

were loyal to the government largely escaped. It is estimated that the lands of the island are mortgaged to more than sixty-five per cent of their present market value, the mortgages generally being given for money with which to stock and improve the farms. During the struggle for liberty the improvements were destroyed, but the mortgages escaped unharmed.

The Cuban people are as a rule docile, domestic, well-meaning and temperate. There is almost an entire absence of drunkenness. Americans admit that about the only evidences of intoxication they have seen on the island have been exhibited by the Americans.

The education of the children was much neglected during the numerous insurrections, but in no respect has the island shown more marked improvement than the attention given to the instruction of the children. During the period of American intervention the number of children in attendance at schools has increased several hundred per cent. The governor of the province of Matanzas told me that in the city of Matanzas the number of children in school there had increased from twenty-five hundred to over seven thousand within the last five years, notwithstanding the large mortality among the children during the last war. He pointed with some pride to a large building which under Spanish rule was used for a jail but is now occupied by a public school. There is at Havana, also, a large building until recently used for the storage of ammunition, which is being converted into a great university.

#### RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

The religion of the island is Catholic, and almost all of the inhabitants have been baptized in that faith. This church has splendid houses of worship and many large institutions devoted to charity and benevolence. There is absolute freedom of religion, and most of the prominent Protestant denominations have representatives here. On Sunday night preceding the inauguration of the president a union patriotic service was held in the building occupied by the Congregational church, and the pastors of all the Protestant churches took part. Some of these churches have established private schools, and these have a very satisfactory attendance.

The difference between the country and the city is very marked. In the country many of the people live in small and scantily furnished houses, each family cultivating a small tract of land. There are, however, some very large plantations, and these, of course, have commodious houses and expensive mills for the extracting of sugar from cane. In the cities the houses are built in solid blocks and have no yards. In the better houses there is usually an open court inside, but the population is crowded very closely together.

Those who have not visited Mexico or some other Spanish country will be struck by a custom which prevails in Cuba. The family carriage is usually kept in the front hall and the stable is generally a part of the house. For instance, you will find a house costing from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand dollars, with marble floors, ceilings twenty-five feet high, and with large rooms, filled with elegant furniture, paintings and statuary. In the centre will be a beautiful court, with all kinds of tropical flowers and plants, watered by a costly fountain. On the first floor will be the living rooms, in the basement will be the kitchen and the servants' rooms, and adjoining a perfectly equipped bathroom will be found the carriage room and the stable.

Havana is, of course, the city of the greatest size and interest. The Cubans call it Habana, although the English-speaking people of the world substitute a "v" for the "b." It means a haven, and the name was first applied to a city on the southern coast and afterward given to the present city. It lies on the south shore of Havana bay, one of the best harbors in the island. It is entered by a deep but narrow channel, and is so

large and well protected that an entire fleet can ride at anchor.

#### WRECK OF THE MAINE STILL VISIBLE.

The wreck of the Maine is still visible in the harbor, and is an object of intense interest to both Americans and Cubans; for to the former it recalls a great national bereavement, while the Cubans recognize that, horrible and lamentable as it was, it had an important influence in the securing of their independence. Morro Castle guards the entrance to the harbor, and it is admirably situated, as well as admirably constructed, for defence. It is built upon a cliff and its massive walls made the Spaniards feel secure from any foreign attack. Near by is Fort Cabanas, which is equally well constructed, and, having been the scene of the execution of many Cuban patriots, is equally interesting to the visitor. The formal transfer of the government from the United States to the Cuban republic gave the Cubans scarcely less pleasure than the raising of the Cuban flag over Morro and Cabanas. In fact, it is said that when, on the 11th day of May, the president-elect landed at Havana and the Cuban flag was for a short time raised over Morro, the veterans of the prolonged wars were so affected that they shouted, wept and hugged each other by turns.

Fort Principe, which crowns a natural eminence just back of the city of Havana, is said to be the strongest fortification on the Western Hemisphere. It was constructed for the defence of Havana and will accommodate a garrison of many thousands. The city of Havana is built upon the shore of the sea and of Havana bay, the ground gradually sloping back from the water's edge toward Fort Principe.

