

**DUFFIELD
ALEXANDER
JAMES**

PERU IN THE GUANO AGE

Alexander Duffield
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*Peru in the Guano Age / Being a Short Account of a Recent Visit to the
Guano / Deposits With Some Reflections on the Money They Have / Produced
and the Uses to Which it has Been Applied:*

Содержание

DEDICATORY LETTER	4
PERU IN THE GUANO AGE	9
CHAPTER I	9
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	34

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DEDICATORY LETTER

Á Señor Don Juan Espinosa y de Maldonado,

Estimado y distinguido Amigo mio:

It would be most pleasant to continue this letter in the

language in which it begins and which you taught me some five and twenty years ago, but I wish others to read it as well as yourself.

I dedicate this little book to you for several reasons: not because of our common friendship, extending now over more than a quarter of a century, nor yet for the confidence which you have reposed in me under many trying circumstances during that long period, but rather because you are much interested in the country which the book describes, are intimately acquainted with all the questions it raises, and more than all because you have a thorough knowledge of Peru – its people and history; – because further, it was you who first taught me how to regard your countrymen, opened my eyes to their good and other qualities, and because also you know that here I have set down nought in malice, have said nothing that you do not know to be true, and drawn no inference from the facts of past times or the doings of living men which you would not sanction and endorse.

With one exception.

I am quite aware that you do not share in what I have said at page 118, but this is not my own opinion – it is the candidly expressed view of the leading men of Lima. I know that you have always insisted upon Peru paying her debts, not merely because you well know that she can pay quite easily, but also because the effect on the moral life of the country, if she should prove a defaulter, will be most disastrous. It is pitiable beyond the power of human expression to find a single thoughtful Peruvian holding

a contrary opinion.

Since the following chapters were written several things have taken place which have corroborated some of my statements, and fulfilled more than one of my predictions. As you are aware a public meeting was held, a month after my departure from Lima, at the Treasurer's Office; at which were present the Minister of Finance and Commerce, the Chief Accountant, and many other officers of departments, for the purpose of receiving a communication from two Englishmen, setting forth the discovery of fresh guano deposits on the coast, in the province of Tarapaca. From all that could be gathered these new deposits may be fairly estimated as containing three million tons of guano. This confirms what I have said at page 101.

And yet we have heard nothing new from Peru regarding the payment of her liabilities, nor has any official communication been made by the Government regarding this important discovery. If General Prado does not take care he will have his house pulled about his ears. One of the most interesting revolutions yet to be made in Peru is one in the interest of its honour and uprightness. If your friend General Montero appeals to the country in that cause he might immortalize his name and bring in the New Era. From the little I know of the General, however, I should say that such a task is too much for him. It requires a man broad of chest, of constant mind, of unimpeachable honour and absolute unselfishness to make a revolution of that sort. Still it is a good cry, and if Prado does not

take it up himself he may come to grief when he least expects it.

By the issue of Mr. Marsh's report from the British Consulate at Callao you will notice how the Consul confirms what I have said about the British sailor in Peru. Excessive drinking, licentious living, and exposure are set forth as the main causes of a deterioration in our merchant seamen which should attract the notice of Parliament. To send unseaworthy ships to sea is to bring disgrace on the national name. The national disgrace of sending unworthy seamen to sea appears to attract little notice.

The chapter I read to you in MS. on 'Commercial Enterprise in Peru' I have purposely omitted, as also my report on the riches of its Sea. It will be time enough to talk of these things when the Chinese get a firmer footing in the country than they have at present, or when the Mormons have established themselves there.

Let me ask you to treat with leniency any unintentional wrong thinking or wrong writing, but anything you discover here to be purposely vulgar, purposely bad, or unjust, treat it as you would treat the creed of a Jesuit, or a priest, or any other evil thing.

Believe me to be,

My dear Don Juan,

Your faithful friend and servant,

Q.B.S.M.

A. J. Duffield.

Savile Club,

February, 1877.

P. S. Let me publicly thank you for introducing to English

readers the works of Ricardo Palma, certainly the best writer Peru has produced, and eminently its first satirist. As you will see, I have translated one of his *Tradiciones*. Some readers at first sight might naturally feel inclined to suggest a transposition of the chapters in the 'Law-suit against God,' or to look upon the second chapter as altogether irrelevant to the story. But we who are in the secret know better, and that the official corruption which is there set forth is intimately connected with the catastrophe which follows, and is a faithful representation of public life and morals, not only in old Peru, but also in the Peru of the Guano Age.

