

Cuba a Veritable Natural Treasury

Some Facts Which Shed Light Upon Its Inestimable Possibilities.

Writing in the New York Commercial Advertiser, Robert T. Hill, of the United States Geological Survey, gives these details concerning the Pearl of the Antilles:

Cuba is the westernmost and largest of the Greater Antilles. These, with the Virgin Islands and their eastern end, stretch east and west for over 1,500 miles, and constitute a distinct geographical province—distinct in relief, geologic formation and history from the other West Indian islands and the adjacent mainland.

In their climate and vegetation, as in topographic features and geologic formation, the Antilles have no affinity with the conditions with which we are familiar in the United States. Their whole aspect is tropical, yet they possess so many unique individual features, differing from those of other tropical lands, that they belong in a class of themselves. The causes of this individuality are involved in a peculiar geologic history, which can be dwelt upon here only to the extent of stating that it has produced certain peculiarities of configuration and given origin to formations which weather into soils or unusual productivity.

A SUPERIOR SOIL.

So far as wealth and "lay" of soil are concerned, Cuba is superior to the rest of the tropical lands, excepting Porto Rico. It has but a small proportion of unfruitful declivities and rocky areas such as are found in New England; no fields of sterile volcanic debris, such as occur in the Central American lands; no arid areas, like those which make up so large a proportion of Mexico and the western half of the United States; no stretches of sterile, treeless lands, like those of Florida and other coastal southern states. Its proportion of swamp lands is less than that of the average American seaboard state. The whole island is mantled with rich loams, fertile calcareous soils, which, under constant humidity, yield in abundance every form of useful vegetation of the tropical and temperate climates. The configuration and geological formations are diversified, and there is a variety of economic resources, both agricultural and mineral, convenient to an extensive littoral, with frequent harbors affording excellent anchorage.

GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES.

Its essential geographic features are as follows: Area, with 1,200 adjacent cays, 45,000 square miles, equal to that of New York, of which 16 per cent. is cultivated, 7 per cent. reclaimed, 4 per cent. forest land, and the remainder un reclaimed wilderness. Elevation, nearly thirty times that of Long Island and stretching between the longitudes of New York and Cincinnati—a distance of 720 miles. Narrowness, everywhere less than 100 miles. Diversity of relief, the eastern end, high above the adjacent sea; its middle portion, wide and gently sloping plains—a continuous field of sugar cane, well drained and high above the sea, broken here and there by low, forest-clad hills; its western third, a picturesque region of mountains, with fertile slopes and valleys, and of different structure and lower altitude than those of the east, where alone grow the aromatic tobacco which have made the island famous. Over the whole is a mantle of tender vegetation, rich in every bush that more than 3,000 species of flora can give, kept green by gentle rains and mists. Indenting the rock-bound coasts are a hundred pouch-shaped harbors. Less than half a dozen of these are found in all the other islands and shores of the American Mediterranean, and for one in the West Indies (St. Lucia), England gave the rich islands of Martinique and Guadalupe.

CLIMATOLOGY.

Climatologic records are not available, except for Havana, and these are not applicable to the whole island, where it is inconceivable to suppose that the altitudes and position of the high mountains produce great variations in precipitation and humidity, such as are observable in adjacent islands. The Sierra Maestra probably presents conditions of temperature very nearly the same as the Blue Mountains in Jamaica, where the thermometer at times falls almost to the freezing point. Everywhere the rains are most abundant in summer, from May to October—the rainy season. As a rule, the rains, heaviest in the mountains, are heavier and more frequent on the slopes of the eastern end. At Havana the annual rainfall is 40 inches, of which 28 inches fall in the wet season. This rainfall is not excessive, being no greater than that of our eastern states. The air at this place is usually charged with 85 per cent. of moisture, which under the tropical sun largely induces the rich mantle of vegetation. The average number of rainy days in the year is 102. There is but one record of snow having fallen in Cuba, namely, in 1556.

