



CUBA

*Pocket
Edition Studies in
Home Missions*



BY

LIDA W. MILLER

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The Woman's American Baptist
Home Mission Society

2969 Vernon Avenue
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with the exception of a few weeks of English domination, until given its freedom by the United States in 1898. Not until 1908 was a stable government established after centuries of misrule, of cruel injustice, of smouldering discontent and of revolutions.

Beginning of Baptist Missions in the Island

The dawn of a new era of happiness for Cuba came when in a new constitution of a new republic religious liberty was given to all the people, and the union of state and church came to an end. Then came the summons to the Christian people of America to give the Gospel to this new republic, and the history of our Baptist Missions in Cuba began.

In 1899 the Home Mission Society sent its first worker to this great new field, and soon after, three appointees of the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society began their service of heroic devotion—pioneers in a mission field of peculiar difficulties. The past twenty years of Cuban history have seen a people emerging from oppression and dependence, into independence and nationhood.

These twenty years have witnessed the growth and development of Christian missions in this wonderful island. The year 1916 has witnessed such a conference of interdenominational interests in the city of Havana as promises a new impetus and growth in the decade that is to follow.

Returning from the great Congress in Panama, called to consider on Latin-America's own soil and with its own workers, her religious problems, members of Mission Boards and Societies interested in Cuba met with missionaries from Cuban fields to discuss the special needs of this island. The workers met and they and their boards became better acquainted, and together they faced the problems. A new relation was established as the various denominations conferred as to how they might co-operate in supplying some of Cuba's needs. Together, too, they planned a co-operative campaign in the *home land* of prayer, of education and of giving.

The Regional Conference

This Regional Conference marks another step in advance in Cuba. Among the 2,600,000 of the population of this republic are the following groups: (1) the "Criollos," or native Cubans of Spanish descent, who form 88 per cent of the people; (2) the Spanish immigrants, 10 per cent; (3) English-speaking immigrants, mostly from the United States, Canada and Jamaica, 1 per cent; (4) other nationalities, among them many Chinese, 1 per cent. There are many negroes and a large admixture of negro blood throughout the land.

Location

Cuba lies directly in the pathway of steamers running between New York and the west coast of South America via the Panama Canal. This makes her position with respect to the United States, Canada, and the twenty-one Latin-American republics very important.

The Gateway of Latin-America

But to us whose interest lies not in her commerce but in her evangelization, she lies at the gateway to our entrance into Latin-America, that great Spanish-speaking territory toward which Christian eyes and hearts are turning, as a new feeling of responsibility for our share in carrying the Gospel to it has been born in our hearts.

As we enter the wonderful harbor of Havana, the city whose treasure-vaults once held the gold and silver gathered from Spanish dependencies and from which sailed in olden days the Spanish galleons, we find the first point of contact between Latin and Anglo-Saxon America.

The People

From this city with its wealth and its poverty, its beauty and its squalor, its churches and its masses of ignorant and irreligious people, we start to explore Cuba and to know its people. All over the island are the palm-thatched huts in which live the native Cubans. In many a hamlet at the full of the moon they still beat the drum in the square and have their pagan religious exercises.

Under a bush, one may still pick up the "Obeah" man's charm, thrown away at midnight while the "magic" works. Spiritism and superstition have a large hold upon tens of thousands of people. The cities and some of the great central sugar plantations have schools and churches; the little hamlets are neglected. There are no schools for thousands of natives.



Cuba suffers from absentee landlordism in the person of the sugar planter; under the policy of the Catholic Church ignorance prevails; the people are sturdy and industrious, honest and hospitable, but hordes of them are still under the dominion of foreigners. Now and then there is an ominous rumble in some one of the six provinces, which speaks of a new revolution threatened, and voices the popular discontent. The masses have no moral standard; they have no horror of sin. "While all Cubans are nominal Catholics they do not concern themselves about Protestantism or Romanism, but pursue their way gaily and carelessly."

Cuba's Great Need

The great need is the Word of God. "The Latin-American religion is the one religion in the world that has no sacred Book for the people. Hindoos and Buddhists have their sacred books open to all. In Moslem lands an ideal of the educated man is to be able to read the Koran in Arabic. But here we have the phenomenon of a land with its sacred Scriptures, the Bible, sealed to the people." They have no vision of God as their father, or of Christ as their friend. Agnosticism, indifference, ignorance,—these we find prevailing. The results of immorality in Cuba may be judged from the large number of illegitimate births. Sacred names have no sacredness. Cock-fights and gambling are the Sun-

day pursuits. Every where the dark trail of the lottery shows in poverty and distress.

