A Brotherly Empire:
Transnational Religion and Politics in Cuba, 1878-1903

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A. B. 2000, The University of Chicago

A Dissertation submitted to

The Faculty of
The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences
of The George Washington University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 15, 2011

Dissertation directed by
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The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences of The George Washington University certifies that Sara E. Berndt has passed the Final Examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy as of March 11, 2011. This is the final and approved form of the dissertation.

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Dedicated to my father, Clarence F. Berndt, Jr.,
and to the memory of my mother, Rosalie S. Berndt.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation was researched and written with financial assistance from George Washington University, the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive, the Center of Military History of the United States Army, and the American Association of University Women. I could not have done the research or writing without each installment, and I am extremely grateful. I would never have begun graduate school in Latin American history if I had not had the good fortune to work and travel with Gary Cozette, Martha Pierce and many others at the Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America. Their partnerships with Latin Americans and their vision for peace and justice continue to inspire and challenge me. I have also been lucky to work with wonderful colleagues at both the National Security Archive and the Office of the Historian of the U.S. State Department, who offered encouragement in the final months of writing.

Thanks to the fiasco that was the 2009 scare over the swine flu, I was not able to travel to Cuba to do research. Nevertheless, I am grateful to all those who helped me prepare for my trip there, including Mavis Anderson, Sarah Stephens, John-Marshall Klein, Louis Pérez, Franklin Knight, Lillian Guerra, Ana Karim, Bob Guild and everyone at Marazul Travel, and especially Marilyn McKenna and Rev. Raquel Suárez. I am thankful to the (very few) people I met at the Comunidad de Educativa Cemanahuac in Cuernavaca, Mexico, with whom I commiserated as I waited for Cuba to reopen its borders with Mexico.

The very able librarians and archivists at Gelman Library of George Washington University; the U.S. Army Military Historical Institute; the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and College Park, Maryland; the Family History Center in Kensington, Maryland; Earlham College; Drew University; Columbia University; the University of Texas-Austin; the Brooklyn Historical Society; Emory University; and the American Baptist Historical Society provided research guidance. Not all of their collections made it into the finished product, but I am grateful nonetheless for their generous assistance. I would especially like to thank Kristen Miller Hellman at the American Bible Society Library and Archives, who provided me with a treasure trove of photocopies at a cost that a graduate student could love; Taffey Hall at the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive, who made me feel at home and was a fount of knowledge about Una Roberts Lawrence and the Southern Baptist Convention; and Tracy North at the Hispanic Reading Room in the Library of Congress, who gave creative guidance and encouragement on more than one occasion. On my travels to all these archives and libraries, I was welcomed into the homes of Raj Nayak in New York, the Lowes in Texas, the Richardsons in Alabama, and Jon and Jen Berndt in Ohio.

I have been lucky to be among the graduate students and faculty of the History Department at George Washington University. I am grateful to Peter Klaren, Andrew Zimmerman, Leo Ribuffo, Marcy Norton, David Silverman, Tom Guglielmo, Tyler Anbinder, Dane Kennedy, Muriel Atkin, Allida Black, Katrin Schultheiss, and Bill Becker. Our dissertation group provided both an extremely helpful sounding board for half-baked ideas and a check on my more fanciful attempts to butcher the English language. Thanks to Varad Mehta, John O'Keefe, Richard Boles, Kaysha Corinealdi, Bell

Clement, and others in the group. We all know that we would be lost without Michael Weeks.