At Havana in July and August, the warmest months, the mean temperature is 82 degrees Fahr., fluctuating between a maximum of 88 degrees and a minimum of 76 degrees. In the cooler months of December and January the thermometer averages 72 degrees, the maximum being 78 degrees, the minimum 58 degrees. The mean temperature of the year at Havana, on a mean of seven years, is 77 degrees; but in the interior, at elevations of over 300 feet above the sea, the thermometer occasionally falls to the freezing point in winter, hoar frost is not uncommon, and during north winds thin ice may form. The prevailing wind is the easterly trade breeze, but from November to February cool north winds (the norther, or "norther")—the southern attenuation of our own cold waves—rarely lasting more than forty-eight hours, are experienced in the western portion of the island, to which they add a third seasonal change. From 10 to 12 of these are the hottest hours of the day; after noon a refreshing breeze (la vax) sets in from the sea. In Santiago de Cuba the average is 80 degrees; that of the hottest month is 84 degrees, and that of the coldest 73 degrees.

The whole island is more or less subject to hurricanes, often of great ferocity. The hurricane of 1846 leveled nearly 3,000 houses in Havana, and sank or wrecked over 700 vessels. In 1858 the banana plantations of the east were similarly destroyed. Earthquakes are seldom felt in the western districts, but are frequent in the eastern.

All in all, the climate of Cuba is much

more salubrious than it has been painted. The winter months are delightful—in fact, ideal—while the summer months are more equable than in most of our territory. By the Cubans these are considered the most enjoyable of the year. The current impressions of insalubrity have arisen from an erroneous confusion of bad sanitation with the weather. While it is true that sickness follows the seasons, the former would be greatly alleviated—almost abrogated—if public hygiene received proper official consideration.

POPULATION.

The population at the beginning of the revolution of 1895 averaged 3,000,000 to the square mile, or a density equal to that of the people of Michigan. As a class they were neither ignorant nor lazy, as has been represented. The higher classes, as in New England, Pennsylvania, Minnesota and Louisiana, were the descendants of Latins, Bohemians, Scandinavians and negroes, were gentlemen of education and refinement, skilled in agriculture, and often learned in the arts and professions. Some dwelt in picturesque cities, the largest of which, Havana, with the refinement and gaiety of a European capital, had a population numerically equal to that of Washington. Santiago, the eastern city of picturesque villas, was as populous as Atlanta, Nashville, Lowell or Fall River. There were many other cities exceeding 25,000 inhabitants. The population of the principal cities was as follows: Havana, 200,000; Matanzas, 182,270; Santiago de Cuba, 71,207; Cienfuegos, 182,274; Puerto Principe, 45,841; Holguin, 24,757; Sancti Spiritu, 22,928; Cardenas, 18,228,850.

The remainder lived upon 100,000 ranches, farms and plantations, valued at \$200,000,000, which, besides supplying the food necessities of the island except salt meats and breadstuffs, yielded a surplus valued at \$90,000,000 for exportation.

WEALTH.

The wealth of Cuba chiefly consisted in enormous products of sugar and tobacco, which constituted 90 per cent. of the total exports. Sugar was grown chiefly in the great central plains of Havana and Matanzas, which was practically an unbroken field of cane. In the central plain of Cuba sugar can be produced more economically than in any other part of the world. In this region, owing to the better quality of the natural soil and superior plantation management, this article can be produced profitably, notwithstanding the competition of the rising beet root industry, while in the other West Indian islands, except Porto Rico, it has of late years largely become unprofitable. The Cuban planters have been quick to appreciate every improvement in the way of machinery and transportation, and at the outbreak of the revolution some of the mills were the finest and most perfect in the world. It was also abundant in the provinces to the east. This product in the fiscal year, 1892-1893, amounted to 815,894 tons; in 1893-1894, 1,054,214 tons; 1894-1895, 1,294,264 tons, and in 1895, 26,625,221 tons, all of which, except 20,000 tons, were exported.