The children of Cuba need to have as object lessons Christian lives showing ideals of unselfishness, love and devotion to duty, and of purity. It is the Christian teacher and missionary upon whom such service devolves.

The Forces at Work

What are the forces for good that have entered this land? Immediately on the close of the Spanish-American war, various American evangelical churches began systematic missionary work throughout the republic. The agencies have been preaching, visiting missionaries, Sunday and day schools, colportage, and the press.

The first places to be occupied were the capitals of the six provinces into which the island is divided. With these as centers, work in the districts about them has been organized and carried on by the nine denominations that have sent their missionaries and teachers. These denominations are the Baptists and Presbyterians, North and South, the Southern Methodists, the Disciples, Friends, Protestant Episcopalians, and Adventists. In addition to the mission forces of the churches are Bible and tract society agencies, colporters, and, in Havana, a fine Y. M. C. A., with a beautiful new building and a noble Christian secretary.

All the denominations have day schools which offer education far in advance of the public schools and, of course, Sunday schools and Young People's Societies. The missions are training a native ministry and developing self-support. The churches as a whole have 145 stations and 190 out-stations. There is a combined membership of 12,000 and 121 church buildings.

Baptist Missions

Of all these various mission stations, the northern Baptists have 99 and these are all located in the two eastern provinces of the island, Oriente, and Camaguary; six new churches were organized during the year 1915-16.

There are at this date 2,000 church members and 55 Sunday schools with 3,800 pupils enrolled. During the present year, 239 baptisms are reported.

Cuba's Needs

Cuba needs native teachers and preachers. No one understands the Latin-American mind and its best method of approach as well as the native. She needs better schools, not only primary, but higher and normal schools. Within a year the government has started its first normal school. One can judge how far such a school, even if well conducted and free from political and Catholic influence, can supply the need of the whole island. The government schools all suffer from politics. Indifference and incompetence on the part of many teachers have robbed these schools of the confidence of the people.

She needs a literature in Spanish. It is only within a few years that the ignorance of the people has been sufficiently lightened to make them want to read. To meet the demand, the island is being flooded with obscene and debasing reading matter. Sunday-school helps are needed, a children's magazine, commentaries for help in preparing sermons, literature for the homes and for student use. It is not sufficient to translate English works into Spanish. There must be eventually a literature especially adapted to these people, and written from the standpoint of their own experiences.

Literature for Cuban Women

Perhaps the lack of good literature is one of the greatest weaknesses in missionary work for Cuban women, as it is in all Latin-American countries. The whole range of wholesome fiction for young people, and of stories for children is wanting. While many women cannot read, those who have been educated enough for that, eagerly read all the books and papers they can find. Their lives are very narrow. Imagine a woman's magazine like one of our great magazines in the States dealing with problems of home life and having departments

of fiction, hygiene, sanitation, clothing, care of children and religion. Think what it would mean where there is such a dearth of interests, where the mothers are so poorly trained, to have such a publication with its contents interesting to every member of the home, a frequent visitor there; how it would supplement the work of the teacher and the preacher.

It is hoped that with the new impetus given to the study of the field by all denominations, more high and normal schools will result, and also a literature be prepared that will be a mighty means of usefulness in evangelizing Cuba. Through the co-operation of all denominations, great advance can be made along these particular lines.

Work of the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society

While our Home Mission Society is developing missions and schools, our Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society has been placing its emphasis on the supporting of teachers for the schools. In Cuba, at the present time, we are supporting nine teachers and one field worker.

Why We Need Primary Schools

Because the public schools of Cuba are inadequate,—they have no source of supply for trained teachers,—there is always a demand for good primary schools. The question arises: Why should we, whose interest in Cuba is for evangelization, interest ourselves in supplying this secular demand? The answer is that the people are not only indifferent Roman Catholics, they are for the most part without any religious belief and indifferent to its lack. The children have no moral teaching nor have they presented to them any high standards of living or behavior. Impurity, dishonesty, selfishness, with these they are too familiar.

