

# Another View of the Conditions in Cuba.

### The Island Is Lost to Spain, but It Is Time for This Country to Intervene.

An American who has been accustomed to spend his winters in Cuba, having returned from the island, writes as follows to the Springfield Republican concerning the present condition of the island and the proper attitude of the United States toward the instruction:

One cannot comprehend the conditions existing in Cuba without going on to the ground, and meeting the previous acquaintance with the people of the island, both Spanish and Cuban, and have studied the political and commercial conditions. My previous winters in Cuba, and my pleasant relations with many of the leading citizens greatly added me in taking a comparative view of the situation and obtaining the real feelings of the people. Great changes have taken place during the last year, say from April, 1896, to March, 1897. An air of uncertainty, anxiety and discouragement is manifest. Want of employment, great advance in the necessities of life, want of trustworthy information as to the real progress of the war, insecurity of property and life, tightening severity of police regulations, espionage lurking everywhere and distrust even among friends—all these plainly told of the unhappiness of Cuba. Then business was in a chaotic state on account of the paper money issue which is accepted only by reason of compulsory decree. Aghastness is visible on every hand.

The above is true of Havana, where conditions are supposed to be most favorable. Yet in Havana 16,000 sick Spanish soldiers crowd the hospitals, and in the suburbs yellow flags proclaim the small-pox. I counted 11 of these flags in two squares. There is some yellow fever, too. The equator and fifth of the remote parts of Havana is indescribable. Yet, under good government, this would become one of the healthiest cities in the world. The largest ships can ride in its harbor, notwithstanding its 36 feet of mud. This removed, where is its equal? Its population now is about 250,000. Give it proper sanitation and just laws and it would double in ten years.

#### DESOLATION.

But what is the condition of the rural parts of Cuba? Desolation. Savagery has done its work. Homeless, fleeing people, wasted plantations, hill-tops crowded with the skeletons of houses, roads guarded by soldiers, beggary on every highway, huts occupied by ragged women and naked children—these are the scenes you witness, and this is called "pacification." You ask, cannot this carnival of blood and terror be stopped? Is not reconciliation possible? My answer is that reconciliation is impossible. No proposition has been made that contemplates equality of the races. None can be made that is not based upon the supremacy of the Spaniard and the subordination of the Cuban and the negro. Then the atrocities of the war have turned the hearts of the people into furnaces of hate. It has become an irrepressible struggle. It is not what we call doing battle. It is wholesale assassination.

No one may question the validity of Spain's title to Cuba. It is hers by the same title that Canada belongs to Great Britain. But her conduct has been most unparliamentary. Never once has she governed with a kindly hand. No appeal has touched her, no argument convinced. The roared child now flees the parental roof, and with clenched fist, curses the father that denies sympathy and justice. Hatred of Spain has become an inextinguishable passion in the Cubans. It has come down from sire to son. Unfortunately, Spain continues the policy of severity and injustice, and in her savage wars, the things deeds which shook the world. How can reconciliation come? It is the extermination of a million people which Spain now proposes. It is resistance to the bitter end on the part of the Cubans. It is an attempt to prevent by the sword of a question which must at last yield to the enlightenment of the age. It is not revolution, but evolution, that convulses Cuba.

#### WORDLESS REFORMS.

The recently proposed reforms are significant only in that they demonstrate the inability of Spain to rise to the magnitude of the situation. It is not a case of local taxation to be treated by salve and lotions. It is the upheaval of a great commercial center. Commerce will not wear fetters, no matter how forged or by whom riveted. The sword must fall in such a contest. It is a battle of grander forces. What, then, can there be such minor reforms? Reforms which continue a judiciary that publicly demands and receives gratification from suitors and advances or retards causes in proportion to the bribe received. Reforms that continue to install and support at public expense a brothel-tainted priesthood; which continue to permit crowd-appointed officials to appropriate to their own use the treasure of the people and parade their stolen wealth without rebuke; in reforms which purify no channels, lighten no burdens, change no methods, nor give even hope of wise and liberal aids to restoration. Futility folly! And yet Spain proposes to force upon the world by applying such antidotes to so-called pacified districts, where the fields are quiet, but the hedges whisper and the darkness strikes.

