# END OF A DOWNWARD PATH

### *A GOLD MINE AND A REVOLUTION IN SOUTH AMERICA.*

**Wanderings of Cunningham the Good, and Intemperate Linn—Sudden Dissolution of Partnership When the Tide Turned—Benevolent Assimilation Makes Things Even.**

"This benevolent assimilation is a great thing when it's worked just right," said the grizzled mining engineer. "I know, because I've seen it tried before now. The story is worth telling, if only for its beautiful moral."

There were two tramps once, Cunningham and Linn, by name, who spent their time wandering up and down the Andes from Patagonia to Panama, trying to stub their toe on a gold mine. The partnership came about in this wise. When Cunningham had landed at Callao three years before with a twelve-thousand-dollar letter of credit in his pocket, Linn had greeted him joyfully on the wharf, because they had gone to school together back in Massachusetts. In return Cunningham had given him a good cigar, answered his questions briefly about things at home and kept his distance. Cunningham was prepared to take an important place in the mining industries of the country and was making no entangling alliances. Linn was a pleasant little man whose career had been blighted by an itch for the horizon line and inordinate thirst for cool mixed drinks in summer and hot mixed drinks in winter.

A year later Linn found Cunningham in a Lima hospital suffering from a malignant case of typhomalaria and moral collapse. During the intervening twelve months Cunningham had been let into a number of attractive things—mines, nitrate beds, petroleum fields. One of his business friends, a German by the name of Gottweiler, had been enabled to take his family on a visit to the Fatherland as a result.

Linn happened to be in good case just then. An enterprising Connecticut firm had recently sent down a cargo of improved sugar machinery with an engineer to set it up, and the latter had unscrupulously died. One appurtenance of Linn's blighted career was a knowledge of practical mechanics, for which in the emergency the consignees of the crated machinery were willing to pay well. So Linn took charge of Cunningham, and Cunningham said it was a decent thing for old sake's sake.

"Having been thrown together in this providential way Cunningham also thought that they had better stick. Their joint capital at the time amounted to $300 gold, which Linn had saved out of his engineer's wages after Cunningham's convalescent expenses had been paid. It is not necessary to go into the history of the following two years. South America is not a congenial field for foreigners without money, unless they happen to be Chinese. Once in a while, when penury and hope deferred would gall too much, and the opportunity offered, Linn would turn to somewhere and get a job. Being mere makeshifts he was not particular as to the character of these. A deranged sugar mill, an abortive railroad, a short-lived mine were all his ventures. He even turned an honest penny by burning a few charges of powder in small private revolutions. Cunningham took no part in these ventures, though not from any desire to shirk. The point was that Cunningham had no skill in manual labor; his talent ran more to the broad abstractions of finance. There is no demand for uninanned financiers from Patagonia to Panama, and Cunningham's unskilled labor is as cheap as dirt. As for gunpowder, the smell of the nitre in it nauseated Cunningham.

Otherwise Cunningham suffered exceedingly in these wanderings. Linn had previously grown used to the programme, and he had no higher nature anyway. His one grievance was the memory of the mixture the half-breed bartender at the Union club had given him for a cocktail a month before he left Lima. But the heat, the devilish mule roads, the hard living, the constant society of the debased Linn were wearing on a man of Cunningham's refinement.

One day they found themselves in the unhealthy fly-specked town of Buenaventura on the colombian coast, and here Cunningham's real career as a financier began. Having gone to China for a short visit, Cunningham found among his a notice of a $1,200 legacy which awaited his order in Boston, and the next steamer north carried the necessary papers to have the cash forwarded. In the meantime it was necessary to subsist, so Linn struck a job at building bridges on the Cauca Railroad beyond San Cipriano. His pay was so satisfactory that Cunningham, who was feeling quite well of late, advised to go up to call and live coolly like a gentleman.

It was during this time that Linn got a tip concerning alluvial gold mining in the Porce River up in the ancient State of Antioquia. Cunningham was enthusiastic when he heard the story. Antioquia is a sort of desert island up in the central Cordileras, being shut in on three sides by mountains and on the fourth by morasses. But mountains and morasses had no terrors for men who had picnicked from Patagonia to Panama, and Linn and Cunningham were not pressed for time. Six weeks later they were pounding their way up toward Cartago and Manzalejo, bound for Medellin, Antioquia's capital, with the bulk of Cunningham's $1,200 legacy in silver. In three months they reached Medellin, and learned the true inwardness of the Porce fields. This same Porce Valley was probably one of the richest gold fields in the world originally. Medellin, herself, estimated that some $300,000,000 had been taken out in the last three centuries. On the other hand Cunningham and Linn found the place late in the round of things having been pretty thoroughly cleaned up down to low-water mark in the river. Below low-water mark Colombian mining methods had not been able to go, to any extent, and there were all sorts of rumors. For instance, a Señor Sopira of Medellin was said to own a twelve-mile horseshoe loop somewhere near the junction of the Nechi, a few yards of which he had once worked with crannies. A crannie is a crisson sunk to bed rock out of which you pump the water till the gravel is uncovered. It was common talk in Medellin that the Señor had cleaned up $90 to the cubic yard. The average of the famous Yuba beds in California was 40 cents. But the horseshoe bend being the deepest stretch of the river, and being a mile long, no prospector could only touch it in spots. Incidentally Linn and Cunningham learned that not a square yard of soil from Medellin to the Nechi, above or below low-water mark was without an owner.

