

# Castro

## FACE TO FACE

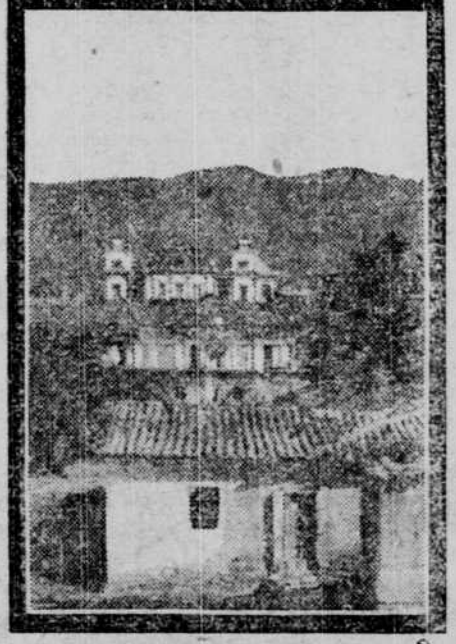
BY EDWARD W. PICKARD



STATUE OF BOLIVAR



CAPITOL - CARACAS



PRESIDENT CASTRO'S PALACE



THE YELLOW HOUSE

MR. EDWARD W. PICKARD, a Chicago newspaper writer, during the late Castro disturbances, was assigned to "find out why" by his paper. So he visited President Castro, taking several months' trip to "cover" his story. Castro felt Mr. Pickard as he would a personal friend and thus the author of the accompanying feature learned ever characteristic of this strange ruler. He saw the good, the bad, the reasonable and unreasonable policies of Castro. He saw Castro at home and in his capacity as president. He is the only American writer who ever turned the spotlight full upon Castro.—Editor's Note.

**C**APRIANO CASTRO, constitutional president and self-styled "restorer" of Venezuela, hated though not despised by most of the governments of Europe, regarded as an embarrassing nuisance by the United States and looked at askance by his South American neighbors, is in Europe, supposedly for the sole purpose of receiving treatment for a malady which has given him much suffering.

Would he ever return to Venezuela?

That query was put to government officials at Washington upon the day Castro left, but because of the fact that the United States had no diplomatic representation in Castro's land no reply was forthcoming.

And this in the face of the movement throughout the little republic to put the "restorer" back in office in 1911 when his present term expires.

Unpleasantness on the part of American friends of Castro was mothered by the recollection of the flight of President Gomez Blanco, who was alleged to have carried with him to Europe many millions of Venezuelan gold. Prior to Blanco's flight he had twice visited Europe while serving as president.

To the general public, misled by the gibes and cartoons of the press, President Castro is a greedy, obstinate tyrant. Yet Castro is not wholly bad, even measured by Anglo-Saxon standards, and his is one of the most interesting of present day personalities. Of humble origin, he has made himself master of his country; meditated in his youth, he has been for years an earnest, plodding student; "bluffed" by mighty nations, he has called the bluff and usually "made good," plotted against by disaffected politicians of his own land, he has speedily put down every revolt. That he is a despot is true, but Venezuela needs despotic rule almost as much as did Mexico when Porfirio Diaz became the virtual dictator of that country. Castro knows, as every student of Venezuelan affairs knows, that his country can prosper only when there is reasonable assurance of lasting peace; and a strong hand is necessary to keep down the schemers whose recurring conspiracies threaten to cast the country into the throes of civil war.

The exploitation of the natural resources of Venezuela, as well as the conduct of many of its industries, is made by law the subject of concessions granted by the federal government. Right there comes the severest criticism of Gen. Castro, based on his administration of internal affairs. His salary as president is not nearly adequate to his expenses, and his peculiar brand of patriotism and honesty will not permit him to steal from the revenues of the republic. Therefore he engages extensively in business through friends who nominally act for themselves. In this way he is a partner in various large business houses, which, presumably through his favor in the matter of customs duties and other taxes, are able to undersell their competitors. When some industry seems especially profitable a concession for his monopoly is granted by congress to a friend of Castro, for a trifling remuneration. This friend thereupon sells the concession to foreign capitalists and the price is divided. One friend of the president not long ago sold in Europe concessions for a monopoly of the manufacture of cigars, which is highly remunerative; for a national bank, which will start with the profits and prestige resulting from handling all public funds, and for the building and conducting of public and bonded warehouses.

