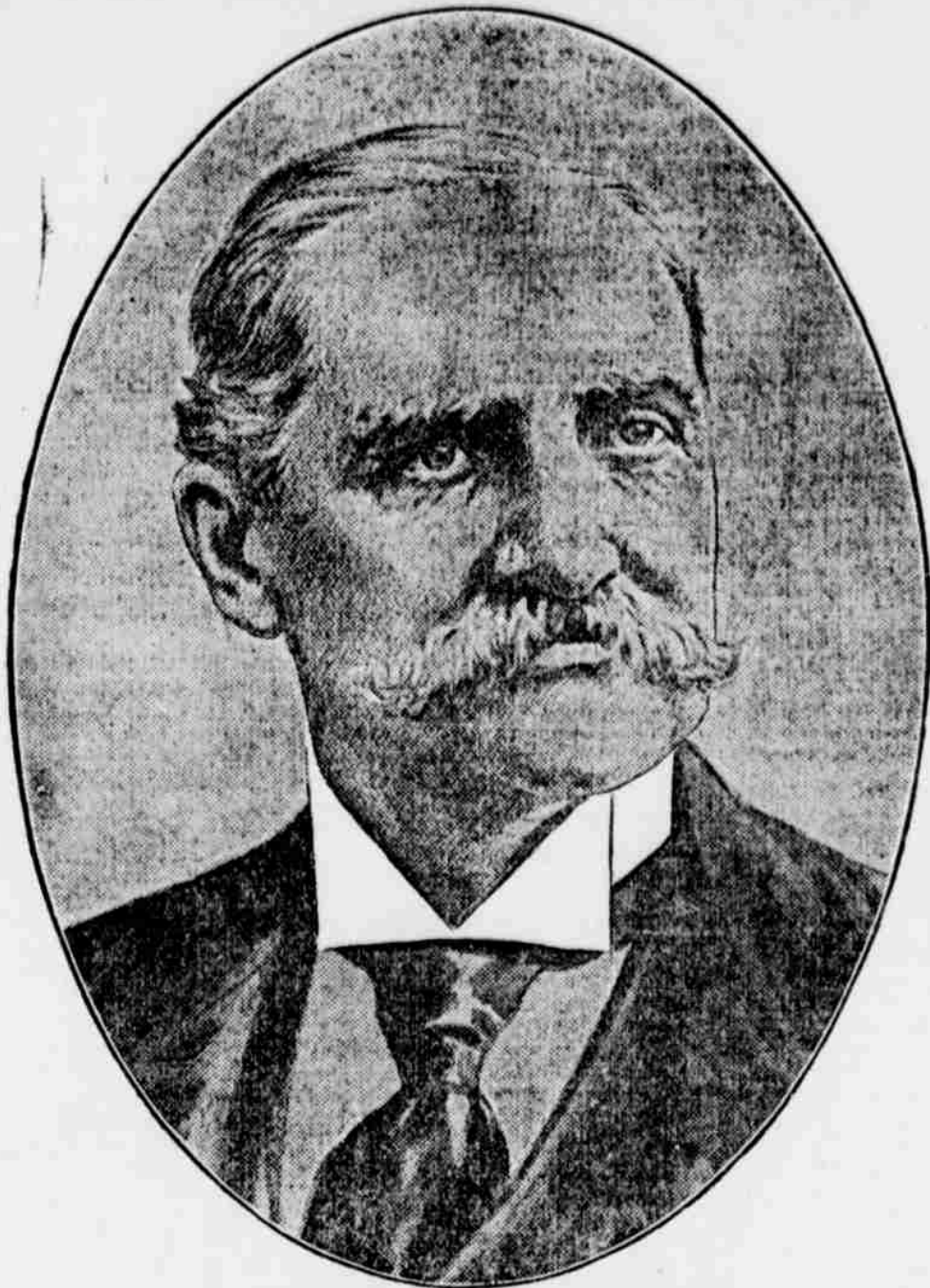


**THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF CUBA.**



**TOMAS ESTRADA PALMA.**

**FIGHT FOR FREEDOM**

**The Long, Desperate Struggle That Brought Cuban Independence.**

**It Began Almost with the First Settlement of the Spaniards in the Island—Some Men Whose Names and Deeds Will Live in Cuban History.**

UBA'S fight for freedom from Spanish rule may be said to have begun almost before the Dons became masters of the island. When, in 1511, the son of Columbus determined to take possession of Cuba in the name of Spain he selected Diego Velasquez to command an advance guard, as it were, of some 300 men. This force met with virtually no resistance from the natives save from one chief, Hatuey, a refugee from Hispaniola, or Hayti as now called, where he had witnessed the barbarities of the new comers and resented their invasion of his new home, as he, unlike the others, knew from terrible experience what such a coming meant to the native people. But Hatuey like many others who came after him in later years, was unsuccessful in opposing the will of the Dons, and paid for his desire for freedom with his life, being burned at the stake as a fugitive slave.