This is no fancy sketch. I could cite instance upon instance. With an exception to everything that Cuba has to sell and an import duty on everything she needs to buy, how can condition be other than unbearable? At one time the West India companies commanded the sugar markets of the world, but now they have lost them and will never regain them. The taxation above referred to made it impossible for the planter to produce cheap sugar, and consequently the cultivation and manufacture of beet sugar began in Europe, and this industry has no proponent again compete except under the most liberal conditions at home. Under the most favorable circumstances Cuba has great problems before her, but if she is to be redeemed by the vast war debt that Spain is building up, in addition to her former burdens, it is not clear that she must succumb. It is impossible by whomsoever she may be inhabited. Spain's policy is self-consuming.

#### CAN CUBANS RULE?

But have the Cubans, if left to work out these great questions, the creative faculty, the pruning hand, the self-denying integrity and the broad, deliberate judgment necessary to the work? This is a serious question. Their ways are not our ways and it is difficult

for an Anglo-Saxon mind to fairly comprehend them. Their long environment must be considered, their Latin blood, their habits, the climate of the country, the intrigue which necessarily attends such a made, the passions which unavoidable resentments have cultivated and the indisposition to be self-helped and consequently self-dependent. All these must be analyzed and weighed. There cannot be a doubt of the Cuban's love of country, but whether it will prove to be of that higher sort that lifts the man above himself and above all that stands in the way of his country's good, remains to be learned. Government is said to consist of a balancing of interests. So long as this process is confined to public interests alone, it is well; but unfortunately, statesmen who do not put



DR. EUSEBIO HERNANDEZ, Candidate for the Cuban Presidency.

New York, May 29.—Dr. Eusebio Hernandez, one of the three present candidates for the presidency of the Cuban republic, is regarded with favor by his countrymen. He is a native of the Province of Matanzas and is 44 years old. When the revolution broke out he went with Garcia on the ill-starred Hawkins expedition. He reached Cuba with Garcia on his second expedition.

His private interests behind them are not unknown even in our own master republic. A woman in Cuba to whom I was condemning the lottery, exclaimed with much emphasis: "Why the lottery is the poor people's only opportunity." There are threads of history in this sentence. Excluded largely from legitimate opportunity they are taught from childhood to play the lottery and, in many cases, they appeal almost to divinity to rule the chances in their favor. They save for it; they pray for it; they take defeat almost as a visitation from some afflicting power. Many times I have watched the crowds that gather to read the posted lists of the latest drawing—men and women aged and patched, middle-aged persons well dressed or seedy and sad, and children, little tots, as young as a half-dozen years. When watching their countenances the conviction was forced upon me that there was an environment that could not be overlooked. It diverts the Cuban mind from the stern purpose to win by honorable endeavor. Has this become unconstitutional?

#### THE CHURCH.

Another important element in the environment of the Cuban is the church, the exclusive religion of the Cubans is the Roman Catholic. Much as I respect the grand sweep of the Roman Catholic church, which raises the Te Deum in every land, I am bound to say that in Cuba it is so administered as to fall far below the moral and intellectual standards of the people. The lives of many of the priests are licentious in the extreme, and the weight of the entire clergy is against the correction of such a state of things. Cock-fights, and (until poverty caused by the war suspended them) bull-fights are prohibited except on holidays and Sundays; prostitution is legalized and patronized unashamedly by members of the priesthood, gambling in every form goes on openly, and the cry of the lottery vendor is heard in every quarter of the cities and villages. As a consequence, religion is rejected by many and respected by few. The church, instead of being an inspiration to virtuous sympathies and holier lives, cloaks crime, champions oppression and absorbs many millions of the taxes paid by the people, besides enormous sums received from special levies. It has also landed estates said to be worth a colossal sum. The church alone could redeem Cuba, but it sits in regal apathy content with evil.

