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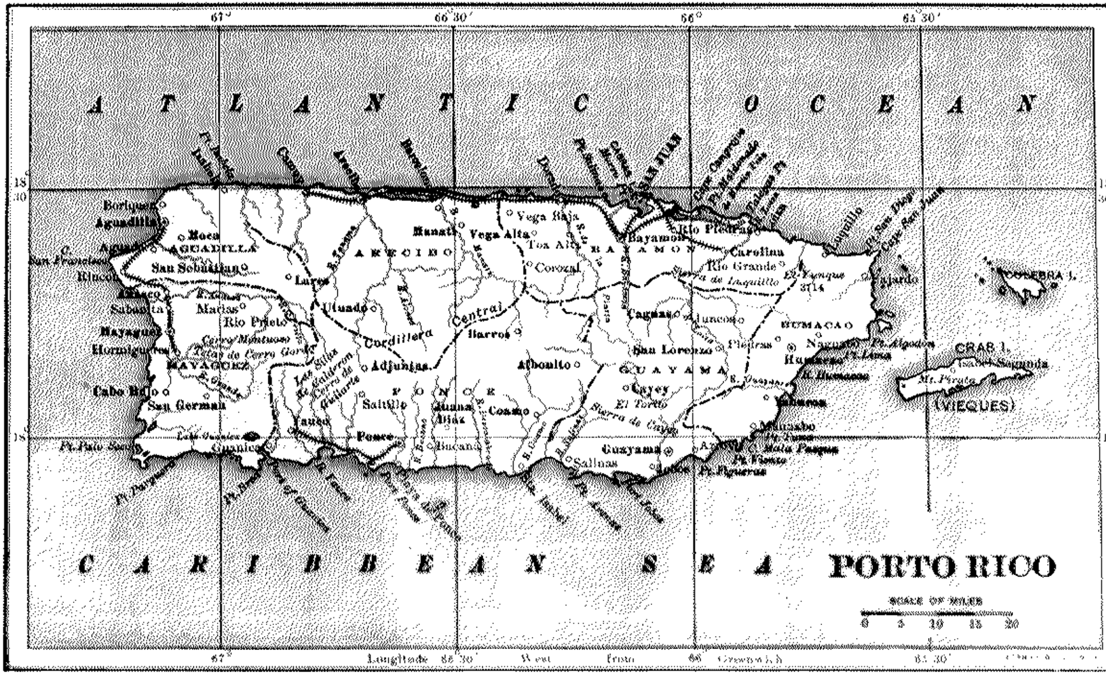
ATLANTIC OCEAN
CARIBBEAN SEA
PORTO RICO
SCALE OF MILES
0 5 10 15 20
Longitude 66°30′ West from 66° Greenwich
67°
65°30′
18°30′
18°
Borinquen
Aguadilla
Moca
AGUADILLA
San Sebastian
Lares
Utuado
Manati
Vega Alta
Vega Baja
Toa Alta
Corozal
BAYAMON
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Port of Guanica
Sabana Grande
San German
Cabo Rojo
Hormigueros
MAYAGUEZ
Mayaguez
Maricao
Rio Prieto
Cerro Montuoso
Silla de Calderon
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THE

WORLD AND ITS PEOPLE

BOOK XII.

PORTO RICO: THE LAND OF THE RICH PORT

BY

JOSEPH B. SEABURY

SILVER, BURDETT AND COMPANY
NEW YORK BOSTON CHICAGO

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SILVER, BURDETT AND COMPANY.

PREFACE.

DURING a brief period of time, now regarded as forming an epoch in American history, Porto Rico came into prominence as an important section of the island-world. Although it lies nearer to the United States than to any other of the great republics or empires of the globe, it was comparatively unknown to the American people. We knew its location, but not its physical features; its people, but not their domestic life, their daily tasks and pursuits. We regarded this fertile island as permanently allied with a European power, with no thought of possessing it ourselves. We had come to think of this Republic of ours as always to be confined within continental boundaries, and not at all likely to embrace in her territory insular lands.

Five years ago our acquaintance with Porto Rico was of that general character as now marks our knowledge of Madagascar, Sumatra, or Borneo; it lacked definite detail.

Great events in current history, especially the conquest of arms on land and sea, necessitating changes in the map of the world, awaken a desire for more specific information regarding those portions of the globe where historic events have occurred and conquests have been made. If, as Mr. Webster once said, "Knowledge is the great sun in the firmament," then knowledge must be precise, accurate, and, in a measure, technical.

The transfer of Porto Rico from the control of Spain to that of the United States was the signal for a widespread, popular desire for thorough and reliable information regarding a portion of the globe which had so unexpectedly passed into new hands.

This book has been written for young people, and is designed to broaden their acquaintance with Porto Rican life. The account is given from the point of view of one approaching the island, entering it at one of its open gateways, and looking for the first time upon its fascinating scenery, its busy streets, its rural occupations. An earlier volume in this series, "The Story of the Philippines," tells of centuries of warfare, of struggles for independence; but Porto Rico has no prolonged and varied history, no exciting historical periods. For this reason but little space is given in this book to the annals of the past. The writer's aim has been to picture the island as it is to-day, with its face turned toward the future.

