

of the Canadian border and I packed up my office in San Francisco and stopped trying to be on both sides of the border at once, which was something of a relief though I had enjoyed the work in the United States and found it most interesting.

At home in Victoria I found the war had moved closer to us and we had to black out our homes and everything else at night, lest the Japanese should have ideas about repeating their success at Pearl Harbour on the coast of continental North America. We were very poorly equipped to cope with them if they came because Canada had been stripped of arms of all kinds, to help re-arm Britain after the fall of France and the disaster at Dunquerque. The Canadian navy was concentrated on the North Atlantic convoy route and the army had two Bofors anti-aircraft guns in use for training on the west coast, and little ammunition.

The shipyards on our west coast built a number of smaller naval vessels such as frigates, corvettes and minesweepers, but these were hustled round to the Atlantic side as soon as they were commissioned. We also built 100 or more of the standard design 10,000 ton cargo ships which likewise vanished to all parts of the seven seas as soon as they were finished. One of these was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine within about 100 miles of Victoria on her maiden voyage. As she was loaded with lumber we were able to float her into our big drydock to be repaired.

Soon after the fall of Singapore we had the S/S *Queen Elizabeth* in the drydock with the biggest barnacles I ever saw on her hull below the waterline. She had been carrying Australian troops to Singapore and was overdue for drydocking to clean off the barnacles which were large and numerous enough to cause some reduction in speed. She left Victoria to start the job of carrying American troops to Australia. At this date she could carry 12,000 troops at a time but after some changes in the arrangements for feeding them she could and did take 20,000.

It was amusing to note how many people who regarded themselves as well informed about all matters to do with shipping, had apparently not heard of the existence of our drydock at Esquimalt before, big enough to take Cunard Co.'s big *Queens* with room to spare lengthways if rather a close fit for depth. The first time the *Elizabeth* went in some of the large wooden blocks on which the keel rests, came floating up to the surface, and when the captain saw this he insisted on backing his ship out again and was with difficulty persuaded to make another attempt the next day, which was fortunately successful.

This big ship had apparently never stayed in one place long enough to have degaussing gear fitted though some bits and pieces of the gear were stowed in various places on board. I looked it over and decided we could do nothing to help matters in the few days she was going to be with us.

As time went on in 1942 rumours began to circulate about the part to be played by the Canadian navy in the invasion of Europe when it should come to pass. In 1943 we began to be very busy with the work of preparing, repairing and altering a number of craft for the various functions to be performed with the object of actually landing an army on the coast of France, whether it be in the English Channel or the Mediterranean.

In December 1943 we were set back rather seriously by an unusual amount of fog, actually 19 days in the one month on which no ships could move in Vancouver harbour, while the rumour mills worked overtime about cables said to be received from the Admiralty fixing deadline dates for ships to reach England, causing the officers appointed to command them to have stomach ulcers worrying about possibly missing the great opportunity of their lives to attain a niche in the hall of fame, by playing an active part in a great historic event. Those I knew were extremely keen on the job they had to do regardless of the possible hazards.

In the event I believe all our ships that were supposed to be on hand in the English Channel were there and played their part. I was sorry not to be there myself but was well represented by three nephews, two as navigating officers on Canadian ships and one who played a prominent part in the design and construction of the "Mulberry" harbours that were planted on the coast of Normandy. He is a civil engineer who was on the civil construction staff of the Admiralty and was at one time assigned to the naval base at Singapore. He was not responsible for the fact that the 12-inch guns could only be fired out to sea as that was settled before he was on the job. In any case heavy cannon of that type are simply not suitable for shooting Japanese infantrymen out of trees, a mode of attack presumably not anticipated by our pre-war planners.



ONCE THE SHIPS FOR D-DAY were off our hands things seemed a bit flat on the west coast, though the shipyards were fully occupied with new construction of naval and merchant vessels. The date for the invasion of Europe was not known but it was obviously too early for the feeling of tension that I supposed we all felt later, civilians and armed services alike, with Dieppe fresh in memory.

By this time (early 1944) I had a good staff in my department, both in Esquimalt and in Vancouver, and my work was largely in administration, supervision and paper work in my office, with less clambering about ships. At one time we had several Russian merchant ships in Vancouver apparently wanting to be degaussed but there was uncertainty about who would pay for the job, and in the end they went off to the United States where Lend Lease was functioning, rather to my relief. When on board them I felt I was being closely watched every minute and there was no feeling of friendliness or co-operation, only suspicion.

In the spring of 1944 I was in the doctor's hands over some trouble with my back, which I had had before and which seemed liable to recur at intervals, especially if I did something that caused strain. The medical officers attached to the naval hospital suggested putting me to bed. When I asked them if

they could cure the trouble and how long it would take, they said I might be in hospital for a year and they could relieve the symptoms but not definitely cure the trouble.

This idea did not appeal to me at all. It looked as if the war might be finished by the end of 1944 and I could do nothing to help it in hospital. I felt I could do better taking things quietly at home and attending to my personal affairs which had been somewhat neglected for nearly five years. So I propositioned the doctors to give me a medical board and certify me "Medically Unfit" for further service, which would automatically return me to life as a civilian, which was done. The war did not finish quite so quickly as many of us had thought it might, but I am sure that was not due to my absence from active duty in the latter half of 1944! It was much more likely due to the Battle of the Bulge.

The Canadian government had set up an elaborate and I think very good organization, the object of which was to try to make sure that all members of the armed services on returning to civil life who did not have definite jobs to go to, would be taken care of in one way or another, by vocational training or other means.

It had never occurred to me that the good people in charge of this work in Victoria would be interested in me, but there was a prescribed routine that everyone was supposed to go through on discharge from the service, regardless of rank or whether he wanted a job of any sort or not.

They seemed to fairly pounce on me and I had difficulty in convincing them that I really did not want anything they could do for me. One official went to some trouble to try to explain some of the business facts of life that I felt I really knew more about than he did, though I did not want to hurt his feelings by saying so.

I had in fact practically made up my mind not to go back into the kind of high-pressure business life I had led for 25 years or so, but had not come to really like in that time, to put

it mildly. I had been away from it for 8 years including my war service and was 58 years old, and thought of retiring at 60 or as soon after as it was feasible to do so.

Another factor was the matter of health, particularly that of my wife. I had long been convinced that she would be better in a warmer climate than could be found in Canada, and I also had a hankering to try living in the tropics myself, preferably on an island if possible.

We discussed the pros and cons and I wrote letters to sundry people with a view to digging up information about places to which we might possibly go. Choice was limited to a considerable extent by the fact that Canada had currency control, which virtually eliminated the southern United States or any country in which the local currency was in practice linked to the United States dollar though not officially tied thereto, such as Mexico for instance.

We decided to try the Caribbean Islands then known as the British West Indies and for currency purposes included in the sterling area. In mid-1946 the Canadian currency control did not seem to include the sterling area or at any rate not the West Indies.

We decided to go first to Antigua (pronounced Antee-ga) partly because there was a new hotel there, managed by a man we knew who had formerly been in the hotel business in Victoria.

Transportation was a problem because ship services the world over had made very little progress toward returning to anything like a pre-war basis. The Vancouver office of a well-known travel agency told us that the shipping companies did not even bother to answer their letters any more.

So we arranged to fly by way of Seattle, and Chicago to Miami, where we had a reservation with Pan-American Airways to go on to Antigua in one of their DC-3's that island-hopped down the Caribbean en route to South America. It took all day and the plane crews changed at Antigua, the crew

we had travelled with from Miami spending the night in our hotel before returning to Miami.

Ruth and I both loved the warm climate of the West Indies from the first moment we arrived there. We did not stay in Antigua more than a few weeks for sundry reasons. It is one of the Caribbean Islands often called "The Sugar Islands" because the staple crop on which the economy depends is the sugar cane, and it does seem to be the crop that naturally and consistently does best in the soil and climate of those islands.

The trouble is that for many years cane sugar has been what is known as a "feast or famine" or a "boom or bust" crop. It can be grown in a large number of tropical or sub-tropical countries including some in which the wages of workers and their standard of living are very low, as in the Sugar Islands, and world supply of sugar often exceeds demand.

Some of the islands are better suited for producing sugar than others, the more fortunate ones having better or deeper soil and more reliable rainfall. We remained in Antigua less than nine weeks and moved on to Barbados where we lived for nine years, before moving on to Mexico.

Antigua has traditionally been a relatively poor island with uncertain rainfall and soil lacking in depth or quality. In 1946 it seemed to us to be somewhat too "underdeveloped" and with very little fresh water available for gardening or other purposes. Ruth has always been a very keen gardener and wanted to pursue her hobby in the tropics.

While staying in the hotel we met a number of men and women in the British colonial service, engaged in trying to see that the various islands had good government and hoping to help them attain economic self-sufficiency, so that they would depend less on being subsidized by the British taxpayer.