Spanish oppression and Spanish cruelty reigned in Cuba from that day until in the summer of 1898, when, with the assistance of the United States, the patriots banished their oppressors from the island forever. Almost from the day of the Spaniards' first landing in Cuba until the signing of the peace protocol that put a stop to the war of 1898 the Dons had found it necessary to meet opposition to their reign by the use of armed force. This opposition was not at all times of sufficient vigor to be dignified by the name of revolution, but it was constant. For many years it was more of a sea fight than a land fight and was carried on by the buccaners whose object was to



**GEN. CALIXTO GARCIA.**

drive Spain from the western seas, not because they were friendly to the native Cubans, but from motives of revenge against the mother country, and as allies of other European nations at war with Spain. Nor were their operations directed against the Spaniards in Cuba alone, but in every part of the western world where the Spanish flag floated.

It was not until late in the eighteenth and early in the nineteenth centuries that the people of Cuba began to think seriously of freedom, or rather of fighting existing

wrongs, and forcing from the mother country a more liberal form of government. England's colonies had thrown off the yoke of oppression, and the seed of freedom that had sprouted on the mainland had been carried to the island. A grievance that brought with it armed resistance came in 1796 when Spain withdrew the ship building yards from Havana to reestablish them at her home ports. The industry had existed in the island from 1726, and the closing of them was bitterly resented. But Cuba at that time demanded only her rights as a loyal colony, and not the absolute freedom for which she has since fought.

During her earlier history the development of Cuba's great agricultural resources



**GEN. MAXIMO GOMEZ.**

progressed but slowly. Her ports were closed to the commerce of all the world save Spain, and it was not until after circumstances which Spain had opposed for years but which finally overcame her, that the Cuban planters began to really realize the narrowness of Spanish rule. The change that began to be apparent in the colonial policies of other European nations early in the last century was not shared by Spain, who but attempted to draw the lines tighter.

This fact is evidenced by the issuance of the royal decree of May 25, 1825, defining the functions of the captain generals of Cuba, a decree which invested them with practically the powers of oriental despots, and this decree remained in force until Spain had been driven from the island.

Even before the issuing of this decree had come the first attempt to break the rule of Spain. Secret political societies had begun organizing as early as 1820 under the name of "Sociedad de Bolivar," and in 1823 these societies made an attempt at open revolt. But the attempt was fruitless of results other than the arrest and punishment of the leaders.

The next revolution came in 1826, and was planned by Cuban refugees in Mexico and Colombia. The scheme included the leadership of the great liberator, Simon Bolivar, but it resulted in nothing tangible through lack of adequate support. The same leaders attempted to organize another campaign for the freeing of Cuba during the years 1827-29, this time including among their supporters many persons in the United States, but this plan was frustrated through the influence of the slave interests in both this country and Mexico.

Another revolution came in 1884 in which the principals were the slaves on the sugar plantations about Mantanzas. With difficulty Spain suppressed this revolt, and punished in various ways 1,346 of those convicted of participating in it, but the seed of liberty then planted resulted in later years in the patriots who fought the long ten years' war, and again those who led to ultimate victory the forces of Cuba in the last war.

The next Cuban revolution, started a year later, was led by an ex-officer in the Spanish army, Narciso Lopez. He was unsuccessful at the time, but his efforts led finally to the attempt of this government to purchase Cuba from Spain in 1848. The overtures made to the Spanish government by President Polk were of no avail, however, and Lopez continued his efforts at libera-

tion until he was finally captured by the Spanish authorities on Cuban soil and executed in 1851.

In 1854 came both the attempt of Gen. Quitman, of Mississippi, for the invasion of Cuba, which resulted disastrously to the leaders, they being captured and executed, and the Ostend Manifesto which recommended the purchase of Cuba for \$120,000,000. But this, like the previous attempt at purchase, came to naught, and the island was left to drag along in comparative peace until the breaking out of the "ten years' war" in 1898.

