

# OUR WAR WITH SPAIN.

BY RICHARD H. TITHERINGTON.

THE STORY OF THE STRUGGLE IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS WON SO REMARKABLE A TRIUMPH, OPENING A NEW ERA OF OUR NATIONAL EXPANSION—THE FIRST INSTALMENT SKETCHES THE HISTORY OF SPANISH POWER IN THE ISLANDS THAT ARE THE NATURAL OUTPOSTS OF OUR SOUTHERN SHORES, AND TRACES THE EVENTS THAT GRADUALLY AND INEVITABLY LED US INTO WAR.

THE war of 1898 between the United States and Spain was the logical and inevitable ending of a long chapter of history. The conditions that caused it began with the earliest settlements of the English and the Latin peoples in the new world. The race that was to dominate the wide continent of North America came into conflict with

its French rivals two centuries ago, and their struggle was decided by Wolfe at Quebec in 1759. While Spain held Florida and Louisiana, hostilities with the English colonies, which had now become the United States, were a constant probability, and were averted only by the timely cession of both those great provinces. For the possession of



HAVANA IN 1720.

*From an engraving in "Gage's Voyage" (1720)*



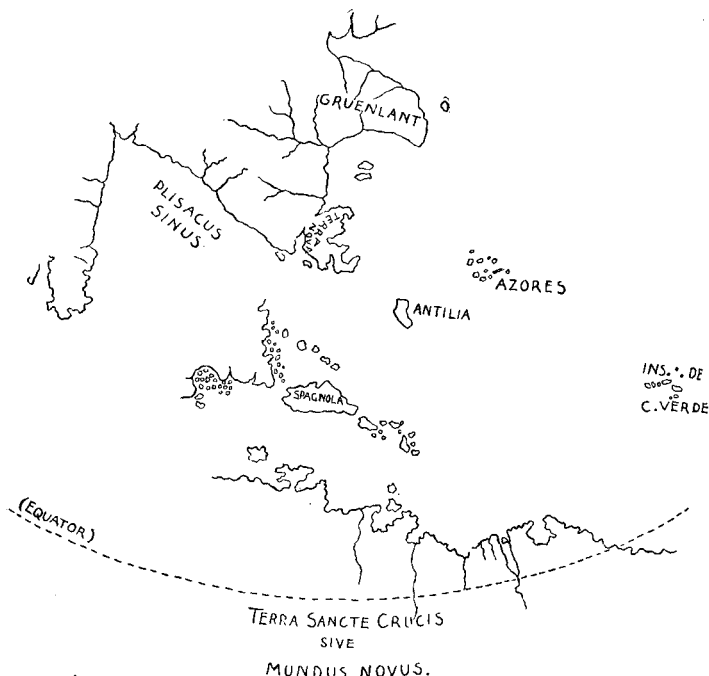
THE TOMB OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS IN THE CATHEDRAL AT HAVANA. THE PEOPLE OF SANTO DOMINGO CLAIM THAT THEY POSSESS THE ASHES OF COLUMBUS, AND THAT THE TOMB IN HAVANA IS THAT OF HIS BROTHER DIEGO

Texas and California we fought the war of 1846 and 1847 against the Spaniards of Mexico—a war that seems to have finally settled the southwestern frontier of our dominion. Cuba, lying scarcely more than a hundred miles

from our shores, facing our southern seaports, and commanding the Gulf of Mexico, is geographically as necessary an appanage of our territory as Florida. Under Spanish rule it has been an unfailing source of anxiety in our foreign

relations, a perpetual problem to our statesmen—a problem to which there could be but one ultimate solution. The unhappy island has long been a running sore in the body politic of the northern half of the new world. It is extraordinary that the nineteenth century should almost have ended before

of October, old style, or the 7th of November, new style, in the year 1492. Here was no low lying islet, such as he had seen in the Bahamas; it was a land of forests and rivers and noble mountains—a part, doubtless, of the Asiatic mainland of which Columbus was in search. In the discoverer's optimistic



RUYSCH'S MAP OF THE NEW WORLD (1508). THIS MAP SHOWS GRUENLANT (GREENLAND) AND TERRA NOVA (NEWFOUNDLAND) TOO FAR TO THE SOUTH. HAITI APPEARS AS "SPAGNOLA," SOUTH AMERICA AS "TERRA SANCTE CRUCIS" (LAND OF THE HOLY CROSS). CUBA RUNS INDEFINITELY WESTWARD.

the great American power to which nature has set her in such close relation found itself compelled to draw the sword against the government responsible for her intolerable condition.

"THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LAND."

It was the first westward voyage of Columbus that made Cuba known to European civilization. Sixteen days after the Italian navigator's landing on the island that he christened San Salvador—which was probably either Watling's or Cat Island—he sighted the Cuban coast at a point near the present site of Nuevitas. This was on the 28th

way, he described it in his diary as "the most beautiful land that human eyes ever beheld." The natives received him with wondering hospitality, but, naturally enough, could give him little information. Hearing them mention a village or district called Cubanacan, Columbus concluded that he had reached the dominions of Kublai Khan, the great Tartar sovereign whose court Marco Polo visited two hundred years before. He sent some of his men inland, as ambassadors to the reigning prince; but after traveling a dozen leagues they came back, reporting that they could find no prince, no cities, no





PUNISHMENT OF INDIANS FOR NOT ATTENDING CHURCH.

*From an engraving in Champlain's "Voyage to the West Indies and Mexico."*

roads—nothing but the same primitive villages of naked, harmless Indians.

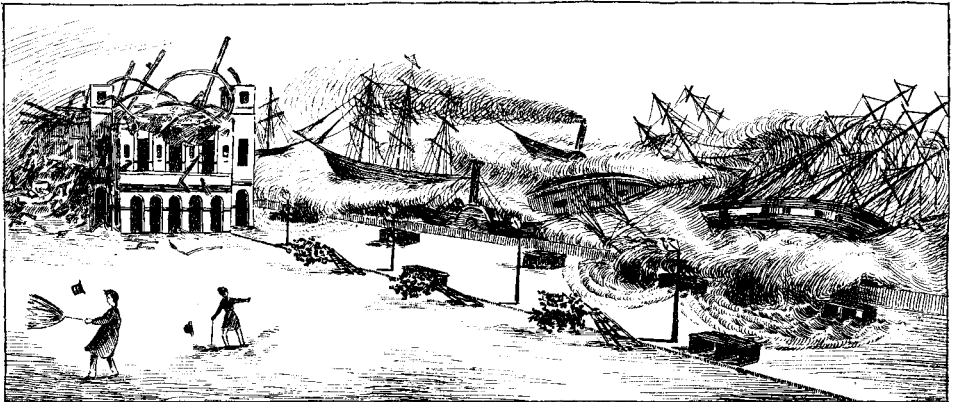
Columbus spent two months on the northern coast of Cuba; then he sailed from Cape Maysi—which he named "Alpha and Omega," supposing it to be the easternmost extremity of Asia—to Hispaniola (Haiti), where his flagship, the Santa Maria, was wrecked, and he left its crew to build the fortified

were soon superseded by the old Indian name which it still bears.

