and rattle-brained, dashing about like the proverbial "hen with its head cut off," futile in proportion to their striving. In the gringo community it is a standing jest that the American or

Englishman most phlegmatic at sea-level will spend an hour trying to shave, and grow so hen-minded over that simple task that he often gives up in despair. The exhilaration is physical as well as mental. Baseball players, far from losing their customary prowess in this thin air, are given to running their legs off in their excitement, and must often be restrained lest they burst their lungs.

It is half-jokingly asserted that after a few months in the mines it is not safe to open a bottle or a "jack-pot" in the presence of a minister's son. Unfortunately the jest seems to have serious basis in fact. The tighter the lines that bound their youth, the more completely do the newcomers cast them off when removed from the influence of home ties and neighborly opinion. Small wonder the Latin races accuse the Anglo-Saxon of hypocrisy. The Americans who live and mine up and down the Sierra have convinced Peruvians that every living American drinks quarts of whiskey neat every day, and squanders his substance in gambling, or if luck runs his way, in the "stews" of Lima. This is not to say that all gringos in Morococha and Cerro de Pasco fall into an evil manner of life, or that there are not many more who perform their tasks fully and efficiently, in spite of an occasional debauch. Those who bring with them very strong wills, or some equivalent for them, retain the tautness of their moral fiber, for all the altitude. The percentage of men who go astray is such, however, that it becomes almost a subject for congratulation to see a well-kept frame and a wholesome, unlined face in these Andean communities, where dissipated countenances are rather the rule than the exception. Then, too, often arriving as youths, with little experience of life except the half-cloistered one of our colleges, the

younger seem to feel it necessary to prove themselves “men,” and to keep up the local reputation for what a missionary referred to as “those rough mining fellows” by assuming a bold, gruff, even vulgar exterior. All question of “morality” aside, the mere materialistic problem of keeping up the efficiency of their force would seem to make some curtailment of the prevailing customs worth the trouble of the mine-owners. But even those sent down to assume charge too often fall victims to that false philosophy of “a short life and a merry one.”

Gringo employees of higher rank command generous salaries and are well housed, with all the comforts that can conveniently be transported to this lofty region. Coming, for the most part, directly from England or the United States, they take naturally to the artificial heat which the natives rarely adopt. Before the fireplace at the club the conversation jumps from “bridge” to tetrahydrite ore, and back again to poker with, to the layman, a vertiginous speed, amid the rattle of glasses and bottles and the strains of a tireless phonograph. A considerable portion of the talk might frankly be called gossip; for South America has this in common with small towns, that every gringo up and down the continent knows every other, at least by hearsay, his private character and his domestic difficulties.

The traveler through South America is frequently struck by the fact that large enterprises, even British in ownership, are more often than not actually and practically in charge of Americans. The manager and most of the office force may be English, but the actual motive power, the man who makes the ore fly or sets the trains to running, is apt to be a youthful superintendent or engineer but a few years out of

one of our technical colleges. This is no argument for or against the mentality or ability of either nationality. These are their natural spheres of action, purely the result of environment. The American, coming from a land where precedent is given short shrift, and accustomed to furnish his own initiative, is best fitted for pushing the pioneer work, for attacking unprecedented problems and carrying the enterprise on to the point where it is established and running smoothly. The Englishman, product of an older and more settled society, is more easily content to continue an established undertaking, to "stick on the job," while the American moves on to attack new and unfamiliar problems.



The bleak mining town of Morococha, more than 16,000 feet above sea-level. Though but twelve degrees south of the equator, dawn often finds the place completely covered with snow, and ice forms on the edges of the chain of lakes, the outlet from which is to the Amazon



The American miners of Morococha live in comfort for all the altitude and bleakness of their surroundings. In spite of their example, however, the natives still shiver through the day and huddle through the night without artificial heat

I visited the chief mines of Morococha with the youthful American superintendent. They presented nothing unusual to one acquainted with those of Mexico, than which they were slightly more crude and undeveloped in their methods. Some details of life were different; the peons wore plenty of clothing, ragged and extremely bedraggled, hats, and even footwear, for it was little less cold down in the mine galleries than in the crisp, wintry mountain air and the brilliant yet chill sunshine that flooded the glacier-draped valley and the indigo-blue lakes above. We climbed and crawled and dragged ourselves by elbows, knees, shoulders, hands and feet through ancient and modern “stopes,” by slippery ladders, crude stairways, or slimy ropes, in an eternal darkness made barely visible by our torches. The Indian miners, some of them but half-grown boys, each and all had a cheek puffed out by a quid of coca. They took a half-hour “coca-time” each afternoon, as religiously as an Englishman does for

his tea. Those who shoveled away the mountain of ore in the sunshine outside earned seventy cents a day; in the Natividad mine, where water poured incessantly and required oilskins, the workmen nearly doubled this wage. The practical gringo miners of to-day had somewhat different views of the ancient Peruvian civilization than its historians, and considered the stories of Inca wealth vastly exaggerated. Many a time, to be sure, a vein that promised rich reward was soon found to have been "stoped out" by the Incas or colonial Spaniards; but these neither knew enough about effective mining, nor went deep enough to get any such quantity of gold as tradition ascribes to them. Moreover, copper is the chief ore of Peru, and even silver owes its importance here almost entirely to the fact that the copper is highly argentiferous.

Beyond Oroya the railways of central Peru spread out in a Y, at the right-hand end of which is Huancayo, something more than two hundred miles from Lima, as is Cerro de Pasco on the other branch. Some time after the hour set, an engine was found somewhere in or about the junction, and toward noon we drifted away down a gorge into which portly, dry hills thrust themselves alternately from either side. Country women were washing their clothes in the scanty river; here and there, at the base of amphitheatrical bluffs, wheat was being threshed under the hoofs of circling horses. There were several dust-blown stations, but no signs of towns, nor, indeed, a patch on which one might have existed, except the one mud village of Llocllapampa in mid-afternoon, familiar with its old Andean red-tile roofs. In the first-class car was a crowd almost exclusively Peruvian, huge scarfs and shawls about their throats, and many in overcoats; for not only

had Americans in their leather leggings disappeared, but even the outward evidence of gringo influence; and I was once more swallowed up in the purely native life of the Sierra. At length the gorge closed in, squeezed us through three tunnels, and there opened out an interandean valley, spreading far away north and south, cloud-shadows flecking its surface, two snowclad peaks contemplating us with a lofty disdain from over the crest of the enclosing wall. The train turned crab-wise toward the nearer end of the valley, and set us down within walking distance of Jauja.

The famous “Xauxa” of Prescott is rather colorless in its personality and barren in its setting. The bells of llama trains, followed by their as soft-footed, coca-chewing drivers, jangled by my window and died away down the street. A considerable proportion of the population was constantly struggling about the hydrant in the center of the plaza; the rest were either simple Indians with coca- and pisco-brutalized faces, or the haughty keepers of glorified peanut-stands. Smoke there was none, of course, neither of industry nor of domestic comfort, and in contrast to the bitter cold nights and the ice-box frigidity of every shade and shadow, the uncovered sun was burning. Not even the murmur of open sewers broke the languorous Andean silence, and in nothing but a few slight details was the monotony of all towns of the Sierra broken. I was back once more in the kingdom of candles, with its dreary, interminable, read-less evenings.

The ancient Inca highway passed through “Sausa,” on the heights above the present town, the beginnings of which Pizarro laid on his way to Cuzco. The ruins were far more easily accessible than

those of Huamachuco, and neither so important nor so throttled with vegetation. The surviving walls are chiefly of broken stone, some of lines of square, some of round, rooms. The chief ruins appeared to have been a double line of fortresses, which hung on the brow of the hill with a truly Incaic view over the surrounding world. Strictly speaking, these were not Inca monuments, but constructions of the Huancas, improved by the Emperors of Cuzco. The tribe that once inhabited this broad valley were conquered by the militant Incas, and forced to give tribute and adopt the tongue of their conquerors, a dialect of which still persists in the region. The plain was once a lake-bottom, stretching from beyond Jauja to distant Huancayo. An hour's walk from the town still brings one to a cool and placid lagoon, surrounded by all but impenetrable marshes and reeds, with numerous wild ducks winging their V-shaped course across it. To-day the Mantaro river, like an unravelled cord, swings southward past a few *pueblocitos*, among green groves that give relieving touches of color to a scene at best bald and barren in aspect.

Long before train-time most of the population of Jauja, having no better means of whiling away the afternoon, wandered out along the dusty road to the station, isolated as some house of pestilence. That American habit of racing breathlessly across the platform at the last moment is not prevalent in Peru. For one thing, the *boletería* ceases to "function" long before the scheduled hour of departure, and he who embarks without a ticket subjects himself to a fifty percent. increase in fare—unless he has the fortune to be a compadre of some member of the train-crew. In the second-class coach the travelers ranged from broad-faced Indians to cholos in "civilized" garb and

rubber collars, the corresponding females wrapped from head to foot in crow-black mantos. With the human deluge came corpulently stuffed alforjas, crude implements of husbandry, distorted bundles of household effects, and, on the backs of the Indian women, bulky in their heavy skirts unevenly gathered about their draught-horse hips, loads of varying size from which, with few exceptions, peered the face of a wide-eyed baby. All these—the infants only excepted—my fellow-passengers proceeded to stuff under the four lengthwise benches, into the racks above, or to hang from the roof supports, until the car took on the aspect of an overstocked pawnshop in which a multitude of tenement dwellers had taken sudden refuge.

Above the door was the information, "96 ASIENTOS," all of which were all more than fully occupied when the engineer embraced the station-master for the last time and the massed population of Jauja began to recede into the distance. Within the car the prevailing tongue was Quichua. The native conductor "grafted" with a fetching frankness here and there in his struggle through the welter of humanity; the brakemen spent most of the journey drinking the health of a group of cholos in a corner of the coach. Chicha flowed like water. At every station old women crowded through the car selling that nectar of the Incas, all purchasers drinking from the same cup, and generally several from the same filling, while the scrawny hags, waiting for its return, idly rubbed their bony talons about the spout of the *cántaro* under their arms. Almost every traveler had his own supply of a more potent native beverage. The pisco bottle with its licorice smell passed constantly from hand to hand, eyes grew more and more bloodshot, tongues thicker, yet more talkative

—for the Andean Indian is taciturn in exact proportion to his sobriety—eyelids heavy, and limbs clumsy. The tippling knew no limits either of sex or age. Infants barely two years old frequently took a long drink at the fiery bottle, and cooed with delight at the taste. The railway company not only permitted, but abetted Peru's national vice. If the universal pastime threatened to flag for a moment, it was resuscitated by the fifty-year old dwarf of a train-boy, who waded incessantly through our legs with a bottle under each arm and a single opaque glass in hand, urging all, from the aged Indian dreaming over the cud of coca in his cheek to the best-dressed chola, to drink and be merry, for to-morrow—he would be bound in the other direction.

Not a few of the Indian and cholo girls were robustly pretty, their cheeks rosy in spite of their coppery tint. At one station there entered the car a white Peruvian baby, richly dressed as some little princess, fingerless white gloves on her tiny hands, borne on the back of an unbelievably dirty Indian girl of twelve, whose filthy felt hat the regally clad infant alternately picked and thrust its fingers into its mouth. Its parents were enjoying babyless freedom with their friends in the first-class car, and incidentally saving the difference in the servant's fare. Thus the unwashed Indian intrudes everywhere, always, from altar to kitchen, from nursemaid to grave-digger, and the fact never strikes the most haughty Andean as incongruous. Had the old Spanish chroniclers been of the realistic school, we should no doubt have learned that the Inca's bread was also dropped on a mud floor, and picked up with unwashed fingers before it was presented to him on a golden platter. In all the pages of Prescott there is no suggestion of uncleanliness. His Indians are as spotless as if they

had been scrubbed and scoured with New England zeal before they were admitted to the muslin-shaded twilight of his study. Yet he who has physically traveled through what was once the Empire of the Incas cannot but suspect that the Puritan-bred historian, for all his marvelously living and breathing masterpiece, inadvertently—or puritanically—gave in this respect a false picture of the ancient kingdom.



Miners of Morococha,—a Welch foreman and two of his gang, whom I had brought to the surface from some 2000 feet underground. Note the mine lamps. This particular “Natividad” mine is so wet that oilskins are required



A typical miner of the high Peruvian Andes. The cloth around his head under his hat is pink; his poncho, red and black; his feet are covered with the hairy buskins worn by the men only

It was nearing sunset when groves of eucalypti began to ride close by the train-windows, then rows of mud huts alternating with little farms of alfalfa, then larger adobe houses, and at length we drew up at Huancayo, the end of railroading in central Peru. For many years there have been plans to carry the railway on to Ayacucho, and even a wild project of some day pushing it across to Cuzco, and of linking it up with the railways of the south. Fortunately, nothing had yet come of the scheme, and what lay before me depended thereafter on my own exertions, with whatever of charm that remained to the ancient

but now slightly traveled route through the heart of Peru, as the reward.

Huancayo, boasting—as towns of the Sierra will—10,000 inhabitants, in a rich and, in better seasons, well-watered valley, consists chiefly of one long, broad street, perhaps the broadest in Peru, paved with small, round stones, a ditch of water stagnating through its center. On either side it is lined by wrought-iron rejas and open shop-doors; at either end it dies out in sand and cactus-bordered paths between mud-huts. As the main plaza of Riobamba is to Ecuador, this street forms the center of what is reputed the greatest native market in Peru. Each Sunday it offers a pulsating vista of Indians from a hundred miles around, in every color known to an artist's palette—and some which the boldest of painters would not venture to use—an unbroken stretch of humanity, shimmering in the glaring sunshine. An expert stenographer might wander all day through the surging throng without being able to set down the mere names of the wares displayed, to say nothing of the endless variety of garments, types, faces, and customs. So packed with details is the far-famed market, that only a cinematograph ribbon could give even a faint notion of its activities; mere words are as powerless to paint its motley variety as to catch the subtle charm of Huancayo itself, with its perfect climate and crystalline sunshine.

CHAPTER XIV
OVERLAND TOWARD CUZCO

The truly romantic thing, of course, would have been to buy a llama to bear my burdens to the capital of the ancient Inca Empire. But however in keeping with the local color that prehistoric denizen of the Andes might have been, there were at least a score of cold, practical, modern reasons why he was not suited to my purpose. A few of them, such as pace, disposition, slight powers of sustained endurance, and uncompanionable temperament, experience had demonstrated native to a donkey, also. A horse, as a famous traveler has remarked, is a delicate and uncertain ally. A mule, in addition to several traits inherited from his paternal forebear, had the drawback of unattainability; for the house of Rothchild and I have this in common—that our wealth is not unlimited. There remained, however, an animal unknown to mankind at large that fitted my requirements exactly, as exactly at least as is possible in this imperfect world,—the Peruvian imitation of a horse. In a bare three centuries this descendent of our “fine lady among animals” has adapted himself to Andean conditions. His small,

compact hoofs are almost as sure on precarious mountain-trails as those of the mule; he is gifted with an uncomplaining endurance far beyond what his appearance suggests; and he possesses an even, peaceful temper, and an absence of ambition and personal initiative equal to his fellow-countryman, the Indian. Moreover, he is capable of sustaining life and strength for an indefinite period on the sparse and hardy vegetation of the uplands, and is, at certain seasons, within reach of a modest purse.

"Foxy's" mozo owned such a *chusco* and, the feast of his patron saint being near at hand, was induced to sell. I took to the animal at first sight. Not that he was a thing of beauty, in his shaggy coat of shedding reddish-brown; but it was this very air of unpretentious modesty and unAndean sense of duty over mere personal appearance that won my instant regard. Here, surely, was a companion who would keep his own counsel under the most trying circumstances. Being no larger than a large donkey, he was nicely fitted to the modest load of some sixty pounds that was destined to represent his share of the world's labor. Not merely was he newly shod, but he had been enjoying the unbroken freedom of a *potrero* for several days, and should therefore be in condition to hold his own for an indefinite period, provided I did not set too swift a pace. The masculine gender was an asset not to be overlooked. Not merely did my sense of chivalry forbid sentencing any member of the other sex to the hardships that rumor insisted lay before us, but once they had been surmounted, I would not have my glory smudged by the possibility of a mere female boasting that she had also accomplished the feat. Again, the animal had never been fifty miles east of Huancayo; and I am of those who find no pleasure in

a trip with a companion who has already been over the route. The mere nine dollars at which we finally came to terms seemed a slight equivalent for all these virtues, though I took care not to hint that impression to the erstwhile owner. The matter of a name was no problem at all. Even the Peruvians unconsciously tacked on the diminutive *ito* as often as they referred to my new fellow-adventurer, and it was natural that I should have instantly dubbed him Chusquito.

Relieved of the necessity of being my own packhorse, I could somewhat increase my outfit. In Lima I had acquired a rum-burner, with coffee-pot, frying-pan, and soup-boiling attachments that closed up into a compact kitchenette about six inches in diameter. With this went a bottle of alcohol, that could be filled at any town "muy provisto de todo" along the way. "Foxy" himself, whose faults, as every gringo up and down the Andes knows, do not include a lack of generosity, insisted that he would be forced to throw away a somewhat worn, but still very serviceable, rubber poncho, unless I carried it off; and this, with my llama-hair poncho from Quito, was destined to shield me from many a bitter night on lofty mountain-ranges. The clothing requisite for every possible variation of altitude, and photographic supplies sufficient to avoid the ill-will of local "authorities," made up the bulk of my alforjas. Then there was room for a native and a foreign book, for a half-liter of pisco, with which to win the esteem of isolated Indians, a bag of cocoa leaves and the accompanying burnt-banana lime, to sustain such estimation, a candle for the endless Andean evenings, and a sufficient supply of imperishable foodstuffs to relieve my mind of the harassing daily preoccupation of finding hospitality

before dark. Even my coat and kodak could be hung on the pack, leaving me free to stride lazily along, dressed in my shirt-sleeves and a cynical smile.

It was the tenth day of September when I creaked my hobnailed way out of Huancayo's interminable street, my only load the end of a clothes-line that tempered Chusquito's pace to my own. At the principal *pulpería* his former owner drank my health in pisco, and, though he shed no tear, it might easily have made a clean mark down his cheek. Of the road to Cuzco I knew nothing, except that it led through four "cities," and that I should never reach, much less bring my four-footed companion to, the end of a journey on which not even a "son of the country" would "venture himself" without a guide and a *tropilla* of mules and arrieros. For myself I had no misgivings; as to Chusquito, I trusted to frequent halts and a militant attitude that should win him an unaccustomed wealth of fodder to confound the pessimists. All Huancayo gazed after me from their doorways with a mixture of astonishment and incredulity as I set out. Now is it not strange, when walking is the first and, indeed, the only natural means of locomotion, that people who look with complacency upon men on horseback, and upon trains, men who have heard of automobiles and aëroplanes, should gasp with wonder to see a man journeying afoot; and that *andarines* may go about living on the country and gathering certificates from every possible source to prove they do walk; as if there were any virtue in that action, except the purely personal pleasure of it, or nothing?

Even the burden of the tow-rope did not last long. Chusquito, being an experienced pack-animal, I soon found could be left to his own devices. In his own

country, he knew fully as well as I how to climb up and down rocky, mountain trails, and if he showed a tendency now and then to wander off across the pampa, especially at sight of some of his own kindred, it was natural that he should have been somewhat bored at merely human companionship. Within two days we were strolling along like lifelong friends, at an even gait that never called for cudgel acceleration, and I journeyed as serenely as if I had found at last that automatic baggage of which I had so long dreamed, only subconsciously aware that my possessions were marching peacefully before me. The mind ran unbidden over the many improvements that might be added,—a tent and more supplies; or I might even become an itinerant photographer or peddler, and earn my way as I went, instead of greeting with disdainful silence the frequent question, "Qué lleva de venta?" But on one point I was quickly disillusioned. Somehow I had pictured a pack-animal as simply a perambulating chest of drawers, fancying that I had merely to hang my possessions on the animal's back, snatching up anything as I chanced to need it. Whereas in real life I found that everything must be made snug and tight, and secured by the intricate "diamond-hitch" that made it as inaccessible on the march as if it had been left behind.

At Pucará, where the great valley of the Huancas narrows and begins to squeeze the trail upward, the inhabitants were killing a cow and stringing it up between two trees in the center of the grass-grown plaza. All the beef that could not be disposed of on the spot was cut into sheets a half-inch thick, and left to dry in the sun. By reason of this treatment all meat in the Andes is hopelessly tough; either it is "green," direct from the hand of the butcher, or

charqui of soleleather properties. Veal is unknown, for who would slaughter a calf that would grow up into several times its weight in beef? Mutton is scarce, or treated to the same charqui-ing process; and pork is of Hebraic rarity. Besides, the traveler who longs for a rasher of crisp bacon is more easily content to assuage his appetite in beef when experience has taught him what the pigs of the Andes feed on.

There was no public eating-house in Pucará. A party of a dozen men and women, however, all more or less gay with pisco, were glad of assistance in making away with their share in the weekly killing. I tied Chusquito before a bundle of wheat straw at a corner of the plaza, and we crowded around a wabbly-legged table in a neighboring mud room, and dined amid an uproar of maudlin hilarity and a series of stories often of a distinctly "raw" nature, in which the females easily held their own. Here *cancha*, or toasted, ripe, shelled corn did duty as bread, and each helping of beef was flanked by boiled *chuño*, or small, frozen potatoes. Then there were *camotes de la sierra*, one of the several species of the potato family unknown in other lands, a soft, sweetish, mushy tuber of the shape of a large peanut, which it was à la mode to pick from the plate with the fingers, and dip before each bite into the general bowl of *ají*, the Incaic peppers so beloved of the ancient Peruvians. As in all Peru, it was the custom here to drink the health of a companion and expect him to round the circle ad infinitum et intoxicatum. Luckily, my companions were so far gone in liquor, even before my arrival, that I managed to avoid most of the fiery "copitas" without giving offense.

In the group was the cholo school-master of the

baked-mud *Escuela Fiscal de Varones* across the plaza. He was a native of Carhuáz, and grew so excited over the extraordinary fact that I had not only been in his birthplace but had traveled thence "by land" that, irrespective of the pisco, he was unable to begin the afternoon session when the boys gathered at one o'clock. It didn't matter anyway, he confided, since he spoke no Quichua and the pupils almost no Spanish, and he would get his salary—whenever the government had the money—whether he pretended to teach or not. The school system of Peru being centralized, like that of France, orders from Lima sometimes transfer a *maestro* from one province to another without any notion as to whether or not he is fitted to his new assignment. The boys, all but one of whom were at least half Indian, could mispronounce a few sentences from the "Lives of the Saints," but few could recognize one letter from another. Though he had nothing to show in the way of teaching, the *maestro* pointed with pride to the school-name in huge red letters, all but covering the adobe façade, as an example of his handiwork and "culture." We spent an hour or more in posing the school for a group in the act of saluting the national flag, the "teacher" insisting on changing his brilliant red poncho for a khaki coat before he would face the kodak, and of course he grew enraged because I was so miserly as to refuse to deliver a dozen copies of the picture on the spot. Another round of "copitas" restored his amiability, however, and he insisted on giving me "something not to forget him by," and forced upon me one of the unvarnished lead-pencils which the government supplied his pupils.

Travelers were frequent on the vast, rising world beyond, where the great valley of the Huantas shrivelled and disappeared into the past. Indian

women trotted by, not only with a load and a baby on their backs, but often suckling the infant as they went. *Ccoto*, as the Incas called goitre, was common. Llama-trains, driven by fishy-eyed, noiseless Indians with colored rags around their heads under their thick, gray felt hats, passed frequently. There are few more interesting sights than that afforded by two of these trains shuttling through each other on a narrow mountain trail, each animal keeping its course as unerringly as a homing-pigeon. At a rocky turn of the road one of the frail beasts lay dying, an Indian boy slashing the gay ribbons out of its still quivering ears with a crude cutlass. Chusquito strongly objected to passing a scene so fraught with the dangers and cruelties of the trail. It was our first real difference of opinion. From Inca days it seems to have been the custom to decorate the ears of llamas with these bits of bright cloth, less from artistic notions than as a means of designating the ownership. To-day even the cows, bulls, goats, and sheep of certain regions are thus embellished—often with ludicrous results. When, as here, the matter is carried so far as to beribbon the donkeys, it seems time to call a halt; for what can look more absurdly incongruous than a plodding ass solemnly waving with the monotonous rhythm of his gait his gaily bedecked ears.

Beyond Marcavalle, on the second day, the stony road was for a time even more densely populated by llama, donkey, and mule-trains, by haughty, white-collared gentry ahorse, and villagers afoot, all, —"gente," arrieros, Indians of both sexes, and, one could almost believe, the very llamas—silly or stupid with drink. Even the women chewed coca, each bulging cheek suggesting a cud of tobacco. Indian women, that is, for in a land where every man rides it is the rarest sight to see a woman on horseback;

and even the chola who drags her skirts through the accumulations of years in her native hamlet, would sooner break the seventh commandment than ride astride. Then bit by bit the travel died out; the single telegraph wire strode knock-kneed away over an uninhabited world, and for an unbroken half day we tramped across a vast brown pampa, with only an occasional flock of sheep, the stone and straw kennels of shepherds at so great a distance off that I must trust as usual to luck in guessing aright among many faint paths, and at times even total absence thereof.

The adobe-and-thatch Indian hamlet of Nahuinpuquio was *en fiesta*, celebrating some church holiday. The air pulsated with the harsh and discordant noise of fife and drum, in the melancholy rhythm of all music of the aboriginals, and the drear landscape was brightened here and there by groups of dancers, Indians in fantastic costumes and ludicrous masks, who danced in fixed spots without moving a yard an hour in any direction. Over the valleyed and rocky face of the mountain beyond, a bit of the road consisted of rough-stone steps that may have been part of the old Inca highway. Then the trail pitched down into an ever warmer valley, the enclosing hillsides and rocky ranges marked off in hundreds of little stone-fenced patches, most of them newly plowed and waiting for rain. Toward sunset we came out suddenly above a river brilliant green with the patches of verdure stretching along it as far as the eye could command,—the Mantaro, racing Amazonward through its rock-hewn gorge, with villages tucked away here and there up the face of the great cliffs that rose ever higher as we wound forever downward round and round the headlands.

In the parlor of the “Hacienda Casma,” where shake-downs were prepared for three travelers whom chance had brought together in the half-tropical throat of the valley, lay piled the Huancayo-Huancavelica mail,—in virtually new American mail-sacks. The unusually noiseless sincerity of our host and the extraordinary order of his establishment surprised me not a little, until I learned that he was Argentine born. These rural haciendas take life easily. It was nearly eight next morning before we drifted together for coffee, bread, and cheese, and some time later that the mayordomo prevailed upon his Indian assistants to drive from the hacienda pasture a score of mules and horses, from which we each chose our animals. While I sat reading in the fresh, bird-singing, June morning, awaiting my four-footed companion, a travel-stained Indian slipped noiselessly into the yard with a letter which the wife of the hacendado opened and began to read. Her suppressed laughter soon drew the attention of her husband, who, having taken possession of the epistle, began in his turn to shake with mirth. When he had finished, he sent out of ear-shot the Indians who flocked in and about the corredor, and read the note to his guests. It was from the parish priest high up on the mighty range that shut in the river, and ran in part, all in a solemn, almost sanctimonious tone:

“Yesterday, dear compadre, while on a round of confession among my scattered flock, to whom God grant all blessings, I found in the house of the widow —— a poor little orphan, newly born. Now I beg of you in the name of charity and the Holy Church to do me the inestimable service of acting as godfather to this unfortunate little innocent, that it may not be in danger of dying in mortal sin for want of baptism. We will ride there on Thursday.... Now I beg and

pray you, dear compadre, to grant me this favor, and above all to say nothing whatever of this matter to anyone, since it is of no importance to any but ourselves, not even to mention it to your good and pious wife, whom God....”

“But—” I began, somewhat at a loss to account for the roars of laughter that increased with each phrase.



A hint of what the second-class traveler on Peruvian railways must put up with—without the clashing of colors and the odors of *pisco* and chicha



The wide main street and a part of the immense market of Huancayo, said to be the largest in Peru. The Indians, dressed in every shade of vivid colors and carrying every species of native

product, trot in from a hundred
miles around for this Sunday
gathering

"Why, it's—you see it's—well, the padre knows the widow well, very well indeed," explained my host, wiping his eyes with a corner of his poncho, "and this is the fourth time since I became owner of Casma that he has asked me to be godfather to some poor little orphan he has found in different parts of his scattered parish. He is a man of force, is the padre. But of course he doesn't want the good and pious señoras of his flock to know about his little amusements. We Argentinos, however—well, who knows the secret of keeping a secret from a woman," he concluded, gazing after his wife as she hurried away, her shoulders still shaking.

At the ancient and graceful arched bridge across the Mantaro, a half-day further down, I came to the parting of the ways. The direct trail to Ayacucho continued along the stony, winding river-bank to Tablachaca (Plank-bridge), but Huancavelica promised interest in proportion to its isolation, and I prevailed upon Chusquito to undertake the long, stiff climb up the face of the range under the vertical blazing sunshine. Little patches, inhabited since time immemorial, stood out here and there, their green trees, flowers, and fruit-odors, in as sharp contrast to the grim mountain flanks as any oasis, of the Sahara. Somewhat above the ancient town of Izcochaca, spilled up the hillside, rocks of a faint red or purple hue are dug out of the mountainside and tied in pairs on the backs of donkeys or llamas, scores of which we passed on their way to the great market of Huancayo. Even the inexperienced Andean traveler

might easily have guessed what these stones were, from the habit of the donkeys of licking the burdens of their fellows at every halt. Salt is a government monopoly in Peru, and truly Peruvian in its condition. In the rural districts he who asks for salt is handed a stone—and a hammer with which to break it. Or in lieu of the latter he may beat two slabs of this mountainside rock together, and sprinkle, the resultant gravel on his food. It behooves the wise traveler to carry his own kodak-tin of civilized salt, for even in the larger towns this is often unattainable.

All the afternoon we undulated across a lofty mountain-top, with a few human kennels of shepherds stuck on rock-ledges along the way, passing through one straw hamlet bright new in outward appearance, since threshing-time had but recently passed. In Huando, one of those dismal, rocky, comfortless, cold Indian towns that abound in the Sierra, I made my first acquaintance with *alcaldes* carrying silver-mounted staffs of office. His bedraggled wife, who was much more at home in Quichua than in Spanish, sent a messenger to announce my arrival to the gobernador. The latter was a quaint little man in side-burns, wearing the only even theoretically white collar in town, and a not too successful imitation of “European” garb that did not exactly set off to advantage his bashful rural dignity. There ensued that long, diplomatic parley by means of which the traveler at length wins hospitality—in rural Peru the word must be taken with a scanty meaning, since it commonly consists of permission to spread one’s own trappings on the earth floor of the corredor. He who would be successful even in this must never state his wants abruptly, but only gradually drift toward them,

without appearing to care particularly whether he be granted the permission or not. Ramón Lagos, however, for all his childlike simplicity, knew the duty of a gobernador toward a distinguished traveler, even though he could not fathom my reason for coming on foot. By the time cold night was settling down he had sent an Indian to pile my possessions in the corredor, and in due season the most soapless of Indian girls arrived with a *puchero*, the Irish-stew of the Andes, containing the wing and drumstick of a guinea-pig, and carrying carefully on the end of a fork—no doubt after having stuck it there with her unmentionable fingers—another fat leg of the same squeaky rodent. Then there was ancient bread and weak willow-leaf tea, and *á la postre* my hostess came to share with me a delicacy she called "chicharrón,"—strips of hard-fried pork.

Meanwhile, I had diplomatically put the gobernador in possession of ten cents, with which to buy fodder for Chusquito. A messenger went forth, and in due time an Indian *alguacil* on the down-grade of life appeared, bearing his *barajo* with all the dignity of an English beadle. Behind him came several youthful assistants, with less pretentious staffs of office. Though they are appointed by compulsion, these aids to the ruler of an Andean town are proud in their undemonstrative way of being thus raised above the common rabble. None of them would permit even the wife of the gobernador to take the black cane with silver bands out of his hands, and I could only admire them at a distance. Not one of the alguaciles spoke a word of Spanish. The gobernador in a Napoleonic voice gave the old man an order for two nickel's worth of straw. Apparently it was not etiquette for the younger aids of government to understand the command direct from the lips of the

great gobernador himself. The chief alcalde bowed faintly and turned to stride away with an authoritative, if soft-footed tread. To carry out the order himself? No, indeed! Instead, he passed it on to one of the youths, whose badge of office was a much shorter staff, tied to his wrist, that it might not interfere with the actual and physical carrying out of the command. Somewhat later one of these returned, struggling under a great bundle of straw, the old Indian strutting behind him, in all the dignity of his high authority still firmly grasping his barajo. After them came a girl, evidently the inferior of another of the authoritative youths, carrying at least a peck of *cebada*, or barley. I sat late superintending the repast of my companion, for only the inexperienced Andean traveler will trust to native supervision of his animal's requirements.

Not only do the Indian alcaldes and alguaciles hold office for the mere "honor" of the position, but the gobernadores themselves are appointed on compulsion and receive no reward, except from the traveler who, with great care not to give offense, chooses to make up for this governmental oversight. The news of my arrival had spread through the town, and in the morning the alguaciles had increased to a half-dozen, who sat motionless about the yard, staring like ruminating oxen and accepting with leisurely avidity the crusts of my desayuno, handed them by the gobernador. That official, certain I could not find my way alone, had ordered a youth to accompany me. But as he was not overjoyed at the appointment, it was no hard matter to lose him in the bleak and gloomy labyrinthian town.

An all-day tramp across an often laborious upland, brilliant for all its yellow-brown waste under the

broad blue lift of the sky, raised a glacier-topped range, at the foot of which lies Huancavelica. The rolling uplands were alive now with llamas, alpacas, and sheep, grazing together as one family. Here was the "home" of the llama—which, by the way, is the Quichua term for domesticated animal—the only beast of burden known to the inhabitants of Peru before the coming of the Conquistadores, their only domestic animal, in fact, except the guinea-pig, unless we count the now exterminated *allcu*. Relics of an ancient civilization in which they held chief place, the llama and the Indian of the Andes have much in common; they seem two branches of the same race who have fallen on evil days together, to plod through modern life like ghosts of a far-off past. Both endure only the high altitudes; both are firmly wedded to their ancestral home; both suffer uncomplainingly; both are temperamentally incapable of haste. The llama will not travel alone, but only in company with its fellows; the Indian is a moderately effective workman in "bees" or bands, but lacks the self-reliance requisite to individual accomplishment. As the Indian squanders half his time in fiestas and celebrations, and breaks his labors frequently for a "coca-time," so the llama can work but twelve or fifteen days a month, spending the rest in feeding. The drivers—and only an Indian can drive them—are as soft-footed as the animals themselves, never shouting or urging them on with those cries common to all other arrieros.

The llama, however, is more cleanly in his instincts than the Indian; does not rival him as a drunkard; and, above all, retains a manly air, even under adversity, in striking contrast to the slinking manner of his human companion. He is the aristocrat among animals. Ever silent—if he has a bleat or cry, I have

never heard it—his gentle, liquid eyes seem to look unseeing clear through one; he gazes upon the world about him with an expression of timorous disdain and the indifference of convinced superiority. His dignified attitude suggests a proud Inca set to carrying fire-wood, or a “decayed gentlewoman” refusing to be outwardly cast down by her misfortunes; his air is dreamy, as if he were looking back to the time when he and the Incas reigned supreme over all the Andean plateau. Like an aristocratic prisoner on parole, all the security he requires is a rope laid across his neck, or a corral bordered round with stones a foot high. If the figure may be carried still further, there is yet another suggestion of the aristocrat in the fact that, beneath his haughty exterior, he is apt to be stupid, assuming his impressive dignity of manner to cover this interior paucity of matter.

Had the llama been found in North America, he would have been exterminated even more completely than was the Indian. He is far too slow and ineffective a beast of burden to endure long against our national impatience. He carries barely a hundred pounds, and covers at best ten miles a day, grazing along the way, since he cannot feed by night. But in the leisurely southern continent he still survives on the high, cold plateaux that are his natural home, as the thin, hardy vegetation of páramos and punas is his natural food; and in this day of trains and automobiles, caravans of these frail, graceful creatures, their ears gaily decorated with bright ribbons, still glide across the frigid heights, as in the centuries when they represented the only freighters of an immense empire.

Graceful when he walks, the llama runs with much

the same awkward gait as the kangaroo, throwing his neck, and looking at a distance like an ostrich on four legs. In the region round about us were grazing, also, many alpacas—here called *pacos*—a far uglier animal in its thick wool of many colors, from black to gray, than the gracefully formed and generally white llama. He is suggestive of a shaggy, spring bear, and though he, too, occasionally serves as a beast of burden, his chief value is in his wool. Two other members of the same Andean family, the *guanaco* and the *vicuña*, found chiefly in the wilder regions further south, are never domesticated. The latter, graceful and delicate as a fawn, produces the most valuable wool to be found in the Western Hemisphere.

A native horseman, or, more exactly, muleman, had fallen in with us, after striving for hours to overtake us. We rose and fell two or three times more over rocky ridges, then came out suddenly on the brow of a tremendous ravine above Huancavelica, in a situation extraordinary even in comparison with the many striking ones throughout the Andes. Grim, almost perpendicular mountains, their jagged summits of rock like decaying fangs, lay piled into the sky on every hand, and completely boxed in a *vega*, or little, flat plain, in the center of which, close at hand, yet far below us, every patio of the city lay as plainly in sight as the unroofed houses of Paris under the gaze of “Diable Boiteu.” The trail pitched so steeply downward that the native was forced to dismount and lead his mule.

“You see,” he boasted, pointing to several iron crosses on almost inaccessible crags high above the city, “this is a Christian” (by which he meant Catholic) “country.”

The retort suggested itself that there were other and even less pleasant proofs of that fact, but there would have been no gain in talking plainly to one of his low mental caliber. The Latin-American can always build crosses along his roads, even if he cannot build the roads themselves. Our thighs ached from the swift descent long before we passed through the suburb of San Cristobal, separated from the town proper by the crystal-clear little mountain river, Ichu, and we had all but encircled the department capital before an ancient bridge of *mampostería*, a mixture of mud, stones, and plaster, at last gave us admittance.

Rare is the traveler of to-day who passes through Huancavelica. As I climbed the slippery, squeaky, small-cobbled streets toward the central plaza, I was quickly reminded that I was far from the haunts of civilized man, in an isolated world where even the sight of a strange face is a rare treat, to say nothing of a foreigner in shirt-sleeves, armed with a revolver and a sheath-knife, struggling to drag with him a diminutive, shaggy mountain pony laden with miscellaneous junk. For Chusquito, bewildered by the surroundings of an unknown city, displayed an excitement and a waywardness of which I had not suspected him capable. As I entered the cobbled and grassy plaza, across which the towering western mountain-wall was already throwing its cold evening shadow, the chiefly Indian soldiers on guard before the Prefectura stared with bulging eyes, and rubbed their hands across their brows, as if wondering whether they saw aright and whether they should do anything about it. The adjoining streets were long lines of gaping faces, each new group falling suddenly silent as they caught sight of the unexpected apparition that had descended

unheralded upon them, and the at best slight industry and energy of Huancavelica came completely to a standstill.

I was supplied with no fewer than six letters of introduction. The Prefectura was officially closed, which made one useless. I dragged Chusquito into the patio of Dr. Durán next door, and announced myself possessor of a recommendation to the lawyer from his best friend in Lima. He acted like a Peruvian. Not merely did he decline to step out of his office, but sent an Indian boy to demand the letter. When I presented myself in the doorway instead, he read it with fear plainly depicted on his features that he might be obliged to offer hospitality to a man who could not be a caballero, since he came on foot, and as plainly sought some loophole to avoid that necessity. He found one, too, when he turned again to the envelope. The writer had carelessly written the first name and, though he had explained the error, had not taken the trouble to change it.

“Ah, but this letter is not for me,” cried the lawyer triumphantly, “it is addressed to Felipe, and I am Enrique”—though he knew as well as I that there was not another Dr. Durán in all Huancavelica.

The open-mouthed throng that had massed about the zaguán led me en masse to a building that had once been a hotel on the further corner of the plaza. It was too much to expect the inhabitants to know already that it had ceased its ministrations to transients—the proprietor had been barely four years dead. The whispering chorus about me swelled gradually to the audible assertion that there was another establishment a few squares away which “sometimes had given accommodations to estranjeros.” At that moment a soldier, bearing a naked sword in one

hand and a musket in the other, came running to say that the ayudante wished to know who I was, why, where, whence, and all the rest of it,—and that I was to report to him at once. I commandeered the messenger to lead me to the rumored hostelry. Before we reached it, however, a boy shouted to a shopkeeper, leaning out over his half-door to watch the unwonted excitement, that—a fact I had chanced to mention to some one, whereupon it instantly became general knowledge—I had a letter for Solomón Atala. The "Turk," for such he was, dashed into the crowd and announced himself the addressee.

"Very well; you will come and live at my house," he cried, when he had perused the note.

I protested that a public hostelry in the Andes was too rare a luxury to be lightly given up, and that it was bad enough to intrude upon private families when there was no other alternative. The "Turk" would not hear any such argument. I had been recommended by his good friend, and I belonged to him as long as I chose to remain in Huancavelica. Memories of Palestine reminded me that to men of his race hospitality has none of the hollow nothingness common to Peru. While we stood talking, a boy surreptitiously led Chusquito off down a gaping side-street to the "Turk's" home, and I had perforce to follow. My possessions disappeared through a narrow door within a door, once through which I found myself in the littered patio of an ancient house of ample, rambling proportions. A female voice bade me mount a century-worn stairway to a sagging second-story balcony completely surrounding the yard. Barely had I dubiously set foot upon it than there popped out several slatternly women and the mightiest swarm of

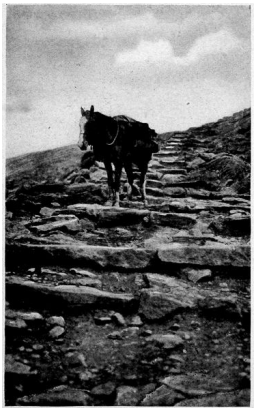
unassorted children I had ever yet seen in captivity. My imagination began to picture what sleeping, and writing notes, and getting the few days' rest to which I was entitled, would be in that swarming household, and unable to think of any ceremonial excuse, I slipped down the aged stairs, untied Chusquito, and dragged him away up the slippery cobbled street.

The worst of it was that I had to pass the "Turk's" shop again to reach the hotel. The good fellow was just locking up to come home and entertain me, and he pounced upon me at once, quite literally, throwing his arms about me and attempting to drag me off bodily, while Huancavelica stared open-mouthed upon us from every doorway. But I had set my heart on the repose of a room of my own. Beating off the affectionate "Turk" with one hand, and struggling in vain to keep Chusquito off the sidewalk and out of each succeeding shop with the other, I gradually worked my way forward, leaving my would-be host on the verge of tears, and gained at last the "Saenz-Peña Hotel." It was a dislocated little building of long, long, ago, wrapped like a carelessly flung garment around a tiny patio, its most conspicuous feature the city billiard-room in which a half-dozen youths of sporting proclivities were gathered—at least, until they caught sight of us. Summoned from the mysterious interior, the respectful and astonished poncho-clad proprietor went in quest of a key, and unlocked the padlock of one of three small doors tucked away in as many corners of the patio—doors made of battered drygoods boxes with the lettering still upon them, so precious is lumber in these treeless heights—explaining that the other two rooms were "ocupados"—perhaps with empty bottles or guinea-pigs, certainly not with guests.

The chamber assigned me awoke my gratitude. It was, to be sure, so small that I could touch both walls at once, windowless and doorless, except for the narrow opening by which I squeezed in, gloomy and chill, after the fashion of adobe mountain rooms long closed; but it was furnished, even to a bed with real springs. Barely had I carried my traps inside, when there burst into the patio another "Turk," who asserted in gestureful Spanish that *he* was the real Solomón Atala to whom I belonged during my stay in Huancavelica, the other being merely his brother, who had opened the letter in the brotherly way of Palestinians. He, too, was a believer in forcible hospitality, and the hotel proprietor looked on in helpless dismay at what promised to be a successful attempt to carry off his only guest in—the patron saint of hoteleros knows how long. A bed with springs, in a room by myself, however, was not a luxury to be given up for the mere danger of making a few Turkish enemies, and in the end the engaging Syrian, seeing no way out of it, admitted with bad grace that, as I already had my possessions scattered about the hotel room, it would be unfair to the proprietor not to retain it. I should remain where I was until morning, when we would talk the matter over. He agreed under protest, and at length gloomily took his departure.

This "friend in town" is the bugbear of hotel-keepers, or would-be keepers, in the Andes. The Arabian notion of hospitality, inherited from the Moors and mixed perhaps with the traditions of Inca days, with their free and public tambos along all the highways of the empire, still holds sway, at least superficially. The Peruvian will all his life put up with begging lodging, food, and fodder on his travels, often going without them entirely, rather than help support a

hotel, considering it a sign of high rank to be housed by an outwardly delighted acquaintance, and thus cheat the struggling hotelero out of a livelihood.



"Chusquito" descending one of the few remnants of the old Inca highway I found from Quito to Cuzco



A detail of the market of Huancayo, with a bit of pottery like that of the days of the Incas

Having led Chusquito to the river to drink and heaped before him half of a five-cent bundle of *alcazer*—green barley, for grain does not ripen at this altitude—and locked the rest inside my chamber, I stalked in solitary grandeur through the gaping billiard-players to the dining-room, and sat down at the end of a long oil-clothed table near a small opening in the wall that looked like an enlarged rat-hole. The poncho-clad proprietor proceeded with fitting gravity to serve me a thoroughly Peruvian meal, of which the chief ingredient was a *churrasco*, or steak, not of beef, as I at first fancied, but of llama, a favorite Huancavelican dish which would not exactly win the unstinted praise of an epicure. Between each course he repaired to the kitchen in a corner of the barnyard to poke the various dishes through the hole in the wall, and then reappeared within to serve them. It may have been a long time since he had been honored with a guest, but he had not forgotten the proper form of service. After each trip he balanced on alternate legs, staring at me silently, until at last his tongue refused longer to obey his will, when he burst out tremulously:

"Usté'—ah—señor, es andarín, no?"

"Not at all," I replied, to his patent disappointment. "You see I haven't a single medal on my chest."

"Ah, then you travel to sell something; jewelry

perhaps, like all franceses?"

Squier, traveling through the Andes a half-century ago, found that "in the Sierra all foreigners are supposed to be French in nationality and peddlers of jewelry by profession," and conditions have changed little to this day. The landlord-waiter was openly incredulous of my second denial, but once the sluice-gates of his curiosity had been opened, the flow of words swamped even the service, and the soup had long since become a memory of the dim past before he poked the *pastre* of melted panela through to himself. I made my escape at last, and went to sit on the wooden sofa in the billiard-room, as the only place in town with light enough to see oneself by; but my distinguished presence was so evidently the cause of bad shots that gradually turned the players bitterly resentful, and the atmosphere was so decidedly wintry, that I soon "hit the hay"—quite literally, for such proved to be the filling of the outwardly luxurious-looking mattress.

I had barely ventured into the street next morning when I was dragged into the shop of the two Palestinians. After a bitter and noisy struggle we patched up a truce as follows: Since I was already enstalled there, I was to keep my room at the hotel, but it was at their house that I must take breakfast and dinner....

"And desayuno!" cried the "Turks" as one man, "You must also come and take breakfast with us. If you like eggs, or steak, or pickled pigs' feet, or.... Very well, even if you take only coffee and bread, like a Peruvian...."

Though it was barely ten of a brilliant Sunday morning, the Andean merchant's richest hour, they shut up shop, in spite of the mild protests of a dozen

ponchoed shoppers, and led the way to their rambling residence. A meal heavy with meat was enlivened with an excellent wine that could have cost little less than a small fortune at this altitude. The manners of the household recalled Palestine. We three men sat at table with our hats on, in Arabic as well as Andean fashion, while the women hovered more or less inconspicuously in the background. A dozen small children of both sexes crawled and climbed and sprawled and displayed their plump, unwashed nakedness on, around, and under the table, drinking wine and swearing like arrieros in both Spanish and Quichua. They were being brought up in the Palestinian, which is to some extent the Latin-American, fashion that forbade coercion, and were heartily laughed at and dubbed "cute" whenever they did anything particularly naughty or disobedient.

The two Syrians, as we would call them, or "Turks," as their fellow-countrymen are known through all South America, had left Bethlehem some eight years before. They announced themselves "Christians," which meant merely that they were not Mohammedans; though, as behooves ambitious merchants, they diplomatically avoided any religious controversy with their clients. For several years they had peddled on foot over all the accessible portion of central Peru, descending even into the montaña, or great hot lands to the east, the abode of rubber, fever, and "wild" Indians. Bit by bit they had established shops in various towns, until they had come to be among the most important merchants of the region, with headquarters in Huancavelica and branches in charge of more youthful fellow-countrymen in the chief centers of population of the department. Their success was typical of thousands

of men of their race throughout the southern continent. For the native, equally scanty of initiative, industry, and the inclination to risk his capital, is at best an ineffective competitor of this tireless race of born shopkeepers. Of productive labor, great as is the call for it in this backward Andean land, the “Turk” brings nothing. Nor is his example likely to better the personal habits of the native population, though it may breed more effective “business methods,” and even a higher grade of commercial honesty—to say nothing of hospitality. It is not by such immigration, however, that the dormant continent will be rejuvenated.

My irrepressible hosts cherished a hazy dream of some day returning to Palestine with their fortune. Yet their children spoke not a word of the Arabic that still served for most of the intercourse between the men and their slatternly wives. The brothers themselves were fluent, not only in Spanish, but in Quichua. The throaty dialect of the aboriginals has much in common with the no less guttural Arabic; as the similarity of customs and point of view makes the race particularly adaptable to Peruvian surroundings. No other foreigner fits better into the life of the Andes, and it is not strange that the Syrian has most effectively invaded Andean commerce. Even the Chinaman, who quickly disappears as the traveler turns his back on Lima, has found it impossible to compete with these more western Orientals.

It is unfortunate that the traveler given to reporting his wanderings cannot have his mind erased every little while, like a slate; for so quickly do the sights and sounds of a strange country sink to the commonplace that many things that might delight

the stay-at-home pass unnoticed. Thus an American untouched with the contempt of familiarity, suddenly set down in Huancavelica, would no doubt find it abounding with “local color.” Hays, who journeyed overland to Cuzco some months before me, enthusiastically proclaimed it “the most picturesque town in South America.” But to one who had followed the Andes step by step it was rather monotonously like any other town of the Sierra, its customs varying only in a few minor details from those that had long since grown familiar. By night it lies silent and dead under its cold stars. Dawn finds the fountain in its central “Plaza de la Independencia” bearded with icicles, and no clock or sun-dial could give the hour more exactly than the regularity with which these drip away to nothing in the late morning. For the sun falls tardily on Huancavelica, having first to climb the mountain rampart that shuts it in on the east. The town wisely remains in bed until the god of the Incas has asserted his brilliant, undisputed sway, and my road-habit of rising at daybreak gave me the sensation of strolling through a city from which the entire populace had fled. Indeed, the only really comfortable place in town was in bed. All day long one shivered in the shade or burned in the sun. In my dank, dungeon cell it was distinctly too dark, cold, and gloomy to read or write; on the red benches of the plaza the glare of the molten disk above was too brilliant to endure, even when some unsophisticated old native did not join me and remain deaf to all hints that even a traveler has his work to do. I soon formed the habit of taking daily possession of the ancient band-stand facing the white “cathedral.” Here was a bench on which I could, by constant manipulation, keep myself in the sun and my note-book in the shade; and as it

was apparently against the rules or contrary to *costumbre* for a native to occupy the structure, I sat here hour after hour in solitary glory, flanked by the four staring sides of the plaza. The activity of an Andean town can generally be gaged by its plaza, and by that token Huancavelica was inactive indeed. Evidently no industry more important than a soup-kettle could be run by natives, and foreigners were rare. Charcoal braziers, or the three-stone, fagot-fires at the backs of huts, where crouched old women almost too feeble to drive off the curs that swarmed around the steaming earthen calabashes, represented the ordinary cooking processes, the fires being now and then given new life with a bamboo, or woven-weed fan. So bucolic was the populace that every stroll through the streets brought a score of inquiries as to what I was selling, many regarding even my kodak as a sale-kit and inviting me to enter, while children and grown-ups alike hastened to summon the rest of the family as often as I hove in sight.

In common with all Latins, the people are lovers of perpetual noise, and have no conception of our Anglo-Saxon desire to be occasionally let alone. Though the annoyances were always innocent, rather than intentional, I could not pause for a moment that I did not have a surrounding mob, and there was almost constantly a procession of boys, and even those old enough to know better, at my heels. If I paused to look at an old carved corner-stone or an ancient balcony, necks were craned in wonder as to what on earth an *estranjero* from the great outside world could find of interest in the lifelong sights of their drowsy capital. Yet there was a peculiar repose and quiet about the place, as if it were literally shut off by its grim mountain-walls from all the troubles of the great world. Shopkeepers locked up and went

home to play or sleep whenever the whim struck them. Though a department capital, there was not a physician in town, nor any open evidence of a drug-store; and while there was no doubt some advantage in this state of affairs, the death-rate from dysentery and pneumonia was high. An awkward, slow-minded, mountain people, they had not even the usual mountaineer virtue of shyness, being as forward in their manner as Hebrews. I was never out of sight of at least one “authority,” a ragged Indian from some neighboring hamlet up among the higher ranges, clinging jealously to his black silver-mounted cane of office. Pacos and llamas could be made out, tiny as mice, feeding on the perpendicular crags sheer above the town, among the abrupt splintered masses of rock that cut all the surrounding sky-line sharply with their jagged crests.

As I was strolling about town the day after my arrival, a soldier again came running after me to say that the prefect himself desired me to report and explain myself. I handed the menial my card, and heard no more of the matter. The printed name on a bit of cardboard is proof sufficient of aristocracy in most of South America. Burglars and highwaymen contemplating entrance into that field of activities would do well to provide themselves with a plentiful supply of visiting cards, the larger and more imposing the better. Later on, when I called on the department ruler at my own volition and with the dignity befitting an envoy from the outside world, a man was assigned to attend me on any excursions I chose to make in or about the town.

The origin of the name of Huancavelica is curious. There was, it seems, no town here at the time of the Conquest. To the Incas this flat enclosed plain with

its clear little river offered too fine an opportunity for their enemies to roll rocks down upon them from the towering heights above. Centuries ago there settled on the spot an Indian of the Huanca tribe, inhabiting the great valley between Jauja and Huancayo. He died young, and for long years his wife dwelt alone in the only hut in this capacious mountain-pocket. Her name was Isabel, which in South America becomes familiarly or affectionately, "Velica." Her hut was a sort of tambo, where a bit of corn or eggs might occasionally be had, or at least pasture for pack-animals and shelter from the páramo winds. Hence travelers through the region, asked where they would spend the night, announced: "Voy llegar donde la Huanca Velica."

Then it was discovered that the grim, treeless mountains piled into the sky about the little valley were rich in quicksilver, and a mining town built itself up about the hut of Isabel, the Huanca. For centuries the great Santa Barbara mine high above the town, and several smaller workings in the vicinity, yielded the mercury used in Potosi and in all the mines of Peru, High or Low, which was brought from Huancavelica on the backs of llamas. Then, as more scientific methods came into vogue, the miners turned to California for their supply, until to-day the Mercury Queen is but an echo of her former greatness, and the open shafts of her cinnabar mines, which rumor has it left several of the surrounding ranges great hollow caverns, stand silent and deserted. It is this failure to keep up with modern times that has left Huancavelica one of the most "picturesque" department capitals, with poverty her chief handmaid. Lack of transportation is her principal drawback. The very town itself is said to sit on top of great deposits of quicksilver. Workmen,

digging for the foundation of a new building on a corner of the plaza during my sojourn, found pure-liquid mercury bubbling up out of the ground. Modern miners, however, refuse to operate where only the slow and unreliable llama must be depended on for transportation, and only when the long-promised railroad arrives, will Huancavelica come into her own again.

The chief point of interest was the famous old mercury mine of Santa Barbara. Strangely enough, the cicerone appeared within an hour of the daylight time set, though without breakfast, and shared with me the results of my own rum-burning handicraft. A roundabout, but exceedingly steep road, on which we panted audibly in spite of frequent halts for breath, brought us to our goal far above the town. Near a silent, cold, Indian hamlet, with an aged Spanish church facing its dreary plaza, was the ruin of a cut-stone smelting-works of colonial days, and behind it the imposing arched entrance to the enormous caverns said to undermine all the neighboring range. Above this was a large Spanish coat-of-arms cut in stone, with the information that the arch had been constructed by General Fulano in 1707; and the weather-defaced relief of a saint holding a child. The silence of long abandonment brooded over all the scene. We lighted the medieval oil-lamp borrowed from the hotel, and disappeared within. The tunnel that led straight into the mountainside was large enough, if not for a railway train, at least for a horseman to have ridden in comfortably, its floor easily as good a road as the average Peruvian one outside. Here and there we crawled over a heap of stones and earth where a part of the wall had fallen, and at 382 paces from the mouth were halted by a cave-in that had choked up

the entire tunnel. My companion had assured me that the spirits of ancient Spaniards and their Indian victims, lying in wait for unwary moderns, made our entrance perilous in the extreme, and, once permission was given, lost no time in retreating.

From the exit we went *faldeando* (skirting) the mountain to the ancient mining village of Chaclatacana, about which, and scattered over all the vicinity, were the evidences of little mines the Indians had dug on their own account. The cinebrio deposits of the region were first disclosed to the Spaniards in 1566, by the custom of the aboriginals of painting their faces with it. My guide asserted that condors were numerous, and often dangerous to the eyes of men wandering over these lofty heights; but it was my luck not to catch sight of one of those giant birds of the Andes. I was rewarded, however, for taking the "short-cut" that proved longer and more laborious than the road, by a bird's eye view of Huancavelica, so directly below us that we could have tossed our hats into the central plaza. Here, too, among the split and jagged rock-crags we stumbled upon a colony of *viscachas*,—"biscachos" my companion called them—almost the only quadruped, besides the guinea-pig and the llama family, indigenous to the Peruvian highlands. The creature is sometimes dubbed the "squirrel of the Andes," but its size was more nearly that of the rabbit, its prominent tail and means of locomotion suggestive of some diminutive species of the kangaroo, its color not unlike that of our prairie dog, which it resembled somewhat also in its manner of dodging in and out among the rocks and crags, as if inviting us to a game of "hide and seek." According to my attendant, the meat of the animal is even more succulent than llama-flesh, providing the tail is cut off at the

moment of killing.

But for the unkindness of fate there would have been a gala bull-fight in Huancavelica on the Sunday of my stay. The one negro I had seen shivering about town turned out to be a torero, imported—chiefly at his own expense—from Lima for the occasion. The corral behind the rambling dwelling of my hosts had been turned into a "ring," a square one, to be sure, laboriously fenced with poles tied with bark and cords to upright stakes. But on Saturday afternoon, just as the town was rubbing its hands together at the prospect of a half-forgotten entertainment, the one bull that was to have furnished it sprang through the barrier and over the low wall to the sunken street below, fifteen feet if it was an inch, and instead of dying on the spot, was last seen making record time for his mountain pasture.

The irrepressible "Turks" were wellnigh obnoxious in their hospitality. The most baggage-abhorring of travelers acquires gradually and unconsciously a new point of view with respect to his pack when he is no longer forced to burden his own shoulders with it, and articles that have hitherto seemed only useless weight take on the aspect of necessities. But after they had "sold" me an enamel cup and a roll of cotton-flannel for "Fusslappen," the Syrians refused vociferously to accept payment. When I caught sight of a mouth-organ that might have served to while away the tramp across the lonely uninhabited world ahead, my mere glance at it caused José to drop it into my pocket when I was off my guard. A wordy battle ended with his acceptance of a *sol*, which he swore was the wholesale price of an instrument marked to retail for five times that amount; but it cost me eternal vigilance to keep now one, now the

other brother from surreptitiously returning the coin. There was nothing left but to curtail my purchases. To choose from their stock was to have charity thrust upon me; to buy off their rivals would have been the height of insults, and would quickly have published to all the town their lack of hospitality, or my ingratitude. My last day with them the firm of Atala Hermanos spent in writing me letters of introduction to all their countrymen from Huancavelica to Cape Horn, and when I sneaked into their patio at dawn next morning, bent on abducting Chusquito unseen, the entire household was already waiting to drag me in to an extraordinary breakfast. Not satisfied with that, they forced upon me a boiled leg-of-mutton and several other delicacies, among them a dozen raw eggs which, tied in a handkerchief on Chusquito's back, broke one by one with his jolting gait and ran in yellow streams down the rubber poncho that covered the pack.

All Huancavelica united in attempting to force a guide upon me, asserting that even "hijos del lugar" frequently lost themselves on the trackless puna beyond. I smiled indulgently at what had long since become a threadbare prophesy, but had occasion to recall it before the day was done. The way mounted steadily all the morning, uncovering a vast yellow-brown world that stretched forever before me. In the early hours it was scantily inhabited by wild, weather-faded shepherds watching over flocks of llamas, pacos, or sheep, and leisurely busy turning wool into yarn on their crude spindles, an occupation that gave the men a curiously effeminate air, out of all keeping with their rough exterior. These chary fellows took good care that we should not come within shouting distance of them, and even the rare travelers and llama drivers made wide circuits to

avoid us, as if fearful of their defenselessness on this bleak, shelterless top of the world. If taken unaware in some fold of the earth, they muttered some stupidity in the Quichua slang dialect of the region, and sped away like startled hares. Unable to make inquiries, I could only trust to chance, compass, and the instinct that develops with long Andean travel. For on these broad mountain-tops the traveler is by no means master of the situation, and to guess wrong between several at best faintly marked paths may be to go hopelessly astray, and come out on the opposite side of the Andes from that toward which one is headed. For long stretches the dreary páramo showed no sign whatever of travel, though here and there the droppings of llamas gave the route a more or less fixed direction. A jolly, coca-chewing old Indian, whom I came upon in the afternoon plodding patiently behind his haughty train, had seen enough of the world to have lost some of his fear of white men and assured me I was still on the right road. But he must have been mistaken, or else I guessed wrong at the next opportunity, for the bit of trail that had grown up under my feet split irreconcilably and left, at the hour when I should have come upon an hacienda reputed hospitable to travelers, only the rolling, trackless, yellow puna stretching away on every hand.



Huancavelica, one of the most picturesque and least-visited provincial capitals of Peru, is completely boxed in by grim, rocky mountain walls noted for their deposits of mercury. The city itself is more than two miles above sea-level

A raging thunder-storm of rain and hail, under which the vast land and skyscape turned dark as night, soon broke upon us. I had struggled a long distance through the storm, when I faintly made out a little cluster of huts some distance to the right in a wrinkle of the pampa. After I had overcome my own disinclination to go out of my way to seek lodging, there was needed a laborious argument to bring my companion to my way of thinking. For Chusquito would have none of your side trips. The truth is I had been somewhat deceived and disappointed in the disposition of my chosen fellow-adventurer. As long as the road lay straight and undoubtedly before us, he was an ideal companion, never breaking the thread of my reflections by calling attention to the scenery, nor otherwise making himself humanly obnoxious. But in temperament he might best be likened to a cat, accepting all favors and friendly overtures with a complacent aloofness and matter-of-course manner that resembled ingratitude, refusing to be won over, even by caresses, to the faintest expression of a reciprocal affection. Moreover, he had a will, not to say a wilfulness, of his own that is inimical to all genuine companionship on the road, and a respect for *costumbre* that betrayed his Latin-American training. I felt no compunction in having recourse to brute force in a dispute under such

circumstances as then faced us, however, and we soon gained the only visible shelter.

On a cold, cheerless spot, almost devoid of even the vegetation of high pampas, I found five miserable human kennels of loosely laid stones and ichu grass, in charge of several gaunt, savage, yet cowardly curs, and an Indian boy speaking only monosyllabic Quichua. All the huts, except a beehive-shaped structure that served as kitchen, had huge native padlocks on the doors. Choked with thirst, in tantalizing contrast to my dripping garments and the raging storm, I called for water.

“Manam cancha,” murmured the boy dully, using the Quichua version of that stereotyped Andean falsehood, “There is none.”

“Yacu!” I shouted, jokingly laying a hand on my revolver.

He slunk away, and picked up a battered cup behind one of the huts. Wiping this on his lifelong sleeve, he scraped the bottom of a huge earthen jar that leaned awry, in what would have needed only a fence to be a barnyard, at an angle that enabled the dogs to help themselves at the same source, and presented the half-filled vessel to me. There was no second choice in the matter, for this region, untold miles above sea-level, had no other supply of water than the rain that chanced to drop into the leaning cántaros. Fortunately the taste bore little evidence of what the appearance suggested. I made a round of the huts, resolved to spend the night there, even if I had to break into one of the buildings.

“Huasi-muñuy!” I cried, patching my Quichua together after my own fashion, and pointing to one of the padlocks.

"Manam cancha," repeated the *huarma* in the same dull monotone. I held out what would have seemed a fortune of small coins to a country boy of other lands, but he shook his head doggedly, without a gleam of interest, casting a half-frightened glance at my weapon. An older youth, who had appeared noiselessly from somewhere, treated the offer of money with the same indifference and settled down to a silent attempt to drive me off, in spite of the storm and the night that was closing in. It was then that I thought of the sack I had filled in the market of Huancayo. At the magic word "coca" the pair awoke to a new interest in life. Each snatched off his hat to receive a handful of leaves, mumbling a "Gracias, tayta-tayta," and the older youth ordered the other to clear away a miscellaneous assortment of junk, bundles of old sheepskins, and a heap of llama-droppings gathered for fuel, from one end of the hut "porch" under the edge of which I was seated. As he worked, there fell from somewhere under the projecting eaves the corpse of a tiny, black pig that had quite evidently died a natural death, but which the family just as evidently proposed to eat, for the boy carried it off to a safer spot, plainly doubting my honesty. In a corner lay two bundles of ichu grass. I tossed one to Chusquito, standing dejected and disgusted beside me, and spread out the other as a mattress. The youth made no protest, but shook his head at the *real* I offered in payment. A howling wind that even the stone hut failed to break made it useless to attempt to set up my cooking outfit. As I drew cold food from my pack, the Indians sat motionless as stone statues, but watched with keen eyes, monkey-like, my every move. I shared the lunch with them, though I should much have preferred paying them in money for their dubious

hospitality. It is one of the drawbacks of Andean journeying that the traveler is expected to share his scanty supplies, not merely with his human companions of the moment, but is invariably surrounded under such circumstances by a ravenous swarm of begging and thieving dogs, pigs, and fowls. Except for a score of llamas lying in patrician aloofness beyond the huts, every living creature crowded round to appeal to my generosity or to catch me off my guard. The Indians accepted each morsel with a murmured “Gracias” that plainly proceeded from custom rather than from any real thankfulness. Innumerable experiments, from the Rio Grande southward, had demonstrated that the American aboriginal has not a trace of gratitude in his make-up; indeed, the use of the Spanish term suggests that the native language did not even include a word for thanks.

The thirst that follows an all-day tramp outlived the available supply of water, and even the bottle of pisco I dared not bring to light until darkness had concealed my movements from the Indians could not be shared with Chusquito, no doubt choking within, in spite of his bedraggled, dripping flanks. As the storm died down, the evening spread wonderful colors across this bleak upper world, bringing out in lilac tints, shading to purple and then to black, the saw-toothed range bounding the horizon on the far south. The night would have been bitter cold even inside one of the huts, to say nothing of lying on the earth floor of the open, mud corredor. Yet the cold which my rubber poncho kept out was no less surprising than the heat which the wooly llama-hair one kept in, and my sleep might easily have been much more broken than it was.

During my first doze there arrived an old Indian, evidently the head of the household that had hitherto kept itself successfully concealed. He was somewhat the worse for fiery waters and, being apprized of his visitor, set up a deal of howling and shouting in Quichua. Receiving no answer, he ventured to take a mild poke at me with his stick. It would have been heroic indeed to have gotten out of "bed." Instead, I turned loose a string of American and Spanish words of high voltage which experience had shown to have a withering effect on his race. Though he did not understand them individually, he evidently grasped their general import, for he subsided at once, and retired to the beehive kitchen, where for a long time he howled and yelped, as brave men will in the midst of their trembling and admiring families. Bit by bit his women pacified him, in the way women have, perhaps with more pisco and coca, for I heard him laugh several times thereafter, with a sound like that of a choking cow, before anything resembling silence settled down over the lofty mountain-top world. Real silence is rare in these Indian huts at night. Either the lack of comfort they are too lazy or uninitiative to remedy, or the chewing of coca keeps the miserable inhabitants half-awake, and periods of growling and grumbling are seldom far apart from dark to dawn.

I fancy it was midnight, more or less, when I became drowsily aware that Chusquito, tied within a foot of my head, was munching some fodder I knew he did not possess; but I was too nearly asleep to rise and investigate. The moon testified that it was some two hours later when I was awakened to find the head of the household standing beside me, his hand on a damaged roof and bellowing a guttural stream in which I caught several times the words "Huasi

micuni—eating my house." This would be an impoliteness in any land, and I bravely forced myself to slip into my brogans and out into the icy moonlight. Chusquito had scalloped out the bangs of the grass roof in a new style that, to my notion, was more fetching than the original. If only the Indians of the Andes were not so stonily conservative, my host would have thanked me for the improvement, instead of sputtering with rage. I tied the innocent culprit to a stone-wall nearby, which was also an unfortunate choice, for I heard him knock down most of that in the hours that remained before daylight. During the long uproar that ensued in the kitchen, no doubt the old Indian told his family many times over that had *he* been at home when I arrived, I should not have remained; but in that he was mistaken, for it would have taken a considerable band of South American Indians to have denied me hospitality. I lay down again with my revolver and cartridge-belt handy under the edge of the ponchos; not that there was any danger, but because I do not care to be numbered among those who take foolish chances.

The next I knew distinctly, it was dawning. I fed my mattress to Chusquito and set up my kitchenette in the most sheltered corner of the corredor, bent on concocting a hot broth with a lump of ice from the bottom of a leaning cántaro. The directions on my magic can of concentrated soup asserted that "one cube with hot water makes a delicious bouillon." But this, experience had demonstrated, should be taken with a grain of salt—also four other cubes. Even under the lee of my alforjas the rum-burner went out at the faintest breath of wind, but by constant coaxing, and at the imminent risk of setting fire to my possessions, I managed even to boil the two eggs that remained whole, though so great was the

altitude that with eight minutes of boiling they were still soft. Gravelly bread of Huancavelica, and a native “chocolate” that was really a pebbly brown sugar, topped off a meal I might have longed for in vain at that hour in the best hotel of Peru. Many an hour on the road, during the best part of the day for walking, that simple little contrivance gave me, when I should otherwise have been waiting on the sleepy natives for breakfast.

By the time I had eaten, the householder appeared in his slit panties with white buttons down the sides, and a fancy upper garment evidently intended to impress me with his importance. But when he noted by daylight with whom he had to do, he gradually shrivelled up to a half-friendly smile, and accepted with a pretence of gratitude a coin for his forced hospitality and newly decorated roof. A silver-ringed, black cane, leaning against what Chusquito had seen fit to leave of the stone wall, proved him one of the “authorities” of the region. Above it stood a crude cross decorated with dry grass, designed to keep evil spirits—except those in bottles—away from the cluster of huts. Either my host’s knowledge of the trail ahead, or his manner of imparting it, was extremely hazy, and I dragged Chusquito away across the pampa in the cutting cold, but invigorating mountain air, burdened with the task of finding ourselves once more.

Within an hour we were so fortunate as to fall again upon a trail, where I could relinquish the tiller and drift into those day-dreams that come upon the solitary traveler across these vast Andean punas. Snow had fallen during the night, and a great white immensity, slightly undulating, spread out to infinity before us. We shared an all-night thirst that set us

both to munching snow at frequent intervals. By ten the sun had burned away the whiteness and restored to the scene its accustomed monk's robe of faded yellow-brown. All morning I continued to guess the way across a steadily rising world, in the utter silence that makes more impressive the dreariness of these lofty regions, until at noon we panted over a jagged rock-ridge from which all the kingdoms of the earth lay spread out below us, tumbled, broken, and velvety brown as far as the eye could command even in this transparent air. As we started gradually downward, shepherds and their flocks appeared once more, then little fenced patches and stone-heap hovels; then we dropped almost suddenly into the blazing hot valley of a little river, along which tiled huts and travelers were numerous. Several times I went astray and waged pitched battle with Chusquito cross-country, past hovels swarming like disturbed beehives with barking dogs, before I once more got securely under our feet the trail that was to lead us upward again over the next páramo. It is not merely that the stupid inhabitants of these regions speak only Quichua, but they are incapable of giving intelligent directions, even in that tongue. There is something exhilarating in the air of Andean heights that breeds reflection and a peaceful serenity of mind; but it is nature, rather than humanity, that awakens the marked optimism of spirits. The traveler grows "inspired," lifted up out of himself by the magnificence of the scene, realizing for a moment how marvelous is this world we inhabit; then suddenly an Indian, a human being, intrudes, and snatches him back to earth again. Time after time I caught sight of an approaching figure which the mind, from youthful force of habit, imbued with human intelligence—and as many times it turned out

to be a shuffling Indian, stupid and glassy-eyed from the quid of coca in his cheek and the chicha and pisco of the last hamlet in his belly, who cringed like some degenerate animal as he passed, mumbling some Quichua monosyllable. Incapable of intelligent reply, even when they are not in a half-drunken stupor, these plodding creatures have a very hazy notion of distance. The *acco*, or time of duration of a quid of coca, which they throw on the *achepetas*, or symbolical stone-heaps along the way, is at best but an uncertain term of length, and their besotted intellects seldom retain the memory of any number above three or four. So that, in spite of the frequent appearance of fellow-travelers, I had perforce to be satisfied with the half-certainty that I was on the right road, without any notion of whether the nearest shelter was one, or ten leagues distant.

