

[Autobiography of a Person]

[26068?]

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PERSON

WHO INSISTED ON WRITING ONE

Translated from Spanish

to English.

I wish, before anything else, to solicit of my dear readers, that they dispense me the most cordial [benevolence?], since they will not have the pleasure of reading the copy sheets of an upright literary man, but those composed by a humble worker, who by force of sacrifices, has been able moderately to take a little instruction, so that in this manner be able to distinguish the world and its consequences.

My name is that of Gerardo Cortina Pinera. I was born in the City of Havana, the second day of January of the year 1912, reasons for which you will be able to calculate [?] I have at present the short age of 33 years in the world of the living. An age which will seem short in order to consider a person with the sufficient experience to judge the different worldly problems; an opinion on which I differ as I believe that the world and its consequences are the principal factors which gives to man the experience of living.

I am the son of honorable and laborious Spaniards. My father's name was Juan Antonio Cortina. He dedicated himself laboriously to the [commerce?] of grocery stores in Cuban lands, place in which he founded and procreated a poor but honest family. He was a man of means, and for this reason our home lacked nothing. The name of my mother was Sofia [Pinera y?] Garcia, also of Spanish nationality. Prosperity and happiness inhabited this my

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poor home as was told to me by elders of the family, while my beloved father had life. But unhappily, death knocked at the doors of my home, 2 and the head of the family went to render tribute to the mother earth. My father did not leave much worldly treasures in the year of 1918. Four years after the death of my father, my poor mother died, leaving in the world five children without worldly treasures.

The older of my brothers were adopted by sisters and cousins of my mother, and to them is attributed the affection and the compliance which to sons is dispensed. As I was the smallest of all my relatives placed me in the worth "Granja Dr. Manuel Delfin," place in which I followed a course of five years' study as pupil. My teacher was Mr. Manuel [Arteaga?], a religious man [consecrated?] to the Catholic order, and due to his [unwearied?] persuasion, it is the reason why in the present days the small knowledge of knowing how to place my name. In the year 1923 I left the training school due to economical reasons and [commenced?] learning the trade of line-maker at the printing company of "[La Habanora?]," house situated on the street of [Mereaderes?] No. [28?], in the City of Havana.

For reasons that the second one of my brothers was the second operator of my department, I was able advantageously to learn my trade in the period of four years. It should be recorded that in order to realize this, I found myself in the necessity of presenting documents, which testified that I had 16 years in 1923, so that in this manner avoid that the Secretary of Work of the Republic of Cuba should hinder my apprenticeship. After graduating as operator in the year 1927, I worked at the house until the month of February in the year 1923, and on the 7th day of May of the same year, I took the ship CUBA, which brought me to this hospitable American land, to the city of Tampa.

3

Upon my arrival in Tampa, I started working as waiter in a cafe, which found itself situated in 2102, 14th street. At the [same time?] I acquired friends, and these advised me to dedicate myself to reading at the factories, and in this manner it was another field

Library of Congress

[experienced?]. Months later I went to [occupy?] a place as Reader at the factory of [Gradiatz? Annis?] & Co., but never leaving positive position, since the hours of reading allowed me to [render?} another work.

In the year 1931 I contracted [nupials?] with a daughter of this city of Tampa. Her name is [Esther Gemis?], belonging to a respectable and esteemed family of the Tampa society. Toward the end of the same year 31, the terrible symptoms of the sickness of “unemployment” [commenced?] to sprinkle me, and for this reason I lost the employment which I held in said cafe. I was left alone, depending upon a small salary which I had as Reader of the small workshop of [Arange? & Arange?], amount which was not sufficient to purchase bread and butter. But to increase the misfortune, the sickness of “unemployment” was nearing me with gigantic steps, to such an extreme that two weeks later, the “lovers” of the city of Tampa, the Mr.manufacturers, agreed at a joint meeting of their association, to abolish the readings in the workshops because they considered this [pernicious?]

