Chapter 7

NEBRASKA CENTRAL COLLEGE

When college was out it was only June, and my school didn't begin until September. I had done so well in the picture business the summer before, I took a crew out again. We went to southwestern Minnesota, northeastern South Dakota, and southeastern North Dakota. The summer was uneventful; and, financially, I did very well. I went out to Nebraska a little early so I could get my feet on the ground before school began.

When I arrived, the president was out of town, which he was a great deal of the time. I went out to the College which is a good two miles from the center of town, and met Emmet Hadley, Vice-President and Acting President. He told me he thought I ought to know something of the background of the college before I ran into trouble. The college was built by the Methodists, several years before, and operated as a Methodist college until they went bankrupt. The building stood idle for a few years until a very energetic Quaker preacher discovered it and got the Quaker Church interested in it. Between him and the church, they raised money; bought the building; and started off as a Quaker college. While they were at it, they didn't raise enough money to adequately finance it, so they were not able to hire experienced professors. The young and inexperienced ones they did hire, even including the president, were single, and very much more interested in keeping company with each other—and with the students—than in performing the duties for which they had been employed. That had caused a lot of talk and a lot of jealousy, and had almost broken up the school. He didn't tell me to watch my step, but I got the idea what he was driving at and assured him he would have no trouble on that score from me.

Our college catalog advertised that we taught the seventh and eighth grades of grammar school, a full three years of college preparatory, and a standard four-year college course. There were just two reasons why we didn't. There were not enough students to fill all the gaps; and, while the faculty was amply qualified to handle any part of it, there simply were not enough members to cover so much territory. Professor Hadley, Miss Caroline Roberts and I were all from Penn College, and all full-time teachers. Mrs. Hadley, the professor's wife, was a graduate of another college, but had her house and young daughter to look after. She taught only half time.

When we got all the pupils enrolled and found out what subjects were to be taught, we proportioned the classes out numerically correct. It seemed to me that they shoved onto me the classes no one else wanted and the ones no one else was qualified to teach. I expected and wanted the latter; that was in my contract. But I very much resented the former. By this arrangement, I had classes sprinkled all over the catalog from seventh-year Grammar to Differential Calculus. All the full-time teachers had classes straight from 7:40 in the morning till 4:30 in the afternoon, with just one hour break for lunch. That is too heavy a schedule of teaching for anyone, but by hard work I got away with it. I enjoyed teaching very much; liked my pupils and they seemed to like me; and I liked most of my subjects, but not quite all.

The subject I liked least was seventh-year Grammar. With three years of Latin, two years of German, and one year of French behind me, I was amply qualified to teach it. I didn't like it when I studied it, and I didn't like it yet! One day when I came out of one of my classes, Mrs. Hadley was standing by the door and said, "Professor Williams, if you want to get rid of your seventh-year

Grammar, I will trade you my General History for it." We traded right then and there. It took a lot more time to prepare my General History lessons, but I have always enjoyed history, and studied to make my teaching interesting. I just couldn't make Grammar interesting. It is very hard to make a subject interesting to the pupils, when the teacher doesn't like it, himself. The General History pupils told me that I made the lessons much more interesting than Mrs. Hadley had, and they were very glad for the change.

Scholastically, the entire year was very uneventful—just plain hard work and good progress. But some events, wholly unrelated to college, happened that gave the latter half of the year a lively but harmless interest, both for me and for some of the students.

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During my junior year in Penn College, John R. Mott, prominent in mission work, came to our college with the slogan, "The Evangelization of the world in this generation". He was soliciting members for the "Student Volunteers". I joined. Since my friend, Sylvester Jones, was in Cuba and I had frequent correspondence with him, I decided Cuba should be my field. During my senior year in college, I made formal application to the American Friends Board of Foreign Missions for work in Cuba. The answer was that they had no money.

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It just so happened that Zenas Martin, Superintendent of the mission work in Cuba, was father-in-law to our Nebraska Central President, Samuel Haworth. Consequently, he came to visit them this year, and I had a long talk with him. He said that the Board still had me under consideration, but still had no money.

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I did not know at that time, nor for many years afterward, what a very small percentage of the Student Volunteers Band ever got to the foreign field. I don't know yet how many of our Band ever applied to a Mission Board for foreign service; nor, if they did, why they were turned down. I do know that I was the only one that ever set foot on foreign soil, and am the only one living today.

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After my talk with Martin, I did a little thinking. A promise is a promise, and particularly when it is made to God. If I had promised to do something for a friend, and found the conventional way closed, I would try some other. Why not try another on Cuba? In my canvassing through the West, I had met several farmers who went out there and took up homesteads. The dry years came and their neighbors all left. They stuck; and, when the good years came, they bought their neighbor's homesteads for a song, and were now quite well-off. Why couldn't I buy a piece of land in Cuba, make a living farming it, and do missionary work on the side? I wrote this question to Sylvester, and asked him what he thought about it. Promptly came the answer. He thought it was a splendid idea. Furthermore, he had just inherited some money; and, if I could send some money down, he would put more with it and buy some land. Later I could go down and farm it. I sent the money and he bought the land. Then he emphasized that I should find a wife before I came. I didn't write him, and neither did I tell Professor Hadley that I already had the lady picked out.

When I entered Penn College, she was a Freshman. Near the end of the freshman year, I took her to a class "blow out" and found her very good company. During the sophomore year, I dated her occasionally; but I knew that girls are awfully hard on both grades and pocketbooks. I was in college to get grades and my pocketbook was always flat, so I held the number of dates far below my natural inclinations. When I joined the Student

Volunteers Band, she was already a member. The other members were Milo Rees, whose brother, Emory, was at the Friends Industrial Mission in East Africa, reducing their language to writing and grammar; and Marie Ross. We had our Band meetings once a week, usually meeting before dark, and finishing after. Nothing more natural than that we boys walk the girls home after meetings, and that I take my classmate, whom I had already dated occasionally. Thus, we were thrown together quite a lot and I became quite fond of her, in a brotherly sort of way, but never told her so. Sometime during our Junior year, her mother was taken quite ill and she had to drop out of school. After she was gone, I suddenly realized, which I hadn't even suspected before, that I was very much in love. With me, at least, it was a case of "absence makes the heart grow fonder". I didn't see her again for more than a year. My commencement should have been hers, too, so she attended. We put a lot of our time in together; and, when we parted, we agreed to correspond. Just before I went to Nebraska, I visited her in her home and proposed. She was so shocked she was speechless for a little while. When she recovered, she said she had always enjoyed my company, but she was entirely too young to even think about marriage as yet. She was past twenty. She said it never occurred to her that I was in love. It didn't occur to me either until after she was gone. She said she felt highly honored and would think it over.

Our correspondence after I went to Nebraska was very agreeable, but the all-important subject was never mentioned. She was back in college that year, and was not going home for Christmas. Also, two of my sisters were there, and were not going home. So, I took a run over to my Alma Mater to visit the three of them. We put in many pleasant hours together, but she still didn't have the answer. After Sylvester bought our land, I wrote her all about it and told her

I would probably go down that fall. As the undertaking was an experiment and I would have no income for some time, I didn't want to get married yet and incur the added responsibility of a wife; but I would like to know before I left that she would come when I was ready for her. That would give her time to finish college. I didn't get her answer by return mail, but in a few days I got a letter from her mother, who was in a different part of the state. I think it was the meanest letter I ever received. She practically accused me of being a criminal for daring to fall in love with her daughter. The answer was definitely, no! In a few days, I got a letter from the girl. It was very nice and polite, but to me the most heart-rending letter I ever had. She said she was sorry indeed to have to write this letter, because she knew it would hurt me, but it was hurting her even more than it would me. She was convinced that we were not suited to each other so the answer would have to be no. She wished me the best of everything in life, and hoped I would find a girl who would make me a better wife than she possibly ever could. She hated very much to say it, but this must be good-bye.

Having received the letter from her mother, I knew who had convinced her that we were not suited for each other. Having been her friend for so long, I knew she was suffering; but I couldn't go along with the idea that she was suffering more than I. She just didn't know how much I was suffering. She was almost twenty-one by now; and, if she had been suffering half as much as I, she would have told her mother to go jump in the lake, or words to that effect, and her answer would have been yes. But there wasn't a thing I could do about it. I never saw her again, nor heard from her directly. I did hear years later, through Robert's wife, that at twenty-eight she married a widower, much her senior, who was already a grandfather.

Again her mother tried to interfere, but by now she had acquired nerve enough to stand up to her mother. She told her that she had already ruined her life and happiness twice, and she was not going to let her do it the third time. They had several children in fairly rapid succession, and he died before they were grown, leaving her to rear them alone.

For days after her letter, I couldn't eat, sleep, nor keep my mind on my teaching. Then I awoke to the fact that I wasn't doing the job that I was being paid to do, and I just must snap out of it. On thinking it over, I decided that the quickest way to forget her was to do just as she had said: Find another, and time was of the essence, as I intended to go to Cuba in a very few months. There were several eligible girls in the college and at least three of them were quite active Christian workers, whom I thought should make good missionary wives, and one of them did go later as a missionary to Mexico. But my promise to Prof. Hadley fenced me in. I had no intention of breaking it, despite the fact it drastically narrowed my field. Try as I would, I could think of but two other possibilities. Lillie Cook from Indiana, whom I mentioned in Chapter Two, was teaching in the public school. Her uncle was Pastor of our church, and he had got her the position. She had worked for my Aunt Julia one summer while I lived there, so as youngsters we became quite well acquainted. I had not seen her, heard of her, nor even thought about her for seven or eight years, till she showed up in Nebraska to teach. The other was Birdie Pickett. She was a member of our church; active in church, Sunday School, and Christian Endeavor; a Senior in High School and very friendly. I decided to cultivate her acquaintance further. Our President, Samuel Haworth, was giving a lecture about that time, in the Opera House downtown. I dated her for the occasion, and there was where the fun began. On the road to her home, one of the college boys passed us on the sidewalk. I thought he recognized me but he never said a word. Next morning at breakfast in the college dining-hall, he asked everybody in general if they had seen Prof. Williams at the lecture last night. Several had.

"What girl did he have?"

"None, why?"

"I passed him on the road home and he had a girl."

"Do tell. Who was she?"

"That is what I am trying to find out."

Bertha Fraker spoke up and said, "I saw Prof. Williams at the lecture, and he did not have a girl."

"Well, I saw him on the road home and he did have a girl."