The primary schools, taught by Christian teachers, give not only thorough education but teach of Christ, His Love, and His Word. The unselfish devotion of the

teachers, by their work, their influence on the lives of the children, and through their relations with the parents, gives them a hold on the community. All mission workers know that to win the mothers means, eventually, to win the social order for the Gospel. This the teacher is often successful in doing. The pastor enters the homes with difficulty; the husbands are suspicious and object to pastoral visiting. The woman teacher and missionary must do this work of visiting the homes. Wherever these schools are established, the attendance on Church and Sunday school is increased. Parents appreciate the discipline our teachers establish and their care for the moral development of the children.

Another reason exists for organizing primary schools. To win the children in the lower schools means that students are won for the higher schools, which prepare Christian teachers and pastors, and from which girls go forth to make Christian homes.

Ten Years of Schools

From the work of our schools in Cuba during the past ten years, we have many encouraging things to report. Many teachers and preachers are being supplied; the aforetime naughty boy of the Ciego de Avila School is now the energetic, consecrated, young pastor of the Baracoa district, where not only his own church, but many missions are served and directed by him. Does it pay? Visit and see for yourself our schools and missions, and answer, "A thousand times, yes!"

Our college at Cristo shows the value of the lower schools which feed it. To it have come the boys and girls from primary schools, and from it have gone these same young people to work as pastors and as teachers. What a splendid showing they make, as you meet them here and there and every where through the provinces,—enthusiastic, consecrated, prepared and at work.

Camaguay

The traveler who would visit the schools supported in part by our Woman's Society, must stop first, after

an all-night ride from Havana, at Camaguay. Though the strongest Catholic city on the island in proportion to its population, with its twenty or more Catholic churches, it had room for one more,—or at least the Baptists decided it had, and built our "model church." Here we pass through the pretty church building, with the vine-shaded *patio* at the side, and visit the little school where Miss Waidman presides. Thirty bright, attractive children, many of them members of the Sunday school, are being made ready for higher school work. Among them, are probably some of the future teachers and preachers of Cuba. The Rev. Mr. Wilson, pastor of the church, a veteran missionary of wonderful piety and success in mission work not only in Cuba but in Mexico, aids and abets the work of the school. Miss Waidman is as useful in the Sunday school with her young woman's class as she is in her orderly little class rooms. Her ministry in the homes, too, is effective and her school is growing,—has doubled this year, her first in Camaguay. By next year we hope the "baby organ" she covets will have materialized and the beautiful voices of the children have its support as they sing the gospel hymns.

Bayamo

No town in Cuba is more interesting historically than the old town of Bayamo, "the patriot stronghold." Here in 1868 the Cubans burned their city of 25,000 inhabitants, rather than have it fall into the hands of the Spanish. Here in a new city of 6,000 many of whom live in the crumbling ruins of the older city, is our church, and the school with Miss Renshaw as teacher. For the religious service of the *Roman Catholic* population, two little chapels suffice, one of them a corner in the crumbling ruins of the old Cathedral. The indifference to religion is so great, and so appalling, that we turn with relief to our mission school and its band of children. Faithful Miss Renshaw, trained in the Baptist Training School in Chicago, has, in addition to her school work, a Sunday-school class of fourteen

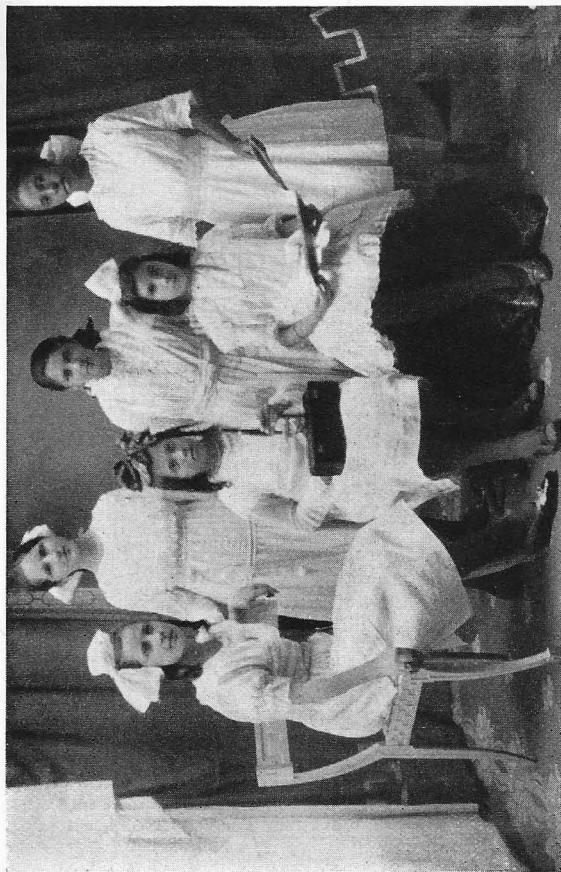
members. She teaches half of them English, two evenings each week, has charge of the Young People's meetings, plays for the services at prayer-meetings and on Sunday, and on Saturday afternoons visits in the homes of the pupils where she is in many of them a welcome and much loved guest.