Clouds crawled into the evening sky again, where the daytime sunshine had swept it clean; the purple shadows of the mountains, across the tops of which the setting sun cast a crimson glow, spread and darkened, and I had visions of shivering out another night in the corredor of an Indian hut, or out on the bare, freezing pampa. I had suffered so many dreary nights, twelve hours long, in South America, that it had become a habit to lose my cheerful mood in the late afternoon and succumb to apprehension, as of some impending misfortune. Under this I developed unconsciously a pace so swift that Chusquito, like a small boy trying to keep up with an inconsiderate father, took to trotting every little while some distance ahead. We were now far up again on a cold puna across which the bitter mountain wind swept unchecked, and even my companion seemed to cast apprehensive glances at the angry, black clouds overspreading the sky, and at the cold dusk

descending upon us. We hurried unbrokenly on, without a sign of town or hamlet, though the last Indian stragglers still bore sufficient evidences of intoxication that proved it could be no great distance off. Then, in the last rays of daylight, we turned a wind-whipped boulder and caught sight of the place, far off in the lap of a stony valley, well aware from long Andean experience that the intervening distance was much greater than appearance suggested.

Black night had long since settled down when I found myself surrounded by indistinct, low structures that turned out to be Acobamba, home of one Zambrano, for whom I bore a letter from the "Turks." As often as I inquired for him, however, there came back that Spanish-American-Indian mumble of indifference and distrust, "Más arriba,"—higher up, until I felt like a District Attorney on the trail of "graft." When a half-civilized youth in "store" clothes gave me the same identical, lackadaisical answer for the tenth or twentieth time, I caught him by the slack of the garments and jerked him into the street, with a polite ultimatum to conduct me in person to that elusive upper region.

He led the interminable, cobbled way down one street and up another, equally unlighted, and finally stopped before a zaguán with an "Aquí, señor." I cut off his proposed escape, and drove him into the patio to summon the man of the house. He returned with the Indian mayordomo, and the information that the Zambrano who lived there was not the one I sought, and was, moreover, out of town. The youth proposed that he "go look for" the right Zambrano.

"No, indeed, my friend," I countered. "You will stay right with me while *we* look for him."

"Sí, señor," said the youth in a shivering voice. Then

he turned back across town and plaza by another route, and pointed out the Zambrano household exactly two doors from the one out of which I had originally snatched him. The flock of women who surged out upon me greeted me with the threadbare "No 'stá 'cá!" He never was—when I bore a letter to him. The wife spelled it out laboriously under the blinking light of a home-made tallow candle, then invited me into the earth-floored "parlor," separated by a calico curtain from the little shop she kept.

"There is no one in Acobamba who prepares food for strangers," she replied to my roundabout hint, "but we shall serve you such as we can here in our poor house."

While the mystery to come was cooking, I managed to get inoffensively into her possession the price of a peck of grain for Chusquito—and some time later found the poor, misused animal munching about two cents' worth of old, dry corn-husks in the corral.

"It is," murmured the wife, in reply to my questioning gesture, "that there is no grain in town—at these hours." But though she would have considered an insult any direct offer of a traveler consigned to her husband by letter to pay for his accommodation, she carefully avoided any further reference to the grain-money.

It would have been in the highest degree scandalous to have lodged a stranger in her own dwelling during the absence of the head of the household. But the delegation of females, having discovered, by dint of turning the house wrong-side out, the massive key of a mud-flanked door across the street, let me into an abandoned shop lumbered with the accumulated odds and ends of many years, an immense, woven-straw hogshead full of shelled corn bulking above the

rest. A creaking board counter, barely five feet long, was the only available sleeping space. The only means of avoiding asphyxiation was to leave the door open to any passing sneak-thief or congenital hater of gringos. But even had the risk been great, the key would have proved an effective weapon. Unfortunately it would have been anti-simpático to have felled with it the solicitous night-hawks who called my frequent attention to the perils of night air, not merely by rapping on the door, but by prodding me in the ribs with their sticks.

It was butchering day in Acobamba when I awoke, and at the suggestion of my hostess I sent a servant to buy ten cents' worth of meat. She returned with an entire basketful,—eight slabs of raw, red beef, each as large as an honest sirloin steak "for two." Virtually every shop in town being a pulpería, it was easy to lay in supplies for the road ahead. But though competition was brisk in all other wares, for some reason I was never able to fathom, in all the region of the central Andes my favorite food was always hedged round with refusals. As often as I stepped into a shop where a basket of eggs was displayed, I was sure to be informed in a dull, uninviting monotone, "No están de venta." "Of course they are not for sale," the experienced Peruvian wayfarer soon learns to reply, "No Andean lady who considers herself a lady would think of selling eggs. But—er"—meanwhile picking out the largest specimens of the fruit in question—"I have taken a dozen. How much?"

The answer was sure to be a meek, "Dos reales—ten cents, señor."

Over the lofty, tumbled world ahead the way was often so steep and stony and contorted that

Chusquito more than once fell on his neck, and threatened to twist himself permanently out of shape. It was a land so dry and barren that only the half-liter of pisco kept my thirst endurable. Whenever I paused for a sip, my companion glanced furtively and anxiously back at me, as if he remembered other masters who had got bad tempers out of bottles along the way. But his was none of your meek and canine dispositions that permit abuse unprotestingly. On the level, high pampas, with all the world spread out in full view about us, the exhilaration of scene and air caused me unconsciously to set so swift a pace that I was obliged frequently to kick the brute out from under my feet—until he retaliated by suddenly projecting one small, shod hoof against a shin that I was distinctly aware of for days afterward.

One afternoon, not fifty miles beyond Acobamba, I was threatened with violence for the first time during my fifteen months in South America. I sat beside a mountain pool, coaxing my cooking-outfit under shelter of my alforjas, when two half-Indians, bleary-eyed with drink, appeared on stout mules. They had nearly passed when they caught sight of me, and charged forward in drunken insolence, all but trampling my possessions under the hoofs of their animals. In the haste of the moment I made the error of showing aggressiveness to the point of drawing my revolver—and came perilously near having to use it for my mistake. When reflection caused me to change my tactics and humor them like the witless children they were, the danger was dissipated like a puff of smoke. Within ten minutes the pair grew so maudlinly affectionate that they insisted on shaking hands alternately a dozen times each, and at length rode slowly away, casting

frequent besotted, loving glances behind them.

Across a barren páramo ahead the mood struck me to cheer the long hours with my mouth-organ. Even the Indian carries one of these, or a reed flute on his journeys, and whiles away the sky-gazing solitudes with monotonous ditties. But I was soon forced to forgo the pleasure. Not merely did that plebian instrument in the hands of a gringo bring glances of unconcealed contempt from the rare horsemen who passed, but I could no sooner strike up than Chusquito, unhumanly frank and honest in his criticisms, would lay back his ears and trot ahead well out of hearing, with some peril to my pack, before he would consent to fall again into a walk.

CHAPTER XV
THE ROUTE OF THE CONQUISTADORES

It was in the scattered *caserío* of Marcas that I overtook a traveling piano. I had barely installed myself by force and strategy in a mud den, and tied Chusquito to a *molle* tree before a heap of straw in which he alternately rolled and ate, when a party of *gente* arrived, among them an old woman of the well-to-do chola class, carried astride the shoulders of an Indian. Their chief spokesman was a lawyer named Anchorena, a white man of some education and even a slight inkling of geography, who was importing an upright piano for his mansion in Ayacucho. With the descending night came a score of Indians carrying a large, crude harp, several fifes and guitars, and a drum, to install themselves along the mud benches of the corredor of the building inside which the more or less drink-maudlin gente had spread themselves. It is never the Peruvian's way to interfere with the celebrations of his underlings, however disturbing these may be, and far into the night the "musicians" kept up an unbroken, dismal, tuneless, indigenous wail that forced whoever would be heard to shout. Anchorena, professionally inclined to like the sound

of his own voice best, bellowed the evening through in an endless account of a fellow-townsman's visit to New York a bare ten years before. Of all the marvelous experience, what seemed to astonish both the teller and his hearers most, all but choking the Indian-riding old woman with incredulity as often as he repeated it, was the alleged fact that in the best New York hotels guests were not permitted to spit on the floor. Come to think of it, that probably would astonish a Peruvian.

To my surprise the natives were off ahead of us in the morning, and Chusquito had picked his way many hundred feet down a stair-like trail before we sighted the boxed piano, lying on its back on a bit of level ground far below, with some twenty-five motley-arrayed Indians squatted about it. The lawyer shook hands effusively and, putting Chusquito in charge of the barefoot squire who was leading his own cream-colored coast horse, invited me to listen to his endless chatter while we continued the swift descent together.

The piano, made in Germany, had been set down in Lima for $500. Freight to Huancayo had added ten percent. to the cost. From the end of the railway to Ayacucho, a scant two hundred miles, the exotic plaything must be transported on men's backs, as the Incas imported a thousand things—if not pianos—in the days of their power. This stage of the journey would, under ordinary circumstances, have nearly doubled the cost of the instrument. But Anchorena had the advantage of owning a large hacienda in the great hot valley toward which we were descending, and was able to cut the expense in two by drawing upon his own peons for the labor of transportation. Three distinct gangs had been sent from his estate,

each to bear the burden a third of the distance. They were paid the extraordinary wage of twenty cents a day, and supplied food, chicha, and coca. Each gang carried the piano for a week, and it was the second party celebrating the arrival of the third that had made noisy the night at Marcas.

Each morning, shortly after midnight, the Indians rose to munch *mote*, or boiled corn, for an hour or more, after which a heavy soup of corn, potatoes, beans, and charqui, was served. Then for another hour the men poked coca leaves one by one into their cheeks, mixing them with lime from their little gourds, and by dawn, the effect of the chewing having made itself felt, they rose to their feet and were off. Some forty peons set their shoulders to the several poles attached to the boxed piano, a picket-line with shovels, axes, and ropes was thrown out in advance to widen the trail and lend assistance in the steeper places, and an army of servants, cooks, squires, and the numerous *capatazes*, or bosses, required for any effective Indian labor, brought up the rear of the expedition.

From the punas of the day before, totally barren but for the dreary, yellow ichu, we had descended through a zone of scrub bushes, lower still through thirstless, sand-loving cactus, and were now dropping swiftly through a dead, desert landscape by zigzag trails as painfully steep and unpeopled as those of the Ecuador-Peruvian boundary. Architecture changed with the altitude, so that the openwork huts became little more than thatch roofs on poles, shading the languid, loafing inhabitants of a place called Huarpo, hot as Panama, on the edge of a river cutting off a broad, sandy valley I had seen from the sky the day before. The surrounding region

was a *cofardía*, that is, it belonged to some wooden saint to whom it had been bequeathed by a *beata*, one of the many pious old women who have thus left great tracts of the Andes perpetually in morte main. For the desire of these sanctimonious matrons is to provide a permanent income for the masses requisite to the repose of their souls, and as their piety is commonly tempered with experience of the ways of this world, they usually reject the suggestion of the Church to sell the property and give the money directly to the priest, lest he grow forgetful, in a way even priests have, and neglect his duty toward the dwellers in purgatory. Huarpo is also paludic, or raging with intermittent fevers, and no wise man drinks water within sight of it. The appearance of a gringo in their midst aroused even these languid, fever-hued, desert people to an unusual concentration of attention, one bedraggled female bursting out at last with a remark in Quichua too rapid for my ears, but which the lawyer translated: "Caramba! Si yo estaba preñada de seguro saldría la cara gringuita!" It is a common superstition in the Andes that a child will closely resemble the person the mother has looked most fixedly upon during the months before its birth.

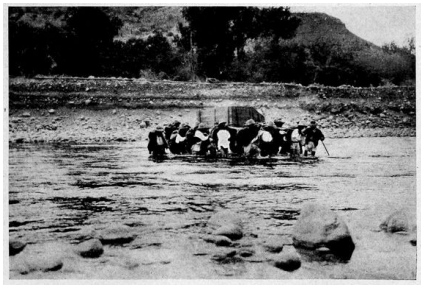
In spite of the fact that everything I owned in South America, not only my letter of credit and the papers necessary to prove my identity, but even my money, had been left in my alforjas under the tender care of an Indian boy miles behind, I did little worrying. The Andean traveler soon grows accustomed to trusting his possessions to penniless peons, for losses are astonishingly rare. For all that, I caught myself glancing anxiously now and then up the wall of shale and loose rock that piled into the sky above us. The piano-movers made good time, in spite of many a

zigzag and desert precipice, where rope and home-made tackle and the widening of the trail were often necessary. We had not enjoyed the shade of the huts an hour before the vanguard appeared, and shortly afterward the lawyer's bulky toy was laid in the baking sand beside us, and the sweating, dust-covered carriers swarmed about the huge jar of *chicha de molle* that had been purchased for them. Progress would have been much less rapid but for the fact that the third gang, knowing theirs was the last shift, realized the advantage of finishing the journey to Ayacucho as soon as possible. Yet their conception of hurrying was not exactly vertiginous. They halted a long hour, not to eat, which they did only morning and evening, but to prepare new quids of coca. From a large grain-sack the lawyer dealt out to each of the peons with his own fair hand a small handful of the narcotic leaves. They slunk forward one by one, with outstretched hats, and a hint of eagerness on their besotted, expressionless faces, with the air of men who would have sold their souls for this few cents' worth of brutalizing leaves.



On the "road" to Ayacucho I overtook a lawyer who was importing a piano. It required three gangs of Indians and

nearly a month's time to transport the instrument less than 200 miles from the end of the railway line



Carrying the piano across one of the typical bridges of the Peruvian Andes. In many places the trail had to be widened or recut, and the instrument had now and then to be let down or hauled up with ropes, or block and tackle

Chusquito, who had appeared at last, all intact but as covered with fine sand as from a trip across the Sahara, was too tiny to have crossed the river without wetting my baggage. It was the cream-colored coast horse that saved me a detour of several miles to a bridge downstream. Except for the lawyer and his mayordomos, the expedition stripped to the waist and forded the stream inch by inch under the piano, slipping individually, but fortunately not in unison, on the stones at the bottom, and spending a half-hour in a precarious task that would have been impossible in any but the dry season. In the shade of a molle grove beyond, Anchorena, who had recently

been won to up-to-date methods, dealt out a quinine pill to each of the Indians. Few were able to swallow them without chewing, and made wry faces and animal noises in consequence. Several surreptitiously got rid of the detested white man's remedy while their master's eyes were not upon them. Though the day was still young, the cavalcade was to camp on the edge of the drowsy, sand-carpeted town of Izcutaco, a bare mile above the river, and when I left them the cooks were already heating over a blazing fire of molle berries the enormous iron kettle, six feet in diameter, under which an Indian had plodded, bent double, all day. When I took leave of the lawyer, he hoped to reach Ayacucho in four days, making the journey from Huancayo three weeks in duration, at a total cost of about $250, without reckoning the labor lost on his hacienda while the three gangs were going and coming and recuperating from their unwonted toil.

The molle tree covered all the great, tilted plain before me, lending it an inviting green tinge in spite of its semi-desert character. Its leaves are not unlike those of the willow, and it produces in clusters great quantities of a peppery red berry somewhat resembling the currant in appearance, and those of our red cedar in taste. These are well supplied with saccharine and ferment readily, constituting the chief curse of the region, in the form of an intoxicant so cheap and plentiful that the inhabitants are more often drunk than working.

In Huanta the addressee of my Turkish letter was Don Emilio, ——, a hearty countryman pleasantly free from the tiresome "polish" of the Latin-American city-dweller. Early in our conversation he took pains to inform me that he never permitted a priest to

cross his threshold. A fellow-townsman later confided to me that the prohibition dated from the day that the oldest daughter of my host had been betrayed through the ministrations of the confessional. There was something pleasantly reminiscent of old patriarchial days in the way we all sat at meat together around the long table in the back corredor, surrounded by a flock of servants, the older, shy-mannered girls rising now and then during the meal to tend shop. Yet it is not easy to make oneself agreeable to such a family, for lack of intellectual interests cuts down the conversation to the simplest matters. The women of the household preferred the guttural Quichua, but Don Emilio found that tongue more difficult than his accustomed Spanish. My host was one of the "city fathers," and perhaps the best-read man in the community, yet he referred to the United States and Europe as "a place somewhere up the coast," and desired to know whether Italy was in New York, or New York in Italy. I attempted, in my struggle to make conversation, to give the family some conception of our northern midwinters.

"Brr! Nearly as cold as Huancavelica, it must be," shivered the wife.

"How high is the highest Andes in your United States?" asked Don Emilio, with a hint of suspicion in his voice.

I told him.

"Then it is impossible for it to be cold there," he cried, conclusively, "for that is scarcely higher than Huanta itself."

Huanta lies close to the great *montaña*, or Amazonian hot-lands, and the "chocolate de Huanta" is famous

throughout Peru. But the trails to that fruitful region are so nearly impassable that the interchange of products is only a fraction of what it might be. Set in one of the dry belts that are so frequent in the Andes, the great, tilted plain depends on irrigation for most of its fruits. Molle, fig, and willow trees abound, yet the ground beneath them is barren of grass. Eighty percent. of the valley is said to be chiefly Indian in blood. Peons are paid an average of twelve cents a day, and judging from what I saw of them, they are grossly overpaid. Nearly a half-century ago Squier found "drunkenness universal throughout the Sierra, and nothing neglected that could be turned into intoxicating beverages." To this day there is slight improvement in this respect. Thanks to the molle berry, intemperance is high, even for Peru, and laziness reaches its culmination during the season when the *tunas*, ripening on the cactus hedges, feed alike birds and Indians. In the town almost every hut is a little drunkery, with an inviting display of bottles of all shapes and sizes. The life of the place was typified by a soft-muscled lump of a man sitting in the shade of his shop, drowsily switching flies off himself with a horse's tail mounted on a wooden handle. To have seen him reading a book, or even whittling a stick, would have been entirely out of keeping with the local color.

House-flies, unknown in the upper altitudes, were more than numerous. Cats, too, were in evidence for almost the first time in the Sierra. The assertion of scientists that these cannot endure high regions was denied by the natives, who attributed their absence elsewhere to the lack of rats to feed on. Dogs, unfortunately, are indifferent to either drawback, and the Andean town has yet to be discovered that does not swarm with them. Llamas avoid Huanta,

and the climate is more fitted to donkeys than to mountain ponies. An Indian trotted in from one of the irrigated *alfalfares* on the edge of town with a poncho-load of fresh, green alfalfa, gay with purple and red flowers, soon after our arrival. But at the first taste of this new species of fodder Chusquito showed keen disappointment. Like myself, he preferred regions of ten thousand feet and upward. During most of our stay he hung sad and dejected, as if homesick for the cold, penetrating air and the wiry grass of his native mountains, and it was here that I saw him lie down for the first time since we had joined forces.

We pushed on to Ayacucho under no very auspicious circumstances, for the department capital was reported to be raging with an epidemic of typhoid and smallpox that had forced it to ask aid of the central government. The day's tramp varied from a blazing, semi-tropical gorge to a barren, waterless range so lofty that I found it necessary to stretch out on my back at the summit to catch my breath. A contrary mood, or too long a rest, made Chusquito choose to be obstreperous beyond all custom, and twice he set his heart wilfully on branch trails, and came perilously near escaping with all my possessions. Thereafter I kept him tied to my belt, and for once he set a pace more swift than I would have had it. Early in the afternoon the blazing desert landscape was broken by the sight of a city that could have been no other than Ayacucho, filling the hollow of a green bowl, several hut-lined streets radiating upward from it, like the legs of some great tarantula stretched on its back. A perfectly level road seemed to promise a quick entrance; but almost at the edge of the town the world fell suddenly away into a bottomless earthquake crack, where we

sweated for an hour in a headlong descent far out of sight of human habitation, and toiled upward again to the crest of the horizon, all to advance a bare five hundred yards. Raging with thirst, we strode swiftly down upon the town, only to be blocked at the edge of it by a religious procession of hundreds of girls in snow-white dress. As if to show off before his fellow-countrymen, Chusquito redoubled his cussedness, and persisted, in spite of all my efforts, in taking advantage of the smooth, flagstone sidewalks, forcing two-legged pedestrians into the rough-cobbled street. It did not occur to me that he, too, might be footsore. At the first open door through which I spied bottles, he attempted to enter with me, and watched me disgustedly while I opened a bottle of native soda-water, a second, then a third, until the proprietress all but fainted with astonishment at sight of a man who came on foot drinking up a whole fifteen cents' worth at once—and actually paying for it.

Both the hotels of Ayacucho were the usual low buildings, extending around a large court one entered beneath a topheavy archway, where guests appeared to be considered a nuisance, to be avoided by both host and servants as long as possible. I was finally awarded a dungeon opening directly on all the assorted activities, misdemeanors, and indecencies indigenous to the cobbled patios of Andean hotels, but which had the unusual feature of a window—with wooden bars, for glass is a luxury, even in an important department capital. The chamber was cool to the point of sogginess and had, of course, to be cleared out and furnished to my order. It was apparent that here was a city that would reward several days' stay, and I set about finding more fitting accommodations for Chusquito than the circle about a post to which he had been

confined at every halt since he had come into my possession. Long search and persistent inquiry brought me to a professional *inverna*, a term supposed to designate a green pasture in which an animal accepted as guest can wallow and gorge to his heart's content. Fortunately I am nothing if not sceptical in such Peruvian matters and, sure enough, investigation proved the place to be only a bare field in which the owner promised to give "plenty of food and water" at ten cents a day. Promises and starvation are too closely allied in the Andes, where he who will know his animal well fed must see to the feeding in person. I had all but resigned myself and the maltreated beast to the inevitable, and had ordered a load of alfalfa brought to the hotel patio, when I ran across the piano importer, who begged me to do him the honor of letting him send the animal to his farm a few miles out of town. When at last I got to bed, my sleep was full of feverish dreams in which I was dragged to destruction times without number over bottomless precipices by a rope tied to my belt, while I gazed about me in vain for a patch of green in a bald and blistered landscape.

At first sight this half-green hole in the ground, surrounded by cactus-grown stretches of loose stones and bare, repulsive mountains, seemed a queer place for a city. But the situation improves somewhat upon closer acquaintance. Under the scanty trees that lend the hollow its color the soil is fertile when favored by the rains, and those who can avoid going out in the middle of the day will find the climate little short of perfect. The main drawbacks to what might be a not unpleasant dwelling-place are the absence of even the rudiments of hygiene, and the whirlwinds that spring up often with sudden, unexpected violence and envelop the town in clouds of dust and

evidence of the absence of street-sweepers, or bring down a wintry wave from the snowclad to the south that lends its contrast to the picture.

At the time of the Conquest the only gathering of mankind corresponding to the present city was what Prescott calls “Huamanga, midway between Lima and Cuzco.” The story runs that an Inca, passing through the region, was sitting at meat out-of-doors when he saw, circling above him, a magnificent *huaman*, Quichua for falcon. Struck with admiration, he held up a choice morsel crying, “Huaman ca!—Take it, falcon!” Whatever the truth of the legend, the department of which Ayacucho is the capital is still known as Huamanga. The city itself takes its name from the Quichua terms *aya* (corpse), and *ccucho* (corner), in other words, “Dead Man’s Corner.” Long before the arrival of the Spaniards all this region was thus known because of a great battle between the fierce local tribes and those of Cuzco, in which the latter were routed. But the tables were turned under Huayna Ccápac, the Great, who colonized the territory by the customary Inca method of settling it with *mitimaes*, or “transplanted people” from another province. The great military highway passed close to the present site, but the only town of any size between Huancayo and Cuzco in early colonial days was Huari, now an insignificant Indian village lost among the stony hills. Manco, the revolted Inca, and his followers formed the chronic habit of falling upon travelers between the ancient and the new capital of Peru, and in 1548 Pizarro ordered a city founded for their protection, usually known as Huamanga. Not until after what is known to history as the Battle of Ayacucho, in which Sucre defeated the Spanish veterans who had fled before Bolívar from the icy pampa of Junín, and brought to

an end the struggle of the new world for political freedom begun in New England a half-century before, was the older and more appropriate name revived.

In colonial times it was a far more important city. A census taken by a German in 1736 showed a population of more than 40,000. To-day it has barely two inhabitants for each of its 8000 feet elevation above sea-level. Even Squier found it “laid out on a grand scale, but with unmistakable signs of a great decline in wealth and population.” Epidemics of smallpox, typhoid, and yellow fever, the advance of machinery and foreign importation over the local handicraft manufacture of *tocuyo* (cloth from the cactus fiber), *frazadas*, or hand-woven blankets, and native shoes, with the corresponding decrease in the growing of cotton in the region, were the chief causes of this decline. Then, too, the building of railroads left the ancient route from Lima to Cuzco stranded, and only a rare gringo andarín, driving a shaggy and sun-faded chusquito, comes now to visit the once proud city. Should the long-threatened railway across Peru ever come to pass, Ayacucho, like Huancavelica, may come more or less into her own again.

The cities of our own land are not without their faults, but he who would fully realize the advantages of even the most backward of them should come and dwell for a time in one of these shipwrecked “capitals” of the Andes. By night Ayacucho is “lighted” by dim kerosene contrivances, mildly resembling a miner’s torch, inside square, glass-sided lanterns of medieval origin, each house-owner paying from five to twenty cents a month for his share of the illumination. Gradually, however,

electric lights were being installed—those pale, ought-to-be-sixteen-candle-power bulbs indigenous to Andean towns—against which a considerable opposition had developed because of the threatened cost of nearly a dollar monthly to each householder. In view of the fact that the average shop rents for $3 a month, it was natural that so decided an increase in expenses should be resented. The huge main plaza is garnished only with a central fountain surrounded by the customary iron fence, "due to the untold patriotism of Juan Fulano, ex-alcalde, etc.," and a few ancient, backless, rough-stone benches. The favorite loafers' gathering-place is under the *portales*, or arcades, that surround the square on three sides. These are lined with shops into the blue-black shadows of which the plaza-stroller's eyes peer gratefully, but wellnigh blindly, from the blazing sunshine outside. Compared even with Spain, Ayacucho harbors an unbelievable number of non-producers. Hundreds of little shops, endlessly duplicated, stretch away along its every street, tended by lounging men and women with no other desire in life than to sell a few cents' worth of something, particularly strong drink, and not even desiring that very decidedly. Their business methods are crude in the extreme. The town, for example, is noted for its native chocolate. The cacao beans grown in the montaña on the east are hulled and roasted, mixed with crude sugar and vanilla, and crushed and rolled again and again by hand under stone rollers, producing a gravelly, but not untoothsome product. Yet, though every merchant in town is ready to sell these individually at 2½ cents a cake, not one of them can be induced to sell by weight. "No es costumbre," answers every man, woman, and child tending shop, and though all

hover on the verge of poverty, not a man among them will overstep fixed custom, even to this extent, to win a less precarious livelihood. For a country where “trusts” are unknown the entire town is rather staunchly agreed on prices. The money in use is almost exclusively silver, which is lugged back and forth through the streets in cotton bags. Many of the coins, having at some time served as female adornment, have holes in them, and though these are perfectly acceptable to Ayacucho, they are worthless elsewhere in the country, so that to my usual task of gathering small change for the road ahead was added that of carefully weeding out all holed pieces. The average ayacuchano has a kind of crude insolence and an arrogance bred in isolated places which, added to his mountaineer uncouthness, makes him not over pleasant. Toward me they assumed a suspicious air that suggested some foreigner had once long ago cheated some one among them out of ten cents. Even for Peruvians, the plighted word of every grade of inhabitant is peculiarly worthless. Of a dozen or more promises of larger or smaller importance made me during my stay, not one ever reached even the point of attempted fulfilment. The population is very largely Indian—often in diluted form—and genuinely white persons are decidedly rare, certainly not ten percent., though there are many more than that, strutting about in what Ayacucho fancies faultless dress, who consider themselves such, and who would be astonished at the set-back their pretentions would receive in more exacting communities. The town swarms with tailors, chiefly boys and youths with slight ability at their trade, who sit, like the craftsmen of Damascus, in little shops the entire front of which is open door, and work steadily but languidly on miserable

materials that barely last long enough for purchaser and seller to part, their attention chiefly on whatever passes in the street. The Indians of the region still weave a heavy wool frazada of astounding combinations of color, and the town is somewhat noted for the filigree work and wood-carving for which it was once famous. But for the most part it is silent, smokeless, and industry-lacking as any village of the Andes, without a single wheeled vehicle to rumble over its cobbles. Its water is so bad that even the natives admitted I should not drink it. Indeed, I did not even dare develop films in it. Not that its source is ill-chosen, but in the several miles of open conduit to the city, the Indians make free use of it for any of their lavatory processes. The local Quichua dialect varies much from that of Cuzco, the Florence of the Inca tongue, so that Indians from the two towns understand each other with difficulty.

Ayacucho is about as badly overdone in churches as any town in church-boasting South America. In colonial days a religious edifice was built on the slightest provocation, of cut-stone if possible, of cobbles or adobe if necessary, until to-day the entire population might be housed five times over in those that are left. Not a few are things of beauty in their time-mellowed delapidation. The cathedral, centuries old, is surpassed in all Peru only by those of Lima and Cuzco. Externally, and at some distance, like so many things of Spanish origin, it has an imposing and not inartistic appearance. But the interior is disappointing. Here is the usual Latin-American garish gaudiness of wooden, tin, and porcelain saints, with no suggestion of art, except in the intricately carved wooden pulpit and the choir stalls flanking the altar. Behind each of the latter a boy stands during services, holding a candle above the chanting

friar whose bulk amply fills the niche. A spittoon is provided for each of the singers. Ash-trays had evidently not yet come into style. An unusual feature was seats for the congregation, which in most churches of the Andes is left to kneel on the bare floor, or to bring a servant carrying a prie-dieu. It was the first place in Peru where the beating of church-bells reached anything like the hubbub of Ecuador or Colombia, for Ayacucho is so fanatical that the law against this is openly disobeyed. Sleek, well-fed, cigarette-smoking priests are everywhere in evidence, scores of "barefoot" friars in their stout leather sandals waddle about town with the self-complacency of the sacred bulls of India, and the public appearance of the bishop brings all activity to a standstill, and all beholders except the upper-class men to their knees.



The striking headdress of the women of Ayacucho—in this case purple

embroidered with red. The *dicella* about the shoulders is blue



The friendly and ingratiating waiters of our hotel in Ayacucho. They had two shoes, three eyes, and not a crumb of soap between them. One wears a bright pink shirt, the other one of brilliant maroon

As in most centers of religious fanaticism, the town reeks with poverty. Even for South America, the overwhelming display of rags is striking, and ignorance and debauch is in constant evidence. Yet the children, the babies particularly, sometimes have

a brightness and an innocence about them that suggests what might be made of them could they be caught young, very, very young, and taken away from this environment of dirt and ignorance and immorality and priests. Yet who knows? The more one travels, the more one's opinion wavers between the effects of ancestry and environment.

It has been said of Ayacucho that her chief occupations are drinking, cock-fighting, love-making, and religious processions. The last is most in public evidence. The first fiesta to break out after my arrival was that of the "Virgen de las Mercedes." All shops closed for the occasion, and the entire region boomed and clanged with the exertions of gangs of boys filling every belfry and vying with each other in adding to the uproar. At four of the afternoon, when the sun had lost some of its glare, the cathedral disgorged a solemn throng escorting three huge floats that began a snail-paced circuit of the broad plaza, halting before every building of importance while the choir sang some Latin anthem. Before the Virgin and her two accompanying saints, all flashing with rich and many-colored silks, marched teams of sanctimonious-faced beatas with ribbons over their shoulders, feigning to supply the motive power which was, in reality, furnished by toiling and sweating Indians half-concealed beneath the massive floats. As the head of the procession reached certain points, an aged Indian acolyte set off home-made fireworks of intricate and long-enduring design, that filled the air as with a sudden bombardment. The instant these fell silent, swarms of boys raced into the smoke from every side to fight with the low-caste functionary for possession of the charred framework. Every male, as well as the Indian women, uncovered as the figures passed—except myself, too busy with

photography to honor the local customs. Yet, where a century ago such sign of the heretic would have caused homicidal riot, I heard only one audible protest—from some one of the newsboy order.

Of course few inhabitants of the town had any notion of its history back of their own lifetime, nor any real interest in abetting my investigations, though all pretended to bubble over with enthusiasm for them. A blank indifference hangs like moss over the records of the past throughout all the Andes, and the curious traveler will find more by wandering around until he stumbles upon them, than by making inquiries. Not only are the natives ignorant of all points of historical interest, but utterly incapable of distinguishing any such from so much junk. It is just as useless to call upon the "representative men," for the minds of these differ only in slight degree from the gente del pueblo. Ayacucho has more than the usual excuse for this ignorance of her past, however, for in 1883 the Chilians marched into the region, took possession of the town, its houses, goods, and attractive women, and, camping in the city hall and the prefect's office, boiled their soup over the archives. For a few brief months before their arrival, Ayacucho was the proud capital of Peru. Congress held its sessions in the old church of San Augustín cornering on the plaza, and for a while money was coined there.

Local information might have ended with that, but for the fact that an ayacuchano who eked out an existence, Santiago knows how, in one of the little shops under the portales, was "aficionado" to the history of the region. I spent long hours with him, for clients were of scant importance compared to his hobby. He was unshakable in his conviction that the

Indian was just as ambitionless and animal-like in his habits before the Conquest, as to-day. Ayacucho has a local heroine in one María Parado de Bellido about whom already strange legends have gathered. A chola woman of the middle-class, who could neither read nor write, she took a leading part in the revolution against Spanish rule. Having undertaken the delivery of a treasonable letter, written at her instigation, she was captured by the Spaniards and, swallowing the missive, refused to betray the writer, for which hardheadedness she was shot before the broad, central pillar of the Municipalidad. This was the scene of many an execution in colonial times. Those condemned to die were kept three days in the arched dungeon that forms a corner of the building, "gorged with all spiritual and material blessings—peaches and beefsteaks and the like," as my informant put it, and then shot. He asserted that in Ayacucho none were burned nor otherwise executed by the Inquisition. But the statement has not all the earmarks of veracity. Not only is the century-faded edifice on the adjoining corner still known as the "Church of the Inquisition," but a city whose population never exceeded 40,000 that could build the twenty-four large churches and countless chapels still existent, to say nothing of the many that have disappeared, "just because the priest of each ward cried, 'Come, let us build a church!' and they came and built it," was not likely to be contented without seeing an occasional heretic roasted in the central plaza on a gala Sunday afternoon.

There was one sight which the "authorities" were so bent on my visiting and "picturing to the world" that the prefect detailed a soldier to accompany me to it. The so-called "Battle of Ayacucho" really took place at La Quinua, on the sloping brown mountain-flanks

some twelve miles to the northeast of the city. From any high place in town the village, backed by its white monument and the dark face of Cundurcunca, the "Condor's Nest," is plainly visible. One can even make out the highway on which the Spanish veterans zigzagged up to the deep quebrada in which La Serna capitulated, almost at the very hour that Phillip V in far-off Spain was making him "Duke of the Andes" as a reward for his victorious campaign. There was no cable in those days. But I knew no way of telling the prefect, without insult, that I did not choose to tramp twenty-four thirsty, earthquake-cracked miles to gaze upon a plaster monument that I could study to my heart's content from where I sat, and I was reduced to the customary strategy of Latin-American intercourse. The soldier came to wake me at six—it is the South American way to fulfill only those promises one hopes will be forgotten. I greeted him with the announcement that I had decided to put off the trip until the following week. He showed distinct signs of relief at not having to drive his legs, with heavy, unaccustomed shoes on the ends of them, all day, and as everything always is postponed in Ayacucho, the decision caused no surprise.

"Is there a public library in town?" I asked a native son.

"Cómo no!" he cried, as if the question were an insult to the "culture and progress" for which Ayacucho fancies itself famed.

Following his directions, I hurried over to the Municipalidad, cheerful with the prospect of spending a few quiet hours unstared-at among its books. For some time I wandered through several refuse-strewn patios and deep-shaded corredors of the rambling, one-story building, peering into many

a room with uneven earth floor, without finding anything even mildly resembling a library. At length I stumbled upon a chamber marked “Secretaría,” in which six men of varying shades of color were discussing the coming bull-fight, rolling cigarettes, sleeping, and otherwise earning their salaries. A long search brought to light a ten-inch key, and a procession of the full municipal force of Ayacucho escorted me through several more empty, earth-floored rooms to a door at the rear of the building.

“You see,” explained the official with the most nearly white collar and the longest right to keep his hat on, “we have only just begun to form the library, so the catalogue is not yet available nor any of the books arranged. However....”

As the time-eaten sign over the door announced that this evidence of culture and progress had only been founded in 1877, it was natural that it should not yet be set in order. One cannot expect things to be done in a minute in Latin America. The walls of the stoop-shouldered mud room were almost hidden by books, however, nearly all of them bound in ancient parchment or imitations of the same. I ran my eyes along them, the six municipal employees grouped in a staring semicircle about me. Row after row stretched books in Latin, Italian, Spanish, and French, with such titles as, “The Infallibility of the Church,” by Padre So-and-So, “The Life of Saint Quién Sabe,” by “A Brother of the Order”; but nowhere was there one with a suggestion of modern utility.

“This looks much like a priest’s library,” I remarked, when I had read most of the titles.

“Cabalmente, señor,” said the front-rank official. “Exactly; it was given by the holy bishop who died a

few years ago. Where are those friars who were arranging the books?" he demanded querulously, glaring at his inferiors grouped about us.

"I think they have not come back from lunch yet," tremulously suggested one of the five.

As the dust lay at least an eighth of an inch thick on every book in sight, the good friars must have been called to a sumptuous repast indeed.

"Isn't there some book in the collection that will give me something of interest about Ayacucho?" I asked.

"Ah—er—well, as to that—ah—cómo no, señor—yes, indeed! Here you have the five volumes of Bossuet, and—and here is the 'Imitación de Cristo'—very excellent—old parchment, as you see—and...."

My slightest finger movement was followed by six pairs of eyes, as closely as an "aficionado" of the bull-ring watches those of his favorite matador. Had I found anything worth reading, I should not have been left in peace to read it. First, because of the excitement which the sight of a stranger arouses in Ayacucho, trebled by unbounded wonder that any man should be interested in books and libraries; second, because every Latin-American knows that any person left alone for a moment in a library is sure to carry off as many books as he can conceal about his person. The most modern volumes brought to light by a more careful scrutiny were Racine's works and a Spanish edition of Richardson's "Clarissa Harlowe"; but this last I am sure some practical joker had given the good bishop so late in life that he had not found time to read and destroy it before he was called to whatever reward awaited him. We tiptoed out into the earth-carpeted hallway again, and carefully locked up the dust and parchments, as they

will no doubt remain until the worthy friars come back from lunch.

Around the corner the cobbled street was blocked by a horseshoeing contest. This is always considered a very serious business in the Andes, though the average horse is so small that a real blacksmith could toss him about at will. A barefoot, half-Indian *herrero* had emerged from his mud dungeon shop, containing a forge from Vulcan's time, but by no means the space necessary to admit the animal, and stood watching the preparations for his feat with the anxious and critical eye of an aviator about to attack the world's record. One of the three attendant Indians threw his poncho over the head of the chusco and bound its eyes. Then a rope was drawn tightly around its neck, with a choking slip-noose about its nose, an Indian clinging desperately to the end of it as long as the contest lasted. Next, a llama-hair lassoo was bound to the animal's nigh front fetlock and the foot hoisted by another attendant on the off side, who used the back of the trussed-up brute as a pulley. A third Indian held the foot by hand. When all was ready, the valorous blacksmith sneaked up and pared the hoof a bit with an instrument much like a small, sharp, shovel with a long handle—pared it very imperfectly, as is the way of Andean blacksmiths, leaving so much of the toe that the animal was in constant danger of having an ankle broken on some rough-and-tumble trail. Then he hunted up a cold horseshoe, without caulk, just as it came from the hardware store that had imported it from the United States—for the Andean blacksmith never heats a shoe, much less alters it—and laid it gingerly on the hoof. Evidently, to the inexact eye of the herrero, it fitted. He clawed around among the cobbles and refuse of the street, where his tools lay

strewn and scattered, until he found several hand-forged horseshoe nails of the style in vogue in our own land before the Civil War, and standing afar off, like a man willing to risk his life to do his duty, yet not to risk it beyond reason, started one of the nails with a Stone-Age hammer. Suddenly the foot twitched. The blacksmith sprang backward a long yard, with blanched countenance, the foot-holder fled, and the two remaining Indians cried out in startled Quichua, while clinging to the far ends of their ropes. Bit by bit the herrero crept up again and took to driving the nails at long range, as if he were mashing the head of a venomous snake, poised on his toes, ready to spring away at the slightest sign of life in the blindfolded animal. Gradually the eight nails were driven, not without several repetitions of the blanching fright, and the operation repeated with the other hoofs. Finally the blacksmith maneuvered to positions in which he could twist off and crudely clinch the protruding nail-points, rubbed a rasp once or twice over them, and the perilous job was done. The fiery steed was relieved of the blinding poncho, the Indians went to restore their nerves with a *copita* of pisco, and the blacksmith, collecting fifteen cents a shoe from the owner of the animal, shut up shop forthwith, as if he had risked his life enough for one day.

The milking of a cow is a no less serious business in the Andes, and requires as large a force. First the cow must be captured and confined in a corral overnight. Calves are never weaned, but are kept away from the mothers until the hour of milking. As each cow's turn comes, its calf is freed for a moment, then dragged away by main force, and either tied to the mother's front leg, or held by a boy close enough to deceive the animal into fancying she is feeding her

own offspring. Another youth, after tying her hind legs together at the ankles, clings to a rope about her neck, a third assistant holds a *socobe*, or shallow gourd-bowl, under the udder, and a woman—why it must always be a woman I know not, but the fact remains—squats on her heels at arm's length on the opposite side of the animal, and falls to milking with much the same attentive regard for her welfare as the blacksmith. As often as the pint-measure is filled, the milk is poured into a vessel outside the fence or one in the hands of a waiting purchaser. The woman or one of the boys laps up the few drops left in the socobe, and the task continues until two teats are stripped. The two remaining belong by ancient custom to the calf. In view of the fact that cows are milked at most once a day, and often at irregular or broken intervals, it is not strange that milk is rare, and butter unknown, even on large haciendas well stocked with cattle.

Saturday is beggar's day in Ayacucho, as in most towns of South America. From morning till night a constant procession of disease and decrepitude comes whining by the shops, so endless in its appeals that the town has adopted a custom similar to the merchants of India with their bowls of *cowries*, or sea-shells. On Saturday morning each shopkeeper opens a package of large needles, three to four inches long, one of which he bestows upon each beggar who presents himself. The mendicant mumbles a "Diós pagarasunqui," and shuffles on to the next doorway. When he has collected ten or twelve needles, if he be so lucky, he sells them to certain dealers for a *medio* (2½ cents), on which, apparently, he lives until the next Saturday. In some parts of Peru the Indians wear a large needle in their hatbands, evidently as a weapon of defense, but those of Ayacucho seem to

have no practical use, except as legal tender. Some time during the ensuing week the purchasers sell them back to the shopkeepers, Saturday sees them again distributed, and so they go on indefinitely around the circle.

Among other things of long ago Ayacucho used to have a university. To-day her highest institution of learning is the Colegio Nacional de San Román, corresponding to our high schools—chiefly in the impudence of its pupils. It was for the purpose of supplying this institution with an athletic field—incongruous possession it seemed in this community—that a "benefit" bull-fight was perpetrated on the Sunday of my stay. The *cuadrilla*, headed by "Currito" and "Ramito" of Sevilla, my fellow-sufferers at the hotel, were the same simple-hearted, modest fellows, with a noisy joy in life, that I had found most of their fellows in Spain. Both the principals had come over with Posadas, one of the friends of my Spanish journey, who had returned a year later only to be killed by a "Miura," while these his companions remained to eke out a livelihood in Chile, Peru, and Bolivia.

All the gente decente of Ayacucho and their wives, in full powder, were on hand when the gala corrida began. We of the élite occupied the "palcos," or boxes—several rows of chairs shaded by a faded strip of canvas, up on the roof of the ancient colegio, the aged red tiles of which were trodden to powder underfoot. The "ring" in the patio below, fenced by poles tied to uprights and other rustic makeshifts, was surrounded by the excited gente del pueblo. The scene was backed by a massive, old, crumbling church—it would have been hard to avoid such a backing in Ayacucho—and a view of most of the

town sprinkled away through its half-green valley, Rasuillca, the snowclad and the black range of Cundurcunca, with its white battle monument and its highway zigzagging away over into the great Amazonian montaña beyond as plainly visible as if they stood a bare mile away. The exciting national sport of Spain degenerates at best to a dismal pastime in the new world. The imported toreros were well enough, but the bulls of the Andes leave much to be desired. Even dogs lose their aggressiveness in high altitudes, it is said. At any rate, the animals gathered for the occasion on the broad pampas at the foot of Cundurcunca could seldom be roused to face the toreros, and spent their efforts chiefly in racing around the "ring" in vain efforts to escape, until they were at length tortured out of existence. In fact, about all the gala corrida amounted to was the substitution of these heroes from across the seas for the native butchers accustomed to prepare Ayachucho's weekly meat supply. As they fell, the animals were dragged out and cut up within full sight of the crowd, the meat in some cases being raffled off to the ticket-holders of the *sol*. It was the dragging-out that the gathering hooted most vociferously. Picadores and horses are rarely in evidence in the bull-fights of Spanish-America, but the program had featured the promise of removing the carcasses from the ring "al estilo de España," that is, by gaily caparisoned mules. It was this new evidence of culture and progress that much of Ayacucho had come to see. But when the first victim sprawled in the dust, the mules were missing, and the customary gang of Indians crawled through the barrier and, tugging at its tail and legs, and raising clouds of dust that half-concealed their activities, gradually removed the fallen brute in the time-

honored Andean manner.

As the supply of meat promised to exceed the demand, the fifth and sixth bulls were merely decorated with banderillas and sent back to the corral. Then a pair of two-year-old *novillos* were turned over to the "aficionados." A dozen youths of the "best families" descended into the "ring," in their most impressive Sunday garb and with *capotes* borrowed from the toreros, and demonstrated their own skill as bull-fighters. A Dr. Fulano, in private life a civil engineer, at least on his visiting-card, killed the first of the frightened animals in admirable style, and was hailed by his delighted fellow-townsmen the king of matadores. But dusk had fallen before the amateurs had effectively wounded the other, and the massed population gradually radiated homeward and subsided into its humdrum weekly existence.



A religious procession in the main square of Ayacucho. When the leading figure reached certain points, an old Indian set off elaborate pieces of fireworks, and as the smoke cleared away scores of urchins dashed in to fight with the Indian and one another for the framework



A gala Sunday in the improvised “bullring” of Ayacucho, in the patio of the *Colegio*, or high school, for the benefit of which the *corrida* was given. The chief toreros are Spanish, and the mountain bulls are at best somewhat lacking in ferocity

I have come near overlooking the most striking thing in Ayacucho,—the head-dress of its women. In the Andes fashions change not with time, but with place. In Inca days each district had its own distinctive garb, or at least head-gear, a custom which was strictly enforced in colonial times, in order that Indians belonging to one province might not escape compulsory labor by going to another. What a convenience it would be in our own land if we could recognize each man’s place of birth by the shape or color of his derby! The bonnets of Ayacucho are hard to believe. Though I had been duly warned in advance, the first glimpse of an ayacuchana caught me unawares. I fancied she was carrying home some purchase on her head. When others like her began to appear from all directions, however, I recalled to what lengths fair woman will go to keep in fashion. The wildest nightmares perpetrated by the milliners

of more familiar lands by no means come so perilously near reducing the mere male beholder to hysterics as this, which at first sight gives a suggestion of that thrill the traveler to Mars might experience at coming suddenly face to face with something totally new and unprecedented. The rank and file of Ayacucho women wear on their heads a blanket, gay in hue and large enough to serve as a bedspread, nicely folded in triangular form, with one sharp corner protruding over the face. Each one is distinct in color, with an embroidered border, and is usually lined with silk. Even the half-Indian women from the suburbs, driving to market donkeys all but hidden under loads of alfalfa—each burden protected from its hungry carrier by a large wooden gag in the animal's mouth—balance this contraption on their heads through all their labors. No one in Ayacucho could tell me the origin of so absurd a fashion, though all were agreed it had been in vogue a very long time; nor had any of them ever developed enough curiosity to enquire, except the prefect, a newcomer in this region, who had investigated in vain.

Anchorena, the piano importer, had promised on his caballero honor to have Chusquito back in the hotel patio on Sunday night, that I might continue my journey at dawn. Knowing only too well the nebulous stuff of which Latin-American promises are made, I set out on Saturday to jog his memory. The houses of Ayacucho are not numbered, but the thumping of a piano in the throes of amateur tuning easily guided me to the lawyer's dwelling. Surrounded by the gaudily overdecorated magnificence of his parlor, he laughed at my absurd misgivings and repeated his "palabra de caballero." Yet when night fell on Sunday, no horse had

appeared. I hurried back to the Anchorena residence. The lawyer received me with that complacent indifference to his plighted word, without even an attempt to excuse himself, which is common to his race. As in the days of the Conquest, when betrayal was an everyday affair, the word of the most important resident of the Andes is not worth the breath required to utter it. Most annoying of all, they treat any protest against their devotion to mañana as a gringo weakness they must put up with, but to which they hope never to fall victims themselves. Even as they listen, a sneaking smile lurks just behind their solemn countenances, as if they were hearing the plaints of a querulous child. Were we in this world merely to see how easily we could drift through it, the Andean point of view would be superb; to those of us burdened with the notion that we are here to get some little thing done, it is maddening.

"Team ess mo-nay, eh?" squeaked the lawyer, with a condescending smirk. "If the horse does not arrive to-night, perhaps it will come to-morrow; or if not, what is the difference whether you go to-morrow, or the day after?"

"The difference, my friend, between an American and a Latin-American," I could not refrain from replying, "and may it ever grow wider."

Thus, when I would gladly have added Ayacucho to my past, I found myself helpless to advance, for the lawyer would not even direct me to his estate, that I might bring the animal myself. The next afternoon an Indian arrived from the hacienda—with the wrong horse. I joined the bull-fighters, strolling about town with the Monday languor customary to their profession, and whiled away several more

funereal hours. Then at dusk I returned to the hotel, to find Chusquito lounging against a pillar in front of my door, looking not an inch rounder for all the "very rich feed" with which the hacienda was reputed to abound. The way he fell upon a bundle of alfalfa, bought off the Indian woman and girl who sleep on the cobble-stones of Santo Domingo plaza beside a heap of it, suggested that he had spent the week grazing on bare ground. Yet the Indian who brought him had presented an exorbitant bill for his accommodation from the *sister* of the man who had implored the honor of giving him free pasture on his own hacienda.

I was awake at four—for religious reasons—and by the time the birds in the trees began to twitter we had left the acknowledged cemetery of Dead Man's Corner behind, and were climbing away toward the sunrise. The road, true to its Latin-American environment, left town with great enthusiasm, but soon petered out to a wearisome trail. Of several villages of Indians noted for their passive resistance to all the demands of the traveler, the most typical was Ocros. We came out far above it one morning, on the lofty crest of a range from which the trail pitched for a time blindly down into a vast sea of mist hiding all the unknown world before us. Bit by bit vast rocks loomed up out of the fog, like black, misshapen giants; then huts appeared once more, with here and there an Indian plowing a bit of hillside with a wooden stick and a pair of oxen he seemed in constant peril of suddenly losing down the sheer mountain-side. Then at last the mist cleared and disclosed, cramped in its narrow vale far below among dwarf trees, a town which rose gradually up to us, and at noon, after all but losing Chusquito and my other worldly belongings through a dirt-and-

branch bridge that showed no sign of having been condemned until we were upon it, I halted at the hut of the gobernador. He was out—which probably meant that he was hiding in one of the half-dozen ancient mud structures that surrounded his corral—and his females were taciturn. I displayed my government order and asked to have food prepared.

"Manam cancha," mumbled one of the women, all of whom kept silently and impassively at work with their primitive spindles.

"I must have fodder for the animalito," I protested.

"Manam cancha," came the monotonous answer again, with that inflection peculiar to the Andean Indian, which seems to say, "There isn't any; but there might be if I felt like going to get it." I should have preferred hunger to a scene, but I declined to allow anyone out of mere apathy to starve Chusquito.

"Manam cancha, eh?" I cried, snatching the grass roof off a chicken-coop and tossing it before the animal. Sentimentalists to the contrary notwithstanding, the surest way to impress an Andean Indian is to appeal to force. Gradually the most democratic traveler learns to adopt the native habit of addressing him as "tu," and to treat him like the balky domestic animal he so closely resembles. I picked up a boy from behind the mud wall surrounding the females, and thrusting a coin upon him, ordered him to go and buy eggs. Once the traveler can force money into an Indian's possession, his prospects of provisions brighten, for it is as easy for the latter to produce them as to come and return the coin. The eggs were soon forthcoming and, taking possession of a table under the projecting roof and marching into the kitchen for water, I lighted my

rum-burner and fell to preparing a meal. By the time I had effectively demonstrated my importance, the same woman who had "manam cancha-ed" me in the beginning came to say that if I would give her a medio she would buy fodder; and a few moments later she returned, carrying in her own arms a huge bundle of *chala*, or dry cornstalks, over which Chusquito struggled during the rest of our stay in competition with the family calf, pigs, and chickens.

It was probably as much out of a desire to inspect my cooking outfit as fear for her chicken-coops that had won me attendance. Behind the mask that hides his emotions the Indian of the Andes is filled with curiosity. There runs an Andean anecdote that well illustrates this characteristic. One of their own race, who had served in the army and learned other things without forgetting the ways of his own people, came at night to an Indian hut and requested lodging. When this was granted in the customary manner—merely by not being refused—he asked for food.

"Manam cancha," came the expected reply.

"Well, sell me something and I will cook for myself."

"Manam cancha."

The soldier was well aware that there were plenty of supplies hidden away in the hut. He knew, also, the Indian temperament.

"Well, I suppose I'll have to get along on a chupe de guijarros," he sighed, using Spanish to make his speech more impressive.

"A stone soup!" murmured the household, betrayed by astonishment into understanding a tongue they pretended not to know.

"Yes, it is what we use in the army when there is

nothing better."

He wandered down to the mountain stream below the hut and, returning with a dozen large smooth pebbles, washed them carefully, and laid them out on his bundle.

"You won't mind lending me an olla?" he murmured to the wall of expressionless faces about him.

A woman brought the kettle in silence. The soldier, humming a barrack-room ballad, half-filled the pot with water, set it over the fire, dropped in the stones one by one, and squatted on his heels with a sigh of contentment. By and by he borrowed a wooden spoon and tasted the concoction from time to time, throwing the residue back into the kettle in approved Andean fashion.

"You don't happen to have a bit of salt?" he murmured, after a time, to the family now gathered close around him watching this possible miracle silently but intently.

"Cachi? That we have," said the woman, handing him a piece of purple rock, which he beat up and sprinkled into the now steaming pot.

"Too bad I haven't a few potatoes to put in," he droned, as if to himself, "it would help the flavor."

The old woman shambled away into the darkness of a far corner, and came back some time later to thrust silently toward him a handful of small potatoes, her eyes glued on the miraculous pot. When these were about half-boiled the soldier again broke off his song to murmur:

"This is going to be one of the finest chupes de guijarros I've ever made. All it lacks now is a bit of ají to give it life."

The old woman muttered something to one of the ragged girls beside her, and the latter went to dig two red peppers out of the thatch.

“A piece of cabbage would make it perfect,” sighed the soldier.

The Indians, too engrossed in the production of a stone soup, and too slow of mind to have caught up yet with the course of events, brought to light a small cabbage. By this time they were so consumed with curiosity that the old man asked innocently:

“But do you make a stone soup without meat?”

“Ah, to be sure, a strip of charqui always improves it,” replied the soldier indifferently, “but....”

A girl was sent to fetch a sheet of sun-dried beef, which the former conscript cut up slowly and dropped bit by bit into the now savory-smelling chupe. A half-hour later he lifted the kettle off the fire, the old woman handed him a gourd plate, and some cold boiled yuca as bread, and having given half of it to the family, he ate the stone soup with great relish—all except the dozen smooth, round stones at the bottom of the olla.

All that afternoon we slipped and slid down a half-perpendicular stone-quarry, that bruised my toes if not Chusquito’s, into a repulsive molle- and cactus-grown desert in which a tropical sun blazed with homicidal intensity. No wonder its blistering rays faded the made-in-Germany cloth of my Ayacucho-tailored breeches, when it bleached even Chusquito’s coat to a pale, reddish yellow. Had I not come upon an isolated hut and a gourdful of chicha de jora just when I did, it is by no means certain that I should not have perished of thirst before the day was done. The “Hacienda Pajo nal,” in the valley of the Pampas

river where sunset overtook us, was in charge of a white and cultured woman engaged in the inviting occupation of dealing out to half-drunken Indians the concentrated sugar-cane juice of a large hogshead in the liquor room. The husband, who loomed up through the tropical twilight, was the graduate of an American agricultural college; but the hacienda, under charge of his Quichua-speaking mayordomo, was farmed in the same backward manner as in the times of the Incas, without even their energy, and his foreign training had given him no inkling of the proper occupation for wives. Nor did he give any evidence of ability to speak English. After the patriarchial supper around a long, rough-hewn table, he set in motion a large phonograph, and we heard not only the best opera stars of the day, but such exotic selections as “The Old Gray Bonnet,” and a tale of love and moonlight along the Wabash. A veritable crowd of arrieros and low-caste native travelers, who had made this their night’s stopping place, and the uncouth Indian laborers of the hacienda, gathered on the edge of the darkness and stood like statues as long as the entertainment lasted. Evidently they were amused, or they would not have remained; but the absolute stoniness of their expression, without the faintest outward evidence of pleasure, would have brought dismay to a living entertainer. We had dropped again into a genuine *tierra caliente*, warm as the Cauca valley, where tiny gnats decorated my skin with an annoyance that was to last for days to come; and though I was favored with the guest-room all important Peruvian haciendas provide for travelers, the corredor outside my door, and all the neighboring patios and corrals was strewn with Indians of both sexes, stretched out among their bales and trappings.

An hour or more next morning along the flat river-bottom planted with sugar-cane brought us to one of those swaying bridges over a roaring stream compressed between precipitous rock-walls, so numerous in the time of the Incas. But instead of woven willow withes, it was supported by cables and, as if to recall the provident Incas by contrast, was sadly in need of the repair that had just begun. Chusquito crossed the precarious contraption only under protest, after the application of more than moral suasion, and on the slanting and broken cross-slats I kept my own footing with difficulty. Had he been more than a boy's size horse, we should have been held up at the edge of the gorge for days, until the languid workmen finished their task. We were now in the department of Apurímac. Some miles further along the river, through a sandy wilderness of organ-cactus noisy with flocks of screaming green parrots, the trail struck upward on the famous ascent of Bombón. It was another of those infernally stony, endless, blazing, absolutely waterless climbs that must be endured wherever a river has cut its way deep into the Andes, requiring a day of laborious toil to advance a few miles across a chasm that might almost be bridged. Even Chusquito seemed ready to stretch out on his back when at last we reached the summit, the lofty plateau again spreading away cool and inviting before us.

In Chincheros the gobernador attempted at first to deny the honor, but being caught in the act, as it were, accepted the situation with good grace, as became a caballero of considerable Spanish ancestry. In the black shale of his back corredor all the local "authorities" were gathered about a long table that groaned as with the gout each time any of its legs was subjected to undue weight, their state papers,

seals, and ink-horns, and a goodly array of large ill-scented bottles spread out before them. When he had spelled out my papers, the gobernador invited me to make the veranda my home as long as I chose to grace Chincheros with my gnat-bitten countenance, and I spent what remained of the day amid a mixture of chicha, pisco, and justice. A fully sober person was not to be expected at that hour in Peru, but the "authorities" were still sufficiently aware of the dignity of their position to whisk the bottles out of sight when I prepared to photograph the group. That an andarín should not present a book for their seals and signatures they took as a slight, and I was forced to submit several pages of my note-book to their official decoration. During all the rest of the afternoon Indians and half-Indians came slinking in before the authoritative crowd, one of whom was a notary public, to mumble their petitions or complaints with many a cringing "tayta-tayta," and the air of slaves before ill-tempered masters. The otherwise subservient proceedings were broken once by a wordy passage-at-arms between the gobernador and an aged caballero dressed in rags and pride, who bade a formal farewell to the women of the family and other officials, but left without the customary handshake with the gobernador, marking this as the most serious quarrel I had yet witnessed in South America. When the business of the day was over, the mellow-conditioned "authorities" all joined in a game of "quoits," with silver soles in place of horseshoes, to determine which of them should supply the wine that topped off the festivities. The family supper was served on the table so recently occupied by the affairs of justice, and I spread my bed on two of the benches that had sustained the weight of the august judges. Here and there on the

mud floor of the court-room an Indian slept, curled up like a contented yellow dog on a bundle of rags or corn-stalks.

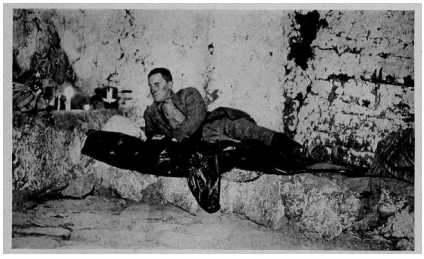
I had assigned to the long, hard day across the great range beyond Chincheros the experience of chewing coca, said to sustain the Andean Indian on his laborious journeyings. As we undulated across the barren, brown top of the world, I began feeding myself leaf by leaf, adhering strictly to the accepted rules of this indigenous sport, until I had formed a bulging cud in my right cheek—the left is also permitted by the rules. The taste was not unlike that of dry hay. Then I bit off several nibbles of lime from the burnt stone I had bought in the market of Huancayo and, mixing it with the leaves, began to chew. The only sensation I was clearly aware of was that the lime burned my gums atrociously, as it would have done had the coca leaf never been discovered. I am not sure that I did not feel a slight increase in exhilaration that caused me to lift my feet a trifle faster; but this may easily have been due to the beauty of the scene that stretched to infinity on every hand, for even Chusquito seemed inspired to bestir his dainty hoofs with more than his accustomed sprightliness.

The hazy valley of the Pampas river with its biting gnats had disappeared into the past, and only the bare, brown world spread before us to a far distant horizon that seemed to move forward as we advanced. Small wonder the natives were astonished that I kept the road. I could not but be surprised myself that instinct and the slight assistance of my pocket-compass guided me aright across this deathly-still, unpeopled mountain-top, where the traveler must constantly watch the faintly marked path, lest it

take advantage of the briefest inattention to dodge from under his feet and leave him hopelessly stranded high up on a dreary puna trackless as the sea itself. On these shelterless heights it was easy to understand why each succeeding town had watched my departure with gaping mouths, and that the boldest inhabitants had cried out: “Nosotros, aunque hijos del país, no nos aventuremos hasta el Cuzco sin guía!—Even we, sons of the country, would not adventure ourselves to Cuzco without a guide!”



A familiar sight in the Andes,—a recently butchered beef hung in sheets along the clothes-line to sun-dry into *charqui*, the soleleather-like imitation of food on which the Andean traveler is often forced to subsist



A typical “bed” in the guest-room provided for travelers by many Peruvian *hacendados*,—to wit: a stone or adobe divan on which the traveler may spread whatever bedding he brings with him. Note my *alforjas*, kitchenette, and bottle of fuel. An auto-picture taken by pinning a flash sheet on the opposite wall

But luck was with me. The dull-yellow world began to subside at last, and we came out far above a long, winding valley, in the dim end of which I could make out a green speck that was evidently that very Andahuaylas toward which we were headed. Far away, in the same direction which I must follow to reach the Navel of the Inca Empire, were tooth-shaped peaks, slightly snowclad, hung high in the sky, and below, and about, and beyond them to the ends of the earth, the suggestion, rather than the actual sight, of such a labyrinth of ranges as only the disordered imagination seemed capable of creating. We began to go down and forever down, so swiftly that we could have kicked each other in our disgust, now slipping and stumbling along toboggans of loose stones, now picking our way step by step down natural rock stairs, then descending across steep meadows of mountain grass on which Chusquito, with his caulk-less shoes, gave a ludicrous suggestion of some silly fellow attempting to skate on all fours. At length the slope moderated its pace and took on a thin garb of trees and vegetation, the mountain-tops on which we had been walking a bare two hours before now towering into the sky above. Below the

village of Moyabamba, so renowned for its horse-stealing that we lost no time in leaving it behind us, the valley narrowed to a gorge, in which our progress was blocked by a mule-train of Ica wine. I fell in with the chief arriero at the rear, and plodded with him in the cloud of dust rising behind the shuffling mules like the mists of the morning from some seaside valley. Each of the animals bore two kegs of wine nicely balanced on his sawbuck-shaped pack-saddle, a total weight of 250 pounds. The journey from Ica to Andahuaylas averaged from three weeks to a month, the entire cost of transportation about $7.50 for each animal. In the morning, horsemen and pedestrians formed an almost unbroken procession along the rich and thickly inhabited valley of the little Chumbau river, for all the league from Talavera to the straggling town of Andahuaylas.

Manuel Richter, addressee of my letter, kept a little general-store on a corner of the plaza. Chusquito and I waited in the streak of shade before his shop until he had spelled out the missive with Teutonic deliberation, in marked contrast to the Latin-American quickness of welcome, which almost as quickly explodes into thin air. Our new host had first emigrated forty years before from Poland to New York, where he had lived several months in “Ghe-r-reen Schtreet,” a fact he never lost an opportunity to mention, evidently under the impression that it was still the aristocratic center of the city. During that time he had worked in a store “way uptown in Oonion Sqvare.” He still boasted a brother in the kosher district of Harlem, but for some reason that does not apply to most of his race he had drifted on to Peru and become a true Peruvian, even to taking off his hat when a tin Virgin passed in the street. Yet

we spoke German together. He seemed to prefer it to Spanish, even after half a lifetime in the Andes and despite a Peruvian wife and half a dozen children entirely ignorant of the former tongue.

The Richter meals were more than substantial, and his family bubbled over with kind-heartedness. But he was forced to share the honor of a guest from far-off América del Norte with one Da Pozzo, who dwelt in solitary, topsy-turvy state in an ancient, two-story ruin on a knoll across the prattling Chumbau. He was a Venetian on the sadder side of forty, once an architect of high standing, who had laid out more than one Plaza de Armas in Peru and Bolivia. Several turns of the wheel of fate in the wrong direction, among them a Peruvian wife, the confessional, and the fiery waters that partly drown such memories, had reduced his ambition to a low level and his income to what may be picked up by the building of mud houses in these drowsy towns of the interior. In his customary condition he was maudlinly affectionate, to the point of making even my cheeks the target of his bewhiskered kisses, and vociferous in his assertion that he was a “masón” and a hater of priests in all lands and languages. But what mattered all this, or the fact that his junk-strewn ruin boasted only one wooden-floored bed, and that the rotting old balcony seemed always on the point of dropping from under one? For it overlooked splendid groves and rows of the slender, blue-black eucalyptus where birds sang merrily, as well as the brown flanks of the Andes rolling up out of both sides and ends of a valley enlivened by a constant going and coming of Indians along its broad roadway. Then, too, there was rich alfalfa on which Chusquito might gorge himself at no other expense than an occasional medio to the Indian boy assigned the task of cutting

it—"that he have affection for you and your horse."

Andahuaylas is really nothing but an example of how life may be made a perennial pastime, scattered almost thickly along the entire two leagues from Talavera to San Jerónimo. Yet its situation and climate give it a charm peculiarly its own, and it would be hard to imagine a better place in which to drift through life—as its inhabitants seem to recognize. Though the long valley is extremely fertile, it produces little. The Indians of more or less full blood that make up the bulk of the population will not work; the "white" man cannot, lest he forever lose his precious caste. The laziest American laborer known to charity bureaus will do more and better work in an hour, unwatched, than the liveliest Indian of Andahuaylas in a day, with a boss standing over him. Without in the least hurrying I could descend from the upper story of our ruin to the river, return with a pail of water, complete my toilet and throw out the water, before the Indian boy whose only duty in life was to attend me would, if called, appear from his seat directly below my balcony to get the pail—which he would smash before he got back, if there was any possible way of doing so, and into which he would certainly manage to get some sort of filth, if he had to pick it up and throw it in. The *gente* lay the blame of this condition on the *escuelas fiscales*, the free government-schools, complaining that "there is no longer service, for as soon as the cholo has been to school, he wants to be a *person*." "Faltan brazos—arms are lacking," they wail, gazing across the all but uncultivated valley; yet not one of them notices the two hanging idly at his own sides. A shower of medios failed to win from the Indian boy an affection sufficient to keep Chusquito from starvation. I obtained permission to

tie the animal in a corner of the fat alfalfa field that would not come to him, and all day long I could see him across the little river, a contented dot of red against the deep green background of the field from which he never raised his head the whole day through.

Yet the products of the valley are cheap enough, when they exist. Eggs were five cents a dozen; one morning an Indian who needed the money came to the ruin to offer me eight for a medio (2 cents). Four liters of milk might be had for 7 cents. But let the harassed American householder pause a moment and reflect, before he sells his chattels and hurries down to Andahuaylas. To obtain those four liters one must take a pail and wander several miles along the valley at about nine in the morning, wait around some hacienda corral where the Indians have concluded not to abandon the daily milking, and never get home before noon. The “best families” have a special milk-servant who does nothing else—and frequently not even that—than go milk hunting; and on an average he is robbed on his way home of the contents of his pail about every third morning, by some group of Indians who come upon him out of sight of any member of the gente class.

There is a type of “white” Indian in the Andahuaylas valley, apparently without admixture of European blood, yet with a very light skin and delicate pink cheeks. In the color of their garments they nearly rival those of Quito. The heavy woolen socks and hairy sandals of more lofty regions are unknown, and the barefoot patter again reigns supreme. In manner the aboriginal is cringing and timorous, yet if the word of the shod minority was trustworthy, he has more than once been known to sneak up on a

sleeping gringo and mash his head with a rock. Nor will he "squeal" on one of his own race, even when put to the torture.

In the wilderness of weeds that passed for the local cemetery I came upon three Indians digging a child's grave. One muscular loafer stood less than waist-deep in the hole, scratching into a blanket spread out at his feet a bit of dust, with a hoe Adam might have thrown away in disgust during the first week of his existence, before he invented a better one. To corners of the blanket were tied ropes, by which a pair of equally muscular Indians standing on the ground above hauled up every ten minutes or so nearly a shovelful of earth. Of course, at "coca time," or a dog-fight, or the passing of a drunken man, a foreigner, a bird, or a milk-pail, they paused from their strenuous labors a half-hour or so to stare after the attraction. At least half the time left they spent in bandying a skull and a pair of thigh bones back and forth between themselves and a pair of Indian women lounging in the grass nearby.

In the church forming one side of the plaza the chief among many absurdities testifying to the local absence of a sense of humor were the figures in the main side-chapel. These were life-size statues of Christ and the Virgin, the former in a sort of "precieux" gown and a broad-brimmed red hat with a pink band, the latter in a still broader blue one, giving the pair a ludicrous resemblance to the "shepherds" into which the nobles of the French court of two centuries ago used to disguise themselves, an impression increased by the cross between a golf-stick and a back-of-the-scenes hook carried by the Cristo. Yet the simple Indians pattered in all through the day to kneel and gaze with a

beatified expression, in which there was not the shadow of a smile, at these absurd figures, no doubt considering them the last word in beauty.

When all is said and done, there is a subtle, lazy charm about the valley of Andahuaylas that holds the traveler long after he should have moved on. Sometimes, as the placid days drifted smoothly by, one caught the native point of view, and regretted the intrusion of strenuous gringo activity in the midst of nature's and man's repose; a realization that we of the North do much which is not much even when we get it done. Here one could lie in perfect contentment and watch the road looping away out of the valley over a sunlit hill, without feeling too strong for resistance the itch to be off. Yet in the end the only sure means of enjoying an Andean range is to know that some day one is going to tramp away into it, to follow the trail that shoulders its way mysteriously off through those shaded valleys and rugged quebradas, beckoning one toward another and a new world beyond.



