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5th Floor, Hunt Library
Carnegie Mellon University
4909 Frew Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890
Contact: Archives
Telephone: 412-268-2434
Email: huntinst@andrew.cmu.edu
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The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

by

Alex Kosta

With one item by Julie

Photographs by Fred Kent from

Kodachromes by the Author.

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All Items are centered around various true episodes which occurred in Greece, Jamaica, Brazil, or elsewhere where I have collected slime molds, worked as a botanist for the government, or taught classes during the last 25 years. I have related them as they occurred, or at least as I remember them. Most names of persons and places are authentic, fictitious ones having been substituted only when memory has failed or prudence prevailed!

A. K.

Iowa City
July 1959

I

GREECE -- 1936

Pro Patria

At Saloniki I stepped down from the train to stretch my legs during the twenty minute stop. The platform was crowded with people. An elderly lady was sobbing quietly while a young man, obviously her son who was going away on a long trip, was trying to comfort her. A young woman was embracing her husband who had just returned from Athens while two little boys wrapped themselves around daddy's legs. Several large baskets, their tops covered with burlap, were lined up ready to be loaded into the third class coaches. Bundles of hens with feet tied together lay on the platform, the birds resigned to their fate.

Farther down, a young man, obviously American, was trying desperately to understand the broken English of a well-meaning "Brooklyn" recently returned from Pittsburgh. He was making little progress. I stepped up to them.

"What seems to be the trouble?" I asked in

Greek of the hyphenated American.

"I am not sure," he replied somewhat disturbed "but I think he lost his money."

"Do you mind if I take over from here? Maybe we can help him."

"Eleuthera, eleuthera," (freely, freely) he consented.

The American was listening with interest, but somewhat impatiently. I turned to him.

"Can I be of assistance? This gentleman says you have lost your money. How did it happen?"

"No," he said "I have all my money, but I am told they will take it away from me at the border."

"That's absurd," I protested. "You can take every cent with you that you brought into the country. Every cent that was recorded in your passport when you entered Greece."

"That's the trouble," he said sadly. "Nothing was recorded."

"Nothing was recorded?" I asked almost in a shout. "How is that possible? Why didn't you tell

the customs officials how much money you were bringing in?"

"Nobody asked me about money," he replied indignantly. "I didn't know I was supposed to declare it."

There was obviously something missing from this story. Greece was under the strong hand of John Metaxas at that time and the currency regulations had teeth. No customs official would risk his job and maybe his liberty by forgetting to enforce them.

"You had better go to the U. S. consulate and have this affair straightened out," I advised the young man.

"U. S. consulate?" he asked somewhat apprehensively. "I have no time. The train will be pulling out in a few minutes."

"If you want to take a chance with the border officials I'll try to talk them into letting you take your money out, but frankly, I doubt very much if I shall succeed. Their orders are clear

and strict: No one takes a cent out of the country unless he has recorded proof that he brought it in. My advice is to postpone your departure and have this affair straightened out first."

He thought for a moment, and then:

"I'll take a chance," he said. "Let's get on."

He grabbed a briefcase with a T-square protruding under the cover from both ends and started to mount the train steps.

"Wait a minute," I called. "Where is your luggage?"

"This is it," he replied innocently, waving the brief case.

"How long have you been in Greece?" I asked, mounting after him.

"Six weeks."

Six weeks with only an empty looking briefcase and a T-square? Now I knew there was a mystery behind all this.

"All right" I said, "let's go."

On the train I led the way and he followed me

to my compartment. He sat opposite me near the window. When the train pulled out I offered him a Papastratos No. 1 and lighted one myself.

"Now," I said with the air of a lawyer speaking to his client, "if I am to help you, I must know the whole story in all its details. Give."

He smiled.

"I worked my way over on a freighter," he started. "I had signed up for the whole trip, but when we got to Piraeus I jumped ship. Left all my belongings on board except for an extra shirt, a pair of socks and my T-square. Got out with the crew and never went back. I'll pick up my things when I get back to New York," he said to end his laconic statement.

The man had not gone through customs at all. As a member of the crew of a foreign ship he escaped the formalities of passports, currency regulations, customs declarations, and all the other little annoyances that plague the tourist. At least so it appeared. It seemed absurd to trust the crews more than the school teachers,

but one cannot fathom the regulations of governments.

"How much money do you have?"

"Two hundred fifty bucks."

"Student?"

"Yes. University of Texas, Architecture."

"Architecture? You are in the right country. Did you see the Parthenon?"

"Yes. And the Erechtheion, and the Theseion. Marvellous buildings! Inspiring! The modern buildings too. The Academy of Science, the National Library. All marble! I'd like to come back someday. Legally!" He laughed.

In a few hours we were approaching the Yugoslav border. At ~~Gevgelia~~ Evzones the government official came on board. He inspected my luggage, my passport, asked me about my money. All was in order. He addressed my friend in Greek. Jones looked at me inquisitively.

"Here we go," I said. "He wants to see your luggage."

He opened his brief-case. He had told me the

truth. A shirt and a pair of socks were all it contained besides some postcards -- of Greek monuments to be sure -- and the T-square.

"Where are his suitcases?" the customs man inquired.

I interpreted the question, knowing full well what the answer was.

"Honestly, that's all I have." Jones assured me.

I turned to the customs man: "That's all he has. He is a student on vacation and does not wish to be bothered with luggage."

"Practical people these Americans," he said, not without admiration for this fabulous race. "He is an American, isn't he?"

"What else?"

"May I see his passport, please?"

"He wants your passport."

The customs man paged through the small red book.

"Hm! Let's see. Where is the money declaration?"

Silence.

"That's funny. There is no record of the money he has brought with him. Is he travelling without luggage and without money? How is that possible? Doesn't he have any money?"

"He wants to know how much money you have."

"Fifty two dollars in currency and two hundred in traveller's checks."

With fear in my heart I interpreted.

The customs man's eyes bulged. "Two hundred and fifty two dollars," he shouted, "that's a whole fortune." And then: "I'm sorry, but we'll have to confiscate it."

"Confiscate it?" It was my turn to shout. "Surely you can't be serious. The boy is five thousand miles away from home. You can't leave him penniless."

"You know the regulations. If Metaxas -- garumph -- if the prime minister is strict about anything nowadays it is about this currency business. Why, I'd lose my job if I let this boy take the money out. Why didn't he declare it? One thing I can tell you, he didn't enter Greece through this route. No sir, we are very careful about

such things here."

"I'm sure of that. He came by ship to Piraeus and he did not know he had to declare his money. After all, you cannot expect every tourist to be familiar with all the regulations of the Greek government. No one asked him how much money he was carrying and the boy did not think it necessary to open his pocket book to every official he met."

"I don't know whose fault it is. All I know is that the law is very strict. I'll have to take his money. We'll give him a receipt, of course."

"A lot he can buy with your receipt."

"That's the best I can do."

"Listen to me," I pleaded. "This boy is an American student of architecture. He came to Greece purposely to see the ancient monuments; to draw inspiration from the Parthenon and the other glories of Greece. He loved it here. He is full of enthusiasm for Greece. He will be a walking advertisement for the country wherever he goes. He wants to come back. Everyone has been friendly and helpful to him, <u>up to now.</u>"

My oratory was pouring out, and the more the customs officer appeared to be impressed, the more eloquent I waxed.

"Up to now," I repeated. "But what will he think if you take all his money? What will he tell his countrymen when he returns to America? He will say that in Greece he was robbed. Oh! I know all about the law and the regulations, but he is not going to think of those things. All he will remember is that in Greece the government official took his money away. You are that government official."

I looked straight in his eyes: "Law or no law," I said slowly, "regulation or no regulation, job or no job, you can't do that to Greece."

The man was silent for a moment. He swallowed hard.

"I'll have to think about this," he finally said as he went back to the customs office.

I knew I had struck the right note.

"What did he say?" Jones asked nervously.

"I think you'll keep your money," I replied, "but we'll have to wait for the final decision. We

have put this man in a terrible predicament. I shouldn't want to be in his shoes."

Ten minutes later the customs man was back. He turned to me very seriously: "Just for what you said," he started deliberately, "just so that he will not form a bad opinion of the Greeks; just so that he won't defame our country; I shall let him keep all his money. I hope I am doing the right thing," he added, "I am risking my all."

I shook his hand warmly. Here was a customs employee with a keen sense of responsibility toward his country. A minor official who had the courage to make the right decision contrary to the regulations; in defiance of the dictatorship of the moment. Some administrators who hide behind the book of rules may well take a lesson from this simple man.

Sequel

Jones breathed easier as the train slipped across the border from Greece into Yugoslavia.

"I don't know how to thank you," he said, full of gratitude. "I wish I could do something in return for your help."

"Buy me a drink in Paris next Saturday and we'll call it square."

"It's a promise," he said with enthusiasm. "Where can we meet?"

"Do you know where you will be staying?"

"Yes. I'll give you the address."

He scribbled the address on a small piece of paper and gave it to me.

"Look me up as soon as you get in."

I put the paper in my billfold. "You can count on that. A drink is a drink."

On the Yugoslav side of the border the customs officer came in.

"Anything to declare?"

"Transients."

"Makes no difference. I must inspect your baggage."

"Go ahead. Here they are."

He looked in my bags carefully, not missing a thing. He found about twenty dollars' worth of souvenirs I was taking to friends back in the States.

"That will cost you a lot of duty."

"But I am not stopping in Yugoslavia. I am going straight through to Paris."

"But you could easily dispose of some of these things in Beograd or at some other stop."

"Can't you see these are nothing but souvenirs I am taking back to my friends in America? Why would I want to sell them in Yugoslavia? There isn't enough there to make it worth while."

"You will either pay duty or have the bags sealed and taken to the baggage car until you reach the Austrian border."

"Very well," I said with murder in my heart. "Seal them and take them to the baggage car."

I paid about a dollar and fifty cents, the charge for sealing and transferring, and saw my bags disappear. I felt a little sick, but decided that there was really no cause for worry. We

should be in Austria by evening.

At Ljubljana Jones got off to change trains while I continued on. We were both going to Paris, but by different routes. He to stay for a few weeks, I for a few hours on my way to Cherbourg to sail on the Europa Sunday afternoon.

Not long after Jones left, we arrived at the last Yugoslav town before the Austrian border. Now for the baggage. I approached one of the station officials and asked him in English where I could claim my suitcases.

"Nicht verstehen" he said, and dismissed me with a shrug of the shoulders. I tried my high school French, showing him the check stubs at the same time. Another shrug of the shoulders. The man made no effort to understand. I was so angry I could have burst, and in my indignation I swore. I swore vociferously in Greek. A higher official was passing by at that moment. He stopped suddenly, turned and, doing his best to control his laughter, addressed me in the modern idiom of Plato's tongue.

"What seems to be the trouble here?" he asked.

I was so startled and so embarrassed that he understood my Greek that I remained speechless for

a few seconds. He introduced himself to set me at ease.

"You'll find Greeks anywhere you go," he said with a certain amount of pride.

My new friend took charge and in a few minutes I knew the worst: my baggage had been taken off the train at Beograd for reasons known only to the Yugoslav railroads, and there presumably they were resting.

"What do I do now?" I inquired helplessly.

"Stay here for the night. There is a fair hotel in town. Your bags will probably be on the next train which arrives at nine in the morning."

"Can I still reach Cherbourg in time to catch my ship Sunday afternoon?"

He took me into the station and there, poring over maps and time tables, we figured the right combinations that would enable me to reach Paris Sunday morning and Cherbourg early in the afternoon.

I thanked the fellow profusely and offered him a handful of dinars which he absolutely refused.

"It is my duty," he said modestly.

I went to the hotel and slept soundly and trustingly. My luggage would come in the morning and I would be on my way. After all, what is a trip without a bit of adventure?

Early the next morning I went to the station confidently. The nine o'clock train pulled in at nine o'clock. A good omen! I found my Greek friend and in a few minutes he had my luggage for me. I felt like planting a big kiss on each of his cheeks French fashion, but restrained myself. After a warm handshake I was on the train, bag and baggage.

It was a slow train. About midnight we pulled into Feldkirch, Austria in a driving rain. At four in the morning, with a feeling of relief, I boarded the Paris express. This was the last lap of the journey except for the quick trip to Cherbourg on the boat train. Two French students, a young man and his sister, kept me interested and somewhat amused explaining to me the causes and effects of the latest French cabinet crisis. As long as France was having a political crisis all was normal in the world and everything would

go well. Alas! My adventure was not yet at an end.

We arrived in Paris in ample time to catch the boat train to Cherbourg, only it was Sunday and there was no boat train to Cherbourg! The heavens fell upon me with a thud when I heard the news. This was my darkest hour! Never have I felt so discouraged, disheartened, dispirited, depressed, dejected! My ship would sail at four that afternoon and there was no way in the world to reach it. I had to draw what confort I could from the fact that I now belonged, or was about to belong, to a relatively small if not select class of people. Innumerable persons miss the street car, the bus, even the train, but how many have missed an ocean liner?

I counted my money again. I had fourteen dollars, six dinars, twenty-five pfennig, and seven drachmas. Total: fourteen dollars! I went to a small hotel nearby and asked for a room with bath. That was two dollars, and now there were twelve. As I opened my billfold to pay the clerk, I noticed the little note Jones had given

me with his Paris address. A bright ray of hope shed its warming glow in my heart. If that boy really wished to repay me for my eloquence at ~~Geugele~~ Evzones, he would have an opportunity now to do so liberally. I took a taxi directly to the address he had given me.

"Monsieur Jones habite ici?"

"Monsieur Jones? Mais oui, but he moved this morning. Left no address."

Why do the French say "oui" when they mean "non?"

"Merci bien."

I was back where I started with twelve dollars, minus taxi fare, and no Jones.

The next morning I went directly to the steamship agency and explained my predicament.

"All sailings are booked through the middle of October" the clerk said. "No space on any ship until then. Everybody is returning from the Olympics at Berlin. I can give you no hope, but if there happens to be a cancellation I'll call you at your hotel."

"You must do something for me," I insisted.

"I only have twelve dollars to live on until I board the ship. It wasn't my fault, you know that I missed the Europa."

"Neither was it ours," he countered.

Unfortunately, that was a strong argument.

As I left the agency dismayed, my thoughts again turned to Jones. How could I locate him in this metropolis? Perhaps he had already registered at the American consulate. That was my last hope. In a few minutes I was at the consulate. I rang the bell and waited. No answer. I rang again, and again, and again. No answer. Was the U. S. government out of business? I walked around the corner to the side door and rang there. Finally a negro porter stuck out his head.

"What do you want?" he demanded rather angrily because I had disturbed him.

"What's the matter?" I asked. "Is the consulate closed?"

He looked at me in disgust.

"Labor Day," he answered, and closed the door again.

It took me a moment to appreciate the humor of the situation. Then I burst out into a raucous

laugh, and felt better.

I went back to the hotel to plan my life in Paris for a week, two weeks, a month, who knows? Maybe six weeks, on eleven dollars. My relatives were in Athens; Metaxas would not permit any money to come from there. The U. S. consulate -- even when it was open -- had a strict rule: no financial help to distressed Americans; it was printed in the regulations. Jones could not be found.

After much careful deliberation I decided on the following course:

1. Move to a cheaper room.

2. Live on one sandwich and a cup of coffee a day.

3. Drink plenty of water from the hotel faucet; it was included in the rent.

4. Spend my days in the Louvre for two francs and fifty centimes a day.

5. Go to bed early to forget my hunger.

On this program I could make my money stretch for about a week. If my luck did not change by then I would spend my last dollar on a tin cup and a pair of dark glasses.

My friend Harry Fuller had sent me a going-away present when I left New York. It was a book which I had not even unwrapped up to that fateful Labor Day. Now, as I was ready to crawl into bed at seven o'clock, I tore the wrapping and, for the second time that day I went into a paroxysm of laughter. Harry himself could not have planned the joke any better. The book he had given me, in good faith to be sure, was:

PARIS SALONS, CAFES, STUDIOS

By Sisley Huddleston

I crawled into bed and read the book from cover to cover.

The next morning I started my well-planned routine. No man has drunk as much water in an equal period of time; not in Paris at least. No casual visitor to this queen of cities has seen so much of the Louvre and so little of anything else. Every painting, every statue, every piece of furniture of every period I vow I have seen. Daily I visited the Venus; daily I worshipped at the feet of the Nike. Raphael's Madonna delighted me; Ingre's water girl smiled at me, but Mona Lisa

was so tired of seeing me she was frowning by the end of the week.

I spent the evenings quietly at my hotel room alone, even though the lady clerk insisted every morning that it was perfectly all right if monsieur would bring "une amie," and was certain every evening when monsieur returned alone that monsieur had not understood what she had said in the morning.

On Friday the agency called me. There was a cancellation on the Columbus sailing from Cherbourg next Sunday. Beginning Saturday noon they would support me again.

I never did find Jones, but Friday evening I had dinner and wine.

II

AMAZONAS, BRAZIL -- 1943-1944

Prelude

It was in January 1942 I heard that Mike Polli was back from Africa. Mike had been a favorite student of mine at the university. He had received his B. A. degree in Biology two years before and had gone to the rubber plantations of Liberia soon after. I was anxious to learn how Mike was faring and he was anxious to hear the news from his Alma Mater.

He came to see me one afternoon in early February and told me he was leaving soon for South America to help the government launch its rubber program in the Amazon Valley of Brazil. The government, he said, needed many technicians for this program.

"Mike," I said "what chance do you suppose I would have to go to the Amazon for Uncle Sam? I should like nothing better."

Mike said he would mention my name to the authorities in Washington and would see that I received the forms to fill out.

Rubber! Wild rubber from the Brazilian jungles. Rubber for our flying fortresses. It

sounded interesting; important.

I waited a long time for the forms; at least it seemed a long time. In the meantime my colleagues were being commissioned in the navy. There was feverish excitement on the campus as one by one they made the rounds to say goodbye; it was contagious. Soon I decided to try it too, but the interviewing naval officer did not give me much hope. He was polite and very understanding, but could not help smiling when he read in my credentials that my forte was botany. The navy, he implied, had little interest in Monocotyledons. He thought perhaps it would be just as well for me to return to my classroom. I was discouraged.

