

posits of coal and iron. Under all the disadvantages that misgovernment can inflict, and with a vast share of her soil untouched, Cuba produces, when not wasted by war, about one hundred million dollars' worth of sugar and tobacco annually, and there is a prodigal luxuriance of fruits and forests, while her mountains are reservoirs of minerals, and her rivers and shores swarm with fish. There is no more exquisite feature in any landscape than the royal palms, and the orange trees, never touched with frost, are loaded with golden spheres, and the clusters of bananas cling under feathery foliage, while the green cocoanuts hang high, each containing a quart of pure, sweet water; and where the soil is not a deep, dark red, it is so black that it shines as if oiled. Around the coral shores is the snowy surf of seas matchless in color, and over all the exalted arch of the sky, with a delicate tint of indigo, spotted with stars that are strangely brilliant, and the procession of the constellations moves with unutterable majesty; and one sees the all-searching beauty of the firmament, and finds new meaning in Paul's line with the divine inner light in it that tells that the stars differ in glory, and in Byron's that gives the glorious image of womanhood:

"She walks in beauty like the night of cloudless
climes and starry skies."

The geographical position of Cuba is that of Guardian of the Gates of the American Mediterranean. Glance at the map and see how she is posed between Florida and Yucatan, and that her southern shore confronts the Caribbean sea, whose waters, famous in history, are storied with romance, from the days of the Caribs with their brave canoes, and the adventurous discoverers who plowed the sea with lofty prows driven by the trade-winds, the Spanish galleons, too, freighted with the gold and silver of the New World, and pirates whose heroism gave a glamour to their crimes; and the giant fleets of England and France that with the contending thunders of the broadsides of their liners disputed the command of the ocean that held the incomparable Indies, until at last (April 12, 1782,) the British admiral Rodney avenged Yorktown at Gaudaloupe, and, Froude says, tore the Leeward Islands from the French, and saved Gibraltar and Hasting's Indian Empire to the English.