These civil servants knew the various islands well and we learned a great deal from them, to help us decide which would suit our needs and ideas best. The answer was definitely Barbados so we packed our bags and betook ourselves to Bar-

bados, the most easterly of the Caribbean Islands, with a very high density of population which is about 90% negro. The island is approximately pear-shaped, about 23 miles long with an area of 166 square miles, and is unique in being the only one of the many islands in that part of the ocean that has always been British since it was first settled by them in 1625, prior to which it was uninhabited. The others all changed hands, some of them frequently, in the various wars between the Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese and British in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

We were fortunate in having a social contact in Barbados with a man who had been at school with me and was the headmaster of a boys' college of about 500 students. I had had no contact with him since leaving the school some 42 years before, but the old school tie is a very strong tie, as I used to tell some of my young friends in Canada who were members of one of the Greek letter fraternities with which North American colleges are infested. The old school tie is also basically more democratic.

My former school contemporary and his family were very kind to us socially and our contact with them helped us materially to "find our feet" and feel at home in Barbados, much sooner than would have otherwise been the case.

As a place to live we liked the island from the first and it did not take us long to decide that it was where we wanted to settle down, which started us on hunting for a house to buy or a plot of land on which to build to suit our own ideas.

We toyed with the idea of buying an old plantation house and modernizing it but were thankful later on that we had resisted this particular temptation. Some of the old houses we looked over had artistic and romantic appeal as well as wonderful views, which were, however, offset by antique plumbing and kitchens, leaky roofs and heavy infestation of termites in the woodwork, every scrap of which would have to be replaced. Some newcomers to the island who bought old plantation

houses and proceeded to carry out extensive alterations, including cutting through the walls to make new windows or doorways fell into a booby trap because the original building, perhaps two centuries before, did not include the use of cement in mixing the mortar. Perhaps cement was unobtainable then or too expensive for ordinary use; some said molasses was used instead. The walls seemed to do well enough till someone began to cut through them, when they would collapse and have to be completely rebuilt, so that the final result would cost a great deal more than the luckless buyer had planned to spend.

We finally decided we must build in order to have a home that we really liked because it suited our ideas and the climate. This seems a simple formula but in our experience it has been amazingly difficult to find a house already built that came fairly close to our ideas of comfortable living, convenience in housekeeping and suitability for the climate, and this applies to all the various places in which we have lived. We have built four "Dream Houses" in different places and in each case they sold quite readily at a good price when we wanted to move away.

Building a house in a strange country is something of an adventure because manners and customs and methods of doing business vary and newcomers have much to learn. One might think the simplest way would be to engage the services of a local architect but we have found that unsatisfactory even in our own country of Canada; perhaps it is our fault.

My wife has very sound ideas on the subject and is quite capable of drawing plans to scale, while I am equally capable of seeing that the structure will withstand hurricanes or whatever is the local hazard, also that the surrounding ground is well drained and so on. Hurricanes are a feature of life in the West Indies and the local history is replete with stories of destroyed buildings, including in Barbados at one time the Cathedral and Government House.

The staple material for walls is the coral rock of which the island is largely composed. It is like a soft rock and is quarried with the help of dynamite and cut into rectangular blocks with saws similar to those used by carpenters and loggers. The coral is hygroscopic and the outside surface must be made waterproof by one means or another, or the rain will quickly leak through the thickest wall and ruin the appearance of the inside surface, making the whole building look and feel very damp, sprouting an ugly black mould.

We bought two acres of land with sugar cane growing on it, though it was not really good cane land as the soil was not deep enough for that demanding crop. It proved adequate, however, for the sort of gardening my wife wanted to do, and she thoroughly enjoyed the experience of gardening in the tropics with a negro lad or two to do the unskilled chores. They were not the world's most wonderful workers but were about worth their relatively small wages from our point of view.

The contractor who undertook to build our house was a white man born in the island. The workers were all negroes and at times the total number of men, women and children on the job must have been about 40, though it was not a large house. We visited the site every day and sometimes took a hand in the proceedings, trying to see that the rooms and doorways and window apertures were rectangular. The native workmen had a genius for getting them definitely non-rectangular and were hard to convince on the subject; they seemed to think our predilection for geometric symmetry was a strange obsession of foreigners. I tried to show them how to check by making sure the diagonals were equal but their reaction was that my idea wouldn't work in Barbados. We learned later that this was a very common reaction to new ideas or suggestions and was by no means confined to the coloured Barbadians; I suppose it is a symptom of insularity.

When the house was finished and we had moved in we

found it a very good spot in which to live. Our household staff consisted of a cook and a housemaid and the garden staff at first of one teenage lad and later of two. The idea was that two would do approximately twice the work of one but we had to admit that in this respect Barbados really was different; they did twice as little and spent much time sitting down where they were not visible from the house, chewing sugar cane and talking interminably in the local patois, a curious mixture of seventeenth-century English, bad grammar and missing teeth caused by lack of dental care.

Household help was very plentiful and some of it was good and wages were modest by our standards. Many of the applicants for jobs as housemaid or cook were not trained and some very hard to train, especially the would-be cooks. A written recipe is little use to a cook who cannot read and some lacked any natural aptitude for the culinary art.

Education was not compulsory if only because it had never been practicable to provide schools and teachers to keep up with the rapidly increasing population. Barbados was traditionally noted for its schools, including secondary schools from which students could graduate to universities in England or elsewhere, some with the aid of scholarships. There were also private boarding schools for youngsters from other islands, the curricula of all schools corresponding to those of Britain.

Shortly after we arrived in Barbados in 1946 some drastic political and social changes set in that were destined to revolutionize life on the island for both the white and coloured populations. The Labour party won the election in Britain in 1945 and went to work to effect changes in the Colonies, with the object of bringing them up to date according to socialist ideologies.

Prior to that time Barbados did not have universal suffrage. The vote was limited by an income or property qualification that disfranchised most of the teeming negro population. There was an elected legislative assembly of 25 members only two

of which were coloured. When we left the island nine years later only two white men were members. The governor and commissioner of police and the first secretary and attorney-general were still career men in the British Colonial Service, but it was obviously only a matter of time till that changed.

It is a tribute to the way in which the island had been administered by the British that this revolutionary change was accomplished smoothly, with no vestige of violence. This did not alter the fact that with 90% or more of the total population coloured, the whites had become politically negligible, and this condition prevailed in all the islands of the British West Indies, plus the continental enclaves known as British Honduras and British Guiana.

There was much discussion of a federation of all these units and the British government was in favour of the plan, probably I should think in the hope that the prospect of them becoming economically self-supporting would be improved thereby, instead of taking it for granted that they should be supported by the over-burdened British taxpayer, through a substantial subsidy on the cane sugar they produced or in other ways.

Trying to get them all to agree on federation was like trying to get a large family of problem children to sink their differences and mutual jealousies, and work together for the common good. It finally reached the stage of being attempted with some of them "opting out," but federation had a very short life and then collapsed completely.

There was also much talk of expanding tourism which offered promise if only on account of the climate in the months of winter in the northern hemisphere, when the weather is excellent in the Caribbean Islands and especially so in Barbados, which has no malaria or snakes and relative freedom from other pests found on some of the other islands.

Not all Barbadians were in favour of more tourists. Members of the old established plantation families recognized that

most of the tourists would come from the United States or Canada, and would bring inflation of the currency with them, especially the Americans, by overpaying the negroes and their generally lavish way of living wherever they may be.

It was deemed urgently necessary, however, to diversify the economy by any means possible, instead of continuing indefinitely to depend on the old unreliable cane sugar, subject as it was to long periods of price depression. Efforts have been made to produce other crops such as cotton or tobacco but without success. To judge by my wife's efforts at horticulture it seemed evident that Barbadoes was meant by nature to produce the sugar cane efficiently and very little else of commercial value.

With much effort and irrigation and constant battling with pests we managed to produce a few vegetables for our own consumption, but we also bought tinned stuff. We did grow bananas and avocados which we consumed with relish when they were not stolen at night by dark complected predators with bare feet, invisible and inaudible.

The legal term for this is praedial larceny and it was evidently an old problem in the island. The plantation houses coped with it by keeping dogs of a large, fierce breed loose about their premises at night but we did not think it important enough for that remedy. They were known as plantation dogs and were sometimes referred to as Bull Mastiffs and seemed a very effective answer to the problem.

Some householders kept a flock of guinea fowl which roamed the garden in the daytime and roosted in trees at night. They were said to be more sensitive to the presence of nocturnal prowlers than the best watchdog, and made a terrific din if anyone came around.

We liked the climate of Barbados better than that of any of the various places we lived in before or since. In Latitude 13' North it is well within the tropics but the temperature is modified by the easterly trade wind, so that the mean tempera-

ture throughout the year is 80°F. and the seawater is the same. Air temperature very seldom varies more than 10° above or below the mean, which makes it the most equable climate of the many in which I have lived.

The sea bathing is very good especially on the west or lee coast, with some excellent sandy beaches. On the east or windward coast the wind is too strong and the sea too rough for safe bathing most of the time.

The island has another advantage in a good supply of fresh water from underground though there are no lakes or rivers. The waterworks are operated by the government and while we were there a large subterranean basin of fresh water was discovered, and measurements were being made to determine the quantity of water that could be drawn from it daily without exhausting the supply. It was several hundred feet above sea level so the water would flow to most of the island by gravity. It was recognized, however, that continued increase in both population and per capita consumption would create a problem in time.