Someone else piped up, "Will somebody please lend Prof. Williams thirty-five cents?" Then someone remembered that I had said that I knew Miss Cook in Indiana, and suggested that she must be the lady.

"They were going in the right direction all right, but I don't think she was big enough for Miss Cook."

Miss Cook was taller than I and quite well built. When her cousin, Essex Perry, arrived at school that morning, he was met by quite a good-sized delegation who wanted to know if Prof. Williams hadn't brought his cousin home from the lecture last night.

"I don't think so. She was there, but I am quite sure she came home with Ma."

This was really getting interesting. I was getting a big kick out of it. If they had asked me whom I took, I would most likely have told them. I had taken her to a public gathering, where all could see her. She was a fine girl and I definitely was not ashamed of her so why all the fuss? But who was I to volunteer information that had not been asked of me? Despite Essex' statement that it wasn't Miss Cook, and the statement of the one who saw us, that she wasn't big enough for Miss Cook, practically everyone was convinced that it was Miss Cook. I was just laughing at them and enjoying their confusion. The following Sunday night our church was undergoing some repairs, so there was no service there. The students scattered out to some of the other churches in town. Next morning at breakfast, Fred Lebert called over to Bertha Fraker, half-way across the dining-hall, and asked where she went to church last night.

"Presbyterian."

"You should have gone to the Methodist."

"Why? Did Prof. Williams have a girl there?"

"He sure did."

"Do tell. Who was she?"

"Birdie Pickett."

"I saw Birdie Pickett go into the lecture ahead of him the other night, but who would have thought of Prof. Williams having a girl?"

I roomed in the boys' dormitory, so after that, whenever I was out at night, they set traps for me. One night they pumped water and worked up a mudhole in the path to the dormitory, then stretched a wire about six inches high, just far enough from it that I should fall right into it. Another night they propped the hall door about half open and balanced a bucket of water on top of it. Another time they turned my covers down, and distributed corn cobs all around under the sheet for me to sleep on. Those were only a few of many. I was very suspicious and watchful; but must admit that luck or providence was with me or I would have fallen into some of their traps. I wasn't caught once.

Remembering Prof. Diem at Penn, I never tried to find out who set the traps, but would tell all about them at breakfast next morning, and laugh at whoever set them for being amateurs who couldn't figure out anything effective. The perpetrators soon got discouraged and quit trying.

One of the boys who balanced the bucket of water on the hall door, was so curious to know how I got by it without getting wet, that he came to me and confessed. Said he was not going to squeal on anyone else, but he helped put it up there. To be sure that it would work, he tried it, thinking he could jump quickly enough to dodge the water, but he got the full pail. I told him the joke was on him. I didn't get a drop on me. That was one of the cases that providence was with me. The boys had laid a board on the floor to hold the door in the right place. The wind had come up just enough to shove the board back against the wall, without spilling the water.

One night in Literary Society, one of the pupils had a question box. One of the questions was, "What is the difference between Prof. Hadley's cow and Prof. Williams?" Answer, "Prof. Hadley's cow is picketed out in the daytime and Prof. Williams is Pickett in at night." Near the end of the school year, one of the pupils wrote a prophecy of what was going to happen to various persons. About me the prophecy was, "Prof. Williams went as a missionary to the cannibal islands. Word came back that he had been eaten. No details were given, but it is assumed that he was boiled, for all who knew him know that roasting would do no good."

Birdie and I were engaged before the end of the school year. She wanted us to get married and go to Cuba on our honeymoon, but I felt it was too risky without an income. Besides, she was young and I thought another year of schooling would be good for her. So I talked her into spending a year in Penn College at my expense. When the College Board met to employ teachers for the next year, I presented my resignation.

I had done so well selling enlarged pictures the last two summers, that I offered to take any of the boys from our college who cared to go. Nine volunteered, and Mr. F. E. Gordon came out from Oskaloosa and gave them some training. We took the train to Lexington, Nebraska, then rode our bicycles across country to Elwood, in sparsely settled southwestern Nebraska. We worked west, and did very well for a while; but, as we got farther west, the houses got so far apart we had to spend most of our time riding between houses, and had little left to canvass. In Holyoke, Colorado, we decided we would have to go to new territory. Only one of us had ever seen a mountain, and we were so close we thought it would be a good time to go. So we took time out to ride to Denver and Pikes Peak. It took us two days and a half to ride to Denver. We put in a little more than a day there, riding street cars and sightseeing buses, visiting the Capitol, etc. We rode to Palmer Lake and spent a half day climbing in the mountains there; then went on to Colorado Springs, riding the last several miles after dark and without lights. We arrived about eight-thirty; found a hotel; had them fix us a lunch; left our wheels; and, took the streetcar for Manitou. We arrived at ten P.M. and had three choices of ways to go up. We could ride the train on the cog railroad for five dollars, or ride a burro for three. We walked up the cog-way.

Everett Myers had lived in Oregon and climbed Mt. Hood. He was going to show the rest of us how to climb a mountain. He and his pal, Asal Kellogg, went on ahead and left the rest of us far behind. Sometime in the wee small hours of the night, we reached Windy Point. A man was there making coffee for a party that was supposed to be coming. Everett and Asal were there, too. We stopped and chatted a little while; and, when we were ready to go on, the two were not able to go on. They had over-exerted in that light atmosphere. They rested a while and turned back.

The man at the Point told us we could never reach the top by sunup, but we were willing to try. The going was tough. Breathing was difficult in that light atmosphere;

the grade was steep; and for the last mile or so, the ties were covered with frost and very slick. When I reached the summit house, and looked out to the east, the sun was just half above the horizon. I could see woods, towns, and cultivated fields with their irrigation ditches for many miles. They all seemed to glisten in the morning sun. It was a wonderful sight to see. It was in August, and I had on summer clothes. With frost everywhere and snow on top of the mountain, I was cold. Normally, I don't drink coffee, but I needed something to warm me up. I went to the hotel, intending to get a cup. When I went to open the door, a man on the inside held it so it wouldn't open but just a crack, and asked me what I wanted. I told him I wanted a cup of coffee, and asked how much it was. "Twenty-five cents."

"All right." And I started to enter.

"You drink it out there. It will be another twenty-five cents to come in and warm." I was cold but not that cold.

I found a ledge where I was able to lie down where the wind couldn't hit me. I looked at the scenery a little longer, but, as the sun rose higher, the beauty faded, and I was getting colder by the minute, so I headed down the mountain. Going down the mountain doesn't take as much breath as going up, but it tires the muscles more. The calves of my legs soon began to hurt. Someone had told me that he had seen a man sitting on a flat rock, and sliding down the rail. If another could do it, why couldn't I? I found the flat rock; put it on the rail; sat down on it; crossed my toes over the rail in front of me, to keep my rock on the rail; and with a heavy stick which I held tightly under my right arm, the lower end bouncing over the ties as a brake, I set sail. That got me down the mountain much faster than walking, and with no sore calves; but I just couldn't sit in that cramped position for very long at a time. I alternated my method of travel several times before I reached the bottom.

After sightseeing in the Garden of the Gods and other places of interest around Colorado Springs, we took the train for Goodland, Kansas, where we wound up our summer's work.

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I visited Everett Myers this summer (1956) at his present home in Long Beach, California. He told me that Paul Quisenbury still lives in Nebraska. He had lost all track of Glen Winship, and all the other six are dead. Quite a mortality rate. Either two-thirds, or seven-ninths, in fifty-three years. Just the opposite to my class in college. After fifty-four years, two-thirds of us are still living.

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On my way east, I stopped at Central City, then went up to Scotia, Neb. and spent Sunday with Birdie in her home. Her father was a family doctor, but also an ardent fisherman. Nothing would do him but that I must stay over another day and go fishing with him. On Monday morning, we got our bait and tackle ready to go in the afternoon. It turned out to be a cold, raw, windy day, and drizzling rain a part of the time. Not fit to be out at all. I just didn't want to go at all; but did want to keep in the good graces of my future father-in-law, so couldn't say no. While we were eating dinner, a man came to get him to go miles into the country to see a sick baby. I was sorry for the baby, but never much gladder of anything in my life, than I was that we couldn't go fishing that day. I spent the afternoon by the kitchen stove visiting with Birdie. I am not an ardent fisherman anyhow.

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After we were married, I discovered that Birdie had some of her father's blood in her veins. Whenever it looked like there might be a possibility, she would say, "Let's go fishing." I was very busy and never could find time. Maybe I didn't try very hard. When our oldest daughter was about a year old, I was sent way out ahead of civilization

to build a section of railroad. We pitched our tent on the high bank of the beautiful Cauto, Cuba's biggest river. "Now," Birdie says, "We'll go fishing." But the Cubans told her that was tidal water and brackish, so there were no fish. The river fish didn't come down that far, and the salt-water fish didn't come up that far; but there were some lagoons back a few miles in the jungle where fishing was fine. That was valuable information; but I was being paid to work, not to fish.

The Cubans have many saints' days, when they don't work. They never tell you when one is coming. Everybody is supposed to know. I went out to work one saint's day and there wasn't a man on the job but my two helpers, a Cuban and a Jamaican, whom I had brought with me. I decided maybe it was time to go fishing, so went by the little store and bought fishing tackle. When I rode up to the tent, Birdie came running out to ask why I had come home.

"I came home to go fishing."

"Oh, you didn't!" But when I held up the fishing tackle, she went into ecstasy and rushed in to get dinner. We took a piece of canvas along for the baby to lie on, and my helpers went along. When we reached the lagoon, and I had cared for the horses, I rushed down to fish, and very soon pulled out a fish six or seven inches long. Then I said, "I forgot, it was you who wanted to fish. I will care for the baby." I went up on the bank where the breeze kept the sandflies and mosquitos away; spread my canvas; and played with the baby all afternoon, while the others fished. The Cuban caught one about the size of mine, the Jamaican caught a turtle, and Birdie didn't get a bite, except sandfly and mosquito bites, of which she got plenty. On the road home, the Cuban said, "I know there are fish in that lagoon. I can't understand why we didn't catch any." Next day was Sunday and he got up early and went back. Before noon he was back with six or eight big, nice ones, and gave us a good mess for dinner. I asked him where he caught them. "Right where we were fishing yesterday. I knew they were there." I told that story a few times, emphasizing the sandfly and mosquito bites Birdie got, and it made her so angry she never asked me to go fishing again.