It was this long struggle that brought to the fore such men as Gomez, Garcia, Palma and many others destined to live in the history of the new republic as the names of Washington, Lee, Putnam and a score of others live in our own history. They are the grandest names Cubans will ever know; true patriots, who yet live to guide the young republic through its first troubled waters with the same courageous hands that taught the Cuban soldiers to match Cuban strategy and daring against the heavier forces of Spain. To this list must be added that of Maceo and the others who sacrificed their lives in the last struggle for Cuban freedom, but demanded of Spain a dear price for the sacrifice.

The story of the "ten years' war" is a story of ten years of hardships and sacrifice. It brought with it the first declaration of Cuban independence, signed on October 10, 1898, and also the first election of Cuban officers including a president and vice president and the appointment of cabinet officers.

It was Carlos M. de Cespedes, at the head of 128 ill-armed men, who started this conflict, and who issued the proclamation of Cuban independence at Yara. Cespedes was a lawyer of Bayamo at the beginning of the war, but he was a natural leader of men, and soon had 15,000 men with which to op-



**GEN. ANTONIO MACEO.**

pose Spain. It was he who virtually wrote the first Cuban constitution which was promulgated at Guaimaro on April 10, 1899.

For the first two years of the war success attended almost every effort of the Cuban army, which increased rapidly until it had reached the numbers of 50,000 men, but the ability of Spain to furnish war materials and fresh troops was greater than that of the insurgents, and the rank and file of the Cuban army began finally to tire of the struggle. From 1873 until February, 1878, the war dragged along in a desultory way, and finally ended with the peace of San Antonio which guaranteed pardon to all who had taken part in the conflict, and representation for Cuba in the Spanish cortex.

It was during this war, in 1873, that there occurred the incident of the steamer *Virginia* which came so near resulting in war between Spain and the United States, and which did result in some pointed correspondence between officials of the two countries, and the execution as pirates at Santiago of 53 persons.

The incidents of the last revolution that started in 1894 and led to American intervention for the pacification and liberation of the island are too well known to need any recounting here. The leaders who flocked to the Cuban standard were men who had fought for Cuban freedom from 1868-78. Jose Marti started from New York in February, 1895, Gomez, Antonio and Jose Maceo, Crombet, Cebreco, Borrero, Angel Guerra and a score of others gathered again



**GEN. RIVERA.**

on Cuban soil from different points to again begin the fight for Cuban freedom. In time Garcia, Robi, Rivera and others joined them, and what Spain at first believed to be but the beginning of a negro riot that could be suppressed within a short time proved to be the final conflict for Cuban freedom, a conflict that has waged on sea and land for more than a century.

**WRIGHT A. PATTERSON**

**A Year of Cuban Prosperity.**  
The year 1892 was the most prosperous in Cuban history for almost half a century. During that year the value of the island's exports amounted to \$89,500,000, and the imports to \$56,250,000. Of the exports \$85,000,000 were classed as vegetable, \$3,500,000 as mineral and \$750,000 as animal.

**A Great Cuban Disaster.**  
One of the greatest disasters in Cuban history was the hurricane of October 14, 1870, in which some 2,000 lives were lost.

**RESOURCES OF CUBA**

**Her Greatest Wealth Lies in a Fertile and Productive Soil.**

**Possibilities of Sugar and Tobacco Cultivation Judged by the Records of the Past—Valuable Woods, Fruits and Minerals.**

URING years of peace in the past Cuba has produced more cane sugar than any other country in the world. She produces more than twice the cane sugar manufactured in Java, her nearest competitor, and more than five times as much as is produced in any other country. In exceptional years her production of sugar has passed the one million tons mark.

The beet and cane product both considered, Cuba is surpassed by but one country, Germany, with one and one-half million tons, as a sugar producer, and is equaled by but one other, Austria.

Cuba has exported in one year more than 6,000,000 pounds of leaf tobacco and more than 134,000,000 cigars in addition to heavy exports of baled tobacco of less valuable varieties.

The shipping of nine Cuban ports, which includes Havana, for the year 1894 amounted to 3,538,539 tons, carried by 3,184 vessels.

The above three paragraphs give a general idea of industrial Cuba of the past; they can scarcely be classed as even prophetic of the future.

Cuba and the adjacent small islands belonging to it occupy an area of 45,000 square miles—a little less in size than the state of New York. Of this total area less than 10 per cent. has ever been under cultivation; four per cent. is classed as forest land, and large quantities of the remainder is virgin soil awaiting development by a progressive people under a progressive government. When such a people under such a government have turned this unclaimed area into productive territory we shall have the Cuba of the future.