In Bayamo was born the hero of the Revolution of 1868. Here was written Cuba's national hymn, and here was born Cuba's first president. When we think of the sturdy patriotism and strength of character of the people who fled to the mountains, leaving their homes burning rather than yield to the conquerer, what may we not hope from their little descendants who, in a happier time are having a Christian training? They are preparing to do later their share as men and women in impressing Christian ideals upon life in Cuba.

Manzinillo

In the heart of the old seaport town of Manzinillo is a small, neat church with its tiny *patio* and parsonage. There lives here a fine young Cuban pastor with his sweet-faced wife and their two little children. The pretty home with its birds and flowers, its simple furnishings and white-curtained rooms, is a center for a Christian community where the work of this young man, a Cristo graduate, is proving a great blessing. Near by is the school with its winsome leader, Alice McCarty and her two Cuban helpers. Sixty-five students are enrolled and happily at work.

The bright executive head of this school is an ardent nature-lover. Herbariums, nature pictures, attractive charts and many flowers make the rooms very cheerful. The children are taught to see and love the beauty that surrounds them, and to look from "Nature up to Nature's God." They work with much independence and faithfulness and are bright and resourceful. The spirit of the school is evident; none could mistake the fact that it is a Christian school full of kindness and goodwill.

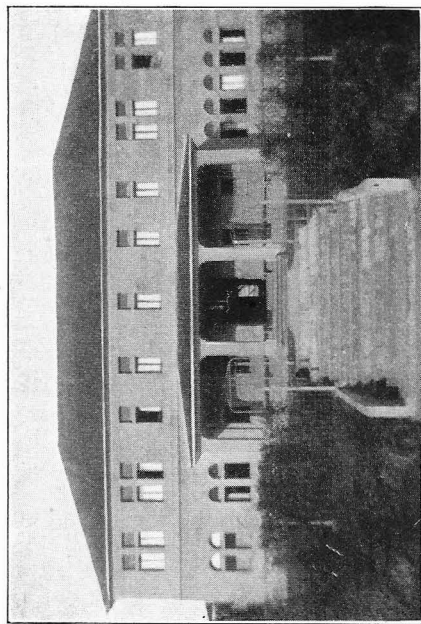


Fifth Grade Girls of the School at Manzanillo

Cristo

Up among the mountains with blossoming trees and gardens, where oranges and limes abound, is a beautiful school known all over the island as the best equipped evangelical school in Cuba. On either side of the white road are the dormitories for the girls and boys, separated by road and gardens. In this school are one hundred and eighty students. Miss Young, another teacher trained in the Chicago Baptist Training School, is preceptress of the girls. Christian character, fine education, poise and common sense make her very efficient. Her wise training of young women is making some good teachers for Cuba. Among the young men are students of theology preparing to take their places among the other young Cuban pastors whom the school has already sent out. The bell of the Baptist Church and that of the school-house have taken the place of the bell which now sounds rarely from the belfry of the dilapidated Catholic church. The Cristo schools were established in 1908; from the start they have been successful. Today the dormitories are crowded to their utmost capacity and students are turned away. During the first six months of the present school year, thirty pupils were refused for lack of room. These mean a lost opportunity for Christian work, as most of them have gone elsewhere and will not be under evangelical teaching. Dr. Curtis Lee Laws, editor of the *Watchman Examiner*, says after a recent visit: "A visit to Cristo would prove the salvation of the anti-missionary members of all our churches." The president, Mr. Routledge, and a fine corps of consecrated teachers are training these young people for Christian leadership. Last year more than forty conversions were reported in this school. This year sixty-seven have made a start in the Christian life.

