

Branching Out in Cuba

TO the average American, Cuba is a protégé of Uncle Sam. Perhaps if he were not so busy, the good-natured old gentleman would be able to show more frequently how much he thinks of the staunch little island republic, for which he stands sponsor. Yet Cuba, no bigger than our state of Pennsylvania and only ninety miles south of the tip of Florida, will always have a place in the heart of the United States. We will never forget that it has fought against oppression and has the same ideals of liberty and free government that exist in all democratic nations.

One cannot speak of Cuba long without recalling its tense history, which goes back almost to the days when Columbus discovered America; of its great resources, developed and undeveloped; and of the Spanish-American war in 1898. Memories of that brief but decisive conflict at once bring to mind the sinking of the *Maine* in Havana harbor, the battle of San Juan Hill and the destruction of Cervera's fleet in Santiago bay, on that memorable July 3, nineteen years ago. Yes, we all remember that eventful year—but how time does fly!

Nor can we think of Cuba without giving prompt recognition to its courageous and manly attitude in the present war. Hardly had Uncle Sam declared war on Autocracy, before President Mendocall, of the Republic of Cuba, took steps to follow his example. All the German spies in the world could not, in fact, wean Cuba from the nation which brought to it autonomy and freedom in 1898, and now Cuba's not inconsiderable resources in men and material are devoted to the cause of our Allies. It is significant that Uncle Sam has training grounds on the island, which also possesses many strategic advantages in naval operations.

Wells Fargo's interest in the progress and prosperity of Cuba—and the republic has advanced wonderfully during the past decade under Uncle Sam's tutelage—has been of long duration. For many years we have had steamship service to the island, as well as efficient representation in Cuba's famous capital, Havana. But

even war times have not checked—they have, in fact, stimulated—the enterprise and extension of our service in new fields, and so the New Year sees our revered red-and-blue squared circle making its permanent abode at every important railroad point in Cuba.

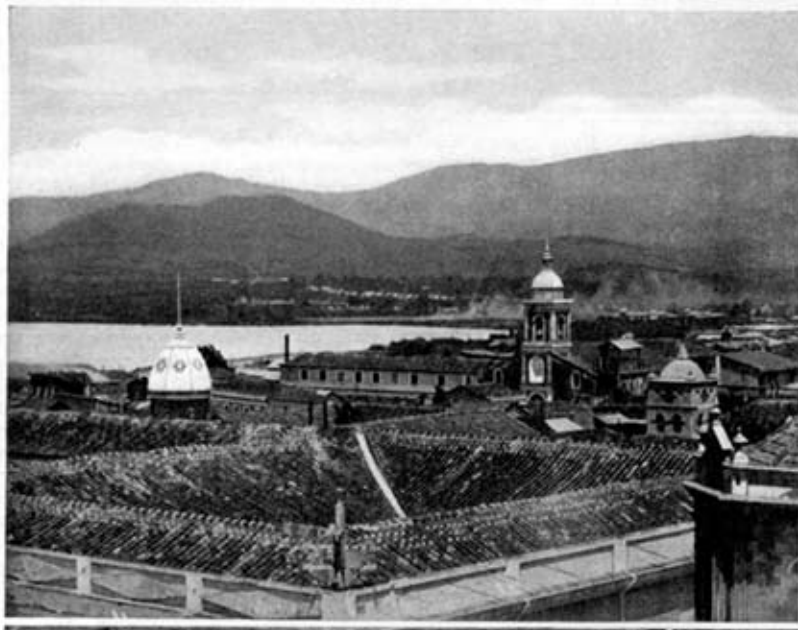
In one way, the extension of Wells Fargo service throughout Cuba is not surprising. Our interest in Central America and the West Indies dates back to the early days of our company, before the steel highway had reached across the

United States, and one of the principal routes from New York to the newly discovered gold fields of California was by sailing vessel to Panama, thence across the Isthmus by prairie schooner to the Pacific, and then the rest of the journey by clipper ship to San Francisco. The romantic days of 'Forty-Nine brought Wells Fargo to Panama, although Cuba, not so very remote from the Isthmus, was then known merely as an island which centuries before had been discovered by Spanish explorers, and was in the hands of Spanish settlers.

It is, incidentally, only a short while ago that Wells Fargo returned to Panama—and established itself at the Canal Zone, to aid American commerce

in its use of this wonderful short-cut between the two oceans. It was a different Panama from that of the early days. The Canal stands before the world as a monument to American enterprise and engineering achievement. And our aim is the same as ever—to be as of much assistance as we can in the growth and extension of American business. It is expected that large freight shipments from the Orient for Cuba will move via the Canal. Already we have been able to accomplish much in this regard, as our offices at both ends of the Canal—at Panama and Cristobal-Colon—have been making fine progress.

And so now we come to Cuba to install Wells Fargo service and all that it stands for on the principal railroad lines in the republic. With the first of this year we will operate the express on the lines of the Cuba Railroad and the Guantanamo & Western, with through service on the United Railways of Havana between



A view of the harbor of Santiago