Hasta cada rata.

PERU IN THE GUANO AGE

CHAPTER I

Although Peru may boast of its Age of Guano, it has had its Golden Age. This was before any Spaniard had put his foot in the country, and when as yet it was called by quite another name. The name of Peru, which signifies nothing, arose by accident or mistake. It was first of all spelled Piru, no doubt from Biru, the native name of one of its rivers. Time and use, which establish so many things, have established Peru; and it is too late to think of disestablishing it for anything else: and though it is nothing to boast of, let Peru stand. The country had its Stone Age, and I have brought for the Cambridge antiquaries a fair collection of implements of that period, consisting of lancets, spear-heads, and heads for arrows, exquisitely wrought in flint, jasper, opal, chalcedony, and other stones. They were all found in the neighbourhood of the Pisagua river. It is to be regretted that no material evidence of equal tangibility is forthcoming of the Age of Gold. This is generally the result of comparison founded on historical criticism.

In the Golden Age Peru had —

I. A significant name, a well-ordered, fixed, and firm government, with hereditary rulers. Only one rebellion occurred

in twelve reigns, and only two revolutions are recorded in the whole history of the Inca Empire.

II. The land was religiously cultivated.

III. There was a perfect system of irrigation, and water was made the servant and slave of man.

IV. The land was equally divided periodically between the Deity, the Inca, the nobles, and the people.

V. Strong municipal laws enforced, and an intelligent and vigorous administration carried out these laws, which provided for cleanliness, health, and order.

VI. Idleness was punished as a crime; work abounded for all; and no one could want, much less starve.

VII. No lawsuit could last longer, or its decision be delayed more, than five days.

VIII. Throughout the land the people everywhere were taught such industrial arts as were good and useful, and were also trained by a regular system of bodily exercises for purposes of health, and the defence of the nation.

IX. Every male at a certain age married, and took upon himself the duties of citizenship and the responsibilities of a manly life: he owned his own house and lived in it, and a portion of land fell to him every year, which was enlarged as his family increased.

X. Great public works were every year built which added to the strength and glory of the kingdom.

XI. Deleterious occupations or such as were injurious to health

were prohibited.

XII. Gold was used for ornament, sacred vessels of the temple, and the service of the Inca in his palaces. There is a tradition that this precious metal signified in their tongue '*Tears of the Sun.*' Whether this be an ancient or a modern tradition no one can tell us. It may be not more than three and a half centuries old.

XIII. A man ravishing a virgin was buried alive.

XIV. A man ravishing a virgin of the Sun, that is, one of the vestal virgins of the Temple, was burnt alive.

XV. It was accounted infamous for a man or woman to wear other people's clothes, or clothes that were in rags.

XVI. Roads and bridges were among the foremost public works which bound the vast country together.

XVII. Public granaries, for the storing of corn in case of emergency, were erected in all parts, and some very out-of-the-way parts of the kingdom.

XVIII. Woollen and cotton manufactures were brought to great perfection. Examples of these remain to this day and will bear comparison with those of our own time.

XIX. A thief suffered the loss of his eyes; and a creature committing the diabolical act of altering a water-course suffered death.

And to sum up, here is the true confession of Mancio Sierra Lejesama, one of the first Spanish Conquistadores of Peru, which confession he attached to his will made in the city of Cuzco on the 15th day of September, 1589, before one

Geronimo Sanches de Quesada, escribano publico, and which has been preserved to us by Espinosa in his 'People's Dictionary,' art. 'Indio.'

'First of all,' says the dying Lejesama, 'before commencing my will I declare that I have much desired in all submission to acquaint His Catholic Majesty, the King Don Philip our Lord, seeing how Catholic and Christian he is, and how jealous for the service of God our Saviour, of what touches the discharge of my soul for the great part I took in the discovery, conquest, and peopling of these kingdoms, when we took them from those who were their masters, the Incas, who owned and ruled them as their own kingdoms, and put them under the royal crown. And His Catholic Majesty shall understand that the said Incas governed these kingdoms on such wise that in them all there was no thief or vicious person, nor an idle man, nor a bad or an adulterous woman, [if such there had been, be sure the Spaniard would have been the first to find it out,] nor were there allowed among them people of evil lives: men had their honest and profitable occupations, in all that pertained to mountain or mine, to the field, the forest, or the home, as in everything of use all was governed and divided after such sort that each one knew and held to his own without another interfering therewith: nor were lawsuits known among them: the affairs of war, although not few, interfered not with those of traffic, nor yet did these conflict with those of seed-time and harvest, or with other matters whatsoever. All things from the greater to the less had their order, concert,