To see the Cristo school in another aspect, one must follow its "extension work," and see some of the schools of the surrounding districts in which its graduates are teaching.



Girls' School at El Cristo

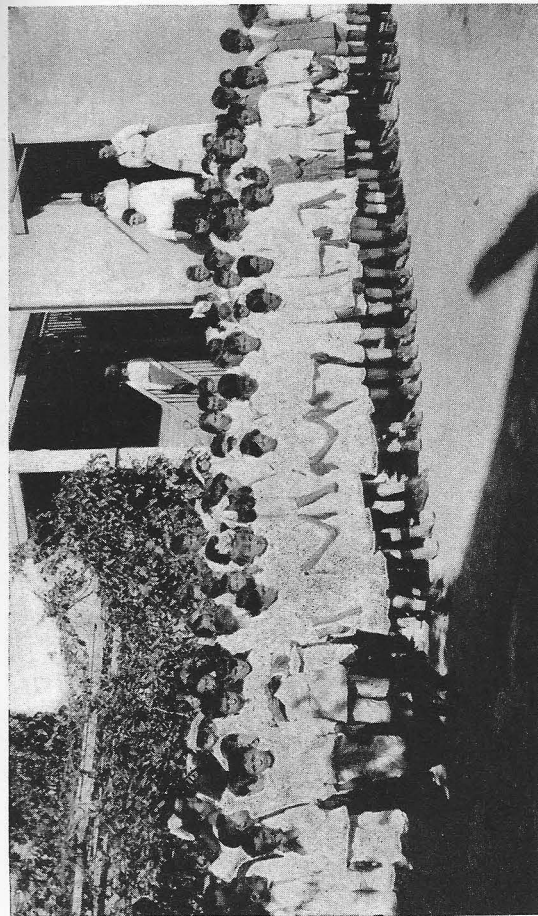
Guantanamo

In this busy little town is another school, fortunate in having as its head an inspiring teacher, Miss Maggie Howell, the sister of our superintendent of missions for eastern Cuba, the Reverend A. B. Howell, the "Baptist Bishop" of eastern Cuba. In this school Carlotta Perara of the Cristo school is one of the two assistant teachers. Her beautiful Christian character adds much to her success. Another assistant doing fine work is a graduate of Cristo. Miss Jiminez, trained in the Chicago school, is the missionary in this town and is supported by the Woman's Society. She lives with the three teachers, and their happy home life overflows to the community. The close association of teacher and missionary makes it possible to know the homes of the children, and their problems, and to follow the lessons of the school into these homes.

We should like to linger on this subject, to think of the comfort in times of bereavement and trouble our Christian workers are to the families with whom they come into relation. When death comes, what is a Roman Catholic mother's comfort? What is her only hope? She believes in Purgatory. Think what it is to believe that her loved one is suffering, and that the duration of his sufferings is conditioned on the efforts of the living to buy him out of Purgatory. Many a poor mother, impoverished in the effort to buy masses to secure freedom from suffering for her little dead child, has been led by these friends to know and love the Christ who loved little children.

La Maya

We have schools in country villages as well as in towns. Far up among the hills of eastern Cuba lies a dusty little village, its rough streets filled with panniered donkeys on their way with their burdens to the coffee-mill. In this place we find the school, church, and home combined in one building where Miss Lulu Jackson with her assistant conducts a bright, happy little school of thirty or more children. A corrugated iron roof

