

THE REDEMPTION OF SANTIAGO DE CUBA

AN OBJECT LESSON IN AMERICAN BUREAU.

Major George M. Barbour, the United States Sanitary Commissioner for Santiago, Tells the Story in Interesting Detail—What Manner of Man Leonard Wood Is.

From the Buffalo News.

Santiago de Cuba is the oldest community of white people on the American continent and it is a fine place to build a city. Columbus visited this spot and inspected the beautiful bay on his second voyage.

But the Yankees came on an eventful occasion in July of the year 1895 and presto! a wonderful change came over the city.

Horrible state of affairs. Everywhere were seen small groups carrying dead people to the cemetery. These could scarcely be described as "funerals" for the dead were mostly enclosed in a rude box and carried to the cemetery on the head of one or more men.

Spanish people, too—having no sewer system nor any drainage outlets, having a feeble burlesque of a water supply works which was built more to suit the whim of church priests and the luxurious official leeches—and a very few favored wealthy residents—than for the needs of the real public.

On July 19, 1898, about the noon hour, the American army entered this city, and within twenty-four hours, General Leonard Wood, colonel of the famous "Tough Riders," was appointed military governor of the city and suburbs.

Following his very cordial welcome I was asked to make a proposition to organize a sanitary force and for cleaning the city, and I did so.

Such was the appointment and simple brief order given me to undertake the cleaning and purifying of this city; and so it happened that to me fell the pleasing honor—thanks to General Wood—of being the first American city appointee in Cuba by American authority and to be entrusted with the duty of organizing the first civil department established under the flag of the United States, which yet waxes with its deeply significant assurance of peace and order.

FIRST WORK. I spent that afternoon strolling about the narrow, over-crowded streets studying the confronting task.

The city has a population of about 70,000 people. Fully 130,000 souls were then crowded in its limits, including three distinct, and not overfriendly elements—Spanish, Cubans and the victorious Americans, who were the real steady peace-preservers.

Of the natives, especially the reconcentrados, the proportion of children and women, especially widows, was overwhelmingly great. And all were so hungry and helpless! It was a pitiful, a shameful evidence of the monster Weyler's idea of war.

General Wood was hastily selecting a large staff of army officers and details of soldier clerks and assistants (for

the American soldier is always capable and available for any intelligent service), selling vacant stores in all directions, sending into them bountiful supplies sent by our liberal government and in two brief days from the hour of occupation, the doors were thrown open, flags were raised and food was fairly thrown into the countless outstretched hands of the doubly starving, wildly frantic multitudes that fought for a space at the doors of those blessed relief stores.

In the now pretty plaza fronting the official palace was a vast pile of reeking filth; also another, even worse, in front of the Anglo-American club, each of which, within a few days, was filled with a dozen army wagon boxes and hundreds of similar piles lay in the streets, vacant lots, house yards, stables and the very numerous hillside gullies (or gulches), peccata in this city.

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case of many of the most reeking, odorous piles of filth. Petrol, which quite a stock was found in the city, was poured into the gutters all about the city, and, in fact, the entire surface of some streets were drenched with it and set on fire—a very effective and purifying method.

But when the streets were finally cleaned to a fairly respectable condition another task was found confronting and urgently requiring prompt attention.

SPANISH CLEANLINESS. The Spanish idea of such private delicacies is certainly strange. From the condition of these matters as found here their ideas of cleanliness, decency, modesty and health far exceed and more deserving from a general standpoint, of civilized people than ever found among any tribe of Indians in America.

Having no sewers, nothing whatever to such purposes, all families had their water slops and refuse into the streets. From a long established custom this was, and is, done at night. At present fully 180,000 gallons daily, or nightly, are thus disposed of. It is certainly very bad for the streets and for the health of the people.

Political prisoners were released from their cells, the almost daily slaughter of men by Spanish officers had ceased, and the pursuit of peace, happiness and prosperity of mankind that the American flag typifies and maintains was realized by the long-oppressed people.

CLEANING THE CITY. The task of cleaning the city began on the 23d. At 6 a. m. I found in the Plaza a mass of about 7,000 men, and more, eagerly awaiting me, and their excitement was great to be given a broom and shovel and be "counted in" for that blessed one-dollar and one-cent ration of food per day!

Hurry was the order and the need of the hour. The hardware stores were sought and some interesting facts were learned.

Street push brooms, squeegees, scrapers and such street cleaning implements so familiar in all American cities were unknown here. And the light garden rake, the simple thin blade hoe and the common barbed fork were also not to be had, or nobody ever used such things here.