A few days later an envelope arrived from Washington. "Mr. Michael Polli informs us that you have expressed interest in the government program....." Mike had come through!

Month succeeded month, but no further news came from Washington. One day a circular letter arrived from army headquarters asking me to recommend advanced biology students for commissions in the Sanitary Corps. Anyone with some knowledge of

bacteriology was urged to join in order to release physicians who were needed for more urgent work. I had been teaching bacteriology for seven years. Since the government did not seem disposed to let me hunt rubber perhaps the army could be persuaded to let me hunt microbes.

The interviewing army officer in Cleveland was very encouraging this time. He was certain I would be of use to the Sanitary Corps if I could pass the physical examination. That was on Thursday, September 12, 1942. On Saturday I travelled to Columbus for the army physical and took my first reprimand from a sergeant -- one of Japanese origin at that -- for stepping up to the X-ray machine before my name was called. One glance at the papers, and the colonel in charge assured me that if the X-rays and the laboratory tests proved satisfactory I should be in uniform before long.

I left Fort Hayes with the feeling that I was in the army, but dropped a note to Washington asking about the rubber program. The reply was so encouraging that I thought it might be well to

learn a Portuguese word or two, just in case. Time and time again I had been assured by the advertisements in the New York Times Book Section that "The Berlitz Method never fails." Obviously then there was no alternative. I went to the Berlitz office in Akron for a demonstration lesson and was soon convinced. Julie, who came to see that I would get our money's worth, was also convinced, and that was a victory for Senor Ramirez.

Nothing happened for a long time. Then a long distance call from Cleveland:

"This is Captain Meyers speaking. How soon can you be ready to join the armed forces?"

"I shall need a week to arrange for someone to take my courses and to obtain a release from the Board of Trustees. Has the appointment come through?"

"We have just had a wire from Washington that your papers are coming through. I shall notify you as soon as they arrive."

Weeks passed and then more weeks. It was on St. Valentine's day in 1943 that I received a telegram from Washington. I was being appointed Field Technician in R. D. C. (Rubber Development Corporation)

in connection with the U. S. government South American rubber program and assigned for work to the Amazon Valley of Brazil. I was to report to Washington immediately -- they were in a hurry now -- arrange for a passport and a Pan-American World Airways ticket to Belem, Brazil. No further word from the army ever arrived.

I telescoped my courses for the remaining of the academic term and asked the university Board of Trustees for a leave of absence for the duration of the war. To my surprise, the Board flatly refused. Knowing, however, that, leave or no leave, I was bound for Brazil, the Board decided to accept my resignation there and then and to "express the hope that when and if he is ready to return to the university, there will be a position open for him." Later in Brazil I was informally informed by the president of the university that at a subsequent meeting the Board regretted its generosity and voted to "correct" the minutes by deleting the "hope" that there would be a position open for me at the end of the war!

Julie and I spent ten days in Washington rushing around to the various embassies for visas,

shopping for what equipment we guessed I should need in Brazil, and packing 70 pounds of it in duffle bags.

I felt a trifle uneasy several days later in Miami when I boarded the clipper for Belem. I had never flown before, and this was going to be quite an extensive trip considering it would be my introduction to Aeolus. I knew from several Atlantic crossings on an ocean liner that I was not a good sailor. Furthermore, the two-motored baby clipper was a toy compared to the "Bremen," for example, on which I had travelled not long before. I fastened the safety belt, tightened my jaw, and prepared to battle the winds.

It was a delightful trip. The blue Caribbean, turning to turquoise near the shores of each island was a marvel to behold. The tropical isles themselves, gems of extraordinary beauty as we flew over them.

The first evening we stopped at San Juan, Puerto Rico and were taken to the Normandie to spend the night. We lined up in front of the desk for rooms. By the time my turn came there was only one room left. It was a double room, however, and the

clerk was reluctant to let me have it. Only by promising that I would share it if the need arose did he consent.

"The rate is $7.00 double," he said "but you may have it for $5.00, since you are alone."

No later than the time required to take a shower, the telephone rang.

"An officer from the U.S. army camp nearby is spending the night in town," the clerk informed me, "and he would like to occupy the other bed in your room."

"Send him up," I said.

In a few minutes I welcomed the young lieutenant upstairs. In the course of our conversation it developed that we were both natives of Chicago, that we had both attended the University of Illinois at the same time, and that his bride, a secretary in Washington, had processed my appointment papers. He remembered her mentioning my name as an unusual one.

Very early the next morning when I reported to the desk to check out, the morning clerk presented me with a bill for $7.00.

I protested. "Last night," I said "I was told that since I am alone the rate would be $5.00. I was willing to share the room just to accommodate you, and you want to charge me $7.00."

"That is the official rate," the clerk said.

"That was not the agreement," I insisted.

"All right," the young man said "you may pay $5.50."

"No," I said "I shall pay only what we agreed upon."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Five dollars, five dollars," he said. Whereupon he made out a bill as follows:

Lodging for one night	7.00	
Credit		2.00
Cash		5.00
	7.00	7.00

I paid the bill, received a receipt marked "paid in full" and everyone was apparently satisfied. Thus I had my first experience with Latin American bookkeeping. I am still wondering what the lieutenant was charged.

Trinidad was in bloom that afternoon when we arrived in Port of Spain. Hibiscus and Bougainvillea,

bird of paradise and Hydrangea, filled our eyes with color, and the air was heavily perfumed with jasmine. A comfortable room and a sumptuous meal at the hotel gave me a feeling of well-being.

We departed early the next morning and soon the coast of South America came into view. In a few minutes we were over the jungles of Venezuela. What a sight! Many times after that I flew over the jungle and much time I spent tramping through it, but that first experience is unforgetable. The green earth indeed! From a height of ten thousand feet the individual trees can just be distinguished as masses of lighter or darker foliage. Trees in bloom punctuate with splashes of red, yellow or white, the continuous ocean of green which extends as far as the eye can see on all sides, interrupted here and there by everwinding silver ribbons -- the rivers.

We refueled at Georgetown, Paramaribo, and Cayenne. As we lost altitude, individual trees became sharply distinguishable, the taller ones with their huge crowns first, the shorter ones in

succession. When the palm foliage could be distinguished from the rest we were already approaching the earth's surface. As the sun shone on the forest we could now see that the trees were in water. The whole jungle was inundated.

Just before we came to Cayenne we saw Devil's Island. We were flying low enough to be able to distinguish the buildings of the infamous French penal colony which had prompted Zola's "J' accuse." This was the place from which a group of convicts had escaped in a small boat in 1940 and had arrived in Miami, while we were visiting there. They were on their way to join de Gaul's army to fight for the liberation of the country which had imprisoned them in hell.

We were now flying through huge cumulus clouds and the air was rough. Of a sudden the plane took a dive, elevating my insides, and then climbed just as suddenly, letting them drop back in place. The steward, with a smile, confirmed our suspicion:

"The equator," he said.

But the sky was cloudy below and above and where we were flying, and we could not see the earth's

belt. I wondered if the famine in occupied Europe and rationing in America had caused Mother Earth to tighten her own equatorial belt a trifle.

That afternoon we landed for the last time: Belem, Brazil.

First Impressions

It was raining when I first stepped on Brazilian soil in Belem. It was raining when I left thirteen months later, and all the time in between!

After the usual customs formalities, a taxi took me to the Grande Hotel. Americans had been pouring into town for some time, and the hotels were overflowing. Not realizing the situation, I asked for a single room with bath. The desk clerk shook his head with an ironic smile.

"I can't remember how long it's been since we let anyone have a single room," he said in good English. "Oh, you'll have a room that was intended for a single person," he emphasized, "but you will be sharing it with another one of your colleagues. I'm afraid you will have to sleep on a cot."

A ten or twelve year old bell boy in uniform put my duffle bags in the elevator and waited for instructions. Now, I thought, we shall see if the Berlitz method ever fails. With an air of confidence I instructed:

"Segundo andar por favor." The bell boy

looked up, grinned, raised an eyebrow, and as he shut the elevator door,

"O.K. Butch," he answered. He too must have been taking lessons from Mr. Berlitz!

An American colleague welcomed me when I reached his room. The clerk was right. It was a small room designed for single occupancy, but a cot with mosquito net had been placed in the room.

"A bit crowded in here," said my new roommate extending his hand. "Welcome to Brazil."

He was a middle-aged, stocky man with thin gray hair. His high forehead made his light blue eyes appear as if they were placed squarely in the middle of his round face. His hornrimmed glasses accentuated the effect.

"I'm sorry to intrude," I apologized, "but I had no choice."

"You are not the first one," he replied. "I'm getting used to it by now. This your first time in Brazil?"

"Yes, and yours? You seem to be well settled here."

"I've been in Belem for over a year now, but

I hope to be transferred to Rio before long. Took my vacation down there. Much better than the Amazon. Civilized place, Rio."

I saw him in Belem again a year later. He was still stationed there and had, by then, become reconciled to his fate.

The dining room of the Grande had a festive atmosphere that evening. The clientele consisted almost entirely of Americans, both civilians and members of the armed forces. The boys in uniform were particularly gay, talking loudly, laughing raucously, and gesticulating wildly. While I waited for the waiter to bring a menu a small orchestra appeared on the balcony and started to tune up. Good, I thought, now we'll hear an authentic samba, authentically performed. The conductor raised his baton and the orchestra let out with "Deep in the heart of Texas."

Everybody joined in on the chorus, clapping hands, stamping feet, tapping glasses with knives. The few Brazilians in the dining room entered into the spirit of the occasion and enjoyed the performance almost as much as the Americans. The waiters, com-

pletely Americanized by now, were in a happy mood.

The dinner was excellent and the coffee superb. I thought of coffee rations in the United States, and ordered a second cup. Alas! This indulgence was not destined to be repeated soon. A few days later a coffee shortage developed in Belem. Fantastic as it seemed, there was no coffee in northern Brazil. With German U-boats sinking Brazilian ships off the coast, and with the limited shipping space available already overtaxed by war requirements, coffee had yielded space to more essential commodities.

Dinner over, that first evening in Belem, I joined a group of young Americans at the sidewalk cafe of the Grande, and at their suggestion ordered cognac and guarana. As we sipped our drinks, my companions discovered that I was fascinated by my new surroundings and proceeded to disillusion me as to life in the Amazon. But what they said that evening went in one ear and out the other. This was my first evening in the tropics and no one could take the thrill out of it. I pretended to listen to the conversation, but I was actually pinching myself --

figuratively -- to make sure this was no dream.

The avenue was lined with mango trees on which orchids were growing. There were still a few mangoes on the trees. They were overripe and, once in a while, one fell and squashed on the sidewalk. Palms, cycads and other tropical plants in the park across the street evidenced my nearness to the equator. In spite of the high humidity, the evening air was delightful.

Eventually the party broke up and I went to my room. This was a different matter. The air was still and, under the mosquito net, suffocating. My roommate was already asleep and was snoring violently. I hoped that the excitement and fatigue of the day would overcome heat and noise and allow me to sleep, but that proved to be a vain hope. It took but a few minutes to convert my pillow into a sodden mass of wet chicken feathers. I tossed it on the floor and folded my arms behind my head as a substitute. I concentrated on sleep. I counted sheep, goats, turtles, without effect. I tried mangoes, papayas, avocados, with no results. Every time Hypnos approached me a violent roar from my

roommate frightened him away. Seven-thousand-two hundred-eighty-two, seven-thousand-two-hundred eighty-three.... Not one minute did I sleep that entire night.

Morning finally spread over Belem. The alarm rang and my roommate awoke.

"Good morning," I said.

"God, how you snore," he replied!

After breakfast I called on Ed Hamill, the man who was to be my chief. I liked him immensely from the very beginning. There was a big job to be done he said. It was an important job. It involved some hardships, and it required a broad perspective, a cool head, and a lot of common sense.

He summarized the rubber program for me. Spreading out some large maps of Amazonas, he pinpointed operations. The westernmost section of the country had not been included in the program up to this time. Hamill said he would like for me to operate out of Benjamin Constant, on the Peruvian border, and open up that territory for Rubber Development.

Mike Polli had made a reconnaissance of that region some months before and the information he brought back indicated it had great possibilities for expanding its rubber production. If a student ever owes his teacher anything, Mike seemed to be paying his debt with interest whether he knew it or not. After his visit to my home which had resulted in my appointment to Brazil, I never saw him again. Six months after my arrival in Brazil a report came that Mike had been drowned in the Paraguai river near Corumba. The story is nebulous and the facts were buried in the jungle. One version is that someone had been taken sick, and Mike, together with a Brazilian doctor, started to his aid, full speed on a river launch at night. On the way to the sick man, their launch collided with a river boat coming from the opposite direction. The shock of the collision was violent, and both Mike and the doctor were hurled into the river. Their bodies were never found. It is presumed that they were devoured by piranhas which infest the Paraguai as well as many other rivers of Brazil. It was whispered

at that time that this story was a cover-up for the real events, and that Mike and the doctor were murdered. Unfortunately I was unable to verify either version of the tragedy.

I told Hamill, that morning in Belem, that I should be glad to work anywhere I was needed, and that Benjamin Constant was as good a place as any. He said he hoped it was not worse than some he knew! Hamill, wanted to see that region himself and would take me there. Then, as soon as it could be arranged, he would send me a Brazilian assistant and a government launch.

For a week in Belem I studied the details of the rubber program, visited various institutions, made purchases in preparation for life in the field, and obtained medical supplies. The more I saw of Belem, the better I liked it. The old cathedrals, the narrow streets, the pavement of cobblestone imported from Portugal, the tile facings of many buildings, were all reminiscent of Lisbon, through which I had passed on two delightful occasions.

Belem has a fine, if small, botanical-zoological garden, in which are concentrated plants and animals

of the Amazon region. I spent some delightful hours there acquainting myself with the life I was likely to encounter in the jungle. It was there I first saw a kapok tree, that majestic personality of Northern Brazil which I was to admire so many times in its native habitat. Later I was to see the seeds of the tree, enveloped in their white silk, filling the air and travelling with great velocity as they were pushed by stormy winds over the rivers and forests of western Brazil.

At the Instituto Agronomico I saw the white milk of Hevea converted into thin, smoked sheets ready to ship to the United States. At the Belem washing plants I saw our experts cut open and classify the big black balls of rubber that were coming in from various parts of the Amazon basin. Native workers took the rubber, after classification, to the big rollers to be crushed, washed and made into crepe sheets. These were dried, baled, and shipped by cargo planes, most of them to the big rubber plants in Akron -- seven miles from my home -- to be converted into tires for our big bombers. Slowly, I found myself fitting into the world picture that

stretched from the Amazon to the Rhine. I was anxious to get started.

The day for departure finally arrived. At Manaos, a thousand miles to the west, I would be initiated into the mysteries of tapping rubber trees. As soon as Hamill could leave his desk he would come and take me to Benjamin Constant. My plane was leaving for Manaos at six in the morning. At five I arrived at the airport, and was surprised to find Hamill there. He had come to see me off!

Once again I was over the jungle. We flew at ten thousand feet above the green carpet of trees extending as far as the eye could see in all directions, continuously for six hours. Then Manaos! As we circled over the city two or three times, one landmark dominated the view. It was the great opera house, whose gaudy gold, green, and orange dome shone in the bright sun. A temple to culture in the middle of the greatest jungle on earth! Built in 1910, it had a brief day of glory, but when the rubber boom ended, it was abandoned to the spiders.

We landed on the Rio Negro about noon. One

of our men who met the plane directed me to the R.D.C. staff house. It was Sunday. Most of the men were out. A poker game was in progress at one corner of the lounge. I sat watching the game which continued until dinner time.

The man in charge of assigning beds came in shortly after dinner. By that time I had learned the worst. The accommodations here made those of Belem seem luxurious.

"I've been expecting you," said Dick. "I suppose you want a bed."

"That's the idea," I replied rather sourely.

"Why, of course, we can fix you up here." Then in a half apologetic tone, "I am afraid I can't give you a pillow, nor a sheet to cover with, and we have no mosquito nets as yet for everybody. But the mosquitoes are not too bad," he added quickly.

They were! All night long they buzzed around my ears. All night long they dive-bombed me with a vengeance. Sleep was impossible. I turned and tossed on my cot and every time I did so, one of the dry, stiff straws in the mattress poked me in

the ribs...or elsewhere. There were several other beds in the large room, and the lion's roars that emanated from their occupants, furnished the background music for my dance on the straws.

The world seemed brighter next morning. A new staff house was being opened and I was transferred there immediately. It turned out to be the best staff house in Manaos. I shall always remember with pleasure the few weeks I spent at 415 24th of May Street. Maria's incessant chatter in Portuguese -- which few of us understood at the time -- and the way she tried to boss the rest of the servants; Creouza's early morning song; and Armando's virtuosity at the battered old upright, will always serve as a symbol of "good neighborliness" with the simple, generous, warm-hearted people of the Amazon valley.

After moving to my new quarters I started out for the American Counsulate to report my arrival and to register. As I approached, I heard someone playing the piano with the facility of a virtuoso. I stopped and listened. It was a Mozart sonata.

"Sounds as if someone is preparing to give a concert," I said to the secretary at the consulate. "Who's the pianist?"

"Oh, that?" she sighed. "That's Maria, next door. She ought to be good! She is at the piano twelve hours a day. We do get awfully tired of it."

"Ambitious girl," I said. "Is she studying for a diploma?"

"That isn't what I call it," she said.

Seeing the big question mark on my face, she continued:

"Maria is the mistress of a wealthy Brazilian merchant who has her locked up in that love nest. When she is at the piano, his spying friends know she is out of mischief. When the piano stops they have orders to report immediately. The piano does not stop. It's a living!"

Finished with formalities at the consulate, I presented myself to Harold Gustin. He was one of the rubber veterans, with much experience in Brazil and before that in the Firestone plantations of Liberia. Many of the new field technicians upon arrival in Brazil were turned over to Gustin for

briefing. Gustin and I had one thing in common from the first: both of us knew and liked Mike Polli. In common with other field technicians, Gustin had a Brazilian assistant, one João Silva.

