

CUBA

Area, 44,164 square miles. Size of Pennsylvania. Population, 2,160,000; 49 per square mile. Railway mileage, 2330.

“The Pearl of the Antilles,” discovered by *Columbus*, was first colonized by his son Diego, who founded the towns of *Baracoa* (1512), *Santiago* and *Havana* (1515). Search for gold having proved disappointing, the colonists turned their attention to the cultivation of the indigenous tobacco, and of sugar-cane imported from the Canary Islands. Having exterminated the natives, they imported negroes. Cuba’s golden age was in the years between 1763 (when, after the English capture of Havana, the island was restored to the Spanish) and 1834. The rich soil yielded full harvests of tropical products, the island became a center of ship-building, and vessels laden with valuable cargoes sailed from every port. On the downfall of Napoleon, when the Spanish dynasty was restored to its throne, a series of rapacious governors were sent to Cuba armed with despotic authority and privileges. Then began an era of oppression and injustice seldom paralleled in history, which led to resentment and revolt culminating in the war of 1898, too well known to need further comment. Since independence the

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growth of Cuban commerce shows clearly the revival of economic life and prosperity. A greater variety of products as well as a development of communication and shipping facilities and the introduction of foreign capital is increasing the wealth of the island republic.

The island is 730 miles long, 90 miles wide at the eastern end, and not more than 20 in the west. The coast line measures about 2000 miles, dotted with more than 1300 coral or mangrove islands, which are obstacles to navigation, yet the ports are numerous and excellent. The eastern end is mountainous (the *Pico del Turquino* rising abruptly from the sea to a height of 8600 feet), and is rich in minerals but little exploited. The middle portion consists of broad, undulating, well-watered plains, while the western section becomes hilly again and has altitudes of 2000 feet.

The tropical conditions of Cuba are modified by its insular situation; there is ample rainfall, considerable humidity, continuous trade winds. The wet season is from May to October, when showers occur daily from 10 A. M. to sunset, but the nights are clear; August is the hottest month. The winter is mild, clear, and equable; January is the coldest month. The mean temperatures are from 71° F. to

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82° F. with a maximum of 100° F. and a minimum of 50° F.

Cuba is divided into six provinces, the westernmost, *Pinar del Rio*, producing the famous tobacco; *Havana* and *Matanzas* raising the most sugar; *Santa Clara* sugar, tobacco, and coffee; *Camagüey* cattle and truck gardening, and *Oriente* coffee and minerals. There are nine chief ports on the north coast and six on the south, and but few towns of any size in the interior. Cuba is so well advertised and supplied with guides that more detailed information is unnecessary here, but some mention of the railroad systems is as follows:

(1) *United Railways* from Havana through *Matanzas* to *Santa Clara*, 184 miles, with branches to *Cárdenas* and *Sagua* on the north, to *Batabano* and *Cienfuegos* on the south. (Other minor branches.)

(2) The *Cuba Railroad*, connecting at *Santa Clara* with the *United Railways*, runs east to *Santiago*, 360 miles. Through trains leave Havana every night, reaching Santiago the following evening; leave Santiago every morning to arrive at Havana the following morning. Observation cars are attached to day trains. This has a branch to *Antilla*, a new port on the north, founded by *Sir William Van Horn*.

(3) The *Western Railway*, from Havana to *Pinar del Rio*, 109 miles through the tobacco district of *Vuelta Abajo*. The Cuban Agricultural Experiment station is twelve miles from Havana.

HAVANA, capital. Population, 236,000. 1226 miles from New York: 90 miles from Key West. The first capital of Cuba was *Baracoa* (1512), the second *Santiago*

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(1518). In 1582 the seat of government was transferred to Havana on which was later bestowed the title of "Key of the New World," and "Bulwark of the West Indies." At the entrance to the harbor are the *Morro* castle (*Morro* in Spanish means snout) and *Cabañas* Fortress, with *La Punta* Barracks and the *Malecon* Promenade on the opposite shore. On all sides busy wharves, docks, customs and storage houses, upon slightly rising ground which, illuminated at night, looks like the circle of an amphitheater. Visit the cathedral (from which the bones of Columbus were removed to Spain after the war of 1898); the governor's palace on the *Plaza de Armas*; the shopping streets, *Obispo* and *O'Reilly*; market; parks and promenades, and the suburbs of *Vedado*, *Jesus del Monte*, and *Marianao*, where General Fitzhugh Lee resided, with bathing beach and yacht club; and the *Toledo* sugar plantation. *Regla* is the railroad terminal and shipping point across the harbor. Havana is to-day one of the cleanest cities in the world, having excellent water supply and all electric improvements, a university and modern school system, fine hotels, and is unsurpassed as a winter resort.

MATANZAS. Population, 40,000. 54 miles from Havana by rail. Harbor on a bay five miles long, protected by a coral reef. Town is on a hill-slope crowned by the church of *Monserrate* and is intersected by two rivers, the *Yumuri* and the *San Juan*. Central Plaza (music twice a week) surrounded by principal buildings. Beautiful villas and residences in suburbs of *Versalles* and *Pueblo Nuevo*. Excursions to caves of *Bellamar* (admission, one dollar), and to the *Valley of Yumuri*. Try a *volante* (Cuban carriage).

CÁRDENAS. Population, 25,000. 80 miles east of Matanzas. Founded, 1839. Many American settlers. Asphalt deposits and sugar plantations.

NUEVITAS. Population, 12,000. Picturesque harbor, and growing trade with the United States. Port for interior town of *Camaguey*.