Unlike the Philippines, which are large clusters of islands within a vast archipelago, Porto Rico is but one link in a chain of islands, is at its eastern extremity, and apart by itself.

It is interesting to note that Porto Rico has an area five hundred square miles less than Hawaii, the largest island of the group that bears its name, while the area of all the Hawaiian islands is twice that of Porto Rico. Its smallness, its compactness, and the unity and variety of its products make it an attractive and satisfactory object of study.

Since the stirring events of 1898, the value of Porto Rico to the United States has steadily increased. It

has become equally apparent that Porto Rico needed just such a friend as the United States is proving herself to be. The one purpose which has actuated our government has been adhered to, viz. to improve the condition of the people, to give them larger returns for their labor, to provide them with better sanitary laws, better schools, better dwellings. This complex problem the United States is now working out.

Porto Rico has not filled a very important place in the literature of American travel and research. Up to the time when the fortunes of war so materially changed the status of the island, nearly all the books written on the subject were in Spanish and issued from the presses at Madrid. The only notable exception is the valuable work by Colonel George D. Flinter of the general staff of the army of the Queen of Spain. The book is in English, and gives a reliable account of the "Present State of the Island of Porto Rico"; it was published in 1834. It has been used, to some extent, in the preparation of the present volume. The author has also found useful the latest government reports, which are compiled from careful investigations by United States officials.

It is hoped the reader will make good use of the map of Porto Rico, it being indispensable that in exploring a new country frequent reference be made to its geographical features. The Table of Pronunciation should be of service to the reader in making himself familiar with Porto Rican proper names, so many of which are entirely new to him.

J. B. S.

MAY, 1903.

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTO RICO:

THE LAND OF THE RICH PORT.

CHAPTER I.

THE ISLAND OUTLINES

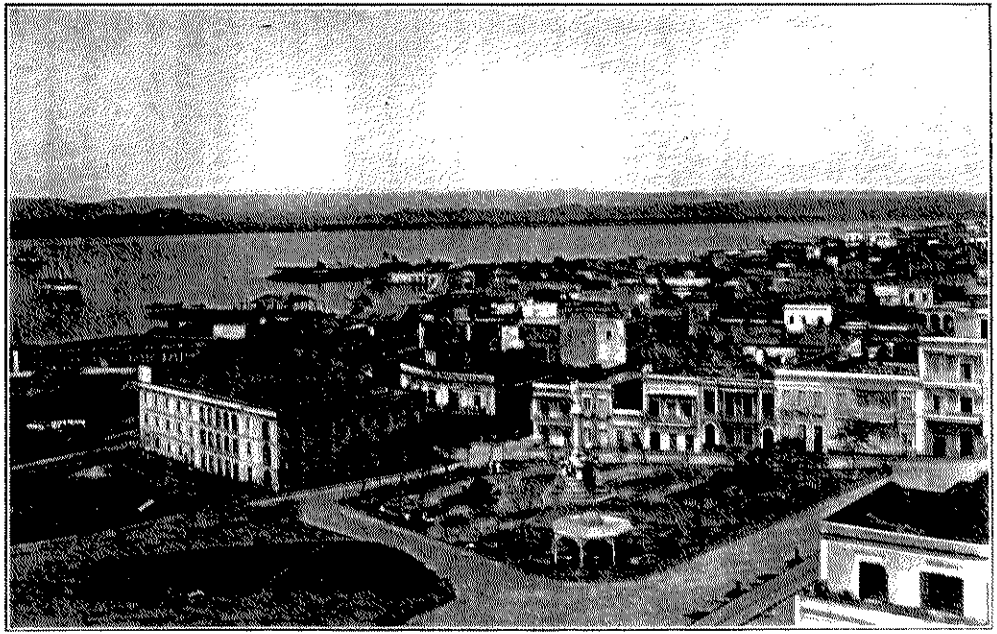
If we turn to the map of the United States and trace the eastern coast downwards from Boston or New York, we find that it ends with Florida. But there is more land beyond. The peninsula of Florida points directly to an island which appears, as we look at the map, something like a fish, with its tail bent towards South America. It is called Cuba. The nose of the fish extends towards another island, shaped like a horse's head, and known as Haiti. The horse's ears stretch up in the direction of Cuba, while the nose is almost on a line with a still smaller island, resembling in shape an ordinary building brick. This little island, the smallest of these bodies of land, is Porto Rico.

Let us study the location of Porto Rico a little more closely. If a line should be drawn between Cape Sable and the most eastern point of Honduras, and these two points should then be connected by straight lines with Porto Rico, the island would be the apex of the triangle

thus formed. Porto Rico is washed on its north shore by the Atlantic Ocean, and on the south by the Caribbean Sea, while to the east are the Leeward Islands.