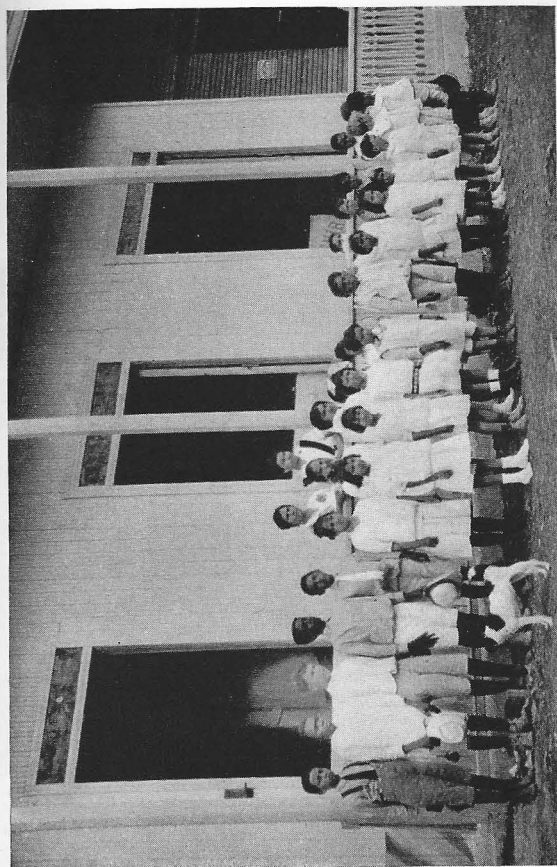


The School at Guantanamo with Miss Howell and Her Assistants

covers the bare room of the church, where some rough benches and a table furnish the space where the churchgoers assemble; adjoining are the two classrooms where happy children learn many new and interesting things. Here, too, are the plain living-rooms in which the teachers make their home. As one looks off over the blue hills one sees the thatched huts which are the homes from which the little country children come to school. In these homes, as among the village people, our teachers have found friends, as they have made their way there sharing the joys and sorrows of the people. Miss Jackson is happy and optimistic and is doing her part in making Christ known in this simple community.

Palma Soriano

After a ride of several hours by rail up the hills back of Santiago, a ride which takes us through Cristo and its palm-crowned hills, past sugar plantations and over streams with their bamboo covered banks, we come to the town of Palma Soriano. In this little town one of the earliest missionaries to Cuba, Miss Purdy, sent by the Women's Baptist Home Missionary Society, began in 1905 the first Christian work ever done in Palma. She visited the homes, read the Bible to the people and started a Sunday school and an industrial class. There is now in Palma Soriano a pretty church building, and beside it the classrooms and little home where our home mission teacher, Miss Grace Peyton, lives with her assistant trained at Cristo. All about this school are humble, thatched-roof cottages as well as more pretentious homes. Although a public school is in operation a few blocks away, our classrooms are crowded with bright children. In the public school no religious teaching is allowed. In our school the Word of God is taught, Scripture verses are memorized, and Christian songs sung. A center is established here from which radiate helpfulness and good-will. From this district ten conversions and baptisms have been reported this year.



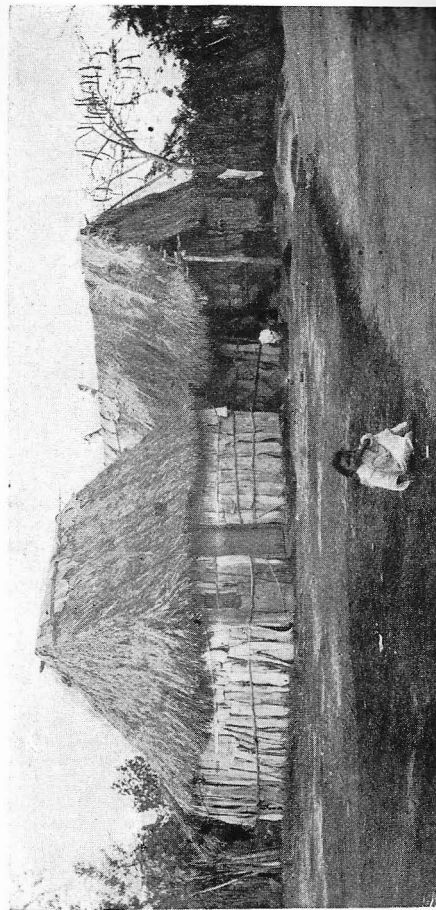
Miss Jackson and Her School at La Maya

Victoria de Las Tunas

Las Tunas, one hundred and twenty-five miles west of Santiago, is the center of another mission district. It was once rich and prosperous. The Cuban revolutionists in 1897 destroyed the town lest it fall again into the hands of the Spaniards. It is recovering slowly from this disaster and since 1904 has had a chapel and some devoted Christian church members. Here, too, we have a school where Miss Beulah Hume, who was obliged to leave Mexico in 1914, has since been at work. Here, as formerly in her school at Monterey, Miss Hume teaches the Bible, with its stories, its heroes, and especially the life of Jesus and his teachings. The children who attend this mission school learn about sane and healthy living, in addition to the usual classroom exercises. There are great opportunities at Tunas for serving the Master, and while Miss Hume's heart still turns with affection to the children of her school in Mexico, she is finding much work to do in a very desolate and needy field.