Emancipation of Cuba! Can it come and this remain? Never. Has this not entered into the Cuban character and tended to deprive it of that sublime faith which works wonders among the children of men? Add to the foregoing environments all the passion engendered by fruitless resistance to a galling yoke, all the debts made necessary to circumvent the schemes of the taskmaster, all the vices fostered by years of vulgar license, and you have obtained a point of view necessary to a true appreciation of the Cuban people. It is not an encouraging picture. Yet a people who have endured so much may not be adjudged as wholly unequal to the work of constructing a better government. Against almost like conditions Mexico has become a successful republic. The American schoolmaster has bridged the gulf of Mexico and the pollen of our institutions has found a lodgment on Cuban soil.

#### CLEVELAND'S COURSE.

Mr. Cleveland has been severely condemned for not having taken affirmative action in behalf of the Cubans. In the judgment of the writer, his course was a wise one. The American government cannot afford to intrude itself into every struggle and must respect the legal title of other nations as we expect our to be respected. It was expected that the United States would not be expected to be respected. It was expected that the United States would not be expected to be respected. It was expected that the United States would not be expected to be respected.

remedy the evils complained of and to restore public order. It was due to the great nations of Europe that we demonstrate our good faith to all friendly powers and especially that we had no disposition to grab Cuba, however tempting the prize. It was important to teach the Cubans that they must be self-helpful and themselves do the hero work which they had undertaken, and must not look to another to do it for them. It is a marked trait of Cuban character that he will never perform any task in person which he can procure done by another. The Cuban people have been developed by the non-interference of the United States and are stronger today in state-craft and in arms than they would have been in the simple attitude of shouters to the Stars and Stripes. I desire to be emphatic in commending the wisdom of Mr. Cleveland under the circumstances as they then existed.

But the time is near at hand when a larger duty will fall upon the United States. Spain has now had over two years for reflection since this last rebellion in Cuba broke out. She has been appealed by the United States and other great powers to cure the manifest ills of Cuba and win back peace and fertility. But what has she done? Simply made war, ruthless war. Has she suppressed the rebellion?

America has exhausted every kind of office to induce the government of Spain. Are we assured pacification in Cuba? What are the facts? The fields are quiet, but the hedges whisper, and the darkness strikes. There is no pacification, and God forbid that there should be. The United States, "pacification" and "desolation" are synonymous. It is for the human race I plead. Surely America has some better cheer than to speak the raven's "nevermore."

It is a great wrong to mankind to permit this sort of an attitude to go on, within 90 miles of our shores. It is American soil that is being desecrated. Shall monetary cowardice stand between? Have we become too sordid to champion the rights of humanity? Spain has published through her press that the United States is a nation of traders and will do nothing that may tend to disturb the money market. Is it jingolism to rescue women and children, to stop massacre, to restore peace and welcome a new nation founded upon civil and religious liberty? Applying the facts as they actually exist in Cuba to the law governing like cases, the insurgents are entitled as a matter of right, to recognition as a belligerent power.

#### FOREMOST LETTER WRITERS

The United States First Among Nations in This Respect.

From the Sun.

There are 200,000 postoffices in all the countries of the world enjoying organized facilities of correspondence, and of this number 70,000 are in the United States. The number of letters sent through the mails in a year in addition to this the United States sell in a year 600,000 one-cent stamps, some of which are used for letters, though a larger number for newspaper and circular postage. In 1896, three-cent stamps, 20,000,000 four-cent stamps, and 50,000,000 five-cent stamps, mostly used for letters sent from this country for foreign delivery. More than 1,000,000,000 letters a year, therefore, paying full postage, and exclusive of the cards, are written in the United States.