The streets are narrow, like the streets of Mexican cities, and show a reckless disregard of the points of the compass. The residences are nearly all one story, and have a window and door opening upon the street, the former invariably protected by iron bars or grating. In the middle of the window is a gate which is unlocked in the cool of the evening, and the young ladies stand at the opening and watch the passers-by. The presence of so many beautiful faces at the windows enhances the pleasure of a drive through the streets at this hour of the day. The casual admirer must be content to talk with the senorita through the bars; only an accepted suitor is admitted to the parlor, and even then he must do his courting in the presence of some older member of the family. Until the period of intervention the young ladies never went upon the street alone. Though this custom has relaxed somewhat, it is usual even now for the mother or a chaperon to accompany the daughter.

#### THE PRADO—HAVANA'S FINEST STREET.

The principal street of Havana is called the Prado, and leads from the point opposite Morro Castle back into the interior of the city. It has been very much improved under General Wood's direction and is now the most beautiful part of the city. While a considerable sum was expended upon this improvement, the Cubans are very proud of it and it is the place most frequented in the evening. On Sundays, about sunset, the Prado is crowded. A contract has been given to an individual to furnish seats for those who desire to rest, and the city receives four thousand dollars a year for the concession. Thousands of people line this street, while every one who has a carriage or can hire one joins in the procession. On the Sunday preceding the inauguration the carriages were sometimes four abreast and the travel was so congested that it was difficult to drive faster than a walk. Here one can see Havana life in all its phases. The wealthy are out in splendid equipages, and those of more moderate means mingle with them, while on the sidewalks will be found a promiscuous crowd, all neatly dressed, and so peaceful and orderly that no officer of the law is necessary to control them.

Not far from Havana, about twelve miles to the southwest, at a beautiful little cove, is situated

the house of the Havana Yacht club. It has a large membership and furnishes a delightful place for rest and recuperation. The road leading from Havana to the yacht club passes by the cemetery and Columbia Barracks.

The cemetery is an object of interest to those who are not acquainted with burial customs in tropical countries. The private vaults of the wealthy are made of cement and stone and are waterproof. A marble slab covers the grave and artificial flowers adorn the lot. Those who cannot afford to own a private vault are buried in vaults rented for a limited time, and when the time is up the remains are removed to the bone-pile if further rent is not forthcoming. The very poor are carried to the cemetery in a rented box and buried, mother earth furnishing them their only coffin. There are a number of beautiful monuments in the Havana cemetery, the most elaborate of which is one of white marble, erected to the memory of forty volunteer firemen who lost their lives in a disastrous explosion which occurred some years ago. Next to the firemen's monument in size and even surpassing it in interest is the pile of granite and marble reared in honor of the eight students who were shot by order of one of the Spanish generals.

Columbia Barracks is the name given to the place where the American troops were encamped during the intervention. General Lee's army corps located the camp upon a beautiful knoll overlooking the sea. It proved to be a healthful place, and our soldiers suffered far less than it was feared they would when they embarked for Cuba.

From General Wood I learned that the island has been entirely purged of yellow fever and that the death rate in Havana is now lower than in Washington, D. C.

Major W. C. Gorges of the United States army, who has been in charge of the sanitary department, deserves great credit for the work that has been done in the matter of improving sanitary conditions in the island. Under his administration the mosquito theory was fully tested, and it was proven to the satisfaction of all who watched the experiment that the disease is not transmitted by contact with the yellow fever patient but by the bite of a mosquito which has previously bitten one having the disease. Dr. Carlos Finlay of Havana some twenty-one years ago brought this terrible indictment against the mosquito and, after a fair and impartial trial, it stands convicted before the world.

Governor Jennings of Florida, who visited Cuba for the double purpose of attending the inauguration and of investigating the sanitary system of the island, was much gratified to learn of the care that is now taken to provide against and stamp out contagious diseases. Florida is so near to Cuba that his people are vitally interested in the subject. From him I learned that vaccination against smallpox has received especial attention in Cuba. A room is fitted up with the most modern scientific equipment; expert physicians are in charge; calves, first tested as to their general health, are vaccinated and kept under surveillance for five days and then placed upon a table made for the purpose and the bovine virus is extracted. This is placed in vats and, after being thoroughly prepared, is made into what are called points, each point containing sufficient virus to vaccinate five persons. One calf furnishes bovine virus enough to vaccinate 1,000 persons. The Havana institution furnishes virus for the island and the marine hospital service of the United States. Some idea of the magnitude of this institution can be gathered from the fact that 250,000 persons have been vaccinated on the island of Cuba within five months, and the care taken is shown by the fact that not a single case of death has resulted in all that number of vaccinations.

#### IMPROVED SANITARY CONDITIONS.

There is also at Havana a very complete disinfecting plant. The United States steamer Sana-