I am blessed with an extraordinary group of friends, family, and friends who are like family. Their hospitality, laughter and care have sustained me in more ways than I can count. At GW, I am especially thankful for the friendship of Bo Peery, Elizabeth Charles, Janet Kilian, Mary McPartland, Justin Pope, Andrea O'Brien, and Julie Fisher. Chris Hickman provides classic film, whimsical conversation, political outrage, and common sense advice when each is most needed. In Washington and its environs, I am lucky to have Helen and Dave LaCroix, Ellen Hickman, Laura, Kevin, Robert and Anna Kosar, Kathy Konieczny, David Quick, Jen Schulp, Britta Anderson, and Raj Nayak and Becca Widiss. I always hope for a visit from (or to) Kristen Gwinn and Amy Becker, Stacy and Matt Bondurant, Veena Iyer and Faisal Hadi, Jonathan Nowak and Karrie Radloff, Mark Nabong and Kristianne Kossler, Sarah Wilkes, Kamilah Foreman, Brian Richardson and Alberto Varona, Jess Robinson and Mike Gemm, Lindsay Moore and Ken Marshall, Helena Kaler, Mike and Christine Tang, Beth Poteet, and Jen and Mark Williamson. Many of them were with me in spirit and in person during my very darkest days, and I hope they know how deeply I appreciate them. My immediate and extended family has provided endless love, hospitality, and wry humor for years. My parents, Clarence and Rosalie Berndt, instilled in me their own loves for history and reading, and gave me the gift of their unyielding love and support. My dad read every word of this dissertation with an editor's eye, and talked over many of its themes with me. I only regret that my mom passed away before she could talk with me about it, too.

Abstract of Dissertation

A Brotherly Empire: Transnational Religion and
Politics in Cuba, 1878-1903

This dissertation provides a history of Baptist congregations in Cuba, their most charismatic preacher, Rev. Alberto J. Díaz, and their relations with the U.S. Southern Baptist Convention from 1878 to 1903. It uses this history to explain a key part of the imperial transition on the island—how and why the many relationships between Cubans and North Americans changed after 1898. Before 1898, the U.S. was often a symbol of cultural and political resistance to Spain. After 1898, frequent exercises of U.S. power caused many Cubans to see the U.S. as both an actual and a symbolic oppressor.

This cultural shift can be seen especially sharply in Baptist transnational relationships, which changed profoundly during the period of U.S. military occupation from 1898 to 1902. Before 1898 Cubans directed the Baptist congregations on the island, and their ministry focused on the diverse group of Cubans who held separatist political views. Southern Baptists had a supportive role in this "brotherly empire," but they did not control the Cuban Baptists' initiatives, and their personnel did not live on the island. Largely because of the 1895-1898 Cuban war against Spain, but also because Díaz's managerial skills were in doubt, Southern Baptists began to want greater control over the Cuban congregations after 1898. Southerners gained this control slowly, sometimes with the help of Cubans and sometimes by pushing them out of power. During the occupation, Southern Baptists and their new Cuban allies began to target whiter and wealthier Cubans for conversion. They also sought to suppress Cubans' desire to participate in politics as

an analogy to their free practice of religion, two dimensions of freedom that Baptists had linked before 1898. A transnational history of Baptists during this period thus provides a useful cultural history of a complex political transition. By tracing the changes in this relationship over a period of twenty-five years, it also calls into question the teleologies and historical categories set by both the U.S. imperial and the Cuban nationalist projects.

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Introduction

> God has given Cuba's religious future to Southern Baptists.[1]

> I am American citizen and are identify with your methods, but ... if you put here before any congregation an American Minister today, no matter who will be, Henry Ward Beecher or D.W. Talmage, they will not succeed, as this political movement has created profound division between Am & Cubans.[2]

In 1882, Alberto J. Díaz was baptized at the Willoughby Avenue Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York. Díaz, who was about twenty-nine years old, a doctor, and a naturalized U.S. citizen, was Cuban by birth and returned to his native land shortly after his baptism. There, he passed out religious pamphlets and rented a hall on the Prado, Havana's most important promenade, to preach the Word of God to the Cubans. In 1885, Cuban Baptists visiting from Florida discovered Díaz and quickly convinced the Florida Baptist Convention, and then the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, to sponsor his work. By 1886, "the first Baptist Church on the island" had been officially organized, Díaz had been ordained in Key West, and the members of the Home Mission Board were amazed at their good fortune. They had discovered a man universally described as a faithful Baptist, a mesmerizing preacher, and a skilled organizer—a man they came to call "the Apostle of Cuba." The prominent leader of the Home Mission Board, Rev. Isaac T. Tichenor, became a close friend to Díaz and devoted the last fifteen years of his life to supporting Díaz's evangelism projects in Cuba.[3]