GHASTLY SCENES. Army wagons and details of men were promptly sent out along those trenches and it happened that about 400 shovels were gathered in. Also that the common barbed fork were found hidden in the deep underbrush, wherein they had probably crawled badly wounded and soon died, and had not been found by the burial parties.

And of wagons! All of the very few of the United States army service were imperatively needed to haul the daily supply of food to the American camps, also to the large army of Spanish prisoners and to the multitude of famished reconcentrados, in fact, to everybody!

It was fully a week when General Wood had succeeded in capturing three fine four-mule army wagons ready for use, and then the removal of piles of filth earnestly began. Also, it may be added, Mr. Manuel Gomez, a resident here, who had lived years in the United States (and his handsome wife was a Philadelphia girl, came to our dire needs with a proposition of help, and soon he succeeded in gathering about two dozen of the clumsy, abominable and almost prehistoric carts, found everywhere in use here.

DEATH EVERYWHERE. Meanwhile, I had been clearing away the horribly odorous dead dogs and mules, hauling those that could be, and I found too much rotting wood was piled, wagon, sunken over all, and they were thus burned on the spot. And this method was also used in the

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wagons, are included in the fine teaming service of the department.

Great supplies of crude petroleum, chloride of lime, carbolic acid, formalin, and other approved preparations for sanitary needs are carried in stock and lavishly (but not wastefully) applied where needed and freely supplied to all houses.

This Sanitary department of Santiago was the very first civil organization created in Cuba the instant the Americans were in possession and control. The law courts and the much valued common free schools (these being the first of schools free to all ever created in Cuba) were the next matters General Wood promptly attended to.

WOOD'S GREAT WORK. Much has been printed and illustrated descriptive of Major General Leonard Wood, all highly complimentary and every bit as well deserved, but such mentions have been almost entirely about his service in organizing and commanding the First regiment of United States Volunteer Cavalry—the very famous, popular and only "Rough Riders," and all about how early in the morning when landed on Cuban soil he led them into and began and won the first combat with the hidden Spanish foe.

ON A BUNAWAY ENGINE. An Interesting Fragment of Early Railroad History. From the Boston Transcript. It was a proud day for Reuben Finch when he was selected "engineer" of the big, eight-wheeled freighter Massachusetts. Back in the '40's, when railroading was young and innovations were regarded with an interest not jaded with the many inventions and contrivances of modern science, the news that the Western railroad, which now forms a part of the Boston and Albany system, had put on a mammoth freight engine, larger than any yet tried, excited a widespread curiosity, not limited to the circle of railroad men, which was then much smaller than it is now.

Finch was now a very healthy, clean and quietly attractive city. None more so anywhere. No city has a more perfect and complete sanitary organization.

BETTER CONDITIONS. It is divided into sanitary districts, each under native foremen and the employees are very nearly all natives (who, I find, are as efficient as any laborers), are neatly uniformed, fairly well drilled, and quite satisfied—are, in fact, proud of their duties. And the supply of equipments, implements and teams is absolutely complete, none could be better, of everything up to date, the latest and best for all needs and purposes. Of the hundreds of employees of the railway department none has died or even been ill, and of the many mules—all large American animals—not one has yet died. Several large, deep wagons, many district street cars, ten great iron revolving garbage carts from the United States, a dead end wagon, sunken over all, a piling wagon, pump and tank wagon for privy cleaning and freight

"give and take" fighting kind, but rarely make good civic rulers or advisers. Too much regard for rules, regulations, red tape and "respectfully referred."

But General Wood is not much hampered in his mind with such intensely military dilly-dallying dead weights. Possessed of a high university education, and a thorough professional education in the medical field, then having some years of activity in civil life and its affairs in direct contact with the logical people, then about 12 years of service in the United States army, nearly all in the West (one of the best fields in years past to develop the real qualities of a man), an athlete, possessed of greater physical vigor and high mental activity and—by instinct and preference—a soldier, he is fully gifted with a combination of qualities rarely possessed by men and all of the kind precisely needed for the various duties demanded from a governor of these people and their affairs in these crucial times.