Some of the Caribbean Islands depend on catchment of rainwater from the roofs, as in the Bahamas, Virgin Islands and others, but this system has drawbacks, one of which is keeping the storage cisterns clean and the water free from pollution. I gained the impression that many householders solve the problem by ignoring its existence.

We found no lack of social life that was congenial to us. Most of our friends were British, Canadian or American but we were on visiting terms with a few of the plantation families, some of which had been in Barbados for 200 years or more, and were regarded as 'old Family' by themselves and others. Some of them did not really approve of their personal paradise being invaded by intruders like ourselves, and did not like the idea of the universal suffrage that came from the socialist government in England, at about the same time we arrived

from Canada; but there was nothing much they could do about either.

Owing to the extent and quality of education there is no doubt Barbados was better prepared for self-government than many of the under-developed countries. It was still true, however, that the illiteracy rate was quite high and illegitimacy about 60% of the population as many of the negroes had a definite preference for a tie less binding than that of legal marriage, especially when no social stigma was incurred.

The first election held with universal suffrage resulted in a negro lawyer becoming premier. He had qualified as a lawyer in London and was therefore a well-educated man, but that did not mean that all the members of his cabinet were of the same calibre, in fact that was far from being the case. It did not seem very sensible for a small island with a total population of about 220,000 to have a premier and cabinet with all the paraphernalia and complications of government as a parliamentary democracy and bureaucracy. One thing certain was that taxes would increase considerably.

While this was going on I began to have misgivings about continuing to live in Barbados. It seemed to me that white people being only 10% of the population would be in the position of second-class citizens and the idea lacked appeal. I gathered that some of the "Old Families" would leave if they could, much as they would dislike selling the plantations that had been owned by their ancestors for many generations. It would probably be easy enough to sell the land but that did not solve the problem of where to go in view of the restrictions imposed by the currency control of the sterling area. The idea of going to live in England with the doubtful climate and high taxation was not popular.

As a matter of fact we had a taxation problem in Barbados that we had not anticipated before we went there. We were taxed by Canada as non-resident citizens, a straight 15% with no deductions or exemptions allowed. We were also liable for

income tax in Barbados with much smaller exemptions than we had had as Canadians domiciled in Canada. The tax tables were based on smaller incomes than in Canada so we were in a relatively higher "tax bracket" in Barbados.

When we first enquired at the tax office to find out how we stood, we were told that there was then (1946) no agreement between the governments of Barbados and Canada about non-duplicating of taxes, but that it was fully expected there would be one within a year or two. In the meantime as an act of grace they would make some allowance for the fact that we were taxed by Canada.

Actually it worked out between the two taxes that we paid just about 30% of our entire income, which was a heavy "bite" for people of modest means. We could have offset this to some extent by putting more of our hard-earned life savings into annuities which are only partly taxable, as the taxgatherers distinguish between "return of ~~income~~ ^{capital}" and "interest." The older one is when the annuity is bought the better it works, but we did not want to do this at the time as a matter of policy.

One thing and another added up to make us think of going somewhere else to live in spite of regrets at leaving Barbados. So we decided to explore Mexico after selling our house and furniture and car and saying farewell to the friends we had made in our nine years in Barbados.

from Europe did the same thing and happened to arrive just ahead of us, so had a prior claim on the customs and immigration officials while we were kept waiting. By the time we were ashore all the good hotels were chock full and the best we could find was a 2nd or 3rd rate one in a rather dreary part of the city, minus air-conditioning.

Our first call was at the office of the American Automobile Association, which we had joined as "Members at Large" before leaving Barbados. The staff were very pleasant and helpful indeed but had some bad news for us.

We had planned to buy a station wagon and load our 800 pounds or so of assorted duffel into it and drive to Mexico, to spend six months exploring the country in order to decide whether we wanted to live there, and if so, where. We did this in the end but getting started was not so simple as one would think it should be.

We found that our Barbados driving licences were not valid in the State of New York nor probably anywhere in the United States, and owing to congestion of applicants it would take at least three weeks for us to obtain New York licences. To make matters worse there was an acute shortage of station wagons and none of the dealers had one in stock that suited us.

Finally one of the girls in the AAA office suggested that we might do better in the State of Connecticut, with reference to both licences and a station wagon. So we loaded our duffel on a train to Stamford and put up at a hotel there, only to find that the situation was not much better in Connecticut than in New York.

One of the car dealers who hoped to sell us a station wagon offered to use his political influence to hasten the licence formalities for me, but not for Ruth. I dislike that sort of thing on principle but waived my objection in the circumstances, took my test and was given a driving licence for Connecticut, which would of course be valid anywhere in the United States or Canada or Mexico, so long as I was a tourist there.

WE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED to go to Mexico by ship direct from Barbados or Trinidad which is only 200 miles away and more of a centre for shipping. However, it seemed impossible and we finally settled on going by an American cruise ship that normally plied between New York and South America as far as Buenos Ayres.

It was Ruth's first visit to New York since she had arrived there in the *Olympic* to find them celebrating the Armistice on November 11th, 1918, 37 years before. But her second visit did not cause her to revise the rather poor opinion of New York she had formed the first time.

No city is very pleasant in a heat wave and I think that applies with exceptional force to New York, perhaps owing to the relatively humid climate, the airlessness caused by so many very high buildings, to say nothing of the polyglot nature of much of the population, which has of course no connection with the state of the weather; it is always the same.

Our visit in 1955 was marred by additional drawbacks, one of which was the result of our ship arriving in the harbour on the morning of July 5th, doubtless because she had been slowed down to avoid arriving on the great national holiday, July 4th.

The trouble was that 3 or 4 of the large transatlantic liners

When it came to the point the dealer could not produce a vehicle that met our ideas of what we wanted to buy, and we appealed to the AAA again for help in the dilemma. They telephoned to their office in Memphis, Tennessee and were assured that there would be no delay or difficulty about licences or station wagon there.

So off to the railway station we went again and arrived in Memphis after a pleasant and comfortable train ride of 24 hours.

This time we landed on our feet so to speak and everything went smoothly for us. Within three days we had bought a new station wagon with automatic transmission, tubeless tires and V-8 engine, all of which proved very satisfactory; we also obtained Tennessee driving licences with what seemed a minimum of formality.

When we commented that it seemed curious that our Barbados licences were not recognized in the United States we were told that the only foreign licences that were valid were Mexican and Canadian and that the international licence was not recognized in any of the states of the Union.

Later on when we both obtained Mexican licences this seemed even more odd, as there was no driving test at all, only forms to be filled in with information about one's grandmother, plus of course a fee to be paid. It was not even necessary to declare that one knew how to drive a car!

Officials in the United States did not seem to have heard of Barbados, so I explained it was an island in the West Indies, "Where the rum comes from." This roused a spark of interest which flickered out quickly when I apologized for having no samples left.

We set out in good spirits from Memphis, enjoying the quiet running and quick, smooth flow of power from our first V-8 engine, and looking forward to six months of carefree exploring in Mexico. We had obtained tourist visas good for 6 months from the Mexican government tourist office in New York.

The AAA had told us that the ordinary car insurance carried by most motorists in the United States and Canada was not valid in Mexico, and insurance with a Mexican company would be necessary. This we obtained from the AAA office in Laredo, along with maps and booklets all of which proved useful. The Mexican insurance seemed rather expensive but it may have been a special rate for tourists, who are regarded as fair game in many countries. The rate may of course have been based on actual experience of claims for accidents, theft or other hazards.

We planned to drive in a leisurely way so as to see as much as possible of the country, before making the important decision about living in it or not. We made three overnight stops in the 760 miles from the border to Mexico City. We found the hotels and motels on the main highways to be clean and well run with good food in the dining rooms, all at rates that seemed reasonable to us. The Mexican government keeps a watchful eye on everything connected with the tourist business, recognizing that the hundreds of millions of American dollars it takes in yearly are a mainstay of the national economy.

It is possible to travel by the main routes without knowing any Spanish. It is necessary, however, to count the change carefully when paying for gasoline and not simply accept what is offered and pocket it without making sure it is correct.

The main roads are well paved and maintained and the mountain scenery striking. Few of the roads are fenced, however, and there is a distinct hazard of domestic animals suddenly appearing in the road just in front of a car; these include horses, cows, donkeys, goats, dogs, pigs and poultry. It may be even more dangerous at night when the animals are dazzled by headlights and less able to evade an oncoming car.

Arriving at the outskirts of Mexico City it is well to engage the services of a courier to act as chauffeur to one's hotel or wherever one is going. Traffic in the city streets is in a class by itself as to density and what seems to a stranger as dangerously

high speed and reckless behaviour. To cope with this condition when one does not know the way or the local rules and customs is not amusing to put it mildly.