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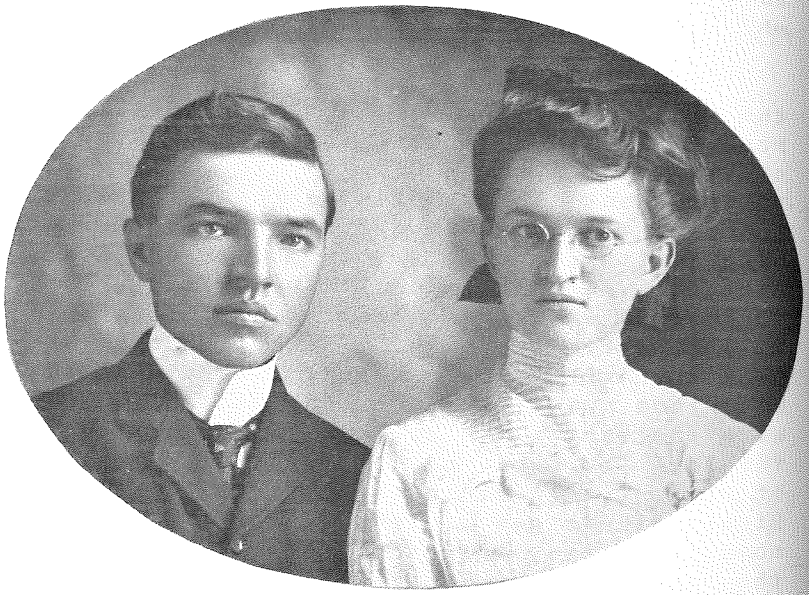
Getting back to my life story, when I left Nebraska, I took Birdie with me as far as Penn College. I spent a few days there, introduced Birdie to my sister, Luella, and set the two of them up keeping house together. It had now been five years since I left Indiana, and four since I was there on a visit. I made that my next port-of-call, visited all my relatives and friends, and prepared for my great adventure.



NOAH WILLIAMS and BIRDIE PICKETT --1903

Chapter 8

CUBA

When the U. S. troops sailed for Cuba in 1898, they sailed from Tampa, Florida; and I just naturally supposed I would sail from there or some other southern port. I was very much surprised when Sylvester Jones wrote me that the best way to come was by way of New York and the Munson Steamship Line. He sent me their address. He might honestly have added, but didn't, that that was the only practical way for a man to come if he didn't speak Spanish. The Florida East Coast Railroad had been built as far as Miami, but had no boat connections to Cuba. Tampa and Mobile both had boats running to Havana, but Havana is a long way from Gibara where I wanted to go. From Havana, you could take a Spanish coastwise freighter along the north coast, or take the train.

The Cuba Company had just finished building its railroad to Santiago de Cuba, but had not yet put on through trains. You could go to Santa Clara the first day, to Camaguey the second, and to San Pedro de Cacocum the third. There you left the railroad. If the weather was dry, you could get a guagua (an army transport) for Holguin, twelve miles away. If the weather was wet, the guagua couldn't get through. If you were lucky, you might get a volanta. They usually got through—but not always. The volanta consisted of two very strong wheels about seven feet high, a strong axle between, a pair of long, strong shafts fastened directly to the axle, and a specie of top buggy body hung in between the shafts, back next to the axle with four strong leather straps. The straps gave it swing but no spring. The only spring in the whole contraption was what you could get out of the shafts and the horses back. It accommodated two passengers, and the fare was five dollars each to ride twelve miles, and there were times when it was really worth it. It was pulled by two horses in dry weather, three in wet, and most of the time it operated it was wet, because the passengers preferred to take the guagua when it could get through. The driver rode the near horse, the middle horse carried the front end of the shafts, and the off horse went along to help pull. You spent the third night in Holguin if you were lucky enough to get passage out of Cacocum, and didn't get stuck in a mud hole, and have to spend it in the road. There was a narrow-gauge train out of Holguin if you could catch it. Just imagine a person going through all that process if he couldn't speak a word of the language.

I wrote to the Steamship Company and got their rates, schedule of sailings, and itinerary. They had two boats, and had sailings every two weeks. They sailed directly from their pier in Brooklyn to Havana; then went east along the north coast, unloading cargo at every port. Gibara was next to the last port of call. The fare was only twenty-five dollars, second class, from New York to Gibara, which seemed cheap even in those days, when you considered the number of days they had to feed you. But their boats were not luxury liners. I made reservations on the Curityba, sailing the latter part of October, 1903. I allowed myself time to do some sightseeing on the way.

The first event of note was what I thought was in Detroit, Michigan. We were stopped what I thought was an unreasonably long time with a train on each side. I got off the train to see if I could learn what it was all about. When I got out where I could see, I discovered that we were not standing in the yards in Detroit; but were on a very large car ferry with other trains, out in the middle of the Detroit River, headed for Windsor, Canada. We spent the rest of the day traveling through Canada, and crossed back into the U.S. at Buffalo, New York, where I spent the night.

Next day I spent at Niagara Falls. The whole thing was wonderful; but what I think impressed me most was my trip back under the Falls. They had built boardwalks along the side of the cliff, so you could walk between the overhanging cliff and the water pouring over the Falls. They dressed us all in oilskins and sent a guide with us. Every once in a while, a gust of wind blowing up the canyon through the falls was so strong it blew so much water in my face I couldn't breathe for a time. I have often thought, "What if some of the cave-offs of recent years had happened while we were under there?" I wonder if anyone was ever caught.

Next morning, going south beside the Hudson River, I saw the biggest flock of crows I ever saw. They were flying north, yet it took many minutes to pass them. Knowing the destructiveness of crows, I wonder how the farmers around where they nest ever raise anything.

On my arrival in New York, I was very much surprised to see horse-drawn streetcars still in operation. In the West they had all been electrified several years before. I took a room at the Y.M.C.A., then set out to see the city. I went up to James M. Davis' office and he told me some of the things I should see. Told me Alexander Dowie was going to preach in Madison Square Garden that night and that, by all means, I should hear him. I went to some of the parks, visited the zoo, had a look at some of the big buildings, and went out on Brooklyn Bridge. This was my first sight of salt-water. I saw ships, barges, tugboats, sailboats, ferryboats, and what have you on East River. One ferryboat had so many freight cars on it I wanted to count them. In order to get a clearer view, and be free of traffic, I climbed up on the banister two or three feet. I had scarcely got to counting when a great big Irish cop, who couldn't speak good English yet, came along and started abusing me, and threatened to run me in.

That night I went to hear Dowie. He had the biggest and most wonderful choir I ever heard. I think they said there were five hundred voices in it. He claimed to be the reincarnation of the prophet, Elijah. He was a very large man. When he came out he was dressed in a rich robe, with lots of gold on it, which he claimed was like Elijah wore. I have my doubts. Elijah was a poor man, not a millionaire; and, furthermore, I doubt if they wove such robes in his time. During his performance, he jumped up and down and ran all around in the pulpit. I would call his discourse much more of a ranting tirade than a sermon. In my case the good impression I had from his choir was pretty much over-balanced by his ranting and gymnastics. He had an audience of several thousand.

Next morning I went aboard. The boat was over three hundred feet long, but its beam was only about forty feet. We were not sailing till afternoon, so I took the opportunity to write home. I told them the boat was far too long to plunge, but I was afraid it would roll if we got a strong side wind. How little I knew about boats! The very first motion we felt was plunging. Our cabin was right up in the bow, just under the forward deck. It was just long enough for the bunks, and wide enough to make a three-foot alley between them. The six bunks were two triple deckers. The only furniture was a washstand anchored to the wall, with an enamel bowl, pitcher, and slop jar that could be anchored down. There wasn't room for any more. If you stayed in your cabin, you laid in bed. There wasn't head room to sit up. There were only five in our cabin, so we used the other bunk to put our grips on. My cabin-mates were: a young doctor, two Hill brothers, eighteen or nineteen, and twenty-one or twenty-two, and a Mr. Nay. He was forty-five years old; had been to La Gloria, Cuba; liked it and bought a tract of land six miles inland, and named it Garden City. Then he went back to the States, organized a company to plant citrus fruit, and was now on his way back as manager of the proposition. All were from New England, and all but the doctor were headed for Cuba's oldest and biggest colony, La Gloria. The doctor was going to La Atalaya, south of Nuevitas Bay.

We sailed in the afternoon. For the rest of that day and two more, the weather was cloudy with just a little breeze, but not enough to make the ship roll. It was cool, but not cold. There was very little to break the monotony—once in a great while a ship in the distance. During the third night, we rounded Cape Hatteras and next morning the boat was pitching. I got up and dressed and took my turn at the washbowl. While washing, I had hard work to keep from butting the cabin wall out. When I went up, the contents of my stomach readily went along; but when I started to come down, there seemed to be considerable hesitancy about their accompanying me, so I laid back down. Soon I heard the doctor call, "Oh, Williams, hurry and come up on deck. We are in the Gulf Stream. We have a lovely, balmy breeze, and the sea is a beautiful blue." When I reached the lower deck, I made a run for the rail where several others were feeding the fishes. I made a couple of heaves but didn't get anything over. Then I looked up on the upper deck, saw the doctor and said, "O, Doc, I've got it."

"Oh, you are kidding."

"No, I am not kidding."

"Well, you have the happiest smile I ever saw on a seasick person's face."

I went up onto the upper deck, and laid down, flat on the hard deck. When breakfast was called, I didn't go down, but the doctor brought me up a sandwich. Pretty soon I felt all right, and continued so just as long as I stayed on deck. The minute I went down in the galley I got sick. As a result, when meals were called, I went down and grabbed something I could eat on deck. I also got my raincoat and slept on deck. I neither ate nor slept below till we reached Havana.

On the fourth day, we were off the coast of Florida and were very much thrilled with the sharp line of demarcation between the blue and green water near the shore; also surprised to see that the water was so deeply colored. As we passed Palm Beach, we saw the famous Breakers Hotel. We went into Havana Harbor on the fifth day. It certainly looked forbidding as we sailed in between Moro Castle on the left and La Forteleza on the right. They were built so that by a crossfire they could catch any buccaneer or enemy ship that tried to enter the harbor. They fulfilled their purpose so long as pirate ships sailed the Spanish Main. A modern shell from one of our big guns would blow them to small smithereens, but even up to and including the Spanish American War no hostile ship ever entered Havana Harbor. At that time (1903), there wasn't a dock on the whole north coast of Cuba with sufficient depth of water to berth the Curityba, so we had to cast anchor out in the bay. Before the anchor hit bottom, we were literally surrounded with small boats—both row and sail. All anxious to either sell us something, or take us somewhere. With Nay as interpreter, our gang hired a sailboat to take us over to Moro Castle. We were very much awed and horrified at the place—the dungeons where, in Spanish times, they locked up political prisoners and threw away the key, and the chute where they threw the dead out to the sharks. Between cruel treatment, starvation, and yellow fever, there were many corpses to throw out every morning. Our boat finished unloading that afternoon, and sailed that night. That became our regular routine—unload cargo by day, and sail at night, with one exception.