The main seat of tobacco culture was in the western province of Pinar del Rio, although quantities were grown throughout the island. Much of this was manufactured into cigars, cigarettes and snuff, giving employment to a large proportion of the population of Havana. The average tobacco crop was estimated at 590,000 hales of 110 pounds each, of which 428,000 hales were exported as leaf, and the remainder manufactured in Havana into cigars and cigarettes. In 1897 the product was reduced to 200,000 hales, or about one-tenth of the ordinary crop. The island also yielded Indian corn, coffee, oranges, bananas, pineapples, and other tropical fruits; manioc, rice and all herbaceous vegetables; poultry and live stock and products of the apairy.

MINERAL RESOURCES.

The mineral resources of Cuba are of secondary importance. Gold and silver have been found, but never in quantity sufficient to repay the labor of search. The gold sent to Spain from this island by the early settlers was probably the wealth of the aborigines accumulated in previous centuries by trade with other islands. In 1827 silver and copper were discovered in Villa Clara. The first ore yielded 140 ounces to the ton, but the productivity diminished and the mines abandoned. Very rich copper mines have been worked in the eastern part of the island since 1850, but have been abandoned of late. Fifty tons of ore were taken out daily in 1868, the richer of which was broken up and shipped to Europe, while the poorer part was smelted at the works. Copper is also reported from other localities. Manganese and Jasper of various colors and susceptible of high polish are found in many places and in the island of Pines. Salt of fine quality abounds on the northern cays. Notwithstanding frequent assertions to the contrary, there is no coal in Cuba. A rich asphaltum resembling this mineral has been mistaken for it. This occurs in quantities near Villa Clara and will ultimately prove of great value.

The chief minerals of the island are the iron ore and manganese which occur in quantities near Santiago, where the iron has been worked for several years by Pennsylvania capital. This ore is consumed entirely in this country and constitutes the main bulk of the mineral exports, which in 1892 amounted to \$2,200,000. In 1891, 296 million tons, with an extent of 13,727 hectares, were issued; of the mines reported and claimed 135 were iron; 85 manganese, and 53 copper.

MANUFACTURES.

Manufactures of all kinds, except of tobacco, have been discouraged by Spain's unwise colonial policy. The commerce of Cuba is relatively enormous, and consists of exports of raw material and manufactured tobacco, and imports of all breadstuffs, salt meats, machinery, hardware, leather goods, textiles, table luxuries, including all manufactured articles whatsoever except tobacco. It is utterly impossible to secure accurate statistics of the total trade of Cuba. Its value can only be estimated by its commerce with this country, which is about 80 per cent. of the total.

The shipping trade, both foreign and coastal, is extensive, the American tonnage alone amounting to 1,600,000 per annum. About 1,200 ocean vessels, steam and sail, annually clear from Havana, while the sugar crop finds an outlet at all the principal ports. Lines of communication to the island, the north coast being served by lines from Havana and the south by lines from Batabano the southern entre pot of Havana. The tonnage of Havana and eight other ports for 1894 amounted to 3,538,559 tons, carried by 30,181 vessels.

COMMERCE.

The normal commerce of the island is best illustrated by a typical year. In 1892 the exports were valued at eighty-nine and a half million dollars; the imports at fifty-six and a quarter million. The balance in trade in favor of the island was thirty-three and a quarter million. This could be maintained under ordinary conditions of government, or even enhanced by exporting trade with adjacent islands. Of the exports \$85,000,000 were classified as vegetable, three and a half million as mineral, and three-quarters of a million as animal. The vegetable exports included 241,300 hales of tobacco (1 bale=110 pounds), 152,000,000 cigars, and 1,690,000 tons of sugar. The minor exports were 10,000 pipes of rum, wax, bananas, honey, beeswax, mahogany and other woods, valued at \$2,000,000. The tonnage of Havana, Cienfuegos and eight other principal ports for 1891 was 3,538,559 tons, carried by 31,181 vessels.

The essentials of this commerce are: First, a large balance of trade in favor of the island; second, the overwhelming consumption of the exports of the United States; third, the division of the imports between the United States, Great Britain and Spain, the trade of the latter being maintained by discriminatory duties against the other countries; fourth, the absence of trade with the neighboring tropical regions of which the island is by nature the commercial center. Even the traveler who wishes to go from Cuba to these countries, except Porto Rico, must first proceed to New York.

