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GEORGE KENNAN ON THE SPANISH–AMERICAN WAR

A Critical Edition of "Cuba and the Cubans"

Edited by Frank Jacob

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Editor
Frank Jacob
History
Queensborough Community College
Bayside, NY, USA

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Frank Jacob

Abstract The introduction provides a survey of George Kennan's (1845–1924) vita and works until the outbreak of the Spanish–American War (1898). It furthermore provides a discussion of the context of the war within Cuban and American histories. The developments on Cuba as well as the U.S. discussion about a military intervention on the island are analyzed and different perspectives on the issue critically explained. Furthermore, a short description and analysis of the main contents of Kennan's lecture "Cuba and the Cubans" are given.

Keywords George Kennan · Spanish–American War · Cuba Cuban independence

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F. Jacob (✉)
Queensborough Community College, Bayside, New York, USA

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The Spanish–American War[1] was often called a "Splendid Little War" that finally ended the remains of Spanish imperial pretensions in the Caribbean and Latin America and replaced the former colonial power in this region with a new imperial great power, the United States of America. While the U.S. perspective and the perception of Cuba in the works of George Kennan the Elder (1845–1924) will be of special interest in the present book, a few words about the Cuban context are needed to understand what happened before U.S. interests in the country developed. A short survey of the events leading up to the Spanish–American War is therefore necessary before returning to the perception of the conflict in the United States.

As recent research has shown, the history of Cuba must be researched in its Caribbean context to understand the economic and social transitions that determine the history of the island in the "long" nineteenth century.[2] German historian Michael Zeuske argues that the "point of no return in the relationship between 'African' ethnicity, slavery as labor system, and constructed blackness seems to have come in the English, Dutch, and Danish Caribbean at the end of the first half of the sixteenth century; eighty years earlier in Brazil; and somewhat later in North America, the French Caribbean, and the Spanish Caribbean".[3] While a first wave of abolition swept through Saint Domingue, the British colonies and Latin America (1650–1850), as Zeuske continues the periodization, "An overlapping third stage of expanding slavery begins with the Haitian Revolution and lasts until the last New World abolitions in the southern United States in 1865, Cuba in 1886, and Brazil in 1888."[4]

[1] On the Spanish–American War see: Donald H. Dyal, Brian B. Carpenter, and Mark A. Thomas, ed. *Historical Disctionary of the Spanish–American War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996); Frank Freidel, *The Splendid Little War* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1958); G. J. A. O'Toole, *The Spanish War: An American Epic, 1898* (New York: Norton, 1984).

[2] Thomas Neuner, "Santo Domingo/Saint-Domingue/Cuba: Five Hundred Years of Slavery and Transculturation in the Americas," *Social History* 31, 1 (2006), 79–83. For a discussion of the "long" nineteenth century in Latin America see Frank Jacob and Gilmar Visoni-Alonzo, "Introduction: Conflict and Warfare in Latin America's Martial Century", in *Latin America's Martial Age: Conflict and Warfare in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Gilmar Visoni-Alonzo and Frank Jacob (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2017), 5–14.

[3] Michael Zeuske, "Hidden Markers, Open Secrets: On Naming, Race-Marking, and Race-Making in Cuba", *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 76, 3/4 (2002), 212.

[4] Ibid.

This third period caused an economic and social transformation on the island, where "the leading role of Hispano-Cuban planters led to the creation of an explicitly white model of the nation".[5] The Cuban struggle against Spanish colonial rule between 1868 and 1898 was therefore not only a struggle against a foreign ruler but also an internal one between the white ruling class and the people of color, which was particularly stimulated by a crisis of the existing political system on the island.[6]

The economic elite until the 1820s had been the large landowners (hacendados), who, for example, had gained money from crown privileges within the tobacco trade.[7] In the nineteenth century, however, a process of class and social diversification began, which opened the stage for those of modest social origin, who were able to increase their wealth as a consequence of economic, techonological, and demographic change on the island and in the region. In the 1860s a period of technological development is followed by a concentration of capital, which stimulated a "formation of an independent consciousness", because the changes caused a reconfiguration of the Cuban elites between 1868 and 1898, which would eventually have a direct impact on the louder demands for independence from Spain.[8]

At the same time, race, as the Afro-Cuban intellectual Esteban Morales Domínguez emphasized, is "a problem of vital importance"[9] on the island. In order to understand Cuba's history in the "long" nineteenth century and beyond, one has to highlight that "Racism arose from slavery", because "For generations, blacks and their descendants occupied the lowest rung in Cuban society."[10] While slavery

[5] Matthias Röhrig Assunção and Michael Zeuske, "Race, Ethnicity and Social Structure in 19th Century Brazil and Cuba", *Ibero-amerikanisches Archiv*, Neue Folge 24, 3/4 (1998), 442.

[6] Ana María Calavera Vayá, "Del 68 al 98: Oligarquía habanera y conciencia independentista", in *La nación soñada: Cuba, Puerto Rico y Filipinas ante el 98*, Actas del Congreso Internacional celebrado en Aranjuez del 24 al 28 abril de 1995, eds. Consuelo Naranjo Orovio, Miguel Angel Puig Samper, Luis Miguel García Mora (Madrid: Doce Calles, 1996), 109.

[7] Ibid., 110.

[8] Ibid., 111–114.

[9] Esteban Morales Domínguez, *Race in Cuba: Essays on the Revolution and Racial Inequality*, ed. and transl. under the direction of Gary Prevost and August Nimtz (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2012), 19.

[10] Ibid., 21.

was not only related to the cultivation of sugar, as well as tobacco,[11] it was the revolution on St. Domingue that would tremendously change Cuban demographics and the economy that previously existed. Following the independence of Haiti, Cuba would become the leading exporter of sugar in the Caribbean, and slavery the determining factor for the island's history until 1886, when it was formally abolished, and beyond.[12] Between 1816 and 1867 more than 595,000 slaves were brought to Cuba, and with 17% of the island's population being free people of color, the white population became a minority.[13] These demographics would increase the white elite's fear of a slave rebellion, such as the one that swept over St. Domingue, and made them support the Spanish colonial rule at a time when other colonies in Spanish America were considering greater autonomy or outright independence.[14]

It was the global impact of the French Revolution in the Caribbean, the violent transformation of the sugar colony of St. Domingue to the free nation state of Haiti that stimulated a colonial paranoia in Cuba as well.[15] We can consequently identify three main problems for the Cuban upper classes related to the events in the French colony. The elites needed to (1) keep the colonial status of the island in existence in order to preserve their own privileged status, (2) expand the plantation system to take advantage of shortfall in sugar production the revolution on St. Domingue had created, and hoped for (3) the end of French exports from the region due to the involvement of the French Republic in the

[11] For a detailed discussion about the interrelationship of tobacco and slavery on Cuba see Michael Zeuske, "Sklaven und Tabak in der atlantischen Weltgeschichte", *Historische Zeitschrift* 303 (2016), 315–348.

[12] Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868–1898* (Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 2; Morales Domínguez, *Race*, 91.

[13] Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 2.

[14] A survey of the revolutions in Latin America between 1760 and 1830 is provided in Stefan Rinke, *Revolutionen in Lateinamerika: Wege in die Unabhängigkeit 1760–1830* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2010).

[15] Michael Zeuske and Clarence J. Munford, "Die 'Große Furcht' in der Karibik: Frankreich, Saint-Domingue und Kuba 1789–1795", *Ibero-amerikanisches Archiv*, Neue Folge, 17, 1 (1991), 52. For a discussion of the global impact the French Revolution had on the Caribbean and in how far, it could be taught from a specific global perspective, see Frank Jacob, "Teaching the French Revolution from a Global Perspective", CUNY Academic Works, April 29, 2017, http://academicworks.cuny.edu/qb_pubs/37 (Last access, July 5, 2017).

First Coalition War between 1793 and 1795.[16] The end of the plantation system on St. Domingue consequently marked the beginning of the Cuban transformation, because the continuation of slavery on the island made the takeover of the economic potential of the former French colony possible. While fear existed for a possible consequence of the extension of the plantation system on Cuba, the economic impact was tremendously bigger than this fear.[17]

The demographic changes since the early nineteenth century would later impact the history of Cuban emanciptation, which, as Rebecca J. Scott and Michael Zeuske have correctly argued "took place during a period of intense competition for popular loyalty between the Spanish colonial state and Cuban separatists".[18] The Cuban struggle for independence can therefore not solely be understood as one of colonized people against their colonizers, but is far more complex, as different interest groups within the Cuban society would determine the course of the events. While the emancipation of the slaves was a complex process that would take decades to gain the legal freedom of this group in 1886, the wars between 1868 and 1898 served as catalyzers to achieve this aim.[19] Eventually, the struggle for the abolition of slavery became closely linked to the struggle for Cuban independence and the idea of the establishment of a free nation state.[20] The final defeat of Spain in 1898 marked what Rebecca J. Scott and Michael Zeuske called a "break with the past",[21] and the former slaves initially believed to be able to claim citizenship, especially since they had served in the Liberation Army of Cuba, in which 60% of the soldiers, and up to 40% of the officers (like Antonio Maceo (1845–1896)), were men of color.[22] It was between the abolition of slavery in 1886 and the beginning of the War of Independence in 1895 that the antiracist moment in the independence

[16] Zeuske and Clarence J. Munford, "Die 'Große Furcht'," 66.

[17] Ibid., 68.

[18] Rebecca J. Scott and Michael Zeuske, "Property in Writing, Property on the Ground: Pigs, Horses, Land, and Citizenship in the Aftermath of Slavery, Cuba, 1880–1909", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, 4 (2002), 670.

[19] Rebecca J. Scott and Michael Zeuske, "Le 'droit d'avoir des droits': Les revendications des ex-esclaves à Cuba (1872–1909)," *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 59, 3 (2004), 521.

[20] Röhrig Assunção and Zeuske, "Race", 376.

[21] Scott and Zeuske, "Property in Writing", 670.

[22] Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 3.

movement continued to grow, and in contrast to the Ten Years' War (1868–1878),[23] which was led by wealthy natives like Carlos Manuel de Céspedes (1819–1874) that demanded independence from Spain, in 1895 a "new rhetoric made racial equality a foundation of the Cuban nation".[24] In 1895 the revolutionary war against the colonial power had therefore become "an ambitious anticolonial and antiracist project"[25] that was supposed to lead to a free and equal nation state in which the racial segregation of the past should be overcome. However, Cuba did not achieve its independence in 1898, but rather switched from a form of direct rule in one of the old colonial empires (Spain) to a form of indirect rule within the informal empire that was established by the United States. With regard to Cuban racism, the society of the island remained "deeply divided along racial lines and was still haunted by the fear of black revolution"[26] decades later.

U.S. historian Louis A. Pérez, Jr. accurately described the Cuban drama when he stated that "somehow the twentieth-century republican reality had fallen short of the nineteenth-century separatist ideal."[27] While the war that began in 1895 was the continuation of two previous wars, it was, however, different, regardless of the personal continuities, i.e. the fact that the years from 1868 to 1898 "involved two generations of Cubans in three major wars".[28] The Ten Years' War rather resembled a true colonial conflict between center and periphery in which slaves could be freed by their owners to fight against Spain,[29] but it has been argued that the war as an initial event did a lot to create the seminal perception

[23] For a survey of the events see Francisco Ibarra Martínez, Cronología de la guerra de los diez años (Santiago de Cuba: Instituto cubano del libro, 1976).

[24] Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 3.

[25] Ibid., 5.

[26] Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886–1912* (Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 2. Helg specifically focuses on the so called Little Race War in 1912 (originally Levantamiento Armado de los Independientes de Color, Armed Uprising of the Independents of Color). On the events see: Silvio Castro Fernández, *La masacre de los Independientes de Color en 1912* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2008).

[27] Louis A. Pérez, Jr. *Cuba Between Empires 1878–1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), xv.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ada Ferrer and M. Ferrandis Garrayo, "Esclavitud, ciudadanía y los límites de la nacionalidad cubana: la guerra de los diez años, 1868–1878", *Historia Social* 22 (1995), 102.

of a Cuban national identity in contrast to the foreign "other". However, like the following Small War (Guerra Chiquita, 1879–1880)[30] no independence and social equality could be achieved, even if the wars themselves, especially the Ten Years' War, had tremendous social and economic consequences,[31] which stimulated the course of events until 1895 when another war broke out to eventually achieve independence. This time, as Louis A. Pérez, Jr. correctly emphasizes, the war "was different not only because it succeeded. It succeeded because it was different."[32] It seemed obvious that the collaboration of the local elites, creoles and peninsulares alike had prevented a successful war against Spain, because the difference between 1868 and 1895 "was the recognition that inequity was not caused prinicipally by Spanish colonial rule, for which independence was the obvious panacea, but, rather, was the effect of the Cuban social system for which the only remedy was a transformation of Cuban society".[33] What also made the war of 1895 different was the intervention of the United States in 1898, which seemed to have developed a much greater interest in its Caribbean neighbor since the first wars for independence had broken out three decades earlier. The interest was stimulated by an increasing economic value related to Cuba as well as by many Cubans that had reached U.S. shores before and had began to lobby for a free Cuban nation state.

Already during the Ten Years' War many Cuban refugees had arrived at Key West, whose number of inhabitants had doubled to reach 10,000 by the year 1880.[34] The war on the island had caused a Cuban diaspora which also forced some independence fighters to look for shelter in Mexico where, between 1880 and 1897, they established secret organizations that supported the revolutionaries in Cuba with money and

[30] Francisco Pérez Guzmán, *La guerra chiquita*: una experiencia necesaria (Havana: Letras Cubanas, 1982). For related sources see: Archivo Nacional de Cuba, *Chiquita Documentos para servir a la historia de la Guerra Chiquita*, 3 vols. (Havana: Publicaciones del Archivo nacional de Cuba, 1949–1950).

[31] Hernán Venegas Delgado, "Plantación, plantaciones: Cuba en los 1880", *Caravelle* 85 (2005), *Grandes plantations d'Amérique latine: Entre rêve et commerce*, 67–74.

[32] Louis A. Pérez, Jr. *Cuba Between Empires*, xv.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Antonio Rafael de la Cova, "Cuban Exiles in Key West during the Ten Years' War, 1868–1878", *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 89, 3 (2011), 289. In 1888, the Cuban exile Juan Bellido de Luna (1830–1902) reports, that of 25,000 inhabitants, 20,000 were of Cuban decent.

weapons.[35] Similar actions were also coordinated in the United States where José Martí (1853–1895) established the Partido Revolucionario Cubano in New York in January 1892.[36] Three years later it was this Cuban Revolutionary Party that demanded another rebellion against Spain to achieve independence.[37] The conflict between Spain and the Cuban revolutionaries, however, only caused violence to spread against the civil non-combatants when the Spanish Army seemed incapable of dealing with the guerilla tactics of the Cuban enemy.

Economic interests and expansionist ambitions eventually caused the United States to intervene on behalf of the Cubans. After the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives had sanctioned an American intervention in April 1898, the war between Spain and the United States began on May 1, with an attack of the U.S. fleet in the Philippines. The Battle of Manila Bay was a success for American Commodore George Dewey (1837–1917) whose fleet destroyed the Spanish enemy. While Dewey had to wait for reinforcements from the USA to continue the war on the Philippines, American soldiers landed on Cuba at Daiquiri and Siboney. On land the U.S. troops were successful, regardless of the fact that they had severe problems with supplies and logistics. On July 3, 1898 the Battle of Santiago de Cuba saw the end of the Spanish fleet, which was destroyed by the U.S. fleet under the command of William T. Sampson (1840–1902). In late July, after the Cuban successes, the United States would also occupy Puerto Rico and thereby acquire another Spanish territory that would be included in the new American Empire. Once the Caribbean theater was decided, Spain also lost the Philippines, and in August 1898 the war ended.

The end of the Spanish–American War also marked the end of the Cuban dream of independence. The Cuban coalition against the colonial

[35] María del Socorro Herrera Barreda, "Hacia 1898: conspiraciones separatistas cubanas en México", *Historia Mexicana* 47, 4 (1998), 808. Already in 1825, Cuban militant separatists had formed the Junta Promotora de la Libertad Cubana in Mexico.

[36] Academia de la Historia de Cuba, ed. *Diario del Teniente Coronel Eduardo Rosell y Malpica (1895–1897)*, vol. 1, *En Camino* (Havanna: El Siglo XX, 1949), 26–36 describes the Cuban activities in the United States in early 1895. One of the exiles involved in the planning for another Cuban rebellion against Spain was Pedro Betancourt Dávalos (1858–1933). For his biography, see: Juan M. Dihigo, *El mayor general Pedro E. Betancourt y Dávalos en la lucha por la independencia de Cuba* (Havana: El Siglo XX, 1934).

[37] Lars Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic: The United States and the Cuban Revolution* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 14.

ruler broke up, and as Louis A. Pérez, Jr. termed it, "Divided, exhausted, and impoverished, the revolutionary coalition came apart. The United States skillfully exploited these conditions."[38] Therefore "a guerilla war of national liberation aspiring to the transformation of society"[39] turned out to be inapropriate to achieve national sovereignty and independence. It was rather taken over by the United States, and the latter's ambitions transformed what had begun as a war of liberation into an expansionist one. The ideas of the Cubans were also far too radical for the United States, especially since "Cuba Libre contained elements of anti-imperialism, political radicalism, agrarian reform, racial equality, and social justice."[40] As Michael Zeuske emphasized, "The nationalist variant of equal rights clearly contained a much stronger set of egalitarian claims under the rubric of race-blindness,"[41] something that could have been dangerous in the American context as well. In the end, the Cuban and American allies turned into adversaries[42] and U.S. voices, like the one of George Kennan, changed towards doubting Cuba's capability to be an independent nation state. These assumptions were also based on racism, which marks continuities from Spanish to American rule in Cuba where (regardless of later developments even after the revolution of 1959) a "new racism… forms part of the open secrets in Cuban history".[43] Important to better understand the development and the success of Kennan's perspectives on Cuba was the general perception of the conflict in the United States.

With regard to the U.S. perspective, newspapers and journals were the main medium to get informed about the events in Cuba, and for the European observers it seemed clear that "American 'innocence', as far as the Europeans were concerned, succumbed to greed, vulgarity, hypocrisy, and materialism".[44] The United States, immediately having had Hawaii annexed after the outbreak of hostilities, would gain its

[38] Louis A. Pérez, Jr. *Cuba Between Empires*, xviii.

[39] Ibid., xix.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Zeuske, "Hidden Markers," 214.

[42] Louis A. Pérez, Jr. *Cuba Between Empires*, 221–227.

[43] Zeuske, "Hidden Markers", 234.

[44] Holger H. Herwig, "Review of Sylvia L. Hilton and Steve J. S. Ickringill, ed., European Perceptions of the Spanish–American War of 1898. New York: Peter Lang, 1999", *The Journal of Military History* 64, 3 (2000), 858.

first colonial possessions as a consequence of the victory over Spain. The war between the former American colony and the European colonial power was also a media event about which many newspapers reported.[45] Three years before its outbreak Joseph Pulitzer (1847–1911), the publisher of the *New York World*, declared that he could provoke this war with his publications: "Let the war idea once dominate the minds of the American people and war will come whether there is cause for it or not."[46] Furthermore, he and his media coverage of the war were also responsible, like many other war correspondents and newspapers in all parts of the United States, of changing the national perception of the war against Spain from a war that was fought to free the Cubans to a war of colonial expansion.[47]

Initially the Cuban War of Independence (1895–1898) was compared to the American Revolution. Some Americans believed the Cubans were suppressed whites, a view dominant in the southern parts of the United States, while the northern states interpreted the conflict between Cuba and Spain as a war for the freedom of the oppressed black people on the island. Eventually "Racist and racial liberal thus moved from opposite poles to join hands in support of the Cuban."[48] Twenty-five years later, Oscar E. Carlstrom (1878–1948), a veteran of the war with Spain and later Attorney General of Illinois gave a speech to the State Encampment of Spanish War Veterans at Jacksonville, Illinois, in which he emphasized the importance of the U.S. intervention in Cuba: "Twenty-five years ago the citizenry of these United States were inflamed with a holy passion and determined purpose to strike forever from these Americas the last effort of a tyrannical power to cruelly oppress."[49] It was the "continued recitals of brutality in Cuba" by the Spanish that "had … been brought to the attention of the American people" to eventually cause action for a humanitarian cause.[50] Furthermore, the mysterious sinking

[45] James Castonguay, "Hypertext Scholarship and Media Studies", *American Quarterly* 51, 2 (1999), 247–249.