Friends in Barbados had given us introductions to two families in Cuernavaca which is 50 miles south of Mexico City on the main road to Acapulco. By paying a small toll charge motorists may use the new boulevard highway through magnificent mountain scenery. Mexico City is about 7,300 feet above sea-level and Cuernavaca about 5,000 feet. The high point of the highway between is 10,000 feet and is known as The Pass. Some people and some car engines feel the effect of the relatively thin air at high altitudes, though this is seldom serious up to about 10,000 or 12,000 feet. The carburetor of our V-8 engine must have been adjusted for high altitude for some reason, and when going over the pass the car seemed to want to go faster than I wanted to drive, and tended to romp up the mountain grades at 80 m.p.h. if left to its own devices, whereas the legal limit is 100 kilometers or just about 70 m.p.h.

In Mexico one hears much about an intestinal ailment that the natives pretend afflicts only tourists, so they call it "Turista," though they have been known to have it themselves. It is the same trouble that Barbadians call "Barbados tummy," and that was nearly fatal to me when I contracted it in Burma many years before. The usual cause is infected food or drink but in Mexico very high altitudes may make it worse. It is wise to carry medication to give immunity and to give relief if one happens to be caught. The pills may be bought at any good drug store and are not expensive. I do not remember being bothered by this trouble in Mexico but Ruth nearly always felt the altitude when going over the 10,000-foot pass, though normally she seemed less susceptible to ailments of the digestive tract than I am.

The friends of friends we looked up in Cuernavaca were very helpful in giving us information that would have taken

time and trouble to obtain otherwise. After a brief pause there we went on to Acapulco, about another 200 miles or so. We stayed there for about 6 weeks, long enough to decide we did not want to live there. Later on we found that there is no place on either coast of Mexico that has a climate that is pleasant the year round. From Acapulco we retraced our steps to Mexico City and from there went west to Guadalajara in the State of Jalisco, not far from the Pacific coast and about 5,000 feet above sea-level. It seemed a pleasant enough place and we used it as a base from which to explore the district of Lake Chapala, which has been boomed from time to time as an ideal spot to which Norteamericanos may retire to live in the sun, with plenty of domestic help at very reasonable wages, and other advantages too numerous to mention.

The town and lake of Chapala are about 30 miles from Guadalajara on a good paved road, and at first sight may seem almost as good as the Siren Song of the Boomster makes them sound. It takes a period of actual living there to discover the drawbacks.

Mexico is a land of vanishing lakes. At the time of the Spanish conquest Mexico City resembled Venice which is certainly not the case now. Lake Chapala had done a partial vanishing act shortly before we arrived there, and was in process of returning to its former shoreline when we first set eyes on the locality.

Houses that had been built almost at the waters edge were some distance from it and the peons had cheerfully moved on to what had been the lake bed and planted crops between the houses and the new shoreline. Then the lake began to rise to its former level and we saw the peons working from dawn to dusk to gather the crops in before they were submerged.

We put up in a hotel on the lakeshore in Chapala and were in a room on the second floor. The door had a bad habit of locking itself when we were in the room and refusing to unlock as it should do when we wanted to go out. We had visions of

the hotel being on fire at night with us trapped in the room. When we asked the desk clerk what we were supposed to do he said the accepted procedure was to lean out of the window and shout, "Socorro" as loudly as possible. This seemed out of keeping with our normal, English attitude which is to live quietly and avoid attracting attention to ourselves, and as for dramatizing the simple fact of a malfunction in the lock of the door of our hotel room, that simply isn't done!

So we moved on to a newly opened motel in the village of Ajijic, (pronounced A-hee-hic) about four miles away on the lakeshore, where we stayed for about a month while we explored the neighbourhood, the houses available for rent, the amenities of life and density of insect population, especially the aggressive ones such as mosquitoes, centipedes, scorpions and so on, also reptiles like snakes, all of which are found in Mexico in varying numbers in different localities, but about which the boomsters are usually mute.

By the time our tourist visas were getting ready to expire we had decided we should like to live in Mexico and that Cuernavaca seemed most likely to suit our ideas and needs. So then we had to set matters in train for the elaborate routine necessary for us to become "Inmigrantes," corresponding to the American status of resident alien, both requiring extensive documentation and the paying of fees and so on.

The documents were all in Spanish of course and our knowledge of the language was not yet equal to coping with the paper work or interviews with government officials, so we thought it better to engage the services of an English-speaking lawyer to handle the formalities for us.

We asked the Canadian embassy if they would put us in touch with a good lawyer and their first reaction was to pour cold water on any idea of living in Mexico, though without giving any reason. When we refused to be easily discouraged they did put us in touch with a legal firm that seemed to consist of an American with Mexican associates.

The American was very friendly and helpful and the business proceeded smoothly. Among other things it involved paying customs duty on the car we had bought in Memphis six months before, at the rate of 100% of the purchase price. We had expected a blow but not quite such a hard one; it is amazingly difficult to obtain reliable information about such things before they hit one.

The documents we had to produce included our birth certificates, marriage certificate, police certificates from every place in which we had lived since we were 16, to say we had no criminal record, evidence of financial responsibility, and for anyone who had been in the armed services of another country, proof of honourable discharge. We had to take our marriage certificate to the British embassy to have a certificate typed on the back in Spanish, to the effect that it was a valid legal document. This seemed odd in a country where divorce may be obtained in a manner that seems to us to be extremely free and easy.

When the red tape was fully complied with it was necessary for us to make a trip back across the United States border so that we could re-enter Mexico with our new status as immigrants, after having surrendered our visas as turistas in the usual way on leaving the country. We spent a few days in San Antonio, Texas, where we looked up some American friends we had made when we were all held up in a hotel near Manzanillo, when a bridge had been washed out by a bad storm that the papers described as a "ciclon," meaning cyclone or hurricane.

After we returned to Cuernavaca we settled down seriously to the business of house-hunting, just as we had in Barbados after deciding we would like to live there some ten years before; the end result was the same too. After looking at a number of houses for sale or rent we decided we would have to build in order to have one we really liked.

We were fortunate in finding a plot of land about half an

acre with a good stone wall about six feet high around it, with steel gates and a flourishing crop of noxious weeds inhabited by an equally noxious collection of the local reptiles such as snakes, scorpions, skunks and centipedes. It did, however, have a wonderful view which could not be obscured as it was on the brink of a large "barranca" or ravine, with a clear outlook to the east over a sea of mountains including the two famous volcanoes, Ixtaccihuatl and Popocatepetl, both well over 17,000 feet high.

To see these silhouetted against the multi-hued dawn sky was a memorable sight we never tired of observing from our house after it was built. The Spanish name for Ixtaccihuatl is "La Mujer Dormida" — the Sleeping Woman, much easier to pronounce as well as having a striking resemblance to the outline of the female form recumbent as in bed, even wearing "falsies" to the eye of the experienced beholder. I never heard a Spanish equivalent for the name of the other volcano, which never looked like anything but just a volcano so was not given a romantic pseudonym by the Conquistadores; it was always known as "Popo" for short, very few being able to pronounce the Aztec name with confidence.

The plot of land was relatively expensive at \$8,000 United States but it was on a paved road with water, electricity and telephone available, and very convenient for getting to "El Centro" as Mexicans call "downtown," where the plaza and post office and banks and shops are to be found.

We were also fortunate in finding a white Mexican contractor who spoke English fluently. In collaboration with him we devised a scheme to baffle the wood termites by having practically no wood in the building, which worked out very well.

We had been warned of the danger of having building materials purloined but did not expect it to start quite so soon. Before work on the house had actually begun I noticed an apparent discrepancy in the number of bricks delivered to the site. On checking up it was obvious that a whole truckload of

1,500 bricks was missing, having vanished overnight. I explained to the contractor that I would not mind 100 bricks or so at a time but a truckload seemed to be overdoing a good thing, especially at such an early stage of the operation. He agreed in principle and made no demur about replacing the truckload, though I could not help feeling he thought it was not quite gentlemanly of me to count the bricks.

If larceny took place after this incident it was on a minor scale and not enough to be worth notice. I think it is always well to recognize the customs of the country one is in, so long as one can feel one is not the subject of flagrant discrimination as a foreigner.

The stone masons of Mexico are good, hence (I suppose) the pyramids. The walls, roof and floors were of masonry with no lumber at all, and the masons extended themselves to do a good job. The walls were over a foot thick of solid brick with columns of reinforced concrete at all corners, about a dozen of them. On top of the foundations there was a "cadena" or chain of reinforced concrete tied in with the columns, and on top of the walls another cadena, so that the finished job looked and felt rather like a fortress. The roof was carried on reinforced concrete beams that were cast on the ground and lifted into place with a hand winch. The roof itself was composed of layers of large clay tiles called "petatillos," with mortar between the layers, and waterproofed by layers of tar paper and a top layer of gravel. The floors were of concrete with a surface layer of ceramic tiles, which are made in Mexico and relatively inexpensive. The frames of doors and windows were of steel. There was no lumber in the structure of the house at all, the only wood being in secondary items such as cupboards and shelves and filling in the steel door frames. Thus if the termites did infest the wood it could be ripped out and replaced with a minimum of trouble and expense. The termites are a very great plague in Mexico and a booby trap for the northerner who is not accustomed to them, and thinks

of buying or building a house with any important part of the structure made of wood. Real estate salesmen are like their counterparts elsewhere, they don't go out of their way to mention small things; if they have a slogan it might be the old Latin tag *Caveat Emptor*—termites and all; they are only small in the literally physical sense.