As we glance at the map once more we can see that the group of islands of which Porto Rico is one is generally known as the Greater Antilles. Before Columbus discovered America, many people in Europe were of the opinion that if some one would take the trouble to investigate the matter, a large island would be found in the Atlantic Ocean, far west of the Azores. No one had ever reached this island, so far as any European knew, but it was spoken of as Antilla. The word comes from the Latin *ante*, meaning in front of, and *insula*, an island. The name Antilles was afterwards given to some of the islands on which Columbus first landed. In later times the islands between North and South America were generally called the Antilles, with the exception of the group known as the Bahamas. The four largest of the islands, Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, and Porto Rico, are distinguished as the Greater Antilles, the groups farther to the southeast, which embrace twenty-six islands in all, being known as the Lesser Antilles.

The Antilles form a sort of curved line from the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico almost around to the mouth of the Orinoco River. Porto Rico is at the large bend of the curve, and is the most easterly and the smallest of the Greater Antilles. Haiti, its next-door neighbor on the west, is eight times as large, and Cuba occupies about space enough to hold an even dozen bodies of land of the size of Porto Rico. We might think from this that Porto Rico is a small and insignificant island. It is really, however, about three times as large as Rhode Island,



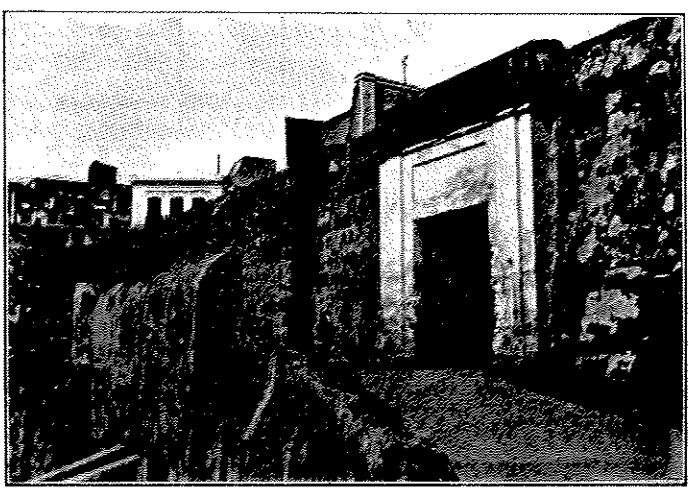
SAN JUAN, SHOWING COLUMBUS PLAZA AND INNER HARBOR

and is one of the most interesting regions that we hear anything about. We shall find it quite worth our while to visit Porto Rico, and we shall enjoy making acquaintance with the plants and animals and people of this ambitious little island, just north of the Caribbean Sea. To reach it we must take a sail of fourteen hundred miles; if we start from New York, a five days' voyage.

The island has been compared to various objects. One writer has seen in its shape some likeness to an ox dressed and ready for market. By a little play of imagination we can easily trace the outlines of a human profile in the western coast-line. The southwestern portion, Point Aguila, is the long, square, and prominent chin. The deep depression forming the harbor of Mayaguez is the bold mouth, open as if about to speak. Cape San Francisco is the upturned nose. The eye is at Moca, and above it appears the forehead, low and flat.

The Japanese people are so proud of their beautiful mountain Fusiyama, that we can hardly find one of their pictures, even on a fan, that does not show this snow-topped mountain in the background. The people of Porto Rico have a mountain of which they are nearly as proud. It is called El Yunque, and it is the first object that attracts the eye as we approach the island from the north. If the day is clear, we shall probably catch our first glimpse of picturesque El Yunque when we are still seventy miles from land. As we sail nearer, we begin to distinguish what appears to be a long stretch of cloud, but which is really the low-lying shore of the island itself. Soon the sky-line becomes wavy, then abruptly broken, and finally the irregular summits of other mountains come within our view.

As we approach still nearer San Juan, we feel that the island was indeed rightly named Porto Rico, the "rich port." Along the lower portions, near the coast, are wide stretches of green, which extend upwards to the sloped sides of the hills. We can see between the hills the narrow valleys, the cultivated fields and white villages, with their fringes of tall and majestic palms,



LA PUERTA DE SAN JUAN. THE ONLY REMAINING CITY GATE.

"resembling Indians with feathers and plumes." Forming a background for all are the ridges of hills and mountains, rising one behind the other, each ridge higher than that in front, and reminding the observer of the rolling billows of the sea. Some of the slopes are covered with forests, with every coloring of green from the lightest to the darkest shade. The picture, as we see it from our place on the steamer's deck, is certainly

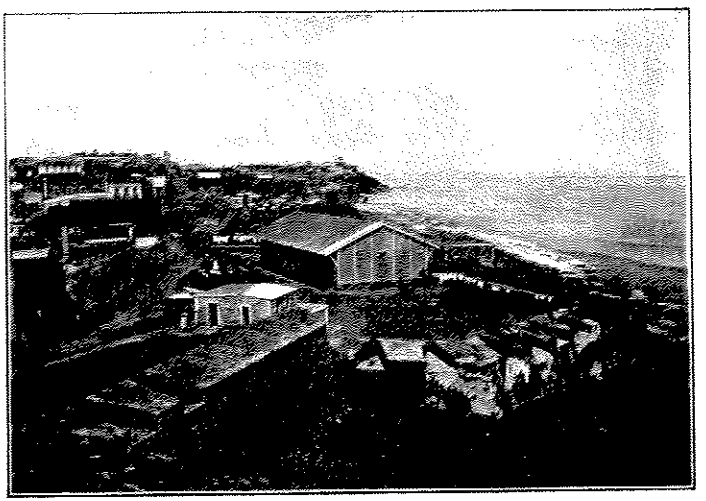
a charming one. No wonder the island is known as "a rich garden spot."