If my memory serves me correctly, it was at Sagua la Grande. We had a lot of heavy sugar machinery to unload and the bay was so shallow we couldn't go in. We had to anchor in the open steadway, and for two days the sea was so rough they couldn't bring the lighters alongside. Those were very monotonous days. One day at our request, the Captain sent one of the crew in the ship's launch to take us over to a sandy key for a plunge in the ocean. Those who were used to it got quite a kick out of diving through the waves as they came rolling in. I tried it a couple of times, and didn't think much of the idea. I thought even less of the crust of salt that formed on my body when I dried. We had no fresh water to wash off the salt, nor any towels to rub it off. Just had to let it dry.

Not only my cabinmates, but every passenger in second class, got off at Nuevitas, and left me all alone. A Cuban came on but we could neither one speak the other's language so we weren't much company for each other. Two days later, we reached Gibara, too late to clear port that night. Next morning, Sylvester Jones came aboard with the doctor. I had been thirteen days on board ship. After passing my hand-baggage through customs, we walked to the mission, Sylvester's home.

Gibara was a typical Cuban town of five or six thousand inhabitants. Most of the houses were one story, built one against the other and right out against the street. All the windows had iron bars, which made the houses look like prisons. But the bars were there to keep people out, not to keep them in. The entire yard, or patio, as they call it in Spanish, was back of the house, just the same width, and fenced in with a high brick wall. On top of the wall when they built it, they stood beer bottles as close together as possible, and poured concrete around them. After the concrete was set, they took a club and broke the necks off the bottles, leaving the jagged broken bottle edges sticking up to discourage any scaling operations. Every house owner built his own sidewalk, to the height and width he chose.

They varied from two to three feet in width, and from level with the neighbors, to two feet either higher or lower, as his fancy dictated. The break was always at the property line. They were used much more for sitting on in the cool of the evening, than for walking on, either day or night. Most Americans tried to walk on the sidewalks when they first went there, but soon got discouraged. Cubans and experienced Americans walked in the middle of the street.

Gibara Bay is very open; merely an indentation in the rather high coastline, where a river enters. The town is built on the point where the coastline bends to form the bay, and varies in elevation from five or six feet above sea level on the bay, to near one hundred feet in the west edge of town. The north side is a coral rock headland, exposed to the constant pounding of the sea. In the fifty years since I went there, the sea has claimed several houses and more than a block of street that weren't even close to the cliff in 1903. Starting at the bay in the southeast corner of town there was a high brick wall, with an occasional blockhouse, along the south and west sides of town, to the headland at the northwest corner. The town had but one entrance; a road running around the bay shore, entered at the southeast corner, beside a blockhouse.

As a matter of necessity, every Cuban carried a machete on his belt. It is a big knife, something like a cross between a sword and corn cutter, that can, and frequently is, used for both purposes. On account of fallen trees and vines across the road, he had to carry it with him. When he came to town, in order that there might be no temptation to shed blood, he had to check it and leave it at the blockhouse. While sight-seeing alone one day, I wandered down to the gate. When I saw all these men checking their machetes as they came into town, and picking them up as they went out, I decided I had no business beyond the gate, so turned back to the Mission and told Sylvester what I had seen. He smiled, explained the situation, and assured me I would be perfectly safe, since the Cubans are not a blood-thirsty race. They discontinued the checking before I had been there very long, and men rode right into town wearing their machetes.

When I moved to the country, I, too, had to carry one. I guess I am not built like a Cuban, or didn't start my training early enough. When I carried it on my belt, I was always getting it tangled up with my legs; so, if I had my pony along, I hung it on the saddle.

Another day, I wandered over into the southwest part of town and came to the cemetery. It, too, was surrounded by a high brick wall. I never learned whether the wall was supposed to keep the dead in or the living out. In two corners were brick walls, five or six feet high, built as quadrants of a circle, and the space enclosed was the bone pile. If the relatives of the dead didn't pay the rent on the grave, the bones were dug up and thrown in there after two years.

One day, I wandered down to the ballpark where they were playing baseball, and heard the familiar baseball calls, "ball one, ball two, strike one, foul ball, strike three, out, etc.". I went up to the umpire and said, "I am so glad to find someone who can speak English." All I got was a dirty stare. He never said a word. Baseball is strictly an American game. The Cubans learned to play with the soldiers of occupation, and developed some very good players. After the Army left, they still carried on, using the same terms they had learned from the soldiers, but learned no other English.

I think one of the greatest hardships I had to endure was the water. In the States where I had been, all well water was cold. In Cuba, there is neither cold weather nor snow to cool it, so all water is warm.

Furthermore, around Gibara, the water was so highly mineral it was wholly unfit for human consumption. Ice had not yet been introduced into Gibara, so all the water we had to drink was warm cistern water, and I could hardly stomach it. One day, after Sylvester had assured me it was safe, I went for a walk in the country. Right beside the road, running down into a nearby stream, was a beautiful spring of crystal clear water. I had seen many such springs in the mountains of Colorado the summer before, and the water was almost ice cold. Without a thought of location or conditions I said to myself, "Now I am going to get a real drink of water." I had no cup, so I got down on all fours and put my mouth in. I took a big swallow before I took time to sample it. What a disappointment! It was not only as warm as dishwater, but loaded with some kind of mineral that made it positively undrinkable.

Our land was about thirty miles west of Holguin. Naturally, I was anxious to see it as soon as possible. C. C. Haworth, who was both a schoolmate at Penn and my predecessor at Nebraska Central College, was in charge of the Mission at Holguin. Sylvester wrote him to meet me at the train the following Monday morning.

The railroad was narrow-gauge, hence, the cars were very small. There was no smoking car because everybody smoked—both men and women. Our modern women, who smoke, think they are setting a new fashion, but the Cuban women have been at it for generations. Right across the aisle from me sat a Cuban negro woman, smoking the biggest cigar I had ever seen. Her face was very liberally powdered, and her baby was so heavily powdered one would think she was trying to make it white. The baby cried and the tears plowed furrows down across its cheeks. She couldn't wipe the tears without smearing the powder, so the last I saw of them the baby's face was still furrowed.

Speaking of cigars, most of the women raised their own tobacco and made their own cigars—some of them ten inches long. They were entirely too long to carry on the job, so most of the men smoked cigarettes.

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A few months later, after I was on the farm and had learned a little Spanish, a workman came in to see me one evening about a job. I was cooking supper. As he entered he muttered, "Mucho malo, mucho malo." (too bad, too bad). I asked him what was so bad. "For a man to work hard all day and then have to cook his own supper. You should have a woman." I told him I seemed to be doing all right. "No, it isn't right. You should have a woman. I have three grown daughters over at my house. Come over and get acquainted. You can have your choice." A few nights later there was a dance at the canteen. As I came from work, I rode behind the three of them going to the dance. They were walking duck fashion, one behind the other. Each one had on a dress so long it would sweep the road if not carried. They wore slippers that only the toes slipped into, and the soles flopped. They carried their dresses with their left hands, and their dancing slippers under their left arms, leaving their right hands free. Each one had a cigar, seven or eight inches long, in her mouth; and, every once in a while, with her free hand she would remove the cigar from her mouth and spit clear across the road. I just thought, "Wouldn't I be happy, and think a lot of myself, tied up to one of them for the rest of my life?"

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Getting back to my story. Mr. Haworth met me at the train, and took me down and introduced me to Enos H. McCracken, a Quaker, originally from Pleasant Plain, Iowa. Right after the Civil War, he went down into Mississippi as a missionary to teach the freed Negroes. His wife was also a northerner and taught there. I am not quite sure but think they met there. From Mississippi he went out to Hoxie, Kansas, and took up a homestead. Somewhere along the line he studied law and hung up his shingle to practice. He mixed farming and law till his boys got big enough to take over the farming. After the Spanish American War, he decided Cuba would be a good place to do missionary work. When he learned that the Quakers had opened a mission at Holguin, he rented his farm out, loaded his family, bag and baggage, onto the train and went there.

He promptly ran into the language barrier, which he didn't have in Mississippi. But he was a man of courage. Someone told him that the Cubans didn't speak correct Spanish. He wanted his children to learn to speak it correctly, so he bought a book, "Spanish in Forty Lessons Without a Teacher", and opened up a private school, with his wife, two daughters, and two oldest sons as pupils, and himself as teacher. His two little boys were too young to learn Spanish, so he shooed them out-of-doors so they would not disturb the school. Boy-like they went over to play with the neighbor boys, in spite of their very bad Spanish. I don't know how long school went on but one day Enos McCracken started to town to get some groceries. Preston, the older of the two youngest, asked to go along. At the store, the old man took out his dictionary and looked up the Spanish name of some article he wanted to buy. The clerk couldn't understand his Spanish; but the boy did, and translated it to the clerk, and he brought out the article. The old man was making progress, so looked up another article and asked for it. Whether it was his pronunciation or whether the dictionary gave a word which was not in common use in Cuba, which frequently happened, neither the clerk nor the boy understood him. The clerk asked the boy what his father wanted, and he in turn asked his father. He told him, then added, "But you wouldn't know." The boy promptly told the clerk what was wanted. With the boy's help he finished his purchases; went home; laid his books up on the shelf; dismissed school and told the older boys to get out and find themselves some jobs. Whenever he had any talking to do, he took Preston along. Whenever I was around Holguin I used this same boy as my interpreter until I learned to be my own.

Soon after the McCrackens went to Cuba, a lot of Americans began wandering over the place looking for land to buy. When the army made its sale preparatory to leaving Cuba, McCracken bought two cavalry horses and an army wagon; learned a few Spanish words from his children and the neighbors—not from the book—and set himself up as a guide to help Americans find what they wanted. He also studied legal Spanish, so he could translate Spanish deeds into English. He never did learn to really speak Spanish; but did learn enough words to get by, and with his horses was able to render a great service to people who wanted to get around the country.