One feature we were glad not to have in the house was central heating, than which one thing worse is not to have it when it is really needed. The southern half of Mexico is within the Tropic Zone but the wide range of altitude means that many places are high enough to be quite cool at times in the winter months. In Cuernavaca at 5,000 feet we did not need more than a good fireplace in the livingroom, for use occasionally in the evenings.

Altogether we were very pleased with the house when we moved in, even more so when we had been there about a year and there was quite a bad earthquake that gave us a good shaking in the middle of the night. Very serious damage was done to buildings in Mexico City about 50 miles to the north, and less serious damage in Acapulco some 200 miles to the south. Cuernavaca had relatively slight damage and our house none at all, not even a small crack anywhere.

In the process of settling in we went through the usual gamut of troubles before we acquired a satisfactory domestic staff. The people who extol the virtues of Mexico as a place to relax and lead a carefree life in the sun, always omit to mention that the golden handshake is part of the law of the land. If it is not embedded in the constitution it might as well be, for practical purposes.

Any employee who is fired after only 30 days is legally entitled to 3 months severance pay, and some of them in domestic service make a career of behaving like angels for 29 days and then try to be fired. By dint of much experience they have developed a technique that is fiendish in its ingenuity and ruthless in lack of regard for results of their conduct, so the

inexperienced "Norteamericano" employer is at a disadvantage in dealing with them.

Some dislike being "taken for a ride" in such a crude fashion, and try to outdo them in what the Germans call "Schrecklichkeit" or frightfulness so that they will quit and forfeit severance. This condition of domestic hot war can continue indefinitely but is not relaxing. We usually made with the golden handshake as gracefully as possible though not pretending to like the idea.

In due course we arrived at what seemed like an ideal solution of the help problem, in the form of a married couple who were old enough to be mature in their behaviour while young enough to be good workers. They lived and did their own housekeeping in the servants quarters which were separate from the house, as customary in Mexico. The woman worked as housemaid and did the rough work in the kitchen, though not experienced in cooking the kind of food to which we were accustomed. The man made himself useful outdoors as gardener, washing the car and acting as gatekeeper, watchman and general factotum. They were very good people and congenial in every way, and seemed especially wonderful after the tribulations we had been through with their predecessors. Our experience with them helped somewhat to restore our faith in human nature, which had taken quite a battering before they came. Domestic workers are like human beings in other walks of life in that it is seldom that both husband and wife are good, but these people were in a class by themselves in that respect. Their whole attitude toward us was like that of faithful retainers left over from the feudal times.

After the house was completed we had to go through the established routine to have it assessed for taxation, which began with making application at a government office in El Centro and paying a fee that was prescribed in the regulations. Like so many things in Mexico there was a catch in this in the form of an extra, unofficial fee of the same amount as the

official one, to ensure that the property would not be over-assessed. This is known as "mordido" or "bite" and is part of the way of life that one meets at every turn and is taken for granted by the Mexicans. I paid it by a cheque made out to "Bearer."

This formality having been complied with they sent a surveying team with instruments to make a detailed plan of our property with all buildings on it, the house, servants quarters, carport and the bodega or shed that was my workshop. The final result was a tax bill that was certainly not nominal but did seem reasonable enough to us by our standards. I do not know just what would happen if someone balked at the "bite" but was given to understand that the tax bill would be much higher, possibly double or treble the correct sum. Our contractor told me this and he should know. The tax bill was of course an annual affair and the bite only once, unless for some reason a re-assessment became necessary.

We found our life in Cuernavaca quite pleasant with as much social amenity as we wanted with English-speaking people, British, American and Canadian, many of whom had been in Mexico for many years and were fluent in Spanish. There was comparatively little social mixing with Mexican families except with some couples of mixed nationality, one being a Mexican.

After a time I began to have doubts on the subject of taxation. Before we decided to live in Mexico I had taken the precaution to ask legal advice about income taxes, and was told that we would not be liable for tax on money we brought into the country. As this was the only kind of income we had it seemed fair enough, and we were still being taxed by Canada as non-residents, which came to slightly more than if we were still domiciled in Canada. This would not apply to all non-residents but happened to work like that for us. It varies with the kind of income one has, but it always seems difficult to get reliable information on the subject until one has made a

mistake, when there is no lack of people ready to point out where one went wrong.

As time went by I picked up a scrap of information on the subject here and another there, and then found I could obtain complete English translations of the law about income tax for a small sum, from the American Chamber of Commerce in Mexico City; so I did that and started doing my homework. It was quite clear that we were liable for tax on our entire income wherever it came from. While I was about it I studied the law about estate or inheritance taxes too, and the first thing I found was that the Mexican courts would not recognize any will that had not been drawn up in Spanish and recorded with the proper authority, according to the regulations which seemed very clear, definite and detailed.

That was a bit of a shock and I found that our American acquaintances had apparently assumed that their wills drawn up in the United States would be valid in Mexico, but this was an unwarranted assumption, so that if they died in Mexico, they would be treated as intestate with reference to any property they owned in the country. In the case of wealthy people that could be regarded as a pretty kettle of fish for the lawyers of both countries to enjoy, and perhaps little left for the heirs when legal fees and "mordido" had been paid. On the basis of our own experience and that of others with whom we discussed the matter, it seemed probable that mordido would be a feature of any transaction in which public officials had power of decision. I had a feeling myself that "Norteamericanos" were regarded as fair game and were all assumed to be rich and probably malefactors.

The majority of Mexicans don't distinguish between Americans and Canadians unless the difference is pointed out to them in a particular case. Then it becomes apparent that they have no prejudice against Canadians. I once asked a well-educated Mexican the reason for this, to which he replied, "You have never invaded us."

Government officials with whom the turistas come into contact are under orders to be polite to them, and usually are, so long as they do not get into trouble of any sort, such as an accident with their car. Some Americans we met did have a slight accident for which they were not at fault in any way, but the police promptly impounded their car. Their insurance company paid the cost of repairing the car which was \$100 United States but did not pay the cost of retrieving the car from the clutches of the police which came to \$120 United States. It is virtually impossible to ascertain the reason for an impost like this and if it could be done at all, it would take so long that hotel expenses would far exceed the amount at risk, so it is wiser to pay up and try to look pleasant.

It is generally understood that the government services are so poorly paid that it is taken for granted that they must make their pay up to a living wage by seizing any opportunity that comes along. I do not think Mexico is any better or worse than other Latin American countries, and if that is the way they want it to be, after all it is their country. Perhaps the tourists should regard it as an occupational hazard of tourism.

One can understand those who staff our foreign embassies taking a dim view of Canadians who get into difficulties by their own sheer ignorance or naiveté, and expect to be rescued promptly and if necessary by all the resources of our foreign service. However, it is true that at the time our embassy in Mexico City did not have a good reputation among Canadians we met who were living in Mexico. The embassy folk were said to show little interest in Canadians living in Mexico, and from what we observed while sitting waiting for some attention ourselves we felt we understood what they meant. The treatment accorded to some wandering windbag from Ottawa was so very different and one could not help noticing the sudden switch from the casual and off-hand to the sycophantic.

While we were wondering if it would be wise for us to stay in Mexico the problem was solved for us by Ruth having one

of the most serious bouts of pulmonary trouble in her long medical record. After the doctor had sounded her chest his diagnosis was, pleurisy, bronchitis and double pneumonia. We pulled her through with a massive injection of penicillin and a tank of oxygen, and when she was well again the doctor advised a thorough check-up with chest x-rays and examination by a chest specialist. The final result was advice to live at sea-level instead of 5,000 feet above as in Cuernavaca.

In the course of our exploration before settling in Cuernavaca we had concluded that none of the possible places on the sea had a pleasant climate the year round and most had too many insects, tourists or other pests, or too few of the amenities of life to which we like to be accustomed.

My thoughts turned instinctively to Hawaii which I had visited briefly on the way to New Zealand and back in 1936, and after discussing it we decided to try living there at sea-level, "La que el Medico señala," which means "As the doctor ordered."

The termite-proof house we had built in Cuernavaca sold very readily for a good price, all cash in United States dollars and the buyers also bought our furniture and car. By the time one has paid the very high customs duty on a car in Mexico it is uneconomic to take it out of the country again, and most car buyers seem to prefer a car that has been made in the United States or anywhere but in Mexico.

We were sorry to part from the friends we had made in Mexico but needs must when the devil drives and doctors advice must be taken, to say nothing of the very unsatisfactory situation with reference to taxes both income and estate, which we were glad to leave behind. It felt like a potential menace hanging over us that might drop at any moment that the government decided to tighten up a somewhat loose bit of business.

We were also sorry to part with the very good domestic help we had finally acquired after running the gamut of

several of the severance-pay bandits I have described. Our faithful Reynaldo and Ignacia did not take a liking to the buyers of our house for which we could not blame them, but we were able to put them in touch with another American couple by whom they were engaged with complete and lasting mutual satisfaction.

We did not know if we would be able to find domestic help in Hawaii. Before the war it was available and good but the extinction of that particular aid to civilized existence seems to be definitely one of the horrors of war, and so it proved to be in Hawaii with the added horror of the booming tourist industry.

