CIVIC-MILITARY RURAL EDUCATION OF CUBA: ELEVEN EVENTFUL YEARS (1936-1946)

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of the Ohio State University

by

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1950

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Approved by:
Preface

This appraisal of the civic-military rural education movement was undertaken as a result of a continuing interest in Cuba that was first aroused by my father who had lived on the island, at the turn of the century, as one of the occupying forces of the United States Army. Further study of the history and present status of Cuba, and especially that of education, suggested the possible interest and importance of the subject of civic-military rural schools to those concerned with the problem of rural education in Latin America or the larger problem of making school education real and effective in changing the lives of those for whom it is carried on.

We talk about developing better understanding among the republics of the Western Hemisphere but we are ignorant of the basic institutions that shape the attitudes, beliefs, and thinking of their people. Although the United States Office of Education, the International Institute of Teachers College, and the Institute of Latin American Studies of the University of Texas have published articles, pamphlets, and books on the educational systems in Latin America, they have been largely descriptive rather than critical analyses and appraisals. Education in Cuba by Severin Turosienki,
Bulletin 1943, No. 1, for example, presents an excellent over-all view of Cuban educational institutions in 1940 but great care is taken not to make frank statements of judgment that might offend our neighbor republic.

When Ernesto Galarza was on the staff of the Pan American Union, a pamphlet was printed each year summarizing the status of education in the various Latin American countries. These provided a year by year digest of the achievements of the civic-military rural schools up to the year 1940. Henry Smith and Harold Littell devoted a chapter on Cuba in their textbook, *Education in Latin America*, published in 1934. This again is a description of the Cuban educational system without much in the way of critical analysis. The Educational Yearbook for 1942 of the International Institute of Teachers College brought together a series of articles on the educational systems in Latin America. The section on Cuba, written by Dr. Ofelia Morales, gives the rural schools only passing attention.

The materials on the background and setting, presented in Part I of this thesis, are derived for the most part from secondary sources. No one writer is relied upon but greatest help came from Charles E. Chapman, who has devoted his life to a study of the history of Central American countries; Dr. Diego González y Gutierrez, who is noted for his researches in the history of primary instruction in colonial Cuba; and Erna Ferguson, who has written many travel books on her journeys throughout Latin America.
Obviously the original contribution lies in making available in the English language a description of the civic-military rural movement and an evaluation of the achievements and failures of its schools and missions. The data for Part II are derived from government decrees and publications, interviews with various educational authorities, letters written by Cubans to the writer, and conversations with teachers and missionaries themselves. For the legal basis, constant reference has been made to the basic decrees. For a general idea of the whole civic-military rural system two basic volumes of the Administrative Board of the Civic-Military Rural Schools, Memoria Anual for 1937 and 1938, were utilized.

As a people the Cubans have their own customs and traditions; hence their institutions are a crystallized expression of the most potent of these. Because I found it difficult to make this heritage a part of my own life and thought, I continually have had to guard against judging the civic-military rural institutions and their influence from my own national standards. I made three visits to the island. On the first, during the Christmas vacation of 1938, I visited the "José Martí" School of Improvement, where the sergeant-teachers were trained; the Civic-Military Institute, an orphan's home under Army supervision; General Headquarters of the Constitutional Army at Ciudad Militar; and the University of Havana.
Numerous friendships were formed with members of the faculty and administrative staffs of these schools as well as with missionaries of the educational missions in Havana for the holiday season. Quantities of materials were brought back and others were received by mail from friends who held offices in the civic-military rural education organization.

The second visit took place from June to August of 1941. The civic-military rural institutions had by then been converted into civic rural establishments and Dictator Batista had become President. The "José Martí" School of Improvement, now called the Rural Normal School, and the University of Havana were revisited and friendships renewed. The offices of the newly created Bureau of Rural Education were visited and the Chief of that agency interviewed. An enjoyable two days were spent at a rural children's boarding school and a civic rural school in Havana province. Here I observed the educational mission and its work at first hand, a considerable number of decrees, regulations, and other official circulars were secured along with quantities of other descriptive materials.

The third visit occurred from May 21 to May 29 of 1949. The civic-military movement had been discontinued; regular rural schools or none at all were operating in its stead. Many new friends were made, up-to-date statistics secured, and further materials received.

It should be obvious that if everybody to whom I am under obligation were mentioned, the list would become very
long; but I take occasion here to express my sincere appreciation to all those who made this work possible. I am indebted particularly to the articles of, and talks with, Ramon Guerra, political columnist of El Diario de la Marina, the oldest Cuban newspaper.

A very great debt is owed to Dr. Berto Brito Buron and his wife for their kindness and hospitality, and to Dr. Brito for sharing his profound knowledge of the history of the civic-military movement, however much his judgments are impassioned and biased in favor of the ideal. He supplied copies of La Escuela Rural, the Constitution of 1940, many army regulations, and decrees issued by Presidents of the Republic. I especially enjoyed meeting and talking with the pupils of his school, Academia Brito.

For much of the material on the civic-military phase of the movement, the writer is indebted to Lieutenant Peter Izaquierre, missionary in Santa Clara province, who supplied copies of El Ejército Constitucional and Cultural Militar y Naval, which included news and orders on civic-military education.

Dr. Ofelia Morales was very helpful in keeping the writer abreast of the changes in rural education after 1944. The basic and comprehensive decree for all primary education, Decree No. 2726, Reglamento General de Instrucción Primaria, of December 5, 1946, was most helpful in clearing up the confusion resulting from the changes made by the administration of President Grau San Martín. It would have been difficui
cuit to secure this material without her assistance; and the information she provided relative to the extent to which the decree was actually put into practice could otherwise have been secured only through a prolonged study in Cuba. The thesis, Escuela Politécnica General Calixto García, by Angela Lorenza Penin Fuentes, completed under the direction of Doctor Morales, gave me an excellent summary of the present status of polytechnical education and a critical analysis of the General Calixto García school. There has been no material published, either in English or Spanish, on this new development in Cuban education.

Dr. Alberto Pamies, formerly Chief of Statistics in the Section of Culture, and later in the Bureau of Education, is now Assistant Professor of Spanish at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio. He has been very helpful in answering questions, supplying data, and permitting the writer to translate his doctoral thesis in which he presented a summary of the organization of the school system. La Organización de las Escuelas Rurales Cívico-Militares is probably the most comprehensive description of the civic-military phase of the movement. It is merely a descriptive study, however, and in no way critically examines the extent to which the plan was implemented.

Dr. Ramón de la Cruz Valdes summarized his experiences in the civic-military rural movement in a graduate thesis at the University of Havana in 1944. The title of the thesis was
Mis Observaciones en la Educación Cívico-Rural. Actually it is but a description of the system as it existed in 1944. I enjoyed many hours of conversation with Dr. Cruz and profited from correspondence with him.

Dr. Aristides Sosa de Quesada, who was chief of the Section of Culture, supplied me with the basic textbooks used by the pupils in the civic-military rural schools and some of the reference books utilized by the sergeant-teachers. El Consejo Corporativo de Educación, Sanidad, y Beneficiencia is a large volume describing the origin and functions of this military-political agency. This, together with the annual reports of the Administrative Board of the Civic-Military Rural Schools, were given to me by Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa. When the civic rural schools were transferred to civic status, Dr. Sosa preferred to remain in the army where he still holds the post of Chief Auditor. I renewed my acquaintance with Dr. Sosa in 1949 and received suggestions which were helpful in making a final appraisal of the movement.

Dr. Eloina Lopez Villaverde, Chief of the Section of Instruction of the Ministry of Education under Minister Aleman, prepared with the assistance of Dr. Mercedes Curbolo a special summary of the status of Cuban education and its general organization in the year 1948. Dr. Philipe Donate, who replaced her in 1949, was most cooperative in supplying me with facts about recent changes in the Ministry. An entire day was spent in an informal discussion with Dr.
Donate, Dr. Diego González, Superintendent-General of Schools; Dr. Aguila Ruíz, Secretary to Dr. González; Dr. Texedor, assistant to the Minister; and Dr. Pastos Fernandez Zayas, rural inspector for the province of Havana.

Assistance was rendered by Mr. Hamilton, a consular official of the United States Government in Havana. He enabled me to contact American residents who had observed at first hand the work of the schools in action. His conclusion relative to the civic rural movement had a great bearing upon many of the final appraisals reached by me. Likewise, the kindness and hospitality of the American Consul in Camagüey, Mr. Paul Tate, will long be remembered.

I am also grateful to a personal friend, Mr. Frank Birtalan, librarian in the Office of Education in Washington. Through the years he has supplied me with many of the Consular and Embassy reports and other materials that the Office of Education received from time to time on civic-military rural education.

The greatest debt of all is owed to Dr. Roscoe Eckelberry, Bureau of Educational Research, The Ohio State University, for the many painstaking hours spent in reading my manuscript. His constant supervision, encouragement, and suggestions were most helpful. I am also grateful to Doctors Fred Carlson, Dan Eikenberry, and Harry G. Good for having supervised the writing of the thesis and made many valuable suggestions.
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PART ONE

THE HISTORICAL SETTING
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The study of Latin American education has been sadly neglected by professional educators in the United States. Educational literature gives little or no consideration to it and textbooks on education practically ignore the subject. Few classroom professors ever refer to the problems in education that confront our neighbors to the south because they are not acquainted with the problems themselves or with the materials concerning them. Yet the educational needs which beset the Latin American nations are world-wide in scope, significance, and importance. The thinking that has been brought to bear upon them and the attempts made to meet them should be of interest and significance to all people.

When their problems are analyzed, the conclusion is reached that all of these countries are beginning to feel the impact of changed economic, political, and social conditions upon their educational policies. This impact varies only with the differing traditions and culture of a particular people. In all cases, however, illiteracy presents the greatest challenge. According to I. L. Kandel, "There is not a single Latin-American country to which the liquidation of
illiteracy has not become a serious concern."\(^1\) But this suggests a further question of how valuable is literacy of itself. Merely to provide schools in large numbers or to make them more accessible by means of pupil transportation does not necessarily improve and reconstruct life in a country. The problem of reconstruction is just as much social and economic as it is educational. For example, the extension of primary schools into the rural areas, where the incidence of illiteracy is the highest, involves a threefold problem of adapting this rural education to the social and individual needs of countryfolk, preparing teachers to carry on a more functional type of teaching, and securing finances to provide adequate school facilities within easy reach of all. Should these problems be solved, other problems are thereby created because the educated peasant will then prefer the higher standards of living made possible by the industrialization of urban centers. Assumed advantages of city living and the demand for a large labor supply will result in an exodus from rural areas. When the social measures enacted by most of the national legislatures are examined, the reasons for the exodus become self-evident. Housing projects, sewage plants, roads, communication facilities, electrification, wage controls, social security, and most of the other social legislation have largely resulted in bettering the lot of the city workers.

Actually, education is made compulsory by law in most of the Latin American countries. Statistics reveal, however, that, generally speaking, education is almost entirely neglected in the rural districts of nations having the largest rural populations. It is in these countries that illiteracy is greatest, standards of living are very low, and backward methods of production are widespread. The needs of urban areas are met first; if any money remains, then rural needs are considered. All this helps to account for the fact that more than three-fourths of the people of Latin American are affected by intestinal diseases and one out of ten suffers from malaria. The Office of Inter-American Affairs estimates that 55 per cent of all deaths are caused by diseases that are preventable through vaccination, better sanitation, and ordinary medical precautions. One out of every five babies born alive dies during infancy.\(^2\) These are as much problems in education as they are in health, economics, and sociology.

It is not suggested that rural education is a unique problem. Like other forms of education, rural instruction must arise out of, and be adapted to, the environment which it serves and at the same time must contribute to raising that environment to a higher and richer cultural level. The problems of rural education facing Latin American countries, therefore, can be stated quite simply. They include the liquidation of illiteracy by extending educational facilities

to all regions, the adaptation of education to the rural environment, the professional training of teachers capable of carrying on this kind of education and a will to devote their lives to it, and the establishment of rural higher primary schools to meet emerging needs so that there can be developed the leadership that is sorely lacking in rural areas.

**Problem of this Study**

What, then, has been the condition of rural education in Cuba? Has she been confronted with all of the problems of rural education mentioned in the foregoing paragraph? Unfortunately, the interior of the island was almost completely ignored until 1936. Then a revolutionary government found itself facing the problem of teaching rural people how to read and write and how to live better and healthier lives. The revolutionary educational program, under the name of civic-military rural education, was transformed in 1940, but it operated long enough to reveal the rural problem in all of its difficult aspects. It succeeded in suggesting a new approach to the matter of extending education to what were considered to be inaccessible regions. A conception of primary education was evolved which aimed at something more than the three R's and sought to develop a feeling of responsibility for local social, health, and economic welfare. The civic-military rural educational program of Cuba, however, never got beyond its infancy. It started in 1936, underwent a transformation in 1940, and ended in 1946 - eleven
eventful years in the history of Cuban rural education. Civic-military rural education is worthy of study and understanding, not only for the influence it could have had on the reconstruction of life on the island, but also because of the vigorous, progressive tendencies it could have had and the social perspective it could have projected. It is the aim of this work, therefore, to appraise the civic-military rural education movement. Despite the passionate claims of the followers of Batista that civic-military rural schools completely revolutionized rural living and the equally passionate denial of these contentions by the political opposition, the experiences in civic-military rural education point the way to a more mature and better founded concept of how the many problems of rural education in Cuba can be met. This means, not merely eradicating illiteracy, but, equally and perhaps more importantly, effecting a change in the living habits and thinking of the backward and underprivileged peasants of the island.

**Definition of Terms**

In the study that follows a number of terms will be used which, were they not defined, might be variously interpreted by Americans not familiar with Cuban usage. Hence they are herewith defined as used in this discussion.

A municipality includes all of the rural area up to that claimed by an adjoining municipality. It is somewhat comparable to our county. A local board of education directs all primary education in the municipal district, urban and
rural; secondary schools have a completely independent system of administration.

Primary education embraces the pre-primary, primary, and higher primary schools. The pre-primary stage is equivalent to our nursery schools and kindergartens. Any school having from one to six grades is termed primary, although the rural children's boarding schools under army control were called higher primary, when actually their courses were on the fifth- and sixth-grade level. Generally speaking, however, higher primary institutions are comparable to the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades of our junior high schools.

Secondary education is offered in the Institutes even though the baccalaureate degree is granted upon graduation. Students in the Institutes are about on the same level of our high-school and perhaps junior-college students. The private colleges and academies offer a curriculum comparable to that of the Institutes, and the graduates from them must pass course examinations by the latter institutions before the baccalaureate can be awarded them. Normal schools in Cuba are on the secondary level, as are many of the special agricultural, trade, and technical schools.

The rural educational institutions created by the Cuban Constitutional Army in 1936 were named civic-military, a name which seems to be self-contradictory. They were, however, military schools only in the sense that sergeants taught in them. Except for the first year, the curriculum of these
schools did not contain subjects of a military nature. They were civic-military rural schools in the sense that the army sought to extend to the rural areas a basic education which it thought necessary for intelligent citizenship. When the military features were deleted in 1937, with the exception of the sergeant-teachers who remained, these establishments were renamed civic rural. They retained this title until 1946 at which time all rural schools were placed under the direct supervision and administration of the Ministry of Education and local boards of education. From that date on civic rural schools were not distinguished from regular rural schools except in terms of original status.

A counterpart of the civic rural movement was the educational mission. It consisted of seven missionary specialists in the service of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army. Assigned to a school zone in the rural area, the missionaries acted as inspectors, supervisors, and instructors in their special capacities. The headquarters of a mission was a rural children's boarding school in which the specialists taught when not traveling among the civic rural schools of the zone.
CHAPTER II

COLONIAL CUBA

It seems pertinent before beginning the story of the
civic-military rural education movement to examine the nation
in which the system developed. The physiography and climate
of Cuba forced the white man to change his mode of life to a
certain degree from what it had been in Europe. The heritage
that he brought with him, however, countered as a conservative
force. Geography and history thus became inseparable compan-
ions, with both nature and white men destined to leave an in-
delible imprint upon the island.

For centuries natives wandered over the land before the
Americas got their names. These first men had lived apart
from the rest of the world and had built their own way of life.
Then there came a day when this region and the men who inhabit-
ed it were discovered and a new life began for the island.
From the very beginning Cuba took on significance because it
was the largest and most strategically located island of the
West Indies. Today it still outranks all other Caribbean
states in contribution to the economic life of the world and
in political importance. Some 760 miles in length and varying
from 36 to 190 miles in width, it has a total area of 44,164
square miles, and thus is comparable in size to the state of

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pennsylvania. Although it is about one-quarter mountainous, there are few lakes and rivers and most of the island is sufficiently level to permit the use of agricultural machinery. In fact, most of its surface is a rolling plain like that of Iowa or Kansas. The highest mountains are located at the southeastern end, with those in the center of the island scarcely reaching over 3,000 feet in height. While her territory is sufficiently broken up to produce a differentiation in culture, it is not so extensive and rugged as to make exchange of ideas difficult. A very irregular shore line of about 2,500 miles provides excellent and readily accessible harbors, notably that of Havana which is one of the finest and safest in the world. These excellent harbors played an important part in making ocean contact between Spain and the possessions quite easy.

The greatest of Cuba's assets, however, continues to be her tropical luxuriance combined with a temperature sufficiently moderate to permit her being peopled by the white race without too great a loss of physical vigor. The most moderate months are January, February, and March. During this time of year, the temperature may drop to a low of 55° during the night, which is quite cold for the poor, ill-clothed natives who live in homes without glass windows. The mercury seldom goes above 92° during the hottest months of April through December, but high temperatures are registered in the open country and in the streets of the city. In fact, the lowest temperature on record is 47° and the highest is 98°.
Other assets are an absence of frost, a fertile soil, and a year-round growing season. These conditions enable the Cuban farmers to grow a variety of crops with success, among which are bananas, oranges, mangoes, grapefruit, tomatoes, onions, potatoes, tobacco, coffee, coconuts, and cacao beans. All of these, individually and collectively, sink into insignificance as compared with sugar. Production of sugar and molasses from cane has so dominated industry that Cuba is usually thought of as a one-crop country. Americans may think of it commercially as an extension of the one-crop area of our own South. The palm tree, of course, dominates every landscape, but some 8,628,434 acres are still covered with forests. The dense jungles and impenetrable growth of most tropical countries, however, are nowhere found.

A possible asset is the supply of mineral resources, found mostly in the eastern end of the island. Beneath the rich soil are known to exist iron, chromite, copper, manganese, gold, zinc, lead, silver, antimony, coal, asbestos, and asphalt. Because many of these are low concentrates, extraction is a difficult and costly operation. Of the known iron deposits, about 90 per cent are held as future reserves by the steel companies of the United States. Some petroleum is known to exist and the present world demand for oil is encouraging exploratory drilling.

The island abounds in a great variety of animal life, especially fresh- and salt-water fish. The reptiles include horned toads, alligators, turtles, tortoises, and many species
of lizards and snakes. Insect life and bird life are very abundant and varied. Ticks, ants, and mosquitoes of many species abound, as well as many kinds of beautiful moths and butterflies about which entomologists know little.

One of the unrealized assets is the beauty of Cuba. Much has been written about it, but few descriptions surpass the romantic words penned by Christopher Columbus as he gazed for the first time upon the "Pearl of the Antilles":

It is the most beautiful land eyes ever beheld; it so far surpasses all other lands as day transcends the night in beauty and splendor...One could live on here forever.1

The island sighted by Columbus on the night of October 27, 1492, however, was quite different than the Cuba of today. Many tourists, for example, have viewed the squalor and filth, wretchedness and poverty, that accompany the beauty of modern Cuba. But few of them are able to think back to the Cuba of 1492, the island that became the storehouse for supplying the Americas. Unless they do, they can hardly appreciate the achievements, the failures and successes, or understand the history and background of Cuba today, for this is the same island that Columbus discovered on October 27, a little over two weeks after he first stepped ashore on the island he named San Salvador.

The Early Colonial Period

Cuba was the first of the major islands of the Antilles known to Europeans and can be said to be the major discovery of the famous first voyage. Columbus claimed the island in the names of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, the legal right being confirmed by the Papal Bull of 1495. Because it was not primarily a wealth-producing colony, Cuba failed to command much attention from the conquistadores and for a long time the island was used merely as a depot by Spanish adventurers on their way to the Spanish mainland in search of gold. The exploitation of the other Americas was naturally detrimental to the economic development of Cuba in that it drew away men, supplies, and equipment needed for an expanding economy. In spite of this fact, the growing of sugar cane was introduced early as the staple industry and stock raising became a popular means of gaining a livelihood. To provide labor, the Indians, who had always secured food and clothing without too much effort, were quickly subdued by the Spaniards. The latter imposed a system of forced labor, called repartimientos, so rigorous that the natives rapidly diminished in numbers. In fact, within fifty years, almost the entire native male population was eliminated and the shortage of labor that resulted necessitated the importation of Negroes from Africa and Indians from the mainland.\(^2\)

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While the Indian race was being sadly depleted, there was a steady influx of conquistadores, many of whom left Spain for the purpose of escaping her laws, of fleeing the Inquisition, or of getting away from her corrupt officials. At first, Columbus was commissioned as an adelantado or governor and judge for the entire territory. Then further exploration and settlement proved this governmental arrangement inadequate, and a Council of the Indies was appointed to act as the supreme authority in all colonial matters. The Spanish Cortes seldom legislated on colonial matters, with the exception of voting funds or supplies for colonial administration. This arrangement continued until the eighteenth century, when a Minister of the Indies was appointed as a cabinet official to take over all the administrative functions, with the Council of the Indies still continuing to exert its authority over judicial matters.

3. Hudson Strode, The Pageant of Cuba (New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1934), pp. 36-37. The King reserved certain powers over this body and the right to appoint the governing heads. In practice, the Council nominated almost all the civil and ecclesiastical officials and acted as an advisory body to the King. It decreed new regulations; collectively, they were known as the Laws of the Indies.

4. David R. Moore, A History of Latin America (New York:
Although the colony had a highly centralized system of government, in the very beginning, some measure of self-government through elected municipal assemblies was established. Then, as now, a town in Cuba included not only the village itself but also the surrounding country up to that claimed by another town. At first, the residents gathered together in a town meeting to elect their own officials for local administration, namely, a town council and mayor, and to sanction their own taxes. They freely criticized the governor and let him know their desires. When representatives from these towns began to meet each year to talk over their common problems and interests, the Spanish Crown took steps to discourage self-government on the island.

Charles V (1516-1556) was most successful in diminishing the isolation and local freedom of the Spanish dependencies. The action taken was but a part of the larger plan to eliminate the last vestiges of constitutional government from Spain as well as its colonies. Any Cuban discontent and resentment served merely to call forth more autocratic and centralized control.

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5. Forbes Lindsay, Cuba and Her People of Today (Boston: L. C. Page and Co., 1911), p. 33.
6. Moore, op. cit., pp. 107-110. A new series of laws described in minute detail how the life and activities of colonial officials and subjects should be regulated and controlled. Captaincies-general were created as subdivisions of a vice-royalty, and captains-general, who
But the autocratic tendency in government was not the only deterrent to the development of Cuba and the prosperity of her people. The land system of the island, together with the trade restrictions and excessive taxation, likewise were limiting factors. When the cultivation of sugar was expanded in the early colonial period, the large outlay of capital required to start a plantation tended to discourage small estates. As a result, land has been held by the few in Cuba down through the centuries, and this today is one of the principal barriers to a democratic way of life in the Republic. Furthermore, the large tracts of land in colonial Cuba were supervised by agents, who sent the profits to finance fashionable pleasures in Madrid or Paris. This constant withdrawal of wealth left few resources for agricultural and industrial expansion; as a consequence Cuba was dependent upon Spain and the mainland for the essentials of life. Almost from the start, therefore, she was conditioned to import agricultural and industrial goods which could easily have been produced on the island.

This was all a part of the mercantilistic system of the possessed both military and civil authority, were placed in charge. Still smaller areas, called presidencias, were supervised by presidents with only civil authority. Theoretically, this was a hierarchy of officialdom but, in practice, many captains-general and presidents were in direct communication with the Council of the Indies. Cuba did not become a captaincy-general until 1777 and then it was made to include all the land along the gulf coast from Florida to Louisiana as well as the island.
colonial period, that worked to the benefit of Spain and the 
7 detriment of Cuba. Naturally, manufacturing and agricultural 
production was restricted to those things not in competition 
with the Spanish economy. Cattle raising and horse breeding 
were popular pursuits until Spain and the mainland developed 
a home supply and then the islanders turned to sugar culti- 
vation. Fortunately for Cuba, these were times when the 
colonial authorities and local officials ignored the trade 
laws and regulations; otherwise Cuba would not have made the 
little progress that she did.

The political phase of mercantilism provided that all 
important colonial offices be filled by native Spaniards. 
Cubans were not appointed to any of the governmental or church 
positions of responsibility, in spite of the fact that only 
a small proportion of the 250,000 inhabitants in the eighteenth 
9 century were truly Spanish in sentiment. As would be expected, 
the small clique of aristocratic Spaniards became the object 
of suspicion and hatred and the Cubans withdrew more and more 
from the social, economic, political, and ecclesiastical life 
of the island. Moreover, subordinate offices of the govern- 
ment were sold to the highest bidders, thereby developing two 
 basic traditions of the Cuban heritage. First, a small unre-

7. Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 44-52.
8. United States Department of War, Office of the Director 
of Census, Report of the Census of Cuba, 1899 (Washington: 
9. Ibid., p. 29.
representative minority without too much difficulty can secure and maintain control over governmental and economic affairs. Second, government posts exist for the personal and financial aggrandizement of those in power. So deeply have the ideas of absolute power and graft been embedded in Cuban political history that a half-century of independence has failed completely to eradicate them.

**Temporary Enlightenment**

From the foregoing discussion it might be concluded that Cuba was permanently possessed of bad government. There were, however, periods of enlightened rule. Fairly competent governors were sent to the island during the sixteenth century. But with the appointment of military men to these posts, graft and corruption grew on a larger scale. These generals attempted to enforce trade restrictions with greater effectiveness, although this was difficult since Spain was continually at war with other European nations. It was during one of these wars, in 1763, that Great Britain occupied Cuba for a period of ten months and thereby made the inhabitants aware of the potentialities of commerce with European countries. After the return of the island to Spain, Cuba continued to engage in illegal trade with England and, as long as Great Britain controlled the seas, the mother country was powerless to interfere and enforce her laws. During the Napoleonic Wars, the island cut off from

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Spanish control, enjoyed practically free trade, as it had in 1763, and achieved a level of prosperity higher than had ever been attained before.

The economic freedom and success of these years might have spread further the seeds of discontent and encouraged open rebellion had it not been for a brief interlude of liberal thought brought to the island by the splendid and humane rule of an enlightened governor, Luis de las Casas, who ruled from 1790-1796. Historians who have dealt with Cuban history agree that Las Casas was one of the most benevolent and liberal-minded governors the island ever had. Arriving in Cuba in the year 1790, he was appalled by the condition of the country. Ignorance was the order of the day. It was evident that conditions were not the outgrowth of a deficiency in intellectual ability, but the consequence of utter lack of educational facilities throughout the island. There was practically no printed material available in the capital city and conditions in the interior were even more alarming.

Las Casas set about to ameliorate some of the worst conditions. Any plan of action was bound to meet with opposition from the governing clique of Spaniards and the wealthy conservative Cubans, and with apathy on the part of the ignorant masses. But Las Casas found support in a small group of

12. Dr. Diego González y Gutierrez, En Cuba Prerpublicana (La Habana: Academia de la Historia de Cuba, 1933), p. 11.
enthusiastic Cubans who had received their education in foreign lands and were filled with a patriotic zeal to better the conditions of their countrymen.

The initial step taken by Las Casas was to found a literary periodical, the first to be published in Cuba. The second step was to form, with the aid of the sympathetic Cubans, the Sociedad Patriótica. Originally, the intent was to carry on a campaign for advancing liberal ideas in Cuba but, soon thereafter, the additional objectives of increasing the industrial and commercial prosperity of the country were assumed. The name of the association was then changed to La Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, the Economic Society of Friends of the Country, as it is known in the United States. The Sociedad was made up of three sections, namely, education, agriculture, and commerce. Later a fourth was added, the history of Cuba section.

Unfortunately for Cuba, Las Casas was replaced in 1796 by the Count Santa Clara and the fostering of intellectual progress by the government ceased. The Sociedad managed to

15. Ibid. The Sociedad was instrumental in instituting a lighting system for Havana. Hitherto occasional lanterns on individual homes were the capital's only means of street illumination. Bridges and roads were constructed as a result of its promptings and those which had existed were maintained in a better state of repair. Popular education was promoted through its schools. A public library was founded in Havana and branches were extended to the more important cities. The tobacco industry was encouraged and showed signs of prospering by the end of the eighteenth century.
continue its work under great handicaps and is today still
in existence.

In all probability, a period of extreme reaction would have followed the Las Casas reforms had it not been for the chaotic conditions on the European continent in the early nineteenth century. It is generally conceded that Cuba could have secured her independence from Spain, as did numerous other Latin American countries at this time, but for many reasons the revolt did not occur. First, the Las Casas rule had helped to bring a period of prosperity and freedom to the island, the like of which had never been known before.

Second, the Negro rebellion in Haiti, the French occupation of Santo Domingo, and the revolutions on the Spanish mainland made for immigration of many who feared that independence would bring extremists into control of Cuba. Third, many of the revolutionary doctrines did not appeal to the Cubans. Because slavery was an institution needed at that time for sugar production, Bolivar's advocacy of emancipation of the Negro aroused fears on the part of many Cubans. Fourth, the liberal Spanish constitutions that King Ferdinand VII announced in 1812 was extended to Cuba to create a feeling of good will toward the mother country.

16. The central office of the Sociedad is today housed in a large and beautiful building in Havana.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., p. 3.
Political Reaction and Civil War

But the period of the Holy Alliance in Europe was soon to change all this. The constitution of 1812 was suppressed and Cuba was placed under a despotic form of government. The Cubans, however, had enjoyed liberalism too long to accept such a change without manifesting some resistance. To meet the sporadic uprisings that occurred throughout the island, Ferdinand VII (1808-1833) issued a Royal Order conferring power on the captain-general to exile from Cuba any person deemed suspicious or detrimental to the welfare of the government. The captain-general could suspend any or all of the royal orders or decrees as he deemed advisable and necessary. Originally a temporary measure, this act was never repealed or annulled; consequently, it was to be used unscrupulously for many years by the governors of Cuba and even to be a common practice under the Republic.

The last vestige of political freedom was taken from the Cubans in 1834 by the new captain-general, Miguel Tacón. Widespread resentment and bitterness brought forth revolutionary societies throughout the island and frequent minor uprisings ensued. But the Spanish authorities largely ignored these early warnings of dissatisfaction and continued to rule the island in the traditional way. John S. C. Abbott, traveling through Cuba in the year 1860, had this to say

concerning the corruption of the Spanish administration.

It is said that the late Captain-General of the island, Concha, returned to Spain with three million dollars, as his perquisites, collected during an administration of five years. All his vast group of retainers returned with him, also proportionately rewarded. A new Captain-General, Sereno, and a new swarm from the Castilian Court, have just arrived, and are now busy filling their purses.22

When the Cubans petitioned for reforms and a greater degree of local self-government, their solicitations went unheard and unread by the Spanish authorities. Stability in administration could not be expected with chaos reigning in Spanish governmental circles. In the six-year period of 1868 to 1874 Spain alone changed her government three times. It did not come as too much of a surprise, therefore, when a small group of Creoles, Negroes, and mulattoes formed a provisional government and declared a Republic of Cuba on

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22. John S. C. Abbott, South and North (New York: Abbey and Abbott Co., 1860), p. 159. In spite of the various instances of bad government cited on the foregoing pages, the Spanish colonial system had much merit. Theoretically, at least, it aimed to protect the natives from ruthless exploitation, to extend the Christian religion among the pagan natives, and to develop culture. To be sure, abuses and corruption did creep in but it must be remembered that vast areas, backward people, poor means of communication and transportation, difficulty of keeping unscrupulous individuals from responsible positions, loss of control of the sea to Great Britain, and decrease in wealth at home constantly hindered the implementation of these policies. Certainly these limiting conditions must be considered before making appraisal of the Spanish colonial system. Then too, little else could be expected in colonial government, when Spain failed to provide herself with local representative assemblies and when she permitted her own commerce and government to be dominated by excessive regulations, red tape and corruption.

October 10, 1868. This was the start of the ten-years' insurrection. Actually there was never any organized warfare. Fighting degenerated into a form of banditry and by 1878 most Cubans recognized the cause as lost. The estimated cost to Spain for suppressing the rebellion was $300,000,000, which was immediately charged to the Cuban debt.

The Treaty of Zanjou, which ended the civil war, guaranteed civil and political reforms to Cuba, promised membership in the Spanish Parliament, extended provincial and municipal laws of Spain to Cuba, and granted amnesty to all who participated in the insurrection. But these and other promises for reform that followed seldom got beyond the paper stage and conditions continued much the same as they had been prior to the civil war. Yet Spain loudly proclaimed to the world

24. Ibid., pp. 40-41.
26. Report of the census of Cuba, 1899, op. cit., p. 37. One real reform was effected in the abolition of slavery. As was previously indicated, Indian labor was early supplanted by Negro help. The Spaniards encouraged the importation of slaves but the supply was never quite sufficient to meet the demand in view of the steady expansion of tobacco, sugar, and coffee plantations. Then, in 1817, Spain consented to a plan for the end of the slave trade which had been drawn up by Portugal, France, and Great Britain. Contraband trade in slaves continued, however, because the Cubans believed an adequate supply of Negro labor was needed to insure the economic development of the island.

When the Cuban revolutionary assembly met in 1869 it provided for the abolition of slavery with future compensation to the owners. Naturally the restoration of peace did away with this constructive measure, but the effect was not lost. Both Americans and the British urged the abolition of slavery in the Spanish possessions. Although the Spanish authorities were not quite ready for complete abolition, they went halfway in 1880 and placed
that she had benevolently acquiesced to meet the demands of the rebels.

Unrest and the War of Independence

Although the civil war created a certain degree of economic instability, a serious fall in the price of sugar aggravated the situation even more. And the large debt that Spain had accumulated against Cuba, the interest of which alone amounted to over $10,000,000 a year, did not lessen the discontent. In order to meet this obligation each year, excessive import and excise taxes had to be levied on goods consumed in Cuba and lotteries maintained. Often revenues were insufficient and the deficits were added to the debt. The per capita obligation of $283.54 could not possibly be removed under the prevailing financial arrangement. So the early optimism of the Cuban people growing out of the Treaty of Zanjou was replaced by that of greater hatred and resentment.

Still another cause for unrest was the constant uprooting in which colonial administration found itself due to the rapid change in captains-general. Between 1859 and 1898 there were thirty-eight in all, an average of about one a year. With but a few exceptions, they did nothing whatever to improve the welfare, material or intellectual, of the Cuban people.

the slaves under a state of servdom or patronato. The patrons were given full rights over the Negro laborers for a specified period of time, in return for which the Negro was to be provided with food, clothing, compensation, and education for his children. This system was abolished in 1886 and all former Negro slaves were given complete freedom in 1897.

27. Olmsted and Gannett, op. cit., p. 37.
To prevent any common discussion of existing evils, censorship of press and speech was strictly enforced. Three copies of each printed edition had to be filed with the governor or mayor before distribution could be made.

All of this led to the outbreak of a revolution in Oriente province on February 24, 1895, and the movement slowly spread throughout the island. On July 15, 1895, a provisional government was created and the independence of Cuba declared. The Spanish were not particularly aggressive in their opposition to the movement in its initial stages, but the coming of General Valeriano Weyler in 1898 changed the situation. He inaugurated the reconcentration policy of gathering into one district all of the rural population that had been aiding the insurgents. Consequent congestion brought untold hardship, famine, and pestilence. The counter move of the insurgents entailed devastation and destruction of the countryside in the hope of exhausting sources of Spanish revenue and of evoking intervention by the United States.

29. Andrew Rowan and Marathon Ramsey, The Island of Cuba (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1897), p. 194. Had Spain taken a lesson from developments on the mainland, opposition to continued colonial status might have been quieted or at least minimized. But disturbed conditions at home prevented the working out of a consistent and liberal colonial regime, and the loss of Mexico seemed to determine the Spanish authorities to tighten their control of the possessions still held. Cuba was put under a captain-general with military powers equal to those of an officer of a besieged town. The natives continued to be denied any significant role in their own government and trade policies.

American Intervention

Because American business had invested between thirty and fifty million dollars in Cuban sugar, the government of the United States requested the revocation of the edict of reconcentration and the recall of General Weyler. Peace seemed certain when Spain complied with these requests verbally and removed Weyler as well as his reconcentration policy in October of 1897. As a gesture of friendly relations between United States and Spain, the Americans sent the U. S. S. Maine to visit Havana harbor and the Spanish dispatched its cruiser Vizcaya to visit American ports.

Peace, however, was not to be had so easily. An active element within the insurgent group demanded complete independence, a concession that Spain was not willing to grant. When this became evident riots occurred throughout the island. It was then that the Maine arrived in Havana harbor on January 25, 1898. On the night of February 15, the battleship was blown up and almost completely demolished. Public opinion in the United States was indignant.

The United States was swept by a demand for war; Congress voted a large appropriation for national defense. President McKinley proceeded to request the authority to intervene in protection of the United States citizens in Cuba, and for the stability of international obligations. Joint resolutions were adopted in Congress, on April 19, 1898, which demanded

31. Chas. and Gannett, op. cit., p. 38.
the withdrawal of Spain from Cuba and empowered the President to use military and naval force to secure the evacuation.

The justice of American intervention need not be discussed here. America did use military force to oust Spain from Cuba and for good measure forced her out of the other colonial possessions she held. The objectives sought, as defined in the congressional resolutions, were accomplished by July 13, 1898, namely, the complete surrender of Cuba and promised withdrawal of Spanish troops. Spain was ready for peace and hastened negotiations for a settlement in view of the menacing position of the American naval forces in the vicinity of the Philippines.

Hostilities ceased the twelfth of August, 1898. The treaty of peace, which was signed on December 10 in Paris, provided for the American occupation of Cuba and the responsibility of the United States for the island during the occupancy. That a great power would be satisfied with a big-brother attitude toward a weak nation, rather than taking possession of it, was very much doubted throughout Europe.

Following the treaty, Major-General Leonard Wood became military governor. He established an extremely autocratic administration on the assumption that the Cubans were not competent to undertake local self-government and that the three years of insurrection had so disorganized the economic

33. Oosted and Gannett, op. cit., p. 39
34. Ibid.
and political life of the island that such control was necessary. With the people living in filth, poverty, and disease-infested communities, General Wood looked upon military occupancy as a period in which Cubans could be trained to assume responsibilities in a democratic government. The prosperity in business and agriculture that prevailed under his rule and the extension of communication and transportation that was achieved—all attest to the material success of Wood's government.

In the arrangements looking toward American withdrawal, the President of the United States made it evident that, while the United States intended, as the resolution of April 20, 1898, had said, "to leave the government and control of the island to its people," he would take steps to make certain that our relations with the new government would assure the protection of the interests of our own people.

A call was issued for the election of members to a constitutional convention on July 25, 1900, and this group began deliberations on September 15 of the same year. Among the instructions given by the military governor were the following: "to frame and adopt a constitution for the people of Cuba, and as a part thereof, to provide for and agree with the government of the United States upon the relations to exist between that government and the government of Cuba." 36

38. Ibid., pp. 97-98.
General Wood emphasized that when the United States was satisfied that the relationship between the two countries had been properly cared for, "the Government of the United States would doubtless take such action on its part as would lead to a final and authoritative agreement between the people of the two countries for the promotion of their common interests." It is now evident to the objective observer that the Americans in control were determined that American interests should not be neglected in the steps taken to set up an independent republic.

Among the foremost provisions adopted by the constitutional convention were those providing for separation of church and state, the establishment of freedom of religion, and universal manhood suffrage. The administrative structure largely resembled that of the United States. The island was divided into six provinces, each under its own governor and provincial legislature, but all, like the states in the United States, were subject to federal laws and regulations. Beginning in the western end of the island, the provinces were: Pinar del Río, Havana, Matanzas, Sanata Clara (now Las Villas), Camagüey, and Oriente. Each province extended completely across the island from north to south and each possessed a capital city. The provinces, in turn, were divided into municipalities which were administered by mayors and city councils.

The convention failed to include any provisions relative to the relations between Cuba and the liberating country. So the United States Senate attached the Platt Amendment to the army appropriation bill of 1902 which authorized the withdrawal of the troops of the United States only after the Cubans had accepted in their constitution the specific provisions laid down for future relations between the two countries.

History records that the Cubans incorporated all the provisions suggested without qualifications but not without prolonged opposition. It is clear now that Cuba approved the "Platt Amendment" because no better terms could be secured. To refuse would have meant further postponement of the withdrawal of the military government of the United States, an even less acceptable alternative. So the Cubans accepted them, fully prepared to differ among themselves and with the authorities in the United States as to the real meaning of the terms in practice. Temporarily, they turned their attention

40. Philip G. Wright, *The Cuban Situation and Our Treaty Relations*, (Washington: Brookings Institute, 1931). (Appendix A, p. 189). The more important terms of this amendment provided:

1. Cuba shall never enter any treaty with any foreign power which will impair or tend to impair its independence.
2. Cuba shall not assume or contract any public debt to pay interest and sinking fund charges upon which ordinary revenues, after defraying current expenses of government, shall be inadequate.
3. Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and industrial liberty.
to setting up the new government. National elections were held on December 31, 1901, and to the presidency was elected Tomás Estrada Palma, veteran of the Ten Years' War and of the Revolution of 1895. On May 20, 1902, the long-awaited transfer of power took place amidst general patriotic rejoicing, and General Wood withdrew from the island. Cuba was now on her own.

It should be obvious, in light of the colonial background, that in the short span of two and one-half years the Americans could do little in the way of imparting to the Cubans any real conception of democratic government and even less in its practical implementation. The evils of an anti-republican character were too deep-seated to be uprooted by American supervision in such a short period. They live on to this day to plague each succeeding political administration.
CHAPTER III

The Republic of Cuba

With a constitution that provides the outward mechanics of a good form of government and a population not too excessive, Cuba unfortunately has a political heritage which has constantly worked against progressive development and has brought little but disillusionment and despair to those few who have wholeheartedly dedicated themselves to the democratic ideal. The Cuban problem is very complex. It is the outgrowth of many political, social, economic, and educational factors in Cuban, American, and world history which must be carefully examined before any appreciation can be had of the problem faced by Cuban educators in the fourth decade of the twentieth century.

The previous chapter indicated that Cuba began her republican history under many unfavorable conditions. It is true that the war of independence had been fought with a great sacrifice in men and resources, but the losses were not as overwhelming as would have been the case had the islanders gained freedom without the aid of the United States. Her independence was guaranteed by the latter country and a large source for international loans was available in "Wall Street." She was practically without a public debt because the Spanish obligation was repudiated and few financial commitments had
been made during the war. The economic development of the island had been encouraged by the building of many miles of roads, bridges, and telegraph and telephone lines. The Americans had given much attention to the improvement of health conditions. Street cleaning and garbage disposal were made municipal functions and sewer systems were introduced into the larger cities. Tropical diseases, particularly yellow fever, were diminished or practically eliminated from the island. Any by 1900 a steadily growing population had reached a total of 1,572,000 people, two-thirds of whom were white and the remainder Negroes except for a few Chinese.

On the other hand, Cuba entered upon self-government lacking in a great many of the qualities needed for democratic action. Her people, having little political experience beyond that acquired during the American occupation, were largely illiterate and, as a rule, uninterested in public problems. The election of 1901 was a bad start inasmuch as the presidential opponent of Tomas Estrada Palma withdrew from the election on the grounds that his party had not been assured a part in supervising the elections. This procedure was to be repeated many times during the course of Cuban history.

**Political Instability**

Cubans of today, however, can find satisfaction in some of the achievements of the Palma administration. The government was administered honestly and well during the first term,

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but the beginning of political corruption could be observed by the growing number of government employees, occasional fraud, and political partisanship. Although Estrada Palma was re-elected in 1905, again it was an easy victory because of the withdrawal of the rival political party on the grounds that registry lists had been falsified. Just as soon as the second term began, guerrilla warfare broke out, and without a militia and military resources, Palma was forced to resign and to turn the government over to a commission headed by William Howard Taft.

An analysis of this first failure in government reveals some of the continuing weaknesses in the political life of the island. The lack of political experience was certainly a major cause in the breakdown. Equally to blame was the high degree of illiteracy among the common people, which seriously interfered with the successful operation of a democratic election. The failure of a large part of the upper-class Cubans to participate actively in politics made it possible for self-seekers to take over important offices. A great many of the inhabitants of Cuba were unnatualized immigrants from Europe and the United States for whom politics held no interest. They refused to look upon their residences as anything but temporary, and hence felt no personal identification with the fortunes of the republic. Many of these conditions persist today as basic causes for the political upheavals that beset


the Cuban republic. None, however, had been as troublesome as the tendency to form political groups around personalities rather than programs. It has resolved into an opposition of the "cuits" to the "ins." Almost unbelievable realignments have been effected by contending factions with the result that "platforms" are high sounding propaganda, but seldom programs to be carried into action.

So in 1906 Cuba found herself without a president. Commissioner Taft declared a provisional government and assumed the role of governor. After one month, Taft was recalled to Washington and Charles Magoon replaced him. The Magoon administration was not well received and was unjustifiably criticized by the Cubans. Yet the weaknesses of Cuban political life could not possibly be ameliorated by the provisional government that existed from September, 1906, to January, 1909. The most that could be hoped for was that Cuba would be advanced sufficiently to resume her responsibilities of self-government. This expectation proved to be much too optimistic, however, in view of the excessive graft, fraud, and corruption that ensued once the Cubans took over.

The Magoon administration supervised a fair election and on January 28, 1909, handed the government over to the second President of Cuba, José Miguel Gómez, who had led the revolt in 1906. He lost no time in reinstating the

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4. Ibid., p. 813.
Spanish tradition of government for personal profit and power, the end to which most administrations have been dedicated throughout Cuban history. Mario Menocal virtually stole the election in 1912 and continued in power until 1921. This long rule was made possible by the allied need for sugar during World War I. Discontent was voiced from time to time but the United States made known that it would not allow any uprisings to interfere with the island's output of that product.

Then too, the price of sugar was high, Cuba was prosperous, and her people were not too concerned about things political. The world demand for sugar, growing larger and larger after 1910, effected a rise in prices which in turn brought more and more acreage into productivity. Price increases, except for the year 1918 when price ceilings were imposed, showed a progressive rise, going from approximately two cents a pound in 1913 to a momentary high of twenty-two cents early in 1920 before falling back to a year average of twelve cents.

The increase in prices naturally pushed plantations to their greatest yield and encouraged the opening of new acreage. Until 1909 practically all of Cuba's sugar production, except for a small amount domestically consumed, was imported by the United States. As the years passed and

the Cuban crop continued to be expanded, the American market absorbed less than 75 per cent of the total produced. Thus, Cuba became increasingly dependent on the hazards of a world market. The total sugar production rose from 1,077,000 tons in 1907-08 to 4,517,000 tons in 1921-22, the year in which prices took the sharpest turn downward.

Sugar became a surplus commodity in various parts of the world in 1921 and the price fell sharply to about three cents a pound. To further the collapse, the United States raised its import duty on Cuban sugar from 1.0048 to 1.60 cents. Fortunes vanished, sugar mills went into bankruptcy, and financial institutions closed their doors, many never to reopen. American capital took over many of the bankrupt businesses, creating a condition of absentee and foreign

9. Commerce Yearbook, 1932, "Foreign Countries" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), Vol. II, p. 677. The expansion of commerce that resulted from this demand for Cuban sugar was so tremendous that for a time the island had a per-capita trade greater than that of any other country in the world. Havana was a capital of millionaires and a city of showoffs. Private marble palaces, elaborate office buildings, and numerous gambling casinos were constructed. Beautiful and expensive automobiles crowded the narrow streets of Havana. Nor did the "Dance of the Millions" affect just the capital city. The villages and even the peasant's bah{io, or hut, was penetrated by the sugar boom. "Clear more land to plant cane" brought employment and high wages to the interior. Acre after acre of trees was cleared and the trees burned to make way for sugar. The Cuban peasant, who had squatted on a small plot of land and took from it about everything he needed for a living, now found his land sold to a large sugar corporation. The guajiro, or peasant, became a part of a great industrial enterprise. Yet his temperament, ideas, thinking, and habits were geared to a simple agricultural society.
landholding and business ownership. Three-fourths of the sugar industry came under American control and, similarly, public utilities, the tobacco industry, and mines became American corporations.

In the midst of this economic ruin, President Menocal failed to take advantage of the last opportunity to retrieve his degraded reputation. He feigned a desire to hold an honest presidential election in 1920 by inviting General Crowder to assist in drawing up a new election law and taking a new census. In spite of American observers being present at the final election, however, fraud and intimidation were widespread. When the candidate supported by Menocal, Alfredo Zayas, won by a narrow margin, Cuba was ripe for revolution. Crowder was returned to the island by President Wilson to hold new elections in disputed regions. The Liberals at this point, consistent with the Cuban tradition, stupidly refused to go the polls and Zayas was declared the victor.

The new president, Alfredo Zayas, proved to be a poorer executive than Menocal. The presence of General Crowder for the first two years of his administration, however, held corruption and graft to a minimum, but with the withdrawal of the American observers, an orgy of spending and maladministration ensued. Zayas realized he could not be re-elected

so he gave his support in the election of 1924 to a coalition candidate, Gerardo Machado y Morales, who pledged himself to economic and political reforms, abolition of the United States control through repudiation of the Platt Amendment, one term in office, and no further extension of foreign loans. Charles E. Chapman, a well-known Latin American historian, had this to say in 1925 relative to the Machado election.

Machado has a chance to make his name the greatest in the history of the republic. He has ability enough to meet the demands of the situation. But will he avoid the corrupt practices of most of his predecessors? Will he say "No!" to family and friends? Will he carry through the reforms that he has begun? And will he hold an honest election in 1928? If he will do these things, then not Zayas, Menocal, Gómez, or even honest old Don Tomás will have made so good a record. This writer wishes that he may accomplish these things, or, at least, make an effort to do so.  

Unfortunately for Machado and Cuba, the economic crisis due to the world surplus of sugar in 1929 and the consequent fall in the world market price forced the government to carry on an extensive program of public-work projects as a means of lessening unemployment. When public criticism of his administration increased, Machado suppressed all of the opposition parties. He then had Congress propose an amendment to the constitution to extend the presidential term of office two years. A constitutional convention met in 1928 and accepted the amendment. This irregular

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13. At the conclusion of Machado's first term in office, the public works debt alone had mounted to more than $200,000,000, a figure that began to rival the old Spanish debt.
proceeding aroused the anger of the three distinct groups, namely, the labor unions, the students of the University of Havana and the institutes, and a small political faction headed by Carlos Mendieta. The little popularity that remained to Machado was lost when the United States Congress dealt a deadly blow to the export of Cuban sugar to the United States by passing the Smoot-Hawley tariff.

These conditions increased the feeling against Machado and his government. For a time at least, the President was able to crush all outward signs of resistance. Then in 1931 well-organized demonstrations developed. Students formed a directory and began arming themselves for a revolution. To forestall such a plan, Machado closed all institutes and schools of higher learning. The professional men joined with the university students to form the "ABC" Society. At first its program was limited to a propaganda campaign against Machado but when this failed to effect a change, the "ABC" adopted the same terroristic and lawless methods used by Machado's henchmen.

14. Sumner Welles, Two Years of the Good Neighbor Policy, an Address (Washington: The State Department, April 15, 1935), pp. 2-5.
16. The Cuban Congress in 1932 granted the president the authority to maintain military rule until the termination of his second term, which would have been 1936. In the meantime, the United States government refused to intervene even though terrorism was rapidly increasing. With the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt in
Then came a period which is especially significant to the present study since it brought into power a group of young men who were to effect some educational and social change, chief of which was the civic-military rural school movement. These men seized power by means of a revolt within the ranks of the army. Fifteen sergeants and a number of other enlisted men ousted the pro-Machado officers from their posts. One of these sergeants, Fulgencio Batista, assumed the title of Colonel and Commander-in-Chief of the new army. The revolutionary junta, which backed Batista, appointed Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín provisional president. Because the United States government failed to recognize this new radical administration, Dr. Grau resigned office on January 15, 1934. But the Revolutionary Junta's new choice for president, Carlos Hevia, was no more popular and after three days in office the appointment of Colonel Carlos Mendita was announced. The recognition of this new government by the United States quieted much of the political

1933, however, pressure was brought to bear upon Machado to leave the country. This he did on August 13, 1933. His entire cabinet resigned with the exception of Secretary of War Herrera, who automatically became provisional president. After appointing Carlos de Cespedes Secretary of State, he resigned and Cespedes became President. Although Cespedes annulled the constitutional amendments of 1928, removed the Machado appointees from Congress and the Supreme Court, and ordered an election for February, 1934, these measures did not allay the revolutionary spirit that had taken hold of the Cuban people.

agitation as did the abrogation of the Platt Amendment and the passage of a reciprocal trade agreement by the United States Congress.

Yet the revolution was more than a crusade against Machado personally. It was a demand for major political, economic, social, and educational reforms. The fact cannot be ignored today, nor could it be ignored then, that Cuba will be successful in meeting the need for education in rural regions and elsewhere only to the extent that she has a stable economy, a government which is efficient and honest, and a general condition of social welfare. The following analysis of some of the economic, social, and political problems that Cuba faced in the chaotic years just prior to and following the overthrow of Machado, in 1933, will reveal to some extent the complexity of the times and the disillusionment that confounded the Cubans. Inasmuch as the educational phase of the Cuban problem cannot be isolated from the economic, social, and political, this thesis must of necessity describe these larger problems.

18. "End of Cuban Strife Seen in Our Recognition," Literary Digest (February 3, 1934), p. 11. Probably much more effective in restoring the calm was the complete concentration of administrative powers in the chief executive who was supported by the armed forces. A series of strikes in 1935, for example, led to a presidential proclamation of a state of war in Cuba. The ironfisted rule that followed far surpassed that of Machado in severity; the government met terrorism with terrorism. With military governors over each province and military supervisors over each district, the army held complete sway throughout the island.
Monocultural Production of Sugar. The living conditions for the bulk of the Cuban population in the 1930's were particularly unstable, being dependent on the fluctuations of the foreign market. The point was previously made that during World War I Cubans had given up the production of most of the other basic agricultural products in favor of sugar cane. The Cubans were convinced that more foodstuffs and manufactured goods could be gotten by producing and exporting sugar than by using labor and other resources to produce the goods within the island. Hence, when the price fell, panic and poverty prevailed. J. P. McEvooy, a constant observer of Latin American Affairs, offers this analysis of the Cuban economy.

As the Cubans themselves put it with their genius for vice versa, they are cursed with a soil so rich, a climate so blessed, a labor supply so abundant, and a market so near that they are always either going into bankruptcy or struggling out of it. Cuba could produce all the food the people could eat with plenty to export, but it clings to a one-crop economy, sugar, tied to one inescapable buyer, the U. S.

19. Cuba never reverted to her former diversified agriculture; instead she remained primarily a "one-crop" country. Since the agricultural production was keyed to foreign markets, large sectors of the rural population were frequently exposed to sharp economic crises resulting from fluctuations in demand. Under such a system the development of subsistence agriculture, badly needed to supply domestic requirements and reduce the effects of sudden crises, was inhibited. Consequently, when the world price of sugar was high, Cuba prospered and was happy.

Under the Roosevelt administration, the United States adopted a new policy with regard to Cuban trade. The policy was invoked on the belief that Cuba had been an important market for American goods which would be revived only to the extent that the sugar industry was rehabilitated. So on August 24, 1934, Cuba and the United States announced a reciprocal trade agreement which reduced tariff rates on sugar, rum, tobacco, fruits and vegetables, and raised the quota allotted to Cuban sugar and tobacco. The new tariff of ninety cents per hundred pounds of sugar was about half that charged other countries. Though this reduction in tariff and increase in quota stimulated Cuban agricultural production, the sugar *central*es still operated at only 50 per cent production of the early 1920's.

Government Finances. Another basic economic problem in the 1930's was deficit spending on the part of the Cuban government. The debt of Cuba on June 30, 1933, six weeks

21. "United States Slashes Sugar Duty for Cubans," The Miami Herald (November 30, 1938), p.1. In 1938 the duty on sugar was further cut to seventy-five cents per hundred pounds, which was the maximum reduction permitted under the reciprocal trade law. How great was the need for improvement in the Cuban situation is readily appreciated when it is considered that the total value of Cuban exports from the United States, which had reached over $32,500,000 in 1902, when Cuba had a population of 1,750,000, had dropped to $22,674,000 in 1933, when the population had increased to over 4,000,000.
before Machado’s flight was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>$40,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>80,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Bonds</td>
<td>24,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floating Debt</td>
<td>85,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$244,500,000

The status of the national debt on May 31, 1934, nine months after the September revolution, indicated that the floating debt had been reduced from approximately $85,000,000 to $60,000,000 largely because some of the claims registered with the Machado government, as well as salaries and pensions in arrears, were ignored. The total debt on May 31 was divided as follows:

22. Hudson Strode, *The Pageant of Cuba* (New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1934), p. 310. The five major categories under which the debt was classified called for explanation. The foreign debt was created by borrowing from the banks of the United States and the Government of the United States to pay off old floating debts or public-works projects. The interior debt was not created by selling bonds to the public, but by issuing bonds in payment of existing obligations that could not be met. The public works debt was contracted by Machado for the construction of the Cuban Capitol building and other undertakings to create jobs. The sugar bonds were issued by the Machado government during the time it attempted to control the price of sugar through restricted and delayed production. Finally, the floating debt was the result of the government's inability to pay all its creditors, its employees, and its pensions during the Machado period. The debt was funded rather than met out of any government surpluses, hence, future generations of Cuba were obligated to pay for the extravagance and corruption of the past.

Foreign.............. $51,237,400
Internal................ 7,766,500
Public Works............ 87,559,273
Floating Debt............ 60,000,000
Sugar Bonds............. 24,500,000
$231,083,173

When this public debt was analyzed by the new provisional government, however, several startling revelations were made. Cuba had never floated any internal bond issues. The people were never encouraged to invest their savings in their own government, which explained perhaps why so many were indifferent to dishonest and inefficient government. Also it was apparent that a great part of the financing of the Cuban government in the thirties would have to go for the funding of past debts. Hence, the government had little surplus to utilize for current public improvements.

The financial dilemma was further accentuated by a steady decline in national income caused, in part, by the inequality of the tax system of the island. Landholders, through the great political power springing from their control of resources, succeeded in keeping rural property relatively free from taxation. Moreover, the modern conception of progressive taxation, such as the income tax in the United

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24. "The Problems of the New Cuba," op.cit., pp. 350-360. The total indebtedness was even more menacing in view of the greatly reduced revenues of the Cuban government and a growing demand for increased military expenditures to check the revolutionary excesses of the period. From 1930 on, therefore, the interest on the national debt and internal policing by the armed forces demanded a larger and larger proportion of the total expenditures. Less and less money was given to sanitation and education.
States, was completely ignored by the government.

In a report on the fiscal system in Cuba prepared for the United States Treasury Department at the request of the Cuban government, the following statement was made:

There appears to be little doubt that many properties are omitted from the municipal assessment rolls entirely, and that the efficiency and fairness of assessments varies widely in different parts of the land. Vacant or unused property, urban and rural, should be subjected to some form of tax.26

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25. Since urban and rural workers received such low incomes that they could not be taxed directly to any extent, most of the revenue money was derived from export and import duties and other indirect taxes. The irregularity of such revenue made it a highly questionable source. All municipal taxes were based upon rural and urban landholdings. Rural land was included in municipal taxation because the Cuban municipio was comparable to our county. The basis for rural taxation, however, differed from that for the urban. In the city, taxes were based upon the rental value of the land and buildings. The tax levy on rural holdings, on the other hand, varied according to the use of the land. Sugar land was taxed on the basis of the market value of the sugar produced. This really called for a yearly assessment, but, in practice, municipalities seldom varied the tax from year to year. Most of the other rural land was taxed on the basis of the cash rental that it brought. Thus there was no tax on urban and rural land not used, and the country gentleman with large holdings not being cultivated was fully tax exempt. The vast reserve areas of sugar, coffee, and cattle corporations completely escaped taxation.

Such conditions naturally encouraged large landholding and large unused reserves of land. The local governments were powerless to do anything about it. The national government and its 125 municipalities served as tax collectors whereas the national government, its provinces, and municipalities were spending agencies of the revenue collected. The national government determined the majority of the local taxes and a great many of the sums collected had to be sent directly to Havana. As a result, most of the badly needed social services for rural areas were practically impossible to obtain.

Varying amounts of the municipal tax collections were sent to the national government for sanitation services, public works and education. The national government determined that which should be returned either in money or in services to the municipality. True to the Cuban tradition, each municipio received much less in return than it contributed. For example, 10 per cent of all municipality revenue was turned over to the national government for public-health service. The national government then distributed a portion of this to the directors of local health offices of the National Bureau of Public Health. The money received usually went to pay for cleaning streets and collecting garbage. Those other activities which minister directly to health promotion in rural areas were completely ignored. Such a plan largely discouraged local initiative. Localities looked to the national government for every detail, from the
construction of a municipal water supply down to the removal
of the garbage pail from the back door.