The fatherless urchin who fell in

with me beyond Andahuaylas; the only native wearing shoes I met on the road in the Andes



My body-servant in Andahuaylas, and the sickle with which he was supposed to cut all the alfalfa "Chusquito" could eat

CHAPTER XVI
THE CITY OF THE SUN

I grew suddenly tired of Andahuaylas one afternoon, and sunrise next morning found me driving Chusquito over the neighboring divide. We had turned aside from the direct route to Abancay, following the valley of the Chumbau, for the least we could do for our recent hosts was to carry their greetings to an isolated *compadre*. His "civilized hacienda" sloped up from the shore of a beautiful mountain lake some twenty miles in circumference, deep-blue as some immense emerald, with half-cultivated mountain-flanks rising all about it, and a village tucked away in one corner. But, as so often in the high Andes, its entire shore was bordered with slime and reeds that made access almost impossible. Mine host shouldered his fowling-piece and easily provided a brace of ducks for the evening meal; but he refused vociferously to swim, and watched my preparations with patent misgiving. I succeeded in finding an entrance, and took a header into the dense-blue, seemingly bottomless immensity of icy water, to the vast astonishment of all the Indian shepherds, male and female, who live out their lives among their flocks on the edge of this magnificent body of water without ever washing a foot in it, to

say nothing of contriving a boat. The lake is said to be famous for its floating islands, that blow back and forth across it with cattle grazing serenely upon them; but it was my luck to find even this Andean invention out of order and no longer "functioning."

My lake-side host was of rare adaptability for a Latin-American, and of no slight mechanical ability. He not only had a real flour-mill, but *washed* his wheat before grinding it! This removes him at once and forever from the "Spig" class. His own electric plant furnished the most satisfactory light I had read by since leaving Lima; a telephone connected him with the outside world—though this ultra-modern contrivance was not yet considered a fitting messenger for the greetings of his compadres in Andahuaylas. With the advertisement of a $200 "Singola" as a model, he had fitted his small phonograph into a home-made cedar box, making it an instrument quite equal both in tone and appearance to that in the catalogue. Only he who knows how devoid of mechanical ability is the average Latin-American can realize how vastly this feat lifted the lake-side hacendado above his fellows.

I had half-skirted the lake and crossed a stony range next day when, near noon, in a collection of huts called Pincos, at the bottom of a mighty quebrada, I caught sight of something I had never before seen in South America. It was a white boy, perhaps twelve years old, wearing shoes, yet in spite of that carrying a bundle over one shoulder, like one bound on a journey.

"Going somewhere?" I asked.

"Al Cuzco," was the astonishing reply. A Peruvian boy actually leaving home to go somewhere else, just like a live American!

“Then we’d better go together,” I answered, as soon as I had recovered my breath.

The child rose without a word and turned his face with me toward the trail looping upward across the chasm.

“What’s your name?” I began lamely, as we strained along at the heels of Chusquito, who had seemed little less surprised than I at this extraordinary apparition.

“Teófilo Fulano,” replied our new companion.

“Fulano! Relative, perhaps, of the Señor Fulano at whose hacienda I spent last night?”

“Yes; Don Faustino is my father.”

“Impossible!” I cried. “He is only recently married and has no children.”

“Not since he is married,” replied the child, innocently, “and he won’t recognize me.”

“And your mother?” I continued after a time.

“She keeps a chicha-shop in Andahuaylas,” answered the boy. “She used to love Don Faustino.”

For hours we rose steadily, the valley of Pincos and the little river, frothing over the stones at its bottom, sinking lower and lower beneath us, a damp mountain-top coolness tempering our toil and somewhat offsetting the absence of drinkingwater. Our shadows crawled from under our feet and grew to erectness before us, and still the rather well-kept roadway looped upward.

“Why do you go to Cuzco?” I asked, breaking in upon the story of some boyish prank; for, once I had won his confidence, the child was garrulous, after the manner of his race.

"One of my relatives lives there," he muttered. The answer was too exactly in the tone of the same reply in another tongue I had so often heard from the lips of "hoboing" youngsters in my own land to be taken for more than a subterfuge. I hold it any man's privilege to keep his own counsel, however, even though he has not yet reached the four-foot mark, and he was soon prattling on again as unbrokenly as if the steep slopes of his native mountains were level plain.

A crude cross, surrounded by an irregular heap of stones tossed there one by one by passing Indians, marked the wind-blown summit. On the bit of pampa that preceded another stony descent stood the ruin of what may have been an Inca fortress or lookout, with another crazy cross atop. From it spread a vast view, with the morrow's road plainly in sight, squirming out of a half-concealed valley and panting away over another of the countless Andean ridges that divide this region as with a series of mighty walls. But it was long afterward that we came in sight of Huancarama, wedged in the throat of the gorge and extremely inviting, at a distance, to three famished and choking roadsters.

Our reception there was so typical that I am minded to describe it, for all its similarity to other experiences. We had explored the place rather thoroughly before we located the dwelling of Ezequiel Palomino, the gobernador. It is a common ruse of the rural "authorities" of Peru not only to hide from an arriving stranger, but to swear the rest of the town to secrecy. Small wonder, since they hold their positions on compulsion and without emoluments. Moreover, their inability to visualize that which is absent gives these isolated rural

officials a contempt for the government and its orders, unless it is actually there in person, and well armed. The doors of Don Ezequiel's shop, facing the grazing-ground plaza, were closed, and his Indian women in the patio as stupid in their indifference, and as clumsy as usual at covering up their lies. The set answer to any inquiry for the head of such a household is a mumbled, "No 'stá 'cá," or its Quichua equivalent. Yet if one answer, "I did not ask where he was *not*, you wooden-headed daughter of a father without understanding; I asked, *where* is he?" one is considered rude and unsimpático. A long struggle brought only the information that the gobernador was in some indefinite place somewhere far-away or near at hand, and that he might or might not return in the natural course of events.

But this time there was a loophole in the defenses of the besieged. A shopkeeper—*keeping* it, as well as all its accumulated stock, seemed to be the extent of his activities—across the plaza turned out to be the alcalde, who evidently was privately disgruntled with his fellow-official. For when my questions grew pressing, he swore me to secrecy and whispered:

"The gobernador is at home asleep in his own house, because he is seasick to-day"; and he winked ever so faintly at the generous display of bottles on the shelves beside us.

Far be it from me to blame any man for whiling away an Andean existence in the only available fashion. But poor, uncomplaining Chusquito had already stood a long hour unfed and unwatered, his burden still upon him and twenty-five steep and stony miles in his slender legs. I lost no time in returning to the patio. The Indian women, seeing no way out of it, admitted that their lord and master

was “sick in bed, but ya no más ha de venir”—which may mean, “he is coming at once,” or that he may come the day after to-morrow. I strode up the outside stairs to the second-story veranda and, throwing open the several doors, discovered at last the elusive official, a bleary-eyed half-breed of the most disgusting type. I slapped him in the face, figuratively at least, with my government order, and with a savage leer and an unhuman growl he ordered a servant to open for us a mud den facing the street. As to alfalfa, that, he mumbled, was “far away.” I thrust a coin upon him, piled our junk in the bare dungeon with the little fatherless one to watch over it, and set out to forage food for ourselves. When I returned, the gobernador had carried out the legal requirements of his office by causing an Indian to toss before Chusquito a small handful of last year’s corn-stalks. This time he had hidden himself effectually. I began a systematic search of the premises. In a back-yard, behind the patio wall, I found a half-dozen of the gobernador’s fat horses stuffing themselves to bursting from an enormous heap of fresh, green alfalfa! The Indian whom I caught by the slack of the garment and drove before me under all the load he could carry, pocketed a *real* with a promise to watch over the fodder, and to repeat the dose at dawn. But I also hovered for some time in the shadow near at hand, in the hope of catching some one attempting to snatch away Chusquito’s hard-won meal, that I might fittingly express my feelings with the toe of a boot. No victim offered himself, however, and the little love-token and I rolled up together in my ponchos on the dirt floor, to spend a night during which the rain poured as it seldom does in the upper Andes.



A view of Quito, capital of Ecuador, from the summit of the Panecillo



View of Cuzco, the ancient Inca capital, from the summit of the Sacsahuaman

We were off at daylight, as travelers should be, along a fertile, V-shaped valley. The rain had given the morning a scent of fresh lushness rare in the dry Andes; birds sang gaily in the willows along the stream; and great masses of snow-white clouds lay banked in the hollows of the mountains. Then came another mighty climb to a stagnant, mountain-top lagoon, and the usual hundred yards or so of level going before we pitched down another of the stony *bajadas* that seem to shake all the bolts of the anatomy loose, like a runaway railway train bumping over the ties. Suddenly there disclosed itself to view one of those Andean vistas so tantalizing to the photographer, since any attempt to reproduce them on a film results only in a waste of effort and material. The earth had been scolloped out into an enormous valley, with a very green, thread-like river racing Amazonward far down in its rocky gorge; hundreds of little stone-fenced patches newly plowed to await the rain, were scattered far and near on all

the fertile, enclosing mountainsides that rose higher and higher as we descended. Each Indian chacra showed two tiny white houses connected by a high wall, which, no doubt, enclosed the corral, enticing —at least at a distance—in their specklessness. Then, far, far off across a vast expanse of gashed and tumbled valley, at the back of a great tilted field broken into squares of the yellow-green of sugar-cane, alternating with the deeper line of alfalfares, with a ribbon of road winding to, and swallowed up within it, could be plainly made out the little city of Abancay, backed by mountains capped with snow-white clouds.

The brilliant sun had reduced things again to the old, familiar dry-as-dust condition, making a torture the long perpetual zigzag down to the river Pachachaca, flowing north through a deep cleft in the mountains to the hot Amazonian montaña and the Atlantic, the gleam of its blue waters tantalizing to our choking, desert thirst. I reached at last the stone and cement bridge of graceful arch straddling the gorge, only to find, to my dismay, that this passed high out of reach of the water. But we would not be choked thus in plain sight of the inviting stream. I turned Chusquito up along the bank and tramped a long distance through cactus and chaparral, dust and tropical heat, without finding a break in the jungle-clad, precipitous bank. At last, unable to endure the tantalizing sight longer, I took chance by the forelock and dragged the animal down through the clutching trees and undergrowth as far as he could possibly go, then unloaded him, standing on a huge rock as on a pedestal, and carried my junk the rest of the way to a shady spot beside the racing stream. There I cooked, ate, read, wrote, bathed, washed all my available clothing, and napped, and it was mid-afternoon

before I had loaded again. The little son of the chicha-shop had fallen behind in the long descent. As I ate, he crossed the bridge above, but though I fired my revolver several times to attract his attention, he went on unheeding. All the four hours had been burdened with the worry of perhaps finding it impossible to get Chusquito back again up that jungled precipice and rock-spill; but the little beast climbed it like a chamois in his native mountains, though a real horse would have refused to attempt it.

Abancay is one of the most insignificant of department capitals, the lowest and most nearly tropical city of all this trans-Peruvian trip. Hot as it is, there are snowclads close behind and seeming hardly a rifle-shot away from the town, and back along the valley through which we had come the double Indian houses stood out as clear white specks far up the perpendicular mountain walls, fifteen and even twenty miles away. The place has probably fewer than 2000 inhabitants, of whom easily ninety percent. are more or less Indian, the few whites being chiefly importations in the form of government officials. The town is not old, and is somewhat built to order. Yet it has not only electric lights, but a good water-supply—when this is not polluted on its journey as an open brook through the town. There is a simple monument, designed by my former host, Da Pozzo, to a local hero who rose to the lofty heights of a department prefectship; one of the few artistic things in Peru, because of its absence of over-ornamentation. Bread was again worth nearly its weight in gold, the town being well below the wheat-line. A disease known as “obero” is common among the Indians, turning the face a sooty black. There is also a white “obero,” which gives its victims the appearance of those negroes who seek to attain white

skins by acid treatment. Some of the chola women are decidedly pretty, in spite of their habits; but, as so often with their sex the world over, once they begin to suspect that fact they are prone to attempt to improve on nature, with distressing results. Every woman wears the *dicclla*, a square of cloth richly embroidered and worked with flowers, about her shoulders. In it a baby is carried when the wearer attains one, apparently not a difficult feat in Abancay. But none go without this article of attire, and he who does not look closely will scarcely notice whether the dicclla is full of baby, or is empty.

In my first stroll about town I came upon the boy of Andahuaylas in one of the huts on the outskirts, where he was evidently avoiding me because he had eaten—raw—the five eggs I had given him to carry. He had fallen in with friends, and demonstrated his Latin-American temperament by giving up his plan to walk to Cuzco.

The "Hotel Progreso" of Yacarias Trujillo is, like Abancay, more easily imagined than described. A stone-paved rectangle full of clothes-lines, flapping with garments of both sexes, of Indian and chola women and children of all degrees of ignorance of soap, of parrots, turkeys, a belligerent goose, chickens without number, countless yellow curs, a dozen fat and self-assertive pigs, and an occasional drunken man, formed its center. A wall half-separated it from the barnyard general-convenience and kitchen, beneath which flowed an open sewer and water-supply. My "room" was an ancient, lopsided, scarfaced, airless den opening directly off this, with the dust of ages on its battered and medieval furniture. The longer of the two maltreated wooden platforms on legs that posed as bedsteads

was at least a foot shorter than I, though I make no great requirements in that respect, and I had either to hang my legs over the razor-edge of the footboard, or thrust one out at each corner. In these Andean hostelries the landlord may hover around the guest on the day of his arrival, chiefly out of curiosity, commanding the servants who furnish the room to order. But he never does so on the succeeding days, as his attention is fully taken up with the little grocery, drunkery, and billiard-room on which his real income depends, and one is lucky indeed to lay hands once a day on a servant to bring a pitcher of water and empty the basura. As to a clean towel or a change of sheets, the only way to obtain them, whatever the length of stay, is to move to another hotel—in the unlikely event that one exists. But the accomplished bachelor prefers, on the whole, to be his own chambermaid, rather than admit to his room the average variety of Andean hotel servant. The service was genuinely table d'hôte, in that we gathered around the table with the entire family of our host, his children, dogs, and chickens, some local government officials, and the ubiquitous four-eyed German with his stale jokes and flat-footed attempts to make himself "simpático." On Sunday we had to dinner a dried-up but still bright old lady who claimed to remember the battle of Ayacucho, 88 years before, and to have seen as a small girl the beaten Spaniards racing pell-mell through "Dead Man's Corner."

Yacarias had learned none of those tricks of his tribe that are the burden of the traveler almost the world over. Though his rates were ninety cents a day, he refused to collect for the meal or two I ran over and when I left he forced upon me a roast chicken for my *fiambre*, or road lunch, as "a little remembrance."

Moreover, to my astonishment he actually had Chusquito back from his pasture and tied in the patio with a juicy bundle of alfalfa before him, by the time the religious fiesta had sunk into its drunken sleep and quiet had settled down over the Andes. To have a Latin-American promise to do a thing and then to do it the same day was a breath-taking experience, indeed.

We were off at the crack of dawn on the last stage of my march to the ancient capital of the Inca Empire. That eagerness the traveler always feels in nearing the scene of boyhood dreams caused me to scold Chusquito more than usual for not keeping out from underfoot on the famous climb to the next mountain notch, with its *achapeta*, or stone-heap, on which Indians are said to have tossed their coca-cuds since long before the Conquest. The descent was even swifter, and by three we had ended the nine leagues to Curahuasi, a scattered collection of huts on a high shelf of mountain. Chusquito had brought with him his own dinner wrapped in my rubber poncho, in the form of a wad of alfalfa he had not been able to finish in Abancay. But, though he managed to make away with it, he seemed to prefer the short, dry mountain-grass of the central plaza, consisting of a large, open space adorned by one lone eucalyptus. I was soon possessor of the Stone-age key and padlock of the *cabildo*, an empty mud cave furnished by the municipalidad, to which the traveler is as legally entitled as to lodging in a French *asile de nuit*. The same building included the jail, full of the aftermath of the religious fiesta in the persons of bleary-eyed Indians thrusting their faces through the wooden bars of the single window, imploring liquor and tobacco. But though I had wine, chicha, and pisco, and Peruvian prisoners are permitted anything they

can lay hands on, it seemed wiser to let them reflect on the error of their ways. The ragged lieutenant-governor came to inquire if he should send a "cholita" to keep me company, and seemed to consider my negative reply a personal affront. Now and then an Indian, all but hidden under a load of green alfalfa, loped across the plaza, pursued by several asses taking a bite at every jump. It is the custom in this region for all aboriginals, men, women, or children, to snatch off their hats and murmur "Buenas tardes"—whatever the time of day—to every white man. If I failed to answer, they repeated that inane, redundant, and not always truthful remark in a loud, distressed voice until I replied, as if they feared some punishment unless their greeting was returned. When it came to every passerby thus insisting on recognition as often as he passed the cabildo doorway in which I sat writing my notes, it was hard to refrain from replying with the adobe brick nearest at hand.



Building a house in Peru. Mud and chopped straw are trampled together with the bare feet, loaded into a hod that is really a sun-dried ox-hide, and fashioned into such a wall as that in the background



The patio of the “Hotel Progreso” of Abancay. The cook is peering through the hole in the wall by which she thrusts out to the servants at meal-time her nefarious concoctions

Birds were singing merrily in the molle trees when we descended a semi-desert bristling with cactus, then through precipitous stony quebradas at the bottoms of which excited streams rushed headlong down from the mountain heights in their haste to join the unseen river below on its journey to the Atlantic. We were approaching the famous Apurímac, the roar of whose waters already came up to us, and the crossing of which travelers have always looked forward to with misgiving. Yet it was only a very moderate river we came in sight of in mid-morning, exceedingly far down in the precipitous gorge it has cut for itself during the centuries. The leg-straining descent seemed endless; the road wound incessantly round the mountain, far up each profound ravine and back again, so that a two-mile walk was barely a 500-yard gain. Travelers now were numerous. Mule-trains with goods from the outside world by way of Cuzco appeared as dots on the sky-line crest of the range beyond, and crawled slowly down its barren face; Indians, bearing

on their backs chickens, pigs, or the scanty produce of their chacras, climbed past us into the hot, cactus-grown world above.

The blazing sun stood sheer overhead when we reached the river, or more exactly Tablachaca, the "board-bridge" high above it. Since long before the Conquest, *simpichacas*, the swaying Inca bridges of braided withes, have been thrown across this mighty gorge at various points, so that the passing of the Apurímac has long been synonymous with taking one's life in one's hands. But the tameness of modern times has intruded even here. To-day a solid bridge, built by a Philadelphian and maintained, not by the government, but by the neighboring hacendados, carries the traveler across without a tremor. In an openwork, gnat-bitten hut beside it live the bridge-tender, a curiously old youth, and his mother, boasting themselves the grandson and daughter respectively of the builder, yet so purely Peruvian that they cannot even pronounce the name of their illustrious ancestor.

Finding it possible to descend to the river by a series of natural stone steps, I determined to enjoy the distinction of a dip into the famous stream. The astonished bridge-tenders wished to know if I was a great swimmer, as their father and grandfather from Philadelphia had been, and could I even out-gringo him by swimming clear across the river. I admitted that I could come near to making it, if there were a sheriff's posse at my heels and no bridge; but neither of those contingencies staring me in the face, I saw no reason to risk coming home by way of the Amazon in the garb of Adam by attempting a gratuitous "stunt" worthy of a genuine andarín. As I stood soaping my gnat-bitten frame, however, I fell

to wondering why Pedro de la Gasca should have lost most of his horses and mules here on the way to his famous pussy-wants-a-corner game with Gonzalo Pizarro on the field of Xaquixaguana. For though it snarled and fretted against its rocky barriers with considerable force and speed, to any but a Spanish-speaking people the stream lapping at my knees would not exactly seem a great river. I came to the conclusion that his misfortune must have been due to the fact that Pedro was a priest, and to test the theory, swam across, sat a moment against the sheer rock wall that bounds the resounding gorge on the further side, and swam back again. True the stream moved with something more than Peruvian energy, and not far below there was a fall with a threatening hollow roar where the man so foolish as to let himself be carried over might have sustained a few bumps and gashes. But there was nothing in the escapade to get excited over, much less to lose one's horses.

Imagine my surprise, therefore, as I gripped my prehensile toes once more on the hither bank, to discover, just in time to save myself from shattering the proprieties to fragments, that all the surrounding countryside, large and small, male and female, Indian, half-breed and ¾-breed, was hanging over the precipice and bridge above, watching with open mouths my marvelous and unprecedented feat. As I climbed the bank, reclad, the vigilante del puente and his mother fell upon me, insisting that such unrivalled prowess should not pass unrecorded, and getting possession of my note-book, they spent most of the afternoon in concocting a certificate of my epoch-making adventure, with all the signatures, rúbricas, and seals thereunto appertaining.

Beyond the river, now in the great department of Cuzco, we climbed a sheer mountain face, and descended with sunset to a mass of buildings on a bluff, among immense stretches of yellow-green canefields. This was the hacienda “La Estrella” of Senator Montes, whom official duties held in Lima, but whose son, once he had overcome his racial prejudice against a man who came on foot and without a servant, appointed an Indian valet to Chusquito and took upon himself my entertainment. His newly constructed mansion boasted all modern improvements, from electric lights to paintings on the walls of corredor and rooms “by a famous imported artist.” In the well-appointed sugar-mill the cane of the surrounding fields was turned into white, cone-shaped sugar-loaves and concentrated merriment, the latter selling at $9 a hundred liters, of which something more than half went to the government. Two salt-inspectors joined us at the formal dinner in the overdecorated mansion. Salt being a government monopoly, Peru swarms with salt-inspectors, salt-police, salt-detectives, official salt-weighers, and so on to national bankruptcy. The reddish rocks mined on the Montes estate were bought by the government at ten cents a hundred-weight—and sold in official *estancos* at $2.50!

As we sat,—Montes the younger, his half-dozen white overseers, and the salt-inspectors—before the door of the cabin that had been assigned me, the tropical full moon casting over the scene a brightness almost equal to that of a sunny day, a hundred picturesquely clad Indian peons, carrying medieval hoes and axes, lined up before us for roll-call, then scattered to their huts. The hacienda’s vast army of laborers refuse for the most part to live in the tenement-like houses, in long, identical rows, of

which my own lodging was one, but insisted, with the conservatism so deeply engrained in their race, on building their own huts, of far poorer accommodations. Each peon was given a piece of land on which to erect his dwelling and plant his garden, free pasturage for a few animals, and a wage of 20 cents a day, when he worked for the hacienda. This he did only every other month, and thanks to church festivals and the concentrated cane-juice with which they are enlivened, by no means all the days of that. The women had no obligations to the hacienda, but lived on it merely as appendices to their husbands—old maids, of course, are unknown among South American Indians—doing only such work about the estate-house as they could be coaxed to do, or "what they were ordered by their husbands." Under the silver-flooding moon the gathering of *gente* grew reminiscent, and on every hand floated stories of Peru, ending with one by the son which explained why Montes the elder had become wealthy and a Senator and had had such extraordinary all-around luck—because he had picked up at the Chicago Exposition twenty years before a horseshoe, which was still carefully guarded.

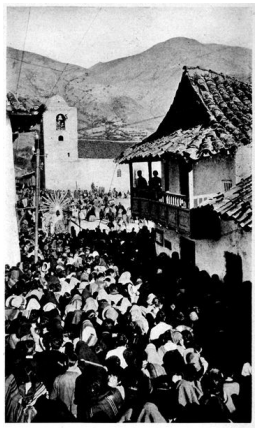
The moon had set, though the forerunner of day had not yet appeared, when, after trying in vain to punch awake the peon Montes had ordered to attend me, I entered the immense hacienda corral to *pescar*, or "fish out," as the Peruvians say, my horselet from the army of mules and horses munching the dry pulp of crushed sugarcane that constitutes the fodder of these near-tropical regions. I had no difficulty in recognizing my own animal in the dark, not only by his diminutiveness, but by his picturesquely docked tail. Looking back on that day, however, I am sorry I

did not pescar another animal by mistake.

As I prepared to load him before my cabin door, I was startled to find that Chusquito seemed to have turned zebra during the night. Several dark lines ran from his spine down either side to his shaggy belly. The sense of smell astonished me with the information that these were of blood. I got water and washed him off, meanwhile cursing the savage mules that had evidently spent most of the night biting the helpless little brute. As a former Zone Policeman, trained to arrest every Panamanian coachman who dared enter the Canal Zone with a horse *matado*, I had taken extreme care to keep my own animal free from those back-sores so atrociously frequent and unattended in the Andes. But the soft alforjas could not add to his injuries. I, too, had been bitten, until my frame was one single expanse of tattooing; and Chusquito must bear his share of troubles unavoidable in the tropics. I arranged the load as carefully as possible, and we were off.

It was not long, however, before I realized that something, perhaps the impossibility of eating during the night, had decidedly sapped my companion's strength. He did not tramp with his old-time vim; the joy of life seemed to have departed from him. I moderated my pace, thinking my haste to reach the climax of my South American journey was unconsciously causing me to outdo the pace we had long since agreed upon. Still he would not keep out from under my feet. For almost the first time in our acquaintance I found it necessary to touch him up with a stick. We were moving along a semi-tropical hollow, amid the deafening scream of parrakeets, with an occasional sharp dip into and climb out of a stony quebrada, from which I had almost to carry

him by main force. He moved like a clock that was running down, and for the life of me I could not contrive the means of winding him up again. Then, all at once, I realized what had befallen him. The poor, misused brute had been bitten, not by mules, but by those loathsome vampire bats of tropical valleys that sometimes find even human victims for their blood-sucking propensities.



A religious procession in Abancay. Note the group of urchins in the church-tower vying with each other in beating the bells into an uproar

We crawled at last into the mud village of Limatambo, only to be informed that there was no alfalfa in town, and that we must push on at least to

the “Hacienda Challabamba,” half a league up the valley. As we turned toward it, I was startled to find the way bordered by a splendid wall of cut stone, about which the effete modern inhabitants had pitched their miserable mud huts. For here, commanding the narrow entrance to the valley, stood one of those four fortresses with which the ancient emperors of Tavantinsuyo had defended, at some twelve leagues from the capital, the highways radiating to the Four Corners of the Earth. Chusquito had lost all response to any species of outside influence. Push as I would, putting my shoulder to the wheel—I would say rump—and digging my toes into the trail, we could not advance a mile an hour. The drooping animal took a half minute to lift each separate foot, a pebble caused him to stumble, a six-inch rock step made him groan audibly. He did not look particularly worn-out; he was fatter if anything than the day I had bought him; and surely even a man could have gone the mile or two more “on his nerve.” Instead, he came to a complete standstill. This would never do. At least we must reach the hacienda and its alfalfa-fields. Much as it grieved me to raise a hand against a faithful companion, I rapped him soundly across the quarters with my stick. He uttered a sudden pathetic groan, and dropped in the middle of the road as suddenly as a well-killed bull in a Spanish bull-ring; his legs quivered a moment, his eyes opened wide, closed, then opened again in a glassy stare.

Despite all my blustering before soulless gobernadores who would have starved him in the midst of plenty, despite all my struggles to find him food when even I had gone without, the patient little brute had come to this sad end. Never had I felt the loss of a traveling companion more keenly. For six

weeks we had toiled together over lofty Andean ranges, across vast páramos with nothing in sight but their dreary nothingness. How often had we not listened to each other contentedly dining in our adjacent chambers at the end of a laborious day? If we had had differences, they had been only those which arise between all beings with wills of their own, joined together on a long journey. And the end of that journey had been so near at hand. I had long looked forward to our triumphal entry into Cuzco together, to having our pictures proudly taken side by side in the main plaza, and to the pleasure of presenting him as a pet to the children of the one American I knew dwelt in the ancient capital—should it turn out that the latter had any such appendages—that he might toil no more and end his days in the beloved mountain air of his native heights. Instead of which, here I sat on the edge of a Peruvian trail, gazing at a shattered dream stiffening in the blazing sunshine before me.

But the experienced traveler will not let misfortune long interfere with the regular flow of his existence. Behind the bristling cactus hedges lining the road were several Indian hovels. I risked leaving alone what was left of my possessions to walk to the nearest, some fifty yards away. Two arrieros, a boy, and a woman, were lounging within it. The muleteers spoke a Quichua somewhat different from that I had picked up; moreover they were half drunk. I offered them a good reward to toss my stuff on one of their grazing mules and carry it to “Challabamba.” But they were bound for “La Estrella”—probably five or six hours later—and could not turn back. Perhaps it brings bad luck. The woman would not be compromised, even to the extent of admitting my existence. As a final straw the boy refused a “peseta”

to carry a note to the hacienda.

I returned to the scene of the disaster and sat down hopelessly in the shrinking shadow of the hedge. The connecting link between a sahib and his baggage kept running like a refrain through my head. Indian travelers and mule-trains passed to and fro, staring curiously and seeming, in so far as the impassive Indian face shows anything, to smirk with satisfaction at my plight. At least I could pull my belongings off the corpse; though not easily, with the "diamond-hitch" and the ropes wound round and round the body. Luckily the animal had fallen on the side carrying my "city" clothing, and had spared the developing-tank. I disentangled my still existent possessions and piled them beside me in the shade. An hour crawled by; another was crawling. Something must be done. I could neither leave my baggage unprotected here beside one of the four royal highways leading into, or out of the City of the Sun—depending on which way one was going, were one going at all—nor could I carry it myself, such was the bulk to which it had accumulated. I drew out a visiting-card, that proof of the caballero caste in South America, and wrote upon it:

"Vengo recomendado por los señores de La Laguna, pero á 'tres cuadras de su hacienda me ha muerto de repente el caballo. Puede V. mandarme un indio para que me ayude con el equipaje?"

The owners of "Challabamba" were relatives of my host of the first night out of Andahuaylas, and he had implored me to stop with them. As to the horse, it was best not to try to explain offhand that it was not one I had been riding. Awaiting my chance, I picked out an old Indian woman stubbing along the stony, rising trail, twirling her ubiquitous yarning-spindle,

and explained to her in my most fluent and Incaic, not to say archaic, Quichua, that she was to give the note to Don Francisco when she passed his hacienda.

But like most of her race sent on errands, she probably forgot it, or concluded I didn't mean what I had said, or thought of some other incomprehensible reason for not delivering it, such as not having the consent of her *yaya*, or father confessor, or she decided to keep it as fuel, or Don Francisco was "No 'stá 'cá" as usual, or he didn't care to have travelers recomendado by his relatives, or qué sé yo. The empty, blazing minutes expanded into half hours; these in turn into hours, and still life drifted eventlessly on. I dug out a battered copy of Marcus Aurelius, and strove to pass the time as pleasantly as possible until fate saw fit to make a suggestion. Limping old Epictetus would have been far more to the point under the circumstances. The sun drew relentlessly away on its westward journey, the handful of shade crawled on all fours under the cactus hedge and spread into the uninviting field beyond. I transferred my sundry, not to say sun-dried, chattels to the other side of the road and continued my reading. An old, near-white fellow hobbled past and desired to know what I was doing there. I replied that the densest of human beings could see that I was installing an electric light-and-power plant, and could he, as quite evidently the oldest resident of these parts and a man of extraordinary intelligence, suggest any means of starting the dynamo. His brilliant, but not wholly unexpected reply was, "Where do you come from where are you going?" If one dragged a Peruvian out of bed at midnight to say that his wife had just hanged herself in the patio and should be cut down as soon as convenient, he would certainly cry, "Y á

'onde vueno?" I finally stirred up his drivelling intellect to the point where he announced himself the owner of a small hacienda not far away, and he promised that as soon as he returned from a social call up the road he would see whether he had an animal that could carry my stuff to his house, and an Indian that cared to fetch it. I picked up my book once more—and just then Chusquito raised his head and gazed listlessly about him, like one of the opposite sex coming out of a faint, or one of our own regaining the first consciousness of the cold gray dawn of a morning after. Then getting unsteadily to his feet, that deceitful, ungrateful, possum-playing rascal stood up, staggered through the cactus hedge, and fell to nibbling the stubble of the field beyond!

The octogenarian had not mentioned the date of his proposed return and, whatever it was, it had not arrived when there appeared along the road I would have traveled a near-Indian in some cast-off clothing and the same kind of Spanish, leading a stout, "empty" mule. Don Francisco, as I had suspected, was not at home, and la señora had evidently slept the siesta on the note before acting upon it. Chusquito, though on his feet again, was of course too weak to be reloaded, and even in the clothes he stood in I could only drag him along a few feet to the minute by pulling like a Dutchman—or more exactly, a Dutch woman—on a canal tow-path, the inscrutable near-Indian, with the mule bearing my baggage, bringing up the funereal rear. A score of times I was on the point of abandoning the derelict far from port and alfalfa, but contained myself in patience, recalling the former virtues of the deceiving creature, and sweated at last with him into the hacienda corral. The estate was just then in supreme command of a woman of such cold

indifference to my sad tale that she might as well have spoken only Quichua, instead of being so versed in Spanish that she was performing the extraordinary feat, for a South American country-woman, of reading a novel of Dumas in that tongue. The "parlor" of the low adobe building was papered with the pages of illustrated weeklies from many lands and in many languages, and there the illustrious and the notorious of all countries rubbed shoulders,—the latest champion of the fistic world beside the ivory-like dome of an experienced American presidential candidate, the Pope in the act of blessing a group of Mexican bandits, the American rector of the University of Cuzco arm in arm, as it were, with a famous Spanish bull-fighter.

In a corner of the corral Chusquito had fallen upon a heap of alfalfa in a way to show that, whatever his appearance, he was far from dead. But the hacienda people assured me the animal could not possibly carry my stuff to Cuzco; that, like a nervous breakdown, his ailment called for long rest and weeks of good feeding. I might perder cuidado, however, as they would lend me a chusco and an Indian for the rest of the journey. From their careful avoidance of any suggestions on the subject, it was evident that they fancied I would leave Chusquito where he was, and that they would automatically fall heir to him. I may look like that in my pictures, but photography is at best deceiving. Moreover, I had not forgotten that it is a common human failing to take far less care of that which is given than of that which is bought. A wily old compadre of the family, smelling how the wind blew, said he would buy the animal himself were it not that he had only that week finished and a won a 27-year lawsuit against some Franciscan friars for the possession of an

hacienda, and was penniless in consequence. The brother of the absent Don Francisco, who chanced to ride over from his neighboring hacienda, assured me the eighteen *soles* I had paid in Huancayo was an "atrocious" price, and after the rest of the usual prelude to a bargain in Peru, offered me eight. I forgot myself and accepted too quickly; whereupon he walked slowly around the animal until, finding a discolored fetlock or some other fatal blemish, he lightly broke his word and offered six. After a sharp and scintillating exchange of gypsying, I pocketed seven, and sadly watched the constant companion of my most pleasant six weeks on the road in Peru led slowly away to a large green spot up the valley, the order of his new master, to give him all the alfalfa he could eat, ringing in his ears. Yet I knew only too well his preference for the tough páramo grasses of his native upper heights.

La señora had promised that I should start by six, whence it was unusually good luck that I actually dashed out through the hacienda gate at seven, my possessions behind me on a little gray chusco in charge of one of the wooden-headed Indians of the region, sent to lead the animal to Cuzco and back. The first half of his task did not last long. After I had paused to wait for him a dozen times or more in the first furlong, I came back to kick him off the end of the tow-rope and take personal charge of the expedition. Gradually the great, semi-tropical valley where Chusquito had found the end of his journeyings shrunk to a hollow in the earth, then to a mere hole, wavy blue with distance, that finally disappeared forever from my eyes. The brown pampa and exhilarating air of upper heights appeared once more, with magnificent views of the Andes on every hand as far as the eye could range. The wooden

Indian disappeared for hours, and I fancied I was rid of him for the rest of the journey. But he caught up, and dropped at the roadside with an almost audible sigh of relief, the coca quid still in his cheek, the bag of eggs I had entrusted to him still intact, where I paused for dinner on the edge of a floor-flat plain that had evidently once been a lake-bottom. The mood came upon me to treat him as an equal, to see what the effect might be. I shared with him such a meal as he had certainly never before enjoyed; but his outward expression showed neither gratitude nor any other emotion, though he mumbled the customary "Gracias, tayta-tayta" in the tone one would expect from a wooden Indian. A more passive human being it would be hard to imagine. He ate boiled oatmeal without a murmur, though it was plain he neither recognized nor liked it. When I pointed to the approaching storm and murmured, "Para—it rains," he muttered, "Para, señor." "Munanquichu cocata?" I asked. "Ari, señor," he mumbled, and waited like a stone image until I had handed him a pinch of coca leaves. "Munanquichu copita?" "Ari, señor," and he drank the pisco as impassively as he had eaten the oatmeal. Had I announced that it was snowing, or asked him to take poison, I should have expected the same passive acquiescence.

The plain broadened to the immense Pampa de Anta, the "plain of Xaquixaguana" of Prescott, stretching to far-off mountain-walls on either hand. Along the base of these, to the left, hung some splendid examples of ancient Inca *andenes*, or terraced fields. Thousands of cattle speckled the plain in every direction, dim villages stood forth on projecting headlands, while several snow-clads peered over the bordering range to the north. The ground was half-

marshy, but a broad, partly paved, raised highway stretched straight ahead as far as the eye could see. It began to rain. It always does on the Pampa de Anta, if local information is trustworthy. It was such a rain as one rarely encounters in the high Andes, mixed with hail and punctuated by roaring crashes of thunder. Lightning is so frequent on the Pampa de Anta that natives always fee their favorite saint before crossing it, and the government, a bit more materialistic in its superstitions, has provided each pole of the two-wide telegraph line with lightning-rods. A well-meaning Peruvian had advised me, if, as was certain, I should be overtaken by a thunder-storm on the pampa, to take refuge at once under a telegraph-pole and remain there until the storm was over.

Instead I splashed on, wet to the thighs, singing between the crashes of thunder, so great was my joy at approaching Cuzco. As the storm slackened, the world about me became musical with the chorus of frogs. All day the costume of Indians had been gradually changing. The pancake hat of Cuzco was now in the majority; the knee breeches and skirts were shorter; the faces were distinctly darker—or was it dirtier?—and even more stupid than the type with which I had grown so familiar. Greetings were more obsequious than ever. Even the women raised their hats to me as they duck-trotted by, and more than one carried my thoughts back to Inca days by a respectful “Buenas tardes, Viracocha.”

It became evident we could not reach Cuzco by daylight. We halted at Izcochaca, the Indian curling up in a far corner of the mud corredor assigned us, with only his thin semi-tropical garb upon him, too passive to find himself the ragged old poncho I

discovered in a corner and threw over him. It rained most of the night, making much of the twelve miles left a quagmire broken by patches of atrocious cobbling. No conquistador of old looked forward more eagerly than I to the first glimpse of the Navel of the Inca Empire; yet as always at the end of a long journey the last miles seemed trebly drawn out. The road that had been perfectly level since the preceding noonday began to clamber over bumps and rises, from the tops of each of which I strained my eyes in vain for the long-anticipated sight. Towns grew up along the way, birds sang in clumps of eucalypti, the peon slapped sluggishly along behind me, apparently seeing no further than his coca-cud; broad vistas of a tumbled and shadow-patched mountain world, with an occasional flash of the long snow and glacier-clad cordillera, spread and contracted as I hurried onward. The road passed through deep-rutted hollows and under the graceful old arch of an aqueduct ranging away with giant strides across the rolling uplands; but still no city. Again and again I topped a ridge, only to be newly disappointed, until I came almost to fancy this was only some dream city of the imagination toward which we were headed.

Then all at once, without warning, the road dived downward, turned a sharp angle, and there, below and before me, in mid-morning of October 17, lay spread out in all its extent the City of the Sun. Like the passing Indians, I, too, paused on the edge of the rocky shelf, and was almost moved to follow their lead in snatching off my hat and murmuring reverently, “O Ccoscco, Hatun Llacta, Napai cuiqui—Oh, Cuzco, Great City, I salute thee!” For to the aboriginals Cuzco is still a sanctified spot, venerated not only as the abode of the Incas, but of all those

deities that still, in spite of its outward Christianity, preside over the ancient Empire of Tavantinsuyo. My peon showed not a hint of surprise when I knelt to make a tripod of stones for my kodak, no doubt fancying it some instrument of worship it was quite natural any human being should set up at first sight of what to all mankind must be the noblest scene in all the world.

In a way his veneration was justified. Some have it that Cuzco is superior in situation to even Bogotá and Quito. In physical beauty alone this is not quite true. But what with that, combined with its historical memories, there are few such fascinating moments in the traveler's experience as this first glimpse of the ancient Inca capital. I, for one at least, looked down upon it with a thrill exceeding even that awakened by Rome or Jerusalem.

The city covered the northern and more elevated end of a half-green plain, enclosed by velvety-brown mountain flanks and dying away in hazy, labyrinthian distance. On the edge of the ridge on which we stood, Sacsahuaman, a mere knoll from this height, with its fortress, frowned down upon the city. A hulking, two-tower cathedral faced an immense plaza, faded red roofs giving the scene its chief color, until this broke into the velvet green of the plain, which in turn shaded into the soft brown of the surrounding ranges. But neither words nor photographs can give more than a faint hint of the charm and fascination of what is in many respects the most interesting spot in the Western Hemisphere, a charm enhanced by the anticipation of a long overland journey. There came upon me pity for the tourist who comes sneaking into the famous city by train along the valley below. This in its turn was

succeeded by a regret that the hands of time could not be set back 400 years, to the day when Balboa first peered out upon the Pacific, that I might sit here and watch the activities of a world totally different from that we know; a regret that what men call the Conquest of Peru ever happened. What days were those, when there were really new worlds to discover! What would I not have given to have preceded Pizarro a bit—and been provided with the magic cap of invisibility to save me from being served up as an exotic delicacy on the Inca's table.

A swift, stony descent that soon became a regular cobbled stairway, once topped by the Huancapuncu, or West Gate, led through none too pleasantly scented suburbs, the population staring agape at sight of a white man in shirt-sleeves and belligerently armed descending afoot into the famous city. The chusco and Indian followed at my heels across a great market square, past a prettily flowered little rectangle, and I marched at last out upon the broad central plaza, so densely populated with the shades of history. I had loafed away thirty-eight days since leaving Huancayo, though only twenty-two of them had been even partly spent on the road. The distance had proved almost exactly 400 miles, making a total of 2380 miles that I had covered on foot since Hays and I walked out of the central plaza of Bogotá nearly fourteen months before.

The City of the Sun, ancient capital of the Inca Empire, which Garsilaso called Cozco and Stevenson Couzcou, is to-day but a shadow of its once imperial grandeur. The famous Inca historian states that the name corresponded to the Spanish *ombligo*, and from his day to this writers have referred to it as the Navel of the Inca Empire. Educated cuzqueños of to-day

deny this derivation, asserting that the Quichua word for navel is, and always has been, *pupu*. The talkative old successor of Valverde chanced, when I called upon him, to have just been reading an ancient manuscript in which the words *ccori ccoscco* (crumbs or shavings of gold), occurred frequently in the description of the city, and he held this to be the real origin of the name.

Whatever of truth or exaggeration there may have been in the statements of old chroniclers that the city gleamed with gold at the time of the Conquest, little of that royal aspect remains. The chief and almost only material reminders of the days of the Incas are long walls of beautiful cut stone in the central portion of the modern city. Indeed, in all Peru the mementoes of the ancient race are almost wholly confined to walls. Some of these are "dressed down" so smoothly that the joints seem mere pencil-marks. Most of them are cyclopean, rough-hewn boulders of irregular size and shape, similar to the Pitti Palace in Florence, which is by no means so perfect in workmanship. There are almost no curved or circular walls, the chief exception to this being the former Temple of the Sun, now the Dominican monastery, where, like mud huts superimposed on the ruins of a mighty race, contented old friars lounge among the glories of long ago. The remnants are chiefly street after street in which the old walls have been left standing from six to twenty feet high, the whitewashed adobe of the ambitionless modern descendants above them. For the most part these form only one side of each street, for the elbow-rubbing passageways of the Incas, of which one still remains intact, were too narrow even for Spanish notions. But the city of to-day is still defined by these long reaches of elaborately cut stones, which, legend

has it, divided the ancient capital into regular squares. They are Egyptian in aspect, these massive walls, shrinking toward the top, as do the rare doors and openings of Inca construction that have survived. Here and there they have been rudely torn open to give entrance to a blacksmith-shop, a bakery, a chicharia, or, it would seem, for no other reason than the mere lust for destruction. Everywhere old walls stare out upon the passerby with Indian stolidity, as if refusing to tell the stories they might so easily if they chose. Even where the walls themselves have disappeared to furnish building material for the churches and monasteries of the conquerors, the magnificent doorways have sometimes been preserved as the entrance to some modern hovel, and give a suggestion of what this imperial city, so ruthlessly destroyed, might have been.

It is only these walls and the historical memories with which they are saturated that distinguish Cuzco from any other city of the Sierra. The life of the place is drab and uninspiring, wellnigh as colorless as the most monotonous village of the Andes. The metropolis, no doubt, of the Western Hemisphere in the fifteenth century, in the twentieth it seems a little backwater almost wholly cut off from the main stream of life. For a long time after the Conquest it was queen of the Andes, greater even than Lima. Then as the Inca highway fell into decay under the squabbling and incompetent successors of the provident Incas, it shrunk away into its mountain-girdled isolation, until to-day it is less known to Peru itself than is London or Berlin. For one limeño who has visited Cuzco, the historical gem of the continent, a hundred have journeyed to Paris.

The Conquistadores, fond of exaggerating their prowess by multiplying the numbers of their defeated enemies, ascribed to Cuzco 200,000 inhabitants. This is inconceivable. To-day a trustworthy census, taken by the American rector of the university a few weeks before my arrival, shows the population to be slightly under 20,000. It may, this authority fancies, have numbered 100,000 at the time of the Conquest. The percentage of marriages was found to be extremely low, though the birth-rate holds its own. A few white officials and *comerciantes*, what would be called petty shopkeepers elsewhere, are in evidence; otherwise Cuzco has chiefly the aspect of an Indian town, its plazas too vast for its shrunken population.

An ancient chronicler tells us that "through the heart of the capital ran a river of pure water, its sides faced with stone for a distance of twenty leagues." Granting that he carelessly wrote leagues when he would have said *cuadras*, none but a Spaniard would call the stream a river, and the purity of its water, if it ever existed, has long since departed. To-day this "stone-faced" Huatenay at the bottom of its deep-gashed gorge becomes a trickling sewer as it enters the town, passing directly beneath the principal buildings and carrying off such refuse as its sluggishness makes possible. The vast central plaza, far from level and once even larger than to-day, is faced as usual by the cathedral, second only to that of Lima, or, being of stone rather than of reeds and plaster, perhaps to be rated the first in Peru. There is something of the soft velvet-brown of Salamanca about the churches of Cuzco, that calls, not for a kodak, but for an artist. The blue-black plaster interior, pretending to be also of cut stone, is divided, after the Spanish custom, by the choir, with

splendid carved stalls. In the sacristy are ranged the dusky portraits of all the Bishops of Cuzco, from sophistical old Valverde to him of the gold-leaf theory. In the scented twilight of the nave gather all the motley population, the male *gente* only excepted, after the free-for-all manner of Andean churches. Dogs are not permitted to enter. But it is a strange Latin-American rule that cannot be circumvented. I have seen a chola pause at the door, sling her puppy in the manto on her back, as she would have carried a baby, and enter to kneel before a tinselled image, the puppy licking her face affectionately from time to time as she prayed.

In the center of the plaza stands a fountain topped by a life-size bronze Indian. A figure of some great Inca? No, indeed; but a North American "redskin," feathers, in buckskins, unAndean haughtiness and all, armed with such a bow and arrows as no Inca ever beheld. The exotic is ever more pleasing than the local. The ornate façade of "La Compañía," testimonial to Jesuit wealth in colonial days, stares awry at the cathedral. Around the other sides of the square are the usual arched and pillared arcades, gaudy with everything that appeals to the eye and purse of the Peruvian muleteer. Here are gay leather knapsacks in which to carry his coca and less valuable possessions, richly decorated trappings for his animals, *quenas*, or fifes, to while away the weary hours across the unpeopled páramos, and the many-colored "skating-caps" with earlaps which are worn not only by babies, but by many of the Indians of surrounding hamlets. The clashing of shod hoofs sounds now and then over the cobbles, but the absence of vehicles, which is so curious a feature of the interior cities of the Andes, would be striking to a newcomer. A "ferrocarril de sangre," what we might

call a street-car of flesh and blood—a roofed platform on wheels behind phlegmatic mules—rambles down to the station on train-days. Memories of viceregal times hover about the rare sedan-chair that serves the same purpose. Cuzco had no electric lights as yet, though she continued to hope, and my friend Martinelli had enstalled a dynamo to operate his cinema in the patio of the "Hotel Central."

Cuzco was the first place in South America with any hint of a tourist resort about it. Visitors have become almost familiar sights, and there was already developing that pest of European show-places, unwashed and officious urchins offering their services as "guides," an occupation undreamed of elsewhere on the continent. A wily Catalan resident pays any street Arab twenty cents for bringing him first news of the arrival of a foreigner—by train; those who tramp in from the north are, of course, overlooked—taking a sporting chance on recovering the *dos reales* from the possible victim. But the business is still in embryo, though there are those who prophesy that Cuzco will some day become the Rome of South America—not entirely to its own advantage.

There are many points of similarity between Cuzco and Quito, located at opposite ends of what is left of the ancient Inca highway. In climate they are much alike. Being 11,380 feet above the sea and on the thirteenth parallel south, surrounded by high and snowy mountains, even though at some distance, one would expect the former capital of Tavantinsuyo to be colder. But even in this rainy season, though the atmosphere was often lead-heavy from the almost constant downpour, it was only more dreary, not lower in temperature. Neither of the two cities has a

river worthy the name; the Machángara and the Huatenay, with their slight branches, serve alike as dumping-grounds, and equally break the soil with deep quebradas. Splendid views of both cities may be had from the mountains that shut them in, though in this respect Quito surpasses. The soft evening air, the singing of birds, the rows of tall, maidenly-slender eucalyptus trees behind massive mud walls, the long roads to the railway stations, are alike characteristic of the two towns. In both an atrocious din of church-bells tortures the hours before dawn, though here again the Ecuadorian capital wins the palm; nor can the cuzqueño policeman rival his fellow of the equator in shrilling away the monotonous hours of darkness. To nearly as great an extent as in Quito the patios and lower stories are given over to Indians and servants, with the "gente decente" holding the upper floor. Both towns are colorful in garb; both are peerless when the sun shines, and gloomy under clouds; both have the drowsy air of places far removed from the real world, with many times the number of shops needed droning through a precarious existence. On the other hand, whereas the Indians of Quito speak Spanish also, here one must know Quichua to carry on any extended intercourse. There are a few beautiful women in Quito, too; I never saw one in Cuzco, though this may be merely another instance of my abominable luck. Some Indian girls between five and fifteen are pretty, but they are so often veiled by the grime of years that the virtue must be chiefly accepted on faith. Nor has Cuzco anything approaching that unrivalled circle of hoar-headed peaks that ennobles the vista of its rival to the north. The two cities would probably be about equal in population were Cuzco also the national capital—as it should and hopes some day to be. "We

want to free ourselves from those degenerate negroes of Lima and establish an independent government under an American protectorate," a self-styled lineal descendant of the Incas by way of Tupac Amaru confided to me. As it is, Quito is more than three times the larger.

Cuzco has been called the dirtiest city on earth. I am not sure it merits the title. The Andean town that aspires to that proud and haughty position will have to exert itself constantly—no cuzqueño characteristic—keeping always on the alert for new and hitherto uninvented styles of uncleanliness; for it will have dogged, unrelenting competition, vastly more determined and energetic than any other form of industry. Quito, for instance, is a formidable rival in this also, especially as Cuzco has the handicap of a much smaller population—and in a contest of this kind every little one helps. But though it is too early to prophesy the final rating, there is little doubt that the former Inca capital will at least win honorable mention—unless she continues to import American alcaldes.

Which brings me to the chief influence in modern Cuzco. Among the legends of the origin of the Inca Empire is the tradition of a tall, imperious man of white skin, with blond hair on both head and cheeks, who arose from the sea and took up the task of teaching the Children of the Sun more proper ways of living. He was called Ingasman, whence some have held that he was a castaway Briton from some ship blown to these distant shores long before the days of Columbus. A fantastic yarn; yet is it impossible? The imagination likes to dwell on the possibility of the improbable story. Such an origin might account for the stolid British temperament of

the Indians of the Andes; as to complexion, leave an Englishman in the tropics for generations and the result would be no darker than the self-styled lineal descendant of Tupac Amaru above mentioned. Whatever the truth of the legend, the modern teacher of the Children of the Sun came from the sea also,—an enthusiastic, hopeful young American who is officially rector of the university, but who, as town councilor and even mayor, has been responsible for most of the local improvements of recent years. For all the labors of Ingasman, the town was probably not noted for its immaculateness before the Conquest; to-day it is of that stagnant, Latin-American temperament that can be set in motion only by some external force. Thus we have the anomaly of seeing that "picturesqueness," so often closely allied to uncleanliness, which Americans travel to Cuzco to see, being constantly reduced by one of their own race. Yet the influence of a single individual, however energetic, is limited; hence one must still be circumspect in inspecting old walls and Inca ruins, and the wise man always boils his water on the banks of the stinking Huatenay.

Of the old Inca race there remain few traces. The vast majority of the 20,000 cuzqueños are "descendants of the Incas" only in the loose acceptance of that phrase. For want of a proper name the people of Tavantinsuyo, the Four Corners of the Earth, have come to be called Incas, as the inhabitants of the United States are called Americans for lack of a national adjective. As a matter of fact, an *inca* was a member of the royal family, of which the *Inca Ccápa*c was the ruling chief. It is easy to imagine other peoples quarreling with the race over their name—to their supreme indifference protesting that they, too, inhabited the Four Corners of the

Earth, with the same right to the term as the tribes of Cuzco; and referring to the latter privately by something corresponding to “yanqui” or “gringo.”

The thick upper lip, wide nostrils, and broad face of the aboriginal race shows in some degree in all but a few cuzqueños; those of full Indian blood still make up a large percentage of the population. The Cuzco Indian is a type by himself. His skin is darker, his manner more cringing, his gait more slinking, than his fellows elsewhere; the faces of both males and females have a brutalized expression that seems to mark them as the most degenerate of all the Andean tribes. Rumor has it that they retain some slight and sadly mixed traditions of Huayna Ccápac and of the days when the native Empire occupied this vast plateau; but they are extremely chary of sharing any information they may possess. The Inca rule of having distinguishing costumes for each community still holds, especially in the matter of head-dress, and it is as easy for the initiated to recognize the birthplace of an Indian by his garments as to know a Hindu’s caste from his turban. Many from the towns surrounding Cuzco wear knitted, tasseled caps of gay colors, with earlaps. Those of the city are noted for their “pancake” hats, common to both sexes. These are round disks of straw, covered with flannel or an imitation of velveteen, one side of faded black with spoke-like stripes of color or gilt braid, the other brilliant or dull red, according to its age, which is generally advanced. In fine weather this is worn black side up; in wet it is reversed. The women are invariably barefoot, the men usually so, or with at most a strip of leather to protect their soles; except that old men who have once wielded the silver-mounted cane of authority over their section of the community uphold their dignity by wearing on

Sundays and feast-days heavy, native shoes often with large buckles and always without socks. The women wear carelessly fastened blouses of coarse material, heavy skirts bunched about their waists, and a shawl fastened with one pin of large, fanciful head. The men dress in tight, ragged knee-breeches or loose, shoddy trousers of varying lengths, and ponchos which prove that full use is made of the little packages of crude aniline dyes sold in the market-square.

The quiet of this chief gathering-place is unusual. It has no clatter, but only a suppressed hum; for the Indian of Cuzco is as silent as he is inoffensive. Here huge strawberries are sold at twenty-five cents a hundred, the primitive-minded female vendors counting them out by tens in hissing Quichua sibilants. The hot country is only a day's tramp from Cuzco; hence tropical as well as temperate fruits, are displayed, though often sadly crushed and maltreated by their transportation in sacks or nets on human backs. The Indians are here the same beasts of burden as elsewhere in the Andes. It is no uncommon thing to see a rather small man trot the mile from market to railway station with half a beef on his back. The wooden-headedness of the aboriginal, as well as his lack of strength for any labor except carrying, is often in evidence. I saw one ordered to take an iron wheelbarrow to another part of town. He removed the wheel and bound it on his wife's back with a llama-hair rope, slung the rest on his own shoulders in the same manner, and away they trotted one behind the other.

When all is said and done the Andean Indian remains an enigma to the foreigner. At the end of a year of constant intercourse with him the traveler can

quickly sum up his real knowledge of a race whose internal workings he has only guessed, confessing an inability to see from the aboriginal's point of view, to be aware with his consciousness. There is an enormous difference between the South American Indian and the bearers of the same misnomer in our own country. The majority of our tribes were warriors, with an obstinate courage that took little account of odds. They could be killed; they could never be enslaved to a degree that made them profitable servants. From Tehuantepec southward, on the other hand, the aboriginals are noted for a subservience, not to say timidity, that made it possible for the Spaniards to exploit them ruthlessly, as do their descendants to this day. Was this characteristic the result or the cause of the government under which the Conquistadores found them? Ruled by the Incas in a far more autocratic form of imperialism than the worst known to-day, carrying authority into the very depths of their cabins and the most personal conduct of their lives, the Indians of the Andes were robbed of all initiative —granting that they ever possessed any—and became the most passive of human creatures. Having imbued their subjects with a sort of fatalism, a non-resistance to anything they conceived as authority, above all by convincing them of their own divine origin, the Incas made their conquest by the Spaniards easy; for the credulous masses readily accepted these bearded strangers as Children of the Sun also, to whom any resistance would be absurd. Thus must all false doctrines prove in time a boomerang to those who foster them.



A chiefly-Indian woman of Abancay, who refused to run the risk of having the infant face the "magic box with one eye" until assured that it was the best-looking baby in town



A *chola* of Abancay, wearing the *diccllа* which all put on at the age of puberty, and in which the baby is carried when one arrives

To-day the domination once held by the Incas has been taken over by the priests, public functionaries, and the *patrón*, whose wills are obeyed without question. In the eyes of the Indian the priest is the representative of God on earth, to whom he must show absolute submission and obedience, as to one who holds the key to that place of primitive joys and freedom from the sorrows and hardships of this world to which he conceives death to lead. That the priest may be harsh and unkindly, or worse, has nothing to do with the case. Even the God of his conception is cruel and vengeful, taking pleasure in bringing down misfortunes on his head, and to be placated by any means in his power. Were priest and authorities true to their missions, their domination over the Indian might be advantageous. Too often they are quite the contrary. The authorities are disdainful, looking upon their positions merely as opportunities for personal gain; the priest is less often a shepherd than a wolf preying upon his flock with impunity. Too often priest and authorities join together to exploit the aboriginal with liquor and church festivals, his only recreations, at times even inventing the latter to make an excuse for exploitation. Whatever he may once have been, the Indian of the Cordillera is a child, to be governed by a kindly father, as the Incas seem to some extent to

have been. The civilization which the Spaniard is reputed to have brought him is nothing of the sort. Garsilaso assures us that the masses were little better than domestic animals, even at the time of the Conquest. They were certainly in no worse state than to-day. That he should have remained or fallen so low is difficult for us of the hopeful United States to understand; it would be more easily understood in India with its fixed castes, or even in England, where certain boys are born with the necessity of lifting their caps to certain other boys. His stolidity passes all conception. He is native to, and of a piece with, the pampa, the bare, treeless upland world where the dreary expanse of brown earth and cold blue sky incites neither ambition nor friendliness, neither hopes nor aspirations. Hence his flat, joyless face with its furtive eyes suggests a soul contracted upon itself, an aridity of sentiments, an absolute lack of aesthetic affections. Passively sullen, morose, and uncommunicative, he neither desires nor aspires, and loves or abhors with moderation. The native language is scanty and cold in terms of endearment; I have never seen the faintest demonstration of affection between Indians of the two sexes, though plenty of evidence of bestial lust. Even his music is a monotonous wailing, an interminable sob on a minor key. He lacks will-power, perseverance, confidence, either in himself or others, and has a profound abhorrence of any ways that are not his ways. He works best in “bees,” with the beating of a drum, the wail of a quena, and frequent libations of chicha to cheer him on, as, no doubt, in the days of the Incas. He is noted for long-distance endurance; yet this is not so great as is commonly fancied. Like an animal, he cannot go “on his nerve,” or will not, which amounts to the same thing. Try to hurry him and it

will be found that he needs fifteen days rest each month, like the llama.

From his earliest years the Andean Indian forms a conception of life as something sinister and painful. As a baby, as soon as another uncomplaining little creature usurps his place on the maternal back, he is shut up in some noisome patio or hut, along with chickens, guinea-pigs, and new-born sheep, with which he fights for his scanty fare of a handful of toasted corn. Rolling about in his own filth and that of the animals, who now and again all but outdo him in combat, he reaches the age of four or five, and then begins his life-long struggle with hostile nature. In the country he takes to shepherding the family pigs, then a flock of sheep of the patrón, learning the use of the sling and to wail mournful ditties on his reed fife. Here, with no other covering than a coarse homespun garment open to the waist and barely reaching the knees, he sits day after day contemplating the dreary expanse of puna, until its very nothingness turns to melancholy in his soul. In town he is "farmed out," or virtually sold into slavery to some family, learning a few ways of the whites, some Castilian, which he commonly refuses to talk later in life, and also the injustice of man, or the habit of considering himself too low to be reached by justice. When he is older, and grown superstitious with listening to the tales of the *yatiris*, his labor is still heavier. He guides the clumsy wooden plow that is his notion of the last word in mechanical inventions, or carries donkey-loads on his back. Nature yields only to hard struggle and great perseverance in tilling the sterile soil; the sun is parsimonious with its warmth; the very fuel of dung costs hard labor to gather on these treeless heights. Or perhaps the authorities come to carry him off to

serve as a soldier of a country he hardly knows the existence of, probably to die of the diseases engendered in his overdeveloped lungs in the dreaded lowlands of coast or montaña. People of scanty, inclement soil, mountaineers in general, are canny and lacking in generosity by nature; add to this that he was forbidden the use of money under the Incas, and it is small wonder the Indian will give or sell his meager produce only by force. Tight-fisted and frugal, he lives for days on a handful of parched corn and his beloved coca, of the depressing effect of which he has no notion. To sleep he needs only the hard ground, be it in his own hut or out under the shivering stars, using perhaps a stone as pillow, if there be one within easy reach. He is a tireless pedestrian; his corneous hoofs are impervious to the roughest going; he sets out on whatever journey fate or his masters assign him, knowing that if he lives he will some day come back to the point of departure. For he has an irrepressible love for his native spot, the mud den where he was born, however miserable or inclement, and will not abandon his home permanently under any circumstances. If he does not return, it is because some misfortune has overtaken him on the trail.

The woman lives the same life from babyhood; and in some ways her duties are still more onerous. Rude and torpid as the male, she neither conceives nor possesses any of those softer qualities peculiar to her sex. When trouble overtakes her she does not complain, but suffers and weeps—if at all—alone, an utter stranger to pity in either its passive or active form. Strong as a draft-horse, she knows none of the infirmities to which modern civilized woman is subject. She gives birth to a child virtually every year, often from the age of fifteen on, without any

species of preparation or precaution, washes it in the nearest brook, slings it on her back, and goes on about her business.

The husbandman of the puna plants a few potatoes, a little quinoa, perhaps some barley, clinging to the primitive ways of his ancestors to remote generations. A good harvest does not depend upon proper planting or fertilization, but on the changes of the moon and stars, and the propitiation of the fetishes to which he still secretly gives his adherence in spite of his ostensible conversion to Christianity. He considers himself a being apart from the governing class, referring to himself as “gente natural” and to his superiors as “gente blanca,” as our southern negroes distinguish between “white folks” and “colored folks.” He takes no part whatever in political matters, rarely indeed having any conception of the country to which he belongs. Anything which does not touch him personally he looks upon with profound indifference and disdain. He is submissive as a brute, lives without enthusiasms, without ambitions, in a purely animal passivity that is the despair of those who are moved to an attempt to better his lot.

Some knowledge of Quichua is essential to intercourse with the mass of the population of Cuzco, as it is to the convenience of the lone traveler down the Andes. Even in the city a large number of the “gente del pueblo” cannot, or will not, speak Spanish; in the villages round about it is a rare man who has a suggestion of Castilian. All classes, on the other hand, speak the aboriginal tongue, by necessity if not by choice. The majority, indeed, imbibe it with their nurse’s milk, learning Spanish as an alien language later in life. A professor of the local

university, boasting a Ph.D., assured me that he did not know a word of Castilian when he first entered school at the age of seven. After the revolt of Tupac Amaru an edict was promulgated prohibiting the use of Quichua, as it did the native costume, and even commanded that all musical instruments of the aboriginals be destroyed; but like many a Spanish-American law this was never strictly enforced. To-day Cuzco is the Florence of Quichua, where it has retained its purest form, least influenced by the Spanish, and there are many persons of high social standing, the women especially, who speak it by preference.

It is typical of the Latin-American that those things which are of the soil, and have been familiar since childhood, are treated with contempt, are considered inferior to anything possessing the glamor of distance. Thus Quichua, like all survivals of "los Géntiles," is looked down upon by the "cultured" caste throughout the Andes as something appertaining to the lower classes, to be avoided as diligently as manual labor. "Vulgarly speaking" is the expression with which the cane-carrying Peruvian apologetically prefaces any use of the native tongue. "No se dice *allco*, se dice *perro*," a mother reproves the child that points to a dog with a lisp of the aboriginal word. But as usual, environment is more powerful than maternal desires, and the child grows more fluent in the speech of the Indians than in the aristocratic Spanish. The tendency to scorn it seems a pity to the traveler, for the ancient tongue is certainly worth preserving, and its preservation depends chiefly on Cuzco. The American Rector of the University has done much to reassure the town on the importance of its mission in this respect. Already much has been lost. The best quichuaist in

town did not know the words for boat or island, though these are familiar enough wherever any body of water exists in the Andes. Shortly before my arrival the ancient drama "Ollantay" had been performed, and was found to contain many words which even those whose mother-tongue is Quichua did not understand. As the *quipus*, or knotted strings, was the only form of writing known to the Incas, authoritative interpretation has been lost with the *quipumayos* who were trained to read them. The tongue of to-day has suffered much admixture, many Spanish words having been "quichuaized" when there was no necessity for it, until there remains a language as bastardized as the "German" of rural Pennsylvania. Not a few have a distinctly hazy notion of the line between the two tongues. "Medio," said Alejandro, my one-eyed hotel servant, "is Quichua, and 'cinco centavos' is Spanish." How should he know which was which of the two languages he had spoken from childhood, neither of which he could read nor write? There is less excuse for the assurance of persons of some education that "asno" is Quichua and "burro" Spanish, completely overlooking the fact that the Conquistadores brought not only the donkey, but both names, with them. Now and again some expression from the lips of an Indian quaintly recalls the history of the Peruvians and their two-branch ancestry to remote generations. "Ojalá, Diós pagarasunqui!" for instance is a mixture of Arabic, Spanish, and Quichua in as many words.



The first view of Cuzco, at the point where all Indians, male or female, going or coming, pause and uncover and, looking down upon the City of the Sun below, murmur, “Oh, Cuzco, Great City, I salute thee!”



It requires at least three persons to shoe a horse or mule, as it does to milk a cow, in the Andes. Ordinarily the blacksmith is not so bold as this one, but stands at arm’s-length from the hoof. In the background is one of the many old Inca walls on which the modern dwellings of Cuzco are superimposed

Yet after all, the ancient tongue of the Incas, variously called Quichua, Quechua, and Keshua (with the most guttural of sounds), has survived to a greater extent than any other American dialect. Some have called it “Runa Simi,” or general language of the common people; but the quichuaists of Cuzco insist that it is rather the Inca or court language that has remained. Garsilaso complained that even in the time of the Incas there was a “confusion and multitude of tongues,” with a new dialect almost every league. He who has attempted to make his way down the Andes on a fixed vocabulary will recognize the justice of this plaint. Before we left Panama, Hays and I had made up a lexicon, only to find that all but the commonest words changed so often that it was of little value. What is called Quichua is spoken more or less continuously from Quito to southern Bolivia, with scatterings through northern Argentine. But the dialects of Ayacucho, Huancayo, the valley of Ancachs, and especially of Cajamaca and further north, include many terms which the purists of Cuzco will not grant an honest pedigree. Only in the ancient capital has it retained anything like the original pronunciation, with those “sounds harsh and disagreeable to our ears” which Garsilaso sought to soften with editorial license. Philologists assure us that the language rose in the north and moved southward, citing the use of more archaic terms in the more southern dialects; for example *yacu*, which is water in the north, is flowing water, or river, in the south, where *unu* designates the liquid. The spread of Quichua has been attributed to culture rather than conquest, that is, it was adopted by new tribes coming under the Inca influence, not because it was forced upon them, but because it afforded a more perfect means of communication than their

primitive dialects.

It is a real language, with complete grammar and all the flexibility and shades of expression of our classical tongues. Philologists have attempted in vain to represent its sounds by Roman letters or combinations thereof, even by inventing new characters. But these are makeshifts at best, and the pronunciation can only be learned by practice in its native land. Roughly speaking, it includes all the letters of the Spanish alphabet except b, d, f, g, j, v, x, and z. But many of those remaining must be doubled or otherwise modified to represent sounds unknown to European tongues. L is rare, while the sound represented by the Spanish ll is frequent; there is no rr, but r is much used. Harsh in its phonetics, it has a suggestion of the Chinese in that three pronunciations of the same word, labial, palatal, or throaty, give it quite different meanings. The traveler who pauses in the trail to call out “Cancha acca?” to an Indian hut displaying the white flag that announces chicha for sale, would say something quite different than he intended if he gave the cc the sound represented by the single c. The accent is nearly always on the penult, lending the speech a fixed and almost monotonous rhythm. Technically speaking, Quichua is agglutinative, that is, formed by the tacking on of suffix after suffix, until in some cases an entire sentence consists of a single word, making it possible to express fine shades of meaning fully equal to the Spanish with its diminutives and affixes. It has no articles, no genders (at least expressed), no individual prepositions, and has virtually only one verb conjugation. The plural is formed by adding *cuna*; the six cases, corresponding to the Latin, by suffixes. Thus *huarma* is boy, *huarmacuna*, boys; *huarmacunacta* is the accusative,

huarmacunamanta, of the boys. In like manner the genitive is formed by combination; *acca* is chicha, *huasi*, house, and *accahuasi*, tavern. The doubling of words gives a collective and often quite different meaning; thus *rumi* is stone, *rumirumi*, a stony place; *runa* is man, *runaruna*, a crowd; *quina* is bark, *quinaquina*, the medicinal bark from which we get quinine, as well as the name thereof. Its system of counting is built up on the fingers, as in all languages, but is somewhat cumbersome in larger combinations—which none of the ignorant Indians of to-day are capable of using. Thus 299 is *iscaypachacchuncaiscconniyoc*!

As in the case of all more or less primitive languages, Quichua is often onomatopoetic,—its words formed from sounds connected with the object expressed. Why the animal we miscall guinea-pig should be *cui* (kwee) to the natives of the Andes no one who has shivered through a night in an Indian hut listening to the falsetto, grunting squeak of those irrepressible little creatures will wonder; why a baby is a *guagua* (wawa) none need ask. As in most languages, *mama* is mother; on the other hand, father is *tata*, or *tayta*; the newcomer finds *papa* already in use to designate potato, as it has come to in all Spanish-America, as well as in Andalusia. The primitive origin of the Inca tongue is further demonstrated by many crudities of expression, and an indelicacy in the use of certain terms that have been banished from polite intercourse among European nations. *Nustahispana*, or *penccacuy* (shame) are cases in point. Marriage-time is *Huarmihapiypacha*, literally, “the time to chase a woman.” It is natural that many more aboriginal words should have survived and become a part of the general language in a land where the Indians have survived themselves, than in one where

the race has been virtually wiped out, or at least set apart, as with us. Hence the language of Spanish-America is much richer than our own in terms from the aboriginal tongue. The ignorant Spanish Conquistadores, as devoid of "language sense" as the most uncouth American "drummer," gave many of the native words queer twists; to their untrained ears *Anti* sounded like Andes, *tampu* like tambo, *pampa* like bamba, and *Biru* like Peru. Yet Quichua has enriched even the languages of the world at large with many words, such as llama, pampa, condor, and alpaca.

A brief sample of the ancient tongue might not be amiss. Few works except the Bible have been printed in the vernacular; and this was done not that the Indians might read it, since there probably exists no man able to read Quichua who cannot also read Spanish, but for the use of missionaries and priests among the Andean tribes. Many words for which there existed no equivalent have, of course, been "quichuaized," and the letters retain their Spanish values. The parable of the man who built his house on sand instead of rock (St. Luke, VI, 48) runs:

Ricchacun uc huasihacluc ccaryman; pi yallicta allpata allpisca ccaccahuan tecsirkan. Inas paractin unu llocllapi yaicumurkan mayutac caparispa saccay huasiman choccacurkan mana cuyurichiyta atispa huasi ccaccapatapi tiactin.

