

# Career of Major General Leonard Wood

No soldier who ever served the United States has ever risen to fame and has earned its rewards more rapidly than General Leonard Wood, the new military governor of Cuba. It is the sort of success that may well be called dazzling. Although barely past 39 years of age, Wood is a major general, occupying the most important post, with one exception, in the gift of the War department. Less than two years ago he was a plain assistant army surgeon with the rank of captain. Indeed, his rank in the regular army is still that of captain. When he became colonel of the Rough Riders in May, 1898, he was absolutely unknown outside of his circle of friends in the army and in Washington. His brilliant dash at Las Guasimas made him a brigadier general and the fight of San Juan hill, in which he commanded a brigade, brought him the governorship of the city of Santiago. Here his remarkable activities in the quelling of the riots, the feeding of the thousands of starving Cubans, in street cleaning, in fumigating, in battling with disease, made his fame even in Great Britain and brought him the governorship of the entire province of Santiago, together with an appointment of a major general, which he held until the army was reorganized, when he became a brigadier general. And only the other day he was again made a major general and assigned to the chair in which Weyler sat so long at the palace in Havana. This career is all the more remarkable because Wood started as a surgeon—outside of the active line of service. Only a few medical officers ever have reached high places in the line and not one ever before became a major general. Brigadier General A. J. Myer, once chief of the signal service, rose from the medical service; so did General S. W. Crawford and General Thomas Lawson—and there the list ends, so far as generals are concerned.

Wood received his military training in the hardest school of the service—the Indian country of the far southwest. Years before the Rough Riders were thought of Wood was postmaster of the art of rough riding.

### By Nature a Fighter.

Although Wood possesses rare talent in his chosen profession of medicine, having been graduated with honors from the Harvard Medical school and later serving as official surgeon to President Cleveland and to President McKinley, he is by nature a fighter and it has been his ambition from his earliest days to find a place in the active line of the service.

And, curiously enough, he won favor with the commanding general of his department, now Major General Miles, by knocking him down. It was this way: When young Wood entered the army he was as strong as an ox and he possessed the endurance of a Sioux Indian. He was then, as he is today, immensely powerful of shoulders and arms, with a short, thick neck and sturdy legs. From his boyhood he had practiced running and walking and during his school career at Boston he had practiced boxing until he had become proficient in the art. Boxing was a favorite sport at the headquarters of the Department of California and Miles was proud of his boxing. At first the young surgeon, who was by nature shy, diffident and low-voiced, took no part in the sport. One night, however, Miles invited him to come up, assuring him that he (Miles) was a hard hitter, but that he would take into consideration the opponent's youth, and so on, and so on. If there is one thing that would have stirred up Wood's boxing blood it was just such a remark. As the story is now told, the sparring was fast and furious and resulted in General Miles getting much the worst of it. But Miles was then, as he is now, very much of a soldier, with a keen admiration for the qualities of grit and determination, even if he suffered by those qualities, and Wood became his warm personal friend, as well as his physician.

By nature General Wood is "fearfully direct"—the characterization of one of his friends. He is direct and honest, like Roosevelt, and yet there never was a man who had learned the difficult lesson of tactfulness more thoroughly. Not long ago a New York newspaper commented on the fact that there were only two men of prominence who came out of the war wholly without unfavorable criticism—Dewey and Wood. When Wood was appointed major general last month he was confirmed by congress without a dissenting vote, although the feeling among the higher officers of the army who were being superseded, and many of them had strong political influence, was against him.