That such a plan was also cumbersome and usually ignored
local needs is only too well illustrated in the following
account given in Miss Ferguson's "Cuba."

The ayuntamiento (municipal council) decided that
the cement walks in and around the plaza should be
mended. Remember this next time you wonder why Cubans
don't keep their walks in repair. They ascertained
what it would cost: $500 or so. A committee was
appointed to travel to Havana and wait upon the
President: the judge, two councilmen, and two other
prominent citizens. One could hardly call upon his
Excellency with less. The train trip, going and
coming, came to $180. As the President was a very
busy man, he could not see them promptly and they
waited at ten to twenty dollars a day hotel bill for
the group. Naturally they ran up a few other expenses
seeing the right people, entertaining congressmen at
lunch. That added $150 to the outlay. Total $530.

Foreign Interests. The reluctance of the Cubans to
invest in their own government, as revealed in the analysis
of the Cuban Debt, was likewise extended to the financing
of private enterprise and public utilities. It was somewhat
paradoxical that, although the Cubans won their fight for
political independence, they became an economic dependency of

27. A criticism of this system was that street cleaning and
garbage disposal should have come out of another budget
than that of public health. Also, too much of the total
revenue was spent on trying to beautify Havana and make
it healthy, which left little for distribution to other
municipalities where the great majority of the people
lived. There were too few visiting nurses, social
workers, school attendance officers, and recreational
leaders to care for the neglected people of the interior.

29. Cf. p. 46
the United States and largely lost control of most of their economic resources. The trend was further encouraged by a system of large landholding that began with the turn of the century.

The large-scale production of the World War period furthered the trend toward concentration of holdings. Then with the crash of 1921, American capitalists moved in to take over not only the sugar industry but the railways, banks, and public utilities as well. After that, small-scale sugar production was discouraged because of the large outlay of capital required to withstand the competitive market.

A statistical breakdown of the use to which the total area of Cuba was put in the early thirties reveals the extent of the area devoted to agricultural production and dominated by foreign interest. Of the total 833,288 caballerías

30. Before this time, land-ownership was quite widely distributed among Cubans. The revolution of 1895 and the general chaotic conditions created by the reconcentration policy in the interior led many Cuban peasants to abandon their homes for cities. Before 1894 Cuba had 90,060 farms, a number which had decreased to 60,711 by 1899.

31. The successful plantation contained several thousand acres, several miles of private railroad, numerous buildings for grinding and storing sugar cane, and costly machinery. Most of the large plantations also had several hundred homes for the employees working in the mills. In short, large centrales were constructed during the early twenties. In order to supply the enormous capacity of these mills, sugar companies acquired control, either through lease, contract, or ownership, over thousands of square miles of sugar land. This explains in part why so few independent Cuban farmers or business men had made places for themselves under the existing system.
or 27,776,822 acres, approximately 3,529,380 acres were occupied by cities, towns, villages, roads, mountains, and rivers. Of the remaining 24,344,108 acres of rural land, 7,316,801 were controlled by the sugar companies: 6,272,338 by coffee planters and cattle ranchers; 3,975,572 by small farmers who devoted part of their sugar and coffee land to the cultivation of subsistence crops. Of the remaining acres, 629,527 were so-called unclaimed or state land and 1,939,872 were waste land.

Actually, only a minor part of these large tracts of land were ever utilized for raising sugar cane, coffee, or cattle. It was estimated that the sugar companies alone kept unused an unnecessary reserve of at least 3,300,000 acres of land that could have been devoted to the growing of subsistence crops so badly needed in Cuba and the other densely populated areas of the Caribbean.

32. One caballería is equivalent to 33.33 acres.
34. The degree to which United States companies monopolized the sugar land is revealed by the report that four corporations were in possession of one-fifth of all the sugar acreages in Cuba and twenty-nine mills. The Pan American Yearbook, 1945, pp. 246-248, is the source for the statement that 75 per cent of Cuba's sugar output in the thirties were owned by North America with seven of the largest American companies grinding 40 per cent of the total sugar production.
Banks also were almost entirely in the hands of Canadian and United States banking corporations. Thus most commercial loans were held by foreigners. In general, their services were rather cheaply and fairly extended to all who were reasonable risks. Little Cuban money was available for domestic loans because most wealthy Cubans preferred to invest abroad at rates of interest below those offered on loans at home, in view of the instability and dishonesty of political administrations. Cubans may have rankled at foreign capital but the dominant position of that capital was due to the absence of Cuban money for investment purposes at home. Thus, with most of the land controlled by a few large corporations, much of it unused, and thousands of Cubans unemployed and hungry, it was natural that a demand would be voiced for agrarian reform and that there would be a growing antagonism on the part of the Cuban to the concentration of business in the hands of a few foreign corporations.

35. Even though he was loud in his denunciation of the so-called Yankee Imperialism, the Cuban was just as noisy in his complaint that the Americans had not done enough for the island. Government pressure was repeatedly exerted on such corporations as the United Fruit Company and the Hershey Company to go into vegetable production. Yet at the same time, the government attempted to break the foreign hold on the commerce of the island and to overcome the reluctance of Cubans to go into business and management. This met with little success because the Cuban was traditionally a poor business man. True to the gold-seeking traditions of the Spaniards, if the Cuban invested money in business enterprises, he expected immediate and big profits. He had the point of view of a landed aristocracy which measured wealth and distinction by the ownership of great estates and locked down upon anyone who worked with his hands or made money in
Since most of the public utilities were owned and operated by foreigners, the spirit of nationalism engendered by the Revolution of 1933 naturally made these companies the targets of reprisals and reforms. And inasmuch as there had been no governmental regulation of rates, the belief was widespread that the Cubans were overcharged. The government under President Grau (1934) arbitrarily cut electricity rates and issued a decree that made it almost impossible for management to discharge any of the maintenance staff, cut wages, or reduce services. Later President Mendieta (1935) approved a raise in rates so that the Cuban Electric Company, a Florida corporation, which furnished almost all of the electrical current consumed on the island, could show a reasonable profit.

"trade," so he lacked those traits necessary for a progressive industrial society and an energetic middle class. In general, the Cuban was content to let Spaniards, Italians, Germans, British, Chinese, and American monopolize the restaurants, industries, stores, and plantations. Mendieta Sets Up a Dictatorship in Cuban Crisis," New York Times (March 9, 1935), p.1. The Cuban Telephone Company, a Delaware Corporation, furnished island-wide service at a monthly rate cheaper than that offered in the United States. Yet a slight wage cut and the anti-Yankee feeling engendered led to a series of strikes in 1933. The government for several months took possession of the company.

Train service was fairly adequate, but again railroads were the monopoly of foreign capitalists. They consisted of the British-owned United Railways of Havana and the United States-owned Consolidated Railroads of Cuba. There were other private branch lines, operating little gasoline or electric cars, which connected ports with these systems. Profits were excellent when the sugar industry was prosperous, but the depressed prices and competition from motor freight and bus service which came with the completion of the Central Highway brought the companies to the verge of bankruptcy.
Land Reform. In an effort to overcome the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, the Cuban government undertook a program of agrarian reform which sought to develop a greater number of independent, small-scale farms, establish homesteads for workers earning a cash income for part of the year, and encourage the production of new crops. But this brought the Cubans face to face with the fact that significant agricultural improvement could not be achieved without redistribution of land and this would have meant expropriation of considerable foreign-owned and native-owned property. The Mexican experience in this direction had not been too successful. Furthermore, a study of the Mexican program revealed that a homesteading policy must of necessity be accompanied by government credit, better transportation facilities, available power, accessible markets, and equipment. A continuous program of adult and childhood education was likewise required. So it was obvious that parceling out of land alone would not serve to meet the needs.

Unemployment and Suffering. Part and parcel of the policy of land hoarding by the large companies was the failure of the Cuban economic system to provide a decent living for the Cuban people. Approximately 525,000 workers were dependent, in the early 1930's, for their livelihood upon the seasonal employment by the sugar industry. Ninety per cent of these

37. Statements by Lieutenant-Colonel Aristides Sosa de Quesada, Adjutant-General, Constitutional Army of Cuba. Interview in Havana, on May 25, 1949.
were engaged in cultivating and harvesting; the remaining 10 per cent were mill or clerical workers. The living conditions for these people will be described in Chapter V. Suffice it to say here that without higher and steadier incomes for rural workers, who made up such a large part of the consuming public of Cuba, an effective domestic market for increased and diversified agricultural production was lacking. And without a plentiful and varied diet for its laborers, Cuba could not hope to better the health and productivity of its workers to the point that the economic output could justify high wages. The diet of the Cuban during "good times" was far from adequate, but during the eight months of unemployment his diet became more monotonous and less plentiful; in fact, most Cubans eked out an existence on a meager fare of starchy foods, such as plantain, yuca, and malanga. So the immediate need of these people was for food; the remote need was for new industries and diversified agriculture.

Social Conditions and Problems

Health, Sanitation, and Housing. Such pitiful living conditions naturally created health problems, of which malaria was the most important. The larger cities were relatively

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free from this disease but agricultural areas were ravaged by it. The second most important cause of illness and one of the most important single causes of death was tuberculosis. It was more prevalent in Havana than in the rural areas. Typhoid fever declined markedly after the American intervention in 1900. Although not found to any extent in large cities or on farms, it was far from being under control in villages and small towns. This is not surprising in the light of conditions like those described by Miss Ferguson:

"...the matter of health goes back to our water supply. The aqueduct, which supplies all our water, belongs to a few of our most distinguished families, who acquired it as a royal grant in colonial days. Under its terms the owners are obligated only to provide water for washing, nothing is said about drinking. So you ought to see what comes out of the pipes when the rains begin! Those who can, naturally buy bottled water, but too many people have typhoid."

Smallpox, yellow fever, diphtheria, scarlet fever, and many other childhood diseases were well controlled. Syphilis was prevalent, especially in large cities. Intestinal parasitical infestation was practically universal among rural children. Hookworm was most severe and very common in most rural districts. The tropical anemia that resulted greatly

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39. A huge sanitorium for the care and cure of those afflicted with the dread "white pest" was the dream of Dictator Batista. A national campaign, endorsed by the government and the Cuban Red Cross, undertook the construction of Topes de Collantes, located on the peak of a mountain about thirty miles from Trinidad. But there it rests today, unfinished and ignored by succeeding administrations.

40. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 81
reduced the producing capacity of a laborer. Hence, the productivity of at least 90 per cent of the population was much lower than it would have been had the Cubans been freed of this infection.

Poor housing, like malnutrition and poor health, constituted a major obstacle to improving the health and productivity of the Cuban people during this period. It is no exaggeration to say that most of the village and rural laboring population was wanting in the most elementary housing and sanitation necessities. To a lesser extent this was also true of the small middle class. The seriousness of the situation was obvious to any observer who traveled throughout rural Cuba. Only the larger communities had a water supply, the smaller ones had to depend on rain water, with neither water nor sewage facilities reaching the poorer streets anywhere.

"Shanty-towns" were found in every city. The writer vividly recalls a visit through the slums of Havana in 1938. Several thousand families were huddled together, without much food, basic necessities, and sanitary facilities. This was indeed a paradox when so very near existed vast areas of fertile but largely uncultivated land which could have yielded those people ample subsistence. Most of the homes in villages

42. The description of the water system of Sanoti-Spiritus described by Miss Ferguson creates doubt about the quality of the water supply even in the large communities. When the writer was in Mariana in 1949 there was an acute shortage of water in that city which necessitated a cessation of service for six hours of each day.
and towns were stucco or wood frame crowded side by side, without lawns or trees, built along streets scarcely passable for mud. In these homes were found very little other than rusty iron beds with broken springs, a primitive charcoal stove, and mud floors. Children played daily in the midst of such squalor, they were poorly clothed, undernourished, and neglected. Housing and sanitation problems were even more serious in rural areas, where the bohío was more often than not a single room thatched with palm leaves.

Labor Relations and Working Conditions. It was only natural, in view of these conditions, that labor unrest would reach new heights and continue to cause trouble, throughout the thirties. Strikes were called as much for economic reasons as for political protest. The revolution against Machado (1933) invited excesses and Communists capitalized on the existing discontent to arouse antagonism between labor and management. The National Confederation of Labor became powerful and aggressive in putting forth its demands.

The provisional government under President Grau (1934) passed a series of labor regulations which sought to regulate strikes and lessen labor-management violence. It also took steps to improve labor conditions, raise wages, and lessen unemployment. A decree was issued to nationalize

43. Cf. p. 127.
labor and deport Haitians who had been employed during harvest on sugar plantations. The Nationalization of Labor decree provided that 50 per cent of the employees in any enterprise had to be native Cubans and that half of the payroll had to be paid to them.

Population. Unlike many European and Asiatic countries, Cuba was not faced with a problem of over population. Although she was one of the most densely inhabited of all American republics, the island was not classified as thickly populated. The total population of the island, based on the census of 1932, was 3,988,708, divided by provinces as follows:

Table 1
Population of Cuba by Provinces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Pop., per Sq. Mile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pinar del Rio</td>
<td>5,206</td>
<td>345,638</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havana</td>
<td>3,170</td>
<td>987,212</td>
<td>330.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matanzas</td>
<td>3,256</td>
<td>340,567</td>
<td>104.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Villas</td>
<td>8,257</td>
<td>822,198</td>
<td>99.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camaguey</td>
<td>10,064</td>
<td>411,382</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriente</td>
<td>14,211</td>
<td>1,082,011</td>
<td>70.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44,184</td>
<td>3,988,708</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

45. Much to the surprise of foreign operators and many Cubans, the estates and businesses, where the changes have been made, have not gone bankrupt but have been about as successful as under foreign supervision. The same president decreed a maximum working day of eight hours for any and all types of labor. Later agricultural labor, domestic servants, and taxi drivers were exempted from its provisions. Thus the provisional government in the short space of a few months did more to improve the status of Cuban workers than had been achieved during the entire previous history of the Republic.

The population density of the island was not great, roughly 90 people per square mile, which was quite a contrast to 449 for Puerto Rico in the same period. Java, which was not much larger than Cuba, supported 45,000,000 inhabitants, a population ten times as great as that of Cuba. But the population density of Cuba was more than twice that of the United States, namely, 41.3 per square mile in 1930, and more than any one of the southern states. Although there was no problem of over-population, there was one of uneven distribution and concentration of the population in the province of Havana.

Cultural Stocks and Intercultural Problems. Throughout its history, Cuba had been the melting pot of four people: Indian, African, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon. Most of the original Indians were either killed or worked to death by the Spanish conquistadores so that only a few remained on the island by the end of the seventeenth century, and Negroes had to be imported to fill the labor needs. Little of the early Indian blood remained in evidence but more of it existed in Cuba than was usually admitted.

Cuban dances, songs, and rural life showed many traces of this Indian tradition; El Caney, located in the eastern end of the island, was one place where Indian features were readily observed. Here the people were much like those of primitive Cuba. Verrill described them as "quiet, industrious, happy and contented, ploughing their small garden plots with crooked sticks." However, Cuba never had the mestizo problem of blending Indian and Spanish cultures which faced most Latin American countries.

Many of the Negroes of Cuba were descendents of slaves brought directly from Africa; others were recent immigrants from the islands of Jamaica and Hispaniola. The proportion of colored to white steadily declined over the years, due to the ban on slave importation and large immigration of Spaniards, until 1930 it constituted about 27 per cent of the total. The colored inhabitants, however, were unequally distributed throughout the island, with the result that many of the rural districts, especially the eastern provinces, had a Negro and mulatto population that outnumbered the white.

For the most part, whites and blacks lived together in harmony and there never was a Negro problem. The revolutions

51. Ibid., p. 112
52. Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 32-34
of 1868 and 1895 had brought the Cuban whites and Negroes closely together in a common cause. As a result, racial prejudice was not as acute as in most of the northern states. Or at least, there was not much open discrimination against Negroes in Cuba. Colored children attended public schools along with white children and many went on to the university and the normal schools. This in large part explained the rich contributions Negroes made to the cultural advancement of the island. Afro-Cuban music and dance were internationally famous. Among the leading musicians in Cuba history were Negroes. One of Cuba's leading poets was a mulatto. The many Negro doctors, generals, government officials, and teachers were evidence of the fairly wide economic opportunity open to the race.

Some of the Negroes retained the customs of the African tribes, while many others were completely assimilated into Cuban culture. A great many of them were greatly influenced

53. Though Cubans said there was none, there was ample evidence that it existed. For example, the writer observed that in Camagüey white people promenaded on the inner walk of Plaza Agrámonte and colored people took the outer walk, a step lower. In fact, most Negroes preferred to go to another plaza where few whites were ever present. The open discrimination in Cienfuegos was even more openly observed. The Commission on Cuba of the Foreign Policy Association reported an increase in racial prejudice during the 1930's, which was largely attributed to the unconscious influence of American tourists and the competition that came with a depression and a period of unemployment.

by the primitive religion brought from Africa. Dr. Fernando Ortiz, an authority on cults, claimed that their religion had changed little, if at all, in over four hundred years. Olive Gibson gave an excellent summary of their fetishism, which was little known because of the great secrecy surrounding the cult.

The Spanish translation of the word, fetishism, is brujería, and the fetishman is brujó; the feminine form being bruja. The cult is more than superstition and witchcraft, though it contains both; it is a religion with its temples, its altars, and its gods; and the fetishman is prophet, priest, and conjurer; as though by magic he can produce amulets and panaceas for every ill in life.

Of the four people contributing to Cuban culture, however, the Spanish influence was most felt. The language, religion, social customs, and way of living on the island were basically Spanish in origin. The political system is perhaps the most obvious and one of the worst of the Spanish inheritances because of its irresponsible, unproductive, and corrupt nature. The art of revolution, plotting, and misrule was learned very early from the Spanish. This, together with the traditional Spanish abhorrence of business enterprise,

57. Cuban Spanish has been so greatly affected by the many immigrations that it is difficult for a beginner in Spanish grammar to understand it. The natives talk so rapidly that most all the consonants are left out and the many slang shortcuts are understood only to the extent that Cuban life is appreciated.
meant that Cubans seeking "honorable" employment looked only to the professions and government positions. The tradition called for utilizing government posts for personal profit and power. So Cuban politicians soon gained a reputation of irresponsibly disposing of government positions without regard for ability. The result was widespread inefficiency and corruption in government. Throughout Cuban history there were few fair and honest elections. This again was due to at least three factors in Cuba's Spanish colonial heritage: the ease with which an electorate composed of a large number of illiterate and impoverished voters could be corrupted, the intimidation of the electorate by means of the army and military supervisors, and the nature of Cuba's electoral system.

Another Spanish practice which had led to widespread corruption was the granting of amnesties and pardons. These pardons were not only for political offenses, but also for such crimes as murder and burglary. The excessive use of amnesties and pardons obviously increased the opportunity for corruption and encouraged the commission of crime.

Regardless of their social standing, however, most all of the Cubans are Roman Catholic in religion. The Spanish brought with them the Roman Catholic Church, which from the beginning allied itself closely with the government. No
other church was permitted and immigrants of other than Catholic faith were denied admittance. The Protestant Bible was outlawed and subject to seizure. Only a few Cubans entered the priesthood, because advancement was limited primarily to Spaniards. Then during the long struggle for independence some antagonism to the Church was created because of its support of the crown. Many of the priests actively opposed the revolutionists. There had always been quite a number of "free-thinking" agnostics and Masons in Cuba though their wives and daughters in most cases were devout Catholics. But church-state relationship never caused much trouble in Cuba. A separation of church and state was declared from the beginning of the Republic. The Constitution guaranteed to all the freedom to worship as they pleased. Consequently, the Protestant churches were active after independence in mission and school work. The major Protestant faiths had their churches in Havana and throughout the provinces. The Jews had their synagogues.

And finally, the last of the four major people to contribute something to the cultural growth of Cuba were the North Americans. Their influence was most significant after

58. Verrill, op. cit., p.201.
60. Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 121-22.
the War of Independence in effecting a modernization program that left Cuba a country of contrasts. In the rush to accept the ideas and practices of a modern civilization, for example, many of the architectural and artistic antiquities of Cuba were either ignored or destroyed. In spite of the changes effected, however, the interior of the island continued to exhibit an easy-going way of life quite in contrast to modern and commercial Havana. These cities were still organized on the old Spanish pattern of a church, jail, recreation hall, and city hall located around a public square. Havana, however, was scarcely a semblance of its old self. Many of the beautiful, old tiled roofs could be seen in the old section, but modern buildings were not using them. The wide contrast between the modern and the ancient that was in evidence throughout the island served as an endless source of frustration, unhappiness, and confusion to a great many of the inhabitants.

The many other problems created by the coming of the North Americans were previously described in this chapter under the problems arising from landholding, United States-Cuban trade relations, foreign control of Cuban resources, and "Wall Street" loans. Although it can be said that the Cubans were 90 per cent responsible for their own ills, fairness demands that the United States should share the blame. This great country had often desired peace and prosperity more than good government in Cuba. At times, the United States was the main prop
that kept the evil governments in power. And great American corporations with business interests on the island too often displayed a similar attitude.

**Education.** Finally, lack of schools for the education of the masses, which caused a high rate of illiteracy, made pressing a problem that had been with Cuba from early colonial days. The shortlived enthusiasm for education, expressed immediately after the war of independence, spent itself soon after the Americans departed. The dictatorship and revolutionary chaos of the late 1820's and early 1930's was not conducive to educational advancement. Hence, Cuba needed a system of education for the masses which would be primarily agricultural and functional for those in the rural areas. Chapter IV will be devoted to a detailed analysis of the history of Cuban education and the educational problems that grew out of the needs of the 1930's.

**Proposed Solutions**

The foregoing analysis of the problems confronting the Cubans in the thirties should suffice to convince the reader that all was not "fiesta and siesta" on the island. But what else could be expected of a people who had a little less than four year's preparation for independence under American tutelage to offset an almost four-century tradition of corrupt, inefficient, personal rule by a foreign powers. It is clear
that the island needed better communication and travel facilities, small-scale and diversified agriculture, more education, better health, and a greater acceptance of democratic responsibilities in both high and low places. Some Cubans were of the opinion that better communication and travel facilities alone were the panacea. They claimed that such an improvement would open domestic markets and encourage the poor sugar worker to engage in small-scale farming. Once this was underway, agricultural education would be desired and better health would result from a higher level of living.

Those in the agricultural department of the government and in the agriculture schools agreed that roads were needed but insisted that other things were also essential. To show the peasant how to prepare his land, plant his crops, and market his harvest demanded agricultural agents in every province, farm clubs for adults and children, and agriculture courses and projects in the schools. The Cuban peasant had ample time for truck farming; all he needed was someone interested in agricultural improvement to help him.

The educators naturally believed they had the answer in the schools. They claimed that the peasants had been reluctant to send their children to school to have their ideas and attitudes made over. In many cases, schools had not been within walking or riding distance. Nor had the schools of the past been geared to the needs of the rural school
population. A good system of community schools, available to all rural adults and children, with a curriculum and projects that would prove the great values of learning was the means, they said, to a new Cuba. And in addition, a system of agricultural and vocational schools on an advanced level would assist Cuba to outgrow the traditional belief that any education worthy of the name must be in the liberal arts and the professions. If Cuba would spend thirty-five per cent of its general revenue on education and one per cent on the army, which was the reverse of the traditional practice, then, said the educators, Cuba would begin to make progress.

The health authorities agreed that roads and education were absolutely necessary but also believed they were of little avail as long as the health standards were not improved. Parasitical diseases, typhoid fever, and malaria would be eliminated only to the extent that all agencies cooperated in cleaning up filth and getting children and adults to eat a decent diet as well as live under healthy and sanitary conditions. Financial assistance and encouragement from the national government were needed by local governments to make this attack successful in securing the material and spiritual advancement of the people of Cuba.

In the last analysis, Cuba needed a greater degree of cooperation from all domestic groups to the end of locating and solving her economic, social, education, and political
problems. This was not too characteristic of the Latin American way of life. The absence of communication and transportation facilities, schools, and small-scale farming had perpetuated the agricultural and political oligarchy that persisted into the 1930's. But Cuba had weathered many a storm of greater proportion than that which she faced in that period. Fortunately, many of her traditions—her desire to be free, self-sufficient, and prosperous, and her attitude of "being down but never out"—would be of great value in those precarious times.
CHAPTER IV

PUBLIC PRIMARY EDUCATION IN CUBA

The educational institutions of Cuba in the colonial period were transplanted from Spain, and the church dominated the state in so far as the schools were concerned. The basic difference between this system and that of English colonial America is that the former was under one centralized ecclesiastical authority. Education was considered of importance only for the limited few, namely, those possessing superior intellectual ability and social influence. Any education for the masses came in and through the church and the home, not the school. To a great extent this tradition dominated Cuban educational theory well into the twentieth century and today it has a hold upon a very influential portion of society. As a result, the island had always been plagued with a large illiterate population. In addition to the traditional attitude toward educating the masses and the assumption of the educational responsibility by the church, the retarded development can be explained by the same factors that interfered with educational progress in the United States, namely, inaccessible territory, sparse rural population, diverse racial elements, pioneer life, and the burden of getting the bare necessities for existence.

It would be interesting to follow in some detail the
evolution of Cuban education in all its stages. But here the concern will be primarily with the history of public elementary education of the island; the story of the development of other phases must be passed by with only brief mention. Hence, the proper starting point for a study of educational beginnings which aims at an understanding of the present and past need for rural education in Cuba is in the colonial history of the island.

**Education under Colonial Rule**

Little is known about education in the seventeenth century; still less is known about that of the sixteenth. Indeed, there is little direct information here at all. Nevertheless, it is possible to reconstruct the earlier conditions with some degree of assurance from what is known about education in other colonial possessions of Spain.

The greater part of the education, probably in most instances the whole of it, was given in the home or in the church. The teachers were the father and the mother, or a tutor, and the quality of this home education obviously depended on the education which the parents or tutors themselves received. A few schools were sponsored by the Roman Catholic Church, but there was little thought of instructing the young in preparation for the needs of ordinary life. From time to time, of course, there were churchmen who tutored students beyond the limits of what was directly valuable for religious purposes and cultivated learning for its own sake.

The clerical monopoly of education really lasted for four
centuries, during which the Roman Catholic Church did little to develop elementary education for the masses. The most obvious result was the general restriction of learning within the boundaries fixed by the church’s interest and doctrines. Naturally, such an enforced limitation of thought imposed a serious check on the forward movement of institutions and intellectual growth.

On the other hand, the demand for an education on the part of Cuban youth during this period was not great. Since Spain provided the island with its government and ecclesiastical officials and since the commercial life was dominated by non-Cubans, there was little need of education for such functions. Furthermore, the general intellectual conditions throughout the world, and particularly in Spain during this period, were not conducive to the development of schools in Cuba.

Secondary education received a little more attention, but it consisted primarily of tutoring in Latin and chanting for clerical duties. Only Havana could boast of the most

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1. Dr. Diego González y Gutierrez, La Enseñanza Primaria en Cuba Pre-republicana, (Habana: Academia de la Historia de Cuba, 1938), pp. 1-8. Although Cardinal Cisneros requested the religious orders and the clergy to teach the Indian children to read and write until they were nine years of age, there were few private institutions in the elementary school level worthy of the name school, and there were no public elementary schools established during the first three centuries of Cuban existence as a Spanish colony.

2. Ibid. P.8.
meager kind of educational advantages; the other cities and the interior had absolutely none. Ignorance was widespread. The little printed material that was available was brought in from Spain; Cuba had no literature of her own.

The arrival of General Luis de las Casas as governor in 1790, however, brought a brief interlude of educational progress. He quickly realized that there was no deficiency in intellectual ability on the part of the Cubans, but rather an utter lack of educational facilities. To assist in meeting this need, Governor Las Casas created the Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País de la Habana, commonly called the Patriotic Society. It conducted a school survey in 1793 that revealed thirty-nine small primary schools in Havana, similar to the dame schools of New England, in which conditions were at their worst. Seven of these were for boys and thirty-two for girls, with lowly whites or free mulattoes in charge of instruction. Only one school offered free instruction to those children whose parents would declare themselves too poor to pay tuition, all the others were private venture institutions maintained by the parents of the children enrolled. As a meager beginning, the Society established several free schools and drew up plans which aimed to generalize free primary instruction in Cuba.

Although the old indifference of government to educational endeavors reappeared after Las Casas returned to Spain in 1796, fortunately for Cuba, the Society continued much of its work of extending the opportunities of education to a greater number of children. That some progress had been made was revealed by the 1801 School Survey which showed 71 schools operating in Havana, an increase of 32 schools in eight years. Most of this increase can be attributed to the work of the Society, whose teaching endeavors were expanded still further in 1816 when its Section of Education was founded with a government grant of $32,000.

When in 1824 the last installment of government aid for gratuitous instruction was stopped by Royal Order, the Section of Education of the Society found it impossible to bear the financial responsibilities for many of the free schools it maintained. The society somehow managed to keep open some of the schools while it carried on an endless campaign to renew government support of education. Its efforts were rewarded in 1827 with an appropriation of

5. C. R. Cameron, Regulation of Private Schools in Cuba, Report by the American Consulate General to the Secretary of State (Habana: February 26, 1936), No. 355, pp. 5-6.
8. Packard, op. cit., p. 944. At the same time, the University of Havana was placed under close governmental surveillance due to the increased spirit of resentment that accompanied the growth of political reaction throughout the island.
$8000 per year for free schools. This was made possible by the new governor Alejandro Ramirez, a name which ranks next to Las Casas in Cuban educational history. But the few schools that were established were located in large cities, leaving the rural areas and villages ignored and underprivileged. Consequently, over three-fourths of the inhabitants of the island were illiterate in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. Dr. Wurdiman's first hand description of Cuba gives ground to this belief.

The mass of even the wealthy population are not liberally educated, and of the poorer classes, every man is ignorant of the first rudiments, reading and writing. Over every effort to instruct them the mother country watches with a jealous eye; and Cuba as long as she remains subject to her, will have cause to mourn over the ignorance of her imigent classes. Too much praise cannot, therefore, be rendered to those noble spirits among her citizens, who struggle amid every obstacle to diffuse the blessings of education among her population.

The causes of this widespread neglect of education were given by the same Dr. Wurdiman upon returning from a visit to the island in 1843.

The extreme poverty of the laboring class of whites in the country is one cause of this neglect of education; the children often have not clothes decent enough for school, and some have none at all; and the distance to the school in a country sparsely populated with the poor where the soil is barren, and almost exclusively occupied by the rich planter

where it is fertile, is another prominent obstacle. But another cause felt by every Cuban, but which no one dares publicly own, is the depressing effect on the energies of the population by the enormous exactions of the mother country, and the extreme jealousy with which she views every attempt to enlighten the Creole...And with what feelings of approbation must not the efforts of the teachers be regarded. Although frequently in indigent circumstances themselves, by the report of 1836, they taught gratuitously one-half as many as all the societies and the government paid for, and in many cases adopted the scholars, to rescue them from ignorance. 11

Kimbball, writing in 1850 concerning the plight of the Cubans, presented the following statistical survey taken by the Cuban government census of 1841 which gives weight to the personal observations of Dr. Wurdiman.

The total population for 1841:
- White.................418,291
- Free Mulattoes.........88,054
- Free Blacks...........64,784
  Total Free People......571,129
- Mulatto Slaves.........10,974
- Black Slaves...........425,521
  Total Slaves............436,495
- Transients...............38,000
  Total Population......1,065,524

The number of schools:
- For White Male Children............129
- For White Female Children.........79
- For Colored Male Children...........6
- For Colored Female Children........8
  222

So it would seem that most of the common people got no formal education. Furthermore, many of those who were

11. Ibid.
12. R. B. Kimball, Cuba and the Cubans (New York: Samuel Hueston, 1850), p.161. Kimball states that this may be an overestimate, but Packard's statistics in general agree with these.
relatively more fortunate and attended school got their education under the worst possible conditions. Their teachers were only too frequently ignorant men and women who were totally unfit for their duties. School teaching was usually regarded as a means of eking out a scanty livelihood, and the schoolwork was often done in the home of the teacher. The usual subjects of instruction were the three R's - reading, writing, and religion. Arithmetic was frequently omitted because it was too difficult for the teacher. This inadequate schooling, moreover, was only given a few months out of each year and for a few years of the child's life.

By 1842 the weight of public opinion favoring a more adequate educational system became so overwhelming that the colonial government was forced to feign some reforms. In that year the first act was passed providing for elementary and secondary schools that were both publicly controlled and supported. Provincial committees were given supervisory control over education in their provinces and a central school board was established to supervise the system. School attendance for children from seven to ten years of age was made

13. From this date on, great care must be exercised in ascertaining the extent to which the voluminous educational decrees and orders, plans of study, and other instructional measures were actually carried out. A survey of the many legal and administrative documents dealing with Cuban education in the last half of the nineteenth century leads to the conclusion that Cuba had an excellent school system when actually the intellectual conditions of the period were sufficient evidence to the contrary.
obligatory. Each locality was given the right to organize a local board of education and to maintain free schools. In most cases these provincial committees were never appointed but, in the few instances where they were, they did assist local governments in raising money for schools. A few municipalities and provinces encouraged and provided further primary education. Since taxes were already at the breaking point, further impositions were almost impossible and within a short time funds could not be secured and the few schools that were established had to be closed.

Probably the best evidence of the ineffectiveness of the act of 1842 is the census report of 1860. The number of schools for that year was reported as 283 for white and 2 for colored children, a total of 285 schools. The increase of 63 schools in eighteen years is not discouraging until the total increase of over 350,000 persons in the population for

14. Packard, op. cit., p. 955. Because of the enactment of this law, the Patriotic Society discontinued its schools.
16. Cabrera, op. cit., p. 153. The statistics are rather confusing at this point. The census for 1867 shows 752 public and 532 private schools with an attendance of 27,780. It is quite evident that the 1860 census report of 285 was in reference to primary schools while the 1867 census included schools of all grades. Yet it is difficult to believe that such a pronounced increase actually occurred. Knowing the illiteracy rate before 1860 and after 1867, it can be deduced that the 1867 census figures were the result of governmental manipulation in face of the growing discontent. Another argument against the 1867 census is the survey of 1863 which enumerated a total of 535 public and 184 private schools. The decrease of 217 public and 348 private schools in sixteen years, from 1867 to 1883, is just as difficult to explain away as the increase of 469 public and 530 private schools in the seven-year period from 1860 to 1867.
that same nineteen-year period is considered. In view of this
the increase of educational families was rather insignifi-
cant. Certainly the census disclosure that 70 per cent of
the white and 95 per cent of the colored population were illi-
terate should have appalled a civilized government.

A plan to reorganize the Cuban school system was entered
on the statute books in 1863, along with suggested reforms
in the courses of study, but there is little evidence that
the changes were put into practice. Then came the ten-year
insurrection beginning in 1868, which seriously interrupted
the progress of education throughout the island. A royal
decree in 1871 charged that the education reform acts of 1842
and 1863 were liberal measures which had stirred up a desire
for change. Religious instruction and parochial schools
were emphasized as a means of teaching children to respect
authority, whereas science was deplored as a school subject
because it encouraged doubting. The fact that many of the
insurgent leaders were former teachers added weight to these
arguments. Also an analysis of several history textbooks
then used in Cuban schools reveals that the revolutions in
South America led by Bolivar were hailed as great historical
events.

Fortunately for Cuba, since the revolutionary conflict

17. United States Department of War, Office of the Director
of Census, Report of the Census of Cuba, 1899 (Washington:
was waged for seven more years, there was no time to act upon these royal suggestions. When Madrid again considered educational matters, the decision was reached to extend the education laws of Spain to Cuba. The resulting decree of 1880 created a system of public instruction which continued on paper until Cuban independence was secured. The captain-general became the supervisor of all organized education on the island and a Supreme Board of Public Instruction of thirteen members was chosen by the Spanish government from a list submitted by the captain-general. Provincial and local boards of education assisted the superior board. Inspectors were appointed to make visits to all schools and clergymen were exhorted to inspect textbooks and hear classroom instruction in order to make all teaching conform to that of the Catholic Church.

The law also made it mandatory for all children between the ages of six and nine to receive some form of primary schooling. Every town of five hundred was expected to establish and maintain at least one elementary school for boys and another for girls. In the capitals of each province and in all towns of 10,000 inhabitants, there was to be an infant school or kindergarten. A normal school, as well as a school for the deaf and the blind, were to be created in each

province. All elementary schools were to charge fees, with free admission for those children professing inability to pay. A very extensive course of study was outlined for the elementary grades which recognized two divisions, namely, the primary from one to six, and the higher primary from seven to eight. The eminently practical and religious character of the elementary training is evident from the following plan of studies which was offered in the schools of Havana after 1885.

Plan of Studies for the Lower Grades

Christian doctrine and sacred history for children.
Reading and writing
Elementary Spanish grammar and orthography
Elements of agriculture, industry, and commerce (varied according to locality).

Plan of Studies for the Higher Primary Grades

For Boys
Elementary geometry, linear drawing, and surveying
Rudiments of history and geography, especially Spanish
Elements of physics and natural history adapted to the more common necessities of life.

For Girls
Women's domestic work—sewing, embroidery, etc.
Elements of drawing as applied to domestic work
Elements of domestic hygiene

Though the law required compulsory school attendance, the number of schools in existence could not possibly have

22. Ibid., p. 1642.
23. Ibid.,
taken care of a third of the children. The census of 1891 showed a total of 355 public elementary schools, whereas the law would have required 1,870. The total population in the same year was given at 1,632,699, making a proportion of one elementary school to 4,036 inhabitants.

The classrooms of the few schools that did exist during the last half of the nineteenth century were overcrowded, poorly ventilated, and badly lighted. Pupils of all ages, intellectual levels, and races were usually placed in the same room. They sat on benches without backs and in many instances their feet did not reach the floor. Although in the majority of the schools only one teacher was found, the Lancasterian system of monitors was quite popular. The textbooks were poor in quality and content. They were usually written in Spain by men who knew little about the island, the people, or the social conditions influencing them. Few modern conveniences, almost no playgrounds, few decent class rooms, very inadequately prepared teachers—

25. Ibid., p.952. Provisions were made for many special schools, but much of this part of the act was ignored. Although public-school teachers were supposed to be appointed through competitive examination, the practice was quite the contrary, with personal or political connections being given preference. These teachers were usually provided with an allowance, out of which a schoolroom had to be rented, books and equipment purchased, and the teacher's salary paid. If one held school in his residence, purchased very little equipment and few books, the job could be made fairly attractive financially.

The Cuban School System
1880 - 1898
Chart I
The Spanish-Cuban Educational Administration
1860 - 1898
Chart II
these were characteristics of the Cuban schools prior to the War of Independence.

Though there were probably many who desired an education, the general attitude of the masses had become more and more indifferent to the matter of public schools. After a long period of ignorance and intellectual suppression little else could be expected. The poor child had little incentive to secure an education. If he had the desire he had to swallow his pride and accept one of the few charity places in a school that charged fees. As long as the moneyed groups had schools for their children, they were not greatly concerned over the question of public education.

27. It must be kept in mind that the plantation life of Cuba did not lend itself to a widespread system of schools. The wealthy rural people sent their children either abroad or to a boarding school in Havana. Consequently, not more than one out of sixty-three rural white children were receiving an education in 1890. Nor did the rural teachers, who often went unpaid for months, advocate increasing the enrollment and teaching responsibilities for which they would not receive any greater salary.

The Associated Spanish and Cuban Press summarized the forces working against educational progress in Cuba in the following words:

If primary instruction is not so widely diffused in Cuba as could be desired, the causes for it may be found in the prejudices of the authorities and the lack of good methods of teaching, and also in the fact that the heads of families among the rural working classes manifest in general but little disposition to send their children to school, in some cases through ignorance and in others from a selfish desire to avail themselves of their children's assistance in their labors. 29

In short, the law of 1880 presented a very commendable and progressive scheme which would have been a credit to any regime that carried it through. But such was not the fortune of Cuba. On paper hundreds of schools were busily engaged in educating Cuban youth; actually, the people were becoming more and more indifferent, ignorant, and illiterate.

**Education During American Occupation**

Most of the schools continued to operate as best they could during the first year of the insurrection, 1895. With the arrival of Weyler and his reconcentration policy in 1896, all schools were closed save for those in the provincial capitals and garrisoned towns in which military headquarters of the Spanish government were stationed. And as would be expected, many of those permitted to remain open were closed

through lack of students or teachers. When the Americans arrived on the island they found that the schools of colonial Cuba were very different from theirs in purpose and methods. It was not until Cuba declared her independence from Spain that its education, with programs of studies and methods of teaching, became fundamentally akin to those of our times.

With the defeat of the Spaniards and the beginning of American occupation, the first military governor, General Brooks, was given complete control over all the meager educational facilities in Cuba. Because so many other problems of more immediate import than those of education were pressing the General, he created the office of Superintendent of schools of Cuba to which was delegated supervision of the entire school system. Mr. Alex Frye, a Harvard graduate, was appointed to the office on November 2, 1899. Provincial superintendents of schools were appointed to assist him in his work. Collectively, they were known as the Board of

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30. Robert Hill, *Cuba and Porto Rico*, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898), p.74. Private education was little better. The census of 1895 revealed not one Roman Catholic parish supporting a free or endowed school in that year. The Jesuits directed a fine college in Havana; other teaching orders maintained colleges throughout the island. All of these charged fees but offered some free places to those who professed poverty.
Superintendents.

One month later, Military Order 226, series 1899, set forth the first school law to be prepared for the island by an American. Elementary and secondary education was reorganized and boards of education were established in each municipality. The mayor of each city served as president of the board and selected the other members. One public school for boys and one for girls was to be founded in each town of 500 inhabitants. Compulsory attendance was to be enforced by fines of $5 to $25 for those neglecting to send their children to school. The course of study was outlined by Superintendent Frye along with the details for administration of the school.

Within a month the 312 schoolrooms operating in December of 1899 had increased to 635. By February, 1900, there were 2,058 schools with about 10,000 students in attendance, but many of these schools were huts. As long as the military government subsidized the establishment of schools, the municipalities readily accepted them.

32. Ibid.
When General Wood took over as governor, however, government support was minimized and the total number of schools which had reached 3,800 fell to 3,313.

Then on July 30, 1900, General Wood announced an entire new school law, drafted by Lieutenant Matthew Hanna. With four years of teaching experience in the state of Ohio, Hanna based the new system on the one under which he had taught. The office of Commissioner of Public Schools was created, the head of which was appointed by the military governor. The law continued the Board of Provincial Superintendents with a general superintendent presiding over it. The work of this Board was solely to supervise the elementary school system, whereas the Commissioner had control over all

37. Lieutenant Hanna was appointed to the newly created office of Commissioner of Public Schools. There had been a disagreement between Frye and Wood over educational policies and in this manner Frye was eased out of control without dismissing him from his superintendency. Frye, however, immediately resigned his office. The Cubans soon learned to love Commissioner Hanna as he traveled throughout Cuba visiting the remotest schools and giving encouragement and guidance to teachers and administrators in their work. Today he is ranked along side the other great figures who helped to establish the Cuban Republic.
education on the island. The provincial and general superintendents were appointed by the military governor upon the recommendation of the Commissioner of Public Schools.

Public schools were open and free to all unmarried youths of the district between the ages of six and eighteen, while attendance was compulsory for all children six to fourteen years of age. To make this law effective, the employment of children under the age of fourteen was prohibited during the school term, which lasted thirty-six weeks each year. Upon presentation of a petition bearing the names of twenty-five persons of school age, a night school could be established by a local board for those who were employed during the day.

The Board of Provincial Superintendents organized a teachers' institute in each province for the professional development of teachers. Teaching certificates were granted on examination in the theory and practice of education. This provision was suspended for a time because teachers were not found who were adequately prepared to pass the examinations and local boards were permitted to hire anyone they felt was

38. This is largely the administrative system in Cuba today, with the Minister of Education replacing the Commissioner of Public Schools and the general superintendent of schools being in charge of all elementary education. Both the Minister of Education and the General superintendent are presidential appointees.
39. Ibid.
capable of teaching. Wood refused to accept teachers from the United States but he did go along with Harvard University which held a six-week summer session for Cuban teachers. The public schools of Cuba sent 1,175 teachers and the University of Havana sent 125 professors to attend the session.

Private schools were permitted to operate under strict government supervision. A great number of Cubans who could afford it preferred to send their children to privately-owned institutions. In fact, the census of 1900 showed 24,333 students enrolled in 610 private primary schools — one-seventh of the entire number of elementary schools in Cuba.

Primary Education under the Republic

The problems in creating and expanding a new system of schools were so numerous that much still remained to be done after the withdrawal of the Americans. The new Cuban government adopted intact the school laws of the military government and wrote them into its constitution. The president assumed the duties formerly possessed by the military governor over education and the title of Commissioner was changed to Secretary of Public Instruction. The new authorities believed, as did the American officials, that education and

41. Fitzgibbon, op. cit., p. 48.
literacy would spell success for the young Republic. They fully recognized that the foremost educational problems challenging them were providing rural education, practical courses, schools of agriculture and trades, and a general reorientation of education toward the ideals of democratic living.

The board of six provincial superintendents, headed by a general superintendent of public education, supervised all primary schools, whereas the secretary reserved to himself control over secondary education. Municipal boards of education continued to rule over local schools, save for inspection, which was carried on by an inspectorial staff under the Secretary.

Hence Cuba became one of the few American countries in

43. The changed conditions necessitated many administrative and spiritual changes in the government and in the schools. An education for democratic living had to be developed to replace the traditional concept of education for the sake of pedantry or prestige. Neither the highly scholastic character of Spanish education nor the traditional emphasis upon higher and secondary schooling was adequate to meet the new demand for a national and popular educational system. But to break with the past in aims and methods of instruction merely by effecting administrative reorganization is generally not too successful. The Cuban had been taught for centuries to honor and respect the theoretical and the abstract over against the practical. A liberal arts or professional education was, and is today, a mark of an educated man. The students had been taught to listen, to accept, and not to question. The creation of a democratically organized school system consisting of locally elected boards of education was no assurance that teachers, methods, aims, or evaluation procedures would be reconstructed and redirected to be in harmony with the new political ideal of the Republic.

Educational Administration under the REPUBLIC OF CUBA
(1902 - 1933)
Chart III
which the influence of the United States had partially
changed the typical Spanish-American educational system.
For a time it appeared that she would abandon the six-year
for the eight-year elementary plan but tradition was too
strong to be overcome. Instead the higher primary school
was encouraged as a preparatory center for the secondary
schools rather than a terminal institution meeting the needs
of Cuban youth. Consequently, these schools never became
very numerous; only thirty-one of them had been founded up
to 1931. 45

In spite of all this enthusiasm for increased edu-
cational opportunities, public instruction was actually to
suffer progressively after the Cubans took over the govern-
ment. The most discouraging feature in the situation was
undoubtedly the fact that most Cubans were aware of the bad-
ness of the schools and were almost completely indifferent
to their status. This made it very difficult for the few
idealists who planned a better scheme of education and for
the more practical men who attempted to effect improvements
in the existing order of things.

Because the Americans left the island without experi-
enced school administrators, the Cuban educators when they
faced a school problem naturally yielded to the old fixed
ideas and habits of the centuries. The change had been too

45. Henry Smith and Harold Littell, Education in Latin
sudden and too violent. A democratic system had been created
in an environment that was not conducive to it and in a
country that lacked the leadership necessary to make it work.
History, tradition, inheritance, and prejudice joined to work
against its successful operation. Moreover, local citizens
had a good deal of power over the system through the school
boards but were freed of direct financial responsibilities
since funds came from Havana and not from a direct local
school tax. And since most of the local boards were composed
of men who knew little about school standards, aims, ad-
ministration, and methods, such leadership did not lend it-
self to developing a progressive, dynamic system of elemen-
tary schools for the masses. Instead there resulted laxness
in administration, carelessness in teaching, lack of citizen
interest in school-board elections, corruption in teaching
appointments and local school finances, inability and refusal
to enforce compulsory attendance, and partisan politics. Nor
did the twenty-six different Secretaries of Public Education,
of whom only one would have qualified as an educator, offer
strong, continuing leadership. In the six-year period of 1931
to 1936, ten men held office of Secretary of Public Education.

Under such administration, large sums were listed as
educational expenditures but no proportional results could
be observed. For example, some $4,000,000 was spent annually
on education by President Gómez but the school system ac-

tually declined under his leadership. Miss Gibson gives
the best explanation as to how this money was misused.

During the first Presidential campaign, prior to
the election of Machado the first time, I had the
pleasure of visiting all the schools of Carbarien,
a city of 20,000 population. The Superintendent of
Public Instruction accompanied me. Before we started
he told me that we would find all the public schools
greatly depleted because the funds of the School
Board had been confiscated by the various political
parties to carry on the campaign; a statement verified
by every teacher in the schools, for they all told us
the same story. In every public school room in the
city we found three or four children packed into a
single seat, without books, paper, pencils, or any
other material with which to work, absolutely nothing
but a teacher and a blackboard without chalk. There
was not seating capacity for even half the children
enrolled, and it was claimed that not half the chil-
dren of school age were in the schools at all, despite
our good looking compulsory school laws.

The only progressive measure relative to education
during the Menocal administration (1913-1931) was the enact-
ment of legislation in 1915 which provided for the establish-
ment of two normal schools in each province, one for boys and
one for girls. Previous school laws had provided for
teacher institutes but nothing of any real consequence had
been accomplished in teacher training. Students were ac-
cepted in the new normal schools at the age of fourteen,
which placed the institutions on a secondary school level.

In general, then, it can be said that retrogression was
the mark of education in republican Cuba. Census figures

46. Fitzgibbon, op. cit., p. 133.
47. Gibson, op. cit., p. 259.
showed that 50 per cent more children attended school in 1900 than in 1920, with only eighty schools having been built in the twenty-year period. Illiteracy had increased greatly for the entire island. Less than one-third of all children of school age were in school and less than one-third of these were in attendance for the entire term. All this was taking place in a country enjoying a period of maximum prosperity because sugar was selling at a record world price.

To this sad state of affairs came the dictatorship of Machado, in 1925, which the previous chapter concluded was the most inhuman, dishonest, and totalitarian ever known to Cuba. At first, the new president seemed to look upon education kindly. He issued an executive order emphasizing the need for developing Cuban nationalism throughout the entire school system.

As a part of this program, Machado fathered the Cuban Physical Training Institute and the Industrial School in Havana bearing his name. Physically fit bodies and self-sufficiency in economic life would have little influence on the political and social intelligence of the masses and therefore were not dangerous educational objectives. For years an effort had been made to introduce physical education into the Cuban schools. Since the Cuban life was primarily one of inactivity, the Cuban child generally displayed poorly developed physique, but the schools had
never assumed any responsibility for this aspect of his development. So the training of teachers to introduce and direct physical education program in the schools was to be achieved by the Cuban Physical Training Institute. Students between the ages of seventeen and thirty-two were accepted for a two-year course.

The President Machado Industrial School was but a part of the larger program to diversify Cuban industries and agriculture. Each municipality was asked to sponsor a student by supplying the youth with funds which would enable him to attend the school. Here he was taught trades and scientific agricultural practices.

Revolution and the Educational System

These contributions to Cuban education, however, did not suffice to gain for Machado the support of the faculty and students of Cuban secondary and higher schools. After 1929, students from the institutes, colleges, university, and normal schools became more and more actively affiliated with revolutionary groups. This was to cause both the students and the academic institutions of a secondary and higher level to feel the effects of dictatorship. The chaos and confusion that followed brought to the fore certain problems in education that had existed for many a decade.

as well as new ones caused by the state of complete disorganization - political, economic, social, and educational. No true appreciation of the revolutionary chaos, however, can be had without a knowledge of the part played by students.

The first evidence of student opposition to the regime was provided as early as 1927, when a group of university students addressed a proclamation to the Cuban people protesting the extensive powers that the legislature was assuming. Because of this action, the university was closed on April 24 and ordered to remain so until the September term. During the 1928-29 school year, many students were expelled from secondary schools and the university, some of whom were imprisoned for their machinations against the government. Then in 1930 all public schools on the secondary and higher level were ordered temporarily closed until students should forego participation in political discussions and activities. Most of the elementary schools remained in session, but did so with unpaid teachers and little or no instructional material.

53. When the students continued their activities through the Directorio Estudiantil, Machado issued a presidential decree on July 1, 1931, which closed the university and all secondary and normal schools. But the next year Machado was forced to open these institutions because the supreme court had declared his decree unconstitutional. Probably the foremost obstacle in reaching an intelligent settlement between the student body and the
On the eve of the revolution, in 1933, the entire educational system was in a state of confusion. Elementary schools continued offering instruction in a haphazard manner in most districts, though teachers were unpaid, equipment was poor, and buildings were rundown. Only schools in provincial capitals offered what could be called decent primary and higher primary instruction. The masses had only a meager education. Not more than one-half of the Cuban children in this period had ever been enrolled in the elementary school, and of these, fewer than half ever got beyond the second grade. Miss Gibson's description of her experiences on the island after the eclipse of Machado confirms the belief that most Cubans had little if any education.

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After the fall of Machado, I was in the country not over fifteen miles out of Placetas, at a church service. There were about 70 adults in the congregation and not over four or five could read the hymns that the Ministers had written on cardboards. I was told that there were over 100 children of school age in that village and there never had been a school or a church of any creed in the place. 55

Problems in Education

Hence, one of the most immediate and pressing problems facing the Cubans after the fall of Machado was to get its educational institutions back into operation. The chaotic years of the revolution and the resulting civil unrest had prevented any progress in education. Once the students had gotten used to making themselves heard and felt politically, they were not satisfied to return to an academic life un-related to political concerns. So the task of restoring the schools to somewhat normal conditions was most pressing throughout the period under consideration, 1930-1940.

56. In January of 1935, the students in Havana went on strike out of sympathy for their imprisoned fellow classmates, who had been jailed for excessive political activity, and presented Provisional President Mendieta with a list of six demands: the removal of military jurisdiction over Cuba, demilitarization of the police, guarantee of personal rights, immediate release of political prisoners, suppression of urgency courts created for trying terrorists, and greater appropriations for schools. Teachers joined the strike when the government refused to grant concessions and, by February 23, some 300,000 persons were involved, with one school after another in the provinces joining the movement.

By 1935 all the educational facilities of the island above the primary level were once again closed and little was done to recognize the students' demands until March 1937. Then students returned to school under a thirty-day agreement, pending action of the
Foremost of Cuba's continuing problems in education was her inability to provide elementary schooling for every child of school age. Although she had compulsory school attendance laws on her statute books, the nation was still far from able to make elementary education available to all of its citizens.

The Director of Census reported 852,162 children of elementary school age in 1933. Approximately that same number were living in 1932 when the elementary school enrolled only 426,709 children. In short, about half of Cuba's children who were of elementary school age were enrolled in school some time during the year and, of these, by far the largest number were found in the first two grades. When the enrollment figures given below are further analyzed, they reveal additional interesting facts.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Children in School</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pinar del Rio</td>
<td>345,638</td>
<td>39,890</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havana</td>
<td>987,212</td>
<td>129,171</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matanzas</td>
<td>340,367</td>
<td>52,555</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara</td>
<td>822,198</td>
<td>84,845</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camaguey</td>
<td>411,382</td>
<td>25,560</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriente</td>
<td>1,082,011</td>
<td>34,687</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,988,708</td>
<td>426,708</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

government on the student request that university prisoners be released. School sessions, however, continued to be interrupted frequently and, in 1940, when two professors were killed, the university was closed for several months.

Camagüey, for example, had less than one-half the proportion of its population in school that Havana and Matanzas did. The three Western provinces had fewer children in school than did the three eastern ones. Moreover, these figures do not tell the whole story. The average enrollment for 1932 was 329,654, which meant that roughly two-fifths of Cuba's children were in regular attendance in the elementary schools.

The low attendance was in part due to lack of interest on the part of local authorities and parents. Especially in the rural areas, parents depended on the labor of children or were too poor to afford decent clothing for them. The prevalence of disease, which was the natural accompaniment of poverty and ignorance, was also a factor. The formal methods of teaching and a curriculum of monotonous and useless materials were also contributing causes.

When the age distribution of the 426,708 elementary school children enrolled in 1932 is analyzed, further interesting facts are revealed.

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59. Problems of the New Cuba, op. cit., p. 134
Table 3

Age Distribution of Pupils Enrolled in Elementary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>In School</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>39,146</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>48,667</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>51,911</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>53,911</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>56,795</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>52,067</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>46,554</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>32,344</td>
<td>7.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>15,029</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 or more</td>
<td>3,835</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>426,708</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures indicate that either a great number of children entered elementary school comparatively late. Irregularity of attendance was likewise a cause for holding children back in grade progress. Statistics relative to the grade distribution of children enrolled in elementary schools in 1932 bear out these generalizations.

Table 4

Grade Distribution of Pupils Enrolled in Elementary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Children Enrolled</th>
<th>Per cent of total</th>
<th>Per cent, not Kindergarten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>27,865</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>162,576</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>93,546</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>66,114</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>43,763</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>22,096</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>10,748</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>426,708</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60. Ibid., p. 135.
Thus it is evident that enrollment was heaviest in the first two grades, after which more than half of the children immediately dropped out of school. In short, 40 per cent of all the children in elementary grades in 1932 were in the first grade and 24½ per cent in the second grade. The rate of desertion of students after a year or two of elementary schooling was sufficient evidence that the Republic was far from realizing the democratic ideal, put forth in 1900, to make at least elementary education available to all of its citizens. The Cuban school system was conspicuous in its failure to hold any large number of pupils beyond the first grade. Moreover, it must be recalled, as previously stated, that while the total enrollment was 426,708, the average attendance for the year was 328,654.

The length of the period of schooling, together with the type of schooling, were totally inadequate. The rural schools most frequently offered but a three-or four-year course, whereas the urban schools were usually of six grades. The dearth of schools was naturally greatest in the villages and rural areas. Although a few higher primary schools were found in large cities, few children attended them. Secondary education was accessible only in the six provincial capitals. As a matter of fact, only one adolescent in twenty had an opportunity to continue his education in

61. Dr. Donate, op. cit.
a public school of more than six-years. The lack of a strong middle class perhaps explained the large gap between those with but a little elementary education and those with advanced degrees. The only alternative to the institute or private college was a vocational education in a normal, trade, agricultural, or commercial school. As a result, all non-university courses lacked prestige and dignity. Hence not over 17,000 received instruction beyond the six-years of elementary schools according to the enrollment figures of Cuban public schools in 1930.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment in Past-Primary Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal Schools 4,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Schools 5,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Schools 452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Trades Schools 1,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Primary Schools 5,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Schools 216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 16,668</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of over nine thousand students were in the University to prepare for a profession or in the normal schools to become elementary teachers, so that only a small number of children not dedicated to a profession received more than six-years of schooling. Herein was a basic educational problem, namely, the absence of a desire for a general education. The curriculum of the institutes was not adapted

62. Ibid.
to the requirements of everyday life. This was true of the educational offerings of all Cuban schools from the first grade through the university. The University of Havana had no faculty of liberal arts, only those professional in character. So it appeared that the Cubans believed that professional study was the primary way for higher education to serve the cultural interests of its students and society.

Not only did the Cubans lack a broad general education, but there was an absence of technical education of the sort which would equip the pupil leaving school for work in industry or on the farm. The slow development of industry and the absence of opportunities for small-farm ownership probably encouraged this condition. At the same time the lack of vocational education was the reason why Cuba had to look to foreigners to supply technicians for her industrial development. A degree from the institute was regarded as granting the holder the privilege of not working with his hands. The "white-collar class" this system produced sought government and professional positions rather than jobs in industry and agriculture.

63. These statements are based upon a conversation with Dr. Ofelia Morales del Campo, Professor of Education, University of Havana.

64. Most of the Cubans with whom the writer talked affirmed this observation but Dr. Gustavo Catellano, last Director of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School, was the most emphatic in placing the blame for Cuba's backwardness upon this cause.
Cuba did have six provincial schools of agriculture under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture but these, besides creating the problem of a dual system of education, did not turn out small-scale farmers. Young men who completed six-years of elementary school and three-years of agriculture, which was one-year less than that needed for a bachelor's degree in the institute, could not be expected to do farming themselves. They sought supervisory jobs with sugar corporations. If small-scale farming was to be encouraged and improved on the island it would have to come through teaching in the elementary school.

A further handicap to those teaching in Cuba in the thirties was the general inadequacy and lack of school buildings. A great majority of the Cuban elementary schools were badly housed. Especially was this true of rural schools. Many classes were held in rented buildings which were not designed for school use and were poorly adapted to school purposes. The charge for rent in most instances was not excessive but in good years rent unpaid in previous bad years made for a heavy burden upon the school budget. Hence, Cuba was in need of a school building program to replace old buildings or rented ones and to establish schools where more existed but were needed.

65. Based upon conversations with Dr. Floro J. Cepeño Ferrer, Professor in the Provincial Agricultural School of Camagüey.
Parochial schools, charity schools operated by philanthropic societies, schools maintained by mutual benefit societies, and private schools compensated in some degree for the lack of public schools. Most of the private schools existed in the large cities and enrolled no more than 25,000 children. The private schools on a secondary level were identical in curriculum and methods to the elementary and secondary schools maintained by the state. This was due to the necessity of students from private schools submitting themselves to official examinations based upon the courses of study of the Institutes. No one was admitted to the university without the official bachelor's degree. The University of Havana, therefore, forced all secondary schools of the academic type to conform to the pattern it set down.