The business of the German and of the English postoffice department is less than half as large. The postal card system in Germany is in much more general use than in England, and it is for this reason, perhaps, that Germany keeps ahead of England in respect of the amount of correspondence done. The number of postoffices in Great Britain by the last official statement, made on Jan. 1, 1897, was 20,275, exclusive of what is officially called in England, "the road and pillar letter-box." There are 150,000 employees of the postoffice department in Great Britain, of whom 6,500 are women and girls. The number of postoffice employees in Germany is 100,000, and in the United States is 125,000. The number of letters handled by the Austrian postoffice department in a year is 750,000,000, and of these two-thirds are handled in the portion of the empire which comes under the designation of Austria, and one-third only is handled in the portion officially known as Hungary. The Germans in Austria, as well as in Germany, are great letter writers, and in those cities of the United States in which the German population is numerous more letters are written in a year proportionately than in cities in which the German population is small. The Italian postoffice handles 350,000,000 letters a year, the postoffice department of Spain 120,000,000, of Canada 100,000,000, of Holland 100,000,000, of Belgium 125,000,000, and of Russia 200,000,000, a considerable portion of which is carried on what are called "the mail coach roads," upon which postal services are provided by the imperial government. In France the number of letters handled by the postoffice department is about 700,000,000 in a year and the receipts of the department are about \$5,000,000, or one-half of the total receipts of the French government, however, does a considerable express business, handling more than 40,000,000 parcels, or at the rate of one to each inhabitant of the country in a year. The expenditures of the postoffice department in the United States exceed the receipts by from \$8,000,000 to \$10,000,000 in an ordinary year. When times are bad there is less corresponding.

The future of Cuba, what may it not be? Capital has been waiting at every door years. How valuable to Spain Cuba in the future, her case is hopeless under the Spanish crown. Nothing short of a new birth can perpetuate her. Capable of supporting a population greater than that of the state of New York, having fields of unequalled fertility; mineral lands of inexhaustible wealth; virgin forests of rarest woods; harbors on either shore lying geographically in the path of commerce between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans; producing the crops of every season in choicest quality, what may not Cuba contribute to the wealth of the world and the happiness of mankind when war shall have ceased and self-government shall have come to stay?

ing. In its cultivated spots and its many little hay fields the farmers were making the most of the morning. Further along to the northeast an old castle stood out upon crags that projected above the river; and the imagination crossed easily back to the time when those pristine strongholds had each its garrison of free-boaters, and fighting, plundering and devastating were the rule and the business of the land. But now all was peace and quiet. The snows began to appear in heavy drifts along the sides of it. When we reached our first change of horses we had nearly gained the ridge of the Krestovaya Gora, the "mountain of the crosses," so-called because there, one of them very ancient, attributed to Queen Tamara, and the other a modern creation of sixty years ago. There is a village of some shops and several houses, with an attractive Caucasian chain in that gained from the railway to Rostov; and while the snowy summits of Elbruz rise its most conspicuous feature, the long line of lofty and broken peaks and of massive forest-covered slopes remains in the memory as one of the grandest objects.

#### INCOMPARABLE LANDSCAPES.

In truth, I have never behind anything to be compared with them in any other country. From the top of the Krestovaya Gora, past Kasbek through the gorges of Darial, until the crossing of the mountains is completed and we find the Terek flowing in peace and quiet through green meadows near Vladikavkaz, the very opposite of the fury with which it forces itself among the mountain reefs, there is a continuous scene of rocky peaks, of noble mountain openings and gorges, of broken and dilapidated old castles, which make of this roadway of forty or fifty miles the wonders and marvels of the earth. It is impossible to think of it without longing to be there again, dashing along the river-side and through the narrow mountain defiles, with the same spiritless horses, and the same enthusiastic giant of a Caucasian guide. The traveler who has not yet had this experience, is to be envied provided it is still in his power to procure it for himself; and he or she to whom it is possible and who does not at once set out to drive over the Krestovaya Gora, and through the Darial Pass, is to be pitied indeed.

We arrived in the village of Kasbek at about 1 o'clock, but the glory of the mountain was all hidden in the clouds. Even the monastery, which is at the point on the mountain's flank about 1,800 feet higher than the village, could not be seen; and it was not possible even to speculate at what elevation the antique story had fixed the point where Prometheus was chained to the rock and vultures came to torment him. These were serious privations for which a very good luncheon afforded no satisfactory indemnity. But all such losses seemed trivial when we resumed our drive and began once more to pass between the barriers of the ever-varying peaks, which hemmed in our way on either side.