"Our only chance," said Linn, "seems to be to get at the bed of the river for some of these farmers on shares,' and proposed a prospecting tour.

Cunningham consented, though he begged Linn to remember that he wasn't blowing in his capital on any wild-goose chases. They followed the river 140 miles down stream, till they struck the twelve-mile horseshoe bend, whereupon Linn immediately showed signs of struggling with an idea. They camped there for a fortnight, while Linn wandered up and down the country, and poked in the bed of the stream and interviewed natives, and Cunningham sat under the shade of trees and reproached him with his past life. At the end of the two weeks Linn gave the word to break camp.

"What's your game?" asked Cunningham. The dysenteries and biliousness had made him a trifle irritable.

"That twelve-mile loop,' said Linn, has been a sort of bag for gold alluvium for the past ten centuries. Lay bare its bed and hoist out your big boulders and it ought to clean up several millions."

Cunningham breathed through his nose.

"Yes, I know," he said, 'but this chap Sopira has been trying to lay bare the bed of the thing for the past forty years. How are you going to do it?"

Thereupon Linn expounded his idea, which was foolishly simple when you came to think of it. From the upper point of that horseshoe to the lower point, was a bit over three miles in a straight line. Linn's idea was to connect these two points by a canal, drain the river straight down and leave the whole twelve miles of the loop dry as a bone.

When Cunningham got the scheme well into his head he chewed the end of his Tolima cigar masterfully.

"By Heavens!" he said, I'll clean the twelve miles in a year.

"There's a preliminary or two,' Linn suggested. A deal with Señor Sopira, for a starter and about $20,000 more capital.

"But such trifles did not worry Cunningham. They merely offered a chance for his talent in the broader abstractions of finance. The two went back to Medellin, and Cunningham lost no time in mixing in the best society. This was Cunningham's long suit. He was one of those big-chested, beautiful men who put on flesh everything they sit down, and to whom a square meal and a clean shave give the front of Jove himself. Within a week he was dining with some regularity at Señor Sopira's table. Besides owning the horse-shoe bend, Señor Sopira was one of the solid men of Medellin. Also he had a daughter with the sort of eyes you can dish up with a spoon, and a fine style of hospitality. At the end of two weeks Cunningham had swelled to a pink demi-god. Señor Sopira pored admiringly over Cunningham's neat map of the proposed canal, and other plans and specifications. These were all in Linn's hand-writing, but Cunningham thought it best that Linn should not appear personally on the scene. He remained at home stultifying himself on the liquor of the country, and discussing mercurial placer mining and other matters, in his uncider interviews to Cunningham's enlightenment.

The night Cunningham burst into Linn's room swearing and slammed a bulky document on the table. Linn unfolded and read. It was an agreement by which Pilar Sopira gave to Charles Eustace Cunningham the sole right to work his horse shoe loop, duly located and described, for a period of two years, the consideration being 20 per cent. of the gross outcome.

"'Is there anything the matter with that?' Cunningham inquired.

"'The form seems all right,' answered Linn, 'but I was wondering just where I came in.'

"'Where you come in what?' asked Cunningham sharply.

"'This deal. You seem to have forgotten to put in my name.'

"Cunningham leaned over the table and wagged his finger at the little man.

"'Now look here, Linn,' he said, 'there's no use talking nonsense about this thing. I've lived in hell for it for three years, and I've got it. I had to get it. I could never have gone home and looked my people in the face again if I hadn't. Well, I'm not taking any chances with it. I've stood by you, my boy, in good an bad weather, and you know you'll never want a square meal while I've got the price. But you know, too, what sort of a chap you are and so do I. And you mustn't expect me to carry you on my back.'

"Linn listened with his mouth slightly open. Then he grinned a little.

"'Understand,' said Cunningham, 'I'm not stealing the work you've done for me so far on this thing. You know that's not my style. You're going to get paid for it and paid well. And if you want to take hold as managing engineer, there's $250 a month in it, gold.'

"At this point Linn said he'd have to be excused for a moment because he felt sick, and went out. Cunningham waited two hours for him, and then turned in. The next day passed and Linn did not appear. This annoyed Cunningham, because he did not like to be trifled with. But he had more important matters to think of. At the end of the week he started eastward for the Magdalena, and six weeks later made his appearance in Boston. Cunningham knew capitalists in Boston, but he wasn't asking favors. The capital he required was to be subscribed conditionally. Then a mining expert was to go to Antioquia with him at his expense. If the thing wasn't all he said and more the deal was off. Cunningham's friends were impressed with the change his South American experience had worked in him. His plans and specifications, for instance, were the acme of business-like completeness from the map of his clever canal to his inventory of placer mining machinery. The promoter who had the business in his hands put it through inside of sixty days.