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[1] "The Great Opportunity," *The Arkansas Baptist* vol. 17, no. 3 (January 20, 1897), p. 1.
[2] Alberto J. Díaz to Porter King, September 28, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.
[3] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* (August 1888), p. 1; Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6-7; A. J. Díaz, "The Cuban Mission," *The Missionary Review of the World* (March

Díaz's story offers an intriguing way to open up the history of relations between the U.S. and Cuba. It serves as a corrective to the usual narratives of Protestant mission history, which rarely focus on native leaders of evangelism. It also clarifies mission histories of Cuba, which often state that missions in Cuba began only after 1898 and were always controlled by North Americans. But a history of the Baptist congregations in Cuba can also provide answers to larger questions about U.S. influence in Cuba during the nineteenth century, when Cuba was politically subordinate to Spain. In addition, this history can be used to understand the imperial transition—why, how and in what ways the many relationships between Cubans and North Americans changed after 1898. "Empire" is a fluid category of power, international in scope but changeable in method and ideology, that has meant different things in different situations. Cuba was caught between the Spanish and the United States empires before 1898: Spain exerted political control, while the U.S. empire on the island was cultural and economic in nature. When U.S. political empire took shape on the island after 1898, it sharply changed the nature of the existing cultural and economic relationship that had been there before. 1898 was in many ways a profound turning point for Cubans, but not only because it was the year that the 400-year-old Spanish empire on the island crumbled. Before 1898, the U.S. was often a symbol of cultural and political resistance to Spain. After 1898, frequent exercises of U.S. power caused many Cubans to see their northern neighbor as both an actual and a symbolic oppressor.

This cultural shift can be seen especially sharply in Baptist transnational relationships, which spanned the period of imperial transition and which changed

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1892), p. 185-192; and J. William Jones, "Sketch of Rev. A. J. Diaz, 'The Apostle of Cuba,'" *The Seminary Magazine* (April, 1896), p. 349-353.

profoundly during the period of U.S. military occupation from 1898 to 1902. Before 1898 Cubans directed the Baptist congregations on the island, and all evidence indicates that they focused on preaching to—and serving the needs of—a diverse group of Cubans with separatist political views. Southern Baptists had a supportive role, but they did not control the Cuban Baptists' initiatives and their personnel did not live in Cuba. Largely because of the destabilizing influence of the 1895-1898 Cuban war against Spain, but also because Díaz's financial and managerial skills were in doubt, Southern Baptists began to want greater financial and personnel control of the Cuban Baptist congregations after 1898. They gained this control slowly, sometimes with the help of Cubans and sometimes by pushing them out of power. During the U.S. military occupation, Southern Baptists and their new Cuban allies also began to target whiter and wealthier Cubans for conversion, to the exclusion of other groups in the separatist coalition—a change that mirrored the choice of political coalitions nurtured by the United States military government. During the occupation, Southern Baptists and their Cuban allies also sought to suppress Cubans' desire to participate in politics as an analogy to their religious practice, two dimensions of "freedom" that had been deeply linked before 1898. They also later reinterpreted the history of Cuban Baptists, to ignore, distort, and explain away the earlier Cuban-led period.

Transnational Alliances, Cultural Brokerage, and 1898

The U.S. invasion of Cuba in 1898 and the military occupation that followed marked a sea change in Cuban politics and alliance-making. Before 1898, Cubans had created a durable alliance that crossed class, race, and national lines in order to sustain

their second war for independence against Spain. The failure of the first Cuban war for independence, the Ten Years' War of 1868-1878, has been attributed to a failure to create this type of durable alliance. Between 1878 and 1895, however, a fertile period of alliance building was also the crucible for new definitions of the Cuban nation that included former slaves, people of mixed race, Cuban exiles in Europe, Mexico and the United States, a newly unleashed merchant and intellectual class, and a number of great nationalist leaders. Thus, the Cuban separatist movement contained within itself myriad cross-national, cross-racial and cross-class alliances.[4] The U.S. invasion in 1898 was for Cubans a largely unforeseen and unsought outcome of the war against Spain, so that date marks a change in the entire calculus of the separatist movement. Cross-national alliances with North Americans were still possible, even essential, for Cubans after 1898, but their character (in terms of class, race, and goals) changed radically.