#### EARLY SPANISH COLONIZATION.

To the chance that wrecked the Santa Maria on its shores was due the fact that Spanish colonization of the new world began in Hispaniola. In 1511 Diego Columbus, the great discoverer's son, who was ruling in that island as

post of La Navidad. He never founded any settlement in Cuba, though on his second voyage (1494) he passed along almost the entire length of its southern coast, and on his fourth and last (1503) he paid it another brief visit. When he died, three years later, he still believed that it was part of the mainland of Asia. He had named it Juana, in honor of the Infant Juan (John), the son of his patrons, Ferdinand and Isabella. It also appears on early maps as Fernandina, Isabella, Santiago (after the patron saint of Spain), and Ave Maria; but all these titles



A CUBAN HURRICANE—THE GREAT STORM OF 1846 AT HAVANA.

*From an old print.*

admiral of the Indies, sent out Diego Velasquez, with four ships and three hundred men, to conquer Cuba. With this force—of which Hernando Cortez, the future conqueror of Mexico, was an undistinguished member — Velasquez

ready established the bloody and brutal system of enforced labor—or slavery, to give it its true name—which utterly exterminated the West Indian aborigines. They carried the same policy to Cuba. The Inquisition, established in

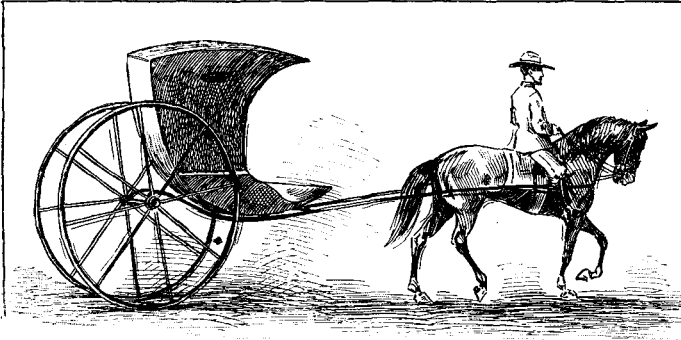


CANTINO'S MAP OF THE NEW WORLD (1502). THIS MAP SHOWS CUBA AND HAITI AS "ILHA YSSABELLA" AND "ILHA ESPANHOLA." THE DOTTED LINE IS THE "LINE OF DEMARCATION" DRAWN BY THE POPE TO DIVIDE THE NEW WORLD BETWEEN THE KINGS OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

established the armed posts of Baracoa (1511), Santiago de Cuba (1514), and some others whose names still appear on the maps of the island. Baracoa, now a decayed seaport with the population of a village, was the first seat of government, being made a city and a bishopric in 1518; but four years later the capital was transferred to Santiago, of whose long history the latest and most eventful chapter is fresh in all American minds.

In Hispaniola the Spaniards had al-

Spain thirty years before, went with it, and the torch of the holy office seconded the sword of the soldier in cowering the helpless natives. "Thus began," says Arrate, the Cuban historian of last century, "that gathering of an infinite number of gentiles to the bosom of our holy religion, who otherwise would have perished in the darkness of paganism." They were gathered so rapidly to that gentle bosom that within fifty years the Indians of Cuba, who had numbered several hun-



THE VOLANTE, THE HISTORIC VEHICLE OF CUBA.

dred thousand when the Spaniards came, were totally extinct.

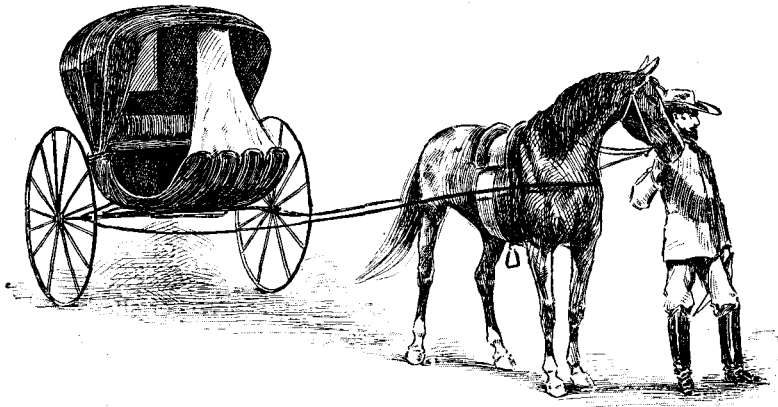
There is a characteristic story of Hatuey, a chief whom Velasquez ordered to the stake for his resistance to the conquerers. A priest soothed his last moments by asking if he wished to go to Heaven. "Are there any Spaniards there?" Hatuey inquired. "Many," replied the priest. "Then," said the Indian, "I would rather go to hell!"

Spain has suffered from no little misrepresentation at the hands of Cuban writers, and of some Americans; but the facts of this dark page of her colonial annals do not rest upon the testimony of any foreign critic. They are told by that great Spaniard, Bartolome de las Casas, whose "Destruction of the Indies" is a narrative of what he himself saw in Cuba and Hispaniola between 1502 and 1530.

ships sailing from the mainland. It was this traffic that gave Havana its importance.

#### THE EARLY HISTORY OF HAVANA.

The history of the chief city and seaport of the West Indies begins in 1515, with the settlement of fifty of the men of Diego Velasquez' expedition at the post of San Cristobal de la Habana, on the present site of the town of Batabano, on the southern coast of Cuba. A few years later, finding the spot they had chosen unhealthy, the settlers crossed to the northern shore, little more than thirty miles distant, and established themselves at the narrow entrance of a bay in which Ocampo—the Spanish admiral who first circumnavigated Cuba—had repaired his ships in 1508. Here, beside its fine harbor, Havana had a long struggle for existence. The sixteenth century was a



A MODERN TYPE OF VOLANTE.

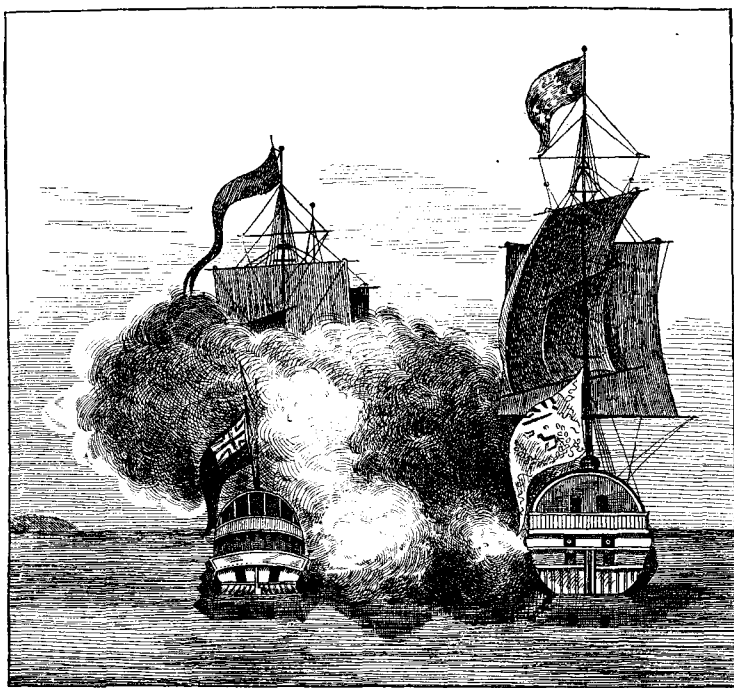




THE EXECUTION OF THE VIRGINIUS PRISONERS AT SANTIAGO DE CUBA, NOVEMBER 7, 1873.—CAPTAIN FREY SAYING FAREWELL TO HIS MEN.