III

TO OBTAIN PERMISSION TO LIVE

IN Hawaii it was necessary for us to comply with the elaborate routine prescribed for those who wish to become resident aliens in the United States, very similar to that which we had gone through in order to become immigrants in Mexico.

Only one additional document was needed, a police certificate to the effect that we had no criminal record in Cuernavaca. As we had all the others it was simple enough to obtain some more photostat copies and make application at the consular office in the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City.

The process was expedited somewhat by the fact that the buyer of our house was a technical attaché of the embassy who had reached retirement age and planned to remain in Mexico, and was anxious for us to leave so that he and his wife could move in.

They also bought our car and furniture so we left Mexico as we had left Barbados some years before, with our clothes and about 800 pounds of assorted household oddments that we wanted to keep. We sent these on to San Francisco by air freight and followed ourselves as passengers, a very pleasant trip, memorable owing to the lavish scale of the issue of champagne "on the house." Coming in for a landing at Los Angeles we noticed the thick brown "smog" that seemed to blanket

the city, and that contrasted oddly with the large headlines of the afternoon papers on sale in the airport, announcing "SMOGLASS DAY."

We spent about 4 days in San Francisco and saw something of old friends before embarking on a Matson liner for Honolulu, also a pleasant trip though long enough in our view for that particular mode of travel.

The famous tourist heaven of Waikiki had changed considerably since my brief glimpse of it some 12 years before, mainly in the proliferation of hotels, apartments and tourist attractions of all kinds, and the density of the bumper-to-bumper traffic and the fumes therefrom. With some difficulty we found a furnished apartment we could lease for a month, while we looked around and decided where to go next. It seemed obvious that the Island of Oahu was too crowded to be attractive to us as a place of domicile, therefore it was just as obvious that we should have a look at the other islands, specifically Maui 100 miles east of Oahu and Kauai the same distance west.

We started with Maui and spent several months there, looking over the houses for sale or rental and available plots of land suitable for building the kind of house we would want. It was surprisingly difficult to find anything at all that met with our ideas, perhaps because we were sophisticated by much previous experience in Canada, Barbados and Mexico. The prospect of any real estate salesman persuading us to buy a house or a lot that did not measure up to our notions of what we wanted, was practically negligible.

It is also true that real estate in Hawaii is in a class by itself in that comparatively little of it is freely held by persons or corporations that do not want to sell, and much is only for sale as leasehold, under a contract that provides for re-negotiation every few years.

In a tropical island it is natural to think of living near a

good sandy beach but those are rather rare in Hawaii, and such as exist are likely to be inaccessible or not for sale or pre-empted for expansion of the tourist trade. When I first saw the famous beach of Waikiki it was most attractive and not over-crowded. Now the sand is hardly visible for the thousands of sun-bathers much of the time, and what sand may be seen is littered with cigarette butts (many with lipstick), and reeks of sun-tan oil, revolting evidence of the desecration of the beauties of nature by human litterbugs.

When planning to build a house on a tropical island many people take it for granted that they should be close to the shoreline, for convenience in bathing or other reasons. It does not occur to them to ask about the cost of insurance coverage for house and contents before they build, so they are staggered to find that they are quoted a rate of something like 15% or 20% per annum, which is prohibitive for people of modest means. In fact we were told in Hawaii that the ordinary insurance companies will not take the risk for what is known as "Sea-Wave" at any price, though Lloyd's of London will take it at what they regard as a suitable premium.

Sea-waves or tidal waves may be caused by hurricanes or earthquakes, the latter sometimes occurring thousands of miles away. In the short two years or so that we lived in Hawaii we experienced a hurricane, the centre of which passed right over us in Kauai, a tidal wave from a very bad earthquake thousands of miles away in Chile that caused serious damage in the Island of Hawaii some 300 miles from us, also a volcanic eruption in the big island that caused a considerable amount of damage to property there, but did not affect the other islands.

The Inter-Island Air Lines advertised special trips to view the eruption at close quarters, featuring the slogan, "See the volcano now, pay later," in keeping with the spirit of these debt-ridden times.

The hurricane did some damage to houses in Kauai, re-

moving many roofs completely and damaging others along with the television antennae. When the storm was over it was amusing to note how many of the roofless citizens regarded it as more important to get the TV into operation again than it was to repair the roof.

Having sold our car in Mexico we had a transportation problem which we solved by the purchase of a used Lincoln sedan for the sum of \$500. Cars of the more expensive type may usually be picked up second hand in the United States for only a fraction of the new price. The one we bought was in good condition, only six years old and with comparatively little mileage. The roads in Hawaii are very good but there is not a vast mileage of them. In our case it seemed very uneconomic to buy a new car for that reason, and the Lincoln served our purpose quite well while we were in the islands.

The population of Hawaii is very mixed and there is comparatively little of the pure native blood left. The Hawaiians seem to have no inhibitions about inter-marrying with other races, from the descendants of missionaries from the United States to oriental coolies from China, Japan, Korea and the Philippines. In 1936 I was told that taking the population as a whole it was about 60% Japanese, which is still probably the predominant strain, perhaps more than 60% now.

Prior to 1810 the islands were ruled by chiefs or "kings" who were frequently at war with each other. In 1810 Kamehameha the Great established himself as sole sovereign, and in 1820 missionaries from New England began arriving. Some of their descendants married Hawaiian princesses and acquired title to large tracts of land that became fabulously valuable. Others became extremely rich in commerce of all kinds.

Coolies from the orient were imported to work on the sugar plantations and at other jobs of hard manual labour, as the native Hawaiian does not take readily to the idea of earning his living by such means, though as a race they have magnificent physical development. A similar situation developed in

islands of the South Pacific such as the Fiji group, to which workers were brought in large numbers from India. They have a high rate of natural increase and now constitute a major political problem in opposition to the native Fijians. A similar situation is found in South Africa where the population includes about half a million or more of Indian descent, making a complex race problem still more difficult to solve.

The native Hawaiians seem to have been willing to marry almost anyone who came along, with the result that the race is in danger of becoming extinct, which is a pity because they are naturally fine people both physically and psychologically. Personally I don't blame them for not taking kindly to the idea of becoming coolies doing the hard work of cultivating sugar cane or pineapple by hand, to make rich plantation owners richer. Now the oriental coolies have become unionized along American lines, raising the cost of production so much that the plantations have a struggle to exist, despite the use of much costly labour-saving machinery.

We found we had one problem in both Maui and Kauai in a relative lack of medical facilities for anyone not connected with the plantations, which had their own staffs of qualified doctors on a salary basis to take care of the employees and their families. The doctors could treat private patients in return for suitable fees, but we did not find the system satisfactory, and it was an expensive nuisance to have to make a trip to Oahu for more or less minor medical or dental matters.

The very great inflation of medical costs of all kinds was becoming a serious problem for most people in our age group, and we were overage for membership in such organizations as the Blue Cross. Those did not exist in Barbados or Mexico but one could at least have domestic help there, and good doctors and nurses were available.

While we wondered what to do about this problem the Canadian government made a change in the rules about social security, which meant that if we returned to live in Canada for

12 months we could claim that for which we had been paying in our taxes for many years, but deprived of by an arbitrary rule as non-residents. Added to the fact that we had found Hawaii disappointing in some ways as a place of residence, this helped us to decide to return to Canada for at least a year, with open minds as to what we did or where we went afterward.

So again we sold our house, furniture and car and flew off by jet plane to Florida, via California. We were not in a hurry to return to Canada and thought we would have a good look at Florida and some of the Caribbean Islands we had not previously seen, which we did for several months in 1961.

We used Miami as a base from which to explore Florida, the Bahamas, Puerto Rico, the American and British Virgin Islands and Jamaica. We did not feel tempted to live in Florida for sundry reasons, though it has some undoubted attractions. All the islands that were formerly known as the British West Indies are ruled out for us because changes since World War II have had the effect of making white people second class citizens, also they have income taxes that would hit us hard when applied over and above our Canadian tax as non-residents. In addition the medical facilities are not so good as those to which we are accustomed in Canada. Some have a good supply of fresh water and some do not.

The Bahamas are organized for the tourist trade and most of the tourists are Americans, which means inflation of prices and does much to nullify the absence of income tax. Water for domestic supply is from rainfall trapped in cisterns of doubtful cleanliness. Sometimes there is a drought which can be serious. The Bahamas and Bermuda are undergoing political changes as a result of universal suffrage.

The American Virgin Islands are somewhat over-developed for tourists and the British Virgins are rather under-developed for anything; all the Virgins are short of good fresh water. So we did not find any spot in that part of the world in which

we really wanted to settle down for our old age. Probably we are hard to please but the thing we liked best in the whole region was the climate, which we knew very well of course from the nine years we had lived in Barbados.

In mid-1961 we wended our way by jet plane from Miami via Chicago to Seattle, thence by ship to Victoria. I think it was about this time that the Canadian government made another change in the rules about old age security, which made us as non-residents eligible without the need to return to live in Canada for 12 months.