Santiago, A City School

In the upper floor of a big old Spanish residence, much remodeled, is the church and parsonage together with the school with its sixty children presided over by Miss Harrington as principal. Opening upon a pleasant *patio*, with cocoa palms and fig trees, roses and lovely flowering shrubs, are the classrooms. The noise of the city is heard but faintly as the children gather, many of them from Catholic homes, for the thorough instruction, including a generous use of the Bible, which they receive at this Baptist Mission School. Some of them cross themselves as they hear it read, but they hear its lessons and cannot forget them. On Sunday eighty-five children gather for Sunday school, and after it two Christian Endeavor Societies have their meetings; in the Junior Society there are forty-eight children. It is a pretty sight to see the three young officers take their places about the table as president, secretary, and treasurer, while the members settle down in their places, their



A Cuban Country Scene

Bibles much in evidence, and alertness and expectancy on every face. There is a regular order of exercises with much singing. While the young president presides with great dignity, Miss Harrington supervises, makes suggestions and is a very important part of the assembly. She, like Miss Hume, Miss Jackson and Miss Peyton, was trained in the Chicago Baptist Training School, all three being members of the class of 1915. The normal school training which she has had in addition, fits Miss Harrington especially for this school with its varied tasks. She directs the work of two assistant teachers.

Use of the Bible

Familiarity with the contents of the Bible and ability to use it freely mark all our schools. It is noticeable how many of the children own copies. To the prayer-meeting, the church service, the Christian Endeavor meeting and the Sunday school, the Book is carried as a matter of course and is referred to so often and with such facility in finding place and reference that one wishes that this phase of Christian education might be copied in regions nearer home.

The first woman missionary to go to Cuba under the appointment of the Woman's Society was Miss Barkley. Always cheerful, hopeful and efficient she labored for more than fifteen years in the Santiago district. A year ago she felt obliged to leave. Many churches, among them San Luis, Cristo, Caney and Santiago will always hold her in loving remembrance.

Baracoa

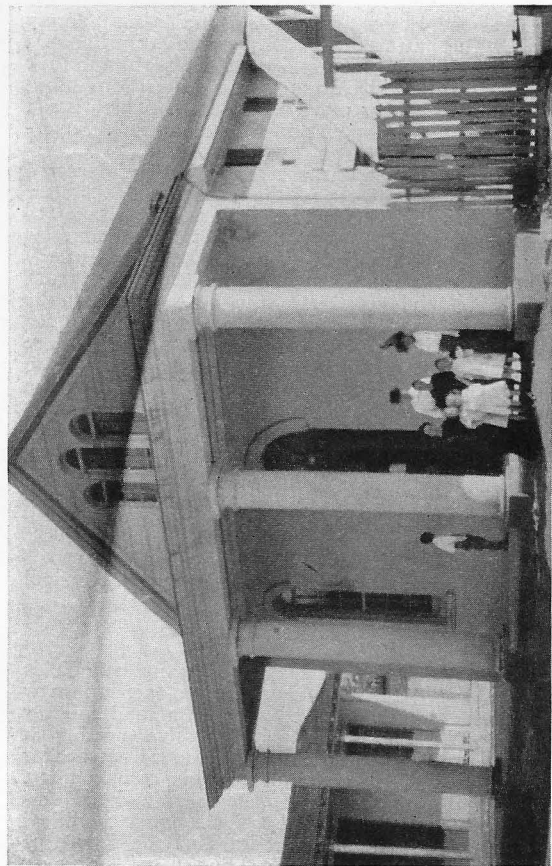
It is hoped that in the coming year, 1916-17, a new school may be opened at Baracoa, a district commonly referred to as the "Other World," because of its remoteness. It occupies the extreme eastern end of Cuba, in the most mountainous part of the island, and is difficult to reach. Once a week a coasting steamer stops there if the weather permits a landing. The region has thirty-five thousand inhabitants, mostly in rural districts, with its one town, Baracoa, of five thousand inhabitants.