As a result, almost all of Cuba's schools had an exceedingly formal and bookish curriculum and methods. The more modern developments in elementary education had not yet found their way to Cuban elementary and normal schools. And little curriculum advance could be expected in view of the backwardness of the teacher-education programs in the normal schools. There were six normal schools which were on the secondary level, since their four-year course paralleled that of the Institutes. As such, they functioned as professional schools but in many instances they offered an education beyond the six years of elementary school to
a very large number of youths who would otherwise not have been able to continue in school.

The normal schools had been closed from 1930 to 1933 because of the revolutionary disturbances under Machado. When they reopened with new personnel, the equipment was badly deteriorated and the routine of teaching badly upset. The immediate problem was one of return to class procedures, restoring buildings, and erecting others. A longer-range problem was that of preparing elementary teachers who would be able to break away from the formalism and routine of the past. Cuba needed teachers who were capable of creating a type of education that would be closely related to the environment it was to serve.

The high degree of centralization in administration was another source of trouble in a land plagued with graft and corruption in high places. The local boards of education almost completely lacked administrative responsibility. The head of the entire system, a Secretary of Education, was a cabinet official appointed by the President of the Republic. His power over the school system was extremely great because of the decrees which he could recommend that the President issue. Three assistant secretaries were in charge of the three departments of the Ministry. A department of primary education controlled all kindergartens, primary schools, and the few higher primary institutions. A department of higher education was in charge of the six
provincial institutes, six provincial normal schools, four industrial schools, four commercial schools, an institute of physical education, and a school of home economics. A third department that of accounts, recorded income and expenditures. Neither the latter department, nor any of the others kept much in the way of statistical data essential for wise formulation of educational policies.

A general superintendent was responsible for the supervision and administration of all schools under the department, but the actual work was done by six provincial superintendents. The seven men formed a national board of superintendents. Each provincial superintendent was assisted by a number of district and assistant district inspectors. Hence the local government had nothing to do with the administrative machinery of its schools. It could not establish schools or control their internal operations. Teachers were appointed, however, after consultation with the local board of education. In short, the public schools were supported and administered entirely by the central government. The same criticism that was made of such a system in the distribution and supervision of money for local sanitation can be made of the state-municipal relationship in education.

The instability of the administrative staff due to the political basis of appointment was a basic cause of confusion. The general superintendent and his six provincial superintendents had no tenure, hence there was little

66. Cf. p. 49.
continuity of administrative and supervisory practices to improve the schools. The selection of these men on the basis of political affiliations rather than of exceptional competence had left Cuba without the statesmanship and leadership in education absolutely needed for progress.

Especially was the lack of leadership felt when it came to finding sufficient money for the purpose of financing public education. Prior to 1929 only a small percentage of the national budget went for interest on the public debt. After 1930, the drastic decline in revenues, interest on the national debt, and large maturities on short-term indebtedness left little revenue for governmental services, such as education and sanitation. Then too, the very great outlay for the army and navy, which grew larger under the Batista dictatorship, combined with the former conditions to effect a decline in the expenditures on education and sanitation. As a result, the budget for elementary education in 1932 was $13.90 per child enrolled. This sum was much less than that spent in the poorest states of the United States.

All of the statistical data provided on the foregoing pages are indisputable evidence that the Republic had a crucial need for greater appropriations for education, more and better teachers, more classrooms, more modern curricula,

and a greater equality of opportunity for an education. Cuba needed to insure at least a minimum school opportunity to every child.

In the final analysis, the democratic philosophy expressed in the early school legislation required such sweeping and rapid changes in school administration, curriculum, and teaching that the fumblings and mistakes of the past four decades should have been expected. To impose on a nation a school system which had been evolved in a democratic setting for over a hundred years and expect it to be conducted as in its native environment is to expect a miracle. That the conception of graft and corruption which had dominated political operations for centuries should extend itself to the educational is not surprising to the constant observer of Cuban affairs.

The final problem of Cuban education, that of extending educational facilities into the rural areas of the island and providing a type of education to meet rural needs, will receive detailed treatment in Chapter V. A great many of the problems of late entrance to elementary school, irregular attendance, early dropout, inequality of educational opportunity, and others were really problems of rural more than those of urban education. The chapters that follow will examine the problems of rural education in the 1930's and appraise one of the attempts made to meet them, namely, the civic-military rural education movement.
Part Two

The Civic Rural Education Movement
Chapter V
Rural Cuba and Education

From the description of the history and educational evolution of Cuba and the analysis of the problems she faced in the fourth decade of the 20th century, which were presented in the foregoing chapters, it is easy to see that the rural people throughout the history of the island since its colonization were ignored and underprivileged. When the revolutionists drove dictator Machado from the island in August, 1933, there was displayed an intense desire not only to free the nation of dictatorship, but to get rid of many of the conditions which caused the problems described in Chapter III. Unfortunately, there followed a period when the revolutionary factions, temporarily united by a cause, divided against each other; and the chaos that followed necessitated the establishment of a military dictatorship. The many high-sounding revolutionary and reform proclama-
tions were forgotten as each faction jockeyed for power. So the basic problems that plagued Cuba in the early part of the fourth decade continued unsolved. It appeared that the problems of Cuba would be chronic - always present and pressing, and made more acute by revolutionary chaos and the world-wide depression. No part of the island suffered
more than the rural area and no part of the Cuban population was deprived of the essentials to a greater degree than the guajiro, the Cuban peasant.

Some insight into the widely varying conditions under which children and adults lived within this area can be had by a knowledge of: (1) the size of the rural population, (2) its socio-economic status, and (3) the condition of rural education.

**Size of the Rural Population**

Statistical information on the Cuban population was never very accurate but the revolutionary confusion of the 1930's made it still more unreliable. In 1934, the Director of Census estimated the population for the entire nation to be 3,988,708. Of these, 2,153,902, or about 54 per cent, lived in cities; and 1,834,806 or 46 per cent lived in the country. The same source estimated the elementary-school population at 852,162 children. Slightly less than half of these lived in rural areas. In other words, about

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1. Since the remainder of the thesis deals exclusively with rural conditions and rural education, the term must be defined. The Cuban Bureau of Census included in the term, not only open country, but all villages up to 2,000 population.

2. Cf. p.66.

one-half of Cuba's children were rural in spite of the fact that 54 per cent of the total population were urban. Well over half of the rural children lived in the open country — on small farms and plantations near villages or cities and on vast and remote plantations or cattle ranches.

It must also be recalled that Cuba is divided into 5 125 municipios, which act as local governing units. Each includes not only the city that provides the name, but all rural area up to that claimed by adjoining municipios. The municipio of Camagüey, for example, is the capital of the province of the same name. It has an area of over 2,000 square miles and a population of 131,500, of which only 80,000 people live in the city itself, while the rest reside in the villages and open country around it.

Socio-Economic Status of the Rural Population

On the basis of the agricultural and industrial activities of the island, the rural population was classified into the following groups: (1) those engaged in diversified agricultural activities, (2) those connected with cattle raising, (3) those who worked in mines, (4) those employed in coffee and tobacco plantations, and those who labored in sugar mills or on sugar plantations.

4. Interview with Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, formerly Missionary-Specialist in the Civic-Military Rural Education System.
5. Cf. p. 49.
6. Interview with Dr. Ricardo Joaquín Cepeño, Professor of English, Academia Brito, General Perez, Havana province.
Occupational Groupings. The most stable and prosperous of all rural people were those engaged in diversified agriculture and cattle raising. The fact that a great majority of the farmers and ranchers lived all their lives on the same farms was in sharp contrast to the mobility of other groups. The small widely scattered population in the cattle-raising areas, however, created a problem of providing school and transportation facilities that was not so acute in the diversified farm regions located near city and town markets. The population of the mining areas was fairly stable, but the families of miners lived in the worst kind of misery and wretchedness. These people had no desire to produce their own foodstuffs. Yet none of the above-mentioned people were plagued by seasonal unemployment as much as were those who worked on plantations. Those engaged in coffee and tobacco planting suffered the least of all plantation workers. Their seasonal lay-off was limited to five months, from February to July of each year, because planting, fertilizing, and other activities were required.

The great majority of the peasants, however, were employed in the sugar industry. Cuban statistics were such that the number of sugar workers in mills or on plantations

7. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
was difficult to ascertain. The Department of Labor reported that one-third of the working people on the island were connected with the sugar industry. Living conditions for these people were very unstable and the population very fluid.

It will be recalled from Chapter III that many of them worked for two or three months of each year for as little as twenty or thirty cents a day. The remaining months made up the dead season during which the sugar fields should have been cultivated but, because of the depressed times, they were largely ignored. Chronic unemployment prevailed for the great mass of Cubans who depended for a livelihood upon the sugar industry.

There were really three kinds of sugar laborers who suffered from unemployment. First there were those who lived in small villages and worked in a near-by sugar mill or on a local plantation. They had no land upon which to grow their own food and many were in a condition of partial starvation.

Second, there were those who were bound to a central. The term central referred to a large mill surrounded by a batey, which was an enclosure containing houses and barracks for employees, stores, and in some cases a church, school, and recreational center. These workers varied from unskilled

laborers to semi-skilled mechanics, electricians, and carpenters. The wages they received depended upon the price of sugar but the average daily pay during the early thirties seldom was greater than a dollar a day. This sum did not really represent the entire income of the worker inasmuch as the mill usually furnished a rent-free or low-rent house and some medical services. The great majority of the married workers lived in thatched houses while the single men were housed in barracks. There was much overcrowding and lack of sanitary conveniences. In short, the batey was really an industrial village in the rural setting.

The most pressing problem facing the people in the bateys throughout Cuba during the thirties was how to get enough food for survival. Since the workers barely earned enough to exist, even when times were good, it would seem that part-time agricultural work was the answer. These men, however, were not farmers; they were mill laborers who were accustomed to working under supervision.

The following is an account of the difficulties encountered by a plantation manager when he tried to get the unemployed guajiros of his district to plant and cultivate small garden plots.

12. Ibid.
Yes, they've all got gardens now. But we have had a lot of work, I'll tell you, getting them to do it. During the depression we had to lay off so many that we knew the only way to save them from starvation was to make them raise their own food. But would they? You should have seen the struggle we had. We gave them land, seed; they had time — nothing but time. We said: We can't sell our sugar; we're on quota; you'll have to produce food. We gave them tools, we even ploughed the land. And they wouldn't produce! They're just beginning now, but it's a hard pull still; we have to keep a man on the job all the time to see that they work their gardens, bring in the stuff, eat it. You can't imagine such complete indifference to his own welfare as the typical guajiro shows. But they're doing better."

The third group of sugar workers were the field hands who lived at various points over the plantations in clusters of homes. During most of the thirties these workers were employed for three or four months of each year. The Department of Labor reported 514,000 field workers, or more than one-eighth of the total population of the island. A great many of them moved to the cities during the dead season where they secured employment or begged. Possibly as many as 100,000 were Haitians or Jamaicans who moved from the sugar industry to the coffee industry. On the other hand,

as unemployment increased in the cities, increasing numbers entered the country during the harvest season to cut cane.

Each cane cutter was paid on the basis of the weight of the cane he cut and was usually supplied with a house but none of the other services given the worker in the batey. And since the field hand did not own his own land, he was not interested in cultivating it, not even in raising his own foodstuffs.

Level of Living. After 1930 the great masses of those connected with the sugar industry were fortunate to average more than $250 a year in money income and the entire family unit generally had a real income of less than $600 a year. Below are presented a few of the many case studies of the peasant and mill workers employed in the sugar industry that were made by the Foreign Policy Association in 1934. All of them told the same story.

A cane cutter living alone in the province of Camagüey had a net inventory of household goods totaling $18. His income for the year 1933 was $124. He existed from hand to mouth depending chiefly on cane juice and sweet potatoes for food during the dead season.

A field hand and family of seven in Santa Clara province had a household inventory of $25 and an income of $210. His employer provided two acres of land for him to cultivate for himself. The family ate meat once a week during the dead season.

A semi-skilled mechanic in a central in Santa Clara province was the head of a family of seven. The net household inventory was $94 and the entire income for the year was $401. Diet was limited in the dead season but he was always willing to work on farms during the dead season for part of the crop. He also raised chickens and pigs.18

These cases were typical rather than unusual. Other evidences to indicate the wretchedness of these people is found in a report of the United States Federal Loan Agency which shows that the average family of five in Cuba was living on a caloric intake considered adequate for not more than one single worker. Moreover, they seldom had the right kind of food. The daily diet consisted of mildly soggy "water bread," made of water, grease, and flour, which was eaten with black coffee, malanga, or plantain fried in deep fat, black beans, rice and pork. Ferguson presents a vivid picture of one of these half-starved ignorant peasants who could be observed in almost any Cuban village or city.

A man thin to emaciation staggered up to the step and stood swaying, it seemed, as much from weakness as from the motion of the bus. In his arms was a child, pitifully limp, five or six years old. Holding her as an exhibit the man began a tirade; nothing weak about his voice or his ideas. What sort of a country was this, he demanded, in which a man can find no work.21

Another investigation into the life of the Cuban peasants in the province of Pinar del Río was undertaken by the Ministry of Education in the 1930's. The survey included 143 families with a total of approximately 900 members. It

revealed that rural children frequently started to work on tobacco plantations as early as five years of age, which kept them from attending school. The investigators found only 7 per cent of the children drank milk regularly and 13.3 per cent ate meat. Of those who consumed meat, 20 per cent ate it twice a week, 44 per cent once a week, 22 per cent once a month, and the rest only occasionally. Among the peasants of the area, only 10 per cent were owners of land and the rest were tenants who paid rent. Seventy-five per cent of the homes had a dirt floor and the roof of 89 per cent of them was made of guano, the leaves of palm trees. 22

Health Conditions. Such conditions naturally led to a rural public health problem in an area where proper sanitation and modern methods of hygiene were largely unknown. The indifference to, and ignorance about, a good diet brought to the rural population bad teeth, weak bones, defective eyesight, and disease. In the interior, malaria was the most important, and tuberculosis was the most most menacing disease. The cities showed a greater tuberculosis rate but this was probably due to the influx of those affected who sought treatment in the provincial capitals where sanitoriums were located. Typhoid was widespread in villages and small towns, which had poor water supplies. Ascaris and trichinosis were practically universal among rural children. 23

22. Data furnished by Dr. Felipe Donate, Director of Instruction, Ministry of Education, May, 1949.
Young doctors refused to practice in small towns and rural areas where the people had little money. The annual increment of young physicians was far greater than the cities could absorb, while the peasants were forced to go to the charlatans and herb doctors for relief. Some of the large hospitals in Havana were supported by national funds so that those who could finance the trip could receive inexpensive hospitalization.

Home Conditions. Worst of all, the Cuban peasant was not interested in keeping his dirt-floor, palm-thatched bohío clean and in repair. Poverty, filth, and squalor were found within. Hammocks of twisted and woven palm leaves served as beds. Pots and utensils were made out of gourds. Chairs were hewed from native woods and covered with stretched and hairy coarse-grain cowhide. This was the permanent dwelling of the more energetic of the rural population. The baracones were temporary huts in which the itinerant workers lived. They were decrepit structures constructed from material found in royal palm. These were the two common types of homes in which Cuban children were reared and from which they got their ideas on how to live.

Children of Rural Cuba. Child labor, far more common in agriculture than in urban occupations, was excessive in

the depressed groups. Suffice it to say that the arduous and premature toil was hurtful to children's health and social attitudes, even though it was merely for three or four months of each year. Likewise, it seriously interfered with school attendance so that child laborers learned little, were retarded, became discouraged, and usually dropped out of school at the end of the second or third grade. Moreover, there were very few schools and school-attendance laws were notoriously ill enforced.

Teachers and social workers on the island observed how children gradually slid from eagerness to listlessness and finally into sheer stupidity. A teacher had this to say about her children:

...too many of them are malarial or suffer from diseases that make slow starvation easier than hard physical labor, and nobody is interested in schooling.26

Miss Gibson reported:

.....I could notice the decline in the mentality of some of my pupils, who I know were living on one meal a day, and that of cornmeal.....Children enter the schoolroom shod in sandals, home-made of the castoff inner tubing of automobile tires -- a pair cost five cents when all finished -- and garments crocheted of raveled gunnysacks.27

Ferguson provided another illustration in reporting on her journey to El Cobre, an abandoned mining town.

26. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 73.
Ill-clad children played in front of hideous shacks, along rutted roads piled high with refuse, blowing with dust. There was no school. When the mines closed, nobody thought of them, there they were starving.28

Rural Education, 1930-1935

Little wonder, then, that there was a widespread belief that rural people in general were mentally inferior to their urban contemporaries. The knowledge that the more alert and capable of the farm population moved out to secure the satisfactions and opportunities of city life lent support to this belief. Not mentioned, however, was the fact that many who went to the city lacked initiative and ability to succeed at farming or plantation work. Perhaps the real explanation for rural inferiority was the difference in educational opportunity rather than natural ability.

Inequality of Educational Opportunity. The record from the beginning of the Cuban republic showed glaring educational inequalities provided for children living in rural areas as compared with children in urban communities. For example, the estimated elementary school population for 1934 was 852,162 children. Only 426,708 of the children of elementary school age were actually enrolled in school and of these 329,654 were in regular attendance. In short, about one-half of the children of school age in Cuba were never

28. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 41.
29. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
enrolled in a public school at any time, and of the number enrolled, by far the larger part had always been found in the first two grades. Although reliable statistics showing the number of rural schools and rural children in attendance cannot be secured, a safe generalization can be made that the dearth of schools was greatest, and hence elementary enrollment the least, in the rural parts of the island as contrasted with the cities where a six-year elementary school was made reasonably available to all.

The meager instruction given rural children was provided in a few small schools located not so much where the children were as where transportation facilities made possible daily commuting of the teacher to and from the school. In Buycito, near Bayamo in the eastern part of the island, there was a school center that consisted of several one-room elementary schools near the highway, whereas in the interior of the same district there were no schools for rural children. Many of the parents of the area indicated a desire to send their children to school but feared

32. Cf. p. 104. The Ministry of Education was not able to give any statistics on the number of rural children in school in the period of 1930-35.
33. Lieutenant-Colonel Dr. Aristides Sosa de Quesada, Educación Cívico-Rural sobre la Sección de Cultura del Ejército Constitucional de la República. Broadcast from Mexico City, 9 de febrero, 1939.
to have them walk the long distances of 2, 4 or 6 miles and perhaps cross rivers, railroads, and highways. In other words, teachers seldom got into the isolated and forgotten regions in the interior except for a small staff of traveling teachers.

Public education beyond the primary school was non-existent in rural Cuba. There were some higher primary schools in the provincial agricultural schools, in the capital cities under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture. The fact that not more than 15,000 of all Cuban youth went beyond the six years of elementary instruction in 1933 was substantial proof of the slight opportunity for advanced education in the cities and the complete absence of it in the rural areas.

This state of affairs was difficult to understand in light of the enthusiastic commitment of Cuba to the ideal of equality of educational opportunity at the beginning of her history as a republic. More exactly stated, this ideal of equal opportunity was the right of each child to an education, free, and not dependent upon the poverty or

35. Interview with Dr. Berto Brito Buron, Director of Academia Brito, General Perez, Havana province.
influence of parents, place of birth or residence, sex, race, color, or religion. It conceived the opportunity for education to be determined by individual ability, character, and promise of contribution to the social welfare. It envisaged education that would go beyond literacy - an education for citizenship, personal growth, self-realization, and vocational efficiency. It called for decent school houses and equipment, and well educated teachers.

Political Nature of Education. Perhaps one of the chief reasons that this idea was never achieved was the political nature of Cuban school administration. All rural public elementary schools were under the direction of the Ministry of Education in Havana. Its department of primary education supervised rural and urban elementary schools and its department of higher education administered the six normal schools, in which both rural and urban teachers were prepared. The rural schools were theoretically inspected by a general-superintendent who was assisted by six provincial superintendents. These seven men made up a national board of superintendents. The actual work of inspection was carried on by district, assistant-district, and provincial inspectors. There were municipio boards of education but they were almost completely lacking in administrative duties; all inspection was carried on independently of their control.  

38. Interview with Dr. Felipe Donate, Director in Instruction, Ministry of Education, May, 1949.
A municipio board of education in theory had jurisdiction over all urban and rural schools in its district but it had no authority to establish schools or determine school policies. The board of education was primarily interested in urban schools so that no objections were raised when the Ministry of Education, for political reasons, placed rural schools where they would bring the greatest political advantage rather than where they were needed. Since the majority of rural children lived in the open country and the majority of the rural schools were in villages or on the edges of large cities, the great masses of rural school children were deprived of an opportunity to attend school. It was a conservative estimate that at least half of the people or rural Cuba were illiterate in 1934.

School Finance. Rural schools should have constituted a major undertaking of the Ministry of Education. They should have affected intimately the 46 per cent of the people who lived in rural areas. But this was not the case. Most of the poorest schools in the nation were found in the rural areas. Moreover, the total expenditures per pupil in average daily attendance in all Cuban elementary schools

41. Problems of the New Cuba, op. cit., p. 3.
In 1934 was only $13.90 as compared to $70 per child in rural schools of the United States. The budget for 1933-34 for education called for a per capita outlay of $1.49 in contrast with $7.24 in the United States.

The Ministry of Education pleaded inability of the national government to finance a widespread system of rural schools, and to a certain degree this was true. The point was emphasized in the previous chapter that all unused rural lands were tax free and that most corporative holdings were undertaxed. This explained the relatively small revenue collected from rural property. Naturally, when educational appropriations were apportioned in Havana, they were based upon the taxes collected in a particular area. Moreover, the sparsity of population in rural areas added to the cost of providing school opportunities comparable to those that were provided in the more densely populated regions.

42. Problems of the New Cuba, op. cit., p. 134.
44. Problems of the New Cuba, op. cit.
46. Cf. p. 48. It must be remembered that 80 per cent of all tax collections were made by the national government and of the remaining 20 per cent collected by the municipio, part of it was paid over to the national government as recompense for taking charge of local sanitation, schools, and other services. This system relieved the local board of education almost completely of financial responsibility for the schools it directed.
47. Cf. pp. 48-49.
School Buildings. The few rural schools that were in existence were in a miserable state. The Foreign Policy Commission report of 1935 deplored the ugly condition of the buildings and grounds.

One of the most distressing signs of Cuba's unhappy recent history is the ugliness which prevails in a country which should be one of the beauty spots of the world. No matter what the interior of a school building may be the exterior can be made beautiful. No more appropriate beginning of an activity program in Cuba's schools can be devised than that which would grow out of a nation-wide campaign to "make the school grounds beautiful." 48

The commission also reported that a great many of the elementary schools occupied rented buildings which were not designed for school use and were poorly adapted to school purposes. In the budget for 1933-34, a sum of $295,761 was set aside for rent. Hence, Cuba needed to undertake a building program to be financed by community projects or by amortized bond issues.

One of the best descriptions of the Cuban rural school prior to 1933, which bears out the foregoing statements, came to the author in a letter from Dr. Ofelia Morales, professor of education at the University of Havana.

49. Ibid., p. 147. Dr. Antonio Sobrino Placencia in "La Reforma de la Escuela Cubana," in Orientación, (enero de 1935), pp.8-9, proclaimed the neglect of the schools of Cuba the "biggest failure of the Republic of Cuba," He further stated that "99 per cent of the Cuban schools functioned in buildings, not only inadequate for instruction but, what is worse, unhealthy, dirty, poorly ventilated."
Those schools which were called rural did not deserve the name. In general they were simply located in the country, badly housed, inadequately and insufficiently provided with equipment and materials of instruction, and conducted by teachers who in the majority of cases did not actually live in the school neighborhood and were unfamiliar with the social environment, or the training needed by the pupils, and who followed the same courses of study as in the urban schools.

Rural Teachers. As Dr. Morales suggested, it is largely true that the teacher makes the school. The problem faced by those interested in rural school progress of the island was to a great extent that of improving rural teaching staffs. Rural teachers of Cuba, as a group, were undertrained, underpaid, undersupervised, and underrated as to their importance. This state of affairs brought forth many lamentations in the Cuban educational journals over the plight of la pobre maestra rural. Since they were given a salary lower than an urban teacher and poorer living conditions, the Secretary of Education had some difficulty in finding skilled and experienced teachers to teach in the few rural schools that did exist.

The rural teachers were trained in normal schools which were on a secondary level. They offered an education beyond

the six-years of elementary school to many youth who did not want to be teachers but who otherwise would have had no opportunity for additional schooling. Most of these schools were in a miserable state as a result of their suppression during the chaos of the Machado regime (1929-1933). They were reopened in 1933 with new personnel, but the buildings and equipment were poor. In addition, the students' education had been interrupted by three years' revolutionary activity.

More serious, however, was the fact that the normal schools of Cuba had never seemed able or willing to prepare teachers to meet the needs of rural people. They had been concerned chiefly with preparing individuals to enter the verbalistic classrooms of city schools, whereas the University of Havana's School of Education was interested only in caring for those who desired the degree of doctor of pedagogy as the means of advancing to positions of importance.

Consequently, when the conditions under which the rural teachers labored and their inadequate training were considered, it was a source of astonishment and inspiration to find that some of them had been able to do so much with so little. They taught all six grades in delapidated school houses which had little or no equipment. They usually had to solve their own educational problems without any supervisory assistance. They generally did not reside in the neighborhood, which led to irregularity of attendance when weather
conditions were bad. Hence, the rural teachers were removed from the rural environment, the families of the pupils, and the problems of the area. It was little wonder that rural schools were unable to attract and retain better prepared teachers in competition with the salaries and living conditions in urban communities. What rural Cuba needed was teachers whose abilities and spirits were far above the level of the salaries and comforts they would receive.

At no time in the history of Cuba had there been so great a need in rural education, as there was in the middle of the fourth decade of the twentieth century, for leaders who had a clear and comprehensive understanding of the major problems they faced. The lack of interest and complete indifference of most of the peasants to education were largely due to the absence of schools, good teachers, and leadership from the profession. The scarcity of formal education plus

51. As implied in the foregoing paragraphs, absenteeism of the teachers was a serious problem in the rural school. The teacher was often prevented from traveling to his school by bad weather conditions. There were many other ways to avoid attendance. Leaves of absence could be secured for illness and pregnancy, and under certain conditions these could be extended. During election year, teachers were allowed a number of days to assist in arranging for the elections and tabulating the results. The rural schools of Cuba were not twelve-month schools, instead they opened the second Monday of September and lasted thirty-six weeks for five days a year.

52. Interview with Señor Eduardo Martínez Fajardo, elementary grade teacher, Academia Brito, General Peraza, Havana province.
the relative isolation of the country people engendered the feeling that those not indigenous to the locality were enemies, or at least, objects for suspicion. This, along with a Spanish tendency to suspect fraud, fortified prejudices and resistance to the stranger. Consequently, the unreasonable adherence to the old was largely due to a deep-seated mistrust of those who proposed the new. Great leadership indeed was needed to overcome the dead-weight of conservatism.

Course of Study. Dr. Ofelia Morales indicated another basic weakness of rural education when she pointed out that the schools followed the same courses of study as those of the urban schools. Examination of the rural elementary school curriculum of that period revealed that it was congested with materials and illustrations that were beyond the rational understanding of the children; the teaching was primarily geared to the needs of urban living. To teach the pupil to read, to write, to spell, and to figure, as well as to know some of the basic facts about the cultural heritage, was the primary purposes of all rural education. The mere aim of making citizens literate, however, could not rescue the peasants from poverty, misery, oppression, and ill-health.

53 The following paragraphs are based upon conversations with Dr. Alberto Pamies, formerly Chief of the Bureau of Statistics, of the Corps of Culture of the Constitutional Army.
In reading and health classes, for example, the rural child learned the causes of malaria, but he did not learn how to make a screen adequate for keeping out the mosquitoes nor how to rid wet places of them. Nowhere in his school experience did the school make available to him, in language he and his parents could understand, simple plans for building sanitary toilet facilities. In fact, nowhere in his school experience had anyone helped him to acquire the skills necessary for making repairs and improvements to make his home more livable. Children in rural schools, with teeth worn to the gums for lack of calcium in their diet and with hookworm from lack of adequate foot covering, were reading about things of little or no interest or value in their living.

Theories of Rural Education

It is true that the government had from time to time issued courses of study for meeting rural needs but they were largely directed toward long-range social changes. One school of educators criticized the curriculum as overlooking the very practical and immediate things that could be done to improve the backward, disease-infested, and underprivileged

54. Moreover, the situations described in the textbook content were far removed from the actual conditions under which children in isolated rural communities lived. Since the children seldom traveled, they were unable to relate the content to their own experiences, and as a result fell into the habit of mere word calling or of thinking of school as totally unrelated to their lives.
people. They were of the opinion that the peasants themselves, even in poverty-stricken areas, could raise their level of living if only they had the necessary knowledge in a form they could understand. The plans in effect never took into consideration the fact that habits developed by these children in school, the knowledge and skills they acquired, and the attitudes they picked up would influence the whole course of their lives. This, said the educators, together with the fact that over 50 per cent of the Cuban peasants were illiterate in 1933, was a living indictment of the men who held power in the decades of independence—an indictment, at least in the eyes of an age in which people had learned to regard education as a right rather than a privilege. So, unfortunately for the school children of rural Cuba, there was a wide difference of opinion among educators concerning the function, nature, and content of rural elementary education.

The remainder of the chapter will be devoted to an analysis of the various theories of rural education which competed for allegiance in the third decade of the twentieth century. This will be followed by a statement of the basic conception of the scope and purpose of rural elementary education that the writer is convinced would have served best the needs of rural Cuba in light of her traditions.

55. Cf. p. 133.
and contemporary problems as outlined in Part I of this thesis. The latter will then be used in appraising the civic-military rural educational program.

What did the pedagogues of Cuba consider to be the proper character and scope of education in rural schools as related to the children, to adults, and to community life? What principle of rural education did they espouse? Since a wide discrepancy of opinion concerning the various theories of rural elementary education is found in Cuban educational literature, an attempt will be made to classify some of the representative writings of each group.

The quotations are classified under three basic theories as follows:

1. There should be no further expansion of rural elementary schools in deference to an increase in secondary schools and improvement of roads, hygienic conditions, and agricultural processes.

2. Rural elementary schools should retain the child on the farm by orienting children to choose agriculture as a life vocation and by preparing them for a satisfying rural life.

3. Rural elementary schools should prepare children for general efficiency by effective use of local rural resources.

I. No Further Expansion of Rural Education.

The first of these theories, as held by Roberto Verdaguer, was that there should be no extension of elementary education into the interior of Cuba on the grounds that once the campesino was educated he would abandon the place of his origin for the city. There he could enjoy a higher level
of material living and be freed of the feeling of inferiority which previously kept him apart from many groups of Cuba. Very boldly he wrote:

We believe that in place of clamoring for the diffusion of the rural schools...We ought to content ourselves with attending to the existing times, trying to better the professional and economic conditions of the rural teachers and the results of the work which they render. 56

Further on in this same article Señor Verdaguer added:

We believe that instead of creating more schools...the material conditions of the rural areas ought to be improved by making available tools for farming, establishing banks for agricultural financing, arranging for roads into the community, connecting artery roads to highways of importance, building hygienic houses, giving specialized instruction to adults on health, hygiene, economics, and physical development, and increasing the productive capacity...Likewise, instruction of an industrial type on the secondary or higher levels ought to be encouraged.

This opinion was representative of an influential group in the Cuban government. Those who held this view were convinced that individual betterment would have to result from community improvement. Hence, an extension of schools would gain a small intellectual advantage for the individual momentarily but only at the expense of long-run rural improvement.

Señor Gustavo Urrutia expressed the same opinion.

In whatever manner the problem is considered, the result obtained from the schools in our rural areas has been negative for the nation, because in the end what it sought was not, nor is not, that of bettering conditions of the individual only, or that of bettering

the environmental conditions of the rural countryside... necessarily it has gained a small intellectual advantage for the individual in detriment to something more substantial... The consequence of the preparation received by the said human element has been the abandonment of the places of origin, leaving the cultivation of fertile lands and cattle raising with a consequent damage to the positive wealth of the nation. 57

Much the same view was expressed by Luis Teran.

We believe that the diffusion of culture by means of elementary instruction, which is considered with wonderful child-likeness to be the panaceas for solving all profound and deep-seated evils of a complex character, is a regrettable error. In the first place, the preparation which the peasants receive is incomplete and misconceived. Second, the problems which engulf these unfortunate beings are of an ethnic and biological character. 58

2. Radical Ruralists.

There was a much larger group in Cuban education which wanted consciously to vocationalize the rural elementary school, limit it to the contacts and ideals of the immediate community, select its teaching content in terms of adult needs, reduce its responsibility for perpetuating the racial heritage, and thereby force children to remain on the farm. They wanted to overcome the attractiveness of the city as a means of maintaining a rural population in quantity and quality. Hence, the aim of rural primary schools was to teach their children in a way that would lead them to choose the farm as their home and agriculture as their

58. Luis Teran, "El Indio frente a su realidad," America, (marzo de 1939), p. 34.
lifework. The implication for curriculum purposes, therefore, was that rural schools should develop that knowledge and those skills which specifically prepared for carrying on the activities essential to successful agriculture in Cuba.

Retaining children on the farm as the school's responsibility. The responsibility of the rural school for retaining children on the farm by preparing them for country life found expression in the writing of José Martí, as early as 1887.

A very grave error is being committed in the educational system in Latin America. In countries which live almost completely on agricultural production, the population is being educated almost exclusively for urban life, and is not being prepared for country life. And since urban life exists solely at the expense of and by virtue of the country, and by trafficking in its products, it follows that with the present system of education there is being created an army of unemployed and hopeless people. The head of a giant is being placed on the body of an ant. And every day, with the system of purely literary education which continues to be given in our countries, the head is being increased and the body decreased.59

A more recent statement of this position was found in the preface to "El Huerto Escolar," a teacher handbook on the school garden.

The rural school must be dedicated to awakening in the rural conscience a love of the land - a love produced by the knowledge of the possibilities and certainty of a better life - and equipping the rural child to be rooted in its eternal treasures.60

59. Problems of the New Cuba, op. cit., p. 137.
Providing vocational preparation to children. The lack of a truly rural school in Cuba was sufficient cause to bring forth many comments from those who advocated retaining children on the farm by means of preparing country children for the vocation of agriculture. Señor Isidro Montano y Pelaez, in an address at the General Alemán School, in 1929, stressed the vocational purpose of the rural elementary school.

The Public Schools in Cuba...were centers for teaching reading and writing but without organized civic orientation, without vocational tendencies, or clear vision of the political, geographical, and economic medium in which we live...That was the weakness of the era, in school and everywhere.....The highest mission of the school in these moments of national transformation is that of inculcating in the soul of the peasant children the good principles of agriculture and love of agriculture. 51

The Pedagogy Club of Cuba recommended the teaching of agriculture for vocational purposes.

The importance of the rural school is a truth so evident that no demonstration is needed. By Cuba's being a country essentially agricultural, the proper occupations of rural life constitute the principal means of life and at times the only one for the majority of our citizens...a teacher specializing in cultivation should attend to instruction in gardening, farming, and fruit growing. 52

Dr. Grau San Martín, provisional president for a few months in 1934 and president from 1944 to 1948, was among those who stressed the vocational purpose of rural

62. La Reforma General de la Enseñanza en Cuba (La Habana: Club Pedagógico de Cuba), p. 36.
elementary schools.

Our country, by nature agricultural, needs an instruction in tune with the economic realities of the nation...The rural school ought not to be opened in order to give theoretical culture to the guajiro, but that which he needs to know about science applied to the land, agriculture, and all its problems... This positively rural school, in the center of the island, will come to show the guajiro the basic science of the land. 63

A rather unusual suggestion relative to the teaching of agriculture in elementary schools came from a graduate of a provincial school of agriculture. Fernando Agete y Pinero expressed the opinion that agriculture should be taught in all schools, urban as well as rural.

...agriculture ought to be taught everywhere. Agriculture is coming to be the synthesis of all sciences; it is knowledge of life itself...Instruction in agriculture for children is useful, although it may be no more than instruction...The practical instruction of agriculture provides the child physical and mental exercise....Agriculture ought to be taught in urban schools; in Havana itself. 64

Dr. José Martínez, a teacher who spoke with years of experience in rural schools, set forth his ideas in favor of the teaching of agriculture in a pamphlet, Los Siete Centros de Interés del Programa Globalizado de la Escuela Rural.

The duty of the public rural school is to teach the peasant how to extract from the land all that which he needs or at least the greater part of it...

64. Fernando Agete y Pinero, op. cit., p. 8.
When the rural schools are what they ought to be, they will not only have an orchard and a garden but they will have a small field for experimentation. 65

In all probability the most extreme group in favor of teaching agriculture in the rural schools was the National Association of Teachers in Agriculture, whose members were all graduates of the provincial schools of agriculture. In a pamphlet published by the association, *La Necesidad de la Escuela Rural Cubana*, the representative of the group pleaded for support in their fight to convert the few rural schools into primary schools of agriculture.

The rural schools...will be named in the future "Primary Schools of Agriculture" and the practical instruction in agriculture will receive the same preferential attention in all grades, thereby adjusting their programs of instruction to obtain an efficient preparation for life in the country and the rational exploitation of the land. To this end would be created in the Ministry of Education a Corps of Agriculture Instructors for the primary schools of agriculture. 66

Adjusting the School to Meet Rural Needs. A great many of the criticisms of the prevailing rural school curricula dealt with the city-type of purpose which dominated the courses of study. Quotations from Dr. Ofelia Morales and José Martí have already mentioned this. The next step for most of these writers was to demand rural schools that

would serve rural life. Most of them wrote that rural schools must adjust to the needs of rural life. The National Association of Agriculture followed this particular theme.

Where does the little peasant child go with his reading, counting, writing, and his grammar that he neither understands nor applies, his geography which he learned by memory. He only suffers among the yaguas of his humble bohío because now he knows that the child of the city enjoys the better things of a civilization and in a little while he wishes to gain a higher culture...the little peasant would be more happy if he knew that the soil that is under his feet ...is the principal agent of his welfare and his source of wealth. The little peasant does not know that his true happiness is right at his hand, because he learned in the school to know in La Bana there is a majestic capital that awaits him! 67

Dr. Martínez followed the same approach.

How strange to us that in thirty years of republican life the peasant has not been taught to know the resources and beauty of the medium that surrounds him; and public education has been limited, in most cases, to teaching him to read, write, and count badly. Only a rural education is able to meet the needs of rural living, as much in the home in which he lives as the knowledge and exploitation of the natural resources of which our soil is so well supplied. 68

Dr. Enrique C. Henríquez, in Escuela para los Campeinos, also found fault with the preparation of teachers who went into rural schools unable to relate their instruction to the needs of rural people.

It is maintained here that the formation of the rural faculty must be undertaken in institutions perfectly appropriate for it. What do young girls recently graduated from normal schools know of rural psychology? What do they know about improving the resources of the area in order to better living? Why

67. Ibid., p. 7.
68. Dr. Martínez, op. cit., p. 156.
don't they teach them to preserve fruit in order that it may not be wasted? Why not teach them the more hygienic methods of life and how to make adequate adaptations in the home in order to make it more comfortable and beautiful? What do they know about agriculture, of the art of working with yaguaras, constructing homes, and making shoes? What advice would she be able to give a peasant whose pigs might be ill? Nevertheless, the illness of an animal constitutes, for the poor peasants, a true and serious problem. Even physically the teacher of the country needs certain preparation for living in an isolated area.69

Preparing children for a satisfying rural life. In all of the foregoing quotations that mention adjusting the rural program to meet rural needs, the implication was that these were local and vocational needs for meeting the larger demands of membership in a progressive democracy. Another meaning could have been given the term, but it was not found in the literature examined, namely, lacks in a rural environment which must be met to bring about the freest development of the individual in any direction he might choose. In this case, rural schools would be dedicated to providing those essentials of growth lacking in the rural environment. None of the writers in this general group, however, were of this view.

On the other hand, there were many who believed that the rural school should effect community betterment within the area. Dr. Idelfonso Bernal del Riesgo, professor of psychology at the University of Havana, had this in mind when he said to the writer:

69. Dr. Henriquez, op. cit., p. 34.
The recovery and industrialization of Cuban agriculture places an obligation on education, or better said, the reeducation of our peasants. It would be foolish to hope for a change in them by spontaneous generation or by the arts of showy propaganda.  

The Pedagogy Club of Cuba expressed this purpose of rural education.

If improved living is to be secured through instruction in agriculture, rural arts, and trades, teachers are needed who possess special preparation and who will make this aspect of education the most practical and real. To this end, a domestic science teacher will teach domestic economics and manual arts for girls, a teacher specialized in arts and trades, and rural industries will have in his charge the instruction of boys, and another teacher, specializing in cultivation, will attend to instruction in gardening, farming, and fruit growing. These teachers will circulate in a rotary manner.

Dr. Martínez showed great concern for the rural school's responsibility for the health of the country people.

Another of the aspects which the school ought to attend to with the greatest care is the knowledge of the rules of hygiene and health that today are the guarantees of life and health in all civilized countries of the world but which are unknown by the majority of our rural population... In the schools, the people ought to be taught to put an end to the unhealthy state of affairs that engulf most communities.

The National Association of Teachers of Agriculture acknowledged the wider responsibilities of rural education for community improvement.

70. Interview with Dr. Idelfonso Bernal del Riesgo, professor of psychology, University of Havana.
71. La Reforma General de la Enseñanza en Cuba, op. cit., p. 47.
72. Dr. Martínez, op. cit., p. 63.
Rural children need a special preparation that not only may instruct them but that also educates them for improved rural living and will enable them to realize in the future the larger benefits of rural living.\textsuperscript{73}

The larger educational mission of effecting social change is referred to by Evelio Romero and H. Jorge Rodríguez.

When the teacher arrives in the locality in which the school functions and gains the confidence of the neighbors, then will they recognize that he is there to inspire and labor for the welfare of all and not for mere personal interest. When fathers, pupils, and authorities observe and recognize the generous, patriotic, and altruistic work of the teacher, then, with all security, he will be able to realize a sufficient and high educational mission. Then will the school be converted, with its small cultivations, gardens, orchards, etc., to a community center, a center of morality and of pleasure, a creative source of social virtues and economic activities. Then also, the teacher will feel himself happy and satisfied with the result of his dedication to the cause of life, of truth, and of wellbeing which is the cause of the school.\textsuperscript{74}

Preparing children to solve their personal and social problems. A few who agreed with these previous writers would go one step further to have the Cuban rural school children engaged in a critical analysis of the many neglected social, religious, recreational, and occupational problems of the adult rural group. The problems, needs, and interests of the adult and the local community should determine the problems and content of the rural elementary curriculum. Under this conception there were no limits to

\textsuperscript{73} La Necesidad de la Reforma de la Escuela Rural Cubana, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 25.

the scope of the service that could be justly demanded of it. Dr. Henriquez stated this in his pamphlet, La Escuela para los Campesinos.

Rural education ought to supply knowledge and to favor the development of personal qualities so that the subject may give the child a thought and a possible course of conduct that may place him in the best condition possible for solving the problems that engulf him in the rural areas. 

3. General Rural Elementary Education.

Yet there were many who saw grave dangers in the practices just described. They took the position that the purpose of rural elementary education in Cuba should be that of working toward a larger opportunity and freedom of life for country children. They believed that the rural child had an equal right with any other child and that any attempt to keep him in the country through limited suggestion and over-emphasis upon rural material was undemocratic, and contrary to the best interests of the individual and society. They advocated for peasant children the best possible development of the rural elementary school dedicated to providing Cuban youth a basic background for Cuban citizenship. This did not mean limiting the child to the interests and ideas of his community. Instead it implied putting the child in touch with the many varied interests of man as a basis for the discovery of aptitude and fitness. Moreover, this did not mean that the rural environment and agricultural needs would be ignored. Nor did it mean that the child’s educa-

75. Dr. Henriquez, op. cit., p. 48.
tion would be totally unrelated to the social, religious, recreational, and economic problems of rural Cuba. It did mean that local or limited purposes should not be made the primary objective for the rural elementary school if it was to meet the demands of young and immature children. Preparation of youth in different vocations should be the fundamental purpose of higher primary and agricultural schools of the island.

The implication for curriculum purposes here was that rural schools should develop abilities in the use of the elementary tools of learning; to develop such interests, appreciations, attitudes, and ideals necessary for good citizenship; and to broaden the child's interest in and deepen his appreciations of his larger environment. To a great extent this meant a school that would be the same in essential features as that provided for city schools. Difference would be in emphasis upon certain topics, in the interest approach to learning, and in the illustrative material used in teaching. In short, the end results in rural and urban schools would be closely similar. The means by which the results were achieved would be quite different.

Dr. Ramiro Guerra was loud in his denunciation of the idea that there should be a special type of rural school for children of the country. As a former Superintendent of
Schools under President Machado (1927), and since that date a columnist for Diario de la Marina, Dr. Guerra has each year devoted articles to the problem of rural education in Cuba. As early as 1927, he wrote the following paragraphs concerning the purpose of rural education.

There is a fundamental principle of good pedagogy which an educator ought not to ignore: that which says, education and instruction must have as its base and point of departure the experience of the child. There is another which ought not be forgotten without which all the work of the school gives way and loses its force and efficiency: namely, it is necessary to vitalize instruction by relating it to the activities which the child unfolds in the surrounding in which he lives. If these basic principles are fulfilled, the school situated in the country, even when it may direct all its efforts to educate the children without prejudicing their future destiny or pretending to assign them permanently to agriculture labor, will be typically rural, because it will take as its point of departure in instruction the experiences of the rural life of its pupils. Likewise, it will take care to make instruction vital and interesting, correlating it with the rural occupations and activities of children. It will then be a rural school by virtue of surrounding, by the nature of the childlike experiences upon which it leans, and by the eminently rural activities that it utilizes for realizing its general educational ends. 76

In short, Dr. Guerra believed that rural elementary education must prepare each child for any type of life or activity that he might choose after leaving the elementary school. He definitely disavowed any purpose of making farmers or preparing children solely for rural demands.

76. Dr. Loredano González, La Educación Rural en Cuba (La Habana: Instituto Cívico-Militar, 1945), quoted on p. 39.
Writing as recently as 1948, Dr. Guerra reasserted the same basic theory of rural elementary education.

I do not believe that rural teachers destined to be permanently attached to supposedly peasant schools ought to be formed in Cuba. There does not exist in Cuba a peasant class tied to the land in a permanent way since ours is a democratic society and very changeable, in which the peasant of today may have an urban residence tomorrow... Such a social structure makes it improper to try to impart to children residing in the country a specialized education which may make them peasants forever. Primary instruction, elementary as well as higher, is an instruction of a general type, directed to give the future citizen the basic instruction essential for capacitating him in the best form possible for fulfilling his duties as such.\(^77\)

Just as Dr. Guerra advocated an education which would utilize the rich experiences of rural children in their environment as subject matter worth knowing and as the most psychological means of introducing the rural child into a larger experience and environment, so would Dr. Loredano González del Campo pursue the same course.

I do not want to say that the rural elementary school is able to ignore or ought to ignore regional principles, local problems, the activities of the particular society to which the child belongs. Neither ought it to forget the reality that the rural child is put earlier in life in contact with nature, geography, and parental occupations than other children. Neither are we able to fail to attend to the types of association. But this local content which in some form colors the elementary education of the rural child, or any other, does not necessarily have to be imparted either by a teacher of special agricultural background who proceeds from a typical rural normal school. Any promising teacher, with sufficient general and pedagogical culture, will be sufficiently supplied with the requirements of that instruction on the elementary level.\(^78\)

77. Dr. Ramiro Guerra, "Escuela para los Campesinos," Diario de la Marina (18 de septiembre de 1948), p. 4.

Elementary instruction does not pursue, or is it able to pursue any other purposes than to provide the pupil with the essential tools for mental development and productive specialization, besides a number of experiences, not specialized but general, with which to start the game of adjustment and accommodation. 79

Dr. Juan F. Zaldivar, one of Cuba's outstanding educators during the early 1900's, was concerned about the democratic implications of a narrow conception of rural education.

A democratic ideal of rural education...Equal possibilities of education for children of the country as for those of the city...The contrary would be undemocratic, unjust, and inhuman...Yes, there is no good reason to distribute in an unequal manner the benefits of education, preparing some children for the higher life of our cities, while to others is assigned by the school the coarse occupation of the laborer. All social and pedagogical reasons that may be invoked for planning almost from the cradle those two roads open to children are false and hypocritical...the only ideal of rural, Christian, human, and just education is that which puts into effect the words: Equal possibilities of education for all!

There ought not to be an education of classes where there are no classes. The ideal of a rural education dedicated to the formation of peasants, lovers of the land, tied to the soil, without any other ambition than to cultivate the land...would be necessarily an education of the classes, and in modern societies of a democratic type as ours, there are no such classes. 80

Further on, Dr. Juan Zaldivar attacked those who desired to vocationalize rural elementary education.

79. Ibid., p. 9.
80. Ibid., p. 35.
I do not know a single person who advocates a rural education chained to forming workers who, if he has sons, desires for them that education.81

Doubts concerning the final success of the vocational rural elementary school in keeping children on the farm were raised by Dr. González.

It is assured that in this manner we will put a stop to the constant tendency of the farmer to come to the city and the unsolvable tendency of the urban teacher to flee from the country. These two things are not certain or is it true that the teacher educated in the city does not wish to go into the country. Or is it true that by making the farmer a teacher he will avoid the universal exodus toward the urban area; or much less is it certain that the farmer converted in the bureaucracy of the mastership has more interest in remaining on his agricultural parcel than in the city.82

Most of the writers on the philosophy of rural education under examination also agreed that the rural interests and experiences were much too meager and should, therefore, be supplemented from other sources. In doing this, they hoped that education would help to bridge the gap between the country and city.

First, give the child mastery of the elementary instruments of learning and expression; second, aid him in developing interests, appreciations, attitudes, and ideals that are capable of being valuable to him as an individual and as a member of the social order of which he is going to be a part; third, lead him to a broader interpretation and appreciation of the larger country about him.83

Dr. Oscar Ibarra Perez took the same point of view in

La Razón del Maestro Normalista.

81. Ibid., p. 36.
82. Ibid., p. 22.
83. Ibid., p. 77.
One of the essential ends of the primary school is the elimination of illiteracy, but this is not its only mission. The school should, however, provide the means of acquiring broader knowledge, deeds, theories, experiences through the study of writing, reading, language, geography, civics, morals, etc., within the scope of rural primary education.84

A Suggested Philosophy for Cuban Rural Education

The foregoing quotations are sufficient to show the competing purposes of rural education that were expounded in Cuba during the 1930's. It is quite evident that any appraisal of the civic-military rural movement will necessitate a statement of what the writer of this thesis believes should be the conception of the function, nature, and content of Cuban rural education. A study of the Cuban educational history and an appreciation of the terrible economic and social conditions that engulfed the island in the 1930's have led to the conclusion that some elements of all these theories must find a place in the philosophy of rural education for Cuba. This can be achieved without conflicting with the larger goal of all education, namely, individual and social welfare. If any one of the local or limited purposes analyzed above is made the primary or sole objective for the elementary school, rural education of Cuba can not possibly meet the larger demands placed upon it. No doubt many of the purposes described in the preceding paragraphs may be legitimate ends

84. Dr. Oscar Ibarra Perez, La Razon del Maestro Normalista, La Habana: Tipografia Frank, 1945, p. 9.
for older children on a higher primary or secondary school level, but it is the contention of this writer that preparation for vocational efficiency and retention of the farm have no place as primary objectives in rural elementary education on the island. The general education of the immature child must not be sacrificed to the more specific, local, or vocational interests of the adult society.

Since each Cuban child is a member of a democratic society at large, the rural school must be an institution created to facilitate the growth and development of each child. As such, many of the larger adult problems are too far removed from the immature child to justify organizing the curriculum around them. This does not deny the significance and the crucial nature of some of these social and economic problems. It does maintain that only in so far as the solution of these problems contributes to the significant growth and development of children do they become legitimate fields of activity for the rural elementary school and teacher. The first obligation of rural education, therefore, is to concern itself with enriching the life of the child. The individual must be treated as an end and never merely as a means.

Moreover, as a democracy, Cuba has the obligation of providing adequate educational opportunities for all of its people. Herein lies the opportunity and privilege of the Cuban state to protect and augment the sources from which
its greatness, its power, and its future strength will spring. These educational opportunities must reach rural children in remote and isolated areas as well as those of villages. They must provide for children from homes of poverty and ignorance and from those of prosperity and broad culture; for the slow intellectually, the average, and the above-average. They must serve those who may remain in the country and those who go to the city. Who will go and who will stay cannot be foretold.

The democratic task of the rural school is to assure the development of the potentialities of all rural children for their personal happiness and social usefulness. The problem is difficult in Cuba because children take their place in society much younger than do children in the United States. The common practice has been for children to leave school at the end of the second or third grade. Under the conditions of Cuba in the 1930's all should have had an opportunity to complete the first six years of school. Those with ability should have had opportunity to attend a higher primary school of three grades. Cuba was not financially able to offer the rural child much in the way of secondary education but the ideal of equality of educational opportunity comparable to the city child demanded some kind of advanced schooling. The provincial schools of agriculture, a school of forestry, provincial normal
schools, institutes, and other secondary schools were open to both urban and rural children. The rural youth of necessity would have to go to the city for his advanced education.

_A Distinctive Program for Cuban Rural Schools._

From what has been said, it may be questioned whether there can be a distinctive rural school program in a democracy. The writer is of the opinion that the supposed future careers of children cannot determine it, although it must be recognized that large numbers of rural children will leave for the city. On the other hand, he admits that the rural environment is distinctive in the experiences it provides children of that area. Moreover, he accepts the principle that firsthand experiences are basic to all learning. Hence, he is forced to the conclusion that a distinctive program of education for rural children is not only possible but highly desirable. The educational opportunities extended to rural children must be intimately related to family life, economic activity, and the life of the whole community. This means that a rural teacher must be able to speak the language of the children he teaches. In short, a difference in approach is made and different materials are utilized than would be the case in a city school, but all teaching effort is directed toward vital appreciations, attitudes, abilities, values, and skills of immediate and larger living. This, then, is the justification for a rural curriculum in Cuba that is distinct from an urban one.
Another basic principle to be followed is that change in behavior toward better living is the only way the learning of the child can, in the last analysis, be tested. From the very beginning of the school experience of the child, the school must develop a concern for and a desire to participate in better living in all of its many phases. This can be best developed by dealing with the problems of the individual and the local community because these are real and near to the child. This does not mean that the school must crusade for a changed social order, although in the process children can do much to improve the living conditions about them. More important to the school, however, is the growth of the child toward a realization that, whatever he is and wherever he is, he can become an influence in bettering his own living and his surroundings. Education then becomes a process of continually reorganizing, reconstructing, and transforming the experience of the child.

Still another principle is that the school must concern itself with the child's growing up in the larger community. From the foregoing it is evident that, although the program of rural education for children must utilize the local community as a means, rural education should not limit itself to narrow local standards and to local interests. To place a peasant child in a backward region, isolated from
many broad interests, is to discourage growth and development. Local resources must be utilized but these must be expanded and enriched. Any attempt to introduce practical agriculture as a vocation at an early age will have very little vocational training value and much less educational value. To ruralize a rural elementary school will fail to meet the needs of many who will never pursue that kind of a life.

Conclusion

The relatively small enrollment of children in rural schools of Cuba was due to six basic causes. First, the compulsory education law was less well enforced in rural than in urban communities. Second, the persistence of rural children in school was very poor possibly because the educational opportunities were less well suited to their needs. Third, it was often difficult for rural children to attend school because they lived on isolated plantations or cattle ranches. Fourth, there were no schools in most rural areas. Fifth, many of the schools were small and inefficient. Sixth, the children were needed at home to assist the father in his work or to help the mother in the home. One of the most pressing educational problems in Cuba in 1933, therefore, was the problem of extending schools into the interior and devising a school curriculum to meet the needs of rural children. This problem was likewise significant to the city inasmuch as it was
to the rural communities that large centers of population looked for the replacement of its urban population.

There could be distinguished three group attitudes toward the scope and function of rural education. The first was that there should be no further expansion of rural elementary schools in deference to an increase in secondary schools and improvement of roads, hygienic conditions, and agricultural processes. The second group attitude was that rural elementary schools should retain the child on the farm by orienting children to choose agriculture as a life vocation and by preparing them for a satisfying rural life. And the third group attitude conceived of rural elementary schools that would prepare children for general efficiency by effective use of local rural resources.

Actually none of these three theories of education dominated rural education, since the educational needs of the rural areas were largely ignored. In the few rural schools that did exist, teachers trained children in subject matter that would enable them to live in a city or to climb the educational ladder to higher academic levels. The main purpose of education for rural children was the mere imparting of literacy and a regimen of certain "essential" knowledge and information.

A new curriculum was needed. Rural education had to be made distinctive because the community, present living, and opportunities for active experiences were all rural. No
single pattern of a school for rural children was needed, but imagination, inventiveness, and reason needed to be utilized to discover unused resources and devise better ways of using the resources at hand. Hence a major problem of rural education in Cuba was that of devising teaching programs and procedures that would best contribute to a satisfactory way of individual and community living in rural areas.
Chapter VI

The Establishment of Civic-Military Rural Education

The preceding chapter emphasized the seriousness of the rural educational problem that presented itself in the third decade of the twentieth century in Cuba and the thinking that her educators brought to bear upon it. The writer then proposed a theory of rural education which he believed would best meet the needs of rural children of that period. The principles stated therein will be used in appraising the civic-military rural movement which is to be described in the chapters that follow.

In this chapter, attention will be given first to the immediate influences which effected the creation of the civic-military rural schools. This will be followed by a critical analysis of the purposes of civic-military rural education. Then each of the chapters that follow in Part II will treat a specific phase of the civic-military rural system. In Part III, the writer will attempt to summarize his conclusions and propose recommendations.

Origin of the Civic-Military Rural Education Movement

Since social and political motives, as much as educational, determined the character of the civic-military rural
schools that were to be created, it must be recalled that rural conditions in the fourth decade of the twentieth century demanded action on the part of the Cuba government to develop new sources of income and living for the underprivileged and starving campesinos. There could be little prospect of political stability or ultimate reconstruction as long as food was not available for the rural masses. With these needs in mind, the Cuban officials in 1934 requested the Foreign Policy Association of the United States to send a Commission to the island for the purpose of analyzing the problems confronting the revolutionary government and recommending possible courses of action. Most of the final report of the Commission, submitted in 1935, dealt with rural problems, chief of which was that of rural education. In a sweeping indictment of the Cuban rural educational system, the report said:

Schools in Cuba are failing entirely to meet the needs of the rural population...It was Cuba's educational misfortune that the pattern of its public school system was set under North American auspices, directed by a school man from Massachusetts. The great expansion of education which followed the establishment of the Republic was directed toward the goal of making the then existing type of school available to every inhabitant of Cuba, in the belief that school and literacy had some magic by which successful democracy could be assured. No attempt was made to determine the special problems of rural life and devise a school which would fit rural people to meet those problems. Schools must now be created which shall be as serviceable to the agricultural population as the existing ones are to urban people.1

Recommendations of the Commission. The Commission then outlined a program of rural education for the island which would provide for the education of all rural people, not by bringing them into the schools, but by taking to them in their homes, through an extension service, a type of instruction specifically designed to redeem rural Cuba from its pitiful condition. In short, the Commission recognized the problem to be one of adult as well as child education. It realized that practically nothing that the school might do could be effective unless rural home conditions could be changed. Only after the larger plan of community improvement was initiated would there be justification for establishing rural schools.

Once this extension work is well underway, however, schools for children of school age will be needed. For these, as well as for schools already functioning in rural districts, a pattern should be devised which will make the rural school useful in preparing young people for rural life and giving them the fundamental skill and knowledge which they need immediately, and will open the way for eventual extension of that knowledge. 3

So the Commission suggested a rural school to prepare for rural life, but, in providing for eventual extension of that knowledge, it recognized the need for broadening the narrow conception of rural education so widely advocated throughout the island. On the other hand, the Commission was concerned about the immediate needs of rural Cuba and

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
to this end it recommended giving agriculture a prominent place in the curriculum as a subject, as school activities, and as home projects.

Pupils will come to the school to engage in group agricultural projects under the guidance of the teacher and to learn, inadequately at first, systematically as their interest grows, the things directly related to their lives and the more remote things suggested by a study of immediate problems. The first essential item of school equipment will be an adequate plot of ground. Since a garden cannot be given two months vacation and be successful, the rural school will be a twelve-month school. The school building will be a shop in which the arts and crafts used in Cuban rural life, and new ones which should be used, are taught... Home projects will be carried on by pupils, the school teacher will bear the same relation to these projects as the volunteer leader of the "5-C" Clubs which are already operating under the direction of the Department of Agriculture. 4

Further on the report recommended:

.........That the teacher of the rural school should know the agriculture problems of the district in which he works is indispensable. That he should live in the community where he teaches and shall be sufficiently competent to gain the respect of the parents of the children in his school is imperative. 5

All of which raised the problem as to whether a special kind of agricultural-rural teacher education was needed by those intending to teach in rural schools. The quotation that follows indicates that the Commission doubted the ability of the regular normal schools of the island to provide an adequate rural teacher preparation.

