

night. The parents who are used to it, simply turn in their beds with thanks to the saints that their doors are massive and the windows are of iron. Belated male passers cast sympathetic glances at the lone troubadours, remembering their own dismal efforts in the past. Even the neighbors keep silence; and not a rock or handy household implement is shot, as from some shadowy catapult, on disturbing mission through the bosky midnight air. For hours of this sort of lugubrious vigil no reward is sought or expected. But if the flutter of a dainty hand, or the shimmer of delicate laces, is for an instant caught at the balcony of the fair one's alcoba, then is the minstrel lover in an ecstasy of delight.

On one occasion I came upon two of these amorous Romeos, singing and playing in a sort of desperate rivalry beneath one balcony. It was truly a dilemma both for the adorado and her lovers. The latter were both singing "La Luna," one in a frenzied falsetto, the other in a barytone, hoarse from jealous passion. A polite *guardia civil* finally relieved the dramatic tension of the situation by carrying away one at a time to a near bodega, thus preventing a tragedy, securing his own fill of wine, and in a kind of relay giving each smitten troubadour a fair and equitable chance at the moon.

Another situation illustrating Cuban sociological peculiarities, was found in a railway trip across the island. One of the passengers, an old senora, sneezed. Instantly, and reverently, a score of passengers responded: "*Dios te guarde!*" ("God guard thee!") She sneezed again. This time the concerted ejaculation was: "*Maria!*" She sneezed the third time. This was followed by a chorus of voices with: "*Jose!*" It is a universal Cuban custom, and in its motive reminds forcibly of the quite as universal German custom, when one sneezes, to express kindly concern by responding with the unctious and expressive, "*Gesundheit!*"

Again, a young fellow, passing a mother and radiantly beautiful daughter on his way out of the car, doffed his hat, stood straight and tall before the couple he had never before seen, and with the dignity of a Don Quixote said in Spanish: "Old woman, keep that daughter of heavenly beauty for the unworthy one before you!" Then, he strode away and nobody insulted him. The aged senora responded pleasantly, "I will faithfully keep her!" Possibly the senora's fan moved a little more rapidly at the compliment. But nobody thought amiss of the episode, or for that matter anything at all about it, save myself.

At one time myself and friends were traveling on horseback the almost impassable country roads of the southern coast, in the vicinity of Trinidad. Along in the afternoon we suddenly heard a great rustling, galloping and hallooing some distance in advance. Our wise ponies instantly grew restive, and showed alarm. We halted for a moment; the yeomen listened; and directly cried out excitedly:

"Ah, *biene un toro bravo!*" ("Here comes a wild bull!") The words were not out of his mouth before his feet struck the ground. Whipping out his machete he cut with incredible speed a way through the hedge. It was not a moment too soon. Thundering around

a sharp corner in the road came a wild bull, her pursuing rider yelling, "Tengan cuidado con el toro!" ("Look out for the bull!") The brute catching sight of our group charged madly upon us, and it would have surprised your anise-seed fox hunters to have seen the vaulting through and over that hedge as the gleaming horns whisked by our ponies twinkling heels; while, true under all circumstances to the universal principle of Cuban politeness, the vanishing vaquero turned in his saddle, removed his hat, and with the bow of a courtier sang out after our flying squad:

"Perdonemen, amigos; pero he tenido el diablo con este toro!" ("Your pardon, my friends; but I am having a devil of a time with this bull!")

The going to and coming from Europe on the great ocean liners provide an endless variety of ludicrous incidents; because on every steamer passengers to a large proportion are new to the peculiar and irrevocable situation; formality can by no means be uninterruptedly sustained; individuals, character and station are brought into close, sharp and most striking contrasts; and all social distinctions are liable at any moment to total obliteration in the common and often grotesque misery of sea sickness.

