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G. CLOTHIER

THIS WEEK Great Mystery

FAMILY NIGHT

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Yellow House, the White House of Venezuela, to Mira Flores. And there in the wing where walls, floor and ceiling are all of steel, the Castros eat and sleep.

Incidentally, the man who published the verses in which the Dictator was named Clown of Mira Flores, one Dr. Pedro Migares, is at this moment languishing in the Rotunda, having been confined there since last April, when his poem first appeared—all this without trial and by the simple mandate of Castro's thumb.

That the steel house is bullet proof is an added point of merit, in the Dictator's eyes. That which Castro most fears is not earthquake, not nature, but human kind. Were he to camp on the summit of Vesuvius the uncertainty of the prolongation of his career could not be greater than it is as the Dictator of Venezuela.

The country over which he rules is a volcano and Caracas is its crater. And when comes the eruption the first victim will be Castro.

A revolutionary army is mobilizing in the field. Colombian revolutionists are pouring over the border to lend a hand to their Venezuelan brothers, with the understanding that the attention will be reciprocated when Castro is overthrown and Colombia becomes the seat of war.

That Venezuela has a revolutionary party is, of course, not remarkable. The conservative element of one Administration invariably becomes the revolutionary element of the next Administration. But the particularly discontented party which is now in the field has a special grudge against Castro.

The Dictator shot the revolutionist leader, Gen. Acosta. Now, in that country, where such leaders are as thick as straws along a railroad, never before has one been punished by death. But Castro said: "I ever my soldiers capture Acosta he shall be shot." So last February, when the revolutionist was taken, the Dictator sent an order for his captors to get Acosta into Caracas before the 30th, that he, Castro, might have the pleasure of supervising the execution. Falling this, the order was to shoot Acosta on the 19th, wherever he might be.

When came the 19th the prisoner was still 60 miles by horse from the capital; and so Acosta, one of the bravest soldiers in Venezuela, was made to kneel in the middle of the road, with his back to the firing squad, and thus was carried out another sentence pronounced by Castro's thumb.

To appreciate the importance of the date of this occurrence it is necessary to state that Feb. 20 was the day on which Castro called his congress together, changed the constitution to suit his own purposes, and declared himself no longer Dictator, but Constitutional President. The constitution forbids capital punishment. As Dictator, Castro might shoot Acostas by the score and his legal right to do so would only be a matter of dispute. But once he became the chief executive under the constitution such an act would be illegal beyond question, and Castro, immune as Dictator, would be subject to consequences as president.

Castro's own soldiers love him not. "He took away our thin uniforms," they say, "and dressed us up in cloth uniforms and caps, like French soldiers." Besides, he seldom pays us. So he is glad when we desert, simply putting new men in our places." The officers of Castro's army, however, make no complaint. For every time the Dictator uses the military as the instrument for making a golden haul the officers get the drippings. To illustrate:

Last fall the soldiers reported that three rich Caracas merchants were hoarding gold within their homes. The Dictator ordered that each of these men be taxed \$60,000 for the "support of the government." The merchants refused to pay. Castro turned them over to certain army officers, who, having made them prisoners, kept them tied to stakes facing the sun all day, and facing an electric light all night. Half blinded and almost crazed by their sufferings,

they at last yielded and paid the "tax."

Another case was not quite so profitable to either Castro or his military staff. A German merchant collected bills to the amount of \$12,000 in cash. Castro not only forbade the German to take the money out of the country, but demanded that it be paid over for "government support."

The man was arrested and lorded until he understood that it was his money or his life, and so led the soldiers to the place where the treasure was hidden. A few weeks later one of the Kaiser's cruisers put in at La Guayra, the captain hurried over to Caracas and demanded not only the \$12,000, but the punishment of the officers who had maltreated a German subject. Castro, livid of face, liquidated on the spot, and the guilty members of his staff are still in Maracaibo prison.

Castro has not a single friend among the foreign representatives in Caracas. All the members of the diplomatic corps, on behalf of countrymen who have interests in Venezuela, watch Castro with suspicious, mistrusting eyes. For the Dictator has more than once openly asserted that, if he could, he would annul all con-

cessions of land granted to foreigners by his predecessors, and sell the same over again to others. He actually did annul concessions enjoyed by the various Oymoco river companies—all American concerns. But he has not yet succeeded in selling these over again.

For the sum of \$40,000, however, he granted a concession of what is alleged to be part of an American asphalt company's mines in the state of Bermudez. This, in a nutshell, was the cause of the asphalt war, the first days of this industrial fight, then United States Minister, Mr. Loomis, in a formal conference with Castro suggested that Venezuelans should protect American interest in their country in order to encourage the investment of American capital in the development of Venezuelan industries. Mr. Loomis concluded with the statement that Castro's attitude toward the asphalt company was opposed to the policy just outlined, and was calculated to antagonize Yankee capital. To which Castro, in his reply, gave this token of international courtesy:

"Well, Mr. Loomis, those Ameri-

can asphalt people are getting very excited. Take them to a saloon and give them some ice cream to cool them off."

Even the course of justice is perverted as Castro wills. The Dictator recently informed the Attorney-General that his legal arguments in the famous asphalt dispute ought to be in favor of the concessionaire's enemies. The Attorney-General, however, handed down an opinion in favor of the concessionaire. The upshot of the matter was that the Attorney-General was compelled to resign, and Castro's mind was appointed in his place.

The law of Venezuela commands the Judge of the Superior Court in each federal district to inspect prisons, ascertain through the prisoners themselves how their cases are progressing, hear their complaints and provide remedies. The Judge of the Caracas district has very recently not only complied with this law, but also made public the result of his investigations. He mentions facts proving that under Castro's government justice does not run in the path of law, that there are individuals in the prisons who were committed by Castro's agents instead of by the

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When the wheels had ceased to spin the clock tinker would take the movement out and rub it dry. The next step was to lubricate it, which was placing one-half of a hickory nut meat between the jaws of the duck-billed pinners and with a firm grip pressing out the oil, which, through the agency of a broom splint, was put back on the little wire and locked into the crown wheel once more, the springs newly wound and the convalescing patient was well on the road to recovery. The movement was set back in its own place, the pendulum

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When business was it its best he receives word that the factory would soon start up on full time and his services would be required for making more clocks for future clock tinkers to doctor up.

In later years he explained the trick as follows: It seems that six out of every ten balky clocks are afflicted the same disorder, gummy, dirty pinions, and instead of taking the whole movement apart he slipped verge off and allowed the movement to run down in a can of common stove gasoline. The fluid would remove the old oil that had collected dust and lint to an extent that stopped the clock, the revolving pinions cleaned themselves and when the movement was taken from the liquid it was in running order again.

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