[46] "Editorial", *The New York World*, December 22, 1895.

[47] Gerald F. Linderman, *The Mirror of War. American Society and the Spanish–American War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974), 122.

[48] Ibid., 129.

[49] Oscar E. Carlstrom, "The Spanish–American War", *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 16, 1/2 (1923), 104.

[50] Ibid., 105.

of the battleship *Maine* in the harbor of Havana, "blasting into a watery grave 266 American sailors of her crew" spread the "battle cry of 1898" across the country.[51]

While the United States might have been theoretically prepared for the conflict, its military was not. However, numerous volunteers answered the call to arms by President William McKinley (1843–1901), a fact Carlstrom later would comment on in the following way: "Never in the history of any nation has there been such a remarkable response. The blood of the fathers truly coursed with abiding purpose and conviction through the veins of the young manhood of America. A free people under a free government had justified their capacity for strength in emergency."[52] Regardless of the national support for the war, the events in Cuba would eventually cause a transformation from a war for liberty to an empire building war of expansion. This transformative process was made possible by people like George Kennan (1845–1924),[53] who accompanied the American forces to report about the events in Cuba. His opinion about Cuba and the Cubans would change in similar ways, as that of the American public. After the war, Kennan would regularly present lectures to audiences in almost every part of the United States and strengthen the negative image of an independent Cuba, the one he often referred to in his lecture "Cuba and the Cubans". The present introduction will provide a short description of Kennan's life and work until 1898, to show how a "self-made writer" was able to gain national fame and as a result was handpicked as a war correspondent for the Cuban campaign. In the second part, the role of the press in the formation of the U.S. attitude towards the war against Spain will be discussed before finally elaborating on Kennan's impact on the Cuban image in the United States after 1898. It was the demand for current news from

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] The few available works on Kennan predominantly deal with his impact on U.S.–Russian relations. See Frederick F. Travis, *George Kennan and the American–Russian Relationship, 1865–1924* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1990); Helen Sharon Hundley, "George Kennan and the Russian Empire: How America's Conscience became an Enemy of Tsarism", *Occassional Paper* no. 277 (Washington, D.C.: Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, 2000). Of his many writings only a small part has been edited before, i.e. George Kennan, *Vagabond Life: The Caucasus Journals of George Kennan*, ed. and commented by Frith Maier and Daniel Clarke Waugh (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).

faraway places at the end of the long nineteenth century that made the rise of Kennan, who had no prior intellectual education, possible.[54] He would become the voice of a nation that found itself within the transformative process, due to which a collective fervor to create a free and independent nation state, based on the American idea of a nation, would be transformed into an aggressive nationalism that could not tolerate Cuban independence after the Spanish–American War and demanded the expansion of U.S. interests to the Caribbean sphere and Southeast Asia, all in order to secure great power status and gain international recognition as one of the nation states that could effect change in the world.

George Kennan's Career Until 1898

The life of George Kennan is amazing to say the least.[55] He was born on February 16, 1845 in Norwalk, Ohio. In 1846 the family moved to Buffalo New York, before returning to a farm west of Norwalk in 1848, and Norwalk itself in 1852. Five years later, Kennan quit school, at the age of 12, and became a telegraph operator in his father's Western Union office. In 1860 he was a railroad telegraph operator at Norwalk Station. Two years later he left home for the first time to take over the position of a substitute operator in the Cleveland office of Western Union, from where he was transferred to Columbus, Cleveland, and finally Cincinnati. During the Civil War (1861–1865) Kennan advanced to the rank of Assistant Chief Operator, but did not seem to like the job. In April 1864 he applied for a position within the Alaskan–Siberaian expedition team of the Western Union Extension to prepare a new telegraph line to Russia. After a journey from Cleveland to New York to Greyton, Nicaragua, he arrived in San Francisco in January 1865. On his way to the Central American country Kennan traveled on a steamer with 150

[54] For a discussion of the role of war correspondents since the late nineteenth century see Barbara Korte, *Represented Reporters: Images of War Correspondents in Memoirs and Fiction* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009), 7–94.

[55] The following description of Kennan's life is based on "Chronologies", a timeline of Kennan's life, 1930. Copy made in Medina N.Y. July 1930 for George Frost Kennan, Milwaukee, Wis. George Kennan Papers (henceforth GKP), New York Public Library, Box 7, Series V: Kennan family papers, Folder 7.4, V.B. Emeline Weld Kennan, 1896–1933, n.d.

other passengers, a journey he described in "Two Christmases" later.[56] In addition to the journey itself, Kennan was amazed at the Nicaraguan landscape, its flora and fauna, which manifested their beauty early on.[57]

In order to cross Nicaragua to reach the Pacific, from where Kennan would sail to San Francisco on another steamer, he was forced to make the trip on the back of a mule, an experience Kennan seems to have rather disliked:

> Whether the Nicaraguan mule of 1865 was naturally stupid, obstinate, vicious, tricky, and full of all unrighteousness, or whether his naturally sweet and tractable disposition had been soured and ruined by the fortnightly transit of a horde of hungry and irritated passengers from the river steamer, who had a grievance against the Company and who proceeded to "take it out" of the Company's mules, I will not undertake to say; but certain it is that every Nicaraguan mule whose behavior I had an opportunity to observe was possessed of more devils than the whole drove of Gadarene swine![58]

Kennan's mule must have been particularly stubborn because Kennan

> belabored him with a big cudgel until my arm was tired, and then tried pricking him with the point of my bowie-knife. To this stimulus he responded by bucking me out of the saddle and pitching me over his head into a clump of thorny cactus.[59]

His experience with the mule notwithstanding, Kennan made his way to San Francisco in the end. After having worked six months there as a Western Union operator, Kennan crossed the Pacific and arrived in Petropavlovsk on August 21, 1865, and between 1866 and 1867 he served as the Chief of the Asiatic Division in Siberia. Initially Kennan liked the Siberian environment and wrote to a friend of the family, Dr. Morill, about his vision for the future of this region.[60]

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[56] "Two Christmases", n.d. GKP, Box V, Series III: Writings, speeches, publications and notes, 1866–1922, 1963, n.d., Folder 5.1, 6–7.

[57] Ibid., 10–11.

[58] Ibid., 17.

[59] Ibid., 18–19.

[60] George Kennan to Doctor Morill, Ghijiga, July 4–16, 1866, GKP, Box 1, Series I: Correspondence, 1866–1924, Folder 1.1.

However, as soon as the Siberian winter set in, his mood drastically changed, a fact clearly displayed in another letter to his mother, when Kennan describes his life during the winter months.

> The nights were around twenty hours in length. To try my hardest I couldn't sleep more than twelve, so that every evening I was compelled to sit on the snow around the camp fire from six to eight hours. I don't care how fertile a man's mind is in ideal, he can't sit and think eight hours every night for forty nights without exhausting all the subjects for thought which a Siberian steppe affords.[61]

In January 1868 Kennan finally left Siberia to travel to St. Petersburg, where he left on February 10 via Berlin and Paris for New York. In April he returned to Norwalk and became a solicitor for schoolbooks by Appleton & Company. During the fall of the same year Kennan began to write his first pieces that dealt with his Siberian experiences. In January 1869 his first article "Tent Life with the Wandering Koraks" was published, and he presented his first lectures in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and Wisconsin. In the winter/spring season of 1869/1870 Kennan delivered 60 lectures, for which he earned $600. In June 1860 Putnam's agreed to publish his book *Tent Life in Siberia*,[62] in which Kennan described his years abroad for a wider audience. During the fall months of 1870 Kennan visited the Caucasus, before he returned via Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, Austria and Germany to London and the United States. His lecture repertoire now included those about Siberia and those about his travel experiences in the Caucasus regions.[63]

Regardless of his lectures, Kennan started to work as a cashier at his brother's bank in Norwalk in the summer of 1871. He must have worked there while lecturing whenever possible, but five years after having started at the bank, he quit his job and went to New York City, possessing only $50 and his books. His lectures for the National Lecture Bureau on "Dog Sledge Travel in Kamchatka and Siberia", "Adventures in Northern Asia", and "Vagabond Life in Eastern Europe" seem to have not been very lucrative, since Kennan had to move from his apartment

[61] George Kennan to his mother, Ghijiga, Dec. 14–26, 1866, GKP, Box 1, Series I: Correspondence, 1866–1924, Folder 1.1.

[62] George Kennan, *Tent Life in Siberia* (New York: Putnam, 1870).

[63] The Caucasus journals have been edited and are available in Kennan, *Vagabond Life*.

at 24 West Tenth Street to a cheaper one in the Tower of Old University Building at Washington Square. He was living on $5.50 a week, which is why he could no longer solely rely on writing and lecturing; eventually he accepted employment in the Law Department of the New York Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1877. A year later Kennan moved to Washington, D.C. where he became a night manager of the Associated Press in that city. In May of 1879 he married Emeline Rathbone Weld in Medina, New York.

In 1885 Kennan took a leave of absence with the Associated Press and signed a contract with the Century Company for an expedition to Siberia, which began on May 2. Via London, Dover, and St. Petersburg he traveled to Moscow and from there to Siberia. His first article in *The Century* about his experiences in Siberia and with the Russian exile system was published in 1887 and there followed "Immediate recognition as authority on Russian affairs; this pre-eminence in America was never dimmed".[64] With his return to the United States and the publication of his books on the Siberian Exile System[65] Kennan could eventually live off his lectures and writings. In January 1888 he was nominated and elected as charter member and first secretary of the National Geographical Society in Washington and offered an editorship on science at $4000 per year. Since February 1889 Kennan was also lecturing for the Pond Lecture Bureau—18 lectures were arranged—and in March he quit his position with the Associated Press. Between February 1889 and February 1891 an extensive lecture series with more than 300 lectures followed. Kennan continued to lecture on the Siberian Exile System, his Siberian experiences and his Caucasus tours until 1898 and published numerous articles on these topics, mainly in *The Century*. When the decision was made to send him as war correspondent to the Spanish–American War, he was a well-known writer and lecturer in the United States, but hardly a specialist on Cuba. This inconvenient fact, however, did not matter, nor did it matter that Kennan did not speak Spanish or was unfamiliar with the island. His name was sellable, a brand people would recognize, and the interest in the Spanish–American War was high since the press debates had already started before the war broke out.

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[64] "Chronologies", a timeline of Kennan's life, 1930, 7.

[65] George Kennan, *Siberia and the Exile System*, 2 vols. (New York: Century, 1891). This work still seems to be of interest and is probably Kennan's best known work. It has recently been republished by Cambridge University Press in 2012.

The Spanish–American War and the United States

When the rebellion against the Spanish rule in Cuba began anew in 1895, it was an event that seemed rather unimportant in the United States, regardless of the fact that African Americans, e.g. in Indiana, were sympathizing with the fight of the repressed Cubans against the Spanish colonial government.[66] Being "[c]onfronted by a rising tide of Jim Crowism and oppression themselves, black citizens had little difficulty in equating the Cuban struggle with their own quest for justice",[67] but the supporters for the Cuban struggle initially remained a minority. Despite this low interest in the events, the Cuban Insurrection would become another guerilla war and the strategy of General Máximo Gómez Báez (1836–1905) targeted the economic interests of Spain and therefore also those of the United States on the island when he burned down the sugar plantations. His Spanish counterpart, General Arsenio Martínez-Campos (1831–1900) had no other choice but to request further troops from Spain to fight against a rather invisible enemy, who regularly retreated to the jungles on the island. Campos was eventually withdrawn and replaced by Valeriano Weyler (1838–1930), who for his violent reconcentration policy would later become known as "the butcher".[68]

While Gómez retreated to the East, Weyler was waging a bloody war against the Cuban civilians. In the United States, businessmen with economic interests in Cuba became worried. With burned plantations and a dead working force, there was no chance to make any profit in the

[66] Ivan Musicant, *Empire by Default: The Spanish–American War and the Dawn of the American Century* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998), 29.

[67] Willard B. Gatewood Jr., "Indiana Negroes and the Spanish–American War," *Indiana Magazine of History* 69, 2 (1973), 115.

[68] Linderman, *The Mirror*, 133–136. On Weyler and his reconcentration policy on Cuba see Emilio de Diego, *Weyler: De la leyenda a la historia* (Madrid: Fundación Cánovas del Castillo, 1998); Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, *Weyler en Cuba: Un precursor de la barbaie fascista* (Havana: Páginas, 1947); Antoni Marimon Riutort, *El General Weyler: Governador de l'illa de Cuba* (Ciutat de Mallorca: Comissió de les Illes Balears per a la Commemoració del Vè Centenari del Descobriment d'Amèrica, DL 1992); María Julia Martínez Alemán and Lourdes Sánchez González, *Weyler y la reconcentración en la jurisdicción de remedios* (Santa Clara, Cuba: Ediciones Capiro, 2000); Andreas Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung: Die kubanischen Unabhängigkeitskriege 1868–1898* (Hamburg: HIS, 2012); John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895–1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

future.[69] When the United States eventually decided to enter the war against Spain in 1898, humanitarian issues and the freeing of Cuba from Spanish rule were just superficial factors for the decision. Financial interests and imperial ambitions would certainly have played a role as well.[70] Since the 1850s there had been voices, from Cuba and southern U.S. states that demanded the annexation of the island by its northern neighbor.[71] The financial market as a whole, however, was not responding too well to the American decision for war. It therefore has to be emphasized that one has to distinguish between the interest of U.S. landowners in Cuba or the interest of pressure groups like the Florida cigar makers[72] and the stock market in general, as well as Wall Street in particular.[73]

Several leading financial journals were also against the war and an active engagement of the United States on behalf of the Cubans and the economic interests of a few. *The New York Journal of Commerce and Commercial Bulletin* made it clear that the only reasons that would make a decision for war reasonable were "(1) a finding by the naval board investigating the Maine disaster that the ship had been destroyed by an official act of the Spanish Government; or (2) a refusal by Spain to make reparation if the board should hold that that country had failed to exercise due diligence in safeguarding the vessel".[74] Regardless of such statements, one should not forget the commercial interest of the United States in Cuba, which also might have acted according to Hobson's later theory on imperialism. Hobson emphasized in his central argument that

> No mere array of facts and figures adduced to illustrate the economic nature of the new Imperialism will suffice to dispel the popular delusion that the use of national force to secure new markets by annexing fresh tracts of territory is a sound and a necessary policy for an advanced

[69] Julius W. Pratt, "American Business and the Spanish–American War", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 14, 2 (1934), 163. See also James Ford Rhodes, *The McKinley and Roosevelt Administrations* (New York, 1922), 55.

[70] Harold Underwood Faulkner, *American Economic History* (New York: Harper, 1924), 624–625.

[71] One example for this discussion can be found in "Cuba and the United States: The Policy of Annexation Discussed", *DeBow's Review and Industrial Resources* 14 (1853), 63.

[72] Nancy Lenore O'Connor, "The Spanish–American War: A Re-Evaluation of Its Causes", *Science & Society* 22, 2 (1958), 135.

[73] Pratt, "American Business", 164.

[74] Ibid., 165.

> industrial country like Great Britain. It has indeed been proved that recent annexations of tropical countries, procured at great expense, have furnished poor and precarious markets, that our aggregate trade with our colonial possessions is virtually stationary, and that our most profitable and progressive trade is with rival industrial nations, whose territories we have no desire to annex, whose markets we cannot force, and whose active antagonism we are provoking by our expansive policy.[75]

Similar assumptions might be made for the U.S. decision to enter the war against Spain. The imperial and expansionist ambitions were consequently based on a growing nationalism, an intensifying expansionism and economic interests that were mixed with arguments for action to answer a humanitarian call. Initially large parts of the U.S. public also identified with the Cuban fight for independence, due to which the American revolutionary movement against colonial rulers was revived in the geographical backyard of the United States.

A group that criticized the American ambitions on Cuba and the official arguments for war were the U.S. socialists, although they were not able to establish a united front against the growing public opinion and its final decision for a war against the European colonial power. The socialists in the United States faced a dilemma. It was undeniable that millions of Americans wanted to go to war to end the misery of the suppressed Cubans, to support a revolution. At the same time, the capitalist reasons for the members of the financial plutocracy and the government to engage in the conflict were also quite obvious. Howard H. Quint summarized the dilemma which resulted from this ambivalent situation:

> For American socialists … to refuse to support a war waged in the name of democracy and human decency would accentuate their already pronounced alienation from the overwhelming majority of their fellow citizens. And such a negative policy would embarrass their propagandists who were seeking to convince the skeptical that socialism was completely attuned to American values and traditions and, to borrow a well-turned phrase, that it was in reality the coming twentieth-century democracy.[76]

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[75] John A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (New York: James Pott and Co., 1902), I.VI.1, http://www.econlib.org/library/YPDBooks/Hobson/hbsnImp7.html#Part%20I,%20Chapter%20VI,%20The%20Economic%20Taproot%20of%20Imperialism (Last access, September 15, 2016).

[76] Howard H. Quint, "American Socialists and the Spanish–American War", *American Quarterly* 10, 2 (1958), 132.

In 1895 the socialists had demanded that President Grover Cleveland (1837–1908) should act on behalf of the Cuban *insurrectos*, a fact that made it hard to change this course until 1898. Daniel De Leon (1852–1914) was one of those socialists, who, however, openly criticized the idea of a war against Spain for its expansionist and imperialist character. He thought the Cuban insurrection was "conducted from New York by … capitalistic schemers calling themselves 'Cuban patriots'," while those who would really gain from a conflict were "the American Sugar Trust, the American Tobacco Trust, and other American sharks" who wanted to "take actual possession of the island in the name of King Dollar".[77] De Leon and other socialists had already recognized that the war on Cuba would hardly been fought for the Cubans but solely to secure American interests on the island.

However, not all left circles shared this view. The Jewish Marxists of New York's East Side preferred to display their loyalty to the nation and supported the war party. Yiddish socialist newspapers like the *Daily Forward* emphasized the duty of the USA to act on behalf of the oppressed to correct Spanish colonial misrule on the island.[78] The *Vorwärts*, a Milwaukee paper published by Victor L. Berger (1860–1929), argued that a war on Cuba would advance its capitalism and eventually lead towards revolution. While a majority of the Marxists might have shared the views of De Leon, the named examples already show that there were different voices regarding a possible war against Spain in the left camp.

The U.S. press was also not speaking with one voice when it came to the possibility of a war on Cuba. George W. Auxier thought to have identified the leading force behind the activism for a U.S. engagement in Cuba. "Sensationalists" like William Randolph Hearst (1863–1951) and Joseph Pulitzer "in their ruthless exploitation of the Cuban crisis for purposes of increased circulation of their respective papers in New York City, were universally imitated by the newspapers throughout the 'entire' United States and that sensational journalism was accordingly the paramount factor that culminated in war with Spain over the Cuban question".[79] This evaluation

[77] *The People*, January 17, 1897, http://www.slp.org/pdf/slphist/cuba_1897.pdf (Last access, July 8, 2017).

[78] Quint, "Socialists", 134.

[79] George W. Auxier, "Middle Western Newspapers and the Spanish–American War, 1895–1898", *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 26, 4 (1940), 523.

might be true for the press in New York City, however, it is not for the whole of the United States.[80] It can be assumed that both of the named publicists gained from the war scare and were able to increase newspaper sales; however, they alone were not able to determine the U.S. foreign policy either. Of course, other newspapers joined the chorus of accusations against monarchical Spain, which was neglecting the democratic rights of people in the Western hemisphere,[81] but there were also critical voices in all parts of the country that did not wish for a war over the suppression of Spanish colonials on a Caribbean island.

