

**THE CUBAN QUESTION IN ITS TRUE
LIGHT; A DISPASSIONATE AND
TRUTHFUL REVIEW OF THE
SITUATION IN THE ISLAND OF CUBA,
AND THE POSITION OF THE UNITED
STATES TOWARD THE INSURRECTION**

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The Cuban question in its true light; a dispassionate and truthful review of the situation in the island of Cuba, and the position of the United States toward the insurrection by Various

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BY AN AMERICAN

NEW YORK, 1895

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THE CUBAN QUESTION

IN ITS TRUE LIGHT.

I.

UNRELIABILITY OF CUBAN NEWS.

A great deal has been written about the Cuban question in the American newspapers, but, as those conversant with the true state of affairs in the Island of Cuba know, there is, in the majority of the reports which find their way into print, so much that is utterly false, that they give the public no reliable information from which to derive a correct knowledge and on which to base a fair judgment of the situation in the "Pearl of the Antilles."

The requirements of the daily press—the aim of every newspaper being to outdo the others in the publication of sensational news—make it a difficult, almost an impossible task for the news editor to carefully weigh the value of every piece of information received, and to winnow the grains of truth out of the immense amount of chaff which is served to the daily press as news.

There are in the United States a number of Cuban refugees who are naturally interested in magnifying the extent

and scope of the present rebellion, and they avail themselves of every opportunity to spread exaggerated reports of victories in the field and to pour into the ears of sympathizing Americans tales of misery and woe. Key West, Tampa and Jacksonville are the principal hotbeds of Cuban filibusters, and these have agents who make it their business to concoct and transmit North such fabulous tales purporting to come from Cuba, as to make all dispatches dated at those places entirely unreliable.

MISSTATEMENTS OF THE PRESS.

It is generally from such sources as these that American newspapers derive the information which they serve up to an unsuspecting public under the guise of news, without taking the trouble to ascertain the truth or falsity of their reports. Thus we have read in a leading paper a cablegram announcing the gallant feat of a Spanish officer, whose death had been reported by the same newspaper a few days before. Thus we have been told of the capture by the insurgents of so important a town as Santa Clara, even the location of the town being shown on a map, on the very day that General Martinez Campos made Santa Clara his head-quarters, and yet the paper which boasted of this great feat of journalism, allowed the false report to remain uncontradicted in its columns. Thus we have read, day after day, the most absurd and extravagant tales about the progress of the Cuban rebellion and the atrocities committed by the Spanish soldiers, until the public mind has become bewildered and confused, and public opinion has erred in its judgment on the Cuban question.

AN APPEAL TO AMERICAN COMMON-SENSE.

It is for the purpose of setting public opinion right that these pages are now written. The American people love

truth and fair play, and they are always to be found on the side of right and justice. No fair judge would pass sentence upon a case without hearing the evidence on both sides, and no fairer judge can be found than the American people when their honest good sense is appealed to. Almost all that has been said so far in this country about the Cuban question has been inspired by the insurgents themselves or by their agents and sympathizers. It would be interesting to know what Spain has to say on the subject. But in the absence of any presentment of the Spanish side of the case, it should be the endeavor of all impartial and fair-minded people to examine the question without prejudice, putting sentimentality aside, and seeking only the truth in order to form a correct and intelligent opinion.

II.

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW.

In the first place, let us see how and by whom this insurrection was brought about.

There is no nobler or higher aspiration in the heart of man than the desire for independence. To Americans this feeling must be for ever dear; as it was the origin, the foundation, the corner-stone of our great and glorious country. One after another the various possessions of Spain on the continent of the New World have severed their political ties with the mother country, just as the thirteen English colonies in North America severed their ties with Great Britain.

Cuba and Porto Rico are the only possessions left to Spain in this hemisphere, which she discovered and in a great degree peopled. By reason of the richness and fertility of their soil, and—let us acknowledge it frankly—by dint of energy, activity and thrift on the part of the Spaniards, those two islands, and more especially Cuba, have so prospered in the development of their agriculture as to be among the richest and most productive regions in the world.

About the middle of this century, Narciso Lopez, with a few followers, raised the cry of independence and took up arms against Spain. The movement was short-lived, because the great majority of the inhabitants of Cuba frowned upon it as impeding the true interests and prosperity of the Island.

Eighteen years later, in 1868, a group of Cubans headed by Cespedes raised again the cry of independence at Yara, and this time the spirit of rebellion spread throughout a great

portion of the island, many among the better class of native Cubans—lawyers, planters, men of brains and wealth—either joining the ranks of the rebels or aiding the cause with the sinews of war. The struggle lasted ten years, for the insurgents received valuable aid in the shape of armed expeditions which managed to leave the United States and land on the Cuban shores. However, the great majority of the inhabitants continued loyal to Spain, and the insurrection was finally quelled by General Martinez Campos, who, by the treaty of Zanjón, permitted the rebel chiefs to leave the Island, promising at the same time a more liberal policy in the government of Cuba, including its representation in the Cortes.

THE ZANJON AGREEMENT.

We have no less an authority than General Campos himself, a man whose honesty has never been questioned, for the statement that all the promises made by him at Zanjón have been religiously fulfilled by Spain.

As a matter of fact, the conditions submitted by the rebel chiefs at Zanjón on the 10th of February, 1878, to General Martinez Campos, previous to their surrender and as a basis of peace, embodied the following demands: First—That the Island of Cuba be granted similar politic, organic and administrative reforms as those already adopted in Porto Rico. Second—General amnesty to all political offenders and persons engaged in the rebellion. Third—That all the slaves having taken part in the insurrection be set free. Fourth—That the Spanish Government will permit and facilitate the leaving of the Island to any of the insurgents wishing to do so.

Not only were all of the above demands acquiesced in by the Spanish Government, but, as is well known, slavery in