I spent ten very pleasant and profitable days with Gus and João on their launch "Anzac" travelling on the Negro and Solimoes. The chief purpose of that trip was to open up a small rubber plantation, and to instruct some men in the use of the oriental tapping knife, the Jebong knife, which we were introducing into the Amazon wherever its use seemed warranted. A second purpose of the trip was to facilitate a young Brazilian cinematographer from Rio, who had come to the Amazon to make a film of the production of rubber, to be used for propaganda purposes by the Coordinator's office.

By the time we returned to Manaos, I had gained some experience and considerable confidence. I was now more anxious than ever to go into the field and was eagerly waiting for Hamill to come from Belem so that we could start to Benjamin Constant.

In the meantime, with little official work

to do, I spent my hours becoming acquainted with the details of the rubber program, straightening out financial matters, and sight seeing.

In some ways, Manaos was a surprising city when one considered its location in the midst of the jungle. By 1943 it had a population of 70,000 and the war had given it once again the aspect of a busy port. It was the center of the natural rubber industry of Brazil, for it was here that the rubber from the interior was concentrated for shipment.

The city's communication with Belem and the interior was by means of river steamers and airplanes. During the war years, at least one plane a week and frequently two or three in the service of R. D. C., flew back and forth to and from Miami. Pan-Air do Brazil flew planes regularly linking Manaos with Belem and with the west part of the republic as far as Benjamin Constant on the Peruvian border. River steamers of all sizes travelled up and down the Amazon, as in the days of old, and entered the Rio Negro to approach the city.

Manaos has wide avenues lined with either

Mango or Benjamin trees, the latter trimmed to an umbrella shape. The streets were kept clean not only by the city authorities, but also by a big staff of urubu the vulture common to the Amazon basin. It was a common sight to see a group of urubu early in the morning feeding on refuse anywhere in the city.

In spite of its location on the Rio Negro which pours its waters into the Amazon a little further south, and in the midst of the forest, Manaos lacked both water, and wood for fuel. I was told this paradox was due to the fact that the water pumps were antiquated and could not be replaced during war time, and that the wood from the forests near the city is of a quality that does not serve well for fuel. Wood, therefore, had to be brought in from a distance. I have not tried to check on this explanation, but I shall vouch for the fact that many a time I was caught under a shower, covered with soap and with no water to rinse off the lather, and many a night I had difficulties finding my way to the staff house because the city was blacked out -- and the Luftwaffe had nothing to do with it.

We did have some war black-outs in Manaos, however. Three times while I was in the city did we have a black-out which lasted 30 to 45 minutes. We could not imagine why such drills were necessary in a city a thousand miles away from the coast, which in turn was at least 1600 miles from Africa, already in Allied hands. The Germans could not come over to bomb Manaos, and many of us felt that even if they could they would not want to! So we decided that the Amazonians must have liked to play war in this harmless way.

People in Manaos were very friendly. Though Americans were exploited, just as they are in all parts of the world, they were also liked. They would have been liked even better if a few of them had not behaved as they did. In the early days of the American migration, when liquor was still plentiful in Manaos, a few Americans drowned their sorrows a bit too thoroughly and passed out a bit too frequently. For a time this situation was so bad that one man was assigned to visit all staff-houses every morning to count and report the drunks. Marked improvement came after a few of the offenders were

shipped home. Certainly the majority behaved admirably, but it takes only a few irresponsible ones to ruin the reputation of a whole community or a whole nation.

It also seems that one or two American young ladies appeared on the streets dressed in short shorts. These may have been quite proper in their home towns, but they shocked the people of Manaos.

American men also shocked the Brazilians by persistently appearing in public without coats. Manaos is hot much of the time, but the Brazilian wears his coat whether the thermometer stands at 70 degrees or 100. Most Americans would not conform. During the day many of us wore khaki field clothes which resembled an army uniform. Since American soldiers were permitted to appear coatless, we were not conspicuous, but in the evening when we wished to wear something different, it was another story. At first, sitting at the Bar Americano without a coat was enough to draw the eyes of all Brazilians frequenting the place. As the months passed and the Americans still insisted on being comfortable, they also became less conspicuous. However, the

Brazilians took their revenge at the cinema, refusing to sell tickets to anyone who did not wear a coat. This revenge, of course was a temporary one, for as soon as the lights went out, off came the coats. Thus, face was saved by the management and everyone was happy.

But in general, Brazilians and Americans got along well. Most Americans in Manaos made a definite attempt to understand Brazilian customs and to learn the Portuguese language and the Brazilians appreciated this attitude.

Hamill finally came from Belem and it was decided that Gustin would lend me João Silva for a few weeks to initiate me into the work, and to be my tongue and ears in Benjamin Constant. Though I was making some progress in the language, I was still quite ineffective without an interpreter.

Thus, one fine morning on May 1943, Hamill, João, and I boarded a baby clipper, and flew westward over the jungle. About six hours later we saw Benjamin Constant from the air. It was a town of about sixty houses scattered over a wide area. A

large portion of the town, including all of its "business district," was under water. The houses nearest the river front were built on stilts and the whole region appeared to be swampy and desolate. Such was my first impression from the air of the town that was to be my home for an indefinite period of time.

The Sloth

As an assistant to the field technician he came in contact with all sorts of people: government officials, reporters, scientists, business men, farmers, rubber tappers, and even savages. He was at home in a castle and in the caboclo's thatched-roof hut. He did not bow to the rich nor did he snub the laborer. He gave everyone his due and expected to receive his. A psychologist of the first order, he knew how to do and say the right thing at the right time. And sometimes that took considerable doing and even more saying.

One time he was visiting an Indian tribe to get some information which was vital to the rubber development program. After the usual introductions and ceremonial amenities, he sat on the ground with the men of the tribe all forming a circle, to wait for the refreshments which were to precede the discussions. Refreshments consisted of a delicious concoction made as follows: The women of the tribe prepare a mash from roots which they chew thoroughly so that the saliva may start the desired fermenta-

tion of the starch. They then deposit this juicy pulp into suitable containers, pour a light syrup or fruit juice over it and mix it thoroughly. Finally they add live beetles of a particular species. This speeds up the fermentation. When the proper stage is reached they pour the drink, beetles and all, into cups and serve to the guests.

All eyes were upon him when a dark-eyed maiden offered him a cup full to the brim. He drank it; the whole cup! He got his information too, and the cooperation of the tribe on the project of the moment.

João Alberto de Sequeira da Silva was an extraordinary man. He was short, thin, wiry, and ever active. In spite of his youth -- he was in his early thirties -- he was becoming bald. He wore spectacles with thick lenses and was almost blind without them. When he smiled, which he did frequently as he had a happy disposition, his whole personality scintillated.

The scion of a prominent Brazilian family,

he had severed connections with his relatives and had attached himself to the Americans. At the time I met him he was already indispensable to the field staff of the rubber development program in the Manaos area of the Amazon Valley.

Everybody knew, everybody liked, and everybody depended upon João. Officially he was the assistant and interpreter; actually he was often the whole show. Alert, quick, intelligent, well-mannered, pleasant, he would pave the way smoothly and tactfully for delicate and sometimes embarrassing negotiations between Brazilians and Americans. He impressed people with his encyclopedic knowledge and his linguistic ability. He was an excellent raconteur; he was well versed in Portuguese and foreign literature; he could discuss the arts intelligently; he spoke five languages -- three of them perfectly -- and was learning a sixth. He was a licensed air pilot; he was a crack shot with any fire arm; he could play the mandolin, cook, administer first aid, give injections. And this last was not the least of Joao's virtues, for Brazilians loved to be injected.

One of João's passions was hunting, and he had many stories to tell of his encounters or those of others with animals. Some of them sounded fantastic, but after what happened to him in my presence I believed anything he told me.

We were aboard the "Anzac", a fifty-two foot launch which Harold Gustin, the American field technician out of Manaos, was commanding, with Silva as his right hand man. We had already left the Rio Negro and had entered one of the numberous tributaries on our way to one of the few small rubber plantations in the area. We had just finished a delicious meal of roast chicken a la Silva, cooked by João himself who would invade the kitchen when he could no longer endure the cook's atrocities. The "Anzac" was now travelling up a small igarapé no more than 50 feet wide, and we had a clear view of the thick, tropical vegetation along both banks. Rubber trees with oriole nests hanging down like baskets, silk cotton trees with immense buttresses spread out like giant pincers, Cecropias with gigantic leaves, and literally hundreds of other tree species were interspersed with bananas and palms of various kinds. The water of the igarapé

was like a mirror. The sun was shining through thin clouds. The whole picture was like one of those romantic scenes that one imagines in his most sentimental reveries about tropical landscapes. Pure white egrets were perched on the tree branches. Brilliantly colored macaws flew overhead, always in pairs. Little parrakeets, hundreds of them, flew from one tree to another chattering incessantly. Occasionally the incredible toucan would add himself and his enormous bill to the maze of color and form. Hollywood, in its wildest extravaganza, could have done no better.

I was lounging on a deck chair lazily, digesting the excellent food and admiring the panorama through sleepy eyes as the "Anzac" slithered easily through the calm waters of the igarapé. João was leaning on the rail, shotgun by his side, eyes glued on the trees at the nearest bank, hoping he would see something to shoot. Suddenly he called and pointed to a rather thick branch of a tree opposite. A large sloth was hanging up side down in plain view.

"People here say," said João with a smile,

"that when you shoot at one of these animals the gun will not fire."

He laughed his characteristic happy laugh.

"Now we'll see," he added.

He took careful aim and squeezed the trigger. The hammer came down with a small click, but nothing more happened. The gun did not fire.

We looked at each other sheepishly. Quickly we examined the cartridge; it had been hit, but had not exploded.

"Oh well, just a bad cartridge. What a coincidence," João said, obviously embarrassed because he was confirming the local superstition.

"We'll try again."

He reloaded with a new cartridge. Again he aimed at the sloth, now a little farther away but still plainly visible. He pulled the trigger. Again no explosion. The second cartridge was dented but did not fire.

João looked at me rather seriously.

"You know," he said, "that is the second time I have had that experience with a sloth. I did not

tell you before because I did not want you to think me superstitious, but now you have seen for yourself."

"That proves nothing," I said. "Many of these cartridges are bad nowadays. Just as you said, a queer coincidence."

"I'll tell you what," said João, his eyes sparkling with an idea. "Just to prove the cartridges were bad, let's use them again and shoot at something else."

He looked around. A hawk was sunning himself on one of the high branches of a big tree. The bad cartridge was in place. João cocked the gun, he took aim and squeezed the trigger. Down came the hawk, dead, a split second after the cartridge exploded.

Neither of us said anything. João ejected the shell and loaded the second bad cartridge. He aimed at another bird and fired. The shell exploded and the bird fell.

"Maybe there <u>are</u> 'more things in heaven and earth ... than are dreamt of in your philosophy.' Why am I to say?" whispered João.

The Jaguar

"Senhor Ramon, may I present my friends? Joao Silva, my assistant; Alex Kosta of the United States, our newly arrived technician; and José Lima of Rio, our guest."

"Welcome senhor Gustin; senhores. It is a great honor and pleasure to welcome all of you to my house."

The introductions over, we all filed down the gang plank from the "Anzac" which had just anchored at Santa Maria, Amazonas, and climbed the slope to senhor Ramon's porch while the crew finished tying the launch to a couple of cacao trees which grew on the bank of the Rio Negro in front of the Casa Ramon.

We sipped cognac and guarana while waiting for dinner to be served. Gustin and João talked rubber with senhor Ramon, while Lima and I, newcomers to the Amazon, feasted our eyes on the lush tropical forest which was rapidly growing darker and more forbidding as the day came to a close and night took over swiftly. At four degrees south there is no twilight.

Of the banquet which our gracious Syrian host spread before us, Lucullus himself would have approved. There were Russian caviar, big black Syrian olives, hot peppers, and pickled fish, for hors d'oevres. This was followed by freshly caught broiled fish with olive oil and lemon dressing, and by a delicious chicken pilaf. A baklava-like Syrian dessert and a cup of Turkish coffee brought the meal to a close.

We invited senhor Ramon on the launch for creme de menthe and we listened to the 9:06 war bulletin from the B.B.C., after which senhor Ramon bade us good night and we prepared our hammocks.

Our hammocks on the "Anzac" were suspended across the deck and each was prudently equipped with an ingenious, especially-made mosquito net which formed an oblong box with the floor and completely enclosed the hammock. The sides were long enough to drag considerably on the floor and thus prevented any insect pests from entering and disturbing our slumbers, but I am sure that the inventor never meant the nets to keep tigers out.

All was quiet except for the occasional soft snore from senhor Lima's hammock; in a few minutes I fell asleep.

Suddenly I awakened with a very uneasy feeling. As I leaned over my hammock I saw an animal I judged to be about three feet long struggling at the far corner of my mosquito net. By the light of the moon it looked like a small jaguar and for a moment I thought it to be inside the mosquito net. I grabbed for my flashlight, the only weapon near at hand, and called for assistance.

"João, your gun. Quick!"

"Que e, que e?" asked João in his native tongue as he fumbled for his glasses. And then changing to English, "What's the matter?"

"Maracujá, maracujá (ocelot)" cried Manoel, one of the crew, who had just arrived on the scene.

"Cobra, meo Deus, cobra. He bit me, he bit me" shouted the cook as he emerged on deck trembling with fear. His hand was bleeding between the thumb and palm.

In the meantime the animal, frightened by all

the commotion it had created, succeeded in untangling itself from my mosquito net and leaped out of the launch.

João, Lima, and I climbed out of our hammocks and with flashlight in one hand and revolver in the other jumped on the beach as Manoel was shouting that the maracujá had disappeared in the foliage of one of the cacao trees.

Turning his flashlight on the sand just below the tree, João found the unmistakable print of a big cat's paw. There was no doubt about it; we were dealing with a dangerous animal.

João, who fancied himself a Brazilian Sherlock Holmes, led the way, his eyes now focussed on the crown of the cacao tree, Lima and I tiptoed behind him. In a moment João thought he saw the head of the animal and fired. We waited for the body to fall, but in vain. He had missed.

We searched the foliage diligently with all three flashlights, but there was nothing to be seen. The animal had apparently escaped into the jungle.

There was nothing to do, but return to our hammocks. Just as we turned our backs to the tree, Lima gave a terrific shout of pain, dropped his flashlight and gun and started slapping his pajama legs and hips with both hands, at the same time jumping and leaping up in the air and stamping his feet on the sand. "Formigas, meo Deus" he yowled, "ants!"

I was doubled up, howling at Lima's antics, when I felt the first bite around my ankle. I looked down. For the love of heaven! There were dozens of fire ants all over my legs and pajamas, crawling and biting, and moving up! Always up...up...up!

"Help," I shouted, "Caramba! Do something someone!"

"Ha, ha," came from Lima in a revengeful laugh. "You laughed at me senhor .., Ow!" he interrupted his speech "how they bite."

We ran to the "Anzac" and up the plank, and with the help of Manoel and the cook, who had now recovered from his own experience, we started to de-ant ourselves while Gustin, shaking with laughter, was threatening to put us in irons if we let any of

those ants escape and populate his launch. It was an endless process, but we did not dare go back to our hammocks with all that company. Finally we accomplished the impossible. To sleep at last!

In the morning, senhor Ramon insisted that we have breakfast with him. When he heard our story of the maracujá he said he thought that it was probably just the "gato ladro" (thief cat) that had been operating around for some time and that our imagination in the night, made a jaguar out of a tommy! It's true that by sunlight the footprint under the cacao tree looked more like the paw mark of senhor Ramon's dog than that of a jaguar or ocelot, but we'll stick to our story to the end. And anyway, you can't explain away those darn fired ants. What an opportunity for some cub reporter! Can't you see the headlines in the hometown daily? "Botanist attacked by pack of jaguars in jungles of tropical America; has ants in pants."

End of Troubles

"Remate de Males", "End of Troubles" they call this tiny fly-speck of a "town" on the Javary. For us it would have been more appropriate to have named it "Começo de Males." Ed Hamill, Chief Technician, would go back to Manaos after a brief but thorough look at this God-and-man-forsaken place, but Joao Silva and I were going to the end of the line, up the Curuça, eventually to return to Benjamin Constant, which was my base.

Tall, lean, lanky, with a long, thin face dissected by a gray, clipped mustache and topped by gray hair -- what was left of it -- Hamill looked straight at you through a pair of kindly, sparkling blue eyes that told you you were dealing with a straight-forward man you could trust implicitly. Sincerity and common sense fairly oozed out of him. (Were he to read this, he would say: "My God! Is that what it was? I've been calling it sweat.") No bureaucrat, he was interested in results and got them. He did all he could to help his field men; he slashed red tape; he got the supplies out as quickly as possible; and best of all, he listened to our woes.

"Go ahead and bitch, fellows," he used to say, "it will do you good to get it off your chest. I'll take out all the bad words and send the reports on nice and clean." Under the most adverse conditions he retained his sense of humor with all its sparkle. We all loved him.

Just now, the future for João and me looked black. Hamill was rubbing it in: "Thirty years after the war is over," he began, "Carlton and I will be sitting by the fire in my home in Long Island smoking our pipes, sipping our scotch and soda and reminiscing about 'Rubber Development'." Carlton was one of Hamill's old pals from the days they both worked on the Firestone rubber plantations in Liberia. He was now a technician in the Amazon Valley working for the government, like the rest of us, trying to get some natural rubber out for our bombers.

"Whatever happened to that fellow at Benjamin Constant?" Carlton asks between swallows. "What was his name?"

"Hm! You mean . . . Hm! What <u>was</u> his name, anyway? Seems to me last time I saw him was at Remate de Males back in '32."

"You don't suppose he's still over there travelling up and down the Curuça in a motor launch urging the caboclos to get more rubber out for the war effort, do you? Pour me another drink, will you Ed?"

The imaginary scene now changes from Long Island to the Amazon Valley where the aforementioned "what's his name," thirty years older, with long white, tangled, greasy hair, and equally long, white, tangled, and greasy beard; emaciated, malarial, leprotic; bare-footed; in tattered clothes; sits on an old jaguar skin in front of the cobwebbed door of what used to be José Veiga's warehouse in Remate de Males, repeating to himself over and over: "Mais boracha, mais boracha" (More rubber, more rubber).