Cross-racial and cross-class alliances became more fragile in occupation-era Cuba, a trend that continued in the post-occupation years as Cuban politics adjusted to the U.S. hegemony that was now thoroughly entwined in Cuban economic and political life. These new realities changed the calculus of alliance-making for people of both nationalities. For Díaz, his Havana congregation, and leaders of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta, the occupation was a time of upheaval as each contended with the conflicting demands of their national, racial, religious, political,

[4] The inclusion of the Cuban separatist movement—its multitude of alliances—also meant that it had a multitude of fissures. Scholars have recently challenged the Cuban nationalist teleology that claims that the Cuban people rose up as one to challenge Spain, and that their victory was thus inevitable. John Lawrence Tone persuasively argues that the defeat of Spain in 1898 was not due solely to either Cuban unity or U.S. power. Rather, Tone argues that political events in Spain, the effects of infectious disease, and a number of other factors led to Spain's defeat in Cuba. My interest here is not in how or why Spain lost but in the effects of that event: the transformations in Cuban and U.S. transnational politics and religion wrought by this change. John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

gender and class identities. Beliefs about property, native-led missions, proper methods of evangelism, and the relationship between church and state did not follow the lines drawn by national boundaries, and opposition to Spain no longer held together these alliances. Consequently, the relationships Díaz had built before 1898 crumbled, and the Havana congregation experienced a painful split. The Home Mission Board rebuilt an alliance with an almost entirely new set of Cuban allies, with new goals and concerns, after 1903.

Alberto J. Díaz was the one essential figure for Cuban and Southern Baptists in their pre-1898 process of alliance-making, a position that marks him as a cultural broker. The term "cultural broker" has been used to describe the aims and actions of people who translated, mediated and facilitated alliances between people of two different cultures.[5] Historians have often described cultural brokers as people who were essential for the functioning of these cross-cultural alliances. They were usually bilingual and could serve as translators, and their formal citizenship was sometimes blurred—Díaz, who identified himself as a Cuban throughout his life, was born a subject of the King of Spain and became a U.S. citizen in 1882. Perhaps more importantly, cultural brokers were cultural translators: they understood and were comfortable in each of the cultures in question, so that they could explain the values and goals of each set of people in the alliance to the other group. Cultural brokers mediated disputes, gained access to resources, and led joint projects that they believed would benefit both communities to which they belonged. Their key positions in these alliances, however, were entirely dependent on the survival of the alliance as a whole. Once the larger political situation changed, cultural brokers were often the first ones to fall and were those who suffered the most. Alberto Díaz's

[5] For the term "cultural broker," see chapter 2, n5.

position as a cultural broker between U.S. Southern and Cuban Baptists was thus entirely dependent on the imperial political situation of Cuba. His role as a cultural broker was possible before 1898 because politics in Cuba were fluid, as the U.S. and Spain jockeyed for influence on the island. After 1898, when the U.S. was the undisputed hegemon in Cuba, cultural brokers like Díaz—whose broad aims were Cuban independence and the conversion of Cubans to Protestantism—were no longer necessary or even desirable for the U.S.-Cuban relationship. Other cultural brokers, more interested in facilitating transnational relationships for Cubans who accepted the hegemony of the United States, rose up to fill that role.

The history of Baptist relations in and between the U.S. South and Cuba, mediated by Díaz, can be best understood as both a transnational and a local story. A "transnational history" is one that primarily examines phenomena that were not bound by political borders (such as labor or religion), and draws on primary sources created by people from more than one nation-state. This religious and political history of Cuban congregations is inevitably transnational—not because it is a traditional history of a mission, in which British or U.S. Protestants moved to a foreign land, but because all the actors and ideas in this story moved naturally across national borders. This dissertation thus suggests that the study of religion would often do well to expand beyond the limits of any one national boundary. At the same time, the particulars of local politics and economics defined the choices available to Baptists in Havana. Baptist congregations in Havana were sites of international conflict over resources, power, and identity during this period, but they were also local spaces, inhabited by people living within the constraints of choices determined by their locality. A history that takes into account both the local

and the transnational aspects of peoples' lives is needed to make sense of the events they lived through. Diverse groups of both Cubans and Americans were in the process of constructing and defining national and cultural identities for themselves, for each other, and for others within their own nation. Baptists on both sides of the Florida Straits saw themselves simultaneously in terms of Christian brotherhood and of their own particular nationalism, class, or race. Baptists also had a long-established relationship, so that their occupation-era problems were deeply felt and exhaustively documented.