The distinguished “lovers” of Tampa presented the excuse that in the tribune of the respective cigar factories, reading was made of radical works, and [Communitic?] newspapers, without knowing that such books and dailys were subject to the strict censorship of the American government.

4

It is, therefore, demonstrated that, with the [?] of the “[censorship?]”, the Mr. Manufacturers, were wanting of the truth, as to my thinking, and it is very humble, but gifted with the sincerity that characterizes a Christian, as I believe that if the government of the United States permits such foreign works in this country subject to the postal franchise, and for a greater democracy, consents also that newspapers be edited with [communitic?] principles. There is no reason why manufacturers of foreign origin should restrain the democracy given by this [sovereign?] country that [?] is given to literature that [pleases?] the people, always and whenever it [?] with the laws of censorship.

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I the Mr. manufacturer had no other reason than the one given, which I do not believe, as I esteem that they presented unfounded reasonings, or [?] inclined, and on taking such measures of abolishing the readings, they [throw?] on the streets more than [40?] fathers of family, and [converted?] them as Federal government [charges?]. I believe that they made a double [evil?], since they did not pay the [?] readings in the workshops, as it was the working cigar-maker who sacrificed his earnings to sustain what they qualified as the [bread?] of instruction.

By means of these [tribunes?], the working cigar-maker received great and advantageous teachings which permitted them to increase their cultural knowledge; and would have permitted them to penetrate clearly the government plan of the President of this great American nation, who at first, on directing himself to the workers of his country, asked them highly that they should group themselves in institutions so that in this manner they should help in his plan of helping the workers.

[As?] it will be well ;understood who reads me, the Mr. Manufacturers abolished the readings for [some obscure?] reason, which they [cannot? sustain? on?] 6 of Sofia, so that in this manner, remember in my little daughter my lost mother.

In the same year of 1932 I went to form part of that great [conglomeration?] of unemployed who belonged to the offices of the National [Emergency?] Council, known as the offices of the Relief. Although I realized [?] to see if I could provide myself with a stable position in any place, and in anything, all my realized efforts resulted sterile to obtain [my?] purpose. Meditating greatly what would result to the world, if it continues through the taken trail, I passed in spiritual meditation, the rest of this year 1932.

Another year had passed over the inhabitants of the [planet?], and we found ourselves already in the year 1933. [?] year for me, since it was in this year, and on the date always marked on April 2, in which the angel of my home disappeared from this world. The death of my daughter planted uneasiness and [restlessness?] in my home, and yet forgetting that

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Christian faith which asks resignation of man before the purpose of the Divine Father, the afflicted hearts of all the family is the hour which unfortunately has not been able to find such a [?] of consolation.

After the second anniversary of the death of my little daughter, I continued occupying my place in the line of the [immense?] conglomeration of unemployed, in hope probably that the spirits of [man?], badly treated by the present social developments, they should [?] themselves of sufficient [?] so that in this manner they will find themselves ready to defend with the [?] energy, the right that every man has of benefitting of that [which?] the earth produces.

It is to be lamented that human beings have persisted in making of man a slave of man. [This?] is to be lamented because Christ said through his apostles that [man?] is made to benefit of that [which?] the world [produces?] 7 but not that [men?] should make a slave of him.

In this governmental system, so inappropriate, man finds himself [relegated?] worse than the beasts, since these fortunately [eat?] daily, while man encounters great want of tranquility of obtain a piece of bread to give to his small children, and give thanks it can be obtained. But a day will arrive, said Christ, in which those who ask for justice will be attended to, and such a thing I presume will not be delayed.

I must advise that if in these moments I force my mind to realize this [mission?], I do not do it solely to satisfy a spiritual expansion, but to carry out the petition that my dear and special friend, John [Ferlita?], chief of the Sociological Study of the department of Federal Relief, who approached me so that I would write my humble opinion of the evolutionary state of this town and the whys of its actual conditions.