But Ed Hamill's imagination was totally unnecessary at this point; the reality of Remate de Males was bad enough.

This trip was to be my initiation to the job. My own launch had not arrived as yet and, not to waste precious time, I had decided to take my first

trip in José Veiga's launch the "Curuça," named after the river which ran through his property. This was the time of year the launch was taking Veiga's caboclos to their huts to start the new tapping season.

Hamill, João, and I had boarded the "Curuça" at 3:15 a.m. in Benjamin Constant. The dew was already heavy and everything was wet through and through. There were no chairs, stools, or even boxes where one could sit, anywhere on board, so the three of us perched on the wet rail, lighted our cigarettes, and waited for sailing time, while water dripped down our necks from the edge of the deck roof above.

Soon the tappers and their wives, and their children, and their dogs, and their cats, and their pigs, and their monkeys, and their chickens, and their parrots, and their lice, started coming on board. By four o'clock the launch appeared to be full, even by the standards of one who had always travelled "tourist" on the transatlantic liners at high season. The ropes were pulled in, the diesel was started and the "Curuça" began chugging its way to Remate de Males. Four hours later it anchored in front of José Veiga's warehouse.

Like all Amazonian villages at this time of the year -- it was May 10 -- Remate de Males was inundated. Truly, the Venice of the New World! I had expected the worst of Remate de Males and I was not disappointed. Half a dozen wooden shacks and a couple of warehouses, all on stilts and connected to each other by a chain of precariously slippery wet planks, was all I could see of the town, and all I wanted to see.

"When are we starting up the river?" I inquired of João.

"There seems to be some engine trouble," he replied "and I understand it will take three or four days to repair it."

It did! For four days, and what is worse, for four nights we waited at Remate de Males "sitting and looking" as João put it in his picturesque English; sitting on hard wooden benches and looking at nothing. Finally, the engine was repaired and the "all aboard" signal was given. It was then I realized how many people can actually get into a river boat. As I watched the tappers with their families and livestock pour into the launch and the number of square inches of deck space per living being diminish proportionately, Hamill came over and put his hand on my shoulder.

"You still want to go?" he asked.

Before I had a chance to reply I heard Joao chuckle at my back.

"They are betting three to one," he said "that the Norte-Americano will go no further on this trip."

"A lot of people are going to lose a lot of cruzeiros," I said.

"Good luck," said Hamill "it's going to be Hell."

"Thanks for telling me," I said.

Silva and I climbed on board and soon the Curuca had left beautiful Remate de Males far behind ... thank the Lord!

The first day out was not so bad. We amused ourselves watching the activities of our co-passengers. Five little children, two black, two reddish-brown and one white, all brothers and sisters, sat silently on the deck floor in a circle, each delousing the hair of the one sitting in front of him. This went on the whole day and could be counted upon as a feature production to which we could return when all other entertainment was lacking. Then there was the barefooted old negro who sat cross-legged on the wooden box which stored his few earthly belongings and passed

his time petting his white feet with his white hands. This discoloration of the hands, the feet, and often the face of affected individuals is a widespread phenomenon in the Amazon Valley and is due to a disease the Brazilians call pinta. The blacks change to white and the whites to colored. The various species of animals which eyed each other suspiciously, promised to furnish added amusement as time went on. It became increasingly apparent that a great coalition was in the making to fight the monkeys who insisted on riding everything and everybody.

We joined our host, senhor Leão -- the man in charge of the launch -- for lunch and dinner, served on the counter over which he sold goods to the tappers. He stood inside the little cabin which served as a store as well as his sleeping quarters, and we stood on the outer side of the counter where the customer was usually pouring out his blood for a tin of milk, a box of matches, or a cut of black, fermented, soggy, smelly, powerful tobacco.

When evening approached the various family groups began jockeying for the best places to string

Their hammocks. It was obvious that there was not enough room for all the hammocks to be hung side by side and that stratification would be necessary. João and I, therefore, strung our hammocks as close to the counter as possible, and pulled the cords tight so as to assure us a top level position. When everyone was settled there were three bodies below each of us; two lying in hammocks one below the other and one lying on the floor below the three hammocks. On my left, at the top level, was João. On my right, less than two feet away, was an old tubercular woman who chose to turn toward me every time she coughed. She coughed all night long.

There was, of course, no thought of undressing. No such thought for 18 of the 23 days during which the voyage lasted. To undress to any extent when there were women on board would never have been forgiven in a land in which they will not sell you a ticket to the cinema if you are not wearing tie and coat, even on the hottest day of the year. Before leaving Washington we had been told to consider ourselves each as an ambassador of his country. An ambassador in the nude, even for a brief moment?

It was unthinkable! So, dressed we stayed for eighteen days and nights.

But the greatest ordeal was furnished by the toilet "facilities." There was a single toilet room about four by five feet which served the entire human population of that boat which now consisted of about 85 people of all sexes. The concentration of ammonia in the air was so strong as to make the eyes smart as soon as one entered. One approached it with timidity and with the hope that he would find it occupied. And he generally did.

Every hour or so during the first night the boat stopped to pick up more passengers or to leave supplies to tappers who had already reached their huts ahead of the Curuça by canoe. The lights, dim though they were, the voices, the commotion accompanying the sales transactions, all conspired against Morpheus and sleep was impossible.

We delayed getting up the next morning to reduce the number of hours on our feet, for once the hammocks were taken up there was no place to sit. At last we decided to rise. Crawling under some hammocks, stepping over bodies, crowding between

people, João and I worked our way to the very front of the boat to wash hands and face. With a rope, we lowered a tin can into the river and drew water. One of us washed over the rail as the other poured water.

After breakfast, at the counter, we looked for entertainment: The delousing quintet, the man who fingered his toes, the dog-cat-monkey fights. As we proceeded up the river animal life in the jungle became more abundant. Macaws were now flying overhead; monkeys and marmosettes jumped from tree to tree curiously keeping up with the boat; once in a while an alligator would slide through the water. Game became more abundant and the meals improved. We now had macaw soup, and roast deer, and wild turkey, and delicious wild pig, and even agouti.

Soon we entered the region where rubber would be tapped as soon as the waters receded, and each day some tappers with their families would get off at their huts after first shaking hands with every single passenger on board. By the eighteenth day the last of the tappers were off and João and I had the run of the boat. The feeling of having all that

space to ourselves was overwhelming. We took our clothes off and wallowed in soap. Clean clothes at last. "The simple pleasures of the poor" indeed!

New York could not have looked better to us than Remate de Males, after our first trip up the Curuça. End of troubles!

"Einstein is right," said João philosophically as the first shacks of the town appeared around the river bend. "Everything is relative."

Doctor, Save My Child

"I want to see the doctor you have on board," said the old rubber tapper as he climbed up the gangplank of the Carolina, the boat on which we were travelling up the Ituhy in August of 1943.

"I've got to see him quick. My daughter is very ill. Gracas a Deus you arrived before it is too late."

"But we have no doctor on board."

"No doctor? O! meu Deus! We heard there was a Norte-Americano doutor who was travelling with you."

"Yes, of course, but he is not that kind of a doctor; he is a doctor of botany."

"Please, please, let me talk to him."

"Doctor Alex," called Herculano. "Doctor Alex, will you come down a moment?"

Herculano Caldeira Filho was my assistant who took over after João Silva went back to his regular post at Manaos with Harold Gustin. Herculano was a young man of 27. Tall, dark, strong, and handsome, he was the chief lady-killer of Rubber Development. He had come to us as an Assistant Field Technician and interpreter from Sao Paulo where he had left a

pretty, young wife who had her first baby while Herculano was flying north. Even so, as far as he was concerned, there were only three things in life that were worth while: girls, girls, and girls, in that order. He never missed an opportunity to get acquainted with any reasonably young and pretty female, and once or twice he was in danger of becoming involved a little deeper than he planned. Urbane, educated, full of life, and with wedding ring hidden away in a box, he appeared to be a very fine catch for any damsel whom fate had buried in an Amazonian village, and he took almost full advantage of his opportunities.

"Better be careful, Herculano," I used to say to him. "Remember, you have a lovely young wife and a baby boy back home."

"Ah! My pretty wife," he would answer. "How I wish I had her here in my arms. And my son! My son, whom I have never seen."

"Better remember them, Herculano, next time that young schoolteacher comes around."

"But doctor, there is nothing wrong with seeing the schoolteacher. I just have to have girls to talk to."

"As long as you restrict the relationship to talking, I suppose it's all right, but I don't want any R.D.C. scandal up here. You know we have a job to do and our relations with these people must be impeccable."

"Impeccable? What is that?"

"Beyond reproach. Gentlemanly."

"Ah, impecavel, sim."

"Yes, impecavel! Have you told her you are a married man with a family?"

"Who, the schoolteacher?" with a twinkle in his eye.

"Yes, the schoolteacher, who else?"

"But she has not asked me!"

And so it went. While in Manaos waiting for his orders to fly out to join me at Benjamin Constant, our base on the western border of Brazil, Herculano saw a copy of Esquire at the American commissary and was captivated by the girl of the month. One day he brought up the subject:

"Is a subscription to Esquire very expensive?" he asked.

"Five dollars, I think." He converted that into cruzeiros quickly and made the decision.

"Do you suppose you could order me a subscription? I'll pay you here in cruzeiros." I was not sure whether the Esquire girls would be good for a young man in the jungle, but I succumbed.

"Sure," I said. "I'll be glad to."

And so, every month the Esquire girl was eagerly awaited. The rest of the magazine was of little use to Herculano.

The fact the young patient was a girl may have prompted him to call me down that day when the caboclo asked to see the Norte-Americano doutor, in spite of the fact that he knew full well that I was no physician. But maybe I wrong the boy. The girl's father was grasping at a straw and no one would have the heart to pull it away from him.

I went below and was properly introduced to the man. It was already eight o'clock in the evening and the meeting took place by the light of a kerosene lamp.

"How can I be of service?" I asked, using Herculano's tongue, for I had little confidence in my Portuguese as yet.

"My daughter is very ill and we do not know

what to do for her. Perhaps the doutor will see her and give her some medicine?"

"But I am not a physician," I protested. "I am a botanist. I know nothing about human illnesses." Herculano explained.

"Even so," the old fellow replied, "he still knows a lot more than we do. Please ask him to come," he pleaded with Herculano.

"I shall be glad to see the girl," I told Herculano after he had transmitted the message, "but I want it well understood that I am not a doctor, and that I cannot be responsible for the results of any guesses I may make."

"These poor people," exclaimed Herculano. "My people. They get sick and there is no one to see them, no one to advise them. They have no medicine, nothing. They are at the mercy of God." He was becoming more dramatic by the second, but he was right of course; all the way.

"Get the flashlight," I said "and let's go."

We slid down the muddy, slippery gangplank and precariously climbed the rickety ladder to the tapper's hut. His wife came and shook hands silently. An atmosphere of grief, melancholy, and impending catas-

trophe prevailed. The trembling flame of a small kerosene lamp did nothing to dispell the gloom. A hammock was strung across one end of the room and a girl of about thirteen years lay gasping for breath. She was thin, almost emaciated, and deathly pale.

"Mina filha," said the old fellow -- my daughter.

I tip-toed toward the hammock and sat on a wooden crate which someone pulled up for me. I smiled at the girl, but her face did not respond. She was breathing heavily.

At my suggestion, Herculano put our thermometer in her mouth. We waited a couple of minutes and then read an incredible 106° F. The girl was burning. I felt her pulse and, watch in hand, I started counting. Three times I tried and I gave up. The pulse was much too rapid to count with any degree of accuracy. Once in a while the girl would break out with a violent, rasping, sandpapery cough.

"You don't have to be a doctor to see this is an advanced case of pneumonia," I said. "How long has the girl been in this condition?"

"Fifteen days."

"Herculano, they might as well know the worst," I said. "I am no doctor, but I'm positive the girl

has no chance. If she survives the night it will be a miracle."

Herculano transmitted the cheerful prediction to the girl's parents.

"We have been expecting the end to come any time," said the father. "We had hoped ... perhaps ... some American medicine ..."

"Herculano," I said "we have some sulfa. We'll give it to the girl and God be with her. Tell them this is the only possible chance of saving her, but it is a mighty slim one. They are to give her the pills exactly as we tell them no matter what happens and they are to continue giving them until she recovers or dies. But before they decide please emphasize once again that I am only guessing she has pneumonia. This medicine is very powerful and it may be the wrong thing to give her if my guess is wrong. I am willing to give them our own supply of sulfa, but the decision is theirs."

Herculano translated all this to the girl's father and probably added some ideas of his own besides.

"Compreendo," said the father briefly; "D'acordo."

I went back to the launch and looked over our

supply of pills. We had sulfathiazole and sulfadiazine. I read the instructions. The recommended dosage seemed enormous. Suppose a heavy dose of sulfadiazine snuffed out the last flickering flame of life that remained in that frail body? What business did I have prescribing for the sick, anyway? And yet if I did nothing the girl would die. Maybe the sulfa was just the thing. I decided on the weaker medicine at a third of the recommended dose. I divided the few sulfathiazole tablets we had into a number of equal doses; told Herculano the girl was to take two pills every four hours until she had taken all of them; and I went to bed.

About five o'clock in the morning I heard conversation down below. Herculano was listening too.

"I'll go down and see what it is all about," he said.

A few minutes later he returned.

"It is the girl's parents," he said. "They have come to buy muslin to wrap the body."

My throat went dry. Either we had come too late, or I had guessed wrongly. Perhaps if I had given the sulfadiazine according to the printed

instructions instead of the thiazole according to my own intuition...

"A shroud," I said. "When did she die?"

"She is not dead yet," replied Herculano "but they think it is a matter of hours or minutes."

"Have they given her the sulfa?"

"She has had two doses according to instructions and had a violent nosebleed after each one. They are asking what to do."

"Tell them to continue the treatment. If sulfa does not save her nothing else in our kit will."

At eight in the morning the Carolina pulled away continuing its trip up the Ituhy. Just before we left we were told that the girl was still alive, but that another nosebleed had followed the third dose of sulfa. The father said he would give her the rest of the pills.

Up the river we travelled, stopping every half hour or so for the boat to pick up the rubber and for the tappers to buy their supplies. Each time we stopped, Herculano and I got off and went into the forest to look at the rubber trees. Then we talked to the tappers in private, away from the interested

ears of the patrão's representative in charge of the boat, and gained their confidence. Often the tappers poured their complaints into our ears. The stories of exploitation and misery were shocking, but it was true also that the caboclos were not too work-brittle. Which was the cause and which the effect was difficult to determine. Be that as it may, the news of our presence in the valley as representatives of the United States government had spread like the flood waters of the Amazon and had already uplifted the morale of the down-trodden. There is such an enormous amount of trust for the United States in the hearts of the oppressed, the exploited, and the miserables of this world that it will take our State Department many years to destroy such unshakable faith!

Our job was to teach the seringueros some simple, accepted methods of tapping their trees to help them get more rubber for their day's labor. We needed rubber desperately and every drop of latex counted. We also distributed atabrine tablets to fight malaria which was rampant, and spread war propaganda to inspire the tappers to work a few more days a month than usual. Herculano starred in this last mission. He gave fiery speeches on the importance of rubber

for the war effort and made each tapper feel that victory depended upon his own personal efforts that year.

Once in a while we were embarrassed by the simple logic of these people. One day Herculano was waxing more eloquent than usual. He had already aroused the interest of his listeners and was driving home his point.

"If we don't win this war, the Nazis will take over Brazil and you will be slaves," he ended. One of his listeners smiled bitterly:

"And what are we now, senhor?" he asked simply.

On the day we left the sick girl's hut, an inspection revealed that our fuel supply was running low, which meant we had to stop somewhere and refuel. The Carolina was a wood-burning boat and refuelling involved pulling up at some convenient place on the river bank, tying the boat to some convenient tree, and chopping down enough trees from the ever-present forest, to carry on. The wood of most trees in these forests contains enough resinous material to permit it to burn as soon as it is cut. There is no thought of drying the wood in a country where there are only two seasons: wet and very wet.

A well sheltered place was soon found, the Carolina was anchored and senhor Manoel, who was in charge, announced that we would stay there the rest of the afternoon. The thought alone was enough to make Herculano restless. He thrived on activity and change.

"Doctor," he said "I wonder how our little patient is doing?"

"I should like to know too, Herculano."

"If I took the canoe I could paddle down there to see her and leave some more pills with her parents."

"Do you think there is enough time?"

"Yes. I shall return before evening."

We had given the girl all the sulfathiazoles we had, but we still had our sulfadiazine.

"All right," I said. "Take a good supply of sulfa with you and hurry back. Be careful of the submerged logs."

"I shall," he replied. "Do not worry. I shall be back in -- how you say -- a jiffy?"

He returned toward evening. The girl, he said, was alive. She was showing some improvement. She was breathing a little more easily, but the

nosebleeds continued after every dose of sulfa. Nevertheless, the parents were now a bit more hopeful and assured him they would administer the sulfadiazine according to instructions.

Early the next morning we continued up the river. For the next ten days nothing out of the ordinary happened. When we reached and supplied the last seringuero on the river we started back to Benjamin Constant. The return trip was rapid. We travelled all day and only stopped for the night. Travelling on the river at night is dangerous because of the many submerged logs which are impossible to see in the dark. About the third day, toward evening, I estimated we were not very far from our patient's hut. I began feeling a bit nervous. Was the girl still alive? I did not have to wait long to find out. As we approached the tapper's hut where we planned to anchor for the night I saw a woman running along side the boat waving her arms and shouting. I could make out the word "doutor" but could not understand what else she was saying. I summoned my ears and tongue.

"Herculano," I called "what is that woman so excited about?"

"She is thanking you for saving her niece."

"The girl," I said. "Is she all right?"

"That is what she says. The little one seems to be up and around."

As soon as the boat was anchored the woman came on board. She grabbed my hand in both of hers and shook it violently.