What institution should prepare these teachers must be decided, and the program of preparation devised. The existing agriculture school could undertake

4. Ibid., p. 139.
5. Ibid.
the task with no additional equipment beyond a rural school annex for demonstration in charge of a person competent to teach others how to teach. This is preferable to the use of normal schools because of the expense involved in providing adequate equipment for giving the necessary agriculture training in these schools.  

The implication throughout these quotations is that the rural elementary school should be dedicated to retaining the child on the farm and preparing him for the vocation of agriculture. As for the problem of supplying schoolhouses and teacher residences, the Commission did not recommend a large-scale building program.

In the case of rural schools, the ground is for the moment more important than the buildings...The construction of essential buildings constitutes a community project. They should include improvements over the existing type of building as well as set an example for housing betterment in the region served by the school.  

Hence, the Commission emphasized individual betterment and immediate relief, but community improvement was not ignored. In fact, the larger responsibility of the school for long-run progress in rural living was emphasized.

What the child does and learns in school should have a direct bearing on family problems and become an instrument for instructing the whole family...thus establishing a vital relationship between school and family.  

The burden of bettering community living, however, was to be carried by a public health nurse, a social worker, and an agricultural agent working as extension agents in the rural area. The teacher would cooperate and assist in the

6. Ibid.
work but he would be merely one of several government representatives striving for rural improvement.

When the writer was in Cuba in 1938, there was still much talk of the Foreign Policy Association's report in relation to rural education and the advisability of applying its recommendations. All evidence points to the fact that those in power were stirred to action by the findings of the Commission. Probably no one individual was challenged by the suggestions of the Commission more than was Fulgencio Batista. A knowledge of his early childhood and youth suggests that he had a personal reason for his interest in reconstruction of rural living.

Dictator Batista. As a boy Fulgencio lived in a small village called Banes in Oriente province. Since his father was a gardener for the United Fruit Company, Batista learned to know at first hand the wretchedness and poverty of rural life. When he was orphaned at the age of eleven, he was forced to shift for himself, going from one job to another. The experiences he gained gave him a realizing sense of the hardships and aspiration of the common people of Cuba. Then in 1921 he joined the army as a private and for twelve years he remained an enlisted man. His meager education, gained in a rural primary school and at a Quaker mission, was supplemented by courses in stenography in an army night school.

9. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, Dr. Gustavo Castellam, and Dr. Ofelia Morales were all of the opinion that the Commission's report had a great influence on Batista and those about him.
As a result of this training he became chief clerk and stenographer with the rank of sergeant. His job took him to all parts of the island and enabled him to establish a close relationship with hundreds of privates and non-commissioned officers. Then came the enlisted men's coup de'etat on September 4, 1933, and from it emerged Fulgencio Batista, Colonel and Chief-of-Staff of the Constitutional Army. From behind the scenes in Military City, Batista was unofficial ruler of Cuba from 1933 to 1940.

Dictator Batista never forgot the deprivations and hardships of his youth. The report of the Foreign Policy Association in 1936 merely served to reawaken a childhood dream that rural life could be improved. That the sufferings of his youth had a great influence on his social and economic philosophy is evidenced by the words of Batista to J. P. McEvoy.

Orphans generally go through life with an overwhelming inferiority complex. They are generally abused and exploited, and their whole subsequent existence is colored by the treatment to which they have been subjected during the formative period of their lives.

Perhaps this explains the close kinship that Batista had with the underprivileged and the downtrodden as well as his passion for extending the opportunities for education and

10. The boyhood of Batista is described in two books: Alberto Arrendondo, Batista, Un Año de Gobierno (La Habana: 1942) and Isa Caraballo, Batista, Un Vida Sin Tregua (Mexico: Ediciones Iberoamericanas, 1945).

improved living to rural people. It lays bare his emotional conviction that the submerged masses could be taught to improve themselves and to better the conditions under which they lived. The death of his brother from tuberculosis, in a country where there was almost a complete absence of proper care for sufferers from this disease, explains Batista's dream of a million-dollar Topes de Collantes sanitorium, which now lies forgotten in the mountains of Trinidad. Likewise, as a boy, he suffered from intestinal parasites and he observed at first hand the examples of the detrimental effects these conditions had upon growing children of the island.

José Martí. The writings of the Cuban patriot, José Martí, the "Patron Saint" of the Revolution of 1933, provided an even greater inspirational guide than did Batista.

12. The national hero of Cuba, José Martí, was born in Havana on January 28, 1853, the only son in a family of four children. He came under the influence of the revolutionary ideas of the director of a private school that he attended as a boy. The passion of this teacher for the freedom of Cuba inspired the youth to write letters and verses of an incendiary character. When these came to the attention of the Spanish authorities, the frail youth of fifteen was sentenced to six years of hard labor in the stone quarries.

Fortunately for José Martí and Cuba, influential friends were able to secure a parole for him on condition that he leave the country. Off he went to study civil and canon law and philosophy and letters at the Universities of Madrid and Saragossa. From there he traveled throughout Europe, Central and South America, and the United States. Finally, he settled down in New York City where he became the leader of the Cuban revolutionary junta. In 1895 fighting broke out on the island and the three great revolutionary leaders of Cuba -- Maceo, Martí, and Gómez -- returned from exile to lead the cause. Only six weeks after landing, May 19, 1895,
In 1887, he wrote:

....the population is being educated almost exclusively for urban life, and is not being prepared for country life...Men of influence and foresight in these countries of ours must labor tirelessly for the immediate establishment of practical agricultural stations and of a group of itinerant teachers who travel through the countryside teaching to the dwellers in valleys and remote places the things necessary for them to know of the spirit, government, and earth.13

The Revolutionists were challenged by Martí's thoughts on education and used them to justify the need for creating a widespread system of rural schools in Cuba. Especially were they impressed by Martí's writings to the effect that the central idea of democracy was the dignity and equality of man and that the best means for developing this individual was universal education, educational missions, and schools of trades and crafts. Consequently, when the revolutionary

Martí was killed in a skirmish with Spanish troops. From then on Martí was the symbol of Cuba's aspiration for independence, the apostle of her future. The years have developed a Martí legend which makes the man a liberator, religionist, philosopher, educator, poet, orator, and author, with the tendency to venerate and laud rather than critically to evaluate his work and his influence. (Andres de Peidra-Bueno, Martí, Mensaje Biografico (La Habana: La Escuela Nueva, 1939); Gonzalo de Quesada, Martí (La Habana: Quesada y Arostegui), 16 volumes; "Un Sueño de Martí," Cultura Militar y Naval (October, 1938) p. 4; "La Democracia de Martí," Emeterio Santovenia, Carteles, (19 de febrero de 1939), p. 26.

14. Since a great many of the works of José Martí on the democratic ideal and human relations were as applicable to the problems of the 1930's as they were in the 1880's and 1890's, his writings were revived and excerpts quoted voluminously as justification for the innovations introduced. José Martí may have lived in the nineteenth century but his works and ideas have attained the reputation of being classics of permanence and movers of mankind in Cuba in the twentieth century.
leaders sought an apostle for their movement, their choice fell on José Martí. Dr. Sosa in an address in Mexico City on February 9, 1939, for example, referred to José Martí as the one who suggested the formation of education missions.

The sublime idea of the Apostle Martí, for improving democratic education by missions, was the guiding star of the movement...initiated by our beloved country on the 4th of September of 1933...for the purpose of transforming into tangible reality that pleasant proposition.15

All of these influences, therefore, -- the report of the Foreign Policy Commission in 1935, the rural boyhood experiences of Fulgencio Batista, and the idealism of José Martí, -- were significant in determining the thinking of Dictator Batista as he contemplated the need for economic, social, and political reconstruction in rural Cuba. All of them, no doubt, played a part in leading him to announce on September 28, 1935:

The first step of distributing schools over the country-side is indispensable for developing a plan which will make the country people conscientious and responsible managers of property and natural resources.16

Immediate Problems. Batista's declaration, however, was received apathetically by the majority of the peasant population. Little wonder, inasmuch as the idea of making free public rural schools available to every child and attendance

compulsory had been for years merely a political platform reasserted by each administration. In fact, many who were familiar with the widely scattered clusters of peasant families in the open country and remote regions of the island called it an impossible vision.

Why had the Ministry of Education failed to extend educational facilities into the rural areas? The answer most frequently given was that there were too many insurmountable difficulties. First, teachers could not be secured who would be able and willing to go into the backward and isolated countryside to teach both children and adults. They refused to live in remote regions and took little interest in the problems of the community. Where could be found, in the words of the Foreign Policy Commission, "young people... .who are willing to devote their lives to work in the country... more interested in the progress of their work than in salaries, more inspired by the direness of the need than discouraged by the magnitude of the task?" Second, insufficient finances prevented the building of schoolhouses, equipping of classrooms, and paying of teachers' salaries that were needed for a program of expanding facilities for rural education. Third, the Ministry of Education had found it difficult to enforce attendance in those areas where rural schools already existed. A large pupil dropout and

17. Doctors Ramón de la Cruz, Brito, and Famies were in agreement on this point.
irregularity of attendance evidenced a lack of desire for educating children on the part of many rural parents. How could the benefits of an education be brought to many who were indifferent to them? Fulgencio Batista found his answer to these questions in the Constitutional Army of Cuba.

The Constitutional Army. Dictator Batista had utilized the Constitutional Army to eliminate the terrorism and chaos that followed the fall of Machado in 1933 but, in so doing, had made the army not only an instrument to maintain peace but also a political force. Therefore, Batista's power and influence in civil government rested primarily upon the authority that the army commanded in Cuban life. Yet after more than two years of military rule, it was obvious that the Cuban people would not permit a dictatorship by force or arms to exist beyond the emergency period. So when the chaos had subsided by the latter part of 1935, serious questioning of the continuation of the power of the armed forces and military government on the island developed.

Batista, therefore, made haste to develop a program of rural education in charge of the army that would meet the domestic demands for social reforms and at the same time justify the

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18. The army had been increased from 8,000 men in 1933 to over 22,000 in 1935. In addition, there was a military reserve of several thousand men. The cost of maintaining this army was $25,000,000 a year. ("Army is Dominant in Cuban Politics," New York Times, December 25, 1936), p. 24.
existence of a large army. The pressure of time in estab-
lishing this program was further increased by the
announcement that a return to civil government would be
effected by a presidential election on January 10, 1936.
Consequently, there was put forth a new conception of
the role of the army as a social-service agent. The
necessity for understanding this new conception of the
place and function of the armed forces in a nation was
expounded by Lieutenant-Colonel Dr. Aristides Sosa de
Quesada, Chief Auditor of the Constitutional Army.

The military has no authority over the civil de-
partments of government except in some cases when
these departments fail to function, when there is
a national emergency, and even on occasion when
there are political and social exigencies.19

In the same address, Dr. Sosa elaborated upon this
view.

Perhaps within a perfectly organized democracy
the dividing line between military and civil strength
can be an invisible line... And there is not, nor
should there be, a clash of jurisdiction. But that
democracy, which has not something to be desired, is
a product of education, total instruction, and in-
dustrial and technical preparation. For a people,
whose educational promise is very high, it is
possible to hope that militarism may reduce its func-
tion to that of being a policeman. But in Cuba....
we are still far from that moral temperature... One
day we will find the spiritual promised land. To-
ward it we are going. Perhaps the day is not far.

Hence, the army acting in the rule of a social-service
agent would be dedicated to the improvement of Cuba socially,

19. Dr. Aristides Sosa de Quesada, El Militarismo, su con-
tenido, pasado, presente y futuro, pronunciada ante los
socios de la Hispano Cubana de Cultura, 9 de agosto de
1938.
economically, and culturally in those areas where the civil authorities failed to develop an effective program.

Establishment of the Civic-Military Rural School System

As previously stated, the calling of a presidential election in January, 1936, the first since the election of General Machado in 1924, meant that a duly elected government of the people of Cuba would replace the provisional military government that had ruled the island ever since the overthrow of Machado in 1933. This election was held on the promised date and ended in the victory of Dr. Miguel Mariano Gómez, son of a former president. However, the Batista-appointed Provisional President, José A. Barnet, remained in power until the inauguration of Dr. Gómez in June. This enabled Dictator Batista to get the social service program of the army underway before the new government assumed office. On February 27, 1936, a Decree-Law was promulgated which authorized "the Chief of the Constitutional Army of the Republic to designate members of the army to extend primary instruction to those places where no school actually exists or there is little probability of one being created."

This was the start of the civic-military rural educational awakening that was to last eleven years, 1936-1946. As such, it represented a partial fulfillment of the promise made by the Revolution of 1933. Moreover, it represented a

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victory for Dictator Batista. Not only was the strength of the army preserved, but in a short time the personnel was to be materially increased.

Obviously, the program for extending educational opportunities into the most remote regions of Cuba was a partial expression of the revolutionary zeal that had not yet spent itself by 1936. It would be easy to conceive of the creation of this movement as a sudden insight of a few men, or one man, who had an intense interest in bettering rural living through the medium of rural education for the peasant population. Those who worship Fulgencio Batista have insisted that the civic-military rural movement was the work of the man, and of him alone. It is true that he initiated the movement and gave it leadership, but the plan itself was the work of a number of Cubans and the result of circumstances.

In looking back upon the swift movement of events from September 28, 1935, when Batista indicated his intention of developing a system of schools, to February 27, 1936, when the civil government officially granted the army the authority to establish rural schools, it is obvious that political motives were probably more instrumental in bringing the civic-military rural educational system into being than were educational and social needs. The rapidity with which military planners moved to continue their control also was indicative of the haphazardness of the educational planning.

At first, practical army men had more to do with the organization of the system and the determination of the scope and function of the schools than did professionally trained personnel. As the months passed by, however, it became evident that the purpose to which the first civic-military rural schools (*las escuelas rurales cívico-militares*) were dedicated, namely, "to reduce illiteracy in rural areas to a minimum and to make it disappear entirely in its day," was not a sufficiently broad and professional reason for their existence. It was then that Batista turned to qualified educators to develop a curriculum for the civic-military rural schools and a unified school organization consistent with the large social-service objectives projected by the army. In the meantime, the courses of study for the civic-military rural schools were "the same as those of the public schools, limited and adapted in any way necessary to meet the local needs" and the educational phase of the program was supervised by the Secretary of Education. In short, the first civic-military rural school program was really that of urban schools adapted somewhat haphazardly to the rural areas in which it was applied.

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23. The first school organization was the result of the planning of Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, Chief Auditor; Colonel Batista, Chief of the Constitutional Army; and Dr. Juan Remos, Secretary of Defense and formerly professor in the Institute of Cuban and Spanish Literature.

Mexican influence. It was not until December 30, 1938, that the larger purposes of civic-military rural education were defined. A study of the curriculum and school organization then developed led this writer to conclude that they were but a continuation of the Mexican experiment in education adapted to the peculiar needs of Cuba.

Although the Cubans denied any direct debt to the Mexican program, an explanation of their early reluctance to

25. The final civic-military rural school organization and curriculum were developed by a commission of four educators. Dr. Juan Remos, professor in the Institute of Cuban and Spanish Literature, Secretary of Defense from 1936 to 1937, and Minister of Education in 1941; Dr. Jardines, retired superintendent of schools in Oriente province; Dr. Pardo, superintendent of schools in Santa Clara province; and Dr. Crespo, professor in the School of Special Education. The provisions were made known in Orden General Nro. 219, 31 de diciembre de 1938.

26. The leaders of the civic-military rural movement insist they did not draw upon the Mexican rural school program to any appreciable extent. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quezada told the writer that, other than the name and idea, the Cuban missions were completely original. Dr. Gustavo Castellano answered in about the same way. He described the experiences of the cultural missions in Spain prior to the Franco regime and indicated the Cubans had studied them. They consisted primarily of circulating libraries in charge of discussion leaders. He admitted that the Mexican missions had been studied but was quick to say that the Cuban missions were unlike either those of Spain or Mexico in a great many ways. In short, the Cuban civic-military rural school system was designed to meet the peculiar needs of rural Cuba within the confines of its resources and limitations. Yet the similarities between the two programs are too marked for a neutral observer to believe that the Mexican plan did not play a determining role in the Cuban planning. When the Mexican plan for mission is examined, for example, the very form of the program is almost identical with that of civic-military rural education. When the details of the plan are analyzed, the duties and responsibilities of many of the missionaries are practically word for word the same as those in the Cuban program. The evidence clearly points to a great
recognize this heritage may be found in the fact that, when the civic-military rural program was announced, Dictator Batista was under attack as having Socialistic or Fascistic designs. At that time the continuance of the Batista dictatorship depended to a large degree upon the support of the United States' Department of State. Hence, the Cuban revolutionary leaders had to be careful not to admit modeling their rural education system on the Socialist plan of the Revolutionary Party of Mexico.

Financial trouble. While the civic-military rural school program was being modeled after that of Mexico, the army experienced some difficulty in financing the educational undertaking which had by the end of 1936 reached almost 700 schools and a large military reserve of sergeant-teachers. Moreover, plans called for opening at least 2,000 more schools in 1937 and 1938. Such a project naturally

similarity between the two programs that is too great to be merely coincidental.

29. It is only fair to add, however, that after the program got underway the differences between the Cuban and Mexican program increased. For one thing, the Mexican rural school was a revolutionary institution which attempted to indoctrinate in Socialism. But Cuban and Mexican rural life being different, there was naturally a like difference in their educations.
entailed an enormous expense which the army was in no position to finance even with its annual budget of $25,000,000, roughly one-third of the entire government income in 1936. Consequently, the army sponsored a bill in the Cuban senate which provided for an increase of nine cents on the existing tax on sugar cane processed in the national territory. The income from this tax, estimated to be $1,500,000 a year, was to be used exclusively for the support of the civic-military rural schools.

The tax bill passed the Senate without too much opposition, although the National Association of Landholders of Cuba raised objections to bearing any further levy because of the twenty-seven taxes already being borne by the sugar industry. But violent opposition was met in the House of Representatives. President Miguel Gómez, the first constitutionally elected president since Machado, led an anti-Batista faction which objected to the interference of the military in civil functions. The President likened this new program to a "tumor -- not dangerous now but capable of becoming dangerous in the future."

31. With the fall of Machado in 1933, the twofold problem of terrorism and military control became acute. Batista used the army ruthlessly to eliminate the former but, in so doing, made the latter more powerful than it had been in the history of the island. Thus the fears of those who saw democratic freedom jeopardized by the civic-military program were well founded.


Batista then appealed to the National Association of Landholders to lobby for the bill as a "service to the people of Cuba and in the interest of national welfare." Señor José Casanova, president of the Association and Senator of the Republic, gave leadership to a drive to rally the members to the cause. Addressing his colleagues in an executive committee meeting, on December 17, 1936, he said:

Although we may have to make sacrifices we will not refuse our aid to the man who has aided us in the most difficult, most dreadful moments...who now asks our cooperation for another work, so splendid and so great, that, as I say, has no parallel in Cuba because here has not been done anything equal...so great and beautiful.

The approval of the proposed tax by the National Association on December 18 was sufficient to overcome the hostile forces in the House of Representatives. When President Miguel Gómez vetoed the bill, Congress impeached him, found him guilty of the charges, and then passed the bill over the veto. Vice-President Frederico Laredo Bru, as the new president, signed the bill on December 30, 1936, and made it known that he would support without exceptions the army's rural educational program.

35. Ibid.
More important than the political maneuverings were the principles involved in this controversy. President Miguel Gómez opposed the tax bill on the grounds that the civic-military rural educational system was an invasion of the scope of civil authority and that it would lead to educating the Cuban children in a Fascist manner. In short, the establishment of the civic-military rural schools created a dualism in educational organization and purpose -- the one educational system under the army and the other under the civil authorities. In purpose, the dualism came to be expressed by a community school idea in civic-military rural education, whereas the old academic purpose of teaching dominated the regular schools under the Secretary of Education. It almost appeared that Cuba was educating two types of citizens.

Aims of Civic-Military Rural Education

To what extent was civic-military rural education Fascistic? Was it dedicated to Socialistic ends, as some claimed? Was it an attempt to establish Communism in the Western Hemisphere? Before determining the larger social, political, and economic aims of civic-military rural education, the more immediate educational objectives must be analyzed. The larger purposes to which the movement was dedicated will then be discussed.

Elimination of illiteracy. Little need be said about the initial purpose of the civic-military rural education, namely, the elimination of illiteracy. Such a conception of elementary education was much too narrow and the educational leaders in the movement were well aware of it. For that reason a new course of study was gradually developed and put into force in all civic-military rural schools in January, 1939, which made it difficult at times to distinguish between education and a plan for economic and social reform. Although the newer purposes were decreed and given great emphasis, the narrow conception was continually mentioned as being fundamental. As a matter of fact, many who observed the schools in operation were of the opinion that a great majority of the teachers focused their efforts primarily on this narrow purpose, namely, the elimination of illiteracy. 39 As late as 1944, for example, José Chabús wrote in Batista: Pensamiento y Acción:

The plan of studies was focused on the three basic points of instruction: to read, to write, and to count....as a means of perpetuating the simple values and traditions which characterize the Cuban way of life.40

Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada recognized this purpose in an address in Mexico City on February 1, 1939:

39. Mr. Paul Tate of Camagüey, Mr. Hamilton of Havana, Dr. Ramón de la Cruz of Rancho Boyeros, and Dr. Cepero of Camagüey.
...the Civic-Rural Educational Missions were instituted by the Constitutional Army of Cuba in a fight against illiterate countryfolk.41

*Retention.* This narrow conception of elementary education, however, was broadened soon after professional educators were called upon to develop a civic-military rural curriculum. In both *El Ejército Constitucional*, the official army journal, and *Cultura Militar y Naval*, an army-navy publication, there appeared numerous articles which stressed the need of the Cuban peasant much more than a limited literacy. Yet none of the writers of those articles ever went so far as to suggest that reading be made the essential means of enriching the isolated life of the rural community. In fact, Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada very boldly stated:

> Its [-civic-military rural education] end is, in the first place, that of exterminating illiteracy in order to create afterwards a specific kind of culture in the rural areas.42

The implication was that children should be educated in and for rural living. This same Sosa de Quesada wrote *Motivaciones Escolares*, the basic reader used in civic-military rural schools. This textbook was written especially for rural children with the intention of stimulating a desire to remain on the farm. The following statement appeared in the preface:

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It [the book] does not fascinate them with accounts of urban life, but stimulates them to better themselves within the milieu in which they are growing and intelligently to take advantage of the resources that nature offers them in order to better the conditions of our rural population.\textsuperscript{43}

Likewise, Colonel Batista believed the civic-military rural schools should be the means of making agriculture and farm life attractive to rural children as a means of keeping children from leaving the country.

Due to the activity of this kind of rural school and its auxiliary branches, it is expected to make the character of the country family more dignified.... to make agriculture attractive to the child.\textsuperscript{44}

Furthermore, he believed that the patriotic feeling of the rural child should be stimulated as a means of getting him to remain in the country.

The Civic-Military Rural Schools\textsuperscript{45} should try to make the farm child a being conscious of his importance as an indispensable factor in the national economy.

On the basis of the principles of rural elementary education accepted by the writer in the previous chapter, the idea of educating a child in a way to predetermine his future residence is undemocratic. The task of elementary education is to acquaint the child with life in its wider aspects and its many opportunities. The civic-military authorities had no right to limit the field of a child's opportunity. Expediency may justify it, but the long-run

\textsuperscript{43} Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, Motivaciones Escolares (La Habana: P. Fernandez y Cia., 1938) Preface.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{45} United States Department of State, Memorandum on Civic-Military Rural Schools, Dispatch No. 7662 to the Secretary of State (Havana: December 17, 1936).
results can not make for a strong, united Cuba. The civic-military rural schools were dedicated to strengthening the bonds that tied the child to the land. Agriculture, wood-working, home economics, rural industries, nature study and farm literature were utilized to ruralize the child rather than to broaden his appreciations and skills. Such a purpose in education merely leads to two separate classes in a nation, namely, city dwellers and peasants.

**Vocation.** A third aim of the civic-military rural educational movement was decidedly vocational and was a counterpart to the previously stated objective. An article in *Cultura Militar y Naval* on the contributions of Colonel Batista stated the aim of civic-military schools to be:

...to defend the decent work of the field laborer as being useful to the entire collective whole... Land is an instrument to riches...to educate a child to cultivate it and make it fertile is to contribute to national progress.\(^4^6\)

The official regulations for the civic-military schools stated that "the civic-rural schools are dedicated to vocational orientation of the campesinos."\(^4^7\) This purpose was also recognized officially by the Corporative Council of Education, Health, and Welfare when it announced "the civic-military rural schools should teach the campesinos to secure

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47. *Orden General Nro. 219*, 31 de diciembre de 1938.
a better return from their lands."

lieutenant-Colonel Sosa in an address given in Mexico said:

They are truly schools of work, of a utilitarian character, which contribute to their own betterment by means of products from the land, garden, orchard, and extensive fields.49

Evelio Romero and H. Jorge Rodríguez, writing in La Escuela Rural, were even more enthusiastic concerning the agricultural dedication of rural elementary education.

Instruction in the rural school ought to start to inculcate in the pupil a love of rural life, plants and animals, giving him basic and fundamental ideas of the agricultural sciences, which prepare him to be, if such is his inclination, a modern and an intelligent farmer...Pupils ought to be made aware of the rural agricultural institutions created by the Cuban state in order to improve the agricultural knowledge of the farmers.50

Thus the peasant child was viewed as primarily a future producer. But such a purpose of elementary education ignores the child in his larger developmental phases. It fails to stress those abilities which enable the individual to participate in the society at large. If he is to take part in the democratic processes of Cuba, his attention must not be limited to learning a vocation at such an early age and, if Cuba is to grow and progress, all individuals must be free

49. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa, Tres charlas, p. 12.
and intelligently prepared to choose their own fields of work.

If the civic-military rural education planners had gone one step further to say that in addition to the preparation in agriculture, the child should have his interests and abilities expanded and developed through an appreciation of the literature, science, history, art, and music, the overall purpose would have been less objectionable. It would still have fallen short of the purposes accepted by the writer, however, to the extent that the larger vision, richer satisfactions, and happier life would have been sought in terms of a narrow conception of the future career of the child as a farmer. But civic-military rural education never want that far. It limited its purpose to a concern for the social, economic, and political problems of the local community.

Community betterment. As previously described, the civic-military rural school was, after the first year, conceived as a social institution dedicated to serving the local society. As such, there was no limit to the scope of the services that could be demanded of it. The movement was dedicated to the belief that the school must take an active part in solving all community problems.

Colonel Batista repeatedly asserted the aim of social change:
The purpose of this organization...is to prepare the country families through lectures, demonstrations, and circulars to provide more hygienic homes for themselves. This school, as we have said, is the neighborhood club.

Due to the activity of the rural schools...it is hoped to make the character of the country family more dignified and to bring the future citizen who lives in the country into civilized life. After a few years have elapsed, we hope that the bohio with its dangerous earth floor will disappear. 51

Colonel Batista described to Dr. B. F. Ashe, President of the University of Miami, how a sergeant-teacher was expected to care for country people who became ill or to help them solve their problems.

The sergeant would be taught the method of making a blood smear or other methods which would permit the sergeant to send some tangible evidence concerning the illness to a laboratory where proper diagnosis of the disease could be made. The sergeant likewise would be able to advise the peasants regarding methods of turning their crops which would result in a preservation of the wealth of the soil and an increased financial return to the farmer himself. 52

Dr. Ashe went on to say:

The Colonel also brought out a possibility of instilling in the peasants a knowledge of better living conditions and a resulting desire for such an improvement in their daily lives. He illustrated this point by citing the hypothetical case of a sergeant who might say to a peasant who contemplated a new home, "Suppose I help you build a home which might be nicer and more comfortable and with not much additional labor." The peasant agrees and under the supervision of the sergeant a new log house is constructed which has, perhaps, four rooms and is larger than those houses normally built in the region. Better sanitary conditions are introduced and the peasant and his

51. Dispatch No. 7662, op. cit.
52. United States Department of State, Transmitting Memorandum concerning Rural School System, Dispatch No. 8081 to the Secretary of State (Havana: January 30, 1937.)
family find themselves installed in a home which is luxurious in comparison with those resided in by surrounding neighbors. The neighbors, of course, come to visit, see the new home, admire its comforts, and develop a desire to have such a home for themselves despite the additional labor involved in its construction. The living conditions of the entire community are improved, the standards are raised, and the Cuban peasants of that region have made a slight amount of progress.

Thus the Foreign Policy Association Commission's recommendation that individual improvement must be preceded by community betterment, achieved by extension agents and social service workers, was made over into a community school idea. The civic-military rural school would be dedicated to redeeming the masses from the ignorance, ill-health, and wretchedness that engulfed them.

Dr. Ramón de la Cruz in summarizing the reasons for establishing civic-military rural schools wrote:

First: to extend schools into those distant places where none existed. Second: to transform rural life.53

Elaborating upon point two, Dr. Cruz said:

It was urgent to change the peasant's way of life; showing him how to take advantage of the innumerable riches surrounding him; installing him with faith, giving him the benefits and comforts of the city, carrying to him a little of the light and happiness of city life; and reducing the exodus from the rural areas.54

Army regulations guiding the civic-military rural system set down the two purposes as follows:

53. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, Mis Observaciones en la Educación Cívico-Rural, Unpublished thesis for the degree of Doctor of Pedagogy, School of Education, University of Havana, 1943, p. 3.

54. Interview with Dr. Ramón de la Cruz.
The civic-rural schools are dedicated, first, to bettering the conditions of rural living. Second, to preparing the campesino through his cooperation for the better fulfillment of his social life.  

From these quotations it would appear that the civic-military rural education movement hoped to secure a radical reconstruction of the rural society. Specially, it meant the gradual change of the social, economic, and intellectual surroundings toward the achievement of a more satisfying rural existence.

Yet this large purpose was so comprehensive and sweeping that there are doubts about the possibility of achieving it even under the most ideal conditions. The fundamental error lies in the fact that it does not consider the difference between the needs of the rural child and those of the rural adult. The adult has knowingly chosen his vocation and residence; thus his group responsibilities are so imposed. But the child is as yet a member of no class. The child's attention must not be limited to local problems but instead the school must create interests for him that will be common to those held by other groups in Cuba with whom he must live and cooperate. If improvement of the supply of water in the home, beautifying of the peasant's bohío, and improvement of food habits are used, not as ends in themselves, but as means of developing the child and as approaches to larger experiences in the wider society,

55. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit.
there can be no criticism of them. It is only when ruraliza-
tion becomes an end in itself or when schools become
more interested in social reform than in child development
that objections are raised to the local problem and project
approach.

The writer is willing to admit that the rural school
is under greater obligation to furnish leadership to the
rural community which it serves than is the city school,
because the former community is much less fully organized
for social service than is the city. But the rural school
cannot undertake to improve all the unsatisfactory condi-
tions of the community.

There are certain conditions that exist in most rural
communities, however, which directly hinder the work for
which the school should exist, namely, educating children.
These conditions the school should undertake to improve when-
ever and wherever possible. For example, a most serious con-
dition which existed throughout rural Cuba was community in-
difference to education. This was the justification for
placing the rural schools under the management of the army
and the rural community under its discipline. The only
difficulty with this arrangement is that once the pressure
is removed indifference once again reasserts itself. A much
healthier approach would have been to undertake a well-plan-
ned program by the Secretary of Education to overcome this
this indifference. Good teaching, teacher-community re-
relationships, exhibits, programs, adult classes, and clubs usually succeed over a period of years in breaking down this attitude toward school.

**Fascistic Methods.** The purpose of community betterment and the use of the army to achieve it disturbed many Cubans and Americans. Yet the authorities in the civic-military system never could quite understand those who opposed the use of sergeant-teachers in the schools. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada repeatedly wrote and spoke in the defense of the program.

The public school was not able to penetrate into the mountainous and rural areas. In order to do it the creation of an agency was required whose structure and whose discipline contained the proper rigidity and elasticity.56

Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa insisted the army discipline was absolutely needed in order that education be extended into inaccessible regions. Only army discipline together with a fervor and enthusiasm, in his opinion, could overcome the obstacles and difficulties placed in the way of a rural teacher. Colonel Batista agreed:

It would be almost impossible for a civil teacher to take charge until means of communication were more numerous.57

In an interview with Dr. B. F. Ashe, Colonel Batista expressed his regret that many Americans and Cubans "did not understand fully his earnest desire to improve the condition

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56. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, *Tres Charlas*, p. 27.
57. Dispatch No. 7662, *op. cit.*
of the Cuban peasant and his use of the army as the most effective means of attaining this objective.

In short, the rigid military discipline and compulsion used to get the illiterate and skeptical peasants to take an interest in educating and improving themselves were branded Fascism. The militarized form of physical education, though later eliminated, gave further substance to the inculcating a kind of totalitarianism in the people of rural Cuba. Batista denied all this to Dr. Ashe:

He said that undoubtedly the Fascist Government of Italy had done very praise-worthy work in the field of education and in teaching the illiterate portion of the population. He added that he was also conscious of the fact that equal efforts had been made by the Soviet Government in teaching the illiterate masses of Russians; that in that respect...his efforts in teaching the illiterate portion of the Cuban peasants could be considered similar to either that of the Italian or the Russian Governments...the difference between his efforts in the rural schools and those others consisted in the fact that, while the teachers or educational agents of the Italian Government taught grammar, arithmetic, hygiene, and such other subjects to the population, they also taught Fascism as the official political doctrine and, while the Communist teachers taught grammar and arithmetic, they also taught Communism...but in Cuba the teaching of rural schools were to limit themselves to the teaching of educational subjects without emphasis on any particular political idea.

In an interview with Colonel Batista, Quentin Reynolds reported on the answer given to his question, "Do you teach the children military training and do you teach them any

58. Dispatch No. 8081, op. cit.
60. Dispatch No. 8081, op. cit.
political doctrine?"

First, let me tell you we teach no political doctrine in the school unless love of one's country is such. Secondly, unless you call the out-of-door training of the American Boy Scouts military training.61

Hence, Batista was of the opinion that, although the army was in charge of the civic-military rural schools, they were in no way dedicated to developing a political philosophy. Yet the very appearance of the military uniform in the school and community created an entirely different relationship between school and community than if a teacher had been sent by the Secretary of Education. The method of achieving democratic ends quickly by military force results in a democracy of doubtful quality. Few would claim that most of the ends sought by the civic-military rural education movement were Fascistic but certainly the methods were. The extremely patriotic and nationalistic aim of the school, however, may even raise questions concerning some of the larger motives. Especially is this the case when it is remembered that Batista utilized the civic-military rural education movement as a means to perpetuate a large army and his military dictatorship.

**Accusation of Socialism.** A still greater source of controversy, however, was the accusation that the programs

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ought to establish the foundations of Socialism in Cuba. The charge that this type of education was socialistic had its origin in the fact that the sergeant-teachers encouraged the peasants to demand more and more from the government. As such, it would be but a prelude to a demand for land distribution, expropriation of natural resources, and confiscation of corporate property. On more solid ground were those who claimed the school was being used to change the social order and effect economic reforms. They pointed to the attempt on the part of the civic-military rural schools to get children and parents to enter upon diversified agriculture, encourage field and mill workers in the sugar industry to raise foodstuffs during the dead season, create new rural industries, and enter into cooperative undertakings. Much that was written concerning the social inertia of the peasant being the result of ignorance, traditionalism, and special interests had the flavor of Socialist propaganda.

Certain phrases were repeatedly used in speeches and writings which were much akin to the philosophy of Socialism, namely, "united front," "equalization," and "the new social and economic order." Yet no stronger case can be made for the accusation that the civic-military rural schools were socialistic agencies than the predominately social purposes that dominated it. The civic-military rural

schools were to be instruments of the state to condition the environment of the child so that he would develop into a citizen of the future. For example, each child was to participate in a school cooperative, be a member of a school club, and work for the collective welfare. Cooperative gardening, farming, industry, and marketing were to be fostered in each school. A type of student government was encouraged in an effort to make the school organization cooperative. Likewise the teacher was considered to be an instrument and leader of social change. He was not to be an isolated pedagogue teaching the 3 R's in an academic ivory tower. On the contrary, as Batista pointed out, he was to be a directing force in the social current.

Furthermore, a basic aim of the school was to further the march toward Cubanization and the recovery of the island's resources for Cubans. The schools were to make the children and their parents conscious of the need to diversify agriculture and create new rural industries as a means of freeing Cuba of the one-crop dilemma and foreign domination.

It is obvious, therefore, that certain doctrines of the civic-military rural education movement were closely akin to those of Socialism, especially as it was conceived and implemented in Mexico. Unlike the Mexican program, however, the curriculum and the teaching never systematically

64. Orden General Nro. 219, op.cit.
propagandized for Socialism. As to whether the goals of civic-military rural education were socialistic or democratic, the controversy still continues. The answer one gives depends largely upon one's conception of democracy. The writer would be inclined to say they were not radically socialistic.

Conclusion

Although the leaders of the September Revolution made known from the beginning their dedication to the reconstruction of Cuba, little was actually achieved until the civic-military rural education system was established on February 27, 1936. However much this reform measure may have been inspired by the desire of Colonel Batista to better those surroundings he knew at first hand as a boy or by the idealism of José Martí, which was fervently expounded by the Revolutionists, there can be no denying that the threatened overthrow of the military power of Batista was the immediate reason for the creation of the civic-military rural education system. Several years were needed to develop a matured program but with its final announcement, in 1938, the larger purpose was made self-evident. The civic-military rural schools were to secure a radical reconstruction of the rural people and their environment as a means of arresting the movement from the rural to the urban areas.

The basic position taken in this and the previous chapter
is that the adult problems of the community are not really the child's to solve nor is it the responsibility of the school to change the social order. There is a danger in considering the elementary school the servant of the local community, responsible for meeting its many local needs. This does not prevent a teacher who is concerned about the development of his children being interested in the improvement of the environment in which the child is living. The writer readily recognizes that education for citizenship, good health, morality, and intelligence is an education in the formation of essential habits in each. Civic education, for example, means experience not only in understanding the meaning of the words social service and cooperation, but actual experience in rendering social service and being cooperative. But the improvement of home life, cleaning up of filth about the house, and eating a greater variety of vegetables are just starting points in the education of children, the fuller implication and meaning of which are beyond the limits of the local group and locale. The primary function of rural elementary education should be to further the growth of the child and not primarily to serve the local community. When the latter dominates it is no longer elementary education but social service. When community and home improvement furthers the child's opportunities by providing him with an environment richer in interest,
in social contacts and in resources of growth, these experiences gained are educative and thereby become the proper concern of rural elementary education.

Although the conclusion reached in this chapter is that few of the stated purposes of civic-military rural education are adequate for rural education in a dynamic democracy, this observer must admit that such a conception of the purposes of rural education at least represented a real advance over what had existed previously. The chief objection is that it limited the right of the immature rural child and circumscribed his vision. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa's frank admission that the civic-military rural program had not been successful in its endeavor to keep the peasant on the farm is significant in this connection. If rural children are to take their places in the larger social community, they must be educated in such a way that wherever they are, in rural or urban areas, they may live socially-sensitive, intelligent lives. Rural elementary education must be merely elementary education in a rural setting; there is nothing local in its purpose. A local approach should be used and local needs seized upon in order that the rural child may realize, through his intimate environment, the larger development that is justly his.

65. Interview with Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, May, 1949.
Chapter VII

Civic-Military Rural Primary Schools

The previous chapter presented a description of how rural living in Cuba was in need of reconstruction. So pressing was the need that, by the Decree-Law Number 620 of February 27, 1936, the Constitutional Army loaned its services to effect the establishment of a system of rural schools dedicated to improving rural conditions. The thought was to let the most effective and forceful agency of the island pioneer the movement; the deficiencies and errors incurred the rush would be corrected as the system progressed.

The facts concerning the lack of rural schools were well known to the previous leaders of Cuba, but the government had refrained from doing anything about it in spite of the existing legislation which authorized the Secretary of Education to establish and maintain rural schools and to enforce compulsory attendance. Then in 1936 civic-military rural schools (las escuelas rurales cívico-militares) were created, without a doubt the most far-reaching educational activity since the American occupation of the island in

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1898.

These schools, which hoped to start a new rural Cuba on the march, were dedicated to the fourfold end of eliminating illiteracy, improving the satisfactions from rural living, orienting each child agriculturally, and increasing the ability of rural people to carry on cooperative living. The aim was to create an elementary rural culture which was to be expanded later by granges and higher agriculture schools until rural Cuba achieved a civilization and state of well-being equal to any other in the world. Consequently, civic-military rural schools were established in remote places throughout the rural areas where educational facilities had never been extended and where none would likely be established under civil auspices.

In their eleven-year history, these schools passed through three distinct stages which are designated as civic-military, civic-rural, and rural. The period of civic-military rural education, from 1936 to 1940, occurred under the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. When Batista became President of the Republic in 1940, the military sponsorship was withdrawn and the direction of the schools was given to the Ministry of Education. This phase, called civic-rural, lasted from 1940 to 1946, and except for the elimination of the military, it was basically the same as that of the civic-military. By 1946 the opposition party had been in power long enough to end the distinction
between civic rural and regular rural schools. In this chapter the civic-military rural primary schools will be described; the higher primary and teacher-training institutions will be treated in the chapters that follow.

The Civic-Military Rural School Plan

The civic-military rural school system was much more pretentious on paper than in practice. The original plan called for four types of schools on the primary level, namely, basic or initial schools (escuelas-initiales), garden schools (escuelas-huertos), farm schools (escuelas-granjas), and traveling schools (escuelas ambulantes).

Almost all of the 1,336 civic-military rural institutions that were actually established were of the basic or initial type, located on two- or three-acre plots of land in the remote regions where the school population was at least sixty pupils. They were one-classroom, one-teacher schools which usually had a separate room in the school building for the teacher's residence, a latrine, source of drinking water, and irrigation facilities.

A few one-classroom garden schools were established. They were supposed to be situated on a five-acre farm and directed by a sergeant-teacher with a corporal-teacher as assistant. If the number of girls in the school was unusually large, a teacher of rural economy was to be assigned as full-time instructor.

1. Orden General Nro. 219, 31 de diciembre de 1938.
2. Ibid.
The farm school was to be the largest, requiring sixty-seven acres of land, two classrooms, residences for teachers, and other facilities found in all civic-military establishments. The teacher was to hold the rank of sub-official and be assisted by several assistant instructors. Actually, none of these schools ever saw the light of day.

Where the student population was too sparsely distributed to justify the establishment of a school, teachers provided a kind of a traveling school by riding a circuit, thereby making the three R's available to those residing in remote and almost inaccessible areas. Practically none of these schools were ever founded.

It is obvious that the plan was but another example of the tendency commonly found on the island to reach beyond the limits of the pocketbook. At least it was too large to become a reality in Cuba in the 1930's. What is more significant, however, is that part of the plan was put into operation and rural Cuba for the first time received school facilities on a large scale.

**Number and Location**

Beginning with a small staff of sergeants and officers already in the army, and with very meager finances, the

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4. The Secretary of Education had claimed that the regular teachers employed by the Department of Education refused to travel to such hidden places to teach or to live there permanently. Hence no schools had ever existed in the remote rural areas.
number of schools grew rapidly. By August 23, 1936, six months after the provisional government granted the army the authority to establish rural educational institutions, there were 691 basic or initial schools. In fact, 300 of these were in existence within two months after the grant of power.

5. By Orden General Nro. 171, 23 de agosto de 1936, the army announced that various regiments had established 691 one-room civic-military rural schools in six provinces, as follows: Regiment No. 1, "Maceo," Oriente, 199; No. 2, "Agramonte," Camagüey, 161; No. 3, "Leoncio Vidal," Las Villas, 176; No. 4, "Placido," Matanzas, 71; No. 5, "Martí," Havana, 42; No. 8, "R. Rivera," Pinar del Río, 22.

6. United States Department of State, Memorandum on Civic-Military Rural Schools, Dispatch No. 7662 to the Secretary of State (Havana: December 17, 1936). These figures provide some indication of the haste with which the schools were created, especially when it is considered that most of them were founded in regions remote from any town, roads, and means of communication. The locations for the first 691 schools were not determined by a school census or any other methodical approach. Each chief of regiment was assigned a quota of sergeant-teachers and it was the responsibility of the chief, together with his sergeants, to determine where a school should be created. Later a system of educational missions was devised and to the mission was delegated the authority to establish and supervise schools in its zone, with from 25 to 30 schools constituting the zone of a mission. Although the missionaries conducted a school census in their respective zones and located schools accordingly, they failed to take into account the floating character of the rural population in the 1930's. As a result, many of the initial schools had to be closed and at times schools of two classes were restricted to a single teacher. During other periods, however, the latter schools registered as many as 150 pupils.

How could a system of schools be created in face of the great instability of rural population? Neither the military authority nor the Ministry of Education after 1940 seriously attacked this problem. Herein was one of the chief weaknesses of civic-military rural education. There was a need to classify the
Following the establishment of the sugar tax of nine
7 cents, which created a special fund to finance civic-
military rural schools, the system was expanded further until
by April, 1937, there were a total of 1,336 schools, of which
8 120 had two or more classrooms. However, the total number
of schools and classrooms on November 6, 1940, just prior
to the transfer of the schools to the newly created Minis-
try of Education, had been reduced to 1,159. The dis-
tribution of these schools is summarized as follows:

various rural occupational groupings of Cuba of these
areas an analysis should have been made of the matricula-
tion and attendance statistics over a period of years
to determine the degree of fluctuation. These results
would have made possible a redistribution of schools
based upon statistical evidence rather than personal
or political considerations.

8. The army once had the intention of establishing a civic-
military rural school in every area where a sufficient
number of pupils justified its establishment. In fact,
Batista estimated that some 3,000 schools would be
needed in order to achieve that goal.
9. The Constitution of 1940 instituted a government by
ministries to replace that of executive departments
under the Constitution of 1901.
10. Orden General Nro. 213A, 6 de noviembre de 1940. It
would appear from the above figures that Cuban officials
were engaging in the age-old practice of padding
statistics when they claimed to have established
1,336 schools in 1937. Only 70 of the 120 two-class-
room schools supposedly operating in 1937 were in exist-
tence in 1940, while the 1,216 basic schools were re-
duced to 1,019 in 1940, a loss of 97 schools. Investi-
tigation reveals, however, that in the rush to es-
establish schools many had been poorly placed and had
to be closed.
Table 6

Distribution of Civic Rural Schools on November 6, 1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>School Zones</th>
<th>Schools of One Classroom</th>
<th>Schools of 2 Classrooms</th>
<th>Total Schools</th>
<th>Total Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oriente</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camagüey</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Villas</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matanzas</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havana</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinar del Río</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the island-wide distribution of civic-military rural schools is studied, it is not surprising to find that 841 of the 1,089 schools, or 67 per cent of all civic-military rural schools, were located in the three most backward provinces of Oriente, Camagüey, and Las Villas. Yet neither the number of civic-military rural schools, nor the enrollment in these institutions was ever commensurate with the need, if universal education in the rural area is accepted as the criterion. The statistics that reveal scores of these schools scattered over Cuba, where there had never been school facilities before, imbued this observer with enthusiasm. The knowledge, however, that there existed many other areas with no schools at all and that many of the civic-military rural schools were poorly located left him to wonder about the adequacy of the whole movement.

School Sites and Buildings

When the buildings in which the civic-military rural schools were housed are considered, a variety of impressions are received. In the short space of time between the announcement of the army program in February, 1936, and the establishment of 691 schools by August of the same year, schoolhouses could not be built for all of the civic-military establishments. The sergeant-teachers utilized abandoned homes or rented vacant ones until the support of the community could be won to undertake the building of a school as a cooperative enterprise. Land, solicited from local property-holders, was too often poorly located, but the army furnished no land and no money with which to purchase proper sites.

12. Army regulations called for the construction of schoolhouses with ample space for classroom recitations, workshops, toilet facilities, and teacher residences. An ideal plan for a civic-military rural school was drawn by an engineer instructor, Fernando Aguado, and his pupil, Pedro Lessasier, during a course of orientation at the "José Martí" School of Improvement in 1937. This plan provided that the building materials be those found in the zone where the school was to be constructed, namely, wood, stone, brick, or adobe. The foundation was to be of stone and clay, so constructed that the floor would be at least a half meter from the ground level. The classroom was to be nine meters long, six wide, and four high. The platform-porch that surrounded the entire school building was to contain shops for mechanical and tin work, carpentry, basket-weaving, and rural industries. The roof was in two parts or slopes, one over the classroom and the lower roof over the porch. It could be constructed of tile or any other material available locally.

This was the general plan suggested but, by the time it was designed and made known to the missionaries and sergeant-teachers, a great majority of the civic-
Modelo de Escuela Rural Cívico Militar.
So the sergeant-teacher or missionary, upon entering a community without a school, made it known that the parents would have to share the responsibility for securing and maintaining a civic-military institution. The principle of self-help was applied to the construction of all schools; materials had to be gathered by the parents and local residents. As a result, schoolhouses varied from community to community. Many were in a terrible condition and poorly situated, while others were the best buildings in the district.

Here is what H. Freeman Matthews of the United States Embassy staff in Cuba found in one of the more prosperous districts in Havana province in December, 1936:

The Escuela Civica-Militar which I visited is about four miles south of the batey, in a group of perhaps twenty-five bohíos adjacent to the cane track. The new school is the only building with a tile roof; a light, wooden-frame building, white-painted, measuring about twenty-five by fifteen feet, with a small porch and twin-flagpoles carrying the Cuban and Cuarto de Septiembre flags.

The building was divided into one L-shaped schoolroom and one small square room, walled only to the height of the eaves, in which the teacher lived. The school equipment consisted of rows of benches, separated by long tables with sloping tops which served as desks, with a table and chair for the teacher facing the benches. On the walls were a large map of Cuba, a Standard Oil Company road map of the island, a large bulletin board containing samples of school work,

military rural schools had been constructed. Most of the buildings actually in use were much less pretentious.
Pinar del Río: Escuela Cívico-Rural en el barrio de Río Feo

One of the Best Civic-Military Rural Schools
Plate II
Escuela Cívica Rural en San Vicente, Jovelanos

One of the typical Civic-Military Rural Schools

Plate III.
La escuela rural más común antes del gobierno del Dr. Grau.

One of the Poorest Civic-Military Rural Schools
Plate IV
and smaller boards containing the schedule of classes. On the rear wall were lithograph portraits of General Máximo Gómez and of Colonel Batista.\footnote{United States Department of State, \textit{Dispatch No. 7835 of The United States Embassy to the Secretary of State}, (Havana; December 17, 1936).}

Quite the opposite impression is given in an account taken from the diary of Dr. Ramón de la Cruz. It reveals the sad state in which some of the civic-military rural schools were found.

On this day, March 3, at 4:30 a.m., I left to inspect Rural School No. 131, El Masso; 130, El Dulce; and 133, La Yamagua. These three schools were found in a very bad condition, being installed on improper sites. The zone is extremely poor for which reason the effort realized by the sergeant-teachers is almost nil. The school of El Masso is installed on the coast some 50 meters from the sea shore, in a very unhealthy place because of the stagnant water which accumulates there from time to time. The floor of this school, as of the other two, is of dirt and the atmosphere saturated with humidity.

School No. 133 is installed on a small hill with a very limited level surface. One is able to get to it from Río Seco through almost impenetrable brush. The surroundings are found in worse condition than the previous school visited.

School No. 130. The material conditions are equal to the previous school. A very dangerous road passes by it.\footnote{Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, \textit{Diary}, Missionary and later Chief of Mission. (March 3, 1937).}

Many of these schools were never replaced due to the poverty of the surroundings and the indifference of the
parents of the children. Yet there is evidence that many
of these schools were gradually improved. The diary of
Dr. Ramón de la Cruz records an example:

School No. 245 was situated in the vicinity of
Realengo 18. It was installed on a most inadequate
site and half-destroyed. The neighborhood was em-
bedded in the most complete ignorance. The floor of
the school was dirt and violated all hygienic pre-
scriptions. An Association of Parents and Neighbors
was organized, and the latter came to possess a fund
of more than $400 and quite a quantity of building
material.

Today, the old school is closed and its land is
cultivated. The walls and roof of the new school
are of cedar and mahogany; the classroom is ample
and well ventilated. Two large doors provide en-
trance to the workshops of carpentry and mechanics.
Tools have been acquired, a medicine cabinet in-
stalled, and room constructed for the teacher and
his family.15

Most of the Cubans with whom the writer talked were
agreed that a great effort had been made to improve the
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civic-military rural schoolhouses. One incentive which
contributed to this end was the annual award of a "Medal of
Rural Efficiency" and a salary increase of five pesos a
month made by each mission to the teacher who showed the
greatest material improvement in his situation. Another
means was the school cooperative which sold products from
the school garden and workshops. The money was then used
either to construct a better schoolhouse or to buy equip-
ment.

15. Ibid.
16. Mr. Paul Tate of Camagüey, Dr. Cepeco of Camagüey, Dr.
    Berto of General Pereza, Dr. Ramón de la Cruz of
    Havana, and Dr. Alberto Pamies of Havana.
17. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
Hence, the civic-military rural schools pretty much reflected the circumstances of the local communities. The important fact to keep in mind, however, is that new schools were being built and old schools were slowly being replaced by new ones. Yet, when it is recalled that the school building program was intended to be a means of spreading knowledge of better housing, the general consensus is that little lasting effect, as far as improved homes is concerned, can be observed throughout the island. True, here and there were instilled desires of material emancipation in the lethargic souls of the rural population but, if the success of the rural schools must be judged by the way they transformed housing conditions in rural Cuba, the conclusion is that the civic-military rural education movement fell far short of its goal.

On the other hand, the civic-military rural movement made a step forward in inaugurating a school building program as a community project. It is to be commended for attempting to develop a kind of construction feasible for residence buildings in the community. Furthermore, the great majority of civic-military rural buildings were obvious improvements over the type of rural schools that had previously existed. In most instances, there was an attempt to beautify the school and its grounds. This certainly was an improvement over what had been.\(^18\) But in most cases it was

\(^{18}\). Cf. p. 134.
too much to ask poor communities to finance such a project; the army should have developed a program of state-aid in some form for underprivileged areas.

**Equipment**

The problem of providing equipment for the civic-military rural schools was just as large as securing the school building. The Decree-Law Number 620 of February 27, 1936, which created the civic-military rural system, delegated the responsibility of furnishing school supplies to the Department of Education, but the limited budget of that agency prevented its giving much assistance. Furthermore, the type of curriculum developed in the civic-military rural schools after 1937 necessitated not only the usual instructional materials, but also tools for workshops, gardens, and domestic arts centers. In most instances these had

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19. Dispatch No. 7662, _op. cit._ Colonel Batista had this to say about the equipment the army deemed necessary for the schools. "These schools have been provided with all necessary details from shop equipment to a water filter, each of which had been submitted to a proper study in order that its simplicity and cost would serve as a model to the farm family." All of the Cubans with whom the writer talked agreed that the sergeant-teachers had taken care to develop a filtered source for drinking water and had conducted it as a project of teacher-community study and planning. And most of these men were of the opinion that a good many of the rural people with whom the school came into contact did try to improve the home source of water as a result of the example set by the civic-military rural school.
to be supplied from the income of the school garden and workshops, as well as fiestas sponsored by the Association of Parents and Neighbors.

As for the furnishings of the schools, they were as simple as the buildings and were made by the parents or the students in the school workshop. Most classrooms had a blackboard and benches for pupils, a table and armchair for the teacher, and a bookshelf for a few library books, magazines, and newspapers. Each school developed its own museum shelf but, in most cases, it was not well kept. Although army regulations provided that there should be ample land for gardens, athletic fields, nurseries, and pastures, what the schools actually had depended in large part upon the topography and wealth of the area in which each school was located.

Teaching materials adequate in number and type were rarely seen. Books, while not abundant, were interesting and an improvement over what had been. Motivaciones Escolares, a basic reader for grades 2, 3, and 4, was delightfully illustrated and inexpensively bound in cloth.

20. The General Headquarters of the Constitutional Army published this text, written by Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, Chief of the Section of Culture of the Army, and supplied each school with copies. Most of the classrooms, however, were not furnished with sufficient copies to provide one for each pupil.
It contained 75 lessons and 208 pages, and was highly nationalistic and practical in emphasis. The National Hymn, Hymn of Civic-Military Education, and Hymn of the Revolution of September 4th set the stage for the first lesson which dealt with the Mother Country and the second which explained the purpose of civic-military rural schools. The remaining 73 lessons were concerned with plants, animals, trees, home, home duties, personal hygiene, national heroes, historical events, industries of rural Cuba, and benefits of rural living. Besides being a textbook in reading, basic processes and problems in arithmetic were stressed as well as lessons in music, writing, and art.

Actually, the course of study, discussed later in the chapter, was set by this textbook. It did not recommend that the lessons be taught in any particular order, but it did stress the need for developing centers of interests such as the home, community, agriculture, nature, and nation. In addition, there were suggested in each lesson several projects and games for student activity, some to be carried on in school and some out of school. Although teachers were instructed to relate the content of the textbook to the interests, problems, and living conditions of children, there is ample evidence to indicate that this was seldom done. The professional training of the sergeant-teachers was generally too insufficient and inadequate to expect it.

21. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, Motivaciones Escolares, (Havana: Cultural S.A., 1938)
Motivo N° 8

EL CERDO Y EL BUEY

(Fábula)

Hipopresía justo holgazán rebelarme

Un cerdo se lamentaba de su suerte y de la hipópresía de los hombres.

—¿Crees que es justo — decía al buey — que me cuiden y que me engorden para quitarme la vida cuando más feliz me siento?

—¡Vaya! Tu suerte no es tan mala como la mía, y ya ves que no me quejo. Tú eres un animal holgazán que te pasas la vida comiendo y descansando, mientras yo casi reviento de tanto trabajar. Cuando me canso, me pinchon con el agujón, y cuando llega la zafra me paso la mayor parte del día amarrado al yugo. ¡Tú no sabes lo que es pasar malas noches!

—Si yo tuviera tu cuerpo y tu fuerza, no permitiría que me hiciesen tales cosas — replicó el cerdo —. Eres demasiado bueno.

—De nada valdría rebelarme contra el poder del hombre que ha domesticado a los más fieros animales — respondió el buey —. Me siento feliz cuando veo hacer las plantas en los terrenos que abrí con el arado, y cuando mi amo me acaricia el lomo, satisfecho de mi labor. No te quejes, amigo cerdo, ten conformidad.

Cada ser tiene en la vida una función que desempeñar, y por las horas de trabajo y de dolor siempre existen otras de regocijo espiritual que las compensan. Cuando se tiene el hábito del trabajo honrado, se dignifica al individuo al rendir su labor; entonces, vivir ocioso es vivir atormentado.

¿Por qué se quejaba el cerdo?

¿Qué le dijo el buey al cerdo cuando lo oyó lamentarse de su suerte?

¿Qué dijo el cerdo cuando oyó las razones del buey?
EDUCACION CIVICO-RURAL

Motivo Nº 12

CUIDADOS QUE HAY QUE TENER
CUANDO VAMOS A ORDEÑAR

páldos      parásitos      intestinales

Los hijos del mayoral de la finca están muy pálidos y delgados, a pesar de que comen mucho. Sus padres están muy preocupados y han llamado al médico. Éste dice que los niños tienen parásitos intestinales.

En la casa del mayoral, todos se han quedado asombrados cuando el médico les dijo que esos parásitos se debían a que ellos tomaban leche con estiércol.

—Eso no puede ser, doctor —replicó el mayoral—. Hace diez años que yo mismo ordeñaba las vacas y nunca le ha caído a la leche esa basura.

—Eso se cree usted, Don Antonio, pero estoy se-
guro que usted no tiene cuidado de lavarle la ubre a la vaca ni de amarrarle el rabo.

—¡Hombre! tanto como eso no, doctor.
—Pues en ese desecho está la causa de todo, mi amigo. Cuando la vaca mueve el rabo, mientras se la ordeña, el estiércol que está seco y pegado al mismo, se desprende y cae en la leche. Ese estiércol tiene parásitos del intestino de la vaca.

—Si no se lava la ubre —siguió explicando el doctor—, el roce de las manos desprende muchos parásitos pequeños que se encuentran en la ubre y también caen en la leche.

—Estoy convencido, doctor, —dijo Don Antonio— que, cuanto más vive uno, más aprende. ¡Quién me lo iba a decir!

Los niños se curaron pronto con las medicinas que les mandó el médico, y Don Antonio ha ido casa por casa de la finca explicando lo que dijo el doctor. Ahora todos ordeñan sus vacas lavándoles primero la ubre y amarrándoles el rabo.

¿Qué debemos hacer antes de ordeñar la vaca?

¿Por qué causa deben tomarse esos cuidados?

¿Qué hizo Don Antonio, el Mayoral, después de lo que le explicó el doctor?

¿Qué debemos hacer cuando hemos aprendido una cosa que puede ser útil a los demás?
The book was well received and used throughout the military phase of civic-military rural education. Dr. Morales spoke for most Cuban teachers, who were familiar with rural education, when she said "the textbook *Motivaciones Escolares* was a great improvement over the old formal encyclopedic textbooks that had formerly been used in both urban and rural schools."