The observer is especially impressed with the smallness of everything. Travelers often speak of Porto Rico as a country in miniature. Many of the hills are hardly more than knolls, yet they are so rounded and so perfect in shape that they are recognized at once as hills. The mountains, with one or two exceptions, would hardly be called by so dignified a title were they in the neighborhood of our mighty Rockies or Adirondacks. Yet they show their peaks and chains as distinctively as those to be seen on the continent. And the gardens, the trees, the rivers, and the lakes — all are in the Porto Rican landscape, but all are of diminutive size. The Porto Ricans themselves, while not so large nor so rugged as the people of the northern and colder climates, are well proportioned and sensitively organized.

Before we land at San Juan, let us sail around the island and see what the other sides are like. On the south, by the Caribbean Sea, the mountain range runs nearer to the coast. The hills rise up in ridges with here and there a sharp peak. Columbus first saw the island from the south, and, on his return to Spain, he spoke to Queen Isabella of the picturesque effect. The mountains of the island, according to his report, appeared to him like a handkerchief folded and wrinkled.

But whatever be the direction of approach, hills of great beauty will be seen. To the south the mountains reach the very water's edge. To the west the slope is gradual and extends also to the shore. On the northern side, and on the southern side east of Ponce, wide

sandy stretches connect the uplands with the sea. To the southwest, beyond Ponce, are coast-hills, some of them slanting from the central mountain and ending in bold bluffs a hundred feet high. Beyond these are grace-



SEA WALL FROM SAN CRISTOBAL. EL MORRO IN THE DISTANCE.

ful valleys, in one of which is the Lake of Guanica. Near by are the *cerros*, low, rounded, wooded hills, similar to the "knobs" of our Western States.

Like the coast of Maine, the shore of Cuba is dotted with islands. Porto Rico, on the other hand, has very few, excepting on the eastern side. There the waters are dotted with little islands and reefs, of which Vieques, the principal one, was used by the Spaniards as a military prison. Soldiers were kept there, when convicted of crime. The lonely island of Desecho, off the western coast, is the home of millions of sea birds that build their

EL MORRO AND CITY OF SAN JUAN, LOOKING ACROSS THE HARBOR ENTRANCE FROM CABRAS ISLAND

nests among its rocks. As we pass by on the steamship these birds present a striking picture, fluttering over their young, soaring above the water, or diving beneath its surface in search of food.

As may be seen by reference to a map of the West Indies, the whole island protruding above the surface of the water is a section of the great ridge which extends lengthwise over both North and South America, and of which Cuba and Santo Domingo are also portions. The land on the west side of the island ends in abrupt cliffs, while on the east the ridge continues unbroken, save that all, except the portion which appears as small islands, is under the surface of the water.

We will land at San Juan. Farther west there is no good harbor on the northern coast. Even the busy seaport Arecibo is open to the sea. On the south side, Ponce, a flourishing center of trade, has a long, curved anchoring place, with no wharves to which vessels may tie. Nor can the ships that engage in trade with Porto Rico moor even on the western coast; they must anchor at a distance from shore and unload by means of light boats. So we will land at San Juan, for here our ship will find safe shelter, after it has once made its way within the landlocked harbor.

Just where is this island of Porto Rico to which we have come? We have found it a five days' trip from New York. It is 450 miles from the southern point of Florida, and many miles farther east than the easternmost portion of Maine. Halifax is two thousand miles away, London twice that distance. The equator is still a thousand miles towards the south.

Although the United States extends into the warm

regions of the sunny south, it has never, until recently, possessed soil capable of growing some of the great staples of the tropics. Porto Rico and the Philippines have given to our country the very best climate and soil for the cultivation of sugar, coffee, and numerous fruits, cereals, and spices which we think we can hardly do without. Porto Rico is a territory of the United States as truly as is Arizona or New Mexico. Its interests are the concern not only of our government, but of the people as a whole.

The United States has other "gardens" committed to its care, — the great fruit-growing regions of Southern California; the broad cotton-belt of the South; the treasure lands of Colorado; the Hawaiian Islands, "the land of the Rainbow and the Palm"; but our real garden, whose soil is "rich with the spoils of nature," is in the blue waters of the Atlantic and beneath the tropical sky to the north of the Caribbean Sea.

CHAPTER II.

ODD SIGHTS IN PORTO RICO.