But to go back again to the Cuba of the past. Cane sugar development has been confined to the vast central plain lying to a great extent in Matanzas province. In the season of 1892-93 this great plain yielded 1,054,212 tons of sugar, valued at \$80,000,000. The sugar plantations of this territory vary in extent from 100 to 1,000 acres, and employ an average of one man to each two acres under cultivation.

For several years the sugar industry in all the West Indian islands has been in a deplorable condition, but different causes must be assigned for the condition in Cuba than for the other islands. In Cuba it has been the series of rebellions and insurrections that have caused the decline of the industry. During the periods of comparative peace the industry has prospered, and the reason may be found in the fact that the Cuban planters have gone about the production of sugar on a large scale, and equipped with the most modern machinery.

While sugar is the staple crop of first importance in Cuba tobacco has an important place in the island's industries, and is even more valuable than sugar when the acreage under cultivation is considered. As Matanzas is the center of the sugar industry so is Pinar del Rio the center of the tobacco interests, though the tobacco fields may be found in all sections of the island, and the crop is exported from every port from Havana to Santiago.

The average size of the Cuban tobacco plantations, or vegas, as they are called, is only about 33 acres, and the average annual production from a farm or vega of this size is something like 9,000 pounds of tobacco of varying qualities. Of this amount, however, there will seldom be more than from 450 to 500 pounds of the finest quality from which the higher priced cigars are made; 1,800 pounds of the second quality, and so on down to the cheapest grade, which is, of course, the greatest in quantity.

In the wars of Cuba the tobacco interests of the western portion of the island, in which is grown the better qualities and the greatest quantities, have been but little affected until the last one. During the years of 1896-'97, however, these interests, like the sugar interests of Matanzas, suffered heavily from the conflicts waged over the tobacco territory, and the planters are but now fully recovering from the effects of the devastation which the revolution left in its path.

Among other agricultural products which the island is capable of producing, and from which much may be expected in the future, are coffee and fruits. The former is especially adapted to the mountain-sides and hill-lands of the eastern portion. There was a time when a considerable quantity of coffee was exported from the island, but the political conditions rendered its cultivation unprofitable, as there was always an uncertainty of getting the crop to market. In point of quality Cuba can produce as good coffee as is grown anywhere in the world, and there is but little doubt that it will soon become a leading industry.

Though the present value of the fruit crop of Cuba has greatly diminished in compar-

son with what it was a few years ago it is still of considerable importance, and may be expected to assume even greater importance in the industrial development of the island under the new regime. In the eastern end of the island there are now a large number of beautiful banana plantations high up the mountains that supply to the American markets the best of this class of fruit that is sold in this country. Oranges and pineapples of unusual size and flavor are also grown throughout the island.

But Cuba possesses more than agricultural wealth. Her forests supply mahogany, logwood and fustic in some quantities, though the supply is limited, and a great source of wealth is in her, as yet, almost undeveloped mines. Iron, manganese, copper and salt are all mined in paying quantities, though on a comparatively small scale. Of them all iron is the chief of the mineral product. The iron mines are located a few miles east of Santiago, and, while they have not as yet been worked to any large extent, the American company which controls them have expended large sums in preparatory development. That these iron mines will become of considerable importance in the development of the island cannot be doubted.

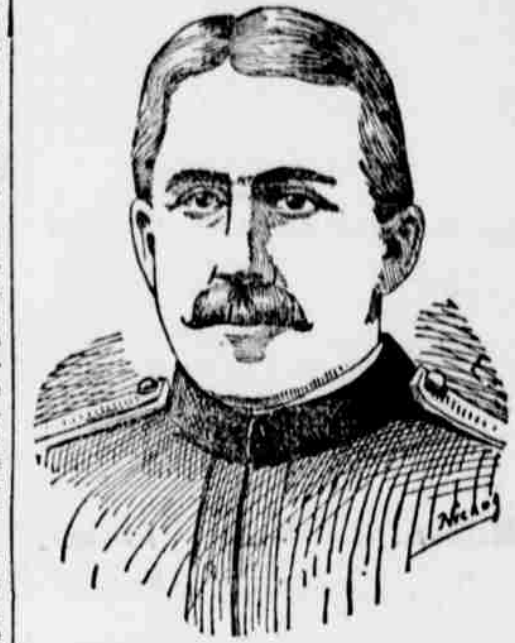
With such resources to draw upon Cuba, under a progressive and enlightened government that will encourage rather than antagonize development, should soon take a leading place among the smaller commercial nations of the world.