TRADE.

The trade relations with the United States are shown by the following figures:

Year	Imports to Cuba from the United States	Exports from Cuba to the United States
1891	\$1,364,241	\$1,589,919
1892	6,091,894	2,855,076
1893	4,538,807	2,850,922
1894	1,440,006	683,032
1895	1,471,329	968,249
1896	2,098,704	2,811,671
1897	3,205,321	3,297,961
1898	3,205,321	3,297,961
Total	\$23,678,291	\$27,871,229

The railway aggregate less than 1,000 miles of line, and consist principally of the united system of Havana, extending through the tobacco and sugar districts of the west and center and connecting the capital with Matanzas, Pinar del Rio, Batabano, Cienfuegos and Sagua, the system terminating at Santa Clara, 150 miles east of Havana. The entire half of the island east of Cienfuegos and Sagua is dependent upon water communication, although several short local lines extend hitherward from Nuevitas, Remedios and Santiago.

There were about 2,810 miles of telegraph line in 1895, including nearly 1,000 miles of cable, connecting the cities of the south coast and the Isle of Pines with Havana, via Batabano.

RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES.

It is estimated that the United States consumes from 80 to 90 per cent. of the entire exports of Cuba—in fact, nearly everything except the cigars, which are world-wide in their distribution, and practically all the raw material. In return for this outlay, however, Cuba purchases only one-fourth of her goods from our country, including principally those necessities which could not be produced in Spain, such as breadstuffs, salt meats and machinery. Furthermore, the United States is about the only market of commercial importance against which the rates of the maximum tariff were enforced. As these rates are in some cases much higher than the conventional duties granted by the second and third class tariffs, our products were to that extent placed under disadvantages.

According to John Hyde, statistician United States Department of Agriculture, between 1892-94 and 1896-97, our imports from Cuba suffered a decline of 75.7 per cent. and our exports to the island a decline of 61.7 per cent. The imports being reduced to less than one-fourth and the exports to little more than one-third of their previous volume. During the first year of the insurrection our trade fell off over \$20,000,000, during the second year a further sum of \$18,000,000, and during the third year a still further sum of \$21,000,000, making a total decline of \$69,000,000 in the annual value of our foreign trade, and of a branch of it, moreover, that is carried almost entirely in American bottoms.

The net revenues of the island are of two kinds: (1) The balance of trade against the world, which amounts to an average of \$30,000,000 annually; and (2) The duties on foreign imports, which have averaged \$15,000,000 annually, and would, under any other government, be ample for administration and public improvements.

From 1827 to 1894 an aggregate of \$30,000,000 was sent in annual installments, reaching \$22,500,000 in 1899.

FAMOUS NAVAL FIGHTS.

Some Sea Battles That Are Noted in History.

Time and the Hour.

We were talking at the club the other night about famous naval fights the admiral taking the lead. He agreed that since the fight between the Monitor and Merrimack, which revolutionized the navies of the world, there has been no naval combat between ironclads so fierce and bloody as that between the Huascar and the two Chilean vessels off the coast of Peru, which is so well known in our country. The admiral said: "No wonder," he exclaimed, "that when the roll is called of a Peruvian war vessel the name of

Gratu, the admiral in command of the Huascar, who fought her so gallantly till his death, is called first, when an officer steps forward with the answer: 'Absent, but accounted for. He is with the heroes. The account of this terrific fight, which is enough to stir a fever in the blood of a non-combatant, carries one for a parallel away back to the old fight between the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis and her sister ship off the English coast during our Revolutionary war. It is a good custom of foreign powers,' our admiral added, 'to name their vessels after their naval heroes, and it would be well if we would follow the custom. Suppose we had a vessel in our navy named the Paul Jones, a hero whose splendid achievement is familiar to every well taught school boy; or the Lawrence, for the brave captain whose dying exclamation, 'Don't give up the ship,' is historic; or the Worden or the Farragut or the Foote. Such naming, in my humble opinion, would be far preferable to the prosaic impersonal and, in a way, meaningless style of nomenclature. If a crew fighting on the Paul Jones, for instance, did not derive added inspiration from the name of their vessel, then names are indeed of no significance." This struck us all as a good suggestion, and I pass it along.