Many pro-Cuban articles were also instigated by a pro-Cuban pressure group, which acted on behalf of the Cuban rebels within the United States. They organized lectures, meetings and publications and thereby tried to mold public opinion. The efforts of the combined press and such pressure groups led to a public attitude in the United States that was no longer willing to accept criticism against a possible war. Whoever was resistant against a possible conflict was suspect and blamed for his unwillingness to act for the humanitarian cause on behalf of the repressed Cubans.[82] Regardless of these developments, even financially important businessmen considered the war to be of no financial use to the USA. Even President McKinley was trying to prevent the war, and the time from February to April 1898 is considered as the "supreme crisis of his life".[83] While he had been able to persuade people earlier to consider other options to avoid a conflict, in 1898 he failed to do so.

Those who demanded a war against Spain had gathered their strength, and since 1896 members of the Congress were continuously demanding an intervention in Cuba. The president initially tried to avoid the issue, but the fact that the rebels were not ending their insurrection and the Spanish army was incapable of ending the rebellion left him with no other choice. Regardless of the promise of Cuban autonomy under rule by the Spanish crown in November 1897, such measures were not

[80] For an evaluation of the press in the state of New York see Joseph E. Wisan, *The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press, 1895–1898* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934).

[81] *Indianapolis Journal*, April 12, 1895; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 17, 1896; *Sioux City Journal*, March 17, 1895; *Detroit Free Press*, August 5, 1895; *Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean*, March 9, 1896.

[82] Lindermann, *Mirror*, 7.

[83] Ibid., 10.

applied in Havana. A political solution seemed to be far away, if not impossible; however, neither Spain nor the United States were ready for a war. Neither of the two "had a fleet fitted, as far as material strength was concerned, to meet that of even a second-class naval power".[84] One could therefore argue that both governments were rather reluctant to go to war. What finally ignited the armed conflict was the demise of the battleship *Maine* in the harbor of Havana.

The ship was sent to the Cuban capital on January 24, 1898 to secure American interests on the island. On February 15, at 9:40 pm the ship exploded and sank in the harbor of Havana.[85] Commodore George Dewey (1837–1917), at the end of February, received the order to prepare to counter and bind the Spanish fleet in Asia in case war broke out, for which public opinion was asking now to avenge the sailors of the *Maine*. Ambrose Bierce (1842–1914) was criticizing the reluctant position of the U.S. government in his "Letter from a Dead Soldier" on April 3, 1898: "Nevertheless, I cannot help feeling that in the negotiations between Washington and Madrid we poor devils that went down in the 'Maine' have not been accorded the standing that we were justly entitled to. … There is but one way by which our living countrymen can distinguish us: our death can be made memorable and glorious only by avenging it."[86] In Congress, the report by Redfield Proctor (1831–1908) about his journey to Cuba already provided a reason for war. He depicted "the spectacle of a million and a half of people, the entire native population of Cuba, struggling for freedom and deliverance from the worst misgovernment of which I ever had knowledge".[87] His speech in Congress on March 17, 1898 "[i]n a place of dubious vengeance, he offered war founded on an undiluted humanitarianism".[88]

On March 27, 1898 an ultimatum was addressed to the Spanish government demanding a prompt ceasefire and an end to the Spanish

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[84] French Ensor Chadwick ed., *The Relations of the United States and Spain*: The Spanish–*American War*, vol. 1 (New York: Russel & Russel, 1968 [1911]), 28. For statistics of the military strenghts, see ibid., 18–54.

[85] Ibid., 6.

[86] Lawrence I. Berkove, *Skepticism and Dissent. Selected Journalism, 1898–1901 by Ambrose Bierce*, Nineteenth-Century Studies (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, [2]1986), 1–2. The letter was originally published in *The Examiner*, San Francisco, April 3, 1898.

[87] Quoted in Lindermann, *Mirror*, 45.

[88] Ibid., 58.

reconcentration policy. In the end, the pressure of Congress and U.S. public opinion left no doubt about the American readiness to go to war against Spain. It was seen as a just war to defend the Cuban revolution and to eventually free the island's population from the grip of Spanish colonialism. However, what began as a war to free Cuba would end as an expansionist action by the United States that led it to acquire the first part of its Latin American influence zone and, as a byproduct, its first territories in Asia as well. One of those who observed, commented and went through the same transition while participating in the war as a journalist was George Kennan. He would formulate what many American readers would also believe in early 1898 and in late 1898. An initial expansion of the American Revolution of 1776 and the jingoism before the war were transformed into the first expression of U.S. imperialist chauvinism after the conflict ended. Kennan, who was not only serving as a war correspondent but would also later report on the events on Cuba in many American cities, seems to be emblematic of this change of opinion. This is why his contribution to the process should now be analyzed in broader detail.

George Kennan and the Perception of the Spanish–American War

General interest in the events of Cuba was high, and many newspapers sent their own correspondents to Cuba to gather first-hand information on the conflict. Kennan described the gathering of the war correspondents in Tampa, Florida, where they waited for the departure.

> There were in the city of Tampa, at the time of my arrival, nearly one hundred war correspondents, who represented papers in all parts of the United States, from New England to the Pacific coast, and who were all expecting to go to Cuba with the army of invasion. Nearly every one of the leading metropolitan journals had in Tampa and Key West a staff of six or eight of its best men under the direction of a war-correspondent-in-chief, while the Associated Press was represented by a dozen or more reporters in Cuban waters.[89]

[89] George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (New York: Century, 1899), 35.

The demand for up-to-date information was extremely high and "[e]very invention and device of applied science was brought into requisition to facilitate the work of the reporters and to enable them to get their work quickly to their home offices".[90] What was visible here was also a new kind of correspondent who "shrank from neither hardship nor danger"[91] to gather information for the reader while guaranteeing information that was available nowhere else. Kennan further emphasized, that "the endurance and the capacity for sustained toil in unfavorable circumstances, which are quite as characteristic of the modern war correspondent as are his courage and his alter readiness for any emergency or any opportunity".[92] Print capitalism and a thirst for news by the readers created a new corps of war participants that were not resistant to go to the front line to get information nobody else was able to provide, a practice that also cost a lot of their lives.

> In the first two months of the war the corps of field correspondents, in proportion to its numerical strength, lost almost as many men from each and casualty as did the army and navy of the United States. The letters and telegrams which they wrote on their knees, in the saddle, and on the rocking, swaying cabin tables of despatch-boats … were not always models of English composition, nor were they always precisely accurate; but if the patrons of their respective papers had been placed in the field and compelled to write under similar conditions, they would be surprised, perhaps, not at the occasional imperfection of the correspondents' work, but at the fact that in so unfavorable and discouraging an environment good work could be done at all.[93]

Kennan was one of these correspondents looking for information that would secure the success of the journals and newspapers that hired them in order to be ahead of those who fought for the best access to information at home.

The editors of *The Outlook* asked Kennan if he would report for the journal from Cuba. If he were interested, he could travel to the island

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid., 36.

[92] Ibid., 37.

[93] Ibid., 43.

with Miss Clara Barton (1821–1912)[94] on the steamer of the Red Cross, *State of Texas*.[95] At this time George Kennan was already a well-known writer and lecturer, who had received around $10,000 for his articles about Siberia from the journal *The Century* and $150—a high honorarium at that time—for each lecture that was organized by Pond's Lecture Bureau.[96] With Kennan as a correspondent, sales of *The Outlook* would rise since one had recruited a famous writer for the job. The fact that Kennan had neither experience in Cuba, nor was he familiar with the situation, played no important role. His name promised sales. The Manager of the Advertising Department of *The Outlook* emphasized this fact in a letter to William W. Ellsworth of The Century Company on May 18, 1898:

> We sent yesterday a circular letter announcing the first results of our campaign for new subscribers, on the strength of the letters which are to be published weekly from Mr. George Kennan on the war in Cuba. I am sure it will interest you to know that this morning's mail brought us 1119 new subscriptions, making a total of up to date, of 3852 and all within one week. Mr. Howland suggests that now is your time to get on board the band wagon and ride along with the procession. We can probably squeeze in one or more special pages in each week's issue, if you will send along the copy. A word to the wise is sufficient.[97]

On May 14, 1898, *The Outlook* further publicly advertised its newest hire:

> George Kennan who revealed the truth about Russia and the Siberian exile system in his world-famous papers in the Century Magazine, has started for Cuba as Special Commissioner of the Outlook to describe the war and the conditions in Cuba from the humanitarian point of view.

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[94] Clara Barton had founded the American Red Cross in 1881 and headed its mission to Cuba. On Barton and her role see Eve Marko, *Clara Barton and the American Red Cross* (New York: Playmore, 1996).

[95] Kennan, *Campaigning*, 1.

[96] "Financial Matters," GKP, Box 7, Series V: Kennan family papers, Folder 7.1, V.A. Jeanette Hotchkiss, 1874–1987, n.d.

[97] Manager Advertising Department of The Outlook Co. to William W. Ellsworth, The Century Company, New York, May 18, 1898, GKP, Box 1, Series I: Correspondence, 1866–1924, Folder 1.4. Harold J. Howling was the editor of *The Outlook*.

> Mr. Kennan is the most distinguished American traveler of the time, is widely known as a successful lecturer, is the Vice-President of the American Red Cross and will bring to the recital the story of the war the resources of the trained investigator, of the brilliant descriptive writer, and of the sympathetic student of the conditions of oppressed peoples.[98]

From week to week Kennan would report on the conflict, providing the readers at home with "the results of his study of events as they succeed each other—military, reconstructive, social, industrial, and political."[99] It is also emphasized why George Kennan was hired for this job: "Mr. Kennan needs no introduction to American readers, nor is it necessary to say that his point of view will be philanthropic and humanitarian" and "We venture to say that no war correspondent of the day will give American readers more readable, accurate, and instructive interpretations of the great drama of civilization now being enacted in Cuba."[100] In a letter to Kennan, Chas. F. Chichester of *The Century*, the editor who not only agreed to the *The Outlook*'s proposal to join forces but would later also agree to publish *Campaining in Cuba*, Kennan's book on the events, also made clear that the "readers are interested in what you have to say".[101] He also emphasized that the information delivered from Cuba was very often confusing. This is why Kennan's reports were so important.

> The amount of misinformation we have is surprising. … Have you been able to get any exact information as to whether Havana is well supplied with food or not? Almost everybody here goes about with some sort of a flag in his buttonhole, and lots of patriotism, and yet they are down on the war. But what we can't make out is why the soldiers don't make a descent on the coast and open up the interior. Is it because we have no soldiers, or because there are too many Spaniards? Or why is it?[102]

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[98] "George Kennan and The Outlook," *The Outlook* 59, 2 (14 May, 1898), backside of the front matter.

[99] Ibid., 111.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Chas. F. Chichester, The Century Co Publishers, to George Kennan, New York, May 19, 1898, GKP, Box 1, Series I: Correspondence, 1866–1924, Folder 1.4.

[102] Ibid.

Kennan's reports finally arrived, and not only the editors were pleased with them,[103] readers and editors alike longed for further information. Kennan's judgment on Cuba, as the Editor in Chief of *The Outlook*, Lyman Abbott (1835–1922), confirmed in July 1898, was important for the opinion building process of the readers:

> the letter on Hospital Experiences, which we have concluded with some hesitation to hold for next week, is still more graphic and striking. I alternately covet you your opportunity and am thankful that I am not in your place. I am sure that your heart must be submerged with sorrow at the scenes which you are compelled to witness, but I am sure that you are doing perhaps as great a service to humanity by your pen as you did by your exposure of the Siberian system of Russia. Your views of the Cubans themselves I am looking forward to with great interest, and am depending not a little on the light which your letters will throw to guide me myself in my editorial judgement as to the course which the country ought to pursue in the endeavor to give Cuba what she has never had—a decent government. I think a great many others will look to you for light also—not for philosophy but for trustworthy account of facts on which philosophy must be based.[104]

It were Kennan's reports from Cuba that attracted readers in the United States and also influenced their opinion on Cuba.[105] Kennan had begun

[103] William B. Howland, The Outlook Co. to George Kennan, New York, May 19, 1898, GKP, Box 1, Series I: Correspondence, 1866–1924, Folder 1.4.

[104] Lyman Abbott, Editor in Chief, The Outlook, to George Kennan, New York, July 19, 1898, GKP, Box 1, Series I: Correspondence, 1866–1924, Folder 1.4. Kennan's "Hospital Experience" will be later described in detail in this chapter. Another letter that evaluates this report is William B. Howland, The Outlook Co. to George Kennan, New York, July 27, 1898, ibid.

[105] Next to Kennan's writings letters and reports by soldiers who had served in Cuba were also published in the early 1900s, e.g. *Two Rough Riders: Letters from F. Allen McCurdy and J. Kirk McCurdy of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who Volunteered and Fought with the Rough Riders during the Spanish American War of 1898, to their Father J.M. McCurdy* (New York/London: F. Tennyson Neely, 1902); Trumbull White, *Pictorial History of Our War with Spain for Cuba's Freedom* (Freedom Pub., 1898). See also the later exemplatory regional work by Alice E. Bennett, *Record of the Soldiers of the Civil War, Spanish–American War and the World War from the Town of Manchester, Vermont* (Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 1925). Another journal of interest with regard to the conflict, but from a military perspective, is Carolyn A. Tyson, ed. *The Journal of Frank Keeler* (Quantivo, VA: Marine Corps Museum, 1967).

his trip as an advocate of humanitarianism and Cuban independence, but would end it as a disillusioned revolutionary. He later found Cuba not ready to be independent and in his judgment resembled the imperialist and racist chauvinism of his time.

Two main writings should be further analyzed in detail here. One is his book *Campaigning in Cuba* and one is his lecture "Cuba and the Cubans", which he delivered after 1898 in many American cities, thereby influencing public opinion on the island and its political future in almost every U.S. state.

In his book Kennan follows the events of his journey to Cuba, beginning with a description of Key West, Florida, and its transformation throughout the war.[106] It was an interesting transformation the city went through, and Kennan devoted a lot of space to describe it in detail, especially since he was fascinated by its difference compared to other parts of the USA: "one cannot get rid of the impression that [one] has left the United States and has landed in some such town as San Juan de Guatemala or Punta Arenas, on the Pacific coast of Central America. Everything that meets the eye seems new, unfamiliar, and, in some sublet, indefinable way, un-American".[107]

War had transformed the city in many ways. Soldiers longed for entertainment, conflicts between locals and the new arrivals seemed to be inevitable, but for Kennan, one of the most significant changes was created by the arrival of the fleet, when "the people of Key West saw, in their harbor and at sea off Fort Taylor, the largest and most powerful fleet of war-vessels that had ever assembled, perhaps, under the American flag".[108] However, this image would not last. War was waiting for the ships and Kennan alike.

Landing on Cuba was remarkably easy—probably a consequence of the Spanish lack of tactical skill Kennan would refer to—and only two drowned soldiers to report.[109] The U.S. traveler was again fascinated by the Cuban landscpaes, its flora and fauna, which provided "a constant

[106] Kennan, *Campaigning,* 23.

[107] Ibid., 26.

[108] Ibid., 30.

[109] Ibid., 80.

source of surprise and delight, even to the most experienced voyager".[110] His quiet voyage was interrupted by the Battle of Las Guásimas, the first battle of the Santiago Campaign.[111] Of the 964 American soldiers, 66 were wounded or killed, and the reality of war had also finally met with George Kennan. At that time, Kennan also met the first Cuban soldiers and was rather disappointed when he recognized that their image did not match his idea of a revolutionary fighter for freedom and liberty.

> They did not, at first sight, impress me very favorably. Fully four fifth of them were mulattoes or blacks; the number of half-grown boys was very large; there was hardly a suggestion of a uniform in the whole command; most of the men were barefooted, and their coarse, drooping straw hats, cotton shirts, and loose, flapping cotton trousers had been torn by thorny bushes and stained with Cuban mud until they looked worse than the clothes that a New England farmer hangs on a couple of crossed sticks in his corn-field to scare away the crows. … I do not mean to say, or even to suggest, that these ragamuffins were not brave men and good soldiers. They may have been both, in spite of their disreputable appearance.[112]

Kennan does not hide his frustration with this image when he tells the reader that "The Cubans disappointed me, I suppose, because I had pictured them to myself as a better dressed and better disciplined body of men, and had not made allowance enough for the hardships and privations of an insurgent's life."[113] He was probably not the only person who was disappointed. The American soldiers had expected an

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[110] Ibid., 65. Kennan provides very detailed descriptions of Cuba and thereby images of the geographical spatiality of the war, many readers must have been unfamiliar with. To quote one example: "Wild, beautiful, and picturesque, however, as the coast appears to be, not a sign does it anywhere show of a by, an inlet, or a safe sheltered harbor. For miles together the surf breaks almost directly against the base of the terraced rampart which forms the coast-line, and even where streams have cut deep V-shaped notches in the rocky wall, the strips of beach formed at their mouths are wholly unsheltered and afford safe places of landing only when the sea is smooth and the wind at rest. Often, for days at a time, they are lashed by a heavy and dangerous surf, which makes landing upon them in small boats extremely difficult, if not absolutely impracticable." Ibid., 66.

[111] Ibid., 80–82.

[112] Ibid., 92. This description is an identical match for the one in "Cuba and the Cubans", GKP, Box 3, Series III. Writings, speeches, publications and notes, 1866–1922, 1963, n.d., Folder 3.13, 4 (henceforth CaC).

[113] Kennan, *Campaigning*, 92.

honorable ally that would resemble their forefathers in the fight against the British. Instead they found black Cubans, fighting for their freedom from Spanish oppression. Consequently, the situation far more resembled the fight of the African Americans for their rights than the revolutionary war of the white colonials against British rule. Images, which had been created by the press campaign, could not be identified in real life and the "honorable Cuban revolutionary" would transform fast into a "Cuban coward" that was unable to rule himself without U.S. control. In addition to this frustrating experience, many soldiers also had to face the cruelty of war, as it exposed itself on the battlefield or in the field hospital.[114]

Preparations for the wounded were rather rudimentary, since the military leadership had not expected fierce resistance. When Kennan arrived at the hospital, it "consisted of three large tents for operating-tables, pharmacy, dispensary, etc.; another of similar dimensions for wounded officers; half a dozen small wall-tents for wounded soldiers; and a lot of 'dog-kennels', or low shelter tents, for the hospital stewards, litter-bearers, and other attendants".[115] Only five surgeons were available to take care of hundreds of wounded and the general supplies for the medical treatments were rather limited. Only beed extract and malted milk were available for the wounded troops, and Kennan criticizes the preparation of the military planners with regard to these issues. The mules would preferably only transport what was needed for the attack. This is why nobody had counted on animals for the transport of the materials that were needed to take care of the wounded soldiers.[116]

With the beginning of the Battle of Santiago on July 1, 1898, the situation worsened dramatically. Until sunset, the five surgeons had to take care of 154 wounded soldiers, a number that increased throughout the night. The Spanish sharpshooters made it impossible to use candles, and two men of the Red Cross were killed while trying to take care of the wounded during the night.[117] In his book, like in his lecture, Kennan emphasized the heroic suffering of U.S. troops during the campaign.

[114] Ibid., 130–149 describes such a field hospital.

[115] Ibid., 131.

[116] Ibid., 132–133.

[117] Ibid., 134.

> Some, who had been shot through the mouth or neck, were unable to swallow, and we had to push a rubber tube down through the bloody froth that filled their throats, and pour water into their stomachs through that; some lay on the ground with swollen bellies, suffering acutely from stricture of the urinary passage and distention of the bladder caused by a gunshot wound; some were paralyzed from the neck down or the waist down as a result of injury to the spine; some were delirious from thirst, fever, and exposure to the sun; and some were in a state of unconsciousness, coma, or collapse, and made no reply or sign of life when I offered them water or bread. … If there was any weakness or selfishness, or behavior not up to the highest level of heroic manhood, among the wounded American soldiers in that hospital during those three terrible days, I failed to see it. … It was the splendid courage and fortitude of the men that made their suffering so hard to see.[118]

What becomes obvious when one reads Kennan's book is that the U.S. army was not ready for the war at all. The supply lines were not functioning, the equipment was very often not up-to-date, and sufficient medical or cooking supplies had not been provided for the troops.[119] The Mauser rifles of the Spanish soldiers were superior to the Krag-Jørgensen rifles (manufactured under license at the Springfield Armory) with which the U.S. soldiers were sent to fight. However, many more deaths were the result of insufficient medical supplies. While 345 soldiers died in battle, more than 5000 would die as a consequence of diseases that spread especially fast in the field hospitals Kennan described in his lecture and book.[120] Regardless of such criticism, the essential message of Kennan's writings and his lecture alike, was that Cuba was not ready for independence. Since "Cuba and the Cubans" is a widely perceived description of the island and its people, it needs to be further analyzed to explain its impact towards the U.S. opinion about the island's future.