and good management. The Incas were dreaded, obeyed, and respected by their subjects, for the greatness of their capacity and the excellence of their rule. It was the same with the captains and governors of provinces. And as we found command, and strength, and force to rest in these, so had we to deprive them of these by the force of arms to subject them to, and press them into, the service of God our Lord, taking from them not only all command but their means of life also. And by the permission of God our Lord we were able to subject this kingdom of many people, and riches, and lords, making servants of them as now we see. I trust that His Majesty understands the motive which moves me to this relation, that it is for the purging of my conscience by the confession of my guilt. We have destroyed with our evil example people so well governed as these, who were so far from being inclined to wrongdoing or excess of any sort – both men and women – that an Indian with a hundred thousand dollars in gold and silver in his house, would leave it open, or would place a broom, or small stick across the threshold to signify that the owner was not within, and with that, as was their custom, no one would enter, nor take thence a single thing. When they saw us put doors to our houses, and locks on our doors, they understood that we were afraid of them, not that they would kill us, but that perhaps they might steal our things. When they saw that we had thieves among ourselves, and men who incited their wives and daughters to sin, they held us in low esteem. So great is the dissoluteness now among these natives, and their offences

against God, owing to the evil example we have set them in all things, that from doing nothing bad they have all – or nearly all – been converted in our day into those who can do nothing good. This touches also His Majesty, who will take care that his conscience has no part in allowing these things to continue. With this I implore God to pardon me, Who has moved me to declare these matters, because I am the last to die of all the discoverers and conquistadores; for it is notorious that now there exists not one other of their number, but I only either in this kingdom or out of it, and with that I rest, having done all I am able for the discharge of my conscience.'

This might be called the epitaph of the Golden Age, written by one who knew it, and who helped to destroy it.

XX. Hospitality was a passion in that time, and what had been enjoined and practised as a national duty became a private virtue, procuring intense happiness in its exercise. Instances of this are on record that are not equalled in the history of any other people.

Lastly – and these characteristics of our Golden Age have been taken quite at random and as they have come to my recollection – the name by which the Incas most delighted themselves in being known was that of 'Lovers of the Poor.' In this Golden Age gunpowder was unknown, and the people for the most part were vegetarians. Animal food was eaten by the soldiery and the labouring people only at the great religious feasts. Fish, and the flesh of alpacas, were confined to the Incas and the nobles. This will account for many things which

subsequently occurred, notably their easy conquest by the fire- and meat-eating Spaniard.

Let us now write down our comparisons of the Age of Guano with the Age of Gold.

I. The name and form of Government, it is true, are reduced to writing, but the Government is, and has been from the commencement of its Republican history, as unstable as water. On the close of the Guano Age things would appear to be improving: President Pardo has completed the whole term of his presidential life, and this is only the second instance of a Peruvian Republican President having done so. It would be difficult to reckon up the number of revolutions which have taken place in the Age of Manure.

II. The land is not cultivated: the things, for the most part, which are taken to market, are those which grow spontaneously, without art or industry. The people who supply the Lima market are chiefly Italians, while the greater part of the land is barren and unproductive. Potatoes and other vegetables, wheat and barley, flour, fruits, and beef, all come from Chile and Equador, but chiefly from the former.

III. The great water-courses and system of irrigation which marked the Golden Age are all broken up, and the fructifying water, once stored for the use and service of man, first became his master, and then his relentless tyrant.

IV. The land cannot be said to belong to any one. Certainly not to God. Even the Church, once a great proprietor and holder of

slaves, is as lazy as the laziest drone in any known hive. Many of the large estates which flourished in the pre-Guano period have perished for lack of hands. The sugar plantations are exceptions for the present, but what will happen to them when the Chinese are all free is very uncertain. It may even be said to be a source of alarm to many thoughtful persons.

V. Of the municipal laws, which provide for cleanliness, health, and public order, although great progress has been made in Central Lima, all that need be said is, that it is a wonder the inhabitants have survived, and that those who were not killed in last year's revolution have not been carried off by a plague.