The long era of the bloodhound, the buzzard and the plundering Spaniard is forever ended in Cuba and under the simple, earnest, common sense and honest lead and guidance of General Wood a new era of humane, practical, of practical ideas, of real honor, of personal liberty and happiness, of education and brains is being established. Slowly, peacefully (let us hope) quietly but sure. Being the central factor in accomplishing this great work with which so much depends for the welfare and progress of countless humanity in all the ages to come, General Wood is highly entitled to the constant respect and good will of all Cubans and Americans. As an ideal representative and a practical exponent of real republican American doctrine, he meets all demands. His first lesson of peace and good will to these people was to teach them that "cleanliness is next to Godliness."

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thing that interfered—there were not cars enough around to make it interesting. In those days the freight traffic was very limited. Each road kept its own cars on its own iron, as the railroad men say, and the variety from every road in the country could not be seen on each track, as it is today. So, to get enough cars a tribute was levied on each passing freight train. It delayed the traffic, and, of course, but goods sent by freight in the '40's were not perishable.

The test was to be made over the track from Worcester to Springfield, and on December 18, 1840, thirty-five cars had been collected—enough, it was thought to give the engine a most thorough test, for thirty-five cars made a tremendous load, as loads were then. In the afternoon Finch and Marcey oiled up the Paris anew and made everything ready for the triumphant trip to Springfield.

A couple of tons of coal, a pile of a clanging of the bell, and Finch, opening the throttle, felt the great engine roll out on to the main track with seemingly as little effort as though there were not a string of freight cars behind her nearly a quarter of a mile long. It was a fine sight, the engine in the cab with Finch and Marcey, among them Wilson Eddy, known the country over in later years as the veteran master mechanic of the Boston and Albany railroad. Majestic! The Massachusetts swung along and there was nothing to get the smoothness of the machinery's motion. It was a brisk winter day and the rails were covered with frost, but the great wheels did not slip. Railroad accidents were a new thing then, and it was as yet an undiscovered fact that an engine could run away with its engineer powerless to control. The wheels were but two tracks on the train, but this caused no uneasiness, particularly as there was that great engine to be depended upon.

In those days the railroad had not yet been extended across the Connecticut river at Springfield, but the abutments for a bridge were being built. Before the handsome Boston and Albany station was built at Springfield there was a steep grade which went down into the city from the east. Beginning about a mile back from the station and came to an end at the river bank, 39 yards below. This was the jumping-off place, for the tracks had not yet been built out on the river bank not far away. It was here that the engines were faced about for the return trips.

As the Massachusetts, coming in triumphantly from its 26-mile run, approached the brink of the hill a mile back from the river Finch began to slow down, and as he did so he began to realize that the heavy train had considerable momentum. He was afraid to risk going down the grade with so few brakes and decided to stop and block the wheels, seeing that the track was very slippery. So he shut off the steam and applied the brakes. To his surprise they seemed to have no effect on the heavy train.

"Watch out, Finch," said Marcey, "or you'll have us on the grade. It's pretty slippery today."

of Finch's efforts, as ear after ear swept over the brink and pushed forward with a force that was not to be resisted. The occupants of the cab could do nothing but cling to the engine with a helplessness which became despair as they saw that the big engine was entirely beyond control. But as the Massachusetts came rushing down toward the depot the full horror of the situation burst upon her occupants, for there seemed to be a way to escape plunging straight into the abutments of the new bridge.

There was a scramble for the side of the cab. Eddy made the first jump and he rolled off the tracks just at the station, unhurt. Moore, the conductor, and Nichols, a fireman who was riding in the cab, jumped next and were not seriously injured, while back of them the train hands were jumping to the right and left for their lives. Finch bravely stuck to the Massachusetts, doing all he could to stop the wheels, but his landing place at the last moment at the river bank, and Marcey stayed with him.

A few seconds more and the whole train would be piled up in the river, but just then a curious thing occurred. As the Massachusetts reached the station, Moore, the conductor, saw that the train had stopped, and realizing that it must plunge into the roundhouses instead of the river, he jumped without an instant's hesitation and without seeing what his landing place was going to be. He luckily struck a clear spot just in front of the roundhouse and went rolling yards away from the track, while the mighty engine with its long train of cars went rushing at full speed through the double doors, Marcey had delayed his jump too long and was buried in the debris into which the roundhouse, engine and cars were resolved.

Abel Willard, the master mechanic of the road, had heard the engine coming down the grade, and supposing that it was some engine wanting to come in there had thrown the switch. The force with which the Massachusetts, pushed by the heavy train, struck the roundhouse was tremendous. The old engine Hampden, which was standing on the track inside, was driven through the double doors, Marcey had delayed his jump too long and was buried in the wreckage into which the roundhouse, engine and cars were resolved.

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Real good military men of the ideal