Imperialism, Freedom and Exceptionalism in U.S.-Cuban Relations

The term "brotherly empire" is an apt descriptor for the remarkably equal transnational alliance, whose goal was global conversion, built by Cuban and Southern Baptists before 1898. Cuban and Southern Baptists shared an ethos of spiritual imperialism before 1898 that led them to build a cross-national alliance whose goal was the conversion of Cubans to Baptist Christianity. By "spiritual imperialism," I mean that both groups believed they had a duty to spread their shared set of doctrines and practices; they saw themselves as the agents of an irresistible moral force that could lead all people to a better way of life. It was an ethos of both religious certainty and geographic expansion. In the longer term, Southern Baptist leaders believed that Cuba could be the base for the conversion of all of Latin America. This ethos was a common one in the United States at the time: some Protestants believed that they could together convert the entire world to Protestant Christianity "in one generation."[6] For Cubans, the spiritual

[6]One prominent proponent of this view, John R. Mott, coined the rallying cry "the evangelization of the world in this generation" and led the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM). Michael Parker, *The Kingdom of Character: The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1886-1926* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008).

liberation that they sought from the Baptist church was a natural corollary to the separatist quest for independence from Spain. I have used the term "brotherly empire" to describe this partnership because Baptist men often referred to each other in letters and conversation using the title "brother," a term of closest familiarity that at the same time implied perfect equality.

Conflicts over freedom and resources affected the nature of Cuban autonomy and the shape of United States empire as each was redefined in these years. Debates about the meaning of freedom animated social relations between North Americans and Cubans throughout the period covered here. Before and during the Spanish-Cuban-American war (1895-1898), people in both Cuba and the United States, allied against Spain, had believed that they were working toward freedom for Cuba. During the occupation, though, it quickly became clear that independence, autonomy, and freedom meant different things to different groups. Baptist congregations became embroiled in a serious controversy over the structure of congregations, control of financial assets, and the role of politics in their spiritual lives—all issues that revolved around a discourse of spiritual and political freedom.

Investigation of these discourses of freedom, in conversation with broad cultural notions of imperialism and independence, points to the inadequacy of concepts of Cuban and U.S. exceptionalism that have often isolated both nations from the broad trends of study in Western Hemispheric and global history. Modern imperialisms have sought direct political control, but also economic coercion, indirect political influence, and cultural hegemony. All of these dimensions of power were in place over the course of U.S.-Cuban relations in this period. By looking deeply at the low-level points of contact

where empire functioned in the daily lives of everyday people, we blur the false boundaries between these types of power and bring into focus the choices that people faced on a daily basis. By examining relationships in religious communities, we see that U.S. and Cuban actors behaved in ways that were particular to their situations but which also fit into the broad patterns of imperial experience. They sought alliances where they could, disputed facts and interpretations that would have limited their power, and sensed that imperial politics (whether in the colony or the metropole) could change the entire trajectory of their lives. The fact that discourses about the meaning of freedom arose at Baptist congregations in Cuba should not necessarily surprise us, but it should tell us that "foreign relations" between the U.S. and Cuba was not simply a matter of political or economic control. Discourses about freedom paradoxically became a route for North Americans to exert cultural influence and, in some instances, control over Cubans. At the same time, alliances were not always carved out along national lines: many Cubans were active participants in this process, and many allied with North Americans to achieve shared goals. None of these choices point to an exceptional U.S. or Cuban experience in the scope of global imperialisms.