Another associate of the chief executive is a partner in a large drug house that offers its wares at lower prices than can other dealers in the city. Yet a third has the exclusive right to import arms, ammunition and explosives of all kinds, he never has imported anything of the sort, but he never has refused to do so and he has made a fortune out of the privilege, and his income from this alone is considerable.

Among the latter is a large concession granted to a foreign injurious concessionaire that brought the cattle for the animals are outsiders of the city and there are the agents of the concessionaires. These are condemned as unfit for food and their owners portion of the cattle and order their owners to drive them home over the mountains. When the poor cattlemen have fairly started on their

return trip they are overtaken by other agents of the concession-holders, who purchase the condemned animals for paltry sums. These soon find their way to the meat stalls in the city.

These are but instances that mark a state of affairs which is stifling general trade and industry. It would seem that complaint of Castro's internal policy is well founded.

Yet Castro undoubtedly loves his country and seeks its welfare. He is laying many plans for its betterment, and some of them will be carried out, though hampered and delayed by his overmastering need of money. He is proud of Caracas and is anxious to see it modernized.

The president makes periodical tours through the various states of the federation and orders numerous public improvements. The capital and other cities of the country are embarrassed by the army which, under his administration, has grown from a ragged lot of peasants in alpacas and motley garments, into a well drilled, well armed and well clothed body of fighters who are devoted to their leader.

Peace is what the business men of the country must have, and they believe it is better to pay tribute to Castro and prosper measurably under his firm rule than to run the risk of having in the president's chair a man so weak that revolution would be almost continuous. Though church and state are still united in Venezuela, their relations were severely strained several years ago and probably never again will be quite cordial. At the instigation of President Castro a national divorce law was framed and introduced in congress. Instantly the archbishop and all the lesser powers of the church were up in arms and a bitter campaign against the proposed law was begun. Castro was determined, as usual, and soon drafted the church to terms by having drafted a bill to expel the religious orders. A truce was effected and the divorce law was passed; and it is only fair to say that up to the present time there has not been a single instance of its abuse. "Castro wants a divorce law so that he can get rid of his wife," said the detractors of the president, for it is a notorious fact that the dove of domestic peace is not among the scores of birds that Senora Castro feeds and fondles at Miraflores, the presidential palace. But no step ever has been taken toward a legal separation of Gen. and Mrs. Castro. They appear in public together whenever occasion offers, and she is always proud, serene and self-possessed.

Gen. Castro is a vain man, confident of his own powers, seemingly believing himself a child of destiny. Probably he does not fully trust anyone but himself, and he seldom takes the public into his complete confidence. He sits in his apartments in the Yellow House—the administrative building—looks down on the statue of Bolivar, which is the center of the city's life, and easily convinces himself that his services to Venezuela are second only to those of the great Liberator. He believes Venezuela is to become the leading nation of South America, and he bitterly resents what he considers the affronts which other nations attempt to put upon it. It is the method in which he expresses this resentment that causes so much trouble, for his disregard of diplomatic usages is most obnoxious to other governments.

In private life Gen. Castro does not present an admirable figure, but his faults are such as are often found in strong characters. His periods of relaxation are as strenuous in their way as are his periods of work, and his recent severe attacks of illness probably are due largely to overindulgence in pleasures. When he appears in public he is always dignified—until he begins to dance, when he becomes ridiculous. At his home he retains many of the habits of his soldier days. His chamber at Miraflores contains a \$10,000 bed, but he sleeps on an iron cot in a corridor. His marble bath is filled with everything the most fastidious could desire, but he turns on a tap in a small room, and stands under the cold stream.

Gen. Castro, if he does not soon

die or become a hopeless invalid, is a force to be reckoned with. And how to deal with him is a difficult question. England got the best of him for a time by a blockade and bombardment. The United States sent him several ultimatums which he refused to consider, France made a great blunder when he seized the property of the French Cable Company, and did nothing. Holland was almost ready to blockade the ports of Venezuela, but Holland admitted her minister to Caracas desolved to be ousted, and knows, as does everyone, that Caracas has long been the headquarters of smugglers whose business it was to evade the customs laws of Venezuela. Therefore Holland hesitated to act. To put it briefly, international matters Castro usually does the right thing in the wrong way.