"Gracia, gracia" she kept repeating.

"Don't thank me," I protested. "Thank the good Lord and the American government."

The next day we stopped at the girl's hut. She was fully dressed and sitting on her hammock, still thin, but very much alive and completely recovered.

The parents came on board to buy some cloth. It was not for a shroud this time, but for a wedding dress. The little thirteen year old whom sulfa had snatched from Charon's boat would be getting married in a few days.

Both Herculano and I slept soundly that night.

The Radio

On our second trip up the Ituhy on the river launch Carolina, Herculano and I felt more at home. Senhor Manoel who was in charge of the launch was by now an old friend of ours. We had gained his confidence as well as that of the caboclos who were tapping rubber for Senhor Barbosa, the wealthiest man in the region and owner of the Carolina. Being intermediaries, and presumably neutral in the unending struggle between seringueiro and patrão, we were in a unique position to advise both sides to the good of the rubber program.

Senhor Manoel insisted that we take over his cabin on the upper deck and we now installed ourselves in the comparative luxury afforded us by a private stateroom on an Amazonian river boat. We hung our hammocks in the room and moved two tables onto the covered deck. I used one as a desk where I typed my reports on the portable Remington I had brought from the States; on the other we installed the radio we had bought from a notorious smuggler at Leticia, Colombia, a short distance up the Amazon from Benjamin Constant.

The radio provided our greatest pleasure. Each evening after the news cast from the B. B. C. we turned the dial to a Montevideo station and enjoyed an entire evening of uninterrupted symphonic music. When we were in more frivolous mood we sometimes tuned in a Brazilian station and listened to a samba. Brazilian programs were punctuated with commercials almost to the same extent as our American programs are, but some of the ads were sufficiently different from ours to be interesting.

I remember one evening we were listening to a Brazilian program sponsored by a jewelry shop. "The cock cries at midnight," the commercial began. "Consult the watch which you bought at the Gonzales jewelry shop. If the watch does not indicate the midnight hour ....correct the cock!"

Senhor Manoel often joined us upstairs for the radio concert. While the Montevideo concert was in full swing the cook usually brought three small cups, a pot of boiling, fragrant coffee, and a bowl of wet, brown, sugar. The cups were distributed and the sugar passed around. Almost invariably when his turn came for the sugar, Herculano would say

"O cafe deve ser, preto como o diabo, quente como o inferno, puro como os anjos, e doce como o amor." (Coffee should be black as the devil, hot as hell, pure as the angels, and sweet as love.) Whereupon he would fill half his cup with sugar and pour the steaming coffee over it.

It was on this trip that we acquired Carmen.

About four o'clock one afternoon we arrived at a rather large, well-kept, hut. We stopped to pick up the rubber and leave a month's supplies with the tapper. He and his family came on board the launch and, as is the custom, everyone shook hands with everyone else. We had met him before on the previous trip and had advised him to change his tapping method, assuring him that by so doing, with no more work and without injury to his trees, he could draw more latex. He had remonstrated and had remained completely unconvinced, of course. But finally he had agreed to try our method on half a dozen trees and keep accurate records of production until our next visit.

Now he came straight to Herculano and me, hand outstretched. "Welcome back senhores," he said "I

trust you had a good trip?"

"Very enjoyable," I said. "And how have you fared in the meantime?"

"Graças a Deus, very well," he replied. "I am now using your tapping method for all my trees," he volunteered "and drawing 1/3 more rubber than before. This month's production must reach almost 100 kilos," he added proudly. I looked at the white ball of rubber that was being brought on board to be weighed.

"That should weigh 109 kilos," I guess wildly,

"Não senhor," he contradicted. "I would say it weighs no more than 95 to 97 kilos."

"One hundred nine and one half," I joked, but with as straight a face as I could manage.

The ball was now on the scales and senhor Manoel was reading the weight. "One hundred nine and....." he paused to verify his reading.

I looked the tapper straight in the eye.

"One hundred nine and one half," announced senhor Manoel.

The tapper lowered his eyes. "Incredivel," he muttered "incredivel."

The prestige of the United States had increased enormously!

The caboclo called his young son and whispered something. The boy ran back to the hut and in a few minutes returned with a good sized turtle.

"Please accept this with my compliments," said the caboclo. "It makes good soup."

"Muito obrigado senhor," I thanked him.

During all this time, word had spread up the river that the Carolina had arrived at Aguilar's and would probably spend the night there. Tappers and their families started arriving by canoe from nearby huts to visit and learn all the news. The women wanted to look at the new fabrics while the youngsters surrounded the crew asking innumerable questions about the boat.

Herculano was sitting on a bench on the lower deck cleaning and oiling our shot gun and I was loading my camera. The turtle had somehow succeeded in turning herself right side up and was crawling over the deck. In spite of a generous coating of mud, she displayed a colorful and intricately--patterned shell.

"Herculano," I said "It's a shame to make soup

of that animal. Let's keep her for a pet. We'll call her Carmen and make her R.D.C's mascot."

"The turtle?" Herculano asked disgustedly.

"Yes, the turtle, why not?"

"Why not?" he repeated. "But she is so dirty," he added.

"Let's give her a bath," I proposed. "Here is a scrub brush. Clean her up and then I'll take a kodachrome of her."

"She is pretty," said Herculano who, now having finished cleaning the gun, adopted the turtle-scrubbing project.

We drew a bucket of water from the river and started to scrub the amphibian.

Someone saw us and notified the rest that the crazy American was bathing the turtle. Soon we had a sizeable audience gathered around watching the amazing proceedings. In the meantime, soap and water vigorously applied had transformed Carmen into as beautiful a creature as her name implied. But her shell, brilliantly colored when wet, became dull as soon as it dried. A kodachrome would be disappointing.

"Why not use some gun oil to polish the shell?" I proposed to Herculano.

Amused at the crowd's comments about our eccentricity and anticipating a riot of mirth and excitement as a result of the new undertaking, Herculano reached for the bottle and began oiling and polishing Carmen's shell. The crowd, reacting according to plan, roared, and we all had a good time. Carmen was now beautifully shiny. We took her in the canoe to a nearby sandy beach, posed her for her kodachrome portrait and returned to the launch.

On the upper deck I sat at the typewriter to type my notes for the day. Herculano came up a few minutes later.

"Dr. Alex," he asked "Would it bother you very much if I turned on the radio? You know most of these people have never heard a radio. It would be a great treat for them."

"Go ahead," I replied. "Get a Brazilian station so that they can understand what is being said. I want to finish typing my notes before it gets dark, but the radio doesn't bother."

Herculano turned on the radio and tuned-in Rio. Then he called some of the younger people to come upstairs. It was not long till the upper deck and the stairway were filled with people listening to the music, asking innumerable questions, and commenting on the mysterious box. Herculano was explaining how one can tune-in various stations. He got a Spanish broadcast and an English one, as well as the Portuguese.

In about an hour and one-half dinner was called. Herculano told our numerous friends that he would now turn off the radio for a while, and that we would have it on again in the evening at eight when the Montevideo classical concert was on.

By evening the news about this marvelous box of the American's that pulled music from the air had spread for miles, and by eight o'clock twice as many people had arrived. Awstruck they listened for hours quietly, except for a comment once in a while expressed in a whisper.

The concert over at eleven o'clock, Herculano turned off the radio and announced that the performance was finished and that he and I were going to retire. No one moved. We waited. Eventually

the crowd began to thin out, but several people continued to stand by the radio.

"What shall we do?" asked Herculano. "These people just won't go home." "I don't know what you are going to do," I said, "but I'm going to bed. Maybe when they see me undress they will take the hint."

Many of them did, but a woman and three young men did not budge. Herculano and I climbed into our hammocks, blew out the lamp, wished our four guests "Boa noite" and went to sleep.

About three o'clock in the morning some noises woke me. I listened carefully. Someone was tip-toeing up the steps leading to our deck, and a light flashed. At the same time I heard a voice talking in Portuguese.

"You simply must see this," it was saying. "Never have you imagined such a marvelous thing."

"But can't we wait till morning?" another voice replied. "We must not disturb the American."

"He won't mind," the first one said encouragingly "come up here."

Two young fellows finally appeared from the stair well and stood, silhouetted in the moonlight,

in front of the radio. One turned on his flash-light and started to explain to the other.

"All night long," he said "this box gathers music through this wire (pointing to the aerial) from the air. Then during the day the American sits at this machine (pointing to the typewriter) and punches the keys. This releases the sounds which have been accumulated during the night and the music comes out from this box."

Herculano and I, wide awake by this time listened without comment. At breakfast we related this peculiar explanation of radio to senhor Manoel. He was amused, but remained thoughtful.

"You and I now take the radio for granted," he said after a while "but, really now, is the caboclo's explanation any more fantastic than the facts? Just think, by turning a dial in a box on a river boat in the Amazonian jungle, you can hear a man playing the piano in London or a pretty girl singing in a cafe in Rio."

We admitted he had a point.

Indians

Only once in my thirteen months in the Amazon Valley did I see a genuine wild Indian. We were steaming up the Javary on _senhor_ Bessa's launch on a mission to inspect his _seringal_ and to determine whether we should recommend a loan to him by the _Banco da Boracha_ for further operations.

The Javary, a tributary of the Amazon, forms the border between Brazil and Peru in country that becomes progressively wilder the farther one goes up the river. This is the densely forested region some of the head-hunting tribes inhabit, and the shrinking of human heads was a profitable industry here many years ago.

The third morning out of Benjamin Constant, as the launch was slowly chugging along, this wild creature appeared out of the jungle on the Brazilian side of the river. He was nude, except for a loin cloth. His reddish-brown skin formed a coppery-glinted background for the designs on his face, chest, and arms, painted in streaks of white and blue, intermingled with vermillion and yellow. On his head he

wore long feathers. Were they the tail feathers of the macaw? In his right hand he held a long weapon, whether spear or blow-gun I could not tell from the distance which separated the launch from the shore. He walked straight ahead along the river bank, with a slow, majestic pace, his head slightly inclined as though watching the ground intently -- perhaps following the tracks of some jungle animal. He paid no attention whatsoever to our launch, entirely ignoring the shouts of our crewmen. Soon we left him far behind.

During our trips on the upper Amazon and many of its tributaries we never came across another. Yet wild Indian tribes are scattered over all of Western Brazil. Senhor Leão, our host on the Curuça, often met and traded with the Quixito Indians near the headwaters of that river. Actually from that locality he brought me a blow-gun, a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, and a pot of curare for which he traded various articles the Quixito Indians wanted. I must have looked very strange when I got off the plane in Miami a year later with my 10-foot blow-gun in my right hand and the quiver of

poisoned arrows hanging over my shoulder. Certainly I could not be accused of carrying concealed weapons.

But this story concerns "civilized" Indians.

There were a number of Indian villages in our region. Most of their inhabitants were either farmers or hunters. The farmers raised the crops for the village. The hunters contributed not only game, but alligator skins as well, to be traded, or sold for cash. From the little information we could gather about the villages, we concluded that they operated under a mixed communal and capitalist system: common ownership of the essentials was maintained without abolishing private property or the rights of the individual.

Inasmuch as there were few if any rubber producers among the village Indians, we did not go out of our way to visit them. However, we had heard interesting stories about village life, and both Herculano and I had built up considerable curiosity about these people. We did not miss the chance, therefore, to see these Indians, when, in the winter of 1943 on one of our visits to the upper Itecoahy

and its tributaries, on our own launch, the Guararana, we happened to see an Indian village on the highlands above the river. We tied the Guararana to a tree, left our guns with the crew, and climbed up to the level clearing above. Not a soul was in sight. The village appeared to be completely deserted. Yet, it did not have the aspect of an abandoned habitation. Everything was clean and orderly. Various utensils were in evidence indicating that life had been going on as usual until shortly before we appeared on the scene.

In our numerous discussions with the Brazilians of the Amazon, we had been told that such behavior is typical of the Amazonian Indians. When strangers are detected approaching, the entire population goes into hiding, but every move the visitors make is observed by an hundred eyes. If the strangers' intentions are judged to be friendly, the Indians eventually come out of hiding.

So it happened with us. As Herculano and I entered the clearing we saw the community house, a large oval structure with a thatched roof tied securely with lianas to a number of evenly spaced, heavy, smooth,

shining, wooden poles. The house had no sides. A number of large tables and benches were strategically located on the clean, dirt floor under the roof. One end of the huge covered space served as a kitchen, the rest as a dining room and probably an activity room.

There were three wooden benches outside this community house. I sat down on one of these and waited. Herculano -- younger, more impatient, more curious, less experienced -- explored the community house, examining every object in sight.

I must have waited for twenty minutes or more before any sign of life became evident. Finally, two men appeared at one edge of the clearing. They advanced slowly toward me and as I rose from my bench they extended their hands to me and to Herculano, who had joined me by now. We had been accepted.

Within the next five minutes we were surrounded by the men of the village a few of whom spoke some Portuguese and acted as interpreters. The men wore western-type trousers and either leather sandals on their feet or no footwear at all. The more prominent

members of the tribe wore striped pyjamas, or pyjama tops with whatever trousers they had on. Pyjamas are the "Sunday clothes" of the Amazonian caboclo.

The men were joined gradually by their wives and children. At first, we could see an occasional woman's head peeking from behind some tree at the edge of the clearing. Eventually, curiosity would get the best of its owner and, overcoming her bashfulness, she would approach the group of men to listen to the news from the outside world.

Soon we were engaged in small business deals. We traded brown sugar, salt, and matches, for bananas, fresh vegetables, and a pair of parrakeets, and we distributed some atabrine tablets as an antimalarial to the villagers. By the time these transactions had been agreed upon, we had become well enough acquainted to ask if the chief and his wife would permit us to photograph them. He consented graciously. As I was measuring the light and focussing the camera, he stood before me clothed in pyjamas and dignity. His wife thought the whole affair was very funny and kept chuckling and giggling constantly, much to the dismay and embarrassment of her husband. The photographic ice broken, I asked whether the chief's mother would

consent to pose for my lenses.

Although I knew nothing about the social life of this village nor about the customs of the tribe, it required no great knowledge or acumen to guess that the old lady was the power behind the throne. Her strong features, her poise and dignity attested the role she played in the village government, and life of the community. She did not smile for our lenses. She wrapped herself in the dignity of royalty, and frowned! The dignitaries having thus been honored, I called for a group picture. Everyone was happy to be included, and we parted cordially.

Some Indians in our region shunned village life and struck out on their own, living with their families in isolated huts by the river banks, farming for themselves, or tapping rubber. It was relatively easy to distinguish the hut of an Indian from that of a Brazilian caboclo. The Indian huts were almost always more sturdily built, better arranged, cleaner, and neater. The grounds were well cared for, and some vegetables and fruits were usually cultivated in small gardens around the house.

One day we stopped in front of a well-kept

hut where obviously an Indian family was living. We knocked on the post by the entrance, and the owner soon came out to meet us. We were invited in. Stools were pulled up for us, and after the usual words of greeting and polite small talk, Herculano explained to our host that we were making a survey of the region and asked whether he would be willing to answer certain questions.

Yes, said our Indian friend, he would do his best. Herculano, thereupon, began with questions about the man and his family. The Indian told us his name, his age, the number in his family, et cettera without hesitation.

"How many trees do you tap?" asked Herculano eventually.

"Ah, senhor," replied the Indian, "that is a difficult question."

Thinking that perhaps our host had never counted his trees, and not wishing to embarrass him, Herculano assured him that it was really not important, and continued:

"How much rubber did you produce this past season?"

"Ah senhor," repeated our friend, "that is as difficult for me to answer as your former question."

It seemed incredible that a man so neat and intelligent-appearing had so little knowledge about his affairs. We thought he did not wish to give us the information. Herculano now went into a lengthy discourse about the purpose of R. D. C. He explained the importance of the rubber program to the war effort and finished by saying that he hoped our Indian friends would understand the motive that prompted our questions, and would supply the answers.

"Sim senhor," said the Indian. "I should like nothing better than to be of assistance."

"Tell us then," said Herculano, "how much rubber did you produce this past season?"

"Very difficult question," repeated the Indian.

Herculano was losing his patience. "Don't you know?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," came the immediate reply.

"Then why do you find the question so difficult?"

"You see senhor," said the Indian, "I do not know what figure to give you. I do not tap rubber trees. I am a farmer!"

Later the same day we stopped at the hut of

another Indian. This time, before entering upon the question period, we established the fact that the man was indeed tapping rubber for a living.

"How many estradas do you tap?" asked Herculano.

"One estrada senhor," was the forthright reply.

"Good," said Herculano. "How many trees do you tap?"

"Seventy and sixty," said the Indian.

This hardly made sense. An estrada is a path cut through the jungle connecting a number of rubber trees. The number of trees in an estrada in our region varied generally from 100 to 200. Each tapper usually worked two estradas which he tapped on alternate days.

"Seventy and sixty?" repeated Herculano.

"Sim senhor."

"I misunderstood," said Herculano politely. "You tap two estradas."

"Não senhor, only one," answered the Indian.

"Well," said Herculano. "Now listen to me carefully. How many trees are there in this one estrada?"

"Seventy and sixty," insisted the Indian.

"But if they are all in one estrada," asked

Herculano "why do you say seventy and sixty? Are they in two groups? Are they perhaps different kinds of trees?"

"Oh, não senhor," said our host. "My trees are all together in my estrada, and they are all good rubber trees."

This was quite a puzzle and the Indian's limited Portuguese vocabulary did not help clarify the situation. At any rate we seemed to be getting nowhere with the utmost speed. We wished him good luck in tapping his seventy and sixty trees and continued our journey.

That night after we had gone to our hammocks Herculano suddenly let out a yell.

"Caramba, doutor," he exclaimed, "I have it! Do you remember that Indian with the one estrada and the seventy and sixty trees? It's simple. The man can't count above seventy. When he reaches that number he has to start all over again."

"Thank goodness, Herculano!" I said. "Now I can go to sleep."