Cuzco, the last foothold of Spanish power on the American continent, bids fair to be the last of popery also. Even Quito is little more fanatical. With the exception of Ayacucho, I found the former City of the Sun the only place in Peru where the priests were still permitted to advertise their spurious wares by an incessant thumping and hammering of all the

discordant noise-producers of whatever tone or caliber or lack thereof, in her church towers, at any hour of day or night. There is a law against "unnecessary" ringing of church-bells in Peru; but in this hotbed of fanaticism the prefect does not interpret his duties too severely. With a din that awoke the echoes of the distant mountain-flanks that shut her in, Cuzco sallied frequently forth in a long religious procession, not a single white man gracing it, except the priests. These latter did not permit the most solemn formalities to weigh heavily upon them. Even within the cathedral itself I have seen the chief padre, carrying the host or whatever it is, and marching with sanctimonious tread under his embroidered canopy, wrinkle up his lascivious countenance and half-surreptitiously make unbelievably scurrilous jokes with the priests close around him about the attractive girls of the pious, downcast audience.

Peru has long been one of the most intolerant of nations, at least theoretically. Since the adoption of her constitution public worship by non-Catholics has been forbidden, its fourth article reading: "The nation professes the Catholic religion, Apostolic and Roman; the state protects it, and does not permit the public exercise of any other." An attempt had recently been made to amend this to the extent of striking out the last clause. There has long been violation of the law. Lima has an Episcopal church of long standing and considerable congregation, and as the membership is largely English and American, Peru has not risked a controversy with those countries by enforcing the constitution. In fact the strongest and chief argument of the senators supporting the proposed amendment was not that liberty of cult is just, but that "the law is not being

enforced anyway, so let's change it." A very few grasped the fact that this is one of the many reforms needed to draw to Peru the immigration indispensable to her modern advancement. The fourteenth-century arguments of the hidebound clerical senators against the proposed change afforded reading compared to which the efforts of the world's chief humorists are staid and funereal.

Great excitement broke out in the more "conservative" cities of the interior when the news came up from Lima. Headed by the archbishop, ecclesiastics of every grade issued orders to all *fieles* to combat "por cualquier medio—by any means whatever, this vile attack on the Holy Mother Church, the morality of the family, and the honor of Peru by the *masones* and *ateistas* of the Senate." From all the *altiplanicie* telegrams poured in, calling upon the senators to suppress "this absurd resolution on the liberty of cults, unnatural to Peru and abhorred by all the faithful." Every scurrilous little Catholic organ—and the most outspoken "sage-bush" journal of our Southwest cannot approach these in vituperation and positive indecency of language in attacking their enemies—frothed with raging editorials. In Cuzco it was planned to parade the patron saint through the streets, ostensibly as a mere protest. A few years ago the bishop would have met the issue by calling together a few hundred of the most fanatical, filling them with concentrated courage, and preaching a careful sermon that would really have been an order to sack and kill the hated "liberals," though with a clever wording to clear his own skirts of the matter. Such things have often happened in Cuzco. This time a rumor that the procession was to be merely an excuse for the priests to incite their followers of dull complexion and

understanding to riot reached the students of the university. Though all are Catholics, these fiery "liberals" are ardent haters of priests; only a few years before they had bodily flung the "clerical" faculty out of the institution. Now they secretly gathered revolvers and planned to lay in wait for some of the more fanatical priests when the procession started. Wind of this reached some one of higher authority and intelligence, the news was wired to Lima, and in the nick of time orders came to the prefect to forbid the parade.

An amendment to the constitution in Peru requires the consent of two consecutive congresses and the signature of the president after each passage. A year later the amendment on the liberty of cult was carried and became law amid a scene of riot in the senate, during which a fanatical representative snatched the bill from the hands of a clerk and tore it to bits.

It occurred to me one day that it might be unpatriotic to leave Cuzco without calling on the only American missionaries—except a lone preacher in Bogotá—I had so far heard of in South America. On the edge of town I found my way at length into a mud-walled compound of some fifteen acres, with fat green alfalfa, an exotic windmill, and a two-story mansion surrounded by flower-plots. I had paused near what seemed to be the main door, and stood gazing admiringly at the wall that shut out all the troubles of this rude world, when a window opened and a lean man of forty, his mission plainly imprinted on his gaunt features, a finger between the leaves of a hymn-book, put out his head and murmured, "Buenas tardes."

"Is this Mr. ——?" I asked in English.

"It is."

"Well, I just happened to be in town and thought I'd.... But no doubt you are very busy...."

"Yes, I am busy," came the reply, in a bona fide missionary voice, "but don't let that keep you from coming in—if you want to."

Naturally I grasped so urgent an invitation with both hands.

"Oh, no," I protested, "I wouldn't think of disturbing you. I'll stay out here and look at the scenery."

"Yes, look at the scenery," replied the urgent gentleman, as he and the hymn-book disappeared behind the closed window.

Inside arose sounds not unlike a Methodist meeting, and I had begun to wander stealthily away when the door opened and the missionary's more cordial better half informed me that they were not "holding services." Reassured, I entered the cozy parlor. Two women and a man were gathered about a diminutive melodeon, singing mournful hymns. Naturally, at sight of me the musicians lost their nerve, and the cheerful pastime came to a standstill. In due time I discovered that the youthful organist had just been shipped down fresh and untarnished from a Canadian theological seminary, to "bring the poor Peruvians to Christ." His qualifications for that feat were that he had not, up to his arrival, seen a printed page of Spanish, had never heard of Quichua or Pizarro, and though he did remember the name Prescott, he "didn't know he had written about foreign countries." I found that Peyrounel, he of the maidenly hair, chestful of medals, and andarín reputation, had lived a month at the mission the year before, having posed as a poor persecuted Huguenot

among bloodthirsty Catholics. He had filled the scanty imaginations of the group with so many wild tales of the road that I could not refrain from giving my own inventiveness vent, and at the end of a dozen bloodcurdling episodes the fresh young product of the seminary remarked in a ladylike voice, "That must have been quite interesting." Looked at from that point of view, perhaps he was right. In the early days of their mission the ladies had been received and called on socially by the haughtiest of their sex in Cuzco. But they had soon been ostracized, not because of their religion—or, from the Cuzco point of view, lack thereof—but because, having been detected in the act of sweeping out their own parlor, it was concluded that they were *cholas* in their own country and not fit to associate with gente decente.

Unless the time of my stay there was exceptional, suicide is à la mode in Cuzco. Almost on the day of my arrival one bold youth of twenty-five decided to die because Señorita Fulana scorned his attentions. He wrote a long poem explaining to the disdainful damsel, and the world at large, why he was leaving life so early—it afterward graced the contribution page of one of the local journals—and fired four revolver shots. One grazed his chest, a second tore a hole in the tail of his frock-coat, the third smashed a lamp on the mantelpiece, and the fourth scared the family cat off the divan. The date of the wedding was soon to be announced when I left Cuzco. Among the host of disciples of this heroic and enviable deed among the excitable *juventud* of Cuzco were several youth of like age, who attempted to imitate it from equally absurd motives. All carried the act to a more or less successful conclusion, except one who, either because he took the matter too seriously, or

neglected to practice beforehand, or because he was not a native cuzqueño, or had been reading Ibsen, shot himself through the temple.

The subject of suicide leads us naturally to the cemetery. That of Cuzco celebrated a sort of "Decoration Day" during my stay. Placards announced that "for reasons of hygiene" the alcalde permitted no one but actual mourners to visit it; but it is always easy to find something to mourn over in Peru. An endless stream of humanity was pouring in through the gate by which I entered, while a score of soldiers on guard stood drinking chicha, gambling, and making love. As in all Spanish countries, the corpses were pigeon-holed away, bricked in, and marked with the date on which the rent would fall due. With unlimited space about the city, it is hard to understand why the dead must be tucked away in this expensive fashion, except that the priests refuse to sprinkle with holy water those planted elsewhere. At the gate was posted a long list of corpses whose rent had run out, with the information that unless it was paid by the end of the month the contents would be dumped in the boneyard.

A visit to any Latin-American cemetery is equal to sitting through a well-played comedy, so lacking is the native sense of propriety. Between the padlocked iron reja and the bulkhead of each grave is a narrow space which it is à la mode to fill with flowers. But as flowerpots are rare and expensive in Cuzco, there were substituted cans that had once held "Horiman's Tea," or "Smith's Mixed Pickles," many with gay labels adorned with the portraits of scantily clad actresses of international notoriety still upon them. Here and there a family with a praiseworthy sense of economy had caused the grave-head to be marked

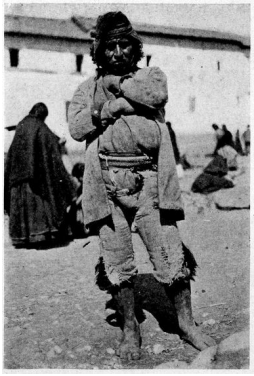
with the brass name-plate that formerly graced the place of business of the deceased; others had "Renewed to 1918" crudely scratched in the cement, bearing witness to an unusually tenacious grief on the part of the survivors—or to a well-drawn will. Many tombs were decorated with atrocious photographs of the occupant; others had verses—no doubt the author would call them poems—some printed, some laboriously hand-written, pasted against them and glassed over, like the photographs. Here and there the bulkhead of a well-to-do member of society was entirely covered by a painting depicting the untold grief of those left behind,—in most cases a picture of the coffin of the deceased, with a string of his male relatives and friends on one side and the female mourners opposite, all dressed in their most correct attire—or the best the painter could furnish them from his palette—and standing exact distances apart in exactly the same attitude of weeping copiously into a large handkerchief á dos reales in any shop. Only, as the painter, who is seldom a direct descendant of Murillo, always paints in the eyes *above* the handkerchief, the impression conveyed is that the entire group is suffering from a bad cold, that the funeral was inadvertently put off too long, or that each is keeping a worldly eye out for any suspicious move on the part of the others.

The hospital of Cuzco is a part of the same structure as the cemetery, with a door between—a very foresighted and convenient arrangement for such a hospital. The building is roomy, but not much else can be said for it. Indians and half-Indians, male and female, lie closely packed together in long rows of aged cots along ill-ventilated halls. Hardy as seem these mountain Indians, once they are subjected to the changed life of the barracks, with food, clothing,

and shoes to which they are not accustomed, they succumb with surprising ease to a long list of ailments. From kitchen to drug-shop, from nurses to Indian servants, stalked that ubiquitous uncleanliness of the Andes. Several idiots and insane persons were confined in noisome dens unworthy of animal occupancy. In a dismal, half-underground corner a handsome, powerfully built young cholo lay on a heap of rags that constituted absolutely the only furnishings. He had been *capellan* of the cathedral, and whenever a church-bell rang—which was most of the time—he sprang up from the uneven earth floor and began to sing Latin hymns at the top of his voice, shaking and gnawing the heavy wooden bars that confined him. The four most deadly diseases of Cuzco, in their order, are typhoid, dysentery, tuberculosis, and smallpox. The doctors, physicians of the town who drop in casually and hurriedly each morning, are paid $27.50 a month. La Superiora draws $10, the first cook and the grave-diggers $5, general male servants $3.50, and female servants $2 a month, with food and a spot to lay their “beds” on. What they do with all that money I cannot say. The hospital cannot afford disinfectants, and when a surgical operation is to be performed the instruments are washed in hot water—if there happens to be fuel. Patients are allowed 13 cents a day for food, employees, 15, and the woman in charge, 20.



Indian women of the market-place, wearing the “pancake” hat of Cuzco



An Indian of Cuzco, speaking only Quichua

I visited most of the institutions of learning in Cuzco. The German head of the Colegio, or high school for boys, wore his cap and overcoat even in the class-

rooms; and no one could have blamed him for it in this dismal rainy season. An army officer had been detailed as gymnasium instructor, the national government requiring a certain amount of physical training of all students. He led the way to an earth-floored building in the rear, where the pupils took turns in falling over the crude apparatus without removing even their coats. To appear in shirt-sleeves, even in a gymnasium, would be an inexcusable breach of etiquette in South America. School ran from 8 to 11, and from 1 to 5, with a ten-minute recess between each fifty-minute class, that must be spent in the corredor and not used in study. Among the students was one Juan Inca, of pure Indian type, and the great majority showed more or less aboriginal blood. The chemistry class, in a laboratory with a floor of unlevelled, trodden earth, had a peon to arrange the experiments for the professor, who performed most of them in person. Few of the students could be coaxed to soil their own never-washed hands in the interests of science, and those who broke or spilled anything were sure to cry out, "He, muchacho!"—or more likely, "Yau, huarma," since in their excitement their native tongue came first to their lips—and in trotted an Indian boy to clean up the mess. The newly arrived limeño teacher, who had tried to get them to do their own experiments, was informed that they were not peons. Yet nine tenths of them would have been run out of the least exacting American workshop for their evidences of avoiding the bath. It may be that the poor, proud fellows had no servants at home to take it for them. Upon his arrival the teacher had established the rule that, as his class began at 1:10, any boy not in his seat by 1:11 would be reported tardy. The students sent a telegram of protest to the

government in Lima, and word came back from the Minister of Education:

"Professor ——, Colegio, Cuzco: Do not put too much stress on small and unimportant matters."

As if there were any matter on which the Latin-American is more sadly in need of education!

The class miscalled "English" was in charge of a native youth who had spent a year in a well-known but not particularly famous institution in our Middle West, unfortunately favored by most Cuzco youths permitted to top off their education in the United States. When I entered some sixty boys, of about the age at which the Latin-American begins precociously to turn rake, were floundering through some "I want a dog" sentences. The teacher's knowledge of his subject was such as might be gathered in the dormitories of that seat of jesuitical learning above mentioned, but was not exactly what he might have learned had he been permitted to mingle with the profane outside world. It would not have been so bad had he been content to stick to his Cortina grammar, though his pronunciation was at best mirth-provoking. But like so many half-learned persons, he regarded himself as the source of all wisdom and insisted on using his own judgment, when he possessed none. He was dictating dialogues between two American boys, and forcing his students to learn to mis-mumble them; just such expressions as we have all, no doubt, heard American boys use to each other daily. Here are a few of the gems I copied from the blackboard:

"Mys cheek it is pinkes"—which had not even the doubtful virtue of being true.

"By Gosh, Huzle up!" The Jesuited instructor had no

doubt often heard this hasty, unLatin-American word in the dormitories, but having never chanced to see it in print, he had chosen his own spelling, with this happy result.

“We now shall go to the exam.” The longer word for that distressing experience he seemed never to have heard.

“My watch it goes too fast.”

“At your service, John, thank you. What are the news?” Several students made the error of using a singular verb in this sentence, but they were quickly and sarcastically reminded that the noun *news* ends in an s, which any fool knows is a sign of the plural in English, as in Spanish.

“I shall long for you after you are gone away”; the blackboard continued, and so on, always with a distinctly home-made pronunciation. The traveler can scarcely blame himself if he does not understand his native tongue when it is shouted after him in the streets of Cuzco by the proud students of the Colegio.

The higher institution is the ancient University of Cuzco, founded nearly a half-century before our oldest, and occupying the great stone cloisters of the former Jesuit monastery. A young and enthusiastic American rector has done much to give it new impulse; but one man single-handed cannot reform the Latin-American character. Its 160 students from the four surrounding departments have increased both in numbers and diligence since the “conservative” professors were thrown out, but their point of view is still not exactly that of our own college men. Among others I attended a class on “Special Literature.” It was a third-year course, of seven students; the hour, from three to four. I arrived

at 3:15 and found the professor, a Ph.D. (Cuzco) whose wide nostrils, broad face, and prominent cheek bones proved him chiefly of aboriginal blood, pacing up and down the second-story corredor smoking a cigarette. At 3:20 a white youth of about twenty-three, with a mustache, drifted languidly across the patio swinging his cane. He and the professor bowed low, shook hands, exchanged the unavoidable "Buenas tardes, señor. Cómo está usted? Cómo está la familia?" lifted their hats, and at length broke the clinch. The professor produced from his pocket a massive key and opened a cubical, whitewashed room, having installed himself in which, he began to "lecture" on Calderón de la Barca. At 3:28 a half-Indian student stamped into the room and interrupted the proceedings with a loud "Buenas tardes, señor," causing the professor to lose the thread of his discourse for a minute or more. When the interruption had subsided, he continued to lecture, pausing now and then to look at his outline notes, more often to inhale the smoke of the cigarette he still held backward between his fingers. The white youth soon fell asleep, woke as his head dropped, spat on the floor, and then frankly and openly laid his head back against the wall and slept. The other half of the class sat with the filmy, half-closed eyes of a man who is dreaming of his cholita of not too unobliging morals in some hut on the outskirts of town. It would have been ill-bred of the professor, and galling to the "pride" of his class, to have waked them. He finished his cigarette and droned unbrokenly on. At 3:46 another haughty half-Indian, his silver-headed cane held at the approved Parisian angle, broke in upon the lecture with a greeting, which the professor interrupted his remarks to acknowledge. At 3:50 he took advantage of the

awakening caused by the new arrival to begin a quiz, asking the white student something about the subject of his discourse. The usual long preliminary sparring for wind in the form of “Ah-oh-ah, Señor Don Pedro Calderón de la Garca, one of the most important authors of his epoch in Spain,” and so through a long list of stock phrases, was followed by a mumbling of some vague and general rubbish he could easily have framed up had he not known whether Señor Don Pedro was man, woman, or priest. When he had said nothing for about two minutes, one of the others was given the floor—no doubt the professor apologized later for being obliged to call upon them because of the presence of a distinguished foreign visitor—and launched forth in another set of phrases. Like the other, he did not know the title of any of Calderón’s dramas, who left only a hundred or two to choose from, though the class had “studied” several of those works during the year’s course. After each question the professor broke in upon the meaningless mumble to answer his query himself, and as he named the works one by one, the student cried out each time with a great display of wisdom, “Ah, sí, señor!” “Es verdad, señor!” as he would have done had the former inadvertently included “Quo Vadis” or “Evangeline.” At 3:56 the professor carefully called the roll to find out how many of the seven were present, entered that important fact on an official blank to be left with the rector at the end of the day, and with much bowing and ceremonious formality the class took leave of themselves, lighted their cigarettes, tucked their canes under their arms, and faded away.

Having long wished to attend a trial, I carried a note of introduction to a judge of the supreme court of the department of Cuzco.

“Trial? Certainly, señor. When do you wish to see one?”

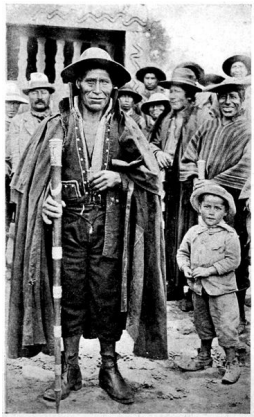
“Any time there happens to be one.”

“Choose for yourself.”

“Well, shall we say Wednesday, at one?”

“It shall be done. I shall have something of importance arranged for you. How would this new burglary case do? Or the recent suicide? The burglary? Very good, then, señor; Wednesday at one. Su servidor, adiós, caballero.”

Luckily there were cases pending, thus sparing the judge the trouble of having to arrange to have the crime committed.



An Indian required to pay for the day’s mass proudly clings to his staff of office



Youths from a village near Cuzco, each with a coca cud in his cheek

Jury trial is unknown in Peru, as in most, if not all Spanish-America. In the first place, if the uncle of the accused is a compadre, or his nephew a padrino or a nineteenth cousin of the father-in-law of the judge or anyone else high in authority, the chances are that the matter will be dropped. Favored with none of these advantages, he must let the law take its rigorous, snail-like course. The trial is entirely on paper, back in the recesses of some dingy office. The one I entered at the hour and day set reminded me of some scene from the pages of Dickens. I was bowed to an ancient couch at one side of the dismal adobe room, the secretary, in an aged overcoat of various degrees of fadedness and an enormous neck muffler, sitting at a medieval table. My friend, the “Judge of the First Instance,” in sartorial splendor, sat at another, his silk hat upside down before him. He had “arranged” the case of an Italian shopkeeper who had been robbed the Saturday before. The Italian,

being summoned, entered, bowed, remained standing, gave his name, age, *religion*, and other personal details, took the oath. Then he told his story in his own words to the judge, who asked questions but made no attempt at cross-examination, rather helping the witness in his answers when he stumbled or paused for want of a Spanish word. Meanwhile the secretary busied himself with rolling and consuming innumerable cigarettes. When he had finished his tale, the Italian was shown for the purpose of identification some articles sent over from the Intendencia as taken from the prisoner's pocket, after which they still remained "in the hands of justice." Then the witness sat down and the judge himself dictated the story in his own words to the secretary. The latter armed himself with a steel pen, dipped it incessantly into a viceregal inkwell, and peering over the top of his glasses, laboriously wrote in a copybook hand three words at a time, repeating them aloud. Shorthand is unknown in the government offices of the Andes. It would be too much to ask a political henchman to learn stenography, or anything else, for the mere purpose of holding a government position; typewriters are expensive; moreover, typewritten documents are not legal in most governmental formalities; so ultra-modern a system would be lacking in dignity for such solemn purposes, and its introduction would require new effort on the part of secretaries whose only asset is the medieval art of penmanship. The endless task over and the Italian dismissed, one of the prisoners, a half-breed boy of eighteen, of degenerate type, was brought in by an Indian soldier and "testified" in the same manner as the plaintiff had done. He was not required to take the oath, but was warned to tell the truth. Again it was his own

story, just as he chose to tell it, with no attempt to trip him up, and even occasional assistance. This the judge redictated in his own more cultured language, that the archives of Cuzco should not be marred by the undignified speech of the masses; and the "trial" was over. A deaf-mute wished to testify in the case, but as there are no schools in Peru for those so afflicted, there was no one who could understand him.

In short, a trial in Spanish-America consists of nothing but the making of affidavits, there called *declaraciones*. These are seen only by the judge, not even the prisoner's lawyer being permitted—legally—access to them. Later, if there is found time for it, comes the *sumario* in which the judge reads in his private study the various declarations and passes judgment and sentence, likewise in privacy, which sentence must be reviewed by the Superior Court of the Department. The curious may ask where the lawyer for the prisoner comes in. I was informed that "he sees the prisoner first and tells him what to say in his declaration." Thus is the secret, mysterious "justice" of Latin-America, "a joke at so much a word," as they call it in Ecuador, administered. If one has a man arrested, one must hire a lawyer to find out what happened to him.

I next went with the judge, in his gleaming stove-pipe hat and surrounded by his suite of courtiers, to the prison on the banks of the noisome Huatenay. The departmental place of confinement consisted of an old-fashioned Spanish dwelling built around a large courtyard, a dismal patio in which were gathered prisoners from all parts of Peru's largest department, from white men of the capital to half-wild Indians of the *montaña*, who know so little of

the ways of government that they thought they were being held by their tribal enemies. Everyone was doing whatever he chose, with a freedom from restraint that recalled the debtors' prisons of England a century ago. As in most Latin-American penal institutions, there was no evidence of cruelty or unkindness to inmates, except the passive cruelty of neglect, most of the outward forms of courtesy being kept up between officials and prisoners. By night the latter slept in mud cells of the rambling adobe building, on earth floors as bare as those of an Indian hut unless, like the traveler in the Sierra, they brought their own "beds" with them. No food worthy the name was furnished. Outside the patio, separated from it by a massive iron wicket, were the wives, temporary or otherwise, of the prisoners, who had brought them dinner in baskets, pots, or knotted cloths. This custom of having the judge visit the place of confinement is not without its advantages; at least, it gives him a personal knowledge of what a sentence means. As long as we remained, a constant line of prisoners crowded around my companion to tell their grievances. Those who wore hats carried them in their hands, but the cringing Indians, who mumbled their complaints in Quichua, did not remove their earlap "skating" caps. The petitioners ranged all the way from four "wildmen" from the hot-lands to the east, to a white and well-educated youth who began:

"Your Honor excuses me, but I have now been here seven months, and if you could be pleased to arrange that they have my trial some day before long...."

It is a short but rather breathless climb in this altitude from the level of the town to the ancient fortress of Sacsahuaman, frowning down upon Cuzco

from 700 feet above. On the city side the hill hangs almost precipitous, the town piled part way up it; but a flanking road soon brings one out beside the most massive monument of aboriginal art on the American continent. The cyclopean ruins are, as Garsilaso put it, “rather cliffs than walls,” and how these enormous boulders, of which mathematicians compute the largest to weigh a little matter of 360 tons, were set in position on this lofty headland by a race that knew neither horses nor oxen will ever remain as great a mystery as the building of the pyramids. Only one thing is certain; that the builders had unlimited labor at their command and that time was no object. Prescott’s “so finely wrought it was impossible to detect the line of junction between the rocks” is scarcely true; the detection is more than easy. But it is hard to believe these monster walls were constructed by the ancestors of the stolid and ambitionless Indians one sees to-day peddling their wares in the market-place of Cuzco. These downtrodden descendants take the amazing works of their forebears for granted, as we accept the constructions of nature, and never dream of attempting to imitate them. Indeed, many contend that they were not built, but grew up by enchantment. Nations, like individuals, have enthusiasm and initiative for great enterprises in their youth, and are apt to settle down to contentment with the mediocre in middle age, which there are hints that the race we roughly call Inca had reached at the time of the Conquest. The massive triple walls of the fortress were built in zigzag form, with salient angles from which the defenders within could fall upon their enemies, making it sufficient protection to the Imperial city without the necessity of surrounding that with walls. Even after the effete

modern inhabitants have tumbled all the stones they could move down into the city to build their own temples and dwellings—the efforts of Lilliputians among giants—and despite the damage wrought by ruthless treasure-hunters, the main portion of the great fortress of Sacsahuaman still remains intact, to bring upon the beholder a rage that Pizarro and his fellow-tramps should have destroyed, like bulls in a china-shop, the Empire that wrought such marvels, a wonder at what might have been had the Conquest of Peru never taken place.

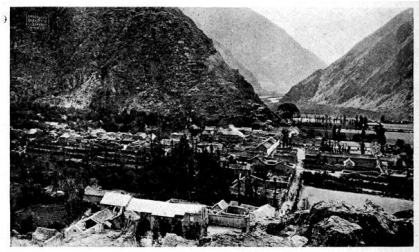
In ancient days, whenever the son of an Inca put a bent pin of champi in the Imperial chair the resulting box on the ear must have been accompanied with a "Here, you aslla supay, go out and carve another step in that boulder!" There is no other rational explanation of the mutilation which every rock and ground-stone for a circuit of many miles around the City of the Sun suffered before the Conquest. Everywhere huge, house-large rocks, dull-gray in color, are fantastically carved in every imaginable form, with seats, crannies, grottoes, and stairways, as if for mere whim or amusement. There was no "scamping" of work in those days, no "good enough" to the straw bosses of the Incas, only one grade,—the perfect. The hardest rock is cut with exquisite care and finish, the angles perfectly sharp, the flat parts smooth as if cast in a mould. To the modern inhabitants every such carved seat is a "throne of the Incas"—as if the Inca had nothing to do but sit around admiring the widespread view from those aërial points of vantage of which his dynasty was so fond. The imagination likes to picture him watching athletic games on the little plain before Sacsahuaman, and chuckling behind his Imperial mask at the antics of children sliding down the

Rodadero, or toboggan-stone, as do still those youths of Cuzco who are low enough in caste not to jeopardize their dignity by such antics.

Over behind the ruins and carved rocks I found all the provincial “authorities” gathered one Sunday to uncover another of the many immense boulders that had lain for centuries disguised as a mound of earth. The gobernadores and tenientes, in more or less “European” garb, confined their labor to bossing; the actual work was done by the alguaciles, jealously clinging to their silver-mounted staffs of office, even as they toiled. The digging brought to light not only another huge, fantastically carved ground-rock, but a hint of how Sacsahuaman might have been built. The Incas had but to call in men from all the district roundabout, under their commanders of tens, and if a thousand did not suffice to move a stone, nothing was easier than to summon two, or five, or ten thousand. Thus the government of to-day has continued many of the ancient ways, as the Church has grafted its own forms on the religion of the Children of the Sun.



Our party setting out for Machu Picchu across the high plains about Cuzco



Ollantaytambo, the end of the first day's journey, in the valley of the Urubamba. In the upper left-hand corner is seen the bright-yellow "school" of Inca days

But more striking even than prehistoric ruins is the view of Cuzco from the foot of the inevitable wooden cross at the summit of Sacsahuaman. So steep is the hill on this side, and so close to the town, that it seems almost to bulge out over it, and all the Imperial city lies spread out beneath, as from an aeroplane, its every plaza and patio in full view to its very depths, the activities of every family as plainly visible as if some magic wand had lifted away the concealing roofs. Here and there, even on a Sunday, an Indian in crude-colored garments and his pancake hat crawls along the fortress hill behind his oxen and wooden plow, with the Imperial city of his forefathers as a background. Beyond, the greenish valley of the Huatenay stretches away southward between velvety-brown, wrinkled hills, the four royal highways diverging from the main plaza as principal streets and sallying forth to the "Four Corners of the Earth" as directly as the configurations of the Andes permit. But always the eye drifts back to the city below, spread out in every slightest detail. Under the

Incas it may have been “bright and shining with gold and gay with color, its long and narrow streets, crossing each other at right angles with perfect regularity, adorned with beautiful palaces and temples”; even to-day, under the rays of the unclouded Andean sun, it is a scene no mere words can bring to him who has not looked down upon it in person. The soft red of its aged tile roofs and the rich brown of its bulking churches leaves no need for golden adornment. The Sunday-morning noises come up distinctly,—school-boys playing in the patios of monasteries, fighting-cocks haughtily challenging the world to combat, a weary bell booming a belated summons, the half-barbarous, half-inspiring screech of trumpets rising as a regiment of the garrison that keeps Cuzco loyal to “those degenerate negroes of Lima” sets out on a march; yet all blending together into a sort of pagan music that carries the imagination bodily back to the pre-Conquest days of long ago.

CHAPTER XVII
A FORGOTTEN CITY OF THE ANDES

The traveler of to-day is seldom granted the pleasure of visiting really new territory. How much more rarely comes the joy of being one of the first of modern men to tread the streets of an entire city, unrivaled in location and unknown to history! Such, however, is the privilege of those who come up to Cuzco in these days with the time and disregard for roughing it necessary to visit Machu Picchu.

The mysterious, white-granite city of the Incas or their predecessors now called by that name was unknown to civilized man and the world until Professor Hiram Bingham of Yale visited the site in 1911, to come back a year later in charge of the expedition that cleared it of the rampant jungle growth and the oblivion of ages. Here was uncovered what are perhaps the most splendid pre-Columbian ruins in the Western Hemisphere, most splendid because, in addition to being the most important—except Cuzco itself—discovered since the Conquest, they have not been wrecked by treasure-hunters or confused with Spanish building. The account of the

find had overtaken me in Lima, and all the four-hundred-mile tramp across Peru to the ancient City of the Sun had been gladdened by the anticipation of visiting a spot that not only promised extraordinary interest in itself, but had the added attraction of being difficult of access.

I had planned to travel to Machu Picchu alone and afoot. In Cuzco, however, it was my good fortune to run across Professor R—— of our Middle West, and to change in consequence my customary mode of transportation. We called on the prefect together. His mind wandered, as do those of all his class, to his *cholita* or whatever it is that sends the Andean official wool-gathering, even while he puzzled to account for the joint appearance of a famous sociologist recommended by the President of the Republic and a tramp who had arrived on foot. His secretary at length delivered an impressive document informing whomever it might concern that we were going to "Mansupisco." When I protested, the prefect assured the professor it was often spelled that way. I insisted, whereupon he and the secretary sneaked off and found a geography, and this time got all right except the date. That was a week behind time, which was perhaps in keeping with the local color.

Martinelli of the cinema, who volunteered to accompany us, owned a coast horse and a wise gray *macho*, leaving the prefect to obey his telegraphic orders only to the extent of furnishing another animal capable of keeping the professor's feet off the ground. This was not so easy as it may sound, for the professor had finally halted in his physical rise in the world about midway between the six and seven foot mark, and the horses of the Andes are rarely spoken of without tacking on the Spanish diminutive, *ito*.

Having already spent more than a year among the people of the Andes, I was by no means so surprised as the professor when, upon descending in full road regalia to the cobbled street at six, we found no sign of the horse the prefect had solemnly promised to have standing saddled at our hotel door at five. Some things come to him who waits—long enough—even in Peru, however, and by the time the third round of anecdotes was ended, there broke the street vista and drifted down upon us a Peruvian soldier in full accoutrements, bestriding a sorrowful little black mule and leading as gaunt and decrepit a *chusco* as even I had ever seen among those shaggy ponies that masquerade under the name of horse throughout the Andes. The soldier dismounted and saluted. The professor stood gazing abstractedly down upon the animal, no doubt drawing a mental picture of himself in the rôle of Don Quixote, with the added touch of dragging his toes on the ground over 150 miles of Andean trails. With a snort, and a speed that proved his four years in the United States had not been entirely misspent, Martinelli disappeared in the direction of the prefectura. Before another hour had drifted into the past he reappeared, followed by a second soldier leading a real horse from the corral of the officers of the garrison.

“How did you manage it?” I asked, in admiration.

“I raised hell,” said Martinelli, tightening the girth of his own animal.

“What Peru most needs,” mused the professor, who has the happy faculty of now and then giving his professional vocabulary a furlough, “is about ten thousand of you young fellows educated abroad to come home here and raise hell.”

Plainly the professor was already beginning to get a

real mental grasp on South America.

We transferred the government saddle to the real horse and by eight were clattering away over the cobblestones of the City of the Incas, the soldier on his sorrowful black mule bringing up a funereal rear. This was doing very well indeed. To get off on the same day planned, at any hour whatever, is no slight feat in the Andes. Such of Cuzco as had already lifted its frowsy head from the pillow gazed hazy-eyed out upon us as we wound and clashed our stony way up out of the city by that breakneck stairway down which I had descended from my trans-Peruvian journey. The morning sunlight fell weirdly upon the City of the Sun below when we reached the notch in the hills where all Indians pause before the last view of the sacred capital of their ancestors to murmur, with bared heads, "O Cuzco, Great City, I bid thee adieu!"

As we jogged on in the sunny October morning across the bare, colorful, cool hills of Cuzco toward the lofty pampa beyond, I turned to ask the soldier behind:

"Cómo te llamas?"

"Tomás," he replied, with a military salute, "Tomás Cobino, sargento de la Gendarmería Nacional."

"Can you be that same Tomás who was with the Americans in Machu Picchu?"

"Sí, señor, I attended *los yanquis* three months in their treasure-hunts."

The means has not yet been found of convincing the people of the Sierra that digging about old ruins can have any motive other than that of seeking the traditional treasures of the Incas.

A few miles out, the road was in the throes of "repair" by a large gang of Indians, under command of the alguaciles of the neighboring hamlets, who stood haughtily by, firmly grasping their silver-mounted staffs of office. They looked not at all like worldlings, but like men from Mars commanded by sixteenth-century pirates. At first we met many mule-trains, Cuzco-bound, the leaders wearing about their necks long jangling bells with wooden clappers. The Cuzco Indian, of the color of old brass, with his bare legs, scanty knee-breeches, and flat, black-and-red *montera*, sneaked noiselessly by with the air of a whipped cur, fawningly removing his pancake hat and murmuring an abject "Amripusma." The greeting sounded like Quichua, but is merely what becomes of the Spanish "Ave María Purísima" in the mouth of the aboriginal. The professor showed great astonishment to find even the women raising their hats in salutation, but Martinelli and I had long since grown to expect it. In his democracy he touched his own hat and repeated "Buenos días, señor" to each Indian's greeting, instead of acknowledging it with a surly grunt or haughty silence, in the Peruvian fashion. He would have been astonished to know how the startled native cudgeled his primitive brain all the way home, there to roll about his mud hut telling his fellows how he had met a "kara" so roaring drunk that he called him "señor," as if he were a white man.

Within an hour the trail swung to the right. Away over our left shoulders lay that splendid Plain of Anta, rich with cattle and historical memories of the Conquistadores. The distant bleat of sheep now and then drew our eyes to a bedraggled little Indian shepherdess, armed with a sling, and spinning incessantly, automatically, the crude native yarn on

her cruder spindle of a quinoa-stalk run through a potato as whirl-bob, as she edged cautiously away. These lonely guardians of the flocks are not infrequently pursued with impunity by native travelers, and are even known to resort to mechanical means to frustrate attack. In this treeless region the doors of the Indians' dismal mud hovels were of stiff, sun-dried, hairy cowhides. As the bare world rose still higher, even these miserable dwellings died out, and only the bleak, brown uplands of the Andes spread about us on every hand.

In mid-morning we topped a great bare *puna*, from the chilly summit of which the white-crested Central Cordillera stretched like some mighty wall across the entire horizon, the snow-peaks and glaciers thrusting their hoary heads through the less-white banks of clouds. Then a vast Andean valley, like those that had long since grown so familiar to me, yet were always beautiful, opened out before us, in its lap the town of Maras, tinted the pale red of its aged tile roofs. The great rolling, red-brown basin was surrounded by age-wrinkled mountainsides speckled with little shadowed valleys and perpendicular *chacras*, or tiny Indian farms, hung on their flanks like small paintings on slightly inclined walls. We halted for dinner with the gobernador, and for *chala*, as the Incas called dried cornstalks with half-matured ears; and to admire the far-reaching view and the cut-stone doorways of mud houses sculptured with bastard Inca-Christian designs.

We went on again over the high, brown, barren world, the wind-swept summit of each succeeding land-wave bringing again above the horizon the great snow-crested wall that each time seemed near, yet all the jogging day appeared not a yard nearer.

At three we came suddenly to a vast split in the earth, into which we began to go down and ever down by acute zigzags and stony *cuestas* that grew so steep we had to dismount and lead our animals. Before and below us spread the magnificent cañon of the Urubamba, that river of many names which, rising near Titicaca, at length adds its bit to the giant Amazon. Spring plowing was in progress on the valley floor, walled by mountains as far as the eye could reach in either direction. Over this rampart the sun still peered when we reached the level of the river at last and, picking up the road from up the valley, jogged down along it.

Stone-faced terraces of the Incas were frequent; here and there far up the sheer enclosing bluffs were the ruins of pre-Conquest watch-towers of rough stone. At times the road was itself one of these ancient terraces, the retaining wall of the one above rubbing our left elbows, a sheer drop of some eight feet to that below close on our right. In places the river itself was faced and narrowed by massive cut-stones. The exotic iron bridge, replacing to-day the former one of braided withes, by which we crossed to Ollantaytambo had a central pier of those enormous boulders which the bygone race seemed to toss about at will.

We rode to the bare, mud-hutted plaza past splendid wrought-stone walls of what had once been palaces little inferior to those of Cuzco. The local “authority” bowed low over our “passport” and turned the *gobernación* over to us for the night. This was an all but windowless second-story room opening on the unfurnished plaza, with a springy earth floor laid on poles. Into it shrinking alguaciles lugged our baggage and a rheumatic table and bench, without once

releasing their staffs of office. Tomás, our soldier-servant, had found the bringing up of the rear a heavy task, and he and his worn and sorrowful black mule arrived with the last rays of the setting sun. Meanwhile, the egg supply of Ollantaytambo having been greatly reduced, we spread our saddle-blankets and lay down with heads to the walls; for the slope of the floor was such that to stretch along them would have been to fetch up before morning in a tangled confusion in the middle of the room.

Like Limatambo, near which Chusquito had ended our joint career, Ollantaytambo was one of the four fortresses and rest-houses, each about twelve leagues out on the Inca highways that sallied forth from Cuzco to the "Four Corners of the Earth." Its ruins, among the most striking in South America, consist of fairly recent Inca structures alternating with remains of unknown antiquity. Unquestioned history, however, has little to say of the great wrought-stone fortress in the best "Inca style" on the hill overlooking the town; the several splendid defensive walls, on the general plan of Sacsahuaman, being topped off with any chips of stone at hand, as if at the sudden appearance of besiegers. This might suggest that a later race of less energy had taken advantage of the works of more hardy ancestors, but for the mystery of the "Tired Stones" of porphyry, the largest 25 by 10 by 5 feet in dimensions, which lie abandoned all the way from the town to the quarry far up near the top of the mountain wall across the river, down the face of which they were tobogganed.

Ollantaytambo unquestionably was once densely populated. On all sides it is surrounded by remarkable terraces, some still under half-hearted

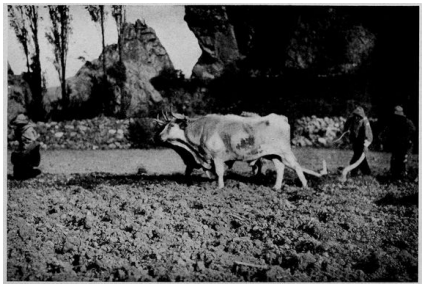
cultivation, long and flat, with barely a foot difference in each succeeding level, on the valley floor; narrow and high-walled on the swift mountainsides and for miles up a side gully to the east. The inhabitants of to-day, unemotional, bath-fearing, Quichua-speaking Indians, as in all this region, still occupy much of the old "Inca" town, with its shoulder-wide streets between massive stone walls that grow more and more careless in construction in direct ratio to their distance from the center. Whole blocks of these ancient houses are still intact, except for the roofs, a single doorway giving entrance to each block. Strangely enough, this was the same unbroken exterior wall around an interior court common to the Moor and Spaniard. Had it fallen to men of the Anglo-Saxon race to overthrow the empire of the Incas, they would have been vastly more struck by the aboriginal architecture than were the Conquistadores.

Enormous cut-stones are here and there incorporated with the buildings of to-day; as in Cuzco, many an adobe second-story has been superimposed on the walls of what must have been at least a king's palace. Far up the sheer bluff behind the ancient town hangs the "school," bright yellow in color, constructed, according to the alcalde, of some concrete-like substance that has not disintegrated under the rain and sunshine of centuries. From below it looks more like a five-story building than the five terraces piled one above the other on the inaccessible face of the mountain, which it really is. If, as is commonly accepted, it was a school for children of the nobles—for the Incas, like the priests who have inherited their power, did not believe in education for the common people—a daily climb to and descent from it eliminated any necessity for a course in physical

training. Whether the “school” was built by another race, or whether those whose massive monuments cover the site below could not carry their blocks of stone so far aloft, is but another of those baffling mysteries that hover forever over the ruins of the Andes. About the town are several “baths” of carved stone, which may rather have been reservoirs for drinking water—I for one will not believe that a bath was ever a part of the equipment of the Andean Indian. As everywhere within a radius of many miles about Cuzco, every possible boulder, ground-stone, or rock-ledge is carved into seats, steps, dungeon-like grottoes, every fantastic shape a tyrannic mind could have conceived, a score of grotesque forms that can only be accounted for as the whims of some despot. The ancient Peruvian emperors seem to have believed, as firmly as the windjammer’s “bo’s’n” who sets his crew to picking oakum, in the relationship between idle hands and mischief, and to have assigned the otherwise unengaged the task of carving the nearest boulder.

With the remaining half of the seventy-five miles from Cuzco to Mandorpampa before us, we were away betimes in the soft, early-summer morning, tinged with coolness from off the half-hidden snow-clads above, as we rode northeastward into the sunrise down the right bank of the Urubamba. Gradually, as the morning warmed, the blue-white glaciers of Piri and its neighbors shook off their night wraps of clouds, until they stood forth above us in all their massive grandeur. The valley narrowed to a cañon, and that to a gorge, with repulsive, bare mountain walls standing precipitously more than a thousand feet into the sky on either hand. Here and there the rock-broiling river was hurried between retaining walls laboriously constructed by the

bygone race. Often these alone held us up, as the precipice shouldered us to the sheer edge of the stream; sometimes, indeed, the road was hewn out of the perpendicular mountainside and carried tremulously across from one solid foothold to another on patched-up props of stone. Straight above us on virtually unassailable crags were the ruins of walls, and perhaps small forts, the holders of which might have showered down boulders squarely upon us—had they not centuries since been laid away in their bottle-shaped graves, hugging their osseous knees. On the inaccessible left bank were scores of ancient terraces. For miles every available inch of the mountainside had once been prepared for cultivation. Small, indeed, must have been the laborer's wage, a daily handful of beans and corn, in this once densely populated cañon, where the struggle for existence forced the construction of an eight-foot wall of stone to uphold a four-foot shelf of cultivation.



Spring plowing in the Urubamba Valley. The woman in front is scattering manure, the man behind dropping seed potatoes and covering them by a flip of the bare foot

Hourly it grew more perfect summer, and ever more delightful views and magnificent vistas broke unexpectedly upon us, contrasting strangely with the bleak, wind-swept puna of the day before. The old trail from Cuzco to the tropical montaña climbed sulkily away up a side quebrada toward the dreary uplands. This new road to Santa Ana had only recently made accessible for the first time in modern days this marvelous cañon of the Urubamba. It was nowhere steep. We went down by frequent little stony descents, with no corresponding rises, half-aware of now and then standing in our stirrups as our animals dropped from under us, the conscious self gazing at the enthralling scene below and above. Frequent pack-trains passed us, bound upward out of the hot-lands with cargoes of fiery native aguardiente, in leather skins inside cloth-wrapped wooden frames, or long cylindrical packages of coca-leaves such as the drivers were chewing. Often the meetings were at points where only extreme vigilance saved us from being pushed over the precipice; for, though our right of way gave us the mountainside, the pack-animals, shy of the roaring stream below, sought to crowd in between us and the wall, in spite of the threatening cries and whistling of their arrieros.

At eleven we stopped for “breakfast.” By the time we were in the saddle again the vegetation began to grow frankly tropical. The approach to the vast Amazonian lowlands was heralded by trees, then by whole forests climbing the lower flanks of the hills that cut in alternately from either side; then they began clothing the lower ridges and the flanks of the mountains themselves, in delightful contrast to the dreary treelessness of the upper heights. The first full-grown trees of the montaña, crowding in among

the hardy shrubs of the lower highlands, began to stand forth against the irregular patches of sky ahead. Jungle brush and undergrowth sprang up about us. Moss and tropical herbage took to draping the moist rocks and boulders, until even the perpendicular face of the mountain clothed itself in lush-green vegetation. Ferns, the first I had seen in months, appeared, and quickly grew to their gigantic tropical forms. Orchids were plentiful, and other flowers of brilliant colors. The government telegraph wire that had followed us across the bleak, wind-swept puna the day before, on poles shriveled with the cold, began to jump gaily from parasite-laden tree to tree. Brooks of sparkling clear water came leaping down from the unseen glaciers and frozen heights above, to the joy of both man and beast. A condor, volplaning on motionless wings high above the mountain wall, looked like a sparrow mingled with the white clouds that flecked the summer sky. A soft wind caressed us, and upon us fell that lazy, contented mood that always follows a descent from the cold, nerve-straining páramo.

As we descended still deeper into the fastnesses of the Andes, the solid granite precipices, rising sheer thousands of feet from the foaming rapids to the clouds, remained at the same height; but the valley of the river continued to descend, and gave us the curious effect of seeming to see the mountains that shut us in rise ever higher into the sky. The cañon of the Urubamba had shrunk to a resounding gorge of sharp V-shape, with virtually no room left for cultivation, so that even the hardy *andenes* of the ancients were crowded out of existence, and only the imperious river forced its way through the mountains, permitting the narrow road to follow on the precarious footholds blasted for it along one of

the towering granite walls. We began to meet yellow, fever-eyed walking skeletons, straggling languidly up from the tropical valleys. These increased until all the few travelers were gaunt and hollow-eyed, and of a lifeless cast of countenance. Now a humid jungle hemmed us in; impenetrable tropical forest covered all the tumbled mountain world about us, the further ranges blue-black with distance, an unbroken wilderness in which might lie buried a score of forgotten cities. Trees assumed those fantastic shapes that startle or mock the tropical traveler. Lianas, those great climbing vines over which the northern school-boy dreams before his open geography while the snow swirls about the shivering window, swung languidly from these giants of the jungle. The rampant vegetation clutched playfully at us along the way; now and again a branch reached forth and whipped us in our sweated faces. The drowsy chorus of the jungles sounded about us; the tropical joy of life took possession even of the professor, rousing him to song, so that the cañon resounded with discordant, rumbling Middle-Western noises.

Toward four the beautiful jagged peak of Huayna Picchu came into sight down the winding gorge, puffs of white clouds hovering about it; and we knew we were approaching our goal. But things moved with ever more tropical languor. In places the road became a stony stairway down which we must pick our way step by step; in others it was pieced together with slivers of rock to keep it from falling sheer into the angry stream below. The impending crags squeezed the trail to the extreme edge, so that an unwary horseman, gazing at the riches of nature about him, was not infrequently rapped on the head by jagged points of rock left by the dynamite of the trail-builders. Tropical birds of startling plumage

flitted in and out of the impenetrable undergrowth; the pungent, death-suggesting, yet enticing scent of the tropics filled our nostrils. The sun abandoned us early, and left us with a sense of being down in some great well dreamily wondering whether we should ever again reach the broad, open world above.

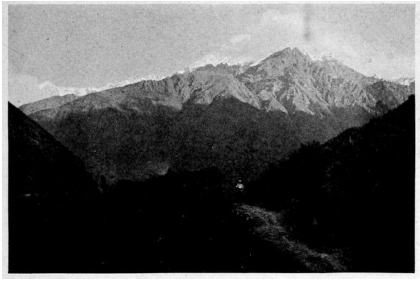
Dusk was falling when the road wandered out upon a bit of flat meadow, squeezed between the mountain wall and the now calmer river, facing the breakneck slopes of Huayna Picchu. This was Mandorpampa. A grass-thatched hut on poles served as tambo. As we hung our alforjas over the unhewn beams, an unattractive half-breed, past middle age and scented with fire-water, appeared from the adjoining hut he occupied with a flock of Quichua-speaking women and children. It was he who had first guided *los yanquis* to the then jungle-hidden Machu Picchu. He had long known of the ruins, as had other natives, but had never considered them extensive or important. Indeed, he seemed still to have a distinctly low opinion of them as "things of the Gentiles," not to be compared with the Cathedral of Cuzco, with its tin saints and tinseled Virgins. He promised to climb to the site with us in the morning, however, for a consideration, and I fell to preparing supper over my miniature cooking-range.

After it, we sat for a time in the heavy, humming, tropical night, listening to the *chirrido* of jungle crickets and striving by anecdote and song to keep up the professor's spirits, drooping under the dread of snakes and vipers and the thousand subtle dangers of the tropics. For the night we arranged that Martinelli should share with the family chickens the pole couch of the Indian's "guest-room," knowing that, as a Peruvian, he preferred to sleep in as airless

a spot as possible, while the professor and I prepared to hoist ourselves up into the garret of small poles under the low thatched roof of the tambo. It was like stowing a piano on an upper bookshelf, but we got a bit of our “beds” bunched under us at last, and when the poles had ceased to sag and creak, I fell asleep.

The humid darkness was showing signs of fading when I woke the professor from a night during which, by his own testimony, he had not slept a wink. The cause of his insomnia was not lack of comfort, for the professor is an experienced man of the woods, but a great mental anguish. An insect had stung him on a knuckle. Now the professor had just come from investigating that dread disease of the Andes knows as *uta*, from the Quichua word for rot, which, beginning in just such an insect bite, eats away the victim’s flesh until he is hurried at breakneck speed into the grave. His was too fixed a place in the life of our Middle West to afford to be rotted away here in the Peruvian jungle by a mere insect. Naturally he wanted our earnest examination and experienced opinion whether we should, after all, climb to Machu Picchu or hurry back to Cuzco to call a conference of the medical wiseacres. I examined the bite solicitously. There was no doubt that it was merely the preliminary nibble of the myriad insects that would have fallen upon us in earnest, and tattooed us with the strange patterns I had already often worn, had we descended another five thousand feet into the real tropics. But one cannot put such things cruelly and baldly to a companion weighed down by the intangible dread of the subtle, pest-infested hot-lands, from which no man is free upon his first descent into them. Between us we convinced the professor that he would in all probability outlive the day, and by fog-bound six we

were off.



"As we rode eastward into the sunrise down the gorge of the Urubamba, glacier-clad Piri above threw off its night wraps of clouds"



The semicircular tower and some of the finest stone-cutting and fitting of Machu Picchu. The vegetation had already begun to grow up again but a few months after the site had been cleared

The lover of ardent waters had concluded that he could not possibly get his various activities in shape

to accompany us before eight, and we decided to hobble along without his historical assistance. We paid him two *soles* to keep the animals well fed and, lest the matter slip his mind, left Tomás with him as a perpetual reminder. This left us well burdened with our "beds" and the supplies necessary to pass the night, for I would not hear of paying the forgotten city only a flying visit. Being the only one in Andean training, I volunteered to carry the surplus and, bowed under a bulky sixty-five pounds held by a llama-hair rope across my chest, like any Indian cargador, I led the way back along the road, planning to boast myself forever after the equal of any aboriginal burden-bearer of the Andes. Barely had I reconciled myself to the perpendicular climb in store for us under such a load, however, when we came upon a gang of Indians chopping the boulder-imbedded roadway higher back under the edge of the cliff for flood-time. The foreman offered us carriers. None of them were large; beside the professor the impassive fellows approached dwarfishness, and I uttered a protest when Martinelli waved a thumb at by no means the largest. But my fancied equality to the human freight-trains of the Andes oozed away as suddenly as the rotundity of a pricked wine-skin. When, the Indian had swung upon his back the burden I had been staggering under on a level roadway, Martinelli nonchalantly tossed his twenty-five pounds on top of it. A bit further on that unfeeling savage paused at one of the pole-and-leaf shelters of the workmen under the edge of the impending cliff and added a pair of blankets, a coca-bag, and several other personal odds and ends, then waltzed away as lightly as a prairie chicken under its tail-feathers—faster than we cared to follow.

Perhaps two miles back, a hidden path plunged

swiftly down through the wet, clinging jungle to the sapling bridge that hung precariously from rock to boulder across the river. Beyond the snarling stream, which snatched impotently at us as we passed, sagging, a perpendicular jungled mountainside, apparently impenetrable, stared impassively down upon us. But when we had clambered and tripped some distance over the rocks and jagged boulders at the edge of the raging torrent, a hole in the undergrowth, like the lair of some wild animal, proved to be the beginning of a trail, now overgrown almost to nothing.

The first mile up was through densest wet jungle. We climbed clutching at the vegetation as at the hair of some giant head we were striving to surmount. The average slope was perhaps sixty-five degrees, though there were places virtually perpendicular where to lose an Andean level-headedness would have been to pitch many yards down toward the now hoarse river below. According to local repute, this section was notorious for its venomous snakes, particularly a little ten-inch *víbora* whose bite is certain death unless the victim instantly adopts the heroic measures of the Indians and carves out a Shylockian chunk of flesh, cauterize the wound with a hot iron, and retire a half-year to recuperate. But as with all tales of robbers, dangers, and sudden death on the road ahead, that behind me trailed out harmless and unexciting.

Gradually the heavy jungle gave way to a lighter, stunted growth that had once been burned over and on which the sun blazed down mercilessly. Up the all but sheer face of this the trail sweated in sharp zigzags. Rumiñaui, as we had dubbed our stony-eyed carrier, kept steadily above us, and though he panted

a bit, it was the least burdened of us who called now and then for a breathing-spell. Dry-tongued with thirst, we came at last to an almost level shelf of the mountain, with a patch of shade. In it grew a "Spanish tomato" shaped like a huge strawberry, of a double acidity that throttled our thirst for the moment. Somewhat higher we found ourselves mounting ancient agricultural terraces. These were walls of rough stone, head high, that sustained level spaces of like width. Far from being under cultivation, the rich, black soil of these artificial mountain shelves nourished an all but impassable tangle of new jungle growth; and the trunks of great trees that had been felled and charred over cut us off in many directions. By working our way laboriously back and forth, and gradually mounting several terraces, now by a canted tree-trunk, now by the four projecting stones set stair-like in the faces of the walls, by which the prehistoric husbandmen mounted and descended, we found a terrace along which we could tear our way, and came out at last, nearly two hours above the river, on the sheer edge of things. Machu Picchu lay before us.

My first impression was tinged with disappointment. Aside from the universal experience of finding a long-heralded scene striking in inverse ratio to the length of time the imagination has fed upon it, my mental picture of a city seemed to call for skyscrapers crowded together over a vast area that could be bound closely together only by a rapid-transit system. Measured by these subconscious standards, the town the Incas or their predecessors had left here in the beautiful fastnesses of the Urubamba was small. But at least it had been our good fortune to catch the first sight of it from a splendid point of vantage. Well below us, and across

a gully so deep as to be almost a valley, the abandoned city lay spread out under the gorgeous Andean sunshine in all its white-granite brilliancy; and if all the town could not be included in a view from this point, or from any other, that view included all the finer buildings, and left out chiefly the extensive *andenes* and the third-class houses of those who lived on and worked them. Though roofless, it was otherwise a complete city, in so fine a state of preservation that the beholder felt like one of the old Spanish Conquistadores in those enviable years when there were still new worlds to discover.

On a gigantic scale, its site was that of an ancient feudal castle. A mountain ridge defended by nature in one of her most solitary moods, and including within its confines the steeple-pointed peak of Huayna Picchu, fell away on every side by tremendous precipices into the fearful void of the Urubamba, a sheer unbroken two thousand feet to the thread-like river that makes a three fourths circle around it; while beyond, pregnant with mystery of impassable jungle and the story of a bygone race, lay a wonderful wilderness of Andean ranges, shaggy with dense forest, pitched and tumbled and fading away in the blue-black of unfathomable distance. Yet how strange that an entire city, a mere two days' ride from Cuzco, should thus have remained for centuries unknown! Only he who knows the Latin-American will comprehend how Machu Picchu could be so seldom visited even now, after *los yanquis* have uncovered it; though the cuzqueños who passively wait for foreigners to come and do what they themselves should long since have done blandly assume credit for the newly discovered city, as if they had some part in it because the blood of its builders runs in their veins. Yet to the world at large

its existence was never suspected. Squier, noted for his accuracy, says self-confidently: “Ollantaytambo was the frontier town and fortress of the Incas in the valley of the Ucayali, as it is to-day of their conquerors. There were outlying works some leagues lower down at Havaspampa, but the bulwark of the Empire against the savage Antis in this direction was Ollantaytambo.” Small wonder he heard nothing of a place not a whisper of which has crept into all the writings of Peru since Pizarro’s secretary first took to setting down the prowess of his commander.

Machu Picchu was indeed a city of refuge. There is no need of Incaic lore and the furrowed brow of the archeologist to be certain of that. Only men scared beyond the functioning of goose-flesh would have scurried away into this most inaccessible nook of the Andes and scrambled up these appalling cliffs to escape their pursuers; only men to whom labor was nothing as compared with the fear of bodily violence would have toiled a century fitting together these gigantic boulders, rather than sally forth and take their chances against the slings or poisoned arrows of their enemies. The slinking, hare-hearted Cuzco Indian of to-day may easily be their lineal descendant.

Effectively defended by nature though they were, these champions of precaution left no loopholes. Across the gully between where we sat and the lost city they had thrown two massive stone walls from sheer precipice to sheerer. Outside this were most of the agricultural terraces, for within the city proper was scant space for cultivation, and in case of attack the peasants no doubt abandoned their fields and raced to town. Between these walls lay a dry moat, deep and wide, while at the city gate the fortress was

constructed on the “salient” system of Sacsahuaman, so that while a besieger was gently knocking for admittance some member of the goose-flesh clan could stroll out on the wall above and drop a boulder on his astonished head. Nor was that all. In every least crevice or foothold across which the champion trapeze performer or tight-rope artist of the besieging tribes could by any stretch of the trembling imagination have squirmed his way, the defenders built little patches of rock-wall, in places he only will believe who has climbed to see; and on the tiptop of the neighboring heights, on Machu Picchu mountain, on the steeple-point of Huayna Picchu, in every crow’s-nest the most athletic Indian could hope to reach, were stone watch-towers, sometimes invisible, from which certainly the sentinels had some telegraphic means of passing word down to the cautious city. There were no adventurers among the builders of Machu Picchu. They took no chances.

When we had drunk in this comprehensive view of the forgotten city, we descended by projecting terrace stones and jungled zigzags and finally by a great stone stairway to the dry moat, then by a graded approach to the city gate, always tearing our way through thick undergrowth. For though “los chapetes” had cleared away the dense tropical forest that had hidden the city from civilized man since historical time began, the rampant vegetation was striving quickly to conceal it again, as if jealous of its beauty or guardian of its secret. Being far more determined in its efforts than the apathetic Peruvians, it bade fair to succeed. Already the *caña brava* waved impudently head-high everywhere, and what might grow to such trees as had been felled in hundreds were already sprouting forth again here and there from between the interstices of the

splendid walls. A deserving-politician caretaker had been appointed by the government, but he was caring for both Machu Picchu and Ollantaytambo by living in Cuzco on his salary.



"We came out on the edge of things and Machu Picchu lay before us"

We sent Rumiñaui ahead to stack our junk under the weather-blackened thatch roof supported by four slender legs, down in a central space that might have been a parade-ground or a garden to fall back upon in time of siege. There we hastened to disentangle the canvas bucket and bade him "Unuta apamuy." But it was more easily ordered than brought. The cut-stone basins to which small *acequias* had once carried water down off the shoulders of the range behind had gone stone-dry, and as we lay choking in the welcome shade, surviving only on the anticipation of the cooling draughts soon to come, the Indian came wandering back with that apathetic expressionlessness of his race—the bucket empty. Martinelli rose up, cursing in three tongues, to lead him, and soon returned to say that a well-filled bucket was following close behind. But Martinelli was a Peruvian, given like all his race to counting his

chickens before the eggs are laid. After fighting his way through the jungle to the edge of the hollow "where the spring really is," he had neglected to descend ten yards further through the bushes to find whether the spring really was. So that a few yards behind his resuscitating announcement came trailing Rumiñaui, more stony-eyed than ever, still carrying a collapsed bucket.

Audible expression of our inmost sentiments would have been the opposite of thirst-quenching, and as each day consists of a limited number of hours, even in the waterless tropics, I slung my kodak over a shoulder and set out to see as much as possible before preservation of life might force a hurried descent to the river. The fancied disappointment of the first view had worn completely away. As the mind adapted itself to pre-Columbian standards, the abandoned city assumed its true aspect, that of a delicate work of art of intensive construction. Here in this eagle's nest of the Andes, virtually cut off from the rest of the world, had lived an artistic and adaptable people with a capacity for concentration of effort, for sustained endeavor, and a high grade of efficiency now lost among the Peruvians. Virtually all the stone work of the better part of the city was of the very best "Inca style" in plan, cut, and fit. Nothing I had seen in all the length of the Andes, from Cañar in the far north, could surpass these walls, rivaled only by those of Cuzco; and even those of the City of the Sun cannot match the charming uniform color of this white-gray granite, approaching in beauty to pure marble. Whereas Sacsahuaman and Ollantaytambo seemed massive, cyclopean, this new city of old gives the effect of a delicate gem in a peerless setting—though the man of to-day ordered to tote the smallest block in the average wall would

not exactly refer to it as delicate.

Like the remains of Cuzco, the ruins are exclusively confined to walls. The Inca civilization seems to have been of that utilitarian turn of mind that gives its attention chiefly to the practical, with the result that to-day there is not a statue in the length and breadth of Peruvian ruins; and the grass-thatched roofs beyond which these unrivaled stone-cutters did not advance may have fallen in centuries before Pizarro first herded his pigs among the foothills of Estremadura. But as walls they are unsurpassed, fitted with so tireless a nicety that, even without mortar, they stand to-day, except where the roots of trees have crowded in between them, striking illustrations of that time-worn phrase of all Peruvian chroniclers from Garsilaso to Squier, “so that a knife-blade cannot be inserted between them.” Marble-white walls there were so splendidly symmetrical that time after time the enraptured eye stole along them as over a beloved form. As with all Inca architecture, everything,—walls, doors, niches—decreased in size toward the top, at about the slope of the surrounding precipices, carrying the mind back to Karnak and the ruins of the Nile. Every possible ground-boulder or rock-ledge and mountain-platform was made full use of, and the eye at times hardly detects where the building of nature leaves off and the planning of man begins.

Hidden away from the iconoclastic, gold-thirsting Spaniards, and so far distant from the dwellings of his effete descendants that transportation of its blocks for their own botching is impossible, Machu Picchu has escaped the common fate of the other pre-Columbian ruins of the Andes and remains a city intact, like Pompeii, as genuine as when its

inhabitants abandoned it, carrying off perhaps their household gods and the revered remains of their ancestors. But for the missing roof, scores of buildings are as well preserved as on the day their dwellers departed. Rough-stone, windowed gables—though both Humboldt and Prescott deny the existence of gables or windows in ancient Peru—stand everywhere peaked above the general level, sometimes still bearing the stump of a great tree the roots of which had curled and twined in among the stones wherever a handful of soil was to be found to feed upon. The ruins seemed to sprout flowers and trees. Giants of the forest grew wherever there was a suggestion of foothold; with a Jewish persistency they had crowded in between apparently inseparable stone blocks; great trees had sprung up and grown to man's estate in unbelievable places, on the very peaks of frail stone gables, even out from between the still tight-fitted granite boulders. The task of "los yanquis" had been no sinecure. They had felled an entire tropical forest, with giant trees a century old, the charred trunks of a few of which lay as they had fallen, like gluttonous bandits overtaken at their stolen feast, convenient stairways now from one terrace to another. But much care had been necessary. Many a stump must be left where it stood, for even to attempt its removal would frequently have brought down half the structure it grew in. Besides clearing it of the concealing vegetation, the Americans had dug away in places several feet of soil and had presented at last the entire city, with its alignment of streets, its "baths," temples, palaces, and blocks of dwellings. The finest ruins of the Western Hemisphere, the mystery of this city of the unpeopled wilderness trebles its fascination. How could such a place have completely eluded the

foraging Spaniards? How could long centuries have passed during which Ollantaytambo was accepted as the last monument of importance in the valley of the Urubamba? How—

But just then a cry of “Cancha unu!” from Martinelli, who affected Quichua since he found I had some knowledge of it, brought me tearing back through the undergrowth to the roof on legs. Back along one of the terraces a trickling supply of water had been found, and now we might take time to view the ruins more leisurely. We concocted a lunch and sent Stony-Eye to carry our possessions to a “sacred cave” among the palaces.

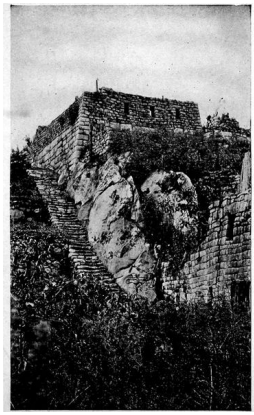
The town centers about the main plaza, with its splendid wrought-stone temple, backed by the priest’s dwelling with the sacred hill piled up behind it. Here, too, is the temple of the three windows, so unusual a feature of prehistoric Peruvian architecture that the chief of the excavators connects it with the tradition of the three brothers who came out of as many windows to found the Empire of the Incas. “Al principio del mundo,” as Garsilaso puts it,—“In the beginning of the world, say the Indians who live to the east and north of the city of Cuzco, three brothers sallied forth through some windows in some rocks, which they called royal windows.” Certainly, if this is the original Tampu Tocco from which came the founders of the Empire, they improved little in their building during the long years between Machu Picchu and the construction of Cuzco. Its sponsor considers the city a thousand years old. Yet though the virile simplicity of its construction is untouched by the beginning of that ornateness that marks decadence in all civilizations, there is something of delicacy and artistic splendor, even amid a curious

mixture of the crude and primitive, that does not seem to bespeak an older and less-developed people than the builders of Cuzco.

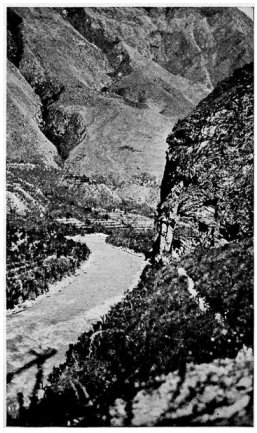
The long, solid walls are broken, as in most Inca structures, by niches large and small, mere shallow closets without doors, with cylindrical projecting stones alternating between them. These have been fancied, among other things, to have wardrobes and hooks for clothing, but the habit of their descendants suggest that the builders were content to hang their garments on the floor. Though larger than the average Andean dwelling of to-day, houses of more than one room are rare. The ancient Peruvians were evidently as indifferent to lack of privacy as their modern successors. Along the walls are stone couches as comfortable as those of sun-baked mud which the weary traveler is fortunate to find in the better-class houses of the interior to this day. They probably had as little furniture as their descendants, and the host of long ago no doubt greeted his guest with that selfsame “Tome asiento” (Be seated) and a wave of the hand toward a six-inch block of wood or a sharp corner of stone. They lived apparently more thickly than in any modern tenement-house, and the problem of increase of population must have been acute. Was it this internal pressure that forced them finally to abandon their eagle’s-nest? Every square foot of ground was utilized, the rooms densely crowded together, with even subterranean dwellings, and long rows of rough-stone houses stand steeply one above the other on the swift precipices of the city.

For all its ups and downs—and it was next to impossible to go somewhere else in Machu Picchu without climbing or descending—

intercommunication was amply provided. Scores of stairways of all lengths and sizes, often laboriously cut out of a single ground-boulder, lead everywhere. Mrs. Tocco had no difficulty in dropping in on Mrs. Huasi simply because she lived in another clan-group or up over her head. Tunnels, too, were common to this ingenious race of stone-cutters, and fat men must have been as rare as among the Indians of to-day, or distinctly limited in their movements. No nation under blockade ever made more intensive use of its agricultural possibilities. Within a radius of several miles not a possible foot of ground escaped cultivation. The soil, carried perhaps from a great distance, was richly fertile, and to these men of a bygone race the building of a massive stone wall to support half its size in arable ground was all in the day's work. The terraces on the north side of the mountain, half agricultural, half defensive, drop swiftly away as long as there is a suggestion of foothold, and those on the west of the sacred plaza and below the *intihuatana*, or sun-dial, go down so vertiginously hand over hand that there could have been no dizzy heads among the husbandmen of long ago. It was easy for the peasant of those days to do away with an enemy; he had only to reach down from his own field and push his rival off his three-foot farm into bottomless oblivion.



One of the many stairways of Machu Picchu. “The eye could scarcely detect where the building of nature left off and the planning of man began”



The resounding

gorge of the
Urubamba, with
terraces of the
ancient inhabitants
on the inaccesible
left bank

I pushed on toward the outskirts. The social inequalities of to-day were as native to the civilization of this lost race. As one left the center, the houses grew less and less like the cut-stone palaces; on the edges of the town hung mere cobblestone hovels, little better than the miserable dens of the modern Indian. All about them now was rampant cane jungle. On the slopes, from the interstices between the rocks, even on the thatched roof of last year's shelter of the workmen, grew big yellow calabashes, like gypsy pumpkins. Then there was wild corn and self-sown potatoes, bushes of ripe *ají*, the beloved peppers of the Incas, in deep reds and greens. These were no doubt the chief products of olden times, constantly threatened with suffocation by the belligerent tropical vegetation. Monarch of all he surveyed—and it was much—the ruler of this aery probably lived chiefly on corn and frozen potatoes, ground in such carved stone mortars as are still to be found here; and he could not have been overwhelmingly troubled with a longing for the fleshpots or for other excitement than that his enemies gave him. For he does not seem to have often visited other towns, and even "los yanquis" found no ruins of theater or billiard-hall.

The Incas, using the word broadly, showed an extraordinary liking for building where they had an unbroken outlook over all the surrounding world.

Lovers of nature, perhaps, though the apparently complete indifference of their descendants to its charms and moods makes this debatable, they were, above all, practical fellows, moved less by esthetic reasons than by an overwhelming dislike of being awakened from an afternoon siesta by a well-aimed boulder. Yet had their only quest been unrivaled situations, that of Machu Picchu could scarcely have been improved upon. Mere words or pictures give faint idea of the unique charm of the place. Men not merely of iron will and endless patience, they must also have had a fixed and unchanging policy for generations, for with such tools as they possessed it is inconceivable that they could have built Machu Picchu in less than a century. Not even their ambitionless descendants of to-day have less of the wanderlust than they; and what a conviction of the perpetual endurance of the status quo was theirs, to take such infinite pains in their building that they need not even be repaired for centuries. Were they driven out by the fierce Aymarás from the south, or by the dreaded “huari-ni,” the “breechless” tribes from the hot-lands below, which the meek Indian of the highlands fears to this day; were they suddenly wiped out by an epidemic; or did they gather strength and courage after centuries of hiding in this lofty nest and sally forth with the avowed intention of conquering the world, perhaps to be destroyed, and the secret of their city with them? Every traveler knows how isolated groups of men gradually come to fancy themselves superior to all the rest of the universe. Whatever the cause of the migration, it must have taken stern renunciation to leave behind so much of the work of themselves and their ancestors.

I was aroused from my musings by a crashing in the

jungle, and the professor hailed me with, “Wait! I want your advice!” It was that awful bite on the knuckle again. By this time it had grown to nearly the size of the second letter of this word, was a pale red in color, and about it was a swelling that could plainly be seen under a microscope, or without one by a man with good eyes and a badly worried imagination.

“Now of course this might not turn out to be uta,” said the victim, in an agitated voice, “but if it should, twenty-four hours delay might make all the difference in the world, and I wonder if it wouldn’t be *prudent*, at least, to go down now and get started back to Cuzco.”

I examined the alarming symptom with care. There was no doubt that it was the dreaded “rot”—bally rot, in fact. As to the swelling, had not I myself more than once been so swollen by tropical insects that my best friends would not have recognized me in a bar-room? Moreover, I was not to be cheated out of the night I had promised myself in the abandoned city, and from words of sympathy and reassurance, I led the conversation deftly and gently back through the mention of the professor’s large life-insurance policy, to the dangers of life here in the days of the Incas, who had not even those post-mortem sops to make existence bearable, until the terror of the tropics, inherent in all men of the temperate zone, was buried beneath the fascinating mystery of the fathomless past.

