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CHILDREN IN CUBA'S WAR

Their Presence Upon the Battlefield a Pathetic Feature.

Little Ones in the Insurgent Camps Whose Playthings Are Cartridge Shells and Their Lullaby the Trumpet Call.

[Copyright, 1898.]
There is no more pathetic feature in the war between Cuba and Spain than the actual presence of children upon the battlefield. The awful massacre of the Cubans by starvation as well as by bullet and sword has numbered among its victims many child martyrs to the cause of liberty.

There are little ones in the insurgent camps to-day whose playthings are cartridge shells; whose lullaby is the trumpet call and the noise of battle. This revolution must always live in history as one which numbers in its list of martyrs, baby patriots whose blood has stained their country's soil with that of their fathers and mothers.

These children die, most of them, from fever and insufficient food. They are gaunt little specters of childhood, with wan eyes that have looked upon terrible scenes of carnage and death. Some of them die on the field, where they march beside their fathers with tiny hands clasping some implement of war. Others are stricken down with machetes, or trampled upon by horses' hoofs in the wild charges of the insurgent army.

And these little martyr souls pass away without a mother's prayer or a mother's arms around them. Their requiem is the cry of "Cuba Libre!" echoing from dying lips. Their little bodies

lie unburied beneath the southern suns, until Heaven in benediction marks their resting places with Cuba's most fragrant bloom of lilies and roses, springing from the very life blood of these infant warriors.

The presence of women and children on the field of battle has been used as a reproach by the enemies of Cuba. There have been stories of armies of "Amazons"—described as rough masculine creatures leading the men on with their fury.

To those who know the real nature of the Cuban women these stories seem like fairy tales. The women of Cuba are intensely feminine in their natures—domestic, womanly creatures, fond of their children, to whom they devote themselves from babyhood.

The Cuban baby is a veritable monarch in the home of its parents, and in times of peace the education and the guidance of the child almost constitutes its mother's whole existence. The presence of women and their children on the field of battle is only due to the fact that every Cuban insurgent knows the Spanish volunteer will wreak his vengeance on women and children left unprotected in the towns. It is for this reason that whole families have fought together—children side by side with their parents—baby hands sometimes loading and reloading rifles for the men and women.



A CUBAN BOY PATRIOT.

He reached the campfire of the insurgent detachment, where his father waited his coming, and fell forward at the feet of the surprised men, whispering that he had brought the bullets—and the loaves of white bread that his mother had sent, and a flask of red wine. The boy died two days later, his wound inflaming and fever setting in as a result of that terrible journey through the marshes.

Huedo Hernandez was one of the girl victims of the war. She was only 11 years old, and living at Cardenas. She was playing one day with some other children, when a stranger approached and asked her to carry a package to some one in the town. The little one innocently consented, and was on her way to the house indicated when she was arrested and the package seized. It happened to contain letters from an insurgent to a woman relative. Huedo was charged with conspiracy against the government, and was cast into a foul prison. I do not know her ultimate fate.

The children of Cuba have suffered by this awful war as never children have before. War devastates homes and leaves hearthstones desolate in all cases, but this has been a war of extermination. In the children of Cuba Spain sees another generation of Cubans, even stronger in their patriotism than their fathers who have gladly given their lives in the cause of liberty.

Every Cuban boy and girl—every baby—has been looked upon as a menace to the Spaniard. These children must never be allowed to grow to manhood and to womanhood—strong in their love of country, with the memories of the ten years' war and all the wrongs and massacres that their parents have suffered in this war of revenge—so reasons the Spaniard.

And so it is that the children of Cuba have gone upon the battlefield to fight with their fathers. In the wonderful war that the Cubans have waged, holding their island in the face of an army three times their size, the child warriors have played an important part. Their innocent lives have been added to that vast altar upon which so many lives have been offered as a sacrifice.

Gray hair is caused solely by the loss of pigment which gave it color. Grayness may occur at any period of life, irrespective of age; it is also hereditary.

was now a suspicious looking person, and was sure to be detected if he was seen by anyone. He stumbled on in the darkness, realizing his danger, but determined to reach his father. He fell many times in that journey; his clothing was torn from his tired legs, but he plodded on until a sentry's challenge rang out somewhere in the night. Then he started to run, still carrying that heavy load; but two shots whizzed after him, one striking his shoulder. He hid behind rocks by the roadside until the lazy, half-drunken Spanish sentries had ridden away; then he started on again.

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