Yet it appears from the description of the civic-military rural schools, which appeared on the preceding pages, that the sergeant-teachers were woefully lacking in textbook and source materials so obviously needed by rural teachers and students. Civic-military rural schoolrooms

22. In an interview on May 25, 1949, Mr. Paul Tate of Camagüey, told how the previous textbooks had several pages given to an explanation of the national lottery and how to read lottery tickets. The writer also read letters addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa from Doctors Crespo, Luciano Martínez, Miguel Garmendia, Alfredo M. Aguayo, Odila de Quisada, and Enrique Jardines. These eminent Cuban educators praised the book for its centers of interest, suggestions for activities, and significant content. Because of the military emphasis, however, the textbook was not used much after 1946. Yet the new textbooks which replaced it never proved satisfactory. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa revised *Motivaciones Escolares* in 1948, deleting the objectionable materials and rewriting other parts. As a result, the new edition has been adopted and is now being reintroduced into the rural schools.

23. Most of the civic-military rural schools were likewise supplied with the textbooks used in the schools under the direction of the Secretary of Education. In addition, each teacher was given reference books relative to the content to be taught in the special fields. For example, Fernando Agete y Pinedo, a teacher in the School of Agriculture of Pinar del Río, was the author of *El Huerto Escolar*, which gave a detailed outline of the elementary principles of agriculture, as well as
were, in general, pretty barren. Still, it must be admitted that, in spite of the scarcity of equipment and meager facilities, these were certainly improved conditions where compared with what had existed in the few rural schools prior to 1936.

**Civic-Military Rural Teachers**

To offset this lack of materials, teachers needed to utilize as laboratories the facilities within the rural community, namely, nearby farms, rural industries, homes, and the natural phenomena about the school. Such an approach to teaching required men who would permanently reside in rural communities and become intimately aware of their limitations and resources. The army met this requirement with little difficulty. Men under strict discipline could be sent to any location on the island and they could be assigned to live permanently where the schools were established. Consequently, the teachers for the civic-military

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instructions on how to get underway the practical teaching of gardening in the civic-military rural school. The chapters were so organized as to start with the first day of a child's experience in school and, through the medium of practical exercises in the school garden, to provide an appreciation of the principles of agriculture.

**Divulgaciones sobre Parasitismo Intestinal** by Dr. Gabriel de la Pena González, veterinary-surgeon of an educational mission, was an illustrated outline of each of the intestinal parasites that were prevalent throughout the countryside. The detailed life history of each parasite, the means by which it was acquired, its effect on the human body, and the treatment needed to avoid and eradicate it were presented in a simple style. This book was used by the sergeant-teachers as a source for content and illustrations for teaching their health classes and diagnosing the illnesses of their pupils.
rural schools were selected either from among the members of the armed forces or from the military reserve corps called to active service for the purpose of teaching the rural population in places where the regular schools did not exist. The local municipio boards of education had nothing whatever to do with their appointment.

The first group of these sergeant-teachers were young graduates with doctorates from the professional schools of the University of Havana and graduates of provincial secondary schools, namely, institutes, normal schools, schools of agriculture, and special schools of arts and trades. Many of them had enlisted in the army after the Revolution of September 4th because they were unable to secure employment during the depressed times. Moreover, Colonel Batista had so greatly improved the morale and living conditions that the army provided rather attractive opportunities for young men with ability. When the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army was created to undertake the task of extending schools into the rural areas, a great many of these regular army men applied for a transfer to the new organization. As the civic-military rural school system expanded, new recruits were

24. For example, Dr. Berto Brito Buron, formerly Secretary of the "José Martí" School of Improvement, graduated from the University of Havana's Law School. The excessive number of lawyers meant little opportunity for a young graduate to make a living. He enlisted in the
accepted as members of the military reserve in active service. The majority of those selected were young men of ability with an enthusiasm and conviction for their work.

A description of one of these sergeant-teachers, teaching in a school near the town of Guines, Havana province, is given in a routine dispatch by an official of the United States Embassy in Cuba to our State Department.

The teacher was a pleasant mulatto sergeant, neat as to his personal appearance, who seemed keenly interested not only in the specific problems of his own school but also in the broader aspects of the system under which all the civic-military schools, now about 700 in number, are functioning...Except for the fact that the teacher was in uniform (with a special insignie, representing an open book, directly under the chevrons) there was little to indicate a "military school."

The same dispatch also records that the army representative was usually called teacher rather than sergeant.

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25. In order to become a member of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army, the regular physical examination of the army had to be passed and, in addition, the applicant had to possess the title of normal teacher, agriculture or trade teacher, bachelor of arts or science, or doctor. The great majority of those selected became either first-, second-, or third-sergeants who wore a special insignie of a saber and pen crossed with an open book at the intersection.

26. The United States Department of State, Dispatch No. 7835, Submitted by H. Freeman Matthews, First Secretary of the Embassy, to the Secretary of State (Havana: December 17, 1936).

27. Mr. Paul Tate of Camagüey told the author that the sergeant-teachers whom he knew in the province of Camagüey acted more like teachers than soldiers.
I noticed that the people of the village, including the children, referred to the teacher as "maestro" rather than "Sargento."

Yet the fact must be faced that most of the sergeant-teachers had never had any real professional training in education, nor were they too familiar with rural conditions. The few who were normal school graduates had been trained for urban schools. Therefore, in order to oriente the first group of some 700 sergeant-teachers in methods of teaching and in rural living conditions and problems, a short course was prepared and administered in the headquarters of each regiment from July 26 to August 26, 1936. Those who were later selected for the active reserve had to take a two-months' orientation course at the "José Martí" School of Improvement.

28. This training sought to develop teachers who would be willing and able to go into rural areas and become a part of the rural life, study its needs and resources, adapt themselves to the situation, and enter into the spirit of the new program. Inasmuch as the school program during this early period was primarily based upon the 3 R's, there was little effort made to get the teachers to throw aside their devotion to the traditional methods of teaching.

29. This school will be described and appraised in Chapter IX of this thesis. Suffice it to say here that while at the "José Martí School of Improvement, the trainees had no rank but, upon completion of the course, those who received high ratings were appointed second- and third-sergeants. The remainder were destined to become corporals who acted in the capacity of substitute and traveling teachers and, when not teaching, assisted in the administrative work of the mission. Later, the sergeant-teachers were encouraged to take competitive examinations which were the means of selecting missionary-trainees for the one-month's orientation course at the "José Martí" School of Improvement.
Each regimental chief of the Constitutional Army had the authority to place the sergeant-teachers who were assigned to his control and, in theory, to order transfers. In most instances, the sergeant-teachers were not assigned to teach in the province in which they were born. Many desired to be located near their home towns, but individual desires and preferences were seldom considered. Such practices naturally did not contribute to maintaining a high morale and spirit among the teaching staff.

Still another factor contributing to lowering of morale and spirit was the military discipline and routine under which each sergeant-teacher lived. As a soldier, he was expected to maintain order throughout his district and to discipline he children under his care.

30. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit., Capítulo 43. Civic-military rural school regulations provided that each time a new mission or a new school within a mission was created in a regimental territory, teachers and missionaries within its bounds would be subject to reassignment and promotion based upon the annual merit rating. In practice, transfers and promotions were decided upon in the Section of Culture at general headquarters in Havana. This applied to transfers not only from one mission to another but from one school to another within a mission. The chief of a mission had no authority to remove a sergeant-teacher from his teaching assignment unless directed to do so from central headquarters.

31. It must always be remembered that the teacher of a civic-military rural school was under the same rules and regulations as the members of the Constitutional Army. In addition, he was subject to the special regulations of the Section of Culture of the Army. His duties and obligations as defined by the latter authority were such that, if faithfully performed, would have given him little time for sleep.
school matters were not to be discussed publicly or privately unless authorized by a superior officer. In a life manner, all political and religious activities of a propaganda or controversial nature were to be avoided. Although he could submit to the chief of mission petitions of complaint and objections, as well as suggestions for improvement of the school, all regulations and order issued by superior authorities had to be obeyed by him.

The sergeant-teacher was under orders to remain in the classroom and the community during the school year as well as to make his home in the school in which he was teaching but, during vacation periods he was allowed to leave the community. Should strained relations develop

32. The author found it very difficult to gather data concerning the civic-military rural schools on his first visit to the island in 1938 because of this regulation. Until he became acquainted with some of the higher authorities of the movement, most of the data gathered were general statements and appraisals highly flavored by revolutionary enthusiasm.

33. If at any time a teacher found it necessary to suspend classes because of illness, rain, or any other emergency condition, he was to make a detailed report of it to the chief of his mission.

34. No outside work or activities were to be undertaken that directly or indirectly detracted from the enthusiasm and time given to teaching and community improvement.

35. If the chief of the mission desired, he could order the sergeant-teacher during the vacation to take further training, better his school, prepare a course of study, rework class schedules, or plan school programs.
between the community and teacher and the latter was given the privilege of requesting from the chief of the mission a transfer to another school. If a teacher had an affair with a girl of the district, however, he was subject to a dishonorable discharge from the army.

The school house, equipment, and residence were to be maintained in a state of cleanliness and attractiveness. In addition to maintaining the cumulative records of each pupil and the daily attendance register, each teacher had to prepare daily lesson plans for each school week. The usual grade and promotion sheets had to be submitted at the end of each year. School assemblies and programs had to be arranged according to the provisions of the school calendar or by special order from the higher authorities. The teacher was held personally responsible for the care of a museum and an archive of student and adult works of achievement, library, radio receiving set, and medicine chest. Since each school had a student and an adult social club, the successful operation of them were a concern. Likewise the account books for the Association of Parents and Neighbors, student club, and school cooperative had to be kept. Blood smears had to be taken of each child who showed signs of illness and these were to be sent to a mission laboratory where proper diagnosis could be made. If treatment was recommended, the teacher had to see that the child received and took the medicines. All of these were routine duties in addition to teaching the children
each afternoon from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the adults of
the community in night classes twice a week from 6:30 p.m.
to 8:30 p.m.

Furthermore, the sergeant-teacher had definite responsi-
bilities in his relationship with the community. Each year
he directed the school census in his district and through-
out the year enforced the compulsory attendance law. He
was expected to advise the country folk regarding methods of
crop rotation and cultivation as a means of preserving the
soil and increasing financial returns. Better methods of
living along with a desire to improve the community were
to be sought by the teacher setting an example of hard work
and good living. It was hoped that school club activities
would arouse a desire in its female members to adopt more
effective methods of caring for their homes and children.
The club for adults was to make the school into a community
center where the campesinos of the area could gather to
read, hear radio programs, see motion pictures, attend
sports events, and participate in as well as enjoy special
assembly programs.

36. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit., Capítulo 34.
37. When an attempt is made to judge the success with which
the civic-military rural teachers carried out these many
responsibilities, one is immediately faced with a mass
of contradictory impressions. It is inevitable that
civic-military rural schools, founded upon enthusiasm
and zeal more than pedagogical wisdom and staffed with
many teachers poorly prepared professionally, should
give varying emphasis to the many aspects of the school
program. One conclusion can safely be reached, namely,
that the pressure of work was such that the sergeant-
teacher found little time to search for teaching
In discussing the responsibilities of the sergeant-teacher, it must be recalled that he usually taught in a one-room school. Hence, he had to face the local residents alone and more often than not they were hostile or indifferent to the work he was attempting to undertake. For this reason, he was instructed upon entering a new community to gain the confidence and support of the residents by demonstrating to them that he was inspired by a desire to help everybody in the area who needed assistance. By his action, deeds, and teachings, he was to create a living example for the inspiration and admiration of all rural people.

Teachers, however, are pretty much alike the world over. Some carried out their instructions with a high degree of enthusiasm and tact; others merely held down their jobs. The diary of Dr. Ramón de la Cruz is the source of the following statements:

The majority of the sergeant-teachers under my supervision were young men anxious to find new horizons. It was with great difficulty that many of them set about to transform communities in which the rural people refused to extend to them hospitality and affection.

We have already pointed out that a great number felt a true love for the work and really desired to take advantage of this opportunity to show their resources in the community and to supplement the course of study to meet local needs. The number of the duties actually performed and the quality of the performance depended upon the zeal and ability of the teacher as well as the effectiveness of the supervision he received. More will be said about the latter when the work of the educational missions is described.
organizing capacities and their abilities to contribute to the development of a great project. 38

H. Freeman Matthews reported:

The administrator of the mill, with whom I talked, later confirmed my own impression that the teacher was well regarded in the village and doing excellent work there. 39

Mr. Paul Tate, United States Consul in Camagüey, told the writer:

The sergeant-teachers of this province were capable men. When they arrived at their school district, they usually gained the confidence of the neighbors. Generally, parents, pupils, and local authorities recognized the generous and patriotic work of the teacher. Every sergeant-teacher I knew did a good job of teaching the 3 R's.

An American resident of Banes, Mr. Eugene Borda, wrote to the writer on February 15, 1938:

The teachers are men with some normal and university training who are given several months instruction, the rank and pay of sergeants, and sent into the country to start schools. They are, of course, not professionally trained teachers but their uniform creates respect with both the children and parents. They can ride around on horseback and compel the parents to send their children to school which the average normal school graduate could not do. 40

The great majority of the sergeant-teachers with whom the writer was acquainted were of a high type—morally, intellectually, and socially — and were bursting with a

38. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
39. Dispatch No. 7835, op. cit.
40. Mr. Eugene Borda spent eight years in Cuba with the United Fruit Company as a superintendent of a sugar plantation.
high idealism and enthusiasm for their work. Most of them attributed their high spirits and the pride they took in their labor to the fact that at long last the rural teachers were given a favorable professional, social, and economic position in Cuban life. But as a group they failed to meet what the writer believes rural teachers need in professional and personal qualities in order to accomplish the fundamental job of rural education was described in Chapter V of this thesis.

Most of the sergeant-teachers, when compared with the elementary instructors employed by the Department of Education, had a broad cultural education. By this is meant a comparatively rich knowledge of the social and natural sciences. In addition, they acquired a slight knowledge of rural sociology and economy during the short orientation course of "José Martí" School of Improvement, but on the whole this was quite superficial. And in spite of the fact that the civic-military rural-school curriculum emphasized the teaching of the practical arts, most of the sergeant-teachers were woefully lacking in the basic skills in carpentry and other crafts. Since so many of the original enlistees were city-bred, their meager knowledge concerning agriculture was theoretical rather than functional. As for knowledge of child psychology, child development, and teaching methods, this aspect of their training was very inadequate. In short, the civic-military rural
teachers were for the most part sincere, enthusiastic, and inspired in their work. They were motivated by a fundamental belief in the civic-military ideals and were truly consecrated to the service in which they were engaged. But their work fell short of what it would have achieved at times because of a lack of insight into rural needs and a lack of understanding of local resources that might have been utilized. The meager and practical character of their professional training was in all probability as much a barrier to creative and dynamic teaching as was the rigid and centralized nature of army organization.

Perhaps it is fair to say that Cuba provided her rural areas with the best teachers she knew how to provide at that time. When all is considered, however, the sergeant-teachers, in spite of all their missionary and revolutionary zeal, achieved little in the way of permanent transformation of rural living.

Salaries

On the other hand, it cannot be said that the sergeant-teacher's salary was much of an inducement to draw superior people, especially in view of the conditions under which the teachers lived and worked in remote villages and the arduous nature of their teaching duties. Colonel Batista in an interview in 1936 had this to say about salaries paid to sergeant-teachers:

Men and women holding positions as teachers and missionaries... do not earn as large a salary as other teachers, inspectors or superintendents with a similar rank of the Department of Education.42

The annual base salaries received over twelve monthly installments by members of the Section of Culture were as follows:

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Yearly</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captains</td>
<td>$135</td>
<td>$1,620</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Lieutenants</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1,440</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Lieutenants</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>1,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Lieutenants</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Officials</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Sergeants</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-Sergeants</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
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<td>Third-Sergeants</td>
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<td>600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporals</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Section of Culture</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>2,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Office of Accounts</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistant</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical Assistant</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Thus, sergeant-teachers received, on the average, between $50 and $60 a month and an annual salary of between $600 and $720. Each teacher, in addition, was granted an annual allowance for clothing. His home was furnished and much of his food was either secured from the school garden or neighbors. The only regular salary deduction was that

of six per cent for a retirement fund.

**Supervision**

Since so many of the sergeant-teachers were inadequately prepared professionally and practically to carry out the larger tasks in the civic-military rural program, a kind of in-service training in teaching methods was recognized and provided for through the educational missions. These organizations will be described in a succeeding chapter.

Suffice it is to say here that the missions served as an agency of supervision and inspection. As supervisors, the missionaries were to preserve an esprit de corps among the teaching staff and to promote professional growth. They were to rotate among the schools of a zone and in a practical way compensate for the lack of pre-service preparation

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44. Ibid. Salaries as of January, 1938. An increase of 10 per cent was granted for each five years of service until the amount increased to a maximum of forty per cent of the base salary. Those who transferred from the regular army or navy to the Section of Culture had their salaries figured on the basis of prior service in the armed forces. The total payroll of the Section of Culture, which included 1,637 persons in 1937, follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Payroll</th>
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<td>First Lieutenants</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>83</td>
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<td>Sub-Officials</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40,320.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Sergeants</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30,240.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Sergeants</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35,240.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Sergeants</td>
<td>1,006</td>
<td>603,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporals</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>86,520.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6,720.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Advisors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$1,139,092.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of sergeant-teachers. Each of the six missionaries, specializing respectively in educational theory and practice, agriculture, trades, veterinary medicine, dentistry, and domestic arts, was to care for supervision in his own specialty.

As inspectors, they were to make an annual rating on the work achieved by each sergeant-teacher. According to regulations, this rating was to be made three times a year so that a final average could be secured. The rating scale consisted of 104 items which were assigned a figure from 0 to 30 points, depending upon the evaluation that the supervisor made of the teacher's work. The total of these numbers indicated the over-all ability of the sergeant-teacher in carrying on his teaching responsibilities and was to be used as the basis for recommending promotions and transfers.

An analysis of the scale reveals that it was really a diagnostic chart to determine the material condition of the school and the character of the school activities undertaken. A rating would make known the organization of the school, the quantitative evidence of the teacher's education, the social work undertaken, and the economic status of the district, but it would not reveal the results of teaching efforts, the progress of the students, or the other signi-

46. In practice, the missionaries in many instances did not visit each teacher under his supervision each year.
47. Cf. p. 489. The scale is much too long to analyze item by item, but a copy is included in the appendix since a criticism of it is to be offered.
ficant details of pupil development. Perhaps this is a natural outcome of the extremely social aim of civic-military rural education.

Another criticism of the scale is that the items were very poorly organized which made it difficult to secure an over-all appraisal of the teacher's abilities in each one of the specialties. Moreover, when the items are classified, out of the 3,120 possible points, only 330 were actually related to general education of children; the great majority were related to the special areas of agriculture, trades, hygiene, domestic economics, care of animals, and oral hygiene.

Furthermore, the rating itself was most subjective. If there was a complete absence of discipline, for example, a rating of zero would be easy to give. If there was extremely good discipline, a rating of thirty would be given. But what kind of a point rating would be given if the discipline was somewhere in between these extremes? How was it possible to distribute the other 29 points? Naturally, a great many injustices were committed. Perhaps a range of 0 to 3 points would have permitted a somewhat fairer estimate. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, in his diary, revealed his doubts concerning the rating device.

We visited a school and, if a certain aspect merited our attention, we were not able, in visiting the next school, to arrive at a comparative judgment that would permit us to make a just rating of the
last teacher.

In short, the civic-military rural teacher received much more inspection than he did supervision and, as long as the army was in control, discipline and supervision were rather rigorous. As one teacher complained, the missionaries liked "to flash their brass." To a certain extent, the revolutionary enthusiasm and the army discipline created a drive to carry into effect the civic-military rural program and activities. Yet there were many exceptions to this, due in part to the infrequent and hasty visits made by the missionary specialists. When the schools were placed under the Ministry of Education, both of the above-mentioned motivating forces were eliminated. As a result, the missionaries found many of the activities and projects ignored and local enthusiasm vanished.

Curriculum

Originally, the one-room civic-military rural school was designed to offer no more than the first four grades of study; the two-classroom school had five grades. Because the projected three-classroom farm schools with six grades were never established and only a few two classroom schools were founded, the one-classroom schools met

48. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
49. Cf. p. 329
50. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
51. Cf. p. 404
the demand for a fifth and sixth grade by the formation of a platoon of those pupils interested in continuing beyond the fourth-year.

The course of study was based upon a weekly program of five days. Ordinarily the regular day school was conducted between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. The schedule provided for two hours of practice in workshops and agriculture with a fifteen-minute rest after the first hour. The time spent on the various activities actually depended upon the interest and ability of the teacher. An hour of recess after the practical courses was followed by two hours of academic work with a fifteen-minute rest at the end of the first hour. In addition, each school, no matter how remote or how small, conducted adult education classes two nights a week, Tuesday and Thursday, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. On Friday night, there was a community recreational meeting directed by an Association of Parents and Neighbors. All these activities began each year on the second Monday in September and closed 36 weeks later.

Sergeant-teachers were under orders to adhere rigidly to the schedule, course of study, and school calendar prepared by the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army. Hence, the responsibility for the program of students after

53. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
54. Ibid.
1937 was in the hands of an office of instruction of the Section of Culture in the general headquarters of the Constitutional Army and the sergeant-teachers, in theory, were not given much leeway in selecting and conducting school projects and community activities that they deemed necessary and good. The program was pre-planned and the directions for guiding it were set down by the central authority. The rating scale served as a guide to the missionaries in judging the degree to which the teacher adhered to the prescriptions.

55. The civic-military rural institutions originally accepted the course of study of the urban schools, but by the end of the second year of their experience they had entered upon a phase of development transitional between the earlier stage of predominately city schools with a curriculum not too well adapted to rural living to schools of a true rural character with a six-year program designed to ruralize country children. By 1938 the latter type of a program was adopted. It was largely retained and blessed by those in charge of rural education under the Ministry of Education after 1940. As a result, many teachers went through the motions of directing projects, activities, and recitations that had little meaning or significance in the lives of rural children of that decade.

56. Perhaps there was some justification in this procedure in the early years while the system was being organized and perhaps even later, inasmuch as teachers lacked professional training and were given little supervision. Still, under such conditions, it is obvious that the day by day school work could not effectively contribute to the social and economic welfare of the community if it were not intimately related and based upon specific and immediate needs. In brief, the chief objection to the curriculum was its nation-wide application. There were common elements, no doubt, which all children should be taught. But the civic-military rural teachers were given little help in determining the purposeful activities, illustrations, and methods that were peculiar to the region in which they were teaching. Certainly after 1940, however, a more intelligent
While the boys were taking carpentry, mechanics, stone masonry, and painting, the girls were in domestic science. The latter learned how to weave cradles and baskets. Floss of the Ceiba tree was used to stuff cushions and mattresses; miniature model homes were built and furnished. Fruits and vegetables were canned; table linens, dresses, and other articles of clothing were made. Taxidermy enabled both boys and girls to stuff the birds and beasts of the Cuban countryside. Elementary ceramics was the means of showing children how to make basic utensils for home use. Emphasis in physical education was originally military in order "to develop a sense of discipline and patriotism," but the military aspects were gradually deemphasized after the first year. The stress throughout the course of study was on a theoretical and practical understanding of the arts and industries of rural Cuba, hygienic living, and good homemaking.

Although all schools were required to have a garden, orchard, and aviary, actually some teachers did not give the agricultural projects much prominence in the curriculum. One reason for this was that the teachers themselves were not adequately prepared to direct them. Another reason

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57. The sergeant-teachers, being poorly trained professionally, needed help in selecting experiences from the rural environment and adapting them to the abilities and capacities of children. They needed guidance in
was the difficulty in arousing an interest on the part of
the children and parents in the latest knowledge about
civilization, fertilization, and irrigation of farm land.
In many instances, when children devoted some time to cul-
tivating the school garden, parents objected and either
kept their offsprings home or had the child appear at
school after the practical subjects had been completed.
The parents felt that if the children were going to garden
they might as well be home taking care of their own plots.
This kind of an education parents could give them but not
that of the three R's. Hence, schools were conceived by
some of the parents as places to which children were sent
to study, not work. This kind of reasoning was a continual
barrier to the successful operation of a community school.
A visit in 1938 to a civic-military rural school in Havana
province and in 1941 to another in the same province
enriching and reconstructing the environment in which
they lived. Most of these men, however, had not much
experience with children; they knew little about how to
explain the work and content of instruction in lan-
guage that had meaning for the learner. At the same
time, the smallness of the civic-military rural school
required effective use of special plans, procedures,
and devices in order to meet the needs of rural children
and the local community. Unfortunately, the highly cen-
tralized character of civic-military rural education
interfered with adapting the course of study to the
peculiarities of the local situation. It retarded mod-
ifications even when they were recognized as desirable
and necessary by the sergeant-teachers. It made diffi-
cult the use of local resources and the recognition
of the needs of the pupils. It led to imposing and pre-
scribing a curriculum, with the result that teaching
was conceived as a means of carrying out a predeter-
mined program. Consequently, when a phase of the course
of study did not apply to a particular community, the
convinced the writer that many teachers were paying lip-service to the larger ends of civic-military rural education but in practice the children were being taught the three R's with a little theoretical and practical training in agriculture, crafts, and domestic arts.

Character development was sought through the inculcation of such ideals as human love, mutual respect, love of work, and the ability to cooperate with one's fellows. As a matter of fact, cooperatives were formed in all workshops from the first through the sixth grade. On the other hand, the importance of individual initiative for the progressive development of the individual, society, and the nation was emphasized in the process of producing articles in workshops and food on farms and selling them. The thought behind it all was that a humanitarian philosophy was not the answer to Cuba's problems. The Cuban campesino had to be taught to improve himself through his own efforts.

sergeant-teacher either ignored it and took the consequences of a poor rating or forced it upon the students. For example, all sergeant-teachers were required to teach the facts concerning certain communicable diseases. Smallpox was not a recurring menace in most regions of Cuba, but all instructors were required to teach about the disease, the need for vaccination, and to supervise the vaccination of all children.

58. Dr. Pamies, op. cit., Capítulo 4. Products secured from the garden and articles made in the workshops were sold by the Association of Parents and Neighbors of the rural school in which they were produced. The income received was applied to the purchase of garden implements, tools, and supplies. In some schools the income was given to the purchase of materials for the missionary dentist which were not furnished by the state. Dr. Pamies
Nationalism was another important aim of civic-military rural education. By means of stories and themes, the Cuban children were to know about their country's heroes and to glorify those who came to the defense of Cuban institutions and ideas. Children were taught "to venerate their native land, to defend its institutions and to worship its heroes."

What was most unusual for rural schools of Cuba, however, was the rule given to music in the civic-military rural institutions. The farm child generally did not know how to sing. So the schools were to teach singing as a means of keeping the child happy and contented on the farm. Margarita Acevedo Aguilar pointed this out in an article "La Música en la Escuela Rural Cubana."

The rural exodus is a real threat. The rural school by means of music will be able to make a perfect contribution to raising the spirit of the farmer that lay dormant until today. It can be a means of proving that his economic and social betterment is in the land.

provides an illustration: "Educational Mission No. 5 of Camagüey reported the income from the sale of onions by the school of the zone totaled more than $150. Birds and rabbits were bred and sold. Bee honey and wax, wine and vinegar, tomato sauce and puree, sweet potatoes and flour, and plantanos were but a few of the produce sold. The money was used to purchase supplies for the missionary dentist."

59. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, Motivaciones Escolares (La Habana: P. Fernandez y Cia., 1938), Preface.

60. Margarita Acevedo Aguilar, "La Música en la Escuela Rural Cubana," La Escuela Rural (Septiembre de 1941, p. 66.)
First grade. More specifically, the child in the first grade began the day in a civic-military rural school by marching and singing songs of an easy melody and a patriotic and moral theme. This was an opening exercise that was pursued in all grades. As daily activities, reading, writing, and arithmetic were organized around centers of student and community interest. Three times a week the pupil studied Spanish grammar, after which he was called on to describe plants, the human body, and phenomena of natural geography. The latter could be called nature study. Twice each week the basic habits of hygienic living were taught with an emphasis upon health rules and actual practice. This was accompanied by children sketching scenes of rural Cuban life as a means of creative expression. Civics and history were not named as subjects but the content was taught in connection with reading lessons, patriotic songs, and programs given on national holidays. Social development of children came through a school club whose activities were directed to a certain extent by the pupils organized as a student government. Sewing was limited to familiarizing the pupils with names and uses of the implements used, such as, scissors, thimble, needle, yarn, and thread.

Second grade. In the second grade, reading and writing were taught in connection with studies of the community, activities of children, and farm life. The four fundamental arithmetical operations were related whenever
possible to reading and writing activities. Practice in selecting seeds; planning, planting, and cultivating a garden; and care and feeding of farm animals made up the agriculture course. Many of these activities were organized as contests in order to arouse student interest. Experiences in domestic science included preserving garden produce; preparation of drinks from pineapples, lemons, and oranges; and the use of kitchen tools and implements. Other experiences revolved around the furnishing and decorating of a dollhouse. In sewing, the second-grade girl learned to baste and backstitch. Near the end of the year, each girl made doll clothes. The boys were taken into the workshops to learn elements of carpentry and mechanical arts. The social activities of the school club were continued for all students as a vital part of the curriculum. Physical education rounded out the other activities pursued each day of the week.

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays were devoted to nature study and geography. The method used was that of student walks in the country and afternoons in a school camp established some distance from the school. The community was studied to discover means of communication, type of industries and agriculture, markets and transportation facilities. On Tuesdays and Thursdays history of Cuba was studied largely by means of biographies of leading Cubans. On the same days rural hygiene, drawing, and singing were given.
Third Grade. Reading and writing in the third grade consisted of composing stories, letters, and biographies of great men and reading them in class. Three days each week, the material for the exercises was secured by a study of great men, their thoughts and their deeds as described in the basic reader, Motivaciones Escolares. Jose Marti was given the greatest attention. An attempt was made to illustrate how great moral principles played a vital role in the lives of these great men. The teachers were under instructions to inculcate such ideals as the importance of work, human love, mutual respect, collective cooperation, importance of capital and labor, individual initiative for personal, family, and national progress. Weights and measures as well as the monetary system were stressed in arithmetic. Nature study and the Spanish language were studied on three days of each week.

Geography, hygiene, civics, domestic science, and workshops were given on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Geography of Cuba consisted of a study of its population, topography, relationships to nearby countries, transportation and communication facilities, territorial divisions, principal cities, flora and fauna, and products. The fundamentals of human anatomy, botany, human and plant physiology, along with human illnesses, plant and animal diseases, and their prevention, were given under the heading of hygiene. Methods of purifying water were also studied and demonstrated.
Civics involved the study of the form of national government and other national institutions.

Theory and practices in agriculture were studied each day. This was accompanied by demonstrations in the preparation of such foods as butter, cheese, meat, and eggs. Care of animals even included bees, birds, fish, and rabbits. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, girls were given domestic arts and boys went into workshops. In domestic science girls were instructed on how to set the table, use fuels in cooking, wash and iron, darn, patch, and sew on buttons. Boys in workshops learned to paint, lay bricks, and varnish. All students participated in a project of planning and constructing a miniature rural home. As a part of all rest and recess periods, calisthenics and games were taught.

**Fourth grade.** Other than the academic subjects, the principal occupation of the fourth grade was the planting and cultivating of the school garden. Students were instructed in the preparation of land, the use of fertilizers, and the principles of transplantation and irrigation. The garden was prepared, planted and cultivated by the pupils. While this work was in progress the teacher reviewed the lessons in agriculture of the lower grades. Drawing was a part of the planning of a garden. A cooperative nursery and fertilizer station were managed by the pupils. For the final two months of the school year, the fourth grade directed the lower grades in preparing seed beds and readying
agricultural products for the annual expositions. Final examinations were over the principles and practices of agriculture. For the girls, domestic arts provided further lessons on home furnishings and making pieces of clothing for each child to wear.

**Fifth grade.** Although most of the civic-military rural schools only had four grades, a few had six or advanced students were organized by platoons. In these, the studies of the fifth grade were organized around the basic trades of Cuba. Workshop experiences were made very practical with the emphasis placed upon the production of useful things of the home. Drawing until this time was free and creative; now rules, compasses, and other instruments were made by the pupils and used in connection with the projects. Sketches were made of the potter's wheel and its operation explained. Fifth graders acted as assistants to sixth graders in making dishes, jars, and filters. Students made molds for tile, brick, and pottery. Principles and processes of all these operations were taught in and through concrete experience. The different methods involved in procedures were explained and demonstrated before students made drawings of their projects. Some of the projects were teacher-pupil conceived and planned. More elaborate projects in home furnishing and personal clothing were provided in domestic arts.

**Sixth grade.** Woodworking received major emphasis in the sixth grade. The project for the first two months of
the school year was to construct a beehive box. The function of the box, the appropriate woods to use, and the various suited types were studied before each student was free to draw the kind of a box he proposed to construct. A continuing activity for all boys was the repair of fences, doors, roofs, and other objects about the school as well as the construction of new equipment and buildings for the better functioning of the school. Instruction on the principles and processes in woodworking accompanied these projects. Each student undertook the plan and make three objects for home or school use. Starting with the midterm the project was building a small table and, when this was completed, pupils moved on to making school desks. The final project was constructing a tall chair for the home. The girls also had culminating experiences in domestic arts which eventuated in the skill of cutting and sewing a complete dress.

Thus it should be easy to understand how the sergeant-teacher, faced with a congested daily class program, complained about the difficulty of teaching four grades during the five-hour period and directing at the same time the many other practical courses and projects that made up the curriculum. Unusually short recitations had to be utilized and naturally there were deletions of those parts for which the sergeant-teachers were not well prepared to teach or had a particular dislike. More of this was done than those in
authority either realized or would admit. Especially was it practiced in those areas where parents objected to their children doing manual work in school. Naturally, the result was disastrous to the larger social-economic purposes of civic-military rural education, namely, the bettering of rural living. The conclusion reached by the writer, therefore, is that the community school idea was largely a theoretical plan that existed on paper more than in practice. Here and there it was implemented by

61. It must be recalled that civic-military rural education aimed to develop citizens with a consciousness of the spiritual and practical values which penetrated rural living in Cuba and to lay the foundations for agricultural and industrial progress. Each civic-military rural school was supposed to have a plot of land and domestic animals in order to initiate children into the processes and activities of farm living which would instill in them a love of nature and a conviction that rural activities were fundamental to the wealth of the nation. The hope was that such training would serve to hold the child on the farm. Such rigid prescriptions led to teaching agriculture for vocational purposes in those areas where children were likely to become minors or in a coastal town where children were interested in becoming fishermen. As pointed out previously in this thesis, one of the major errors in civic-military rural educational endeavors was the inappropriateness of this kind of education for immature and undeveloped children.

The curriculum should have been dedicated to providing those experiences to rural children which would have enabled them to live an understanding, active and useful life in their local and large environment. Instead, the civic-military rural school curriculum sought to cast each child in a rigid rural mold. The writer is of the opinion that the curriculum should have started with the backgrounds, experiences, and activities of rural children, the economic and social problems of the community, and the resources of the area, but the purpose should have been to give every child a well-rounded development. Rural children thereby would have been prepared to deal with the problems of their environment wherever they lived.
enthusiastic missionaries and teachers, especially during the military phase of the program from 1936 to 1940. When the system came under the control of the Ministry of Education, however, much of the enthusiasm and fire had spent itself. These schools then were primarily interested in preventing the development of an illiterate population.

Methods

Here and there mention was made of the methods for teaching the experiences outlined in the above curriculum, but what strikes one most in reading the literature on civic-military rural education is the scantiness of such references. There was much talk about "learning by doing" and those in authority repeatedly exhorted missionaries and teachers to make the civic-military rural institutions "schools of action." The so-called "progressive education theory" proposed, however, was a conglomeration of many incompatible ideas of John Dewey, Dr. Montessori, and Ellen Key. The textbook, Motivaciones Escolares, which was used after 1938, implemented this theory by organizing the content of the course around centers of interest, and in connection with each lesson projects and activities were developed in an effort to discourage mere memorization. Teachers were exhorted to utilize and develop interest as a means of school contests. The best composition written, the best garden crop raised, and the best piece of work produced
in the various specialized shops were displayed in an annual school exposition and appropriate awards granted. Then the missionaries gathered samples of outstanding work in each school for display at an annual mission-wide exhibit. This competition proved to be quite a challenge to pupils on the various grade levels.

In spite of all the theory and planning, however, visits to the civic-military rural schools revealed the teachers were pretty much routinized. Most of the sergeant-teachers conducted their classes in a manner typical of traditional elementary education with an emphasis upon the three R's. Although there were ample opportunities for learning by doing, especially when the content of the curriculum concerned community activities and problems, even here the teaching method tended to be formal and pretty much by prescription. There were some teachers no doubt who did an amazing work and actually were a real influence in the community. Too many, in the words of Mr. Paul Tate of Camagüey, "muddled through."

62. Dr. Alberto Pames was most enthusiastic about the exhibit. 63. The effect of army regimentation, no matter how much it may be denied, established a spirit of discipline and obedience in and out of the classroom. Some sergeant-teachers were more stern and unbending in their manners than others. When Colonel Batista became aware that the chief objection to his educational program was the military spirit that dominated it, the post of military specialist in the mission was eliminated and the military aspects of the physical education course were deleted. Then in May of 1938 General Order Number 79 decreed that "the name civic-rural schools would henceforth replace that of civic-military rural schools," but the sergeant-
Students

At least one beneficial result of the military character of the school system was a more effective enforcement of school attendance. Ordinarily, all healthy children in the school district attended the civic-military rural school regularly, inasmuch as attendance was obligatory for minors six to fourteen years of age, with night classes being on a voluntary basis for illiterate and semi-literate adults. Each year, the educational mission directed a school census in its zone, but the actual work was done by teachers with the assistance of members of the Association of Parents and Neighbors. Children living within the radius of six kilometers of a civic-military rural school or proposed location for such a school were enumerated, as were the illiterate and unmarried youth, fifteen to nineteen years of age.

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64. Every chief of mission, missionary, and sergeant-teacher was instructed to enforce the compulsory education laws in his area. The military nature of the system enabled the teachers to carry out this instruction with greater success than was true later when the schools were turned over to the Ministry of Education. There is ample evidence to show that parents who failed to send their children to school were fined, but there is other evidence to indicate that attendance grew more irregular during harvest season.

65. El Consejo Corporativo de Educación, Sanidad y Beneficencia. (La Habana: Instituto Cívico-Militar, 1937), pp. 76-77. In theory, the office of the Adjutant-General analyzed the total census figures to determine causes for any increase or decrease of registration and to re-locate and create schools as needed, but this was
The power to expel a student from school was not within the authority of a sergeant-teacher. If he believed that a pupil merited such punishment, a brief of the reasons for his decision was submitted to the chief of the mission. The latter summarized the case for the consideration of the provincial inspector and, if he agreed, the Chief of the Regiment was notified. Final authority to remove the child from school rested with this regular army officer. Although discipline was very strict and students obeyed, the sergeant-teacher was frequently reminded about the rights and duties of children. For example, the teacher was instructed not to assign work to students that was not of an educational nature. Nor was the child to be punished in a way that would impair his personal dignity.

Standards for promotion and failure of the children were set by the Section of Culture which also composed all final examinations. At the end of the year students were rated in each course by credit points from one to five. The sum of the credits divided by the number of subjects gave the pupil an average point rating. In class work

seldom done.

66. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit., Capítulo XXXV.
67. A cumulative record was maintained for each pupil. The general matriculation register included such data as name, age, and grade; grade in which the pupil might withdraw; name and residence of the parents; date of enrollment; date of reentry should there be one; and teacher observations and notations on each pupil.
sixty was set as the passing grade; this figure represented one credit point. A promotion list was submitted to the chief of the mission and all cases of failure had to be explained and documented. Upon graduation from the fourth or sixth grade, depending upon the type of school, the student was granted a certificate on which was stated his cumulative average, the grade that he liked best, the kind of agricultural work in which he distinguished himself, as well as his other school accomplishments. The diploma was signed by the teacher or director and the chief of the mission.

The class was organized as a military platoon. Ranks of a military character were granted by the sergeant-teacher to those individuals who demonstrated ability and capacity. The highest rank conferred was that of sergeant and he became assistant to the teacher for a period of eight weeks. At the end of that time the examination records and other accumulated evidences in the students' files were weighed and a new selection made. The granting of this rank was on occasion for an elaborate assembly program.

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66. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, *op. cit.*
69. Orden General Nro. 219, *op. cit.*, Capítulo XXXVIII.
70. Each child who enrolled received two uniforms of blue overalls, a pair of shoes, hat, and several pairs of shorts. If the family could pay, a small charge was made, but otherwise the clothing was given free of charge.
71. Also appointed was a pupil monitor for each specialty in the workshop and domestic science. It was the duty of these assistant-teachers to care for the equipment and to help in a variety of ways. They were likewise
Rural children seemed to enjoy civic-military rural schools; they were well-behaved and worked hard. It must be remembered that these schools were established in localities where there had never before been any educational facilities whatsoever. So this was the first opportunity that many had to attend an educational institution. They either walked or rode on horseback to school. Because clothing was no longer furnished after the schools were transferred to civil authorities, many of the children were then forced to go barefoot in all weather and to attend school clad in scanty garments.

The size of classes varied greatly from district to district. H. Freeman Matthews of our State Department, reporting on a visit to a civic-military rural school, found a total of 56 pupils. Colonel Batista in a memorandum to the Secretary of State of the United States wrote: "For each school there had been calculated a matriculation of from 50 to 80 children during the daytime." The two schools visited by the writer had an enrollment of 40

responsible for the garden and domestic animals of the school during vacations.
72. Mr. Paul Tate, Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Pamies, Dr. Brito, Dr. Morales, and many others attested to this fact.
73. Since coeducation was widely accepted in Cuba and rural conditions necessitated it, boys and girls were educated in the same room.
74. Dispatch No. 7835, op. cit.
75. Dispatch No. 7662, op. cit.
and 51 children respectively. The difficulty encountered in directing such large numbers of children in an activity program is too obvious to require comment.

Several of the civic-military rural school pupils at the end of the fourth grade transferred to St. Paul's School in Camagüey. Mr. Paul Tate, headmaster, tested these pupils and placed them in the sixth grade. They progressed well and did better than most of the children educated in urban schools. The civic-military rural school students who came to him, however, were chronologically older than urban pupils, which in part accounted for their rapid advancement. He estimated that only about 15 per cent of the enrollment of any civic-military rural school in the province of Camagüey ever completed the full four grades, with the average graduating class being about eight students. The majority of the children attending civic-military schools, therefore, received a very meager education. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz admitted this indirectly in his diary when he wrote:

We, who made great efforts to establish a rural children's home in our mission, were not able to derive much satisfaction from it, in spite of the fact that we were able to approve eight pupils for entrance.  

Interpreting this statement, it means that from the thirty civic-military rural schools of that particular mission in Oriente province, only eight boys were found who could meet the minimum requirements for entrance into the

76. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, op. cit.
fifth grade of the rural higher primary instruction of that zone. This should be sufficient proof that in general the schools achieved little in the way of child development and that the great majority of the children left school before the end of three or four years of schooling. A few of those who completed four grades went on to a provincial school of agriculture, the local children's rural boarding home, the home of rural economy, and perhaps a school of commerce. It was the boys, in most cases, who went on to some higher primary school; girls stayed at home.

A sketch of the education history of Eduardo Martínez Fajardo is presented as an illustration of the progress made by one of the civic-military rural school graduates. Eduardo entered a civic-military rural school in 1938 in the municipio of Jiguani, Oriente province. Although fourteen years old, he had never attended any school prior to that time. Four grades were completed in two years with a record that won him a scholarship to the children's rural boarding school of that area. The fifth-and sixth-grade curriculum of the latter school was given in one year, so that at the age of seventeen, he was able to enter the first class of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School, which had been reorganized and placed under the direction of the

77. Cf. p. 312.
78. Cf. p. 354.
newly created Ministry of Education. He completed the four-year course in rural education in 1945 but, at the age of 21, Eduardo Martínez Fajardo decided he wanted to become a teacher in an urban school. Consequently, he attended the normal school of Havana province where he received a certificate to teach in the urban schools. Since 1948, Mr. Martínez has been an instructor in a private school in Rancho Boyeros, a residential suburb of Havana. As predicted by those who questioned the advisability of extending educational opportunities into the rural areas, here is but one example of the educated campesino who no longer desired to live and work in rural Cuba even after he has been trained to that end.

*Flor Martiana.* Many students, such as Eduardo Martínez Fajardo, were inspired to excel in school work and to display exemplary conduct as a result of the annual salute of the "*Flor Martiana*" that was initiated on June 22, 1937. This was a program to honor the child who had the best academic record and conduct in each civic-military rural school. To him was awarded a "small artificial pansy, immaculately white as a symbol of the thought and personality of José Martí," with each of the five petals representing the five stripes of the revolutionary flag of September 4th. The center of the flower carried the inscription of Civic-Military School and the year of the bestowal of the award.

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79. *Orden General Nro. 124, El Ejército Constitutional (22 de junio de 1937).*
The child wore the emblem on the left side of his breast. In a ceremony celebrated in the local school the teacher announced the name of the local winner of the honor by presenting him with a diploma of recognition in the presence of the student body and parents.

The second week of April of each year the sergeant-teacher selected a boy in his school for the honor, taking into consideration his work, conduct, and achievement in examinations. The Chief of Mission was informed of the selection and the basis for making it. The sergeant-teacher was notified by the Chief of the Regiment as to when the local representative was to be sent to the mission headquarters. There the boys were escorted as a group to Havana and the "José Martí" School of Improvement for festivities from the 18th to the 22nd of May. The first day, anniversary of the death of José Martí, was the occasion for each student to lay a white rose on the monument of the apostle. The remaining days in Havana were taken up with instruction in military exercises, school songs, and entertainment.

The girls of the civic-military rural schools also had their "Flor Martiana." One girl was chosen from each school at the time the boy was selected. Their fiesta was held in the provincial capitals and flowers were laid on the local statute of Martí. Five girls from each province were then
chosen to accompany the boys to Havana. Each girl wrote her name on a paper and dropped it into a box. The first five names drawn were the ones to make the journey to Havana to witness the Salud Annual and to attend the summer course in home economics for girls from May 23 to August 31, at Rancho Boyeros.

Adult Education

It was recognized from the beginning that if the civic-military rural schools concerned themselves with children only, they would not accomplish the desired outcomes of rural reconstruction and betterment. Whatever the schools might do for the children, communities with ignorant and superstitious adults would quickly undermine. The civic-military rural schools from the very start, therefore, concerned themselves with adults as well as with children. Since the ideal was to undertake a direct attack, the sergeant-teacher was instructed to make his school a community center where the country folk might come in contact with one another and develop some degree of pride and solidarity.

Evening schools. Night classes were held twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. They were primarily dedicated to the elimination of adult illiteracy but the interests of the sergeant-teacher usually determined what was taught. For example, Ricardo Joaquín Cepero was thirteen years old when his family moved into the interior of Santa
Clara province. His primary education had already been completed but he liked school and desired to continue. Since there were no higher primary institutions within travel distance, he attended the night sessions of the local civic-military rural school. The sergeant-teacher could read, write, and speak English, so Ricardo spent the next two years studying the language before he received a scholarship to "José Martí" Rural Normal School in 1942. At present, he is instructor in English at the Academia Brito in General Pérez, Havana province.

The enrollment in these night classes varied greatly from school to school. Colonel Batista reported matriculation in them "to be from 25 to 30 adults," but this appears to be much too optimistic an estimate.

The chief criticism of the adult education program was the disparity between what the authorities proclaimed was being achieved and what was actually attained. The evening classes were to be places where the rural people could discuss common interests and local problems, and where health campaigns could be initiated. It was to be an opportunity for demonstrating the advantages of modern methods of living. Actually, they were little more than places to eliminate illiteracy.

80. Dispatch Nro. 7662, op. cit.
81. Dispatch Nro. 7835, op. cit. H. Freeman Matthews found a dozen adults attending the evening classes in the civic-military rural schools he visited. Mr. Paul Tate
Association of Parents and Neighbors. A little more successful were the Associations of Parents and Neighbors which each sergeant-teacher was ordered to organize for carrying out programs of amusement and recreation in his community. On the second and fourth Friday of each month, from seven to nine, programs of a recreational nature for rural families were arranged which included radio broadcasts, movies, pupil recitations, music recitals, and adult discussions. Local programs had to be approved by the chief of the mission and be of an educational character.

Radio programs were broadcast from a station directed by a bureau in the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army and received by battery operated sets controlled so that they could receive only the bureau's transmissions. The two-hour broadcasts were informative, cultural, recreational, and musical in nature, with political and religious themes prohibited. The informative part of the program dealt with news about the cultural undertakings of the army, the army itself, and the nation. The cultural plans included lectures, discussions, and propaganda in favor of the cooperative movement. It was considered educational to inform the country people of the benefits of the civic-military organization and other national

Note:
82. Dr. Alberto Pamié, op. cit.
83. Dispatch Number 7662, op. cit.
institutions. Stories, comic sketches, jokes, and popular Cuban music were the recreational features.

The most that can be said about the adult education program and the Association of Parents and Neighbors is that they did effect, to a limited extent, a better relationship between the home and the school. Here and there some real progress and improvement were effected in school construction and equipment, but never to the degree hoped for and expected by the planners of the program.

Conclusion

A comparison of the civic-military rural schools with the elementary schools in the United States is difficult, especially in view of their aim to establish a reality out of the theories about the social functions of schools. Much more akin to them are the community schools of our southern states which are experimenting in social reconstruction.

In the civic-military rural education program the army attempted to create democratic educational institutions to bring about social and economic improvement in the community, but the very nature of military discipline and

84. In conjunction with the civic-rural schools and the Neighborhood Club, circulating libraries were to be organized under the name of "traveling libraries." These were to be financed and directed by the Corporate Council of Education, Health, and Welfare, a body created by the army to coordinate its many welfare undertakings. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada frankly admitted that none of the libraries were ever established.
organization made this impossible. They were democratic in the sense that they were dedicated to serving the community. They were never of and by the community, however, since the army dictated the program, designated the teachers, and ruled in an arbitrary manner.

In material aspects the civic-military rural schools were very poor indeed. Any attempt to construct expensive modern buildings, however, would have been foolish in view of the poverty of the communities in which these schools were located. Perhaps it is fair to say that Cuba provided its rural areas with the best schools that it knew how to provide at that time even though the rigidity of army control, and later the centralized authority of the Ministry of Education, prevented steady improvement. The facts indicate that actual indifference and apathy settled over the system.

Civic-military rural education did not achieve much in the way of redemption of the rural people of Cuba who continue to the present day, in large part, neglected, exploited, and illiterate. Visits to some of the civic-military rural schools and interviews with a few of those in position to make neutral judgments confirm the opinion that the civic-military rural education achieved little in the way of transforming living habits of the country folk.
A synthesis of the civic-military education activity would also lead to the conclusion that the civic-military rural movement was only partially successful in extending the opportunity for an elementary education to the Cuban countryside. Some 1,089 schools were permanently established where it was estimated that over 3,000 were needed. The most that can be said is that it was an idealistic effort to live up to the aim of more nearly equalizing educational opportunity throughout the island. Yet it appears that many more years must elapse before every child of the island will find a school within his reach.

The most impressive aspect of the entire civic-military rural education movement in Cuba was the part played by the sergeant-teachers. These men were enthusiastically desirous of going into the rural areas which the regular teachers of the day did not care to do. Unfortunately, their lack of professional training, teaching experience, and understanding of rural conditions often interfered with a successful prosecution of their work.

Admittedly the civic-military rural education plan was too big to be achieved. That any of it was ever attained is more to be wondered at than the fact that it was not accomplished in its entirety. Perhaps the greatest shortcoming of the movement was the method by which the goals were to be secured. A benevolent few were to effect better rural conditions by authoritarian means. Force did achieve
more immediate results on the surface byt certainly it did not bring about a permanent spiritual conversion so necessary for lasting and durable consequences. Had the movement been a little slower and more democratic in process the faint ray of hope that it inspired might still be a significant part of the heritage of rural Cuba today.

In conclusion, it should be said that the problems of Cuban rural education were not, and are not today, insuperable. There is nothing inherent in the situation that cannot be adequately coped with if public policy, local and national, will make available these three things:

1. A teaching staff devoted to the education of rural children and equipped by education for that important work.
2. National and local leadership to inspire the establishment and intelligent operation of the kind of schools needed.
3. Financial resources necessary to maintain adequate educational opportunities.

If these three are supplied and rural education is guided by democratic principles, Cuba should some day achieve its goal of equality of educational opportunity.
Chapter VIII

Educational Missions

Once the policy of providing education to rural communities was decided upon by the Constitutional Army in February, 1936, the need for systematic in-service training and inspection of teachers was recognized. Educational missions (las missiones educativas) were created to meet this need. In a very real sense they were to personify the rural cultural change that the Revolution of 1933 had promised. In theory, the missionaries were to be far more than school inspectors and supervisors. They were to be promoters of education and progress in the areas where for centuries misery and ignorance had existed.

The Mexican Heritage

The Cuban educational missions, however, did not constitute a unique feature of Latin American education. The Mexican school system had introduced these agencies as early as 1922. There they were known as cultural missions, consisted of six instructors, and were directed by a Bureau of

Cultural Missions in the Secretariat of Public Education,

The conditions faced by the Mexican missionaries were in part the same as those faced the Cubans in 1936. There were no funds for buildings, materials, and equipment. Formal education had been unknown in the rural areas and the great mass of the people were illiterate. The schools had to be staffed by a group of itinerant teachers who would circulate from school to school in the role of administrators, supervisors, teachers, community workers, and creative leaders. Consequently, the Cubans had a wealth of experience

2. There was a missionary for each of the specialized areas as follows: agriculture, rural industries, popular arts, physical education, health, and community service. Inasmuch as the rural school was the center of the social and economic life of the community, the last named missionary was considered the chief of the mission. As an instructor, he taught domestic science, care and feeding of children, clothmaking, and general homemaking. The specialist in rural industries was an expert in pottery-making, weaving, soap-making, and tanning. The teacher of popular arts was a specialist in music, drawing, and drama. The health specialist was usually a graduate nurse.

3. The need for the cultural missions in Mexico had been great because many of the teachers originally selected for the Mexican rural schools had no professional training at all and very little academic training. In fact, they were recruited from people who knew rural life and were skilled in agriculture. They were required to know how to read and write but these were about the only academic prerequisites. The missions, therefore, served as traveling normal schools of specialists who supplied at least the minimum essentials in knowledge and subject matter, professional outlook, and teaching techniques. Each mission was assigned to a certain territory which was divided into zones or regions. In each zone, a certain base or center was selected in which an institute consisting of a series of short courses was held. A certain number of teachers of the zone gathered in this center for a 30-day course. They lodged in the community but ate in a mission dining room.
upon which to draw in developing a program of rural educa-
tion for the island.

The Cuban authorities in charge of civic-military rural
education, however, never acknowledge their indebtedness
to the Mexican experiment. They insisted that the education-
al missions were a Cuban creation designed to meet the pe-
culiar needs of rural Cuba within the confines of its re-
sources and limitations. In fact, they said, the inspira-
tion for the system of educational missions came from the
great Cuban martyr, José Martí, who in 1887 wrote:

Our men must labor tirelessly for the immediate
establishment of practical agricultural stations and
of a group of itinerant teachers who travel through
the countryside teaching to the dwellers in valleys
and remote places the things necessary for them to
know of the spirit, government, and earth.5

The evidence is great, however, in favor of the con-
clusion that the Cuban mission system was a continuation
of the Mexican experiment in cultural missions. One thing,

Likewise, Mexico experimented in permanent missions.
These were permanently assigned to a zone to serve as in-
service training agencies working not only with teachers
but with the adult population as well. The mission moved
from school to school providing definite and practical
observations and advice. At least once a year, the
mission was required to visit each school and community
in its zone. Las Missiones Culturales en 1927, (México:
la Secretaria de Educación, 1938).

5. The Foreign Policy Association of the United States,Inc.,
Problems of the New Cuba (New York: Foreign Policy Associa-
6. It is difficult to believe that this wealth of a decade
and more of experience with cultural missions in rural
education in Mexico would be ignored by Cubans who knew
about it.
indeed, the two countries had in common. Both had missions which aimed at bettering the rural community. Even the instructions to the Cuban missionaries, relative to community improvement, closely resembled those of Mexico. But from the very beginning, civic-military rural educational missions differed very considerably from Mexican cultural missions, and the difference steadily increased as time went on. The Mexican missions were revolutionary in character; they attempted not only to lift the entire life of the masses from its low level toward ever higher planes, but also to train the people for a new social order. This gave the Mexican cultural missions a strong socialistic tendency. They were formed to prepare the ground for a new social order and a more just and equalitarian society. The Cuban educational missions, on the other hand, were neither socialistic in dedication nor in methods.

**Establishment of Educational Missions**

Actually, the educational missions were not a part of the original civic-military rural school plan. The first three hundred schools were established from February to April, 1936, without the services of educational missionaries. Since the sergeant-teachers were in need of in-service

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training and supervision, which the regular army officers could not give, it became imperative to furnish them with some professional help. The sergeant-teacher needed assistance in building a school house, in meeting the problem of teaching many subjects and directing the various activities in the school program, and in undertaking the work of community betterment. Consequently, an educational mission was created to supervise the civic-military rural schools in each provincial territory. The rapid increase in the number of civic-military rural schools, however, necessitated the division of the provincial territory into zones of approximately fifty schools with a mission over each.

This number was later reduced to twenty-five or thirty schools.

9. Orden General Nro. 112, 9 de junio de 1936. The original educational mission consisted of five specialists, namely, those in education, military instruction, agriculture, trades, and health.


11. The number varied because of an attempt to maintain each zone of a comparable area and yet to keep within natural boundaries of rivers, roads, or mountains, wherever possible. Orden General Nro. 172, agosto 23, 1936, provided for the establishment of a laboratory in each mission zone for the purpose of investigating cases of malaria, intestinal parasitism, tuberculosis, typhoid, and syphilis.
281

During these early months the mission personnel functioned without any special training. Then on September 23, 1936, a two-month course was begun. Those who were already serving as missionaries, together with newly appointed ones, attended this course. Selection of the missionaries was effected by means of a competitive examination and ratings based on preparation and experience in special fields. Consequently, the great majority of the first missionaries, who staffed the 29 missions throughout the interior of the island, were graduates of institutes, professional schools in the University of Havana, or special schools on the secondary level. Later when the necessary number of

12. The missions that were functioning by the end of 1936 were listed in Orden General Nro. 257 of December, 1936, as follows:

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<th>Province</th>
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<td>Oriente</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camagüey</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santa Clara</td>
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<td>Matanzas</td>
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<td>Havana</td>
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<td>Pinar del Río</td>
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<td>Pinar del Río</td>
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13. The missionaries with whom the writer was acquainted were of a high type and enthusiastically devoted to their work. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz provides an excellent illustration of the formation of missionaries. He was appointed a missionary on September 3, 1936. As a graduate of the provincial normal school of Havana, he knew very little about rural conditions. He completed the two-month course and was sent to Palma Soriano in Oriente province to be a member of mission #4 in the regular school district #125 of the Secretary of Education. Others, as Dr. Aguila and Dr. Texedor, received leaves from the Department of Education in order to become missionaries.
teachers and specialists were secured to staff all missions, the training period was increased to one-year.

The mission system reached final form on August 27, 1937. Forty missions, staffed with 200 missionaries, were distributed as follows:

Regiment No. 1 "Maceo," Oriente Province
12 Educational Missions
12 First Lieutenants (Chiefs)
24 Second Lieutenants (Specialists)
36 Sub Lieutenants (Specialists)
1 Third Sergeant (Laboratory Practice)
11 Corporals (Laboratory Practice)
300 Third Sergeants (Teachers)

Regiment No. 2 "Agramonte," Camagüey Province
8 Educational Missions
8 First Lieutenants (Chiefs)
16 Second Lieutenants (Specialists)
24 Sub Lieutenants (Specialists)
1 Third Sergeant (Laboratory Practice)
7 Corporals (Laboratory Practice)
200 Third Sergeants (Teachers)

Regiment No. 3 "Leoncio Vidal," Las Villas Province
11 Educational Missions
11 First Lieutenants (Chiefs)
22 Second Lieutenants (Specialists)
33 Sub-lieutenants (Specialists)
1 Third Sergeant (Laboratory Practice)
10 Corporals (Laboratory Practice)
275 Third Sergeants (Teachers)

Regiment No. 4 "Placido," Matanzas Province
4 Educational Missions
4 First Lieutenants (Chiefs)
8 Second Lieutenants (Specialists)
12 Sub Lieutenants (Specialists)
1 Third Sergeant (Laboratory Practice)
100 Third Sergeants (Teachers)
3 Corporals (Laboratory Practice)

Regiment No. 5 "Martí," Havana Province
2 Educational Missions
  2 First Lieutenants (Chiefs)
  4 Second Lieutenants (Specialists)
  6 Sub-Lieutenants (Specialists)
  1 Third Sergeant (Laboratory Practice)
  1 Corporal (Laboratory Practice)
  50 Third Sergeants (Teachers)

Regiment No. 8 "Rius Rivera," Pinar del Río
3 Educational Missions
  3 First Lieutenants (Chiefs)
  6 Second Lieutenants (Specialists)
  9 Sub-Lieutenants (Specialists)
  1 Third Sergeant (Laboratory Practice)
  2 Corporals (Laboratory Practice)
  75 Third Sergeants (Teachers)

Hence, it is evident that each educational mission had one first lieutenant who held a degree of doctor of pedagogy and who, as chief of mission, served as specialist in education. Although the original specialized areas of a mission, besides that of education, were military instruction, agriculture, trades and health, later the post of military instructor was eliminated and a teacher of rural economy was added along with a dentist, veterinary teacher, and a laboratory technician. General headquarters reserved the right to add such specialists as those of physical education and industries whenever local needs created a demand for them. Actually, none were ever appointed. With the exception of the home-economics teachers, all of the missionaries were of the male sex and other than the chiefs of mission and laboratory technicians, held the ranks of

second-lieutenant and sub-lieutenant. The latter specialists were corporals and third-sergeants. As a matter of actual practice, therefore, a missionary was an individual with some training and experience in his particular field of endeavor, whose outstanding qualification was his enthusiasm and devotion to the civic-military rural ideal.