VERY early in the morning we are aroused from our slumbers by the hoarse cries of the fruit-venders. As we peep through the window to find what it all means, we see people carrying on their heads great willow trays of fresh fruit. Piles of luscious yellow and copper-colored mangoes; great heaps of the brown melons known as mameys; bananas of a dozen different varieties, from the coarse cooking-banana nearly a foot in length to the dainty little fig and apple bananas, so called from their flavor; pyramids of sweet-smelling pineapples; green cocoanuts, ready to refresh the purchaser with their cooling milk; quantities of that most delicious of tropical fruits, the custard apple — beside oranges, lemons, citrons, alligator pears, the juicy cactus fruit, and many other kinds for which the English language has not even a name — all these form the contents of the baskets. Throughout the towns and cities, and even along the dusty highways, men, women, and children of all shades from white to black may be seen with the tempting fruit-trays on their heads. Every city block can boast its little shop where one may purchase the most appetizing fruits at a trifling cost, or may refresh himself with a glass of sugar-cane or cocoanut juice.

The fruit-vender is followed a little later by the milkman, or woman, who comes slowly along, riding astride a broad-backed burro, across whose flanks are slung the large milk cans, one on either side. The milkman carries neither bell nor horn to announce his coming, nor

is there need of either. The intelligent little burro knows his route well, and the entrances to the houses are so wide that in most places the milk is delivered at the very door, through which the animals often pass directly into the kitchen itself. Formerly, and even yet in some districts, the cows with their muzzled calves were driven from door to door, that patrons might see the actual milking process. Satisfaction was somewhat marred, however, by the presence of the calves, which were robbed of their birthright before the purchasers' very eyes. Occasionally, nowadays, a milkman, more ambitious than his neighbors, sets himself and his cans on the top of a rickety two-wheeled cart. This method of delivery is an innovation that is not likely to become general, however, for some time to come.

The baker-man passes along the streets displaying his wares in plenty of time for early breakfast. His commodities, also, are carried in a basket on his head. The basket is arranged with the long loaves of bread radiating from the center so as to allow fully half of each loaf to project over the side. The smaller rolls are heaped up in the center. The basket is easily upset, but, if this accident should occur, the carrier leisurely and philosophically gathers up his scattered wares, wiping off the mud or dust with his handkerchief. In case of rain, which is apt to fall during the rainy season with scarcely a moment's warning, he is provided with a piece of oilcloth. This covering he is more likely to use for his own protection than for that of his basket, rather to the detriment of his bread.

All people of the Latin races are fond of sweets. The Porto Ricans seem even to have lengthened the list

of dainties handed down to them by their Spanish ancestors. The abundance of native crude sugar, almonds, cocoanuts and other nuts, affords unlimited opportunity for sweetmeats, while the delicious fruits provide full scope for the confectioner's genius in the way of sugared fruits. And yet, strangely enough, any Porto Rican boy or girl would gladly exchange a basketful of sweet-

THE MILKMAN.

meats and cakes of Porto Rican manufacture for a box of American candies, even if the latter were very stale. Cakes and sweets of various kinds are for sale at all times, and the children are nibbling them wherever we turn.

As in most tropical countries, poultry is sold alive. Porto Ricans would view with horror the average American poulterer's display of what to them would be simply "dead fowl." Men go about from house to

house, carrying on each arm a dozen live chickens tied together in pairs and suspended by the feet. Geese and turkeys for sale are often driven through the streets in flocks. Their progress is marked by many amusing incidents which tend to confirm the Spanish proverb to the effect that the turkey is the most foolish of birds. Our expression "as silly as a goose" would be considered according to Spanish notions an unfair reflection on this, in their opinion, canny bird. If night overtakes the turkeys or geese before they have reached their destination, the boy or girl who has them in charge is left in a sad predicament. The creatures insist upon going to roost wherever they happen to be. As no amount of gentle switching with the long bamboo driving-rod moves them in the least, the unfortunate person in charge is compelled to make the best of the situation and "go to bed with the chickens."

Cigar and cigarette sellers are very numerous. Oftentimes the stock in trade consists of a single box of cigars offered at the entrance to post-office, theater, or hotel, by some barefooted negro or boy. Sometimes a full assortment is displayed from the top of a common soap-box mounted on a child's express-wagon.

Not only can fruit, milk, bread, and fowl be purchased at one's very door, but dry goods are trundled, often by the owner himself, from house to house over the shining white roads around San Juan. A large variety of these commodities, from silks to the all-important mosquito netting, as well as ribbons, tapes, and shoe laces, is displayed temptingly before the lazy customer as she sits comfortably in her rocker or within the cool shade of her veranda. The various wares are car-

INTERIOR OF MARKET, SAN JUAN.

ried patiently back and forth from street to dwelling, in case the occupant is unwilling to go out into the glare of the sun, until a choice is made and satisfaction secured. To a bystander, haggling over prices is most amusing. Buyer and seller regard each other for the time as enemies, and prices are fixed and discussed accordingly. To the Anglo-Saxon visitor the curious part of it all is, that no matter how close the bargaining, the business is conducted with unfailing politeness. The salesman is, as he puts it, "at the feet" of his customer throughout the entire transaction, and is "hers to command" at the close as at the beginning.