III

JAMAICA -- 1952

The Other Jamaica

In Holiday, in the National Geographic, in all the travel magazines, the Jamaican Tourist Office beckons the traveler with short vivid descriptions and photographs, to the tourist attractions of Jamaica; to the Jamaica of Montego Bay, of the Myrtle Bank Hotel, of the fabulous Tower Isle, and of the Glass Bucket; the Jamaica, in short, that one sees with "Martin's Tours." But there is another Jamaica, too. It is the Jamaica of the tree ferns, the fuschias, and the begonias growing wild in the fragrant forests; it is the Jamaica of Cinchona, and of Hardwar Gap, and of Corn Puss; of the Bonnie View Guest House overlooking the magnificent bay of Port Antonio; the Jamaica of Zelma Jones who had genuine tears in her eyes when she said goodbye; and of the old woman at Hardwar Gap with a pipe in her mouth who would consent to look into the camera only for some "good money." This is the real Jamaica which no tourist ever sees; the Jamaica to which Martin's Tours will never take you if only because some of it is inaccessible to the limousine and can be reached only on donkey back, mule back, or on foot; the Jamaica, in short, which we saw and felt,

and learned to love in the very brief ten weeks of the summer of 1952 which we spent there collecting slime molds.

We boarded the plane at the Miami International Airport on a beautiful June day in 1952 and were deposited at Kingston six hours and two stops later. We had made arrangements ahead of time to stay at the Mt. Mansfield Inn, near Gordon Town, located about seven and one-half miles from Kingston in the foothills of the Blue Mountains at an elevation of 1000 feet. As our car passed through the Bougainvillia-covered gate into the court yard of the Mt. Mansfield we knew we had picked the genuine article. This was no fabulous palace designed to attract the American tourist. On the contrary, it was a small, homey establishment where Jamaican travellers may stop or, as we found out later, where honeymoon couples found the quiet and seclusion that they often seek for a week or two. Here indeed was a cool spot where sweltering Kingstonians came in the evening to enjoy the wonderful cool breeze off the Blue Mountains which invariably arrived around dinner time. Three small buildings made up the Inn at that time. The guest house provided accommodations for ten people;

the main building housed the lounge and terrace dining room overlooking the river, and accommodated a few more guests; a third structure was devoted to the bar. We were courteously received by the manager, Mr. Gordon Black, and were installed in our rooms. Julie and I had a bedroom and a more or less open living room overlooking the ravine of the Maumee River. Though modestly furnished, the rooms were clean and comfortable. There was a lavatory in the room, with running water, and in the adjoining hallway a shower and tub were available. There was also a toilet for our exclusive use. For this and three good meals a day, including hotel service, we paid less than it would cost us to live at home. Alas! How things change in a few short years!

Across the courtyard from our living quarters was the bar where Becket reigned supreme. If you liked juke box "music" and dancing, the Mt. Mansfield Bar was not the place for you. There you would sit under the stars in a delightfully cool atmosphere, even in July and August when Kingston is "'ell on earth," listen to softly played recordings of the light classics, sip your rum and ginger or your scotch and soda, play a game or two of darts, and

forget there ever was a Malenkoff. Any drink you liked Becket would mix for you, but if you wanted something extraordinary you would order a rum punch. Becket made the best rum punch on the island, and knew it! No use asking for the recipe, though. He would not give it. For weeks I tried to pry it out of him. He always replied "Yes Sir" very politely but never gave.

Barrett, the head man of the service corps, personified the motto: "Service with a smile." His broad, genuine grin always accompanied the luscious pineapple, bananas, papaya, or mangos which he placed before us at breakfast. Lucille did the cleaning, Zelma made the beds, and Gladys helped Barrett serve the meals in the terrace dining room. From the very beginning these fine, simple people made us feel we belonged there and when, after a trip to the mountains or the beaches which lasted several days, we would return to the Mt. Mansfield, we felt we were coming home.

It was the natural beauty of Jamaica which attracted us, and we decided one day to take to the mountains and go as far toward Blue Mountain peak as our age would permit. Julie and I, Diane, a young

friend who accompanied us on our Jamaican sojourn, and two biologists from the Institute of Jamaica, made up the expedition. We hired a big, ancient, seven-passenger Packard to take us to Mavis Bank where the road ends. To avoid the heat of the day we started out by moonlight at 8:00 in the evening. The ride to Mavis Bank was thrilling, for the normally scenic drive had a wild, terrifying aspect by the light of the moon. The road was so narrow and the curves so sharp that twice the Packard had to back up in order to make the turn. At Mavis Bank we said goodbye to the chauffer, who promised to be there five days later to take us back to Kingston, and we looked for the muleteer who was to meet us there with a mule and a pack horse to take us to Whitfield Hall, 4000 feet up the Blue Mountains, where we had been invited to stay. As so often happens on occasions like this, the muleteer was not there, and no one had seen him or his beasts anywhere in the vicinity. We waited for him the better part of an hour and then decided to strike a bargain with someone else. At 11:00 that night we continued on our journey, singing "Carry me akee down to Linstead Market, not a quattie's worth sell," the best known calypso which one of the

young biologists had taught us while we were waiting for the muleteer who never arrived. It was a three and one-half hour walk for all except the two ladies, who alternated riding the mule. They said it was better that way so one of them could rest while the other rode! The first mile was down hill to the river; the next five miles were all gradually but steadily up hill. The path was well marked and our biologist friends were good guides. It was 2:30 in the morning of July 3 when the hospitable owner of Whitfield Hall welcomed us with a cup of hot chocolate by the open fire. The only reason we used two blankets on our bed that night was that we did not possess a third.

After breakfast the next morning we started out for Portland Gap. The path took us through the mist forest thick with tropical vegetation. It was like walking through a conservatory. Begonias bloomed everywhere; a wild orchid here, a slipper flower there, all among masses of ferns, from the dainty Maiden's Hair to the majestic tree ferns. Dick Proctor, the pteridologist of the Museum who was with us, told us that Jamaica has more species of ferns than have North America and Europe combined. We entered the

forest in its thickest part. No fear of poisonous snakes or other wild beasts here; there are none on the island. Even the mosquitoes were few; Michigan woods boast a hundred times as many as the Jamaican forests. We did not get to Blue Mountain peak, some 7400 feet above sea level, but some of our party started out at 2:30 the next morning to reach the peak by sunrise. They said it was a magnificent sight and well worth the effort. I should like to have gone too, had the sun only risen at 9:00 instead of 5:30.

One does not have to go to Portland Gap to see the tree ferns and the other wonders of the Jamaican forest. A fairly comfortable ride to Hardwar Gap, at an elevation of 2800 feet, just above Newcastle, the hill station of the Royal Engineers, will bring the less hardy traveler to an exotic picnic spot in the midst of the tropical forest. It is a three hour drive from Kingston to the end of the auto road through country of incredible beauty. The road is good all the way, but dangerous in spots because of the sharp curves around which another car or any army lorrie may be approaching. One rides "on his horn." The road ends at the entrance to the gap; then one can walk as little

or as much as he wishes on a well maintained path which is level for quite a distance. At Hardwar Gap one is literally as well as figuratively in the clouds; it is well to have a raincoat along. The panorama from Newcastle is spectacular. The whole bay of Kingston is visible from there.

To enjoy the Jamaican beaches one goes to the north coast. There are various ways of reaching the beaches. The cheapest is by bus. If you want to see Jamaica in the raw that is the way to travel; only you are likely to have some raw spots yourself when you arrive. We took two long bus trips; one to Bath, St. Thomas, and one to the north coast. Now that it is past, I would not have missed the experience but I would be reluctant to repeat it. The other extreme of comfort is travel by Martin's Tours limousine. I cannot speak about this mode of travel from experience because we did not try it. But we did go to the north coast on four occasions. Once on that memorable bus trip, and three times in a car we rented for a month. And I may say here that we took to driving on the left side of the road like the proverbial ducks to water. As a matter of fact, upon returning to Miami where our own car had been

stored, I insisted on driving on the left on U. S. Highway 1, much to the terror of my wife whom, for once, I thanked from the bottom of my heart for being her usual back-seat-driving self.

On the north coast we stayed a week at Eaton Hall on Runaway Bay. For a very reasonable price we had a room with twin beds, tiled bath, three excellent meals a day, and the inevitable English tea in the afternoon. We swam in the small cove in front of the hotel during the day, and we enjoyed the fine company of Captain Hetherington, who owned and operated Eaton Hall, and his charming family. The Captain's Calypso band and his two dancing waiters provided entertainment on three evenings a week and there was dancing on the terrace for those who enjoyed that form of activity. Those of us who prefered to exercise our tongues rather than our feet, joined in the animated discussion between the Captain, an Irish wit who was a guest at that time, a Jamaican sugar planter who was certain Eisenhower had no chance to be elected, and an American college professor who was vacationing there.

Eaton Hall is close to a number of interesting places, such as Discovery Bay, where Columbus is

reputed to have landed when he discovered Jamaica; Fern Gully, where one can drive in comfort on an asphalt road through the tropical forest; the little Colonial town of St. Anne, where one can buy anything, from typical Jamaican basketry to Coca Cola; and the sugar factory where one can watch the ox-drawn rubber-tired wagons unload their great burdens of freshly cut sugar cane.

Our second trip to the north coast took us to Port Antonio. We stayed at the Bonnie View Guest House on the highest point in the vicinity. The view from the large terrace of the Bonnie View is unequalled in all of Jamaica. The guest house was spotless and comfortable. The meals were home cooked. The establishment grew its own vegetables, had its own dairy herd, and its own poultry flock. Fresh cream, butter, and eggs were on the table every meal, and Ma Arnett, always glad to see people from the United States, and especially from Michigan where she had a home, supervised every detail with an eye for the guest's welfare. From the Bonnie View we drove several miles to the beach at San San and when we arrived we agreed that it was well worth the trip. While at Port Antonio we could not resist going rafting down the Rio Grande.

That branded us definitely as tourists, but since we felt we already belonged to Jamaica and Jamaica to us, we indulged in this little deception.

After ten weeks on the island we had learned enough about Jamaica to want to know much more. We found the scenery superb, the climate delightful, and the people friendly and hospitable. So, when the plane that was to take us away developed gear trouble and brought us back to Kingston after ten minutes flight, we were delighted to have an extra few hours on the "pleasure island of the Caribbean."

The Whistler

The tropical noon-day sun was beating down mercilessly as I started up the hill from University College on this July day. In spite of the heat and the steep grade I stepped along rapidly hoping to escape the storm that was rolling off the Blue Mountains into the valley below.

Every day it was the same cycle. The early morning air was crisp and clear; the sky was blue without a cloud. Down the hill I would start toward Papin breathing in the cool air, filling my eyes with the incredible beauty of the Jamaican landscape green with lush foliage and polka-dotted by the brilliant red masses of the flamboyant tree blossoms. As I stepped along briskly I would overtake the last of the country girls on their way to the market with their akees or mangoes. Head high, shoulders straight, the tall, slim, brown-skinned figures, crowned with huge baskets full of fruit, walked in pairs and chattered incessantly in their unintelligible to me Jamaican English. I would meet another on donkey-back, returning perhaps from an all-night trip, the beast strolling leisurely, stopping occasionally to

eat a fallen mango or to snatch a tuft of grass by the roadside, while the rider scrutinized me -- the curious foreigner -- fearful that suddenly from under my peculiar clothing a camera would emerge and capture her image to be exhibited as a curiosity in far off lands. I would then smile and greet her "good morning" and she would reply "Good mawnin' suh" somewhat reassured, but not as yet fully confident.

It was a fifteen minute walk down the hill from the guest house to the market at Papin and another ten minutes to the laboratory at the college campus. While I worked on my specimens the scene outside would change. By ten o'clock the air was already warm and the light so brilliant as to hurt the eyes. Small fluffy clouds now appeared over the mountains to the east, a vanguard of the storm that was sure to follow. By noon the sky over the foothills was getting gray and the storm clouds were gathering fast.

Of a sudden I would look at my watch and know that I must put my work away at once if I were to beat the rain. For the return trip to the guest house was

up the hill at the hottest hour of the day with the rays of the sun vertically pushing through the last openings between the clouds.

And so it was this very day. I started up the hill with the rapid walk of a young man, but soon I was slowing down stopping at almost every bend of the road presumably to enjoy the scene, but frankly to catch my breath. It was not only the scene that was breath-taking but middle age as well.

About half-way to my destination the rain began to fall. It was only a matter of seconds before it would descend in sheets and the nearest shelter was a huge mango tree by the side of the road about two hundred paces ahead. I gathered all my athletic prowess, sprinted for the tree and made it just in time. I arrived under the thick canopy of leaves a second or two after a brown-skinned native had taken shelter there and was already leaning against the trunk of the tree. He was about fifty-five years old, of average height, with hair already gray and with two or three days growth of beard on his face. Obviously of the working class, he was dressed in old khaki clothes, the knees of his trousers patched and the

cuffs threadbare. On his feet he wore what remained of a pair of shoes. His wrinkled, rough skin and his tired expression mirrored the fatigue, the struggle, the poverty of the two million of his compatriots who just manage to eke out a living on the overpopulated island. In common with most of his brethren, however, he did not seem unhappy or disgruntled. As a matter of fact he was whistling to pass the time until the rain, now pouring down, would slacken and permit him to continue his journey.

At first I paid little attention to him, but soon the strain of his melody began to penetrate. This was no ordinary tune. No popular song or native calypso. It was great and familiar music that this Jamaican laborer was whistling. I hunted in my memory for a title and finally it came. It was the figuration of Johann Sebastian Bach's inspiring setting of the chorale: Jesu, joy of man's desiring.

I gazed at the man with more interest and a greater respect, and as I listened to the immortal music which faultlessly issued from his puckered lips I could not decide whether the performer or the com-

poser deserved the greater admiration. I wondered how many of my Ph. D. candidates back home were familiar with any of Bach's compositions and, more still, how many knew them and enjoyed them enough to whistle them. I also wondered how many of our modern composers' works will be whistled under a mango tree in Jamaica two hundred years from now.

Corn Puss Incident

by Julie

"I simply can't go on" Winnie exclaimed as she pulled her right foot out of the mud. Her oxford remained engulfed in the ooze formed by the small waterfall as it trickled down the mountain side and spread out across the roadway before plunging on down into the valley on the other side. She took another step, only to sink once more, ankle deep into the heavy mud. With a sickening gulp the mud now sucked the left shoe off her foot, and she waded, stocking-footed, three or four long steps farther to her left where I was standing on more solid ground.

Wearing knee-length hiking boots, I plunged back into the mire and fished out the two mud-encased oxfords. The two of us looked at each other mutely and miserably for a moment.

"Should we return to the car?" I asked, realizing that now neither of us was in first class condition to walk the four miles up to Corn Puss Gap, to say

nothing of the four miles back. Then, too, this was but the first of the twenty-two streams we had been told crossed the roadway, and which we should have to ford before we reached that gap where the Blue Mountains meet the almost totally unexplored John Crows.

"I hate to let Ron down this way, but just look at me!" Winnie said. "I'll have to go back to the car. You go on -- no use spoiling your trip too. Here, take Ron's lunch."

"I have Alex's lunch here too," I said. "I'll see if I can catch up with the men, give them their lunches, and join you at the car as soon as I can. It won't spoil my trip. I am not as good a walker as I might be -- especially in wet boots!"

Winnie nodded understandingly. Just a year before, she had married Ron, an entomologist, and was gradually becoming accustomed to the strenuous field trips which that hardy group of scientists, popularly known as "naturalists," are want to make with such genuine enthusiasm and at the slightest provocation. After twelve years as the wife of a botanist, I was more used to these collecting trips

than she, but, although an enthusiastic collector, I have to admit to a certain reluctance when the terrain is difficult.

I hurried on with the lunches, wondering if I should ever overtake the two men who had disappeared beyond the first curve of the mountain road long before we had reached the waterfall. They were eager to get to Corn Puss Gap where they hoped not only to collect slime molds, but to see and perhaps capture the rare and spectacular giant swallow-tail butterfly, the Papilio homeris which lives in Jamaica only in this mountain region near Bath, and in certain parts of the Cockpit country. It has been found in no other part of the world.*

Strangely, the Papilio homeris flies only in the mid hours of the day, disappearing about three o'clock in the afternoon. If the men were to see this rare species they must walk the four miles in near record time.

After walking about half mile along the curv-

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* Perkins, L. 1949. Butterflies and Moths. Glimpses of Jamaican Natural History. Vol. 1, p. 39. Institute of Jamaica, Kingston.

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ing road, I called out. Alex's answering "hello" coming from somewhere beyond the next bend was reassuring. Bless his heart, I thought -- he has waited to see what had happened to us! I caught up with him, explained briefly what had happened, handed him the lunches, and said we would wait at the car.

"See you about six o'clock," he called as he started out to overtake Ron.

About noon I arrived back at the car which we had left at Five-mile Post, a widened bend in the road five miles from the town of Bath, and already at a fairly high elevation. This was the farthest point where a car could turn around easily on the narrow mountain road, and it was, therefore, customary for visitors to the gap to leave their cars here and travel on by foot. Now our car was parked on a narrow spur of land jutting out slightly beside the roadway. On each side of this spur, the land fell away abruptly hundreds of feet to the green lush valley far below. At the end of this tiny peninsula a small shelter had been built to protect a dozen oil drums, and some supplies for the road grader which was parked at the bend.

There beneath the shed on an oil drum sat Winnie. There sat also, in solemn silence, two small colored boys eight or ten years old. A kind-faced Jamaican farmer, probably the boys' father, sat a short distance away in the shade of an akee tree.

Winnie's first words as I approached: "Did you bring the car key?" brought me to a sudden halt.

"No. I didn't see Ron, and I didn't even think about it," I answered lamely.

Visions of spending the afternoon sitting astride an oil drum, and slowly broiling while the fierce tropical sun beat on the corregated tin roof of the shed, flashed through my mind, and I wondered how I could have been so thoughtless. Now, too, we remembered there was a thermos of ice-water safely locked inside the car. How I longed for a drink of that water even now! The more Winnie and I thought of that water, the thirstier we became.

Finally Winnie turned to the farmer and said: "Do you know where we can get some water coconuts?"

"No, mom, I don't," he answered. "They're not ready at my place. The mon who owns the coconut trees over there on the slope's gone for the day. Independence Day, you know, and nobody's working. I don't know where you could get any today."