### Tact in Managing People.

Wood ruled with the power of a czar in Santiago, and yet he is probably the most popular man in Cuba, with Cubans as well as with foreigners. His appointment as military governor was received with enthusiasm by every paper of prominence in the island. This was due to Wood's quality of tactfulness which, it seems to me, came to him with his medical training. A doctor must know how to manage people. There are any number of instances showing with what consummate skill he managed the Cubans. One of the most difficult influences in all Spanish-American countries is the church. In Cuba it was very powerful and Wood saw that it would be necessary to handle it with great care. Inasmuch as it was naturally opposed to the Americans

as being the power which parted the church and the state and divested the archbishop of his accustomed revenues. Wood made it his business to become personally acquainted with the priests, to look at the difficulties from their point of view, and when the new archbishop of Santiago was appointed Wood was asked, to the surprise of everyone, to take a prominent place in the triumphal procession. He expected that it would be merely a matter of a brief carriage drive from the palace around the plaza to the cathedral, but when the procession



GENERAL LEONARD WOOD IN UNIFORM OF MAJOR GENERAL OF VOLUNTEERS—Photo Copyright, 1899, by Francis B. Johnson.

arrived he found that a place had been made for him under the canopy with the archbishop. And he marched all the way through, no doubt thinking of his old Puritan ancestors in New England. Since then Wood has no better friends than the church dignitaries.

He dealt with that typical Cuban institution, the agitating editor, with the same wisdom. Santiago is the hotbed of Cuban patriotism. Every Cuban insurrection has had its origin within fifty miles of the city of Santiago. And the mouthpiece of the Cuban insurgent is the agitating editor. After the Americans came into power this functionary was for a time devoid of a purpose in life. The Spaniards were gone and the agitating paper no longer thrived. It was natural, therefore, that the editor should eventually begin an assault on the Americans. So bitter were the attacks that many residents of the city advised General Wood to suppress these papers, but the general knew the mistake of making martyrs, martyrdom in Cuba being another name for patriotism. So he sent for the most violent of the editors.

"You may say anything you please against me personally," he said, in his quiet way, "but the moment you attack the government I shall put you in Morro castle and keep you there."

Another one of these editors had suggested "going to the hills," which in Cuba means rebellion. Wood sent for him, too, and told him that the sooner he went to the hills the better it would be for his own safety and he said it so seriously that the next day the editor did go to the hills, alone, and he has since caused no trouble.

### A Good Mixer.

General Wood has made particular efforts to find out the real sentiment of the Cuban people and to govern his official acts accordingly. With a people of the character of the Cubans, so long accustomed to saying one thing to the cruel Spanish officers and doing another, and by nature so suspicious, this was particularly difficult and General Wood's popularity in the island is the best attestation of his success. One of his aides told me that when General Wood was on his trips of inspection he made it an invariable rule to dine with the local officials and to talk with them. It sometimes happened, therefore, that Wood and two or three members of his staff would sit down to dinner with a table full of black men, with whom he would directly be on the best possible terms.

Wood is an extraordinarily hard worker. He is up early in the morning and frequently visits several hospitals, the jail or the market before he reaches his office at half past eight or more. He is readily accessible to rich and poor and his extraordinary physical endurance enables him to see many people and attend to the thousand and one trying details of such an office and do everything well. Indeed, he appears to do a great many unnecessary things, that is, unnecessary things from the strict viewpoint of duty. He goes at the work of improvement in all sorts of lines because it interests him personally. His motto is "No energy is lost to the universe."

Take one example. The Cuban is, by nature, more or less slipshod in his way of doing things. Wood is thorough, with a thoroughness that is an unfeeling astonishment to the native. I stayed in a hotel that was just being reoccupied after an epidemic of yellow fever. The proprietor was telling me how Wood's men had done the fumigating.

"Why," he said, "they squirted their disinfectants under the tiles of the roof." That was something that no one of Spanish blood ever would have thought of doing.

Wood has few diversions; his work is his greatest pleasure, although he gets keen enjoyment from riding his big gray horse through the country—he is a natural born rider—or of inspecting the various parts in his provinces on a transport. He also reads a good deal, books of history, military lore

# General Wheeler on the Philippines

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SANTA RITA, Philippine Islands, November, 1899.—I have now seen much of the country and the people in that part of Luzon for about fifty miles north of Manila. In every town there is a magnificent stone church and a convent or monastery. The insurgents have a great antipathy to the priesthood of friars and they have dismantled many of the churches. The value of the church and monastery of a town seems to be equal in many cases to the

having any time, they have pursued scientific and other studies and have done a great deal toward the education of the people.