VI. Idleness among the upper classes, i.e. the whole white population, the descendants of Spain – those who supply the Army and Navy with officers, the Law with judges, the Church with bishops, and the rich daughters of sugar-boilers with husbands – idleness among these is the order of the day, and is punished by no one. Even the gods appear to take no notice of it, being itself a sort of god, so far as the number of his worshippers are concerned. To-morrow is the everlasting excuse for almost everybody, and yesterday has done nothing but light fools to dusty death; the to-morrow in which the useful and the good are to be done, never comes.

VII. Going to law is not only an infamous passion in this Guano Age, it is a means of living. There must be few if any people of substance in Peru who have not known the bitter curse of the law's delay. I have known lawsuits of the most vexatious

and cruel nature, and which, in any country where civilisation is not a mere name, could never have been instituted, last, not five days, but five years, and, alas! even fifteen years. I have myself tasted the bitterness of the law in this land, and been very near being lodged in a loathsome jail at the instance of a miscreant who had it in his power to demand my presence before a bribe-gorged judge. I only escaped paying heavy toll or hateful imprisonment by my friends obtaining the removal of the judge. The second was a gross attempt at extortion, from which I was saved by accident. Both these lawsuits, of the basest sort, had their origin in an injustice which is ingrained in the complexion of the people. The captain and crew of the *Talisman* could bear testimony to the difference between the administration of law in the Golden Age and in the Age of Manure.

VIII. The education of the people has never been seriously attempted, except in carrying a flimsy old musket. The Indians, who form the great bulk of the population, do not vote. This would involve a slight cultivation of the Indian's intellect, and he does not know what might happen to further embitter his lot if he were to discover to his rulers that he had a mind. He is perhaps the slyest of animals – more sly than a fox, more obstinate than an English mule, and as timid as a squirrel.

IX. The marriage law is disgracefully abused and neglected for a country which boasts that its religion is that of the Holy Roman Apostolical. Civil marriage is illegal, and ecclesiastical marriage but little observed, except among the Estratocracia, the sugar-

boilers, and such as mix in European society. The subject is one always difficult for a traveller to handle. To speak plainly and publicly of what has been acquired in private on this matter would justly provoke displeasure and disgust, and would not fail to be misrepresented or misunderstood. It may, however, be said, that if marriage be a public virtue, large numbers of the Peruvians of the Manure Age are not virtuous.

X. Of the great public works in Peru, the chief during this time has been a penitentiary, and a railway to the moon not yet finished, all built by foreigners and with English money. Emigration was one of the most important transactions of the Golden Age. There has been no serious attempt at promoting either emigration or immigration: the migration of the native races is absolutely beyond the control of the government.

XI. Of deleterious occupations and

XII. The use of gold, all that need be said is that each man in Peru does what he likes in his own eyes, and what is allowed in the most enlightened land under the sun: and in this regard she sins in the universal company of the wide world; but the comparison with the Golden Age is not on that account the less painful.

XIII. Incontinence is general, and the number of illegitimate children greater than those born in wedlock. The crime punishable by the terrible death awarded to it in the Golden Age has disappeared, for reasons which need not be further noticed.

XIV. The scandals of the Temple or the Church have likewise changed in their character. I have known a bishop of the Peruvian

State Church, sworn to celibacy, whose illegitimate children were more numerous than the years of his life. I have known a parish priest who had living in several houses more than thirty children by several women. All Peruvian ecclesiastics are supposed to live celibate lives, bishops, priests, monks and nuns; and if they do not, the irregularity is winked at, nor is public morality shocked, however grossly and notoriously immoral the lives of these persons may be.

XV. The people for the most part are well dressed, but with the exception of the indigenous races, all wear ready-made clothing. The dresses of all classes are ill-made, costly, and vulgar. The coffin in which a Peruvian of the Guano Period is carried to his last home, is about the best made suit he ever wears, and the best fitting.

XVI. Of roads and bridges of the present day, it would be amusing to write if the recollection of those I have passed over was not too painful. No man not born in an Age of Manure, who has travelled a thousand miles in the interior of Peru, or for that matter a hundred leagues, will ever wish to repeat the experiment. Many of these roads are but ruins of roads, and carry the usual aspect of roads which lead to ruin.