"Guess that's that!" said Winnie. Then, turning to me, she continued: "But you really should try some water coconuts, while you are in Jamaica, Julie. Fresh from the tree. I'm sure you'd enjoy them."

We prepared to open up our sandwiches; maybe they would have a little moisture in them!

Unexpectedly there was foot traffic along the previously deserted road. A man passed by heading toward Corn Puss while two country boys were coming down from that direction.

"Two gen'lemen up there said give you this," one of the boys said, pointing up the mountain road, and handed us the key to the car.

Congratulating ourselves on having thoughtful husbands, we climbed into the car, peacefully ate our lunches, drank the coveted ice-water from the thermos, and settled ourselves comfortably for an

afternoon nap. The soporific summer silence was unbroken for sometime except for the occasional droning of a bee, or the sporadic humming of some other insect. The farmer eventually got up, stretched, and at a leisurely pace disappeared down the road. The two youngsters continued to sit a while longer, and then they too sauntered away shouting to someone far down in the valley. To our surprise, a not too distant voice answered. We were somewhat startled, for in that vast panorama of steep, green-clad mountains and deep valleys we seemed very, very far from human habitation. We realized, however, that Jamaica is more densely populated than one would think, and that people often live on narrow mountainous ledges where, it would seem to us, only a goat could find foothold. Roused from our drousing state, we now became increasingly aware that the afternoon sun was becoming almost unbearably hot as it beat down on the roof of the small car. About two-thirty we decided to sit on the oil drums under the shelter, where, to our delight, a gentle breeze was now blowing. We were pleasantly surprised to discover, tucked down behind the last row of drums, the cushioned seats of the road grader, which had been stored there. We

dragged them out, placed them on the ground against a post, and sat down to enjoy the view of the tropical forest which bordered the road and seemed to fill the valley below.

"I heard you'd like some water coconuts, mom," said a thick, husky voice to our left. "It's a warm day and I thought you'd like some refreshment?" There stood a man, who had apparently approached from above, for we had not seen him come up from the road to Bath, long stretches of which were clearly visible from where we sat.

"Yes, indeed we would," Winnie said. "How many have you?"

"Five."

"How much do you want for them?"

"Anything you like."

"Would two shillings be all right?"

"Yes."

Winnie placed the two shillings on the drum in front of her. The man did not pick them up, but went instead to the farther side of the shelter and with his machete skillfully sliced open a coconut for me, paring down just the right amount from the end to enable one to drink the refreshing liquid directly

from it. I found this to be a very interesting proceedure, and exclaimed admiringly at his skill. His face expressed no pleasure at my praise, but as he opened one for Winnie, he said rather gruffly; "That is not the way I like to open a coconut. I cut too deep. My machete is too sharp."

The surprising thought flashed through my mind. "Here we are, 'way up on this steep mountain side; an English woman, an American woman, and a strange Jamaican man with a cutlass too sharp to cut coconuts. I wonder why I am not afraid."

"Shall I put these other three in the car for you mom?"

"No thank you, you may leave them here. My husband will open them as soon as he returns," Winnie replied.

The man made no motion to leave, but stood indecisively a few minutes, leaning against one of the posts, his cap drawn low over his forehead to cut the glare of the sunlight. From where I sat at the other end of the shed, I noticed that the lower part of his black face, where it was exposed to the sunlight, showed marks of smallpox.

"What time is it?" he asked me.

I glanced at my wrist watch. "Ten minutes to three," I answered.

The man stooped down suddenly, picked up the two shillings from the oil drum in front of Winnie, and with a terrific burst of speed went crashing down the unbelievably steep side of the mountain into the valley directly in front of us.

So sudden was this activity that both Winnie and I were stunned, and it was several seconds before I found my voice: "Goodness, that was sudden. I wonder what got into him!"

"My purse!" Winnie gasped. "He grabbed my purse."

We looked at each other in shocked astonishment. Then, remembering the voice which had answered the youngsters when they had called out over the valley, we, too, began to shout: "Help, help! Stop that man; he's a thief. He stole my purse."

A woman's voice came back: "I sees him, but I can't stop him. He's got a machete! I'm not goin' near 'im."

"Will you try to get help?" Winnie called.

"I'll see if I can. He's throwin' the purse

away," came the reply.

"How much did you have in your purse, Winnie?" I asked.

"Let's see. About a pound in change, I think, but I also had two American dimes I always carry for luck. Oh yes, and the car key! How will we get home? How can we start the car? And my compact -- and my glasses. What will I do without my glasses?" she wailed.

At that moment we saw a stately figure walking down the road from the mountain, balancing on her head a broad basket of bananas, mangoes and cho chos. She moved with rhythm and grace, and carried her head proudly. With her was a young girl, probably in her teens, also balancing a round basket of bananas on her head.

"What's the trouble?" the woman asked. "I heard you callin' for help."

"A man snatched my purse and disappeared right down there," Winnie said pointing.

"Lor' A'mighty. What is this? What is this? You poor lady!"

At one side of the road she gave directions to

the girl, who lowered her own basket and then helped her mother lower her heavier load. Both came over to the shelter to learn the details of the theft. Looking at the coconuts the woman soliloquised on the possibility of matching them with others on trees in the area to determine where they came from and in that way possibly finding out the identity of the thief. Then surprisingly enough she started down the steep path which, to our eyes, was totally concealed, but down which the thief had plunged. Some distance below she discovered the vanity case and returned it to Winnie. This article was the least of our worries at the moment, but it was a good start. We knew, at any rate, that the thief must have opened the purse before he threw it away and perhaps had scattered other articles he was not interested in. We wondered if he had thrown out the car key and the spectacles as well. After a few words with her mother in Jamaican dialect which we could not understand, the girl replaced the tightly rolled doughnut of cloth on her head and the basket of bananas it helped to support, and with swift strides hastened on down the road to get help from the next village. The mother remained with us to see if she

could be of some further help.

"Same thing happened here 'bout a year ago. Terrible thing for this region," she said. "People 'round here's good people. We never had steelin' before that. Some mon move in here from the city where they's bad men. They never caught him then, but I hope they do now."

We heard the sound of horses' hooves. Along the lower stretches of the road raced two riders astride their steeds. The first appeared to be an experienced horseman, but he was urging his beautiful chestnut mare mercilessly up the steep grade. He was followed by a tatterdemalion figure with garments billowing in the wind, clinging closely to a speeding gray-white mule.

"Here come Don Quixote and Sancho Panza," I whispered to Winnie.

When at last they pulled up their steaming and panting mounts at the corner, we noticed the first rider was indeed wearing a well fitting riding habit: white shirt, tan breeches, highly polished leather boots. He was perfectly appointed even to the crop he was swinging carelessly in his hand as he came up to us.

"I'm from the village," he said. "Can I be of help?"

In vivid contrast to this man was the small figure who descended from the back of the mule. This wizened old man was clad in an assortment of odd garments, well worn and well patched.

"I'm the Assistant Constable from the village," he introduced himself. "The Constable's away for the day, but soon as I hear you have trouble I come. We sent word to Bath and soon the police will be here. You ladies tell us what happened."

Winnie and I described the events that had taken place, whereupon Sancho went down the path and recovered the empty purse and a lipstick which was lying near it.

Next, a man arrived who introduced himself as the village magistrate, and he forthwith assumed charge of affairs. After describing events for a third time, we were questioned by him in detail.

"What did the thief look like?"

"About medium height. He wore a cap, shirt and trousers, but no coat," replied Winnie.

"He had some smallpox scars on his face," I added.

"What color was the shirt?"

"Blue," we both answered.

"What color trousers?"

"Khaki," said Winnie with assurance.

"Dark blue," said I doubtfully.

I suddenly realized with something of a sense of shock and humility that I actually had not observed the man or his clothing closely enough to give a positive description.

"He said he heard we wanted water coconuts" said Winnie. "If he actually "heard" it he must have been the man who was walking up the mountain road when I was talking to the farmer. Maybe the farmer with the two little boys know who the man was."

"We'll go talk to the farmer and see," said the magistrate. "He lives just down the road."

The magistrate left, but soon returned.

"We know the man," he said. "He lives up the mountain a short way. We think he is the one who stole from a car here last year, but we had insufficient evidence."

During this time, thirty or more people had gathered around us, milling about, talking excitedly one to another, waiting with great interest to see

what would happen. Even one very prominently pregnant young mother, with her three year old daughter in her arms had walked the mile or more up the steep road from the village.

There was another stir of excitement in the crowd when a jeep arrived and three colossal men stopped briefly to gather the necessary information from the magistrate before hurrying on. These were the police from Bath. All the bystanders seemed to know whom the police were looking for.

"That mon, he live up the mountain now. He not one of us. He come from Clarendon last year," one said. The others nodded agreement.

There was little to do now but wait. But with so much company, the time did not seem long until we saw the jeep return. A short distance behind the jeep walked a group of individuals with Alex and Ron in the center. These were onlookers who had gone up to meet the men as they returned from Corn Puss Gap to tell them the news. Soon Winnie and I were relating for yet another time our experience of the afternoon, this time to our husbands. At first report of the excitement Ron had wondered if

the boys to whom he had given the car keys had done the purse-snatching. Having lived in Jamaica for years, he trusted the honesty of the country boys of the area and was particularly distressed at such a thought. Now he was much relieved to learn that his trust had not been misplaced.

In the jeep the police now had a man whom they pulled out roughly and brought before us. Winnie identified him immediately and with confidence, but not I. He would not turn his face toward me, and in the waning light I could not see if it were pock-marked. Minus the cap, his low forehead gave him a very different aspect.

The man was loudly proclaiming his innocence as the burly policemen knocked him about vigorously in an attempt to force a confession. Finally I managed to see his face squarely. It was pock-marked, and I too identified him as the thief.

The police now told us they had found their suspect at his home. He had apparently doubled back from the valley, crossed the road lower down and beyond our view, and reclimbed the mountain by another path. Outside his house, they had found a blue sweat-soaked shirt and a pair of khaki trousers hanging on

the clothes line to dry. A search of the house had brought forth almost one pound in Jamaican small change and two American dimes. This in itself seemed conclusive evidence of the man's guilt.

After several more brisk blows, while the onlookers shouted encouragement to the police, the man finally admitted the robbery, but gave no information about the glasses or car key.

"Didn't see no car key or glasses," he kept repeating. "I just took the money and threw the bag down."

He then pleaded with us not to bring charges against him. A murmur of protest rose from the crowd.

"Please bring charges against this mon. He a bad mon; not one of us," said an old man.

"We are poor, yes. But we're not dishonest," said another. "Our neighborhood had a good reputation before he came here. Now he gives us a bad name."

"We know he robbed a car here last year, but we couldn't get proof," said one of the policemen.

"You do a good thing for us if you bring charges. He'll commit more crimes if he's not punished," said

yet another man.

The sun had now set, and further search for key or glasses was futile. A policeman started our car for us without a key and in it we followed their jeep down the road to Bath. We took the expectant mother and three year old child to the village with us. As Ron stopped the car to let them out, villagers again crowded around the car urging,

"Please do bring charges against this mon."

In justice to the people of the region, we realized charges would have to be filed. As the ones directly affected, and as Jamaican citizens, Winnie and Ron were selected by the police to do so when we arrived at headquarters in Bath. Meanwhile, Alex and I waited in the car. We wondered why the thief had risked a sentence in a dismal Jamaican jail, to obtain a sum of less than three dollars. We were secretly glad too the responsibility of bringing charges was not ours, for we could not help being a bit grateful to the man that he had used his machete, sharp though it was, only on the coconuts.

It was only now, when the excitement had subsided that I remembered the real objective of our

day's trip.

"Did you find any slime molds? And did you see the swallow tail?" I asked.

"That we did. Beeeautiful Myxomycetes," gloated Alex "and the butterflies were georgeous. Too bad we couldn't catch one. They were flying much too high."

Soon we were joined by Sancho. He told Alex proudly how he had come to our rescue.

"This is the man who recovered Winnie's hand-bag from the bushes," I explained.

Alex thanked him and handed him what change he had in his pocket, with the words, "Go get yourself a beer."

The old man trotted happily across the street to a small tavern. There we could picture him recounting to any chance bystander the exciting events of the day and perhaps glorifying a bit the role he himself had played as Assistant Constable.

As we drove back to Kingston later that night, we speculated as to what the press would say about the day's events. Next morning we glanced through

the Kingston paper. Not one word about our little adventure. Splashed over the front page in huge headlines and filling column after column of reading space was the spectacular account of the discovery of a headless corpse wedged between rocks on the north coast of the island! Elsewhere in Jamaica, it seems, there had been another machete too sharp to cut coconuts.

Flight Number 729

"I'll sue your company, I'll sue them," shrieked the tall, flamboyantly dressed young woman with the jet black hair and dark eyes. "You can't do that to me. I have an engagement to sing in Havana tonight. Do you hear me? Tonight! How will you get me there?"

"We shall do all that is possible madame. This is an emergency. It is no one's fault that the plane developed mechanical trouble. We had to return. The safety and comfort of our passengers comes first."

"That's a laugh," yelled the woman at the top of her voice. "Comfort of his passengers he says," addressing the rest of us in the airport. And then turning to him: "I'll have you all fired. I'll write to the main office and tell them how much you think of the comfort of your passengers. You kept us in agony for half hour. You would not tell us what was wrong; why the plane was returning to Kingston. And when you served lunch you had the NO SMOKING signs lighted. I was bewildered, nervous, excited, and I could not light a cigarette to calm

my nerves. You were not thinking of my comfort, I'll tell you. Caramba!" she ended her hysterical discourse, catching her breath after that avalanche of words.

"Why didn't you warn us we had a chetah on board?" I enquired of the pilot as he passed me on his way to the desk in the airport waiting-room where we had all gathered to await further developments.

"You mean her?" he asked with a bitter smile. "How were you treated on board?"

"We have no complaints," I replied for both Julie and myself.

"We may have to have a statement from all the passengers," he said. "Would you be willing to sign one, professor?" he asked. "You are Professor Kosta?"

"Of course, we would sign a statement," I said. "The crew has been most obliging and considerate."

"Where do you teach sir?"

"Michigan State."

"Michigan State?" he beamed, "That is where I went to school. You would not happen to know Dr.

Woodcock?" he asked. "He was in Botany."

"Of course I know him. We are in the same department."

"A wonderful guy. Give him my best. Maybe he will remember me."

A complete rapport having been established I ventured a bit further. "What was the difficulty with the plane Captain?"

"Nothing very serious. Gear trouble. The wheels could not be retracted so we had to return to Kingston to get them fixed. If the plane develops any sort of trouble we do not continue the flight unless we have no choice."

"And now what?" I pressed. "Do we stay here tonight or do you think the gears can be fixed?"

"My guess is it will be a matter of an hour or two and that we'll take off later in the afternoon."

"Thank you Captain. And remember, I am with you for any statement you wish me to sign."

"I appreciate that. See you later."

This all happened in late August, 1952. Julie and I had spent ten delightful weeks in Jamaica and now it was time to go back home. This had been quite a day. The last minute packing; the last farewells

with the staff of the Mount Mansfield; the drive to the airport through the gorgeous and now familiar Jamaican landscape; the last handshakes with Conrad Gordon, our obliging friend who had made our stay in his country such a delightful experience; the take-off; the ten minute flight, and now the return to the airport; all passed in proper order and perspective through my mind while the Cuban singer was beginning a second verbal round with Pan-American's representatives and indeed with anyone within hearing distance.

Several hours passed. Rumors started circulating among the waiting passengers: The plane had been fixed and we would be taking off in a few minutes. The plane could not be fixed. They were sending a new plane from Miami to take us back. They were sending a new plane from Cuba to take back the passengers for Cuba and the rest of us would have to wait. Finally, about five o'clock in the afternoon an official announcement was made: All passengers were to board the busses waiting at the airport and return to Kingston. Dinner would be served at the Myrtlebank

Hotel at Pan-American's expense and arrangements for departure would be communicated to the passengers as soon as there was anything to communicate.

The announcement was received with mixed feeling. A young American couple who had spent four days in Jamaica and had found "nothing to do in this dump" was disgusted at the prospect of having to spend a few more hours on the island. The soprano who had an engagement in Havana, screamed and threatened in two languages that Pan-American would pay for this. Julie and I chuckled. What luck! Another few hours on this Carribbean paradise.

"There is only one thing I regret," said Julie with mischief in her eye.

"What is that?"

"We will no longer be able to say that we are probably the only American tourists who have come to Jamaica and have not darkened the lobby of either the Tower Isle or the Myrtlebank."

"A chance to see how the other half lives," I said. "Do you suppose they will let us in the Myrtle-bank?"

"I'm afraid so," she replied sadly.

They did. Together with all the other passengers

we marched in and were shown to the desk. It developed that we were to register and be assigned to a room. It appeared that we were to spend the night in Jamaica. I signed the card.

"Oh, you must be the University Professor," said the clerk when she checked my name against the plane's passenger list. "I'll give you a very nice room."

Only in the United States is the college professor the absent-minded, queer, eccentric. An egghead!

"Thank you very much."

We cleaned up, changed, and went down to the dining room. When we were seated, an impeccable waiter handed us a menu.

"Turtle steaks," we both said in one voice. "Oh boy."

That had been our favorite dish in Jamaica. We had a fine dinner from soup to cashews. Now what? I looked around the lobby and spotted the good-looking English girl of the Pan American desk at the airport sitting in a big comfortable chair talking to some of the crew.

"Excuse me, Miss. Any news about departure time? If we are going to stay here overnight my wife and I would like to look up some friends."

"You take your wife and have a good time. No chance that you will be leaving tonight."

"You are sure?"

"Absolutely."

The crew agreed. What joy! Another beautiful evening in pleasure island.

"Let's call up the Bengry's, Proctor, and Gordon. We'll get up a party and go to the Mount Mansfield to spend the evening," I said. "We'll have Becket make the very best rum punches he knows how and we'll celebrate our good luck."

"Saturday night," Julie said. "The Bengry's are probably out dancing."