stormy time in West Indian waters. There might be peace at home, but in the new world the Spaniard, the Frenchman, the Englishman, and the Hollander were foes wherever they met; and all of them were fair game to the buccaneers who fought under no flag but their own. Havana suffered

by another French marauder, Jacob Sores, in 1551. In 1589, to protect his treasure ships from those dreaded wolves of the sea, Drake and Hawkins, who "held the power and glory of Spain so cheap," Philip II ordered two strong fortresses built to defend the harbor of Havana. These, too, are



THE CAPTURE OF A SPANISH GALLEON.

*From an engraving in the "Voyage par George Anson" (1750).*

several hostile visitations. In 1538, the settlement having been burned by a French pirate or privateer—the distinction between the two was often very slight—Hernando de Soto, the governor of Cuba, came from Santiago, his capital, and built the fort of La Fuerza to defend it. The old building, not a very formidable fortress, still stands, the most ancient relic of Havana's early days.

It was at Havana that De Soto gathered his expedition for the exploration of Florida, and from thence that he sailed with nine ships on the 12th of May, 1539—never to return. His fort did not save the place from an attack

standing today—the Bateria de la Punta (Battery of the Point) at the northernmost point of the city, west of the entrance to the bay, and the famous Morro\* on the low heights that rise on the east side of the channel. In the same year the colonial government of Cuba was reconstituted, Havana became the capital of the island, and Juan de Tejada was sent there as the first captain general.

During the next century the fortifi-

\* The Spanish word *morro*, which means "a protruding lip," is frequently applied to forts standing upon an elevation at the mouth of a harbor. There is another famous Morro at Santiago de Cuba, and another at San Juan, in Porto Rico.



ocation of Havana was completed by the building of a wall around the town; and from this time, owing to its situation and defenses, it was long regarded as impregnable. A contemporary description pictures it as an unkempt place, with houses of straw and wood, surrounded by little gardens with hedges of a prickly shrub. At night the narrow streets were unlighted, and swarmed with land crabs.

#### HAVANA TAKEN BY THE BRITISH.

In 1762 occurred an event which, memorable and interesting in itself, is of historical importance as having first brought Cuba into the field of international politics, and as marking the beginning of the island's relations with ourselves. This was the capture of Havana by the British and colonial troops commanded by the Earl of Albemarle. It was one of the scenes of that great drama of battle, the Seven Years' War, in which Europe's soldiers and sailors met and fought in Asia and America, on Atlantic and Pacific. England, after some initial reverses, had shattered the French fleets at Lagos and Quiberon, and driven the Bourbon flag from Canada and India. When Spain entered the conflict as France's ally, the next blows were directed against her colonial possessions, and British expeditions were despatched against Havana and Manila. Both were completely successful, although in each case diplomacy gave back to Spain what had been won from her by the sword.

Havana being reputed a strongly fortified and garrisoned place, the force sent against it was a powerful one. There were thirty two ships of war, with nearly two hundred transports, in the fleet that was sighted off the harbor on the 6th of June, 1762. A landing was effected at Guanabacoa, a few miles east of Havana, on the 17th, and the British army, numbering twenty thousand men, advanced and captured the heights east of the harbor, where the

fortress of Cabanas now stands. The Spaniards, who had twenty seven thousand regulars, besides an auxiliary force of volunteers, still held the Morro, and prevented the English men of war from entering the port by sinking ships in the channel.

#### FEVER AS THE INVADERS' FOE.

In many respects, the campaign suggests comparisons with our own operations at Santiago a hundred and thirty six years later. Although a considerable part of their force had been raised in the West Indies, the British found the fevers of the Cuban coast a deadlier foe than the Spanish guns. Before the end of July, nearly half of their force was disabled by sickness; and the arrival, on July 28, of a body of fresh troops from the North American colonies was a most welcome reinforcement. These earliest American invaders of Cuba consisted of a thousand men from Connecticut, eight hundred from New York, and five hundred from New Jersey, with General Lyman, of the first named colony, in command. It is worth recording that Israel Putnam, destined to win fame in the Revolution, was acting colonel of the Connecticut regiment.

The Morro was stormed a few days later, and on August 13 the city surrendered, the garrison being allowed to march out with the honors of war. An immense quantity of spoil fell to the victors, who confiscated public property and levied contributions unsparingly. The tobacco and sugar seized and sold on the spot alone brought \$3,500,000. Sir George Pocock, who commanded the fleet, and Lord Albemarle drew \$600,000 apiece as prize money. The comparative value that eighteenth century officialdom attached to officers and men may be inferred from the fact that each soldier's share was twenty dollars and each sailor's eighteen.

The territory surrendered to the British stretched eastward to Matan-

zas, but they had made no effort to push their conquests when peace was proclaimed, and on the 6th of July, 1763, they evacuated Cuba, George III's government having accepted in exchange the Spanish province of Florida—which was returned to Spain twenty years later. While holding Havana, the soldiers were terribly scourged by disease. Mante, a chaplain from New England, has left us, in his diary, a vivid picture of the sufferings of his compatriots, in whose camp the "putrid fever" wrought frightful havoc. Only a remnant returned alive.

#### HAVANA BECOMES THE FOREMOST CITY IN AMERICA.

To Havana, a year of British occupation was not without benefit. Efforts were made to improve the sanitary condition of a city which Spanish incompetence has allowed to remain a hotbed of fever to the present day. Its port, for the first time, was opened to the commerce of the nations, and the world's attention was called to the possibilities of Cuba as a mart for trade. Havana's importance as a modern city may be said to have begun at this point, although with the restoration of Spanish rule the law giving Spain a monopoly of traffic with Cuba was temporarily reaffirmed. At the end of the eighteenth century it was probably the largest American city of European settlement, and certainly the richest and most important seaport in the new world.

Luis de las Casas, who came out as captain general in 1790, did much for Havana, helping to form its Sociedad Patriótica (Patriotic Society), to found its first newspaper, the *Papel Periodico*, and to promote useful public works. Another name of the same period that is held in grateful memory is that of Francisco Arango. Born in Havana in 1765, Arango was secretary of the local chamber of commerce when Napoleon drove the Bourbon dynasty from Madrid, in July, 1808. The Span-

ish officials in Cuba promptly met, and at four thousand miles' distance defied the conqueror of Europe by affirming their loyalty to the deposed sovereign. Their action won for Cuba the title of the Ever Faithful Isle—a name of grim irony, in the light of later events—and the privilege, bestowed by the constitution framed in 1812, when Ferdinand VII returned to his throne, of representation in the Cortes at Madrid. Arango went to Spain as one of the first Cuban delegates, and secured the final abolition of the law debarring foreign ships from the ports of the island.