XVII. There are no public granaries. People live from hand to mouth on what others grow for them and bring to them.

XVIII. There are no woollen manufactories. All the wool of the alpaca, the llama, and vicuña is sent to England to be made into things which the growers of the staple never see, much less

wear. No Peruvian of any social standing has had the pluck or the sense to do anything towards extending the cultivation of alpaca wool. It is well known that the produce of this beautiful and docile animal might easily have been increased, just as the yield of merino wool has increased in Australia, if only brains and industry had been brought to bear upon the enterprise; and instead of a yearly income of a few thousand dollars being derived from this source of national wealth, there might have been, within the limits of the Age of Guano, a net annual income of £20,000,000. This incredible statement is made by one who passed four years of his life in studying the subject.

XIX. As for stealing – not that form of it which comes within the range of petty larceny, but the wider and more awful range of felony – it may be safely said, that nearly all public men have steeped themselves to the neck in this crime, and the common people take to it as easily and naturally as birds in a garden take to sweet berries. Nor is there sufficient justice in the country to stamp out the offence. If the punishment awarded to this crime in the Golden Age had been inflicted in the Age of Guano, there would be a very limited sale for spectacles in Lima or the cities of the Peruvian coast, or the towns and cities of the mountains.

XX. It is delightful to turn to something in Peru that merits unlimited praise. The Golden Age was noted for its hospitality, not only as a social virtue practised by the people among themselves, but as extended to strangers. Pizarro had not been so successful in his conquest of Peru if he had not been so

hospitably treated by the noble lady who entertained him on his first visit to Tumbez. The exhortation of Huayna Capac to his subjects to receive the bearded men – whose advent he announced – as superior beings, has been interpreted as the cause of the Spaniards' sudden success in a country that was well-defended as well by soldiers as numerous fortresses – 'Those words,' exclaimed an Inca noble some years afterwards, 'those last words of Inca Huayna Capac were our conquerors.' Among themselves it was the custom to eat their meals with open doors, and any passer by in need was welcomed in. Princesses and high-born ladies received visits from the mothers and daughters of the people, who provided the needle-work that was to occupy the time of the visit. Among English families of the better sort it is still a habit for a lady visitor to ask for some needle-work to do during her visit if it lasts more than a day – a custom that deserves to be enquired into. The prevalence of a similar custom in our Golden Age increases its importance. The traveller, especially if he be an Englishman, who has travelled through modern Peru, even in the Guano Age, who does not bear a lively recollection of kindness and open-hearted hospitality, is most certainly to be pitied, if not avoided. I am quite aware that such persons exist. I have myself travelled in the saddle more than two thousand miles on less than as many pence. The story of the impostor Arthur Orton at Melipilla is a case in point, and if the learned counsel who defended him is in need of a livelihood which cannot dispense with some of the elegances and

charms of life, he cannot do better than follow the tracks of his client. I have lived in every kind of house, rancho, posta, cottage, quinta, and mansion, occupied by the various classes which make up the population of Peru. I have lived with archbishops and bishops, priests and monks, merchant princes, senators, judges, generals, miners, doctors, professional thieves, and widows, and I should be an ingrate indeed if I did not acknowledge with profound gratitude the kindness, oftentimes the affection, which I received, the liberality with which I was entertained, and the freedom I enjoyed. Here I am reminded of an incident which occurred to me in the south of Spain, and as it will suit a purpose it could not otherwise serve, let me relate it.

I was employed to take the level of a railway that was to connect the Roblé with the shores of the Mediterranean. The proposed line passed through one of the great estates of the Marquis de Blanco, and the Marquis gave me a letter to his capitaz or overseer, who occupied a house, the sight of which would have charmed the soul of an artist, on one of the overhanging cliffs which rose above el Rio Verde. I arrived late and, after twelve hours hard work beneath an Andalusian sun. I was well received by the capitaz and his charming wife Doña Carmen, who with her own hands and in my presence prepared for my supper a partridge and other delightful things. If the day had been hot, the night on the highest point of the royal road to Ronda was cold. A glorious wood fire added to the universal beauty of everything. A table was spread for me with a snowy

