

NEBRASKANS IN CUBA

Report of the Doings of old Engineering Students now in the Island

The senior classmen, in all colleges, about this time of year, begin to ask one another, "What are you going to do when you graduate?" I will not try to foretell what the class of 1902 is going to do, but to those who have friends in Cuba the following few lines may be of interest.

Of all the universities represented in the American colony in Cuba, I can safely say Nebraska stands first not only in number but in quality, and the fact that it is appreciated is shown by the responsible positions to which our men have been appointed.

Among the flunkers of the upper classes there may still remain some few who remember Spencer Wells. Spencer was in school in '97, '98, '99, but he was born to be a soldier, not a student; his father was Major Wells of the U. S. army, so at the first blast of the trumpet he dropped his books and joined the army. It is needless to recount the battles or the charges he went through; we all remember the gallant U. S. cavalry and its work in Cuba. After my landing in Cuba, the first knowledge I got of the young lieutenant was to the effect that he was located in Puerto Principe province with a detachment of Eighth cavalry. I received this information from a native who claimed to be a friend of Spencer's and who presented me on several occasions with presents as coming from Lieutenant Wells. One day I decided to make Spencer a present, so when my man was leaving to spend a day with his wife and family and, as he said, to carry greetings from me to the lieutenant, I loaded him up with a cake, not a cake as we think of it, but a Cuban cake. Days passed; I had read of messengers dying in the performance of their duties, maybe this one had met some tragic fate. One day I met Spencer at Camp Columbia, a camp near Havana. I asked him if he knew my messenger, and when he replied in the negative, I knew the poor Cuban had been the victim of an overdose of cake and probably lay bleaching under the tropical sun somewhere along the trail between Havana and his home in far off Puerto Principe.

After this Wells was transferred to Havana and promoted to a position on Governor General Wood's staff. His worth and ability were soon recognized, and last spring he was detailed as special agent to the Isle de Pinos. Upon his return he was appointed judge advocate of the island of Cuba, and is still giving the best of satisfaction in this capacity.

Sargent, whom we all remember, and whose name can be found by a look through the early numbers of the Kiote or Hesperian of about that time, is probably the best known to us of all the Nebraskans in Cuba. Joseph, moved by the one indomitable force of his nature, "duty," rises to the emergency of the occasion and hurries to the scene of action in Cuba. His engineering education at the university, backed by experience in railway work and a summer's experience with the Second U. S. engineers as an officer, fitted him for the position of assistant engineer in charge of the survey of fortifications. A detail of his work could hardly be appreciated; suffice it to say that his work was favorably commented upon by military experts for its general scheme and accuracy. Plans and maps from his work are now being used in the class rooms at West Point, not only in the study of Cuba, but also as samples of

good practice. General Ludlow, in his report, quotes directly from Mr. Sargent's report, and Harper's Weekly of two years ago had articles written by Mr. Sargent on the work then in progress. At present his department is working on a typographical map of the country around Havana, and their work is spoken of as second only in importance to the departments of sewers and streets.

Of course when Sargent wanted men, none seemed to suit him as well as Nebraskans, so he sent directly to the university and we find in his department at present, O. T. Reedy as chief of draughting rooms and Sargent's right hand man in time of trouble; Jim Lytle, field engineer, is now employed making a map of the permanent fortifications showing the courses of the underground passages from fort to fort, and in preparing an article upon how the Spanish engineers had planned to meet the most extreme emergencies in laying out these secret passages.