#### CUBA'S GOLDEN PERIOD.

The first quarter of the nineteenth century has been called the "golden period" of Cuba's history. It was a time of general internal tranquillity, and of great industrial and commercial development. She was benefited by the fact that Spain was at its lowest ebb of weakness both at home and abroad. For years at a time, during the Napoleonic wars, communication with Madrid was cut off by the hostile sea power of Britain, which, though it seized Trinidad, made no second attack upon Cuba. The successful revolt of all the mainland colonies, too, seemed at least temporarily to have opened the ear of the Spanish government to Cuban grievances. At the same time it brought loyalist settlers to the island, just as Canada, after our own Revolution, became a refuge for Americans who preferred their old allegiance. A more important immigration came from Haiti, whence thirty thousand white families, victims of the island's race war, are said to have fled to Cuba between 1798 and 1808, bringing with them the cultivation of coffee—which became the chief Cuban product, till superseded by sugar. All these causes contributed to the island's rapid advance in wealth and population. She had had but 170,370 inhabitants in 1775, and 272,140 in 1791. The number grew to 551,998 in 1817,

to 704,487 in 1827, and to 1,007,624 in 1841.

#### THE DARK SIDE OF THE PICTURE.

But with all this material development signs of Cuba's later troubles were not lacking.

The West Indies seem to be well fitted, by nature, to be the home of civilized and prosperous communities; yet European colonization can show little, if anything, but failure in that rich chain of islands. They have had four centuries of checkered history—history full of revolts and massacres, of crimes and horrors, of battles fought for the spoils of war. The white conquerors exterminated the native tribes, to replace them with negro slaves; and it has been their just retribution to see the African multiply and possess the land where the superior race failed to take thrifty root. In Haiti, negro domination has long been absolute. Jamaica, always orderly under English rule, and for a time a prosperous colony, has but a lingering remnant of a few thousand whites to more than half a million colored inhabitants. In the lesser islands—British or French, Danish or Dutch—the story is the same.

To this long chapter of failures Cuba has appeared as the conspicuous exception. With all her mistakes and shortcomings as a colonizing power, Spain seemed to have done in the West Indies what France and England could not do—to have planted the seeds of a community capable of becoming a civilized nation. But recent history suggests a serious question of this conclusion. There are many today who hold that the prosperity of Cuba was founded upon slave labor; that from the industrial viewpoint, Cuba without slavery—which, it must be remembered, ended only a dozen years ago—is still an experiment; that from the social and political viewpoint, the islanders, taken as a community, have yet to prove their capacity for self govern-

ment and their right to rank with the free peoples of America.

There were no schools in Cuba till near the end of last century. In 1836, when the population was nearly a million, only nine thousand pupils were receiving instruction. In 1860, the municipalities of the island had two hundred and eighty three schools for white children, and just two for colored, and the total attendance was no larger, in proportion to the population, than in 1836. In 1883, a report shows eight hundred and thirty five schools, but their management is described as one of utter neglect, few teachers being paid their salaries, and sixty seven schools being entirely vacant. There is no census of illiteracy in Cuba, but, of course, it is practically universal among the negroes and quite general among the poorer whites. Of another test of popular enlightenment—the relative proportion of legitimate and illegitimate births—we find no recent report. The percentages of forty years ago are given by Ballou:

	LEGITIMATE.	ILLEGITIMATE.
White . . . . .	67.8	32.2
Colored . . . . .	33.7	66.3
Total . . . . .	50.5	49.5

Even allowing for the existence of slavery, the figures are sufficiently shocking. Both Spain and Cuba were to pay a terrible penalty for allowing successive generations to grow up under such conditions of savagery.

#### NEGRO SLAVERY IN CUBA.

Negro slavery, as has been said, ended in Cuba twelve years ago, but it has left a deep and indelible mark upon the island's present and future. It began almost with the Spanish occupation, and by a curious anomaly its origin is traced to the sainted Las Casas. Seeing that the native Indians, a people neither accustomed to labor nor physically competent for it, were perishing in thousands under the lash of their taskmasters, Las Casas suggested, as an alternative, the importation of a



limited number of African slaves. The suggestion, developed to an extent of which its author never dreamed, was destined to bring momentous results, and to stain the history of the new world with a crime to be expiated by the blood and tears of nations. Yet to stigmatize Las Casas as the founder of American slavery is scarcely fair. There were African bondsmen in Spain before the time of Columbus, and the institution was certain to cross the Atlantic to lands where it found so fertile a field prepared for it.

Nominally, at least, the Spanish laws that regulated slavery in Cuba were fairly humane. They forbade the owner to work his slaves longer than from sunrise to sunset (from six to six, in the tropics), with two hours for a siesta at noon, and with Sunday as a day of rest. They prescribed a certain quantity and variety of food, allowed slaves to keep pigs and cultivate patches of their own, and created a system whereby an industrious negro could secure his freedom by paying the amount of his first cost to his master; but it appears that if there was little ill treatment of slaves—and Ballou, Abiel Abbott, and other American travelers in Cuba testify that they witnessed none—it was rather from self interest on the part of their owners than from respect for the statutes.

Whatever the material condition of the slaves, the institution was a fruitful source of social and political disorder. It was bitterly opposed by the mass of white Cubans, just as it was opposed by the free laboring class in the United States. On the other hand, it kept the rich planters loyal to Spanish rule, which protected them in the possession of their chattels; especially as the *cafetals* (coffee farms) were turned into great sugar plantations, operated on a far larger scale of agriculture. It was a fruitful source of official corruption. The negroes themselves formed a dangerous element of the population in slavery, and an undesirable one since

emancipation. Their numbers, at different times, are thus stated:

	SLAVES	FREE
1827 . . . .	286,942	106,494
1841 . . . .	436,495	152,838
1851 . . . .	442,000	205,670
1867 . . . .	379,523	225,938

Their present number is estimated at half a million. If these figures are correct, it is strange that Cuba's colored population should have decreased by nearly 150,000 in the last half century, while that of the United States, during the same period, has considerably more than doubled.

#### THE PASSING OF SLAVERY.

The first blow at slavery in Cuba was struck in 1817, when Spain agreed to prohibit the importation of African negroes into her colonies. A consideration for this act of humanity was the receipt of two million dollars from the British government—which, a hundred years before, had itself bought from Spain a monopoly of the slave trade in her ports. But long after 1817 the forbidden traffic went on clandestinely. With the full cognizance of the Spanish officials, and to their great financial profit, the barracoons of Havana continued to be a mart for planters who needed labor. The trade was not without its risks, of course, and many a human cargo from the east coast of Africa was confiscated and liberated by the watchful British cruisers; and as the demand outran the supply, the price of slaves went up. In 1830, an able bodied negro was worth \$250 or less; in 1850, his value had doubled, and in 1870 it had doubled again.