"Shortly after Cunningham and the mining expert sailed for Barranquilla there limped into Boston a pathetic-looking tramp. After this individual had raised the price of a shave and a haircut he was recognized as Linn. Linn had started for Boston shortly after Cunningham's own departure. He had not travelled first class. He had tramped over the mountains from Medellin to San Pablo on the Magdalena. If anyone happens to know what that means he will not believe this story. At San Pablo he had found a river steamer with a jammed feed pump, which he had assisted in repairing for his passage to Barranquilla. At Barranquilla he had shipped as a stoker on a tramp freight steamer bound for New York. This was in August, and it was sultry in the stokehole. It reminded him of what Cunningham had said about living three years in hell.

"The second day Linn was in Boston he called on a man by the name of Jenkins, whom he had known in the early days of the downward path. Mr. Jenkins's business was such things as close-shaved notes, third mortgages and private loans to friends only on household furniture and the like. Jenkins was a gentleman himself and had got into a tight place, owing to a certain irregularity in a mortgage note. Linn, who had been one of his regular customers and who happened to be flush at the time, had come forward and put up the money to pull him out.

"He was very much surprised to see Linn again after nine years.

"'I pick generous gentlemen seem to be running up from South Africa,' he said. 'Only last week Mr. Cunningham—you must know him—was here forming a mining company. They say he's got a good thing.'

"'Yes, I know Cunningham,' said Linn. 'How much of a company did he get?'

"'A hundred thousand, I think,' said Jenkins. '$40,000 paid up, $60,000 for his mining rights.'

"'M—m—,' said Linn. 'I'm after capital, too.'

"'But I don't need so much as Cunningham.'

"'What have you got?' Jenkins asked.

"'I call it,' said Linn, 'the Benevolent Assimilation Company.'

"'Mine?' asked Jenkins.

"'N—no,' said Linn. 'This is a sort of comic opera enterprise.'

"Jenkins looked into Linn's eyes for further symptoms.

"'No, I haven't got 'em,' said Linn. 'Shut the door.'

"The door was shut for two hours, during the second of which there came out frequent sounds of hilarity on Jenkins's part. When it opened again, Jenkins was giggling.

"'I've seen more conservative investments,' he was saying, 'but nothing so be utiful. You come around when you're ready and get your money.'

"Linn, however, was in no hurry. He went on a visit to a married sister in Newburyport, coming to Boston occasionally. Ten weeks later, Cunningham and the mining expert got back. The mining expert's report read like a work of fiction. Cunningham produced his famous inventories and placed large orders for placer mining machinery. Also he engaged an ambitious young man who had just taken his degree as mining engineer from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After which, he and the young man departed southward. Linn, to whom full reports of these proceedings had come by way of Jenkins's office, rested quietly in Newburyport three weeks longer. Then, one day, he came to Boston spent two days shopping and on the following Saturday took a steamer at New York for Puerto Belillo. On this trip Linn travelled in the cabin.

"Meanwhile Cunningham and the Tech graduate were doing things. The way they pulled their machinery over the mountains from San Pablo in itself opened the native eyes. But that was only an overture. By some miracle Colombia had not had a revolution for two years and Cunningham did not propose to risk any such fly in his ointment. Hordes of brown men swarmed along the line of the canal with pick and scraper, and gangs chopped out derrick beams and sluice timbers in the woods. Cunningham bolded with omnipotence. He had three servants and a porcelain-lined bathtub, and began to grow a Norse viking beard. Inside of six months the Porce was flowing through the canal and they were taking gold out of the horseshoe loop.

"Linn did not appear in the valley of the Porce. When he reached San Pablo he went eastward and leisurely collected some two dozen intelligent native youth. With these he proceeded westward again, across the Magdalena and over the mountains, till he came to a retired spot some thirty miles southeast of the scene of Cunningham's triumphs. Here Linn opened the four large packing cases he carried with him and began rehearsals for his comic opera enterprise.

"Two months from that very day a mule train started from the horseshoe loop for Medellin. Cunningham rode at the head. He had cleaned up six miles of his twelve in five months, and he was carrying two millions of gold dust to Medellin. Two million meant $400,000 for Sopi a, $640,000 for the company, $960,000 for Cunningham, and as much more waiting in the river. As often as Cunningham made this computation he flushed at the temples and chewed his luxuriant beard. Cunningham carried a large revolver in a beautiful holster, but the balance of the train was unarmed. The natives of Antioquia are the simplest, kindliest people in South America, and the valley of the Porce is as safe as Bromfield street, Boston—except, perhaps, in time of revolution.

"Toward the end of its second day's journey at the foot of a mountain, the muzzles of some eighteen or twenty rifles suddenly blocked the train's way. Behind the rifles were as many soldiers in neat, new uniforms and an officer smiling pleasantly and requesting a halt.

"Cunningham jumped from his horse and wished to know the meaning of things.

