In that month, we had the Baptist sponsored movement which ousted Gran Van Martin.
I arrived at Habana on December 18, 1933, and, after a very thrilling (for me) month, President Mendieta assumed office on January 18, 1934. The month was very thrilling for a number of reasons, among others because the resounding boom of at least a hundred bombs was heard every night, as well as the sound of street and housetop fighting, which began every night at nightfall.

A few days after my arrival, I was greeted with a parade, which passed in front of the Chancery, of some twenty-five thousand people - an organized parade meant to impress me in a certain definite political direction. I was a little concerned about it before it began, but as soon as I showed myself they cheered me.

Later
Add:

In Cuba, from December 1933 to March 1937, I had to do with seven Presidents: Gran San Martin, Dr. Gustavo Hevia, Marquez Sterling, Colonel Mendieta, Dr. Barnett, Dr. Gomez and Dr. Laredo Bru.
Later on, we did have fighting in the square below us and machine gun bullets sailed past our windows.

As I said before, the early days of my stay at Habana could well be called thrilling. The night I reached there bombs, counted up to a hundred, were exploded over the town to greet me. As I unfortunately remarked that they hadn't bothered me much, they exploded a gigantic one right under my room at the hotel the next night, destroying what was left of Machado's statue. Then a few nights later, when things were more hectic still, they kept the search-light from Morro Castle on the windows of my room at the hotel all night long.

I met and dined with Dr. Grau San Martin, who was then occupying the Presidency but whom
we did not "recognize", very soon after my arrival, as well as Colonel Batista, Chief of the Military Forces. I met them informally; and sometimes in very out-of-the-way places under exciting and mysterious circumstances.

I thoroughly enjoyed my three-year and a half stay in Habana, although the thrills attendant upon fighting, and strikes, and lootings and killings, and so on, continued for all of the first year and a half thereof.

Cuba is beautiful. To my mind it is the most beautiful tropical island I know. It is not as lush as many others, nor as grandiose, but the Cuban countryside and the views of rolling hills and purple sea show what nature can do at its best.
I negotiated a new commercial treaty with Cuba which was successful; successful for both countries: our exports to Cuba increased as did theirs to us. After the new sugar setup was put into effect, Cuba was very gay indeed, and the Yacht Club and the Country Club were scenes of many elaborate dinners and balls.

I was especially fond of the Yacht Club and spent my Sundays there. The beach was not very big or very fine but was "cozy" and I liked the water even when it was like soup in mid-summer. On Sundays I went to ten o'clock Mass and then to the beach. A group of Secretaries and Attachés from my Embassy and their wives and a group of Cuban friends gathered there and we had these splendid daiquiri cocktails.
cocktails as made only at the Yacht Club (or perhaps at the Florida bar), and then luncheon on the beach and then more beach until sundown. I was soon asked to join a Club of about fifteen Cubans and one Mexican, who called themselves "Sons of the Sunday Sun", a gay and festive club group with whom I occasionally had Sunday luncheon, too. The leader was a Mexican, much beloved in Habana, known as "Otro Toro".

The Yacht Club was especially noted for its regattas and for its Christmas balls; the Country Club for golf and its New Year's ball. At the balls groups of young Cubans organized tandas (acts); one group would do a local native costume dance; another, a children's act, and so on. The Country Club is about the most attractive
attractive country club I know, with the green, green grass, and the palms, and the bougainvillaea and splendid views and splendid sunsets.

Occasionally I took time off on Sunday afternoon and went to Batista's cockfights, where he and some of his officers pitted birds against each other. I bet against Batista's No. 2 Colonel Pedraza.

Habana at that time had a gallery of beauties to show. Two of the best known were the Sampedro sisters; Edelmira, known as Puchunga, who was married to the ex-heir of the Spanish Crown, and her sister Elizarda, known as Elsie. Then there was Lolo Vinent and Perla Truffin; Lola Montalva, married to Demetrio Castillo, graduate of West Point, who every year had an enormous
enormous party in their sugar mill, The Central Havana; one went for an hour or two by motor car and then by Demi's train for a half-hour or so to the mill. The party began at noon and lasted until past midnight. Luncheon was served about four o'clock. After two orchestras were worn out, an amateur orchestra from the mill played on; and then the glorious Gloria Montalvo, wife of José García Ordoñez, "the typical Cuban beauty".