Venezuela's history is checkered from its beginning.

The coast of Venezuela was first sighted by Columbus during his voyage of 1498, and a year later Ojeda and Vesputius examined it more carefully, giving to it the name of "Little Venice" on account of some Indian villages which they observed built upon piles or stakes in Lake Maracaibo. In 1527 Juan Ampues, who was sent from Santo Domingo to settle some differences between the Indians and a small Spanish colony, founded the city of Coro, which remained the seat of government until 1567, when it was transferred to Caracas. About the time of the establishment of Coro, Charles V., whose European wars had obliged him to borrow extensively, agreed with the Augsburg banking and merchant firm of the Weisers to grant them the entire province of Venezuela, in return for advances of money. In 1528 Ambrose Alfinger sailed for the colony, with a force of 400 adventurers, representing the new rulers. Disappointed in the expectation of finding mines of gold to be exploited, he and his successor, George Spira, who brought over another body of retainers in 1533, raided the interior regions for produce, enslaving the natives, and demoralizing the whole country, so that in 1545 Charles V. rescinded the grant. The country was now entrusted to a governor sent from Spain. The rest of the sixteenth century was marked by exploring expeditions, the founding of settlements and cities, and wars with the natives. Early in the seventeenth century the Biscayan merchant organization, Compania Guipuzcoana, secured the right to control the Venezuelan trade, on condition that it put an end to the illicit trade with Curacao and chance foreign ships. For 50 years this worked fairly well, but eventually the Compania found it more profitable to enter into arrangements of mutual advantage with the Curacao merchants. This soon led to great popular opposition, threatening civil war in 1748, but the Compania maintained its hold until 1778. The nominal government was in the hands of a captain-general, subordinate to the royal audiencia at Santo Domingo, for most of the time down to 1786, when an independent audiencia was established at Caracas.

The history of the war for independence against Spain in Venezuela is to a great extent the record of the careers of Miranda and Bolivar. After the failure of the expedition of

forced to retire to La Guaira, Miranda, unable to maintain an army in the field, concluded a peace. July 29, 1812, and joined Bolivar, by whom he was arrested and handed over to the Spanish commander. Bolivar took refuge in Cartagena, raised an army, and in August, 1813, reentered Caracas in triumph. In 1815 he was forced to retire to Jamaica, but in January, 1817, he returned, established a government at Angostura, a position which he succeeded in making secure by December, 1819, when the congress at Angostura elected him president of Colombia, representing a new republic embracing Venezuela and New Granada. On June 24, 1821, the decisive victory of Bolivar practically ended the Spanish domination in this part of South America. In 1829 Venezuela, under the influence of Paez, seceded from Colombia and constituted itself an independent republic. The subsequent history of the country was uneventful until 1846, when an era of insurrection and civil war began between the conservative and liberal factions, which lasted, with scarcely a break, down to 1870. In 1854 a law for the abolition of slavery was enacted. Realizing the hopelessness of contending with Great Britain in arms, the Venezuelan government decided to resort to public opinion. An agent was sent to the United States, who spread abroad pamphlets and statements, and interviewed newspaper men and politicians, and in December, 1894, President Cleveland recognized the widespread public interest in the dispute by an allusion to it in his annual message to congress. A year later, the British government having notified the United States that it had nothing to arbitrate with Venezuela, a special message, sharp in its tone with regard to Great Britain, was sent by Cleveland to congress, leading that body to appropriate funds (\$100,000) for a commission to investigate "the true divisional line between Venezuela and British Guiana." In November, 1896, before the commission had reported, Great Britain yielded to the demand of the United States for arbitration. Eventually, in February, 1897, an agreement was reached and a treaty of arbitration duly signed. The arbitration tribunal made its award on October 3, 1899.

ARCH OF FEDERATION

COURT OF THE CAPITOL

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### SMALL BOY ROUTS SENATOR.

His Cold-Blooded Persistence Too Much for Statesman.

William S. Cowherd, Democratic nominee for governor of Missouri at the recent election, has a fund of good stories, but none better than this one, which he credits to the late Senator George Graham Vest, Missouri's "Little Giant."