"'You have paid señor, as I understand,' said the officer, 'en route to Medellin. No? This I have to seize in the name of the republic.'

"Cunningham turned the color of a man who has died of yellow fever.

"'Look here, sir,' he barked. 'There's a mistake here. This train is consigned to Señor Pilar Sopira of Medellin, a member of the National congress from the State of Antioquia—'

"'Ah,' said the officer sadly. 'Formerly—no longer. The National Congress is dissolved. Señor Pilar's estates have been confiscated by the revolution.'

"'Revolution,' said Cunningham, speaking from the pit of his stomach. Then he choked. They bound his arms and the arms of his men and led them up the mountain, while he mumbled about American citizens and warships. The mule train they turned back along the road it had come. That was the last Cunningham saw of it.

"Ten days later, when he was released, he hastened to Medellin, to find Señor Sopira in good spirits and no sign of a revolution. When the señor heard Cunningham's explanations he requested to hear them again, then a third time. Then he frothed at the mouth and his men beat Cunningham with sticks and dragged him to the Medellin jail. The vile Yankee conspiracy was apparent to every official in Medellin. For a few weeks it looked very like penal servitude for Cunningham. Then he contrived to escape from jail. His subsequent fortunes have not been reported, though interested persons both in Antioquia and Boston would pay well for the information.

"About two months after these incidents Linn turned up in Jenkins's office.

"'Let's see,' said Linn, 'what was the understanding about that thousand dollars?'

"'Why, I furnished the thousand dollars,' said Jenkins, 'and if your Benevolent Assimilation Company assimilated you were to pay back ten. Did it assimilate?'

"'Partially,' said Linn, and passed Jenkins a certified check. Jenkins looked at it and bulged as to the eyes. It was for $100,000.

"'For heaven's sake,' said Jenkins, 'have you got many more just like this?'

"'You have no right to know,' said Linn. 'I have not. But I had two dozen exactly like it, or their equivalent, before I began buying United States Government bonds last week.'

"Jenkins whistled. Linn now lives in a bachelor apartment overlooking Central Park West and belongs to several good clubs. His friends call him a nice little man, though lacking in force and intemperate.

"Incidentally there is an opportunity awaiting some ambitious young man in the lower six miles of Señor Sopira's horseshoe loop though the placer machinery may be somewhat out of repair. Cunningham's technology graduate applied for the job but Señor Sopira was weary of American forms of enterprise at that time."

# LIFE AT BLEST EDISTO.

### *AN ISLAND UNLIKE ANY OTHER ON THE SOUTH CAROLINA COAST.*

**The Generations of Planters Before and Since the War—Where Lafayette Visited—The Lady Who Would Build a Church—Family Ties Are Strong on the Edisto River.**

Edisto Island lies within the two arms of the Edisto River, hand and glove with the sea, choicest of all the family connection of sea islands that belong to South Carolina. It is as though away back in the creation of things the big Edisto water coming down slowly through the low country after its many vagaries further up the State encountered this fair bit of land and deemed it worth while to make yet another digression in order to circle it round and give to it emphasis and a name, calling in half a dozen creeks and inlets as witnesses to the transaction. Then the river went further and emptied its divided currents into the ocean at points far enough apart to provide an ample beach front for its godchild. Thus the island is sufficient unto itself. Every plantation has its own home creek which affords a boatway to the sources without, and the winds and the tides are the public housekeepers, sweeping and scouring free for all with a methodical up-at-break-of-day vigilance that would banish the stoute t-hearted germ or microbe which ever worried a board of health.

The island soil is rich enough to raise the finest cotton that grows, and the finest thistles as well, and everybody knows that the ground that will grow good thistles will produce most of the things that are good for man to look upon and feast upon and take futures upon. If the vegetables and fruits fail on Edisto there are the products of the creeks and the deep sea to draw on, and game in abundance, both feathered and furred. In fact the peculiar flavor and relish of "de wild turkey stuff wid de oyster" to be had commonly "pan tap Edisto" has passed into an adage. And this delectable dish can be secured to almost as good advantage in the humble lean-to or mud-chimney cabin of the poor as in the dwelling of the rich and instructed. There may be wild turkeys in other places, and oysters also, but the two can never be brought together in as happy combination as "pan tap Edisto."

Geographically the island is in the same place it always was on any map of South Carolina ever printed, but politically it is apt to slip about, being now in Colleton county, now in Charleston, again in Colleton, or, mayhap, in Beaufort, according to need. For all its seventy-five square miles, heavy timbers and colonial homes it can seemingly be moved in a night when occasion arises in a Congressional district. Just now it is in Charleston county and its voters, white and black, must carry their affairs to the old court house in Charleston town to be settled. Six thousand blacks to fewer than two hundred whites is the present ratio of population, many of the former white residents having sought other homes and other occupations than planting since the Civil War. Edisto always raised fine negroes. The climate agreed with them, they multiplied rapidly and were lithe, vigorous and healthy, a fact which went far in accounting for the great wealth of their owners. And in no other place in all the South to-day are there so few jars and disgruntlements between the races, the negroes being habitually civil and good humored, looking to the whites as their best friends and taking their word in all matters requiring adjudication. The things which shock and startle other communities never happen here. Not a few negroes are prosperous and independent in homes of their own, managing their farm lands after methods learned from the whites and using "old marster's" sayings and principles as a pattern to go by.