These peaks rose on the east and west to a height of 4,000 to 6,000 feet above the level of the road. They were bare, sharp-pointed, and often as slender in appearance as a man's fingers held up against the light; and far below them the massive forest came down almost to the river along whose banks we were driving. It was a tremendous, an amazing spectacle, and we were through with it altogether too soon. About 2 o'clock we came to an enlargement of the narrow valley, with a little low fort of queer construction, evidently designed to block the road

# Notes of a Summer Journey From New York to Warsaw

### Continuation of the Travel Letters of Hon. Chas. A. Dana in the Sun.

As we drove out of the posthouse yard at Mieta, disturbing one or two lazy and disheveled camels that were loafing about the stable doors, we perceived that at last we had before us some real mountain climbing. Crossing the south-flowing Araxea on a stone bridge, we began the long ascent up the hill which stands opposite to Mieta. The road was precisely of the same breadth and style as we had traveled the day before, but it wound backward and forward up the hillside in long reaches, with a continuous rise that put rapid driving out of the question. The spectacle, however, was altogether superb, and we were glad to study it slowly. Below us lay the village we had just left. Behind it rose another mountain of more moderate dimensions than that we were ascend-

against an enemy. A little further on, at the other end of the same enlargement, there was another fort of similar construction. Some one said that these forts were built by Schamy in his struggle to maintain the independence of the Mohammedan tribe, and to continue his war against the power of Russia. We gazed at the fortifications with renewed interest; but I believe the story was altogether a fiction, and on looking in the books I am confirmed in this conclusion. Very likely Schamy may have made a stand in the Darial Pass, at some period, but he could not have remained there for any length of time. That vital artery has long been too important for Russia to allow such an enemy to hold it even for a day; and, besides, the last desperate effort of Schamy was

part of our excursion, and this is the place to speak of the Russian railways. I have travelled upon them at various seasons and in various directions, and I begin by testifying that they are safe, comfortable and agreeable. In this journey from Vladikavkaz to Rostov the distance is about 400 miles, and it is made by the post-trains in about twenty-four hours, or, including stops, at the rate of twenty miles an hour. The tracks are always solid and smooth, and the cars are excellent. They are much wider than ours, wide enough, in fact, to admit of an inclosed corridor running the whole length of the car on one side, with doors opening into all the compartments. These are spacious enough, with two rows of broad seats facing each other and extending across the compartment at right angles to the corridor, though except at night, only the bottom seats are used. These seats are long enough to lie in comfort, and the beds are made up. The traveler has many places as he desires, and, if he wishes for the exclusive use of a compartment, he pays for it and has it. Russian people when traveling take with them their own pillows and blankets, and pillows can always be procured in a perfect state of cleanliness and at a reasonable charge from the porter in the car. The sleeping seems to be better than in our most luxurious sleeping cars. The interior arrangements are also satisfactory, and the cleanliness of the whole establishment leaves nothing to be desired. In fact, I have never seen any reason to complain of this part of the Russian railway arrangements. The journey to Rostov, and the subsequent longer journey from Rostov to Moscow, landed us at our destination with less fatigue and less disturbance of the nerves than we should have expected to experience in going from New York to Chicago or to Omaha.