General Functions of Missionaries

The primary function entrusted to all educational missionaries was that of improving the sergeant-teacher culturally and professionally. Likewise, the missionaries were to inspire the sergeant-teacher in a zeal for his work. Still another function was to develop popular enthusiasm leading to the economic and social improvement of the communities and zones in which the missions operated. In order to carry on these functions the educational missions served as follows:


17. A great many of the missionaries with whom the writer was acquainted were aware of their professional deficiencies and sought to overcome them by attending the School of Education of the University of Havana during the summer sessions and, if within travel distance, on Saturday mornings.

18. *Orden General Nro. 219*, op. cit., Capítulo XVII, "De las Obligaciones Fundamentales de los Misioneros."
In-service training function. The function of in-service training of sergeant-teachers grew out of the initial necessity of placing in charge of the schools teachers wholly untrained professionally. The rapidity with which civic-military rural schools were founded did not provide sufficient time to require any real professional education as a prerequisite to placement. For the most part, the graduates from the normal schools or the School of Education of the University of Havana had traditionally refused to leave the cities for teaching positions in the rural area. The civic-military rural idea, it is true, attracted a large number of the former and a few of the latter into the active reserve of the Section of Culture. But the traditional training received by these people was considered inadequate for the new kind of rural teaching projected by the civic-military rural movement. So the educational missions were relied upon to supply at least the minimum essentials in rural content and teaching methods to sergeant-teachers. The missionary was to demonstrate
in his field how teachers could put into practice "learning by doing." In providing these experiences, he was to treat the sergeant-teacher as a chief of his school and, therefore, not to criticize or censure him in the presence of his pupils.

In practice the instructional work of the missionary lacked reality and effectiveness and the demonstrations undertaken by him were very superficial. Since the missionary visited each school in his zone once a year, at the most, and remained there for only two days, it was impossible to achieve any substantial or permanent development in personnel. Obviously, by the time the

19. Ibid., Capítulo XVIII.
20. The schools in the zones were so frequently isolated that travel time to and from them made intensive supervision of the instructional program practically impossible. Not only was frequent visitation impossible for the missionary but frequent meetings of small groups of teachers for discussion of common problems were not held. Actually, these things could have been done, especially during vacation periods, but the civic-military rural teachers were given the summer months to themselves.

In fact, there was much confusion throughout the entire mission due to the lack of an overall plan of work. The chief of mission in the general meeting at the start of each school-year, should have evolved a program indicating the proposed visits of the missionaries for that particular academic year. This general plan should then have been made known to all the teachers and missionaries of the zone. In the process of evolving this program, all teachers and missionaries should have been invited to participate in the planning. This procedure would have served to put the chief of mission in closer contact with the teachers, missionaries, and the problems connected with their work. It would have provided a means for a greater exchange of ideas among the missionaries of different specialized fields.
missionary made a second visit to a school, the first observation was too far removed to be of much help in creatively supervising the sergeant-teachers. The members of the mission, as a result, did little to provide the in-service training so badly needed by sergeant-teachers.

**Inspirational function.** Another purpose of the missionary's visit to the isolated rural schools was to encourage the sergeant-teachers who, in view of the inertia of the country folk, might be tempted to abandon the program for rural improvement. To this end, each missionary was expected to exhibit the spirit of service, devotion, and faith in his work, and to leave behind in each school and community some evidence of a permanent contribution resulting from the practice of his specialty.

A close examination of this phase of the missionary's work reveals that these specialists only temporarily created drive and enthusiasm where it had not already existed. By the time a missionary made a second visitation, he found the interval of a year or more was too great to maintain the enthusiasm of the teacher and people of the community. It is evident that under these conditions only a very limited number of rural teachers were permanently improved, while a greater number were left without the encouragement and inspiration needed. As a matter of fact, Mr. Paul Tate of Camagüey reported that when the missionaries did arrive at a school in most instances
they "flashed their brass and authority" so that a poor 21
teacher-supervisor relationship resulted.

On the other hand, those in charge of civic-military rural education maintained that the high percentage of school attendance and the high degree of community cooperation was achieved only through the efforts of the Civic-military rural educational missions. As Dr. Ramón de la Cruz put it: "The missionaries were needed to maintain balance in the civic-military rural program and to keep the sergeants working." Since each missionary was a specialist who was narrowly interested in the teaching of his own field and since he made a visit but once a year, it is difficult to understand how the missionaries could effect such an end. Moreover, the widespread interest that was shown by civic-military rural teachers in their work in 1936 and 1937 largely grew out of the hopes expressed in the Revolution of 1933. It is the opinion of the writer that the zest and drive of the sergeant-teachers in this early period were in all probability the ardor so often displayed in the first stages of all missionary work. By 1940, however, almost all of this enthusiasm had waned and most of the country people had reconciled themselves to the impossibility of securing the economic and social reforms held forth by the revolutionary leaders of

21. Mr. Paul Tate is headmaster of St. Paul's School and United States Consul in Camagüey.
the post-Machado period. It was then that the missionaries faced the greatest task in maintaining teacher morale.

**Inspectional function.** The function that all missionaries most successfully fulfilled was that of inspecting the civic-military rural schools of their zone. Inspectorial responsibilities included the supervision of their specialty throughout the zone, enforcement of regulations and orders issued by headquarters, and seeing that the course of study and community service programs were being strictly followed.

At the end of every visit each missionary was required to submit a summary report to the chief of mission on his findings and to rate each sergeant-teacher's achievements. As such, the missionary was really a district inspector who checked on each teacher of the zone. Since he was not in a community long enough to make a specialized study of its resources and limitations, the missionary was not in a position to know whether the teacher was lax in accomplishing what he was ordered to achieve or conditions prevented the attainment of the goals. Moreover, he was not in a position to know how many of the reforms or activities inaugurated were discontinued by the sergeant-teacher and the community soon after his departure.

Under the circumstances, therefore, the missionaries conceived of their responsibilities as inspectorial rather
than creative supervision. The fact that the civic-military rural educational program was standardized and desk-make interfered with the attainment of the latter end. Furthermore, the kind of training given the missionaries was no help in this direction. The short courses in methods of teaching the practical subjects left no time for courses in general education or demonstrations to indicate ways by which the special fields could be related to life experiences. For this reason, the academic work of the school was usually unrelated to the workshop experiences.

Social welfare function. In his role as a social welfare agent, the missionary was to undertake community projects with the help of the local people. He was to interest the country folk in the work of the school and the educational mission. A cooperative marketing association was to be established in each community.

Some of these objectives were achieved. Most of the schools, for example, were constructed by local people and the land was usually donated by a local resident. As a result of these efforts the civic-military rural educational system of Cuba was expanded with very little cost to the national government. In addition, almost all the equipment, such as carpentry benches, bookshelves, furniture, and apparatus, was constructed by the pupils under the direction of the specialists. Another example of
community service was the water filter which is now pretty generally known throughout rural Cuba because of the drive made by the missionaries to popularize its use in the home. Finally, the newly constructed bohío school-house provided the guajiro with ideas of a better type of rural residence. In the last analysis, therefore, the achievements of the missionaries in community improvement can best be measured in the number of schools established, number of children and adults in attendance, a few physical improvements introduced, and the cooperative undertakings effected. It is obvious that many intangible achievements, which varied greatly from mission to mission, can not be objectively appraised. But the conclusion can safely be reached that they were, in general, much less than were hoped for or expected.

In implying that the missionaries left only a transitory effect on the communities in the zone in which they operated care should be taken to point out the limitations under which these school people worked. There were many communities in which open antagonism and hostility were displayed to the educational and social program of the civic-military rural movement. Apathy and indifference of parents in the backward and isolated communities where the missionaries desired most to effect change was a constant source of discouragement. Even after local projects

22. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit.
were underway, lack of cooperation was a continual barrier to successful and full realization of many objectives. Had it not been for the authority commanded by the military uniform in a few places, there probably would have been no school or teacher permitted there. At times the difficulties encountered seemed insurmountable, especially during the early years of the civic-military rural movement. These hardships and barriers must always be kept in mind when appraising the work of community improvement the educational missionaries achieved or failed to accomplish.

**Instructional function.** The final function of the educational missionaries was that of serving as a corps of teachers for the rural children's boarding homes which offered higher primary education to the rural population and which served as headquarters for the educational mission. These schools and their work will be described later in this chapter. Suffice it to say here that through the efforts of the educational missionaries rural Cuba received higher primary schools for the first time in the history of the island. Since the national government had no finances for the construction and equipment of these homes, the missionaries by sponsoring fiestas and parties as a means of raising money were personally responsible for their creation.

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Missionaries at Work

All of the missionaries of a zone met in council every Monday morning under the chairmanship of the chief of mission to exchange experiences of the previous week and to receive instructions for the week in course. The rest of the day was dedicated to teaching their specialties in the rural children's boarding home and planning the class programs for the resident teachers to follow for the remainder of the week.

Early Tuesday morning each missionary undertook the journey to the civic-military rural school he had been assigned on the previous day, not having to return until Friday afternoon of the same week. Inasmuch as some of the schools were 50 or 60 kilometers distance from the mission headquarters and were separated by very poor

24. "Exposición de las Obras en las Escuelas Rurales Cívico-Militares de la Mision Educativa No. 5," Cultura Militar y Naval (Febrero de 1938), pp. 55-58. A much more comprehensive planning session was held the first two weeks of September of each year. In this conference were gathered all the missionaries and teachers of the zone to discuss mutual problems and difficulties encountered in the previous year.

Still another means of getting missionaries and teachers together each year was an exposition of the work accomplished by pupils in the civic-military rural schools of the zone. This was accompanied by a series of musical and recreational programs in which missionaries, teachers, pupils, and parents participated. The exhibits lasted two to three weeks and attracted visitors from all parts of the province.

The first mission-wide exposition directed by Dr. Ramón de la Cruz was on February 2, 1937. Most schools and missions, he reported, took pride in their annual exhibits. Moreover, he believed they served as a worthwhile incentive to produce practical results.
roads or paths which necessitated traveling by horseback, two
days were usually required to make the trip. Every
effort was made to arrive at the school Tuesday evening or to remain Thursday evening so that the adult classes could be observed and instruction given in agriculture, rural industries, hygiene, and civic-military rural ideals. The local sergeant-teacher acted as host to the missionary, shared his sleeping quarters with him and, in theory, was to be in close informal relationship.

Actually, due to the great number of schools incorporated in a civic-military rural zone, it was not possible for a missionary to make a visit to each school during each academic year. Still another shortcoming was the turmoil created in the school by the unannounced arrival of the missionary. In many instances, the missionary arrived the day after his particular specialty had been taught or after a project had been completed and before another one was underway.

Chief of mission. As administrative head of a zone, a chief of mission was delegated the authority to formulate any rules and make any arrangements of a local nature to

25. Born of dire need, the zones were poorly laid out and schools were not well located on the basis of any comprehensive pupil survey.
secure and maintain good order and discipline in the schools. His office had to keep a cumulative record for each member of the mission, teachers as well as missionaries, and each month he had to submit a report to the Section of Culture summarizing his activities and those of the missionaries in the schools of the zone. Meetings of the mission were presided over by him and the school census for the zone was planned and directed by him.

As a specialist in education, the chief of mission was supposed to visit each school, even during vacation periods, to inspect the physical equipment and buildings, and to examine the records of each school to see if they were properly maintained. To him was delegated the enforcement of all general orders, regulations, and the course of study, as well as the investigation of repeated absences of pupils and teachers. Model class demonstrations and professional orientation of the teacher were his special contributions. Local problems of the community were studied in cooperation with the sergeant-teacher and programs to

27. At first, the visitation reports of missionaries were submitted to the chief of the mission but a summary report of the work achieved by the teacher was sent by the sergeant-teacher directly to general headquarters. Later these reports were sent to the chief of mission who then included them in his annual report to general headquarters.

secure their solution were projected.

From the above description it should be evident that the chief of mission was overwhelmed with responsibilities which made it almost impossible to carry out his professional work. As a matter of fact, most of the routine and detailed tasks grew out of an attempt to impose a standardized program conceived in advance which required inspection rather than supervision. Yet the saddest part about all this activity was that the great majority of the reports finally submitted by the chiefs of missions lacked value and varied so much in content that statistical summaries of data could not be made. This criticism was true of all reports, namely, those of missionaries, teachers, and chiefs of missions. The missionaries, if they wished, could record the academic progress of the pupils, the percentage of matriculation and attendance in the schools, the improvements introduced into the communities, and almost anything else they deemed of interest. In most cases, the reports concerned difficulties encountered in traveling to and from the school,

29. Ibid., Capítulo XXIII, "Del Peagogo A."
30. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz records in his diary that at times he devoted as much as 15 hours daily to his duties. For example, he was responsible for the construction of the rural children's boarding home, raising money to finance its construction and equipment, organizing its course of study, directing the mission-wide exposition, locating and supervising the construction of school houses, editing reports submitted by the missionaries and supervising the sergeant-teachers. In short, the chief of the mission
the status or roads, and a general description of the community. Some reports examined by the writer showed greater concern for the atmospheric and topographical conditions of the district than the educational work and services rendered. Likewise, the report-forms were not differentiated for each speciality; they were the same for all of the special teaching fields. Consequently, little provision was made for recording data of significant statistical value or for making recommendations to the higher authorities concerning the special work of the missionaries.

The missionary teacher in agriculture. Besides the general duties performed by all missionaries, a specialist in agriculture had the responsibility of improving the methods employed by civic-military rural schools in teaching the theory and practice of agriculture and its derivative industries. He was to instruct teachers, parents, and residents of each village in how they might secure, with little cost, farm implements, seeds, and fertilizers. The time for planting crops was to be explained, together with plans for garden plots and methods of animal breeding. In fact, his functions were to be those of an agricultural consultant to the residents of the area.

31. [Footnote: was deluged with paper work that left him little time for the professional leadership he should have given the sergeant-teacher and the missionaries."

The agricultural missionary was under orders to organize in each school small industrial cooperatives for the purpose of preserving fruits, vegetables, meats, and milk, of tanning leather, and of making soap. Cooperative gardening, nurseries, reforestation, and marketing were likewise to be encouraged. Wherever possible, the agricultural specialist was expected to extend cooperation to the veterinary surgeon and the teacher of rural economy in developing their programs.

In this connection, it must be recalled that a great number of the rural Cubans worked on plantations, in mines, in sugar mills, or on ranches, and did little or no sustenance farming. Many of those who did some farming utilized the most primitive methods. The problem was one of interesting many of the poor peasants in sustenance farming and then to instruct them in modern methods and new crops. But the words of Mr. Paul Tate of Camagüey should be rested here, namely, that parents objected to having their children spend their time at practical work in school gardening. Moreover, the inability of many of the city-bred teachers to teach practical agricultural program. The general consensus of opinion among informed observers, therefore, was that little was achieved in the

32. Ibid.
34. Cf. p. 249.
35. Cf. p. 239.
way of changing the traditional practices in farming.

Dr. Ramón de la Cruz corroborated this conclusion when he write in his diary:

Needless to say, for reasons previously explained, in our judgment the fruits harvested by the missionary teacher of agriculture have not been what were hoped for.37

The missionary teacher of hygiene. The hygienist, as a graduate male nurse, was concerned with the health and physical development of the pupils and adults of rural Cuba. To this end he was to instruct sergeant-teachers in games, sports, and gymnastic activities that were suitable for grade-school children. Athletic clubs for competitive sports were to be organized with the help of the teacher of rural economy. Elementary medical examinations were to be made of each pupil and sergeant-teacher in a school. A report was to be submitted to the mission laboratory of every case of sickness, disease, or curable physical disability. Every precaution was to be taken to eliminate pollution or contamination of the drinking water of the school and a filter system was to be installed. For the remainder of the time the hygienist was in a community, adults were to be instructed on prophylactic means for preventing disease and, after making a community survey, suggestions were to be offered for the betterment of community living.

37. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, Diary. Missionary and later Chief of Mission.
38. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit., Capítulo XXII, "Del Higienista E."
The missionary teacher of hygiene achieved some success in his work. The campaign to immunize the rural residents against smallpox and other communicable diseases was well received, and there was a slight reduction in intestinal parasitism throughout the island.

Most of the hygienists divided their zones into epidemic sections and prepared statistical graphs to indicate those areas that demanded attention. Health teams, formed in each civic-military rural school district under the direction of a Junior Red Cross Association and the hygienist, undertook a crusade that revolutionized the toilet habits for many Cubans. They succeeded in getting families to build latrines, "not so much to avoid shameful spectacles," said Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, "as to prevent contamination of drinking water." The teachers of hygiene also talked to evening classes about venereal prophalaxis and common illnesses. To the sergeant-teachers, however, was delegated the task of instructing children in oral hygiene, cleanliness of the skin and of the nails, and care of the body.

The missionary teacher of trades. A skilled artisan, called a specialist in trades, was to assist the sergeant-
teacher in planning and constructing the school building, workshops, and a home for the teacher. Tools, furniture, and equipment were to be made in the locality under his supervision. Methods of teaching carpentry, metal work, masonry, and painting were to be demonstrated and explained. The missionary teacher of trades also was to organize small industries in the schools as shops for making toys, furniture, tin articles, clay crockery, and repairs on farm equipment and machinery. Especially were cooperative projects to be fostered that would enable the children and adults to utilize surplus and plentiful materials of the local area.

Most of these duties were never fulfilled. The school and its equipment were constructed under the supervision of the teacher of trades but the most-mentioned criticism of this teacher was his lack of initiative. It is true that many were frequently hampered by an absence of tools necessary to carry on the program in the workshops of the schools. Some of the specialists accepted this state of affairs and excused themselves and the sergeant-teachers from carrying out the program. Others put pressure upon the sergeants to sponsor parties as a means of securing money with which to purchase the necessary equipment.

40. _Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit. Capítulo XX, "Del Maestro de Oficios C."

41. Here and there some valuable results were obtained. Dr. Aguila Ruiz, now secretary to Superintendent of Schools González, served as a missionary teacher
Dr. Berto Brito Buron was very critical of the work achieved by these missionary teachers. In an interview with the writer, he said:

I never observed that the peasant, as a result of the work of these teachers, actually knew how to convert the materials about him into furniture for the home. This might well be because of the resistance of the peasant to learning and new things, but, for myself, I believe it is a product of the lack of initiative on the part of the teachers of trades. 42

Missionary-dentist. The missionary-dentist was to be a teacher and practitioner. He was to examine the teeth of the sergeant-teacher, the children, and, if time permitted, the residents of the community. A clinical record was to be kept on each patient, with the most urgent cases receiving priority of treatment. Children were to be taught how to clean their teeth and other means of preventing oral diseases. More intensive instruction was to be given the sergeant-teachers relative to the hygiene of trades in Camagüey, Havana, and Pinar del Río. His work was perhaps the most outstanding of all the missionaries on the island. It was his opinion that the program outlined for the missionary teacher of trades was very vague and indefinite which enabled many indifferent individuals to limit themselves to inspectional duties rather than undertaking a broad program of social reform. The mission-wide expositions, he believed, showed some worthwhile articles made in the workshops of the schools but they were generally too few, especially when it is recalled that many of the civic-military rural students were ten to fourteen years of age.

42. Dr. Berto Brito Buron, formerly Secretary to the "José Martí" School of Improvement.
A Missionary Dentist
Plate VIII
the mouth, symptoms of most common diseases, and general prophylaxis. Similar instruction was to be given adults
when time permitted.

Many of these men undertook the above duties with much enthusiasm but were soon discouraged because of a lack of equipment and materials. As a result, the work of the dentist was reduced to supplementing the work of the sergeant-teacher in instructing the children in oral hygiene and methods of preventing oral diseases. In a few communities, the sergeant-teacher directed fiestas as a means of securing finances for dental equipment and materials. In these few instances, the dentist fulfilled their obligations of providing dental treatment to those who were in dire need of it.

One result of the emphasis on oral hygiene, however, was observed in local stores. Prior to the civic-military rural movement, rural stores did not sell tooth paste and tooth brushes. Shortly after the program got underway, the demand for these two items led to stocking them. Dr. Cepero was of the opinion that the greatest outcome of the work of this missionary was getting children to brush their teeth daily. In all probability the sergeant-teacher

43. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit., Capitulo XXIII, "Del Dentista F."
was more responsible for the establishment of this habit than was the missionary-dentist. The evidence is overwhelming, therefore, in showing that the missionary-dentist did little to bring about any substantial improvement in rural living.

Missionary teacher of rural home economics. A teacher of rural home economics was added to the mission staff in 1937. The first few received their orientation in short courses at the "José Martí" School of Improvement, the civic-military rural normal school where sergeant-teachers were trained. Later, however, the teachers of rural home economics received their training in the School of the Rural Home, in Santa Clara. The chief responsibilities of this missionary were instruction of children and adults, initiation and direction of school and home projects, home visitations, and cooperation with the hygiene and agriculture teacher in carrying out specific tasks.

There was certain subject matter that was not within the competency of the sergeant to teach. For example, girls needed to become acquainted with problems of infant feeding and infant care, sewing, weaving, and basket-making. The teacher of rural economy not only was to teach these things but also, by means of teaching girls how to prepare and serve foods that were common to a particular region, to develop a rational diet for each child. Children were to
be taught simple songs and dramatize simple plays for home recreation. After the missionary left school, home economics instruction and projects were to be continued by girl monitors who were trained by the inspectors.

The missionary teacher of rural economy was to visit and instruct adults through the organization of neighborhood clubs. Cooperative enterprises and projects were to be fostered by these groups as a means of teaching the guajiro better ways of organizing and carrying out household duties and responsibilities. When pregnant mothers were underprivileged and without resources, the teachers of rural economy were to encourage the neighborhood club to provide them with needed supplies. In conjunction with the agriculture missionary, the teacher of rural economy was to sponsor projects on preservation of foods, and with the assistance of the hygienist, she was to organize and direct playgrounds as well as athletic clubs and contests. The farmers were to be taught that the cooperative approach to living was the best means of individual and social betterment.

There was general agreement that the teacher of rural economy did excellent work and carried out many of her responsibilities. The sewing and cooking classes were enjoyed by the pupils and the parents encouraged their daughters

44. Ibid., Capítulo XXI, "De la Maestra del Hogar D."
45. Ibid.
in them. For example, the overall uniforms worn by students were made by means of projects started by the missionary teacher of rural economy and directed by monitors after she moved to another school. Many of the monitors then exerted an influence in the community by teaching mothers how to cook and sew. As proof of the influence of the home-economist, the school and mission-wide expositions at the end of the school course usually were well represented by this specialized area.

Veterinary teacher. The veterinary teacher was to render professional services throughout the zone in addition to teaching. The schools were to serve as demonstrations where the sergeant-teachers, pupils, and adults could receive instruction on the common illnesses and parasites which affected domestic animals, methods of treating and preventing them, and possible dangers to human life. Vaccination and castration were to be demonstrated and explained; selection and betterment of breeds of cattle were to be stressed along with care of farm animals; and each year a census was to be taken of all domestic animals in the zone. The veterinary teacher, together with the agriculturist and rural economist, were to organize and encourage cooperative rural enterprises such as breeding stations. Fairs and competitive exhibits of farm products were to be encouraged.

46. Ibid., Capítulo XXIV, "Del Veterinario G."
The actual services rendered by the veterinary teacher was limited, however, by several conditions. First, in the region of large cattle ranches, there were ample veterinary doctors available which reduced the need for a civic-military rural veterinary teacher. In other areas, the greater part of the country people did not have farm animals and, where they did have a few pigs and cows, the Ministry of Agriculture had underway a program, in conjunction with veterinaries in the Constitutional Army, for the immunization of these animals. As a result, the veterinary teacher’s work was reduced to cooperating with the teacher of agriculture and encouraging pupils to raise farm animals at home. In general, little was achieved by the veterinary teacher in transforming and improving rural living.

Laboratory technician. And last to be described is the work of the laboratory technician. Whenever a student in a civic-military rural school became ill or the presence of a disease was suspected, the sergeant-teacher was to make out a card of illness, on which was recorded the symptoms and any other information that might be helpful in diagnosis. This, together with specimens, were sent to the laboratory of the mission for analysis. Here was filed for each one of the civic-military rural school pupils of the zone, a record-card which summarized the
health history of the child and the hygienic conditions of his home and environment. Here were made elementary analyses of blood, urine, sputum, and feculent samples sent by the sergeant-teacher. Doubtful findings were passed on to a clinical station for verification, thorough diagnosis, and suggested treatment. The final report, along with prescriptions for the necessary medicines, was returned to the sergeant-teacher who was to carry through the treatment and see that the families complied with hygienic recommendations about the home. At the conclusion of the treatment, a new specimen was to be collected and sent to the laboratory to determine if further action should be taken.

The first step toward implementing this program was the establishment of short courses for training technicians and selection of students for the course by means of competitive examinations. It should be obvious, however,

47. The first laboratories were established in August, 1936, in each mission zone with a laboratory technician in charge. These laboratories were dedicated to investigating cases of malaria, intestinal parasitism, tuberculosis, typhoid, and syphilis. The first provincial laboratories or clinical stations were established in April, 1937, for the purpose of providing facilities for making a more thorough investigation of cases referred to it by the mission laboratory technicians. By the end of 1938, there were established 23 of these large laboratories, proportioned among the provinces as follows: Oriente 7, Camagüey 5, Santa Clara 6, Matanzas 2, Pinar del Río 3. (Orden General Nro. 172, agosto de 1936).

that courses of this duration were inadequate for the full preparation of laboratory technicians to carry on such responsible work. Consequently, the lack of a broad technical training was to be a constant barrier to the successful functioning of the mission laboratories and clinical stations.

Most of the technicians faithfully instructed the missionaries of the zone on the manner of collecting and preserving specimens for analysis as well as on the methods of treating various diseases discovered. But the earliest contribution was the mission-wide surveys which were conducted to ascertain the extent of parasitical infestation of school children. The first one completed was that of educational mission No. 3 in Matanzas. It revealed that 1.83 per cent by protozoa only, and 68.45 per cent by worms only. This was typical of investigations undertaken by other missions, most of which were living indictments of the manner of Cuban rural living.

It must be recalled that for centuries these people and their forefathers lived under unhygienic conditions. So when mission laboratory reports were returned to the sergeant-teacher indicating the lack of appetite or signs of inactivity of the child were the product of parasites whose names had never been heard and which were never seen by the naked eye, most parents were indifferent to the

49. Dr. Pamies, op. cit., Capítulo X, "Los Laboratorios de las Escuelas Rurales Cívico-Militares."
recommendations for treatment. Moreover, therapy was a waste of effort as long as the sources of infection were present. To purify the source of drinking water, to clean up the home surroundings, to eat hygienic foods, and to receive treatment for the elimination of diseases were drastic changes in living that backward country folk would not be expected to adopt on one generation. Furthermore, the expense involved in buying materials for a water filter and medicines for treatment could not be met by many parents who seldom earned enough for meeting daily needs. The need for free and inexpensive medicines for school children was quite obvious. On the other hand, one successful outcome of the campaign to lessen parasitical infestation was in evidence, namely, the widespread construction of latrines for rural homes.

Still another basic criticism of the work of the laboratory technician was the lack of systematic data relative to the cases investigated and studied. Regulations did not call for special reports to be submitted. Most of the laboratories in the early stages made statistical studies but few of them continued this practice and even fewer ever made any extensive use of compiled results. As a result, there never was made a summar study of the common parasites in rural Cuba. Nor were the most abundant varieties in each province and in each municipio ever revealed. And more important, there were few comparative analyses made of the
degree to which the ravages of diseases and parasites were being reduced in each area.

Rural Children's Boarding Homes

In addition to all of the responsibilities described on the preceding pages, each one of the missionary teachers was assigned special duties in the local rural children's boarding home (hogar infantil campesino). Prior to 1939, the date of the opening of these homes, higher primary schools existed only in the provincial capitals of the island. This practice had been justified for two reasons. First, the Secretary of Education maintained that Cuba was not able to finance advanced public education for all children and youth of the island. Second, the generally accepted belief was that education beyond the sixth grade should serve the few who contemplated professional careers. Consequently, the traditional and urban character of the higher primary schools was not suited to the needs of most rural children. The kind of instruction they offered was formal and academic; it was totally out of touch with the conditions of modern life.

Origin. If the program of rural reconstruction outlined elsewhere in this thesis was to be achieved, there was a need for a new type of rural higher primary school and curriculum. Yet conditions in rural Cuba were such that a general education of four years for most children
was about all that could be hoped for and, from then on, advanced education had to meet the needs of the minority of rural children and youth. It will be recalled that Cuba had six provincial agricultural schools with a three-year course for graduates of higher primary and six-year elementary schools. But after the youth received a period of schooling only one-year less than that required for a bachelor's degree from an institute, the Cuban secondary school, he no longer wanted to become an independent, small-scale farmer. He desired to become a supervisor or manager of a large plantation. Hence, Cuba needed a kind of rural higher primary school that would take the best graduates from the four-year rural schools and provide them with experiences that were predominately pre-vocational and vocational. But at the same time, these schools of necessity had to broaden their scope and function in contrast to that of the agricultural schools which were narrowly vocational in purpose. They could not afford to ignore the larger problems of rural life, such as, rural sanitation, design and construction of rural buildings, rural industries and marketing, and rural economics. Or could they justifiably neglect the role of the rural consumer.

To meet these needs, the planners of the civic-military rural educational system provided for a rural children's boarding home to serve as a higher primary school and
headquarters for the educational mission. These homes were to be located near centers of population on farms of at least 33\(\frac{1}{2}\) acres. They were to be boarding schools for male graduates of civic-military rural schools who through competitive examinations won scholarships paying their entire educational and living expenses. 50

Above these, secondary vocational schools or centers for agricultural promotion (Centros de fomento agrícola) were to be established. On paper they represented the complete and culminating ideal of civic-military rural education. The agricultural phase of the educational program called for a farm of at least 134 acres of land divided into gardens, a truck farm, and a model farm. The other part of the vocational program was to consist of departments of workshops, industries, and commerce. They were to be true community schools with departments of social culture, irrigation, public services, division of lands, and emergency. 51 Inasmuch as these latter institutions were never established, the rural children's boarding schools became the intermediate institutions through which students passed before enrolling in the provincial schools of agriculture, "José Martí" School of Improvement, or normal schools. The rural children's boarding homes,

50. *Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit.*, Capítulo XXVI.
51. *Ibid.*, Capítulo XXVII.
The Ideal Plan of Civic-Military Rural Education

Chart IV
therefore, were originally intended to care for children in the seventh and eighth grades but in practice they offered work on the fifth- and sixth-grade levels because most of the civic-military rural schools provided only four years of primary education.

**Purpose.** The hope was that the rural children's boarding homes would inculcate sound standards of good living and improved personal habits so that the young people would return to their rural communities to lessen the dirty, ugly, and backward conditions under which many of their parents lived. By placing the children under conditions where they would eat properly, sleep in clean beds, keep their bodies clean, create artistic and beautiful surroundings, and enjoy worthwhile social activities, the missionaries hoped to break the hold of the home on the personal habits of these children. Here the children could learn modern farming without interference from their parents. By example and precept, the missionaries were to direct the children of rural Cuba to more modern ways of living and producing. In addition, the schools were to serve as community centers where specialists were to provide assistance and advice to needy country people.

**Distribution.** The civic-military rural program called for one boarding home in each civic-military rural school zone, or, in other words, 40 rural children's boarding homes distributed among the provinces as
follows:

Oriente       12
Camagüey     8
Santa Clara   11
Matanzas      4
Havana        2
Pinar del Río 3
               40

Actually only 38 of these were ever established.

The buildings, constructed without expense to the state, were financed by means of fund-raising campaigns in each mission zone. In mission No. 4, in Oriente province, for example, parties, fiestas, and individual donations totaled more than $14,200. This was followed by other parties and donations to finance the equipment and materials necessary to get the school program under way. Most of the schools were opened in September of 1939 and accepted students who had completed the fourth-grade of a civic-military rural school and passed an entrance examination.

Campus. A representative rural children's boarding home was visited by the writer for several days in 1941. The description that follows is illustrative of general practices and facilities in these schools throughout Cuba. The site was approximately 33½ acres about 10 kilometers from the city of Havana on the Central Highway. The principal building contained a director's office, library,

53. Orden General Nro. 213A, noviembre de 1940, listed 38 homes in operation. The H.I.C. of Mission No. 11,
club room, central laboratory, infirmary, dental office, office for missionaries, dormitory for pupils and one for teachers and missionaries, dining room, kitchen, commissary, warehouse, classrooms, workshops, and toilets. An athletic field, garden and farm plots, groves, and pastures were located on the surrounding lands. A small river passed through the grounds which enabled the pupils of the area to be instructed in methods of irrigation and sources of water power. A small pasteurization plant and a refrigeration system were installed to serve as illustrations to peasants and were utilized in storing products of the school for market.

Personnel. The actual administration of the school was in charge of a director or principal who was required to possess a degree from one of the provincial normal schools and was given the army rank of a sub-official.

54. in Oriente, and that of Mission #2, in Havana, never were constructed. Thirty-seven were constructed under the direction of the Section of Culture and one by the Ministry of Education.

Not all of the directors, however, held the titles required of them by army regulations. Dr. Pamies reported that a survey of the professional preparation of the first 23 directors appointed revealed only 6 held bachelor's degrees, 5 were graduates of a provincial school of agriculture, 6 were graduates of a provincial normal school, three were doctors of pedagogy, one was a certified teacher in a special field, and 2 were completely unqualified academically. (Dr. Pamies, op. cit., Introducción, p. 19.)
The director was assisted by two specialists who were required to be graduates of industrial schools or schools of agriculture, and they were given the rank of sergeants. These men were named to their posts in 1939, as were a corporal-teacher, a soldier who served as cook, and another soldier who was an orderly. Hence the internal supervision and administration of instruction and pupil discipline were under the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army which also administered and supervised the civic-military rural schools.

In addition, the missionaries served as supervising teachers of the special fields that were taught in school. The chief of mission acted as general supervisor of the school and was specifically responsible for supervising the teaching of the academic courses. Each of the other missionaries was responsible for developing the course of study in his field and teaching or supervising the particular subject every Monday of each week. The work was then turned over to the regular teachers while the missionaries made their visits to the civic-military rural schools. The dentist had his office and equipment in the school, while the laboratory technician was permanently located there. The mission laboratory was well equipped with microscope and other scientific equipment.

55. The dualism in administration and supervision created by the designation of a director of the school when the chief of mission really had charge of the entire plant led to many misunderstandings and differences.
In this rural children's home the most modern dental equipment had been installed but the pressure of time was such that the dentist served only the students and the teachers.

Students. Altogether, 100 boys were enrolled, of whom 30 were boarding and 70 day pupils. They had completed the fourth grade of the civic-military rural schools, but their ages varied from twelve to seventeen years.

The boarding students held scholarships which entitled them not only to a free education, but to board, room, clothing, and medical and dental attention. Selection was effected by competitive examinations; one from each of the rural schools of the mission received a scholarship.

When the schools were transferred to the Ministry of Education, in 1940, this dichotomy in administration and supervision ended with the naming of the chief of mission as director of the school. Yet it did not solve the other problem, namely, that the chief of mission was seldom in the school during the week and was already overloaded with responsibilities. So in 1943, the chief was relieved of all responsibility for administration and supervision, with the teacher of the academic subjects acting as director.

56. In some of the rural children's homes the most modern dental equipment was purchased and installed only to discover that the local supply of electricity was not of the proper voltage to operate it. Also the dentist spent so much of his time on visitations that his hours at the school were devoted almost exclusively to the students and the faculty.
All of the other students received medical and dental attention, but a matriculation fee was charged them.

Boarding pupils were permitted to visit their families two Saturdays and Sundays of each month, but they were required to return to school before the start of the classes on the following Monday, unless special permission was secured for an authorized absence. Friends and parents, however, were permitted to visit them during non-working and non-study hours.

A personal file was maintained on each student which included general personal and family data, results of medical examinations, psychological test ratings, achievement scores in each subject, and workshop experiences for each grade period.

Since the pupils were kept there for a period of two years, the homes were able to exercise a strong influence over the living habits of these pupils. Whereas the regular civic-military rural schools were constantly confronted with the restricting influence of the home environment, the boarding pupils were admirably situated to be led away from a low level of living and an inferior cultural life to higher planes without great shock and without alienating the rural children from their parents.

57. The enrollment figures for the 1942-43 school year showed 1,110 boarding students enrolled in 38 institutions for an average of 28 per school.
Most of the pupils returned to their home villages after leaving school and became the educated men in their communities. The hope was that they would become the source from which would emanate the culture which had so carefully nurtured at the school. The abler of these students went on to the "José Martí" School of Improvement, provincial schools of agriculture, normal schools, or urban higher primary schools.

Course of study. Although the school-day was divided into two sessions of the academic and the practical, the course of study was predominately pre-vocational, with the greatest emphasis on agriculture. Study and work were week-day activities, Sundays and holidays being utilized for making excursions, performing civic-services, making visitations, and engaging in sports and competitions. The garden, orchard, hatchery, farm, and domesticated animals received much attention. When the farm and garden produce was harvested, the boys learned processes in school cannery. This was organized on a cooperative basis as a means of demonstrating to pupils and parents how a small group of people could create a rural industry.

The entire course of study originally covered one year of two eighteen week periods, with vacations varying according to the needs of the region in which the school was located. After the second year, the course of study was extended to two years of four courses. The general plan of
the school visited by the writer called for the first course to extend from the first of September to the fifteenth of December. The second began the first of March and ended the thirtieth of June.

The first and second courses consisted of academic subjects usually found in the fifth grade of all elementary schools. These were drawing, Spanish grammar and composition, nature study, design, civics, history of Cuba, hygiene, and physical education. In addition, there was a kind of a vocational exploration program in which each pupil passed through the various workshop experiences, agricultural work, and rural industries in an endeavor to discover his aptitudes and interests. Rural industries included study and work in such industrial installations as were found in the school, namely, rice milling, rice hulling, canning, pasteurization, and refrigeration. Workshop experiences consisted of metal work, carpentry, ceramics, stone carving, plastics, and brickmaking. The third and fourth courses

58. Each school was given some freedom to space vacations to coincide with the need for the children to be home to assist the parent in the agricultural activity in industry in which he was engaged. But this did not work to the advantage of all students. Both students and faculty objected to holding classes during the hot summer months. Moreover, in some zones, such as in Oriente province, pupils were drawn from sugar, coffee and tobacco plantations, cattle ranches, and subsistence farming. Since the children were needed at home at different seasons, the idea of staggering vacations did not fulfill the intended need.
not only included those cultural subjects corresponding to the sixth grade but the child now selected for specialized training his area of aptitude revealed in the exploratory period. The academic subjects were practically the same as those of the preceding year. Nature study became botany and zoology; civics was more of the study of Cuban government. In addition, elementary physics and chemistry were taught as applied to workshop and agricultural activities. All of the boys, however, continued certain basic courses in the study and practice of agriculture. Hence, the program of this rural children's boarding home was dedicated to the physical, hygienic, social, cultural, mental, and civic development of the rural leaders of the future Cuba. It was the first time in the history of the island that rural children had any opportunity to receive a higher primary education created and adapted to meet what were conceived as rural needs.

When each student had successfully completed the four courses, he was granted a certificate which stated his academic record, the specialized trade in which he was trained, and the type of agricultural work in which he distinguished himself. It was signed by the director of the school and approved by the chief of the local mission. The title that accompanied the granting of the certificate was Rural Artisan, which admitted the boy to the provincial school
of agriculture or the "José Martí" School of Improvement.

Community center. The rural children's home was conceived to function not only as a school for rural children but as a community center to serve the adults of the area. In theory, it was to have a public library, a youth club for all children of the district, dental services, and laboratory facilities. Its industrial, agricultural, and workshop facilities were to be models to inspire rural residents and were to be open to them at any time. Each official missionary was expected to render to the area whatever services his specialization permitted.

In practice, as a community center, the rural children's boarding home visited by the writer, as was the case with most of the others, fell far short of the community school ideal. The point was previously made that the dentist spent so much of his time away from headquarters that his hours at the school were devoted almost exclusively to the students and faculty. Likewise, the public library at this school was typical of all others. It was never anything more than a meagerly stocked book-shelf intended primarily for student use. The veterinary, on the other hand, did maintain an animal hospital to treat diseased animals, breed better strains, and demonstrate care and treatment of animals. Also the laboratory technician made

many analyses of specimens taken from those adults of the area who might be too poor to pay for medical attention. Yet the most that can be said of the community-center idea of the rural children's boarding home of Havana, as well as the others, is that it offered many models and examples for the people of the vicinity to observe but this was about the extent of community services.

**Conclusion**

The general conclusion relative to educational missions is that they failed to achieve the larger ends envisaged for them. Their visits were largely for inspec- torial purposes rather than for creative supervision and professional leadership. In practice, the arrival of a missionary to a school occasioned confusion and chaos that were not conducive to good supervision. The time spent in each school was insufficient and the followup visitation too infrequent for the missionaries to carry out a work as socially profound as that projected for them.

There was a need for greater coordination in planning for the improvement of the civic-military rural schools, children, teachers, and communities on the part of all missionaries. The civic-military rural school plan did not provide for this coordination nor for creative participation of the teachers. Each missionary tended to see his own field of endeavor out of relation to the over-all school program. The experience of the Mexicans in cultural
missions offered some suggestions relative to this difficulty. The entire Mexican mission located itself in a specified community for six to eight weeks. The missionaries then proceeded to work with the teacher of the local school and the local residents of the community. This perhaps would have been a much better procedure to follow in the Cuban civic-military rural system.

The first several weeks could have been devoted to studying the environment, getting acquainted with the teacher, few parents, and neighbors. The next weeks could have been given to planning a coordinated program of school and community betterment, and to getting the various projects and activities underway. Such a plan of operation would have called for the entire mission, local teacher, and residents to participate in the planning and execution of the program. The resultant growth, inspiration, and self-identification that the participants would have experienced would certainly have been a great improvement over what actually was achieved.

Another possible plan to overcome the weaknesses of the Cuban missionary program could have been for several missionaries of similar functions to visit a school at a stated time. For example, the agriculturalist and teacher of trades had similar duties and could have functioned well together. The hygienist and home economics teachers
had much in common. These missionaries in groups of two
could have planned their itinerary in accordance with the
topographical conditions of the district to which they
were going, distance between schools, and state of the
roads. Their visits could have lasted anywhere from one
to four weeks, depending upon the progress achieved in a
particular area.

In the last analysis, the evidence presented on the
previous pages would seem to substantiate the conclusion
that the veterinary and the dentist were not needed as
missionaries. A veterinary and dentist in private practice
in the district could have taken care of the needs of the
rural children's home. The laboratory technician was
needed in the mission laboratory but efforts should have
been made to secure better-trained personnel.

The more the writer studies the plan suggested by the
Commission on Cuban Affairs of the Foreign Policy Associa-
tion of the United States, the more he is convinced that
something of this kind should have been the course taken by
the leaders of Cuba back in 1936. This plan would have
utilized an extension service to effect the reconstruction
of the adult population with the schools serving in an
auxiliary and supporting role. Instead of this, the army
established the civic-military rural schools and tried to
make them the primary factors in bringing about social
reconstruction. As a result, the transformation of adult
society was never achieved to an appreciable extent. But the efforts of the educational missionaries in rural Cuba were not all in vain. The rural children's boarding homes, 38 in all, came into existence as a result of their endeavors. These homes were designed to meet the needs of rural children who desired a pre-vocational kind of education beyond the first four grades. As such, they represented the first attempt at post-primary education in rural Cuba.

Unfortunately, the premature opening of most of these institutions created a number of persisting problems. It must be remembered that the civic-military rural basic or initial schools were first opened in 1936 and that during their early years the course of study was quite meager and inadequate. The teachers were poorly trained and, for the most part, inexperienced. As a result, after only three years of existence, many of the first graduates from the fourth grade were not too well prepared for either the academic or vocational courses offered in the rural children's boarding home. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, for example, found only eight graduates of the civic-military rural schools of his mission qualified to enter the first class of the rural children's home in his zone. Moreover, the schools were too new to have their workshops, gardens, farms, laboratories, and industries equipped and ready to receive
students. The first students assisted in getting the plant operating more than they received instruction.

In spite of these shortcomings, the opinion generally expressed by those who were familiar with the work of the rural children's boarding homes was that these institutions met an urgent need in rural Cuba. Mr. Paul Tate, who visited many of these homes in the province of Camagüey, believed "the rural children's boarding homes were an excellent idea because they enabled the child to get away from him home, parents, and friends who otherwise might have discouraged him in his efforts to learn modern methods of agriculture and living."

Dr. Felipe Donate, director in instruction in the Ministry of Education at the present writing, told the writer in an interview:

The rural children's boarding homes should never have been closed. We plan to reopen them in September of the next school year with about the same program as they previously had, the exception being that a more varied vocational experience will be offered with less emphasis upon agriculture.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, formerly in charge of the Section of Culture and now Chief-Auditor of the Constitutional Army, had this to say to the writer:

The rural children's boarding home was absolutely essential to make Cuba more democratic. In this way, rural children were given, for the first time, the advantages of higher primary education. They should be reopened with some slight modifications.
Perhaps it would be better to look upon these rural children's boarding schools in their seven years of existence, 1939 to 1946, as experimental ones. What they accomplished and failed to achieve in those seven years must now be studied in an attempt to supply rural Cuba with an improved higher primary education geared to meeting the needs of its people. The period was too short to expect surprising results and none were actually secured.
Chapter IX

The Civic-Military Rural Teacher-Education Program

The civic-military rural educational system, which was created by presidential decree on February 27, 1936, grew to more than 1,000 primary schools by 1940. Regular army men and members of the reserve corps of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army were named as sergeant-teachers and missionaries who, combining their authority as teachers with that of soldiers, made their way into regions where organized education had never before penetrated.

This step was made necessary because the lack of finances and the dislike of instructors to reside in isolated communities seemingly prevented the establishment of rural elementary schools by the Secretary of Education. The few rural teachers who were instructing in rural institutions had but one ambition, namely, to be transferred to urban schools. When transfers were not effected, many developed attitudes of aversion to, and misunderstandings of, an environment which did not offer them many comforts or inducements. They usually ignored the needs that were everywhere in evidence; they came as strangers and remained as strangers.

Moreover, the rural teachers had never received any adequate preparation for carrying on their duties in terms of the needs of rural communities and children. They were trained in regular normal schools and their entire outlook in life was urban. Consequently, they often used content and methods inappropriate to the children being taught.

**Orientation Courses**

The civic-military rural education movement undertook to correct these failings. As long as a teacher was in the army he had to reside in the community to which he was assigned. The army was his career and orders were orders. But the army found that most of the members of the newly-formed Bureau of Culture lacked the professional training needed to carry out their instructional responsibilities and that the few who were qualified teachers had little familiarity with rural conditions. Hence it was necessary to orient the first group of over 700 teachers in teaching methods and in rural living conditions and problems. In a like manner, it was necessary to develop these new teachers so that they would be susceptible to the influence of the revolutionary spirit that guided the creation of the civic-military rural schools. To this end a

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2. Only a small minority of the first 700 sergeant-teachers were graduated from normal schools and most of them were city-bred. Those selected were, wherever possible, graduates of normal schools, institutes, agricultural and technical institutions, and the University of Havana.
short course was prepared and administered in the head-
quarters of each regiment from July 26 to August 26, 1936. Some 700 soldiers, 300 of whom had already been stationed for several months in the first civic-military rural schools, passed through this month's training. In September of the same year, these men left their respective regiments and took over 691 schools that the army had established prior to that time.

This was followed on September 23, 1936 by a two-
months' course for the training of missionaries. A farm, Dona Juana, near the "Enrique Varona" Industrial Technical School in Rancho Boyeros, a suburb of Havana, served as a campus and army tents provided classroom facilities. Of the 287 students selected for orientation, only 174 were finally named as missionaries.

The second orientation course for sergeant-teachers was held in February, 1937, at a new location, Parque Exposi-
ción, of the Ministry of Agriculture, in Rancho Boyeros. This was destined to become the permanent location for the army's teacher-training program. The duration of this

4. The diary of Dr. Ramón de la Cruz indicated that 29 of these students were women who were destined to become missionary-teachers of rural economy. Twenty-five of the 174 graduates held the degree of Doctor of Pedagogy and many more of the others were graduates of provincial normal schools. For example, Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, a normal school graduate, was granted a commission in the active reserve of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army on September 13, 1936. After taking the two-months' orientation course, he was assigned, on November 21, 1936, to Mission #4 of Oriente Province.
course was sixty days, as were all of the remaining courses given by the Section of Culture of the army throughout 1937. Over 390 soldiers were enrolled to meet the demand for 295 teachers needed for the new civic-military rural schools ordered established by the general headquarters of the army in January, 1937. Of the 372 who passed the course, those who achieved the highest records were named third-sergeants and the others, as corporals, served as substitute teachers.

A second orientation course for missionaries was announced in May, 1937. At the same time, a two-months' course for training substitute teachers enrolled 53 new enlistees and a three-months' summer school in rural economics was inaugurated for 200 primary-grade girls coming from civic-military rural schools. And in August of the same year, all missionary-teachers of rural economy of the Section of Culture along with the personnel of the educational missions of the Provinces of Havana and Pinar del Río were given a month's training in horsemanship, marksmanship, and military procedure. Then immediately,

5. Doctora Blanca R. Urquiaga y Vento, "Escuela Normal Rural José Martí," an address given at Rancho Boyeros, Saturday, June 20, 1942.
6. Since all members of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army were eligible to compete for admission to this course, the majority of the 91 students selected were sergeant-teachers in service.
after the closing of these summer training periods, a special course was given for veterinary assistants and vaccinators and another for laboratory technicians. A completely new group of soldiers entered in October for the final course of 1937.

In all, over 1,000 individuals were qualified to become missionaries, sergeants, corporals, laboratory technicians, and veterinary assistants during the first year and a half of the civic-military rural teacher-training program. Because all of this was achieved under very inadequate and emergency facilities, the need was felt for the creation of a permanent institution which would provide a more professional approach to the training of rural teachers. The opening of the "José Martí" School of Application, Instruction and Perfection, (La Escuela de Instrucción, Aplicación, y Perfeccionamiento "José Martí"), on February 5, 1938, met this need. It was popularly known throughout the island as the "José Martí" School of Improvement, a name which will be used for the remainder of the chapter.

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8. Eighty-four were enrolled in the class for veterinary assistants and 51 aspired to become laboratory technicians.


10. Lieutenant-Colonel Sosa de Quesada, "José Martí" Escuela de Aplicación, Instrucción, y Perfeccionamiento, El Ejército Constitucional (abril de 1937), pp. 53-54.
"José Martí" School of Improvement

When the civic-military rural program was launched, however, there was no concrete plan for a special rural normal school and there were no Cuban precedents to follow in organizing one. The task was made somewhat easy, on the other hand, because the civic-military rural school organization and curriculum, as well as orientation courses, had already been formulated and put into operation. Furthermore, there were the Mexican and European experiments in rural normal schools to serve as guides. Switzerland, Denmark, and Sweden had set high standards and qualifications for rural teachers. The educational leaders of the island were well informed concerning the care with which these countries selected and prepared their rural teachers to become appreciated cultural leaders in their communities. Then too, the issue of rural normal schools vs. regular normal schools had been fully explored after 1932. In the latter year, the Machado government received a report on the state of Cuban education from Dr. Marvin S. Pitman, then director of teacher education at State Normal School, Ypsilanti, Michigan. It

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11. Dr. Marvin S. Pitman was invited by the Machado government in 1931 to make a survey of the Cuban school system and to make recommendations relative to needed changes. Because the final report was very critical of the conditions found, it was suppressed. However, some of the recommendations were widely known and discussed throughout the island.
recommended the creation of a rural normal school in each of the three provinces of Pinar del Río, Matanzas, and Camagüey. That is to say, it proposed a separation of centers for the formation of city and rural school teachers. After 1932 this aspect of the report continued to be discussed with much passion and emotion by the most prominent Cuban educators. The literature of the period clearly reveals that four possible approaches to the preparation of rural teachers were considered. These were as follows:

1. Special departments could be created in the provincial agricultural schools, as was suggested by the Commission on Cuban Affairs of the Foreign Policy Association of the United States.

2. Distinct and separate courses in a rural education department could be created in the provincial normal schools.

3. Special rural problems and experiences could be included in the basic courses in sociology, educational philosophy, curriculum, and methods required of all students in the provincial normal schools.

4. A specialized rural normal school could be established.

**Purpose.** With these four choices before them, the leaders of the civic-military rural education decided to create one centrally-located rural normal school, the "José Martí" School of Improvement, in which all civic-military rural teachers would be trained. The theory was that a new kind of a normal school was needed and that it should be located in a rural setting similar to the one

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12. Dr. Ofelia Morales del Campo, Professor of Education, University of Havana.
rural teachers would encounter in the field.

The purpose behind the original short courses had been that of giving city-bred sergeant-teachers whose experiences necessary to make them familiar with rural people, their nature, interests, habits of thought, feelings, and aspirations. Since most of these men already had an adequate secondary education, these courses of 30 and 60 days' duration were largely for rural orientation purposes.

The long-range program, on the other hand, called for a normal school that would take children from the rural children's boarding homes and prepare them to return to their rural environments as teachers of their own people. In their preparation they would be led to discover the rich educational opportunities a countryside afforded and how to use them educationally. They would be made to realize the importance for educational purposes of the teachers' identification with the life and interests of the community. Here they would learn about the need of country people for health measures, recreational facilities, and cultural enrichment. Special problems of rural teaching would be emphasized along with experiences in agriculture, rural industries, home economics, and other practical courses to prepare the rural teacher to direct the daily vocational development of rural children.
Hence this would be a distinctive kind of training which aimed to prepare teachers to answer the call of the rural community and to bring about improvement in rural living. In short, the "José Martí" School of Improvement was based upon the conception that there should be a sharp differentiation in the preparation of rural instructors which would give them the proper point of view and knowledge of country-people and their living conditions. The real motive was to ruralize the rural school and the teacher.

In view of the theory of rural education presented by the writer in Chapter V of this thesis, it is his opinion that the idea of a rural normal school as distinct from other normal schools leads to a shortsighted and narrow teacher education. According to his view, rural elementary school teachers are not to be held responsible for inducing the rural child to stay on the farm or to desert it. Neither is it the task of the elementary teachers to teach agriculture in such a way as to secure an immediate increase in the farm production of the island. Since their responsibilities in a democratic system of education call for directing child growth and increasing opportunities for a richer and fuller life, rural educators must possess a knowledge not only of rural conditions and problems, but also a larger knowledge of the conditions of life and problems of Cuba. The problem of rural
teachers, then, is the common problem of elementary teachers in general, namely, of guiding the development of children. Admittedly, to do this effectively rural instructors must understand rural conditions and know rural people. This means that rural teachers must appreciate the interests of rural children and adults, their mental attitudes, and their needs. They must acquire the professional skill which will enable them to take the peasant child where he is and by means of resources at hand to guide and direct the development of that child. But this does not mean that the instructor should see rural problems completely out of context of larger national and world problems.

**Campus.** The writer was a guest at "José Martí" School of Improvement for several days in 1938 and again in 1941. There he found a large, luxurious military boarding establishment quite in contrast with most of the provincial normal schools. It was located in Rancho Boyeros on a beautiful campus facing a main highway leading to Havana. At the entrance to the institution, two armed guards of the regular army were assigned to a day and night patrol. To the right of a wide entrance, in the form of a double circle, was a concrete grandstand with a capacity for 1,000 people, shower facilities for each sex, and offices for the male and female professor of physical education. Toward the rear of the sports field
were a riding school and stables. The main building consisting of a central core with five wings, contained classrooms, dormitories, a dining hall, a library, workshops, and offices. In a separate construction were a confectionery, general store, and warehouse. Garden and farm areas were to the left and rear of these buildings. But there was no primary school annex and no rural school near for observation and student-teaching purposes.

The fact that the school was located so near to Havana rather than in the center of the island was a constant source of criticism. One complaint grew out of the long distances those in the eastern part of the island had to travel in getting to and from the school. Another was that the institution was not really situated in a predominately agricultural region in spite of the claim that it was orienting its students to such surroundings. Moreover, the living conditions in the "José Martí" School of Improvement were far from being those to which the sergeants would be subjected in their rural schools.

The writer, however, is of the opinion that the school was well located. If the contribution that these sergeant-teachers could make to country children from the standpoint of a larger acquaintance with other forms, ideas and

13. Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, Bureau of Statistics, Section of Culture, of the Constitutional Army.
14. Dr. Cejero, formerly principal of the provincial school of Agriculture in Camagüey, stressed this complaint.
15. Dr. Brito, Secretary of the "José Martí" School of Improvement, admitted this.
Entrada principal

Entrance to the "Jose Marti" School of Improvement
Plate X
procedures of life be considered, there was some advantage in having the school established near the capital city. The fact that here many of the pupils would come into contact for the first time with the thinking and comforts of another group would, of course, enrich their background of ideas and appreciations. They could then more adequately make real to their children the distant social customs and manners of living in urban communities. This might serve to take the child from the rural fold, but democracy would seem to demand that each child know the opportunities before him and to choose freely. In short, the location of the "José Martí" School provided a marvelous opportunity to develop rural elementary teachers who were more than rural-minded persons teaching rural children about rural things. But it is easy to understand why those who believed that the rural teacher should not enlarge the outlook and opportunities in rural life would be outspoken in their criticism of the Rancho Boyeros site.

Personnel. The faculty of the "José Martí" School of Improvement were men and women selected for the most part for their successful work in the educational missions. Hence the instructors had been in close touch with the civic-military rural school problems from the very beginning of the movement. There were professorships in workshops and small rural industries, rural economy, military
orientation, health, recreation, and physical education, as well as in a variety of academic subjects. All were members of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army with the exception of the instructor of military orientation, who was an officer of the regular army. In all, the professional and administrative personnel of the school totaled sixty-two persons who held ranks and titles as follows:

**Professional and Technical Personnel**

1. Director
2. Captains (Professors)
3. First Lieutenants (Professors)
4. Sub-Lieutenants (Assistant Professors)

**Administrative Personnel**

1. First Lieutenant (Secretary)
2. First Lieutenant (Doctor)
3. Second Lieutenant (Quarter Master)
4. First Sergeant (Commissary)
5. Second Sergeant (Provost)
6. Third Sergeant (Librarian)
7. Third Sergeant (Curator-Taxidermist)
8. Third Sergeant (Nurse)
9. Two Third Sergeants (Office Assistants)
10. Corporals (Typists)
11. Third Sergeant (Chief of Kitchen)
12. Two Soldiers (First Cooks)
13. Two Soldiers (Second Cooks)
14. Two Soldiers (Assistant Cooks)
15. Two Soldiers (Waiters)
16. Corporal (Chief of Stables)
17. Two Soldiers (Police of the Stables)
18. Soldier (Barber)
19. Two Soldiers (Gardeners)
20. Soldier (Horticulturalist)
21. Soldier (Beekeeper)
22. Fifteen Soldiers (Janitors)

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16. The writer was intimately acquainted with two officers of the administrative and professional staff of the school, namely, Dr. Bertoldo Brito Buron, Legal Advisor and Secretary, and Dr. Gustavo Catellanos Villageliu,
Students. Until the long-range program calling for selection of the students from the rural boarding schools could get underway, the applicants had to meet the physical standards required by the regular army and be graduated from a provincial normal school, a school of arts and trades, or an institute. They were given the status of privates in the active reserve of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army and considered to be army-cadets under strict military discipline. Their clothing, school supplies, and all other equipment were provided free of charge. Upon completion of the orientation course, those who received high ratings were appointed second or third sergeants. The remainder became corporals and served as substitute or traveling teachers and as administrative assistants.

In the first course, ending in 1939, there were a total of 147 students and in the second, 165. Perhaps about 10 per cent of those selected were Negroes or mulattoes. Naturally a great many of these students were city-bred and brought almost no experience in rural living to their courses. Hence these men were not able to appreciate fully the needs and problems of rural life. Most of them knew

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17. All of the students upon graduation returned the clothing and equipment supplied while in school because
little about children. Few there were who knew what it was
to use children's interests and most of them were slow to
grasp an understanding of the functional approach to teach-
ing. Those who had not been accustomed to learning active-
ly, found it difficult to appreciate the larger objectives
of the civic-military rural curriculum. And in addition,
the writer is of the opinion that the predominately mili-
tary character of the faculty and military atmosphere
that marked the life and teaching of the school elicited
some doubt about the kind and quality of teacher educa-
tion offered. On the asset side, however, the writer
found that most of the students were enthusiastic in their
dedication to civic-military rural ideals and possessed
of a missionary fervor.