Two or three meals at farthest sponge the banquet airs from the cabin tables. The ship's commander, bland as a bartender in port, has hidden himself from view. The purser's window is shut as if hermetically sealed. The ship's doctor has retired behind the strictest interpretation of hours and rules. The chief and assistant stewards, to whom your great fee has already gone for a choice seat at the table, refuses to recognize you. Your room-steward eyes you with a look of sharp suspicion and close analysis. Will you give him much trouble, and will you fee generously? comprises his uttermost interest. But he will permit no earthly familiarity. The stewardess flaunts her white-capped head, plainly saying, "There are characters h'on this 'ere vessel aside my h'own to sustain, sir!" The boatswains, whose frizzled, fatherly faces on the first day gave promise of sea-yarns and ocean-love revelations, are as stolid as bronzes or brass.

The sergeants-at-arms and deck stewards walk around you, look you up and down, over and around, fore and aft starboard and port, as if to remind you that deck rules are deck law, sir. The bell boys, those little dried up old com-mo-dores of the passages, library and lavatories, regard you from beneath beetling brows as with savage advance protests against possible requests for favors. Wander where you may on your steamer's decks or within her splendid cabins, you find but savagery, selfish preoccupation and despair.

And how it levels the proud and great! Look at them sprawling in their chairs, hundreds of them, under the leavings, hope, pride, scorn, hauteur, all, flown like the flush of the shriveled flowers below. That pompous old fellow who can draw his check for a cool million, and who, on shore, reckons himself a boy of forty, you know, is stretched there like a drunkard, holding his two sets of false teeth in his nerveless hand with the most familiar abandon. He reckons not those who see; he sees not those who reck. Here is a grand dame, as easy a subject of study.

Her wig is displaced; the powder and color have been spotted from one side of her face by some attentive stewardess; her laces, flounces and silks are disheveled; she is snoring, diversified by snorts and palatable staccatos.

See this erst peerless New York belle! Paint, powder and bligewater are blended in a dirty French gray upon her leathery countenance. The fog has deposited a clammy rime upon this. Strands of her now waveless hair are fluttering stickily within her open mouth. Her eyes seem to have gone into her head an inch and are closed beneath dirty yellow lids. Amid this wreck of beauty there is one bit of color. It is in her pinky, pointed nose. It would have paralyzed her to have worn a 25 cent bathing-hat at sea. So from under the edge of her \$25 hat her sea-blistered nose rises rare and red like some hectic beacon-light looming above drear, dank, dolorous isles. In a few days more the long-abused cuticle will peel from this little nose in tenacious swirls and curls, and as she steps upon the staging at Liverpool the rude customs inspectors will pronounce her an "H'American h'object."

A voluble lady sitting in her deck-chair and undergoing the premonitory qualms of *mal-de-mer*, remarks to the unhappy group about her:

"If I get sea-sick like the rest of these people, I shall just give up my reason altogether, so I shall."

Whereupon a bluff old party awakens from his stupor long enough to retort spitefully:

"Judging from my own experience, you will give up far more than that, madame!"

On the other side of the ropes, where the steerage passengers are herded like cattle, you will see them walking the deck as if at wager, with occasional quick recourse to the side-rail for relief. They are immeasurably brighter, sunnier and lighter-hearted in their misery than the more comfortable cabin passengers. While they are pounding cheerily about deck you may approach and sympathetically accost an emigrant with,

"Well, my boy, how do you find yourself this morning?"

"Me health's all right, yer honor" (a plunge to the side rail), is the sturdy rejoinder. Then, with a twinkle in his blood-shot eyes, "but, faith, me ticket's steerage!"

The ocean liner is never without its ferret, who is sometimes a divinity student, "broadening his range of observation and study," frequently the young reporter honestly desirous of acquiring everything possible to be learned on shipboard in six days' effort; and often a female who has broken loose in search of a "career." These human interrogation points usually have gold rimmed eye-glasses, invulnerable assurance, and note-books which are drawn on victims with the celerity of genuine deadly weapons.

They are abroad for information, and they get it. Cornering the ship's commander on the subject of sea-sickness, they find:

"Dear sir, or madam, I have followed the sea for twenty-five years, and have put more in than I ever took out of it!"

From grim old travel-rs they learn:

"This is my hundred and fortieth passage, sir, or madam. Though I have