But the government at Madrid could not much longer maintain an institution offensive to the civilized world, and in 1870, without compensating the planters, a law was passed to effect its gradual abolition. Slaves sixty years old were declared free, and those not yet sixty were to become free on reaching that age; children born to slavery were to remain under "patronage" until they were twenty two, and then be

free. One purpose of this act was to dissuade the negro population from joining the revolt then in progress. Ten years later the Spanish Cortes hurried matters by declaring slavery abolished, while patronage—the same thing under another name—was to end in 1888. Shortly before the latter date arrived, the liberation of all negroes was completed by the decree of October 7, 1886.

#### THE LONG SERIES OF REVOLTS.

It was the Cuban negroes who first began the series of revolts that have made the island's later history so turbulent and disastrous. During the race war in Haiti, ending in the triumph of the blacks, order was preserved in Cuba; but in 1812, when the first agitation for the abolition of slavery was in the air, there was a revolt under a free negro, one Jose Aponto, which was speedily ended by the execution of its leaders.

The first rising of white Cubans—creoles, as they used to be called, though the word is not often used now—was that of the Soles de Bolivar in 1823. The revolution of 1820 in Spain had led to intervention by the Holy Alliance, and a French army, commissioned by that league of rulers by divine right, had invaded the peninsula and restored Bourbon absolutism by force of arms, suppressing the newly established liberal constitution. Of this constitution Cuba had briefly enjoyed the benefit, but Marshal Vives was sent to Havana to cancel the privileges it had granted. Intense discontent was the result, and the secret association of the Soles de Bolivar was organized, its aim being to accomplish for Cuba what the South American liberator had achieved for the mainland colonies. It is said to have been in correspondence with Bolivar, and to have received from him promises of help. August 16, 1823, was fixed as the date for simultaneous risings in several cities; but there were traitors in the camp. On the day of the

intended outbreak the head of the society, Jose Lemus, and his chief lieutenants, were arrested, and the conspiracy collapsed.

#### MONROE'S FAMOUS DECLARATION.

That same year, 1823, was a memorable one in American history. The close political relations of Cuba and the United States may be dated from it.

The Holy Alliance, organized to combat democracy wherever found, sought to follow up its success in Spain by reconquering her revolted colonies, the South American republics. With Cuba as a military base, it would not have been a difficult task, had there not been strenuous and probably unexpected opposition. In December, 1823, President Monroe sent to the United States Congress his famous message declaring that "we could not view an interposition by any European power in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States"—thus laying down the principle that has become historic as the Monroe Doctrine. The stand he took was backed by England, and the continental powers were checked.

To the destiny of Cuba the enunciation of the Monroe doctrine was a fact of decisive importance. It directly implied that the United States would not allow the island to pass to any power other than Spain. Thus much had been foreshadowed a few months before by John Quincy Adams, then Secretary of State, writing to Mr. Nelson, American minister at Madrid:

The transfer of Cuba to Great Britain would be an event unpropitious to the interests of this Union. The opinion is so generally entertained, that even the groundless rumors that it was about to be accomplished which have spread abroad, and are still teeming, may be traced to the deep and almost universal feeling of aversion to it, and to the alarm which the mere probability of its occurrence has stimulated. The question both of our right and of our power to prevent it, if necessary by force, already obtrudes itself upon our councils, and the administration is called upon, in the performance of its duties to the nation, at least to use all the means within its competency to guard against and forefend it.

At nearly the same time the veteran Jefferson wrote to Monroe, whose valued political counselor he had always been:

Cuba alone seems at present to hold up a speck of war to us. Its possession by Great Britain would indeed be a great calamity to us. Could we induce her to join us in guaranteeing its independence against all the world, except Spain, it would be nearly as valuable as if it were our own. But should she take it, I would not immediately go to war for it; because the first war on other accounts will give it to us, or the island will give itself to us when able to do so.

After Monroe's message, our statesmen took a more decisive tone. For instance, in Henry Clay's instructions to the American ministers in Europe, issued shortly after he became Secretary of State in 1825, he said:

You will now add that we could not consent to the occupation of those islands [Cuba and Porto Rico] by any other European power than Spain under any contingency whatever.

#### CUBA AS AN APPLE OF DISCORD.

Spain's extreme weakness at this period, and her loss of great colonies in rapid succession, naturally led to the belief that she could not retain her hold upon Cuba. That England intended to seize the island seems to have been a baseless supposition. At that time—and later—our politicians were prone to mistrust of British designs. There was a strong feeling in favor of its annexation to the United States. Adams, in the note already quoted, declared:

It is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the annexation of Cuba to our Federal Republic will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself.

And Jefferson gave his opinion that her addition to our confederacy is exactly what is wanted to round our power as a nation to the point of its utmost interest.

But nothing was done to realize the suggestion. The sinister shadow of the slavery question deterred our statesmen from action, either in the direction of acquiring Cuba from Spain, or in that of helping the island to assert its independence. All the South American states, on throwing off the Spanish yoke, had abolished human

servitude. An influential element in the United States was very unwilling to aid Cuba to take a similar step. As for admission to the Union, the North would not accept the island with slavery, the South—or those who controlled the South's political course—would not admit her as a free State. Van Buren, as Secretary of State, in 1829, thus stated the situation, after asserting our "deep interest" in the fate of the Spanish Antilles:

Considerations connected with a certain class of our population make it to the interest of the Southern section of our Union that no attempt should be made in that island to throw off the yoke of Spanish dependence, the first effect of which would be the sudden emancipation of a numerous slave population, which result could not but be very sensibly felt upon the adjacent shores of the United States.

It is noteworthy that a couple of years after Jefferson's expression of a wish that England would join us in guaranteeing Cuba to Spain, the British government made that very proposal to France and the United States, the consideration from Spain being her acknowledgment, which she still refused, of the independence of the South American republics; but both Paris and Washington declined the suggestion. The former, possibly, did not care to renounce its chance for a valuable possession that seemed to be in the international market; the latter acted strictly on the lines of the Monroe Doctrine.

#### THE STRIFE OF CUBAN AND SPANIARD.

Amid these international complications, a second rebellion against Spanish rule was planned by Cuban creoles in 1826. Its chief organizers were fugitives of the unsuccessful movement of three years before; their headquarters were in Caracas, and again the aid of Bolivar was expected; but again, through treachery or lack of support, the rising collapsed before a blow was struck. The Spanish authorities were now equipped against disaffection with the weapon which they have ever since used so unsparingly to subvert popular rights and render pretended conces-



sions worthless. By the decree of May 28, 1825, the captain general had been permanently invested, in "extraordinary circumstances"—of which he was to be the sole judge—with "all the powers which are conceded to the governors of cities in a state of siege"—in other words, with absolute military power superseding all forms of law and all guarantees of liberty.