diaper cloth. I can see it now – a bottle of fine wine, most sweet bread, raisins and what not. Just as my partridge was ready, a clatter of twenty horses' hoofs was heard in the patio. The capitaz went out to see the new arrivals, who turned out to be farmers of the district on their way to the horse fair, which was to be held in Ronda the following day. In came the twenty pilgrims to Ronda, to whom I was formally introduced, and Doña Carmen set to work to prepare an enormous *Olla* for the whole company. My partridge was not served until the *Olla* was ready, when we all set to work and ate our supper in peace and good-will. An hour afterwards, whether from the effects of the delightful wine – only to be enjoyed in Spain, the fumes of my own pipe and the cigarettes of the twenty pilgrims, the labours of the day, or all combined, I fell a nodding: whereupon the good-natured capitaz enquired if I would not like to throw myself into bed. On which I rose, and declared with great solemnity that for my rudeness in having gone to sleep in such worshipful company, I was ready to throw myself not only into bed but into the river below.

'Doña Carmen,' said the capitaz, 'shall take you to your room.'

And with a general good-night to the pilgrims and a shake of the hand with the capitaz, away I went in the wake of Doña Carmen.

It was a spacious room, filled with implements of sport, the walls adorned with heads of deer and other trophies of the gun, and there were also unmistakeable signs of its being a lady's room.

'Doña Carmen,' I observed in an imperative tone, 'this is your own room. I am an old traveller, and can sleep in a hay-loft or on the floor, with my saddle for a pillow. At any rate, I will not sleep here. I will not turn you out of your own room.'

'And,' she demanded, 'what would the Marquis say if he knew that you had slept here in the hay-loft or on the floor, with your saddle for a pillow?'

Other expostulations followed, which were answered with great eloquence and stately determination, mixed with that grave humour which can no more be acquired than can be acquired the wearing of a cloak as it is worn by an ancient hidalgo, or the arrangement of a mantilla as it is arranged on the head and shoulders of a high-born lady of Granada.

At last, as I caught up my satchel to leave the room, she caught me by the arm, and nudging me with her elbow, she said with much archness, 'I am coming back again,' and with that she swept out of the room, leaving me no longer with my eyes half closed in sleep.

She never came back. Nor did I ever see her again. She never intended to come back. Those who think so are incapable of making or understanding a joke, and will never be able to appreciate the uncommon wit and humour of Spanish women. That there are shallow fools in the world who interpret everything they hear in a carnal and literal sense is the reason why we have so many childish, not to say unpleasant, stories from Spain and Peru regarding the questionable morals of the fair sex of those

countries. What is meant for fun and drollery is mistaken for naughtiness, and much that is offered as a spontaneous natural hospitality has been wilfully or ignorantly misconstrued. I do not defend the method Doña Carmen took in putting her guest at his ease, and making him feel at home; I think it was a daring act of politeness, and it is not pretty to find so much knowledge of the world in the possession of a woman, however dexterous her use of it may be. There is, however, another kind of culture besides that which comes from reading expensive novels, dressing for church or dinner, and living in a climate somewhat cold, foggy, and changeable. The ladies of Peru are beautiful, natural, very intelligent, and fond of living an unconstrained life. Their climate is provocative of freedom, ease, and delightful idleness. Their fair speech and delightful wit partake of these characteristics. It is born of these. It can be misinterpreted – but only by those who know not their language, and do not respect their ways.

A common source of error on the subject of Peruvian hospitality arises from the fact that in Lima, for example, a foreigner, even an Englishman, is rarely or never invited to dine with a native family. With us, if we meet a man in Bond Street, or anywhere on the wing, whom we have not seen for a year, we ask him to come and take pot-luck with us, and if he is a foreigner he generally does – and notwithstanding the detestable anxiety of our wives, our pot-luck dinners are the best dinners that we give. What is lacking in the mutton we can and often do make up with the bottle or the pipe. This is the kind of thing

we expect in return when we visit Lima and pick up a man who has thus dined with us at home. But the thing is impossible. In Lima a married man dines with his grandmother, his wife's grandmother, his wife's father and mother, together with his wife and the children, whom the old people love to spoil with sugar-plums. The ladies are only half dressed, the service is somewhat slatternly, the dishes, although excellent in their way, are such as do not please the weak stomachs of benighted Englishmen, much less the French, who have not made the acquaintance of the puchero, the ajijaco, or the omnipresent dulces. In short, a stranger at a Peruvian family dinner, unexpected and without a formal preparation, would be as acceptable as a dog at Mass. And when an Englishman is invited to one of these houses he never forgets the things done in his honour – the loads of dishes – the floods of wine – the magnificent dresses of the ladies – the elaborate display of everything; – and oh! the stately coldness, the searching of dark eyes, and the awful sense of responsibility which rests on the being for whom all this has been done, and who is the solitary cause of it all. He never accepts another invitation. And yet the people have strained every nerve to please him; they have made themselves ill, have spent an awful sum of money, and less and less believe in dining a man as the most perfect form of showing him their respect or esteem.