Always locally famous, twice at least Edisto has had the world's eyes upon it. Once was when it was ordered to be abandoned during the Civil War the better to facilitate military strategy, and again when the remarkable storm of 1893 invited national sympathy. At the time of this calamity a literary lion in wide reputation appeared to take notes as to damage and remedy. He was from New York, young and prepossessing, and was taken to a planter's house in the heart of the island, a house whose home creek had behaved handsomely and committed no outrages at the wind's instigation. The little days he spent in this island sojourn broke bread habitual to the place and imbibed glimpses of the inner life and neighborhood interests of his entertainers. The family which, like most Edisto families, was a large one, did not know their guest's importance. They had nothing to measure it by. They treated him with the same unstudied hospitality with which they would have treated Mr. Nobody from Nowhere who had come among them and who had the earmarks of gentility.

"Why don't some of you write up this charming life of yours?" the lion in Nobody's clothing said to the eldest daughter one evening when there were a considerable number of people who had dropped in and he had listened and looked on from a quiet corner.

"Write it up?" she asked. "What do you mean?" the eldest daughter asked with wide open eyes. And although the stranger was at some pains to explain that he thought the Edistonians a distinctive people and their island existence ideal, their ways of doing so simple and delightful, &c., she never understood his meaning. Never having lived in a big metropolis or indeed anywhere except on Edisto, she had no key to it.

That night she recounted his words to her younger sister and to the next youngest and the one next to her, but they did not understand either. And the distinguished guest took himself off without any clear idea of what to write concerning these people. They were too subtle. Only he likened them in his mind to their creeks and inlets, a blending of long or so many generations in the same channel unmixed with other channels, meeting only with the same obstacles or encouragements under the same conditions that they had a way and meaning of their own, the place making them what they were and they making it what it was.

So Edisto has never had a chronicler. People time and again have been there and felt its charm and gone away convinced that something ought to be said about it, but the feeling never took voice. And various natives and home-stayers have also demonstrated this feeling by jotting down bits of verse and fragments of family history in private diaries. There is scarcely a house in the community of plantations in which somebody at some time has not written down things for the sake of writing them, for every home-place has been lived in by the same family of leisurely people for successive generations, and some of these were bound to be people of reflective or romantic turn, aflame with patriotism and a tender, very tender feeling for old Edisto.

Lafayette visited the island once and went off with so lively a sense of the quality of the people and their surroundings that years later his French friends made pilgrimage there, and a nobleman, really noble, wooed the daughter of the very household which the Marquis visited. The house is there yet, kept fresh and unimpaired by a yearly thought for the roof and the needs of weather boarding that was built to withstand the wear of centuries. It is owned now by a lawyer, not a planter. Of brick, with marble facings and the founder's crest over the colonial porch, the mansion stands with its back to the boatway and facing a great avenue of live oaks bowed with beauty. It was through such another carpeted archway that Lafayette walked from the boat landing, and there was feasting and dancing and much music from plantation singers. The pleasures of the hunt, of canoeing, gaming and visits to a score of homes as hospitable as this filled the visitor with delight at this sea island, formed seemingly for the enrichment of man, and where people had the mind and the leisure to make much of existence.

There were many people on Edisto up to 1860 who believed themselves the royally anointed of the earth, destined to be happy and blest forever, with the money and the power to get for themselves and their children and children's children whatsoever they wanted. Extreme wealth united with unbounded leisure and every promotive for pleasure left little stimulus to mental exertion. And although from colonial days the sons were sent to England or elsewhere to be educated, the influences of home and the soft blandishments of climate and family favor soon counteracted for some the effects of those years at college. The ignorance and illiteracy of certain of the older men became proverbial.

"You like Paris. Well, I'll buy 'um for you," it is said that one old Crossus told his son newly returned from abroad when that young fellow was descanting upon the charms of the French capital.

But Edisto is the home of jokers. Every one treasures up the queer sayings and doings of his neighbors and his neighbors' ancestors, and to listen to the accounts of long past duels and chivalrous encounters, of the feuds and family differences, the fads and fallacies of these cotton planters of the old order is good entertainment. The dueling pistols are stowed away among family belongings in the old houses along with the unprinted manuscripts and out-of-fashion baby walkers and feminine trappings.

You will see an old planter sitting out in quiet contemplation under his front porch, who has fought three duels in his time, but he will not tell you of them: they are shut in his mind with those other times and crises in his life which he has felt most. He will rather tell you of his battle with agriculture, how he has planted sea island cotton for fifty years and finds much to learn on the matter still, and has never had two seasons roll over his head when the conditions for the crop were alike. Those were masterly planters, the old school men; non-workers themselves they could see over the flesh better and they knew well how to grasp affairs and get the most out of the labor and the soil and the men they sold to. This planter will get his ante-bellum account books and show you where just after the war he got $2 and something a pound cold cash for his cotton crop from a Swiss manufacturer. It will bring him 40 cents a pound any season now.