### SENATOR.

campaign in some years ago," said a driver was a small boy, who was duly impressed with Mr. Cowherd. "It was the importance of his name."

"At each passenger, he hurriedly visited by Vest, the driver's team to a convenient doornight, and then raced for the place, where the 'speaking' place, and perched himself regularly on the front

seat. He invariably turned his eyes on the senator and took in every word of the speech, as if his very life depended on it.

"Finally the lad's continued conspicuous presence among his auditors annoyed the senator, and he kindly but firmly reminded the boy that it was not necessary for him to attend every meeting.

"I make the same speech each time, you have heard it often enough to know it by rote, so just put in your time in the future looking after the

team," he admonished his youthful driver.

"Despite the senator's objection, the boy was again in the front seat the next day and the following day. This enraged Vest and he thundered:

"Why do you persist in always occupying that front seat; didn't I tell you I make the same speech every day? It's as old and stale to you as it is to me. Why insist on hearing it again and again?"

"I want to see what you're going to do when you forget it," answered the boy. Vest capitulated.—St. Louis Republic.

New Triumph for America. America has now triumphed over Egypt and India in holding what will soon be the largest irrigated tract of desert land in the world. This is what is known as the Twin Falls country in the state of Idaho. The ultimate area under irrigation, when the entire Twin Falls project shall have been completed, will be 1,350,000 acres.—Harper's Weekly.

### COFFIN ROLLED DOWN THE STEPS

HUSBAND FAINTED WHILE HELPING CARRY WIFE'S BODY TO WAITING HEARSE.

HORROR AT CHURCH ENTRANCE

Affair Creates Considerable Excitement—Grief-Stricken Man Shown Wrong Corpse When He Calls at Hospital.

Cincinnati—During the funeral of Mrs. Carl Domm at St. Xavier's church, on Sycamore street the other morning considerable excitement was created when her husband fainted in his pew while his brother, a priest, was reciting the mass for the dead. The priest continued with the mass, while several men carried the young man out and revived him.

Later, while he was assisting in carrying his wife's coffin to a hearse, Domm fainted again at the head of the steps at the entrance of the church, and the coffin containing the corpse rolled to the sidewalk. The terrible affair so affected Mrs. Lizzie Patten, a friend of the dead woman, that she screamed and collapsed, but was soon restored to consciousness. Considerable difficulty was also experienced in reviving the grief-stricken young husband. One hearse was all that made up the funeral cortege of the woman, the two mourners—the husband and Mrs. Patten—with the priest, going to the cemetery in a street car.

Mrs. Domm was heirless to a large estate in Germany, and with her husband had conducted a long and hard fight to recover her share of her father's estate. She was 32 years of age, and resided with Mrs. Patten. For some time her husband, Carl Domm, has been working in Chicago, earning the money necessary to carry on the fight for his wife's inheritance. Five weeks ago Mrs. Domm became ill, and, according to Mrs. Patten, went to a hospital. When she died there the other Sunday the physicians stated that the cause of her death was consumption. Domm broke down and



He Fell in a Faint and the Coffin Crashed to the Pavement.

cried when he told of his visit to the hospital to see his wife.

"I had been there Saturday while she was yet alive," he said, "and she scouted the doctors' belief that she would die. Not dreaming that she had died Sunday, I went there on that day and asked for her. 'She's dead,' said an attendant. I felt like I would fall over, but I pulled myself together and asked them to let me see her body. They hauled out a stretcher, and I asked them not to remove the covering from the face until I could control myself. Worrying over her condition had made me weak and sick, and I had not eaten anything since I left Chicago.

"Now take it off," I said. Then they uncovered the body of a negro man, and it seemed that the room whirled around me. As long as I live I will never forget that shock. Why in the name of heaven do they make such mistakes?"

"The attendant quickly covered the body again and stood there looking at me. I sat down and began to hope that perhaps they had erred in saying that my wife was dead. Finally the man exclaimed: 'Oh, here she is,' and this time it was my dead wife. There were only two pallbearers, my brother Henry and myself, and when I had to let go my end of the coffin there was nothing to hold it, and it fell crashing down the steps. It must have been terrible. Of course I was unconscious and did not see it. My brother Henry had to go back to his work after helping me convey the coffin to the hearse, and there was only the priest, Mrs. Patten and myself went to the cemetery."