[118] Ibid., 136–138. The same description is part of the lecture, why it was quoted here in detail.

[119] Lindermann, *Mirror*, 108.

[120] Ibid., 109–110.

"Cuba and the Cubans": A Change of Perception

With the capitulation of Santiago on July 16, 1898 the Spanish–American War ended. For Kennan, however, his real engagement with Cuba had only just begun. He was already famous as a lecturer before the war, and he gave 744 lectures between 1889 and 1900.[121] For his lectures, he received honoraria ranging from $100–150. His lecture on "Cuba and the Cubans" consists of 140 handwritten pages and seems to have been read many times during his lecture series after 1898.[122] It is therefore an important document for the U.S. perception of the Spanish–American War, and it should be analyzed more closely. Since some of the passages also are part of Kennan's book *Campaigning in Cuba* (1899), it can be assumed that the lecture had been written between 1898 and 1899.

The negative image of the Cuban soldiers is also evident in the lecture; the equipment and the clothing of these troops is criticized as well, as "they were dressed—or perhaps undressed—in the lightest, airiest, most thoroughly ventilated costumes ever worn by man since Adam was cast out of Eden".[123] Kennan, like many others who encountered the Cuban army for the first time, was surprised that 80% of the troops were black, and 20% of the soldiers only boys. Their overall condition was bad and Kennan was sure, that "if the men's rifles and cartridge bells had been taken away from them, I would have thought they were a horde of sixty Cuban beggars and ragamuffins on the tramp".[124] He emphasizes his negative statement by mentioning that "a soldier may fight like a hero in a ragged shirt and one-legged pants, but nevertheless,

[121] Lecture tour schedule and writing notebook, 1889–1900, n.d., GKP, Box 5, Series IV: Personal miscellany and photographs, 1863–1924, n.d. 5.10. In his notebook Kennan listed all his lectures according to the city, he gave it in. Sometimes, titles are provided for the lectures, and in many cases, Cuba is mentioned. It can be assumed, that Kennan in general might have discussed the Cuban experience with his hosts and thereby also spread his opinion throughout the United States.

[122] Kennan lectured numerous times about Cuba in several U.S. states. A ticket for a lecture by Kennan due to a Y.M.C.A. lecture course of six events in Illinois cost one Dollar. *The Argus* (Rock Island, IL), January 12, 1899, 2. On April 7, 1900 Kennan delivered his Cuban lecture at the First Congregational Church in Omaha, Nebraska. Tickets cost 50 Cents. *Omaha Daily Bee*, April 1, 1900, 15.

[123] CaC, 4.

[124] Ibid., 5. In contrast to the passage in the book that was quoted above, Kennan talks of a specific amount of men (60) in the lecture.

I must say that my first impression of a Cuban army was one of disillusion and disenchantment. It seemed to me in the highest degree improbable that such soldiers would ever have driven the Spaniards out of Cuba."[125] Gone was the image of the revolutionary fighters who resisted the Spanish to gain their freedom, following the example of the United States. It was replaced by an image of men nobody in the United States could be proud of calling allies.

In contrast, the Rough Riders, under the command of General Leonard Wood (1860–1927) and Colonel Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919), were always eager to engage in the fight and one could find them where the current battle was being waged.[126] Regardless of their braveness, Kennan remarked that the weakness of the Spanish enemy was responsible for the fast victory of the U.S. troops, and "[if] we had been fighting the South African Boers instead of the Spaniards, we never would have taken Santiago".[127] After these military related descriptions, Kennan describes the situation in the field hospital and the continuous efforts of the surgeons, to do whatever they could to treat the wounded soldiers.[128] He also describes the scenes of suffering and sorrow he encountered there in detail to create a vivid image for the audience:

> I cannot imagine anything more cruelly barbarous than to bring a badly wounded man back two or three miles in a rolling army wagon; let him lie three or four hours on the ground without shelter from sun or dew; rack him with agony on the operating table, and then carry him away, weak and helpless, lay him down in the high wet grass, without shelter, blankets, pillows, food or drink, and leave him there to suffer alone all night. And yet I saw this done with hundreds of men as brave and heroic as any that ever stood in a battle line.[129]

The suffering of the men very often only just began, having survived the battle and returning to the hospital.[130] Some soldiers had to spend hours, and even longer than a day, without water supplies. Following Kennan's account, the U.S. soldiers heroically bore their suffering.[131]

[125] Ibid., 6.
[126] Ibid., 7.
[127] Ibid., 11.
[128] Ibid., 16–20.
[129] Ibid., 22–23.
[130] Ibid., 26–27.
[131] Ibid., 31.

The suffering ended with the war, and Kennan's journey throughout Cuba began. The island was destroyed and all vestiges of civilization seemed to have been lost as well. When the American traveler and war correspondent entered Santiago, he was shocked.[132] He had left the *State of Texas* to explore the city, which had been quarantined. "There did not seem to be any encouraging probability that I would be fed by Cuban ravens, or nourished by manna from the blazing Cuban skies,"[133] which is why Kennan had to go back to the harbor every time he wanted to eat. Some of the crew of the U.S. Red Cross ship provided him with food and something to drink every time, but in the end the American explorer became infected with malarial fever and had to leave Cuba on August 12, 1898. He returned to Nova Scotia, where he had bought a summer house with his lecture money some years prior, in order to recover. After three months, he returned to Cuba to continue his exploration of the island.

During his time in Nova Scotia the city of Santiago had been transformed (of course under U.S. surveillance).[134] The positive impact the United States had on Cuba is more than emphasized when Kennan adds, "I left Santiago a sinkhole of foulness and corruption. I found it, on my return, the cleanest Spanish-American city in all the Western hemisphere."[135] Kennan continued his journey to Baracoa in the east of the island on horseback. Traveling throughout the island, the American correspondent also encountered the local population. However, the image of the Cubans that he portrays lacks any positive aspect.[136]

From Kennan's perspective, the Cuban did not care for his animals and their suffering because of his stupidity. Kennan seemed to really have been frustrated about these encounters, and his image of the common people who lived on the island was a very negative one. Kennan also provides many imperialist stereotpyes of the late nineteenth century when he states that

> generally, the Cuban shows no more intelligence or ingenuity than is required to thatch a roof with palm leaves; fashion a ground into a drinking cup; or make a rude trail out of a section of bamboo. He has no cottage industries; he shows no skill or art in the working of metals; his

[132] Ibid., 33–34.

[133] Ibid., 35.

[134] Ibid., 42–43.

[135] Ibid., 44.

[136] Ibid., 52–53.

> machete is "made in Germany" or New England; and his hoe, which he makes himself, is shaped like an adze, has a handle about two feet and a half long, and breaks the back of the user.[137]

The image drawn sounds very familiar for the Western visitor of colonial environments at that time, especially since it is based on the common prejudices of white colonialism and reproduces in a way the idea of Rudyard Kipling's (1865–1926) "The White Man's Burden" (1899).[138] For Kennan, "the country Cuban … was intellectually, a disappointment".[139] Another problem encountered by the traveler on the island was the U.S. racism and the unwillingness of white soldiers to accept the allies in the fight against the Spanish colonial power as their equals.

One situation in which Kennan was confronted with such racism took place in a Cuban "cantina—a sort of country grocery where the peasant farmers of the neighborhood can purchase supplies; or exchange their farm products for sugar, coffee, Tobacco and rum".[140] The Cuban owner was very friendly when he "welcomes us with effusive hospitality; treated everybody to drinks; declares that the Cubans and the Americans were a

[137] Ibid., 56–57.

[138] The famous poem was initially published in *McClure's Magazine* 12, 4 (February 1899), 290–291 and reads as follows: (1) Take up the White Man's burden, Send forth the best ye breed/Go bind your sons to exile, to serve your captives' need;/To wait in heavy harness, On fluttered folk and wild—/Your new-caught, sullen peoples, Half-devil and half-child./Take up the White Man's burden, In patience to abide,/To veil the threat of terror And check the show of pride;/By open speech and simple, An hundred times made plain/To seek another's profit, And work another's gain. (2) Take up the White Man's burden, The savage wars of peace—/Fill full the mouth of Famine And bid the sickness cease;/And when your goal is nearest The end for others sought,/Watch sloth and heathen Folly Bring all your hopes to nought. (3) Take up the White Man's burden, No tawdry rule of kings,/But toil of serf and sweeper, The tale of common things./The ports ye shall not enter, The roads ye shall not tread,/Go make them with your living, And mark them with your dead. (4) Take up the White Man's burden And reap his old reward:/The blame of those ye better, The hate of those ye guard—/The cry of hosts ye humour (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:—/"Why brought he us from bondage, Our loved Egyptian night?" (5) Take up the White Man's burden, Ye dare not stoop to less—/Nor call too loud on Freedom To cloak your weariness; / By all ye cry or whisper, By all ye leave or do,/The silent, sullen peoples Shall weigh your gods and you. (6) Take up the White Man's burden, Have done with childish days—/The lightly proffered laurel, The easy, ungrudged praise./Comes now, to search your manhood, through all the thankless years/Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom, The judgment of your peers!

[139] CaC, 58.

[140] Ibid., 58–59.

holy band of brothers; waved a Cuban flag enthusiastically …; and finally begged us to do him the honor of taking a Cuban breakfast with him".[141] Kennan enjoyed the breakfast scene, which obviously fascinated him.[142]

Lieutenant Blunt, who accompanied the correspondent, however, did not enjoy the event at all. Kennan asked him later why he was so upset about this great breakfast party, and the Lieutenant made no excuse for his racist beliefs: "That's the first time I ever sat down to breakfast with a nigger!"[143] Many audiences in the USA might have had the same feeling as Blunt when they listened to Kennan's description. This is why the genuine U.S. racism might have mixed with the perception of Cuba to eventually create a negative image of the Cubans in general.

Kennan, in a way eager to further explore the island, continued his travel. In Baracoa he was surprised when he found out that "the congregation on New Year Sunday in a town of 6500 inhabitants consisted of only 40 or 50 women and fifteen men. Evidently the Cubans didn't take kindly to religion".[144] Hence, the dance in the house of the priest after the mass was well visited by the local population and as "far as one could judge from attendance, the priest's dance was a good deal more popular than his church service".[145] After 45 minutes of church, more than 11 hours of dance followed, and "in the back parlor the priest himself, with perspiring face, was smoking a cigarette and opening bottles of beer while he talked, laughed and joked hilariously with the parishioners."[146]

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[141] Ibid., 59.

[142] Ibid., 60–61.

[143] Ibid., 62.

[144] Ibid., 72.

[145] Ibid., 73.

[146] Ibid. Kennan also describes the dance in detail: "Whatever my be the capabilities of the Cubans in other directions, they certainly can not dance. I have seen greater freedom and grace of movement, better observance of time, and far more dash, spirit and abandon at a negro-cake-walk in Tennessee than in all the Cuban balls and dances that I ever attended. … the Baracoa congregation was dancing what seemed to be an ordinary waltz; but their movements were stiff, awkward and constrained, and they showed no exhilaration or enjoyment than they would have shown had they been performing some tiresome religious rite on the floor of a chilly cathedral. … If I were asked to describe the Cuban danzon in a single sentence, I should say that it is a tropical combination of a two-step waltz with an ecstatic wiggle-waggle, and is danced in a jerky unrhythmical way within the limits of an 8 foot circle. …from the point of view of a spectator, it has neither grace nor dignity, and it was interesting to me only because it showed both in movement and in music, the influence that the negro, in Cuba, has had over the Spaniard." Ibid., 74–75.

After having spent two weeks in the city of Baracoa Kennan returned by ship to Santiago and also visited Havana, from where he traveled through the provinces of Havana, Matanzas, Santa Clara and Pinar del Río.

During this journey he realized for the first time how much devastation had been caused by Weyler's policy and the war against the civilians in Cuba. There was almost no village or people left on the way from Havana to Matanzas.[147] The result of the reconcentration policy was obvious, as

> there was not a single peasant village left standing; nor a new crop of any kind left growing; nor an acre of ground cleared and plowed for planting; and the houses — when there were any houses at all—stood five to ten miles apart. Generally speaking, the country was a mere waste of wild grass and weeds, with a few half-choked rows of sugar cane here and there to show what the land had once produced. … There is no longer a shadow of doubt that in enforcing the policy of concentration, it was the deliberate intention of Gov Gen Weyler to destroy the whole Cuban population.[148]

The Spanish colonial rule over Cuba is consequently depicted as violent, cruel, and devastating for the island.[149] It seems ironic that similar tactics would be used by the American soldiers in the Philippines not long after.[150] Kennan consequently, like many others, painted a positive image of the United States which would save an island that had previously been exploited by an autocratic colonial power.

Kennan himself "could not help wishing that ex Governor-general Weyler might be stripped of his rank and wealth, put into one of the palm-thatched shacks of his own reconcentrados, and fed for the rest of his unnatural life with vultures food from the sewers and garbage barrels of Guanabacoa".[151]

The Cuban island had been tormented by the Spanish general, and it was the Red Cross and the American support that tried to re-establish order and to save lives. Many people had died from hunger and the U.S.

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[147] Ibid., 91.

[148] Ibid., 91–92.

[149] Ibid., 95.

[150] Luis H. Francia, *A History of the Philippines: From Indios Bravos to Filipinos* (New York: Overlook Press, 2010), Chap. 4.

[151] CaC, 96.

attempts to help were simply overwhelmed by the number of people who needed support, essentially food to begin with.[152]

Kennan, however, had to leave Cuba when he was struck by jungle fever again and could no longer participate in the attempts of the Red Cross to help the people on the island.

In the last part of his lecture, the writer and traveler tries to sum up some Cuban characteristics he had encountered during his journey and creates an overall negative image of the population of the island. For him, "untrustworthiness, in word and deed, must certainly head the list of Cuban vices",[153] especially considering how Cuban doctors handed out false health certificates to people who might have been infected by yellow fever and small pox.[154] Related to these incidents, probably not only for Kennan, was the question of U.S. security: "If well-known and reputable Cuban physicians deal in this way with sanitary matters involving issues of life and death, what protection are our Southern cities likely to have when we withdraw from the Pearl of the Antilles altogether and leave Cuba to the Cubans?"[155] Consequently, only close U.S. supervision could secure an increase of Cuban trustworthiness, as "the Cuban is untrustworthy because he is the product of a corrupt and vicious system of training, conducted and enforced for 300 years by corrupt and vicious rulers."[156]

For Kennan it is clear that the United States is entitled to its own security:

> It seems to me that in view of the sacrifices we have made, the blood we have spilled and the money we have spent to free the Cuban people, we are at least equitably entitled to demand that Cuba shall be put and henceforth kept, in such sanitary condition that yellow fewer, from that source, shall never again menace our Southern coast.[157]

Politically, Cuba was unstable because the factionalism on the island and the existance of 12 parties at the time Kennan left the island was unmistakably seen as a factor in creating a negative situation for the United States as well. Eventually, Kennan does not believe, like many Americans

[152] Ibid., 98.

[153] Ibid., 106.

[154] Ibid., 109–110.

[155] Ibid., 111.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid., 121–122.

who might have listened to his lecture, that Cuba after the Spanish–American War deserved independence.[158]

U.S. intervention would be needed, something that would later politically be secured by the Platt Amendment in 1901. For Kennan, as for many other Americans, a steady control of the island seemed to be a more suitable way to protect American interest there. Kennan has of course hope for the future generations of Cubans, but only "with American control and an American system of training we may be able to make good citizens out of the Cuban boys for whom we are now establishing schools".[159]

Regardless of such considerations, the U.S. writer and lecturer also defended the decision to enage in Cuba and to intervene there:

> It is not an overstatement, I think, to say that by our intervention and with our food we directly saved the lives of more than half a million of the Cuban people. In view of this fact and in the light of this record the Spanish–American War will forever stand justified before the judgement bar of history and before the judgement bar of God.[160]

Such an evaluation, however, could only have come from an American. The Cuban perspective was probably totally different since one colonial rule was simply exchanged for another, even if Cuba was officially granted independence after the long war against the Spanish oppressors.

Conclusion

The Spanish–American War was indeed "a splendid little war" for which the United States "acquired almost by default"[161] a colonial empire in Latin America and Asia. The Philippines were annexed and, as Julius W. Pratt described it, "In response to the urgings of destiny, duty, religion, commercial interests, and naval strategy, the United States had utilized the war with Spain to acquire an island empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific."[162] With regard to Cuba, the war transformed the image of the

[158] Ibid., 136.

[159] Ibid., 137.

[160] Ibid., 139.

[161] Musicant, *Empire*, 655.

[162] Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898: The Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964 [1936]), 360.

Cuban ally, who fought for independence like the Founding Fathers of the United States, into one of a stupid, reckless, and worthless soldier for whom discipline, culture and civilization were alien.

Someone who represented this transformation after the war in his writings was George Kennan. Through these writings and his extensive lecture series throughout almost all states of the Union, he spread the new image of the inferior Cuban who needed U.S. supervision and protection in order to become civilized in the future. Due to his popularity, Kennan reached many readers and audiences within the country and, therefore, is one of those who stimulated the transformation of U.S. nationalism in favor of Cuban rebellion into a more aggressive and expansionist form at the end of the nineteenth century. For Cuba itself the long nineteenth century would end not only with its revolution against the colonial rule of Spain but also with the political "enslavement" by the United States, which simply replaced the direct rule of the Spanish with an informal empire of trade imperialism that would eventually lead to further uprisings in the twentieth century—ultimately, the Cuban Revolution (1953–1959). While one might argue that Kennan was just a minor actor in this large historical picture, one also has to admit that the sum of all these minor actions create history. "Cuba and the Cubans" is such a minor part of history, but as a historical document it is also evidence of a transformation that would distinguish the fate of so many at the turn from the long nineteenth to the short twentieth century. It is evidence of American racism and imperialism, and, therefore, deserves all the attention possible to emphasize the factors that were initially responsible for the determination of the American–Cuban relationship in the twentieth century.

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CHAPTER 2

CUBA AND THE CUBANS

George Kennan

Abstract This chapter contains an edition of George Kennan's (1845–1924) lecture "Cuba and the Cubans", which the famous journalist and travel writer presented throughout the United States since 1899. The document is an important source on the U.S. perception of Cuba in the aftermath of the Spanish–American War (1898) and provides an insight into American attitudes towards the Caribbean neighbor and into arguments that were summoned during the later discussion about the political future of the island.

Keywords Cuba and the Cubans · Spanish–American War
George Kennan

George Kennan Papers. Manuscripts and Archives Division. The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, Box 3, Series III. Writings, speeches, publications and notes, 1866–1922, 1963, n.d., 3.13 Cuba and the Cubans, lecture, n.d. The lecture is handwritten with pencil on 140 numbered pages.

I would like to thank the staff members of the Brooke Russell Astor Reading Room for Rare Books and Manuscripts at the New York Public Library for the support during my research there.

F. Jacob (ed.), *George Kennan on the Spanish–American War*,
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[1][1]

In view of all that has recently been said and written about Cuba and the Cubans,[2] I almost hesitate to ask your attention to a subject which must seem to you so hackneyed and overdone; But perhaps, after all, it is not so hackneyed as it seems. Most of the political questions raised by the Spanish-American War are still unsettled; We don't yet know exactly what we are going to do with the island that we have set free; and there are still a good many differences of opinion with regard to the character and capacity of their [sic!]