Course of Study

The course of study was extended to four months after
the "José Martí" School of Improvement was opened late in
1938. An extension of the course was made possible because
a sufficient number of sergeant-teachers had by then been
enlisted and oriented to fill all the civic-military rural
school positions. It was also made necessary because of

18. Dr. Brito, op. cit.
19. The first course to be offered by the new institution
got under way in November, 1938, and ended in March,
1939. A total of 147 sergeant-teachers were graduated
in the first class. The next course extended from March
to June, 1940, and 165 sergeant-teachers were graduated
the change in 1938 from the relatively simple civic-military rural primary curriculum to one that was community-centered and ruralized. It imposed upon the "José Martí" School of Improvement a type of teacher education predominately practical and technically specialized. Actually, the educational theory expounded was a conglomeration of samplings from the writings of Ellen Key, Dr. Montessori, and John Dewey. The courses of study examined by the writer were filled with quotations from the above-mentioned educators and were used again and again to support the claim that civic-military rural education and its teacher-education program were of the "progressive or activity school" type.

Some of the passages quoted most often are as follows:

The child is not to be allowed to do whatever he wishes nor the teacher to assume a passive attitude toward silly and foolish actions. Liberty is not to be confused with license, interest with caprice, activity with anarchy, need with desire.

from it. These two courses were the only ones offered by the "José Martí" School of Improvement, for in the next year it was transformed by presidential decree into a coeducational institution and renamed "José Martí" Rural Normal School.

20. There was no attempt to reconcile the theoretical differences of these educators and, of even greater importance, there was no concern for the still larger conflict created by the spirit of military discipline that dominated the "José Martí" School of Improvement and the entire Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army.

The act of learning is much more effective when the pupil studies that which interests him and that which he wishes to do than when he does that to which he is indifferent or which is disagreeable to him.

The civic-rural teacher must not make the child a passive being, motionless, submissive, obedient, exercised in repeating verbally what he reads in the textbook and skilled in doing whatever is ordered of him.

The child possesses a right to the free development of his activities.

The child is a being who needs spontaneous movement as well as air, water, and meals.

The child should spontaneously display his activity in games, work, and amusements.

In theory, then, the curriculum of the "José Martí" School of Improvement sought to provide the foundations for a "functional, active school of work in which instruction would not constitute mere transmission of new, unknown knowledge, but that, on the contrary, it would adapt the knowledge of the pupils to the educational rhythm of the civic-military rural school."

The theoretical part of the four-months' course consisted of a review of the academic subjects that civic-military instructors had to teach along with the reading of digests of the direct experiences of missionaries and sergeant-teachers. Civic-military rural school organization was studied as were military regulations, courtesy, organization, and criminal code. The practical phase included

22. El Consejo Corporativo de Educación, Sanidad, y Beneficencia, op. cit., p. 79.
specialist training in the methods of agriculture, workshops, home economics, rural industries, and the care and breeding of animals. Physical education and military drill were required of all. In short, the students of "José Martí" School of Improvement were given many more experiences in rural living and practical work than the pupils in the regular normal schools of Cuba ever received in their traditional academic programs.

An excellent description of the essence of this teacher education program was given by Colonel Batista, Chief of the Constitutional Army, in an interview with Dr. Ashe, President of the University of Miami and Dr. Pearson, Secretary of the same institution.

Their sergeant-teachers training includes a grounding in the elementary principles of hygiene, instructions in the rudiments of domestic science, information regarding simple but vital practices in successful agriculture and forestry and similar training, designed not only to enable the sergeant to improve the minds of his pupils but also the living conditions. The sergeant is taught the method of making a blood smear or other methods which will permit the sergeant to send some tangible evidence concerning the illness to a laboratory where proper diagnosis of the disease can be made....A sergeant is taught to say to a peasant who contemplates building a new home: "Suppose I help you build a home

23. Dr. Brito, op. cit.
24. H. Freeman Matthews, Memorandum Concerning Rural School System, Dispatch No. 8081 to the Secretary of State (Havana: January 30, 1937.)
which might be nicer and more comfortable and with not much additional labor." The peasant agrees and under the supervision of the sergeant a new log house is constructed which has, perhaps, four rooms and is larger than those houses normally built in the region. Better sanitary conditions are introduced and this peasant and his family find themselves installed in a home which is luxurious in comparison with those resided in by surrounding neighbors. The living conditions of the entire community can be thereby improved.

All such experiences as these were to be given the teacher-cadets in a four months' course. Although this was two months more preparation than the first 1,000 teachers received, the course was still too meager to provide those who passed through it with any real comprehensive understanding of rural problems, children, and teaching. The momentary zeal and enthusiasm engendered were sufficient to send young graduates into the remote regions of the island with good intentions but the practical shortcomings in their experiences and training were instrumental in a great many instances in preventing any real success, especially in that related to changing the ideas and practices of the everyday life of the peasant. It is evident that the "José Martí" School of Improvement was more interested in providing orientation in agriculture, rural economy, and other practical subjects than it was in securing other needed preparation. As long as city-bred graduates from secondary schools were selected as cadets this did not create serious problems. But after 1941, when the applicants chosen were graduates of rural boarding homes, a
much broader and more comprehensive program of teacher education was needed.

Yet the writer must admit that the "José Martí" School of Improvement, in spite of its misdirected and inadequate purposes and its meager courses, made a significant contribution to the development of the rural educational point of view in Cuba, which up to that time had never really influenced educational practice. Especially was this true in its emphasis upon the influence of rural conditions on the rural teacher and the need for preparing teachers to utilize the resources at hand. Likewise, it must be commended for training teachers who dedicated themselves wholeheartedly to a rural teaching career. Most of the young sergeant-teachers were quite a contrast to the few indifferent and discouraged rural instructors in the regular rural schools of the Department of Education.

School of Rural Economy

A sister institution of the "José Martí" School of Improvement was the School of Rural Economy (La Escuela del Hogar Rural) which was created in 1938 and located on the outskirts of the city of Santa Clara in Las Villas province. The physical plant consisted of two large buildings which contained offices, classrooms, workshops, library, museum, auditorium, dormitories, kitchen, dining halls, infirmary, laboratory, dental office, and beauty
salon. Behind these were an athletic field, a model farm home, farm land, stables, and a garage.

Purpose. This school came into being because of the inability of the "José Martí" School of Improvement to train missionary-teachers of rural economy. The latter institution had given a summer course, May 25 to August 31, 1937, for 200 girls, 12 to 16 years of age, who had passed the third grade of a civic-military rural school. These girls were given examinations and the highest-ranking student in each school was represented at a final drawing held in the mission headquarters of each civic-military rural zone. Here five girls were chosen from each of the 40 missions which made a student body of 200 girls.

The purpose of the summer school in rural economy was but a phase of the larger objective of all civic-military rural education, namely, to better the rural inhabitants in all aspects of their living to the point that they might become conscious of their importance as indispensable factors in the national economy. The girls received further academic education along with some advanced theoretical and practical training in such subjects as domestic science, rural industries, hygiene, care of the sick, physical education, sewing, handwork, basket-making, weaving, cooking, gardening, preservation of foods, washing, and ironing. Those

25. Unfortunately the writer was not able to visit this school.
Aerial View of the School of Rural Economy
Plate XII
who successfully completed the course received a certificate which enabled them to become monitors of rural teachers. The primary aim, however, was to encourage these girls to return to their homes to become model housewives and examples of richer living. Prepared in the duties and responsibilities of motherhood, they were to become missionaries in their own families and communities.

The purpose of the School of Rural Economy, on the other hand, was two-fold, namely, to extend to the rural areas some kind of post-primary education for those girls of ability who desired more than the elements of rural economics which had been given in the civic-military rural schools and to prepare missionary-teachers of rural economy for the civic-military rural institutions.

Upon graduation the degree of Teacher of Rural Economy was granted which enabled the graduate to become a missionary-teacher of rural economy in the civic-military rural schools. It was hoped, however, that most of the girls would become housewives and missionaries of better living. As a part of the graduation ceremonies, an oath was taken to better rural living and to impart in rural communities knowledge and practices that had been learned. The alumni were also asked to report to the school, on the first of each January, their activities in home and communal improvement.

for the past year.

Course of Study. The three-year course of study emphasized the practical arts but not to the exclusion of the theory lying behind them. Domestic science classes were organized around experiences in cooking, baking, sewing, embroidering, weaving, crocheting, home management, and budgeting. Manual work included basket-making, book-binding, ceramics, making of dolls, and elementary carpentry. Principles of hygiene were taught in connection with physical education and care of the sick. Modern ideas and practices in breeding of animals, gardening, and horticulture were given in the agricultural courses. Nor were the academic subjects neglected. Advanced arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, drawing, writing, social manners, and civics made the three years academically respectable. Physical education emphasized calisthenics, track, and competitive sports.

Faculty. The faculty of the school were selected on the basis of their academic preparation to teach specialized areas and their understanding of problems and resources in rural living. A majority of the men and women selected had been intimately connected with the civic-military rural movement from the beginning.

27. El Consejo Corporativo de Educación, Sanidad, y Beneficencia, op. cit., p. 5.
28. La Educación Civil y Rural y La Mujer Campesina, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
29. Ibid.
Students. The first class of 100 girls was admitted in 1938 and each year thereafter a like number entered so that a graduating class was never more than 100 students. The school housed a total of 300 boarding pupils, all of whom were at least fourteen and not more than eighteen years of age at the time of entrance. Girls who had successfully passed the equivalent of six grades in the civic-military rural schools were eligible each year to take competitive examinations and those receiving the highest grades were granted state scholarships which paid their entire educational expenses including food, clothing, lodging, medical attention, and school supplies.

Unfortunately the writer was never able to visit the School of Rural Economy. Nor was he able to secure an evaluation of the work of the institution and its graduates from people who were in a position to make an objective appraisal. The remoteness of its location from Havana prevented most of the educators with whom the writer talked from having had any first hand contact with the institution. As a counterpart to the civic-military rural boarding homes for boys and the urban schools of domestic economics, in all probability it fulfilled a need for some kind of post primary schooling for those rural girls of ability who desired to further their education. The writer had serious doubts, however, concerning the kind and quality of teacher training.
education that could be carried on in this institution. The fact is that these students were graduates of four-year civic-military rural primary schools which somehow managed to certify their graduates as having six years of elementary education.

Conclusion

This observer is aware that few countries, including the United States, today provide an adequate preparation for teachers in rural schools. He is also conscious of the fact that if rural children are to have the kind, quality, and scope of educational opportunities equivalent to those of the urban areas, adequately and appropriately educated teachers, supervisors, and other professional personnel will have to be made available for service in rural institutions. Unfortunately, the civic-military rural educational system never really received the services of properly qualified personnel.

It must be recalled that most of the civic-military rural teachers were trained prior to the opening of the "José Martí" School of Improvement. These first teachers and missionaries were oriented by means of thirty- and sixty-day courses which were never adequate for the development of a competent staff of teachers and supervisors. The opinion of the writer is that, even after the course of study was extended to four months and a military boarding
institution named "José Martí" School of Improvement and a School of Rural Economy were created, the graduates of these schools were not provided with an adequate functional and professional preparation. Instead, they received a training that was meager, superficial, and narrowly specialized.

Moreover, it must be pointed out that the great majority of the sergeant-teachers were trained before the new civic-military rural school curriculum was put into effect in 1938. As a result, the sergeant-teachers received orders to carry out a new curriculum which, in order to be effective, would have required a thorough professional preparation of those who were to undertake it. Little wonder, then, that there were so many of the civic-military rural personnel who failed to achieve the larger results projected by the civic-military rural movement.

The "José Martí" School of Improvement was also handicapped by the failure to provide a school annex for the purpose of student observations under supervision. Likewise, the absence of student-teaching facilities and experiences in some typical rural community situation, along with assignments of definite responsibilities for community work, greatly lessened the effectiveness and realism of the preparation. Consequently, the students were deprived of extended and continued observations of rural school teaching
which would have enabled them to make specific applications of the general principles of education to rural situations.

It is true, on the other hand, that the civic-military rural movement did popularize the point of view that better preparation of rural teachers was needed. It laid bare the weaknesses of the traditional normal school curriculum which ignored the need on the part of those who were to teach in rural schools for an understanding of the rural environment and its problems. In spite of these two facts, however, the writer is forced to the conclusion that there was no need for a specialized rural normal school to train rural teachers.

Both the "José Martí" School of Improvement and the School of Rural Economy failed to offer what the writer believes to be the essentials for a good pre-service program of rural teacher education. First, they did not provide their students with a comprehensive and functional general education. Instead they were dedicated to producing teachers with a rural point of view and specialized training. Second, they failed to develop a thorough understanding and appreciation of the subjects and grades to be taught in a multiple-grade school. Third, while emphasizing an understanding of rural people and the rural schools, they ignored the larger problem of the status and needs of urban society in relationship to the rural. Fourth, they never
did develop students with any degree of skill in using a variety of teaching methods, techniques, and materials. Fifth, they made no provision for continuous and extended observations in the home, school, and community as an integral part of professional and general education. And sixth, they offered no supervised student-teaching in civic-military rural schools or a rural primary school annex.
Chapter X

Civic-Military Rural School Administration

The Constitutional army under Colonel Fulgencio Batista was the force behind a series of provisional presidents in Cuba from 1933 to 1936. However, when the revolutionary chaos of the post-Machado period began to subside, a demand arose for the restoration of constitutional government and a reduction in the power and prestige of the armed forces. Yet Batista was fully aware that with a small army he would have very little power and influence in a newly elected government. Hence it was with a good deal of reluctance that the Colonel agreed to call a presidential election for January 10, 1936, which was to be the first step in the direction of ending the military dictatorship.

Batista, however, had been in power too long to give up so easily. He made haste to develop a program of rural reconstruction through education which would serve two ends. First, it would satisfy many who were demanding implementation of the promises made during the September 4th, 1933, revolution. Second, it would justify the continuance
of a large army.

At the outset it should be stated that the civil authorities on the island had failed to create primary schools in the rural areas. Consequently, the army took the position that it alone had the authority and means to set up a system of schools on a large scale in a short time and make a success of it. The resources of the army, its power to command, its prestige as a result of having successfully maintained order throughout the chaotic years of 1933-35 - these conditions made it appear that rural schools could best be established by the armed forces. The outgrowth was Law No. 620 of February 27, 1936, which authorized the Constitutional Army to organize and direct schools throughout the island where none existed and there developed a dual system of education, one civic and the other military.

Dr. Ofelia Morales y del Campo, Professor of Education at the University of Havana, wrote in the 1942 Educational Yearbook:

...The civic-military rural schools have raised a serious problem since the school population was divided into two groups: the one attending the school under the public teacher and the other attending the civic-rural school which has its own building and is well equipped. It almost appears as if the Republic attempted to train two classes of citizens.  

3. Educational Yearbook of the International Institute - 1942, Chapter on "Cuba" by Dr. Ofelia Morales y del Campo (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942), p. 162.
Administration and Supervision

The military character of the administration and supervision of civic-military rural education gives some substance to the statement of Dr. Morales. From the very beginning the administrative control of these institutions was centralized in a Bureau of Culture (Negociado de Cultura) in the office of the Adjutant-General of the Constitutional Army. To this Bureau was delegated the management and supervision of the master plan which called for the establishment of eight different types of schools, namely, the "José Martí" School of Improvement, School of Rural Economy, centers of agricultural promotion, farm schools, rural children's boarding homes, garden schools, initial schools, and centers for traveling teachers.

As the number of schools increased and the system became more complex, a Bureau of Culture was established in each of the eight regimental headquarters which relieved the central Bureau of the details of managing and supervising the civic-military rural schools of the provinces. As the system grew still larger, the central Bureau became the Section of Culture (Sección de Cultura del Cuartel General) and the agencies assisting in the work of supervision and administration were increased to eight.

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4. Cf. p. 208. Actually, none of the centers of agricultural promotion and farm schools were ever established and only a few of the garden schools.
1. Administrative Board of the Civic-Military Rural Schools
2. Section of Accounts and Supplies
3. Bureau of Radio Broadcasting
4. Bureau of Statistics
5. Higher Directive Councils
6. Provincial Directive Councils
7. Provincial Bureaus of Culture
8. Educational Missions

These agencies and the Section of Culture, together with the eight types of civic-military rural schools, constituted the Corps of Culture of the Constitutional Army (El Cuerpo de Cultura del Ejército Constitucional). The remainder of the chapter will be given to a description and discussion of the Section of Culture and its affiliated agencies.

Section of Culture. The Section of Culture of the General Headquarters of the Constitutional Army was created in 1936 as a small bureau with a staff of two technical advisors, one for trades and agriculture and the other for pedagogy. These men in no way determined civic-military rural educational policies and practices but merely edited the programs, circulars, and orders that were formulated by the higher authorities and transmitted them to the chiefs of regiments who were at that time directly in charge of the civic-military rural schools established in their military zones.

4. Naturally, in the early stages of the development of the civic-military rural education movement final decisions upon the more important aspects of the program were made by the commander-in-chief of the army, Colonel Batista, and a small group of army officers and advisers.
As the number of civic-military rural schools increased and educational missions expanded, the Bureau of Culture became the Section of Culture and its staff of two technical advisers grew to 19 persons:

1. Chief of the Section
1 Assistant-Chief of the Section
1 Technical Adviser of Pedagogy
1 Technical Adviser of Trades and Industries
4 Sub-Official Teachers
1 First Sergeant Teacher
2 Second Sergeant Teachers
2 Third Sergeant Teachers
3 Corporal Teachers
3 Soldiers

The size of the staff is an indication of the rapidity with which the civic-military rural system had grown. Most of the men selected for these positions had served as missionaries or teachers in the civic-military rural school system and had been members of the Constitutional army prior to the creation of the civic-military rural movement. For example, Lieutenant-Colonel Dr. Aristides V. Sosa de Quesado was named Chief of the Section of Culture and head of the Corps of Culture. Hence, the point of

5. Alberto Pampies Martínez, La Organización de la Escuelas Rurales Cívico-Militares (Havana: Tesis de Grado, La Universidad de la Habana, 1940), Capítulo XIV, "Medios de difusión cultural de las Escuelas Cívico-Rurales."

6. Lieutenant Colonel Sosa de Quesada, a graduate of the University of Havana, was one of the sergeants who with Colonel Batista engineered the September 4th Revolt, 1933. As a reward, he was named Chief Auditor of the Constitutional Army and later Chief of the Corps of Culture. His interest in rural education, however, went beyond being nominal head of the Corps. He played a prominent part in its creation, wrote the basic reader Motivaciones Escolares, and assisted in planning the courses of study for the schools.
Corps-of-Culture
Constitutional Army of Cuba
Chart V
view and control of the regular army were perpetuated in the new organization. In fact, the basic educational policies and practices continued to be determined by the Commander-in-Chief, Adjutant-General, Chief of the Corps of Culture, and a number of personal advisers. 7

Since the army usually seeks to routinize as many procedures as possible, the work of the staff of the Section of Culture to a great extent involved the formulation of army regulations to govern the minutest activities of the Corps of Culture. Standard operating procedures were developed to guide the teachers, supervisors, and administrators of the civic-military rural school system. There can be little doubt that the establishment of such a vast array of standard educational procedures was a help in directing unimaginative personnel, but the army way of doing things in the case of civic-military rural education proved to be a constant source of frustration to intelligent and creative teaching and supervision.

Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, an educational missionary and later a specialist in the Bureau of Statistics, readily admitted that the Section of Culture was primarily concerned with inspection to ascertain if the regulations were fulfilled rather than providing the supervision and inspiration so badly needed. In fact, Paul Tate, United States Consul of Camagüey, repeatedly emphasized that

civic-military rural school officials "flashed their brass" in such a way as to make creative supervision impossible of achievement."

**Administrative Board.** Financial matters were cared for by a special Administrative Board of the Civic-Military Rural Schools (Patronato Administrativo de la Escuelas Cívico-Rurales). This Board was created by the basic civic-military rural school law of December 30, 1936, which authorized the Board to administer the Civic-Military Rural School Fund that resulted from the collection of a nine cents tax on each 325 pounds of sugar processed in Cuba. The five members of the Board were the Adjutant-General of the Constitutional Army, as president; the Chief of the Corps of Culture, as secretary; the Quartermaster-General of the Constitutional Army, as treasurer; and a representative from each of the two National Associations, that of Landholders and that of Planters. Since three of the men were high-ranking military officers, the army had little to fear from the two civilian members.

This Board issued a detailed annual report at the end of each year indicating the income received and expenditures authorized. The Annual Report for 1937 (Memoria Anual 1937) revealed the appropriation for civic-military rural

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8. Mr. Paul Tate, United States Consul in Camagüey.
9. Ley de diciembre 30, 1936. Artículo III
education for that year to have been $1,535,391.20, of
which almost 83 per cent or $1,260,744 was for personnel;
$41,347.20 for the teacher-training program; $221,300
for supplies and equipment; and $12,000 for contingencies.

It is quite evident that there were no funds available for the purchase of school sites, construction of buildings, and very little for basic equipment and supplies. Local communities were relied upon to furnish these things. Quite naturally, there were many localities which lacked sufficient resources to provide them, with the result that the civic-military rural educational program suffered. If the movement had expanded more slowly, these underprivileged areas could have been given financial assistance and Cuban rural education no doubt would have shown greater success and progress.

An analysis of the $1,260,744 expenditure for personnel in 1937 reveals that the basic salaries paid to 1,633 missionaries, teachers, and aides were as follows:

Table 8

Personnel Salaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Captains</td>
<td>$135.00</td>
<td>$16,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 First lieutenants</td>
<td>120.00</td>
<td>64,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 Second lieutenants</td>
<td>107.00</td>
<td>106,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125 Sub-lieutenants</td>
<td>95.00</td>
<td>142,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Sub-Officials</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>40,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 First-Sergeants</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>30,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 Second-Sergeants</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td>35,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,006 Third-Sergeants</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>603,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206 Corporals</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>86,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Soldiers</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>6,720</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1,133,122

The salaries paid to the four members of the Section 13 of Culture of General Headquarters were as follows:

Table 9

Staff Salaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Chief of Section</td>
<td>$240.00</td>
<td>$2,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Technical Advisor</td>
<td>200.00</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chief of Accounts</td>
<td>150.00</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pedagogical Advisor</td>
<td>150.00</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$8,880

Additional payments to those in the Corps of Culture with more than five-years service in the Constitutional Army amounted to $4,800. And to all non-commissioned officers was paid a monthly clothing allowance of $7.00 which totaled $113,952.

Obviously, the civic-military rural school system was poor. The total income for civic-military rural education purposes in 1937 was $1,853,463.51 which was $318,072.31 in excess of expenditures. The former figure represented

13. Ibid., p. 280.
20,594,039 sacks of processed sugar marketed in Cuba in 1937 which were taxed at the rate of nine cents a bag. In 1938, however, the income was only $1,857,713.22 in face of an operating budget of $1,899,732.49. The deficit was met from the surplus of the previous year, but by 1938 the army had reached the limits of its financial ability to expand the civic-military rural school system. This is explained by the fact that the Cuban government had placed quotas on sugar production which meant that no immediate increase in income from the sugar tax could be expected. For example, the total number of sacks of processed sugar marketed in 1938 was only increased by 47,219 over that of 1937, which made for an income of $4,249.71 greater than that of 1937.

These figures on civic-military rural educational finance, however, enable one to understand how civic-military rural school administrators, supervisors, and teachers were limited, very often in a ridiculous fashion, in their efforts to provide a decent school and needed equipment to the children and adults in attendance.

16. Ibid., p. 689. The increase resulted from the expansion of the civic-military rural school program, namely, opening of the "José Martí" School of Improvement, rural children's boarding homes, School of Rural Economy, expansion of the Section of Culture, and increase in the number of civic-military rural schools.
Section of Accounts and Supplies. A special Section of Civic-Military Rural Education Accounts and Supplies in the Office of the Quartermaster-General of the Constitutional Army assisted the Section of Culture and the Administrative Board in securing all materials, tools, and equipment needed by the civic-military rural institutions. The Quartermaster-General of the Constitutional Army, as treasurer to the Administrative Board, was in a position to coordinate the work of this Section and that of the Administrative Board. The actual accounting was carried on by two bureaus within the Section, namely, the Bureau of Supplies which supervised the storing and distributing of warehoused materials and the Bureau of Accounts, Records, and Paymaster which cared for the fiscal matters.

Bureau of Radio Broadcasting. A Bureau of Radio Broadcasting (Negociado de Radio-Difusión) transmitted programs of an educational and recreational nature. This Bureau was directed by a Commission which planned programs, issued schedules, and determined broadcast policies. Each afternoon at two o'clock, from Monday to Friday, civic-military rural schools tuned the local receiver to a specially prepared program for the pupils. The second broadcast, received from six to eight in the evening, was for parents of civic-military rural school children and inhabitants of rural Cuba.

17. Decreto-Ley Nro. 373, series 1937.
It was previously seen, however, that many of the radio-receiving sets of the civic-military rural schools were not too dependable and, as a result, the programs were not always heard. As to the quality of the programs, Dr. Ramón de la Cruz is the authority for the statement that "most of the broadcasts were poorly planned and executed." It appears that the programs directed to rural children were not too well adapted to their mentalities, experiences, and interests. Similarly unsuccessful were the attempts to broadcast programs of master teachers instructing model classes. Because those who received the broadcasts neither knew the pupils nor their backgrounds, little value was derived from them.

Bureau of Statistics. Still another agency that assisted the Section of Culture was the Bureau of Statistics (Negociado de Estadística). Although it collected data relative to visits of missionaries, pupil attendance, days that schools were in session, and other routine items, little or no information was secured concerning the actual achievements in changing the living habits and practices of rural children and adults. Moreover, when the writer attempted to gather elementary information on the degree

21. Interview with Dr. Ramón de la Cruz, formerly on the staff of the Bureau of Statistics.
to which illiteracy had been decreased through the efforts of sergeant-teachers, he found the Bureau unable to provide any statistical summary. A few isolated studies of the extent to which intestinal parasitism was lessened were available, but there was absolutely nothing relative to the number of school houses constructed, the sanitary improvements secured in rural homes, or the number of cooperative rural industries established.

The Higher Directive Council. In an effort to overcome any shortcomings in the plan that was projected by the high-command, provision was made for a Higher Directive Council (El Consejo Directivo Superior). The Chief of the Section of Culture was its president and the Pedagogical Adviser of Trades and Industries of the Section of Culture, a professor of the School of Rural Economy, and the Chiefs of the Sections of Health, Engineering, and Veterinary Medicine of the General Headquarters were its other members. These men were to project plans for the improvement of the civic-military rural schools and from time to time to formulate policies, in the form of resolutions, which were sent to the Adjutant General.

The obvious omission of a missionary-teacher and a sergeant-teacher from this Council would indicate that the rank and file were seldom consulted in important matters affecting their duties and, by army tradition, these were

the men who were not disposed to argue against decisions from higher headquarters made by high-ranking officers.

Provincial Directive Councils. The above-mentioned shortcoming was supposed to have been met by Provincial Directive Councils (Consejos Directivos Provinciales) and the Directive Council in the "José Martí" School of Improvement. The former were made up of the Chief of the Provincial Section of Culture, as president; three missionaries of different specialties, one of whom served as secretary; and a medical doctor of the regiment.

Each of these bodies were under instructions to report to the Higher Directive Council on weaknesses encountered and progress achieved. As such, they were intended to be progressive and creative forces which injected new blood into the civic-military rural education system, but again it is noticed that sergeant-teachers were not represented. The most common complaint heard was that these Councils lacked time and sufficient personnel to gather data and reach decisions upon matters of their proper concern. And most significant of all, he is of the opinion that they failed to make known to the higher authorities the reactions of the sergeant-teachers to the policies and practices decreed and put into force by high-ranking military men.

23. Orden General Nro. 219, op. cit., Capítulo IX, "De los Consejos Directivos Provinciales."
24. Ibid., Capítulo X, "De la Actuación de los Consejos Directivos."
Provincial Bureaus of Culture. The actual work of managing and supervising the civic-military rural schools was assumed by the Provincial Bureaus of Culture (Inspecciones Provinciales de Cultura) and the Educational Missions (Missiones Educativas). The latter agencies are described in Chapter VIII of this thesis. Suffice it to say here that there were 40 educational missions each of which administered and supervised a rural children's boarding home and from 25 to 20 civic-military rural schools making up a territorial zone of operation. The actual day-by-day supervision of the schools, therefore, was delegated to the educational missions, whereas the Provincial Bureaus of Culture coordinated and supervised their work.

Each Provincial Bureau of Culture had a chief who held the rank of captain. To him was delegated the responsibility of directly supervising the activities of the educational missions and schools under his regimental control. Among his many duties, he was supposed to make an annual inspection of each school to judge the success of the work achieved by the missionaries and the chiefs of missions. Any instances of deficiency or negligence had to be reported to the regimental chief of the regular army.

25. This was seldom done.
26. It must be remembered that the sergeant-teacher was as much a soldier under the jurisdiction of the regimental command as he was a teacher.
As chief of educational matters in his regiment, the Chief of the Bureau of Culture had to unify and coordinate the work of civic-military rural education in his province. To him came the monthly report of the chiefs of missions which he had to summarize and pass on to the Section of Culture in general headquarters. To all of this was added the responsibility of organizing and presiding over the Provincial Directive Council.

The personnel of each Provincial Bureau of Culture, in addition to a Chief, included substitute teachers, an office supervisor, and a laboratory technician who operated the provincial clinic for the civic-military rural schools. The Provincial Bureaus of Culture that had achieved form by 1938 were as follows:

Regiment No. 1 "Macao"
1 Captain, Provincial Inspector and Chief of the Bureau
1 Second Sergeant, Laboratory Technician
1 Second Sergeant, Teacher-Office Supervisor
13 Corporals, Substitute Teachers

Regiment No. 2 "Agramonte"
1 Captain
2 Second Sergeants
9 Corporals

Regiment No. 3 "Leoncio Vidal"
1 Captain
2 Second Sergeants
12 Corporals

Regiment No. 4 "Placido"
1 Captain
2 Second Sergeants
5 Corporals

27. Orden Nro. 219, op. cit., Capítulo XI.
28. Ibid.
Regiment No. 5 "Martí"
1 Captain
2 Second Sergeants
3 Corporals

Regiment No. 8 "Rius Rivera"
1 Captain
2 Second Sergeants
4 Corporals

Actually, this administrative and supervisory organization was not radically different from that of the Secretary of Education. The educational missionaries served in the same capacity as did the provincial inspectors and the Provincial Bureau of Culture was comparable to the Office of the Provincial Superintendent of Schools. The characteristic form of educational administration in Cuba from early Spanish days was authoritarian, a system in which the central authority not only provided and maintained educational institutions but prescribed both the content and

29. The public school system had local attendance units and local administrative units with boards of education, but they were delegated almost no authority. The local attendance unit included the area served by a particular school, whereas the local administrative unit was a large geographical area called a municipality, in which all schools were under a single board of education. This was an elective body with but limited authority over all the urban and rural schools within its jurisdiction. Inasmuch as there were only 125 municipalities on the island, each administrative unit included a large number of school attendance units. From one point of view this was a great advantage; the local authorities in rural districts were not too competent to provide their own teachers, curriculum, courses of study, and supervision. From another point of view it was bad; the direction of education coming from Havana, tended to be urban in orientation, preoccupied with instruction in the three R's and with preparation for entrance to the institutes.
the methods of instruction. The civic-military rural schools merely upheld this tradition in a more thoroughgoing fashion and thereby provided a clear target for objective criticisms of the new order.

The totalitarianism that existed in the civic-military rural school system was also a natural derivative of the military administration of the schools. As such, there was nothing historically new and little that was unique to a school system in a way that had never been previously attempted. Batista did not produce this authoritarianism nor was it Batista’s inheritance from the Machado dictatorship. It was a part of the Spanish tradition that Cuban democracy has had to combat since the inauguration of the Republic in 1901.

Conclusion

By Law No. 620 of February 27, 1936, the civic-military rural school system was created and the army proceeded to establish schools in the rural areas of Cuba. The administration and supervision of these schools was centered in the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army which in turn was assisted by an Administrative Board, Section of Accounts, Bureau of Radio Broadcasting, Bureau of Statistics, Higher Directive Council, Provincial Directive Councils, Provincial Bureaus of Culture, and Educational Missions. These organizations, together with the eight types of civic-military rural schools, constituted the Corps
of Culture. Actually, the directive power of the Corps of Culture was centered in a small group of military men, namely, Colonel Fulgencio Batista, Commander-in-Chief; Colonel Julio Velasco Irizarri, Adjutant-General; Colonel Manuel Lopez Migoya, Quarter-master-General; Lieutenant-Colonel Aristides Sosa y de Quesada, Chief of the Section of Culture, and Dr. Juan Remos, Secretary of National Defense.

Executive direction of this type, concentrated in the hands of a small group of men, is quicker and perforce conducive to a type of efficiency; on the other hand it is inclined to be ruthless, conservative, and exploitative. So it was natural that the most-mentioned criticism of the civic-military rural movement was the rigidity and the totalitarian nature of its organization, supervision, and planning. It is true that military orders directed the sergeant-teachers not too well defined and to meet rural needs wherever they were revealed, but the authoritative nature of army life held the pioneering and experimental spirit of the personnel in check. The truth is that the entire civic-military rural school administrative and supervisory system was a bureaucracy that was both top-heavy and over-organized.

From practically every point of view, the new movement should have been considered an experimental one. This was made obvious by the awkwardness and inexperience suffered
during its immature years. Injustices emerged and confusion was in evidence long after the so-called testing period had passed. Still, when it became evident that the educational missionaries were not achieving the success they should have entertained, there was no attempt at reorganization and reform. The civic-military rural administrative organization took on a fixed form in 1938 and change was resisted thereafter.

One of the greatest dangers in this centralized tendency was the discouragement of local initiative. True, the work of the missionary-teachers and sergeant-teachers in getting local people to build the schools and the rural children's boarding homes, and to supply them, tended to develop and keep alive a cooperative and responsible attitude among the populace. As a matter of fact, financial limitations of the army made it absolutely necessary that these schools be created by local initiative, support, and cooperation. Unfortunately, however, military authoritarianism prevented the local people from having any real hand in directing the educational phases of the school. Yet it is the contention of this observer that an alert public opinion can never be achieved by having a people merely provide and equip schools physically without having some significant share in their management.

The civic-military rural education movement offers ample evidence to substantiate the general conclusion that
public education is alien to the army's way of doing things. Those who were trained educators and teachers in the system were constantly faced with arbitrary decisions from the high command or the Section of Culture. The rank and file were seldom consulted in important matters affecting their duties and, by army tradition, they were not disposed to argue against decisions from higher headquarters made by high-ranking officers.

The conclusion must be reached, finally, that Cuba would have benefited if the opportunities for rural primary and higher primary education had been furnished and administered by the Secretary of Education. The writer is of the conviction that opportunities for primary and higher primary education should be provided all rural children of Cuba, but this end should never have been gained at the expense of civilian control and operation.
Chapter XI

Civic Rural Education

During the five years, 1936-40, the army and Colonel Batista were openly the main power in Cuba and President Laredo Brú was merely the decorative figure head of government. But the badly depressed economic conditions of 1939 together with the growing dictatorial policies of military government made for a rapid decline in the popularity and prestige of Colonel Batista. This was made evident in the November 15, 1939, elections in which members of the Constituent Assembly were chosen. Out of 76 delegates, only 35 were Batista men to make this the worst defeat of the Colonel's political career. Although the opposition was sufficiently divided to prevent its having any real power, the only comfort to Batista was the praise he received for the honesty and fairness with which the election was conducted.

In spite of this defeat, the Colonel let it be known that he wished to become the next president and, when

Washington did not object, he announced his candidacy. He began preparations for the election of July 14, 1940, by forming a coalition party which included such strange bedfellows as Communists and Falangists. And more significantly for Cuba, Colonel Batista resigned his military command.

After a bitterly-fought presidential campaign, Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar, just forty years of age, was declared the winner. On the same day that the new President took office, October 10, the newly-promulgated Constitution of 1940 was declared in effect. This new instrument of government introduced many changes into the Cuban political scene, the most radical of which was the creation of Ministries to replace that of departments. Thirteen of the 286 articles dealt with education and culture. "Culture in all its manifestations" was declared to be of primary interest to the State. "Scientific investigation, artistic expression and the publication of the results thereof" were to be unrestricted; as was "teaching, except for the inspection and regulation to which the State is entitled and which is established by law." Primary instruction was made obligatory for "minors of school age," and it was to be "furnished by the State."

2. J. P. McEvoy, "Cuba's Masterpiece of Vice Versa," Reader's Digest (January 1945), condensed from the Saturday Evening Post, (September 30, 1944). J. P. McEvoy, a constant observer of Cuban political affairs, asserted that the opposition, headed by Dr. Grau San Martín, got more votes but the electoral officials arranged for Batista to have an impressive majority.

3. Constitución de 1940, Artículo 47.

4. Ibid., Artículo 48.
The provision to make school attendance obligatory for all minors was nothing new, it had been in the previous Constitution of 1901, but had been ignored, especially in rural areas. The Constitution added something new, however, in providing for the establishment of "schools for adults, devoted particularly to the elimination and prevention of illiteracy." And of significance to the subject of this thesis was the provision that read:

The State shall maintain predominately practical rural schools, organized with a view to the interests of the small agricultural, maritime or other communities, and schools of arts and trades and of agriculture, industrial and commercial techniques, so oriented that they will meet the needs of the national economy.

Shortly after the ex-Commander-in-Chief of the Constitutional Army took over the Presidency, he undertook to implement the Constitution of 1940 by transferring the civic-military rural school system to the Ministry of Education and to declare all primary instruction under the jurisdiction of that department.

This was to be more than a mere administrative reorganization. It was the first step toward taking the army out of Cuban politics. In an interview with John Gunther, author of "Inside Latin America," Batista made known his intention to return the Cuban government to civil officers:

5. Ibid., Artículo 49.
6. Ibid.
7. Decreto Nro. 117, 30 de Octubre de 1940.
I stand for the people. I act only with the authority of the people. My preoccupation is to do everything I can for the people... I have become President of the Republic, by choice of the people, so that I may represent more than merely the army, so that I may represent the free will of the entire Cuban nation. When I took off my uniform as commander-in-chief, I told the people, "I am one of you, I am one of your's." 8

The firmness of his conviction on this point was amply verified five months later, when in February, 1941, the new President discharged Colonel Bernard García, Chief of the National Police; Colonel José Pedraza, Commander-in-Chief of the Constitutional Army; and Colonel Angel González, Chief-of-Staff of the Navy. The latter two men were among the original sergeants who seized governmental power in the Revolution of September 4, 1933. Now that Batista was a civil official, however, he made it known that irresponsible military officers would not be permitted to interfere in the civil affairs of the island. This event might be designated as the end of an era of military power in Cuba. Since then the army has never been able to regain its former prestige and authority.

The coming of World War II and Cuba's entrance into it turned the attention of the Cuban people away from the work of further implementation of the educational provisions of the Constitution to concerns of world-wide importance.

Progress in education suffered just as it did in the United States during this period. Political controversy remained at a minimum for the rest of Batista's administration; there were frequent rumors of revolution but most of them could be attributed to discontent over the problems of rising living costs, shortages of food, increased taxes, and the production quota and price of sugar.

In 1944 Batista amazed many people by permitting a free election in which his own hand-picked candidate lost to Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín. It was an honest election and an honest man won, so it was thought. Even more encouraging for democratic progress in Cuba, a professor and physician had replaced a strong military hand which many

11. The chief worries of the Batista government after 1941 were the military defense of the island against a possible axis attack, rising costs of living and government, and collaboration with the United States in hemispheric defense. The Cuban government instituted compulsory military service for all Cubans between the ages of 18 and 50.

12. The higher costs of government were met by a general increase of 20 per cent in all taxes. The 1943 budget was set at $88,689,000, an increase of $10,000,000 over that of 1941. Although the budget for national defense was increased to $15,177,000, that for education reached $15,989,000. At long last the Cuban army was receiving less than that devoted to education. Yet the increased appropriation given to education was not as large as appears on paper inasmuch as the Ministry of Education was receiving the income from the tax on sugar processed on the island which had been earmarked for old civic-military rural schools.
Cubans had been led to believe was needed for maintaining law and order on the island. The orderliness of the election won increased prestige for President Batista but he was ordered out of Cuba when the new President was inaugurated, in October, 1944, in order to insure the success of the new government. This ban was enforced for four years.

The End of Civic-Military Rural Education

Probably no one step taken by Batista in restoring Cuba to civic government and furthering the progress of democracy on the island was more significant than the transfer of the civic-military rural school system from the army but it greatly diminished the power and prestige of that force throughout rural Cuba where it had its greatest hold. On October 30, 1940, the President issued a decree that ordered all civic-military rural schools to be placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. General Headquarters of the Constitutional Army followed this up with a general order that released the personnel of the Corps of Culture and gave due "recognition to all those who had realized a work so meritorious and so fruitful in its results."

13. Decreto Nro. 117, 30 de Octubre de 1940. The Constitution of 1940 gave the President authority to issue a Presidential decree, while the legislative assemble was not in session if it were approved by his Cabinet. The next legislature could review and revoke it.

14. Orden General Nro. 216, 9 de Noviembre de 1940. Some of the high-ranking officers who fathered the civic-military rural movement and others who had had long service
This move created some confusion in the Ministry of Education because, under its plan of organization, the former civic-military rural schools would have had to be placed under the jurisdiction of boards of education in the various municipal districts of the island. Such an arrangement would have meant that civic rural education would gradually lose its identity and be absorbed into the traditional pattern of Cuban education. Batista took steps to avoid this eventuality for two reasons. First, having given birth to and fathered the idea of civic rural education, he had a firm conviction that it was needed to reform rural living and ruralize the country children of Cuba. Second, Batista was not disposed to destroy this system of civic rural schools which could continue on as a living monument to his name and ideals. So it was that on November 15, 1940, the President issued a decree that created a Section of Rural, Physical, Mental and Technological Education (Sección de Educación Rural, Físico-Mental, y Tecnológica) in the Division of Instruction of the Ministry of Education. Its offices continued to be located in the building that had been constructed to house the former Section of Culture on the Avenida de Columbia opposite Military City, the headquarters of the Constitutional army.

in the armed forces preferred to remain in the army, but the great majority of the personnel were transferred to the Ministry of Education.

15. Decreto-Ley Nro. 3246, 15 de Noviembre de 1940. This was the basic law which provided for the new civic rural school organization.
Actually, the new arrangement continued the dualism that had previously existed, namely, civic rural schools and the regular rural schools which were directly under the local boards of education and provincial inspectors. An attempt was made to remove the dichotomy when President Batista, on November 15, 1940, declared all rural schools to be under the direction and control of the Section of Rural, Physical, Mental and Technological Education. Since this Section was dominated by the old officials of civic-military rural education, the intention was to extend civic rural organization and plans of study to all rural schools in Cuba. In fact, this same decree declared that the regulations and curriculum of the civic-military rural schools originally ordered by Presidential Decree Number 2683, December 29, 1938, were continued and applied to all rural schools. In practice, the regular rural schools continued under the local boards of education because the civic rural mission system was never expanded to cover all rural schools. So the regular rural schools continued to be supervised by the Rural Inspectors who were now made responsible to the newly-appointed Provincial Chief of Rural Education in the office of the Provincial Superintendent of Schools.

As things stood in 1940 at the time of the transfer of the civic-military rural schools to the Ministry of Education, there were a total of 2,710 rural schools of which

16. Decreto Nro. 3247. 15 de Noviembre de 1940.
1,070 were the civic-military rural and 1,640 were the regular rural schools. Of the total enrollment of 110,725 pupils, it was estimated that approximately 57,000 were enrolled in civic rural schools which seems a little high when it is considered that these institutions were in a minority and located in the more sparsely settled regions of the island. A possible explanation may be found in the fact that these schools had been under military authorities who were more partially successful in enforcing attendance. The distribution of these students and schools among the provinces is shown in the table below:

Table 10
Distribution of Rural Schools in 1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provinces</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Civic Rural</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pinar del Rio</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>14,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havana</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>12,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matanzas</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>11,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Villas</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>25,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camaguey</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>10,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriente</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>35,384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,710       1,070       1,640       110,725

It would appear from the foregoing that the establishment of a separate Bureau of Rural Education and the continuance of civic rural institutions in the Ministry of Education was a sweeping victory for the idea of a system of rural schools dedicated to the end of ruralizing country.

17. Orden General Nro. 213A, 6 de Noviembre de 1940. These figures indicate that under the stimulus of the civic-military rural education movement the Secretary of Education had expanded its rural school program. Unfortunately, statistics were in such a confused state during the 1930's that no definite figure can be given
children and preparing them for carrying on the vocation of agriculture. It was hoped that, by this move to civil status, the educational missions and civic rural schools would be able to do more in rural rehabilitation and in raising the cultural level of the peasant than had been achieved under the military. The intent of the educational reform decrees of 1940 and 1941 was, in effect, to perpetuate the old civic-military rural organization on practically the same basis as it had been before with the exception that the Minister of Education through a Bureau of Rural Education administered the schools. Also the functions that civic-military rural personnel exercised as army officials and soldiers was now translated into civil powers. The change-over from the old civic-military rural organization, institutions, and courses of study to civic rural effected more transformation, however, than was evident in the wording of the decrees and, therefore, requires more detailed description and appraisal.

Civic Rural Schools

Administration. All civic rural schools were placed under the jurisdiction of the newly-created Section of Rural, Physical, Mental and Technological Education in the Division of Instruction of the Ministry of Education. This section was divided into three departments which were designated as

as to the number that were established from 1936 to 1940.
the Bureau of Rural Education (Negociado de Educación Rural), Bureau of Physical and Mental Education for Minors (Negociado de Educación Física y Mental Menores), and Bureau of Technological Education (Negociado de Educación Tecnológica). In short, the Bureau of Rural Education merely assumed the functions and responsibilities of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army, which now had been placed in the Ministry of Education, a central agency corresponding to a department in our government. The Minister of Education was, and is today, a member of the President's Cabinet and received his appointment from the President of the Republic. By means of decrees he formulated and provided for the enforcement of educational policies and practices for the schools of the entire nation. The ministry was located in the city of Havana and housed in a small, overcrowded building with the Ministry of Commerce. For this reason, the Bureau of Rural Education remained located in Marianao in the building originally constructed to house the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army.

A director of rural schools, an appointee of the Minister of Education, was in charge of the Bureau of Rural Education. For all practical purposes, this position was identical with that of the Chief of the Section of Culture of the Constitutional Army. He was assisted in turn by

Provincial Chiefs of Rural Primary Instruction and educational missionaries. The former officials had their headquarters in the offices of the Provincial Superintendents of Schools, which were really responsible for the general supervision of professional work of all elementary schools in the province and their administrative practices.

To the Chief of Rural Primary Instruction was delegated the general supervision of the civic rural schools and missions within a province. As such, this official assumed those duties formerly held by the Chief of a Provincial Section of Culture. The provincial organization of school zones, each with a Chief of an educational mission in charge, was carried over into the civic rural system.

For all practical purposes, the old civic-military rural school organization was retained but adapted to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education. It contemplated a complete rural school organization with specialized rural supervision from a central office extending into each school zone. The district boards of

20. The six Provincial Superintendents of Schools, the General Superintendent of Schools, and the Ministry of Education made up the National Board of Education. Although the Provincial Superintendents were charged with the technical inspection of elementary instruction, most of it was delegated to provincial, district, and assistant school inspectors.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION

SECTION OF RURAL, PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

BUREAU OF RURAL EDUCATION

"JOSÉ MARTÍ" RURAL NORMAL SCHOOL

PROVINCIAL CHIEFS OF RURAL PRIMARY INSTRUCTION

SCHOOL OF RURAL ECONOMICS

EDUCATIONAL MISSIONS

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of PROV.COLLEGES

PROV.COLLEGES of RURAL INSTRUCTION

CIVIC RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

RURAL BOARDING HOMES

Civic Rural School System
Chart VI
education were given no authority over the civic rural schools but they retained control over the other rural schools of the district because the mission system was not expanded to include them.

The 40 educational missions were continued with their missionary-specialists, and to each of the latter officials was assigned approximately the same responsibilities as he held previously in the Corps of Culture.

In general, the whole missionary system became more democratic following the change-over to civil status. But the relaxation of military discipline together with the traditional laxity of the Cuban civil service, brought increased indifference, negligence, and outright refusal to carry out some aspects of the work. If the contributions of missionaries to making over rural living habits were questionable under civic-military rural sponsorship, there was no such doubt about the utter fruitlessness of their work in the civic rural school system.

To replace the Provincial Directive Council, there was formed a college of rural instruction which was made up of all missionaries and rural inspectors of a province. The members elected a Provincial Directive Council to advise the Provincial Chief of Primary Instruction on matters relating to the supervision of the civic rural schools.

24. Decreto Nro. 2596, 28 de Agosto de 1941.
There was general dissatisfaction with the arrangement inasmuch as advisement on administrative functions was denied the Council. Delegates were elected from each Provincial Directive Council to form a National Executive Committee and this group had functions similar to those of the Higher Directive Council of the Civic-Military Rural School system.

Since the army and navy journals, El Ejército Constitucional and Cultura Militar y Naval no longer served as media to inform civic rural teachers on matters pertaining to the rural schools, the new President ordered the establishment of a rural educational journal, La Escuela Rural, to be published by the "José Martí" Rural Normal School in conjunction with the National Federation of Technical Rural Instruction. This review published circulars, announcements, and decrees issued by the Ministries of Education and Agriculture. A section was devoted to each of the special areas, such as pedagogy, agriculture, grades, veterinary medicine, domestic science, and literature. From time to time, outlines of courses taught in the "José Martí" Rural Normal School were published for the guidance of those carrying on independent study in preparation for summer examinations in the various subject areas.

27. Formerly called the "José Martí" School of Improvement.
28. The Federation of Technical Rural Instruction, which helped to edit the journal, was formed in 1940 as a
Civic Rural Primary Schools. As for the civic rural primary schools, they functioned much the same as formerly with the exception that the military phase of the program was completely eliminated. A small proportion of the personnel resigned their teaching posts to remain in the army but the majority preferred to become teachers in the new civic rural system. The basic regulations governing their functions continued to be those contained in the Presidential Decree of December 29, 1938, which was the equivalent of General Order Number 219 of the Constitutional Army.

There was an attempt to make these institutions more like community schools but the extent to which they functioned as such depended in large part upon the vision, courage, and energy of the local teacher and the missionary-specialists. In many instances community education got nowhere because there was still the tendency to impose a plan and a set of ideas upon a locality not yet ready for them. Besides, the civic rural instructors were for the professional group to advance the interests of civic rural teachers. Because most of these instructors did not hold a primary teaching certificate, they could not qualify for membership in the National Federation of Rural Teachers. Consequently, the new organization became the spokesman for the institutions of the old Corps of Culture of the Constitutional Army until 1942 when the two organizations merged under the name of National Federation of Rural Teachers.

most part former sergeant-teachers who had been prepared for their tasks by means of short orientation courses; hence, they were not capable of developing their own programs and courses of study to meet the desires and needs, feelings, and opinions, and ways of doing and thinking of local people. Consequently, community education usually meant night classes for illiterates and a recreational program one night each week.

The schools now opened the first Monday in September and closed for summer vacation on the first Friday in June. The academic year was divided into three tri-semesters which extended from the first Monday in September to December 19, January 7 to Palm Sunday, and the Tuesday after Easter to the first Friday in June.

There was a noticeable increase in irregularity of attendance and illiteracy after the civic-military rural schools were placed under civil auspices. Also noticed was a relaxation of discipline on the part of teachers and pupils. Perhaps the increase in irregularity of attendance and indifference to education in general on the

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31 Dr. Felipe Donate, Past-President of the Pedagogic Club of Cuba, estimated that about 50 per cent of the children who by law were obliged to attend school were not matriculated in any, and of the other 50 per cent the greater part was formed by children who attended with much irregularity and left school at a very early age.
part of both teachers and pupils created these conditions. Under military discipline sergeant-teachers were held more strictly accountable for days in attendance and their teaching. But now the little supervision given by missionary-specialists under the civic-military rural program was greatly reduced in quality and quantity under the new system.

That a more democratic atmosphere pervaded the civic rural school than was found in its predecessor is evident from the description given by Miss Ferguson, of a teacher in one of these institutions.

This country teacher interested me. His manner with Ramiro Alvarez, President of the Student Body, was not what one often finds in Latin American educators—stiff, disciplinary, teaching by rote and demanding respect...

This is typical of what one would have observed in about all of the civic rural schools of the period.

Although the course of study issued by the Bureau of Rural Education provided for a five-year course, the great majority of the schools offered little or nothing beyond the first three grades of primary instruction. The course of study and methods of teaching continued to be substantially the same as those authorized by the army authorities and, if anything, the leaders of the civic rural system became more fanatically dedicated to the idea that a rural

school should ruralize the country children and prepare them for the vocation of agriculture.

Almost all of the civic rural schools were housed in bohíos which had been constructed under the direction of a sergeant-teacher with the aid of the people of the community. Most of these buildings, however well intentioned their creators, lacked the basic and permanent hygienic conditions necessary for good teaching. And the majority of them merely had a corner of the room walled-off for the teacher's residence. Such conditions called for a long-time building program of schoolhouses and teacher residences if competent instructors were to be attracted to and held in rural teaching positions.

The civic-military rural school system never was supplied with sufficient financial support to equip the schools adequately with furniture, tools, and the necessary supplies. The Ministry of Education permitted the civic rural schools to continue to use Motivaciones Escolares inasmuch as there were no other books available and, as a reader, it had much to recommend it over the books in use in the regular rural schools. The Ministry of Education was probably less liberal with student supplies, school equipment, and school repairs than the army had been.

As World War II progressed, the civic rural schools took an active role in popularizing "war gardens." The
Ministry of Education ordered each school to cultivate rice, corn, mani, beans, and other food products determined by the Ministry of Agriculture. The rural teachers were designated to act as assistants to the municipal agricultural inspector to see that all farms devoted a portion of their acreage to the production of suggested foods.

But the civic rural system did not continue to grow and prosper to any great extent under the direction of the Minister of Education. The favoritism and leadership given the civic rural movement by President Batista immediately after he became chief executive were now directed toward other governmental concerns. Nor was the Minister of Education particularly concerned to foster these special institutions as distinct from other rural schools. In short, civic rural teachers became a vested-interest group dedicated to perpetuating their early gains and other concessions granted at the time of transfer from the Corps of Culture. By June, 1943, the number of civic rural schools had increased to approximately 1,300, a growth of about 211 in a period of three years. This in itself was not discouraging, but the goal of 3,000 civic rural schools projected by Colonel Batista in 1936 was becoming more and more elusive.

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34. Decreto, 4 de Febrero de 1942.
36. Wifredo Mas Machado, op. cit.
more unattainable.

Rural Children's Boarding Homes. On the higher-primary level, the rural children's boarding homes continued to serve as headquarters of the educational missions with the Chiefs of missions in charge of them. Of the 100 students enrolled, only 30 received full-maintenance scholarships and the other 70 were day students. The entrance requirements were fixed so that applicants had to be between eleven and fifteen years of age and to show some ability for shop procedures, agricultural work, or rural industrial processes. Those students who completed the fifth grade of a civic rural school and who desired to extend their education were gathered each year at the mission headquarters to take a competitive examination for the purpose of selecting those to whom scholarships would be awarded. This replaced the former practice of selecting a student from each school. About 50 per cent of the examination covered academic subjects and the remainder, agriculture and trades. The next step required the aspirants to pass a physical examination. Should a scholarship student fail to pass two consecutive courses or should he lack moral character or discipline in the school, his scholarship was revoked.

The homes were now financed by a ministry appropriation of $300 a month to provide for maintenance, fuel,

water, light, laundering, workshop equipment, janitor service, and student supplies. This income was supplemented by marketing the surplus crops produced on the school farm and articles made in the workshops. Also each rural children's boarding home was encouraged to form a cooperative for the purpose of bartering and exchanging products with the civic rural schools of the district.

The pre-vocational course of study was revised so as to be the equivalent of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades and the three years were divided into six-semesters of eighteen weeks each. Three hours of the day's program was devoted to academic subjects, three to practical work, and one to physical education. The academic courses included reading and writing in the Spanish language, Cuban history and geography, arithmetic and elementary geometry, natural science, elementary physics and chemistry, physiology and hygiene, drawing, penmanship, and civic and moral principles of living. Workshop experiences in wood and metal, carpentry, plastic arts, farming industries, and field studies in industrial agriculture made up the practical course. The one hour of physical education was given to calisthenics, games, and sports.

38. This did not include salaries for the missionaries, two professors, and cook.
The new course of study was determined by a special commission consisting of the directors of all rural children's boarding homes, the director of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School, and the six Provincial Chiefs of Civic Primary Instruction, over which the Minister of Education presided. For all practical purposes it was the old course of study reorganized plus an additional year. This was made necessary because many of the civic rural schools had added another grade, to make a five-year course, and because of the addition of another year to the program of the rural children's boarding home. As such, the new program represented an opportunity for rural children to receive a higher primary education that was almost the equivalent to that offered by urban higher primary schools, except that the latter was on the seventh-, eighth, and ninth grade levels.

When the programs of the two higher primary schools, rural and urban, are examined it is discovered that they both required Spanish language, reading, and composition; civics, history, and geography; arithmetic and geometry; general science, elementary physics and chemistry; drawing and penmanship; manual training; and physical education. The rural children's boarding home stressed physiology and hygiene as separate courses, whereas the urban higher primary schools included them in a general science course. The natural-science, chemistry, and physics courses taught
in the former school were largely applied to agriculture and problems of farming. Music and singing, elementary algebra, and English language appeared only in the urban higher-primary school program.

The pre-vocational experiences of both schools were concerned with those occupations which the students were likely to pursue in adult life. The urban higher primary school offered electives in bookkeeping, office work, stenography, typing, gardening, industrial arts, plastic arts, and industrial drawing. The rural children's boarding homes on the other hand, provided exploratory and advanced courses in carpentry, metalwork, plastic arts, rural industries, and agriculture.

The successful completion of the three years' work in the rural children's boarding home entitled the graduate to a diploma of Rural Artisan (Artesano Rural) which indicated the specific trade in which he received the most training and had the most success. As such, the diploma qualified the holder to enter the "José Martí" Rural Normal School or to perform his specific trade.

Although the rural children's boarding homes numbered 39, they failed to meet the rural needs for higher primary schooling. First, they were for boys only. Second, they were predominately agricultural and, therefore, did not meet the wider needs of those who intended to be miners, seamen, or other kinds of workers. This condition was
brought about by having a general course of study that applies to all 39 institutions when there was actually a need to adapt each course to the life needs of the area in which the school operated. These homes, along with the civic rural mission system, were abolished by executive decree, on October 16, 1946. The political opposition that came into power in 1944 could not permit the personality of Fulgencio Batista to be enshrined in the institutions he created. So the educational system he created was abolished in 1946 and the civic rural schools were absorbed by the regular public school system.

The School of Rural Economy. The School of Rural Economy at Santa Clara was reorganized and extended scholarships to 300 girls, 13 to 16 years of age, who completed the fourth grade in a civic rural or rural primary school and who passed an entrance examination. The three-year curriculum of the civic-military rural system was continued; its successful completion led to the diploma of rural teacher of economy, arts, and domestic science. The first class, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, was graduated in 1943 and the last in 1946, since in the next year, 1947, the school was closed.

The "José Martí" Rural Normal School. Provision was made for the "José Martí" School of Improvement to be

40. Decreto Nro. 2764, 16 de Octubre de 1946.
41. Cf. p. 354
42. Decreto Nro. 26, Septiembre de 1941.
43. Cf. p. 337.
transferred to the Ministry of Education when the civic-military rural schools were converted to civic status in 1940. But it was not until March, 1941, that any definite regulation was issued to govern the operations of the institution. It was then that the name was changed to "José Martí" Rural Normal School and its program of specialized rural teacher education extended over a four-year period, making the course comparable to that of the provincial normal schools. There was also a special short course designed for graduates of regular normal schools who wished to become teachers in civic rural schools.

Fifty full-maintenance, four-year scholarships were granted each year to those achieving high scores in a competitive examination given the third week of September of each year. Twenty-five were awarded to pupils graduating from rural children's boarding homes and five to the graduates of each of the five groups of institutions as follows: institutes, higher schools of arts and trades, technical industrial schools, school of rural economy, and provincial schools of agriculture. Furthermore, entering students had

44. Decreto Nro. 887, 18 de Marzo de 1941.
45. Decreto Nro. 3117, 30 de Octubre de 1940.
46. In 1940, there were six different types of institutions preparing primary school teachers, namely, provincial normal schools, normal schools for kindergarten teachers, schools of the home preparing girls for teaching domestic arts and manual training in elementary schools, a school of education in the University of Havana, a school of rural economy, and a rural normal school.
to be between 17 and 20 years of age, pass a physical examination, possess no physical defect that would interfere with the duties of a rural teacher, and be of good moral character.

The reorganized rural normal institution opened on October 1, 1941, and 50 students entered. Another 50 were accepted in October of the next year to make a total of 100 students in residence during the 1942-1943 school year. Of these, 75 were graduates from rural children's boarding homes and 25 from other schools. This is sufficient evidence to show that graduates of other institutions were not too interested in becoming rural teachers inasmuch as the quotas for scholarships assigned them had to be filled by graduates of the rural children's boarding home. Although other classes entered, only two were ever graduated, inasmuch as the "José Martí" Rural Normal School was closed in 1946.