I hired him and his two horses to take me to my farm next day. I had not sat in a saddle since I left Kansas eleven years before, and I really felt awkward and out of place. My farm lay along the Camino Real (Kings Highway) to the west, between Holguin and Victoria de las Tunas. That Kings Highway should be taken with a grain of salt. It was an Indian trail through the woods before the Spaniards ever came to Cuba. They widened it out so they could get through it with an ox cart. When it got so muddy they couldn't get through it any longer, they cut a new road around the mud hole. Over the years houses had been built along it in places, and land cleared around the houses. In the heavy woods the sun never shown through down onto the road, and in the low places it was muddy almost all the year around. If the traffic was light, you could wade right through the mud. If the traffic was heavy, the mud got worked up so deep you simply had to cut a new road. The houses were always built, and land cleared, on the higher ground; so with the combination of naturally dryer ground and sunshine, the road stayed put in front of the houses but no work was ever done on it to make it what we would call a highway. In the dry season you could get over it very well with an ox-cart; but in the rainy season it was frequently quite difficult to get over it in the low places even on horseback.

These oxcarts were of various sizes. In and around the cities they used small ones with one or two yoke of oxen. In the country where they hauled big loads long distances, they were enormous things. The wheels were eight feet high, very heavy, and strongly built. The tall wheel has many advantages. The bigger circumference rolls over obstructions more easily; you can straddle taller stumps, and you can work your muddy road up much deeper before the axle drags. The usual team on these carts is anywhere from three to six yoke of oxen, depending on the road and load. One time I had eleven yoke on one heavy load to get it across a muddy stream and up a hill.

How far was it out to my farm? I very much doubt if I will ever know. The natives called it ten leagues which the Americans promptly translated thirty miles. According to my book of equivalents, ten leagues is twenty-six and a half miles. I very much doubt if it had ever been measured; but in real muddy weather you would swear it was forty if you had to travel it.

Holguin is on a big savanna at the foot of a big granite mountain. We got rather a late start and rode for something like three hours on the savanna. We forded the Matamoros River and climbed up onto a rocky ridge that with a few small breaks for streams, lasted us till mid-afternoon. It was supposed to be the beginning of the dry season, but evidently it was not yet well begun, for we rode through several showers during the day with dry road in between. We both had raincoats so we didn't let the rain bother us. McCracken never rode his horses out of a walk, so we progressed slowly. When we came down off the long ridge, we entered a beautiful valley and he said, "This is a rich valley and your farm is in it." We passed a few palm-leaf shacks between strips of tall woods. There was either a rail or pole fence around each one, and all the ground inside the fence was clean of all vegetation and kept swept same as the house which had a dirt floor. Children playing in the yards were as naked as they were born. The mothers staring at us were smoking their ever-present big cigars. A few cattle around the houses were as fat as butter.

We reached my farm shortly before sundown. It had on it what had been a very good, well-built palm-leaf shack, with a good rail fence around it. Whether the former owner thought the sides and roof cap of the house were a part of the furniture and took them with him, or someone else stole them after he was gone, I don't know. They were gone. So I had a very good palm-leaf roof—except for the roof cap—resting on twelve good solid posts. I also had a well, which was a rarity in that part of the country, and an acre-and-a-half or two acres of bearing platinos. Platino is the Spanish for cooking banana. The platino patch was in surprisingly good condition, and the fence around it was intact. There were some fifteen or twenty acres of Guinea grass, higher than a horse's back, along the front, and all the rest was primeval jungle. It was unsurveyed land and supposed to be somewhere around three hundred acres—merely supposition, as I learned later—very much to my sorrow. We had brought quite a bit of lunch with us, so staked our horses out to grass, ate our suppers, and hung up our hammocks. Simultaneously, I spent my first night in a hammock, and under my own roof.

Next morning McCracken took me around

and introduced me to some of my neighbors. They all shook hands with me; were very friendly; and seemed glad to see me. Some of them had quite a bit to say, but I didn't get the benefit of it as I wasn't listening in their language, and McCracken was unable to put much of it across. I wanted to see my nearest railroad station, so we went on west to where the Bayamo Road turns off, and followed that to the railroad, a distance that the Cubans call three leagues. The trains stopped there on signal; but there wasn't a siding nor a building of any sort there. We went on a mile or more beyond the railroad and visited Andreas Lindelie, a friend of McCracken's. He was a Norwegian who went to North Dakota in his youth; met and married a Norwegian girl, who was born in the U.S.; then moved to St. Petersburg, Florida, where he ran a Norwegian language newspaper. After the Spanish American War, he got the Cuban bug and here he was.

There I saw something that to me was really astounding. They talked English in the home, but had an old man living with them who spoke nothing but Norwegian. Their little girl, five or six years old, played with the Cuban children, and could listen in any of the three languages and interpret what she heard to either of the other two. It made me feel pretty dumb. Here, at five or six years of age, she could handle three languages; and I, a grown man, with a college education, couldn't handle but one.

Lindelie's cattle ranch wasn't very big, so later he sold it, built a house up by the railroad and put in a small creamery, buying his milk from the Cubans and a couple of Norwegian ranchers. I have a strong suspicion it was the first creamery in Cuba, and know it was the first industry of any kind in that part of the island. Later an enterprising Norwegian bought a big tract of land down near Santiago, and started a Norwegian colony, naming it Bayate. There were enough

people there to start a school, and Lindelie's children were badly in need of schooling. He could be of service to his countrymen, so he sold out and went there. The last time I saw him, which was several years later, he had turned sugar planter there and was doing quite well.

Instead of returning to Holguin by the road we had come, we only returned as far as the railroad. We followed the railroad many miles till we came to a road going to Holguin, and followed that. We had been gone three days.

I returned to Gibara as planned, and told Sylvester I just couldn't figure out how I could live out there without some knowledge of Spanish. He agreed with me, and I sat down and studied Spanish for five weeks with him as my teacher. You can't learn a language out of a book in five weeks, but you can get a foundation. To learn it, you must both hear it and practice it. By that time my feet were beginning to itch to get into action.

So, January 1, 1904, I started to put things in motion. Sylvester had an American friend, Peter Smith, across the bay in Santa Rosalia, raising pineapples. We took a sailboat and went over there to get him to help us buy me a pony. He furnished us a horse each and he went with us out among his neighbors looking for one. We found a very small mare that we bought for $55.00. (I sold much bigger and better ones for ten dollars each before I left Cuba.) The seller promised to get the deed (Propiedad) to her and bring her and the deed to Smith's next morning. You had deeds to horses and cattle just the same as to land.

Next morning Sylvester went with me to ship my trunk to Holguin, and buy a saddle. Then he put me on a sailboat for Santa Rosalia, and I was on my own. The first thing that happened was we were becalmed in the middle of the bay for two or three hours.

It was my first experience along that line, and I remembered Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" and his "Painted ship upon a painted ocean". We didn't make port till around one o'clock, and then I had to walk and carry my saddle for more than a mile to Smith's. The Cuban had been as good as his word. The pony was there waiting for me. Mrs. Smith fixed me a hasty lunch, and I took off.

Smith gave me a start in the right direction and told me he was sorry, but when I got to the end of his directions I would have to inquire. There was no Camino Real from Santa Rosalia to Holguin. Just trails from house to house. When I got to a house, my Spanish went just far enough to ask if this was the road to Holguin. If there was more than one road, someone would usually come out and point to the right one and come out with a great long string of Spanish, none of which I understood, until near the end of his speech I could understand that I should follow the straight road. There was no place where I could possibly get lost. They probably couldn't get lost because they knew the road; but they would really have been surprised had they known how many times I managed to get lost that afternoon, in spite of the fact that I couldn't, and had to turn back to the next fork in the road. Once, during the afternoon, I stopped to inquire of a Negro working beside the road. He said, "Oh, you want to go to Holguin. Well, there just ain't any main road." Then he began to give me instructions in a language I could understand. Was I glad to see him! He had been a soldier in the famous Tenth Negro Cavalry, had mustered out in Cuba, married and settled down there. Just before dark, I came out onto a big savanna and could see the lights in Holguin. It was still a long way off, and reminded me of the stories of Bible times when the Jews were going up to Jerusalem to the Passover. They traveled in very long caravans and when the first ones came in sight of Jerusalem, they called back,

"The City is in sight!", and others repeated it clear back to the rear. Had the woods lasted much longer, I would have been in a real jam. I didn't have my hammock; the country Cubans had no place to entertain guests; I couldn't ask for a night's lodging anyhow; and I definitely could not have seen to travel through that woods. But luck was with me! It was light enough on the savanna so I could see the trail; and though there were many trails, they all converged on Holguin, and I had the city lights for a beacon whenever I came onto a hill. It took me till nine o'clock to reach McCracken's.

The next morning McCracken told me that the owner of the canteen at San Lorenzo, which was just beyond my place, bought his supplies at the Italian store near him, and suggested that I take Preston as interpreter, and go and see if they knew when a cart from San Lorenzo would be in. The Italian said he had no certain knowledge just when there would be a cart in, but one should be in most any day now. Preston and I scoured around town and bought me an Army cot, a second-hand table with two chairs, some barbed wire to fence my pasture, some smooth wire to fix my house, a machete, a lamp, some kerosene, some dishes, some cooking dishes, and a big box to make a cupboard. Then we settled down at McCracken's to wait for the cart, checking with the Italian twice daily.

When it finally came, the driver said he had a load; it wasn't his cart and he had no orders to take anything but the load for the canteen. McCracken said he had been trying to keep out of taking me because it was a very hard trip, both for him and the horses; but, now, he could see no other way but to take me in his wagon. By this time, we were well into the dry season, but that gumbo mud dries awfully rough. The wagon was too narrow to run in the cart ruts, and too wide to run between them. Where the road was cleared wide enough, and it wasn't too rough outside the rut, we could straddle one rut and got along fairly well. Those cart ruts were deep; and, for most of the way, we had to drive with two wheels in a rut and the others bouncing along on the hard, rough rim of the other rut. In some cases the rut was so deep the axles dragged for short distances. McCracken had been quite right. It was indeed a hard trip on both man and horses. Mr. Martin, Head of the Quaker Cuban Mission, had a tent which he loaned me to hang up on one side of my house till I could get some sides on it, and protect myself from wind and rain. It sure came in very handy. McCracken stayed over one day to rest his horses.