[2]

inhabitants. It is possible, therefore, that I may be able to tell you something about Cuba and the Cubans that will have interest and value, even if it be not absolutely new.[3]

~~I shall confine myself, for the most part, to the eastern end of the island — partly because it is much less known than the western end, and partly because it would be extremely difficult to cover the whole country in a single lecture and pacl six months experience into an hour and a half. Havana, Matanzas, and Santa Clara are doubtless familiar enough to you all; but the wild mountain vastnesses of Eastern Cuba, which lie off all the regular routes of travel,~~

[3]

~~have seldom been visited or described.~~[4]

I went to Cuba the first time on the Red Cross steamer State of Texas at the beginning of the war, and landed in the little village of Siboney, twelve miles east of Santiago, on the 25th of June (1898).[5] Gen Shafter's[6] forces

[1] The numbers in brackets refer to the original manuscript pagination.

[2] Kennan often uses "&" instead of "and", however, for a uniform reproduction, all have been switched to "and".

[3] Originally Kennan used paragraphs after almost every sentence. To provide a better structure to the manuscript this has been adjusted by the editor.

[4] This and the following marked sections (deletions) were crossed out in the original manuscript. It seems likely that Kennan erased such parts to shorten the overall lecture. If he, however, just changed a single word or two, the final version of the lecture manuscript is presented here.

[5] Additions to the text by the editor were put in parentheses.

[6] William Rufus Shafter (1835–1906). For his life and work see Paul H. Carlson, *"Pecos Bill": A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989).

were still disembarking, and I arrived just in time to see the Cuban army of General Garcia[7] march out of Siboney and start for the front by the Santiago trail. We have had at various times, a good many different and conflicting reports with regard to the size, appearance, and fighting capacity of Cuban armies.

Let me give you

[4]

my first impressions of the army of the East — General Garcias command — as it marched out of Siboney on its way to the front. It consisted of about 1500 men, and was the most dirty, ragged assemblage od armed tatterdemalions[8] that I had ever seen or imagined. In the 1st place at heart four fifths of the common soldiers were colored or black and one fifth of them were boys. In the second place they were dressed — or perhaps undressed — in the lightest, airiest, most thoroughly ventilated costumes ever worn by man since Adam was turned out of Eden. Falstaff[9] declared, with humorous exaggeration, that there was only a shirt and a half in all his company. There must have been three or 4 whole shirts and a good many half shirts in a Cuban company to say nothing of straw hats and drawers; but they had

[5]

all been torn by jungle storms and stained with jungle mud, until they looked worse than the cast-off garments which an American farmer hangs up on a stick to scare the crows. There was hardly a suggestion of a uniform in the whole command; and if the men's rifles and cartridge belts had been taken away from them, I should have thought they were a horde of dirty Cuban beggars and ragamuffins on the tramp.

I don't mean to say that these ragamuffins were not good soldiers and brave men. They may have been both, in spite of their disrespectable appearance.

[6]

A singed cat is often a good mouse catcher, and a soldier may fight like a hero in a ragged shirt and one-legged drawers; but I must say nevertheless, that the result of my first sight of a Cuban army was disillusion and disenchantment.

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[7] Calixto García (1839–1898). For works on the general, who was involved in all major Cuban revolutionary wars during the 19th century, see Dolores Rovirosa, *Calixto Garcia: A Tentative Bibliography* (Miami, FL: Ediciones Universal, 1980).

[8] "Tatterdemalions" bascially means something like ragged tramps.

[9] It is unclear if Kennan refers to a real person or the literary figure at this point.

It seemed to me in the highest degree improbable that such soldiers as these would ever have driven the Spaniards out of Cuba.

Having made the acquaintance of a part of the Cuban people by inspecting the army of Gen Garcia, I proceeded to make the acquaintance of Cuban mountains and jungles by going in search of the Rough Riders, who

[7]

had just had their first fight at Guasimas and were said, vaguely, to be somewhere at the front. I don't know how Gen'l Wood[10] and Colonel Roosevelt[11] managed it, but the Rough Riders seemed to be always[12] in front. After the capture of Santiago I heard three or four soldiers of the Sixth Regulars discussing this remarkable fact and one of them said "In front? Of course they get in front! They're too damn fresh! At the batlle of San Juan Teddy was ordered to support our regiment; and how d'ye suppose he supported us? Marched right around our flank and got ahead of us! Damn the Rough Riders!" After walking 8 or 9 miles over a jungle trail in a blazing sun, without

[8]

seeing a sign of Col Roosevelt or his men, I felt about the Rough Riders very much as the soldier did. But we found them at last — camped in a field of high wild grass only about a cannon shot from Santiago.

In the course of this walk to Col Roosevelt's headquarters, I had an opportunity to see, for the first time, a Cuban jungle; and I frankly confess that I didn't like it. With all due contempt for the Spaniards I was forced to admit that in such a wilderness, as that between Siboney and Santiago, they had some excuse for not making good roads. From the point where we left the Siboney valley to the summit of the Sevilla divide, we never had an unobstructed outlook in any direction.

[10] Leonard Wood (1860–1927). On Wood's life and military career see Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978).

[11] Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919). Wood and Roosevelt had organized the 1st Volunteer Cavalry regiment that served during the war and became publicly known as the Rough Riders. Kennan will later also make a reference to this regiment in the lecture. On the Rough Riders see Roosevel's own description of the events in Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1899). On the relationship between Wood and Roosevelt, a recent publication is definitely worth reading. John S. D. Eisenhower, *Teddy Roosevelt and Leonard Wood*: Partners in Command (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2014).

[12] Emphasis in the original.

[9]

Dense torpical forests, almost impenetrable to the eye, closed in on the narrow trail, and when the sea breeze was cut off and the sun stood vertically overhead, we could hardly guess in what direction we were going.

Of scenery, in the proper sense of that word, there was hardly a suggestion. Scenery implies distance, perspective and atmospheric effect, but down at the bottom of that mere slit in the primeval forest we seemed to be in a sort of narrow canyon, whose hundred-foot walls of dark green foliage stood less than 20 feet apart and rose out of an impenetrable jungle of vines, cactuses, pinyon bushed an the sharp lacerating blades of the Spanish bayonet.

[10]

To get through that jungle, without a machete or an axe, seemed to me absolutely impossible; and the more I saw of it the more I wondered at the feebleness of the resistance which the Spaniards offered to our advance by this route.

There were at least half a dozen places which, with a little entrenchment, might have been made as strong as the pass of Thermopylae; and if General Chaffee[13] or General Lawton,[14] with a single brigade of American regulars, had held that trail, — a whole army corps of Spaniards wouldn't have fought their way through to Santiago in three months. Instead of fighting, however, at every point of vantage, and this detaining our army until the deadly climate

[11]

had had time to get in its work, the Spaniards abandoned their strong position at Guasimas after a single engagement, and retreated almost to Santiago without striking another blow. It was great luck for General Shafter, but it was not war. If we had been fighting the South African Boers instead of the Spaniards, we never should have taken Santiago by the Siboney road.

By the time we reached the Rough Riders' camp it was late in the afternoon; and as we had a return march of 8 or 9 miles to make before

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[13]Adna Chaffee (1842–1914). There is only an older biography from 1917 that deals with the later Military Governor of the Philippines. William H. Carter, *The Life of Lieutenant General Chaffee* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1917).

[14]Henry Lawton (1843–1899).

dark, we cut short an interesting talk with Col Roosevelt, took a couple of letters to mail for the Secretary of War and started back. On the battlefield of Guasimas, where we stopped a few moment to rest, there

[12]

were still to be seen a lot of rags, bandages and fragments of clothing, which were stained or sooked with blood of the wounded and the dead. On or about these bloody rags, I saw for the first time Cuban land crabs; and formed the opinion, which subsequent experience only confirmed, that they are the most uncanny, loathsome and disgusting things that the Almighty, in His infinited wisdom has ever created.

They resemble the common marine crab in form, and vary in size from the diam(e)ter of a saucer to that of a large dinner plate. Instead of being gray or brown however, like their marine relatives, they are highly colored in diversified shades of red, scarlet, light yellow, orange and black. Sometimes one tint prevails, sometimes another; and occasionally all of these colors are fantastically blended in a single specimen. The creature has two long fore-claws or pinchers; small eyes

[13]

mounted like round berries, on the end of short stalks; and a mouth that sums to be formed by two horny, beak-like mandiblers; It walks or runs with considerable rapidity in any direction — backwards, sidewise or straight ahead — and is sure to go in the direction you least expect. If you approach one, it throws itself into what a defensive attitude, raises aloft its long fore claws, looks at you intently for moment, and then backs or slides away on its hind legs, gibbering noiselessly at you with the horny mandibles of its impish mouth, and waving its arms distractedly in the air, like a frigthened and hysterical woman.

All of these crabs are scavengers by profession and

[14]

night prowlers by habit, and they don't emerge from their lurking places in the jungle until the sun gets low in the West. Then they come out by the hundred — if not by the thousand — and as it begins to grow dark, the still atmosphere of the deep lonely forest is filled with the rustling, crackling noise that they make as they scramble through the bushes, or climb over the stiff dry blades of the Spanish bayonet.

Colonel Roosevelt told me that nothing interfered so much at first with his sleep in the field as the noise made by these crabs in the bushes. It was so much like the noise that would be made by a party of guerillas or bushwhackers, stealing up to the camp under cover of

[15]

darkness, that it might well keep army man [sic!] awake. Cuban land crabs, like Cuban vultures, are haunters of battlefields; but the crabs seek the dead at night, while the vultures drink the eyes or tear off the lips of an unburried corpse in the broad light of the day.

On the battlefield of Guasimas, however, while the sun was still above the horizon, I saw, crawling over a little pile of bloody rags a huge crab whose pale waxy-yellow body suggested the idea that he had been feeding on a yellow-fever corpse and had absorbed its color. At my approach he backed slowly off the rags, opening and shouting his mouth noiselessly and waving his fore claws toward me in the air with what seemed like

[16]

impish intelligence, as if he were saying "Go away! What business have you here? Blood and the dead are mine." There may be something more repulsive and uncanny than such a performance by a huge corpse-colored landcrab, but if so I have never happened to see it. It made me feel as if I should like to do as the Russian peasant does in similar cases — spit and cross myself.

We reached Siboney about half past five and got on board the State of Texas in time for dinner after a walk of 16 or 18 miles. It is not my purpose, of course, in this lecture, to go over the often desribed and familiar ground of the Santiago campaign;

[17]

but I must say a few words with regard to one feature of that campaign which has attracted comparatively little attention and which I as an officer of the Red Cross had an exceptionally good opportunity of seeing — and that is the bahvior of our wounded soldiers in the field hospital during and immediately after the battle of San Juan.

The newspapers just now are filled with stories of British gallantry and British heroism in front of Kimberley, Ladysmith and Mafeking. I want to describe to you American heorism in front of Santiago. Scores of war correspondents have told you how our soldiers fought. Let me tell you how they suffered and died. On the 1st of July,

[18]

when the two days battle in front of Santiago began, the field hospital of the First Division — the only field hospital we had — consisted of a few units of tent-flies pitched in a field of high Guinea grass, about a mile and a half back of the firing line. It had five surgeons, three ambulances, six or eight operating tables, and perhaps a dozen stretchers, for a whole army corps of 1600 men.

When Dr. Egan[15] , a Red Cross surgeon, and I reached the hospital, after a hurried march of ten miles from Siboney the battle was in progress. The first wounded began to come back from the firing line about 9 o'clock.[16] As the hot tropical day advances, the number constantly increased, until, at nightfall, long rows of disabled men were lying on the ground in front

[19]

of the operating tents awaiting examination and treatment.

Although the small force of field surgeons worked heroically, and with a devotion that I have never seen surpassed, they were completely overwhelmed by the great bloody wave of human agony which rolled back, in ever increasing volume from the battle line. When one of our metropolitan surgeons has performed two serious operations he thinks he has done a good days work. Every one of our surgeons in that field hospital performed thirty operations between nine o'clock and dark, and then lighted candles and kept it all night. They stood at their operating tables, wholly without sleep and almost without food, for twenty one consecutive hours; and yet, in spite of their tremendous exertions, hundreds of wounded men lay on

[20]

the ground from two to four hours before they received the least surgical attention or care. Late in the evening, division and regimental surgeons began to come back from the first aid bandaging stations at the front,

[15] Dr. E. Winfield Egan received a telgram from the Cuban Relief Committee on February 16, 1898 that simply stated "Barton wants you in Havana." Clara Barton papers, 1805–1958, Library of Congress, Red Cross File, 1863–1957, American National Red Cross, 1878–1957; Relief operations; Spanish-American War; Correspondence; Special; Egan, E. Winfield, 1898–1902, undated, MSS11973, box: 135; Microfilm reel: 97. He eventually served as surgeon for the Red Cross during the war.

[16] Kennan usually uses "oclock" instead of "o'clock." This had been adjusted due to the editing process.

and the operating force was increased to ten. More tables were set out in front of the tents, and the surgeons worked at them all night, partly by moonlight and partly by the dim light of a few flaming candles.

Fortunately the weather was clear and still and the moon nearly full. There were no lanterns in the camp, except one that I carried there in my hand, and if the night had happened to be dark, windy or rainy four fifths of the wounded would have had no surgical aid until the next day.

[21]

But the absence of lanterns was not so unfortunate as the absence of clothing and blankets. Many of our soldiers, had either stripped off their upper clothing themselves on going into action, or had had it cut off by the surgeons at the bandaging stations, so that they came into the hospital half naked.

We had no clothing or blankets to give them, and all that a litter-squad could do with a man, when they lifted him off the operating table Friday night, was to carry him away, half naked as he was, and lay him down on the water-soaked ground under the stars. You may say that it didn't matter much because the nights were warm; but the nigths were not warm.

[22]

At noon on both days of the battle, my thermometer in the sunshine stood at 130 but at night it grew damp and cool so rapidly that before two o'clock my clothes were wet with the heavy dew and I was almost in a chill.

I cannot imagine anything more cruelly barbaous than to bring a badly wounded man back 2 or 3 miles in a rolling army wagon; let him lie 3 or 4 hours on the ground without shelter from sun or dew;

[23]

rack him with agony on the operating table, and then carry him away, weak and helpless, lay him down in the high wet grass, without shelter, blankets, pillow food or drink and leave him there to suffer alone all night. And yet I saw this done with hundreds of men as brave and heroic as any that ever stood in a battle line. It might not have been so — it ought not to have been so — but so it was; and in that hospital there were no means whatever of preventing it.

When the sun rose Saturday morning, the sufferings of the wounded who had lain out all night in the grass were intensified rather than relieved, becaue with

[24]

sunshine came heat, thirst and surgical fever. We tried to protect some of them by putting up awnings and thatched roofs of bushes and grass; but about seven o'clock more wagons loaded with wounded began to arrive from the battle line, and the whole hospital force turned its attention to them, leaving the men in the grass almost uncared for. The scenes of Saturday were like those of the previous day, but with added details of misery and horror.

Some of the scenes that I was compelled to witness seem, even now, to be etched on my memory in lines of blood. I shall not describe them to you or even refer to them. They will always be a ghastly nightmare to me, but there is no reason why they

[25]

should be to you. Vereshchagin[17] may paint some things that is not expedient to put into words, and all I aim to do is to describe as much of the dark environment as may be necessary in order to throw into relief the character of the soldiers by whose heroism it was illumined. Many of the wounded who were brought in Saturday afternoon from the extreme right-wing of the army at Caney had had nothing to eat or drink in more than 24 hours and were in a state of collapse.

Some, who had been shot throught the mouth or neck, were unable to swallow, and we had to push a rubber tube down through the bloody froth that filled their throats and pour water into their stomachs through that. Some were paralyzed from the neck

[26]

down or the waist down as a result of injury to the spine; some were delirious from thirst, fever and exposure to the sun; while some were in a state of complete unconsciousness, and made no reply or sign of life when I offered them water or bread.

I well remember one smooth faced American soldier about 30 years of age who had been shot in the head and also wounded by a fragment of a shell in the body. He was naked to the waist, and his whole right side, from the arm-pit to the hip, had turned a purplish-blue color from the

[17]Vasily Vasilyevich Vereshchagin (1842–1904) was a Russian war artist, whose internationally recognized paintings, like *The Apotheosis of War* (1871), also depicted the cruelties of war.

bruising blow of the shell. Blood had run down from under the bandage that was tied around his head, and had then dried, covering his swollen

[27]

face and closed eyelids with a dull red mask. On this bloody mask had settled a swarm of flies which he was too weak to brush away or in too much pain to notice. I thought at first that he was dead; but when I spoke to him and offered him water, he opened his bloodshot, flyencircled eyes, looked at me for a moment in a dull agonized way, and then closed them and faintly shook his head. Whether he lived or died I do not know.

All the wounded, as they came in, were placed on the ground in a long closely packed row, a few bushes or pieces of canvas were put over them to shelter them a little from the blazing Cuban sun, and there they lay for two, three, sometimes four hours

[28]

before the surgeons could even examine their injuries. A more splendid exhibition of patient uncomplaining fortitude, and heoric self-control the world has never seen; and never will see.

Many of these men as appeared from the chalky faces, gasping breath and bloody vomiting, were in the last extremity of mortal agony; but I did not hear a groan, a murmur or a complaint once an hour. Occasionally a Rough Rider under the knife of the surgeon would swear, or a beardless Cuban boy would shriek and cry O mi madre mi madre as the surgeons reduced a compound fracture of the former and put his leg in splints; but from the long rows of wounded on the ground there came no sound or sign of weakness.

[29]

They were suffering — some of them were dying — but they held their grip!

Many a man whose mouth was so dry and parched with thirst that he could hardly articulate, would insist on my giving water first, not to him, when it was his turn, but to some comrade who was more badly hurt or had suffered longer. It is said that intense pain and the fear of impending death bring out the selfish animal characteristics of man; but such is not the case with the highest type of man. Not a single American solder in all my experience in that field hospital, ever asked to be examined or treated out of his regular turn and account of the severity, painful nature or critical state of his wound.

[30]

On the contrary, they repeatedly gave way to one another, saying "Take this one first — he's shot through the body. I've only got a smashed foot and I can wait." And in that valley of the shadow of death even the courtesies of life were not forgotten.

If a man could speak at all, he always said "Thank you" or "I thank you very much" when I gave him hard bread or water. One beardless youth who had been shot through the throat, and who told me in a husky whisper that he had no water in 30 hours, tried to take a swallow when I lifted his head. He strangled, coughed up a bitter bloody froth and then whispered "Thank you; it's no use; I can't; never mind."

[31]

Our Red Cross surgeon Dr Egan afterwards gave him water through a stomach-tube. If there was any weakness, or selfishness, or behavior not up to the highest level of heroic manhood among the American soldiers in that hospital during those first three terrible days, I failed to see it.

As one of the army surgeons said to me, with tears in his eyes, "When I look at those fellows and see what they stand, I am proud of being an American and I glory in the stock. The world has nothing finer." I remained in the field hospital at the front until the 10th of July, and then, as most of the wounded had been carried to the sea coast and put on board the hospital ships

[32]

I returned to Siboney.

Six days later Santiago surrendered, and on the day of the capitulation the Red Cross steamer State of Texas steamed into the beautiful harbor, our women nurses singing "My Country 'Tis of Thee"[18] on the forecastle while

[18]Samuel Francis Smith (1808–1895) wrote this popular American song in 1831. 1. My country, 'tis of thee, / Sweet land of liberty, / Of thee I sing; / Land where my fathers died, / Land of the pilgrims' pride, / From every mountainside / Let freedom ring! 2. My native country, thee, / Land of the noble free, / Thy name I love; / I love thy rocks and rills, / Thy woods and templed hills; / My heart with rapture thrills, / Like that above. 3. Let music swell the breeze, / And ring from all the trees / Sweet freedom's song; / Let mortal tongues awake; / Let all that breathe partake; / Let rocks their silence break, / The sound prolong. 4. Our father's God to Thee, / Author of liberty, / To Thee we sing. / Long may our land be bright, / With freedom's holy light, / Protect us by Thy might, / Great God our King.

the rest of us gathered on the hurricance deck and exchanged cheers with the soldiers of Gen Kent's division who were scattered along the shore.