The religious orders are very rich. They have been acquiring property for nearly three centuries. It was the custom of organizations and individuals to acquire property by settlement and occupation, and title thus acquired is recognized as valid even with no paper title whatever. The religious orders have acquired vast properties in this way, and while it is supposed that the proceeds and the income to be used for religious and charitable purposes there is no doubt that much has been used for their personal comfort and benefit.

The statement I have seen that 70 per cent of the people of Luzon can read and write is a great mistake. It may be true of Manila, but it is not true of the rural districts, and the percentage of illiteracy in the other islands is much greater than in Luzon. The method of work is today very much like that of the beginning of the Christian era.

### Methods of the Years Old.

The people dress very much as they did 2,000 years ago, the means of transportation by carts drawn by oxen is about the same, and their methods of shelling and cleaning rice are as primitive as possible and no better than they were 2,000 years ago. During the last few years sugar mills and rice mills have been erected in some of the large cities, and this has specially been the case since the building of the Manila & Dagupan railroad, but in the smaller cities and towns rice is husked by pounding by hand, and is winnowed by throwing it up and thus separating the chaff just as it was done in the earliest times.

### Products of the New Islands.

Nearly everything can be grown, but oranges and bananas are not as good as in other localities, the reason, no doubt, being that they seem to give them no cultivation whatever. If they were cultivated I believe they would be as fine as the products of any other country.

Tobacco is grown in the valley of Cagayan, in the northeastern part of Luzon, which is said to be equal to any tobacco in the world. The coffee grown is said to be superior to Mocha.

Rice is the principal product, and a failure of that crop will cause a terrible famine as the people depend almost entirely upon it for food. Sugar is the principal crop for export. The greatest amount exported in any one year was 261,681 tons, which was in 1893.

Corn grows very rapidly and the ears reach their full growth about sixty days from the time of planting. The provinces which are especially spoken of as productive of corn or maize are Viscaya, Isabela, South Camarines, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Batangas, Albay and Abray. Wheat is grown in Batangas and around San Isidro and Isabel and Ilicos Sur.

There is a great abundance of very valuable timber in these islands and many varieties of beautiful hard woods under native names, such as mahogany, black walnut and ebony. Gold, copper, coal, iron, sulphur, lead, building stone, petroleum and guano are found.

### Condition of the People.

There are many different tribes living in these islands, the only ones in native rebellion being the Tagalos. This tribe occupies some eight provinces in the neighborhood of Manila and their association with Europeans has made them more civilized than other tribes.

We are now seven or eight miles from Porac, where an insurgent force has been stationed for some time, but around here and through this vast valley the people are actively engaged in planting rice. I have been riding around the outskirts of this place and the fields are dotted with men, women and children planting rice. There are some tribes, the Pampangan and some others, that sympathize with and aid the Tagalos.

I am confident that a brigade of cavalry could easily travel through a great part of the islands.