Family ties are strong on Edisto. Kindred cling together with true Scotch clannishness and families are allied and matched in the one with the other in inextricable fashion. Young men find no girls so fair as their cousins and even relations-in-law are pressed into service rather than go outside the charmed circle.

It is told that an old school planter set out to break the spell. He had three daughters and he undertook to keep them safe from the outside at the home market. He sent them to Virginia to school, took them to Newport and the famous watering places of the time, introduced them everywhere under the happiest circumstances and with chaperons warranted to make the most of opportunity. And all three, after many conquests, came back to Edisto and married first cousins. "The tackle will go back to the marsh," the old schemer remarked as he gave away his last daughter to the nephew on the next plantation.

The marsh tackles, sprightly ponies with valuable resistant qualities, are natives of Edisto. They are as much to the manner born as the turtles that track the beach or the negro oarsmen and sea masters who can sail the most unseaworthy looking boat skilfully in the face of odds.

The philosopher is reared on Edisto likewise, all kinds of him from the sort commonly termed a crank to the inventor of a creed and mode of life as genial as impracticable. "Why are those two horses tied out there at the fence?" a visitor who had been taken to see one of the oldest inhabitants asked of the host.

"Oh, I keep them ready there in case anybody should happen along to plough for me," was the answer. "I shall be very glad to have my cotton ploughed if anybody comes to-day."

This Edistonian, though master of the gun and the sailing skiff, and half a dozen languages, could never conquer the problem of plaiting with free labor. Where he lived in his books, of which the house was full, and the farm work went on as it could. He would make no contracts with negroes. If, at the very time he wanted a thing planted or hoed, or harvested, the negroes appeared to do it, they would be paid for it, but otherwise it could go so. So much of it had gone so that the old gentleman had largely only his philosophy to comfort him. He lived alone in a great bare house with only a man attendant, absolutely refusing to have any dealings with a woman, even in the matter of tidying up or getting home comforts. Yet he liked mankind and was a brilliant talker.

Tenacity of purpose, true old British conservatism and strength of will have set marks all over the island. The main road, bordered with laurels and cypress, that leads from end to end of the island, is a church that testifies to one fine dame's determination. The Presbyterian was the dominant congregation, the Episcopal second, any dissenting beliefs without chance to be heard. The wife of a prominent planter wanted a Baptist church built, her husband gainsayed her. She had everything on earth she wanted and could worship at his church as well as not. The wife made cakes and sweeties and put them out for sale at the beach resort that was the islander's gathering place in warm weather. She would thus raise a fund for the building. A black woman was in charge of the sales. The fine band was shocked at the wife selling cakes, even by proxy, were not to be put up with. Orders were given that no servant should carry those cakes out for sale. At this the mettlesome dame prepared herself to sell her wares in person. She would take a cart and tray in hand, entreat customers from door to door. Frightened that shemight doit, the cake selling was permitted to continue, the church was built and the profits added to its order quickly to terminate the proceeding. A handsome fund was raised and the church built.

At that time nearly every planter on Edisto kept his coachman and footman in livery and drove habitually in as fine a family coach as could be procured. The attendance at the races or at church or other place of public gathering made a good show. To-day there isn't a servant in livery on the island. It is the place to see self-made men, not the self-made man of the commonly accepted type, born with nothing, raised on nothing, but the man who has had to make himself entirely over after he was well grown and well grounded. This man not only had to learn how to do but to unlearn what he had already got by heart. He came out of the war with merely the clothes on his back, to find a half-demolished home with hundreds of hungry negroes as perplexed as he was at the new turn of things, farm implements all rusty, stock all poor or worn out or missing. The land was good but it must be cultivated after a different fashion and the master must learn the fashion. There are a few places on Edisto that show a thorough mastership and whose owners to-day have surrounded themselves with most of the comforts if not the luxuries of former times, places that are complete in themselves with strong well made ginneries equipped with the newest machinery, with neat tool houses and cabins clustered together in the old quarter fashion and with ample well-stocked pastures and a racer or two in the stables, where every member of the family has an individual steed. There are deer preserves on such a place and cheery hunting parties at Christmas, and an easy simple hospitality exercised all the year round. In these homes you will find the English illustrated papers and the latest books. There are English prints on the walls and a fine old thorough-goingness of living everywhere. And the people are of straight-out British descent, came from good folk in Wales or Scotland or England years ago, and have preserved their nationality unmixed through all these generations. A list of the island's fighting or voting men to-day should be practically the same names as those recorded in the lists of the Revolutionary militia or the Colonial social fraternities, and those who have weathered out conditions and got their homes back into shape and preservation are stamped with the same sterling quality that is recognizable in rare plate or paintings or tapestry. It may not be known precisely when the Indians had in mind when they named the Edisto, but the name certainly has to do with endearment and the good residents of that peaceful place and open sunny skies.