Although there was said to be very little yellow fever in Santiago, Miss Barton[19] and the Captain of the State of Texas decided to quarantine the steamer against the city, and gave notice to all on board that if any person left the ship

[33]

he could not return to it. This made going ashore rather a serious matter; because the city had been in a state of famine for weeks, and it was not likely that one could find anywhere a mouthful to eat. However, I didn't propose to be cooped up in the ship if there was any alternative, so filling my canteen with water and putting a few cakes of hard bread in my pockets I bade everybody goodbye and went ashore.

The first impression made by Santiago upon the newcomer in July 1898 was one of dirt, disorder, neglect and foulness unspeakable. It always had the reputation of being the dirtiest city in Cuba

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and at the time of the surrender it was at its worst. The houses were all shut up; dead men and dead horses were rolling in the streets; mango-skins, old bones, filthy rags and refuse of all sorts lay scattered over the rough broken pavements; little rills of stinking water trickled into the open gutters from the courtyards and cess-pools [sic!] of the deserted horses; and when the sea breeze died away at night, the whole atmosphere of the city seemed to be pervaded by a sicky indescribable odor of corruption and decay.

In a long and tolerably varied experience in Russia, the Caucasus, Asia Minor, European Turkey and other out of the way corners of the world I have never encountered such a variety of insupportable stenches as were to

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be found in some of the streets of Santiago on the day of the surrender. It made me wish that I could breathe as well as drink out of a canteen. The problem of supplying myself with food and drink in the famine-stricken and almost deserted city, after the steamer had been quarantined against me, proved to be even more serious than I had anticipated.

[19] Clara Barton (1821–1912).

I walked the streets pretty much all day and failed to discover anything eatable except a few half-ripe mangoes which would undoubtedly produce cholera before they satisfied hunger.

There did not seem to be any encouraging probability that I should be fed by Cuban ravens or nourished by manna from the blazing Cuban skies;

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and in the absence of some such miraculous interposition of Providence, it became perfectly evident to me that I should either have to go with a tin cup to the Red Cross soup-kitchen and beg for a portion of soup on the ground that I was a destitude and starving reconcentrado, or else return to the pier where the State of Texas lay, hail somebody on deck, and ask to have food lowered to me over the ships side. I could certainly drink a cup of coffee and eat a plate of hash on the dock without any serious danger of infecting the ship; and if the captain should object to my being fed in that way, on the ground that the ships dishes might be contaminated by my feverish touch, I was fully prepared to put my pride in my pockets and meekly receive my rations in an old tomato can, or a paper bag tied to the end

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of a string.

I resolved therefore to go to the pier, swear with uplifted hand that I was not suffering from yellow fever, typhus fever, remittent fever, malarial fever, pernicious fever, cholera or small pox, and ask somebody to lower to me over the ships side a cup of coffee in an old beer-bottle and a mutton chop at the end of a fishing line. I was ready to promise that I would immediately furnigate the fishing line and throw the bottle into the Bay, so that the State of Texas shouldn't run the slightest risk of becoming infected with the diseases that I didn't have. About the middle of the afternoon, having exhausted all the provisions that I had brought ashore with me, I walked down to

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the State of Texas, hailed a sailor on deck. I asked him to call Mrs J. Addison Porter, wife of President McKinley's private secretary, who had come to Cuba with Miss Barton to see the war.

When Mrs Porter's surprised but sympathetic face appeared over the steamer's rail, I explained the situation, and asked if she would not please

have the table-steward Tommy lower me something to eat over the ships side. In five minutes Tommy appeared in the starboard gangway of the main deck, and lowered down to me on a tray a most appetizing lunch of bread and butter, cold meats, fried potatoes, preserved peaches, ice-water and coffee.

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As the temperature in the fierce sunshine which beat down on my back was at least 130, the cold meals were immediately warmed up; the butter turned to a yellowish fluid which could have been applied to bread only with a paint brush; and perspiration ran off my nose into my coffe-cup [sic!] as I drank; but the coffee and fried potatoes kept hot, and I emptied the glass of ice-water before it had time to come to a boil.

All the rest of that week I took my meals on the pier — Mrs Porter keeping me abundantly supplied with food, while I tried to make my society an equivalent for my board by furnishing her, 3 times a day with the news of the city.

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In the course of a week I succeeded in getting an oil stove, some dishes, and a small supply of oat-meal and beans, and with this outfit I began light housekeeping in my room at the Anglo-American Club. 10 days later I was taken with malarial fever, as a result of exposure in the field hospital at the front, and after partly recovering and then suffering a relapse, I became so weak that I could no longer be of any use in Cuba, and on the 12th of August I sailed for New York.[20]

Three months in Nova Scotia and the Adirondacks[21] partially restored my health, and early in December I returned to the

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island, steamed once more into the beautiful harbor of Santiago, and landed again at the very same pier where I had eaten my daily bread in the sweat of my brow under the flag of the Red Cross. At first glance there seemed to be absolutely no change in the appearance of the city;

[20] Kennan had added the remark "Click 1" here, probably showing some photographs during the lecture.

[21] The Adirondack Mountains in Upstate New York.

and as I walked up Hagóoey Street to the Anglo-American Club, I felt as if my recent impressions of Nova Scotia[22] and the Adirondacks were merely recollections of a vivid dream; and as if I were looking up my old Santiago life again exactly where I left it that hot sunny morning in August, when I walked feebly down the pier in a paroxysm of fever, was put on board

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a steamer and dreamed that I went home.

Strong, however, as this impression was at first, it yielded gradually to the evidences of change and progress which presented themselves at every step as I walked about the city. The streets were the same that I remembered, but they had suddenly become clean. There were no emaciated pariah dogs nosing about heaps of rotting garbage besides the curbstones; no streams of filthy water trickling into the gutters; and no stenches of decomposition even in the narrowest and least-frequented back alleys.

The Christina Boulevard along

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the water front was as free from dirt and litter as any street in New York; the great central market on Marina Street, which I remembered as a foul, sickening pest-hole [sic!], had become as fresh and neat a place as Center Market in Washington; the city seemed to be full of U.S. hotels, Chicago restaurants, and Arizona saloons; and when a ragged little Cuban boot-black shouted in my ear "Shine? Shine 'em up", I felt as if there were new heavens and a new earth and the former things had passed away.

I left Santiago a sinkhole of foulness and coruption. I found it, on my return, the cleanest Spanish American

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city in all the Western hemisphere.[23] In order to get some acquaintance with the interior of Cuba, I determined, soon after my arrival in Santiago, to make a horseback trip across the island; and about the

[22] The Kennans owned a summer house in Nova Scotia, where George would usually spent time to recover from his yearly lecture series.

[23] Kennan showed additional images at this spot (Click 2–3 and 4).

middle of December, I proceeded by steamer to Guantanamo, where, it seemed to me, I could best make a start. Guantanamo is a town of about 6000 inhabitants, and is chiefly noteworthy on account of the straits to which its inhabitants were reduced toward the close of the Spanish-American War. From hunger, they suffered far more than the Santiago people did; and at the last they kept themselves

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alive for weeks, only by catching and eating land-crabs.

When crabs became scarce in the neighborhood of the town, and the people were too weak to walk six or eight miles in search of them, the Caimanera Raildroad Co. ran a free train out into the woods for the special use of the crab-hunters; and that train used to carry three to six hundred people every day. In all the history of transportation, I think there is no other recorded instance of a land-crab accomodation, run every day by a railroad company in order to keep 6000 starving people alive. At Guantanamo with the

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assistance of Col Ray,[24] I got together a camp equipment; engaged a negro soldier of the Cuban Civil Guard named Hulio as guide; and with Lieut Blunt of the 3rd Georgia Volunteers[25] as traveling companion, started on horseback for a ride of 140 miles to Baracoa.[26]

For the first twelve miles the road ran through an open country between long monotonous stretches of abandoned and weed-overgrown sugar cane; but just beyond the little village of San Antonio, where Col Ray had his last picket, we crossed a low divide, and plunged suddently into the wildest, darkest most tangles tropical forest that I had

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ever seen outside of Nicaragua.[27] The spreading tops of the immense, closely-set trees met over the narrow trail so as to shut out the sun

[24] I assume that this is Alfred M. Ray (c1849–1917).

[25] On this unit see Patrick M. Sherry, "A Brief History of the 3rd Georgia Volunteer Infantry," http://www.spanamwar.com/3rdGeorgia.htm (last access, November 12, 2016).

[26] "Click 5" is inserted here, this time mentioning that the photograph would show "Palms at Guantanamo."

[27] "Click 6" was supposed to show a "Cascade" here.

and fill the woods with a gloomy greenish twilight; long slender lianas, as smooth and even as deep-sea fishing lines, hung from the leafy roof above to the jungle of ferns, cactuses and broad-leaved herbaceous plants below; curious blossoming parasites which looked like huge red spiders crawling out of clumps of Spanish-bayonet grew in thousands on the trunks and lower limbs of all the trees; and here and there a colony of rampant vines had so overrun a thicket or a clump of small trees as to turn it into a great mound of solid greenery 30 feet in

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height and more than 50 feet across.

Most of the trees that made up this great forest were unknown to me even by sight; but among the few that I recognized were cocoanut and royal palms; mahogany's lignum vitae, bread-fruit trees, mango trees; wild limes, and wild bananas. The trail in most places was fairly good; but after the sun set and the short twilight faded, the forest became a carve of Egyptian darkness through which Julio [sic!][28] seemed to find his way by a sort of miraculous intuition. Although there was a bright moon above the great leafy canopy which hid the sky; its rays pierced the foliage

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only at long intervals, and fell upon the trail in small spots of intensely white light which merely confused the eye and intensified by contrast the impenetrable gloom of the jungle. But darkness was not our only trouble.

Along the trail that we were following, the Spaniards, some years before had erected a telegraph line to connect Guantanamo with Baracoa. In order to save labor, they strung the wire on trees; sometimes parallel with the trail, and sometimes zigzaging irregularly across it. Then when the insurgents destroyed the line, as they

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eventually did, they cut the wire every 2 or 300 yards, and either snarled it up and threw it in a tangle on the ground, or left a slackened length or two hanging from tree to tree across the trail, at a suitable height to catch an unwary rider under the chin and drag him off his horse.

[28] Kennan switched to the spelling "Julio" at this point.

I won't undertake to say how many times in the course of our night ride Hulio or Lieut Blunt shouted back to me through the darkness — "Look out! Telegraph wire!" But how could I look out for telegaph wire when I didn't know whether it was on the ground or overheads, and couldn't see it in either case. I always ducked or dodged in obedience to the

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warning, and kept my head below the level of my horses ears until I thought I had passed the point of peril; but I generally misjudged the distance and straightened up just in time to catch it in the neck. If however I escaped this misadventure, it was only to have my horse dance a quickstep under me with 10 or 15 fathoms of tangled wire around his hind legs.

Then I'd have to dismount and extricate him; and if there is anything worse than disentangling 75 or 100 feet of bent and twisted telepgraph wire from the hind legs of a frightened horse in the depths of a tropical forest at night — I don't want to have anything to do with it.

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About ten o'clock that evening — and, by the way, it was Christmas Eve — we camped in a little opening in the forest, on the bank of the Yateras River.

~~Early the next morning we followed the river down to the sea coast — still on the Southern side of the island — rode 20 or 30 miles in terrific heat along a desert-like beach sprinkled with Arizona cactuses; and camped the second night in the yard of a peasant farmer near the mouth of the River Irnias. In this horseback ride through the eastern part of the island I was struck many times by the incapactiy — not to say stupidity shown by~~

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the average Cuban farmer in the management of his farm, and in the treatment of his domestic animals. His cart, for example, is the rudest, clumsiest two-wheeled vehicle that I have ever known to be made by any one except perhaps a six-year-old boy. Instead of putting the axletree and wheels under the middle of the cart, where they would support the load, the Cuban puts them at the extreme rear end of the floor or platform, just as a small boy would make a toy cart by pulling an axle through an empty spool from his mother's work basket, and then tying sticks to the ends of this axle for thills. The bottom or floor of the

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Cuban cart is on the thill, in front of the wheels. The weight of the load therefore is divided between the wheels and the horse, so that the unfortunate animal has to carry one half of it on a chronically sore back and drag the other half.

In all his dealings with horses, mules and oxen the Cuban is equally stupid. He rides his horse with a brutal long-shanked curb-bit which tortures to no purpose; and if he packs a horse or a mule, he cinches the heavy pack on with a single girth of rather thin webbing hardly two inches wide. This girth

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wrinkles to a width of one inch when wet and then saws back and forth the swaying of the pack, until it cuts a bloody gash in the animal's belly. The ide of using a broad girth of heavy leather, which would neither wrinkle nor cut, seems never to have occured to him. He yokes his oxen, always and everywhere, by lashing a heavy beam across their horns; and then he fastens this beam rigidly to the pole, so that every lurch of the wagon gives a violent yirk[29] and shock to the animals heads. He says they don't mind it; but I should like to yoke him up in that way once,

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as an experiment, and drive him 8 or 10 miles over a Cuban road. It might not change his practice, because he doesn't care a soumarkee[30] whether an animal suffers or not; but it would afford great satisfaction to me — even if it didn't break his neck.

In his domestic economy, generally, the Cuban shows no more intelligence or ingenuity than is required to thatch a roof with palm leaves; fashion a gourd into a drinking cup; or make a rude trail out of a section of bamboo. He has no cottage industries; he shows no skill or art in the working of metals; his machete is "made in Germany" or New England; and his

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hoe, which he makes himself, is shaped like an adze, has a handle about two feet and a half long, and breaks the back of the user. Most peasants

[29] A variation of "to yerk," which means to strike of whip.

[30] A sou marqué is a French colonial coin that was quite common in the West Indies and North America during the 18th century.

and country people in Europe, and even our own Western Indians, show considerable skills in working silver, and fashioning it into ornaments; but the only silver objects made by the Cuban are small silver teeth, ears, noses or stomachs which he hangs as votive offerings before the shrines of his saints, in oder that the latter may relieve him of toothache, earache, stomach-ache or nosebleed.

These anatomical models may be good for the saints; but as evidences of intelligence, skil(l)ful handiwork

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~~or artistic taste, they leave much to be desired. In view of what I have said it seems hardly necessary to add, that the country Cuban, as I saw him on the ride to Baracoa and as I afterward saw him in many other places was, intellectually, a disappointment. He may be able to govern his island with the wisdom of a Socrates; but he doesn't manage his domestic affairs with the intelligence of an Eskimo.~~[31]

About noon on the third day of our journey we reached the mouth of the River Imias and there, in a little clearing among the palms, we found what is known in Cuba as a cantina — a sort of country grocery where the

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peasant farmers of the neighborhood can purchase supplies; or exchange their farm products for sugar, coffee, Tobacco and rum. The proprietor of this cantina — a sallow young Cuban in a gauze undershirt and a pair of drawers — welcomed us with effusive hospitality; treated everybody to drinks; declared that the Cubans and the Americans were a holy band of brothers; waved a Cuban flag enthusiastically over Blunt's head; and finally begged us to do him the honor of taking a Cuban breakfast with him.

There was no resisting such fraternal and patriotic hospitality as this, so we all gathered about a dirty wooden table in front of the counter to eat yams, boiled rice and beans.

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It was in some respects, one of the most remarkable breakfast parties I ever had the pleasure of attending. Lieut Blunt, in the uniform of the

[31] At the end of the crossed out part Kennan makes another picture reference, namely "Click 8 (Road house)."

American Army, sat side by side with a coal-black negro in the uniform of the Cuban Civil Guard; the lecturer of the evening, in an old Red Cross jacket, passed the beans to a Cuban groceryman in a transpatent gauze undershirt; two kinky-haired barfooted negroes for whom there were no chairs, stood up on the other side of the table and helped themselves, with dirty hands, to everything they could reach; while half a dozen customers of the canteen, who had not been invited to the feast stood around in a free

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and easy way, casting covetous eyes at the beef and beans and taking part socially in the table talk.

Lieut Blunt who was a representative did not seem to be as happy and hilarious as such company and such environment should have made him, and when breakfast was over and the Cuban guests had duly wiped their mouths on their shirt-sleeves and their hands on their trousers, he rose from his chair and silently left the room. I found him a few moments later, smoking and meditating in a hammock which our guide had slung between two posts of the horse-shed at the end of the house.

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When I casually remarked that he had not seemed to enjoy his breakfast, he said slowly, and with an air of settled gloom "That's the first time I ever sat down to breakfast with a nigger!" The spring of life was poisined for him!

We began the last stage of our journey at the mouth of the Hoho River on Tuesday. We were then nearly opposite Baracoa on the Southern side of the island; and as it was no longer possible to avoid or get around the mountains which occupy the whole interior of Santiago province, we forded the Hoho River, turned northward up its left

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bank, and plunged into the wild labyrinth of the Churchillas — an unmapped chaos of crowded peaks, domes, and sharp-edged ridges, whose steep sides were clothed from base to summit with a great mantle of vine-langled forest and jungle. The Hoho River, whose water had the clearness and the delicate greenish tint of a fine aquamarine, blowed, for a distance of four or five miles above its mouth, through a chain of gorges and mountain amphitheatres of extraordniary wildness and beauty.

Every five or ten minutes we would come out of a narrow ravine into what looked like a great mountain-walled sink-hole, or well, in which the

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river seemed to have its birth, and out of which I could see no possible way of escape; but just as I would shout to my companion "I don't see how we are ever going to get out of this!" a sharp turn in the trail would disclose another deep wild ravine, through which, either in the bed of the stream or along a narrow rocky ledge, we would ride into another great mountain amphitheatre higher up. We passed through six of these splendid amphitheatres and forded the Hoho River thirteen times in less than two hours.

I despair of being able to convey

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in words any adequate idea of the extraordinary luxuriance of the vegetation; the beauty and variety of the flowers; and the wonderful grandeur of the scenery as we ascended height after height from the mouth of the Hoho River to the summit of the wild pass that leads across the range. In the presence of such landscapes the most expert word-painter might as well lay down his dictionary and simply say as Columbus said when he first saw this scenery from Baracoa four centuries ago, "This is the most beautiful land ever beheld by human eyes."

I have said nothing thus far about the road across the mountains as regarded from the point

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of view of a horseman; but it is remarkable enough, and perilous enough to deserve at least twice as much time as I have given to the scenery. I think I have never ridden, in any part of the world, over a trail which, for twenty miles together, was so utterly, hopelessly and irredeemably bad, as the trail across what the Spaniards aptly call "The Knife-blades of Baracoa." Properly speaking it isn't a trail at all.

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It's nothing but a devious, zigzag, back-and-forth, up-and-down route by which an acrobatic Cuban pony, at the peril of his own and his rider's life can climb, jump, slide and scramble from one side of the range to the other.

Not a stroke of work has ever been done on that trail since Columbus discovered America. It climbs mountains as sleep as the Chilcoot Pass[32]; it secends the beds of dry torrents at an inclination of 3000 feet to the mile; it runs along narrow cornices, through steep rocky corridors, over

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shelving masses of wet iron ore as slippery as a toboggan-slide paved with banana-peel, and finally it drops over the edge of a precipice and tumbles into the valley of Baracoa like a zigzag flight of steps down into a thousand foot well!

I'm not particularly nervous on horseback at great heights, but I want no more Baracoa trails. From the time we left the level of the Caribbean Sea on one side until we got down to the level of the Atlantic on the other I never had a feeling of perfect security for ten consecutive minutes. The only thing that could make a man feel safe on that trail would be a good reliable

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parachute. The result of my experience was to give me a feeling of profound respect for the Cuban mountain pony as the best all-around-jumper, climber and scrambler in the world. If Cuban men were half as intelligent as Cuban horses, I should never doubt their capacity for self government. Late Wednesday afternoon, tired hungry and splashed from head to foot with mud, we dashed at a gallop into the town of Baracoa after a ride of 140 miles.[33]

As seen from the encircling mountains, Baracoa appears to stand on what was once a flat-topped coral reef between an outer and an inner bay. The outer bay

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with its long curving line of snowy surf, is bounded on the east by a steep, densely wooded mountain; while the circular inner bay, which is fringed with cocoanut and royal palms, is almost overhung on its eastern

[32]The Chilkoot Pass runs through the Coast Mountains, and is thereby connecting Alaska and British Columbia. For a historical analysis of this region see Kathryn Taylor Morse, *The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).