One of the principal occupations of the inhabitants of the rural districts is the making of hats, some of which equal the finest Panamas. Some of the Porto Rican hats have been sold at wholesale in the United States for as much as twenty dollars apiece. Many of the better grades of these hats can be rolled up into a space no larger than that required for a handkerchief, and they are woven so fine as to be absolutely waterproof. Cinches and bridles are made from the same material, and it amuses the Porto Ricans greatly to find that American girls employ the latter for use as hatbands and belts. The edge of many of the hats is left unfinished, the ends of the straw projecting eight or ten inches beyond the weaving — the effect being most picturesque. The hat vender, with his patient little pony almost completely hidden by the pyramids of hats piled around him, is a common sight in both the cities and the smaller towns. The pony's size is so increased by his load of hats that it is as much as he can do to make his way through some of the narrow streets.

The laundresses carry on their vocation daily at every wayside brook, river, and stream. Barefooted and bare-legged, with skirts tucked up well out of reach of the water in which they stand or by which they kneel, they launder the clothing after the most primitive fashion.

HAT SELLERS.

The American housewife, upon viewing the dazzling whiteness of the linen returned to her by the Porto Rican laundress, is unable to comprehend how such results can be attained with no better appliances than cold water and soap. The explanation lies in the fact that the linen is washed on three or four successive days, receiving each time a vigorous beating with a small

wooden paddle. After each cleansing the clothes are spread upon the ground to bleach for hours under a tropical sun. After the third or fourth washing the linen is starched and then dried again.

NATIVE LAUNDRY.

The week's washing and ironing completed, the laundress must carry home the finished work. The smaller flat and unstarched pieces are folded carefully and piled up in the middle of one of the shallow baskets so generally used. Around these, on hooks attached to the sides

of the basket, are hung the starched skirts, aprons, and other garments that might be crushed by folding. The basket is then balanced on the head, the laundress herself being concealed, from the knees up, by the trophies of her skill. Her work is freely complimented, or criticised, as circumstances may warrant, as she meets other laundresses of her acquaintance. No society woman could be more anxious regarding her appearance than is the Porto Rican laundress for herself and her basket, especially the latter, when preparing for her weekly triumphal march, "carrying home the wash."

Every Sunday afternoon, and on all holidays, we are likely to meet, on any of the suburban roads, processions of curiously uniformed children walking sedately hand in hand, led and followed by nuns, or by priests, should the procession be made up of boys. These are the children from the charity schools, taking an outing. They range in age from midgets who can barely walk to youths or girls of fifteen years. The latter wear holland or jean pinafores, and the boys blouses and overalls. The happy disposition of the islanders is once more apparent, as these processions, so pathetically solemn in Germany, England, and France, move gayly along, the little folks talking to each other and watching with the deepest interest the sights by the way. Most of the children are learning trades, that they may become in future years useful and self-supporting members of the community.

Before the American occupation the towns and cities swarmed with beggars, whose numbers were increased by most of the blind, crippled, or otherwise hopelessly infirm portion of the poor people. Some of these have been

placed in institutions where they are cared for in a far better way than was possible when they were entirely dependent upon the charity of strangers. Nevertheless, on certain days of the week set apart by Spanish tradition for the giving of alms, a motley collection of battered human wrecks may still be seen at the doors and gateways of the more piously inclined among the old Spanish families in San Juan, and even at the shop doors of some of the Spanish merchants. At the stroke of twelve the copper coins are handed out. The donor, generally the aged master or mistress of the household, — although the task is sometimes handed over to the children, — moves from one to another of the group of beggars, giving with the coins kind words of inquiry, counsel, or comfort. Americans have occasionally wondered at the seeming ingratitude of some forlorn cripple who, in the comfort of a newly established asylum, still sighed for the touch of human sympathy without which he could not be happy. All beggars are answered with kind words in Porto Rico, the traditional reply when aid is refused being, "Pardon me, brother," or "Pardon me to-day, sister."

A BEGGAR.

Street musicians are many, the favorite instruments being the guitar, the mandolin, and the bandurria. The

American two-step and rag-time music are becoming very popular, greatly to the disgust of the foreign sojourners, who enjoy much more the plaintive minor melodies of the island or those gayer airs transported from Southern Spain.

The cockfighter with his gamecock under his arm, his shears suspended about his neck, and on the lookout for an adversary, is fortunately becoming a rare figure, since the enforcement of the stringent rules against cock-fighting instituted by the American government. He and his equally obnoxious companions, the lottery-ticket seller and the quack doctor, can well be spared.

Funeral and wedding customs among the poorer classes in San Juan are curiously unlike those existing in the United States. In the former, interments are made usually within twenty-four hours after death, and one often sees the rough pine boxes, painted black inside and out and marked with a white cross on the lid, being carried home from the carpenter's shop where they were rudely and hastily put together. These coffins are entirely unlined and cost about a dollar each. A niche in the great wall of the cemetery is rented for six months or a year, where the coffin is laid by the mourners, who follow the bearers on foot. At the close of the rented period the remains are thrown into a common receiving-vault, with the bones of many others there before them. There are no religious ceremonies of any kind at the grave, except where the deceased has been a member of some fraternal or political society, when funeral orations of a more or less flowery character are delivered.