I telephoned their home. "No sir. Mr. and Mrs. Bengry just left. Will probably not be in until late."

"Let's walk over to the Institute and pick up Dick Proctor," I proposed. "He is probably mounting ferns on herbarium sheets."

"Saturday night," Julie said. "He probably has

a date."

"It's not very far. Let us try."

The Institute was dark. We walked all around the building and looked in Dick's laboratory. No light.

"I'll call him at the Melrose."

"Hello. No, Mr. Proctor is not in. Any message?"

"No message, thank you. I'll call again in a few years."

"Maybe we can get hold of Gordon," I tried again. "He wouldn't refuse a rum and ginger or two."

"Saturday night," Julie said. "He is probably at the Glass Bucket with his fiancee."

"Say, who's side are you on?"

"Hello. No, Mr. Gordon is not in. Any message?"

"Yes. Tell him to stay home once in a while."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Never mind. Thank you very much. No message."

We returned to the Myrtlebank trying to think what to do next. The gardens were lovely. The air was warm. The moonbeams were playing among the palm leaves which were rustling in the slight breeze from the sea.

"Why do we always have to be doing things?" exclaimed Julie. I know of a lot of people who would envy us this chance to stroll among these palms or sit in this tropical moonlight."

"Suits me fine," I said. "Let us stroll first and sit afterward."

We strolled through the formal gardens of the Myrtlebank for some time and then found some comfortable garden chairs. We stretched out in the moonlight without a care in the world. We were the honored guests of the world's most experienced airline, in a fine hotel on one of the world's most beautiful islands. If the plane could not be fixed tonight, perhaps tomorrow or the next day or the next. Dolce far niente. Let the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Pan-American World Airways do the worrying.

About eleven o'clock we decided to go to bed. We took the lift up to our room. I was half undressed -- the upper half -- when the telephone rang.

"Hello"

"Are you there? We have been trying to find you all evening. Please come down within the next

five minutes to go to the airport. Your plane is leaving in half hour."

Julie was fit to be tied. She will endure anything without complaining -- hunger and thirst, heat and cold, blistering sun or soaking rain -- as long as you don't interfere with her sleep. But when it is time for her to go to bed, just get out of the way and keep all other suggestions to yourself. To bed she will go, whether or no.

"I thought your girl friend said we would not be going tonight," she said with obvious hatred toward the whole human race and a certain female, who had suddenly become my girl friend, in particular.

"She assured me," I said "that there was no chance of leaving tonight, and the crew agreed. You heard them yourself. Hurry up," I added "or we'll miss the bus to the airport."

"I am going to take my time and she can jolly well wait for me," she replied, referring no doubt to the Pan-American girl.

I thought of my grandfather who used to say: La plus belle fille du monde ne peut donner que ce

qu'elle a! After all, the girl had given me all she had. Information, I mean. I said nothing. Julie took her time. The bell boy, who arrived soon after the telephone call, waited impatiently until the last female garment was slowly placed into the suitcase with meticulous care. Then he led the way to the lift.

In the bus we learned that our plane had not been fixed, but that Pan-American had sent a special plane from Florida to take all Miami passengers back on a non-stop flight. I inquired about the passengers for Cuba and was told that they would be returning on the regular flight the following day.

"I wonder why the prima donna was taking it so quietly," I said to Julie. "I didn't hear any Spanish oaths at the Myrtlebank."

"They probably put a muzzle on her," she replied, wide awake and in good humor again.

In half hour we arrived at the airport. The plane, brightly lighted, was waiting, stairs in place. We gathered our suitcases around us in the customs room and waited for instructions to enplane. We waited, and waited, and waited. The busses left. There was not an official soul at the airport. Nor was there a single chair or bench to sit on. Just

the long wooden customs benches on which the luggage of returning Jamaicans are examined and the suitcases of tourists are spread out and chalk-marked without inspection. We climbed on the benches and sat back to back in an attempt to find a modicum of comfort. The benches were hard and so were the backs. For more than an hour we waited without explanation.

"For this they would not let me go to that wonderful Myrtlebank bed," Julie sighed.

Then two officials appeared out of nowhere and asked to see our health certificates. We had gone through this inspection at noon just before we started on our very short flight, but no one complained. We dropped in line, yellow certificate in hand. It was something to break the monotony of waiting and it indicated that things were moving along. We had not been forgotten. The inspection over we resumed our places on the customs benches and continued to wait without explanation. The health inspectors disappeared as suddenly as they had appeared and we were alone again.

By two o'clock in the morning everyone was ready to commit murder. Julie suddenly announced she was going out to board the plane or know the

reason why. The young American couple joined the rebel and the three of them walked over to the plane, climbed the stairs and ensconced themselves in the plush seats. The rest of us waited to see them thrown out bodily, but when nothing happened we took heart and followed their example. The plane was completely unguarded. We chose seats, found blankets, covered ourselves, and prepared to go to sleep. By now it was really cold.

A few minutes before three o'clock, the crew, led by the captain, came on board. The young stewardess was last. Someone asked her for an explanation for the delay.

"I am terribly, terribly sorry," she said. "This is awful. They notified all the passengers, but forgot to notify the crew!"

IV

FULBRIGHT TO GREECE -- 1954-1955

Overture

I do not know exactly when first I became interested in slime molds. I suspect it was in 1930 when I was reviewing for my doctorate examinations in Botany at the University of Illinois. Somehow I had passed up these interesting organisms during my formal botanical education, but now there was no telling what the examining committee might ask and I was taking no chances. The more I read about the slime molds the more interested I became, and, I must confess, at that stage of my knowledge, Mr. Crowder's article and his beautiful paintings of the Mycetozoa in the April 1926 issue of the National Geographic Magazine did as much to arouse my interest as the technical articles in the science journals.

Here is a peculiar, one might say a unique group of organisms. Their beauty is unsurpassed; their life history fascinating. At one stage, jelly-like and without definite shape, they creep from place to place slowly but steadily, and feed

in the manner of animals; at another stage, anchored down like plants, they produce masses of spores in intricately designed and often brilliantly colored fruiting structures.

About four hundred species of slime molds are known to science. A great many of them are universally distributed and, with a little searching, can be found in any moist woods from Anchorage to Cape Town, but some species are confined to the temperate regions whereas others are strictly tropical. No doubt more species await discovery, for there are many places in the world where no one has searched for slime molds. One of these places was Greece.

Of the four hundred odd species known the world over, only eleven had been found in Greece. This of course did not mean that there were no slime molds in the land of Pericles, but only that the botanists, from Theophrastus to Politis, who had roamed that ancient land had been interested in other creatures and had neglected the slime molds. It is axiomatic that the known distribution of living organisms coincides with the geographic

distribution and interests of the biologists who hunt them!

Thus it was that in the fall of 1953 I decided to apply for a Fulbright Research Fellowship to enable me to hunt slime molds in Greece. It would be a challenge and a thrill to find something new in this land which had given birth to the science of Botany 300 years before Christ. I had been to Greece on many occasions before, had worked there as a plant pathologist, and had even collected fungi, but in common with other botanists, I had missed the slime molds. I was well acquainted with the country and the people, and my knowledge of the language would eliminate the most important barrier confronting many a field worker in a foreign country. I outlined the proposed study and mailed it to Washington.

In May 1954 the long-awaited envelope arrived from the State Department. I should not be telling the truth if I did not admit that the letter opener I had purchased in Greece seven years before shook a bit in my hand as it neatly cut the edge of the all-important envelope. Was it a Fulbright Fellowship

I was being awarded or did the letter express regret? It did not take long to find out. The letter was from Mr. J. Manuel Espinosa of the Professional Activities Division of the State Department. He was pleased to inform me, the letter said, that I had been appointed Research Fellow for the purpose of making a study of the Myxomycetes of Greece. It is superfluous to say that Mr. Espinosa was not half so pleased as I! I rushed to the phone and called Julie.

"We're off to Greece," I said.

"Hurrah for Senator Fulbright," she replied.

In hopeful anticipation we had made our reservations months ahead of time - just in case - and had planned our itinerary in detail: First to London to look up certain specimens in the famous Lister collection of slime molds in the British Museum; then to Paris to attend the Eighth International Botanical Congress. After that to the south of France to visit the celebrated caves where sheep's milk and mold spores unite to produce the delectable cheese that has made the village of Roquefort world famous.

This had nothing to do with slime molds, but it was good, practical mycology nevertheless. Finally to Greece, by way of Italy, for the main purpose of the trip. The fellowship became effective on September 1. This left us the whole summer for the preliminaries. Julie was not to be denied her own part of the preliminaries.

"There is no reason," she said casually "why one could not go to Roquefort by way of Limoges and Millau, is there?"

"No," I said unsuspectingly. "What's at Limoges?"

"China," she purred. "Havilland china."

"And at Millau?" I inquired, this time suspecting the worst.

"Gloves," she said. "French gloves."

"You have a pair of gloves," I said. No answer from Julie, but from her look I knew we were headed for Millau.

We sailed on the Empress of France of the Canadian Pacific Lines, from Montreal on June 15 bound for Liverpool. As the ship was pulling out I

stood by the rail once more experiencing the thrill of departure for a far away land, when I heard a familiar voice coming from one of the other passengers who were assembled there. I turned and saw the radiant face of Grace Sherrer, a former colleague of ours at Kent State University in Ohio, now at the University of Rhode Island, whom we had not seen in years.

"Grade!"

"Alex! Julie!"

We had a delightful crossing. We saw icebergs, and whales and seagulls, and reacted joyfully every time as though we had never seen these things before. Or perhaps I am putting it the wrong way. Perhaps it is because we had had these experiences before that we were thrilled even more. I hope I shall never be too old in spirit to thrill at the sight of an iceberg in the North Atlantic, a school of dolphin in the Mediterranean, or a patch of cyclamen on Mount Pentelikon.

Lloyd's of London

Five of our fourteen days in London in the summer of 1954, we spent negotiating for "Junior." "Junior" was the Morris Minor we finally bought and drove to Greece.

Not knowing what cars would be available, we had given the matter little thought before our arrival in England. We had decided, however, to buy a small car and in our minds had considered the Renault. But now that we were in Britain we decided to have a look at the English cars first.

Soon after we checked in at the Regent Palace we went directly to the British Ford agency. Yes, they had one Consul available for export. Did we wish to see it? We did. It was a beautiful car, and we liked it very much, but it was larger than we had expected. We wanted a small car, one that would be the epitome of economy. The salesman thought a moment. He had just the thing for us, he said. There was a reconditioned older model Prefect we could have very reasonably. We gave it one glance and were horrified! It reminded us of the typical and proverbial "tin lizzie." Did he not have something in

between? No, that was all.

Next we went to the Morris agency. The Morris was the first English car we had had any experience with. Conrad Gordon, our Jamaican friend and our official host on the island two summers before, owned a beautiful, leather-upholstered Morris and we had ridden in and admired his car on many occasions.

The salesman at the Morris agency showed us the one Morris Minor which was available for export. We liked the tiny, black car very much, and Julie was delighted with the red leather upholstery. We liked the salesman even more than the car. Impeccably dressed, suave, naturally polite, he spoke the Queen's English beautifully. I could not help contrasting him to the salesman who had sold me my last car in the States, and I was a bit annoyed at the obvious difference. We bought the car. Rather I should say we agreed to buy it. Between the decision to purchase and the actual possession there was an incredible amount of paper work and running about from office to office, from hotel, to bank, to Automobile Club. It took the major portion of four days! But finally "Junior" was ours. All the papers had been signed, all the formalities attended to, and we had only to

go to the suburban agency to receive the car and drive it away, except for one more thing: Insurance. We wanted a policy which would cover us for our entire trip from London to Athens. This appeared to be unheard of. We tried several insurance agencies, -- via cabbie, bus, and our own feet, in the rain -- but the best they could offer us was three separate policies: one for England, one for the continent, and one for marine coverage. These separate policies were expensive. We decided to keep trying.

As we emerged from the office of the last West-end company on our list, and paused in the shelter of a portico, a bright idea came to Julie.

"Listen to me," she said with a look in her eye which was patting her on the back. "What British company comes to mind when you hear the word 'insurance'?"

"Why,....Lloyd's of London, of course."

"Well," she said, "here we are in London wasting our time trying to get a policy on the car with companies we have never heard of and we ignore the one outfit that is reputed to insure anything. On to Lloyd's."

"To The City." I agreed.

We looked up the address, boarded the bus and after a half hour's ride past such familiar landmarks as St. Paul's, the Stock Exchange, and the bank of England, found ourselves outside the large building which was our destination. It was still raining, of course.

We went in the imposing entrance, turned to the left and climbed the stairs to the second floor. A sign on the door read: LLOYD'S. I knocked and entered. A trim young secretary inquired as to my wishes.

"I wish to purchase an insurance policy for my car," I said. "I should like a combined British, continental, and marine policy."

She listened politely until I was through.

"We don't sell insurance directly, of course," she said "but I shall take you to see Mr. Robertson, the president of the Brokers' Association. He will direct you to the proper office."

"Thank you very much," I said somewhat taken aback. What does she mean, they don't sell insurance directly? Was this another run around? This business of seeing the president of the Brokers' Association just to get some car insurance struck me as a bit

odd, but I was getting used to the British ways by now. In order to negotiate for the transfer of funds from my Michigan bank to London for the purchase of the car, I had been taken to see the president of the London branch of the Chase National Bank of New York, so why not Mr. Robertson?

We found him in a long, narrow, office taking his afternoon tea.

"Mr. Robertson," said the young lady "this American gentleman wishes to insure his car. Won't you take care of him?"

"Indeed I shall," said the president of the Brokers' Association. "Won't you come in?" he invited Julie and me. "May I offer you a spot of tea?"

"Thank you, no," I said, "we don't want to trouble you. We have been having a difficult time getting insurance for our car and we do not wish to drive it uninsured. Perhaps you can help us."

"Quite!" said Mr. Robertson. He was a tall, thin, man of about 45, with a friendly smile and an obvious desire to serve his foreign visitors. He thought a moment. "I believe we should go to Anthony and Gibbs. It is a very old house you know. Reliable.

You are enjoying your visit with us, I hope? Miserable weather though."

"We do not mind the weather too much," I said. "Makes the flowers grow and you certainly have beautiful gardens here in England."

"You are interested in gardening?" he sparkled. "Many of us here enjoy it. I have a few rose bushes myself," he said as he helped me with my raincoat and picked up his umbrella.

In the lift going down he asked: "Have you seen 'The Room?' That is where all Lloyd's underwriters transact their business, you know," he explained.

"No, we have not."

"Do you care to take the time? You might find it interesting."

"We should be most happy to see it," I said "if we are not taking too much of your time."

"Not at all," he answered as he waited for us to precede him out of the lift.

As we walked down the long corridor which led to "The Room" he tried to paint a picture of the activities at Lloyd's.

"The representatives of the various underwriters

sit around the room. Very experienced chaps, all of them. Now suppose the Queen Mary is to be insured for a million pounds," he said casually.

I turned and looked at Julie. She avoided my look. We were both thinking of our Morris Minor and of the collossal naivete we were displaying by going to Lloyd's to insure it. Nothing but the best for us though! Where the Queen Mary was insured that was surely the place to insure "Junior". Mr. Robertson must have read our thoughts.

"What kind of car did you say you were driving?"

"A Morris Minor," answered Julie blushing perceptibly.

"Ah!" said Mr. Robertson, "Very good car, the Morris. As I was saying, suppose the Queen Mary is being insured for a million pounds. Obviously, that is too large a sum for any one company to handle. By means of messengers who carry the contracts, various houses are contacted. One underwriter will take on 100,000, another one 80,000, a third one perhaps a quarter of a million, and so on until the entire sum has been completed."

We had now reached "The Room." "'The Room' is not open to visitors just now," Mr. Robertson said, "but come along anyway. No one will object." We went to the door. He pointed out a huge ship's bell that was hanging from a support in the middle of the room. "That is the bell of the 'Victory' Lord Nelson's flagship. They ring it whenever a sea disaster occurs." Naive or not we were having a privately conducted tour by a very obliging gentleman who seemed to enjoy escorting us as much as we were enjoying this unexpected experience. We devoured the scene with our eyes. After a while Mr. Robertson proposed:

"Would you like to have a look at the Nelson museum down below? Many of Lord Nelson's memento's, including his ship's log, are kept there."

We responded enthusiastically.

He took us to the museum where a large collection of Nelson's possessions was on display. Prominent among them was the ship's log open to the page on which his famous words: "England expects that every man will do his duty" were written in the commander's own hand.

A photostatic copy of that page was given to us as a souvenir of our visit.

Mr. Robertson looked at his watch. "Perhaps we should tend to the business at hand." He said.

Together we left Lloyd's and walked a few blocks to Anthony & Gibbs. We explained our insurance needs to the gentleman in charge of the office who came to the waiting room to talk to us. He took Mr. Robertson into his private office. About ten minutes later they returned together with a tall, thin, young man well groomed in his dark London greys. He was introduced.

"The Caledonian is the only firm here than can give you that type of policy," said the Anthony & Gibbs office manager. "Mr. Phipps will escort you to their offices."

"I hope you will be served well," said Mr. Robertson "and that you will enjoy your stay in England."

"Everyone here is being so exceedingly kind to us," I said, forgetting about the two R.A.F. girls who had laughed out loud at our American clothes in Piccadily ~~Square~~ Circus, "that we cannot help but enjoy our visit. We are very much obliged for your kindness and your time."

"Don't mention it, don't mention it. It was a pleasure."

Mr. Phipps opened his umbrella and away we went. At the Caledonian with Mr. Phipps' adroit assistance they gave us exactly what we wanted: One insurance policy that covered "Junior" against any sort of mishap between London and Piraeus.

We thanked Mr. Phipps and left. Waiting for the bus to take us back to the Regent Palace I reviewed the whole experience in my mind. "Leave it to Julie," I said.

"'Always go to the top' is my motto," she replied with an expression of immense self-satisfaction.

"Don't try it in New York," I said, "you'll be thrown out and find yourself at the bottom."

"We got what we wanted, didn't we?" she said triumphantly.

"That is the understatement of the day," I said, and we both laughed gleefully.