[33]"Click 9" was supposed to show an image of Baracoa at this point.

side by the precipilous vinde-draped crag upon which stands the blue-walled building now known as Fort Wood.[34] Back of the inner bay is a chaos of foothills and mountains, shaggy with tropical vegetation, through which a swift clear river makes its way in a deep blue ravine to the sea; and in the middle distance rises a hughe, square, forest-clad mesa, 3000 feet in height, known as the "anvil of Baracoa." This gigantic cube of rock forms the most striking landmark on the coast, and can be seen from a distance of 40 or 50 miles.[35]

In whatever direction one looks from the crest of the hill behind Baracoa, the scenery is wild and

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picturesque in the extreme. ~~The mountains that encircle the town on the south are not so high as the great peaks in the vicinity of Santiago, but they are much more diversified in form; their sides are more precipitous; the valleys that separate them are narrower and deeper; and the mantle of vegetation that clothes them is far richer, greener, and more luxuriant than that (of) the arid southern slopes of the mountains between Santiago and Guantanamo~~. In fact I doubt whether in all the West Indies there is a more beautiful combination of dark blue ocean, snowy surf, tranquil palmfringed bay, perennial verdure, and diversified mountain scenery than is to be found in the vicinity of Baracoa.

The next Sunday after our arrival in Baracoa was New Years Day, and thinking that I should probably see the whole population in holiday attire at church,

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I attended divine service in a dilapidated old building on the plaza. To my great surprise the congregation on New Year Sunday in a town of 6500 inhabitants consisted of only 40 or 50[36] women and fifteen men. Evidently the Cubans didn't take kindly to religion. The service was conducted by a single priest, and did not differ much from the Roman Catholic service in our own churches except that the languages used were Latin and Spanish instead of Latin and English.

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[34] "Click 10" was supposed to show another image of the area.

[35] "Click 11" (Baracoa).

[36] Originally Kennan had referred to "seventy five" attendants.

The music however was rather remarkable, inasmuch as it was furnished by a big brass horn, a guitar, a saxophone, a kettle-drum and a gourd rattle. About 11 o'clock the small congregation was dismissed, and most of the young girls, with a few of the men and the whole ecclesiastical

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orchestra marched across the street to the house of the priest, where they were going to have a holiday dance. A dance at 11 o'clock Sunday morning in the house of the priest, with the church choir and orchestra to furnish music, was an entertainment novel enough, I thought, to justify me in breaking the Sabbath — at least to the extent of looking on — so I followed the congregation.

So far as one could judge from attendance, the priests' dance was a good deal more popular than his church service.

When I arrived the front parlor was crowded with dancers, while in the back parlor the priest himself, with presuming face, was smoking a cigarette and opening bottles of beer while he talked, laughed and joked hilariously with his parishioners. At his urgent solicitation I refreshed myself with a

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bottle of lukewarm beer and then took a seat behind the kettle-drum to watch the proceedings.

Whatever may be the capabilities of the Cubans in other directions, they certainly can not dance.

I have seen greater freedom and grace of movement, better observance of time, and far more dash, spirit and abandon at a negro-cake-walk in Tennessee than in all the Cuban balls and dances that I ever attended. When I went in, the Baracoa congregation was dancing what seemed to be an ordinary waltz; but their movements were sliff, awkward and constrained, and they showed no more exhileration or enjoyment than they would have shown had they been performing some tiresome religious rite on the floor of a chilly cathedral. Or at the end of the waltz there was a solemn walk-around, after which the

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guitar, the kettle-drum, the gourd rattle and the scratch-gours struck up the queer, barbaric music of the Cuban danzon — a round dance

something like a waltz, but whith greater irregularity of movement, and with a peculiar swaying of the body suggetive of the "hooche-cooche" and other Oriental dances of the Midway Plaisance.

If I were asked to describe the Cuban danzon in a single sentence, I should say that it is a tropical combination of a two-step waltz with an ecstatic wiggle-waggle, and is danced in a jerky unrythmical way within the limits of an 8 foot circle. Regarded from the point of view of a spectator, it has neither grace nor dignity, and it was interesting to me only because it showed, both in movement and in music, the influence that the negro, in Cuba, has had over the Spaniard.

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The music, especially, with its queer broken time, the sharp staccato click of its gourd rattle, and the half-mufled intermittent thunder of its deep-toned drum, is as unmistakebly [sic!] African as anything to be heard on the upper Nile or in a jungle on the banks of the Congo.

Why the danzon should be preferred to the waltz — as it everywhere is in Cuba — I don't know, unless it be for the reason that the music is more wild and passionate, and the dance itself more in harmony with the ardent, sensual nature of the half-Spanish, half-negro population. When I had satisfied my curiosity I bade the priest good bye and went home; but dancing continued there all the afternoon and evening; and the last sounds I heard before I fell asleep that night were the peculiar click of the cratch-gourd and the faint distant rumble of the drum. The Sunday church service

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had occupied about three quarters of an hour. The Sunday dance lasted eleven hours and a half and broke my dance record.

It is said that a certain historian, in writing a history of the Emerald Isle, put in a chapter entitled "The Snakes of Ireland." The whole chapter consisted of only six words — "There are no snakes in Ireland." When I write a history of Cuba my chapter on "the religion of the Cubans" will also be limited to six words — "There is no religion among Cubans."

After staying about two weeks in Baracoa, I returned to Santiago by water, around the eastern end of the island; then went by steamer to Havana; and spent several months or more in constant travel through the provinces of Havana, Matanzas, Santa Clara and Pinar del Rio.

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Coming from Santiago to Havana in Febuary was like coming from a quiet Wisconsin village to Chicago on the eve of a Presidential convention. The square in front of the Inglaterra Hotel was ablaze with gas gits and electric lights, which illuminated brilliantly the hinted fronts of the clubs, theatres and hotels that stood about it; scores of lighted hacks were dashing hither and thither with a continous rattle over the cobblestone pavements; the sidewalks of the great tree-set boulevard known as the Prado were so crowded with laughing chattering pedestrians that one could hardly make one's way along them, while the spacious bar room of the Inglaterra was filled with an inarticulated

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roar of voices from a great crowd of Cubans and Americans, most of whom were shouting and questioning as excitedly as if they were delegates at a national political convention in Chicago or St Louis.

On the day after our arrival Mr Gray, my interpreter and I, took a drive through the city, I found it as clean, at least superficially, as Santiago. ~~In the vicinity of the old Spanish postoffice, and here and there along the water front, there were foul sickly ordors that seemed to come from choked or neglected sewers; but in all the higher parts of the city the air seemed fresh and pure.~~ It was perfectly evident that even in a single month Gen Ludlow and Major Davis had made a great change for the better in

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the sanitary condition of the place.[37]

The most unpleasant, but at the same time the most interesting thing I saw in Havana was the Christopher Colon cemetery. Up to the time when I left Cuba, all the consecrated burial places on the island were the property of the Roman Catholic Church, and were under the direct and exclusive control of the clergy. Private individuals might lease plots of ground in them, and might renew such leases from time to time by making fresh payments; but they could not <u>buy</u>[38] these lots, nor obtain such little to them as would ensure perpetual possession.

[37] Kennan added here the note "Begin Havana pictures", which indicates that the further part of the lecture must have been supported by photographs he had taken in the Cuban capital.

[38] Emphasis in the original.

If a lease were not renewed when it expired, the priests, who

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virtually owned the ground, had a night to remove the occupant of the grave and put another corpse in his place — just as they would eject the occupant of a house who had failed to pay his rent and put in another tenant. As the people of Havana die at the rate of 150 or 200 a week, as they must all be buried in this cemetery, and as the priests can turn them out of their graves and put other corpses in their places as soon as their relatives stop paying rent, the Christopher Colon cemetery is a source of large revenue to the Cuban Church.

Commercially it is precisely equivalent to a big block of tenement houses, except that when living[39] tenants are ejected for non-payment of rent they take care of themselves; whereas dead tenants, when exhumed, must be in some

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way disposed of. This difficulty the priests have overcome by establishing in every large cemterey a corpse-destroying house and a bone pit. When a dead man's relatives are too poor to rent a grave, or when, if they have rented one, they default in the payment of rent, the priests dig the body up, take it to the corpse-destroying house, eat the flesh off the bones with quick lime, and then throw the sceleton into the bone pit.

When we visited the Christopher Colon cemetery there was a guard of American soldiers at the gate and one of them offered to act for us in the capacity of guide. "I'll show you" he said with indignation "how these blankely-blank Cuban priests treat their[40] dead. They're a sweet lot they are! Imperial cannibals I call' em." "Don't they have funeral ceremonies at

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the grave?" I inquired. "Ceremonies!" Not much. If the relatives of a dead man can pay a dollar or two the priest at the gate comes out with

[39] Emphasis in the original.

[40] Emphasis in the original.

a basin and a clothes brush and slings a little holy water at the hearse as it goes in, and that's all the ceremony there is." Most times they just put the coffin in a hole and nobody says nothing. And then when they want the grave for another corpse they dig the first one up and take him to the lime-box and the bone-pit. I'll show you the whole thing, How's your nerve" so you mind seeing a stiff put in a lime box after he's been buried a week and dug up? I replied that I didn't go around looking for sights of that kind, but that I had come to the cemetery to see all there was to be seen, and if he could stand it I thought I could.

"You can't most alway tell" he said reflectively "how it'll

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strike people. I brought an American lady here to see it one day last week, and described it all to her beforehand…"[41]

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Apparently the work of their day had not begun and if there were any bodies in the process of conversions into skeletons, they were hidden in the closed part of the house. There was a faint odor of corruption in the air, and the place was full of ghastly suggestions; but to my secret relief and the soldier's great disappointment there was nothing repulsive to be seen.

From this house we went to the bone pit. Just before we reached it we met another soldier coming from it with a double handful of human teeth, which he had just extracted from a lot of Cuban skulls. He exhibited them to us with pride as he passed and said that he was going to send them to his friends in the States as souvenirs. The bone pit proved to be a rectangular

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excavation in the ground, 40 or 50 feet square and of unknown depth, surrounded with a low brick wall. It was filled nearly to the level of the ground with dismembered human skeletons of both sexes and all ages, lying heaped together in the utmost disorder and confusion.

[41] Page 84 of the manuscript is mostly unreadable, since the paper darkened and makes it hard to identify the words that had been written with pencil on it. The edition therefore continues with the last sentence on page 83, turning to page 85, which describes the cemetery tour itself.

In one place some of our soldiers had piled up 12 or 15 skulls in such a manner as to suggest half buried skeletons, crawling up out of the mass of bones to stare at us over one another's heads. How deep this bone pit was, and how many thousands of human skeletons it contained, I had no measure of finding out; but in one corner, where somebody apparently had been trying to dig to the bottom, I could see to a depth of 12 or fifteen feet. As far

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down as that the bones extended in a solid mass, and the bottom of the pit was perhaps 15 or 20 feet lower still. As I did not care to collect any souvenirs in the shape of a teeth, not to get myself photographed with a skull under each arm and a thigh bone in each hand, as our guide said he had already had himself photographed, I looked at the great mass of human remains for a moment and then walked back to the center of the cemetery. The practice of digging up and removing corpses whose grave rent has not been paid, explains the absence in most Cuban burial grounds of old graves and old gravestones.

The town of Baracoa has been in existence nearly four centuries, but I could not find in its cemetery a single

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monument or grave stone that bore an earlier date than 1850, and I saw very few that were earlier than 1870. All bodies buried there before the middle of the century had probably been dug up and thrown into the bone pit. For the priests of Cuba, as a class, I have very little repsect; but I don't know anaything that is more discreditable to them than their treatment of the bodies of their dead parishioners when no more rent can be collected from the ground in which such bodies lie.

If they would only cremate the bodies that they dig up it would not be so ghastly; but to destroy the flesh with quicklime and then throw the bones into an open bit [sic!] to bleach in the sun and rain seems unnecessarily heartless and brutal. There seems to be a

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great reluctance in Cuba to completely destroy the human body. The priests discountenance cremation, of course, because it would deprive them of their graveyard rents; but the common people are quite as much opposed to it; and their opposition seems to (be) based on a vague fear that if the body is completely reduced to its original elements, the angel

of resurrection never will be able to get it together again. With a skeleton to build on, they seem to think that he can reconstruct it, even although all its softer parts have entered into new combinations with lime; but in the absence of a framework what can he do?

I am glad to say that after I left Cuba, Gov Gen Brooke[42] issued a decreee declaring that all cemeteries in Cuba

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should henceforth be regarded as the property of the municipalities; and if the clergy desired to maintain their claim to ownership, they must do so in the courts of justice. This, of course, will deprive the priests of their power to exploit grave rent from the relatives of the dead, and will prevent them from digging up the remains of persons whose rent is in arrears.

It is to be hoped that the municipalities will then abolish the bone pits and allow the bodies of the dead to remain undisturbed in their places of burial.

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I did not fully relaize the extent to which Cuba had been devastated by war, and depopulated by the brutal reconcentration policy of Gen Weyler, until I went from Havana to Matanzas.

Outside of the two fortified towns of Haroóko and Antonio, there was hardly a vestige of human habitation or life on the whole route. Now and then one might see a neglected orange grove, a little unfenced patch of bananas, or the shattered walls and fire-blackened machinery of a ruined sugar mill; but there was not a single peasant village left standing; nor a new crop of any kind left growing; nor an acre of ground cleared and plowed for planting; and the houses — when there were any houses at all — stood from 5 to 10 miles apart. Generally speaking, the

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country was a mere waste of wild grass and weeds, with a few half-choked rows of sugar cane here and there to show what the land had once produced. There is no longer a shadow of doubt that in enforcing the policy of concentation, it was the deliberate intention of Gov Gen Weyler, to destroy the whole Cuban population. His plan in Havana and the other western

[42] John R. Brooke (1838–1926).

provinces was to send out a raiding column of 4 or 5000 soldiers — a column too strong for the insurgents to cope with — and drive the whole rural population into the fortified towns — burning their houses and agricultural implements; destroying their growing crops; killing or camping off their cattle, and reducing the country as nearly as possible

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to an inproductive and uninhabited desert.

In the vicinity of a single Cuban settlement for example, — the settlement of Sancti Spiritus in the province of Puerto Principe — one of Weyler's raiding columns slaughtered 30,000 Cuban cattle and left their carcasses to rot on the ground. The Cubans who were driven into the towns had no means of supporting themselves there; they were huddled together in glimsy shacks of palm-leaves and bark where the sanitary conditions of life were murderous; and of course they died in starvation and disease like rotten sheep.[43] The sufferings of the Cuban reconcentrados in the cental and western provinces of the island have never been exaggerated or overdrawn. On the contrary, the half has

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not been told.

Mr George W. Hyatt, our Red Cross agent in the town of Guanabacoa said to me "When I left here Mr Kennan at the outbreak of the war in April 1898, I was feeding with Cuban Relief supplies from the U.S. about 7500 people. When I returned in November — only six months later — more than 3000 of those people were dead; they were dying at the rate of 400 a month, and I found 42 naked corpses, in various stages of decomposition, lying unburied in the cemetery. The air, in all parts of the town when I first got back was so terrible that I could not sleep nights. In the civil hospital I found the sick, two in a bed,

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wallowing in their own filth and the air there was absolutely insupportable. I have cleaned the town up as far as possible, but the reconcentrados, whom I employ as street cleaners are so sick and weak that they can't do much. We are feeding here now about 3500 people — three

[43] A "Click" at this point was supposed to show a photograph of a "Reconcentrado village."

fourths of them women and children. Many of them have no homes and no shelter, and lie out of doors on old provision sacks that I save and give to them. How near starvation they have been, even since I came, you can imagine when I tell you that I have seen women and children eating vulture's food from the sewers and garbage barrels."

As I listened to this ghastly story of our own Red Cross agent, and then

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went out of doors and looked at the great throng of pale and emaciated people — whom he was feeding, I could not help wishing that ex Governor-general Weyler might be stripped of his rank and wealth, put into one of the palm-thatched shacks of his own reconcentrados, and fed for the rest of his unnatural life with vulture's food from the sewers and garbage barrels of Guanabacoa. That is the only punishment for him that would come anywhere near satisfying the demands of equity and justice. In all the parts of Central and Western Cuba that I had visited, the condition of the reconcentrados was or had been substantially the same.

In Santa Clara, for example, Mr Warner, our Red Cross

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agent was feeding about 3000 people, of whom only 163 were men. In Sancti Spiritus, a town of 13,000 inhabitants from which he had just come, 11,000 people were suffering for food; they were dying at the rate of 40 a day, and hundreds of unburied corpses were lying in the neighboring fields and woods. Of the 11,000 people whom he fed there only 1200 were men, and of these 1200 men 600 were too ill to walk or stand. In Matanzas, where I spent about a week, I found the American military authorities feeding 8000 destitute reconcentrados, 2000 of whom were sick. In some of the reconcentrado houses that I visited with Major Ives — Genl Sanger's chief surgeon — in Matanzas, the people were

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living in a state of destitution and misery that have never seen equalled elsewhere in the world.

Their places of habitation were little better than wild beast lairs, without floors other than the damp soggy ground; without beds except perhaps a pile of dirty rags in one corner, without chairs, tables, dishes, or

any of the so-called necessaries of life. In one place we found nineteen women and children and one sick man living on the bare ground in a palm-thatched shack not more than 12 feet by 15, without a single article of house furniture except one old iron kettle out of which they ate by turns with their fingers. All the food I could find in the house was a little half-burned rice at the bottom of the kettle.

It was touching and pathetic to see that even in such destitution

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and misery as this, the women had tried to brighten their environment by growing in front of their shack a little patch of flowers — balsams, marigolds and verbenas — from seed which they had doubtless brought with them when they were driven into the city from their distant country homes. They must have torn up the tough sod with their bare hands, and pulverized the earth with their fingers, because they had no implements of any kind. I doubt whether, at that time, there could have been found anywhere else in all the world, a little garden patch of cultivated flowers, growing in front of a house which did not contain a single article of human manufacture except one old iron kettle.[44]

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After spending about three months in constant travel through the provinces of Santiago, Havana, Matanzas, Santa Clara and Pinar del Rio, I was taken again with Cuban jungle fever — an attack from which I have not yet[45] recovered — and was compelled to return to the United States.

In a fragmentary and imperfect way I have tried to describe to you some of the scenes and incidents of my Cuban experience. ~~I will now tell you briefly what I think of the Cuban peoole and of the future of the island.~~

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In a speech made to the trustees of the Cuban Orphan Fund in the N(ew) Y(ork) Chamber of Commerce on the 29th of June 1899, Major General Leonard Wood, then military governor of Santiago, now governor-general, expressed his view of the Cuban problem as follows. “We are going

[44] Another “Click” would show the photograph of “Emaciated children.”

[45] The term “not yet” is a replacement for the original “only just.”

to be held responsible for the island gentlemen, whether Cuba is made independent or becomes a part of ourselves."

If this statement of Gen Wood be true — and there is no doubt whatever in my mind that it is[46] true — the most important practical question suggested by it is a question of character — namely, what are the hereditary and acquired traits, habits and capacities of the people for whose actions we, as a

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nation and a government are to be held responsible. It is of course impossible, in such a lecture as this, to make a complete and exhaustive analysis of the Cuban character, or to give a very great number of cases and examples.

I shall limit myself therefore to a few of the Cuban most noticeable characteristics, and shall begin with what seems to me the best of them; namely his strict temperance in the use of intoxicating liquor. One of the first things that attracts the attention of the observant traveler in Cuba is the remarkable

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fact that although the whole native population drinks, nobody ever seems to get drunk. I had been on the island almost six months before I ever saw a Cuban perceptibly under the influence of liquor; and yet there was not a day, in the whole course of that time, that I did not see Cubans by the dozen, talking, smoking and drinking in the restaurants and cafes with which their towns abound. All Cubans drink, but they are the most temperate people nevertheless that I have ever known. Even in hours of triumph and periods of great emotional excitement, when overindulgence might be expected if not excused, the Cuban seldom

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loses his head to such an extent as to become noisy, disorderly or offensive.