### *REPORTS FROM JUDGE TAFT.*

**Progress Toward the Establishment of Civil Government in the Philippines.**

WASHINGTON, Sept. 6.—The War Department has just completed a compilation of a number of reports from Judge Taft, President of the Philippine Commission, sent to the island to inaugurate a civil government. The reports were made to Secretary Root in letters from Judge Taft and will be made public in a day or two. The statement which will be given out by the War Department will also include a copy of the proclamation issued by the commission granting amnesty to the Filipinos and a copy of the President's instructions given to the commission just before its departure from San Francisco. Judge Taft's letters give a comprehensive view of the work done by the commission since its arrival at Manila and the progress made toward the establishment of a civil administration in place of military control. The instructions from the President directed the commission to take charge of the civil administration on Sept. 1, and the last report received by mail from Judge Taft shows that the commission considered that the conditions in the Philippines full warranted this change in the government.

One of the interesting features of Judge Taft's correspondence relates to the work of Prof. Bernard Moses, under whose direction was placed the work of education. In carrying out a new educational system Prof. Moses considered that the teaching of the English language to the Filipinos was of the first importance, as it would enable the natives to more readily understand and appreciate American institutions. In teaching English to the Filipinos the plan followed by Prof. Moses was to have English used by the teachers instead of teaching it through the medium of Spanish or Tagalo tongue. Judge Taft called particular attention to the eagerness of the Filipinos for schools and to the establishment of municipal governments throughout the island of Luzon. In the election of municipal officers the commission held that in no case could there be elected or appointed to municipal offices ecclesiastics, soldiers in active service, persons receiving salaries from municipal, provincial or government funds, debtors to said funds, contractors of public works and their bondsmen and clerks, and functionaries of the Administration.

In one of his reports Judge Taft refers to the propositions of peace submitted by a number of leading Filipinos, and also tells of the feast of amnesty which followed the issuance of the amnesty proclamatoin. At the opening of this feast Señor Paterno made an address in which he congratulated Gen. MacArthur on the proclamation, saying that the feast was "inspired by no other idea than that of union between the Filipino and American peoples."

Judge Taft spoke in reply and told of the President's instructions to the commission, saying that the commission was in the Philippines under instructions directing it to form a civil government that would take into consideration only the good of the Filipino people. He explained that the commission was not there to exploit the islands for the selfish purposes of the American people, and that capital would be encouraged only for the improvement of the island, with a view to bettering the condition of the Filipino people. He added that the instructions directed the commission, under the sovereignty of the United States, to erect a civil government which would secure to the people of the islands all the substantial rights which the American Constitution could give, and that in the formation of a government the chief officers were to be elected by the people.

# LEGENDS OF UP ELK WAY.

### *A MYSTERY IMMORTALIZED BY A NAME AND A STANZA.*

**The Unknown Englishman After Whom Strange Creek Is Called—A Pot of Buried Money—Epitaph of the Last Elk—The White Mulberry—Mountain Family Pride.**

CHARLESTON, W. Va., Sept. 7.—Quaint and curious old traditions and legends abound in the back country of which the Elk River is the principal thoroughfare, a region commonly designated here as "up Elk." Much that may be and very probably is of historical value, but that has never yet been embodied in written record, is handed down by word of mouth from father to son through generations of Elkers. As a very large proportion of the Elk River families have been in that region for upward of fifty years, and probably more than half of them for nearly a century, and as there have been practically no additions from the outside to the population except in the lumber camps, which are not intrinsically a part of the up Elk communities, it is reasonable to suppose that these traditions have come down without vital alteration and that the original fabric of truth has not been much embroidered. One of the most interesting of them may be perpetuated officially in the suggested change of the name of the post office at Savagetown to Strange Creek.

Savagetown is not an important post office from the point of view of the Post Office Department, but it supplies a considerable stretch of country with mail. Many a mountaineer rides his fifteen miles thither across the mountains on treacherous and brambly bridlepaths to get a circular from some gun company or a patent medicine advertisement addressed to his wife. Half a dozen paintless frame buildings make up the settlement, and off to one side under the precipitous cliff and almost hidden by the tangle of vegetation that has grown up around it stands the old iron furnace, its massive stone walls built to withstand the wear and tear of a thousand years. But for the rusted machinery and the ramshackle and ruinous shed back of it the place would look like a bit of some noble old castle, long deserted and forgotten by a later age. Picturesque as it is, it is no place for explorative wanderings, for the great, bald hornet which can bowl a man over like a bullet nests there, and among the cool, moist rocks under the shade of the cliff one catches faintly the cucumber odor that warns of the presence of the dangerous copperhead. It is a generation now since the old furnace has smoked, but in its time it was a mighty industry for that region. Why it should have been established there is difficult to understand, as that immediate region is not well suited to the needs of a smelting plant. Coal is there in every ledge and gully, but the iron is scant, whereas twenty miles away in the higher ridges of the Alleghanies there are whole mountains made up of the solid iron ore. To supply the Savagetown furnace the ore was brought across in wagons and the output went to Charleston, seventy-five miles away, making the tollsome and sometimes perilous trip down the Elk in great flatboats. Two brothers named Savage established the furnace eighty years ago, and it is from them that the place takes its present name.