The earth offers few such views as that from the *intihuatana*, the “place where the sun was tied,” at the top of the town. There the great topping boulder has been carved into an upright shaft of stone, of symbolic sacredness no doubt in those bygone days

when the people of Peru made the error of worshipping the sun instead of bowing down before wooden images, though it looks as much like a beheading-block as a sun-dial. The scene is best enjoyed alone. The intrusion of modern man seems to break the spell, and the imagination halts lamely in its striving to build up the past. Literally at my feet the world dropped away sheer to the Urubamba, like a copper thread all but encircling the entire city with what is virtually one precipice. The altitude of Machu Picchu is put at 8500 feet and that of the river at 2000 less, yet it is surprising how distinctly the roar of the stream comes up to the very top of the invulnerable city. Utterly unpeopled, the visible world is one tumbled mass of gigantic forest-clad mountains rolling away to inaccessible distance-blue ranges, rising afar off to snow-capped crests mingled with the sky. Here are not the haggard and sterile Andes of elsewhere, but softened, undulating forms, so densely wooded that nowhere is a spot of earth visible. Swing round the circle, and on the other side the gaze falls as precipitously into the Urubamba. There three great ranges rise one behind another, fading from blue to the purple of vast distances, until the icy wall of the Central Cordillera shuts off all the world beyond. In another direction the rolling purple ranges die enticingly away one beyond the other into the great *montaña* and the hot-lands of the Amazon, while masses of pure white clouds come floating majestically up out of Brazil beyond. One regrets having to return as he came, always a misfortune, and the gaze falls again to the hoarse thread of river below, watching it wind away into the mystery of the unknown, to break through the central range beyond where the eye loses it, and so on away, away. But the chief hardship of travel is

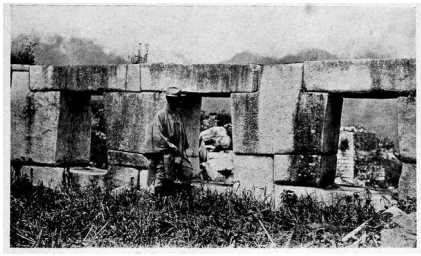
renunciation.

Here, in what is to-day the home only of the condor, one may muse, but muse in vain, on the history of Machu Picchu. A thousand years old; and a thousand years hence it will still be here! Why is man of such perishable stuff that mere rocks and stones may laugh at the brevity of his existence? If only one could call back the ancient inhabitants to tell their story! Did they build so long before the Conquest that the city was already overgrown and forgotten when the bearded centaurs first appeared to startle and undo their descendants? Or was this some secret holy spot the Indians concealed by silence even from the garrulous descendant of Huayna Ccápac? Were its existence known to them, why did not Tupac Amaru and his followers set up a defence here against the Spaniards? For even in those days the place would have been invulnerable against anything but treachery from within.

However baffling its story, it is not difficult for one who has wandered along the Andes to build up a picture of the living city of the past as he sits here in the declining day, lulled yet excited by the ceaseless music of the Urubamba far below, mysterious, Indian-like in its impassiveness, as if it knew, but were sworn forever to guard, the secret it has girdled with its impregnable precipices for unknown centuries. Before the inner eye the many stone stairways take on life. Up and down them move unhurriedly, yet actively, thick-set men and women with broad, copper-tinted faces, noiseless in their bare feet, their garments a constant interweaving of many bright colors. The hundreds of peaked gables take on gothic-steep roofs of thatch, symmetrical, carefully made, perhaps with decorated ceilings

within, at least in the temples and palaces. Llamas step silently through the narrow streets, gazing with haughty dreaminess about them. From all the crowded city rises the hum of busy, bucolic life, yet not noisily, for the general tone is peaceful industry and a phlegmatic preoccupation. Now and again the hollow boom of a wooden gong rises and dies away in one of the sacred temples. As the shadows lengthen, bare-legged workmen, a cheek swollen with a cud of coca, mount up the breakneck terraces below, waving with Indian corn or purple with potato-blossoms, pass silently along the brow of the intihuatana hill, and hurry unhurriedly on to their cobble-stone huts in the crowded outskirts. A greater hush than before falls on all the scene, except for the never-varying voice of the Urubamba, as the Inca, majestic of mien, the royal *llauta* about his forehead, attended a certain distance by respectful nobles bearing the symbolic burden on their shoulders, mounts to the sacred rock. There, alone, or attended at respectful aloofness only by the high-priests of the little temple behind, he watches the god of the Peruvians of old sink swiftly, as it was sinking now, behind the snow range that stands out cold and clear to the west, and sees the labyrinth of shaggy, wooded ranges beyond the bottomless void below melt and merge into one common, fading-purple whole. Off in a corner of the city, on the brow of the headlong precipice, comes faintly to the imperial ears the sound of stone striking stone, where the miscreant sentenced that day to carve a new seat in an over-carved boulder before the coming of the new moon plies his task. With full darkness even this ceases. The faint smoke-columns of the supper-fires die away, and before the night is an hour old the entire city is sunk in slumber, save only the

watchmen in their towers and aeries behind and above, and along the city wall in the hollow beneath. From these come faint glows to punctuate the darkness of the Andean night, then nothing, and from a living city Machu Picchu returns to what it is, an utterly unpeopled mountain-peak cut off from all the known world, into which have intruded three hob-nailed beings of noisy modern days, and their stony-eyed serving-man briefly loaned from that world of long ago.



The temple of the three windows, an unusual feature of Inca architecture



"Rumiñaui" seated on the *intihuatana*, or sun-dial, at the top of the town, from which the world falls away a sheer 2000 feet to the Urubamba below

Martinelli was inclined to sleep in the sacred cave under the circular tower. To this the professor objected, as too “snaky,” and they compromised on the long stone bench above, near the finest wall in Machu Picchu. When they were settled, I piled my bedding on the back of Rumiñaui, and drove him away into the humid, viper-teeming darkness. Sailing under sealed orders, he tore his way fearfully through the undergrowth that clutched at him with a thousand unseen fingers, down through the jungle-grown heart of the town and knee-deep across the sacred plaza, its three great windows staring all but invisible at us in the night. On I pursued the trembling wretch into the three-sided high-temple, the most imposing structure of Machu Picchu, and three times bade him pile his load up on the stone altar before he would believe his ears. When I murmured “illimni” (“all right”), he turned tail and fled so suddenly that he forgot even the customary leave-taking.

Above, below, and all about me the night was chanting its mysterious pagan song. The distant roar of the Urubamba came up clear and sharp. In the sky above, myriad stars shone forth with that unusual brightness of upper heights. The rest was blackness. I cleared away a few plants and parasites from the altar and the niches above. It was an immense cut-stone fourteen feet long and five high, but a bare three feet wide, and a long drop for an uneasy sleeper. I rolled out saddle-blanket and ponchos to form the “bed” of many an Andean night; then unconsciously, in an instant, I solved the niche problem that has been harassing Peruvian antiquarians for centuries. Nothing could be simpler! The bygone race broke the long surfaces of their walls with these half-openings neither as settings for

their idols nor as stations for their guards, but as convenient places in which to lay their leggings, hobnailed boots, and tin watches for the night. I am by no means the only one who will be glad to have the problem solved at last.

It would have been easy for the high priest to have dropped in on me during the night, or to have sent his henchmen to do likewise with a few rocks and boulders, even if he could not have arranged for me a dance of his private *ñustas*, especially as the temple is now roofless. But I slept the night through monotonously undisturbed, waking only once to congratulate myself on being so far removed from the disturbing living world, and falling asleep again without even feeling to find whether my revolver still hung within easy reach.

Long wilderness travel seems to develop in the nostrils a power to scent the dawn. I had finished dressing when the night began to pale along its eastern rim, and striding away through the dew-dripping jungle and down the great central stone stairway, I came upon the professor and Martinelli huddled together end to end on their roofless stone couch, snoring oblivious of the fact that the daylight in which no true traveler sleeps had already come. The opportunity for correction was too precious to lose. Close beside them I drew my revolver and fired a roaring 38-caliber shot into the rosy dawn overhead. Mere words are powerless to picture the slothful pair as they exploded forth from their coverings, with the rampant hair and fist-like eyes of Puritans suddenly fallen upon by a band of Indians in the good old days when Puritans were fair prey. In the sacred cave below I found Rumiñaui also sitting up in his “bed,” scratching the sleep out of his eyes,

and having sent him for my possessions set to boiling coffee while listening to the sad story of my companions.

Barely had I left them to their own protection the evening before when Martinelli thought he felt a snake strike his boot, and shouted in alarm. (By morning light he found a cactus-spine had pricked him through the leather.) Then Rumiñaui had come with a long and dolorous Quichua tale of the tribes of "víboras" that had their nests in the interstices of the wall beside and above them, and only awaited the stillness of the night to sally forth on their deadly errands. This in turn recalled to the professor that the so-called circular "snake-windows" were in this very building, and caused him to scrunch down, head and all, into his sleeping-bag, hoping against hope that no deadly viper could bite through its several thicknesses. To make life even more miserable, another gnat had stung him on another knuckle,—a voracious creature, evidently, so bent on destruction that it had made a special trip up from the valley below for this nefarious purpose, since insects do not commonly inhabit Machu Picchu. Now, it might be that the first bite had not injected the dread *uta*, but surely no ordinary man could hope to survive a second. So that all the bitter night through the professor lay—or, more exactly, curved —rigid and motionless within his six-foot sleeping-bag on the extreme outer edge of the stone divan, as far as possible from the viperous wall, yet always in fear of taking the awful two-foot drop to the reptilian ground beneath, while before his sunken eyes passed in cinematographic succession the picture of the dread "rot" he could distinctly feel creeping and crawling through all his frame, devouring it limb by limb, feature by feature, the awful news seeping out

into the Middle West that one of his most cherished citizens had been brought to grief by a mere insect of the Andes! But enough of the harrowing details! Yet the worst is still to be heard. All the endless night through things kept dropping down upon the sleepers from the wall above. To my unromantic mind these were bits of twigs and leaves, yet in the subtle silence of the tropical night small wonder each was a possible sudden-death to the sufferer within the sleeping-bag, assuring himself a thousand times that no viper could bite through it, yet lacking faith in his own assurance. The most anguishing moment of all was that when there dropped squarely upon him, with a soft, reptile-like thud, something that proved by daylight that he had hung carelessly in the Incaic niche above one of his woolen socks!

The descent was harder than the climb; also it was quicker. So slippery was the wet trail at that angle that whenever our heels failed to bite into the soil we sat down emphatically on the backs of our necks some feet further down the slope, fetching it a resounding wallop with the rest of the body. There is talk of some day building an electric line from Cuzco, and a funicular up to the ruins, with perhaps a tourist hotel among them. Fortunately talk does not easily breed action in Peru. One of the chief charms of Machu Picchu is inherent in the difficulty of reaching it; a scene once made accessible to fat, middle-aged ladies is ready to be marked off the traveler's itinerary and to be turned over to the tender mercies of the tourist.

We ended the descent without broken bones, though not without shattered tempers, and finding the precarious connection with the outer world still sagging between the roaring boulders, climbed the

wet jungled bank beyond. Here Rumiñaui, in addition to his regular government wage of twenty cents, was rewarded with a shilling and a handful of coca-leaves, only the latter seeming to be of any interest to him; and here, strangely enough, Tomás was waiting, as he had been ordered, with the four animals, their heads turned toward Cuzco.

CHAPTER XVIII
THE COLLASUYU, OR "UPPER" PERU

On November 11th I took train southward. Though my original plan of following the Inca highway from Quito to Cuzco had been accomplished, the thought of turning homeward with half the continent still unexplored had become an absurdity. But the scattered life of that dreary region to the south of the Imperial City promised too little of new interest to be worth covering on foot. If I did walk down to the station, behind my belongings on jogging Indian legs, it was because to have waited for the nine o'clock mule-car would probably have been to miss the nine-thirty train.

Cuzco, like its rival to the north, has been connected by rail with the outside world since 1908. The train leaves on Tuesdays and Saturdays, spending a night at Sicuani and another at Juliaca, whence a branch descends to Arequipa. Every Friday there is a vertiginous "express" that makes Puno in one day.

A fertile valley, the great *bolson*, or mountain pocket, that stretches from the pampa of Anta in the north to Urcos on the south, with many grazing cattle,

frequent villages, and strings of laden Indians and asses, rolled slowly past. Before noon we caught the gorge of the muddy Vilcañota, the same stream that under the name of Urubamba encircles Machu Picchu, with little patch-farms far up the face of the enclosing ranges and here and there steep, narrow side valleys rich with cultivation. Yet cultivatable ground was scarce, so scarce that it was easy to understand why the ancient population spared as much of it as possible by walling up their dead in caves and planting all but perpendicular slopes.

Next day the valley rose gradually, until cultivation gave way completely to cattle and sheep, then to llama and alpaca herds grazing on the tough ichu of broad punas stretching to arid foothills that, in turn, rolled up into a great snow-clad range on our left. An aggressive, despairing aridity, rarely touched with a cheering note of green, spread in every direction. A dreary land indeed would this have been to journey through afoot. Small wonder the race accustomed always to this desolate landscape is of melancholy temperament, given to personifying nature as a host of evil spirits inimical to man.

The drear and barren land across which lay the branch line of the third day rolled ever higher to the Crucero Alto at 14,666 feet. Two large lakes, cold, steely-blue in tint, with a few barren islands, broke upon the scene and sank slowly as we panted upward; patches of snow lay above, around, and then below us; the glare of the arid, sun-flooded landscape grew painful to the eyes, recalling that many an Andean traveler holds colored glasses an indispensable part of his equipment. Towns there were none; and the stations consisted of one or two wind-threshed buildings of stone or sheet-iron,

dismal beyond conception.

Then we descended gradually. Here and there in the edge of reedy lagoons stood *parihuanas*,—long-legged, rose-tinted birds the feathers of which in olden days formed the Inca's head-dress, when capital punishment was meted out to anyone of lesser rank who dared decorate himself with them. Equally sacred were the *vicuñas*, the undomesticated species of the llama family that furnished the imperial ermine. Ordinarily the traveler is fortunate to catch sight from the train of one or two of those timid animals. To-day a group of fourteen appeared not five hundred yards away across the pampa; then within an hour we passed close by flocks of nine, twelve, seven, and eight respectively, a total of fifty, more than my Peruvian seat-companion, who crossed this line several times a year, had seen in all his life. Unlike the three domesticated species, llama, alpaca, and guanaco, the vicuñas are uniform in color, a reddish-brown with whitish belly, legs, and tail, not unlike a fawn in general appearance. A more delicate animal could scarcely be imagined; the neck seemed hardly larger than a man's wrist, the legs fragile in their slender daintiness. They were graceful, as well as swift, even in their running, which resembled the gait of the jack-rabbit in the way they brought front and hind legs together. The flocks still belong to the government as in the days of the Incas, when they were protected by royal edict, under penalty of death. For some ten years past Peruvian law, too, has forbidden killing them, but the valuable wool and skins are still to be had in the larger cities, for game-wardens are conspicuous by their absence.

What seemed a hopeless desert thinly covered with dry, wiry bunch-grass, now spread in all directions.

We were crossing the vast "Pampa de Arguelles," so named from the family that has leased hundreds of square miles of it from the government. They in turn grant the Indians permission to graze their cattle,—at 25 cents a year for larger animals, twice that for each flock of small ones; yet "los Arguelles" derive income sufficient to permit the family to live on the fat of Paris. Mirages, as of rivers flowing landward, appeared now and then across the arid immensity. At stations lay piled great heaps of *yarlta*, a fuel resembling a cross between peat and giant mushrooms. Further down, a scraggly bush was cut for the same purpose and carried in bundles on donkeys' backs. Soon that dreary Sahara of the West Coast lay on every hand, massive rocks piled up fantastically, monotonous to the last degree, yet not without a certain striking beauty under some moods. The landscape was what the Germans call *eintönig*, of a rich yellow-brown, dusted by the winds and bleached by the suns of centuries, and spreading away to infinity with a hint of the vastness of the earth which even the sea does not give.

Suddenly a deep-green patch of alfalfa burst out among the glaring rocks, trebling their barrenness by contrast. It was the little oasis of Yura, fed by a small stream, the water of which, reputed efficacious to disordered livers, is bottled and sold—less widely to-day than before the priests, whose rival establishment produces the "Water of Jesus," threatened to blackball out of heaven anyone who drank the other. Then far away across the Egypt-tinted world the eye made out well below, at first dimly, a green oasis with a great, or at least a widespread, city covering about half of it. "Ari, quepay!" ("Yes, let us stay a while!") the first settlers are said to have cried when they caught sight of this

garden spot; and the train seemed like-minded, setting us down at last in Arequipa, second city of Peru. Three dawdling days had been required to cover 412 miles.

The only place of importance between the Pacific and Titicaca is strikingly oriental in atmosphere, with a suggestion of Cairo, thanks to its shuffling donkeys—a hole is slit in their nostrils that they may more easily breathe this highland air—and its encircling desert, yet exceeding the latter in beauty by reason of the snowclads hovering about it. To the north lies Chachani, fantastic with its peaks and pinnacles and jagged ice-fields; nearer at hand stands hoar-headed Misti, rivalled in symmetry of form only by Fujiyama and Cotapaxi. From any second-story roof the arid, yellow sand stretches away as from the summit of the pyramids to a horizon far more broken and tumbled than that of the Sahara. The hills are streaked with what looks like snow, but is really fine sand, the same sand that lies in waves monotonously multiplied in the form of wandering, crescent-shaped *médanos* nearer the coast, whence quantities of it are shipped to Europe to make a cheap glass. Down below and round about the city are fat cattle knee-deep in green pastures, in an oasis where irrigation produces alfalfa, as well as many fruits, in abundance. The desert air is clear beyond words, bringing the newcomer from the bleak highlands above the impression that summer, an unoppressive midsummer of the North, has suddenly come again. Every evening wonderful sunsets, ranging from lurid pink through purple and blue-gray to a velvety fading slate, play a veritable symphony of color across the surrounding desert world.

The city itself is flat, of one, or at most two stories,

always with the bulking mass of Misti or its neighbors behind it. Earthquakes have been frequent in Arequipa. Because of these visitations, perhaps, the town has everywhere an unfinished appearance, most buildings ceasing abruptly just above the first story and looking as if the rest had been shaken off or suddenly abandoned. A few have ventured to crawl up again to two stories, and here and there a bold adventurer to three, these latter, commonly of sheet-iron, seeming constantly to tremble at their own temerity. As in Lima and the lands of the Arab, the roofs are flat, places of promenade and evening *tertulias*; for rain falls, if at all, only in brief afternoon showers. The town is built largely of a soft white stone, almost chalk in composition, and light in weight as terra-cotta, which is chopped or sawed out of a desert quarry not far away and which, though it hardens in the air, can still be carved with a knife. Two arched bridges with massive piers, mildly suggesting those by which one enters Toledo in Spain, span the little cliff-sided Chili. The eucalyptus seems less at home here than in the higher cities of the Sierra, but drooping willows abound. As everywhere on the West Coast of Peru, massive mud fences afford places of promenade in the outskirts.

I was treading close on the heels of civilization of a material sort. Electric street-cars had appeared in Arequipa a bare three months before; with motormen imported from Lima they afforded an efficient service to nearly every corner of the oasis. The innovation had not been without its difficulties. Strolling one morning, I met three cholos driving a dozen donkeys marketward. Suddenly they began to shout and dance about the animals as if some danger were imminent. A block away sounded the gong of a bright new tramcar, but as I had never known one,

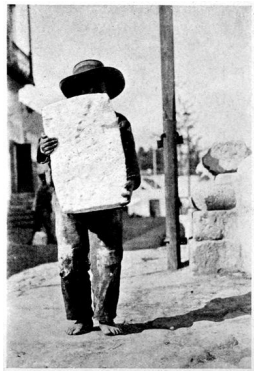
least of all in South America, deliberately to run down an animal, I wondered at the uproar. To my surprise the car came on without slackening speed. The shrieking cholos succeeded in hauling, pushing, or coaxing most of the stubborn brutes off the line, but one pair refused to vary their set course. At the last moment one of these lost courage and sidestepped, but his sturdy black companion kept serenely on, with stubborn down-hung ears and a "to-hell-with-you" flip of the tail—and just then a corner of the swiftly moving car caught him on the starboard beam. He turned a complete somersault on the cobbles, rolled on to his feet, and gazed after the still speeding car with a scowl not unmixed with a ludicrous expression of astonishment. Later I learned from the American manager of the line that a number of donkeys, burritos, and dogs had been killed during the first month of operation. Decrees and warnings had been utterly wasted, and Arequipa's donkeys would have stagnated the lines and again taken possession of the gait of life without this resort to the teaching of experience.

Cuzco and Arequipa are reputed the Peruvian strongholds of conservatism. Of the two, the latter is probably more deeply under the spell of the ancient church. The din of bells was almost constant; during my week in the city I saw no fewer than five images of the Virgin paraded through the streets to the usual accompaniment of kneeling cholos, bareheaded whites, and scores of sanctimonious-faced old beatas following with funereal step. Several of Arequipa's fiestas are noted for the dancing of wooden saints to barbaric music in the public squares. Others have fixed periods of calling on their fellows, sallying forth from their home churches to the plaza where, manipulated by the cholo bearers beneath, they bow

to and finally “kiss” each other, to the fanatical applause of the multitude. The town boasts also several crucified figures operated by wires that cause the eyes to roll, the limbs to quiver, and the head finally to droop as in death, after which a gang of workmen, carrying towels over their arms to wipe away the “blood,” climb up to remove the nails and lay the “body of Jesus” away in a glass coffin until the next holy day.



The babies of Bolivia sit in a whole nest of finery on nurse’s back



Arequipa is built of stones light as wood, cut from a neighboring quarry. They harden when exposed to the air

From a score of stories typical of Arequipa with which I was favored by a fellow-countryman, who had spent many years as the alpaca expert of the chief local warehouse, I pass on two. For months he and his wife had been annoyed by the throngs of beggars who gathered for a bowl of soup each noon at the monastery just across the narrow street from his residence, and then slept out the day in the sandy hollows nearby, like the dogs of Constantinople. What particularly aroused his ire were the habits of an old fellow of ninety or so, whom he had known for years. A few weeks before, finding him in the all too scanty remnants of what had once been shirt and trousers, the American had smuggled him into his workshop and given him a complete new outfit from his own wardrobe. The mendicant returned to his customary hollow a hundred yards up the street,

which he was accustomed to share with several curs and a donkey or two, and during the night his fellow-beggars robbed him of the new garments. What, then, was the donor's surprise and American disgust when he set out on his early stroll next morning to find the old fellow parading up and down the street, begging of the women bound for mass in the monastery church "without a lickin' stitch on him, as naked as the day he was born. If you'd tell it in the States, they'd say you was lyin' and that he must have had a shirt an' britches on anyway. But, no, sir, just as I'm telling you, without a lickin' stitch, an' parading his wrinkled old ninety-year carcass up an' down amongst all them women goin' to mass."

But the ladies seemed merely to be mildly amused, and the native policeman saw nothing in the sight worthy of comment. Children now and then roam the streets of Arequipa in their birthday clothes, and the old fellow had long since been in his second childhood. My outraged fellow-countryman went across town to make complaint to his friend, the prefect. The latter did not see what he could do about it.

"Why don't you send him to the hospital?" grumbled the alpaca-expert.

"They wouldn't receive him, with no one to pay for his keep."

"Well, sir, I couldn't stand it no longer having that ol' feller paradin' around before my house, with my wife inside an' all of them women folks goin' to mass, as naked as the day he was born. So next mornin' I borrowed a stretcher an' got four Indians, an' I says, 'Now you git that ol' feller on that stretcher an' tie him down an' carry him over to the hospital an' leave him inside, or dump him in the river or

anything you like, only so's you git him out of here. An' I've got a phone an' when I hear he's inside the hospital I'll give you each a sol.' Well, sir, them Indians just dumped him in the hospital *payteeo* before the Sisters of Mercy could shut the gates, an' they had to keep him.

"I've got a lot of friends amongst them priests across the road, even if I ain't a Catholic," he went on, "an' they're a pretty nice lot o' fellers, take 'em all in all. They's three kinds of 'em: the brown priests, the black priests, an' the white priests" (Franciscans, Dominicans, and Mercedarias). One especial, by the name of Jayzoóse, has been over here in my house off an' on for fifteen years to ask for a chicken or some eggs, or a few dollars to build a new altar, or to have a few drinks—Oh, they're a pretty decent lot o' fellers, an' of course they've got to live somehow. Well, Jayzoóse—he's livin' with a woman over there behind the monastery wall an' got four or five kids; but then of course they all do that in Peru, though I suppose the Catholics up in the States wouldn't believe you if you told 'em, but of course you 'n me or anybody that's been down here—well, Jayzoóse come over the other day an' says he wants me to come an' hear him preach. So I went out to a church over here on the edge of town an' I tell you he preached a mighty strong sermon, too. Only it was All Saints' Day an' of course everybody was drunk. So I was layin' here readin' along in the afternoon, when I heard somebody knock at the street door—or if I happened to be asleep an' didn't, Theodore Roosevelt" (pointing to a cross between a Dachshund and a pug curled up at his feet) "here, or Woody Wilson" (an Irish terrier) "there did, for they always hear anybody that knocks, no matter if it's midnight —an' I went to the door an' there was Jayzoóse, an'

he was pickled to the eyes. So I invited him in, an' he says, 'Why don't you give me something to drink?' An' I says, 'Well, Jayzoóse, I ain't got anything in the house just now, but I'll send out an' get something. An' I sent out an' got two bottles of beer. But Jayzoóse was that drunk he couldn't sit up, say nothin' of stand up, an' when the beer come he got to rollin' around an' out of his pocket drops a big loaded revolver. I picked it up an' says, 'Here, I'm goin' to keep this gun fer you. What are you goin' to do with a gun anyway?' An' Jayzoóse says, 'I'm goin' to kill that there Chilian blacksmith down the street, because he don't go to mass an' says he don't believe in the Holy Church an' its miracles; an' if I'd a had a couple of drinks more, I'd a killed him las' night.' An' I says, 'No, you don't want to kill that feller, Jayzoóse, an' I'll keep this gun fer you until to-morrow,'—an' I got up to help him home, an' when I opened the street door, in tumbles a woman that had been leanin' up against it—being All Saints' Day—an' just fell down into the parlor here; an' by the time I rolled her out again an' got Jayzoóse home I was sweatin' some, I can tell you."

I strolled out one afternoon in a leisurely hour from the central plaza by a street growing ever rougher and less cobbled to the Harvard Observatory on the flank of Misti, with a splendid view of the snow-capped cone towering into the sky close beside it and a marvelous outlook over all the oasis of Arequipa. Here, in a household where it was easy to fancy myself suddenly set back in the heart of my own land, American scientists photograph the heavens on large dry-plates, with exposures of from one to eight hours, through telescopes automatically regulated to the speed of the earth, but requiring also constant hand adjustment. Arequipa, however, is growing less

ideal for the purpose, since the number of its cloudy days has more than doubled. The blood-red sun was sinking behind the Sahara hills when I turned homeward through the caressing air of evening, the desert flanks of Misti and Chachani and Pichapichu glowing a velvety red from the reflection of the opposite horizon, the white oriental city growing dimmer and dimmer, then suddenly bursting out in a spray of electric lights above which the two white spires of the cathedral more than ever resembled minarets.

Next day I returned to the highlands in the private car of the railway superintendent, a fellow-countryman. The day was brilliant, the leprous desert flashing in the sun even after it had given way to the ichu-brown tablelands of the great plateau, Misti bulking as large a hundred kilometers away as out at the observatory on her flanks, and snow-caps springing up into the luminous sky about us to all points of the compass. All the afternoon we loafed in cushioned armchairs facing the back platform, on which sat our host shooting with automatic gun-pistol at vicuñas, a pastime strictly against the law, but Peruvian statutes scarcely reach the altitude of a railway superintendent. Fortunately the animals were scarce and far away, and the nearest he came to breaking the law was to raise the desert dust about them and send them scampering across the rolling pampa at a lope between that of jack-rabbit and a deer, sparing us the necessity of halting the train and sending out the crew to bring in the game. From Juliaca we turned south along a flat once-lake-bottom. Arms and branches of Titicaca, full of shivering reeds, broke in upon the dusk that thickened into night just as we pulled into Puno, cold, dreary, and monotonously like all other towns

of the high Sierra.

I had timed my arrival to take, instead of the regular steamer directly across the lake, the semi-monthly "Yapura" that makes the round of its shore, with many stops. We were off at ten and out upon the "open sea" by midnight, a huge distorted moon rising off the starboard bow, into the prismatic wake of which we wheezed slowly but steadily, until it crawled up under the black skirts of the clouds that covered the edges of an otherwise starlit sky. A wind as penetrating as that off Cape Race caused our diminutive craft to roll and plunge merrily, to the distress of the priest, lawyer, and home-made Ph.D., with whom I shared the six-by-eight dining-room-cabin. Titicaca by daylight has the identical color of the sea itself, and we awoke to find ourselves wheezing along in mid-ocean, so to speak, at eighteen knots—every two or three hours. We cast anchor first before the red town of Juli, in a lap of bare hills sloping up from the steel-blue lake. I dropped on top of the first boatload of cargo and went ashore, the captain, having orders not to start without me, promising to blow a special signal. The Jesuits claim to have set up in Juli the first printing-press in America, and here Quichua was first reduced to writing. To-day it is a mere dawdling village, distinguished by the voluminous Dutchman breeches of its Indians. At noon Pomata held us long enough to unload the priest and a few boxes and bales at the usual cobblestone wharf. This same good padre had assured me that it was a well-known fact that Saint Thomas had visited America before the Conquest and had brought the Indians their civilization, being known to them as "Tomi"—a bit familiar, to say the least. How persistently mankind seeks to rob poor old Columbus of his glory!

In the afternoon we churned into a wide, semicircular bay as far as shallow water and rustling reeds permitted, and I was soon climbing the easy slope to Yunguyo. Here and there was much freight to discharge. When I expressed my surprise at the consumptive powers of so small a town, the captain winked an Irish-Peruvian eye and breathed, rather than murmured, “contrabando.” I had come at last to the end of endless Peru, with the unexpected privilege of walking out of it, as I had entered it eight months before. Yunguyo lies on the neck of a little peninsula, part of which, by the arbitrariness of international frontiers, is Bolivian. The steamer had orders to pick me up in the morning, and slipping on kodak and revolver, I struck out for the sacred city of Copacabana. A league from the landing the road mounted a stony ridge, passed through the two arches of an uninhabited rural chapel, and left the historical, if sometimes profanity-provoking, land of Peru forever behind.

To that day I had never, to my knowledge, met a Bolivian. Those born beyond the boundary evidently kept the fact a profound secret, and in Peru the silence about the adjoining land was as if it were on the opposite side of the earth. Once in Bolivia it was as rare to hear anything of Peru. It was a stony country, in fact there were more stones than country. Everywhere they lay piled up in high massive fences with half-tillable patches between them. The wide road was well-peopled with Indians afoot, Indians darker and of more independent mien than those of Cuzco. This was the route by which, according to tradition, Manco Ccápac set out from the island of Titicaca to found the Inca Empire. The countrymen were engaged in a sort of planting and plowing bee, a half-drunken festival, their hatbands decorated

with newly picked flowers. The instant I passed the boundary the head-dress of the women changed to an ugly, round, narrow-brimmed felt hat hitherto unknown. On the Peruvian side the shores of the lake had been reedy and shallow, lisping with water-birds and a melancholy wind from off Titicaca, as if the sea were thinking sadly of its lost glory. But as I topped the ridge of the peninsula, there opened suddenly before me the vast steely-blue lake, as clear-cut against the base of the reddish-brown hills as if dug with some gigantic spade, rolling away in one direction over the horizon like an Atlantic, the velvet-brown island of Titicaca standing forth in the middle distance sharp as an etching. Rocks, which the superstitious Indians fancy are impious men turned to stone, stood forth on every hand. Children along the way addressed me as “tata,” the Aymará version of the Quichua “tayta” (father).

At the end of a five-mile stroll the stony highway broke forth into a little lake-side town. The church and monastery sacred to Our Lady of Copacabana, roofed with glistening green and yellow tiles, in a square surrounded by heavy walls brilliant with the crimson *flor del Inca*, nestles in a lap of rocky hills a bit back from the lake and bulks high above the haunts of mere men at its feet. In the days of the Incas this was a holy city, with a certain “idol of vast renown among the Gentiles,” a place of purification whence pilgrims embarked for the ultra-sacred island of Titicaca. The church militant would not have been itself had it lost this opportunity of grafting its own superstitions on those of the aboriginals, and some three centuries ago the present “Virgen de Copacabana” was set up, with the usual marvelous tale of her miraculous appearance in this spot. Her servants have been realizing richly on their foresight

ever since. A steady stream of pilgrims pours into the holy city from Peru, as well as Bolivia, and even from further off, the year round, though August 5 and February 2 are the days of chief festival and mightiest crowds. Near the monastery is a large *hospicio*, a two-story lodging-house for pilgrims, with a great rectangular patio opening through an archway. In the town roundabout is that curious atmosphere of a mixture of piety and commercial advantage common to Rome, Jerusalem, Benares, and Puree, an air of something hard to believe, yet highly advantageous to accept, at least outwardly. The costumes of the populace had grown frankly Bolivian. In several of the shops stocked with sacred baubles, facing the immense grass-grown plaza, women were rolling cigarettes, new proof that I was in Bolivia, for to roll a cigarette in Peru is the exclusive privilege of the government.

The priest of Pomata had given me a note to the superior of the monastery. A doorkeeper led me into pillared cloisters opening on a flower-grown patio and softly into the sanctum of Father Basoberri, deep in conversation with a parish priest who had brought a flock of pilgrims from a neighboring town. Being a European, he created a better impression than the average native churchman. To celebrate my arrival he ordered a servant to uncork a bottle of imported beer and, after the first formalities, had him set me down in the monastery dining-room, where an excellent meal stopped abruptly short of dessert and coffee. The superior conducted me in person to the large brick-and-tile room reserved for distinguished guests, opening on the now bitter-cold expanse of Titicaca, and advised me to fasten the padlock and put the key in my pocket, “for though we are here in a monastery, there are people passing back and

forth, and it is safer. Now," he went on, "if you wish to see the customs of the pilgrims, you have only to mount that stairway."

I climbed two stone flights in semi-darkness and found myself in a narrow wooden gallery at the back of a large, high chamber suffused with a "dim religious light." It was painted blue, with a sprinkling of golden stars, as nearly the painter's visualization of heaven, no doubt, as the crudity of his workmanship permitted him to express. Confession and a contribution to the attendant priests are requirements for admittance to the floor of the church below. At the further end stood the gaudy altar, in its center a glass-faced alcove containing the far-famed Virgin of Copacabana. The figure, scarcely three feet high, was cumbered with several rich silk gowns, laden with gold and jewels, and with a blazing golden crown many sizes too large. Round-about her were expanses of golden-starred heavens, and half a hundred of what looked to a layman like large daggers threatened her from all sides. The original blue-stone idol had been destroyed by the Spaniards, the present incumbent having been fashioned in 1582 by Tito-Yupanqui, lineal descendant of the Incas. He was no artist, but was said to have been inspired by the Virgin herself.

The place was unusually immaculate for the Andes, as becomes a famous shrine where money pours in the year around, and was in striking contrast to the squalor of the surrounding region. The entire floor below was crowded with kneeling pilgrims, weirdly half-lighted by candles, except around the altar, where there was light enough to make priests, acolytes, and the Virgin stand out brilliantly. A week is the customary length of stay for pilgrims, with a

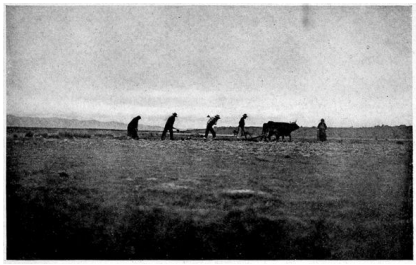
ceremony of welcome and one of dismissal, separated by a long series of masses, confessions and purifications—not to mention the ubiquitous fees. It is perfectly well-known throughout the length and breadth of the Andes, as the priest from the neighboring town, having taken me in hand as soon as I appeared in the gallery, whispered above the rumble of the services, that Nuestra Señora de Copacabana is an all-round champion in the miracle line. For instance: Hardly a year back she had picked up a ship about to be wrecked on the coast of Chile and set it out a thousand miles or so into the mill-pond Pacific, merely because one of the sailors had had the presence of mind to call upon her at the height of the storm. The newspapers of the time seem to have covered the service poorly. Or there was the case of the Indian in my cicerone's own parish who, working in his field far up the side of a mountain sloping swiftly toward Titicaca, suddenly fell headlong down the precipice. He would infallibly have been dashed to pieces on the rocks below, had he not suddenly, halfway down, uttered the name of the Virgin—personally I never knew the mind of an Andean Indian to work with such rapidity—and instantly found himself comfortably seated back in his own field again. The fact should not be lost sight of, however, in rating this marvel that the Aymará husbandman cheers on his labors with an even stronger chicha than that of his Quichua cousins to the north.

The ceremony we were now witnessing was that of dismissing the departing pilgrims. At about two-minute intervals there knelt on the steps of the altar one person, a man and wife, or sometimes a man, wife, and child, always of the same family. An Indian acolyte in red thrust a lighted candle into a hand of

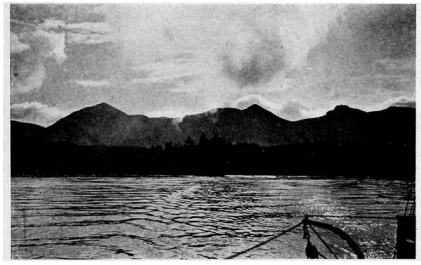
each, the chief priest bowed down before the image, while back beside us in the gallery an Indian in a poncho pumped a wheezing melodeon and the choir, consisting of several boys, four old half-Indian women wrapped to the ends of their noses in black mantos, and three merry little girls who managed to keep up a constant gossip and game through it all, knelt on the floor about the instrument and moaned weird hymns. If the pilgrim was of the "gente decente" class, the hymn was in Spanish; if an Indian, it was in Aymará. During the singing, and the chanting of the priest, another acolyte in a still more striking robe stepped forth and covered the kneeling person or persons at the altar with what looked like a richly embroidered blanket. This the priest beside me asserted was the Virgin's cloak, capable of protecting from all evil, for a certain length of time—varying, perhaps, with the fee.

Then suddenly the cloak was snatched away, the candles were jerked out of the hands of the worshippers, the latter were all but bodily pushed aside, and a priest on the side-lines called out the next name from the list in his hands. This field-manager was startlingly unBolivian in efficiency, keeping things moving with a rush, and calling the next group almost before the acolyte reached for the blue blanket. The attitude of all those professionally connected with the ceremony, was scornful, careless, and hurried—like a New York barber who is convinced there is no "tip" coming. The fifth group to appear, however, was less cavalierly treated. A tall, well-dressed man stepped forward, and an acolyte quickly slipped in front of him a *prie-dieu*, or prayer-stool with high back, of the style used in church by well-to-do South American women. Then, to my surprise, two young men in riding breeches

and leggings, who had been standing near us in the gallery, stumbled over each other in their haste to get down to the floor below and kneel on either side of the older man. “Ese caballero,” whispered the priest beside me, with a distinct tone of pride in his voice, “is a famous lawyer and ex-senator from La Paz, and those are his two sons. They are great devotees of the Blessed Virgin of Copacabana.”



Indians plowing on the shores of Titicaca. Those behind break up the clods with wooden mallets



Sunrise at Copacabana, the sacred city of Bolivia on the shores of Titicaca

When the cloak had been laid away for the night, the

chief priest mounted a pulpit projecting from the side-wall, and in the same drawl in which he had chanted at the altar, compared with which the notorious American nasal twang is soft and songful, either preached a sermon, or recited a bit from the Bible, or imparted some stern orders from the Pope—which, neither I nor, I am certain, any other hearer not previously informed ever guessed. For the monotonous drone in which he hurried through the thing, like a man with an appointed tryst, was such that during the full twenty minutes it lasted I had not the faintest notion whether it was in Latin, Spanish, or Aymará. The only intelligible word I caught was an often-repeated, slovenly "Copavan." Then the acolytes hastily snuffed the candles, and we filed out. At the foot of the stairway my companion was fallen upon by an old Indian and his son who, imprinting a rapid-fire of kisses on his by no means lily-white hands, begged him to hear them confess. He waved them aside as one might an importunate cur, until the Indian, redoubling his osculations, assured him he had real coin to pay for the service, whereupon the good padre took courteous leave of me and led the pair to his room in the monastery.

I was hurrying into my clothes in the bitter cold Titicaca dawn, when the faint long-drawn whistle of the "Yapura" was borne to my ears. To my astonishment it was barely five, so great is the difference in the hour of sunrise in the few degrees I had moved southward since leaving Cuzco. Copacabana in its lap of terraced hills shrunk into the past as we slipped away around the peninsula of the same name. Before us rose the Island of the Sun, traditional cradle of the Inca race, yellow-brown and mountainous, with terraces far up some of its rugged valleys, one red-roofed village housing the workmen

of General Pando, chief owner of the island. It produces potatoes, maize, and quinoa. On the mainland, too, all the shores were terraced and cultivated from the water's edge to the tops of the ridges and hills, in long, square, rectangular, or such fantastic shapes of fields as the lay of the land required. To the east the great glacier mass of Sorata, by some reputed the highest peak in America, lay piled into the sky, half-hidden and cut off from the solid earth by vast banks of white clouds. Before long we passed, a bit further off, Coati, the Island of the Moon, a low ridge terraced from end to end, constituting a single hacienda noted for its fertility. Mere words give but a faint notion of the beauty of Titicaca on a brilliant morning, with its striking combinations of soft colors,—the dense blue-green of the lake, curtained by tumbled banks of snow-white clouds, the velvety yellow-brown islands and mainland, with the faint-purple cloud-shadows playing across them. The mighty glacier bulk of Sorata piercing the sky seemed to move forward also, as the steamer slipped lazily on, frequently bringing into view new and more delicately beautiful combinations of the same elements.

The Bolivian mainland we drew near in the early afternoon was of a reddish soil, with many patches of bright green and pretty little tilted fields checkering the ridges clear down to the water's edge. At Guaqui, the landing-place, no train was to leave for twenty-four hours, and I set out afoot across the exhilarating plains of Bolivia for Tiahuanaco, twelve miles away. It was a fertile, well-plowed land, where the remaining stubble suggested wheat as the chief product. The sun dropped behind a dense, blue-black bank of clouds hanging like a pall over Titicaca behind, and there was no sunset when the time for it

came, but only a gradual, steady fading of light to a faint gleam in which the eyes could barely make out the ground underfoot. The evening stillness was broken only by the rare lowing of a cow afar off; a shower that was half hail and all cold beat stingingly into my face. But for the storm and wind, an absolute silence lay like a solid wall on every hand, with nowhere the suggestion of a light, the many clusters of Indian huts that had speckled the plain by day seeming to keep disconfidently out of reach of highway and railroad.

At eight I stumbled into the station building of Tiahuanaco. The telegraph operator was sufficiently impressed by my familiarity with the name of the gringo superintendent to induce the woman across the track to serve me stale bread and native cheese, and tea made of the water of Titicaca, brought here in locomotive tanks. On the table were several of the dailies of La Paz—it was difficult to think of that city as "the capital" after eight months of considering Lima the center of the universe—in which the world's news all at once jumped up to date. But it was like reading a serial story of which one has lost several chapters and finds it impossible to pick up all the threads again.

Tiahuanaco, 12,900 feet above the sea, in a broad, open, unprotected plain, frigid by night, and not over warm by day under the chill blue of its highland sky, is the chief archeological enigma of "Alto-Peru." The most important ruins lie a few hundred yards north of the station, and an equal distance from the modern adobe town with its bulking stone church. From a slight rise of ground the flat plain, sprinkled with many clusters of mud huts, stretches away to a gouged and broken ridge, here reddish, there green

with vegetation, that fences it in. Huge blocks of stone lie tumbled and scattered over a vaster extent than at Luxor and Karnak, in a disarray at once suggesting earthquake; for they seem too immense to have been overthrown by a merely human destroying vengeance. In the region roughly known as Peru there were several detached and separate civilizations, some of which clearly antedated the Incas; and Tiahuanaco has little in common with the ruins further north. There the relics consist almost exclusively of stone walls; here there are virtually none, though excavations might uncover a few remnants. What is left looks, in contrast to the stem practicability of "Inca" ruins, like the caprice of some childish sovereign. But it is not certain how justly we may judge of the whole original plan, since not only the neighboring hamlet, as well as La Paz, has helped itself freely to the materials for its own chief buildings, but the railroad has carried off vast quantities of it for the construction of bridges and culverts. The still existing monuments are chiefly immense stone blocks too great to be moved by puny modern man, some still upright, some fallen. Bas-reliefs, of which Machu Picchu offers none, are numerous; sculptured figures are unknown among the ruins of Peru, while here there are several. Some resemble totem poles of stone. The most striking is a sturdy rock god, his features defaced by the revolver shots of the enlightened youths of La Paz on their Sunday excursions, which, like the twin figures of Thebes, sits abandoned out on the plain. The monolithic gateway, a single block of dark gray stone on which the intricate carving and bas-reliefs still stand forth clear yet inscrutable, has been set together again since Squier's day.

As I sat gazing across the disordered mystery of long

ago, an Indian woman, the ubiquitous bundle and second generation on her back, a crude sling in one hand, drove her pigs out into what seems once to have been the main square of the ruined city. As the animals fell to rooting about among the ruins, the woman walked across to the inscrutable stone god and bowed down before it with a strange, heathenish courtesy. I attempted to work my way around to leeward in the hope of catching a photograph of the aboriginal rite. But while I was still some distance off, she either spied or scented me, and raced away toward the town at a greater speed than I had ever before witnessed in one of her race.

In the modern town dwells an indolent, not to say insolent, population of cholos and Indians, ignorant as the Arabs of the Nile of the motive that brings strange beings from far off to view the disdained remnants of long ago, yet ready to take all possible advantage of that absurd custom. The place bids fair to become as overrun with the pests of tourist centers as the show-places of Europe. Already the stranger is greeted by a rabble of unsoaped urchins, offering for sale as “antigüedades” all manner of worthless pebbles. Aware that visitors, for some strange reason, are interested only in things of great age, these children vociferously proclaim everything in sight “muy antigua,” even to the loaves and meat displayed in the shops, a statement for which there is some basis. The bulking church of the town, as well as portions of the rudest edifices, is constructed of splendid cut-stone. On either side of the entrance are the weather-worn torsos of a man and a woman, crudely carved from reddish sandstone, sadly defaced, and having an even greater air of antiquity than the chief monuments out on the plain. They would be more properly in their setting out among

the other ruins; here they are startling as one bursts unexpectedly upon them facing the empty grass-grown plaza of the dawdling village.

The train snorted in soon after noon. Across the bleak Collao spring plowing was at its height, amid much ceremony. Many of the sleek oxen were half-hidden by the red and yellow flags of Bolivia, set upright on the yoke across their horns. Gay streamers and banners decorated animals and plow, while the Indian family that in each case had come in full force to see the propitiation of the spirits that rule over the fields, was garbed in its gayest. For not only must the moon be in a particular phase, but all gods must be won over, all demons exorcised, and all signs promising, before it is worth while to begin the year's sowing. What a fertile plateau it was, compared to stony Peru, the plowing unchecked over hill and dale of the slightly rolling plain as far as the eye could see!

An official passing through the train to examine the bundles for contraband was the only formality that had marked the passing of the frontier. In the second-class car I began to gather the impression that the Aymará Indian, if morose and even less given to smiling, was on the whole a more promising type of humanity than the Quichuas. For though he was more inclined to insolence, he was far less obsequious, more manly than the slinking race to the north, less passive and obedient, more bellicose and jealous of his rights; and as long as there is any fight left in a man, there is still hope for him.

The day waned. A plowman driving his oxen homeward and carrying the plow on his own shoulder is a touch Gray did not catch. The plain grew less fertile, and was dotted now with countless

stone-heaps; Illimani and a long, half-clouded snow-range grew up before us; we climbed somewhat, though the world roundabout seemed level as before. The railroad swung to the left. The scores of mule, donkey, and llama pack-trains, however, kept straight on across the bleak, stone-heaped plain, till suddenly at a white pillar a few miles away they seemed to drop all at once into the unknown over the edge of the near horizon.

Where the train halted I scorned the electric trolley and, walking a few yards, saw suddenly burst upon me a scene for once superior to the anticipation,—La Paz, America's most lofty capital, in its hole in the ground. Up there at the "Alto," 13,600 feet above the sea, all was brown, cold, barren, unenticing; all about, behind, and around me the bleak, uninhabited Andean plateau, stony and drear, cherishing nothing but bunches of tough *ichu*, stretched away like a faded brown sea to the hazy distance. Then at my very feet this gave way, and all the nearby world pitched headlong down into a gashed and broken chasm 1200 feet down, measuring perhaps two miles across from where I stood to an equal height on the tumbled and ramified foothills opposite. These, breaking and splitting and falling away into unseen valleys, and climbing out again to become more rugged and higher ridges, finally culminated in a vast and jagged mass of snow and ice, cut off from the solid earth by banks of clouds, above which the reflection of the descending sun streamed in brilliant rose color upon the glaciered pinnacle of giant Illimani, 24,500 feet above the sea. Across the broad puna a cold, fitful wind whistled lugubriously; down below, though barely a sound of life except the blood-stirring snort of a regimental band came up this sheer quarter-mile from the city, all seemed

pleasantly cozy and warm.

The lower flanks of the great *cuenca* were checkered with little Indian farms, now mostly light-brown from being newly plowed, some still the brownish-green of old crops, and all hanging at a decided angle. Further down, on the floor of the valley itself, were similar irregular patches, chiefly of the brilliant green of alfalfa, of every conceivable shape,—round, triangular, horseshoe, veritable "Gerrymanders" in the strange forms given them by the configurations of the ground; for, once down below it, this proves by no means so floor-flat as it seems from above. In the very bottom of the valley, rather on the further side and stretching a bit up the opposite slope, lay La Paz itself. It was a compact city, so compact that it seemed one conglomerate mass into which the eye broke only once,—at the tree-roofed central plaza, tiny from here as a green paster on a vast wall-painting. From this height one saw little but the roofs, the dull-red of the tiles greatly predominating —almost too much red, as in the garments of an Indian gathering; next came the white and colored house-walls, then the sober gray of old churches, and finally here and there the edge of a blue, green, or even an orange wall peering above the mass.

All about the city proper, imperceptibly joining it and stretching away on nearly all sides over vastly more space than the town itself, were perhaps half as many buildings, scattered singly or in small clusters, forming an almost unbroken row down the valley to the southeastward. Here and there one of these ostentated itself in brilliant red; most of them were cream-color or the gray of sheet-iron; and everywhere between them were the irregular green of plowed patches, with now and then a grove of

blue-green eucalyptus, or a patch of willows, enticing from this treeless height where, once the eye rose a bit from the floor of the valley, there was not the suggestion of a shrub. Not the least striking feature of the scene was the glassy clearness of the atmosphere, with nowhere a puff of smoke, and absolutely nothing to dim the view; if the clock in the all-too-slender tower of the congress building had been larger, it would have been easy to tell the time by it.

Brown ribbons of roads, all starting at a pillar on the plateau above, strung like drippings of syrup down all sides of the cuenca, except on the rugged, uninhabited flank opposite; and along all of them on this Saturday afternoon crawled at what seemed a snail's pace files of Indians with their laden donkeys and llamas, the cargoes generally covered with straw, the drivers chiefly in red ponchos, though so like tiny crawling ants were they from this height that the colors were barely noted. Seldom broken, these strings of pack-trains stretched from the edge of the plateau to where the head of each procession to the morrow's market was swallowed up in the compact, silent city.

I walked on around the yawning chasm, the wind that howled across the puna reaching the very marrow of my bones, a raging hail-storm beating upon me for a brief moment and making the city below seem doubly snug and serene by contrast. The little "Great River" of La Paz one did not see at all, so tiny is it and worn so far down into the clay soil of the valley in a half-seen gorge descending through tumbled ranges of gnarled hills toward the *yungas*, as the Bolivian calls the tropical *montaña*, below. Mere words give but a faint notion of this lower end of the

cuenca of La Paz. For so broken and pitched and tumbled, so fantastically gashed by the rains is it, that it would be an indescribably beautiful thing, even if there were not added the wonderful colors and half-tones, a rich dark-red predominating, over the countless split and torn and every-shape hollows and needles and pinnacles of earth across which the cloud-shadows play incessantly. The mournful notes of a *quena*, or rude Indian flute, floated sadly by on the wind. Then sunset crept relentlessly across the valley to the town that seemed to crouch motionless with fear of the darkness descending upon it, paused a moment to do its work well, swallowing up all before it in the purple twilight of tropical altitudes, then climbed slowly again out of the hollow on the further side and spread at last across all the world. The city's bright colors had faded to an indistinct sameness, the brown hills and deeply eroded clay cliffs were blotched red by the departing sun, though the snow peaks above were still ablaze with light; the purple bases of the range receded into black, then into nothing, leaving Illimani standing forth white and cold, stone-dead as a once ardent hope, utterly alone in the luminous sky of the Andean night.

I descended afoot behind the last pack-train, a stony, thigh-aching half-hour from the pillar to the central plaza. The first information to reach me was that La Paz outdid in cost of living even Lima, which is criminal. The *boliviano* having but four fifths the value of the *sol*, I had fancied prices would be correspondingly lower; but here *two* units were often required where one had sufficed before, and the great majority scorned to do business in smaller coins. The hotels which my sadly mutilated letter of credit permitted me to enter were not only unsavory

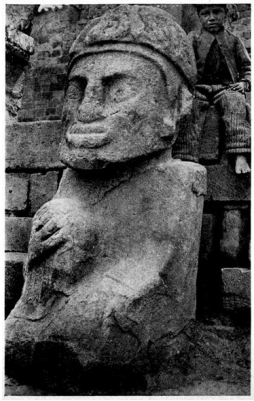
and atrociously managed, but had the barbarous custom of several beds in a room. Each in turn attempted to thrust me into a rumpled nest, with four or five others of unknown nationality or antecedents close beside it, within a battered door to which there was neither lock nor bolt. Whatever else I may be, I am distinctly not a gregarious being in that sense; whereupon they offered me a room with only *one* companion, as if there were any particular virtue in numbers! I brought up at last in the "Tambo Quirquincha," facing the Plaza Alonzo de Mendoza, an inn favored almost entirely by natives arriving on horseback.

The constitution of Bolivia asserts that Sucre is the real capital, but permits congress to choose its place of meeting, and "because of the constant danger from our two chief enemies" (Peru and Chile) "at the northern end of the Republic, the Government really resides in La Paz." How much the choice is governed by the fact that there is no railroad, but only a mule trail, to the "real capital," is a matter of conjecture. At any rate, the president has not been in Sucre in more than a dozen years, congress has its seat in La Paz, and the head of the army resides there—conditions which will no doubt continue, at least until the railroad reaches Sucre. On the other hand the former "Chuquisaca" is honored with the presence of the supreme court and the archbishop of Bolivia, who do not have to move often enough to make mule trails burdensome. But Sucre will not be comforted. Her chief newspaper is named "La Capital," each of its editorials ends with the argument "La Capital!" and it always refers to La Paz as "the present seat of Government."

This "seat of Government," perhaps the most Indian

capital of all South America, has the most purely Spanish name. It should still be called Chuquiyapu, as the aboriginals refer to it to-day, rather than by the trite Castilian designation that is duplicated a score of times throughout Spanish-America. The census of 1909 discovered 76,559 persons in the entire hole in the ground. Of these, 20,007 were rated "white," but as usual in Latin-America the enumerators got the color sadly mixed with the social position of the enumerated. Indeed, the chief of the census goes on to explain "white" as "descendants, more or less pure, of Spaniards, Europeans, or North Americans"—in other words, anyone with a distinct trace of European blood. There may be a third that many of strictly Caucasian race. Of the 3458 foreign residents, 86 were Americans; of 696 non-Catholics, 562 were foreign men, 40, foreign women, 193, Bolivian men ("chiefly atheists"), and *one* Bolivian woman. Bold woman, indeed, to admit it! The census rated 30% of the population as Indians; but here again the social status must have played its part, or else there are many non-resident country Indians often in the city. African blood is extremely rare, though slavery was not abolished until 1851. It is no climate for negroes. "The unmarried American women are nearly all teachers," the report continues, then takes a rap at the country's chief enemy for stealing her seaport and bottling her up within South America by remarking, "Las chilenas living in La Paz are almost without exception prostitutes." Most striking of all the data, perhaps, is the fact that of the 60,445 inhabitants over nineteen years of age, only 13,047 are married. But this does not mean that race suicide is imminent; rather that the priests have made the cost of marriage all but prohibitive to the lower

classes, and that many others are thereby influenced to consider the ceremony of minor importance. In the entire republic 16% are “alfabéticos,” that is, “know their letters,” a much more handy expression in Latin-American statistics than “read and write.” Only Honduras, in all America, is so low in this respect.



One of the two huge figures facing the grass-grown plaza of modern Tiahuanaco at the entrance to the church



The ancient god of Tiahuanaco before which the Indian woman, herding her pigs, bowed down in worship

Roughly speaking, the population is divided into three classes, as everywhere in the Andes, each shading into the other until the lines of demarkation are at best hazy. Of the whites, the census report itself asserts, “Sequestered, they knew more of theological subtleties than of religion, were more devout than moral, and had more preoccupations than ideas. There is even to-day no stimulus for their best faculties, and they have lost almost completely that virile character bequeathed them by their Spanish ancestors. They will work only at commerce or government employments that demand no corporeal fatigue.” Effeminate is the description that most quickly occurs to the foreigner; but they are no more so than all men of the “gente decente” class throughout South America. Even the whites take on something of that sulky dis-confidence, that

unobliging insolence of the Aymará character, and one quickly catches the feeling that the foreigner is disliked in Bolivia, at least far more so than in Peru. Another native, with the point of view of wide travel, assures us, “The whites are really Indians and cholos in their mode of thought. Thanks to the Aymará blood in his veins, or to the effect of that environment on his character, the paceño lacks docility, is uncommunicative, and is bored at all times at everything; hence his desire for excitement, for noise, and the resultant life in the canteens. In the three cold cities of Bolivia more liquor is consumed than in all the rest of the country; alcoholism is the national vice par excellence, and the surest way to win a fortune is to run a bar.”

But in any strict census the cholo is the most numerous class of La Paz. A native writer succinctly explains the rise of this mixed race: “As in the beginning the Spaniards had not within reach many women of their own race, they satisfied the physical and moral necessities of the sex with women of the vanquished tribes.... A few of these succeeded in inspiring real passion in the breasts of the hardy Conquistadores, sometimes even to the extent of causing the latter to marry themselves legally and Catholicly with our Indian women.” All hail to the inspiring Indian women! One must not, however, overlook the fact that “real passion” among the old Spanish Conquistadores was not so closely allied to soap and tooth-powder as in our own days. Short and sturdy—especially the women, who do not wear themselves out with dissipation—with quick little eyes, the cholos have much of the independence of the Aymará character; they are quite the opposite of servile, and somewhat despise both the whites and the aboriginals.

No country of South America has so large a percentage of pure Indian population as Bolivia. The Aymará is by nature silent and aloof, more sullen and cruel than the Quichua, and by no means so obsequious as the aboriginals of Cuzco. He never touches his hat to a passing gringo; unlike the Indian of Quito he crosses the main plaza in any dress he chooses, even carrying bundles and sitting on the benches; in the region roundabout, the race has inner organizations under their own chiefs which are virtually independent of the Government; yet in town he does as he is ordered, though sullenly, and shopkeepers drag him in to perform any low task at whatever reward they choose to give him. As *pongo*, or house-servant, he is farmed out as a child and becomes virtually a slave,—though that condition worries him little. A frequent "want-ad." in the papers of La Paz runs: "Se alquila pongo con taquia," that is, there is for rent an Indian servant with necessity of gathering for his master llama droppings as fuel. Festivals and fire-water are his chief amusements. Sunday he reserves as a day to get drunk, and couples are reputed to take turns at this recreation, so that one may be in condition to lead the other home when it is over. His music is melancholy beyond words. As a Bolivian puts it, "He lives without inquietude and without remorse, being dangerous only when he is full of liquor or religion. He is a beast of burden, uncomplaining, desires nothing, is apparently content with his fate, and looks with supreme indifference on all the rest of the world and its people."

The contrasts of life in La Paz are striking. Here an ancient scribe sits before a typewriter agency; there a group of Indian women squat before the crude products of the country, in front of the electric-

lighted emporium of a foreign merchant; electric tramways thrust aside trains of llamas even in the principal streets. Speaking of these street-cars, they crawl back and forth across town, sometimes zigzagging whole blocks for every street; and the dishevelled carriages for hire are generally drawn by four horses. For La Paz is broken and steep, often held up in layers by retaining walls, while the sidewalks are often toboggan-steep and always slippery. Houses which from the “Alto” seem on the level are found to be a hundred feet or more one above the other. It is one of the easiest cities to get lost in without being really lost; for one always comes out finally on some corner where a familiar landmark or half the city stands forth to orientate one at once. Many a street is crowded with Indians from the country, and especially with chola vendors who, there being no regular market-place, spread their wares where they will, squatting in unbroken rows on the sidewalks and driving the uncomplaining pedestrian into the slippery cobbled streets. One does not hurry in La Paz; the air is too scanty. A bogotano complained that he could not sleep there on account of the altitude! The temperature ranges from 6 degrees Centigrade in June to 18 in this mid-summer month of December. Yet even then it was somewhat wretched after sunset, and no one would choose to sit in pajamas in the central plaza at night. From eleven to three it grew almost uncomfortably warm for climbing about so up-and-down a place, and the brilliant unclouded sky was hard both on eyes and nerves at noonday.

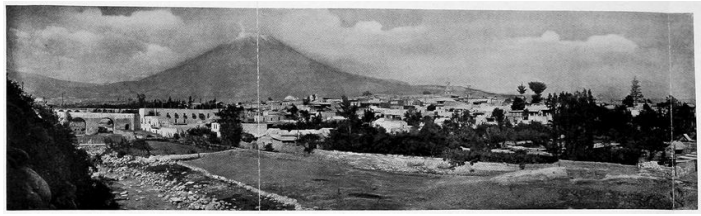
It is difficult for the stranger to get accustomed to seeing droves of llamas, with drivers dressed in the style of Inca days, soft-footing across the main plaza or patiently awaiting their masters, with the modern

congress building as a background. Congress, by the way, was in session during my days in La Paz. The visitors' gallery is high up above the perfectly circular chamber, giving the half-hundred representatives the appearance of being down at the bottom of a deep well. They smoked frequently, spoke sitting, were largely white, though the cholo class was by no means unrepresented, and among them were two priests in full vestments, their tonsures shining up at us like rays from the Middle Ages. There were also several who strangely resembled Tammany politicians of the popular cartoons, and nowhere was there any outward sign of genius, legislative or otherwise. While the man who had the "floor" kept his seat and droned endlessly through something or other, the presiding officer sat motionless and openly bored, and members slept, smoked, read newspapers, wrote letters, and otherwise busied themselves with the vital problems of the nation, after the fashion of legislative bodies the world over.

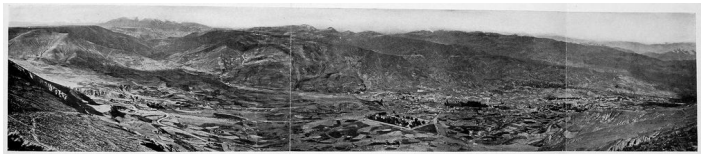
There is a distinct gradation in the costumes of La Paz, especially among the women. The men of the "gente decente" class, the whites and the consider-themselves-whites, ape Paris to the best of their ability, as in all Andean capitals. The higher-class cholo, ranging from shoe-makers to clerks—in both the American and English sense—wears more or less countrified and ill-fitting "European" garb, even to gloves and a cane on Sunday, if he can get them; for social standing depends chiefly on dress. The less ambitious half-caste wears the same leather sandal as the Indian, a coat showing a bit above or below his more or less crude-colored poncho, a coarse shirt without collar, and a heavy felt hat. A peculiarity of the paceño costume, as universal among the Indians

and poorer cholos as the cord around the knee of British workmen, is a slit in the back of the trouser-leg, showing a white, pajama-like undergarment above the bare brown ankle. The Indians, conservative as all their race, are slow to adopt the slightest change, and still dress much as in the time of the Incas. The men wear peaked knitted-wool "skating-caps" of gay colors, with earlaps, like clowns in a circus, often with a felt hat of varying tones of gray on top of it. Their ponchos of alpaca-wool are of solid colors,—orange, scarlet, purple, magenta—with some tone of red always the ruling favorite. Much of this cloth has for years come from Germany, though there is still considerable native weaving. Some go barefoot; more often they wear the heavy, well-made leather sandals that are displayed in large quantities in the market-stalls.

But the men of La Paz lend it little color compared to the women. These may be roughly divided, following the local phraseology, into "señoritas," "cholas," and "indias"; though these in turn subdivide, until there are six rather distinct costume classes, all shading somewhat into one another. First: The foreign women and a small number of native white ones copy the styles of Paris with more or less success. Second: The moderately well-to-do woman—and all those of the "gente decente" class during the morning hours of mass; it being against the rules to wear a hat in church—wrap themselves from head to foot in the jet black *manto* that gives them the appearance of stalking crows. These commonly powder their faces with what seems to be cheap flour, and are rarely startling in their beauty, though many are physically attractive between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three.



Arequipa, second city of Peru, in its desert oasis, backed by Misti Volcano



“Suddenly the bleak pampa falls away at one’s feet, and La Paz in its hole in the ground, 1,200 feet below, spreads out at the foot of Illimani and its sister peaks”

Third (to be marked Baedeker-fashion with two stars) comes the most picturesque figure in Bolivia, if not in South America,—la chola de La Paz. Her mate may blossom out in all the atrocities or “European” attire, but la chola clings tenaciously and wisely to the costume of her ancestors. Moreover, in this case the picturesque is not attended by its usual handmaid, uncleanliness. La Paz is not immaculate by modern standards, but at least la chola does her share toward making it seem so. She wears the usual multiplicity of skirts, but of a finer material and better fit than elsewhere, so that while she is still somewhat bulky about the hips, she is not disagreeably so. Her outer skirt is always of a solid color, distinctly gay, but never of the crudeness this garment attains among the Indian women. Of well-

woven cloth, it stops just halfway from foot to knee, never high enough to suggest immodesty and never low enough to drag on the ground, as is the distressing custom among many of the middle-class women up and down the Andes. Above this she wears two shawls—at least that is the nearest English equivalent in a male vocabulary—of some excellent material closely resembling silk, with perpendicular stripes of varying width and color, the whole gay in the extreme, yet never clashing with the rest of the costume so far as the mere male eye can detect. These being large, they are folded in the middle and thrown about the shoulders, a glimpse of the inner one adding to the gaiety of the ensemble, the fringe of both sweeping her ankles. Her hair, jet black, and coarse as a horse's mane, she parts in the middle and combs flat on either side, the ends of the braids, without the suggestion of a decoration of ribbon or flower, hanging sometimes inside, sometimes outside the shawls. From her ears swing heavy earrings of fantastic design some two inches long. Most striking of all is her unique hat. This is of straw, of "Panama" texture, with the general form of our derby or the Englishman's "bowler," lacquered or glazed over with something that causes it to reflect the brilliant sunlight of these heights like a mirror, and seeming at first sight as absurd and out of place as our own "'ard 'at" might to a visitor from Mars.

But one soon gets used to it, and even to like it, especially as la chola wears it at just the suggestion of a rakish angle, ever so slightly inclined over the right eye, though the near-certainty that she is wholly unconscious of that fact only adds to the attractiveness. When she grows excited, as in arguing the price of a nickel's-worth of beans in the market-place, she has a way of giving the front rim a flip of

the finger that knocks the hat back from her brow, under which circumstances she so vividly recalls a Western "drummer" in a heated but friendly argument in a bar-room, that one sighs with regret that she has not a half-burned cigar protruding at an aggressive angle from the corner of her mouth to complete the picture.

There remains but to speak of her footwear. This consists of a high shoe, native-made, on a very Parisian last, with high, slender "French heels," of every color a shoe could be by any stretch of propriety, but with cream or canary-color the favorite, a bow of the same material—it seems to be kid—down near the toe and a bundle of tassels at the top. Occasionally the shoes are high enough to join company with the halfway-to-the-knee skirt, below which peers the white lace of an inner petticoat, but even then when she stoops over in arguing a purchase, one notes a "clocked" stocking, that adds still more to the debauch of colors, going on up—at least to where it is fitting for a stranger to cease investigation.

Astonishment grows that la chola can afford such garments. The shoes alone cost as high as $10, and every stitch in sight is of a grade and workmanship that come high in Bolivia, that would not, indeed, be cheap in a far more productive country. Yet the chief wonder is the specklessness of her entire garb—doubly wonderful to one of long Andean experience. The glazed hat shines like the polished dome of a mosque, the skirts and shawls always look as if they had just that moment come out of a Parisian shop, and the cream-colored shoes have not a fly-speck upon them; yet la chola wears this costume at any hour and under all circumstances—in the street, at

least—and carries on her often soiling business in all parts of town. Some assert that she starves herself to dress; but her appearance does not uphold the contention. However she affords it, it is to be hoped that the means will continue, and that she will not some day abandon in favor of the atrocities of foreign fashions the most picturesque costume in South America, and the chief decoration of every outdoor scene and public gathering in La Paz.

The chola is not exactly *chic*; the thick-setness bequeathed her by Indian forebears makes that word fail. But she is as nearly so as the Andean Indian type can become; and as she trips along at a "snappy," energetic stride up and down the break-neck cobbled streets of La Paz, in her slender-waisted "French heels," and not only does *not* break her neck but does not even jar from its angle her "stiff 'at," the eye is as certain to note her passing as it would that of a meteor in the sky above. She is always full-cheeked and plump, often good to look at in spite of her rather bulky Indian features, and aggressively independent, going anywhere at any time she chooses in complete indifference to the oriental seclusion that still clings about the upper class women. She treats the rest of the world with a manner midway between sauciness and impudence, scorning anything on the plane of reading and writing with the disdain of her Indian forebears. She holds most of the places in the market and the *pulperías*, or little liquor and food shops, and ranges all the way from small shopkeeper to unservile serving-maid to well-to-do women. One gets the impression from a brief acquaintance that she is as superior to her mate, the shifty-eyed cholo, as are the women of Tehuantepec to their men. She speaks Aymará by choice, but will use Spanish when

necessary; and she is always at least comparatively young. One sees cholas up to thirty or thirty-five, but as they do not look as if they died off at that age, the natural conclusion is that they fall into a more somber and less agreeable costume. La chola is seldom married "legally and Catholicly," but if she has a baby, a mishap that not infrequently befalls her, she wears it as all Andean women wear their babies,—on her back. Instead of being carelessly slung in a blanket tied across mother's chest, however, this fortunate mite sits in a whole nest of clean, gay garments, the spotless white lining hanging down a foot or more on all sides of it, ending in a lace fringe. Indeed, this better care of baby is notable in La Paz, and has its influence even among the Indian women.

But I set out to give a half-dozen female classes. The fourth is the same chola, just a shade lower in the scale. She also wears a little round hat, but of brown or black felt. Her skirts and shawls are less gay and of coarser texture, her stockings are dark, and her footwear a shining-black, low slipper without heel. The fifth is usually a common servant, almost touching on the Indian woman, her garments sometimes descending to the plebeian, crude-colored, made-in-Germany-and-in-a-hurry *bayeta* in which the higher grade chola would scorn to be seen, though it is almost universal to her class elsewhere in the Andes. She wears also a shiny black slipper, but no stockings, though her brown plump leg looks almost like finely woven silk. There is no suggestion of immodesty in this absence of nether covering, yet when one of this class, for some sojourning-gringo reason, suddenly appears in the bare white legs of what at first glance seems a lady of our own race, the sight brings something of a shock. Of the three types

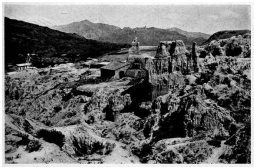
of chola, the third and fourth may blend a bit, sometimes to the extent of coiffing the latter in a glazed hat; but only the first ever falls into the foolishness of the “upper” class in flouring her face a bit, and at worst it is confined to a few sporadic cases.