Probably the most important tree in the country-Cuban's economy is the royal palm. It is not only useful but very majestic, and graces almost every landscape. The nuts are good hog feed; the long leaves, although not as good as the leaves of the guano palm, make very good thatch for roofing houses; the shell of the hard, dead trunk, when split, makes very substantial siding for houses; and the enormous leaf scales ("yagua", in Spanish) are in great demand for capping roofs; siding houses; wrapping tobacco bales for shipping; and, many other purposes. My immediate interest in them was to get some yaguas to cap and side my house. Hilario Vega lived beside the biggest grove in that neighborhood, so I got McCracken to go over with me to see him and make a deal with him to collect and flatten out enough yaguas for my immediate use.

That night it was quite cold. McCracken wanted to get home early, so he got up and started long before day next morning. I got up with him to help him get away. It was so cold I went back to bed to get warm, and slept till the sun warmed things up. When I did get up and look around, I was almost sick. A stranger in a foreign land, I couldn't talk to any of my neighbors. I had so much work to do! A lot of it I had no idea how to do; and, of what I did know how to do, I had no idea where I should begin. My first problem was to straighten up my house. I didn't have much furniture, but where should I put what little I did have to keep it from getting wet? There wasn't a wall in the house, neither outside nor in. The trade wind blows from the northeast. My house was long-way east and west, and had a tie pole running through the middle the short way. I hung my tent, partly over the tie pole and partly over the north plate, forming a northeast corner in the west-half of the house. I put my bed close in the corner, then put the other things as close as possible, taking care not to get any closer to where the north wall should be than was absolutely necessary, and keeping as far as possible from under where the roof cap should be. Sometime during the morning, two men climbed over the yard fence and came toward the house. They acted friendly, so I invited them in. One was tall and slender, and slightly mulatto; the other short and evidently white. Both wore mustaches and goatees.

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During Spanish times the government and the Catholic Church were one and the same; so when Cuba rebelled against Spain, she also rebelled against the Catholic Church. Superstition and religious training run deep, so the Cubans wanted the priests to baptize them, marry them and bury them; and they spend the rest of their lives cursing the priesthood and everything that pertains to the Catholic Church. Consequently, no Cuban would shave his upper lip. He said it made him look like a Catholic priest. The priests all shave smooth.

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I learned later that the tall one was Jacinto Morales, a Cuban; the other was Jose' Diego, a Spaniard, and a nephew of Enrique Diego, the owner of the San Lorenzo canteen. Jacinto was very quiet; didn't say a word the whole time he was there. Jose' talked like a streak of lightning. The trouble was I couldn't understand anything he said. I finally caught the word lapiz (lead pencil), and got him a pencil and paper. He wrote something; but I couldn't decipher his hieroglyphics, so couldn't look it up in the dictionary. The lightning rolled on a while longer and I caught the word agua (water). I went and got him a cup of water. He shook his head, no, no, no. He pointed up to the open ridge of my house and repeated, agua, agua, agua, raised his hand high, spread his fingers about half-open, pointed them downward and lowered his hand by jerks. I finally got the idea. It was going to rain through that opening and I should have it fixed. I knew that already. The only question was How? After a lot more lightning, and a lot of patience on both sides, I got the idea that Jacinto wanted the job of fixing it, and would work for one dollar a day, Spanish silver, which was about seventy-three cents, at that time. I hired him; then Jose' wanted the job of collecting the yaguas to fix it with. I got the idea across to him that Hilario Vega was collecting them. Then he wanted to know how I was going to get them home. I pointed to my pony, and he shook his head, and insisted that I should have a cart. I asked him if he had one, and he said he had, so I made a deal with him to haul them.

Some more rapid-fire one-sided conversation, and I caught the word platino. I decided that Jacinto was short on rations, and wanted to know if he could have some of my platinos. I had plenty, so nodded that he might. By that time it was noon; but it had been a very profitable morning for all three of us. I cooked my dinner; and, while I was eating, Jacinto went by going toward my platino patch. When he didn't come back, I began to wonder if he was going to cut all the platinos that were ready to cut, and how he was going to get them to the house, so went down to see. To my very great surprise, he wasn't cutting platinos at all. Instead, he was gathering the dry leaves from around the bases of the plants, tying them in bundles, and piling them up beside the fence. He hadn't been very loquacious up at the house, so I didn't bother him with any, to him, foolish questions. I guessed from the way he took hold of things that he knew what he was doing, and decided I would learn much faster by watching him, than by stopping him from work to engage in any attempt at conversation. The platino leaves were to make a cushion or pad on the ridge of the house, under the yaguas, so they wouldn't split and let the rain in, when bent over the ridge.

After he carried the dry platino leaves to the house, he went to the woods and cut a lot of poles and carried them to the house. In the meantime Jose' had arrived with the yaguas. The last thing Jacinto did that evening was to spread the yaguas out all over the yard, and sprinkle them heavily, so they would be pliable in the morning. The first thing he did next morning was to gather them up; flatten them out as well as he could; pile them up one on the other; and, weight them down. Next he laid one end of his biggest, heaviest poles on the edge of the roof; tied some platino leaves to one end of a long rope; threw the other end of the rope across the comb of the house; climbed up on the house and seated himself astride the roof. Then the ignorant, unlettered Cuban laborer became the master builder, and the well-educated college professor, owner of the job, became the very dumb helper. I did know enough Spanish to tie the articles onto the rope that he asked for. With the help of another Cuban that just happened along at the psychological moment, and my fine wire, we got the roof fixed and did a very good job of it.

Next I wanted some sides on my house. Since I knew I didn't have enough yaguas, I decided to enclose only the west half, leaving the east half as a kind of glorified porch, which many of the Cubans did. There were already posts at the midway on both sides, and a tie pole across between them at the top, to keep the weight of the roof on the rafters from spreading them apart—the same one I had hung my tent on. I showed him where I wanted the door from the porch into my inner chamber. He set a post in the earth floor each side of the door, and wired them to the tie pole. Then, beginning at the north-side of the door, he wired small, horizontal poles to the posts about twelve or fourteen inches apart, clear around the west half of the house to the south-side of the door. Then he disappeared, and I wondered what had become of him. I have no idea where he had to go to get them, but eventually he reappeared with a big wooden needle, and a double handful of strips of the yare' palm, with which to sew the yaguas to the sides of the house. He took one of his small poles; hung the small end loosely to the fourth pole from the bottom; stood a yagua up beside the door; and had me hold it, while he put the big end of the pole even with the pole that was wired to the post but outside of the yagua, and sewed through the yagua above and below the poles and tied the poles together, clamping the yagua fast. He repeated the process on the bottom pole, then put in another yagua and sewed it fast, and so on till we ran out of yaguas, which was about half way across the south-side of the room. Then we put outside poles to all the inside poles, and sewed them fast. There the siding had to wait till Hilario could collect more yaguas.

The well had been standing open ever since the former owner moved away, so I didn't consider it safe to drink the water till it was cleaned out. I got the idea across to Jacinto all right as to what I wanted, but he had an idea of his own. He looked down in the well, then pointed to himself, and down in the well, and shook his head. He wasn't going down in the well. I pointed to myself, looked down in the well, pointed my finger down, and nodded. That was fine. He drew the water out. I slipped into some old clothes; tied a loop in one end of the well rope; put my foot in it and reached for the other end of the rope to let myself down. He said no, and took a turn around a nearby post to ease me down. It didn't occur to me to even wonder how I was going to get out, till I was almost done. Then I really began to worry. I was heavier than he, so he couldn't possibly draw me out. The rope was plenty long for me to draw myself out, but how was I going to tell him to throw me the other end? It seemed that things just had a way of working themselves out to my advantage. At just the right time, a neighbor came along, Jacinto called him in and the two of them drew me up.

I had no stove, so hunted up three stones and laid them on the ground in my porch in such a way that I could cook on them. The first full day that Jacinto worked, I put my dinner on and watched it while I helped him. He seemed to turn up his nose at my food—ate but very little. Next day just before dinner, his wife brought a big bowl of ajiaco. (ä heé yäco) That is the Spanish for a little of everything in the house thrown into one pot and boiled together, with great quantities of garlic. At the table I offered him some food and he said, "No. Este si, es sabroso." (This, yes,is very good.) He helped himself sumptuously; I took a little but just couldn't eat it. I had never tasted garlic; didn't know what it was; and just couldn't stomach it. Over the years I learned to eat it but I never did learn to like it. When he went home he insisted that I have what was left. I set it in the cupboard till morning, then saw some hogs outside my fence and fed it to them.

My first Sunday was positively the lonesomest day I ever spent. During the week I was too busy to be lonesome. But on Sunday I rested, as was my custom, so I had plenty of time to be sorry for myself. I was something new in the neighborhood, a strange animal so to speak. Several times during the day a bunch of young men came to see me. I invited them in; showed them seats on my two chairs, the bed, and some rolls of barbed wire. They would sit there a while and mumble to each other, then some one would say, "Vamos", (let's go) and they left. If they said anything to me, I didn't understand it; and, if I tried to talk to them, they couldn't understand it. I was far more lonesome having people all around that I couldn't talk to, than when I was all alone. By the next Sunday, I had made up my mind I was going to at least turn these visits to my advantage. Every time I saw anyone look at anything, I would either put my hand on it or point to it and say, "Como se llama?" (What do you call it?) That seemed to break the ice; they were friendly; glad to help me; and stayed longer. I wasn't so lonesome, and right there I began to really learn Spanish.

My next job was fencing my pasture. I took my ax and went down in the woods and started cutting fence posts. My neighbor on the east, Joaquin Amador, hearing an ax in the woods, came over to see what was going on. I tried to tell him I was going to fence my pasture, and showed him the posts I had cut. He shook his head and said, "No serve." (No good.) The kind of wood I had cut wouldn't last six months in the ground. He very kindly went with me through the woods and blazed trees that would make lasting posts——a very helpful service. If he explained one thing, he didn't get it across. That was which trees would split, and which ones had to be used round. The almaqui and baria split fine, but when I tried to split tengui I was in trouble. When I drove a wedge in, it stuck fast. If I put another wedge in to loosen that, unless it was right against the first, it stuck, too. Result, I had to literally cut that timber in two endwise, by driving one wedge right against the other through the whole length of the timber. After that, if I cut a tengui for posts, I used it round, regardless of how big it was. After I got my posts cut, I needed them hauled. Emilio Peralta had a sled that he used to haul water on, and a yoke of oxen. He wanted to haul them, and we agreed on a price. One day went by; no posts. Two days; no posts. On the third day I went to see him and asked him if he was going to haul my posts. Certainly he was going to haul them. "When?" "Manana o' pasada, lo mismo." (Tomorrow or next day; it's all the same.) His oxen hadn't come home. That was one of the hardest things I had to put up with. To make the Cubans understand that when I wanted a thing done I wanted it done today, not next week. Time didn't mean a thing to them.