Ownership. "He owns his own home, doesn't he?" "Yes, he only owes \$3,875 and interest on it now."—Detroit Free Press.

Defined. "A good story-teller is a man who can tell an old story much better than you've ever heard it related before."—Detroit Free Press.

Our "Connie's" Commendable Charity. A lady who was at the sale for the benefit of the homes for wives of prisoners, at Sunderland house, London, writes this of the duchess of Marlborough's interest in the admirably helpful scheme which she started and supports herself: "The duchess, whom I was most anxious to see, is far more charming than any portrait that has been made of her. She is graceful and beautiful, and as she came forward, when my name was announced, and shook hands as if we had been old

### AGED FATHER JUMPS INTO RIVER TO SAVE

FIGHTS BRAVELY WITH THE ICE WATERS OF THE HUDSON BUT SINKS WITH DAUGHTER.

New York.—Unmindful of the cold of the Hudson, and his 78 years, Capt. Henry Rice, skipper of a tug scow, leaped from her deck in a futile effort to save his daughter, Mrs. Helen Block, 31 years old, a widow. Both were drowned while Frank Hauscrucker was vainly striving to aid them.

Mrs. Block and Hauscrucker were to have been married a few days ago and Capt. Rice was to depart aboard his scow for some distant point, which would prevent his attendance at the wedding. His daughter and Hauscrucker promised to pay a farewell visit to the skipper, and Capt. Rice



He Jumped Overboard to the Rescue.

waited at the pier head at West One Hundred and Thirty-second street to warn them against the dangers of the ice coating on the scow's deck, which they must cross to reach the cabin in the stern.

He took his daughter's arm when she and Hauscrucker arrived, and told the latter to stay where he was for a moment. Capt. Rice helped Mrs. Block to the deck and led her toward the remainder of the distance in safety, and started to run toward the cabin.

It was pitch dark, and she slipped on the ice, fell and slid over the unprotected side into the water. Her screams and the splash were instantly followed by her father's efforts to save her. He threw off his coat and jumped overboard, caught the young woman, and bearing her up, swam against the rapid tide toward the scow.

Hauscrucker stood in the dark amid unfamiliar surroundings, not knowing how to help. He cried out: "What shall I do?" and from the water Capt. Rice told him to get a rope and throw it end overboard. Hauscrucker had to grope blindly for any sort of a line, and when he found one Capt. Rice and his daughter had been carried by the tide far out of reach of the scow.

Cries for help from Hauscrucker were faintly answered from the blackness over the river, where father and daughter were drowning, and also brought delayed aid from boatmen in the neighborhood. Capt. Rice cut all along the shore and vainly sought for the missing couple, but found no trace of either. A Weehawken ferryboat added its passengers to the excited witnesses of the efforts at rescue.

BAG O' BUGS STIRS UP CAR. Fine Doings in Subway When Black Satchel Was Opened.

New York.—Somebody's collection of living butterflies, moths, bugs and insects came nearly causing a panic on a south-bound subway train.

An elderly man, who looked like a college professor, and who was accompanied by a pretty girl of 15, arose from a cross seat to alight at Columbia University station. As the couple went, a small, black bag was discovered on the seat they had occupied.

A young man made after them, but was assured by the girl that it was not her property. Before her companion could be appealed to, he had left the train, which started off.

The dozen other passengers in the train, most of whom were women, became curious as to the contents of the bag, and it was opened. It was crammed full of flying insects.

Given their freedom they filled every corner of the car. Women shrieked and jumped on the seats, holding their dresses tightly around them.

The conductor had the passengers transferred to another car, and the insects had undisturbed possession of the first one.

Friendly Criticism. Scribbles—Do you think of my poem in the 17th cent issue of Blank's Magazine? "Magpie" reminds me of a plate of...

Beware. This paper says that kissing is dangerous because of germs. Now, I should like to know what one might catch by kissing? Husband (wearily)—Husbands.—Judge.

German Medical Students. No fewer than 8,252 medical students attend lectures at the universities of Germany this winter.