At intervals during our 15 years abroad seeking retirement Utopia for the elderly, we had been bedevilled by one government or another changing the rules, or by rates of currency exchange being altered, though the changes were not always to our disadvantage. When the pound sterling was devalued soon after our house in Barbados was built it gave us a nice windfall, and helped to offset the income tax we had to pay during the rest of the time we remained in the island.

When the Canadian dollar was devalued soon after we returned to Canada it did not bother us, but would have meant a cut in income of about 8% if we returned to live in the United States. The possibility that some such change might occur at any time caused a feeling of uncertainty and financial insecurity.

Soon after our return to Canada another reason to make us feel glad to be back turned up, when it developed that Ruth needed major surgery to cope with intestinal adhesions, the result of a previous major operation in Toronto some 33 years before. She had what seems to be the usual rather harrowing experience of medical examinations including x-rays that were said to show no cause for surgery, till finally it was obvious that something must be done, though it was a difficult decision for a surgeon to make, to operate or not to operate.

In the event it turned out that the operation was more than justified; it was in fact necessary for continued existence des-

pite negative x-rays. That was six years ago and we are still living in Victoria though we would both much prefer a warmer climate so long as it did not entail complications such as duplication of income taxes or lack of modern medical facilities that become more important as we grow older.

In the years 1962 to 1966 inclusive Ruth was in hospital for one thing or another once a year, which has helped to keep us here, and my turn came in 1967. British Columbia has a well-developed system of medicare that certainly takes the brunt of the cost of illness, which would be enough to bankrupt people with average incomes without this protection. The tremendous inflation of medical costs is especially tough on people who reached retirement age and fixed incomes prior to the past decade or so.

We have not stopped travelling altogether or thinking about Utopia. In December 1963 we went to the Fiji Islands but the trip was not very successful. Our mid-winter in the northern hemisphere is mid-summer there, also the rainy season. With the sun right overhead the weather is likely to be too warm for comfort and very humid with many mosquitoes.

Fiji is not in the tourist business to anything like the same extent as Hawaii and is not likely to be in the foreseeable future. Most of the visitors seemed to be from Australia or New Zealand, and most of the hotels are not up to the standard to which North Americans are accustomed.

It is unique in being one "Colony" that does not want to be independent, mainly it seems because the native Fijians realize they need the British government to prevent the immigrant East Indians from getting control by their rather devious business methods, and the East Indians realize they need protection against the warlike propensities of the Fijians, whom they darkly suspect may not have finally and permanently abandoned cannibalism, or might be tempted to revert to it under pressure of circumstances.

Our stay in Fiji was shortened by inability to find a hotel

that came up to our ideas of suitable accommodation and that was not full up with guests from Australia or New Zealand, so we decided to return as far as Hawaii and spend the rest of our winter "holiday" there.

Waikiki seemed even more crowded than before if possible and extensive and expensive advertising being done to bring more and more visitors to the islands, so that one wondered just where the practical limit was supposed to be. Much of the time one could hardly see the sand for the nearly nude sun-bathers, and personally I much prefer to see the sand. So our holiday in the winter of 1963-64 was not exactly a success.

Our next venture was to Southern California which worked out well enough so far as it went, but that was not far enough to make us feel it solved the problem. The winter climate there is better than that of Victoria but not good enough to justify the upheaval and expense of an annual migration back and forth, at least in our opinion, and apart from the fact that the good spots are very crowded and devoted to the purpose of extracting the maximum number of dollars from the winter tourists.

AT INTERVALS OVER SEVERAL years we had talked of two things, paying a visit to my relatives in South Africa and making a voyage by the type of ship known as a cargo liner, which is a fairly large cargo ship with a good turn of speed and accommodation for a limited number of passengers, usually about 12.

Finally when the time arrived and we found that there were no passenger liners plying between Canada or the United States and South Africa, it seemed the obvious thing was to combine the two projects. There were several established lines from which to choose and the problem was to find one that did not have all its accommodation for passengers booked up for many months ahead, or in some cases a year or two.

The travel agency we tried did not seem able to help much and tried to persuade us to go by passenger lines via England, which we definitely did not want to do. Then it dawned on us that as the cargo liners could obviously fill all their space without the help of the travel agents, they were perhaps giving preference to prospective passengers who applied to them directly, thus saving the agents' commission.

So we tried doing that and it worked at least to the extent that we were able to book passage in a Norwegian ship from St. John, New Brunswick to Cape Town for a date that suited

our plans. The same line could not bring us back to Canada on a suitable date but we were able to solve that problem by contacting an agent in Natal through whom we booked our return passage in an American ship which did not prove to be nearly as satisfactory as the Norwegian vessel, but of that more later.

We planned to be away from home about five months and in a wide range of climates which involved rather too much baggage for air travel, so we decided to go to St. John by train, which we had not done for so many years it was almost a new experience. We left home on February 2nd, so it was a mid-winter journey across Canada with sub-zero temperatures outside but very comfortable in the train.

The trip from Vancouver to Montreal was marred by the presence in the train of a number of ill-mannered youths who were recruits for the armed services on the way to a training depot with no-one in charge of them or responsible for their behaviour. They over-ran the accommodation in the parlour and dining cars and were obtrusively noisy and vulgar and amused themselves in long-winded arguments with the bar-tender as to whether they were over 21; none of them had any documentary evidence of age and the bar-keep was quite rightly sceptical but the arguments were endless, noisy and boring. The Department of Defence should have put someone in charge of these rough specimens of our Canadian youth when travelling.

As it happened on the train from Montreal we met a bevy of girl recruits for the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service going to H.M.C.S. *Collingwood* at Digby, N.S. for training. They were well behaved and seemed to be enjoying life without being a public nuisance, while in charge of a Wren Lieutenant and two Petty Officers. Apparently the Ladies' Navy is better managed.

Arriving at St. John, we found our ship would not sail for two or three days so we put up at a hotel and stayed indoors

most of the time, listening to natives explain to anyone who would listen that the sub-zero temperature was most unusual. We explained that in Victoria we had only two kinds of weather, very good and unusual.

We were very pleased with the accommodation on board the ship, both our cabin and the public rooms, and within two or three days of sailing the weather began to feel like spring and in another short spell like the sub-tropics. The food and service in the dining saloon were excellent and the members of the ship's company who came in contact with the passengers were most pleasant and spoke English so there was no language problem. The ship was modern and well appointed, with a sea speed of 16 or 17 knots which meant about 400 sea miles per day and 19 days for the 7,500 miles to Cape Town, with fine weather all the way, a most enjoyable passage and to our taste a better mode of travel than by the ordinary passenger liner.

In Cape Town the immigration officers came on board to interview us. When one of them asked how much money we had and I replied X-dollars in travellers' cheques, he did not ask to see the cheques but another one said, "Why don't you buy a farm?" It was nice to know we would be welcome to settle in South Africa if we wished to do so, but I explained that I was a bit overage to embark on a new career in a vocation about which I knew nothing and which would probably be too strenuous for me.

My nephew Hugh Baker and his wife met us and took us and our baggage to the customs where we were not asked to open anything for inspection, and then to a hotel with which we had a reservation. Hotels were something of a problem for us as so many seemed to be permanently full up, and it did not fit our plans to make reservations too far ahead and thus commit ourselves to a rigid schedule.

Speaking generally the hotels were not quite up to the standard to which North Americans like to be accustomed, though

the better ones are quite passable. Our first experience was not a happy one though the front facade and the entrance lobby were attractive. It was an old building modernized but the process did not go far enough and the less said about the plumbing the better.

We were ushered to a suite consisting of two small single rooms and bathroom, but we had not been in it very long before we noticed strange sounds which we traced to the drain from the bath tub, and which were connected with the appearance of dirty water flowing into the tub from the drain. When one essayed to have a bath the rubber plug was forced out by the pressure of this effluent which mixed with one's bath-water and caused one to leap out of the tub in a most undignified manner. When we drew the attention of the hotel office staff to this unusual experience in hydro-dynamics they merely murmured something vague about an "air-lock" in the pipes but did not seem to want to move us to another room, so we moved ourselves to another hotel as quickly as we could find one.

My sister Hilda lives about 30 miles from Cape Town and we spent the month of March seeing something of her and her husband and son and daughter-in-law and the surrounding country. Hilda and I are the two youngest of a family of eight and the only survivors and we had not met since we were teen-agers some 58 years before, though we had kept in touch by correspondence. Both her sons had served with the army in North Africa and had the bad luck to be in Tobruk when it was taken by the Germans to the surprise of everyone, perhaps even General Rommel himself.

Later my nephews were p.o.w.'s in Germany at the end of the war and the younger one was killed by the R.A.F. in a strafing raid on a road crowded with retreating German soldiers, fleeing civilians and liberated p.o.w.'s. In the First World War I was never fired at by the enemy but several times by British merchant ships and once by a shore battery and several

times by American submarine chasers. Fortunately no-one scored a hit but such incidents seemed much too numerous in both wars.

When it was time for us to move on to Natal we travelled by the motor coach service run by the government and very well organized. The distance from Cape Town to Durban is about 1,200 miles and the coach takes it in easy stages of about 250 miles per day with overnight stops at the best hotels available, which are included in the price of the ticket.