Before Savagetown was, Strange Creek, at the mouth of which the little settlement stands, had its name. Most of the creeks which, almost dry in the summer, pour furious torrents into Elk in the spring have taken their names from translations of the original Indian names, as did Elk itself. Big Otter and Little Otter, Big Sycamore and Little Sycamore, Big Beechy and Little Beechy, Big Buffalo and Little Buffalo, Birch, Duck, Wild Goose and so on. Amid this nomenclature Strange Creek stands out conspicuous. If you ask the lumbermen of the region how it got that name they will tell you that it is appropriate to the gulch through which the stream runs; that the ravine is unlike any of the other creek ravines; overhung with beetling cliffs that dim it with deep shadows even at noonday, filled with weird rock formations between which yawn the black mouths of unexplored caves, subject to sudden and mysterious floods when all the other streams are trickling harmlessly, infested with venomous snakes and foul reptiles that live in the caves, rank with poisonous vegetation, and void of the flashing bird and insect life and the brilliant flower growth that make the steep banks of the Elk such a delight to the lover of nature. Some will even tell you that the flesh of fish or animals killed there is deadly and that the water runs black at times, producing fever and delirium in whosoever drinks it.

Most of this is, of course, superstition, but it is superstition not difficult to appreciate after one has visited the place. In the upper reaches of the ravine, well back from the gulch, there is a certain mysterious and forbidding atmosphere. The air is chill and dank; the water flows darkly over black stones or lies still more darkly in pools which, probably not beyond a man's depth, give somehow the impression of unfathomable abysses. This uncanny aspect of the ravine undoubtedly was in part responsible for the name it now bears, but this name did not grow up indefinitely as the lumbermen suppose, but was definitely given as a dying bequest nearly a century ago, if the local legend is to be believed. While on a flatboat trip in the Elk River country this summer the writer heard the account from half a dozen sources, some of which were twenty or thirty miles apart—a far distance in a country without railroads, where visiting is rare, and in no case did one story differ essentially from the rest.

In the early part of this century, so the legend goes, three pioneers came across from the coast and, striking Elk far up toward its source, burned out a canoe in which to make the trip to the Kanawha and thence to the Ohio. In those days there was no little pioneer travel that sought Elk as a thoroughfare toward the West and the people who live on its banks and back in the ravines to-day are the progeny of the families who, entranced by the beauties of the region, settled there and bequeathed to their descendants a love of the wild mountains and the beautiful river that holds them there as with bonds of steel. Of the three pioneers two were cousins and the third a man but little known to either of them, who had asked that he be allowed to go along, offering more than his share in the expenses of outfitting. That he was an English gentleman of birth was understood and it was further supposed that he was an exile from England because of some disgrace that had befallen him. His companions did not even know his name, the name under which he went being admittedly an assumed one.

Luck was with them during the first part of the trip. The river was high and swift; they caught fish and shot plenty of game. Only once did they run across any of the hostile Indians, against whom they had been warned, and then they were fortunate enough to escape without having attracted the notice of the savages. Presently, however, their luck changed. Harsh storms overtook them. The river became too muddy to fish in. In one of the swift rifts their canoe was overturned and they lost most of their provisions. In the drenched woods they could shoot no game. Their condition became desperate. Camping at the foot of the shoal above the creek to which they afterward gave its name, they found themselves one morning, almost without food. All were weakened by hardship and exposure and the two cousins were almost discouraged when their companion offered to climb the mountain in the hope of shooting something.

"Our sufferings are for my past sins," he said, "and I should be the one to risk myself in the effort to relieve them."

To venture away from the river in that unknown country was as perilous a project as it was difficult, for besides the danger of being unable to get back, there was the peril of venomous snakes, bears and Indians. The Englishman insisted, however, and set out. Weak as he was he climbed the heavily wooded and tangled mountainside with painful difficulty. But the clouds were breaking away and there seemed a fair chance of his getting some game. It was agreed that if he did not return by nightfall the others would take it for granted that he was lost and search for him in the morning, he to guide them by firing his gun at intervals. Night fell, and their companion had not returned. In the morning they strove to follow his trail up the mountain, but were forced to give it up because of weakness. For two days they remained, almost starving, in the hope that the Englishman would return. Then, giving him up for lost they pushed on. At the mouth of the creek below they killed some water fowls and the strength they got from this food gave them the resolve to make one more attempt to find the lost man, particularly as the ravine of the creek offered a good opportunity for making their way back into the country, in the direction whither he had gone.

About three miles up the ravine they found his body in a sitting posture propped against a small birch tree. There was no wound on him, and it was evident that he had died of exhaustion and weakness. Beside him lay