One day, not long after I went to my place, Lindelie came by going to Holguin, and stopped for a chat. He told me that two Norwegian friends of his, Birk and Thompson from North Dakota, had bought a cattle ranch about two miles south of his, and were going next day to Las Paras, a cattle ranch ten or a dozen miles west of me, to buy some cattle. He suggested I meet them over there, and maybe we could buy together. I met them and their interpreter, Mr. Hoe, also a Norwegian. He had spent several years as a coffee planter in Peru, where he learned his Spanish. Las Paras didn't have enough cattle, and wanted too much for what they did have.

Cuba had been denuded of cattle during the war, and now there were several shippers in Camaguey, shipping cattle in from Porto Rico, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, and Texas. They decided to go to Camaguey and try their luck there and asked me to join them. I met them at the train on the appointed day. The man that came with them to take their horses back to the ranch also took mine. In Camaguey we went to Hotel Norman. By modern standards it wasn't much of a hotel, but it was operated on the American plan, and was the only hotel in town where English was spoken.

Consequently, all the Americans went there. Old man Norman was a German, but he had lived many years in the U.S. and all his children were born there, and all the family was very sociable. It seemed more like living in one big family than living in a hotel. We shopped around a few days before we bought anything. Then bought the last of two shipments. A Texan named Damon had something over one hundred he had brought from home, and a Cuban had thirty he had shipped in from Porto Rico. One third of the Porto Rican cattle was just the size of my pocketbook, so I bought them. We loaded the cattle, then Birk and Thompson went home on the passenger train, and I rode the freight with the cattle. I didn't have my pasture fence completed yet so I left my cattle with Birk and Thompson till I could finish it. I was gone from home just a week, with my house all open, and the Cubans hauling water from my well, yet I never missed a thing.

When Sylvester Jones had gone out looking for our land, Zenas Martin, Superintendent of Quaker Missions in Cuba, and Luther Hill, son of a banker at Earlham, Iowa, also looking for land, had gone along. Luther Hill was a graduate of Penn College, class 1894. I had never met him, but his brother, Harry, and sister, Mabel, were there when I was. Martin bought a tract of more than a thousand acres, all grass, just across the road from mine. Hill bought a tract just across a north-and-south road from the west end of Martin's land. It had some five or six hundred acres, and was about half grass and half jungle. Since I had bought some cattle, I was in a hurry to get my fence finished, so hired a Cuban to help me.

About the time I got my fence finished, Hill showed up to go to work on his land. Hill's place didn't even have a roof on it that wasn't occupied; and, furthermore, he had no desire to live alone, so asked if he might move in with me. A few days later he, Jacinto and I went after my cattle. Just

after we crossed the railroad we met a very unusual cavalcade—three unusually tall men, apparently Americans, and dressed alike. They wore light colored shirts, khaki riding breeches, polished leather leggings, and northwest mountie hats, and were riding Cuban fashion, one behind the other. Behind them came two peons (common country laborers) leading two pack horses. One pack was suitcases; the other a full surveyor's outfit. When strangers in a foreign land meet people from their own country, they usually stop and get acquainted. So did we.

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Erwin Marx and Philip Windsor had been classmates and pals in Iowa's Cornell College of Engineering. Just at the time they graduated, Sir William Van Horne was building his railroad from Santa Clara to Santiago de Cuba and needed engineers. They both took jobs, came down together and were assigned adjoining residencies of the railroad to build. Marx's residency just happened to be the one right there. Sometime during construction, they learned of a cattle ranch down near Bayamo that was for sale; and, with money from home, they went down and bought it. After the railroad was finished, they went to Havana, and, on the strength of their diplomas from Cornell, got licenses to practice engineering in Cuba, something that American engineers could not do after General Wood's Administration. Then they formed the partnership of Marx and Windsor, and hung out their shingle in Camaguey as engineers. Though they got some business, it was not too brisk, so Windsor took charge of the engineering and Marx took over the cattle end of their business. He dug up Luis Milanés, the third member of this trio, and put him in as manager of their cattle ranch. Milanes was the tallest Cuban I ever knew; spoke English without an accent; was educated in the U.S.; and, I thought he was an American until Windsor told me differently. While

Milanés fenced their cattle ranch, Marx went over to Texas and bought a whole shipload of cattle. They stocked the ranch and sold the rest. They had just been down and surveyed their ranch and were returning to Camaguey when we met. I had no inkling of it at the time, but that accidental meeting, and short acquaintance with Erwin Marx proved to be one of the important turning points in my life. It saved my Cuban adventure from utter failure, and changed my whole career from farm boy, college professor, and adventurer, to a successful career as a civil engineer.

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Shortly after I got my cattle home, Hill went to an army sale in Santiago and bought a big army mule and a heavy army cart. By that time I was beginning to get a little smattering of Spanish. Hill's first job was to fence his farm, so he hired me to hire and supervise his Cuban help. Hill grew up in Iowa, and I in Indiana, where you set fence posts big end down, and at least two and a half feet in the ground so the frost won't lift them out. It never occurred to either one of us that where there was no frost to lift posts, it would not be necessary to set them so deep. We hired the posts cut by contract, then went to work to build the fence.

It was the dry season and the ground was very hard. He had brought a post augur with him, and we borrowed some light crow bars from the Cubans. They keep them to dig the holes to set the posts for their houses. I hired a bunch of Cubans, and we went to work laboriously digging all the holes two and a half feet deep. Americans, as a race, are very conceited; think they know about all there is to know; and, that the poor, unlettered peoples of the rest of the world know very little. I learned the hard way that we could get a whole lot of very valuable information from the ignorant Cubans, if we would only turn off our own conceit long

enough to listen, and also use our power of observation. One thing we learned was about fencing, but we learned it too late to help Hill. It helped me many times during my years in Cuba. Had Hill waited till the rainy season to build his fence he could have saved several hundred dollars. The Cubans sharpen the little end of their posts; then, when the ground is good and soft, two men will chug a post down a few times, wobbling it between chugs; then, tamp the dirt around it well and it will hold the fence just as well as the posts we so laboriously dug in. Two good men could set more posts in a day, than our whole crew could set in twice the time. All these Cubans knew this, but they all had jobs, and other jobs in that neighborhood simply did not exist. So why should they volunteer information they had not been asked for, and talk themselves out of their jobs to save the dumb Americano's money? He had lots of it.

In stringing the wire, we had it over the Cubans just as much as they had it over us in setting posts. Two Cubans run a rod through a spool of wire and carry it slowly along between them. Barbs catch and they have to stop and loosen them, or they will pull loose, spin the spool and the wire will jump off and scratch them, as well as delay them. Hill fixed the back end of his cart so he could run a rod through two spools of wire, place the rod in the groove, and have a man hold a pole under each roll as a brake, so it wouldn't unroll too fast nor jump. The barbs soon chewed the poles up, but the woods were full of poles. Thus the two of them strung two wires just as fast as the mule could walk, and no one got hurt. I took a bunch of men and stretched the wire and nailed it up just about as fast as Hill and his man could string it. Martin had had his posts set the rainy season before but had never got around to put the wire on. He was out one day and saw how we put wire on, so hired us to move over onto his place, as soon as Hill's fence was finished, and put his wire on.

Luther's brother, Harry, whom I knew in college, was coming down to help Luther farm. For some reason he was long overdue and didn't come till the rainy season was in full swing. Luther borrowed my pony and raincoat and met him where the road and railroad crossed. The train arrived just about dark in a driving rain. They had to ride that three leagues (eight miles) in the dark and rain, and some places the road just about didn't have any bottom to it. When they arrived, Harry was a real disgusted boy. They spent the next day or two riding around their farm and the neighborhood, then went to Holguin and spent a few days more. After they returned from Holguin, Luther said, "We have looked things over pretty well now, it's time we talk things over and decide what we are going to do. Are we going into the cattle business, or are we going to farm? If we are going to farm, what are we going to raise?"

Harry said, "I don't know what you are going to do; but I know what I am going to do. I am going back to Iowa."

"Look here, that isn't fair to me. I wrote you fully of the conditions here before I bought the land, and you wrote me to buy it and you would come down and help me farm it."

"Yes, I know all about that. But reading about a thing on paper, and getting out and experiencing it are two entirely different things. I am going back to Iowa."

I spoke up and said, "If you are going back on account of your intended, send and have her come down and I will send for mine, too. The girls can come down together and live as neighbors."

"Live out here, thirty miles from the Post Office, over the kind of road we have just come over. I wouldn't let her come if she wanted to."

Luther said, "If you are going back to Iowa, I am going, too. I am not going to stay alone. I bought this place on your recommendation, and everything was planned on the basis of you helping to operate it."

"I can't help that. I am going back to Iowa."

To ordinary mortals it looks like that was his fatal mistake. Had he stayed there he doubtless would have lived many more years. He went back to Iowa and married. Shortly after the birth of their only child, they were in an elevator in a building in Des Moines, when the cable broke, and both of them, together with fourteen other people, were killed. I never learned whether the baby was with them and survived the shock, or if she was some place else. Be that as it may, the administrator of his estate sued the elevator company and got enough out of it to pay for rearing and educating her, and her Aunt Mabel took charge of her.

Seeing that there was no chance of persuading Harry to stay, Luther set about getting ready to go, too. On his way down, Harry had stopped in Havana and bought a wagon with harness, and other things they expected to need on the farm. Now they had to sell them. I bought their harness, wagon, hogs, and mule, and they sold the rest to the Cubans, or left them with me to sell and send them the money. When they were ready to go, I hitched to my new wagon and hauled them to the railroad, and I was alone again.

Having bought Hill's hogs, the next thing was to build a place to put them. I hired Antonio Peralta to split rails to build them a pasture fence. One morning his son, Pepe, came to the house looking very pale and disturbed. He wanted to borrow a vessel to carry some water down to where they were working. He said his father was killed.

"Killed?"

"I am afraid so."