Clarence Marine probably has had the most interesting experience of any Nebraskan in Cuba; in fact his experience has been unique. Like many others, Mr. Marine felt he was needed at the front, and so offered himself to his country. After peace was declared he settled in Florida, but later, being tendered a position in the postoffice, he moved to Cuba. At first his duty was to establish postoffices over the island, but later he was located in Havana and placed in charge of the insular department of money orders and registered letters. We all recall the Havana postoffice scandal of a year ago, and Nebraska can say with pride that the department of money orders and registered letters alone came through the investigation which followed; alone in that it was the only department of the postoffice that had not practiced irregularities. Clarence is still in his position in the postoffice, but little did we think last spring when the Havana papers announced that Mr. Marine would spend a few weeks in the states, and a few lines farther down announced that Havana's fairest belle, Senoritta Maria Del Monte would visit in America that there was to be a Mrs. Marine. A word about Mrs. Marine may interest a few of Clarence's friends: A Cuban of Spanish ancestry, her features perfectly rounded and the last trace of that angularity of features characteristic of the Spanish race gone; slightly shorter than Clarence and of a jolly nature, which makes them quite a team. As may be expected, her hair is black and luxuriant, setting off her round face, beautiful features and complexion to a nicety. Her every movement is grace, as this is a mark of breeding in Cuba. Clarence may be seen afternoons driving on the Prado, his team of blacks trimmed in their silver harness, with outriders and all that goes to make up a royal turnout. Is one of the prides of Havana. While Mr. Marine has entered the gay part of Havana's life, do not let us think he neglects business; in fact he has several large sugar plantations of his own now besides his work at the postoffice.

I am sorry to let any of the boys off easy, and I assure you if my accounts are short or lacking in detail it is because I am lacking in information.

Wilber O. Aver, who was in the university in '95, '96, '97, '98, has been connected with the best work we find done in Havana since the American occupation. He is with the department of public repairs and buildings. He has charge of the remodeling of a number of the old Spanish government buildings. He is well known and liked by everybody; his ability as an engineer is admitted, and the fact

that he is the ranking engineer in the department is no small honor.

Jack Hitchman, while not in charge of any individual work, deserves to be mentioned with some distinction; he and Carter are both in the sewer department, and it is only because this work has been entirely upon paper that they have not come out before the public. We can trust them both, as they will make up for the time they have been planning on paper when they start to build the sewer. The work is a large one, probably the largest and most difficult ever undertaken, and a perfect plan is necessary.

I have given you an idea of the boys in Cuba; now, it may be a word as to the opportunities in Cuba would be of interest. Cuba offers more openings, better openings, and better wages than any other part of the United States. A young engineer will be placed over work sooner and at better wages in Cuba than in any place I know of. There is more work being done than there are engineers for, and above all the work is more desirable, being in general new and not repairing or patching up old work. When one goes to Cuba he is out of America as much as if he had gone to Europe, and what he sees and learns can not help making him a broader and stronger American.

F. B. RYONS.

Electricity at the Pan-American Exposition

The Pan-American Exposition, it may be truly said, was essentially an electrical exposition. Without electricity many of its greatest attractions would have been absent, as well as many of the things now deemed indispensable. The one thing about the exposition that will be remembered longest by those who have been there was the evening illumination, many considering it as being worth more than all the other things put together. The illumination was truly beautiful, nothing like it having ever before been attempted on so large a scale. Standing at the south end of the great central court early in the evening one would see that suddenly all the lights in view would go out. Then after a moment a hand would begin to play the "Star Spangled Banner." At the same time a faint glow would begin to appear along the cornice lines of the buildings on all the lamp clusters scattered through the court, and on the electric tower. Gradually their glow would increase with no perceptible steps till just as the hand finished the lamps were all up to their full candle-power. The electric tower would be a blaze of glory with its thousands and thousands of lamps, while the brilliantly outlined buildings on both sides of the central lagoon but added charms to the view.

It was especially interesting to notice that, except near the gates and in the buildings, there were no arc lamps visible anywhere to mar, with their glare, the illumination. The power for this illumination was all transmitted from Niagara, about 60 miles distant, at a pressure of 22,000 volts. In the electricity building it was stepped down to about 1,800 and in convenient subways again down to about 100 volts.

Leaving the outside illumination, let us now proceed to the electricity building. At the west end the visitor will first see a historical collection of some of the first Edison dynamos, arc machines and street railway motors. Nearby was a Stanley frequency changer, a synchronous motor and generator in one machine, changing the 25 cycle Niagara current to 50 cycle current for lighting in the build-

(Continued on page 8.)

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