#### NO DINING CARS.

I don't think that dining cars are known upon the Russian railways; at any rate I have never seen them; but the restaurants in the station houses are plentiful, and the stops are long enough to allow you to get what you want. You can take a seat at a table or refresh yourself standing; and at almost every station you can procure those incomparable products of the Russian kitchen, Stchy and Borsh. There is nothing so ordinary as to me to be compared with these two kinds of soup. The Stchy has for its essential element cabbage, and the Borsh is a vegetable soup, the materials for it with the exception of the undertake to say, except that beef plays a great role in the drama of the Stchy; and, as Borsh is white when it is served, I suspect that there may be milk in it. Yet I solemnly declare that having procured an authoritative Russian cook book, and having myself carefully studied the prescriptions for both these works of art, and accurately translated the same, I have not yet succeeded in finding any Western cuisinier or cuisinier in any Western country who serves them in a style that would please an international expert. But while I am saying this, it is my duty to add that there is also another Russian soup which I have heard much celebrated in that empire, the soupy Botovina. It is white and is served cold, and I detest it. But without pausing to debate these recalcitrant details, let us not forget one article that is always to be found at every railway restaurant in Russia, as in every other place and every bit, always in transcendent perfection, such as all other peoples are not able to rival. I mean the Russian express train sends its hurried passengers to the next terminus, a vast counter before them stand a hundred glasses of tea. Some have thin slices of lemon for those who like that condiment, and others are served simply with a lump of sugar, or, if you want a drop of cream, you can get that, too; but the tea itself is something ecstatic, and you may voyage all around the earth from London to Dover, and never find so good a beautiful, inexplicable, delightful, invigorating existence. What is the secret? Why it is that other lands and peoples continue to exist in such comparative poverty. I cannot guess; but I know that a glass of Russian tea is a cup of it. If you like that better, something to enchain an ascetic and to rejuvenate an antediluvian.

#### COSSACK VILLAGES.

But a subject of much greater interest is the succession of Cossack villages planted along the line of the province, at pretty regular intervals. According to the latest official figures, there are about 800,000 of these people along the Don, and very interesting people I found them to be. Known to the outside world chiefly as cavalry soldiers, those who have had an opportunity of seeing them at home, or have read what has been written about them, and, above all, that wonderful Cossack novel of Gogol's, "Taras Bulbina," or "Tolstoy's" "Cossacks," understand that they are not without some of the most lasting and admirable traits of human nature. As we saw them in the country of the Don, agriculture is their main occupation, and no one would imagine that they were warriors also. The country is what an Illinois man would describe as rolling, with ridges of no great elevation here and there, but mainly level. The soil seemed black and rich, but when we passed over it the spring crops had scarcely been planted. The herds of cattle were large, and each herd had two or three men and dogs to keep it from wandering too far. There appeared to be no fences to mark the boundaries of the estates. The houses were small, and every village had its church. The general aspect of the land and people was peaceful, and it looked as if any form of political or intellectual agitation was out of the question there.

#### Just One Question.

From Harper's Bazar.

"Oh, dear Mr. Cocker," exclaimed Mrs. Gazam, "I am told you are an expert in dogs. I do love dogs so. I have the dearest little pug. His name is Cupid. The sweetest little thing, just as fat as he can be. Now, Mr. Cocker, I want to ask you just one question. You will tell me, I know."

"Certainly, Mrs. Gazam."

"Is an ocean greyhound anything like a water spaniel?"

#### SAID TO BE THE FINEST SYNAGOGUE IN AMERICA.



New York, May 29.—The finest synagogue in America has just been dedicated in New York. It belongs to the oldest Israelitic congregation in the country and one of the richest, too. All told, the new building cost \$400,000. It is located at Central Park West and Seventieth street. The front wall is supported by four large pillars, which give the ark its most imposing appearance. The interior decorations are of onyx, and the walls and balconies are covered with mosaics. It is one of the finest in the country. It is of white and red onyx, with two small domes on each side, separated by two arched windows, in which are placed large silver lamps fashioned after the Egyptian style. Four steep leading to the ark are of blood-

red onyx. Over the stairs is a lamp which is of the same material. The congregation, which is called the Shearith Israel, founded the synagogue in 1822. The first services were held in a room in the city. People came from Boston, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago and other cities to be present at the dedications. A procession was formed and seven circles were made around the walls. After the last circle was completed, the ark in the ark. The congregation is made up of Rev. Dr. Meidold. Among the visitors was Spanish consul-general at Montreal. The building seats 700.

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