I went with him to where they had been working. His father evidently had been knocked unconscious, but was now sitting on a log with a quid of tobacco on the left corner of his forehead, and looking pretty solemn. He had cut a tree down for rails, and it had hung on another tree, and wouldn't fall. So he started to cut the other tree and let them fall together. The pull of the tree he had cut put such a tension on the other that when he cut in a little way the cut off part split, and kicked backwards hitting him in the forehead. I asked him if he was very badly hurt and he said he was afraid so.

At the house I had a first-aid kit consisting of sterilized gauze, absorbent cotton, a roll of bandages, and a bottle of arnica. I told him if he would come to the house I would dress his wound. I heated some water; got my first-aid kit and prepared for action. I had previously fainted a few times—once or twice when I tried to walk while suffering with inflammatory rheumatism, and, at least twice, when in the presence of accidents to others. When I took the quid of tobacco off his wound, and saw his brain with pieces of bone sticking out of it, things began to whirl and turn dark. Somehow I was able to tell myself that I couldn't faint now because this man had to have help and there was no one to help him but me. I don't know yet how I did it, but I managed to pull myself together; used the scissors as pincers to pick the pieces of bone out of the brain; washed the wound; covered it with gauze and absorbent cotton and bandaged it. After he was all fixed up, I remembered I had not applied one bit of antiseptic, so I just soaked the whole thing with arnica. He felt so good he wanted to go back to work, but I told him he should not get hot. I dressed the wound every few days until he recovered.

It was the rainy season. The sun was hot, and there were ten leagues of very bad roads between him and a doctor, and no possible way to go except on horseback. I very much doubt if he would have survived the journey. On the other hand, I didn't know it then but was later told, that if anyone had reported me I would have been sent to jail for practicing medicine without a license.

When the wound healed, there was a groove in his skull you could lay your finger in. I was in Cuba in 1945, forty-one and a half years later, and took the trouble to hunt him up. He was then past eighty and in rather poor health, but still living. I feel sure it was my care that had given him that lease on life. The bone, over the years, had grown together, completely protecting the brain again.

There were two very bad mud holes in our vicinity—one on the Camino Real going to Holguin; the other between Martin's and Hill's farms, on the road running north from the canteen. I just naturally don't like to wade mud, so I talked to some of my neighbors and got their promises to hew timbers to build bridges across both mud holes. I would do the engineering. We had set a Monday morning as the time to begin work. On the Friday before we were to begin work, I was down at the canteen, and they told me the Alcalde wanted to see me. The Alcalde is the local minion of the law. I went over and asked him what he wanted. He said he had heard that I was going to build a couple of bridges and I said, "Yes".

He said, "You can't build a bridge without a permit, and a permit will cost you ten dollars."

I said, "What? Do you expect me to build a bridge for the public good, and pay for the privilege?"

He repeated, "You can't build a bridge without a permit, and a permit will cost you ten dollars."

I don't often let my temper get out of control, but it got away from me a little that day. I said, "If that is the way you feel about it, you can wade through those mud holes till your bones rot before I will pay you any graft to get to do you and the public a service." We didn't build the bridges.

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Twenty-six years later we built the National Highway. That wasn't in my section but I had occasion to go down in that neighborhood, so went over to see my mud hole. The new highway followed the old Camino Real there and they were building a good concrete bridge, much better than anything I could possibly have built with the material at hand. In the meantime, all who traveled that road had to drag themselves through that mud hole for twenty-six long years. I don't know if the Alcalde lived to travel over the bridge or not, but very much doubt it. He must have been around sixty when I wanted to build it.

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Having bought my hogs and fenced them in, I needed to raise feed for them. To raise feed I would have to clear more land. I went to my neighbor on the east and suggested that we prolong our boundary lines toward the south. He was all for it. When we had cut maybe a quarter of a mile, we came to a trail where someone had recently dragged out some logs. While we were wondering who it could be, José Diego and a Cuban came up with two yoke of oxen dragging a cedar log. José promptly blew his top because we were cutting lines through his Uncle Enrique's land. Joaquin blew his because they were stealing his cedar and mahogany logs. They had already cut mine.

José reported to Enrique and he sent for the Alcalde to establish the line between Enrique and me. He was the same Alcalde who wouldn't let me build the bridges without paying him graft; could neither read nor write; and,was sore at me for the tongue lashing I gave him and because I wouldn't pay him graft. A part of an Alcalde's duties is to keep the record of all the livestock in his barrio (district) and to make out all transfers. Since he could neither read nor write, when he was appointed Alcalde they took all record books over to La Caridad, next barrio to the east, and had that Alcalde keep the records

for both barrios. We had to go over there for our transfers. The Alcalde went to what had always been regarded as the northwest corner of our farm, and started a line down through the woods at such an angle that it would cut off a large part of my platino patch, and meet the line Joaquin and I had just cut at a place that would only give me thirty or thirty-five acres, instead of the three-hundred I was supposed to have.

Martin had left his surveyor's compass with me. I went and got it and set it up on my east line; took a bearing on it; tried to show the Alcalde what it was so I could set it up on the west line to show him that the line he had started was not parallel with the east line, which it was supposed to be. He didn't know the meaning of the word parallel, nor anything else pertaining to land lines. In my case, I am sure he didn't want to know. He insisted that the line he had started was my west boundary; and, since he was the Alcalde, there just wasn't a thing I could do about it.

Next morning I rode into Holguin; and, with Mr. McCracken's help, looked up General Wood's law on surveying Haciendas Comuneras. We found that any owner could move a survey, but would have to bear all the expenses until a meeting of all the owners could be called; an election held; and organized on a business basis. I consulted three or four lawyers, and there wasn't one of them that knew a thing about it.

Then I learned, quite by accident, that McCormick, Chief Engineer of The Nipe Bay Company, was in town. I hunted him up and told him my troubles. He said that The Nipe Bay Company had bought a lot of land; and, because of numerous small holders, they were obliged to have it surveyed. A lawyer named Barciela had done their legal work and seemed to handle the business very well. He neglected to mention what Barciela charged and that The Nipe Bay Company had millions with which to pay their bills. I went to see Barciela.

He had gone to Puerto Padre and would be back the next day. I told his scribe what I wanted, and he said he didn't know what time to expect him, so I had better come to see him after supper tomorrow. His office was in the front room of his house, and they lived in the back. When I entered he had on a silk robe, embroidered slippers, and a skull cap. He looked much more like a Chinese Mandarin than a Cuban lawyer. After I introduced myself, he didn't wait for me to even mention my business, but reached around on his desk and picked up a contract he had already drawn up for me to sign. It called for $1,500 cash; $1,000 when he had done the legal work to the point where the outside survey could be started; and,the final $1,000 when the subdivision was ready to begin—a total of $3,500 for lawyer's fees alone. Then there would be court costs, appraisers' fees and finally the cost of the field survey, which, through the heavy jungle should be the heaviest expense of all. The farm had only cost us $800.00 in the first place. I was up against the Hacienda Comunera, the most complicated mess in land ownership ever invented in any country, which I will describe in a later chapter.

Next morning I mounted my mule and headed for Gibara for a consultation with Sylvester Jones. Our problem was real, and not easy of solution. After considerable discussion, and looking at our problem from every angle we could see, we agreed that apparently the best thing to do was to dispose of everything on the farm but the cattle; get a Cuban to care for them; and for me to get out and find a job. That wasn't easy, either. He suggested that while I was over at Gibara, I go on over to the sugar mill at Banes, where both the older McCracken boys were working, and try for a job there. He gave me a letter to Raymond Holding, the Quaker missionary there, explaining the situation, and asking him to see what he could do for me.

Holding took me to Mr. Field, head of all their stores. He said he was getting old and had been looking for some time for a bright young man to come into the store with him and learn the business so he could take over when Field retired. We discussed wages, rooming and boarding places, and various other phases of the job. It began to look like I had found the place I was looking for, first thing. Then suddenly something hit me. Every store I had been in in Cuba sold liquor. I had come to Cuba to help raise the moral standard, not to help lower it. I asked if I would have to sell liquor. "You most certainly will. That is the most profitable part of the whole business." I think that was about the hardest decision I ever had to make on the spur of the moment. Every store in Cuba sold liquor and practically everybody drank it. Would anyone else be influenced to drink because I, individually, was selling it? I needed a job very badly, and if I didn't find one soon I would most certainly have to return to the States. If I took this job, could I work with the mission there enough to counter-balance any evil influence my selling liquor in a store where it always had been, and always would be, sold anyhow? I told Mr. Field I was sorry indeed, for I needed the job, but my conscience just wouldn't let me sell liquor. Though it was turning down a great financial opportunity, I have never regretted it.

I returned home and sold my wagon, harness, hogs and mule, and made a deal with Emilio Peralta to care for my cattle on a sharing basis. He was a young man, and that fixed him up in the best shape of any young man in the neighborhood. He had a house; a bearing platino patch; a well, which was a rarity in that vicinity; all the land he wanted to cultivate; and all the milk he cared to milk. In fact, he had everything he needed but a wife, and it didn't take him a very long time to find her.

I moved my trunk to Mr. McCracken's so I would be closer to mail and transportation, and started looking for work.

Chapter 9

HUNTING A JOB

As soon as I got moved to McCracken's, I set out to look for work, and promptly learned that a College degree was no asset at all. Wherever I applied for work, naturally, the first question was, "What can you do?" Always my answer was, "I can do any kind of farm work, have a College degree and can run an engineer's transit." Always the same answer, "Can't use you." Had I been a carpenter, a bricklayer or a blacksmith, I might have stood some chance.

Then I heard that over at Velasco, some ten or a dozen leagues to the northwest, was an American-reared Cuban, Frank Gomez, who was looking for a man who could operate American farm machinery, and farm the American way. It sounded like that was right down my alley, so I rode over to see him and spent the night. He wanted a farmer all right, but his ideas were running far ahead of his potentialities. He had a very large farm, many head of cattle and a small cheese factory; but he didn't have one single piece of American farm machinery. Furthermore, the land he wanted to farm, American style, was still solid jungle and it would take at least three years to get it cleared and all the stumps out so we could use American machinery. I couldn't wait.

I learned that the Cuba Company was building its northern rail terminus at Corojal, (later renamed Antilla), on Nipe Bay. I also learned that there was no pasture for a horse over there, and few,if any, places for a man to eat along the road. I bought a java (a sort of palm-leaf market basket with a shoulder cord), a box of guava jam, a hunk of Cuban cheese, and some hardtack. I hung them over my shoulder; made a pack of my hammock, blanket, raincoat, and a change of clothes, and strapped it on my