It seemed a pleasant way to travel and see more of the country than from a train or plane. We were impressed by the number and extent of the fine, sandy beaches along the coast, some of them apparently very little used as the country is by no means densely populated.

We left the coach at Pietermaritzburg where we were met by my niece Memory Otto and her son Richard, who drove us to their home called Saxony about 12 miles from the town, where we were to be guests for several weeks, a very pleasant interlude for us. Many of the place names in that part of Natal were associated in my mind with the war between the British and Boers at the turn of the century.

I was at school in London at the time and saw many of the regiments march past en route to a station to entrain for a port of embarkation for South Africa, later reading the newspaper accounts of actions in which they took part. It was a military mystery of the time why the army brass took so long to realize the need for the khaki uniforms and other features of guerilla warfare, to which they had long been accustomed on the northwest frontier of India. Some of our most famous regiments were very badly cut up by Boer sharpshooters behind rocks before the idea was grasped that it was guerilla warfare as in Afghanistan.

The part of Natal we were in was good farming country and reminded us of Barbados, Mexico and Hawaii owing to the extensive areas devoted to growing sugar cane which

needs a good depth of soil, plenty of water and the warm sunshine of the tropics and sub-tropics.

A highlight of the trip was a visit to two of the game reserves to see the exotic fauna of Africa living naturally in its native haunts. I have never liked seeing wild animals shut in small cages to be stared at by tourists. In the game reserves the situation is reversed because the tourists stay in their cars for the animals to stare at, which seems a better arrangement, and the animals certainly co-operate.

Back again at Saxony from our visit to the reserves it was getting near the scheduled sailing date of the American cargo-liner which we were to board at Durban. It was sad parting from Memory and Peter Otto and their family who were so very kind and hospitable to us but all good things must come to an end.

While we were in South Africa the brief fracas between the Arabs and Israelis had resulted in closure of the Suez Canal, causing many ships to go round the Cape of Good Hope and put into port for bunker oil so that Cape Town, Durban and other ports were congested. Our ship was actually two weeks late in sailing and some of the passengers had cancelled their passages so there were only eight altogether including ourselves.

With one exception the others were a very dull lot indeed and for sundry reasons the return passage compared very poorly with the very enjoyable time we had when southbound several months before.

The American ship was a fine, new, fast vessel and our cabin was excellent. The ship's company was I suppose a fair sample from the great American ethnological melting pot. I like to think I am not prejudiced against trade unions but I have never been able to see how ships can be run by them, and I have had a lot to do with both in my time.

We were told that the owners of American ships are allowed to choose the captain and chief engineer who must themselves

be members of a union, but all other personnel must be sent to the ship by the union. This means that the men who carry the heavy responsibility for the safe and proper navigation of the ship have no say in choosing the men on whom they must rely to stand watches day and night on the bridge and in the engineroom.

The food served in the dining saloon was much inferior to what we had on the Norwegian ship when southbound. Too many items of the menu reminded one of the typical fare encountered at a hot-dog drive-in kind of eatery, the coffee was very bad (surprising in an American ship), and our table steward seemed unable to bring a cup to the table without slopping much of the contents into the saucer, though the weather was fine and the ship always very steady. To make matters worse he chewed gum vigorously and continuously and altogether was by far the worst ship's steward I have ever met, and I have travelled a lot.

It was a fast trip for a cargo vessel as she averaged 22 knots, equal to over 500 sea miles per day and 14 days from Cape Town to New York. We were supposed to go to Boston but this was changed when we were within a few hours of Boston owing to an actual or projected strike of some sort.

So we were landed in New York early on a Sunday morning in a heat wave in the middle of the summer tourist season, with hotels full up and no train on to Toronto till evening, not a happy ending to our South African journey. One redeeming detail, we did manage to secure the last bedroom in the only through sleeping car for Toronto that evening, and arrived in Toronto at breakfast time on Monday morning to find all the hotels downtown full up. The sudden change in port of arrival of the ship had the effect of upsetting our travel arrangements completely.

Through the office of a well-known travel agency we managed to secure very good accommodation in an apartment hotel "uptown" which was actually much more convenient for

our purpose of looking up several families of old friends of 40 years or more—the days when we were all young and trying to get on in the world, battling the big depression and so on.

In Toronto for the inside of a week our friends and a family of cousins allowed us no dull moments and the train trip back to the west coast seemed something of an anticlimax, though it was good to be home again with our own Lares and Penates around us, plus a few new ones as souvenirs of our 25,000 mile journey.

It was only to be expected that since our return many people we have met have asked us about political and social conditions in South Africa, most of them evidently under the impression that it is virtually a police state where people live under tension, with the feeling that outbreaks of violence are just around the corner. We did not find it so.

We were there for only three months but having relatives scattered about the country we probably had a better insight into such matters than the majority of tourists, and we were in the nature of things more interested in matters affecting the outlook for the future. We were able to discuss the problems with white South Africans who were well educated and had liberal views, and while nearly all of these said they do not agree with all the policies of their government they did not go on to say what changes they would like to see.

It is indeed a very complex problem and more so in South Africa than in the United States for instance, if only because there are more different kinds of non-whites involved, including large numbers who have migrated from other parts of Africa and the 600,000 or so who are really indigenous to India, and more recently arrived in South Africa than the people of British, Dutch and French origin who have been established there for several centuries.

Our best opportunity for first-hand observation came when we were staying in Natal where the whites are largely of British

descent and the black Africans are Zulus. The latter are traditionally pastoral and polygamous, wives being bought with cows as currency and brought up with the idea that their mission in life is to work in the fields to produce food crops for man and beast and to make beer for their men to drink. Wives may be beaten without loss of social status and I strongly suspect that most Zulu men would not look with favour on efforts to change their way of life to that of the white man. Should we try to force it on them?

A major problem incidental to the practice of polygamy is to maintain an adequate supply of wives. The Zulus were formerly a warlike people and solved the wife shortage problem by raiding the neighbouring peoples when they felt like it, and exterminating the males and overage females and carrying off the younger females and the cattle, a simple but effective solution for them which helped to keep the country as a whole from being over-populated. Just what they will do in the future I have no notion but these problems in far countries cannot be easily solved by armchair critics in the United States and Canada.

I have been astonished to read of the number of people who attend meetings of one sort and another and vote in favour of resolutions aimed at setting the world to rights by stopping the war in Vietnam at once, or having universal suffrage in South Africa next month, when the total first-hand knowledge of the subjects of the resolutions possessed by the people who make them is practically nil.

Perhaps it helps to make them feel important as if taking an active part in world affairs, or they think they acquire merit by such gratuitous meddling with matters of which they are abysmally ignorant; however, the footling resolutions they so solemnly pass probably don't do any serious harm.

Within the past few months it has been interesting to see some references in American journals to the idea that a form of apartheid may be the only practicable solution to the very

serious race problem in that country. At this late date it is difficult to see just how the details could be worked out, but it is equally hard to see an end of the strife between the white and black races if they continue to try to live intermingled as they are now. Human nature cannot be changed by making rules or passing laws and efforts to do so are doomed to failure.

Retrospect

I SUPPOSE MOST PEOPLE WHO REACH MY PRESENT AGE OF 80 with their faculties in relatively good working order, spend some time thinking over the past, including things they would like to undo or do differently if they had the time over again. When I hear someone say, "I have no regrets" I wonder if he means it literally and if so, how he has been so clever or so fortunate as to make no serious mistakes, unless perhaps his life has been humdrum with little occasion to make important decisions or run risks or to "stick his neck out" as the saying is.

Thinking over decisions I have made such as choosing to be an engineer, emigrating to Canada, starting in business for myself when I had the opportunity and so on, I believe I can say I would do the same thing if I had the time over, though my path has not been smooth or free from troubles or problems.

I have never been motivated by a burning desire to make a lot of money though I have always wanted to be as independent and as much my own boss as possible, and especially to be free from worry about money in my old age, and in this I have been fairly successful in both peace and war as it happens.

In my business career I had some very serious set-backs such as the untimely death of my original partner in 1916 when I was overseas in the navy, and later in the great depression of

the early 1930's, but the business survived and is now a very sound and flourishing industrial concern though my active connection with it ceased some years ago.

I do not regret having served in the navy in both World Wars though the experience set me back financially, especially in the 1914-18 affair on Royal Navy rates of pay.

If I have any claim at all to distinction in my profession it is that I pioneered the use of the electric arc welding process in Canadian industry. If I have a regret it could be that I did not leave this for someone else to do, as I might have done had I been able to foresee what a long, uphill, frustrating job it would be, mainly owing I think to the very conservative attitude of many Canadian engineers and industrialists toward new ideas or processes. In my early days in the business there was a very marked tendency to let all such things be developed elsewhere, in the United States, Britain or Europe or anywhere but in Canada, so that for many years I felt like a prophet crying in the wilderness about the merits of the process, with hardly anybody paying serious attention. I was trying to make them a present of a million dollar idea of which they were reluctant to avail themselves.

However, I am grateful that I have lived to see electric welding come into its own and achieve the widespread recognition that it has today, as an industrial process of prime importance.