Habana is full of attractive houses which were famous for their entertainments. The Countess de Revilla de Camargo and the Marquesa de Pinar del Rio were two of the well-known hostesses. There were a number of titles in Habana, held on from the Spanish times.

The widow of the former President, Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, made a brief visit to Habana while I was
was there. I found her as full of life and as interesting as ever.

Another hostess was Mina Truffin Walsh, the widow of our Attorney General Walsh. Butler Wright, lately Ambassador, lived in her house. Then there was the most likeable Maria Dolores Machin, "widow of Uppmann" as the Cubans say, who gave parties in her town house, as well as in her attractive country place.

Sans Souci, a little way out of Habana in the country, has more atmosphere than any cabaret I know. An ideal setting for tropical nights. They could always count on Saturday night on a gay throng.

The Chilean Minister, Emilio Edwards Bello, now Chilean Ambassador at Bogotá, is a fine colleague,
colleague, with the true good neighbor spirit; and I thoroughly enjoyed seeing him the three and a half years I was in Habana.

The Mexican Chargé d'Affaires in Habana, Octavio Reyes Spindola, now Mexican Ambassador to Chile, and very, very clever, was also very cooperative.

My favorite drive out of Habana was west out into Pinar del Rio. I had occasion to make it frequently. President Mendieta had a small Finca near Rancho Boyeros, and I often went out there to see him. The slightly rolling country, dotted with royal palms; the sugar fields; the flowers; and glimpses of the sea make it the most satisfactory drive I know. For a good part of the way, the road is lined with Fincas and gardens, and
and I remember especially one Finca with a lawn swarming with flaming flamengoes.

I did a great deal of riding. Rode Army horses at Camp Colombia; rode at Alfredo Hornedo's sumptuous Sports Club which, by the way, is about the most gorgeous sports club I know. Rode a lot around the countryside; rode on sugar plantations, and finally set up a sort of riding school of my own next to my house, where I tried my luck at jumping various sorts of walls and fences and hedges and bushes.

I had an Escort of a Cuban Sergeant and four or five soldiers, all splendid blacks, and all good jockeys. They were interested in having me jump higher and higher and very interested in contriving new and fancy sorts of jumps for me.

Once
Once every week I had a sort of circus with them. Incidentally, they were devoted to me.

During the bad times one of my guards was killed on a Sunday morning. I was in the habit of leaving the house shortly before ten for church. On this particular Sunday I forgot something; went back to my room to get it; and when I came downstairs again I found a car with a submachine gun had passed just at the time I usually rode out and killed one of my guards.

The Sergeant, Eduardo Suarez Chamizo, was afraid of nothing. Had been all his life in the Army and had had plenty of experience. Shortly before I left Habana he was married and later I had word that his wife had had twins: one named Jefferson Caffery Suarez Chamizo and the other Fulgencio
Fulgencio Batista Suarez Chamizo. Since then I have had a letter from his widow telling me that Chamizo had died suddenly.

My house was nice. It was of French Renaissance style, which might seem out of place at Habana; but it wasn't. It fitted in perfectly with the palms and the flowers and the views. All my grounds were surrounded by hedge of bougainvillaeas; and I had on my upstairs terrace a vine which blossomed all winter with hundreds and hundreds of huge golden trumpets. The view from my upstairs terrace was one of the best I know. I remember saying to George Rublee that it was as good as the Riviera. "Why, as good?" said he, "it is better." The house was on a little hill, about a mile from the sea, an intervening mile filled
filled with houses and gardens, and the colors of
the sea and sky and the light and the flowers and
villas made it what it was. Sunsets from my
terrace were unequaled anywhere.

Habana is essentially glamorous; nature is
glamorous; the flowers are glamorous; the sky is
glamorous; the sea is glamorous; the people are
glamorous: Life is glamorous.

My Chancery was well situated for a Chancery,
_near the Presidential Palace; but it was not a
very comfortable building.

After the elections were held and President
Miguel Mariano Gomez was inaugurated, I was
appointed Special Ambassador by President Roosevelt
for his inauguration. A number of other Special
Ambassadors attended, among them as Brazilian

Special
Special Ambassador, the present Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Oswaldo Aranha.