FEW OF THEM SURVIVED.

The Last Attempt of the Spaniards to Invade American Soil Resulted in Disaster.

How the Spaniards were last driven from the soil of the original thirteen British colonies forms a pertinent question now, says the Boston Globe. In 1733 Oglethorpe laid out a town site at the mouth of the Altamaha river on St. Simons island, the spot now being known as Frederica. In the meantime the Spanish officials at St. Augustine viewed with jealous eye what they considered an encroachment on their boundary rights and began to threaten war. Oglethorpe returned to England, while there securing military commandship over the country now comprised in South Carolina and Georgia and the title of brigadier general.

He then went to the highlands of Scotland and gathered as sturdy a band as ever followed William Wallace on a battlefield. These he trained and drilled with especial reference to the wild kind of fighting which would have to be undertaken in the new world. The regiment was then transported to Georgia, and the work of the fort pushed steadily on to completion.

In 1740 tidings came of war between England and Spain. Oglethorpe immediately resolved on the invasion of Florida. After a five weeks' siege of St. Augustine and accomplishing nothing, he returned to Frederica.

The Spaniards meanwhile busied themselves concerning measures of retaliation. Troops were gathered from Cuba, and accompanied by a large fleet of powerful men-of-war the army moved toward the mouth of the St. Marys.

On July 5, 1742, a bloody encounter occurred between the Spanish fleet of thirty-eight vessels and the batteries on the southern point of St. Simons island, resulting in a victory for the invaders. The Spanish, finding themselves unopposed, landed at Glascocks bluff and in possession of the abandoned English camp. From this location a road led to Frederica. On its one side was a dense forest and on the other a morass. The Spanish officers held a council of war and resolved to march on Frederica along this road. The army was divided into two sections, the one to precede and the other to reinforce if the enemy proved too strong.

Oglethorpe posted his men along the wooded side of the road, with instructions to attack at a given signal and to be prepared to fall back to the morass. The Spanish van was well to the front of the ambulance when the signal was sounded. Immediately the attack was taken up by each detail, and before the astonished Spaniards could realize what had happened they were falling before the well-directed volleys of the Highlanders, and being slowly pushed into the morass.

Disposing of the few remaining invaders Oglethorpe ordered his followers to move farther down toward the enemy's camp, and he called the company of the second division. Important of the fate of their brethren the soldiers marched gayly forward, moving in disorderly ranks and not troubled by any thoughts of danger.

They advanced against the men lying in wait, and the first few columns raised them, until Oglethorpe, assuring himself that none could escape, sounded the second signal. In an instant the narrow strip of ground was converted into a shambles. The first volley completely took the heart from the Spaniards and the few who remained could effect nothing against the desperate valor of their English foes. Fighting despairing by they fell back into the fatal morass and were soon enveloped in its stinky fogs.

So discouraged were the few remaining Spanish officers and privates that a retreat was resolved on, and seven days after the terrible chastisement which they had sustained the remnant of the once invincible force hoarded their ship, and following the example of the Arsonada, and in almost as deplorable plight, sailed out to sea. They left behind a quantity of stores and ammunition, of which the English commissaries, and quartermasters' departments were sorely in need.

SHEDSKIN 20 TIMES

My little boy broke out with an itching rash. I tried three doctors and medical college but he kept getting worse. There was not one square inch of skin on his whole body unaffected. He was one mass of sores, and that was his frightful. In removing the bandages they would take the skin with them, and the child's screams were heart-breaking. After the second application of CUTICURA (ointment) I saw signs of improvement, and the sores to dry up. His skin peeled off twenty times, but now he is entirely cured. ROBERT WATMAN, 428 Cook St., Chicago, Ill.

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Russet and Black Shoes and Oxford Ties—dongola and satin calf. Everybody can be fitted. Every pair warranted solid leather and on sale Fridays only.

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