The study of low-level or non-state collaborations between Cubans and North Americans, especially in the realm of religion, can change our ideas about the nature of relations between these two peoples. These relations have too often been described in the crude binary terms of bully vs. underdog, freedom vs. tyranny, or modern vs. backwards. These relations have always been more complicated and more interesting than such binaries would suggest, and an examination of shared cultural norms is a good way to understand this complexity. This dissertation explains, in specific doctrinal and practical

terms, the shared cultural norms that made possible the close partnership between Cuban and Southern Baptists before 1898. It also details the transnational and local disputes that made the continuation of that partnership impossible after 1898. The Baptist partnership was not by any means the only close relationship between Cubans and North Americans that existed in these years, and it was not the only one irrevocably changed by 1898. The questions this dissertation asks and the methods it uses can point us toward more avenues for research into cultural relations between North Americans and Cubans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Southern Baptist Convention and the Historiography of Cuban and U.S. Religion

The history of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is filled with the same tensions and themes—expansion and growth, congregational independence, internal divisions—that are developed here. The SBC was formed in Augusta, Georgia, in 1844. The impetus for its split from Baptists in northern states arose from the twin forces of slavery and missions in North American life. Since the late eighteenth century, northern and southern Baptists had cooperated in funding and managing societies that distributed religious literature and Bibles, and that provided support for missionaries. In the 1840s, as the abolitionist movement gained strength and as the U.S. nation-state exerted more direct control over the North American continent, cooperation between northern and southern Protestants on these issues frayed. Northern Baptists began to protest when slaveowners were appointed as missionaries; southerners demanded to know why slaveholding, a source of honor in the white South, was suddenly a problem for the organization of mission work. In 1844, the conflict came to a head, when northern leaders

of the Home Mission Society wrote, "we can never be a party to any arrangement which would imply approbation of slavery." Soon after, white southern Baptists met in Augusta, where they organized the Southern Baptist Convention.[7]

The structure of the SBC was organized so as to emphasize and honor the Baptist theology of the local congregation. This theology, which had deep roots in the Baptist experience of dissent in England, held that the local congregation was the primary unit of religious doctrine, community, and conscience. This very Calvinist theology rejected church hierarchy, bishops, top-down doctrinal decisions, and the like as an affront to the free conscience of the individual believer. For this reason, the Southern Baptist organization was not named a "denomination," but rather a "convention," a meeting that technically existed only when representatives from member congregations met once a year. Few Southern Baptist institutions were financially or institutionally stable until well after the Civil War.[8]

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[7] This account is condensed from Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities Among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Clarence C. Goen, *Broken Churches, Broken Nation: Denominational Schisms and the Coming of the Civil War* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997); Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge University Press, 1993). The quotation is from Robert Baker, ed., *A Baptist Source Book, With Particular References to Southern Baptists* (Nashville, TN, 1966), 106-108. In the years during and after the Civil War, segregation in Southern churches became the norm. By the period of this dissertation, the Southern Baptist Convention was a thoroughly white denomination. African American Baptists organized the National Baptist Convention, among others, to serve their spiritual needs. See John B. Boles, *Masters & Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South, 1740-1870* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1988); Katharine L. Dvorak, *An African-American Exodus: The Segregation of the Southern Churches* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1991).

[8] The Southern Baptist Sunday-School and Publishing Board was established in 1864, but it could not compete with the much larger American Baptist Publishing Society, which was based in Philadelphia. It was folded into the Home Mission Board in the 1890s. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary was founded in Greenville, South Carolina, in 1859, but since its initial endowment was invested entirely in Confederate bonds, it foundered after the war. It moved to Louisville, Kentucky in 1877, partially to "alleviate fears that the seminary was a special haven for southeastern Baptists and hostile to southwestern Landmarkers," as historian Paul Harvey writes. The seminary, like the Home Mission Board, began to prosper in the 1880s. The Home Mission Board's newsletter, *Our Home Field*, was founded only in 1888. Harvey, *Redeeming the South*, 28-30, 145-49.