At the bottom of the scale, as everywhere in the Andes, comes the Indian woman, varying a bit in garb, according to the degree of her poverty. She wears the round felt hat and endures the chill highland winds by wrapping several thick bayeta skirts of clashing colors around her waist in bunches, until she looks like—I am at a loss for a comparison that is ugly, awkward, and bulky enough;—may I say, like a very badly packed sack of assorted hardware with the looser and lighter things above the compressed middle? She likes red best, and as the day warms, every second or third of the skirts she removes one by one is of some shade of that color. Below them are bronzed legs and either bare feet with hoof-like soles, or, as La Paz and vicinity are distinctly stony, as well as cold, with a flat sandal of a single piece of leather, with thongs over the heel and between the large toe and the others. Solidly built as she is, one wonders how the Indian woman’s waist can support the weight of six or eight heavy bayeta skirts. Yet always, in addition to these, night or day, young or old, drunk or sober, filthy or only dirty, she carries a bundle on her back in the colored blanket tied across her chest, with, whenever possible—and her possibilities in this line are infinite—the head of a baby protruding somewhere from the load, now gazing earnestly at the road ahead, now dancing a crowing hornpipe on the broad back of the utterly unresponsive mother.

Now, mix all these types; put at least half the male population in gay ponchos, with every known shade of saffron, red, orange, purple, and the like; sprinkle among them youths with long hair tied in queues, wearing gay-striped ponchos that conceal all but their sturdy brown legs, who straggle up out of the tropical coca-country to the east to mingle with the city life; add a distinctive costume for each surrounding village, the noiseless llama-driver in his absurd cap, a number of Germans in Bolivian army uniforms, monks in black, brown, and white, nuns in gray, soldiers in light-gray uniforms, policemen in brown ones, hundreds of personal idiosyncracies in color and style, and it will be more easily understood why La Paz is justly entitled to that overworked word "picturesque," and why the aboriginal name of Chuquiyapu would still be more fitting than the trite Spanish one by which Bolivia's unofficial capital is known to the world. Moreover, children dress exactly like father or mother as soon as they can walk. La chola's little girl is her mother's exact miniature, glazed hat, gay shawl, fancy little high-heeled shoes and all, as likely as not with a doll in fancy garments on her back; the cholo's son paddles behind his father in long breeches slit up the back, gay poncho and felt hat; the little Indian girl trots after her mother in the selfsame red, green, or magenta skirts of bayeta, the round felt hat on her head, and always a bundle on her back, though she be barely three years old and the burden only a bundle of yarn—as if to accustom her early to the life she must lead to the day of her funeral.



Llamas of La Paz patiently awaiting the return of their driver



Down the valley below La Paz the pink and yellow soil stands in fantastic, rain-gashed cliffs

There are many fine walks in and about La Paz. On a sunny afternoon, brilliant-clear as an afternoon can be only at this height, it is a joy to follow a muddy little creek, known as the Chuquiyapu, down through the broken and tumbled gorge below the town, where the clay soil, now sandy white, now soft red, is rain-gashed into a hundred fantastic shapes. The slender, always-at-home eucalyptus and a species of weeping-willow line the way. Illimani raises its hoar head higher and higher into the sky above, seeming to calm the spirits with its majestic serenity and promise of perpetual coolness. So imperceptibly does the valley descend that one could drift clear down

into the languid tropical *yungas* that draws one on like a lodestone, like the "spicy garlic smells" of the Far East, until suddenly realizing how far the city has been left behind, one takes oneself figuratively by the neck and turns back to the town.

Or there is the climb out of the cuenca itself, a stiff hour to the pillar above. Once on the bleak puna, I wandered along the edge of the chasm to get a view of the city below from all angles. Near the station my eye was caught by the private car of a railroad superintendent. Fancying it might be that of my host on the journey up from Arequipa, I strolled toward it. A dishevelled fellow, his ragged coat close up around his neck, his long hair protruding like straw from a scarecrow, a two weeks' black beard bristling, sat on the back platform, peeling potatoes.

"Está aqui el Señor ——?" I asked casually.

A cloud of incomprehension seemed to pass over the scarecrow face. I repeated the question, thinking he might be one of those weak-minded natives so often found at large in South America.

"English! English is all I talks," came the startling reply out of the depths of the unshaven one, not only the accent but the presence of a few blackened stumps in lieu of teeth betraying both the nationality and the caste of the speaker. As I had never since leaving Panama seen a white man, much less an English-speaking person, doing manual labor my mistake was natural.

Thanks to the pleasure of having a hearer who could understand him, the exile's sad, not to say jumbled, story was soon forthcoming.

"I 'ad a good iducation, d' ye see," he began, "sent to collidge an' all that; but I tykes it into my 'ead t' go t'

sea. An' I was first-cabin steward on the 'Dinkskiver'—I've my papers an' discharge, an' ready t' show 'em t' any man—an' we runs int' Australy, an' I goes t' the —— Club there, an' a gentleman he introdjuces me t' the club, which is where all the best gentlemen belongs, d' ye see. An' 'e says, 'Look 'ere, if you'd like t' stop ashore we'll get the captain t' sign y' off an' we'll put y' up as steward t' the club,' d' ye see—I bein' a first-class cook an' can bake an' do any kind o' cookin'—an' I got me papers an' discharges right 'ere with me t' prove it. An' it was a right-o job, one o' the best jobs I ever 'ad, s' elp me. So I was steward t' the —— Club, d' ye see—an' I'll show the papers provin' it t' any man interested—but fin'ly one day I blew that job, d' ye see; an' I was three years out in Australy. But finally one day I says t' myself, 'I might as well see America, too.' An' I 'ad my passage pyde clean 'ome t' Liverpool, d' ye see, on the Roossian steamer ——, an' we come across t' *Ay*quique first, she bein' bound round the 'Orn 'ome t' Liverpool. But three of us gets ashore in *Ay*quique, d' ye see, an' we was messin' about there an'—an'—lookin' about, d' y' understand, an' fin'ly we was left ashore there in *Ay*quique, d' ye see, not 'avin' got on board again before the packet sailed. An' the British Consul 'e says, 'Well, I'll do anything I can fer ye, boys.' An' I 'ad money too, d' ye see, an' my passage was pyde clean 'ome t' Liverpool on the Roossian, only she slipped 'er 'ook while we was ashore an' there we was stranded in *Ay*quique.

"So then I gets up t' this 'ere Arequeepy" (It turned out later that he meant Arica) "an' I 'ad money on me, d' y' understand, but I was lookin' about an' seein' if I couldn't get work, d' ye see, an' messin' about 'ere an' there, an' fin'ly I 'adn't no money left an' was on the beach there in Arequeepy. An' so I

tykes on with the boss 'ere as cook—I bein' a first-class cook an' steward—an' the boss 'e likes me all right, too, d' ye see. Only d' ye know what 'e's pying me? Sixty bally paysoze a month! That is, I sye 'e's pying me that, but not a blightin' tanner 'as 'e give me yet, an' s' elp me, I ayn't so much as 'ad a shave since I took up with 'im. So finally I says, 'Well, 'ere, sir, I wants me money.' An' the boss says, All right, 'e'd pye me all right, only 'e 'adn't nothin' with 'im t' pye me then, the banks bein' all closed on a Sunday; an' 'e says, 'Well, I'll tell ye what I'll do. If you'll go up t' Bolivy on this 'ere trip I've got t' make, I'll pye ye soon as ever we get down again,' d' ye see. So I says, 'That'll do me,' an' we come up 'ere. An' I ayn't 'ad my clothes off on th' ole bolly trip, an' cookin' all the time. The boss 'e likes me all right, d' ye see, but I don't know 'ow about this 'ere Peruvan in the ki'chen with me, seein' as 'ow I can't understand 'is bloomin' lingo. An' I only jus' left a good cookin' job account o' a black feller. 'E was always pickin' up with me, an' fin'ly one day 'e calls me a —— —— ——, an' I says, 'You're another, ye —— —— black ——,' an' so I quit an' got this 'ere job with the boss —anythink at all t' keep y' afloat when y're stove in, d' ye see. An' yesterday mornin' we stops at a place, d' ye see, an' the boss says, 'Well, now, Joe, rustle out an' buy some pervisions'—an' me not knowin' a word o' the bally lingo! An' then las' night when I'd served 'em coffee at 'arf past midnight, the boss says, 'Well, ye might as well turn in an' do a wink o' sleep, Joe.' So I turns in under the dinin'-room tyble; only I couldn't sleep any all night fer the cold. Nobody 'ad took the trouble t' tell me it was cold up 'ere, d' ye understand, an' bein' in the tropicks I didn't see 'ow it could be—an' me been livin' in North Australy where it's a 'underd an' twenty in the shyde. But I

says t' myself, d 'ye see, I'll tyke one blanket along in cyse I 'ave a chance t' turn in on the trip. Only one blanket don't stop the cold at all 'ere, d' ye see, an' when the boss comes int' the dinin'-room this mornin' an' says, Well, Joe, let's 'ave some coffee,' I 'adn't slept none whatever. An' I 'ave that funny feelin's, my legs all 'eavy an' achin' an' feelin' that bad in the back o' the neck I don't know but I'm took with somethink. I'll tell ye this ayn't no white man's country, tyke it from me. When I gets down again, if the boss'll give me my money, I'm goin' t' make fer 'ome full speed a'ead, I'm tellin' ye an' not ashymed of it. It's all right-o fer you that talks the lingo an' as got 'ardened t' the cold. But fer me that couldn't sleep a wink all night fer bein' that cold—'ere in the tropicks, too—an' that busy cookin' day an' night I ayn't 'ad my clothes off On the trip, an' this 'ere achin' in my legs, d' ye see, as if I'd been took with somethink.... No, I ayn't been down t' the city, though o' course I see it from up 'ere, an' I was wonderin' what place it would be, bein' a moderate fine lookin' town fer these 'ere foreign countries. But we'll be goin' back t'night; the boss'll likely be 'ere any minute. An' I comes of a good family, d' ye see, an' they'll be 'appy t' see me 'ome again, they will. They give me a good iducation an' sent me t' collidge an' all that, d' ye see; only I took it int' me 'ead t' go t' sea an' come out t' Australy, an' I'll show any man me papers—"

But the bitter night air that was beginning to sweep across the plateau was not the only reason I decided to be on my way.

As the sun sets gradually down through the cuenca of La Paz, so it rises, gilding first the western precipice far up near the edge of the plateau, plainly seen from

my pillow in the “Tambo Quirquincha,” then slowly crawling down into the valley until, long after its first appearance, it finally floods in upon the city itself and lights up its streets and eastern house-walls. On such a cool, sun-flooded morning, known to the calendar as December fourth, a cholo boy of eleven presented himself to carry my baggage to the station, and did so easily, though I should have groaned at the load myself. The second-class coaches, here tramcars, left first, and slowly corkscrewed up out of the valley, the motorman, once we were started, coming inside where it was a bit less frigid, closing the door behind him, and giving all his attention to two comely cholas whose little black eyes jumped about like those of guinea-pigs.

On the “Alto” a brilliant sun somewhat tempered the biting cold of the puna at this early hour. At Viacha a better train awaited us, her engine turned south,—big vestibuled cars, marked “Ferrocarril á Bolivia” and plying to Antofagasta, a smooth, well-built roadbed that spoke of Chile and more modern countries, a diner ready for those who did not choose to buy boiled goat and frozen potatoes of the skirt-heaped Indian women squatting at the stations. Once off across the sandy, bunch-grass wilderness, flat as a sea, with herds of llamas grazing here and there, and little farms of all shapes hanging on the slopes of far-off and gradually receding hillsides, the train sped on as if it never intended to stop again. In truth there was little reason to do so, for it was as dreary a region as the imagination could picture. The few stations at which we halted briefly, single, wind-swept huts on the edge of salt marshes, bore names fitting to the landscape,—Silencio, Soledad, Eucalyptus—here a lone tree afforded the only

feature to which a name could be attached. Now and then mirages across the dismal desert gave the *lomitas* the appearance of islands, the heat waves seeming to be water lapping their shores.



Cholas of La Paz, in their striking costume

In mid-afternoon Oruro arose across the brown pampa, as Port Saïd rises from her muddy sea, and we rumbled into a flat, miserable, if from the miner's point of view important town, gloomy, bleak, perhaps the most desolate city my eyes had ever fallen upon. The squat adobe buildings, chiefly one-story, were in many cases thatched over tile roofs, giving them the appearance of wearing a weather-worn hat over colored caps, like the Indians of La Paz. Reddish-brown, utterly barren desert hills, with mine openings, formed the background. The wind drove the sand like needles into our faces and seemed bent on cutting our eyes out. Cholas ostentated themselves in somewhat the same costume as those of the seat of government, but

dulled and soiled by the all-pervading dust. Siberian, dreary, comfortless, the place seemed, yet its stores were well-stocked, and there were more gringos per capita than I had seen in many a day. Seeming to hate themselves and life in general, even the Americans had a haughty, unapproachable air, as in so many mining towns of the Andes, the unconscious result no doubt of caste treatment of Indian workmen.

I was only too glad when the train on a newly-constructed branch-line carried us off northeastward late next morning. A long string of mud monuments still marks the centuries'-old route across the trackless desert. Beehive-shaped huts of mud huddled in the sunshine here and there. We climbed in long zigzags over the crest of the Cuesta Colorada, drear hills of broken rock where only a scant brown bunch-grass finds foothold. Below the divide hearty gringo faces, more cheerful in this lower altitude, broke in now and then on the monotony of Latin-American features. Many tents marked with large letters "F. C. A. B." lined the way, interspersed with the stone kennels of workmen and their women, and the swarming natural consequences. There is something about a railroad construction-gang more suggestive of the world's progress than almost any other labor of man.

The new line petered out in the stony village of Changolla, some sixty-five miles from Oruro and halfway to Cochabamba, which it is in time due to reach. A stage-coach offered accommodations for the rest of the trip; but the joy of jolting all day in the thing was not commensurate with the pleasure of a new experience, even had the fare for both passengers and baggage not been prohibitive to a

scantily supplied wanderer. “See Sinclair there,” suggested the gringo chief, pointing to a sandy, unshaven Scot of more than six energetic feet, who was superintending the loading of all manner of railroad material into ponderous two-wheeled carts; and the hint was sufficient.

Changolla would have been excited that night were it possible for railroad constructors of long experience in many wild regions to become so. A fellow-countryman and predecessor of the New Zealander in charge of the camp had gone on a rampage with an American youth and turned bandits, in dime-novel style. Filled with distilled bravery, they had “held up” a nearby camp under the impression that the paymaster had arrived, and disappointed in this, they had shot a harmless Chilian employee. It took some time and all my papers to calm the suspicions of Changolla before I was offered lodging with the New Zealander. The “bandits” had sworn to shoot him and his assistants on sight, and a cardboard had been fastened over the window to prevent them from carrying out the threat by lamp-light as we ate, though none of the group showed any nervousness at the prospect.

But the highwaying of the pair was amateurish at best. They had made no plans whatever for getting out of town, had even to ask the way, and had as provisions—two bottles of whiskey. Thus it was not strange that they were rounded up before morning, and my hosts showed no surprise when dawn disclosed the prisoners shackled in one of the box-cars. They had been taken, asleep, some ten miles from the scene of the crime, with a bottle in one hand and a gun in the other. The chief looked his fellow-countryman over, expressed his sentiments

with a “You’re a hell of a bandit, you are,” lit a cigarette, and went on about his day’s work. Mounted on asses, with a stick through their elbows behind them, the pair set out for Cochabamba guarded by a score of soldiers. The punishment for murder in Bolivia is to be taken back to the scene of the crime and shot, though there is many a slip between the law and its execution, and judges, according to my hosts, must be properly “greased” before they will even indict a criminal, particularly when the complainant is a rich foreign company.

Meanwhile nine enormous carts, each drawn by six sleek and mighty mules, laden with all the bulky material required for railroad construction, to say nothing of my baggage, and covered in Forty-niner fashion, got under way. I set off ahead. The trail followed a broad, stony and sandy river-bed across which serpentined a yellow brook of brackish, luke-warm water which it was impossible by just two steps to cross dry-shod. The unfinished railroad flanked the barren, stony hills on the left, the embankment carved out of them being broken by unbuilt bridges and incomplete cuts and tunnels that cost me many a steep scramble. In the river-bed below passed a broken stream of Indians and cholos driving donkeys and mules, heavy-laden, as were most of the drivers themselves, their ponchos, chiefly of red with narrow perpendicular stripes, standing out against the barren brown landscape. Every little green patch on its edge was well-populated; many a hacienda or small village having become a railway construction camp where haughty young Englishmen gazed coldly and suspiciously at one of their race sinking his caste to travel on foot. The Briton who has “knocked about” the world until the corners have been blunted is an agreeable fellow; but in his

youthful, fresh-from-London days he is best avoided.

The embankment gave out, and we struck a gorge where the carts were saved only by the vigilance of "Sandy," astride his splendid macho, and the mules, as by a miracle. In the blazing, dusty, river-bed, sweat poured profusely as I plodded, clinging to the tail of a cart to be snatched across the ever-recurring stream. The towns were miserable, yet misery seems far less pitiful in perpetual summer. Worst of all, there was no water a man dared drink. The banks of the river were lined for broken spaces with large quantities of cobbles inside wire nets—an Argentine idea, according to the Scot—to keep the river from undermining and washing away the coming railroad. It seemed absurd to have to take such precautions against a tiny meandering brook, but in the rainy season this increases to a rushing torrent filling all the valley.

It was starving mid-afternoon before "Sandy" called a halt for "breakfast," and the peons prepared a *chupe*,—a stew of potatoes, charqui, rice, and anything else that it occurred to them to toss into the pot. At sunset we camped like gypsies in the stony, wind-blown, waterless river-bed; the mules were turned loose among several heaps of straw carried in one of the carts, and we rolled up in blankets on the sand. The drivers were a motley gang of Bolivian, Argentine, and Chilian cholos, each with the accent peculiar to his nationality. All had long knives in their belts and were inclined to use them on slight provocation. Several carried their wives, or at least their women, with them in the carts, sometimes with a child or two in addition.

Next day as I plodded beside his long-legged mule, "Sandy" whiled away the long, hot hours with

reminiscences.

“Did they tell you in Juliaca how I cleaned out their damned hotel,” he asked.

They had, but I wanted “Sandy’s” own version of the affair.

“Well, we were playing billiards, when some greaser said something about gringos, and I told him to shut up. The crowd was too drunk to know better, so I had to take a bunch of billiard-cues and clean out the thirty-two of them. It cost me just a hundred and twelve pounds—twelve for the greasers’ doctor-bills and a hundred to get my friend the subprefect to lie low until I could get over the line.

“Before the railway came I used to transport across the desert from Arica,” he went on, steering his mule around a hollow of broken rock, “and I had a little dog named Bobbie Burns. He was a wise little dog, and as the desert sand burned his feet he got still wiser, and used to run way ahead of me, a mile or so, so far he could just see me, and then dig a hole in the sand and lie in it until I was a mile ahead and almost out of sight again; and then he would race by me with a ‘how-d’-do’ yelp and dig another hole. A chileno greaser killed that little dog,” said “Sandy,” gazing dreamily across the mirage-flowing landscape, “and I never got a chance to do as much for him.”

The Capinota river we had been following, or rather criss-crossing, for two days came to an alfalfa-green village, exceedingly restful to eyes that had been gazing unbrokenly on the sun-flooded desert, and the trail struck off at right angles up a branch of a stream milky with dust. That night we camped again in the sand at the end of the haul, in celebration of which “Sandy” shaved and put on a purple neckcloth to

scream at his red hair. There I took leave of him, with seventeen miles still separating me from Cochabamba. It was not the problem of transporting myself, but rather my baggage, that forced me to trot several times into blazing-hot Parotani in quest of a donkey—all in vain. At length—strange chances one takes in South America—I caught a total stranger bound for the city, and he was soon lost in the dust ahead, with all my possessions on the crupper of his mule. The sweating trail with its plaguing brook grew in time into a road on the left bank; huts, then entire villages sprang up beside me; troops of pack-animals increased to an almost steady stream, and at four I overtook my baggage in Vinto, recovered it by payment of a *boliviano*, and was soon screaming in a little toy train on a 75-centimeter-gage track, at the terrifying speed of an hour and forty minutes for the twelve miles, into the second city of Bolivia.

CHAPTER XIX
ON FOOT ACROSS TROPICAL BOLIVIA

There are three such “railroads” running out of Cochabamba, though none of them venture more than a few miles. All were brought up piecemeal on muleback or on massive two-wheel carts, like the first steamers on Titicaca, for it is what the natives call a “mediterranean” town. One is a steam line with a single toy locomotive, which starts every hour from the central plaza, for the suburb Calacala, “noted” for its baths, splitting the ears with its infantile shriek and spitting hot cinders upon all the bench-holders in the vicinity. A cochabambino assured me that I could not believe it possible this “enormous” locomotive had been brought “from Germany” on muleback; but as he had never been further out of town than its three little lines could carry him, his conception of locomotives was somewhat atrophied. This one was so childlike that once, when it suddenly started up as I was crossing the street, I unconsciously put out a hand to thrust it back until I had passed.

Cochabamba, 60,000 inhabitants by its own count,

the majority of whom have never left its suburbs, is conceded to be the second city of Bolivia, and considers itself the first, after the South American fashion. It is constantly quarrelling with La Paz as to which shall furnish the country its president, a truce being usually patched up by alternating the honor. The population of Bolivia is made up of just such heterogeneous groups, among which there exists a profound aversion. The rivalry is particularly tenacious between the *Collas*, those, chiefly of the Aymará race, inhabiting the *Collao*, or northern portion of the country bordering on Titicaca, and the south of the republic, containing a large proportion of Quichua blood and partaking of many of the characteristics of that timid, dreamy race. Like the Quichua in general, the cochabambino is wedded to his native soil, with an ineradicable affection for it, partly because isolation keeps its customs largely unchanged. The tongue of the Incas is still the chief one of the lower classes; the town's name, indeed, is derived from the Quichua words *kocha* (lake) and *pampa* (plain)—which the Conquistadores as usual corrupted by pronouncing it as if they had a cold in the head. There is little question but that the surrounding valley was once a lake-bottom. Founded in 1574, the place was christened by a high-sounding Spanish name, which, as so often happened in South America, failed to stick. It has a restful, summer-resort air, with birds singing in its shaded alamedas, reminding one faintly of Granada, with its sand and cactus and half-arid soil requiring irrigation. The little river Cocha wanders by the north and east sides of the town on its way to join the Mamoré; the surrounding hills are less brown than the altiplanicie, half-clothed with trees and with patches of green running up the sides of the range. The showers were

no highland drizzles, but perfect sheets of water for an hour or more—fine prospects for my continued travels at the end of wheel-going!

Yet it is a colorless place compared to La Paz. Adobe is the chief building material; there is no structure of great importance, though "La Compañía" of the early Jesuits has the usual ornate façade. Its houses are of the light yellow mud of the surrounding plain, less painted than those of the capital, and even the tile roofs are of so dull and dusty a red as scarcely to excite the eye. On a barren knoll at the back of the town is a ruined adobe bull-ring, once large and ornate, and still higher up, before the monument to the "Heroes of Cochabamba," the gaze stretches away across a yellowish land, flat as a sea, baking in the blazing sunshine. Costumes, too, show far less color than those of La Paz. La chola wears a similar hat, but it is flatter and therefore uglier, and she has neither the immaculateness, instinct for pleasing color combinations, nor the sprightliness of her Aymará cousin. Natives of pure Caucasian blood are so rare as to be almost conspicuous. Important commerce is largely in the hands of Germans; even the English vice-consul was a Teuton. The municipal library bore a large sign announcing that it was open from 9 to 11, 1 to 4, and 7 to 9. At nine-thirty the doddering old librarian appeared, and at 10:05, when he had finished reading the morning paper and smoking his cigarette, he put on his hat and remarked, "Nos vamos, señores," and go we did, sure enough. In the afternoon and evening he did not appear. Cochabamba has been called the paradise of priests. Fat, coarse-featured men of the cloth swarm, and the town is rated the most fanatical in Bolivia. As late as ten years ago a *hogüera* was lighted in the central plaza to carry out an *auto de fé* against a

Protestant who had dared to preach his doctrines in a private house, the materials, for the inquisitorial bonfire being the holy books and furniture of the evangelist. The troops were called upon to interfere and prevented the consummation of the act, but they were not able to keep the “heretics” from being cruelly stoned by the populace. The approach of the railway, however, the arrival of many gringos, and a now firmly established mission-school with a government subsidy is wearing down somewhat this medieval point of view.

In a corner of the main plaza of Cochabamba, where the sunshine streaks upon it through the trees, was the “gringo bench,” a rendezvous at which there was always to be found at least an American and an odd Englishman or two, generally miners and even more generally penniless. For Bolivia had proved less golden than the rumors that had oozed forth from her interior, and there is no better climate than that of Cochabamba in which to sit waiting for whatever chooses to turn up next. At the time of my arrival the bench had three principal occupants. The most permanent fixture was “Old Man Simpson,” over eighty, not merely a fellow-countryman, but originally from the same town in which I had spent my youth; indeed, he was still a subscriber to the weekly newspaper I had earned more than one school-day dollar folding and “carrying.” A “Forty-niner” who had drifted from California to Chile, he had been in South America unbrokenly—though frequently “broke”—many more years than I had been on earth, his fortunes rising and falling with miner’s luck and open-handedness, his “Spanish” still atrocious. Now he was so nearly blind that he could recognize us one from another only by our voices; and every day he sat from sunrise to dusk, except for

his “breakfast” and siesta from eleven to one, in the shaded corner of the plaza, a cud of coca-leaves in one cheek, his gnarled and leathery hands folded on the head of his *chonta* cane. All day long he would weave endless tales of the prospector’s life, wandering disconnectedly over all the western side of the continent, as long as he could get a single gringo to sit and listen. When he could not, and was, or fancied himself, alone, he sat hour after hour motionless, murmuring each time the clock in the tower above struck, “Well, it’s —— o’clock,” and relapsing again into silence.

After Simpson came Sampson, an extraordinary cockney, resourceful, quick-witted, full of quaint sayings, of a strikingly personal philosophy of life, so much of a “hustler” that his initiative often boiled over into audacity. He spoke fluently a colloquial Spanish and considerable Quichua, chewed coca incessantly, and came close to being the ugliest man I had ever set eyes upon. This last mentioned quality was enhanced by the slap-stick clown garb he wore, —faded overalls with a bib, some remnants of shoes here and there about his ham-like feet, a woolen neckcloth à la Whitechapel, and an Indian felt hat on the back of his bullet head. His view of life he summed up—among friends—briefly with, “I am strictly honest; I never tyke anything I can’t reach.” As to his resourcefulness: in this identical garb he had gained the entrée to the haughtiest class of natives, with whom outward appearances constitute some 99 percent., and had talked his hypnotic way into the confidence of a lawyer and ex-senator of Cochabamba to such an extent that the latter contemplated giving him charge of a large tract of land to plant with cotton.

The third bencher, Tommy Cox, had been "down inside" with Sampson on some prospecting scheme that had failed. Originally from Toronto, he was in appearance and speech a "typical Englishman," a little sandy-haired fellow of twenty-five, the antithesis of his companion in initiative, of so dim a personality compared to Sampson that one barely noted his existence when the two were together.

When I arrived in Cochabamba nothing was more certain than that I should continue my tramp down the Andes, through Sucre and Potosí, into the Argentine. But plans do not keep well in so warm a climate. I sat one day musing on the trip ahead of me, when Sampson cut in:

"'Ere! If you're looking for something new, why don't you shoot across country by Santa Cruz to the Paraguay river and down to Asunción and B. A.? Least I don't think it's never been done by a white man alone and afoot."

The idea sprouted. I suddenly discovered that I was weary of high altitudes and treeless *punas*, of the drear sameness of the Andes and the constant repetition of the *serranos* that inhabit them. To that moment I had, like most of the world, conceived of Bolivia as a lofty plateau, arid and cold; whereas more than half of it is a vast, tropical lowland, spreading away from the slopes of the Andes to the borders of Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina, making it the third largest country of South America. There was, it seemed, a fourth way of entering or leaving this mediterranean land, and it was neither by way of Mollendo, Arica, nor Antofagasta; but a route all but unknown to the world at large, yet followed by many of its imports and exports. The *montaña* or *yungas* promised a new type of people, a new style of

life; a knowledge of South America would be only half complete without including in my itinerary the immense hot-lands and river-webbed wilderness stretching eastward from the Andes. I wished some day to visit Paraguay, anyway; the distance to Puerto Suarez was evidently greater than to railhead in the Argentine—by striking an average of varying information, with the assistance of such maps as the local librarian gave me time to glance over, I came to the conclusion that it was roughly 800 miles—but on the other hand much of this new route was floor-flat, and I had had my fill of climbing over such labyrinths of mountain ranges as lay to the south. True, in this season the region to the east would be wet and muddy, but with no bitter cold nights in prospect I could throw away much of my load, and at least there would be brilliant sunshine most of the time, which is half of life. Besides, is not the chief joy of travel the privilege of suddenly and unexpectedly smashing fixed plans, to replace them with something hitherto undreamed?

To all these arguments there was added another still more potent. When I began to make inquiries, I learned that the proposed trip was “impossible.” Several of my informants quoted recently received letters to prove it. The last hundred leagues would be entirely under water; the wild Indians of the Monte Grande would see to it that I should not get so far, to say nothing of miles of chest-deep mud-holes, “tigers,” and swarms of even more savage insects, and many days without food or human habitation. That settled it. In Bogotá the tramp down the Andes had been “impossible,” but had long since lost completely that charming quality. I decided to strike eastward in quest of the Paraguay.

"I wouldn't mind tackling it myself," sighed Tommy, when I mentioned my decision to the benchers. "I'm badly needed in B. A. But I'm stony broke. Of course if I could find anyone who would take along a steamer-trunk-size man as excess baggage—"

"If the senator doesn't make up his wandering Bolivian mind soon, I'll quit embellishing this plaza myself," put in the cockney, though there was a glint in his eye that suggested, long afterward, that he had meant the hint as a hoax, and considered the trip as impossible as did the rest of Cochabamba.

Were I to have a companion, I should not have chosen Sampson. He was a man with far too much mind of his own to be good company in an uncivilized wilderness. Tommy, diffident, unresourceful, totally lacking in initiative, without self-confidence, wholly innocent of Spanish, to all appearance tractable and harmless, was much to be preferred. Moreover, he was better looking. Though I was thinly furnished with *bolivianos* and the nearest possible source of supply was Buenos Aires, I concluded that the code of world-wanderers forbade me to leave Tommy to waste away on the "gringo bench," and we joined forces. He was to carry his proportionate share of such baggage as I could not throw away, including the tin kitchenette and the bottle of 40 percent. alcohol that went with it—if experience proved I could trust him with that—leaving me, thanks also to the offer of a fellow-countryman to carry the developing-tanks to Santa Cruz on his cargo-mule, only a moderate load. I should have bought a donkey, or another *chusco*, rather than turn ourselves into pack-animals, but for two reasons: first, such a purchase would have relieved me of most of the billetes I had left;

secondly, the fate of “Cleopatra” and “Chusquito” caused me to doubt whether any four-footed animal could endure the journey.

It was two months from the day I had walked into Cuzco that one of Cochabamba’s toy trains carried us past adobe towns and mud fences, with dome-shaped huts that gave the scene an oriental touch, and set us down in Punata in time for dinner in the *picantería* where Tommy had once before washed down a similar plate of stringy roast pork with a glass of chicha. Then we swung on our packs and struck eastward into the unknown.

Beyond Arani next morning came the real parting of the ways. The trail that swung to the right along the base of the hills went on to Sucre and the silver mountain; that by which we zigzagged up the face of a stony range led across the continent. Here the mountains closed in, and the vast, fertile, yet dreary and desolate plain of Cochabamba, that had seemed to stretch out interminably in the brilliant sunshine, disappeared at length below a swell of land and was lost forever behind us.

For a week the going was not unlike that down the Andes, though it grew gradually lower as the endless ridges of the eastern slope calmed down slowly, like the waves of some tempestuous sea. It was only on the road that I began really to make the acquaintance of Tommy. In spite of his Canadian birth he dressed like a Liverpool dock-laborer, with a heavy cap, a kerchief about his neck, and a heavy winter vest—that is, “w’stc’t”—which he could not be induced to shed, however hot the climate, though he readily enough removed his coat. He spoke with a strong “English accent,” and a man following behind with a basket could have picked up enough H’s to

have started a supply-store of those scarce articles in Whitechapel itself. He had given Cochabamba ample opportunity to show its gratitude at his departure, but the fourteen *bolivianos* of his last eleemosynary gleanings turned out to be barely sufficient to keep him in cigarettes on the journey. His share of the load he carried in the half of a hectic tablecloth, of mysterious origin, tied across his chest, as an Indian woman carries her latest offspring. His own possessions consisted wholly and exclusively of a large, sharp-pointed, proudly-scoured trowel; for Tommy was by profession a bricklayer and mason. This general convenience, weapon, sign of caste, and hope of better days to come, he wore through the band of his trousers, as the Bolivian peon carries his long knife, and the services it performed were unlimited. I was never nearer throwing my kodak into a mud-hole than when it failed to catch Tommy solemnly eating soft-boiled eggs with the point of his faithful trowel.

The hospitality of the Bolivian soon proved low, even in comparison with the rest of the Andes, and every meal and lodging cost us a struggle. At Pocona, for example, I ended a 36-mile walk down the nose of a range on which a coach road descended by never-ending S's to a narrow valley bottom below. Tommy had fallen behind, and I had begun to wonder whether he could endure the pace our scantiness of funds made necessary. As I debouched into the grass-grown plaza, I paused to ask a dim-minded person drowsing before one of the doors where one could find a night's lodging. He silently projected his lips toward a building before which stood the empty stage-coach. There a group of supercilious, unwashed cholos of varying stages of insobriety informed me, with an air that plainly said "We are purposely

deceiving you," first, that there was no tambo in town, then that there was accommodation only for travelers "á bestia."

"For horsemen only, eh?" I cried, in the voice natural to an all-day fast. "Where does the corregidor live?" What are gobernadores in Peru become corregidores in Bolivia.

"Down the street," mouthed a half-drunken fellow, with a lazy toss of the head in no particular direction.

I snatched a youth out of the group and pushed him before me. Some way down the foot-torturing cobbles he halted at the open door of the usual slatternly, earth-floored room, saying:

"The corregidor lives here."

"Go in and fetch him," I answered, blocking his attempted retreat. He called out two or three times in the singsong with which neighbors greet neighbors in the Andes, then obeyed my order to enter and summon the "authority"—at least he disappeared inside the building. Some time later two chola girls appeared at the door to ask in pretended surprise what I desired.

"Where is the corregidor?"

"He is in the country. He doesn't live here," they replied respectively in one breath, betraying themselves by their carelessness in not rehearsing the reply before appearing.

"Where is the boy who brought me here?"

"Escapado—he escaped—through the back door."

I had long ago learned this trick of local "authorities" in Andean villages of hiding away at the approach of

a stranger bearing orders from the government, and the complicity of all the population in the concealment. But I had learned, also, one means of bringing him to light. I marched into the house and, throwing my pack on an adobe divan covered with blankets, announced that I should sleep there. The cholas would call the corregidor at once, they had called him, they couldn't call him, he was coming in a minute, he did not live in town, and a dozen other falsehoods poured in a chaotic flood from their lips. For an hour I held to the divan. But as evening settled down, it became evident that the ruse of Peru would not work in Bolivia; that though I might sleep there by force, I should remain thirsty and hungry. I shouldered my bundle and hobbled back to the plaza. There ten centavos spent for chicha convinced the sceptical inhabitants that I was not penniless, and in time it paved the way to a request for food.

"Cómo no?" came the mechanical answer, and a long time after dark a big bowl of broth, luke-warm of temperature but sizzling hot with *ají*, was followed by some hashed black *chuño*, or frozen potatoes, mixed with an egg, and some bran-like bread.

"How much do I owe?" I asked when I finished.

"Pues—ah—será setenta centavos."

"Está bién. And who is going to sleep on those beds?" I continued, pointing to the long adobe divans, each with a roll of thin mattress and blankets, at either end of the room.

"Nadie."

"No one? How much do you charge for a bed?"

"Un boliviano, no más," replied the chola in that droning, soothing voice in which the Andean always

names an exorbitant price which he knows the traveler cannot refuse to pay. “Voy á tender, no?” “Yes, spread it out.”

I was stripping to crawl into the “star” bed of the tambo—in which only horsemen are accommodated—when there sounded at the door I had fastened ajar with a bench, the worn and humble voice of Tommy. Having fallen behind because of a half-sprained ankle, he had stumbled on into town down that stony, looping descent which I had found bad enough even by day. Fortunately there was a bit of cold broth and some chuño left, after devouring which he turned in on the other divan.

Next day we passed a wind-blown, rain-gashed plain, with a few huts on which to practice my neglected Quichua and, early in the afternoon, reached Totora, so named from a long rush which grows in swampy ground. It is the largest town between Cochabamba and Santa Cruz and capital of a province, with several thousand inhabitants. Set in a hollow of the treeless hills, it was dreary and colorless as a mining town, with breakneck cobbled streets, and a little tile-paved plaza surrounded by what Tommy called “drapers’ shops,” all with the selfsame display of bayeta and other crude-colored cloths. The vista of many a street was enlivened by swinging red signs, like Japanese or Chinese banners, above the doors where chicha was for sale. Far better, and almost given away in Colombia, this native drink had come to cost twice what a larger glass of beer would in the United States. In the upper corner of the plaza we spread ourselves at ease on a shaded bench. Around the *pila* in the center of the square a constant crowd carrying earthen jars fought for the two trickles of water. Behind us stood what dared to call itself the

"Hotel Union," consisting of a billiard-table and an absent proprietor, who, according to the disinterested cholas, might be back during the evening to discuss with us our offer to spend the night with him. The neighboring tambo was closed "because of a wedding in the family," so rare a ceremony in Bolivia that we had not the heart to complain. Tommy tired of sitting, and went to lie down in frank "hobo" fashion in the plaza band-stand. As dusk came on we made a round of the shops, warned that there would be none for some days ahead. We bought eggs, and blocks of crude sugar, now called *empanada*, coca to chew when thirsty, several loaves of the bran-like bread that weighed us down like grindstones, and some shelled peanuts which we found next day to be unroasted. Any chip of stone or scrap of iron served as weights in the shops, though some had brass cups full of shot, over which a paper was pasted by the rare government inspector, soon to "break itself" until he came again. That purchaser who got twelve ounces to his pound was as lucky as the one whose *vara* came anywhere near being a yard long. A half-pound weight was commonly the heaviest on hand, and the old woman who sold us sugar poured that amount in with the weight in the other side of the scales, and so on until she had made up the unprecedented quantity we demanded.

A telegraph wire strode bandy-legged over the hills with us on the twenty broken and panting miles to Duraznillo. Across a flanking valley the range was mottled with all colors from deep red to Nile-green, the depths of its gullies purple under dense cloud-shadows, while all the rest of the world lay in brilliant sunshine, and vast banks of snowy-white clouds took on fantastic shapes which the

imagination could animate into all manner of strange beings, or people with innumerable plots and fairy-tales. One mighty descent brought us to a “river,” but at the very moment we reached it, it turned suddenly muddy from rains somewhere in the hills above and spoiled our plan for a “bathe,” as Tommy expressed it. In the dry, burning hills beyond, my companion went astray, but found himself again by following my hob-nailed footsteps. He had so little initiative that he would not lead the way, and his favorite plan of plodding at my very heels having been vetoed, as he did not mix well with the landscape, he commonly trailed a half-mile behind, usually taking care not to lose sight of me.

Duraznillo had a public “rest-house” that had once been an adobe chapel, but which was now as bare as a millionaire’s room in heaven. I boiled oatmeal and eggs in the water Tommy brought from a stagnant pool not far away, but waited in vain for the return of the only European-clad resident, who had volunteered to “arrange us.” As the shades of night spread, the beaten-mud floor looked harder and harder, and in nosing about we were astonished to discover several once-imported mattresses covering a pile of adobe bricks in the back *corredor* of the chief house of the village, apparently uninhabited. Still, it was possible that the local “authority” would in time come out of hiding, and we lolled patiently, if road-weary, in the moonlight.

We had waited until—well, perhaps eight, though without a watch it seemed hours later, when patience ceased to be a virtue, and we slipped through a hole in the mud fence, each to embrace a mattress. It may be that a trap had been set for us. As we approached the wall again, an unusually large

half-Indian, wrapped in a poncho, loomed up on the other side, and shouted in an authoritative voice:

“What are you doing inside that fence?”

Now I do not like any man to address me in that tone, least of all a South American Indian. It is neither good training for his own primitive character nor advantageous to future gringo travelers.

“Speaking to me, indio?” I demanded.

“I am corregidor of Duraznillo, also guardian of this house.”

“Corregidor! Then you are the very fellow we have been looking for these last four hours. You will kindly lend us two mattresses to sleep on.”

“I will not lend you *one* mattress to sleep on. What are you doing?”

Plainly he was of Aymará rather than meek Quichua blood.

“And where have you been hiding yourself, señor corregidor? We have a letter for you from the government.”

“Ugh!” he snorted, with an effort at sarcasm. “Let’s see that letter from the government.”

“It is in my pack in the chapel.”

“Bring it over here.”

“Since when have caballeros run after Indians to show them government orders? Are you going to lend us two mattresses?”

“Not one!”

“Tommy, chuck them over.”

He did so with trembling hands, for something had

given the diminutive bricklayer an extraordinary respect for “authorities.” The corregidor followed at our heels, bellowing, as we carried our finds into the ex-chapel and spread them out. A stocky youth and a woman with a flickering candle appeared behind him in the doorway, and the Indian demanded my papers.

“Can you read?” I asked.

“I can,” he snarled; which he could, to the extent of spelling out the order at about a line a minute.

“Bien,” he admitted at last, in a surly voice, “but you are to ask for things, not take them.”

“From a corregidor who hides himself?”

“And the prefect orders that you be furnished what you need *at a just price*,” he added triumphantly, ignoring my reply.

“Exactly.”

“Then you will pay two bolivianos for each mattress.”

“Very well; but you will first make out a receipt for that amount, that I may send it back to the prefect.”

It was not the first time I had played this unfailing card against an Andean “authority” attempting extortion. He knew he was beaten; for though he could read, after a Bolivian fashion, he probably could not write, and certainly would not dare let such a document reach the prefect. Like a true Latin-American, however, he saved his face as long as possible:

“Very well, give me some paper to write it on.”

“As corregidor, you should furnish your own paper. I have none.”

"Well, you may use one mattress, but not two," he growled.

"You lose. In *my* country we are not accustomed to sleep two on the same mattress."

A shiver of rage seemed to pass over him, while his Castilian pride struggled for expression behind his mask of Indian features. Then he faded away into the night and was heard no more, though I was not so certain of him as not to prop a heavy wooden beam against the door in such a way that an attempt to sneak in upon us during the night would quite likely have been followed in the morning by the intruder's funeral.

Never-ending spiral descents, so steep we had to set the brakes constantly, making our thighs ache, brought us at last to a hot and stony river-bed across which a luke-warm, knee-deep "river" snaked its way incessantly. We stuffed leggings and *Fusslappen* into our bundles and walked all the rest of the day barefoot in our unlaced boots, crossing the stream perhaps a hundred times, and envying the hoof-soled natives as often as we paused to pull on our footwear. Tommy found it too much trouble to roll down his trousers after each crossing, and complained of sunburned legs for days to come. But at least the going was level. The stillness and lack of population recalled Jaen in the far north of Peru. For hours we tramped stonily between ever lower cactus-grown hills, only the mournful note of the jungle-dove breaking the silence. The first gnats and giant-jawed insects we were doomed to endure more and more as we advanced to the eastward began to annoy us. As scrub trees thickened, bird life grew more prevalent. Bands of parrakeets screamed by, as always along these dry, tropical river-beds; now and

then a parrot or two, forerunners of many to come, passed overhead. The rare huts squatting in scant patches of shade were now of mere open-work poles. To sleep in them was far less inviting than to lie on the ground under a shrub.



"Sandy" leading his train of carts loaded with construction material for the railroad to Cochabamba



The "gringo bench" of Cochabamba,—left to right, "Old Man Simpson;" Tommy Cox; Sampson, the Cockney; Owen, and Scribner

But the Andes did not subside so easily. Next

morning the trail shook off the river and climbed wearily to a wind-swept puna, then dropped by a leg-straining *bajada* into another cañon with a muddy, lukewarm brook, only to pant upward again to another summit. Several times each day we sweated to a hilltop and lay down in a cool breeze we should not often enjoy in the days to come. Range back of blue range spread away into ever-bluer, purple distance. The region recalled the Malay Peninsula—with all its romance rubbed off and even more inhospitable inhabitants tucked away in the undergrowth. Yet surely, if slowly, the Andes were flattening down, and each summit was less lofty than the preceding.

One afternoon passing arrieros told us that three of our *paisanos* were not far ahead. We increased our pace and strode at five, with thirty miles in our legs, into the miserable mud town of Chilón. In the corral and corredor back through one of the dismal dwellings we found, camped with their four mules, the American prospectors, Scribner, Kimball, and Owen, who had burdened themselves with my developing-tank. We foraged together. These interior villages are less useful to the seeker after supplies than a lone country hut, for in them each native "passes the buck" by sending the inquirer on to someone else. The traveler who has lived for days chiefly on the anticipation of what he will eat in the town he has been assured is "provided with everything," is fortunate to collect the ingredients of even one real meal, and that only at the expense of wandering from door to door, like a Buddhist priest with his begging-bowl. Chilón was even more anemic and indifferent than usual. It is rated the most fever-stricken region of Bolivia, and the government has striven in vain to drive out the almost universal

chucho by planting the eucalyptus and sending doctors to study its cause. The only water to be had was a yellow liquid mud dipped up in the back yard. Kimball prepared to cook in it some of the *charqui* he had bought at blockade prices, only to bring to light a swarm of maggots. A can of peaches from Chile—some time in the last century—cost two bolivianos; four ounces of tea, a boliviano, a pound of sugar as much, and at that it was a coarse, dirty, stony stuff, so hard an ax was required to break it. One slattern a bit less sullen in aspect than the town in general asked if we "knew how" to eat *mote* and *charol*. We assured her we knew how to eat anything we could get our fingers on, and she set before us a single plate of boiled shelled corn and little cubes of fried fat pork, which we ate with the spoons nature had provided us. In the entire town we gleaned two whole eggs. Most of the huts that displayed them answered with that clumsy old Andean lie, "Son ajenos—They belong to some one else." A woman squatting behind one of the huts admitted she had eggs to sell, but said she did not feel like getting up to sell them. That was the attitude of all Chilón. It may be that the hookworm, as well as the *chucho*, was prevalent.

When I awoke at dawn, Kimball, in retaliation for the state of the charqui, had already picked a chicken from one of the trees in the corral and managed to stuff it into his alforjas without a squawk. By the time we were off, it began to rain. A half-sand, half-mud road splashed and skated away through semi-tropical scrub woods, caking our feet with glue-like mud, and soaking our garments from both inside and out. In spite of the rain the tropical heat weighed down upon us like water-logged blankets, and nowhere was there water to drink.

Rarely among the spiny scrub trees we came upon a miserable hut of poles and sticks, in each of which lounged a dozen or so of the colorless, mongrel natives of the region. *Rancho* was being cooked in one such hovel, and though the householders showed no joy, or any other species of emotion, at our presence, when the meal was ready, a small wash-basin of rice, charqui, and pepper stew was set on the ground before us, and we were each silently handed a wooden spoon. There was, of course, no bread, but a gourd bowl of *mote* was added for our competition. This was one contest in which Tommy was easily my superior. The languid, fever-yellow chola would not accept payment for the food, though she did so readily enough for the chica we had drunk, calling up to Tommy far-off memories of the land of "free lunch," so that several times during the blazing afternoon I heard his sheet-iron voice torturing the wilderness behind me with his own version of a one-time Broadway favorite:

"*S*take me back to New York town...."

Not two hours beyond we drifted into a saw-mill hacienda, and before I knew it Tommy had told his tale so feelingly to the Italian owner, who had the misfortune to understand a little English, that we must go in and have a plate of cold spaghetti, imported to these wilds at nerve-shaking prices. Best of all, after nothing better than liquid mud for days, was several glasses of almost clear water. The Italian was bubbling over about some new invention by one of his countrymen that would forever abolish war. Half the world might be abolished without our hearing of it in these wilds. Before we left he inquired whether we had quinine, and forced upon Tommy a box of pills, with the urgent advice to take

one every morning. I had already begun to dose myself daily, but was never able to convince my companion that ills might be forestalled far more easily than they could be ousted after they had staked their claims.

It was December 21, the longest day of the year, and the sun was still high when we again overtook our "paisanos," camped this time along a brick-floored corredor under the projecting eaves of a large tile-roofed hacienda-house, among scrub trees and scattered huts to the right of the trail. The building was imposing for the region, for the owner held title to a vast tract and many cattle. I recalled the plump hospitality of many a similar hacendado of Peru, but was quickly reminded that we were in Bolivia. Our "paisanos" had already eaten. Having come on foot, Tommy and I were too low caste to be invited into the brick-floored dining-room with the swarming family. After much reconnoitering I found a hut where a lean chicken could be bought at a high price, and the señora of the hacienda grudgingly agreed to have her servants cook it. Here, too, the only water was a thick yellow liquid flowing behind the house and common to all its animals. At sight of it we had abandoned our plan to bathe, yet we must drink it and cook in it. The apathy of life in these parts is exemplified by the fact that an hacendado of comparative wealth will drink mud all his life, rather than dig a well.

Long after dark an unwashed chola came waddling into the corredor with a single bowl of charqui stew and two wooden spoons. Tommy fell upon this gratefully, as he would have upon a bone discarded by a dog. Personally I was not pleased with the metamorphosis the fowl had undergone, and calling

out the haughty hacendado, I thrust a handful of bills toward him, asking if he could not sell us something fit to eat, even if he did want the chicken for himself. The hint caused him to turn a livid green. These landowners of the interior, too “proud” to sell food to travelers, are yet too tight-fisted to give it away; and a lifetime on their own broad, if worthless, acres, with only a few cringing Indians about them, lording it over even their own women, causes them to consider themselves vastly superior to all mankind, and to treat travelers accordingly. So thoroughly had I ruffled his pomposity that the fellow, visibly shaking with anger, went to sit under a scraggly tree in the grassless sand before the house and rage in silence, then took to pacing back and forth, in and out of the building, and kept it up until well into the morning. He might have vented his rage more effectually, for law has but slight foothold in these wild regions, but for the half-dozen revolvers, rifles, and pistols lying about us in the corredor. Meanwhile a servant brought my chicken in a pot, and though it was tougher than life in Bolivia, we drank the broth and hung the remnants of the fowl to a rafter above our heads, out of reach of dogs, Indians, or ants.

It rained most of the night, and the wood we could find in the chill slate-tinted dawn was so wet that it was a good hour before we boiled tea and rice in the yellow mud—and coaxed Tommy to get up in time to eat. Barely two hundred yards beyond, we came to the muddy river, must unshoe the feet we had just carefully shod for the day, and had a provoking task dressing them again on the mud-reeking further bank. Tommy went to hunt cigarettes—which are to be had in these parts only by inquiring at each hut until one has found some old woman who has

inadvertently rolled a dozen or two beyond her own consumption—and it was hours later that he overtook me. We undulated on over half-sandy country, a thorn-tree desert without sight or sound of human life, grown with thousands of immense cactus trees of the pipe-organ species from which fell myriads of *tunas*, an "apple" Tommy called it, the outer spines of which fall off when ripe, the juicy interior, full of tiny black seeds, with mildly the taste of strawberries, effective at least in quenching the thirst.

At a scattered cluster of huts called Mataral we found a group of drunken Indians, male and female, celebrating the customary wake in and about a hut where a baby had died. The corpse of the *angelito* lay pale-yellow and half naked on a bare, home-made table, a lighted candle on either side of its head, its nostrils stuffed with cotton, and already beginning to make its presence known to another of the five senses, while all about the premises rolled maudlin, fishy-eyed half-breeds, only too glad of any excuse for consuming gallons of overripe chicha. Outside, a half-sober cholo was piecing a coffin together from the odds and ends of boxes that had once held foreign imports. The priest's assurance that infants, properly baptized, go directly to heaven makes such a death the cause almost for rejoicing among the ignorant population of Bolivia, even if it leads to nothing worse than passive infanticide.

Frequent ridges and a stream that forced us to unshoe and shoe a score of times, reddening our legs where our leggings should have been, decidedly reduced our pace. Not without surprise, therefore, did I sight at dusk, among the trees on a low bluff across a nearly waterless river-bed, a village of

moderate size, thirty miles from where we had started in the morning. It was Pampa Grande. My fellow-countrymen had already commandeered a mud room on a corner of the second street, and chucked their possessions pell-mell into it. Among the luxuries the place offered was bread, soggy and gritty, dark of complexion as the inhabitants, but bread for all that. While we were swallowing chunks of this and of *empanada*, some one discovered that it was Christmas Eve. A celebration was imperative. Kimball dug up an ancient fife from his pack, I still possessed a battered mouth-organ, and all but Owen, who had none, lent their voices to the lusty, if not musical, carols that astonished the apathetic hamlet so thoroughly that a few found energy to gather in a drooping group in the noiseless street outside. We ended with our patriotic anthem, in the midst of which Kimball's fife suddenly broke off its wail long enough for him to assure Tommy:

"Here, young feller, don't get it into your nut that's 'Gawd save no King' we're treatin' these greasers to!"

The prospectors pushed on in the morning, but finding ourselves a day ahead of our schedule, and that we could still reach Santa Cruz before the end of the year, we decided to spend Christmas in Pampa Grande. It was ideal Christmas weather. The village stands on the eighteenth parallel, at an altitude of some 4000 feet, giving it a soft midsummer air, with a caressing breeze and a most restful atmosphere. Life had slowed down to a snail's pace. The mud-housed inhabitants were too indolent to make a noise or disturbance; even our next-door neighbors were too apathetic to come and satisfy their curiosity by staring at us. Lying on the adobe couch under the eaves, we could let our eyes roam lazily over the

surrounding sandy, scrub-wooded country of unabrupt hills, utterly silent but for the occasional faint note of the mourning jungle-dove.

But the all-important question was Christmas dinner. The boyish corregidor was duly impressed by my papers, and assured me we could have "anything we might desire." I took him at his word and handed over a boliviano with a request for eggs. He called in a sandaled youth and sent him away with orders to round up a basketful. Then he wandered home. After a time the youth came shuffling back to say he could not find a single egg; and thrust the coin toward me. I was too experienced an Andean traveler to accept it and thus absolve the "authorities" of any further aid. Blocked in his turn, the corregidor came again in person to suggest a chicken at a boliviano. My extravagance in accepting this offer startled him, but he dropped the coin deftly into my hand and hurried languidly off, ostensibly to look for the fowl, really to sneak home by a roundabout route. He could not be blamed much for such conduct. Appointed by force and obliged to serve without emoluments, the rural "authority" lives between two millstones, the lower composed of his fellow-townsmen and lifelong friends, with whom he must continue his existence, a far more tangible and permanent reality than the somewhat nebulous government that furnishes travelers with imperative orders from far-off La Paz or Cochabamba.

But a Christmas dinner is nothing to grow sentimental or sympathetic about. When I had loafed and drowsed and read an hour or more longer, I wandered a few yards up the sandy street to the corregidor's hut.

"No," he mourned regretfully from his hammock, "I

have not been able to find a chicken. Nobody wants to sell."

"But, señor corregidor," I protested, "we haven't a thing with which to make dinner—Christmas dinner, and the Minister of the Interior in La Paz told me—"

The official name brought him slowly from the hammock to his feet, a worried look on his face.

"Very well," he sighed, "then we will make you an almuerzo here in my house, which is your own."

"Not at all, señor; we would not dream of troubling you. But if you have wherewith to make an almuerzo, let us have the ingredients and we will cook them to suit ourselves."

"Well, there is charqui—"

"Don't mention it. We don't want to insult our stomachs, even on Christmas. I was speaking of food."

"Well, there is a house down at the edge of the river where they have killed a beef—"

"Yes, three days ago; and the lump of it my compatriots bought this morning all but lifted the roof off our hut. A slice carved out of the middle of it was grass-green. The yellow dog that picked up both chunks of it when we threw it into the street may have had the Christmas dinner of his life, but he is not likely to see another."

"Ay, Diós, señor, then there is nothing else."

"Now, for the good of Pampa Grande, I advise you! There are plenty of chickens in town."

"The people will not sell. The only way is for you to go out and shoot one with your revolver."

"I never risk my aim on anything smaller than a bullock. Cartridges are expensive in the wilds of Bolivia."

Such gringo persistency was annoying. Native travelers needed only to be told the same lie two or three times before they left him in peace to drowse in his hammock. With a badly concealed sigh he wandered into the street, and led the way across the noiseless sanded plaza to the house of his friend the alcalde. The two conferred together and finally sent out a cholo with orders to run down a chicken —"anybody's at all." The emissary returned by and by to report that he could not find one. The pair looked at me as much as to say, "There, you see the last hope has failed." I ignored the hint. In despair they called in another cholo and with a mumbled order handed him a shotgun. A long time later a report was heard some distance off. The two officials shivered. By and by the cholo returned with the shotgun and announced that "it was badly loaded." He said nothing about the aiming. The officials looked at me imploringly. I remained like a statue of patience seated on a cactus. At last the alcalde, with the air of a member of a suicide club who has drawn the black bean, snatched up the gun and, calling upon the cholo to follow, disappeared into the sunshine. For a time only the chirp of an insect in the thatch above sounded. Then a shot was heard, and a moment later the alcalde dodged into the room like a man pursued by bandits, thrust the weapon quickly under a reed mat, and assumed his seat and his most innocent air. Legally he might shoot all his neighbors' chickens on government order; practically he was not anxious to be seen at it. The corregidor looked sorrowfully but appealingly up at him. His voice was a weak whisper:

"Yes, we got him. It was Don Panchito's red one. No, the pullet. No, none of the family seemed to see me, but quién sabe?"

For a considerable time more nothing happened. I began to wonder if this, too, had been a well-acted ruse. Now and then the alcalde or the corregidor rose and peered anxiously down the street through the crack of the door. Whenever the patter of footsteps sounded outside, the pair grew stiff with misgiving.

Then suddenly in burst the cholo, carrying under his poncho the *pollo*, already relieved of its feathers, thus accounting for the last delay. It was a tolerably plump bird, and the corregidor thought fifty centavos would be a just price. He would give it to Don Panchito to-morrow, when his wrath had cooled. I paid it and hurried home. There followed an hour's wandering and pleading, all of which I must do in person, since Tommy spoke no Spanish, and several more appeals to the corregidor before I got lard, rice, tiny potatoes at ten cents a pound, as well as an unexpected bowl of what purported to be stewed peaches. The pot the corregidor could lend us was large enough for an army. Tommy, who had once been second cook on board ship—after they had found him—was appointed fireman and general assistant, and soon had the three-stone fagot cook-stove out under the back porch roaring. Then with plantains fried in lard and —. But why enumerate? By the time we had fed the ragamuffins at the back door and hung the not yet empty kettle on the top of a hammock-post, even Tommy's inclination to make tea had evaporated. It may not have been a genuine Christmas dinner. Pumpkin pie, for instance, was painfully conspicuous by its absence. But it produced the same effect. While Tommy stretched out on a

mud divan, I spread my poncho on the sand under a tree in the back yard, where the gusts of breeze came often enough to lull me quickly into a siesta.

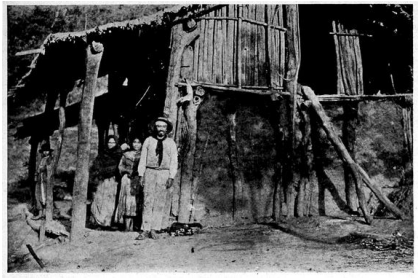
I had barely fallen asleep when the chicken-shooter came to “give me information about the town,” and I must get up and go back to the room with him. There he picked up the scattered pages of Ibañez’ “Flor de Mayo” I had discarded as I read, then clawed out my copy of a Cochabamba newspaper. When he had perused that he took to fingering my note-book, which fortunately he could not read, until at last in disgust I spread my poncho again on the brick floor and was soon sound asleep. When I woke again at sunset both informant and information had faded away. I went out on the porch to write, and a neighbor came to pull the note-book out of my hands and solemnly “read” it, quite oblivious in his illiteracy to the fact that there was hardly a word of Spanish in it, besides being legible only to the elect. Then he must inspect my fountain-pen and learn all its inner secrets. When I recovered it and continued writing with what ink was not smeared over his person, he thrust his nose between the pages, inquiring:

“Are you noting all the inhabitants of Pampa Grande?”

“No.”

“Ah, only the notable ones, then?”

“Alas, no; you see I have only a moderate-sized note-book.”



The home and family of the *alcalde* who could not read



Our impromptu celebration of Christmas Eve in Pampa Grande

In the cool of evening the corregidor came again to share his troubles with me, bewailing the fact that Pampa Grande no longer had a Christmas celebration, because they had no cura. By the same token there was no longer a public market on Sundays and feast-days, “for the Indians only come to town to sell if there is a church fiesta at which they can drink chicha.”

“God save us,” he sighed as he rose to leave, “for want of a priest we are all turning Protestants!”

I respread my “bed” early. But the aftermath of the Christmas dinner had not yet run its course. Some

time far into night I was for a long time half-conscious of some hubbub, and at last woke entirely. On his piece of blanket on the floor Tommy was rolling from side to side, in one hand his precious trowel, which he was beating on the flaggings until it rang again, while shouting at the top of his voice:

"Mortar! Mortar! How in —— can I lay bricks if you don't keep me in mortar?"

All next day he dragged far behind in the twenty-five miles to Samaipata, second largest town of this leg of the journey. Ahead of us was a five-days' tramp without the suggestion of a village, and we were forced to weigh ourselves down under such supplies as we could purchase. Some two hours beyond Samaipata, 3000 feet or more above the road, up the range on the right, stands what the natives of the region call "El Fuerte." Here, in a splendid strategic position, covering the flat top of an entire hill, were and still are extensive terraces and the mostly fallen remains of what must have been important buildings, now overgrown with brush, though there are few or no real trees. Scattered about this cold and barren plateau, some 10,000 feet above sea-level, are many carved seats, similar to those of Cuzco and vicinity, and figures cut in sandstone, among which jaguars, ostriches, and other fauna of the Andes can still be distinguished, though many are time- and weather-worn beyond identification. Practical miners who have visited the spot report the existence of ore-washing apparatus of hewn stone. According to tradition the Incas had here their easternmost stronghold, built by Yupanqui, the emperor who aspired to conquer the hated *huara-ni*, the "breechless" tribes of the tropical lowlands. At present "El Fuerte" is utterly uninhabited. For many

years one aged Indian lived here, long reputed to be more than a century old. The people of the region called him “the Inca” and credited him with supernatural powers and untold wealth. The usual rumors of hidden gold and jewels, and of subterranean passages from temple to treasure-house, hover about the place. So far as is known the site has never been visited, or at least explored, by archeologists, to whom it might bring rewards not inferior to those of Machu Picchu.

As the Andes flattened down, ever slowly and as if under protest, the population showed more African blood; and if the people did not grow more friendly, at least they were less incommunicative than those of the highlands. The women took to smoking, a custom almost unknown to the sex on the *altiplanicie*, until it become quite the fashion. Quichua had finally died out near Totora. Real tropical heat, such as I had all but forgotten the existence of, weighed down upon us, though it did not induce Tommy to be seen without his winter vest. We moved forward steadily, but no longer pushed the pace; the tropics is no place for that. Wandering comfortably along sandy trails through half-woods, we came now and then upon a cluster of weather-blackened wooden crosses tied together with vines, with rudely carved and misspelled lettering, such as:

“Rogad adiós por el alma de Pablo Morales
Fallesió 22 julio de 1911.”

The alcalde of Monos, which consisted of a single hut at the top of a stiff zigzag, had already held that honor for years, in spite of his protests. When I handed him the order from his chief in Samaipata, he returned it, asking me to read it aloud, as he

could not. I did so fairly, without taking advantage of the occasion to include a command from the president of the republic for him to stand on his head, and, duly impressed, he spread a sun-dried cowhide for us on the unlevelled earth floor of his wall-less lean-to, and set his women to preparing us a caldo, of which we furnished the rice and they the fire, labor, and a bit of what looked and tasted like grass. Food had grown so tasteless that we had to force it down like medicine, simply because we needed the strength. To me fell the task of making the family understand why we should wish to eat again in the morning, before we started.

A couple of hours beyond, I came upon Tommy, who for once had forged ahead, seated beside the trail and overcome with sadness. With reason, as the Spaniard says. Far away across the bottomless wooded hole in the earth at our feet rose a sharp range with red rock cliffs up which the trail climbed to the very gates of heaven—which we should find locked no doubt when we arrived. As Tommy put it, "I think they must have to take part of that hill away when the moon comes over." We slept that night higher than Samaipata. But this was the last surge of the Andean billows. Next morning we came out on a wonderful vista of tropical South America, an unbroken sea of green, rolling and more hilly than I had imagined it, spreading away in all directions into the purple haze of vast distances. We had come at last to the end of the Andes.

Now and then thereafter came a short descent, but no more rises, and we were soon in real jungle, with palm-trees of many species. Banana plants appeared; and insects bit us from hair to ankles. Upon us came that care-free languor of the tropics, and for the first

time I realized the strain of living and tramping two or three miles aloft. Dense vegetation crowded the trail, now heavy in sand in which the constant slap of our feet grew monotonous, close on either hand. Night had no terrors now, for we could lie down anywhere. Fruit of many kinds grew,—plantains, bananas, melons, oranges green in color, papayas,—but was rarely for sale. The rare inhabitants had a more kindly air, addressing us as "Ché"—"Hola, ché gringo!"—the familiar and affectionate term, evidently from the Guaraní for "Look!" or "Listen!", which we were to hear often from now on clear into the Argentine, but they were still not noted for unselfishness. A belligerent attitude might have won more, but that we had left behind with the bleak highlands. Besides, through it all Tommy would have hung on my coat-tail, had I worn one, shuddering in his English, laboring-class voice, "Don't! Don't tyke it! The police!"—and once anything had been obtained, he would have made away with it so swiftly that I should have caught little more than its vagrant aroma. The desire for sweets was alarming. Indeed, it was a craving for food, rather than hunger, that troubled us. We ate great chunks of *empanisado*, and an hour after the best meal we should have jumped to accept an invitation to a fifteen-course dinner.

We were following now the course of the little, all but waterless, Piray, some day to join the Mamoré and the Amazon. There were many pack-trains of donkeys and mules going and coming. Thunder grumbled frequently far off to the east. Toward sunset we came upon an hacienda-house before which hung a bullock on a clothes-line—in the process of being charquied, and already as succulent as the sole of an old boot. The haughty hacendado

grudgingly sold us chunks of the already-too-long-dead animal at the breath-taking price of fifty centavos a pound, and steeping tea in water so thick it could all but stand alone, we cut off slabs of the meat and thrust them into the fire on the ends of sticks, to eat it half-raw and unaccompanied, like gauchos of the pampas.

About the house was thick grass, an unusual feature in South America, for ordinarily either the altitude is too great for it, or the jungle so thick it cannot grow in the constant shade. The hacendado gave us permission to lie anywhere in the yard, with a graciousness that implied we might also eat the longest grass if we chose. All the corrals in the neighborhood were filled with donkey- and mule-trains, with arrieros speaking both Spanish and the Quichua of the highlands, on the way to or from Santa Cruz with cargoes of alcohol, hides, and tobacco coming out and foreign merchandise going in. For a long time we sat in the velvety air of a jungle evening, listening to the singing of tree-toads and crickets and the occasional faint tinkle of a grazing lead-mule's bell, with now and then the sharp, excited chorus of birds,—all interwoven with the wind-borne voices of the arrieros. Then I picked a spot, as apt to be free from snakes, on the clipped grass a few yards from the house, and lay down on my rubber poncho. The soft breeze soon lulled me to sleep, in spite of the itching of countless insect-bites. I had not slept long probably, when I was awakened by rain striking me in the face. It would not last long, I fancied. I pulled the poncho over me and let it rain. It did. Quickly it increased to a hollow roar; trickles of water began to tickle me along the ribs. Evidently I had picked a slight slope, for the water was soon pouring in upon me in streams. I caught up my

scattered belongings and dashed for the house, the wet poncho lapping up all the mud in the vicinity, and some of my effects dropping at each step, forcing me to await the next flash of lightning to find them. Under the corredor roof there was barely room to roll up beside Tommy on the earth floor, trampled hard as an iron casting, and for an hour there roared such a tropical deluge as I had never known in the western hemisphere.

The Piray, now a wide, raging river of red mud, forced us to strip to the waist, and even then splashed us redly far higher as we breasted the powerful current. All day we plowed through dense forest, wet and soggy, singing with insect life, a roaring tropical shower bursting upon us now and then, after each of which the red sun blazed out through the thick, humid air. With dusk we waded heavy-kneed into La Guardia, sticky and sweated as the dweller in the tropics must always be who cannot spend the day in a hammock; fighting swarms of gnats while we waited patiently for the promised antidote for our raging appetites. Twice during the day we had climbed padlocked bars across the trail. I had fancied them toll-gates, but found they were *aduanillas*, little custom-houses for the collection of duty on goods entering, or produce leaving the department of Santa Cruz. Each hide exported paid about 65 cents; the flour that had come all the way from Tacoma, Washington, by ship, train, and mule had added to its already exorbitant price a high departmental duty. No wonder chunks of boiled yuca commonly took the place of bread.

Beyond La Guardia the country was more open, the forest at times giving place to half-meadows, with single trees and grazing cattle, across which drifted a

breeze that tempered the midsummer heat. The way lay so straight across the floor-flat country that the line of telegraph poles beside it looked like a single pole standing forth against the horizon. There were many huts now, roofed and sometimes entirely made of palm branches. Warm, muddy water was our only drink, for we had descended so low that the inhabitants were too lazy even to make chicha. Once we got a watermelon, which are small here and far from being on ice. In passing another hut I was startled by a cry of "Se vende pan," and went in to pay two females, whose faces were a patchwork of gnat-bites, an astounding price for some tiny, soggy biscuits. Ponderous ox-carts with solid wooden wheels crawled by noiselessly in the deep sand behind three and even four pairs of drowsy oxen. Everything, even the breeze, moved now with the leisureliness of the tropics. The jungle ahead was so flat and green, so banked by clouds, that one had the feeling that the sea was soon to open out beyond. We loafed languidly on, certain that our goal was near, yet though there were other evidences that we were approaching a city, there were no more visible signs of it than in approaching Port Saïd from the sea.

At last, so gradually that we were some time in distinguishing it from a tree-top, a dull-colored church-tower grew up in line with the vista of telegraph-poles. We drifted inertly into a sand-paved, silent, tropical city street, past rows of languid stares, and on the last afternoon of the year, with Cochabamba 335 miles behind us, sat down dripping, a week's lack of shave veiling our sun-toasted features, in the central plaza of Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

Tommy had heard so many stories of the generosity

of the cruceños that he was astonished to have reached the center of town without being invited from some doorway to come in and make his home there as long as he chose. This was doubly annoying, since rumor had it that white men were so in favor with the gentler sex that a sandy-haired one as handsome as Tommy fancied himself to be was in danger of being damaged by the feminine rush his appearance was sure to precipitate. After a time he rose to carry his perplexity back to where we had seen the British vice-consular shield covering the front of a house. When I met him again he had told his sad tale so effectively that he had been “put up” at both hotels by as many compatriots and was eating regularly at each, though taking care not to let his right hand know what the left was carrying to his mouth. After dark, in a humid night made barely visible by a few candle street-lamps, I splashed out to the hut of Manuel Abasto in the outskirts, to sleep under the trees in the canvas-roofed hammock of one of the American prospectors, the legitimate occupant being engaged in the rôle of Don Juan in the city. The hut was crowded with peons already half drunk, languidly fingering several guitars and now and then raising mournful voices in some amorous ballad. At midnight church-bells rang, and one distant whistle blew weakly to greet the incoming year, but the music of the tropical rain on the canvas over my head soon lulled me to sleep again.

CHAPTER XX
LIFE IN THE BOLIVIAN WILDERNESS

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, capital of all the vast department of eastern Bolivia, owes its fame largely to its isolation. Like those eminent men of many secluded corners of South America, it is important only because of the exceeding unimportance of its neighbors. The only tropical city of Bolivia, it stands some 1500 feet above sea-level on the 18th meridian, very near the geographical center of the republic, so far from the outside world that mail deposited on January 7th reached New York on March 11th. Of its 19,000 inhabitants, 11,000 are female. The emporium and distributing point of all this region and of the rubber districts of the Beni, its commerce is chiefly in the hands of Germans, though the two houses that all but monopolize the trade pose as Belgian, with headquarters in Antwerp. There are few Bolivian, and only three cruceño houses of importance, and these for the most part buy of German wholesalers in Cochabamba. Three or four native families have as much as $150,000, a fortune by cruceño standards, won from rubber, or from cattle ranches roundabout the city. Yet there is

much primitive barter, even in the town,—an ox for a load of fire-wood, and the like, with no money concerned in the transaction. Santa Cruz is the place of birth of those famous Suarez brothers who are kings of the rubber districts of the Amazon.