With his authority thus asserted in Cuba, Captain General Vives formed a highly ambitious plan for the reconquest of Spain's mainland colonies. It was a task far beyond his powers. Landing at Tampico in August, 1828, with three thousand five hundred men, he was speedily hemmed in by superior Mexican forces, and compelled to surrender his arms and withdraw. But Spain's power in Cuba was not shaken by this reverse, and a third native rising, planned by the secret society of the *Aguila Negra* (Black Eagle), was crushed as readily as its predecessors. Vives, who personally was a clear sighted ruler and capable administrator, refrained from any bloody vengeance upon the conspirators, none of whom was executed.

Vives was succeeded by Ricafort, Ricafort by Tacon, one of the most famous of Spain's colonial governors. Cubans remember Miguel Tacon as the man who riveted upon them the hateful system of Spanish officialdom, making the island a feeding ground for the politicians of the peninsula, diverting its revenues from their proper channels, and delivering its public service over to corruption and neglect. It was he who deliberately destroyed the last chance of reconciliation between Spaniard and Cuban. Amid the troubles that followed the death of Ferdinand VII, in 1833, the revolution of La Granja secured for Spain the reestablishment of the liberal constitution of 1812. When the news crossed the Atlantic, General Lorenzo, governor of the province of Santiago, at once proclaimed the new order, which affirmed the liberty of the

press, and created local governing bodies and a national militia. At Havana, Tacon utterly refused to recognize the reformed constitution, and used his arbitrary power to suppress it. Declaring Lorenzo a public enemy, he was organizing an armed force to invade the eastern province, when the governor of Santiago fled to Spain, and laid his case before the Cortes. With fatuous inconsistency, the Madrid legislators approved Tacon's course, excluded the deputies who had arrived as representatives of Cuba, and declared that the island was not governed by the restored constitution, but by special laws. Meanwhile Tacon had established a reign of terror in Santiago, where he laid heavy hands on those who had dared to antagonize him. Clergymen and leading citizens were imprisoned or banished, and five hundred men were set to work with shackled feet in the streets of Havana.

#### PLANS FOR ANNEXING CUBA.

In the early forties, when the troubles on our southwestern frontier were bringing us nearer and nearer to war with the Spanish Americans of Mexico, public attention in the United States again became focused upon Cuba. The British government's active work for the abolition of the slave trade—which, as has been said, continued to flourish in the Spanish West Indies with corrupt official connivance—gave rise to a wide spread belief that England's real aim was the acquisition of Cuba for herself. Such a plan certainly never materialized, and there seems to be not a scintilla of evidence that it was ever contemplated; but the alarm evidently found credence at Washington. John Forsyth, Secretary of State, wrote to our minister at Madrid, in 1840:

You are authorized to assure the Spanish government that in case of any attempt, from whatever quarter, to wrest from her this portion of her territory, she may securely depend upon the military and naval resources of the United States to aid her either in preserving or recovering it.

Daniel Webster, who succeeded Mr. Forsyth in the State Department, told the same official, three years later :

It is represented that the situation of Cuba is at this moment in the highest degree dangerous and critical, and that Great Britain has resolved upon its rule.

Had such a design been formed in London, our war with Mexico offered a favorable opportunity for its execution ; but nothing of the sort occurred. That war over, leaving us with a vast accession of territory, President Polk sought to round out our new acquisitions by a stroke like Jefferson's purchase of Louisiana, and in 1848—a year of trouble in Europe—he instructed our minister at Madrid to offer the Spanish government a hundred million dollars for the sovereignty of the island. Spain refused the proposal, regarding the mere suggestion of such a transaction as an indignity ; and it has never been officially renewed, though various plans for the purchase of Cuba have been brought forward by individuals or newspapers, and President Buchanan twice urged Congress to consider the subject.

#### THE BEGINNING OF FILIBUSTERING.

At this same date, just fifty years ago, the political disorders of Cuba developed a new phase, bringing them into closer connection with the United States, and constituting a source of annoyance that ultimately became almost intolerable. In 1848 Narciso Lopez, who had escaped from the island after another attempt at rebellion, too feeble and abortive to deserve chronicling, formed the first society of Cuban refugees in America, and in the following year organized his first filibustering expedition. He was stopped by the United States government ; but in 1850 he rendezvoused six hundred men on an island off the Yucatan coast, and effected a landing at Cardenas, where he expected that recruits would flock to his standard.

The story of a dozen insurrections

shows that while the grievances of the Cubans have undoubtedly been great, and their outcry against their oppressors correspondingly loud, they have been singularly backward in striking a bold and united blow for liberty. The expectations of Lopez were totally disappointed. The people did not rise. They did not even obstruct the railway from Havana, which speedily brought two thousand five hundred of Captain General Roncali's soldiers ; and at his approach the invaders, who had seized the government house, retreated to their steamer. They disbanded at Key West, and Lopez was arrested by the United States authorities. Brought to trial, he was discharged ; but his ship, the Creole, was confiscated.

#### THE STORY OF LOPEZ' LAST INVASION.

The expedition of 1851 was at least a more stirring and romantic failure. Lopez had gathered about four hundred and fifty men and procured a steamer, the Pampero. His second officer, General Pragay, was an exiled Hungarian rebel. There were a few more Hungarians and Germans among his men ; forty nine were Cubans, the rest Americans, one of them being a well known Kentuckian, Colonel Crittenden. They sailed for New Orleans, and, after nearly running into Havana harbor by mistake, landed at Bahia Honda, some forty miles to the west, on the 11th of August. As Lopez stepped ashore he went down on his knees and kissed the earth, saying, "*Querida Cuba!*" (" Beloved Cuba ! ")

With about three hundred of his soldiers, Lopez pushed inland toward the mountains, where he planned to establish himself in an intrenched camp. Colonel Crittenden and one hundred and fifty men were left at Bahia Honda to land the ammunition and baggage. They had not brought everything ashore when a Spanish steamer entered the harbor and attacked them. Some of the filibusters fled inland, and re-joined Lopez ; Crittenden and most of

his men attempted to escape in their boats, but were captured, taken to Havana and shot.

The Spanish troops found Lopez at Las Pozas. Attacking his camp, they were received with a deadly fire, and driven off with a loss of two hundred killed. The filibusters had lost thirty five men, and when they left Las Pozas they had to leave their wounded behind, to be murdered by the Spaniards, who had no mercy for outlaws. They made a second stand at Las Frias, where two hundred of them defeated thirteen hundred of the enemy; but their doom was certain. No recruits joined them; they had no supplies, and their scanty ammunition was ruined by tropical storms. They became scattered, and wandered through the forests till every one of them perished miserably, or was captured and taken to Havana for execution. Lopez met a felon's death by the garrote in the castle of La Punta.

#### INTERFERENCES WITH AMERICAN COMMERCE.

The annihilation of the Lopez expedition did not deter the Cubans and their sympathizers in the United States—among whom General Quitman of Mississippi was actively prominent—from threatening fresh descents, and the result was a serious strain in the relations between the governments at Washington and Madrid. The bitter feeling of the latter found expression in interferences with American commerce, which provoked intense indignation in the United States. In 1851 the American ship *Falcon* was fired on, and two other vessels were seized upon a vague suspicion that they had been concerned in Lopez' operations. In 1852, the United States mail bags at Havana were opened and examined by order of the captain general. The ship *Crescent City* was debarred from landing her passengers and mails, because her purser, a Mr. Smith, was personally obnoxious to the Spanish officials. In his annual message that year Pres-

ident Fillmore stated the situation thus:

The affairs of Cuba remain in an uneasy condition, and a feeling of alarm and irritation on the part of the Cuban authorities appears to exist. This feeling has interfered with the regular commercial intercourse between the United States and the island, and led to some acts of which we have a right to complain.