Cuban music is now well-known in the United States. I found it cheerful. I didn't like the Rhumba, distorted interpretations of which I have since seen in New York. I did like the Son and the Danzon.

The poor Count of Cavadonga was in Habana off and on during my stay there, but finally after his second marriage left and settled in Miami where he lived until his untimely death in an automobile accident.

It was odd to see turn up in Habana one day a daughter of Princess Marie of Greece - a far cry from Athens - married to a Georgian Prince, Paul Choyashavadze.
Colonel Batista is an interesting type: a self-made man in every sense of the word, with a keen native intelligence, and a keen desire to learn; and also a first-rate politician.

Colonel Batista's Number 2, Colonel Pedraza, is also an interesting character. Personally very shy, he is very brave, with a bravery which he has manifested on many occasions, and a strict disciplinarian; hard as nails when it comes to the Army. He and I always bet against each other at the cockfights. Another interesting Aide of Batista is Belisario Hernandez, who had been a taxi driver in Brooklyn and talked perfect "Brooklynese".

The Cubans talk about "the dance of the millions" when so many of their fine houses, public parks, etc., were constructed. The dance of the millions
millions was the result of the high prices the war caused for sugar, Cuba's principal crop. When sugar prices collapsed, Cuba suffered.

Cuba has some of the largest sugar mills in the world, but most of the largest ones were at the other end of the Island. I visited several in the Habana region; including Hershey's; and saw also their mill for making oil from sunflower seeds.

Of course, we heard sugar, sugar, in Habana; I even broadcast in Spanish about sugar. As I went around American-owned sugar plantations and visited American mills I was very interested to see that our people were attempting to improve the living conditions of their Cuban laborers.
They were giving them better houses and better food and better wages.

Cuban cigars are the finest in the world and I give a little free advertising to Partagas by saying that in my opinion they are the best of all. And then there is Bacardi rum which to my mind has no rival. The Bacardi Brothers have an elaborate building in Habana, and a still more elaborate bar where they dispensed open-handed and generous hospitality. Their rum of about 1873 is incomparable.

Although the Habana beaches are very poor, there is a superb beach about an hour and a half away at Varadero, where one of the Duponts has a fine house. The beach is broad and the sand is white
white and gleaming and the water perfect for bathing. On one occasion a Public Enemy No. 1, Alvin Karpis, lived there quietly for a month or more before we found it out.

The sea food at Habana is hard to beat; sea food of all kinds, but of all, my favorite were the Morro crabs which are in a class by themselves, and the various kinds of large shrimp.

One day I woke up to the fact that my escort had developed a full-size barnyard around my back door. They had fighting cocks (allegedly mine) and guineas, and geese, and ducks, and my own Chinese cook had a barnyard of turkeys which he was fattening. As we had fruit trees in the garden - mangoes, oranges, lemons, grapefruit, papayas, and also alligator pears - the barnyard was complete.

The
The Panamanian Minister gave me a Chinese fighting cock whose progeny were much sought after by those in the know.

I was called up to Washington twice a year, once in January and once in the summer, for consultation. Generally the Navy sent planes for me from Pensacola. I flew to Miami, then by train to Washington, where I would stay four or five days, then back again. The Miami municipal authorities always took very good care of me on each trip through the city; always looked after and entertained me during my entire stay. Mayor and Mrs. Sewell at times; and always Frank Kelly (assistant city manager) on every visit; with them I explored all Miami and all its lovely surroundings. On one occasion Admiral Freeman took
took me over on the TRENTON to St. Petersburg
and waited for me while I sent to Washington
and back.

The Special Service Squadron, under the com-
mand of Admiral Freeman, was in the harbor a year
with me at Habana, and I cannot speak too highly
of the discipline and restraint of the men who
could not be allowed ashore on account of the local
disturbances; and although the ships were changed
occasionally in summertime, it is a very hot
harbor. Also, the Admiral should be praised that
no incident occurred, although in the hectic times
shots would on occasion fall not far from them.
On one occasion the Cuban authorities asked me to
have the vessels removed to get out of line of
fire.