I witnessed in Santa Clara, Cienfuegos and Havana three great popular demonstrations in honor of Gen Gomez; when there were reunions of old army comrades, celebrations of victories won by Cuban arms, and scenes of almost unparalleled excitement and passion; but I did not

[46] Emphasis in the original.

notice in the crowded cafes, or in the surging throngs on the streets, a single intoxicated Cuban soldier or civilian.

Drunken American[47] soldiers I have seen in Cuba by the score if not by the hundred; but all the drunken Cuban soldiers I have ever seen I can count on my thumbs.

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In many parts of the island and at many different times, my national and racial pride was deeply wounded — not to say humbled — by the glaring contrast between American intemperance and Cuban sobriety. In Baracoa one afternoon I happened to see three or four drunken American soldiers staggering down the street toward the post-office under the eyes of a dozen or more sober and observant Cubans. In the faces of the Cubans there was a half-pitying half-contemptous expression which seemed to say "How is it possible for human beings to make such beasts of themselves?"

There was justification enough perhaps for the

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expression; but it irritated me nevertheless. In courage, in honesty, in capacity and in all that goes to make up true manhood, those American soldiers were infinitely superior to the Cubans who stood clear-eyed and sober on the sidewalk and looked after them with disgust and contempt. I had no doubt whatever that three fourths of those very Cubans would lie without scruple and steal if they had a good opportunity, and go contentedly for three months without a bath; but drunkenness didn't happen to be their vice. That the average Cuban has more self control than the average American in the presence of intoxicating liquor, is an

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indisputable fact; but in defence of the American it may at least be said that when he is sober he has his senses, while the Cuban often loses his senses without being drunk.

What effect American example will have upon the drinking methods and habits of the Cubans, I am unable even to conjecture; but I sincerely hope that they won't adopt an imported American vice without at least

[47] Emphasis in the original.

learning a few compensating American virtues. If strict moderation in the use of intoxicating liquors be put at the head of the list of Cuban virtues, untrustworthiness in word and deed, must certainly head the list of Cuban vices.

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The chief representative of one of the oldest foreign mercantile houses in Cuba — a house which has been in business there for a period that covers three or four generations — summed up for me one day, in the following words, the firms long experience with its Cuban customers and employees; "When my grandfather died, the last advice that he gave my father with regard to the management of the business was 'Never trust a Cuban!' When my father died the last injunction he laid upon me was 'Never trust a Cuban!' When I hand over the business to my successor, I shall pass along the advice which I received from my father, and which he received from his

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father — 'Never trust a Cuban!'." Individual testimony could hardly be more emphatic or more conclusive than this.

Three successive generations of upright business men had found the average Cuban so untruthful and so unreliable, that they had adopted and handed down in the firm as a business maxim the significant words "Never trust a Cuban". The untrustworthiness of the Cubans is by no means confined to clerks, traders and the uneducated lower class. If the testimony of American officers and administrators is worthy of belief, Cuban lawyers, physicians and professional men are tarred with the same brush.

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In a talk one day about the character of the Cubans, the Sanitary Inspector of the U.S. Marine Hospital Service at Havana said to me "I have been here Mr Kennan a number of years. It is a part of my business, at certain seasons, to keep Cuban yellow fever and small pox out of the U.S.; and in discharge of this duty I require every Cuban who leaves here for an American port to furnish me with satisfactory evidence that he has had yellow fever and small pox, or, in the case of the latter disease, that he has been vaccinated. At first I began to accept as evidence the certificates of reputable Cuban physicians in this

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city. I soon discovered, however, that I was being imposed upon; and that certain doctors were furnishing non-immune Cubans with false certificates. Then I began to keep a black list of Cuban physicians whose certificates were not to be trusted. This list kept constantly growing, until finally it became so long that I abandoned it, and began to make a white list of the few Cuban physicians that I thought I could[48] trust."

"I pledge you my professional word Mr. Kennan," he said in conclusion, "that if you were to take 50 centennes (¢5, Spanish gold pieces) and go to 50 of the best known and most

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reputable physicians in the city of Havana, you could bribe 45 of them, with a centenne apiece, to give you a certificate that you had had any disease you chose to name, at any time that suited your purposes."

If well known and reputable Cuban physicians deal in this way with sanitary matters involving issues of life and death, what protection are our Southern cities likely to have when we withdraw from the Pearl fo the Antilles alltogether and leave Cuba to the Cubans? How soon will yellow fever be stamped out on the island when Cuban Boards of Health, composed in whole or in part of such physicians, take charge of sanitary work in the city of Havana, and sell false health certificates to

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comers at the rate of ¢5 a piece? It would be easy, if there were time, to furnisch many well authenticated cases of the use by Cubans of false weights and measures; of the procurement of Red Cross supllies to groceries at less than their market value in N.Y.; of the placing of fictitious names, by Cuban foremen, on the pay-rolls of street-cleaning gangs; of attempts to bribe administrative officers of the U.S.; of corrupt and fraudulent identification of sham soldiers by Cuban army officers in the distribution of Pres'd Mc Kinley's $3,000,000 award; and of fraud, deception, embezzlement and untrustworthiness among all classes and in almost every conceivable form.

Now there must be some reason

[48] Emphasis in the original.

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for this wide frevalence of dishonesty in the private, official and commercial life of the Cuban people; and the question naturally arises "What is the reason?" An answer may be found, I think, in the address of General Wood to the Trustees of the Cuban Orphan Fund from which I have already quoted. He said to them "We have got to remember, gentlemen, that we are dealing with a people whose whole disposition has been perverted by a system which compelled deceit, dishonesty and subterfuge in every department of life." In other words the Cuban is untrustworthy because he is the product of a corrupt and vicious system of training, conducted and enforced for three hundred years by corrupt and vicious rulers.

Whatever Spanish army officers

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may have been in Spain, they were in Cuba grasping, avaricious, untruthful, and notoriously dishonest. To expect that colonists of the same race, and natural inheritors of the same characteristics, would undergo this demoralizing intensive training, generation after generation, and come out of it honest, upright or trustworthy, would be to expect a stupendous miracle. In the words of the homely but pregnant Spanish proverb — "The children of the cats catch mice." ~~Next to untrustworthiness the most noticeable characteristic of the average Cuban is uncleanness. It may perhaps be thought that uncleanness, in comparison~~

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with untrustworthiness, is an unimportant if not a venial fault; and that it has no practical bearing upon the welfare of any one except the unclean person and his neighbors. This perhaps is true; but, unfortunately, we are the Cuban's neighbors; and not only our welfare, but even our lives, may depend upon the sanitary condition of (t)his back yard.

It is therefore a practical, as well as a pertined question, whether there is anything in his character and habits upon which we may base a reasonable expectation that when we leave the island he will continue the work that we have begun.

Will the Cuban cities that we have cleaned be kept clean, and will the

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death rate that we have everywhere reduced be kept down, when the people of the island are left to their own devices? Any one who has read the report of the late Colonel Waring upon the sanitary condition of Havana must still have in mind a sufficiently clear idea of the urban Cuban as he was. Is there any good reason to believe that the leopard has changed his spots, or that he will keep himself spotless when no longer forced to do so by American control? When Mr Gray and I came from Santiago to Havana on the Spanish steamer Maria Herrera, we could get no better accommodation than a six-by-eight stateroom, which we shared with two first Cuban passengers.

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One of these gentemen was a Cuban planter, about 60 years of age, rich enough to afford a loss of $40 or $50 every night at cards; and the other was a young lieutenant in the Cuban army. If either of these men had a tooth-brush, a comb, a hair-brush or a piece of soap, I never once caught sight of it. If either of them washed his face or his hands, in the four days that we spent at sea, I never happened to catch him in the act, and never found any evidence in the stateroom that the act had been performed. Both of them had the unpleasant habit of cleaning their throats and spitting on the floor at all hours of the night, and the condition of the floor became such that Mr Gray and

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I dared not get out of our berths in the morning without first putting on our trousers.

When we reached Havana, I asked Dr Brunner the sanitary inspector of the U.S. Marine Hospital Service, whether such untidiness as this was common. His reply was, "I can take you Mr Kennan to private houses of wealthy Cubans in this city — houses that cost 40 or 50,000 dollars to build — where there are all modern improvements, including sanitary plumbing, bath-rooms and closets on every floor, but where nevertheless the occupants neglect the closets and resort to practices which can only be vaguely described as primitive. More than once wealthy Cuban women, wearing four or five hundred dollars worth of diamonds, have

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come to my office to get health certificates or permits to visit the U.S., and upon being required to show their vaccination marks have exposed arms grimy with dirt."

It will be easy of course, for an affronted Cuban, or an admirer of the Cubans, to jump on me indignantly with the charge that I am basing an indictment of a whole people upon a few exceptional facts or cases. But such is not my meaning or intention. I do not believe — still less assert — that all Cubans travel without toilet requisites, neglect bathrooms, or wear diamonds on dirty arms.

I am merely giving from personal observation or trustworthy testimony, a few illustrations of the general tendendy of the Cuban people to

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disregard dirt and ignore the most elementary principles of sanitary science. That there is such a tendency, even the Cubans themselves will hardly deny.

My only object in calling attention to an unfortunate national characteristic and dwelling upon an unpleasant subject is to emphasize the immense practical importance of the impending question "What will be the attitude of the Cuban people toward sanitary reform when we withdraw wholly from the island and leave them to work out their own destiny?" Will they keep Santiago and Havana as clean as Gen Wood and Gen Ludlow have made them? Are they likely to spend in the latter city the 10 or 12 million dollars that

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Col Waring estimated it would cost to construct a proper system of sewerage? Finally is there any reasonable probability that they will ever stamp out that smouldering fire of the tropics — yellow fever — which, from first to last, has cost us Americans far more, in life and treasure than the whole Spanish-American War?

My own answer to all of these questions is unhesitatingly no! What then are we going to do about it? It seems to me that in view of the sacrifices we have made, the blood we have spilled and the money we have spent to free the Cuban people, we are at least equitably entitled to demand that

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~~Cuba shall be put, and henceforth kept, in such sanitary condition that yellow fewer, from *that* source, shall never again menace our Southern coast. If the Cubans will not do this work, we are fully justified in doing it ourselves at their expense; and if we withdraw from Cuba without reserving and asserting our right to supervise and control all sanitaty work on the island, we shall make a serious, as well as a foolish mistake.~~ Although untrustworthiness ~~and uncleanness~~ is perhaps the worst fault of the average Cuban, he has several other characteristics which, although less blameworthy from a moral point of view are even more dangerous politically; and these are his excitability

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his disposition to act on hasty unconsidered impulse, and his ineradicable tendency to exaggeration. ~~These may seem like separate and disconnected characteristics, but in reality they are all linked together. If the Cuban were not so excitable, he would not act so often on hasty impulse; and if he were not so impulsive he would be half as likely to exaggerate.~~

Illustrations of these characteristics, in all its various phases, are so abundant that I hardly know what to select. A typical case perhaps may be found in the discreditable row at the funeral of late Gen Garcia in Havana on the 11th of February (1899).[49]

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In accordance with arrangements made by a Cuban committee, Major Gen Brooke, who represented not merely the U.S. but the only de facto government on the island, was requested to ride in the funeral procession directly behind the members of Gen Garcia's family. Accompanied by the officers of his staff he took the position assigned him, and the procession started from the palace.

A few moments later a Cuban officer, acting under direction of Mr Freyre Andrade,[50] President of the Cuban Assembly, rode up to the

[49] Garcia died during a diplomatic mission to the United States in New York on December 11, 1898 and his remains were brought to Cuba later.

[50] Fernando Freyre de Andrade (1863–1929).

column and ordered Gen Brooke's staff to fall back and give place to Cuban soldiers. Gen Brooke, very properly, declined to be separated from

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his staff, whereupon Mr Andrade ordered all Cuban officers and soldiers to withdraw from the procession and take no further part in the ceremonies. The Cuban army, as well as the members of the Assembly, did withdraw, amid cries of "Viva Cuba Libre", "Out with the Yankees" and "Hurrah for Aguinaldo" and many of the Cuban officers, including several generals, proceeded to the bar room of the Hotel Inglaterra, where, according to the Cuban newspaper *La Lucha*, they "sat in prominent positions, drinking champagne while Garcia's body was passing."

~~The only comment which it seems necessary to make upon this extraordinary performance, is that made by the Havana newspaper just quoted which said "The whole affair is particularly unfortunate~~

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~~as beeing indicative of the childish and impetuous nature which is possessed by many of the prominent men of the island." "Childish and impetuous" are not exactly the words that I should use in describing such conduct at such a time; but they are the words of a Cuban editor and they will do.~~

The proceedings of the Cuban Assembly in connection with President Mc Kinley's gift of $3,000,000 to the Cuban army, would have been regarded as childish and disgraceful by the 12-year-old boys in the Congress of the George Junior Republic. Gen Sanguilly, amid applause, described parts of the message of Gen Gomez to the Cuban army and people as "deliberate lies."

Generals Aguerro and Protuondo

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referred to it as a "lying statement." General Maria Rodriguez[51] called Gomez and Quesada[52] "traitors," and both of the latter gentlemen were forthwith expelled or dismissed, without a hearing and by unanimous vote.

[51] José María Rodríguez (1849–1903).

[52] Manuel de Quesada (1871–1939).

Then the Junta of Cuban generals got together and dismissed twenty four other generals of the Assembly faction en bloc, while the friends of Gen Gomez declared that the elections which gave the members of the Assembly their seats were voidable for illegality and political jobbery. About the same time a Cuban officer named Hernandez wrote a letter to the Havana newspaper *La Lucha* in which he denounced Gen Gomez as a "despot." Gomez retorted with the countercheck

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quarrelsome that Hernandez was a "coward." Hernandez thereupon proceeded to get even by publishing alleged incidents of a discreditable nature in Gomez's private life. All these charges, counter-charges and exchanges of abusive epithets suggest, you will observe, the preliminary stages of a semi-annual revolution in one of the mongrel republics of Central America.

I have referred to them however not for that reason, but merely for the purpose of showing the excitability which almost always hurries them into misstatement, exaggeration or untruthfulness. When Juan Gualberto Gomez,[53]

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a member of the Cuban Assembly, declared in a speech at a public banquet in Havana that "the Americans are worse than the Spaniards," he did not say what he really believed, but simply let himself be carried off his feet by the rush of a hasty, passionate impulse. When General Collazo[54] said, in a letter to Luesada that "the American authorities in Cuba calmly enter private houses without any other excuse than that of scrubbing the furniture" he simply let himself be carried away by the Cuban disposition to oppose sanitary reform and exaggerate facts. When General Avelino Rosas,[55] one of Garcia's

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generals, published a signed article in the *Diario de la Marina*, in which he said that "the American government is worse than Weyler's" and that the "inhuman blockades established by the U.S. exterriorated the reconcentrados, " he was simply telling what he knew to be a plain, straight Cuban lie.

[53] Juan Gualberto Gómez (1854–1933).

[54] Enrique Collazo y Tejada (1848–1921).

[55] Avelino Rosas (1856–1901).

Now the natural and inevitable drift of all this personal abuse, reckless statement, gross exaggeration and intentional falsehood, is not on the direction of social and political order, but rather in the direction of complete anarchy. Men who treat social and political questions in this crazy way are sure to seperate

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into embittered and irreconcilable factions which will fight one another at the drop of a hat. It is idle to say this will not happen, because it has already happened. When I left Cuba there were no less than twelve factional Cuban parties already in existence including the "Cuban National Party", the "National Republican Party", the "Veterans' League", the "Annexation Party", and the "Party of Independence or death" — each with its own newspaper organ.

The Russians, whose natural tendency is in the direction of association and general cooperation,

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and who have little sympathy with the factional spirit, say proverbially of their Polish cousins that where there are two Poles there are three parties. If they knew the Cubans they would carry the exaggeration a little further and declare that where there are three Cubans there are six parties — five of them in the woods. If defeated and disgruntled factions in Cuba would submit to the expressed will of the majority and subordinate their own desires to the welfare of the nation as a whole, the factional spirit would not be so dangerous.

But this is

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exactly what the Cuban will not do and never has been trained to do. If he cannot have exactly the place he wants in Garcia's funeral possession, he acts the spoiled child who won't play. If he does not get the position he seeks in the government, he won't have anything to do with that government, and the chief representative of it immediately becomes, in his disordered and uncontrolled imagination a "tyrant" or a "despot."

Then he and his faction work themselves into a white heat of wrat, by means of exaggeration,

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misstatement, and pyrotechnical oratory and if the existing government tries to quiet or restrain them, they fortwith take to the woods, and there you have at once all the elements of an incipient revolution. ~~The danger to the State at this stage of the proceedings is greatly heightened by the ignorance of the common people, their proneness to act in unconsidered impulse, and their peculiar susceptibiliy to the charm of eloquent speech. The average Cuban is easily managed for good if treated with firmness and tact by a man of stronger and better disciplined character; but he is also easily managed for evil by a Cuban general of the Avelino Rosas~~

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~~type, who combines selfish ambition with political dishonesty, and who knows how to create a stable lie with the vaporous rhetorical bubbles of impassioned oratory. In view of the opinions I have expressed it is hardly necessary to add that~~

I do not believe the Cubans at present are either fit for or capable of intelligent self government. That there are on the island honest and capable men, I do not for a moment question, but that such men form a majority, or even a considerable part of the Cuban population, is not only improbable but incredible. ~~The comparatively fair and temperate Havana~~

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~~newspaper *La Lucha*, said recently, in an editorial on this subject "Cuba must convince the world that she has enough sane men to control the lunatics." I heartily agree with this statement, and the world, moreover, is ready and anxious to be convinced; but convincing evidence is not yet forthcoming.~~

All that I have seen of the Cubans, and all that I know of their character leads me to the belief that they will not prove themselves worthy of the freedom that we have virtually pledged ourselves to give them, and that if we withdraw wholly from the island the first Cuban Republic will go down in a revolution, as so many Spanish-American republics have gone down before.

If this should happen, it would probably lead to a second

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intervention on the part of the U.S., and Cuba would thenceforth be subjected to American control. That we shall eventually take such control for the protection of our interests, or that the Cubans will offer it to us for the protection of theirs,[56] I have very little doubt; but I sincerely hope, that there will be no talk of annexation until we have had time enough to give the rising generation of Cuban boys a throrough training in truthfulness, honesty and the fundamental principles of republican self government. The present generation can't be reformed — it's too late — but with American control and an American system of training we may be able to make good citizens out of the Cuban boys for whom we are now establishing schools.

But whatever we may

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think of the Cubans, and whatever view we may take of the future of Cuba, there is no question whatever that in driving the Spaniards out of the island we were doing a work of justice, mercy and righteousness. When, as individuals, we see a cruel and brutal man beating a women or starving a child, we don't stop to ask whether the victims of the brutality are up to our level of culture or not. We interfere promptly and without question. The duty that is binding upon an individual, is binding also upon a nation.

When Spain undertook to conquer the Cuban insurgents by starving to death two or three hundred thousand of their women and children, it was our duty to intervene, we did intervene, and by our

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intervention we saved the Cuban people. As soon as the Government of the U.S. got control of the island, it began to undo the worse that the Spaniards had done, and to rescue the people who were still alive. How many hundred tons of medical and hospital supplies and how many hundred millions of rations the government and the Red Cross have distributed among the sick and starving people of Cuba, I will not undertake to say; but the Dept of the Cienfuegos and Santa Clara RR told me in Feb(ruary) that up to that time his road had transported into the

[56] Emphasis in the original.

province of Santa Clara alone relief supplies enough to feed 20,000 people for 10 months.

On the 1st of May 1899

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there was not a town, village or hamlet in all the island of Cuba where food was not being furnished to destitute reconcentrados by the army of the U.S. Invading armies as a rule go to kill and to destroy. Our army went to rescue and to save. It is not an overstatement I think to say that by our intervention and with our food we directly saved the lives of half a million of the Cuban people. In view of this fact and in the light of this record the Spanish-American War will forever stand justified before the judgement bar of history and before the judgement bar of God.

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