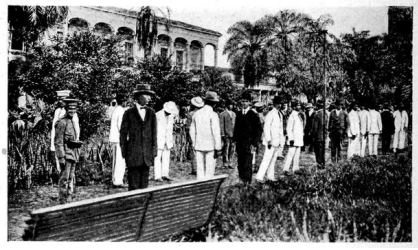
It is a city of silence. Spreading over a dead-flat, half-sandy, jungled plain, its right-angled streets are deep in reddish sand in which not only its shod feet—by no means in the majority, though the upper class is almost foppish in dress—but even the solid wooden wheels of its clumsy ox-carts make not a sound. There is no modern industry to lend its strident voice, though the town boasts three "steam establishments" for the making of ice, the grinding of maize, and the sawing of lumber, and every street fades away at either end into the whispering jungle. Narrow sidewalks of porous red bricks, roofed by the wide overhanging eaves of the houses, often upheld by pillars or poles, line most of the streets. But these are by no means continuous, and being commonly high above the street level and often taken up entirely, especially of an evening, by the families, who consider this their veranda rather than the pedestrian's right of way, the latter generally finds it easier to plod through the sand of the street itself. In the rainy season, which begins with the new year and lasts through April, there are many muddy pools and ponds in the outskirts, along the edges of some of which the streets crawl by on long heaps of the skulls of cattle, bleached snow-white by the sun, and the larger of which, almost lakes, somehow carried the mind back to Kandy, Ceylon. Frequently the streets in the center of town are flooded for an hour or more, until the thirsty sand has drunk up a tropical deluge. For these eventualities Santa Cruz has a system of its own. At each corner four rows of

atoquines, weather-blackened piles of a kind of mahogany, protrude a foot or more above the sand; and along these stepping-stones the minority passes dry-shod from one roofed sidewalk to another.

The houses, usually of a single story, their tile roofs bleached yellowish by the tropical sun, present a large room, wide open by day on the porch sidewalk, and rather bare in appearance in spite of a forest of frail cane chairs, black in color. From the once whitewashed adobe walls protrude several pairs of hooks on each of which hangs, except during the hour of siesta, a rolled-up hammock. On or near the floor sits a little hand sewing-machine, the exotic whirr of which sounds now and then; and just inside the door are usually a few shallow tubs, like small dugout canoes, holding tropical fruits, soggy bread cakes, and sugar in all its stages; for many, even of the "best families," patch out their livelihood with a bit of amateur shopkeeping. Through this main room, parlor, and chief pride of each family, past which one cannot walk without glancing in upon the household, a back door gives a glimpse of the patio, a pretty garden hidden away after the Moorish fashion—strange that the Arab influence should have reached even this far-distant heart of South America—airy and bright and large, for space is not lacking in Santa Cruz, often almost an orchard and blooming with flowers of many colors. On this open several smaller rooms which, being out of sight of the public, are often far less attractive than the parlor.



A street of Santa Cruz de la Sierra after a shower, showing the *atoquines*, or projecting spiles by which pedestrians cross from one roofed sidewalk to another



Conscripts of the Bolivian army practicing their first manoeuvers in the central plaza of Santa Cruz. All who have reached the age of nineteen during the past year are obliged to report at the capital of their province on New Year's Day

In the outside world the climate of Santa Cruz is reputed obnoxious to whites; about its name hover those legends, common also to India, of Europeans being worn to fever-yellow wrecks. As a matter of

fact, the temperature does not rise higher than in southern Canada in July, and a cool breeze sweeps almost continually across the pampas about it. Mosquitos are rare, fever all but unknown. It is not loss of health, but his energetic view of life which the Caucasian immigrant risks. Especially during this hottest season of January the heat was humid and heavy, and I found myself falling quickly into the local mood of contentment just to lie in a hammock and let the world drift on without me. It took an unusual length of time to make up my mind to do anything, and then required more will-power than usual to force myself to get up and do it, particularly to keep on doing it until it was finished. But it is perhaps as largely due to environment as to the climate that Santa Cruz is visibly lazy. The region roundabout is so fertile that almost every staple except wheat and potatoes grow, and the slightest exertion earns sustenance. There are sugar plantations and sugar- and alcohol-producing establishments scattered here and there; the province of Sara to the north supplies food not only to the city but to the rubber districts as far away as the Acre; coffee, rice, and tobacco can be produced in abundance; hides already constitute an important export; the region to the west is reputed rich in oil. Yet Santa Cruz makes small use of her possibilities, languidly waiting for the arrival of a railroad and the influx of foreign capital to develop them.

The rumors that seep up out of Santa Cruz of her beautiful pure-white types are largely of artificial propagation. It is true that she has a larger percentage of Spanish blood than any other city of Bolivia, but this is rarely found in its unadulterated form. Some negro and considerable Indian ancestry has left its mark, and while there is not a full-

blooded African, or perhaps a full Indian, in town, and Spanish is the universal, if slovenly, tongue, genuine white natives are few in number. As to the beautiful girls and women of popular fancy, they do exist, but certainly in no larger proportion than pearls in oysters. The overwhelming majority are coarse-featured, with heavy noses and sensual lips, crumbling teeth that hint at degeneration, and little attractiveness beyond the quick-fading physical one of youth.

Some cynic has said that a wall set about Santa Cruz de la Sierra would enclose the largest house of ill-fame on earth. So broad a statement is unkind. Yet not merely are the majority of cruceños born out of wedlock—that much can be said of all Bolivia—but those who are accustomed to investigate such matters agree that the seeker after feminine favors in Santa Cruz need never leave the block in which he chances to find himself. Plain-spoken foreign residents put it baldly that virginity never survives the twelfth year, but this is no doubt an exaggeration. The causes of this lack of social tautness are several. The overstock of one sex, due largely to the migration of the young men to the rubber forests of the Beni, often never to return; a widespread poverty and the lack of any independent means of livelihood for women; and a tropical apathy, even of character, are perhaps the chief. Then, too, there is a marked absence of good example. The higher officials and more wealthy men have, with rare exceptions, at least one irregular household; not a few have only irregular ones. The story is current of one of the chief political powers of the department who decided to visit his daughter at school in Germany. Forewarned, that startled young lady hastened to write: “If you and mama are coming

to Germany, you must get married first." The father yielded good-naturedly to this quaint whim of a favorite daughter, and during the weeks before his departure, spread the story far and wide as one of his best after-dinner witticisms. The native priests almost invariably have concubines. Some, using the transparent subterfuge common to all Latin-America, refer to their families as "housekeeper" and "nephews." Not a few frankly speak of "the mother of my children." With rare exceptions this runs to the plural. Among the masses, naturally, these conditions are not improved upon. Marriage, troublesome, expensive, and conspicuous, hardly bringing even the advantage of neighborly approbation, is apt to be looked upon as a nuisance; and it is always hard to go to useless trouble in the tropics. The nineteen-year-old son of an American resident was pointed out by both sexes as a curiosity, because he was still without natural children. The laws of Bolivia recognize three classes of offspring,—legitimate, natural, and unnatural. The second are inalienable heirs to one fifth the father's property. The third division comprises those born out of wedlock to parents who could not marry if they wished,—that is, one or both of whom is already married, or has taken the priestly vows of celibacy. The town has little notion of the viewpoint of the rest of the world on this subject. Like an island far out at sea, all but cut off from the rest of mankind, it has developed customs—or a lack of them—of its own, its individual point of view; and, like all isolated groups, it is sure of its own importance in exact ratio to the lack of outside influence; so that barefooted cruceños are firmly convinced that their ways are vastly superior to those of the rest of the world, which they judge by the few sorry specimens thereof who drift

in upon them bedraggled by weeks on wilderness trails. The term “Colla,” used to designate the people of the Bolivian highlands, and passed on by the masses to the world at large, is here a word of deprecation.

With few exceptions the foreign residents soon fall into this easy, tropical way of life. The two “Belgian” firms bring in scores of young German employees trained in the European main house; and there are normally some 250 Teutonic residents. The percentage of these is low who are not established within a month of their arrival in any part of the region with their own “housekeepers.” The recruit is shown the expediency of this arrangement by both the precept and the example of his fellow-countrymen. Celibacy is alleged to be doubly baneful in the tropics; there are no hotels or restaurants worthy the name; the pleasure of forming a part of the best native family would soon wear threadbare, even if the Moorish seclusion of these did not make admittance impossible. To live with even a modicum of comfort in these wilds the white man must have a home of his own. The frail walls thereof are slight protection against theft. Unless he will reduce his possessions to what he can carry to and from his stool or counter each day, a “housekeeper” is imperative. Though a neighbor might be induced to provide meals and such housekeeping as she has time for, the cruceña brings her personal interest to bear only on those things of which she is genuinely, if temporarily, a part. To her, wages are neither customary nor attractive; the reward for her labors must be a temporarily permanent home. Hence the “servant problem” is most easily solved by adopting the servant. Whatever principles contrary to this mode of life the youthful Teuton brings with him

from his native land, they quickly melt away under the tropical sun, and there is commonly little resistance to the new environment.

Let it not be understood that there is unusual betrayal or persecution of innocent womanhood in Santa Cruz. Rather the contrary is true. It is the man who runs the most constant gauntlet of temptation. The arrival of a new clerk is sure to cause a crowding of young women about the door of the establishment, and to swamp it with pretended purchasers. Report has it that a daughter of almost the "best families" may be won by the employee who will remain a few years and buy her a house or leave her a small income at his departure. With the poorer classes the usual procedure is to open negotiations with the girl's family, to give her mother a present, or win her consent through her taste for strong drink. In the wilder regions of the interior the gift of a rifle, or something equally coveted, to the father is usually sufficient. Daughters are easily acquired, but rifles are scarce. Coming under short contract, the recruit, grown to a darker-skinned bookkeeper or sub-manager, goes his way, or is transferred, and leaves behind whatever family may have befallen him, frequently recommending his "widow" to a newly arrived compatriot. Though there is said to be less taking of "housekeepers" than formerly, in a given group of thirty Germans, twenty had female companions, six had German wives, and four, legal cruceña wives. At the time of my stay in Santa Cruz, 49 native women were calling monthly upon the cashier of a single commercial house for the pension granted them for the rearing of their from one to six half-German children; and these were the abandoned mates only of such as were still employees of the firm elsewhere, or of the rare few who had

themselves left some stipend for their offspring. The point of view of the Teuton on this subject is that he is no worse, but merely more free from “hypocrisy” than the Anglo-Saxon. Even the German women accept the condition with little protest, often joining in the celebration at the baptism of the illegitimate infant of a compatriot. In an isolated corner of the department I found a well-educated, likable German keeping house with a jet-black negro girl; and not only was his wife in Germany aware of the arrangement, and amused by his letters concerning his companion, but advised him to keep her as long as he remained in Bolivia, that he might have “some one to look after him and keep him in health.”

Were the results of these attachments an improved human stock, there might be less to condemn. For in its present stage of progress, tropical Bolivia is more amenable to economic than to “moral” improvement; and the country is sorely in need of population. But the foreign blood injected into cruceño arteries is as nothing against the environment. The sons of Europeans may be an improvement upon the natives, at least in those rare cases where the father has remained to add the vigor of his training; but the succeeding generation is only too apt to degenerate quickly into the most native of natives. The assertion of scientists that new blood must constantly be brought to the tropics if these regions are to progress, is plainly demonstrated in Santa Cruz. Throughout the department may be seen to-day in the flesh those conditions which, centuries ago, followed the coming of the Conquistadores without their own women or the Puritan’s point of view, which have made Latin-America from end to end the abode of a chiefly mongrel race.

Attempted improvement of the status quo meets with as little approval as in all other centers of the universe. The American directress of the government girls' school found herself balked at the outset in the simplest matters. Her edict that pupils must not come to school without some other nether garment than the customary skirt was bitterly opposed both by mothers and by her assistants, on the ground that "it is so hot in Santa Cruz." Cruceños blame the heat for most of their shortcomings, as the gringo miners of the Andes sweepingly "lay it to the altitude." In the school in question there were 300 girls of the "best families" of Santa Cruz. One in every four of them was of legitimate birth. The teachers were in many cases decrepit grand-dames, yet no one with a relative or a friend in the government offices could be removed, because these saw to it that no report against their protegees ever reached higher officials. In the faculty meetings it was impossible to criticize a pupil, whatever her delinquency, for she was sure to have at least one relative among the teachers to precipitate an uproar.

On New Year's Day I had taken up my abode with the only permanent American resident of Santa Cruz. "Juan" S. Bowles, born in Ohio—a cavalry troop of which state he had commanded from Atlanta to the sea—had come to Brazil nine years after the war and ascended to Santa Cruz by way of the Amazon, in the years when 80 days of hard labor were required to cover the 280 miles now served by the Madeira-Mamoré railroad. He had never since seen his native land. His ice-plant was for many years the only producer of that exotic commodity in tropical Bolivia, where, in the early days, it ranked as a luxury at 25 cents a pound. Under his unwilted American energy and indifference to local caste rules

the plant still produced its daily quota, if at something less than that regal reward. On his back veranda stood a leather bed—an ox-hide stretched on a wooden frame on legs—just the place to spend a cruceño night, and his stories of "Johnny Rebs" alone made the week I spent there well worth while.

Sometimes, though with difficulty, his reminiscences could be staged in Bolivia. After Santa Cruz had drunk and died of swamp water savored with dead cats for some three centuries, this energetic new resident imported machinery and drove an artesian well, coming upon excellent water some fifty feet below the surface. This he offered for sale, putting out of business the friars who, watching the barometer, successfully prayed to the Virgin for rain. The first woman to arrive with her *cántaro* on her head asked the son in charge if he were not "ashamed to sell the water God gave."

"But he didn't give the pump or drive the well," retorted the boy; "There is plenty of God's free water over there in the swamp."

To-day the former captain of cavalry has ten wells to his credit and is trying to get the municipality to let him install an "aeromotor."

For all his long residence, the Ohioan had by no means reconciled life to the cruceño point of view. His criticisms on this subject were biting. Though the town swarmed with "educated" loafers, well-dressed according to their ideals, it was all but impossible to get native assistants. The youths, egged on by their mothers, flocked to the already overcrowded white-fingered professions, rather than become mechanics or learn to run an engine, two occupations sadly needed in Santa Cruz. As the old man put it, "They won't come here and learn a good, useful trade, with

pay while learning; yet if you throw a stone at a dog anywhere in town and miss him, you are sure to hit a priest, a lawyer, or a doctor—with nothing to do." The boys he could hire, of the most poverty-stricken families, would not work where anyone could see them. Agapito would tote bricks within the patio without a protest, but he would take his discharge rather than carry a parcel to or from the post-office. The mothers would rather have their daughters earn their living in the local feminine way than have their sons descend to manual labor. A "caballero," wearing shoes, without socks, requiring his gun repaired to go hunting, could not get it to the shop until he could find an Indian to carry it there.

Bowles was an interesting example of the transplanted American. A man of education and of shrewd native wit, he had developed here in the wilderness a quaint, isolated philosophy of his own, and was one of those rare white men who have spent many years unbrokenly in such an environment and climate without "going to seed." Not merely was he a wide and reflective reader on all subjects from the scientific to the curious, but still, at seventy-five, produced in the interstices of his labors as chief mechanic of the region authoritative articles for the Buenos Aires, London, and American periodicals. How great a feat this is only those can understand who know the enervating effect on both mind and body of long tropical residence. His staunch individualism and independence of the verdict of the world was little short of startling to those of us who live more nearly in it. Set away in the fastnesses of the earth, with only his own mind to feed upon, instead of having his opinions delivered at his door each morning by the newsboy, he had developed a thinking-machine of his own that grasped firmly

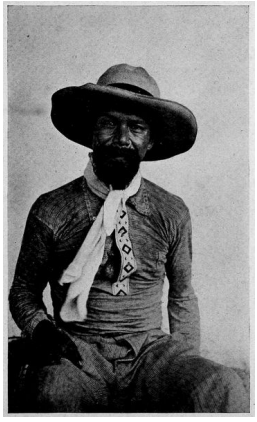
whatever it took hold of, and a hard, unsentimental common sense fitted to his environment. His speech carried one back to the Civil War, and his vocabulary had quaint, amusing touches; for the words he had added to it since his migration had been chiefly from books, with rare and brief intercourse with English-speaking persons. Thus his pronunciation of many terms unknown to the world in the seventies had been evolved from his own mind amid his Spanish-tongued environment. He spoke of “alumeénum,” and called the recently discovered cause of all earthly ills “Mee-crów-bays.” Words like “poligamic,” rarely heard from any but scientific mouths, appeared in the same sentence with “ketched,” the past participle of Civil War days. Edison’s noisy invention he called “pho-nó-graph,” but the word “leisurely” he pronounced correctly, not a common American feat.

This New Year’s Day was notable to Bowles for another reason. His youngest son and last effective assistant made his first appearance in the uniform of a Bolivian soldier, and moved from home to the cuartel. Conscription is theoretically universal in Bolivia. On the first day of each year every youth within the republic who has reached his nineteenth birthday must report at the capital of his department, ready for service. Those that are not physically unfit, or have not sufficient influence, are given three months training, after which they draw lots to serve two years at 40 centavos a day. During my time there the plaza of Santa Cruz was overrun with lank country boys and sallow city youths, in most cases still in their civilian garb of baggy, road-worn linen or near-Parisian *gente decente* attire, awkwardly practicing the right and left face under the commands of youthful officers. By Bolivian law a

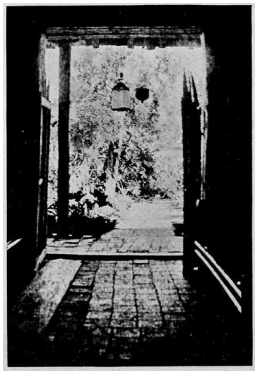
child born in Bolivia is a Bolivian, whatever the nationality of the father. The Civil War veteran, who had strictly kept his American citizenship, though married to a Bolivian wife, had appealed in vain to the American minister in La Paz. Prospective immigrants to this, as to several other South American countries, should not overlook this point in the future of their children. As Bowles expressed it, "Fifteen hundred bolivianos for every son born in the country is too much tax to pay for the privilege of living in it." When the time came for choosing by lot the recruits needed to make up the peace quota of the Bolivian army, Teutonic in its discipline and formation, this useful son of an American "drew unlucky" and was obliged to serve two years, though fate had left behind in Santa Cruz many a worthless native loafer.

But the then most widely-known gringo sojourner in Santa Cruz was an Englishman who chose to call himself "Jack Thompson." His habitat was the departmental prison. His story was well-fitted to the "Penny Dreadful" or the cinema screen. Some years ago "Thompson" and a fellow-countryman had drifted out of the interior of Brazil into Corumbá, and offered to sell their rights to a rubber forest they had discovered. The Teutonic house that showed interest asked them to await a decision, and meanwhile offered them employment in the escort of a party of German employees, peons, and muleteers carrying £7000 in gold to a branch of the establishment in the interior of Bolivia. On the trail a German of the escort drew the Englishmen into a plot to hold up the party. A week or more inland, at a rivulet called Ypias, the trio suddenly fell upon their companions and killed three Germans, a Frenchman, a Bolivian muleteer, and the chola

"housekeeper" of the chief of the expedition. The rest scattered into the jungle; except one old Indian arriero who, unable to run, managed to crawl up into the branches of a nearby tree. There he witnessed the second act of the melodrama. For a time the trio remained in peace and concord, washed, drank, and concocted a meal over jungle brush. But soon the question of the division of the gold became a dispute. The German asserted that, as author of the plan, he should take half. The Englishmen insisted on an equal division. The dispute became a quarrel. At length, late in the afternoon, when the unknown observer was ready to drop to the ground and a quick death, from exhaustion, fear, and thirst, the Englishmen fell upon their confederate with a revolver, two rifles, and a sabre. Even a German must succumb under such odds. Leaving the body where it fell, the pair divided the gold, and each swinging a pair of saddlebags over a shoulder, struck off into the trackless jungle, for some reason fancying this a surer escape than to mount mules and dash for safety in Brazil.



Manuel Abasto, a native of Santa Cruz de la Sierra



Through the open doors of Santa Cruz one often catches a glimpse of the patio, a garden gay with flowers

Meanwhile some of the refugees had reached nearby settlements. Several search parties were made up and, having buried what the vultures had left, took up the scent. The natives of these jungle regions are not easily eluded in their own element. For four days the Britons struggled through the tropical wilderness, half-dead from thirst—for it was September, at the end of the dry season—and soon reduced to a few native berries as food. The gold became too heavy for their waning forces. They managed to climb to the summit of a jungle bluff and bury most of it. On the fifth day a search party came upon them resting

in a shaded thicket. A volley killed his companion and slightly wounded "Thompson." Leaving the corpse for the vultures, the pursuers tracked the wounded man all night and next morning caught him at bay. Having pointed out the hiding-place of the gold, he was set backward astride a mule with his hands tied behind him and, amid such persecution as the savage, half-Indian Bolivian can invent, was escorted to San José, and later driven through the jungle and lodged in the departmental prison.

All this had occurred three years before. Twice "Thompson," who was a Mason, as are some of the officials of Bolivia, "escaped." The first time he was found drunk in the plaza before his evasion was known; the second, he walked the 160 leagues to Yacuiva through the jungle without once touching the trail, only to celebrate too early what he fancied, for lack of geographical knowledge, was his escape into the Argentine, and be forced to walk all the way back. Finally, after more than a year in prison, he had been tried—on paper, as in all Spanish-America—and within another twelve-month had coaxed the judge to deliver his verdict and sentence him—to be shot. The supreme court and the president had still to pass upon the matter, and another year had drifted by.

Of late years it is not easy to gain admittance to the prison of Santa Cruz. About its doors swarm ragged sentinels who scream frantically "Cabo de Guardia!" ("Corporal of the Guard"), and swing their aged muskets menacingly whenever a stranger pauses to speak to them. But a note from the prefect brought me the attention of the haughty superiors of the "Policía de Seguridad," who saw fit to permit me to wade across the first patio of the prison. There an

insolent half-negro in the remnants of a faded khaki uniform felt me carefully over for firearms, and at length deigned to open a wooden-barred door. Beyond another mud-floored anteroom and through another wooden gate, I found myself in a bare patio some forty feet square, with a deep open well and signs that the entire yard became a pond whenever it rained. This was surrounded on all sides by an ancient low building of adobe, under the projecting eaves of which, on the ground or in hammocks, and inside squalid cell-like rooms, loafed a score or more of men and several women of all known human complexions and degrees of undress. A single boy soldier of simian brow, with a disproportionately heavy loaded rifle on his shoulder, paraded in the shade of the eaves. He looked, indeed, like one to whose ingrown intelligence could safely be trusted matters of life and death!

My errand made known, several of the prisoners, without rising, began to shout, “Don Arturo!” By and by a voice came back, “’Stá bañandose!” I crossed to one of the cells, a small room filled with sundry junk, chiefly the tools of a mechanic, of which the wooden-barred door stood ajar. Inside, on a piece of board laid on the earth floor, stood “Thompson,” in the costume of Adam, pouring a bucket of water over his head. I explained that I was drifting through Bolivia and fancied he might be glad to hear his native tongue again. He was, having had only two such visitors during the year just ended. Wrapping a towel about his loins, he stood and chatted, while an anemic half-negro in what had once been khaki leaned against the door-post watching our every movement, and several other prisoners crowded round in the customary ill-bred South American fashion.

“Thompson” was an unattractive man in middle life, rather thin, with the accent and bad teeth of the Englishman of the mechanic class, and the uninspired and rather hopeless philosophy of life common to that caste. Otherwise his attitude was in no way different from what it would have been had we been a pair of tramps met on the road. He smiled frequently as he talked, and was neither more sad nor more cynical than the average of his class. He made no secret of his part in what he referred to as “our stunt,” and gave me detailed information on how to find the graves along the trail “where we pulled it off,” in case I should continue to the eastward. He plainly regretted the crime, but only because he had been caught. Knowing he had already published a doctored account of the occurrence in an English monthly and had found the remuneration exceedingly useful in eking out his existence in a Bolivian prison, I suggested the writing of the whole story.

“Aye, but they ’re not going to give me time,” he answered, rolling and lighting a cigarette. “I just got word from Sucre that they have confirmed the sentence. Now as soon as the president signs it, they’ll call me out and ...”

“Oh, I don’t believe Montes would do that to a gringo,” I remarked encouragingly. “He is a Mason, too—”

“Well, I don’t care a rap whether they do or not,” he replied, with considerable heat, “I’m perfectly willing they do it and have it over with. Even if he commutes the sentence, it means ten years more of this”—he pointed to the slovenly yard and dirtier inmates—“and it’s quite as bad as the other; I don’t know but worse.”

When he had dressed and stepped outside to pose for a photograph, he presented rather a "natty" appearance, though his low-caste face could not be disguised. Together we wandered through the prison. "Thompson," in his striving to be "simpático" amid his surroundings, had become quite a "caballero" in his manner, and spoke Spanish unusually well for one of his class and nationality. The prisoners found it as necessary to earn their own living inside the prison as outside, for though the government theoretically furnishes food, it would not have kept the smallest inmate alive for a week. "Thompson" asserted that he had not touched prison fare since his incarceration. His "cell" was fitted up as a workshop, with a bench, a small vise, and such tools of a mechanic as he had been able to collect, and he earned a meager fare and other necessities by mending watches and at the various tinkering jobs that reached him from outside. Shoe-making was the favorite occupation of his fellow-jailbirds. More than a dozen had their open "cells" scattered with odds and ends of leather and half-finished footwear. Formerly, the public had passed freely in and out of the prison, and prisoners, underbidding free labor, since their lodging was already supplied them, had always earned enough to satisfy their appetites. Now, the rules had become somewhat more strict, at least to outsiders, and with less opportunity to sell their wares more than one inmate suffered from hunger.

We passed into one of the two large common rooms, foul-smelling mud dens in which "Thompson" had seen as many as 37 persons of both sexes and all degrees of crime, age, and condition sometimes *locked in* for an entire month by some whim of *carcelero* or judge. The room being completely innocent of any convenience whatever, the

conditions of prisoners and prison when the door might finally be unlocked needs no description. Just now the room was open, and there were but 26 inmates, men and women mixed indiscriminately, for there were no rules, even at night, as to the sleeping-places of the two sexes. The female prisoners, in fact, earned their food as do so many cruceñas outside, from such of the male inmates and soldier guards as could reward their favors, and had advanced to a point where even privacy was no longer requisite. Even then several slovenly couples reclined together on the uneven floor in half-amorous attitudes, and on a species of crippled bed in a corner sat an evil-eyed fellow of some negro blood, on the floor at whose feet, her uncurried head resting affectionately between his legs, squatted a native woman in the early thirties, who might years before have been almost beautiful. She had killed the "Turk" with whom she had been living, and was for a time under sentence to be shot. The president, however, after making her two accomplices draw lots for fifteen years' imprisonment and execution respectively—by Bolivian law two persons cannot be executed for the same crime—the supreme penalty falling upon a Chilian, had commuted her sentence to ten years. Outside the prison the rumor was prevalent that her lenient treatment arose from the fact that she had borne a son to the prosecuting attorney.

During my stroll my companion ceremoniously introduced me to several of the six "gringo" prisoners. One was a German-Peruvian, eight months before the manager of a local bank, and since then in prison, still untried, on the charge of disposing of bad drafts. When a powerful company does not feel it has sufficient evidence to convict a man whose arrest it has caused, it is the Bolivian custom to see

that the judge does not bring the case to trial. Nearly every government official semi-openly having his price, the prisons are apt to hold chiefly those who have underbid in the contest for "justice." "Thompson" asserted—and he was corroborated by many outside the cárcel—that for some £200 he could make his escape. The savage half-Indian conscripts serving as carceleros vented their hatred of the gringos at every opportunity, and made their lives constantly miserable by watching for the slightest breaking of the rules to give them an excuse to shoot. In former times, when rubber was high in price, the Intendente de la Policía frequently sold prisoners to the "rubber kings" of the Beni at 1000 bolivianos a head, and it was a rare victim of this system who did not end his days as a virtual slave in the Amazonian forests.

As we shook hands at the gate of the inner patio, "Thompson" remarked:

"If Montes signs it, I'll have forty-eight hours left with nothing to do and I'll write you something. I believe the thoughts of a man waiting to be shot"—it was the only time he used that word during the interview—"would make interesting reading. The ending would be all right if these Indians could make a good job of it, but they'll end by bashing in my head with the butts of their muskets, as they have all the others."

If I have inadvertently given the impression that there are no stern laws and rules of personal conduct in Santa Cruz de la Sierra let me hasten to disavow it as quickly as I was disabused in the matter myself; for it was here that I tarnished my hitherto spotless record for non-arrest in South America. I had come to give "Thompson" a bundle of American weeklies

and was leaving the prison again, when a German who had ridden in from Cochabamba asked me to serve as interpreter while he procured a gun license. As we stepped into the comandancia, an anemic, yellow-skinned half-Indian youth in uniform shouted in the most insolent tone at his command, “Take off your hats!” The German quickly snatched his close-cropped bullet head bare, but the tone aroused my antagonism in spite of myself; moreover, a dozen unwashed natives lounged about the miserable mud hall with their hats on. To obey the orders of this class of Latin-American officials requires a certain degree of humility, of which, thank God, I have not a trace. At the second command I retorted, “What for?”

“In respect for the Bolivian government!” shrieked the evil-eyed, ill-smelling official behind the main desk.

“But I have no respect whatever for the Bolivian government,” I protested, warding off with an elbow the boy soldier who was attempting to snatch the hat from my head; and I stepped out into the street. There I was legally immune. There is no law requiring one to uncover in the streets, even in straight-laced Santa Cruz. But the legal aspect of a case is easily overlooked in Bolivia. The official screamed, “Cabo de la Guardia!”, and there poured out upon me five boy soldiers with loaded muskets, who, clutching at me like cats, began pushing me back into the prison. I had been long enough a policeman myself to know the folly of resisting arrest, however unjustified; moreover, there was an entire regiment of these little brown fellows in town, most of whom would be only too happy to give vent to their dislike of gringos.

Once I had entered an empty mud room on the first patio, the door was quickly bolted behind me and I stood looking out through the wooden-barred window upon the mud-hole yard, back and forth across which marched the jeering little soldiers and several loungers, grinning at me nastily behind their blackened stumps of teeth. I was in great danger—that I should be late for the dinner to which I had been invited at eleven. For though my arrest was not legal, those responsible for it had the very simple old Latin-American expedient of holding me "incomunicado" and keeping everyone outside ignorant of my plight. I sat down on the window-ledge and fell to reading the Spanish paper edition of Ernst Haeckel I was so fortunate as to have with me. A half-hour passed. Meanwhile that dinner was a bare hour away, and formal feasts are not so frequent in tropical Bolivia as to be missed without regret. Luckily, I caught Tommy's eye as he dodged under the eaves to escape a new cloud-burst and, beckoning him to the window, managed to say, before he was driven off by three soldiers with fixed bayonets, "Go tell the prefect ..."

The matter never got as far as the prefect. No sooner did the comandante of the prison learn that a man, who only yesterday had been hobnobbing with the supreme chief of the department, had been visited with the indignity of imprisonment, than he hastened to order me set at liberty.

Before we leave Santa Cruz, the story of "Thompson" permits a bit of anticipation. Months later, in far southern Chile, I chanced to pick up a newspaper, among the scant foreign despatches of which my eye fell upon:

"Bolivia, 14 May—In Santa Cruz de la Sierra was

shot to-day the criminal 'Thompson,' of English nationality, condemned to the supreme penalty for having assassinated the conductors of money of some local houses."

Another half-year passed before there reached me in Brazil local papers and letters giving details. According to these, the judge wept when he read the sentence, but "Thompson" shook hands with him, telling him the sentence was just, and that the only criticism he had to offer was that the execution had been so long delayed. As his last favor, he asked that jail conditions be improved, that his friends might be more humanly housed. On his last night he got permission to have a few of these—all jailbirds—to dinner with him, but refused to touch liquor himself, "so I shall be able to take in every detail clearly." In the morning he informed friends that he had parents, brothers, and sisters in London, and a wife and son in the United States. To these he had been writing since his arrest that he was engaged in an enterprise that would in time make him rich, if luck was with him. On the evening before his execution he wrote bidding them all farewell, saying he had suddenly contracted a tropical disease the doctors despaired of, and would be dead by the time they got the letter. He was shot at noon, while the bells of the cathedral were striking, so that nothing should be heard outside the prison.

In Santa Cruz Tommy fell victim to that loathsome ailment popularly known as "cold feet." An attack of fever and a hazy promise of employment for his trusty trowel were no doubt among the causes; it is probable, too, that he had not entirely lost faith in the attractiveness of sandy hair. But the inoculation was chiefly due to the replies to our inquiries about

the road ahead. These were not exactly reassuring. It was characteristic of Tommy, however, that he pretended to be eager to push on, while secretly planning to remain behind.

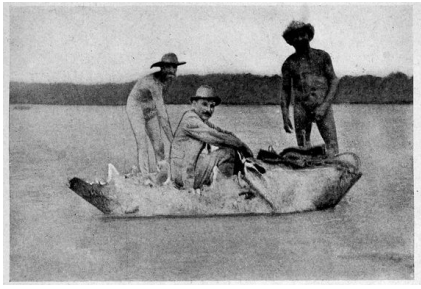
There is one of the sand streets of Santa Cruz de la Sierra which does not run out to nothing in the surrounding jungle, but dwindles to what is known locally as the "camino de Chiquitos," and pushes on to the Paraguay river, some 400 miles distant. "Road" in the cruceño sense, however, means anything but a comfortable highway. As usual, the town was scornful of the suggestion that two lone gringos could make the journey on foot. Disheartening stories assailed us of the dangers from snakes and "tigers," of the unending pest of insects, of the almost total lack of sleeping-places and even of supplies. For the first week we must carry all food with us; in this rainy season the route was sure to abound with chest-deep mud-holes and miles of swamps; the last twenty leagues, near the Paraguay, would be completely inundated and impassable for months, until the waters subsided. Or, if the rains did not come on at their accustomed time, there was as much danger of the country being wholly waterless for long distances. Moreover, beyond the Rio Guapay, eight leagues east of the capital, stretched the notorious Monte Grande, a dense, unbroken forest in which roamed wild Indians given to shooting six-foot arrows of *chonta*, or iron-heavy black palm, from their eight-foot bows, with such force that they pass clear through a man at fifty yards. This was said to be quite painful. Nor were these mere idle rumors; we had only to drop in on one of several men in town to be shown arrows taken from the bodies of victims, and a sojourning fellow-countryman had several relics of the tribe he had had

the good fortune to see first while prospecting on the banks of the Guapay.

Reading Tommy's real opinion of the journey behind his face, I laid plans to continue alone. Experienced travelers asserted that boiled water, a careful diet, a selected medicine-kit, waterproofs, a tropical helmet, and a woolen cholera-belt for night chills were prime necessities. I had all but six of this half-dozen requisites. By choice I should have turned rural native entirely and worn a straw hat, a breechclout, a pair of leather sandals, and a towel. But life can seldom be reduced to such charming simplicity. Two things at least were indispensable,—a cloth hammock and a *mosquitero* to hang over it; for the only sleeping-place on most of the journey would be that which the traveler carried with him. Then I must "hacer tapeque," as they say in Santa Cruz, or "pack" a bag of rice and some sheets of sun-dried beef, to say nothing of distributing about my person a kodak, revolver, cartridges, and money in various forms of metal. Add to this a few indispensable garments, sealed tins of salt and matches, kitchenette, photographic and writing materials, and the other unavoidable odds and ends for a scantily inhabited 400-mile trip of unknown duration, and it will be readily understood why, after mailing the developing-tank and even my coat, razor and accessories, I staggered heavily across town on January 8th, to begin the longest single leg of my South American journey.

Fortunately, the German who had sought my assistance in the matter of the gun license, was bound for at least a few days in the same direction. Heinrich Konanz, born in Karlsruhe, had served the last of three years as a conscript in the expedition

against the Chinese Boxers, and had since worked as a carpenter in China and California, until he had concluded to seek a permanent home as a colonist in some region where population was less numerous. He was largely innocent of geography, spoke habitually a painful cross between his once native tongue and what he fondly fancied was English, with a peppering of Chinese, and knew almost no Spanish. The mule that had carried him from Cochabamba he found it necessary to turn into a pack-animal for the tools, materials, and provisions he had purchased in Santa Cruz, and was to continue on foot. He had been placidly making plans to push on alone, when rumors in his own tongue suddenly reached him of the Monte Grande and its playful Indians. His first inclination had been to throw up the sponge and return to Cochabamba. But his capital had been greatly reduced and his hotel room was heaped with the supplies sold him by his local fellow-countrymen, who would not have taken them back at a fourth of the original cost. He made a virtue of necessity, added a new rifle to his revolver and shotgun, and offered to find room on the mule for the heavier portion of my baggage in return for the reassurance of my company.



Konanz seated on our baggage

in the *pelota de cuero*, or "leather ball" in which we were both carried across the Rio Guapay



The force of one of the four *fortines*, or "fortresses," with which the Bolivian government garrisons the Monte Grande against the savages

It was a brilliant day when I shouldered the German's rifle, my own revolver well oiled and freshly loaded, and led the way out of town. Mud-holes, along which we picked our way on rows of the whitened skulls of cattle, soon gave place to a great pampa, with tall, coarse grass and scattered trees, across which lay a silent sand road so utterly dry that we had already suffered long from thirst when we reached the first "well," a mud-hole thick with green slime, attesting by its taste the also visible fact that all the cattle for miles around made it their loafing-place and protection from the swarms of flies and insects. Here we not only drank, but filled the German's water-bag. When the liquid mud in this gave out, my companion took to lapping up that in the cart-ruts and the footprints of cattle along the

trail. I held out until I overtook a boy carrying on his head a pailful of guapurú (wah-poo-roó), of which I bought a hatful for a *medio*. This is a fruit cruelly like a large luscious cherry in appearance, growing without a stem on the trunk of a gnarly pampa tree, of a snow-white meat not particularly pleasant to the taste, but a welcome antidote for tropical thirst.

Twice during the day we met a train of heavy, crude ox-carts roofed with sun-dried ox-hides, that recalled the "prairie-schooners" of pioneer days, eight oxen to each, creaking westward with infinite slowness. In the afternoon the forest closed in about us, and we plodded on through deep sand alternating with mud-holes. Soon all the woods about us were screaming like a dozen suffragette meetings in full session and, fancying the uproar came from edible wild fowls, I crept in upon them, rifle in hand. To my astonishment, I found a band of small monkeys shrieking together in a huge tree-top. Even a monkey steak would not have been unacceptable. I fired into the branches. Instantly there fell, not the wherewithal for a sumptuous evening repast, but the most absolute silence. The little creatures did not flee, however, but each sprang a limb or two higher and watched my slightest movement with brilliant, roving eyes. A qualm came upon me and I hurried after the German.

That night we camped in a clump of trees about a water-hole. The native who pointed out the trail to it did so in a surly, regretful manner, as if he resented the consumption by strangers who should have remained in their own country of a priceless treasure insufficient for home consumption. Down at the bottom of a deep hole in the sand, strongly fenced with split rails, was an irregular puddle barely four

inches deep, full of fallen leaves, wrigglers, and decayed vegetable matter; yet from it radiated trails in all directions. The blocks of crude brown sugar we had purchased that morning had melted during the day and smeared everything within reach; the boiled leg of mutton already whispered its condition to the nostrils. The breeze a slight knoll promised treacherously died down, and the swarms of insects that sung about us all night frequently struck home, in spite of the close-knit *mosquitero* that kept us running with sweat until near dawn.

Monkeys were already howling in the nearby woods when we pulled on our clothes, wet and sticky, in a soggy morning that soon carried out its promise of rain; and parrots now and then screamed at us in dull-weather mood. A heavy shower paused for a new start and became a true jungle deluge. My poncho would have been useless; besides, it was wrapped, in Australian “swag” style, around my possessions on the mule. Past experience told me that the only reliable waterproof in the tropics is to let it rain—and dry out again when opportunity offers. We settled down to splash on indifferently, soaked through and through from hat to shoes, dripping at every seam. The weather was not over warm either, and only the heaviest moments of the storm dispersed the swarms of ravenous mosquitoes.

In dense woods punctuated with mud-holes, a yellow youth in two cotton garments overtook us well on in the afternoon, and asked if we would need a “pelota.” We would. He stopped at a jungle hut some distance beyond and emerged with an entire ox-hide, sun-dried and still covered with the long red hair of its original owner, folded in four like a sheet of writing paper, on his head. For a mile or more he

plodded noiselessly behind us. Then suddenly the forest opened out upon the notorious Guapay, or Rio Grande, a yellow-brown stream, wide as the lower Connecticut, flowing swiftly northward to join the Mamoré on its journey to the Amazon. We splashed a mile or more up along its edge, to offset the distance we should be carried downstream before striking a landing opposite. Here two men of bleached-brown skin, each completely naked but for a palm-leaf hat securely tied on, relieved our companion of his load and set about turning it into a boat. These "pelotas de cuero" ("leather balls") are the ferries of all this region, being transportable, whereas a wooden boat, left behind, would be stolen by the "indios bravos." Around the edge of the hide were a dozen loopholes through which was threaded a cord that drew it up into the form of a rude tub. To add firmness to this, the hat-wearers laid a corduroy of green poles in the bottom. Then they piled our baggage into it, set the German atop, and dragged it down the sloping mud bank into the water, while the youth coaxed the mule into the stream and swam with it for the opposite shore. This seemed load enough and to spare. But when I had fulfilled my duties as official photographer of the expedition, I, too, was lifted in, as they would no doubt have piled in Tommy also, had he been with us, and away we went, easily 500 pounds, speeding down the racing yellow stream, the naked ferrymen first wading, then swimming beside us, clutching the pelota, the "gunwales" of which were in places by no means an inch above the water. Had the none-too-stout cord broken, the hide would instantly have flattened out and left us—for an all-too-brief moment—like passengers on the magic carpet of oriental fairy-tales.

Before and high above us, where the *peloteros* coaxed

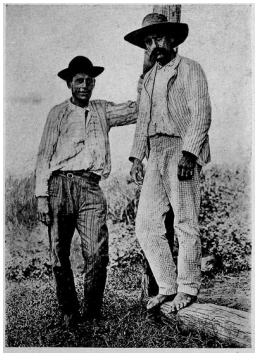
the crazy craft ashore, stretching like a Chinese wall of vegetation further than the eye could follow in either direction, stood an impenetrable forest, the famous Monte Grande, or "Great Wilderness," of Bolivia. Here was the chief haunt of the wild Indians of the penetrating arrow, a region otherwise uninhabited, through which the "road" to the Paraguay squeezes its way for hundreds of miles almost without a shift of direction. We swung our hammocks on the extreme edge of the river, where the breeze promised to blow—and failed of its promise, like most things Latin-American. For though the day was not yet spent, the journey through the Monte Grande is fixed in its itinerary by the four "garrisons" maintained some five leagues apart by the Bolivian government as a theoretical protection against the nomadic Indians. At dusk a man swam the river with his clothing and possessions in the brim of his hat, and soon afterward the stream began to rise so rapidly that it is doubtful if we could have passed it for several days.

Almost at once, in the morning, we met a train of nine enormous roofed carts of merchandise from Europe by way of Montevideo, each drawn by eight yoke of gaunt, way-worn oxen, straining hub-deep through the mire at a turtle's pace. The forest crowded them so closely on either hand that we must back into it, as into the shallow niche of an Inca wall, and stand erect and motionless until the train had crawled by, the wilderness bawling and echoing a half-hour with the cries of the dozen drivers with their long goads dodging in and out, knee-deep in mud, among the panting brutes. We met no other person during the day. Travelers through the Monte Grande go always in bands, and the ox-drivers stared at us setting out alone, as at gringo madmen.

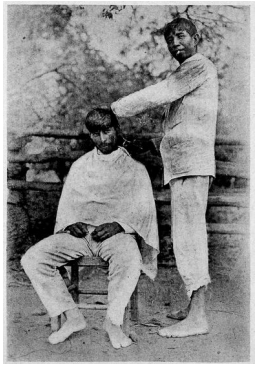
We deployed in campaign formation. Our revolvers loose in their holsters, the German marched ahead, closely followed by his affectionate “mool,” while I brought up the rear with his new Winchester. Mine was the post of honor and most promise, for the Indians of the Monte Grande do not face their intended victims, but spring from behind a tree to shoot the traveler in the back, and dodge back out of sight again. They shoot seated, using the feet to stretch the bow, a slight advantage, in point of time, to their prey. Rumor has it that the tribe is by nature peaceful; but they were long hunted for sport and are still shot on sight, with no questions asked, and so have come to look upon all travelers as tribal enemies. They are said to be entirely nomadic, to wear nothing but a feather clout, and to bind their limbs in childhood, so that the forearm and the leg below the knee become mere bone and sinew with which they can thrust their way through the spiny undergrowth without pain. This improvement on nature draws the foot out of shape, and the footprint of a savage, showing only the imprint of the heel, the outer edge of the foot, and the crooked big toe, is easily distinguished from that of the ordinary native. However, that was not my lucky day, and I caught not so much as a kodak-shot at a feather clout, though I glanced frequently over my shoulder all the day through.

But if the Indians failed us, there were other visitations to make up for them. Every instant of the day we fought swarms of gnats and mosquitos; though the sun rarely got a peep in upon us, its damp, heavy heat kept us half-blinded with the salt sweat in our eyes. The road was really a long tunnel through unbroken forest meeting overhead, into which the thorny undergrowth crowded in spite of

the ox-cart traffic. All day long, mud-holes, often waist-deep for long distances, completely occupied the narrow forest lane. The region being utterly flat, the waters of the rainy season gather in the slightest depression, which passing ox-carts plough into a slough beyond description; while the barest suggestion of a stream inundates to a swamp all the surrounding territory. For the first mile we sought, in our inexperience, to tear our way around these through the edge of the forest. But so dense was this that it barred us as effectually as a cactus hedge. We took to wading, now to the knees, now to the waist, sometimes slipping into unseen cart-ruts and plunging to the shoulders in noisome slime.



Jim and “Hughtie” Powell, Americans from Texas who have turned Bolivian peons



A jungle hair-cut

It grew monotonous, but so does life under the best of conditions. Moreover, whatever gloom our surroundings created was more than offset by the German. Not that he was gay, nor, indeed, cheerful under adversity. But the genuine comedian, like an Italian Hamlet, has no inkling of his humor. Konanz was at his best when he fancied himself most tragic, putting me frequently to excruciating labor to preserve outwardly that solemn gravity that was indispensable to peace between us. He insisted on speaking “English.” This astounding tongue he had concocted by the simple rule of learning the corresponding English for each German word, and jealously retaining the German grammar and form; all this with so guttural an accent that the hearer could not distinguish “lake” from “leg.” Thus I was informed that “He put it his hat in,” and “He set him by a boat the river over.” Our snow-white pack-mule was of that affectionate nature that craves constant companionship. But the Teuton had no affection to spare, and whenever the animal chanced to stray a yard from the spot in which he had left her, he fell upon the poor brute with a bellow of rage:

"Oh, py Gott, Mr. Mool! Ven I don't hat to lug myself der loat all to San Yozay, I rhight avay shoot her der head through. To-morrow, py Gott, I bind her der dree on, der ..."

At sunset we waded through a barred gate into the *pascana*, or tiny natural clearing, of Cañada Larga, the first of the four *fortines*. Five miserable thatched huts, some without walls and the others of open-work poles set upright, were occupied by eight boyish soldiers in faded rags of khaki and ancient cork helmets of the same color, and a slattern female belonging to the lieutenant. The latter was a haughty fellow of twenty-five, sallow with fever and gaunt from long tropical residence, a graduate of the Bolivian West Point in La Paz, and permanently in command of all the garrisons of the Monte Grande. The others were two-year conscripts between nineteen and twenty-one, assigned to the forts for a year, usually to be forgotten by the government and left there months longer.

Our official paper ordered the commander to "give us all facilities, wood and water, and to sell us food —*provided there was any*." He waved a hand in a bored, tropical way, and two of the handsomest children in uniform brought us wood, and soon came lugging a huge bucket of water on a pole across their shoulders. What food could he sell us? Not a thing. Some yucas, at least? Señor, we have only half rations of rice for ourselves. But the prefect said we could depend.... The prefect, señor, has not sent us any supplies for more than a month. There was nothing left but to cook some of our own rice and charqui, and try to be thankful for even that miserable substitute for food. Its staying powers were slight. Twice during the night I ate a large plate of it

cold, and spent most of the time hungry at that. Not that I got up to eat; much of the night I wandered up and down the pascana, fighting the mosquitos and a tiny gnat whose bite was out of all proportion to its size, and which the fine gauze mosquitero designed for the purpose by no means kept out, though it did effectually any breeze that stirred.

The lieutenant insisted on sending along a soldier to "protect" us from the savages. He was a girlish-looking boy of Indian features, armed with an ancient Winchester of broken butt, thick with rust inside and out. Most of the day he lagged far behind, for the sun-dried stretches of road between the swamps and mud-holes hurt even his calloused feet. We tramped unbrokenly for seven hours, the endless forest-wall close on either hand, without sighting another human being, until the jungle opened out slightly on the little pascana of Tres Cruces. The sergeant in command dragged himself out a few yards to meet us, a rifle-shot having warned him of our approach. He had four soldiers and a gnat-bitten female. They called the bucketful they brought us from a swamp, "excellent water." It *was* clear, to be sure, and a decided improvement on what we had drunk from the mud-holes during the day, the swampy taste not quite overwhelming. But it was lukewarm from lying out under the sun, and had at least a hundred tadpoles swimming merrily about in it. One dipped up a cupful, picked out the tadpoles gently but firmly, and forced as much of their vacated bath as possible down the feverish throat.

The gnats of Tres Cruces quickly got wind of the arrival of fresh supplies and attacked us in battalions. The previous camp had been gnatless compared to this. Known to the natives as *jejenes*, they are almost

invisible, yet they can bite through a woolen garment or a cloth hammock so effectively that the mosquito's puny efforts pass unnoticed in comparison. Wherever they alight they leave a red spot the size of a mustard-seed that itches and burns for days afterward. What such a host of them had hoped to feed on, had we not unexpectedly turned up, I cannot guess; surely they were taking long chances of starvation here in the unpeopled wilderness. Under no circumstances did they give us a moment of respite. Even the soldiers, tropical born and long accustomed to them, ate their supper plate in hand, marching swiftly up and down the "parade-ground" and striking viciously at themselves with the free hand. We could not leave off fighting them long enough to lift a kettle off the fire, without a hundred instantly stinging us in as many distinct spots. In bookless Santa Cruz I had had the luck to pick up a paper edition of Nietzsche in Spanish, but even in that tongue the journey through an entire sentence was impossible. I could not write a word or speak a sentence without pausing to slap savagely at some portion of my anatomy. My notes of those days are all short and choppy. A long sentence was impossible. It seemed unbelievable so tiny a thing could bite so. The mosquitero was useless. They could bite through sheet-iron. A real dinner would have been a joy, but an hour's relief from these incessant pests would have outdone a week of banquets. One wanted to run and dance and scream, but tired feet forbade. Much as we needed rest, we must keep walking swiftly up and down the pascana, wondering how long a man would last on charqui and rice, walking day and night. "Oh, py Gott!" cried Konanz, attempting in vain to slap himself between the shoulder-blades. "In China py der Boxer der

mosquito he pinch is very much, aber here!"

Tramping doggedly back and forth in the dusk, I heard the sergeant in his hut singing and apparently happy. I raced to his door. Eureka! Necessity is the mother of invention, even among the uninventive. He was swinging swiftly back and forth in his hammock. I grasped a pack-rope and was soon rushing swiftly through the half-arc of a circle. The relief was startling. But to work incessantly with the arms was little better than tramping the pascana. If only the inventor of perpetual motion had not put his invention off so long. The relief from torture quickly made me drowsy. But if the swinging flagged for an instant, the jejenes at once brought me wide awake. Before long, too, a few hardy gnats solved the problem of catching their prey on the fly, like experienced "hoboes." More and more learned the trick, until I gave up in despair and took once more to tramping the parade-ground; kept it up, indeed, most of the brilliant, moonlit night.

In the morning I found that ants had eaten into decorative fringes the edges of my leather leggings. Vampire bats had smeared our white mule with her own blood. For a long time I could not make the German understand what had happened to the animal, until I dug up out of the depths of memory the word "Fledermaus." To watch him pack was always amusing—also a torture. He had learned to do everything in the German style of systematized routine, in which the longest way round is always the shortest way between two points; and he knew nothing of "efficiency," of that dovetailing of work in such a way as to hasten the process. Instead of lighting a fire first and having his breakfast ready by the time he was dressed, he must be entirely garbed

before touching a stick or a pot; and so on clear through the loading. However often he made up the pack, each detail must be laboriously thought out again, and as he could never think of more than one thing at a time, the operation was endless. Bring him what he needed to load next, and he stared stony-eyed at me, as if wondering why I was trying to disturb his meditations. Though we rose at dawn, we were fortunate to be off before the sun had surmounted the jungle tree-tops.

The sergeant insisted, languidly and tropically, on sending one of his armed boys along. We refused. Should anything have happened to the child, such as a sprained ankle in "protecting" us from the savages, we could never have forgiven ourselves. All day long we tramped due eastward through unbroken forest. Monotonously the swamps and mud-holes continued. It would not have been so bad could we have waded all the way barefoot; but the sun-dried stretches between made shoes imperative. Never a patch of clearing, never a sign of human existence—though I still glanced frequently over my shoulder—never the suggestion of a breeze to temper the heat or to break the ranks of the swarming insects! We threw ourselves face-down at any mud-hole or cart-rut, gratefully, to drink. "It was crawlin' an' it stunk, but"—anything that can by any stretch of the word be called water is only too welcome in tropical Bolivia. The red-hot poison with which the gnats of days past had inoculated us from head to foot itched murderously. Amateur wilderness travelers have a theory that "dope" smeared over the body will afford protection in such cases, but it would be a strong concoction indeed that could rout the jejenes of the Monte Grande. The only method is to get bit and heal again, as one gets wet and dries again, or goes

astray and finds oneself again. The one absolute rule is, *Don't scratch!* Not to scratch may drive the sufferer mad, but to do so will drive him doubly insane; and swamp water is infectious to any abrasion of the skin, and an open sore is the greatest peril of tropical travel.

Let it not be fancied, however, that life was sad even with these drawbacks. The song of the jungle was unbroken, the brilliant sunshine joyful, for all its heat. In places the road was completely veiled by clouds of beautiful white butterflies. Sweating freely, there was a spontaneous play of the mental spirits and a sense of splendid physical well-being, not the mind-paralyzing gloom of our northern winters. Up on the high plateau the mind might work as freely, but with this difference: there it seemed to be using itself up, each period of exaltation being followed by the feeling that one was much older, much more worn out, while here there were no such after effects. Though we drank water which, in civilization, would have caused us to die of cramps within an hour, the constant sweating carried off its evil effects, and though gaunt and gnat-bitten, we both looked "the picture of health." The main rule for keeping well in the tropics is to live on the country, to avoid canned food and dissipation, and above all to get plenty of hard exercise and exposure to the elements. Unfortunately, where food is most needed, it is most difficult to obtain.

A toilsome eighteen miles ended at Pozo del Tigre—there was something fetching about the name of this third fortín,—the "Tiger's Drinking-place." Here were four boys, a cossack post in command of a corporal; also at last there was something for sale, for some one had planted a patch of corn back in the forest.

Two soldiers brought us *choclos* and *huiro*,—green-corn for ourselves and stalks of the same for the mule. The conscripts preferred coffee and rice in payment, for money is of slight value beyond the Rio Grande, but demanded five times what the stuff was worth. It was not sweet-corn, and was either half-grown or overripe, but was welcome for all that. We threw the ears into the fire and raked them out, to munch what was not entirely burned or still raw. The jejenes made it impossible to hold them over the fire to toast. We squatted so closely over the blaze it all but burned our garments, yet the relief was so great, in spite of the smoke in our eyes, that we all but fell asleep into the fire.

The life of these garrisons is dismal in the extreme. The soldiers had absolutely no drill or other fixed duty. In most cases they were too apathetic to plant anything, even to dig a well, however heavily time hung on their hands, preferring to starve on half-rations, to choke in the dry season and drink mud in the wet, rather than to exert themselves. Each "fort" had in the center of the "parade-ground" a crude horizontal-bar made of a sapling. But it was used only for a languid moment, when utter ennui drove some one to it. The impossibility of "team-work" among Latin-Americans was never more clearly demonstrated than by the fact that each soldier cooked his own food separately three times a day over his own stick fire. There was not faith enough among them even to permit division of labor in bringing fire-wood. Each set his *marmita*, a soldier's tin cook-pot shaped to fit between the shoulders, on the ends of burning sticks and sat constantly on his heels beside it, lest it spill over as one of the fagots burned away. The fellows were astonished to learn the use of Y-shaped sticks for hanging their kettles.

Toward morning I slept an hour or two from utter exhaustion. It was astonishing how one recuperated for all the day ahead with so short a rest. After all, tramping is not like mental labor; a brief repose is all that is necessary. The savages having deceived us for three days, we lessened our burdens by fastening rifle and shotgun within quick reach on the mule, though still keeping our revolvers handy. Wild animals are commonly hidden away in the silence of the forest, even in such wildernesses, and rarely cross a path used by man; but they are not always unseen. We were tramping side by side when I pointed excitedly at the narrowing vista of the road ahead.

“Deer!” I cried.

The German, his mind perhaps on Indians, all but sprang over his mule. Some two hundred yards ahead a reddish fawn stood grazing, and fresh meat would have been more acceptable just then than eternal riches. As a three-year soldier it was surely my companion’s place to shoot; besides, the rifle and cartridges were his. But he marched stolidly forward. With no officer behind to give a stentorian command, his mind refused to work. Every step was increasing the probability of seeing a splendid venison repast for ourselves and for the soldiers ahead bound away into the trackless forest.

“Schüsse doch!” I cried, in a hoarse whisper.

Alas! I had overlooked the preliminary routine of “Ready! Load! Aim!” The German snatched hastily and blindly at the pack, leveled a gun, and fired. A discharge of bird-shot sprinkled the nearby tree-trunks, and the startled deer sprang with one leap into the unknown. Konanz had caught up the shotgun instead of the rifle!

It must not be gathered, however, that he was not an effective hunter, given prey fitted to his abilities. All this region is noted for its *petas*, a large land-turtle, with the empty charred shells of which any camping-ground is sure to be scattered. During the afternoon the German actually ran one down.

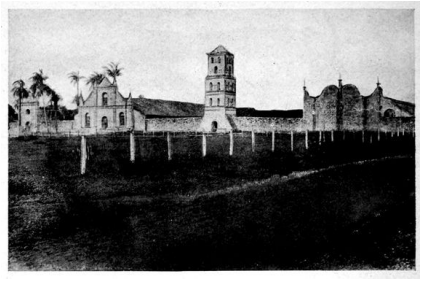
Tied on the pack, it arrived at the fourth and last *fortín* of the Monte Grande, Guayritos, a larger clearing surrounded by *matorrales* or palm-tree swamps, and noted for attacks by the savages. The corporal ordered one of his three men to prepare the turtle. He split it open with a machete and, removing all the meat, spitted the liver, the chief delicacy, on a stick, while I set the rest to boiling. When it had cooked for an hour, the addition of a handful of rice and a chip of salty rock made the most savory repast of several days. All through the cooking Konanz had sat moodily by, fighting clouds of jejenes and smoking furiously for protection. When the meal was ready he refused to touch it. Evidently turtle is not eaten in the German army. But for once the inner man all but overcame the iron discipline of years. It may have been the smoke that brought tears to his eyes as I fell upon the mess; at any rate he moved away from the fire and went to tramp gloomily up and down the edge of the pascana. The thick muscles, that in life are so strong that a man cannot pull a leg from its shell by main force, were of a dark-red meat far superior to the finest chicken—unless appetite deceived me—and almost boneless. The comatose condition induced by the feast lasted with only an occasional break all night, so that I slept considerably, even though the gnats roared about my net like a raging sea on a distant cliff-bound coast, and a few hundred managed to gain admittance.

A tropical shower was raging when we finished loading. Even the soldiers were in a snarling mood. The going was so slippery that it was painful. For long distances there were *camelones* or *barriales*, as the interminable corduroy-like mud ridges with troughs of slime between them are called. Every step was perilous, until we were splashed and soaked from hat-crown down; after that a misstep and a sprawl did not matter. Skeletons of oxen were numerous along the way. When the rain ceased, the day remained thick, and the heat was heavy enough to cut with a spade. For long stretches we waded waist-deep through swamps of long green grasses. A few slight pascanas began to break the endless forest. In one of them, and scattered far beyond, we met the first travelers since entering the woods,—four rusty and mud-plastered wagons, hopelessly mired, others with their several yokes of oxen lying indifferently in water, mud, or on dry land.

That afternoon our journey seemed to have come ignominiously to an end. An immense swamp or lake a half-mile wide spread across the trail and far away in both directions into the now thinner forest, the notorious “curiche de Tuná.” We attempted to flank it, only to have a faint side path end in the impassable tangles of an even greater swamp. Wandering in this for an hour, we regained the road at last, and, putting everything damageable in our hats and strapping our revolvers about our necks, attempted the crossing. The lake proved only chest-deep, but the glue-like mud-bottom all but swallowed up the mule, and the pack emerged streaming water from every corner.

The sun was getting low when we sighted a little wooded hill above the sea-flat forest ahead. The road

dodged the hillock, however, and we slushed hopelessly on through endless virgin forest. Night was coming on. The insignificance of man in these primeval woods was appalling. Suddenly a large, rail-fenced cornfield appeared in a clearing beside the “road,” but this plunged on again into the wilderness without disclosing any other sign of humanity. Darkness was upon us when a man in white rode out of the gloom ahead, and all but fell from his mule in astonishment. We had passed unseen the branch trail to the scattered hamlet of El Cerro, a score of thatched huts, constituting the first civilian dwelling of man beyond the Rio Grande.



The old stone and brick church and monastery of San José, erected by the Jesuits, typical of the architecture of their “reductions” throughout “Guarani Land”



The fatherly old cura of San José standing before the Jesuit sun-dial in the patio of the ruined monastery, now the free abode of travelers. The all-but-horizontal shadow across the dial shows 6:30 A. M.

CHAPTER XXI
SKIRTING THE GRAN CHACO

We took possession of a *galpón*, a thatched roof on poles, up in the edge of the jungle. But the anticipated feast was scanty. El Cerro had little to sell and less desire to sell it. Konanz was so completely worn out that he threw himself down supperless, without even swinging his "hang-net." After a hut to hut canvass I coaxed a cerrito to sell a pound of fresh beef, which, with rice and some little red beans, made such a stew as roused even the German from his stupor. We topped it off with the succulent luxury of an *empanisado*, a smeary block of crude, dark-brown, unpurified sugar, wrapped in leaves and costing eight times what it would have in the jungles of north Peru. Of this we each ate fully a pound, so great was our craving for sweets. Gnats were few in El Cerro, and we slept such a night as seldom comes to the tropical wanderer.

Two of them, for that matter. For a time next morning it looked as if I should have to continue alone, "packing" my own food and possessions. Konanz liked the appearance of the soil round about

El Cerro and was half inclined to settle there. We went to discuss the matter with the horseman of the night before, a Spaniard long resident in the region, I acting as interpreter. But in spite of my over-fairness in trying not to influence his plans, the German decided to push on a few days further, chiefly because the best land was largely held by absentee owners. But he insisted on resting for a day. We removed some of the grime of travel and dried out ourselves and possessions, and in the end even "fed up." For, seeing us by daylight, the people of El Cerro regained confidence and decided that they had more to sell than they had fancied. For twenty centavos a woman brought us the first bucketful of clear water we had seen beyond Santa Cruz. I canvassed the town thoroughly and gleaned some green plantains, three eggs, and a sheet of charqui, and finally metamorphized sixty centavos into a spring chicken. Most of the inhabitants were too apathetic to plant anything to break the endless monotony of their rice diet, to say nothing of being too selfish to part with what little they did grow. Their clothing consisted of two calico garments and a straw hat for the men and a species of flying night-dress for the women; and their industry was chiefly confined to lying in a hammock in the shade. The women carried their children astride a hip, as in the Orient, the Andean custom of slinging the papoose on the back having entirely disappeared. Each family kept a smudge fire burning just outside the door, as a protection against the jejenes. Rested up and somewhat relieved from the "pinch" of insects, Konanz grew reminiscent and now and then prefaced some characteristically Teutonic anecdote with some such dreamy remark as:

"In China ve every day chip more ass two hunderd

heads from der Boxers off."

Beyond El Cerro the landscape changes. The dense Monte Grande with its glue-like loam gives place to a few suggestions of rocks and hills, and the palm-trees and *frondoso* vegetation characteristic of Chiquitos appear. From the "Panteón," a bit of clearing in the jungle, with blackened wooden crosses tied together with jungle creepers standing over the graves of former residents of El Cerro, we caught a short-cut through somewhat thinner forest to the scattered hamlet of Motococito, so named from the *motocú* with which the roofs are thatched. Then we went on all day without another sight of humanity. Now and again the trail undulated over little rocky ridges, where the woods were a bit more open and the danger from wild Indians—if there ever was any—decreased. All day the unshaded tropical sun beat down upon us like molten lead. In the afternoon an enormous *palmar*,—a swamp with a sort of leaf-and-bulb growth protruding from the water and thickly grown with slender palm-trees—opened out on our left and we should have had to wade for miles chest-deep but for a new trail recently cut along the edge of the stony, wooded hills, not always out of reach of the rising waters. Birds large and small, from herons to noisy parrakeets, enlivened the vast, flooded wilderness.

About four, we made out through the salt sweat in our eyes the first cattle-ranch beyond the Rio Grande, and soon limped into the corral of the "Estancia Equito," at the foot of a slight knoll. A large two-story house in wretched condition faced a yard overrun with swine and carpeted with the trodden droppings of animals. From the balcony above, a surly Indian-negro female grumpily gave us

permission to spend the night where we were, and offered no further assistance. Konanz had dropped on his back in the first patch of shade and could not be stirred, even to unload the mule; which was as well, for when tired out he was hopelessly rattle-brained and apt to be of more annoyance than assistance. While I piled our possessions into a covered cart out of reach of the militant pigs, he complained of being ill and for the first time accepted some quinine pills. Evidently these are permitted the Kaiser's troops, once they are visibly ailing. The meanness of the *estancieros* was so Bolivian that they would not even point out a water-hole. I hobbled about for some time without finding anything better than a hog-wallow, which dogs, fowls, and the Indian servants used indiscriminately. The breath of the cattle corral drove off the insects somewhat, but the inhabitants, two and four-legged, gave us no peace where I had swung the hammocks after much effort. I coaxed the German to his feet, and with half the load on the mule, half on my own back, led the way a few hundred yards down the road to some abandoned reed-and-mud shacks. It required a considerable tramp to gather dry wood, and the water, sickly warm and ill-scented, had to be carried a long distance from a swamp completely covered with a weedy bulb. Luckily, we had acquired in El Cerro the "sister" of yesterday's chicken, which, in spite of having jolted on the pack all day under the blazing sun, was still half-alive. By the time I had "chipped" off its head, performed the autopsy with a dull machete, and finally sat down to supper—quickly to get up again under the flagellation of insects—black tropical night had fallen, and it was not easy to fetch more water to wash the dishes, without falling into the source of supply. The German had not stirred

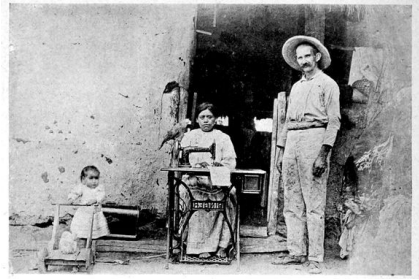
since he had dropped on his back again—except to drink a pail of soup and eat two drumsticks and a wing. Then I must fetch another sackful of water, for the sweat of the day, drying on the body, made the gnat-bitten skin so many square inches of torture. Under the circumstances bathing was no easy task. To have calmly disrobed would have been to be instantly flayed alive by the army of insects. I piled on brush until the flames blazed high, though artificial heat was not exactly required, then threw sand upon them until only a heavy smudge remained. Standing astride this, weeping copiously, mosquitos and jejenes falling furiously in massed formation upon any patch of skin for an instant unsmoked, I poured the sackful over me, and finally rolled into my hammock in the streaming moonlight between two palm-trees.

Under the mosquitero the sweat ran in streams along my itching skin; outside it millions of insects fought to reach me, not a few succeeding. Bulls wandered by, bellowing in amorous anger. Now and then one paused to sniff at me, pawed the earth savagely, and thrust his snout and horns madly into it. Long rolls of thunder sounded in the east, growing louder and nearer. The flashes of lightning became almost continuous. But the sudden coolness and the fleeing of the insects before the rising wind gave such a relief from torture that I fell quickly asleep. Suddenly huge raindrops struck me in the face, and before I could snatch down the hammock and race for one of the ruined shacks, the skies were pouring. Then I must go back for my possessions, the damageable portion of which I had taken the precaution to tie in a bundle. Konanz had gone to no such trouble, so that all he owned was scattered over the surrounding country, and such things as we were able to snatch in

the flashes of lightning proved in the morning to be those that could best have stood a wetting. We swung our hammocks again in separate shacks, and enjoyed some relief from heat and insects. But only a corner of the split-bamboo roof above me did not leak like a sieve, and that was not sufficient to cover more than half my length.

The rain had spoiled a tolerable road, tons of which we carried along in the first fatiguing miles of slipping and sliding with every step. All day we slapped through “der chungle” with no other sound than the swish of our footsteps, as monotonously rhythmical as the ticking of a clock. The mule had transferred her affections to me, perhaps because I did not use a cudgel on her flanks or torture her ears with a stentorial guttural bellow at every step, and no dog ever followed a fond master more closely. Had I climbed a tree, the animal would certainly have got up after me somehow. Konanz was therefore advanced to rear-guard. The woods being a bit more open, we managed to dodge some of the sloughs by crawling around them, though at the expense of being torn and cut by cactus, wild pineapple leaves, and every known species of thorny tropical undergrowth, so that each day saw us bleeding from a score of superficial lacerations and our clothing rapidly becoming a tissue of tatters. But the mule hated to wet her dainty feet, and must be pushed bodily into each mud-hole and driven through it with loud words and well-aimed clods, even then often turning back to follow me through the underbrush. Once, in mid-morning, when I fancied her well across a slough, I heard a crashing in the brush behind me and turned just in time to see the affectionate animal emerge stark naked from between two trees, the pack stripped completely off

her.



Henry Halsey, the American rancher of tropical Bolivia, and his family



Saddle-steers take the place of horses and mules in the muddy parts of tropical Bolivia. Rate of travel: about two miles an hour

“Now you see vat you do!” cried the German tearfully.

“What who did?” I demanded. “Is it any fault of mine that the sex pursues me through thick and thin?”

But he was already studying out which knot of the diamond-hitch to tackle first in such an emergency.

In a way it would have been easier to carry my own bundle than to work for and humor the German so incessantly. A species of tropical madness, familiar to many travelers in the wilds, frequently came upon him. The simple question of whether or not he wished a block to sit on would bring from him a roar of rage, as if he who did not know his wishes in the matter were the king of fools. It was all but impossible to keep up my notes, to say nothing of lifting myself above the surroundings by an occasional page of Nietzsche. If I dared draw out pen or book during a pause in the shade at noonday, steeling myself against the swarming insects, my companion took to looking askance at such occupation. Like most illiterates—meaning by that those who *can*, but have not the habit of reading—he subconsciously resented such action. Perhaps it isn't done in the best circles of the German army. He had not heard of Nietzsche, but admitted during a cheerful mood that it sounded like a German name. In most cases he quickly found some useless topic of conversation, or some chore for me to do, going so far as to fly into an open rage if I ignored these hints. His moods were varied. From the deepest gloom, in which he would not answer yes or no to the simplest question, he would grow suddenly bland and garrulous, almost maudlin in his good humor, from no apparent cause, and a bare half-hour after some fit of rage he would be bellowing songs of the Fatherland in a voice to call down upon us all the savages of the region, had the peril not been neutralized by a lack of tunefulness tending to produce the opposite effect. The German army ration, he took frequent occasion to specify, consists of exactly so many grams of this, that, and the other, and Konanz considered any man who wanted his

supplies in any other proportions a pervert, a weakling, and a rascal.

Once we passed a train of ox-cars laden with boxes of merchandise marked “Via Montevideo en transito para Bolivia,” suggesting that the Atlantic was becoming more accessible than the Pacific. Most of them also bore the information “Ausfuhrgut,” denoting their origin; and all were so old and weather-worn that they seemed to have been months on the road. Indeed, goods for Santa Cruz have been known more than once to be two years en route. The government seeks to make this trans-Bolivian route more popular by reducing by 15 percent the duty on imports by way of Puerto Suarez.

Beyond a swamp which we managed only partly to dodge we met a disorganized band of soldiers, each attended by his chola, who might be, but probably in most cases was not, his wife, crawling painfully toward Santa Cruz with strange assortments of odds and ends on their backs, including the indispensable hammock each and several babies. According to them, the next settlement was so far distant that we gave up hope of reaching it that day and camped in the road, where there was barely room to pile our baggage beside a mud-hole for cooking and drinking. Every hint of breeze was cut off by the forest walls high above us, and the night that followed our stew of rice, beans, and charqui was one to be quickly forgotten—if possible. Stripped naked, the sweat ran off me in streams, soaking through the hammock. Into this the iron-jawed insects swarmed in such masses, in spite of the net, that I was forced to abandon it to them entirely. For a time I tramped up and down the road in the moonlight. But every few steps I stumbled half asleep. I built a fire about my

hammock and covered it with sand, but the smudge had little effect on the insects and made the heat and sweat all the more unendurable, so that I stumbled back and forth in the roadway most of the night.