Habana
Habana is a boating and fisherman's Paradise and there are hundreds of small boats for fishing and cruising in the nearby waters, and a few fine yachts. In peaceful times there were always foreign yachts too in Habana Harbor and a lot of world-known ones (often the Leeds). One hectic night I dined on a yacht while a little fighting was going on ashore and our hosts seemed intrigued by a great coming and going of messengers for me.

One day I ascertained that the night before a fairly well-known young American adventurer, whom I had met elsewhere and who generally turned up in times of disorder, had attempted to bribe an employee of the hotel to permit him to get into my rooms.

I have
In Havana there was a delightful social column racket: if you were a Cuban and in Havana society and didn't appropriately remember the birthdays and Saint Days of the social columnists of the principal papers, your name would simply never be mentioned or, if mentioned at all, would be mentioned in company or grouped at the theatre for example with hardly desirable companions.
I have been seasick twice in my life: once out of Santa Marta, Colombia. All day I had been entertained by the local authorities and everywhere had been given sweet champagne; even when I went out to put a wreath at the house where Bolivar lived. Then when I went on board the ship in late afternoon everybody in the world came to call on me and I in turn had to give sweet champagne. I felt fine when I went to bed, but I woke up in the night in the middle of a very choppy sea feeling I can't say how terribly. The second time was when I went on one of our destroyers from Habana to Key West to meet Secretary Hull on his way back from Montevideo. We were in a hurry and were in the Gulf Stream. Again, I can't say how terribly I felt.

In
In January '33 I went up to Washington on one of my semi-annual trips and stayed over for President Roosevelt's inauguration. I drove to the inauguration with my predecessor, Hugh Gibson, and his wife, and one of the Cudahys. I believe of our present Ambassador to Belgium.

The rain came down in torrents. We Ambassadors were put on the porch of the Capitol, under cover fortunately, with the Governors; and I had an interesting chat with Governor LaFollette of Wisconsin. After the inauguration, however, there was some confusion about cars, and in looking for our cars we all got drenched, so drenched in fact that most of us went down with the flu.

I was staying at the Dunns and one night they had the well-known Belgian pianist, Maas, play for
for us - the Princess de Ligne and Mrs. Truxton Beale came in too to hear him.

Every year at Habana we commemorated the sinking of the Maine. First, I went early in the morning with the American Colony and deposited a wreath. Later in the morning there was a military parade reviewed by the President and Cabinet of Cuba, chiefs of Army and Navy and by me. Airplanes buzzed dangerously near overhead, dropping roses on us. The President and I made speeches.

I had occasion for receiving visits from well-known Cuban "killers" and they were amazingly cheerful and frank about it all; and some of those same killers had been out to kill me too. One amiable
amiable young scoundrel came often to the Embassy, brought us useful information, until he forged the name of my First Secretary on a number of papers and we found it out.

The AP correspondent was H. Edmund Chester, known to us as Ten Points because once he told me he had a ten-point plan for settling the whole Cuban business. Although I didn't take the points too seriously, I liked Ed Chester.

The Panair representative was George Grant Mason, who, with his glamorous wife Jane, lived in a charming house. One winter they lent their house to the honeymooning Luces of TIME, FORTUNE, and LIFE, who passed a month or two there.

One day I had a telephone call from Palm Beach from Myron Taylor telling me that the Honorable Mrs. George
George Keppel, so well-known in Edward VII days, was due in Habana the next day. I had never seen Mrs. Keppel before but found her most delightful. She lives most of the time in Florence now.

I had a Chinese cook who was known as Luis. He had been in Cuba for about twelve years but on engaging him he told me he had a wife and child in China. Sometime later he said he had just been married. I said, "I thought you had a wife and child in China." He said, "Yes, but that was a Chinese marriage."

My house was on a little hill and I could see very far over Habana, and during the troubled days on several occasions all the lights of Habana were cut off. It was weird. The big city in complete darkness from where I stood: sounds seemed
seemed to have been accentuated and the effect was distinctly ominous.

My French Colleague, Eduardo Carteron, was a very cheerful person of unfailing good humor, who enjoyed life thoroughly. He is now the Quay d'Orsay's representative at Tunis. His wife is Russian.

I was particularly pleased with a present the American Chamber of Commerce gave me when I left - an etching of me on an enormous horse jumping from Habana to Miami.