Despite the cultural reconciliation of the white North and South that accompanied segregation and the growth of Jim Crow, Southern Baptists worked to preserve their separate denomination in the late nineteenth century. Some Protestant denominations that had split over slavery and sectionalism in the years before 1861, such as the Presbyterians, reunited in this period. Baptists remained officially divided, although there were increasing contacts and cooperation between denominational mission boards, tract societies, and the like. Rev. Isaac T. Tichenor, the leader of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) from 1882 to 1899, spearheaded the initiative that kept Baptists sectionally divided. As historian Michael E. Williams, Sr. writes, Tichenor believed "that both the South and Baptists were appointed for a special mission to the world," and that their ability to perform this mission required having control of their own strong, independent church apparatus. Tichenor led the effort to define both the territory and the identity of the SBC, after the Civil War and mission "incursions" of Northern Baptists threatened it with collapse. By the 1880s, the Southern Baptist Convention had begun a period of remarkable growth. Tichenor traveled across the South soliciting donations for the Home Mission Board, organized 1,800 new churches between 1887 and 1892, and employed 365 missionaries by 1892—270 more than had worked for the Board a decade earlier.[9]

Division within Southern Baptist ranks accompanied this growth. Since before the Civil War, a movement known as Landmarkism had questioned even the few organizations and hierarchies that the Convention used to do its work of evangelizing and education. The Landmark movement in the SBC had counterparts in other, reformist

[9] Michael E. Williams, *Isaac Taylor Tichenor: The Creation of the Baptist New South* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 129, 147.

movements in other denominations, all of which basically called for the same thing: a return to the pure, often called "primitive," roots of Christian churches, which had freed adherents from the strictures of the Old Testament to an individual relationship with God. Adherents to the Landmark movement believed that even mission boards, Sunday-School organizations and seminaries threatened the freedom and conscience of the individual believer. This extreme form of Calvinist reformism also, naturally, opposed the Catholic pope and sometimes accused Baptist and Methodist leaders of being papists. Its principles were still a factor when some Texas and Arkansas Baptists left the SBC in 1905 to form the Baptist Missionary Association.[10] Tichenor and other leaders of the Home Mission Board, quite naturally, saw their organizations as a tool of the Convention to do God's work, and opposed Landmarkism with all the fervor shown by other modernizers of their time.

We can learn as much about U.S. Southern Baptists from this study as we can about Díaz and Cuban Baptists. The Cuban mission was one of the most important initiatives of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board during the nineteenth century, generating unprecedented contributions to the Board to purchase a building for Díaz's congregation in downtown Havana, which was dedicated in 1891. This initiative, which involved fundraising, letter-writing, and the publication of a new periodical, *Our Home Field*, catalyzed the controversial move toward hierarchy, centralization and professionalization within the Southern Baptist Convention. Díaz and other Cuban ministers frequently toured Southern Baptist churches and state conventions in those

[10] Historian Paul Harvey calls Landmarkism "a folk faith with an ideological edge" and notes that "the democratic and primitivist impulses expressed in Landmarkist doctrines permanently imprinted southern religious culture." Harvey, *Redeeming the South*, 8. For further discussion of Landmarkism, see chapter 6, n2.

years, speaking and soliciting funds for their ministry. Tichenor, the pioneering chair of the Home Mission Board, was an influential supporter of the Cuba mission and a close friend of Díaz, as well as being a key force for New South modernization in the Southern Baptist Convention.[11] When relations between Díaz and the Home Mission Board began to sour, Díaz was able to find new allies in members of the Landmark movement. Landmark Baptists saw the dispute between Díaz and the HMB as the sign that the SBC was beyond redemption, and that its permanent institutions—the mission boards—had become tyrannical hierarchies that oppressed individual believers and congregations. In 1905, they split off from the SBC and formed their own denomination. Scholars have noted these and similar trends among Southern Baptists and other U.S. churches, but there has been little discussion of the essential role of missions, especially Cuban missions, in this change.[12]

However, the scholarly gaps regarding both Cuban religion and Southern Baptist growth are much broader. For several decades it has been difficult to do scholarly research on the history of Cuban religion, because of the sensitivity of the Cuban government regarding the topic. A few scholars have made contributions by doing research in United States or Vatican archives, and recent scholarship has focused on

[11] Tichenor's biographer, Michael E. Williams, sees Tichenor as an embodiment of many of the norms associated with the New South, even as many of his initiatives predated Henry Grady's term by several years. Williams, *Tichenor*, 6.