One of the chief objections to the old "José Martí" School of Improvement was removed when there was created a laboratory school, known as the annex. It was used as an observation, demonstration, and practice center. Each student was given an opportunity to teach classes under the supervision of several faculty members. Now the prospective

48. Student drop out over the four-year course averaged about 30 per cent of the original class and most of it occurred in the last two years in residence.
AULA DE PRACTICA DOCENTE.—Clase práctica de Metodología Especial de Estudios de la Naturaleza. Se puede apreciar a los alumnos de la Escuela Anexa escuchando la clase, y a los normalistas atentos a la misma, pero luego hacer la crítica.

Student Teaching in the School Annex
Plate XIV
teacher could see a rural school in operation and thus familiarize himself, through observation, participation, and teaching, with the school activities which he was expected to carry on in his future teaching assignments. But this was a very narrow teaching experience that did not really prepare the student-teacher to direct the kind of community school projected by the civic rural program. It would have been better for the students in their final year to have been placed in near-by rural schools under real community conditions. Instead, community work was more talked about than practiced.

The faculty of the former "José Martí" School of Improvement was continued and gradually increased to 51 in order to care for the larger student body. A special decree was issued in 1943 specifically recognizing the professors of the school as coming under the protection of the civil service in the Ministry of Education.

The curriculum was guided by a philosophy of education which coincided with the whole philosophy of the civic rural movement, namely, that a new type of rural teacher had to be trained in order to carry on rural elementary instruction in country areas. To this end, a basic decree, issued in 1941, set forth the course of study and all the

50. Decreto Nro. 7, Articulo 91, 5 de Abril de 1943.
51. Decreto Nro. 2343 del año 1941.
details for the functioning of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School.

The four-year curriculum reached final form on April 1, 1943, and was put into force by special decree. Technical rural pedagogy and practical arts were emphasized but not to the exclusion of academic subjects, and all of the military content and discipline connected with the former courses were completely deleted. Each academic year was divided into two semesters with an average class load for each student being sixteen required hours. The plan of studies follows:

52. Once the regulations and curricula are decreed, they are difficult to change. Perhaps Cuba needs to utilize other means of putting curricula and school practices into operation which will allow for differences in area.

53. Decreto Nro. 7, op. cit.

54. Even the academic subjects, however, were taught with a practical bias. For example, English was offered with the end in view of enabling the pupils to read and interpret textbooks, magazines, and reviews related to the specialties that were taught in civic rural schools. This is best illustrated in the article "Programa de la Lengua Inglesa para la Escuela Normal Cívico-Rural José Martí," La Escuela Rural (Septiembre de 1941), op. 82-90.

55. A distinctly more democratic and informal atmosphere was noted by the writer on visiting the school in June, 1941.

First Year

Spanish language (Grammar)
Mathematics (Arithmetic)
Biological Sciences (Biology)
Social Studies (Physical Geography of Cuba)
Organization and Administration of Schools
English language
Music
Pedagogy: Graphic Work
Elementary Psychology
Horticulture and Gardening
Practical Agriculture
Plastic Arts
Physical Education

Second Year

Spanish language (Grammar and Literary Techniques)
Mathematics (Accounts and Algebra)
English language
Zoology
Social Studies
Statistics and School Legislation
Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene
Music
Pedagogy (General Methods)
Special Cultivation
Practical Agriculture
Rural Construction
Construction Practices
Educational Psychology
Physical Education.

Third Year

Spanish language (History of Spanish and Cuban Literature)
Mathematics (Plane Geometry)
Natural Sciences (Botany and Geology)
Social Studies (Geography and Universal History)
Rural Industries
Agriculture (Theory)
Practical Agriculture
General and Special Zootechnics
Rural and Education Sociology (Community Betterment)
Domestic Arts: Arts, Sciences, and Industries of the home

Metalwork
English Language
Music: History of Music
Measurement applied to Education
School Hygiene
Professional Orientation (Practice of Observation)
Physical Education

Fourth Year

Rural Health
Rural Economy and Legislation
Sicknesses of Domestic Animals and Rural Veterinary Practices
Agriculture: Physics and Chemistry applied to Agriculture
Laboratory Practice
Woodwork
Physics and Chemistry
Practice Teaching in the School Annex

When this plan is compared with that of the provincial normal schools of the same period, its practical and specialized nature is clearly revealed. The general experiences in manual training and domestic science in the provincial normal schools were quite in contrast with the specialized courses in horticulture, gardening, practical agriculture, plastic arts, carpentry, metalwork, rural industries and many others of a peculiar and special interest to those going exclusively into the rural areas to teach. Hence the foremost criticism of the institution was its neglect of a broad general education. The teacher graduating from the "José Martí" Rural Normal School tended to see the rural problem completely out of context of larger national and world problems. Even the academic courses were given a practical and rural bias wherever possible. Chemistry, for example, was taught in relation to problems of agricultural and rural
living; drawing was applied to woodwork and agriculture; and mathematics was related to agricultural bookkeeping.

The Cult of Civic Rural Education

Such was the degree to which the faculty of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School attempted to develop a distinctively technical rural school as a means of perpetuating itself and the civic rural school organization as a unique and necessary part of the Cuban educational system. In opposition to this new development were the graduates and faculties of the provincial normal schools. They maintained that their own institutions were best fitted for training rural primary teachers. Furthermore, they contended that the 1,700 unemployed normal school graduates argued against the continuance of a special institution for training rural teachers.

Especially were these forces critical of the provision made to continue in their positions the former sergeant-teachers, who had received inferior, inadequate, and haphazard professional training in the "José Martí" School of Improvement. On January 14, 1941, a commission was named by the Minister of Education to study and propose means by which those who taught classes in civic rural schools and

58. Interview with Dr. González, Superintendent of Schools, May, 1949.
TALLER DE METALES Y ELECTRICIDAD. Los alumnos en plena labor. En este taller se les enseña el aprovechamiento de los envases en la construcción de objetos aplicados al hogar, el aula y sus anexos. Forja de herramientas para el taller escolar. Juegos de metal, etc.

Students in the Metal and Electrical Workshops of "Jose Marti" Rural Normal School
Plate XV
A Class in Agriculture in the "Jose Marti" Rural Normal School

Plate XVI

UNO DE LOS HUERTOS.- Clase practica de Agricultura. Se puede observar la enseñanza coeducacional y al alumno dando la clase.
who did not possess a diploma from a normal school or a
degree from the university might secure the training
necessary to qualify them for a teaching certificate.
On the recommendation of this commission, the President
ruled that the former sergeant-teachers had the right to
continue as civic rural teachers for three years from
March, 1940. If at the end of that time they had not taken
sufficient work in the summer sessions of the "José Martí"
Rural Normal School to meet certification requirements,
they could be dismissed.

But on August 18, 1941, these regulations were altered
to read that teachers who had graduated from the "José
Martí" School of Improvement could continue as teachers in
civic rural schools until the "José Martí" Rural Normal
School provided sufficient instructors. They would then
be dismissed unless they secured the titles of Doctor of
Pedagogy, Normal Teacher, or Civic Rural Normal Teacher.
This decree was voided in April, 1943, when another was
issued, article 91 of which provided that "the persons
referred to in this article who may not be in possession

60. "Regulaciones para cursos especiales para maestros
La Escuela Rural, (Agosto 1941), pp. 16-17. The "José
Martí" Rural Normal School could not possibly have gradu-
atated a sufficient number of teachers to fill the vacan-
cies that would have occurred at the end of the three-
year period. Unless the former sergeant-teachers would
take the summer courses and qualify for certification,
regularly trained primary school teachers from provin-
cial normal schools would be appointed and civic rural
of an instructional title required by the Constitution of the Republic are granted a term of six years to meet the approval of this law."

Hence, the civic rural teachers had until 1949 to qualify for teaching certificates. In the meantime, they were encouraged by the faculty of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School to matriculate in special summer courses created to meet their needs in securing the necessary credits. There were offered three courses of 60 days each, starting on June 20 and ending on August 20. So many civic rural teachers applied for admission to the summer school that a plan was evolved to permit those who desired to study independently and to take examinations for credit. Later this privilege was revised to the extent that examinations had to be based upon the subject matter taught at the "José Martí" Rural Normal School as published in its courses of study.

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62. Decreto Nro. 2596, 18 de agosto de 1941.
63. Decreto Nro. 7, 5 de abril de 1943, artículo 91.
64. Decreto Nro. 1314, 30 de abril de 1941.
65. Decreto Nro. 887, 18 de marzo de 1941.
66. Decreto Nro. 1215, 1 de abril de 1943. Each one of the courses given in the Rural Normal School program was outlined and edited by the teaching professor. They were published by the director of the school for the use of those civic rural teachers who were doing independent study in the preparation for the examinations given each summer in lieu of class attendance. Each course examination was graded by a committee which consisted of the professors designated by the director of the school. The months of June and July of each summer were set aside for the administration and grading of these examinations.
The writer was not able to secure any statistics on the number of civic rural teachers who qualified for the title of civic rural teacher through home study. Dr. Brito was of the opinion that fewer than half of them ever applied for this privilege and even fewer ever completed the work. Paul Tate remarked that many of the sergeant-teachers he knew in Camagüey had an abiding faith that President Batista would never permit their being removed.

The practical work and project requirements of a course were fulfilled by securing the necessary materials from the professor, constructing objects in the teacher's own school, and presenting the results for final judgment. Should the teacher prefer not to do this, he could submit himself to practical examinations in the various workshops. To receive credit for physical education, each teacher was required to appear in gym clothes and to demonstrate his ability and knowledge in various exercises and sports. Methods courses raised a problem but it was finally decided that the district inspector's rating of the teacher's success could be submitted and, if it were "acceptable" or better, the student would receive credit for the methods courses and student teaching.

When all examinations and course work were completed, an oral examination over the theory and practice of education was held before an examining committee and any of the student body of the Rural Normal School who cared to attend. Passing of the final examination entitled the individual to the academic title of rural normal teacher which legally qualified him to teach in the civic rural schools. "Regulaciones para La Escuela Normal Rural." La Escuela Rural (Agosto de 1941), pp. 11-12.

67. Interview with Dr. Brito, Secretary, "José Martí" Rural Normal.
even if they did not hold a title. This attitude led many to ignore the pleadings of the faculty of "José Martí" Rural Normal School for all former sergeant-teachers to take the summer courses.

This easy procedure of qualifying for a teaching title by independent study naturally aroused the anger of the provincial normal school forces. Added to the professional opposition to the continuance of civic rural education was the political antagonism that was created when the more fanatical civic rural leaders sought to perpetuate the civic rural institutions as monuments to the name of Colonel Batista. As early as 1941, this desire was being made known.

...The National Federation of Technical Rural Instruction, representative of the agencies of the old Corps of Culture of the Constitutional Army, as well as those colleagues previously enrolled in the service of Rural Education, remain loyal to the expressed postulates that constitute the origin, basis, and essential end of the new educational organization. It will always be devoted to the respectable personality of Colonel Batista, of JuanPérez, and other cooperating members of the government in prominent places.69

Alberto Arrendondo, in his summary of the first year of President Batista's administration, conveyed about the same idea.

Here, in rural education, is rooted the name of Colonel Batista. It is one of the most gigantic enterprises in favor of Cuban education and stands as concrete evidence of his contribution to our great

68. Interview with Mr. Paul Tate, United States Consul in Camagüey and Headmaster of St. Paul's School.
rural masses.

On the other hand, the political opponents of President Batista were just as insistent in their desire to eliminate all things that might serve to remind the people of the benevolent leadership of the ex-Commander-in-Chief and President. The growth of this opposition led the missionary-specialists to form provincial committees of the Federation of Technical Rural Instruction which dedicated themselves to securing legislation to consolidate the rights and privileges that civic rural personnel had been given in decrees by the Minister of Education. Representatives from each provincial group formed a national committee to act "as a fighting front in getting Congress to recognize the legal existence of the civic rural schools and to certify the graduates of "José Martí" Rural Normal School as the only qualified teachers to instruct in them. Hence, the missionary-revolutionary spirit that had made the movement so dynamic and vital in its early stages was now gradually being replaced by a concern over the future of the movement itself.

The efforts of both the faculty of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School and the missionary-specialists succeeded in getting the Chamber of Representatives of the Cuban

Congress to pass the Nodal bill, on May 5, 1944, which gave statutory recognition of an earlier Ministerial decree that read in part:

In accordance with the needs of civic rural education, the "José Martí" Rural Normal School will organize courses of specialization to prepare members of Education Missions and graduates of the present normal schools of the Republic who desire to dedicate themselves to civic rural instruction.\textsuperscript{72}

This law, together with article 50 of the Constitution of 1940 which provided that "teaching titles of special capacity shall carry the right to preferential appointment to positions that are vacant or created in the respective schools and specialties," and article 57 which read that "the State shall insure preference, in the furnishing of public services, to citizens officially prepared for the respective specialty," meant that a graduate of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School would legally be given preference over all other teachers in filling a vacant civic rural teaching position or one that was newly created.

This naturally aroused widespread resentment and antagonism on the part of the graduates of provincial normal schools, but still greater anger was stirred by another provision of the same law that recognized the right of the civic rural instructors to continue teaching although they

\textsuperscript{72} Decreto Nro. 887, Artículo 5, 1944.
were not yet in possession of a title and were making no attempt to take the courses necessary for securing one.  

The controversy that ensued once again opened the whole issue of the necessity for a specialized rural primary education and a distinctive kind of rural teacher education. The issue became more and more menacing to the civic rural forces in view of the growing possibility that the party in power might not be returned to office in the presidential and congressional elections of 1944. If elected, the opposition probably would not permit the civic rural movement to continue since it stood as a monument to the political ideals and person of President Batista. The "José Martí" Rural Normal School, therefore, became the focus of attack because it was realized that if this institution were abolished, the educational missions and civic rural schools without organized leadership would be short lived.

It was not until October 16, 1946, however, that the opposition succeeded in closing the "José Martí" Rural Normal School. Dr. Grau San Martín, who had been defeated for the presidency in 1940 by Colonel Batista, was elected in 1944, and by 1946 he had consolidated his forces sufficiently to deal a deadly blow to civic rural education. On October 16, the Minister of Education issued a decree that notified the Director and 51 professors of the "José Martí"

73. Decreto Nro. 7 de 1943 had given the civic rural teachers six years, starting with the promulgation of the decree to qualify for a title.
Rural Normal School to dismiss the students, who had just arrived for a new school year, and ordered the faculty to await new teaching assignments from the Superintendent of Secondary Education. The salaries of all personnel were continued and in a few months most of the instructors were placed in secondary schools in and around Havana. The school plant at Rancho Boyeros was then converted into an elementary polytechnical institute.

At the same time, all missionary-specialists were dismissed and the Bureau of Rural Education was eliminated. All civic rural schools were placed directly under the Division of Instruction of the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Superintendents of Instruction. The rural children's homes were closed; most of them were not reopened until September, 1949, and then as higher primary polytechnical institutions. The School of Rural Economy suspended its courses in 1947 and as yet has not been reactivated. At long last, the dualism of civic rural and regular rural education was resolved.

74. Certainly the enthusiasm and leadership of the faculty of "José Martí" Rural Normal School had done much to offset the discouragement and disillusionment that overtook many of the civic rural teachers and missionaries.

75. Decreto Nro. 2764, 16 de octubre de 1946. In the case of Dr. Brito, he was assigned to teach the social studies in the Rosalia Abreu Technical Industrial School in General Ferega but, since the director did not need him, he remained at home and for three years received his salary regularly each month. On May 23, 1949, he received a notice that his salary would cease June 1. He immediately protested on the basis that tenure protected him.
Conclusion

The basic educational problems created by the inauguration of the civic-military rural schools in 1936 were not solved by transfer to the Ministry of Education in 1940. Although on paper all primary education was reorganized and divided into two branches, namely, urban and rural, actually there continued two types of rural institutions, regular rural and civic rural. The civic rural schools had their own curricula, teaching personnel, traditions, and allegiances which were not accepted by other rural schools under the Ministry. Although the courses of study of the civic-military rural institutions were continued in the civic rural establishments, with the exception of a few minor changes, most of the enthusiasm and zeal that dominated the early years of the movement had waned and an air of demoralization permeated the personnel. The system had become regarded by those who fostered and led it as being an end in itself, something to be worshipped and served for its own sake. There resulted schools with cut-and-dried programs set by the leaders and followed by teachers and pupils whenever the facilities were available to implement them and when they did not require too much effort. This simple fact doomed the civic rural system to steady intellectual and emotional deterioration.

In his essay on self-reliance, Emerson says that institutions are the lengthened shadows of individuals.
This statement is especially appropriate when applied to the civic rural movement since the institutions created found their source in the heart of Colonel Fulgencio Batista. This proved in the long run to be unfortunate for the future of civic rural education. True to the traditions of Cuba, the political opposition that came into power in 1944 could not permit the personality of the ex-Commander-in-Chief and President to be enshrined in the institutions he created. So the civic rural educational system was ended in 1946, when the "José Martí" Rural Normal School, the rural children's boarding homes, the School of Rural Economy, and the educational missions were abolished by presidential decree.

Yet the picture of rural education in Cuba in 1946 was very different from what it had been when the first civic-military rural schools were created in 1936. The positive results of this long fight are different to estimate; statistics are unfortunately not available relative to the degree that attendance was enforced, illiteracy was reduced, and basic living habits and attitudes were changed. One obvious result was that rural Cuba had some 1,300 more schools as a direct result of the civic rural movement and possibly another 1,000 regular rural schools which were established by the Ministry of Education to meet the demands raised by local interest growing out of the educational
consciousness awakened in rural areas not served by any schools. The conclusion can be reached that, if the progress of a nation is judged by the number of schools and students it fosters, then the civic rural movement was eminently successful. If, on the other hand, the maximum and broadest development of children in their potentialities is made the basis for judgment, doubts can be registered concerning the adequacy and the success of the movement, whether under civic-military rural auspices or its transformed status of civic rural education.
Part III

The Future of Cuban Rural Education
Chapter XII

Rural Education Since 1946

The last two years of President Grau San Martín's administration, 1947 and 1948, were turbulent ones. The extreme dishonesty and corruption that marked his term in office was encouraged by the "dance of the Millions," the prosperity that overtook Cuba as a result of the world demand for sugar. The extent of this graft is revealed by the expose of the Minister of Education, José Manuel Alemán, who had been using the Ministry's funds to underwrite a revolutionary force for the purpose of invading the Dominican Republic and ousting Dictator Trujillo.

1. A wave of political killings necessitated the appointment of General Gómez of the Constitutional Army as Chief of the National Police. The victims were usually those who had held power under the dictatorial rule of Machado or Batista.

2. The production of sugar, following World War II, was in excess of 6,400,000 tons, all of which was contracted for by the United States Government, except for a small amount that was used domestically. This was almost 2,000,000 more tons than was produced in 1921-22 when Cuba had witnessed another "Dance of the Millions." But this time the Cubans are aware of the future possibility of a world surplus and low prices. Their economists know that the only reason for a deficit on the world market is the lag in production in the Far East and the excessive purchases by the United States Government for distribution to European countries. Before World War II, Cuba was given a quota of 28 per cent of the United States market, but this quota was raised to 50 per cent during and after the war. The Cubans realize that ultimately the United States must
Much more encouraging for Cuban democracy, however, was the real progress that was realized in the direction of holding peaceful and honest elections on a national scale. The presidential election of June 1, 1948, was one of Cuba's bitterest, yet it was one of the most peaceful in the history of the island. Carlos Prío Socarrás was elected to the presidency and ex-President Batista, although politically opposed to the new chief executive, was permitted to return to take a seat in the Senate which he had won after a campaign directed from his home-in-exile in Daytona Beach, Florida.

In spite of this progress, Cubans need to strive with greater earnestness for a permanent and efficient administrative service unhampered by partisan manipulation, rigorous accountability for the expenditure of government funds, and the development of political parties having the interests of the country at heart. The process of purifying and improving the administration will be long and difficult, and it is doubtful whether this can be realized until after the level of living and literacy of the people have been improved. In the absence of such improvement there is always the danger that the traditional political

reduce it quota if the domestic price level of sugar is to be maintained. When this happens the island will be once again plagued by a depression and untold human suffering. The real test of Cuba's growth in democratic processes and understanding of democratic ideals is yet to come.

machinery of democracy will be unscrupulously exploited by the professional politician.

Cuba has many able and honorable citizens, both men and women, who are vitally interested in the welfare of their country. Hence, it is particularly important to establish administrative machinery which will enlist the services of these individuals and groups who, under the traditional forms of government, have preferred to remain aloof from the sordid business of politics.

Corruption in the Ministry of Education

An excellent example of the reason why many honorable and able men have shunned political responsibilities in Cuba is found in the scandalous and corrupt practices of the Ministry of Education under President Grau San Martín. When President Prío took office on October 10, 1948, a hurried examination of the finances of that office revealed that out of a budget of $62,000,000 almost $3,000,000 made up a personal fund for which the minister had never had to account to anyone. Yet with an appropriation four times greater than that of 1941, the Cuban schools were unsupported; buildings deteriorated; school lunch programs were largely

4. The appropriation for the Ministry of Education in 1941 totaled $15,090,000; it was almost doubled in 1944; and it reached $62,000,000 in 1947. Much of this increase came from funds the government claimed when the price of sugar contracted for by the government at 3.675 cents a pound was sold to the United States Government for 8.5.
ignored, and proposed new construction took place only on paper. The degree of corruption is revealed by a strike in February, 1947, of the secondary-school students at Guantanamo to obtain a badly needed new school building. Such was the state of affairs when Minister of Education José Manuel Alemán, just before leaving office in 1948, added some 5,000 political friends to administrative and teaching positions.

The new President, Carlos Prío, appointed Areliano Sanchez Arrango to be Minister of Education, and to the present he has exhibited qualities of statesmanship and honesty. In his first six weeks in office, he dismissed 1,500 political henchmen appointed by Minister Alemán. Many letters received by the new Minister of Education, however, revealed that the extent of graft went far beyond appointing untrained political followers. Excerpts from three of these letters are produced here to indicate the kind of corruption that was exposed.

I wish to take advantage of the opportunity to make known that several days ago I received a mimeographed letter, addressed to me, which certified that I was one of the teachers dismissed on October 1.

5. The total governmental budget for Cuba reached an all time high in 1947 of $190,000,000.
6. These letters were furnished the writer by Dr. Felipe R. Donato Hernandez, director of Instruction, of the Ministry of Education.
Since I was not aware of having been named to a position in the Ministry as professor, I returned the letter to the Secretary of the District Board of Education, who had written it, as not being mine, in order that it might be returned by the same in his supervising authority.

Signed: Srta. Nelia Sanchez Reyes,
Calle Cuba No. 60,
Caibarién, L. V.

I want to bring to your attention that the last appointments made by the ex-Minister of Education have caused true indignation in this city. The persons named do not have titles of English, legally acquired, since we all know that they have been purchased, some in Havana and others in Camagüey.

Signed: Pompilio Escalante,
Ciigo de Avila

Do you know that here in Camaguey teaching positions have been sold for as much as $1,000; $500 cash and $500 paid by installments of $50 a month?

Signed: Sr. J. M. Aguero,
Camaguey.

Many other such letters appeared in newspapers and magazines throughout the island, even before President Prío took office. For example, in Bohemia, an article by Raul Lorenzo brought to light a letter which read in part:

I wish to confirm that which you explained in your article. I have a daughter 19 years old who last June was a normal school graduate. We are following suggestions of a friend of ours in hopes of securing for her a classroom position, and in that we have our hopes. But to us come rumors that the desire to place our daughter is known and that arrangements could be made immediately if we could arrange a payment of $1,500, the price fixed for the sale of a teaching position.7

Several reports to the Presidents of the local Boards of Education, such as the one submitted by School Inspector Dr. Carlos Valdés Miranda, were read by the writer. This particular report reveals the extent to which schools were overstaffed as early as November 19, 1947.

I comply with my duty in calling attention, very respectfully, to the fact that no more teachers of primary grades, English, music, manual arts, and kindergarten can be placed and classes are adequately provided for. There are places with a sufficient population which have no schools for children, but school houses would have to be constructed or the necessary credits supplied for renting buildings... It is therefore impossible to create any more classes of common instruction because available places do not exist. The number of special teachers is already much greater than is needed in the schools of the district. 8

Such revelations as these prompted the new Minister to dismiss approximately 5,000 teachers and employees of the Ministry, pending a review of the records of all teachers to ascertain their legal competencies to carry on the tasks to which they were assigned. Quite naturally, as a result of this move, the chaos and disorganization that beset the Ministry when Dr. Sanchez assumed control was temporarily increased and extended but it was a necessary first step to reorganization and reform. New systems of bookkeeping and recording statistics were immediately introduced and closed schools were gradually reopened. 9

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8. Dr. Carlos Valdés Miranda, Report to the President of the Board of Education (November 19, 1947).
9. Dr. Sanchez found it almost impossible to account for income and expenditures in the Bureau of Budgets and Accounts. In the Paymaster’s Office some of the books had disappeared, as had cancelled checks and other
The True State of Cuban Rural Elementary Schools

After the new Minister of Education had been in office six months, he had gathered together sufficient data to make a statistical appraisal of the Cuban elementary public school system. He found that the population of children 4 to 14 years of age was $1,211,040$. Inasmuch as 120,000 of these were on the kindergarten level, the remainder, or 1,091,000, were of primary and higher primary school age. Approximately 80,000 of these children attended private institutions, leaving a public elementary school population of 1,011,040.

Rural Primary Schools. The Director of Instruction in the Ministry of Education, Dr. Felipe R. Donate, estimated that the rural school population was 455,000 children and the urban 556,000. If, from the former figure, a discount be made for about 100,000 children of higher primary age, it would appear that there were some 355,000 rural children who were in need of school facilities. On the basis of 30 pupils to a classroom, which is probably a liberal estimate, a total of 11,800 primary classrooms would be needed to provide rural children with educational opportunities somewhat equivalent to those extended urban children.

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10. These figures were furnished by the Director of Instruction in the Ministry of Education.
Yet only 4,624 rural primary classes were in operation in 1948. In contrast to this there were 421,000 urban primary children with an additional 135,000 on the higher primary level. To serve the former there were in existence 11,615 urban primary classes. On the basis of 40 pupils per class, there would be needed 10,500 classes. So it appears that Cuba is fairly well supplied with urban primary schools; whereas the greatest continuing educational need of the Republic, if the ideal of equality of opportunity in education is to be implemented, lies in the demand for some 7,000 rural classes or rural teaching centers.

This analysis of the state of Cuban education was further substantiated by the school census that was directed by the Constitutional Army in 1946. The census revealed that 1,814 rural schools were needed to provide educational facilities to 54,416 children who were then denied access to a primary school but who were living in attendance.

11. This report is not entirely discouraging, however, when one considers that there were only 2,710 rural class-rooms functioning in October, 1940, the date civic-military rural schools were transferred to the Ministry of Education. The evidence would seem to substantiate the generalization that the civic-military rural movement made a lasting contribution to Cuban educational progress in that a continued and growing interest in rural educational progress has been noticed since 1936.
districts with sufficient children to justify the establishment of schools.

**Grade Distribution of Pupils.** Another serious educational need is revealed by a study of the grade distribution of pupils. A statistical summary of an investigation directed by Dr. Enrique C. Henriquez shows the percentages of children on the various grade levels of the urban and rural primary and higher primary schools.

Table 9

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<th>Grade Distribution of Urban Primary-Grade Children</th>
<th>Grade Distribution of Rural Primary-Grade Children</th>
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<td>Higher Primary</td>
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This data lays bare the true facts about elimination before the completion of the sixth grade. Withdrawal makes a very noticeable beginning in the second grade of the urban primary school but it is rather gradual from then on,

12. A summary of primary schools constructed during President Grau’s administration showed 628 were completed, all of which were financed by the income from the sugar tax levied in 1936 to provide for schools in rural areas where none had previously existed. Only 37 of those created, however, were in regions where schools were really needed according to the school census and had never before been established.

with only five percent of the children reaching the sixth grade. The rural picture, however, is even more striking. Here it is seen that over one-half of all rural children are enrolled in the first grade and approximately 34 per cent of the pupils withdraw after that grade is completed. From then on, elimination is gradual but steady. An enormous challenge, therefore, faced Cuban educators today. How can both the urban and rural primary schools of the island increase their holding power?

**Higher Primary Schools.** Still another basic educational need, if the island is to progress culturally, finds its source in the absence of an adequate number of higher primary schools, mostly in small towns and rural areas. Of the 135,000 urban children 12, 13 and 14 years of age, the Ministry in 1948 estimated that not more than 50,000 would be interested in attending a higher primary school. On the basis of 40 pupils in a class, which was typical of urban higher primary class size, there were needed 1,250 classes or some 400 higher primary schools. Actually, there were in existence 104 urban higher primary schools with some 312 classes, but these were nowhere near enough to meet the need that was evidently present.

The circumstances confronting rural youth were even more discouraging. For the more than 100,000 youth 12, 13 and 14 years of age, there were no rural higher primary
schools operating in 1948, although the 38 former rural children's boarding homes were reopened in 1949 as rural pre-vocational schools.

**Rural Teachers and Salaries.** In an effort to overcome the unattraction of rural teaching positions, a new salary scale for rural instructors was inaugurated in 1948. All rural teachers up to that time had received $95 a month without regard to the kind of teaching situation or years of service. The new plan classified teachers as A, B and C in accordance with the degree of isolation, difficulty of living, and lack of communication facilities. To each teacher was granted an extra stipend if he would reside in the schools or localities in which he was teaching. A substitute teacher was also given a regular substitute's salary rather than one-half of the salary of the teacher on leave. This change was necessitated because of the difficulty in securing temporary replacements in rural schools at one-half of the standard salary of $95 a month.

In spite of this belated effort to attract better teachers in rural schools, Cuba still lacks a body of professionally trained teachers who are convinced of the missionary role they must play, fully familiar with the needs of the rural area, and capable of directing a community school program which will inspire local inhabitants to a greater and higher level of living. The teachers who are appointed
to rural teaching positions are, in most cases, deficient in preparation and in understanding of rural life and needs. And because the great majority still refuse to live in their school districts, their influence in the communities has been almost negligible. Starting in 1950, the provincial normal schools will be organized into rural and urban departments, and the hope is that Cuba will for the first time in its history receive adequately and appropriately educated teachers and other professional personnel for service in its rural schools.

The titles formerly granted by the "Jose Marti" Rural Normal School and the School of Rural Economy are no longer accepted for certification. Those who held titles and were placed in positions under the Batista administration may continue to teach in rural schools but those who never completed the summer courses for a title were summarily dismissed. The present regulations specifically state that those certified with titles from the two institutions mentioned above will not be eligible for promotions or transfers to urban schools.

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14. The personnel of the old civic rural agencies, however, have been gradually eased out of all responsible positions. A few, such as Doctors Aguila and Texidor, who had service in the Ministry of Education prior to becoming missionaries in the civic-military rural program, still retain responsible positions but most of them were liquidated by Minister of Education Jose Manuel Aleman.
Inspectors of Rural Instruction. All rural instruction is now supervised by Inspectors of Rural Instruction. Each province has a provincial inspector of rural primary education. He is aided by rural district inspectors and their assistants. All of these supervisors work directly under the provincial superintendents. They must hold a degree of doctor of pedagogy and have at least five years' experience as a director, or teacher, in public schools.

Course of Study. Most of the rural schools follow the course of study issued by the National Board of Education in 1944 but, in a few isolated instances where former sergeant-teachers or graduates of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School are still in charge of a school the essence of the old civic rural program is in all probability retained. Because the great majority of the rural school teachers have not been too satisfied with the effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting local needs and problems, the new Minister of Education Sanchez appointed a commission to construct a new program of studies for all rural schools. As yet the commission has not submitted its recommendations.

Visit to a Rural School. The author in May, 1949, visited one of the rural schools that was constructed by the Ministry of Education under the administration of

15. Letter written by Dr. Ofelia Morales y del Campo, Professor of Education, University of Havana.
President Grau San Martín. These were popularly called 16 Rustic Schools (Escuelas Montunas). This school, located about 10 miles from Santiago de las Vegas in Havana province, was situated on a plot of land 100 by 300 meters, with the poured-concrete building occupying 185 square meters. The grounds were laid out to provide for a playground, garden, well, windmill, chickenhouse, and pigpen.

About one-third of the school plant was a teacher's residence of a parlor, bedroom, bath, and kitchen. The teacher was Nilda Duranza, an unmarried girl of 21 years of age and a graduate of the "José Martí" Rural Normal School. She was serving as a substitute for the regular teacher who was on leave because of illness. Neither she nor the regular teacher lived in the school, although the unfurnished quarters were quite clean and attractive. Instead she rode the bus each day from her home in Santiago de las Vegas and then walked down a lane for about a mile to the school which was situated about 100 yards from the main line of a Cuban railroad. The grounds were not well-kept; an unused cistern at the edge of the playground had never been filled and was incompletely covered.

16. The master-plan for these schools provided for identical facilities in all areas. Provision was made to supply electricity by a small power plant if electrical lines were not within reach. The school visited by the writer had been wired for electricity and lines were within running distance but they had never been connected. Actually only 64 of the 1,500 proposed schools were ever built, and all of these were located on roads or railroad lines where they could be seen for their propaganda value.
school garden had been plowed by one of the fathers but nothing had been planted.

The school itself was composed of a student workshop, classroom, and inside toilets for both sexes. The workshop had no equipment whatsoever; it was just a vacant room. The classroom was provided with traditional desks and seats, in rows, for 25 pupils. Twenty children were enrolled but attendance seldom was greater than 12 or 13 each day. A few ragged books, not enough to provide one for each child, a map of Cuba, an emblem representing the Cuban nation, and a small blackboard at the front of the room represented the instructional equipment. Actually, four grades were offered, but the teacher seemed satisfied to limit the work to drill in reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic.

The Future of the Rural School

Dr. Sanchez proposes to establish new schools, such as the one visited by the writer, at the rate of 8 or 10 a week. Unfortunately the numbers must continue to be small because of factors such as sparse population and poor roads. And what is more discouraging, they will continue to be relatively more expensive to maintain than large urban primary schools, while at the same time they will offer less satisfactory educational opportunities. The important fact

17. By the end of President Grau's term in office, 1948, there were about 628 schools of this basic plan in operation.

18. From March 24 to April 10, 1949, for example, 29 had been established, 15 were in process of being completed, and over 800 were projected.
to keep in mind, however, is that, while the Cubans have succeeded in expanding their rural educational facilities far beyond the bravest hopes of many who lived in the 1930's, the rural areas are still engulfed in poverty, unsavory political graft and corruption, ignorance, and indifference. That this is the case is emphasized by Mr. James Yen who, as leader of the movement to revitalize China through reconstruction and doing, traveled throughout the island in 1945.

I found the same thing in Cuba that I found in China...Those who have the learning keep it for themselves, to improve their own positions in life. They do not think of it as something which ought to be shared with all.19

After Mr. Yen described to a group of Cubans the fundamental social problems facing China, one of the islanders made this observation:

Mr. Yen, you were not talking about the problems of China--you were talking about the problems of Cuba. Here we have illiteracy; here we have poverty; here we have disease; here we have misgovernment.

Isn't it interesting that our situation here is much like yours in China? Our intellectuals are very academic too. They live in ivory towers. Here you see this beautiful city of Havana, and yet in the vast rural areas you see thousands and thousands of poor and ignorant people.20

To which Mr. Yen replied:

I found it (Cuba) so much like China. Havana is beautiful--clean, modern, with a good public health service. Then the minute you step into the rural districts you see preventable diseases all around you everywhere. The people in the country are poor.

Mr. Yen was commenting on Cuba in 1945, not in 1932-33 when the island was passing through the most severe economic crisis it ever experienced, when thousands were actually at the starvation point. An editorial in the "Agricultural Bulletin for the Cuban Farmer" gives further weight to the observations made by Mr. Yen.

One of the most urgent needs of the rural Cuban is to learn how to eat appropriately. Along with it is the need to solve the double problem of malnutrition and the scarcity of food. The Cuban farmers, and even the families in the towns that are able to cultivate a plot or patio of fertile land, have in their hands an unsuspected fountain of domestic supplies... And it happens that, in the rural home where it would be so easy to obtain nutritive foods, they are least utilized. Many are the rural homes to whose table never arrives a food so complete and so easily cultivated as the carrot.21

So it is obvious that an increased educational opportunity is not enough. In spite of this, it seems that a blind faith in literacy and further expansion of educational facilities dominates the thinking of those in charge of elementary instruction on the island. While civic-military education, from 1936 to 1946, projected a new concept of elementary education as national and community reconstruction, the traditional rural schools were narrowly concerned with literacy of the child. Today there is a need for fusing both of these traditions and for encouraging responsible citizens, whatever their place in the community, to work

for better schools.

Any attempt to forecast the future of rural education on the island must necessarily be a precarious undertaking in view of the political instability and emotionalism that dominate the educational policies of the nation. The Cubans know that they still have a long way to go to achieve their goal of a completely universal education for a democratic society, and that today the child's chances for an education are tied very closely to such factors as the locality in which he lives and his parents' economic and social status.

Conclusion

The problems facing Cuban educators today are many and serious. The island has never been able to offer much more than primary schooling of three or four grades to about one-half of its children. That the larger goal of universal education has not been achieved can be attributed in part to graft and corruption which has always been present on a small scale in the Ministry of Education. But with vastly increased allocations during the war and post-war years, misappropriation of money in this office reached alarming proportions. The consequence has been inadequate and poorly equipped school buildings and classrooms, overcrowding to the point of discouraging attendance, indifference on the part of teachers, and laxity in the enforcement
of compulsory education laws. Added to all this, Cuba lacks a scientific and objective approach to her problems of education. Accurate statistics are conspicuously absent with the result that educational decisions and policies are based upon whims, political influence, and personal desires.

Another basic reason for primary education not reaching all children is the poor articulation between the various grade levels, making for a very high rate of pupil withdrawal each year. Cuban educators have not been successful in solving this condition, especially in rural schools where elimination comes early and is most marked.

Not much has been achieved in curriculum revision to bring the course of study more nearly into line with the needs of boys and girls in rural areas. If anything, school curricula are in a more confused state today than ever before, and, sad to relate, little real progress in progressive curriculum reform can be expected as long as partisan politics continue to play a determining role in school operations.

A real limiting influence in educational progress has been the meager and inadequate general and professional preparation of rural primary instructors. A great many of the teachers in service are so poorly trained that little more than "keeping school" can be expected of them. It is to be hoped that the new rural departments in the provincial
normal schools will be able to develop a more challenging and professional approach to the preparation of rural teachers than has been true of previous teacher-education programs on the island.

Little wonder, then, that the rural elementary schools have been the least stable, the most confused, and the most niggardly financed of all educational institutions on the island. Perhaps this helps to explain the chaotic political, social, and intellectual conditions that persist year after year.

The peasants of Cuba are at present content to accept a standard of living and life lower than that enjoyed by the habaneros who have no more ability, no greater energy, thrift, and ambition than they. But the coming of depressed times to the rural areas will again renew the "farm problem." There is a need, therefore, for clear, fearless, unselfish, and constructive thinking on the part of the "thinking elite" in Cuba in the quest for a solution to this anticipated problem. There is sufficient intelligence in Cuba to solve the educational problems of the island, and solve them for the democratic welfare of all concerned, if those who possess this ability will use it vigorously and with a positive conviction that whatever is for the good of the many is likewise good for the few.
Chapter XIII

Conclusions and Recommendations

Schools in any culture tend to reflect the ideals and values of that culture. This is true of rural education in Cuba, where public schools have been neglected and poorly supported. The fact is that the common school system is not a part of the island's heritage, and as an importation it remains an aspiration. Without an educational tradition behind them, the Cubans have not had and cannot be expected to have an intense interest in or appreciation of the value of popular education to a democratic state. Especially is this true of the people residing in rural areas.

This has created a rural public school problem in the deepest sense. But unlike the United States, Cuba can act on this problem by means of policies laid down by the national government. Yet this high authority down through the history of the Republic has done almost nothing to overcome the traditional indifference of the masses to the value of an education. As a result, the public school system is neither rooted in the local communities nor does
it command the active support and direction of a whole people.

Prior to 1936, the few rural schools that did exist failed to meet the needs of the rural population. Almost no attempt was made to determine the social problems of rural life and create a course of study which would better help rural people to meet those problems. Consequently, the threefold problem of rural education confronting Cuba in the fourth decade of the twentieth century was that of extending schools into remote areas in the hope of arousing some interest in education, devising teaching programs and procedures that would best contribute to a satisfactory way of individual and community living in rural areas, and providing these conditions which would call forth the active support and direction of the schools by the masses.

The knowledge of all this makes it difficult to understand the sudden change in some 1,300 rural schools distributed throughout isolated and detached regions of the island--accomplished directly by the action of a dictator who was brought into power by the chaos that followed a successful revolution on September 4, 1933. But this is exactly what happened in Cuba when, in 1936, Colonel Batista, Commander-in-Chief of the Constitutional Army, created the civic-military rural education movement as a partial fulfillment of the promise made by the Revolution of September 4.
Civic-military rural schools sought to reduce illiteracy by extending educational opportunities into the most remote regions of the island. Secondly, the intention was to ruralize country children. Thirdly, the content was selected so as to orient children in the vocation of agriculture. And fourthly, the larger goal sought was improvement of social, economic, and intellectual conditions in order to promote a more satisfying rural life.

This study has attempted to show that not only were there grave dangers involved in most of these goals, but that they were not adequate to solve the threefold problem of rural education confronting Cuba in the 1930's. The fundamental error lies in the fact that they did not consider the difference between the needs of rural children and those of rural adults. The adults have knowingly chosen their vocation and residence; thus their group responsibilities are determined. But children are as yet members of no class and the school, therefore, must work constantly toward a larger opportunity and freedom of life for all children. Their attention must not be limited to local problems, but instead the school must create and broaden interests for the children that will be common to those held by other groups in Cuba with whom they must live and cooperate. They must not, as in the case of the civic rural schools, be
dedicated to the ruralization of children and the solution of those adult problems beyond their interest and understanding. If school projects and activities for improving the peasants’ community are used, not as ends in themselves, but as means of developing the child and as an approach to larger experiences in the wider society, they are praiseworthy. Only when social change becomes an end in itself or when schools become more interested in social reform than in child development should objections be raised to the local problems and project approach.

However misdirected the goals of civic rural education may be, the movement itself should be evaluated in terms of the objectives that it proposed to achieve. It is inevitable that the schools, fostered by a military-revolutionary clique, should be subject to a variety of interpretations and varying judgments that make an objective appraisal very difficult. Attacks of a political and emotional nature have had, to a great extent, to be discounted. But visits of the writer to several civic rural schools, a rural children’s boarding school, and a mission headquarters, as well as interviews with many Cubans and American residents of the island, confirm his opinion that these schools failed to achieve most of the larger ends to which they were dedicated. Many youths and adults today, between 11 and 29 years of age, were brought up, or started their education under civic rural institutions. These are among the persons
who now bear the burden of improving life and culture on the island and yet they do not appear to be deeply affected by the ideals to which the movement was dedicated.

Objective conclusions cannot be reached concerning the success achieved by the civic rural schools in lessening the rate of illiteracy. Statistics unfortunately are very unreliable, but general observation would substantiate the belief that the irregularity and short duration of children's stay in these schools could not have significantly increased the literacy rate.

Nor were the civic rural schools successful in providing their students with much vocational experience in agriculture. Parents were opposed to this kind of training because they conceived the elementary schools as being narrowly concerned with the teaching of the three R's. Not only were most of the civic rural teachers inadequately prepared for the teaching of agriculture as a vocation, but the lack of supplies and equipment was often used as an excuse for the neglect of this phase of the course of study.

**Reasons for Lack of Success**

What were some of the reasons for these failures? First of all, there should have been more advanced planning and it should have proceeded beyond the paper stage before announcing the program in 1936. Many problems might have been avoided if the details of the movement had been planned more care-
fully and consistently from the beginning. The sites for the schools should have been chosen with much higher standards and the orientation courses for teachers and missionaries should have been for a longer period and of a different nature. More time should have been given to curriculum planning and securing of needed supplies and equipment. The civic rural school movement proved that a school system could be built almost over night; but it need not have been done so rapidly and would have been much more successful if it had been developed more deliberately.

Perhaps one of the greatest shortcomings was the method by which the goals were to be achieved. The masses were not to be the means but the ends; a benevolent few were to effect better rural conditions by authoritarian means. The use of force perhaps achieved more immediate results on the surface but certainly it did not bring about the spiritual conversion which was so necessary for lasting and durable consequences.

The fact must be recognized that the civic rural education system was established primarily as a means of continuing in power the military dictatorship of Colonel Batista. The large army could not be justified after the revolutionary chaos had subsided in 1935 and a newly-elected government under President Gómez was inaugurated. Without a powerful military force located strategically throughout the island, the military dictatorship of Batista would
have been untenable. The lack of rural school facilities and the need for rural reconstruction were only secondary considerations in the creation of these institutions. The civic rural school system, therefore, can be described as a means for maintaining a military dictatorship.

With the army in control, an attempt was made to routinize as many operations as possible. Army regulations were created to govern the minutest activities and were implemented with standard operating procedures which, although quite helpful to unimaginative personnel, certainly discouraged dynamic and creative teaching. Moreover, rigid regulations encouraged inspection rather than creative supervision. The missionary-specialists were so busily engaged in inspecting schools that they had little or no time to coordinate their work among themselves or with the sergeant-teachers. It was a case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand was doing.

Instead of a system of educational missions, as provided for under the civic-military rural education program, the writer favors an education of all rural people, children and adults, by taking to them in their homes, through an extension service, a type of instruction specifically designed to redeem rural Cuba from its pitiful condition. It is fully realized that practically nothing that the school may do can be effective unless rural home and community conditions can be changed. To this end the teacher of the
rural school can make a definite contribution. What a child
does and learns in the classroom can be made to have a direct bearing on family and community problems and their
solutions. From the very beginning of the school experience
of the child, the school must develop a concern for and a
desire to participate in better living in all of its many
phases. The hope is that the child will grow in the realiza-
tion that whatever he is and wherever he is, he can become
an influence in bettering his own living and his surround-
ings. Education then becomes a process of progressively
reorganizing, reconstructing, and transforming the ex-
periences of the child.

Another basic cause for failure is found in the lack of
money and supplies. To ask poor people in depressed commun-
ities to finance the building and equipping of schools was
often demanding the impossible. As a result, instructors
were usually housed in rustic bohíos and went without schools
entirely because the residents were financially unable to
bear the financial burden that would have been placed upon
them. Needless to say, development of rural children suf-
f ered and, in most instances, the practical part of the
course of study was ignored because of the impossibility of
securing supplies and tools for workshops and gardens.

Although the "José Martí" Rural Normal School was a
step in the direction of preparing teachers for more intel-
ligent teaching in rural areas, there is some doubt concern-
ing the justification for a special and distinctive normal
school for this purpose. Doctors Brito, Cruz, Castellanos, Famies, and many others were, and still are, of the opinion that a distinctive training is needed for rural teachers and that a specialized rural normal school was best suited to achieve this end. As a matter of fact, ex-President Batista asserts that he will re-establish the "José Martí" Rural Normal School if he is re-elected to the presidency in 1952.

In the opinion of the writer, some specialized training for rural teachers is necessary but it can be gotten best by means of special courses for those students in the provincial normal schools who expect to teach in rural schools. There seems to be no justification for differentiation in basic courses in child development, educational psychology, principles of education, methods of education, and such other courses, but the fact that rural teaching involved specific appreciations of general procedures and principles must be recognized. This necessitates some special courses for rural teachers to fit them to meet specific situations. Perhaps it would be well to have general requirements for the first three years with specialization for urban and rural teaching delayed until the final year of the student's education. Rarely will these students, who are on the age level of our high school students, know where they will secure a position or where they will wish to teach. Students from rural areas will not be so likely
to overestimate the lure and value of teaching in urban schools if they have had general preparation for both urban and rural schools.

In short, the movement died with most of the problems of rural education still unsolved. The important fact to keep in mind is that while the Cubans have succeeded in expanding their rural educational facilities far beyond the bravest hopes of many who lived in the 1930's, the rural areas are still engulfed in poverty, unsavory political graft and corruption, ignorance and indifference. The economic and agricultural problems of Cuba, the lack of health knowledge and practice, and the absence of a literary and school tradition are still basic challenges to be overcome. Indeed, it may truthfully be said that the work of rural reconstruction was never really begun. So it is obvious that an increased educational opportunity is not enough and the coming of depressed times to Cuba will again bring to the fore the "rural problem."

Contributions

Having considered the factors that limited and adversely affected the success of the civic rural movement, certain conclusions should now be drawn relative to the contributions made to the field of rural education. It must be recognized first of all that there was an increase in the number of young men attracted to the teaching profession as a result of the security and military prestige the Corps
of Culture offered. These individuals saw the modest income as a good alternative either to unemployment or a perpetual struggle for a living during the depressed years of the 1930's. Others were attracted by the pride of belonging to the Corps of Culture of the Constitutional Army, ready to conquer the youth of rural Cuba and to serve the nation. Unfortunately, it was accompanied all too often by the vanity of wearing a uniform, or by the boredom of "having to do it," or in the case of still others, by the ambition to advance to a commission. But the majority of the sergeant-teachers and missionary-specialists, in spite of their mistaken motives for joining the Corps of Culture, took up their work at the start with a sense of duty towards their country and its leaders.

Their early devotion and inspiration was an indefinable spirit that often accompanies a missionary endeavor. It touched parents, students, teachers, and administrative personnel alike. It was largely that which made the movement the success it achieved here and there on the island, and which left its mark on some of those who shared in the enterprise. It certainly affected, momentarily, many of the children who came in contact with it and thereby brought something really new into their experience, whether they realized it or not. Certainly the problems of national life, and especially the economic and health problems, are now present to the minds of many as fundamental problems to be sol-
ved if the lives of individuals and communities are to be enriched and bettered.

Finally, the civic rural schools cannot be said to have been unpopular institutions in most of the areas where they functioned. A great many of the parents and residents of a school district contributed hours of work, land, and money to make the schools possible. It must be admitted that Colonel Batista and his contemporaries strove mightily for an expansion of educational opportunities throughout the island. Theirs was in one way a tremendous accomplishment, made even more so by the fact that all preceding political administrations had failed in this direction. When civic rural education was abolished in 1946, rural Cuba had directly inherited from the system some 1,300 primary and 39 higher primary schools and another 1,000 rural schools which had been established by the Ministry of Education. Hence, the eleven years of the movement were possessed of an interest in rural education, the like of which had never been previously witnessed on the island, and as a consequent there continues an ever-growing interest in rural education.

The Future of Rural Education

There is a possibility that civic rural education as a movement may be revived. The personality and ideas of Colonel Fulgencio Batista dominated the movement and fascinated the personnel of the civic-military rural schools. Men like Doctors Brito, Pamies, Cruz, Castellanos, and many
others are still convinced of the idealism and practical possibilities within the movement. Ex-President and Dictator, Fulgencio Batista, is now hard at work developing a new political party in his efforts to be reelected to the Presidency of the Republic. He has made known that he intends to reestablish the civic rural education system, the news of which has brought rejoicing from many who were formerly a part of it. But the progress of rural education on the island will be much better served if a fresh attack is made upon the rural educational problem in terms of the wealth of experiences derived from the mistakes and successes of the past fifteen years.

The description of rural life in Cuba emphasizes the fact that the absence of small landholding discourages initiative. In the few instances where land was made available to the campesinos, there was little evidence of individual independence and ingenuity. Rural life of Cuba, as in all countries, demands initiative, resourcefulness, and self-direction; agriculture as an occupation demands people with these personal qualities. Yet the evidence points to peasants living in filth and under primitive conditions. The elementary school needs to meet this demand by developing a sense of independence, initiative, and freedom. This means that the child not only will be consciously aware of the need for improvement but that he will also have experiences in participating in improved living. The final goal
should be a rural people who are forever studying, experimenting, thinking, discussing, and growing.

The wide prevalence of disease and malnutrition on the island emphasized the need for dealing with health in the curriculum. There should be periodic health examinations. Children should learn the causes of infection and malnutrition, and how to produce better foods. If hookworm and parasites, typhoid and malaria, create community and personal problems, they should be systematically attacked as essential content of the school curriculum. Not only would children acquire much valuable content through the study of these problems, but in the process they would acquire ability to read, to weigh suggested solutions, and apply conclusions.

Rural Cuba abounds in flower, plants, and other natural resources which children should learn to know and appreciate. Not only do they need to see and appreciate the beauty that is all around them, but they need to have experiences in furthering that beauty. The future rural school must necessarily be a small school but the conclusion does not follow that it must be a poor school. Inside and out, it should reflect a personal pride and beauty. It should be attractive, clean, sanitary, safe, conducive to good health, and surrounded by ample playgrounds and gardens. Successful rural teachers have demonstrated that many of the educational limitations commonly associated with small schools
can be successfully overcome, but it necessitates the use of special plans, procedures, devices, books, pictures, and other teaching materials. A small library and medicine chest are essential, as is a teacher's residence near or on the school grounds. The present building program of schools like those of Escuelas Montunas is very encouraging.

Above all, these schools need to be guided by teachers who are qualified to teach in rural schools. Such teachers should be thoroughly acquainted with rural life and grounded in science, rural social and economic problems, health and nutrition, and elementary agriculture and homemaking. There has never been a shortage of normal school graduates but the supply of competent teachers who have been willing to accept rural teaching positions and live in the rural areas has always been negligible. Rural teachers must become permanent, broadly contributing members of the community of which the school is a part. Two conditions are requisites. The first is the acceptance by the community of the principle that teachers should not be transient. The second is proper preparation of the teacher to utilize and improve upon local resources. This should call for a period of student teaching under supervision in a rural school, including community work in a typical rural situation.

Salaries of rural teachers must be based upon training and experience instead of location of the teaching site.
Although living costs are often less in rural areas this is due in part to the fact that the standard of living is lower. It follows, therefore, that the cost of living does not justify lower salaries for rural personnel.

One great need, emphasized in Part I of this thesis, is a greater understanding and proper exercise of Cuban citizenship. The schools are obligated to provide a kind of education that will make possible an intelligent and productive participation in the political life of the local community, province, nation, and world. This kind of a program should bridge the gap between home and school, and between the school and adult life. The cooperation of the parents, through some parent-teacher organization, should effect a joint educational guidance by home and school of all children.

Useful and satisfying living requires a variety of skills which education should help children acquire. Such skills as those listed below are needed by rural children.

a. The use of oral and written language
b. The basic number skills
c. Work experiences
d. Creating
e. Appreciating and evaluating
f. Finding resources to serve a purpose
g. Democratic living

Since agriculture is the principal occupation of most rural areas, and since directed work experiences are sought, rural elementary schools should teach both the practical facts and processes of farming as well as its larger
relationships to all phases of community life. The teacher should go on to include study of the ultimate uses of the products of farms, mines, and forests, and the steps of marketing and processing through which such products pass.

Cuban educational leaders have failed to plan the rural school year in terms of pertinent seasonal and geographical factors that vary from region to region. As a result, the educational experiences provided are often out of harmony with community living and activity. There should be nothing fixed about the school year. There should be more days of schooling than the 140 now required. The rural teachers are employed on a year-round basis but custom has established the summers as vacation time. The rural school should provide vacations when children are needed most at home.

A year-round program must not be a year-round, inside-school, learning-from-books program. There should be out-of-school experiences, and these need guidance to make them educational. Teachers should know their children intimately so that they can be in a position to assist them in facing and solving their problems.

The resources of the nation should be utilized to guarantee each child equality of educational opportunity. The responsibility for financial support of education should rest with the national government, inasmuch as it is best qualified to administer the most equitable methods of raising the needed revenues. In other words, control and finances
must continue to originate with the national government.

But increased educational opportunity is not enough. Faith in mere expansion of educational facilities is not an adequate solution to the ills that beset rural Cuba. The civic rural educational experience should make all educators realize that increased amounts of education of the same old sort, or of a new kind incompletely understood by those who are to put it into effect, cannot hope to have significant influence on the rural people and the communities in which they live. New teachers tend to teach as they have been taught, and the civic rural education system never found any way to get its instructors to change to modern methods of education.

Since the efficiency, adequacy, and economy of rural school operation will depend to a great extent upon the educational organization at local, provincial and national levels, the Ministry of Education must be brought to realize that it has a responsibility for promoting the welfare of the rural personnel it employs. There is an obvious need for more permanency in the staff of the Ministry and there must be a full realization that a faithful, competent worker needs some degree of security in his position and is not to be employed or dismissed at pleasure. The Superintendent of Schools and his provincial superintendents need to be continued in office for longer than one presidential term if continuity of administrative practice and policy are to be secured. Moreover, the weakness of permitting
politics to dominate and guide the Ministry, along with a tendency to appoint weak and corrupt Ministers of Education will continue to have disastrous consequences as far as education is concerned.

The Ministry should cooperate with the provincial normal schools in conducting workshops and discussion groups for rural teachers at field centers during the summer months. Difficulties of transportation prevent this being done during the regular school year. These in-service programs need to be organized around the problems that teachers and supervisors recognize as areas of interest or need. The greatest untapped and unrecognized source of rural education in Cuba rests in the creative teacher who can revise his course of study to meet the needs of his own children.

Prosperity brought by the world-wide demand for sugar has effected nearly every city and rural home. The peasants still exist under terrible living conditions, although the economic prosperity of the day has temporarily improved their status by giving them an income which enables them to buy some of the better foods and other material things. When the price of sugar declines and unemployment once again engulfs the island, the material existence of the peasant will once again revert to the status of the 1930's. It is possible then that some of the larger implications for rural
betterment of the civic rural movement will be appreciated and implemented in terms of the broader purposes of all elementary education. That is to say, that if Cuba is to achieve rural improvement, it must be accompanied by a changed conception of the function of the elementary school in society, one which conceives the school as having a vital role in effecting the political, social, cultural, economic, and moral progress of the Cuban Republic. It must be more than a classroom of academic preparation. Unfortunately, only the traditional conception of elementary education has been widely accepted on the island which will make difficult any change to a newer and broader vision.
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MAPA ESCOLAR

Los puntos pequeños representan las escuelas civico-rurales, que en número de 1,000, se encuentran como estrellas de luz en el territorio de la Nación. Los puntos mayores, indican la situación de los 40 Regimientos Campesinos, que complementan como centros vocacionales superiores, la gran organización docente de la educación civico-rural.

Map of the Civic-Military Rural Schools and Educational Missions
Appendix A
Escala de calificaciones que se lleva a cada maestro de la educación rural civico-militar en la sección de cultura del cuartel general del ejército.

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Suma de la presente hoja

Appendix B
Scale for rating Sergeant-Teachers
ESCUELAS RURALES CIVICO-MILITARES

ESCALA DE CALIFICACIONES QUE SE LLEVA A CADA MAESTRO DE LA EDUCACIÓN RURAL CIVICO-MILITAR EN LA SECCION DE CULTURA DEL CUARTEL GENERAL DEL EJERCITO.

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## ESCUELAS RURALES CIVICO-MILITARES

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## ESCALA DE CALIFICACIONES QUE SE LLEVA A CADA MAESTRO DE LA EDUCACIÓN RURAL CIVICO-MILITAR EN LA SECCIÓN DE CULTURA DEL CUARTEL GENERAL DEL EJÉRCITO

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### CALIFICACIONES QUE SE LLEVA A CADA MAESTRO DE LA EDUCACIÓN RURAL CIVICO-MILITAR EN LA SECCIÓN DE CULTURA DEL CUARTEL GENERAL DEL EJERCITO

**Nomenclatura del Sargento Maestro:**

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**Suma total de Calificaciones:**
ESCUeltas RURALES CIVICO-MILITARES

ESCALA DE CALIFICACIONES QUE SE LLEVA A CADA Maestro DE LA EDUCACION RURAL CIVICO-MILITAR EN LA SECCION DE CULTURA DEL GUARDIA GENERAL DEL EJERCITO.

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Suma total por deducciones.

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RESUMENES:

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SUMA TOTAL DE CALIFICACIONES.

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SUMA TOTAL DE DEDUCCIONES.

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TOTAL GENERAL LIQUIDO DE CALIFICACIONES.

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|                                          |        |                |                |                |                |

CERTIFICAMOS Y JURAMOS: Que las calificaciones consignadas a los aspectos de esta tabla, son las que merece el Sargento Maestro de esta Escuela; y que ninguna calificación corresponde a aspectos inexistentes.

(Lugar y fecha).

3r. Tte. Pedagogo,
Jefe de Misión Educativa.

Sub-Tte. Maestro de Oficina.

Inspector Hogarista.

2° Tte. Veterinario.

Sub-Oficial Labormilitar.
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I, Gerald Howard Read, was born in Akron, Ohio, June 28, 1913. I received my secondary school education in the public schools of the city of Akron, Ohio. My undergraduate training was obtained at Kent State University, from which I received the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Education in 1936. From The Ohio State University, I received the degree of Master of Arts in 1938. While in residence at The Ohio State University, I served as a University Scholar during the years 1937-38 and 1942-43. In 1943, I received an appointment in the Department of Secondary Education at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio. I held this position while completing the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.