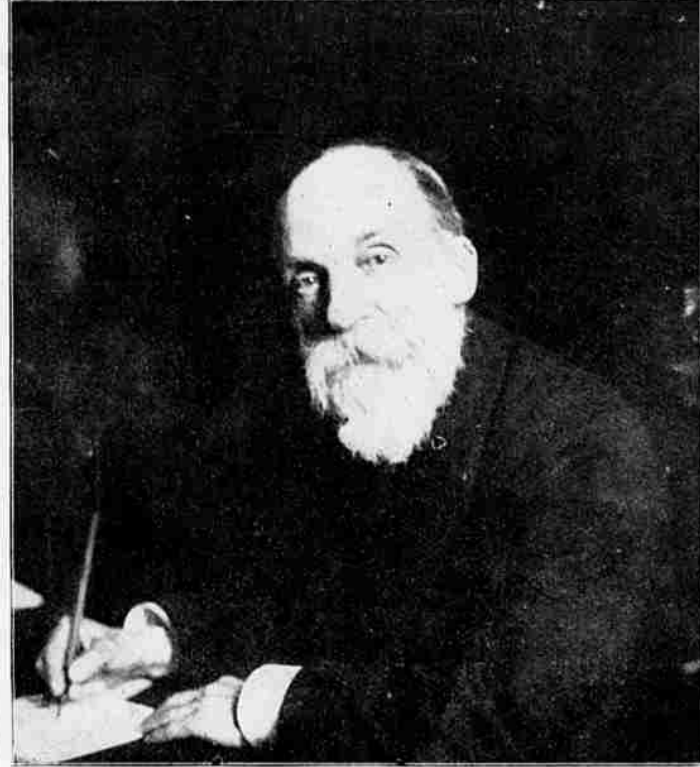
### Animals of the Islands.

Monkeys are numerous, the flying squirrel, which has a fine skin, is found, and also the wild cat, the wild hog and the water buffalo. The lion, the tiger, the hyena, leopard and the bear are found in these islands. In variety, beautiful plumage and charming singing the birds are said to be superior to those of any other part of the world.

Crocodiles, boas, constrictors and lizards are found. There are many dangerous snakes, but in the densely populated districts there are very few, and the people tell me that there seldom is anyone bitten by them. They also tell me that the natives understand how to cure the worst of the bites by using herbs.

The flowers of the island are very beautiful and many years ago a priest collected thousands of varieties, and I saw in a convent a copy of some books giving a description of each flower and a painting of the flower, apparently in water colors, each painting occupying a large space.

The marketplace of each town is filled with men, women and children with their baskets and fruits and other articles for sale. Although bananas and coconuts grow in our yards we take care not to molest anything, but purchase of the na-



GENERAL JOSEPH WHEELER, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY FRANCES B. JOHNSON—GENERAL WHEELER HAS BEEN CONGRESSMAN FROM ALABAMA FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS. SERVED FOUR YEARS IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY AND AT THE AGE OF 62 WAS APPOINTED MAJOR GENERAL OF VOLUNTEERS, UNITED STATES ARMY. HE HAS RETURNED FROM THE PHILIPPINES TO TAKE HIS SEAT IN CONGRESS.

and an occasional novel. When I last saw him he was deep in "Richard Carvel."

### Plans of Government.

Of the government of Cuba he has his own definite though simple plans. He believes in removing largely the American troops from the island and substituting a number of regiments enlisted from among the Cubans themselves. This is no mere theory, for before he ventured to suggest such a scheme to the War department he had actually experimented with it in Santiago by the enlistment of a small company of men under the general ruler of the rural guard and yet drilled and officered as an American company would have been. He found what some critics have denied, that the Cubans were eager soldiers and readily amenable to the strict discipline of American army life. His idea is to have a number of such regiments officered, in the higher places at least, by Americans. These could occupy the forts and other points of vantage, and he has confidence enough in the Cubans themselves to promise peace in the island. With this system of military occupation there would need to be at the head of the island an honest American, whose chief office would be to keep the bad Cubans out of power and the good ones in until such time as the good Cubans could control the government. He believes that Diaz of Mexico is the ideal ruler of a Spanish-American country—strong and honest and steady.

"Success," he said, "is so easy that it is a crime to fail."

He will now have an opportunity of trying his powers on the whole island of Cuba. His appointment showed an extraordinary amount of confidence in him on the part of the administration at Washington, for if he should fall the blame would fall on the president because he had appointed so young a man and appointed him at the expense of so many older officers in the army. But Wood will not fall; he is not the kind of a man who falls. And yet, when his friends congratulated him recently on his appointment to the governorship, he said: "Wait a year."

R. S. BAKER.



BOYHOOD HOME OF GENERAL WOOD.

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