But out of Lima, in El Campo – the country – where everybody is free as the air, everything is changed, everybody is happy, nothing goes wrong. The abundance is glorious, the ease

and liberty delightful; there is nothing to equal it in the riding, dancing, eating, drinking, laughing, sleeping, dreaming, card-playing, smoking, joking world.

El Señor Paz Soldan, in his 'Historia del Peru Independiente,' says: 'Peru, essentially hospitable, admitted into her bosom from the first days of her independence thousands of foreigners, to whom she extended not only the same fellowship she afforded her own children, but such was the goodness of the country that she considered these new comers as illustrious personages. Men who in their native country had never been anything but domestic servants, or waiters in a restaurant, among whom there might perhaps be numbered one or two who, by their superior ability, might, after the lapse of twenty years, come to be master tailors or shop-men, have gained fortunes in Peru all at once, have won the hand of ladies of fortune, birth, riches, and social distinction. Those who have entered the army or navy have quickly risen to the highest posts. If they devote themselves to business, at once they become capitalists; and in civil and political appointments the foreigner is hardly to be distinguished from the native. The first decrees ever issued gave every protection and preference to foreigners resident in the country. They have the same right to the protection of the laws as Peruvians, without exception of persons, becoming of course bound by the same laws, to bear the same burdens, and in proportion to their fortunes to share in contributing to the income of the State... Such as have any knowledge of science, or special industry, or are desirous of

establishing houses of business, can reside in perfect freedom, and have given to them letters of citizenship. He who establishes a new industry, or invents a useful machine hitherto unknown in Peru, is exempt for a whole year from paying any taxes. If necessary, the Government will supply him with funds to carry on his art; and it will give free land to agriculturists. And yet, strange to say, and more painful to confess, many of these foreigners have been the cause of serious difficulties to the country, plunging it into conflicts which more or less have taken the gilt off the national honour. They have wished for themselves certain distinct national laws. They have thought themselves entitled to break whatever laws they pleased, and when the penalty has been enforced they have applied to their Governments, who have always judged the question in an aspect the most unfavourable to the honour and interest of Peru.'

As regards this hospitality given to English tailors and tailors' sons by Peru, it is quite true; true is it that they have married the rich daughters of ancient families, and made marvellous progress in all things that distinguished Dives from Lazarus. Men who would never have been anything but lackeys in their own country have become masters of lands and money in Peru. It is all true. Without wishing to disparage my own countrymen, and still less my countrywomen, I am bound to confess that the Peruvians have derived very little edification from their presence and example. Within the Guano Age a British minister has been shot at his own table in Lima while dining with his mistress. The captain

of an English man-of-war lying in Callao was murdered in the outskirts of Lima while on a drunken spree: the murderers in both cases never being brought to justice.

The English merchants were men noted for neither moral nor intellectual capacity, utterly innocent of any culture, or regard for it; of no manners or good customs that could reflect honour on the English name, and who gained fortunes after such fashion as only the practices of a corrupt government could sanction or connive at. Few English ladies have ever been permanently resident in Lima. It has been visited by one or two showy examples of the money-monger class; but the Lima people have not had the opportunity of knowing by actual contact in their own country the gentry of England. This has been a disadvantage to us and to them of the greatest magnitude: for while we have accepted the hospitality of Peru, we have not returned it in a manner worthy of the English name.

Nor can it be said that English travellers who have written on Peru make any very great figure in the cause of truth and honesty; whilst the amount of literary pilfering has been almost as notorious as that of the pillage of the public treasury by native officers of state.

The commanders and petty officers of the Steam Navigation Company in the Pacific come more in contact with the better class of Peruvians than any other portion of the English community. Among these numerous officers there are a few to be met with who can speak grammatical English. No doubt,

grammar to a sailor is an irksome thing, at any rate it is a thing of minor importance, and we rather like our sailors to be free of everything except their courage, their gentleness, their love of truth, and, above all, their glorious self-abnegation. But it is a pitiable sight to see a British tar with lavender kid-gloves on his fists, Havannah cigars in his great mouth, widened by an early love for loud oaths, rings on his fingers, and other apings of the fine gentleman; and it is disgusting to see him dressed in an authority he knows not how to adorn, and placed in a position which he can only degrade. Yet these British tars are looked up to as English gentlemen, and, what is more, as English captains; and not a few Peruvians come to the natural conclusion that it is no great thing to be an English gentleman after all.