We tramped four red-hot hours to Piococa, all but falling on our faces from sleepiness, and dodging the worst sloughs only by many a struggle with the jungle. Here, in a small open green backed by rock-faced, wooded hillocks, was the estancia-house of a cruceño to whom I had a letter. Only an Indian girl, stupid and filthy beyond words, was there, however, and we got a guinea-hen and some boiled yuca at last only by infinite coaxing. At least there was plenty of rich grass for the mule, and a clear running stream in which I bathed and laundered and lay emerged most of the afternoon in protection from the gnats. In our hammocks under the trees the insects were almost as bad as ever. The only possible relief was to walk swiftly up and down. Had I been alone, I should have pushed on without a stop until I reached a place of rest, but the German was so worn out that not even the “pinching” of the mosquitos could stir him up. There was at least a certain curiosity to know how long the human frame could hold up under these unbroken hardships.

At dusk three youths rode up on saddled steers, the chief means of transportation in these parts. The saddles were not unlike our “Texas,” and the single leather rein passed from the ring in the nose over the forehead of the animal, between the horns. Steers cross deep mud more easily than horses or mules, but are much slower and more easily exhausted, and the width of their flanks makes long riding painful to the hips. The motion is mildly like that of the camel. The natives sat for hours all but motionless, smoking

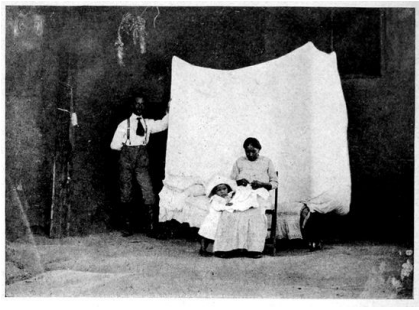
cigarros de chala, cigarettes rolled in corn-husks. Between a few gnat-bitten snatches of sleep I tramped the yard, pausing now and then to squat beside the fire that smudged all night before the native hut, forming a veritable curtain of smoke through which the insects hesitated to pass. The family inside swung in their hammocks all the night through. What secret means the people of this region have to keep their hammocks constantly moving, while to all appearances they are sound asleep, I was never able to learn. More than once I watched them for a long half-hour swinging back and forth with no evident means of propulsion, lying all but on their backs, one bare leg hanging over the edge of the *hamaca*, as if these children of the wilderness had long since solved the problem of perpetual motion that civilization has so far sought in vain.

In the morning the tendency to fall down asleep in full march remained. The road was wider and the forest more open, so that the sun beat upon us like an open puddling-furnace. We paused to drink from any cart-rut or swamp, and to wash from our eyes the blinding sweat that quickly filled them again. A huge hairy spider now and then ran by underfoot. The natives say they are deadly. We did not halt to investigate. Beyond the breathless corner of the woods where we cooked the last of our beans we met a welcome sight,—a woman with a bundle on her head; not merely the first traveler since passing the soldiers, but a sign that we were approaching a town. An hour further on we waded a small river, climbed a gentle slope heavy in sand, and found ourselves in a silent hamlet of sandy streets and an enormous grass-grown plaza backed by a stone church, as out of proportion to its surroundings as the Escorial in its village. We had reached at last the

famous old town of Saint Joseph.

The heels of my boots had worn away until they protruded from my ankles like spurs, and I had been forced to chop them off entirely with the machete. My hat had been trampled by the German and the mule during the thunder-storm until it was no longer recognizable. Torn, smeared, and bewhiskered with twelve days of jungle travel and mud-hole wading, tattooed from hair to soles with insect arabesques, bleached and faded by sweat and the raging sun, we were no fit sights for a ladies' club as we hobbled out upon the broad plaza. One of the huts facing it was the home and office of the subprefect. He, however, was "out on his farm" a few miles away, recuperating no doubt from the rush and roar of the city. "But all strangers lodge in the monastery." We hobbled in at a door under the four-story stone tower of that incongruous church, and found ourselves in a former residence of the Jesuits. The traveler asks permission of no one, but goes and takes possession; for the owners are far away and long absent. Now the ancient monastery is in the last stages of dilapidation. Under the arched corredores, backed by noisome ruined pens that were once the vaulted cells of monks, were a score of hammock-posts. A half-dozen soldiers and their females occupied some of these. We swung our hammocks in the long space left and picketed the mule out on the grassy plaza. Here and there on the stone walls were crude, life-size drawings of Bolivian boy-soldiers shooting Indians clad in feather clouts and armed with long bows and arrows. Three arched cells up against the church across the patio had been roughly walled up to serve as the provincial jail, with an earth floor and a log of wood as bed or bench, its one window protected by hoop-iron bars a girl could have pushed

off with one hand. In the back arches lived the cura, a little, dried-up, hare-minded cholo, with the half-dozen of his children not yet old enough to shift for themselves, and their two mothers. We learned later that he had twenty-two recognized children, some of them men of importance in the department. Though he went about pleading poverty and begging from the Indians, the padre owned nearly half the carts that ply the road through San José, and no small amount of the surrounding acreage.



A German of tropical Bolivia and his “housekeeper.” Showing the *mosquitero* with which all beds or hammocks of this region are covered as a protection against the mosquitos and *jejenes*



Santiago de Chiquitos, above the gnat-line, backed by its reddish cliffs

San José de Chiquitos is the capital of a province so named because the early Spaniards found the doors of the native huts so small, as a protection against gnats and their tribal enemies, that they could only enter them by making themselves *chiquitos* (tiny) and crawling in on all fours. In 1560 Ñuflo de Chaves, ascending the Paraguay river, founded here the original Santa Cruz de la Sierra, the street plan of which may still be imperfectly traced in the jungle a league away at the foot of a rock-faced hill. This first settlement was later removed to its present site, but in 1695 the Jesuits established here, in what is to-day Bolivian territory, under the name of San José, one of their ten "reductions." Not even the ruins of Paraguay, the republic most associated with the memory of the Loyalists, give a better notion of the establishments in which the Indian tribes "converted" by the good Fathers were gathered to toil for the safety of their souls and the filling of the coffers of the society in Paris. The mission remains much as it was when the order was expelled from Spanish territory, too isolated to be picked to pieces by visitors, its people too apathetic to make use of its

cut-stone for their own buildings.

These “reductions” were all alike in plan,—a large central square was enclosed by a wall, a ditch, and a stockade, as much to keep the “converts” from escaping as to protect them from the wild Indians and the *mamelucos* of Brazil who came in quest of slaves. An immense church, in the building of which the Padres made use of their subjects as freely as the Pharaohs, stood high above all else. The enormous mission of San José, conspicuous in its grandeur amid the solitude of the jungle as are the monuments of Egypt in their desert setting, was built of brick and stone under Spanish artisans, the four-story tower bearing the date 1748, and a stone sun-dial in the center of the patio, by which we could still tell the hour, that of 1765. From the summit of the tower the town below looked like an oasis in a desert of dense green, stretching ocean-wide on every hand. The huge bells were still suspended by ropes of *güembe*, a vine used in place of nails in modern constructions, and so strong and durable that it has held these immense masses in place more than a hundred years. The tolling of church-bells, striking even amid the rumble of civilization, was solemn in the extreme above the utter silence of the trackless *selva* and savage tropical solitudes.

The evidence is convincing that the first Jesuits to arrive were self-sacrificing idealists, filled with a zeal for converts that made even trickery,—decoy Indians, abundance of food, dances and festivals—fair play. Conversion was absurdly simple. Catch an Indian, sprinkle him with holy water, and shut him up within the mission stockade, and his soul was safely on the road to heaven. But once these idealists had gathered the Indians together and won their

confidence, they were superseded by astute, hard-headed men of keen business ability, less interested in "saving souls" than in winning temporal power and earthly riches for their society. The later Padres lived like the princes of medieval Europe, surrounded by every luxury the forced labor of the Indians could buy. With virtually a monopoly in trade, having neither wages nor taxes to pay, they were almost wholly free from individual competition. They gave each Indian the education they considered fitting to his place in life, taught as many trades as the society had need of, forbade intercourse with strangers or the learning of the Spanish language, made early marriage compulsory, often mating couples offhand, as did the Incas, and ruled over their subjects sternly, requiring all to rise, eat, work, and sleep in unison at the beating of a bell or drum; in short, they treated the "converts" like valuable domestic animals. From the cradle to the grave the Indian lived in complete submission to the Padres. In church and at work there was a complete segregation of the sexes under the old régime. But by night all were gathered together, often several families under the roof of a single *galpón*, with all the degeneration of customs thereby suggested. Thanks to the careful fostering of the race, there is said to have been 100,000 "converts" in the "reductions" at the height of Jesuit power. San José is doubly notable historically, for it was here, rumor has it, that the Loyalists were planning to build the capital of a kingdom of their own when they were overtaken by the decree banishing them from Spanish dominions.

The last census in Jesuit days credited San José with more than 2000 inhabitants. To-day it has barely a fourth as many, drowsing through life in low, mud huts scattered carelessly along the sand streets some

three blocks on all sides of the plaza. Not a few of the original converts of the Jesuits, suddenly regaining their liberty at the expulsion of the Padres, "went back to the bush," which accounts for the unmistakable signs of European blood in more than one naked savage laid low by a traveler's rifle. Even to-day such reversions to type are not unknown; and this, with the drain of the rubber fields of the Beni, has done most to reduce the population to its present low ebb. The inhabitants belong to the same general family as the several tribes of wild Indians that attack travelers on the road across Bolivia, and which are even to-day the terror of San José itself, having more than once assaulted the place with fury. But in the town this Indian blood is commonly mixed with negro or white, and though Spanish is more general, the *chiquitana* tongue, a branch of the Guaraní or Tupy of eastern South America, is still spoken.

The chiquitano is in features about the antithesis of our inherited Greek idea of beauty. His head is round, with little or no back to it, the hair thick, jet-black, and coarse as a horse's mane, his face wide, all its features bulky, especially the nose, which recalls the negro, as do also the thick, prominent lips. His eyes are black and rather small, his ears plump and prominent, his teeth generally white and strong, the chin neither prominent nor receding. In color he is light-brown, not unlike the Hindu—or the tint of a tan shoe after a month of wear and polish. His body is heavy, thick-set, and muscular, though without what we call "development" of any particular set of muscles. This thick-setness is even more noticeable in the women than among the men, the former being more erect and high-chested from carrying water-jars and other heavy loads on their heads from

childhood. The feet are large, with strong, well-separated toes. Their clothing is simple and excellently adapted to the tropics, where the looser the garment the better the health. The men wear a felt or straw hat and thin cotton jacket and trousers, loose-fitting and generally white in origin, with a wide leather belt containing several pockets and frequently decorated with large silver coins. The women never cover their heads and wear nothing whatever except the *tipoy*, a single loose gown, thin and white as a night-dress, without sleeves and with the neck cut as low as is possible without danger of losing the garment entirely. In these they frequently march into the stream behind the town—for the inhabitants of this tropical region are far more cleanly than those of the upper plateau—rolling up the garment as the water covers them, until it is folded on the head in the form of a turban. As they arise from the bath, they unfold a clean gown so skillfully that the sharpest glance will catch nothing but tipoy and water. As a race the chiquitanos are extremely independent, and very incommunicative to any than their own people; like all American aborigines, they show outwardly very little of their thoughts and impressions. Hurrying is utterly unknown to them, though at times they work with a leisurely steadiness. They show few signs of affection, or on the other hand of aversion or anger, being, indeed, strangely like automatons or lay-figures in their deportment.

There is far less religion, or at least outward sign of it, in these tropical towns than up on the bleak Andean plateau. Is it because the highlands, drear and mysterious, like Palestine or the wastes of Arabia, bring on a dread that is not felt in the tropics, where nature is, or at least seems, more

kindly? When a native dies he is buried at once, then his family and friends start a “santa novena,”—nine days of mourning in which they gather together each day to pray and to drink themselves into complete intoxication. He who has given occasion for the festival is looked upon almost as a benefactor. But there is very little hint of mysticism or worship in these post-mortem antics.

In the “good old days” of Chiquitos, following the expulsion of the Jesuits, the *cacique* brought each traveler a maid for his service. To-day it is the mothers or sisters who offer the guest of the monastery a companion during his stay. Not even Santa Cruz can compare with the former “reduction” in the complacency of its customs. The Indians of all this region, it seems, were as free and natural in their sexual relations as the ancient Greeks or several other pre-Christian nations, seeing no harm in the indulgence of a natural appetite; and while the Jesuit fathers had a decided influence in other matters, they had little in this respect. Indeed, there is evidence that the Padres set an example in this regard quite at variance with their preaching.

In San José I discovered that Konanz could not speak his mother tongue. We had called on the manager of one of the two “Belgian” houses for information in the matter of homestead colonists in the region, and at every few words my companion spilled over into his home-made “English.” A dozen times I had to remind him that the manager did not understand that tongue. Here was exactly the type of immigrant Bolivia sadly needs, a man prepared to spend his life in the country, capable of sustained toil, and likely to leave strong children behind him. Yet already the politicians of La Paz had given three large syndicates

title, almost for nothing, to all the fertile portions of this immense territory, and these held it shut against settlers who did not accept their terms, which, as I heard them outlined to Konanz, virtually made them vassals to the companies. Instead of assisting a fellow-countryman far off here in the wilderness, the manager used all his suave persuasiveness to get my companion's name signed to a contract of benefit only to his own "Belgian" house, and would in all probability have succeeded had I not been there with counteracting advice in English.

These houses are more jesuitical than their predecessors in exploiting the natives—"and their own employees," a former one has added, on reading my notes. The bribery of government officials to obtain immense concessions of land which they make no effort to develop is a mere detail of their business methods. They sell at from 200 to 800 percent increase over buying prices even of Puerto Suarez. A German imitation of a $12 American plow was held at 100 bolivianos ($40); a roll of barbed wire at 40 Bls.; ordinary shoes, as much; a four-gallon can of kerosene, 20 Bls. Not merely do the Germans take advantage of their virtual monopoly to buy of the natives at a fifth of the just value, and sell again at five times that; but even their dealings with each other are unprincipled. One episode will stand as typical. A bank failed in La Paz. The government, seeing all the Germans as brothers, notified one of the firms that the bills issued by that bank had become worthless, expecting one house to warn the other. Instead, the manager gathered together all the worthless *billetes* in his possession and sent them one at a time by natives to the rival house, with orders to make some small purchase and bring back the change in good money.

Barter is the chief form of commerce in all this region. We chanced to be chattering with the manager of a “Belgian” house in San José, when the wobbly-minded old cura came in with a long document written on the firm’s stationery. It proved to be the certificate of baptism of a daughter recently born to the manager, whose “housekeeper” had insisted on this formality. After much chaffering the priest was at last beaten down to three bolivianos for his divine services.

“Caramba!” cried the German, in pretended anger. “If you ’re going to mulct me this way every time, I’ll discharge my housekeeper and bring you no more to baptise. And what are you going to take for those three billetes?” he went on.

The priest ran his dull eyes around the shelves, packed with all manner of cheap imports, until they fell upon a long array of bottles. Then he glanced back at the manager, who was at that moment offering him a cigarette.

“Pues, señor,” mumbled the old ecclesiastic, as he accepted a light, “I wonder if you have a real good wine, proper to say mass with.”

“Cómo no!” cried the German, in his throaty but self-confident Spanish. “There is a splendid wine, just the thing for mass, worth five bolivianos even in Europe, but”—with a wink at Konanz and myself,—“to you, as my compadre as well as priest, I’ll make it three.”

The cura accepted the exchange and wandered back to the monastery with the bottle under his arm. To judge from the condition he was in when we returned to our lodging, he said at least a half-dozen masses that very evening.

We were lolling luxuriously in our hammocks one

morning, when a man in a sun-faded straw hat, cotton jacket and trousers, a long lack of shave, and feet that had never known the restraint of shoes, wandered into the compound and asked Konanz if he spoke English. The latter, full of the self-confidence of his race, had already misinformed the newcomer in the affirmative when I drew his attention. There was not a hair of the man's head that did not cry native, yet he spoke my own tongue rapidly, with only the intangible hint of a foreign accent.

"Where did you learn English?" I yawned.

"Why, I am an American!" came the startling answer. "My name is Jim Powell. We was born in Texas," he went on without urging. "I don't remember what place, an' when I was small paw an' maw they went away with five of us children because North America was fixin' to fight. I don't know what country they was aimin' to fight, but paw he didn't want to, 'n' so we sailed across the ocean to Bolivia. The other seven children was born in Chiquitos, an' finally paw he up an' died last year. Maw she's livin' out to San Antonio, an' the rest is mostly scattered around. One of the girl's married to a judge in Santa Cruz an' the others is on the rocks."

His language was that of the "white trash" of our southern states, but was academic compared to the illiterate brogue of his brother, "Hughtie," who arrived soon after him. The latter had come to Bolivia so young that Spanish and chiquitana were his native tongues. He was a bullock-driver for a native owning several carts, and had recently been released from eight months in the prison of Santa Cruz, at the cost of all he owned,—"Jes' becoze I killed a feller thet was monkeyin' with one o' my women." Accustomed as we are to transplanted

foreigners of all nationalities in our own country, it was a distinct shock to come upon a Bolivianized American. Such atavism brought the reflection that civilization is at best a weak and artificial thing.

So completely native had the pair become that the natives themselves never thought of them as foreigners. “Hughtie” was soon to leave for the Paraguay river with a train of carts, and invited us to go along, pretending, native fashion, that he was in charge of the expedition, of which, in reality, he was a mere peon. When the time set came, he wandered into the monastery to say that we should start the following night—“if thet there mozo finds thet there bull that run away;” or if not, then the next night. “Hughtie” was a true Bolivian in putting his trust chiefly in to-morrow.

The shadow across the Jesuit sun-dial was exactly horizontal when, refreshed by four long gnatless days and nights in San José, we pushed on along a road that stretched like a tunnel through the greenery. Konanz had decided to travel a few days further eastward. The road was of sand that drunk up the rains quickly, but thirst was correspondingly worse. Jejenes were fewer, though swarms of swamp flies added their annoyance. The danger of savages was less than in the Monte Grande; on the other hand “tigers,” as the natives call the jaguar, were said to be plentiful. The mosquitero protected us from these, however, were any protection needed, even when sleeping in the wilderness; for the animal is never known to attack unless it can see the head of its victim. We were soon splashing again waist-deep through swamps, and often wading as laboriously through deep sand between them. Beyond the palm-thatched hamlet of Dolores, where we saw our first

wild ostriches, the country grew more open, with scrub trees, the way strewn with appetizing *petas*, or land turtles, the hollow charred shells of which marked more than one camping-ground of former travelers. We should have reached the ranch of an American off the main trail on the second day, had not the German given out at Las Taperas, a cluster of three huts at the forking of the ways. We camped under a heavily loaded lemon tree, beside a swampy lake backed far off by a blue range of low hills. From this flowed a clear little stream in which I lay most of the afternoon with only my nose and hands out of water and finished the volume of Nietzsche, to the disgust of the German, who did not believe in "vashing all over der body."

In the morning we struck off by the faint trail around the lake. The day was brilliant, and the going pleasant enough to be enjoyed amid my own meditations. I let the German and his animal draw on ahead, until they were lost to view in the placid chiquitano landscape. At Las Taperas we had bought for twenty cents a whole bunch of the fat little "silky" bananas of the region, and hung them on the pack. As I plodded on through a low scrub forest and a tough and wiry grass, knee-high, hunger gradually intruded upon my dreams, and almost at the instant it grew tangible a fresh banana appeared in the trail before me. After that they were as nicely proportioned to my requirements as manna to the Israelites in a not wholly dissimilar wilderness. But what had become of Konanz? Hour after hour passed without a sign of him. He was not accustomed to lead the way for so prolonged a period. I pushed on more rapidly, not entirely free from visions of savages falling upon him. The sun stood high overhead, casting down its rays like the contents of

an overturned melting-pot, when I caught sight of him at last some distance beyond. He lay panting and dripping in the scant shade of a bush, while the mule stood tied to another, eyeing him suspiciously. It was a full minute before he gathered breath to relieve my anxiety.

"Oh, you —— —— mool!" he gasped, shaking his fist at the animal so savagely that it all but tore itself loose, "Rhight avay now I shoot you der head through, you ——"

Expurgated of its adjectives, the story, during which I was forced to retain a deep solemnity, was that the mule,—after having been beaten and kicked during all the loading that morning—had suddenly taken fright when the German started up from a log on which he had rested for a moment, and had run away. For hours the angry Teuton had pursued the animal, trailing her by the clue of bananas she had dropped at intervals for my benefit, until, no doubt frightened to find herself alone in the wilderness, "she come valking pack against me. Chust like a vomans, py Gott! Rhunned avay un' den gum scneaking pack, pegause she haf to haf der home un' der master!"

Beyond the *rancho* of Pablo Rojo the pampa gave place to *monte*, dense tangled growth not tall enough to shade us from the blazing afternoon sun, yet high enough to cut us off in the trough-like trail from every breath of breeze, until our tongues and throats went parched and charqui-dry, and the red-hot sand sifted in through the holes in my shoes and burned my toes. Konanz could only be coaxed along a mile at a time, between which he lay like a log in any patch of shade to be found. Luckily, the sun was still above the horizon when the endless jungle was

enlivened by the welcome sight of a thatched house framed in corn and banana fields and backed by slight wooded ridges. About the gate, toward which we tore our way through jungle grass shoulder-high, were toiling three men in long-uncut hair and beards, barefoot in their leather *ajotas*, and wearing the customary chiquitano garb of two thin and faded garments topped by sun-faded hats of local weave.



"Don Cupertino," chief adornment of eastern Bolivia, with his family and dependents. The man on the right is a German neighbor. The Indian at his side has leaves stuck on his temples to cure his headache

To my astonishment, all three turned out to be Americans. Henry Halsey, whose welcome was as genuine as any I received in South America, though less expressed in words than deeds, was owner of this wilderness estate; his employees were "Chris" and George Powell, younger brothers of the pair we had met in San José. Halsey was a Virginian whose career had ranged from teaching country school to mining in Zaruma and Cerro de Pasco. The altitude

bothered him and he had drifted to Paraguay, only to find “too much government” and to push on into this wilderness as far from the world as a man can easily get. Not because the government of Bolivia is an improvement on that of Paraguay, but because its tentacles rarely reach so far into the wilds, he had prospered. He had all but come to grief at the outset, however. Barely had he chosen a knoll on which to build his hut, when he was bitten by a small viper that swelled one leg to thrice its natural size and left him half paralyzed. For four days he could not move from where he lay, and only by good fortune had he water within reach, for no other human being appeared until long after his recovery. Now, with a native wife and child, as well as his peons, he was in no danger of repeating the experience. With American energy he had cleared of the primeval, tropical forest a large space that now waved with corn-fields and sugar-cane, with bananas and productive ground-vines, and had built a large house in the native style and a distillery to turn his sugar-cane into value, while his cattle spread over a broad region in which he had no neighbor to dispute his sway. His chief problem was to get peons; for as often as a native was named subprefect of the district, he rounded up all the laborers for many miles around and forced them to work on his own estate. Thus Halsey was reduced to the intermittent assistance of “Chris” and George. These Bolivian-born sons of the Texan who didn’t “aim” to fight were as truly peons as the lowest of the natives. They were subject to the same “slavery” that prevails in all the region, hiring themselves out for an advance and getting ever more deeply into debt to their employer. “Chris” was just then “working out” a rifle, and his brother a saddle-steer. They had all the diffidence of

the native peon, the same point of view, the same loose habits, spoke “English” only when forced to, lamely and without self-confidence, ending every sentence with an appealing, “Ain’t thet right, maw?” to their mother. The latter was strikingly typical of the erosion of customs, a “poor white” of our south grafted upon the life of tropical Bolivia. Completely illiterate, barefoot, bedraggled as any native woman, whom she went one better by incessantly chewing tobacco, she had wholly succumbed to her environment, and spoke fluently one of the most atrocious imitations of Spanish it has ever been my fortune to hear in a long experience with all grades of that tongue.

Here we made up royally for all the hungry days behind us. The products of Halsey’s exotic industry ranged all the way from fowls to milk—huge bowls of real, honest-to-goodness milk, unboiled, unspoiled in any Latin-American way—lacking only bread, which could not be had in these wilds at a dollar a nibble. Its rôle was filled by cold boiled squash, or plantains fried in lard. The craving for sweets I found was no personal weakness. Halsey ate huge quantities of sugar—which he refined by the primitive method of covering it with a layer of mud —sprinkling it on every possible dish and often munching it like candy. The longing for fats or grease, commonly supposed to be chiefly confined to the arctic regions, was also extraordinary in this climate. So great was the demand for lard that it sold at 50 cents a pound; the axle-grease supplied by the owners of bullock-carts was mixed with soap to prevent the peon drivers from eating it. Among the children of the region dirt-eating, due to some morbid condition of the stomach, is almost universal, frequently resulting in death unless the vigilance of

parents is constant. The majority are chalky white, weak and sickly, with enormous, protruding bellies. One of Halsey's sources of income was the carting of salt from the *salinas*, shallow lakes some days to the south, around the shores of which it gathers in large quantities, to the neighboring hamlet of San Juan, where it sold at 25 bolivianos a hundred-weight. The region was well stocked with deer; wild cattle belonged to whoever shot them; jaguars were not hard to find and *antas* were so numerous that he shot at least one a week to feed his hogs. This stout, bulky animal, largest of the South American fauna, known to us as the tapir, lives in the dense thickets near streams or water-holes, in which it bathes by moonlight or in the gray of dawn. The experienced hunter has little difficulty in waylaying the anta, since it always follows the same path to and from the water. The Bolivian variety is about the size of a yearling calf, with short legs and a long, flexible, porcine snout. Its skin, excellent for the making of harness, is so tough that it dashes with impunity through the densest spiny thickets, often tearing from its back by this means its chief enemy, the jaguar. Caught young, the anta becomes as tame as a puppy, following its master with marked devotion.

Four days I swung my hammock under a great tree before Halsey's door, reading belated magazines of the light-weight order, the neurotic artificiality of which seemed particularly ridiculous against this background of primitive nature, as the complexity of life in great cities stood out by contrast to the simple ways of the region. Lounging in the tropical shade it was easy to understand why men so often settle down in the tropics and let the world drift on without them, easy to lose the feeling that life is short and fleeting, that one will be a long time dead,

and must grasp existence as it passes. The day after our arrival Konanz had fallen victim to chills and fever. My regret was tempered by the memory of many a vain struggle to get him to take a daily dose of quinine. When he recovered, which did not promise to be soon, he planned to explore the region round about for a spot on which to settle. I took leave of my fellow-men on one of the last mornings of January and struck off alone.

That day's experience emphasized the difference between trackless jungle and even the poorest of roads. Some twelve miles separated Halsey's estate from the traveled trail. The faint path through wiry grasses and low brush, which he had pointed out to me, died out even sooner than I had feared. I pushed on in the direction I knew I must go,—south and a shade east. A wooded bluff standing above the jungle landscape, like the Irish coast from the sea, gave an objective point. It was on the summit of this that "Thompson" and his fellow-assassin had planted in vain their ill-gotten gold; in just such jungle as that about me they had wandered starved and choking for days; somewhere in this sea of vegetation lay the sun-bleached and vulture-picked bones of the more fortunate of the pair.

To keep a due course in the trackless wilderness is not so easy as to set it. I was soon among heavier undergrowth that cut down my progress like a head wind that of a "windjammer," then in head-high jungle that made every step a struggle, then in full forest with the densest undergrowth snatching, clinging, tearing at me for all the world like living beings determined to stop my advance at any cost. Vines enwrapped me, head, chest, waist, and feet, at every step. Thorns and brambles gashed and tore my

sweat-rotted clothing, leaves of wild pineapple laid bare my bleeding knees, the jungle reached forth and snatched a sleeve from my shirt, slashed my hands, broke my bootlaces, poured blinding sweat into my eyes, and treacherously tripped me up, so that I smashed headlong into masses of vegetation where who knew what might be sleeping or lurking. The scent of wild animals was pungent; now and then I fell into their recent lairs or signs of their passing. Every plunge left me so breathless from the incessant struggle that I was several minutes gathering strength to crawl to my feet and tear my way onward.

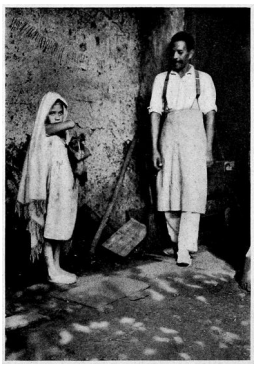
All day I fought nature hand to hand, with the growing conviction that I should still be struggling when night came upon me. The sun beat pitilessly down into the breathless tangle. Once, when thirst seemed no longer endurable, I had broken out upon a small swamp and thrown myself face-down to drink it half dry. From it radiated the paths of wild animals, and every inch of the wet sand was marked with their footprints, as fresh as if they had that moment passed. I recognized those of the deer, the anta, the cat-clawed jaguar; and those of at least a score of smaller species were plainly visible. Beyond the waist-deep swamp the waterless jungle was even thicker. The blue headland of Ypias had long since been lost to view, and I found that I was indeed going round in a circle, like the heroes of fiction, until I drew out my compass and insisted that nature let me through the way it indicated. Hunger was completely routed by a thirst like a raging furnace within me. Frequently I brought up against thorn-bristling thickets so dense that further progress seemed impossible, and must tear my way back and forth, as along some fortress wall, seeking a weak

spot in the impregnable density.

Then all at once, toward sunset, when I had concluded I was hopelessly lost, I fell suddenly out of the jungle into a sandy road, fell indeed on hands and knees, for the way was worn several feet deep into the soft soil. An hour along it brought me to the *pascana* of Ypias, uninhabited, yet like all these rare natural clearings on the trans-Bolivian route, so important as to have its name solemnly engraved on the map of the republic. This was the scene of what "Thompson" had called "our stunt." In a bit of space scolloped out of the jungle were the six weather-blackened wooden crosses of the victims, the largest crudely carved with the names of all, that of the German confederate with its cross-piece at a sharp angle, the natives of the region apparently resenting his claim to full Christian burial. Beyond the clear little stream that makes Ypias a favorite camping-ground, four ox-carts were preparing for the customary night journey after a day of rest and grazing. One of the barefoot drivers under command of a cholo astride a saddle-steer proved to be "Hughtie" Powell. I climbed into his wagon and stretched out on the great balls of rubber from the Beni with which it was loaded.



The *tipoy*, a single loose gown, constitutes the entire garb of most of the native women of tropical Bolivia



A girl of Santiago de Chiquitos selling a chicken to the cook of “los americanos”

Each cart was drawn by twenty oxen, gaunt, reddish, long-horned animals that seemed Patience done in flesh and bone. Their pace averaged perhaps two miles an hour. Now and then "Hughtie," like the other drivers, sprang noiselessly into the sand and, racing ahead, lashed each yoke in turn, with insulting words of encouragement, and the entire team crowded into one of the close-set jungle walls until the massive two-wheeled cart was dragged over small trees and head-high bushes at a slight acceleration of pace. A dozen strange cries were used in urging the phlegmatic animals forward. When a halt was ordered, the drivers sprang to the ground and ran alongside them, voicing a long, soothing wail of peculiarly mournful *timbre* that often lasted a full minute:

"So-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o."

Once, in the thick black night, the train halted to boil rice and make "tea" of a willow-like jungle leaf, then dragged drowsily on. At daylight we broke out into the pascana of Motococito, where the animals were turned loose to graze for the day, each pair still yoked together by a beam that was almost a log, fastened across the front of their horns with rawhide thongs, while the peons swung their hammocks under an ancient thatched roof on poles. We had made four leagues, or a scant twelve miles, during the night.

I made my way to the home of "Don Cupertino" nearby, for no traveler across Bolivia misses the opportunity of at least one meal with this best-hearted of Bolivians. Outwardly ugly, he was a man of fascinating personality, before whom one could sit for hours listening to well-told anecdotes, frequently

emphasized in his excitement by the snapping of his long forefinger, and marveling at the grasp of mind of a man who has never emerged from this inland wilderness. So great was his magnetism that he had imposed on all those about him a degree of human kindness and common decency rare in the region. The education of this corner of the republic, wholly neglected by the government, he had taken upon himself; had turned one of his thatched buildings into a school for the children of whatever cast roundabout, and drafted as school-master a Spanish shoemaker who had drifted in upon him. Motococito is frequently favored with attacks by the wild Indians, and not the least dramatic of "Don Cupertino's" stories was that of the routing of a band of "los bárbaros" the night before.

The pace of the ox-carts was so slow that I pushed on alone. The sky was incessantly growling off to the southwest, banks of jet-black clouds frequently wiped out the brilliant sun, and many a roaring tropical deluge set me slipping and sliding at every step. Swamps of varying length and depth continued monotonously to intrude, until I became amphibious, with water almost my natural element.

Where the road forked one afternoon I took the fainter, left-hand trail for a side-trip to the town of Santiago de Chiquitos. The rumor was persistent that "americanos" lived there; moreover, it was said to be situated on a ridge unknown to insects. The heights to be surmounted were not piled into the sky ahead, as in the Andes. I knew I was rising only by the changing character of soil and woods, the former increasing in rocky sandstone formations, the latter more open, with diminishing undergrowth. After the first few miles up, the forest opened out now and

then on little grassy pampas, with V-shaped gaps in the wooded hills through which one could look back upon tropical Bolivia spreading away sea-flat, humid blue to infinity in every direction, with a vast sense of relief after weeks of never seeing the woods for the trees that had shut me in.

The trail split at last into several branches. The one I took at random led me to a thatched hut, then suddenly broke out upon the grassy plaza of a great, or a tiny town, according to the point of view and the immediate previous experience. A native lolling in a hammock answered my question with a “sí, hay” in the impersonal monotone common to the tropics, languidly nodding toward one of the huts facing the plaza. Jungle-worn and all but shoeless, my reddened knees protruding through the remnant of my breeches, my shirt lacking a sleeve and otherwise mutilated beyond recognition, unkempt and sun-scorched, showing many a patch of my insect-arabesqued hide, my face bristling with four razorless weeks, unquestionably the most disreputable sight in all that disreputable region, a hunger like the Old Man of the Sea riding my shoulders, I strode across to the building indicated and paused in the doorway. Inside, seated about a snow-white table, backed by a butler of African dignity, sat five “gringos” in speckless white, dipping their soup noiselessly and without haste with a calm backward motion.

Santiago was the headquarters and place of recuperation of the employees of the Farquhar Syndicate, engaged in surveying the 1500 square leagues of territory recently conceded the company at a nominal price. There I slept in the first bed since Cochabamba. The chickens that died for us were

countless, the inevitable phonograph was in full evidence, there were lamps to read by even at night, and books to read by them. When the sun touched the jungle sea to the west “los americanos” strolled homeward from the office, pausing to play ball until dark, with real gloves, but picking green oranges from the plaza trees as often as they needed a new “ball.” Great bands of deep-green parrakeets flew by high overhead, screaming and gossiping deafeningly, but with no suggestion of stopping in a place so high and cold. From this “mountain” top the sunsets across the humid-blue, flat jungle were indescribable, particularly after a rainy day. The enormous conflagrations blazed for a brief time across all the western world, faded to red, to pink, then into the steel-gray of a tropical evening; the distant hills turned from deep blue to purple, banks of white clouds floating up out of the wilderness below; the sky above faded through all the shades of pink to lilac and to purple, until even the flecks of clouds tinged with the last reflected rays were wiped out entirely. At night, looking south, we could see the fires of the wild Indians of the Gran Chaco.

Besides the Anglo-Saxons, there were the managers of two “Belgian” houses—the only stores for some hundred miles around, mere thatched huts like the rest, with no distinguishing signs—an odd German or two, an argentino who wore shoes; and the rest were barefoot natives, except for an occasional sun-faded passerby. Like San José, Santiago de Chiquitos, set almost exactly in the geographical center of South America, was a “reduction” of the Jesuits, with more than 1500 inhabitants at the time of their expulsion. To-day it is a sleepy little hamlet of some two streets of one-story huts among gentle and *frondoso* hills, with a constant breeze and no insects, lolling

through an easy, barefoot, loose-gowned existence, chiefly in hammocks. Coffee bushes fill every back yard, the coffee of Santiago being famous through all Chiquitos. A languid commerce in cattle, sugar, and alcohol is carried on intermittently; the region round about is rich in timber. High above all else a wonderfully beautiful palm-tree stands out against the cerulean sky.

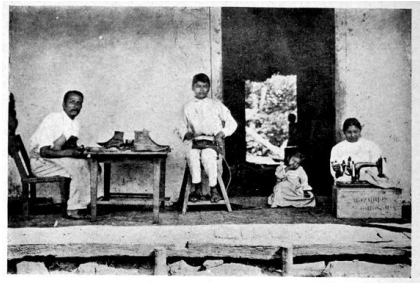
The inhabitants retain many of the customs bequeathed them by the Jesuits. Only a wooden church was built here, with four bells in a wooden tower on legs some distance from the main building. Into this an Indian climbs several times a day, and more often by night, to make life hideous. Why the Loyalists were so fond of the continual hammering of these instruments of torture was a mystery to me at the time, but in the library of Asunción I ran across an old volume that explained the matter. The writer, a European member of the brotherhood, visiting a "reduction," asked the superior why the Padres saw fit to keep themselves awake most of the night for no apparent reason. The Jesuit answered: "Brother, we keep our faithful flock toiling all day in the fields. After the evening meal they drop at once to sleep without remembering their marital duties. Their first fatigue worn off, we remind them of those duties now and then during the night, waking them up with the noise of drums and bells, to the end that the succeeding generation may be larger, to the glorification of the Sacred Church and our Holy Society." And to think that I had fancied the jangling of church-bells all down the length of the Andes to be a mere caprice of the holy fathers!

The fiestas of Jesuit days are religiously preserved. Several nights we were kept awake by the

monotonous, heathenish beating of a drum, often accompanied by a shrill fife. By day, to the "music" of these, most of the population marched round and round the town, holding hands and swinging them high before and behind them in a kind of shuffle and whirl on their bare feet in the silent sand streets, getting ever drunker on chicha of maize or the stronger *totay*. They danced also the *chobena*, to the accompaniment of the *manais*, a hollow calabash with seeds inside it. There was no resident priest, but an old Indian who had assisted the former cura conducted a service each Sunday, always ending it with a debauch that hung over into the middle of the week. There is one custom, however, which even the Jesuits could not bequeath them,—that of industry. In the olden days the entire population was sent to work each morning with drums, prayers, and processions; to-day only the processions, prayers, and drums remain.

As in all Chiquitos, the women and girls of Santiago, chiefly Indian in blood, with now and then a trace of the negro, solidly built as an *anta*, wear only the loose *tipoy*. Their customs are, if possible, even more easy-going than those of San José. Yet they are by no means forward, being rather bashful, indeed, with little sense of wrong-doing, and are said to yield more easily to blandishments and trinkets than to money. The former priest demanded fabulous sums for his services, which is no doubt one of several reasons why virtually none, even of the "best families," are married. The moral attitude of the place may most easily be gaged by an episode that occurred during my stay. A shoemaker living in the other half of the thatched hut occupied by "los americanos" learned that the young woman who passed as his wife had yielded to the entreaties of

one of the foreigners. He beat the girl until her cries could be heard in the office across the broad plaza. But when, next day, he met the offending American, he bowed respectfully with a polite, “Buenos días, señor. Y cómo está usté’?”



The shoemaker who lived next door to “los americanos” in Santiago de Chiquitos, and his latest “wife”



A birthday dance in Santiago de Chiquitos, in honor of the German in the center background. The man dancing with the latter’s “housekeeper” is an Englishman born in the Argentine

The distance from Santa Cruz de la Sierra to the Paraguay turned out to be 135 leagues, something over 400 miles, divided as follows: Santa Cruz to San José, 56 leagues; to Santiago, 32; to Santa Ana, 25; to Puerto Suarez, 22. The last stage of the journey I covered astride one of the company's mules, hardly an improvement in comfort over walking, on such a route. Luckily, the rains were delayed that year, or the difficulties of all this trans-Bolivian journey would have been quadrupled, and I might have been held for months in the hilltop hamlet of Santiago until the floods common to the twenty-leagues or more west of the Paraguay subsided. Day after day we rode through the endless forest that crowded us close on either hand, with no other sign of humanity than the sulky mozo trotting behind me, sleeping in some tiny pascana where a moon so bright one could have read by it looked down upon the crosses of soldiers and travelers who had died on other journeys, or peered dully in at me through the mesh of my mosquitero. *Palmares*, quagmires thick-grown with hardy palm-trees, in which we plunged to the saddle for long distances, alternated with thirsty stretches of waterless sand. In places the heavier woods gave way to dense brush, head-high and always thorny. Across these, to the right, lay the vast Bolivian Chaco—or the Paraguayan, according to how the dispute shall finally be settled—in which the sun set so blood-red that the painter who dared put half the reality on canvas would be accused of gross exaggeration. A strip of delicate pink sky blended quickly into the wet-blue of the endless jungle, darkness settled quickly down, and we rode noiselessly on, the sky an immense field of stars, bats circling around our heads and alighting again and again in the sandy road ahead, to spring up with a

peculiar little squeak when the mule's hoofs had all but touched them. No other sound was heard, except the chirping of the jungle, chiefly the long-drawn creak and short staccato of two species of crickets, and occasionally the noise of some wild animal fleeing unseen at our approach. On such a night we came to the Tucabaca, the only river of size between the Guapay and the Paraguay. I ordered a halt until the moon appeared, but clouds hid it, and we came perilously near losing a mule in forcing the frightened animals across. Frequently the Tucabaca rises in a few hours to a raging torrent that can only be crossed in a *pelota*, or in the dugout of a surly old Brazilian negro living in a cluster of huts on the further bank.

At Santa Ana, eighteen waterless miles beyond, we were overtaken by two of the gringo colony of Santiago. Calling itself a city, the place is merely a row of thatched huts around a grass-grown space, with a mud-hole to keep it alive, saintly in its customs as all the towns of this saintly route. Its corregidor takes orders, not from the subprefect of San José, but from the *delegado* at Puerto Suarez, sent out from La Paz by way of Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil! The place is a headquarters of *jejenes*, and the wild Indians descend upon it periodically. At the very edge of the hamlet lies a *barrizal*, a mud-hole three miles long, famous for its victims. But beyond, territory which the year before had been an almost unbroken lake was for long stretches without water to drink, though we wallowed in more than one swamp and slough. Near the corrals of Yacuces, in a low, humid region where rain often falls, we came upon telegraph-poles, old and sagging, heavy with parasites and creepers. The line planned by the government from Puerto Suarez

to Santa Cruz had been abandoned some forty miles out, and cart-drivers now cut down the poles and use the wire to repair their wagons.

On the last morning we woke at two to find the moon brilliant, and pulling on our soggy garments, pushed eagerly forward. On the right the Southern Cross stood forth brightly whenever a fleck of cloud veiled the moon. Away in the forest monkeys wailed their everlasting plaint. Great masses of green vines, covering irregular giant bushes, looked like German castles in the moonlight. The first flush of day showed in the V-shaped opening ahead the shoulders of the advance horseman, cutting into the paling sky and blotting out the bright morning star. Then dawn "came up like thunder" out of the endless wilderness, and somehow it seemed wasteful to keep the moon burning after the tropical sunshine had flooded all the scene. Tall, slender palms, and all possible forms of trees, festooned and draped with vines in fantastic web and lace effects, stood out against the sky. Masses of pink morning-glories quickly shrunk under the sun's glare; brown moor-hens, flicking their black tails saucily, foraged about mud-holes and flew clumsily, like chickens, with little half-jumps, as we passed. Beyond the pascana of Tacuaral, with its myriad of slim *tacuara* palms, the country that should have been flooded at this season was utterly waterless. Hour after sun-baked hour we jogged on, our thirsty animals stumbling in the enormous sun-dried cart-ruts. An occasional hut with a banana-grove appeared in a tiny space shaved out of the bristling forest. In mid-afternoon we sighted through the heat rays ahead a wide street, with red-tiled buildings and open water beyond, backed far away by low wooded ridges, and the Port of Suarez and the end of Bolivia was at hand. It was two months to

a day since Tommy and I had set out from Cochabamba.

Dawn was just beginning to paint red the humid air between jungle and sky across the lagoon of Cáceres, a backwater of the river Paraguay, when I descended to its edge and, by dint of acrobatic feats of equilibrium, managed a bath and left behind in the mud and slime, like fallen heroes of many a campaign, the remnants of my tramping garb. As I climbed the bank new-clad, there persisted the feeling that I had heartlessly abandoned some faithful friend of long standing. The gasoline launch chugged more than two hours across the muddy *lagoa* before there rose from the jungle, on a bit of knoll, the modern city of Corumbá, in the Brazilian State of Matto Grosso, to the residents of which the appearance of a lone traveler from out the ferocious wilds and haunts of *bugres* beyond the lagoon that ends their world was little less wonder-provoking than the arrival of one from a distant planet. Here at last was civilization,—expensive civilization—and steamers every few days to Asunción and Buenos Aires.

CHAPTER XXII
SOUTHWARD THROUGH GUARANI LAND

With a deep blast from her ocean-going whistle the *Asunción* of the Mihanovich Line swung out through the shipping of a crowded port and was off down the Paraguay. The steamer was easily the equal of the best on the Hudson; its officers and stewards, all argentinos, were as white as you or I, though the passengers ran to all shades, and it was little short of startling to see white waiters serving and kowtowing to haughty Brazilian half-Indians and negroes. Green jungle, occasionally broken by prairie-like stretches studded with dainty palm-trees, like wheels of greenery on the ends of broomsticks, sped rapidly past. We stopped at several towns and *estancias*, now in Brazil, now in Paraguay; here and there a lone passenger, standing erect in his boat, was rowed out by a pair of peons, and picked up as we slowed down for a moment. On the second morning we halted at the estate of an Irishman on Brazilian soil, the passengers going to inspect a jaguar and a huge wild-cat in home-made cages, while cow-boys roped a steer and, dragging it down to the edge of the bank to spare themselves the labor of carrying the carcass,

slaughtered in plain sight of all what was served as beefsteak that noon and evening. Now and again we put in at a little Paraguayan town, swarming with barefoot boy-soldiers in faded khaki, with a reputation for shooting on the slightest provocation. Old women came on board with bread, watermelons, and clumsy native cigars, scorning Brazilian money, and demanding the ragged and all but worthless bills of their own land. Here a new language appeared, the palatal *Guaraní* sounding on all sides. The evening of the second day brought us to Villa Concepción, one of the six incorporated "cities" of Paraguay, which might easily be mistaken for a village. An occasional *estancia* along the bank had a little railroad, with screeching toy locomotives and an electric lighting plant of its own. The Paraguayan *gaucho*, or cow-boy, had the independent air of men who will not be imposed upon. He wore a large straw hat, a colored kerchief about his neck, the *chiripá*, huge, baggy cotton trousers with a puckering-string about his bare ankles as a protection against the gnats and climbing insects, and in most cases a blacksmith's leather apron with a long fringe, a necessity for riders through the thorny undergrowth. Over this all wore a wide leather belt, with several buttoned pockets bulging with their probably not great wealth, and a big knife in a leather scabbard stuck in carelessly behind, as if ever ready to be drawn on the instant.

On the morning of the fourth day I was awakened by a long blast of the whistle, and peered out of my hammock to find the steamer anchored among extensive docks. It was that soft moment of dawn when the sun is just trembling in stage-fright below the eastern horizon, the lower sky streaked with delicate colors, the air of that velvety texture known

only at such hours in the tropics. Then the day blazed forth in all its brilliancy, putting the night breeze to ignominious rout, and disclosing a low city, its chief square lined by two-story buildings, the largest of which I recognized, from photographs, as Paraguay's government palace. One of a score of hirsute, piratical-looking boatmen, neo-poetic names painted in gaudy colors on the poops of their crafts, rowed me ashore with a few strokes, and at the wooden steps of the custom-house answered my "How much?" with a "What it pleases you, señor." Either the boatmen of Asunción are unlike their tribe elsewhere, or my face had lost that innocent, childlike air of earlier days. I rewarded his honesty with two Paraguayan dollars,—that is, about eleven cents,—and marching through my trunk-burdened fellow-passengers, thrust my bundle toward a pompous cholo in a cream-colored suit. He peered through the slit in my deerskin kodak-cover, asked a question about the bundled developing-tank, waved a hand with a regal-toned "Puede retirarse," ("You may withdraw yourself"), and I stepped ashore in Asunción del Paraguay.

The capital of the Inland Republic is its only real city, claiming some eighty thousand inhabitants, or one tenth the present population of a land that once, with nearly two millions, ranked with Brazil and the Argentine as the most important of South America. To-day, thanks to revolutions; anarchy, Lopez and his French mistress, and the consequent stagnation, it is in the far background of modern progress. It spreads over a considerable space of what is really rolling ground—though to one fresh from nearly two years in the Andes it seemed monotonously flat. Across the river, on a curve of which it halts abruptly, lies the sea-flat, trackless *chaco*, the abode of nomadic

Indians, dense-blue by day, and fading to purple under the setting sun. Unfortunately, Francia, “El Supremo,” dictator for a third of a century, sought to “beautify” the town by filling its lagoons, straightening its jumble of tortuous lanes, and reducing it to a featureless similarity to all other capitals of its kind and size. Travelers of past centuries are agreed that the chief charm of old Asunción was due to its delightful irregularity. Certainly its ancient fascination is gone, and to-day it is nothing but a languid little capital of a stagnant country, the least interesting of any I had seen in South America.

The time-worn assertion that the population of Paraguay is wholly Indian in blood is a decided overstatement. In Asunción one sees at least as many whites as in La Paz. Nor is it true that there are nine women to every man. True, Francia wiped out the old Spaniards for conspiring against him; forty years ago, in the days of Lopez, the wars reduced the proportion to seventeen to one. But time and migrating males have all but repaired these ravages, though many a man still lives on the exertions of his harem, one of the several women of which is his legal wife, and the majority of children born in the country are illegitimate. In general the place has a different atmosphere, a blasé air little like the towns of the Andes. Among these less simple people, particularly the denizens of the “Centro Español,” where I was “put up” during my stay, one got the feeling that conventionality was not morality; there was something about their suave, well-bred manners that made one feel that deep down they were no such sticklers for honesty and justice as for the urbanities of life. Or would the artificiality of any “civilized” place have struck a discordant note to one

coming suddenly out of a long stay in the wilderness?

It is in Asunción that the traveler from the north notes the first advance of the immigration that is to increase to swamping proportions in the Argentine, as he moves southward. Paraguay is making strenuous, though not very tactful, efforts to increase immigration, under an immigration bureau in the hands of a German. Commerce and government are largely in the hands of foreigners, at least of the second generation, even the president being a Swiss in blood and name. Paraguay's civilization is not strong enough to absorb the newcomers; one hears German, Italian, or Catalan almost as often as the native Guarani. This latter is the real speech of the country. Spanish is spoken only in the cities, and even there the people use among themselves the remnants of the aboriginal tongue. Teachers in large villages often cannot speak Castilian; the few Paraguayan countrymen who know it are "afraid" to use it for fear their fellows will ridicule them for trying to show off. There has been more than one movement on foot to make Guarani the official, as well as the actual, language of the country.

The money of Paraguay has fallen to low estate. Step into a bank and throw down an English sovereign, and there will be thrust upon you some $90 in native currency, bringing the peso down to little more than the value of our nickel. Metal money is unknown; the paper bills made in London and New York are in universal use, the smaller denominations being ragged and dirty to the point of illegibility, and often patched with scraps of newspaper. "The nation," runs the device on these tattered *billetes* "recognizes this bill as fifty strong dollars," which is quite different

from saying it will be redeemed at that rate. Street-car fares, now 75, had been 67½ centavos, and the company had found it necessary to print its own change in 2½-centavo pieces, worth—well, let fractional experts figure it out. Eggs sold in the market at $7 a dozen; a hair-cut cost $5, and it was not a five-dollar hair-cut. On the other hand, postage is the cheapest on earth, evidently because the rates had been established and the stamps printed before the money depreciated.

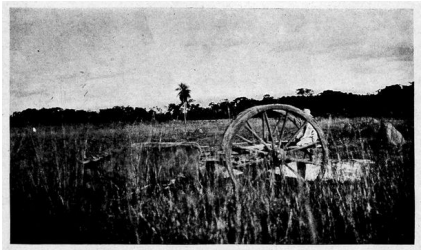
After the first investigation I put off replenishing my wardrobe until I should reach Buenos Aires. It was not merely because the tailor showed me shoddy stuff and demanded $350 for a suit of it! The local styles were even more startling than the price mentioned in so offhand a manner. The trousers demanded by custom, for example, be they made by a local tailor or imported from Europe, are built up as high as trousers could by any stretch of the word go; then on top of this comes an enormous belt-piece, so wide that it requires three buttons to fasten it, clamping the garment up about the armpits. If only they would use a couple of inches more, they could button the trousers about the neck, fasten a collar on them, and dispense with the expense of a shirt entirely. In the olden days, it is said, the Inca tribes gave the inhabitants of this region the name of "guara-ni" (breechless ones). The bloomer-like amplitude of the trousers of the countryman, and the height of those of his city cousin, suggests that they resent the implied insult keenly, and have resolved to leave no opportunity for its repetition. Somewhere around this uncharted expanse of trouser every one, from merchant to peon, wears a leather belt at least six inches wide, a combination of coin and revolver carry-all, held together with several buckles of the

size of those on a horse's saddle-cinch.

The "International" train leaves Asunción every Wednesday and Saturday morning, and lands the traveler in Montevideo or Buenos Aires fifty hours later. The through and local fares vary greatly, the former being subjected to the competition of the river steamers. First and second-class rates to Buenos Aires are $450 and $325 respectively; local fares are $680 and $460! Luckily, this is in Paraguayan currency; but even when turned into real money, it remains a respectable rate. For half a day we steamed across broad pampas, almost prairies, backed by wooded ridges, isolated masses of dark rock standing forth here and there in the middle distance, dim outlines of low mountains hovering on the horizon. The broad savannas were speckled with cattle, somewhat gaunt, but of vastly better stock than those of the Andes, a bulky China bull here and there explaining the improvement.



A view from the promenade-deck of the steamer of cowboys of Paraguay slaughtering our day's beefsteak on the bank of the river



A Paraguayan landscape, with native cart, the tall tough grass, and the *tacurús*, or ant-hills, that abound in this region

Every man on the train was armed, the weapons varying from flint-lock, muzzle-loading horse-pistols to the very latest automatic. The revolver is a sign of caste in Paraguay; my companions accepted me as one of them only when I had shown my own. When the conductor came through for tickets, his friends and acquaintances playfully pointed their weapons at him. The faces of many, even youthful, men were scarred from the latest revolution, like the battered façades of Asunción. Every native aboard,—women, children, the train-crew, even the train-guard in his white uniform and helmet—smoked big, black cigars, which are really nothing more than the blackened natural leaf rolled up in cigar form. Brown maidens, physically not unattractive, sat with a half-smoked stogy in a corner of their mouths, and now and then spat through their teeth like New York toughs. The cigarette, all but universal elsewhere on my journey, finds slight favor in Paraguay. At the stations, peons in baggy *chiripás* mingled with *estancieros*, their neck-high trousers tucked into soft leather boots, a silver-headed *rebenque*, or short riding-whip, hanging from their wrists by a leather thong. Women squatted on

the brick flaggings, selling anything from raw beefsteaks to the native fire-water. Though there were many stations, the towns were rarely visible, except a single church-tower marking the site some distance off. Being built on knolls, the expense of entering them has been avoided by the railway constructors. The few that were seen were *triste* at best, the populations, lolling about the openings that serve as doors, ragged and ambitionless. At Loque station, women wearing from ten to fifty coarse straw hats each, languidly offered them for sale. At Patiño a crude tramway was waiting to carry to the bank of the river the passengers for San Bernadino, Paraguay's "watering-place," on the beautiful fresh-water lake of Ypacarai. Then came Paraguari, famous for its revolutions, commercial center of all the old missions for a hundred miles around, leaf-roofed, two-wheel carts awaiting freight or passengers. Seventy-five miles from the capital we skirted Villa Rica, second city of the Inland Republic, with a commerce in tobacco, sugar, and lumber, but a mere village in all but name.

At the small prairie station of Borja, from which some fellow-countrymen were constructing a branch line some day to reach the Iguazú Falls, I abandoned the "International," and was soon speeding away across the flat country in a track automobile. At best the Paraguyan landscape is monotonous, vast plains of reddish soil and coarse grass stretching away until lost to view, here and there broken by thick clumps of forest. Ever and again we were slowed down or halted by reddish half-wild cattle on the unfenced track; the pampa was sprinkled with them as far as the eye could see. The plains either are, or are fancied to be, of no value for agriculture, and are left to grazing, while the languid natives, swinging in

their hammocks under their wall-less roofs in the edges of the forest clumps, raised a bit of corn and tobacco in plantations hacked out of the woods, and trusted Providence for the rest. Ponderous, springless, two-wheeled ox-carts that seemed all wheels labored by. Everywhere the *tacurú*, or cone-shaped ant-hills, stood head-high in the tall grass. My companions told of *tacurús* erected during a single night in the middle of earth-floored dwellings and requiring the exertions of a band of workmen to dig them out.

At length we drew up before the rough-board headquarters at Charaná. It being Saturday evening, the entire region, men, women, and children, proposed to ride into Borja on the work-train, to squander their month's wages and remain several days drunk. The young American superintendent, however, issued orders to the Paraguayan soldiers that had been assigned him, and though these looked anything but fierce in their ragged khaki and bare feet, the throng lost no time in obeying their orders to disembark. For all their childlike demeanor, the soldiers of Paraguay have a reputation for shooting on scant provocation.

We pushed on along battered old rails, through forest and jungle, with here and there a bank of red clay, some ten miles to railhead, the line squirming its way around every knoll, the cheap engines to be employed requiring that there be nothing steeper than a one percent grade. Advance gangs had hacked out a cart-road for some distance beyond, where the territory was growing so dense-wooded and hilly that the superintendent was considering the use of balloons to survey the country.

Back at the main camp I had my first *mate*, or

"Paraguayan tea." The *yerba mate* is to the life of Paraguay and its adjoining regions what coca leaves are to the Andes. In the *yerbales* the leaves and smaller branches of an evergreen bush not unlike the holly, growing among taller trees, are spread on a raised platform of poles, smoked and dried, forced through to the earth floor beneath, beaten almost to a powder with clubs, and packed in *tercios* by sewing up green ox-hides, which shrink until the contents is stone-hard. The gringo engineers had come to prefer this native beverage to coffee or tea, though they drank it in cups, with sugar and milk. The native way is to put a spoonful of the powdered yerba in a little pear-shaped gourd, pour this full of boiling water, and suck the "tea" through a brass or silver tube, or in the case of the poorer people, a reed. One spoonful suffices for a score of persons, the gourd being passed from one to another of a group, each time being refilled with water, the drinker taking care not to burn hands or lips on gourd or tube. To any but a foreigner it would be an insult to offer a separate bowl. The greenish liquid was bitter in taste and by no means pleasant, but was due in time to become my favorite beverage, as it does with most gringos who continue the use of it. Everywhere in this region one runs upon natives loafing in the shade, a *mate*-gourd, sometimes carved with fantastic figures, grasped in one hand, lazily imbibing the liquid at regular intervals. Unlike the coca, it has no narcotic effect; it is, on the contrary, beneficial in stomachic ailments. The *gaucho* of the pampas makes it serve as bread and vegetables in his fixed diet of *asado con cuero*, or beef roasted in the hide. Many an attempt has been made to introduce *mate* to the rest of the world, so far, unfortunately, in vain.

I fell asleep toward dawn on a cot set out in the

breeze, to the rattle of poker-chips, the clinking of bottles and glasses, and cries of “One hundred dollars!” “Two hundred and fifty!” from the “office” in which the gringo community had gathered. Next evening a local train set me down in the heavy darkness at Villa Encarnación, up to a few months before the halting-place for the night of the “Internacional.” In name one of the six “cities” of Paraguay, the place was a drowsy, barefoot, isolated cluster of buildings, rather than a town. Strewn along the side of a red hill, amid half-luxuriant vegetation, on the banks of the Paraná, the southern boundary of Paraguay, it covered a considerable space of rolling, grassy ground, with wide paths of reddish sand where streets should have been. Its slight commerce was chiefly in the hands of Germans. It was humid with the rainy season, and insolent with its big ragged garrison. Green parrots screamed in and out of the orange-groves, the fruit of which was green in color even when ripe and of rather acid taste. Across the Paraná, as wide as the Hudson, Posadas, in the Argentine, lay banked up on the sloping opposite shore, in plain sight from any part of the town.

Life is free and easy in Paraguay, close to nature. Its women, in their loose gowns and bare feet, very erect from the practice of carrying loads on their heads from childhood, have a childlike simplicity, as well as an extremely graceful carriage. Yet I found this the least interesting of South American countries. Its old missions, to the ruined churches of which, overgrown with creepers, a ride of a day or two from the railroad at almost any point brings one, attract many travelers; but I had already seen these and better in tropical Bolivia. With its education at a low ebb, chiefly in the hands of priests to whom sacred history and catechisms are the sum total of

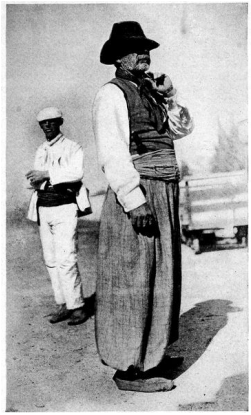
wisdom, the present inhabitants of Paraguay leave the impression of being incapable of much advancement.

The change from this languid little country to the live one across the river was almost startling. When the sun had declined somewhat, a motor-boat chugged across to Posadas with a score of passengers, where we landed without ceremony among a group of Argentine officials, well-dressed and courteously business-like. To those coming upon it from the direction of Buenos Aires, Posadas may seem small and backward; in contrast with the drowsy, little grass-grown Paraguayan “city” still in plain sight across the Paraná, it is very much alive. The capital of the territory of Misiones, that tongue of land piercing far up between Brazil and Paraguay and taking its name from the Jesuit establishments of olden times, it already boasts some ten thousand inhabitants, or more than the entire territory contained ten years ago. In spite of being tolerably compact and two-storied in the business section, the town covers a vast amount of ground, with very wide streets and ample elbow-room everywhere, except in the clustered shacks of laborers along the river-brink. A single church, its old red-brick tower still unfinished, rather Protestant than Catholic in appearance, by reason of the simplicity of its adornments and the existence of seats within, takes the place of the score or more that would bulk above a town of similar size in the Andes. Here were hard-paved streets instead of sand-holes, steam road-rollers and up-to-date machinery, business activity and shoes, well-kept parks with plenty of benches, large, prominent buildings as schools—just opening for the new year in this first week in March—and well-dressed policemen of manly demeanor. Canvas

cots had taken the place of hammocks. Boys were busy polishing brass name-plates before important business houses. The red liberty-cap now adorned all government shields, while the most beautiful flag of South America, the Argentinian white and sky-blue, flew at the crest of many a façade. Here a stranger could pass in the streets without being stared out of countenance. The inhabitants had a look of eagerness and hope in their faces, signs of at least a material prosperity in striking contrast to the dreary hopelessness of Andean regions. Yet Posadas is not forty years old, while Encarnación, across the river, was founded by the Jesuits more than three centuries ago.

In the second-class car of the N.E.A., the "Nord Este Argentino," there were no Indian passengers, and though only a *mixto*, the train made good progress. At the very first farm outside Posadas an American binder was felling the autumn grain—and I had not seen so much as a mower since crossing the Rio Grande thirty months before. At every station were uniformed police; mounted, officers patroled the country roads. Houses along the way were not the dens of human animals, but were supplied with the comforts of home, even American rocking-chairs tucked away in the shade of their verandas. I had come to the end of the great South American *monte* and jungle, and from now on the great Argentine pampas grew ever broader, slightly rolling here, stretching away to infinity on each hand. The brick-red soil of Misiones was given over to grazing rather than to agriculture, though we passed long autumn-dry corn-fields, the ears broken half off and hanging over to ripen. Cattle were everywhere, and cow-boys were roping them here and there, while *gauchos* careered across the broad plains on their hardy

pintos. The railroad and all its appurtenances were just as orderly as they would have been in England, the railway architecture of which it resembled, though the cars were of the American style. Everything from engine to yards was so English one felt sure that, had they spoken their language, the traincrews would have called the little four-wheeled freight-cars “goods-vans,” and spoken of “metals” and “sleepers.”



The mixture of types in the Argentine,—a native *gaucho* in *bombachos* and a Basque immigrant from the Pyrenees

It was some time after dark that we pulled into Santo Tomé, or at least into a station bearing that name, and I concluded that I had ridden far enough for the time being. The train did not enter the town, perhaps because it would have been hard to decide just

where the town was. In the Argentine these are scattered over a vast amount of ground, in striking contrast to the heaped-up crowding common to the Andes. A half-moon dim-lighted the flat country far and wide. I set out in the moonlight along a broad highway, and wandered until any hope of finding a town died out; then ran upon a few low, scattered houses that suggested some insignificant village, like Bolivia's tropical "cities"; then I went on and on until there grew up about me an immense town, never crowded together, yet with an enormous plaza, long stretches of electric arc-lamps, a checkerboard city of wide streets and long blocks, each house set in its own big garden, a town well-to-do, citified, with many automobiles, and but a single church, of moderate size and inconspicuous.

Life began to renew about the station at 3 A.M. The restaurant opened, watchmen lighted big gasoline arc-lamps, the "International" rolled in, and we were off again, with ample room even in the second-class car. Three hours later I sat up to watch the sun rise red out of Uruguay, across the river. About the vast, long-haired, unkempt plains stood clumps of pampa trees; at the towns were many gay with blossoms—spring blossoms, I had almost written, until I remembered it was autumn. The *aloncita*, a bird not unlike a small robin in appearance, though with less red, began to build its beehive-shaped mud nest on the wooden cross-pieces of the telegraph-poles. All day long, for hundreds of miles, there was an average of a nest on every third pole, always on the side farthest from the railroad, as if the noise of the trains were annoying to its inhabitants, the arched doorway always toward the direction from which we came—the north—to catch, perhaps, the warmer breezes. Among hundreds of nests I saw only three or

four exceptions to this, and all day long only one built anywhere else than on the cross-piece, close against the pole. One daring architect had set his on the top of the pole itself, neatly capping it. As this particular pole had its cross-piece already occupied, it looked as if the bird above was a hard-headed fellow who had failed to stake his claim in time, but who insisted, nevertheless, on living in that particular spot.

The country grew more and more like our own, in climate, creature comforts, news-stands, block-signals, uniformed mailmen, carts and wagons, some of them of the boat-shaped style of Poland, rattling past on broad highways, busy towns along the way, at only the more important of which the train halted briefly, and between them raced swiftly and smoothly southward. Through the windows the horizon of the great rolling pampa continually rose and fell. Sometimes it was punctuated with a grove of trees, more rarely with a small forest, the chiefly unfenced plains everywhere sprinkled with cattle. Here and there a *ñandu*, the South American ostrich, trotted awkwardly away across the prairie. Where there were fences, the wires ran through the posts by holes bored in them, rather than being secured by staples. Well-tended fields of fruit-trees in long rows seemed incongruous in South America; it brought a feeling of satisfaction to see industry and decent living again, things being done, instead of merely doing themselves. Some industrious country boys climbed a fence with bags of large, juicy watermelons for sale; boys merely in quest of pocket-money and not because their livelihood depended upon it. The population at large was too busy to bother with station hawking. Countrymen wore *bombachos*, enormous bloomer-like trousers, tucked

into soft top-boots or drawn up about the bare ankles above their *alpargatas*, or hempen soles, as if the cost of cloth were of no importance. Any lady would have remained ladylike in them. Now and then the river drew up so close beside us that we could look far off across Uruguay, spread out on the other side.

At length we sighted ahead, a sort of oriental mist hovering about it, a whitish city with a two-tower church suggesting minarets, a city set on a knoll, not unlike Jerusalem. Yet this was not the town we were approaching, but Salto, in the "República Oriental" over the river. Great fields of grapes, well tended, began to race by us, suburban houses thickened, and we drew up at the in-all-respects-complete city of Concordia, four hundred miles south of Posadas on the frontier I had left twenty-four hours before. In the Andes, world-famous cities had been mere languid villages; in the Argentine, places the world at large had never heard of were large, flourishing metropolises. Concordia numbers twenty thousand inhabitants, virtually all white and all alive. Yet it is not even the capital, but merely the second city of the Province of the Entre Rios—"Between the Rivers" Paraná and Uruguay, famous for its *saladerías*, or beef-salting establishments. Well spread out, it has few churches and no over-supply of priests, the former with few bells and those of agreeable tone, which are *rung*, not too often, instead of being beaten with an infernal din. Liquor-shops are few; the majority of the population finds something more worth while than shopkeeping. Its inhabitants know how to pass two abreast on the sidewalks; women on bicycles bring a frequent start of surprise; swarms of cleanly dressed boys and girls sally forth from big, well-equipped schools, where coeducation reigns; bootblacks clad like business men and carrying

upholstered and decorated seats seek their clients in the well-kept streets and plazas; electric street-cars give excellent service. Electric lights both in streets and houses were even more brilliant than our own; the public library was actually open and "functioning," and did hot spend its time staring at the foreigner who had come to read. In the "Hotel Garabaldi"—just such a place as the name implies—wine was served with meals as freely as in Europe, and though only the abode of workingmen, it was superior to the best hostelry of Andean cities. Real beds had now taken the place of canvas cots; at the rear was an electric-lighted *cancha de bochas*, or outdoor bowling alley for the clientèle of Italian workmen.

I slipped across the river next afternoon to Salto, in Uruguay, adding another country to my growing collection. One went and came freely; without frontier formalities. Salto is large, and several times older than Concordia, with many well-built buildings, yet with a suggestion of "seediness," a bit more squalor and barefootedness, its church not so imposing and well-kept as it looks at a distance, its policemen in rather shiny and threadbare uniforms, its streets cobbled, rather than smoothly paved. In short, it is more Spanish in type, more clustered together, with a general air suggesting that this is not quite so live and hopeful a country as that over the river. Many proud old families live here; yet the head of more than one of them slips across daily to do business in the Argentine.

One can go on from Concordia to Buenos Aires by rail, but I chose to take the overnight journey on a big Mihanovich river-steamer, with all the conveniences of an ocean liner. The flat, sometimes

rolling, occasionally bushy shores of the Uruguay were broken by several towns, notably the two model establishments producing Leibig's extract of beef. When I returned on deck next morning a brilliant sun was pouring its rays blindingly over the stream misnamed the Plata, the "River of Silver," by Sebastian "Gaboto"—who was none other than our own Sebastian Cabot—because he fancied it ran uphill to the silver mines of Peru. The Indians called it the Paraná-Guazú, the "River Large as a Sea," a truer name, for on the right it stretched away to the dimmest of broken land forms, and soon these, too, disappeared, and a reddish-brown sea spread unbroken to the horizon. For a time we hugged the Uruguayan shore, then swung the blazing sun around behind us and struck out for what, but for its color, might have been the open sea. Soon we began to pass buoys of the Argentine government, marked "R. A. m. o. p.," with the kilometers to the end of my journey painted upon them. Toward eight, where the yellow sea and the bluish-gray sky met, the vast, perfect circle of the horizon was broken by a patch of faint white. It was only a tiny narrow line down at the extreme edge of the great inverted bowl of sky above us, yet so long—several inches, in fact—that should it turn out to be a city, as I began to suspect, since we were headed directly for it, it would be a large one indeed. Then the white patch began to take on faint individual shape, and above us the wireless was spitting its message to the yet invisible world ahead. An hour later we were in the midst of buoys, large and small, marking the "Canal Sur," or South Channel. Boats and steamers appeared, and sailing vessels spread their white wings across the yellow waters on all sides of us, while the city stretched along the horizon ahead had turned from white to

gray, with a tint of red, neither color nor edifice conspicuous, except for two groups of huge brick smoke-stacks belching forth into the brilliant sky. Even after the long line of buildings had taken on definite form, and one could all but count their windows, the city seemed still to sit on the yellow sea. One was struck, too, by the narrowness of the strip; the buildings seemed for the most part a bare four stories, with only here and there one as high as ten cutting into the landless sky-line. Two tugs took possession of us, dragging us up a narrow channel through a wilderness of shipping, where we must soon stop for lack of space, until we spied an unoccupied bit of wharf and warped gradually into it. It was a late-summer morning, the ninth of March. While the rest waited for their baggage to be examined, an official glanced at my bundle, jerked a thumb scornfully over a shoulder, and I stepped out into the metropolitan rumble of—no wonder gringo residents have abbreviated it to “B.A.”—“la Ciudad y Puerto de Santa María de los Buenos Aires.”

TRANSCRIBER’S NOTE

1. Changed “I am not of that kidney” to “I am not of that kind” on p. 48.
2. Changed “going a journey” to “going on a journey” on p. 167.
3. Silently corrected typographical errors.
4. Retained anachronistic and non-standard spellings as printed.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK VAGABONDING DOWN THE ANDES ***

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