The death of young children, especially in the country districts, was formerly, and is still, to some extent, made

the occasion of feasting and even merriment, with the accompaniments of singing and dancing. "The little angel," as they consider the child to be, is laid, in its best frock and with a crown of flowers, before a species of rude altar made of rough boards and adorned with fresh flowers. Lighted candles and tinsel decorate the center of the room in which the feasting is going on. The mother, with eyes swollen from much weeping, makes pathetic attempts to smile a welcome on the guests who come to celebrate the entrance of "the little angel" into a better world.

A far more pleasant sight is the country wedding. Away back in the mountain districts of the coffee region, previous to the American occupation, weddings were of the quaintest simplicity. Very seldom did either of the contracting parties possess suitable garments, or the money to purchase them. The alcalde, or village mayor, with kindly foresight and at the same time a keen eye for business, was ready to loan the bride and groom clothing so old-fashioned and ill-fitting, that it would be hard to find it equaled, even in a grandmother's garret. Thus arrayed, the pair proceeded to the alcalde's office, where the civil marriage service was performed. Then came the religious ceremony at the hands of the village priest, after which the pair mounted an ox-cart, and accompanied by neighbors and friends, whose numbers were continually increasing, they rode in state to their new home.

Porto Rican country people have never heard of the Anglo-Saxon custom of throwing rice at a newly married couple, but they see to it that the bridal procession is sufficiently heralded. The pins of the solid wooden

wheels of the ox cart are intentionally so tightened that the ordinary squeaking is increased until the noise is quite sufficient to inform everybody within hearing of the joyous event.

This and many other quaint customs are rapidly disappearing under the more practical if less picturesque rule of the United States. The alcalde is already replaced by the more businesslike municipal judge; "store" clothes are appearing in the most unexpected quarters; the clang of the electric car in places dulls even now the creaking of the ox cart; and the American sewing-machine, bicycle, refrigerator, and cooking-stove can be confidently relied upon to complete the social revolution.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE—THEIR HOME LIFE.

THE homes of the well-to-do people of the island are very comfortable. In many cities of the United States buildings are constructed with shops on the ground floor and apartments above. This is a very common arrangement in Porto Rico, especially in San Juan, the first floor being used for shops, a family living on the second. At Mayaguez there are fine dwellings with broad, inviting verandas.

Many of the prosperous merchants of San Juan live at Santurce, three miles from the city. This charming

suburb contains many beautiful homes surrounded by large and attractive gardens. The long double windows of the houses reach to the floor, and usually stand wide open, to let in all the breezes that may blow in that warm climate.

Within the house there is an air of contentment, but all is simple and plain. The floors are bare, save for an occasional rug or a bit of matting. There is no upholstered furniture — nothing more luxurious than cane-seated settees, sofas, and chairs. Rocking-chairs are very popular. Few pictures adorn the walls, though some steel engravings may be found, and now and then a good oil painting. Every parlor has in the center a marble-topped table, usually of mahogany, with carved legs. The chairs are of smooth wood bent into graceful shapes and always painted black. Plants, artificial flowers, crocheted tidies, porcelain vases, lace curtains, and a glass lamp or chandelier complete the outfit of the "best room" in the Porto Rican home of the better sort.

The home life is as simple as the house. The Porto Rican begins his day by drinking a cup of coffee with milk and sugar, at about seven or eight o'clock in the morning. Breakfast is served at eleven, and consists of a light repast of soup, boiled eggs, rice, fried bananas, bread and coffee. Dinner, at six or seven in the evening, is the important meal of the day. At this time all the members of the family come together, ready to enjoy one another's company. The dinner consists of soup, meat, a salad, plenty of vegetables, fruits and sweets, and the meal winds up with the all-important cup of coffee.

The vast majority of the people of the island live in the country. To know Porto Rico well we must know its peasants. We must break away from the cities and visit the rural districts; we must tarry in the villages and hamlets; we must enter the dwellings of the peons, or field laborers, and see how they live. Nothing reveals

WAYFARERS.

the life of any man so clearly as the place he calls his home. There is an old poem which says:

"If happiness we prize,
Within our breast this jewel lies,
And they are fools who roam.
The world has nothing to bestow:
From our own selves our joy must flow,
And that dear hut, our home."

The home of the peon, if home it can be called, is a rude hut or "shack." Its rough frame is built of poles lashed together, covered with bark, and roofed with palm leaves or a thatch of leaves from the sugar-cane. There are never more than two or three rooms. The floor is uneven and unsteady. The walls are neither papered, plastered, nor sheathed, but the rough poles of the framework are exposed to view. As there is no winter in Porto Rico the windows need no sashes, and no fuel is required to keep the body warm. All that is necessary is a shelter from the wind, the rain, and the burning sun.