**AMERICA'S FIGHT FOR CUBA.**

**We Have Done Battle Not Only with the Sword But with the Scrubbing Brush as Well.**

So fresh in the minds of the American people are the events of the historic summer of 1898 that they really need no recalling at this time when the complete fruition of the objects of the struggle between the United States and Spain are now to be realized in the establishment of that independent government in Cuba which this government guaranteed when it declared the warring of the sword for the island's independence to be a part of our duty.

The destruction of our good ship *Maine*; the declarations and appropriations voted by congress; the mobilizing of armies and fleets; the victory of Admiral Dewey at Ma-



**MAJOR-GEN. LEONARD WOOD.**

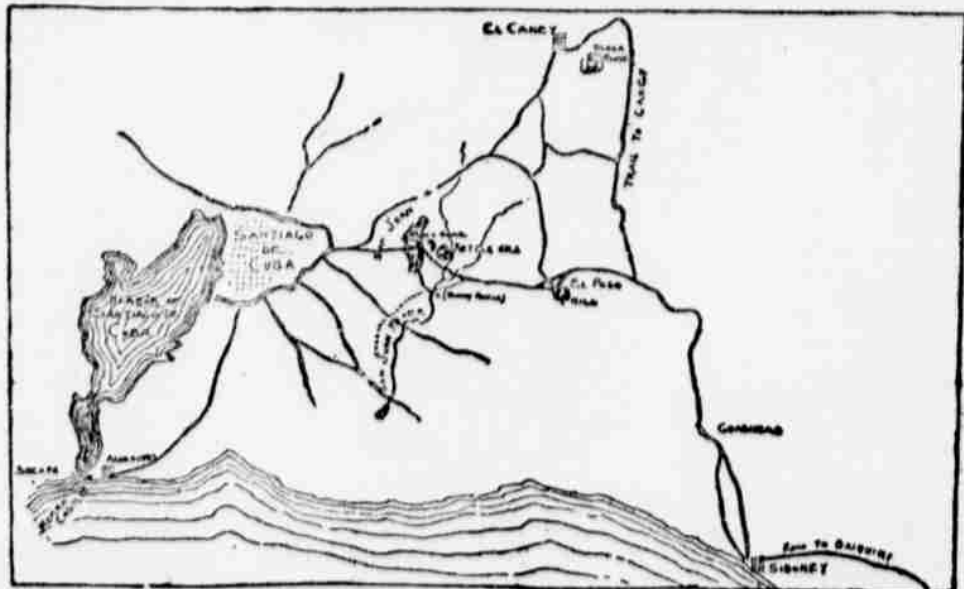
nila; the dispatch of troops to Santiago; our naval victory off that harbor; the fall of the city; the capture of Porto Rico, and Spain's cry for peace at almost any price, all these incidents need but a mention to recall them to the minds of the people of this country. History was never made more rapidly than it was made during that summer, and it was history of which the country and the world may well be proud in after years.

With the sword we drove Spain out of Cuba, our soldiers and sailors reaped wonderful victories in rapid succession, but Spain left behind her a harder struggle than her armies or her fleets had given us—it was with dirt and disease.

How well Gov. Gen. Wood has conquered this foe is evidenced from the health reports from Cuba. First at Santiago, and later throughout all the island he has persistently fought the battle for clean cities and good sanitation until to-day Havana, instead of being the breeding ground of all the various types of malignant fever, is considered as healthful as almost any city in the United States. He has taught to the Cubans the necessity of cleanliness, a lesson they are not likely to soon forget.

He has done more than this. He has opened the public schools, and has so extended the system that practically all the children of school age have now offered them the advantages of an education, and has instilled in the hearts of the people a desire for learning, a desire which their own government will now be in a position to fulfill.

Gen. Wood, as the representative of the American people, has built a government of the people, for the people and by the people of Cuba into whose hands our country can now safely place the reins of control, and Gen. Wood's name must be added to the list of Cuban heroes whose memories will long live in the hearts of the people of "the ever faithful isle."



**MAP OF SANTIAGO BATTLEFIELD.**

Showing the positions of the American and Spanish troops in the series of battles that marked the capture of the city and the downfall of Spanish sovereignty in the western hemisphere.