In the same document the President reported a renewal of the British suggestion of 1825, and its renewed rejection by our government:

Early in the present year (1852) official notes were received from the ministers of France and England inviting the government of the United States to become a party with Great Britain and France to a tripartite convention, in virtue of which the three powers should severally and collectively disclaim, now and for the future, all intention to obtain possession of the island of Cuba, and should bind themselves to discountenance all attempts to that effect on the part of any power or individual whatever. This invitation has been respectfully declined. I have, however, directed the ministers of France and England to be assured that the United States entertain no designs against Cuba, but that on the contrary I should regard its incorporation into the Union at the present time as fraught with serious peril.

#### DRAWING NEARER TO WAR.

During the next two years the friction of which Mr. Fillmore complained became still more serious, and in 1854 the seizure of the American ship *Black Warrior* at Havana, on a charge of violating the custom house regulations, brought Spain and the United States to the verge of war. The famous Ostend manifesto, issued by the American ministers at London, Paris, and Madrid, was generally indorsed by American public opinion when it declared:

Our past history forbids that we should acquire the island of Cuba without the consent of Spain, unless justified by the great law of self preservation. We must, in any event, preserve our own conscious rectitude and our self respect. Whilst pursuing this course, we can afford to disregard the censures of the world, to which we have been so often and so unjustly exposed. After we shall have offered Spain a price for Cuba, far beyond its present value, and this shall have been refused, it will then be time to consider the question: "Does Cuba in the possession of Spain seriously endanger our internal peace and the existence of our cherished Union?" Should this question be answered in the affirmative, then by every law, human and divine, we shall be justified in wresting it from Spain if we



possess the power ; and this upon the very same principle that would justify an individual in tearing down the burning house of his neighbor if there were no other means of preventing the flames from destroying his own home.

This bold and somewhat undiplomatic statement was signed by Pierre Soulé of Louisiana, John Young Mason of Virginia, and James Buchanan of Pennsylvania ; but neither Congress nor the Executive took any action upon it. Two years later, when Buchanan was elected to the Presidency, it was thought that he would take some step towards carrying out the decided views he had expressed ; but beyond his repeated suggestion that Congress should consider the purchase of Cuba, nothing was done. All less pressing questions were now thrust aside by the great conflict that culminated in the Civil War.

#### A SPANISH REFORM COMMISSION.

The prospect of intervention by the United States naturally did not tend to allay Cuba's internal troubles, and the social and political disorder of the island continued. In 1865 the Liberal party, then in power at Madrid, made a characteristic attempt to restore the once vaunted loyalty of the Ever Faithful Isle, by referring its grievances to a commission of reform, half of whose members were appointed by the government itself, and the rest elected in Cuba, but by a system that gave the Spanish party control of the polls. The Cuban demands\* were submitted and rejected seriatim.

Three years later there was again a gleam of hope for Cuba, which proved equally illusory. The reign of Isabella ended in a revolution, and another constitution—one of the seven or eight that Spain has had in the present century—was proclaimed. On paper, at least, it was quite an advanced one, de-

creeing universal suffrage and a free press, and granting Cuba and the Philippines complete political equality with the mother country ; but it was never put into operation beyond the ocean. It would have destroyed the political supremacy of the *Peninsulares*, the Spanish element that regarded itself as rightfully the ruling class in Spain's colonies ; and Lersundi, captain general at Havana, simply ignored it. Had he desired to recognize it, the Spanish volunteers, now established as the strongest political force in Cuba, would not have permitted him to do so.

#### THE TEN YEARS' WAR, 1868-1878.

It was clear that the Cubans could rest no further hope on political agitation. Plans for a new revolution were already afoot, and on October 10, 1868, the standard of revolt was raised by Carlos Céspedes on the plantation of Yara, near Manzanillo, in the province of Santiago. At the head of one hundred and forty men, Céspedes proclaimed the Cuban republic ; and thus began the 'Ten Years' War, which, barren of other results, was destined to bring such frightful losses to Spain and such equally terrible devastation to the Pearl of the Antilles.

The military history of the Ten Years' War is utterly insignificant. It consisted of a confused series of guerilla campaigns, similar to those that have laid Cuba waste during the last few years. There were frequent reports of important actions, which were always sweeping victories for the side making the report. It was several times announced that the insurgents had captured this or that city ; but quite or almost invariably these triumphs were purely imaginary. The Spaniards succeeded in confining the rebellion to the provinces of Santiago and Puerto Principe, its western limit being practically marked by the trocha, or fortified line, which they threw across the island from Moron to Jucaro. In the two eastern provinces they held the sea

\* The chief points of these were the abolition of the military autocracy of the captain general ; representation in the Cortes ; mitigation of the press censorship ; the right of assembly ; the lessening of taxation, and the enforcement of the laws against the slave trade.

coast, the towns, and many fortified posts, but were utterly unable to dislodge the patriots from the forest clad mountains of the interior.

Had they sent thirty or forty thousand men to Cuba on the outbreak of the rebellion, and moved against its scanty and ill armed forces with promptness and vigor, it is very improbable that the Cubans could have kept the field. But Spain was distracted by domestic troubles; civil war was threatened, and in 1872 it broke out, the Carlists attacking the supporters of the Italian Amadeo. Such troops as could be spared were sent over to Cuba in driblets. Some were Carlist prisoners, whose loyalty was doubtful. Some officers high in command were strongly suspected of a desire to continue the war for the chances of illegitimate profit it brought them.

There were shocking atrocities on both sides, terrible waste of life, and great destruction of property. Statistics of the Spanish losses were never published, but it is believed that during the ten years not less than 150,000 soldiers from the peninsula left their bones in Cuba—some of them victims of the bullets or machetes of the insurgents, but far more slain by the fevers of the tropics. The Cubans suffered in turn, for half of the island was laid waste; and though they seem never to have had more than a few thousand men in the field at once—it is impossible to give the exact number, estimates varying all the way from two thousand to thirty thousand—their losses from the hardships of guerrilla warfare were disproportionately heavy.

Some of the worst excesses of the war were committed by the Spanish volunteers—a force numerous enough to have suppressed the rebellion, had they displayed any desire for active service in the field, rather than for terrorizing the cities. There were about sixty thousand of them in Cuba, twenty thousand in Havana alone, and they

carried matters with a high hand in the capital.