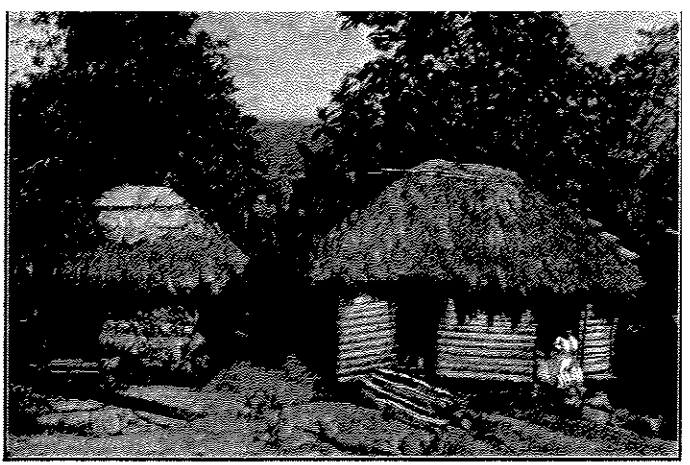
The peon's hut boasts very little furniture. A hammock, a bunk, or a pile of palm branches serves for a bed, a couple of boxes for chairs. Very seldom do we find a table. An iron kettle or earthen pot is the only kitchen utensil, and for cooking this is placed over burning charcoal or bits of kindling-wood. When the weather is favorable the necessary cooking is done out-of-doors. On rainy days, when the food must be cooked within, the house is filled with a damp, suffocating smoke which clings to everything and cannot be driven out.

The prepared dishes of the poor are rice, powdered and curried, corn meal, and coffee. The people are very fond of salt fish. Fresh and cooked fruits, such as bananas and plantains, are eaten in large quantities.

The dishes are made of gourds. Cups, and even ladles and spoons, are among the gourd dishes in common use. A fierce-looking instrument called a *machete* (pronounced mä-chā'tā) serves as a chopping and carving knife. Fingers are used instead of forks.

United States Commissioner Carroll writes of a visit

he made to the poor quarters of Arecibo. He found the houses built of old boxes or short boards, evidently picked up wherever they could be found. The dwellings stood near together in rows, with alleys or very narrow streets between. In one house he saw a man and his wife sitting on the floor and eating their noonday meal from a single dish. A naked child stood in the rear room, crying. There was neither chair nor table, and only one



NATIVE HUTS.

small wooden stool. The roof was full of holes. Some of the houses in the neighborhood were a little better, but poverty was everywhere evident. And yet the people did not seem unhappy; they were probably contented, because they knew no other kind of life.

The peon is up before daylight. He takes his bit of codfish and rice and starts off to his day's labor. In many cases he must walk three miles to his employer's

The *gray* represent the inhabitants of mixed blood, often called mulattoes. They are more than 300,000 in number. They are darker than the white people, and yet in many cases it is hard to distinguish the color-line. They work in the fields, act as house servants in the cities, or have their own little gardens of vegetables and fruits, from which they gather just enough to enable them to keep body and soul together.

The *brown*, or, as we say in our country, the black, are the negroes, who number about 59,000. They live principally along the coast. This is largely due to the fact that they do not suffer from the heat, while the bracing air of the mountains is too cool for them. They work in the cane fields, or are employed in loading and unloading the ships that enter San Juan, Mayaguez, Arecibo, or Ponce.

There are seventy-five Chinese in the island. Including these, the entire population numbers 953,200. This is nine-tenths as large as the population of Maryland. During the last ten years Porto Rico has grown as rapidly as have Ohio and Tennessee.

It is said that if you scratch a Porto Rican you will find a Spaniard underneath the skin. The people have spoken the Spanish language ever since Columbus's day, and the customs of the island are similar to those of Spain.

As in the mother country, the women of the higher class live to some extent in seclusion. The people are excitable, fond of amusements, and they read very little. In these respects the Porto Rican of to-day resembles the Spaniard of four hundred years ago.

The ancestors of many of the Porto Ricans came from

Andalusia. This province bears a relation to the other provinces of Spain somewhat similar to that of Ireland to Great Britain. Like the Irish, the Andalusians are bright, witty, rather quick-tempered, perhaps, but never holding a grudge.

A similar temperament is characteristic of the people of Porto Rico. Although the blood of different classes mingles freely in their veins, they have never been a rebellious or a warlike people. No general insurrection has ever occurred in the island. If any criticism can be brought to bear upon them, it is that they have been too submissive and long-suffering under Spanish rule. They have never shown a warlike spirit towards the people of other islands, and they are, on the whole, orderly and docile, peaceable, industrious, considerate of one another's welfare.

They are anxious to become American citizens and to acquire American ways. They have long considered the United States another name for fidelity, humanity, and brotherly love. They are, as Dr. Carroll says, good material out of which to make steady and trusty American citizens.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PEOPLE — THEIR RECREATIONS.

It is said that a noted musician in ancient Greece was severely punished by the Spartans for adding a twelfth string to the harp. His fellow-citizens were afraid that too great fondness for music would make the people