It is very grievous to make these remarks; justice demands, however, that if we would criticise the Peruvians from an English standpoint, we should take into consideration the English example which has been placed before them during all the years of an Age of Guano.

An English sailor in every part of the commercial world which he visits is too often a disgrace to himself and a dishonour to his country. But in Peru he is a standing disgrace to humanity. When on shore, if he is not drunk, he is kicking up a row. His language is foul, his manners brutal, his associates the off-scouring of the people, and his appearance that of a wild beast. We have of late been turning our attention to unseaworthy ships, and the amount of wise and unwise talk that this important subject has

evoked has been great and surprising. It is a pity that no one has thought it necessary to take up the subject of the unworthy sailor, which should include not only the ignorant, drunken, and grossly depraved seaman, but the oftentimes illiterate, ill-conditioned, and brutal creature called a captain, who commands him. There are many considerations why the captain of a British ship should be a man of good character, and there are imperative reasons why he should be compelled to earn a certificate of good conduct, as well as a certificate of proficiency in the science of navigation. The ability to represent the country whose flag he carries, as a man well-instructed and of good manners, is not the least of those reasons.

I recently had the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with nearly five hundred captains of merchant ships in the Pacific. I am ashamed to confess that the French, the Italian, the North American, and the Swede were everyway superior men to the English captains. There were exceptions of course; the superiority was not in physical force, but in intelligence, in manners, in the cleanliness in which they lived, and the sobriety of their lives. If the Pabellon de Pica may be compared to a pig-stye, the British sailors who frequent its strand may be likened unto swine. Indeed, it is an insult to that filth-investigating but sober brute to compare him with a being who at certain times is at once a madman, a drunkard, and not infrequently a murderer. It is not easy to escape the conviction that captains such as these must be of use to their employers,

and are needed for purposes for which ordinary criminals would be unfitted. At the Pabellon de Pica a choice selection of these British worthies may be seen daily getting drunk on smuggled beer, winding up with smuggled brandy, wallowing among the filthiest filth of that foul concourse of filthy inhuman beings, a detestable example to all who witness it; and a living ensample of what England now is to a guano-selling people.

All this has come of our trying to do some justice to the Peruvians, and no doubt it will become us as quickly as possible to attend to the mote which is in our own eye.

It should likewise be borne in mind that the Peruvians have suffered the greatest indignities at the hands of successive British Governments. Claims for money of the most vexatious, frivolous and irritating nature have been pressed upon Peru with an arrogance equal only to their ridiculous extravagance. When at last, with great difficulty, our Government has been induced to submit one of these claims to arbitration, judgment has invariably been given against us – as it only could, or ought to have been given.

This chapter should not be closed without noticing the fact that for nearly fifty years the English have had their own burying-place at Bella Vista, which is midway between Lima and Callao, and their own church and officiating chaplain. The Jews likewise have their synagogue, the Freemasons their lodges, the Chinese their temples; and although liberty of worship is not the law of the land, the utmost toleration in religious matters exists. The

women of Lima, who have retained the old religion with ten times more firmness than the men, are the sole opponents of all religious reforms in the Peruvian Constitution. And because it is the women who stand in front of their Church, guarding it with their lives, let us have some respect for them. They are a powerful and determined body, as courageous as they are beautiful, which is saying much. In times of great excitement they will take part in the parliamentary debates! Not, indeed, in a parliamentary and constitutional manner, but in a manner quite effectual. These fair champions of their Church, when liberty of worship, or liberty of teaching, or any question that touches the Roman Catholic faith is being debated in the assembly, proceed thither in the tapada attire, with only one eye visible, and from the Ladies' Gallery will throw handfuls of grass to a speaker – intimating thereby his relationship to one of our domestic quadrupeds – or garlands of tinsel, just as it pleases them, and as the words of the speaker are for or against their cause. Our own House of Commons should take knowledge of this, and pause before they remove the lattice work from before their Ladies' Gallery!

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