#### OUTRAGES BY THE VOLUNTEERS.

In May, 1870, a performance was announced at one of the Havana theaters for the benefit of "Cuban insolvents"—which doubtless meant the insurgents. A crowd of armed volunteers broke into the house and poured a volley into the audience. In the following month, displeased with the mild policy of Captain General Dulce, they arrested him and forced him to sail for Spain—a bold usurpation in which the Madrid government meekly acquiesced. In November, 1871, they seized forty three students of the University of Havana, charging them with scratching the glass in a cemetery vault containing the remains of a Spanish soldier. The students were acquitted in court, whereupon the volunteers constituted a court martial of their own officers, condemned eight of the young men to death, and shot them the next morning. The official paper announced that "some negroes had killed a volunteer, and two of them were summarily shot."

"It could not be expected," wrote an American correspondent who was in Cuba in 1873, "that the insurgents, on their side, should abstain from fearful reprisals. The practice with them when a prisoner, and especially an officer, falls into their hands, is to tie his feet up to a tree, and to pile up fuel under the dangling head, thus burning their enemy alive with a slow fire. It would not be easy to ascertain on which side the atrocities first began, or are carried to greater lengths."

#### BALMACEDA'S "RECONCENTRATION."

A specially sinister reputation was earned by the Spanish general, Balmaceda (afterwards captain general of Cuba), whose proclamation of April 4, 1869, in the districts of Bayamo and Jiguani, anticipated the ruthless policy of Weyler in some of its orders:

Every man from the age of fifteen years upward found away from his habitation, who does not prove a proper reason therefor, will be shot.

Every unoccupied habitation will be burned.

Every habitation that does not fly a white flag, as a sign that its occupants desire peace, will be burned.

Women not living at their own homes, or at the houses of their relatives, will collect in the towns of Jiguami and Bayamo, where subsistence will be provided. Those who do not present themselves will be conducted forcibly.

#### AMERICAN SYMPATHY FOR THE CUBAN INSURGENTS.

It was only natural that popular sympathy in the United States should be strongly enlisted on behalf of the insurgents. The spectacle of a people struggling to be free is one that appeals too strongly to give time for a close scrutiny of the standing and the methods of those whom misgovernment has driven to revolt. The patriots of our own Revolution were ragged regiments, and partisan warfare had helped to win the struggle for us. On the other side was a power against whom we had a long series of grievances, and who represented a European domination such as we ourselves had cast off. There was a strong demand that our government should formally recognize the insurgents as belligerents, as had been done by some of the South American republics; but the administration, with undoubted political wisdom, opposed this step, which would have been of no practical benefit. As President Grant said in his annual message for 1869:

The contest had at no time assumed the conditions which amount to a war in the sense of international war, or which would show the existence of a political organization of the insurgents sufficient to justify a recognition of belligerency.

Conditions had not changed when in June, 1870, the President sent to Congress a special message in which he described the shocking state of affairs existing in Cuba. It was a description that applied as well to the rebellion of 1895 as that of 1868:

The condition of the insurgents has not improved, and the insurrection itself, although not subdued, exhibits no signs of advance, but seems

to be confined to an irregular system of hostilities carried on by small and ill armed bodies of men, roaming without concentration through the woods and the sparsely populated regions of the island, attacking from ambush convoys and small bands of troops, burning plantations and the estates of those not sympathizing with their cause.

But if the insurrection has not gained ground, it is equally true that Spain has not suppressed it. Climate, disease, and the occasional bullet have worked destruction among the soldiers of Spain, and although the Spanish authorities have possession of every seaport and every town on the island, they have not been able to subdue the hostile feeling which has driven a considerable number of the native inhabitants of the island to armed resistance against Spain, and still leads them to endure the dangers and privations of the roaming life of a guerrilla.

#### THE VIRGINIUS AFFAIR.

Such was the situation when the affair of the *Virginus* trebly inflamed public feeling in the United States and made war appear inevitable. The *Virginus* was a small American side-wheel steamer which had made several voyages to Cuba carrying arms and recruits for the insurgents. On October 31, 1873, she was sighted off the south coast of the island by the Spanish gunboat *Tornado*, which promptly gave chase. By a curious coincidence, the two vessels were sister ships, built in the same yard; and in the light of recent tests of Spanish and American seamanship it might have been expected that the *Virginus* would outrun its pursuer. But though she made frantic efforts to reach Jamaican waters, throwing her cargo of horses and arms overboard to lighten the ship, as well as to destroy evidences of her unlawful mission, she was overhauled and taken to Santiago de Cuba.

One hundred and sixty five men were captured with the *Virginus*. On November 4, four of them—three Cubans and one American—were summarily shot by order of the Spanish commander, General Burriel. Three days later, thirty seven prisoners, one of whom was the ship's commander, Captain Frey, were taken ashore, lined up before a file of marines, and shot. These men were Cubans, Americans, and



British subjects. The American and British consuls protested vehemently, but without effect. On the 8th, twelve more prisoners suffered the same fate.

The news of the executions was received with wild rejoicings in Havana, with a burst of horrified indignation in the United States. Our government found itself in a very difficult position. Whether they were filibusters or not, the shooting of American citizens captured on the high seas was an undisguised outrage upon international law; but the weakness of our navy—which had been left to rot in our harbors since the end of the Civil War—rendered a prompt and effectual protest impossible. A fleet was ordered to rendezvous at Key West, but little could be expected of our rusty ironclads and obsolete wooden ships. The rest of the *Virginius* prisoners would probably have shared the doom of the fifty three who had perished, had it not been for Sir Lambton Loraine, captain of the British sloop of war *Niobe*, who ran into Santiago harbor with his guns ready for action, and threatened to

bombard the town if there were any further executions.

There followed weeks of tedious correspondence between Washington and Madrid. The Spanish government declared that it had sent orders forbidding the shooting, but that owing to the interruption of telegraph lines by the insurgents they had not reached Santiago in time. Finally Spain consented to surrender the *Virginius*, to release the surviving Americans in her crew, to pay a small indemnity for those who had been shot, to salute the American flag, and to punish "those who have offended." By way of carrying out the last promise, Burriel was promoted. The formal transfer of the *Virginius*, which had been taken in triumph to Havana, was ungraciously carried out in the obscure harbor of Bahia Honda; she was in a filthy and unseaworthy condition—the Spaniards had purposely defiled her—and she sank on her way to the north.

But once more war with the United States had been postponed, and Spain was left to wreak her will in Cuba.

*(To be continued.)*

#### ONE MERRY MORN IN AUTUMN TIME.

THE huntsman bee the meads across  
 Blew blithe his breezy horn,  
 And in the sunlight I saw toss  
 The golden tasseled corn.  
 The apple reddened toward its prime  
 In orchards waving wide,  
 One merry morn in autumn time  
 When I went out to ride.

'Twas at the crossroads that I met  
 A maiden fair of face;  
 Her eyes were dewy violet,  
 She sat her wheel with grace.  
 We both the same long slope must climb  
 And so rode side by side,  
 That merry morn in autumn time  
 When I went out to ride.

I smiled at her, she smiled at me;  
 Our talk it rippled on  
 From politics to poetry,  
 From Dobson back to Donne.  
 Forsooth, the world has run to rhyme  
 Since I that maid espied  
 One merry morn in autumn time  
 When I went out to ride!

*Clinton Scollard.*