The people are simple, sincere, hospitable and deeply religious. The pastor of the local church of whom we have heard before has four assistants, aiding him to look after the spiritual interests of the fifteen organized churches and twenty or more out-stations. This district is the first wholly to support one of its workers. Superintendent Howell says:

"Everywhere in this Baracoa district one is impressed with the deep earnestness of these brethren. As soon as a convert is made, he is fired with a zeal to take the Gospel to others. There are now whole communities where no one has been left unsaved. When the pastor goes on his periodical visits to his churches and congregations, he finds converts who have been won by these earnest church members and are only waiting for more thorough instruction and baptism. So eager are these people to hear the message that many times the meetings are continued until after midnight. As the pastor goes from home to home, the head of the family gathers all the household and expects the pastor to read the Bible, comment on the reading and offer prayer, so that each visit to a home is a family prayer-meeting. If there is any unbeliever, all unite in praying for him that he may be saved then and there. Wonderful experiences are constantly taking place among these sincere Christians who have great faith in God's promises and in prayer." Do they not deserve the school they so earnestly desire?

Need of More Workers

Superintendent Howell speaks of many new fields waiting to be manned. Schools should be opened in new territory, others enlarged, and there is a loud call for more workers. There was an impressive meeting at Panama where no one could listen unmoved as speaker after speaker told of conditions in his own country. Tales were told of the wide open doors and the desperate needs of the masses who "have not a candle of hope to illuminate the horrible fears of the future of torment and darkness they look forward to." May we



Church at Ciega de Avila with two class rooms. Here the "worst boy in the town," now the fine preacher at Baracoa, was converted

not hope that more of the girls of our colleges and higher institutions who profess to love the Lord will cease to crowd each other for places in schoolroom and office in the home territory, and be willing to spend their lives where great areas of humanity have need of them. The harvest is so plentiful and the laborers so few! And let no laborer think the time wasted which is spent in preparation. The great need of Cuba as of all Latin-America is for educated as well as consecrated workers.

There are lovely girls at work in Cuba, alone often as far as English speaking friends are concerned, making friends with little children, visiting in humble homes, bringing new light into the faces of those with whom they labor—the reflected light of a new hope and joy in their hearts. God is a very present help to these young women. They feel His presence and support and are in a daily communion with Him almost unknown to those whose lives are filled with the little cares and diversions of life in our own crowded cities. Would that more of our own young women could see the field and measure the value of their lives against the needs these workers and others like them are facing in far-off places.

Foreign Missions in Cuba

Superintendent Howell says: "The present year in Cuba has been one of growth. The country has had peace and the missionaries have been able to push their work. The churches have from time to time taken special offerings for the Red Cross for missions and for the needy around them to whom they are constantly giving. The churches of eastern Cuba collected \$258 for the support of a native worker in a Baptist mission in Chili. Some of the churches have mission study classes. Mission Sunday is observed in Sunday school, and women of the churches are organized into missionary societies. The lack of literature for this department of our work is greatly felt.

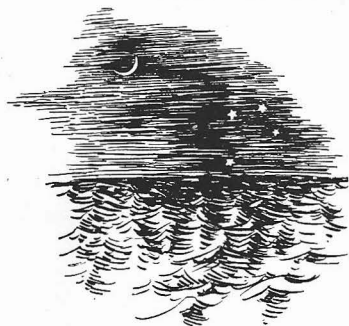
"The native ministry is doing valuable work in all departments. There is a great desire to save souls—a

feeling that the future of Cuba lies in the work they are doing today. Others fought for the freedom of Cuba; they have a more difficult fight, to save her from corruption and sin."

A Symbol and a Hope

The Southern Cross hangs over the Latin-American lands. Those who raise their eyes to the distant sky as they travel in these countries may see it shining there just before the day dawns. We may take it as the emblem of that larger hope for Latin-America which is just above the horizon, and believe that the coming century will see the Gospel of Christ well established in Cuba. What shall be the part of our Society in the coming five years in helping on toward this goal?

While the various denominations are planning for more co-operation in training facilities, for literature, for preparing preachers and for better equipment, we in our Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society have set for ourselves the task of sending to Cuba additional missionaries and seven more teachers. With the beginning already made and this advance to come, we may hope to do our share in bringing to pass the motto which we read in Christian churches and schools throughout the island: CUBA FOR CHRIST.



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