[12] Williams acknowledges the important place of Cuba missions in the life of Tichenor, the subject of his biography. Other scholars consider only domestic U.S. causes for the changes in Southern Baptist life and institutions in these years, ignoring foreign missions, even projects in Cuba that were under the aegis of the Home Mission Board, almost entirely. See John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987); Keith Harper, *The Quality of Mercy: Southern Baptists and Social Christianity, 1890-1920* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1996); Harvey, *Redeeming the South*; Ellen MacGilvra Rosenberg, *The Southern Baptists: A Subculture in Transition*, 1st ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989).

contemporary Cuban religion, but the space for future research is still vast.[13] Similarly, there is a dearth of work on Southern Baptist missions. Many good works on Southern Baptist history are almost silent on missions, in contrast to the attention that missions have received in histories of other denominations and in evangelical histories as a whole. Mentions of the congregations in Cuba tend to rely on published materials that misremember the pre-1898 period and thus have incorrect information about that era.[14]

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[13] Scholarship on the history of Cuban Protestantism includes Margaret Crahan, "Religious Penetration and Nationalism in Cuba: U.S. Methodist Activities, 1898-1958," *Revista/review Interamericana* 8 (Summer 1978): 204-224; Jason M. Yaremko, *U.S. Protestant Missions in Cuba: From Independence to Castro* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000); Marcos Antonio Ramos,

, Costa Rica: Editorial Caribe, 1986); Marcos Antonio Ramos, *Protestantism and Revolution in Cuba* (Coral Gables, Fla: University of Miami, 1989). Manuel Maza Miquel, a Jesuit priest, writes on the Catholic Church in Cuba and has done valuable research at the Vatican; see especially Manuel Maza Miquel, *Esclavos, Patriotas Y Poetas a La Sombra De La Cruz: Cinco Ensayos Sobre Catolicismo E Historia Cubana* blica Dominicana: Centro de Estudios Sociales Padre Juan Montalvo, 1999); Manuel Maza Miquel, S.J., *: Guerra y Paz en Cuba, 1895-1903: Testimonios de los Archivos Vaticanos* : Institut , 1997). See also the assessment of the historiography of the colonial Catholic Church in Juan Bosco Amores Carredano, "La Iglesia en Cuba al final del período colonial," *Anuario de historia de la Iglesia* 7 (1998): 67-83. For contemporary Cuban religion, see, for example, Miguel Barnet, *Afro-Cuban Religions* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2001); David H Brown, *: Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); V. Dickerson, "Are those congas in the pulpit? Hymns, alabanza y adoracion (praise and worship) music, and the evangelical subculture of western Cuba" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2009); Michelle A Gonzalez, *Afro-Cuban Theology: Religion, Race, Culture, and Identity* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2006); Adrian H. Hearn, *Cuba: Religion, Social Capital, and Development* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2008).

[14] Harvey, *Redeeming the South*; Harper, *Quality of Mercy*; and Williams, *Tichenor* are excellent histories, but the focus of each is on the domestic United States. Southern Baptist-authored accounts of the denomination's mission history have written that the Baptist mission in Cuba began after 1898, that North Americans initiated the pre-1898 mission, or that the earlier period was led by Díaz but that it was "unstable" or otherwise doomed to failure. See the discussion in the epilogue; see also Una Roberts Lawrence, *Cuba for Christ: A Study of the Field and Work of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Cuba* (Little Rock, AR: Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, 1923); John Benjamin Lawrence, *History of the Home Mission Board* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1958); Moses Nathaniel McCall, *A Baptist Generation in Cuba* (Atlanta, GA: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1942); Arthur B. Rutledge, *Mission to America: A Century and a Quarter of Southern Baptist Home Missions* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1976). Pura Cova Hernandez, the daughter of the Cuban Baptist minister Rev. José V. Cova, remembered the early years of the mission in similar terms; see the undated draft of her memoir (circa 1930s) in the Una Roberts Lawrence collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive, box 7, folder 1. Scholarly monographs that, to different extents, repeat the interpretations of these works include Harold Edward Greer, Jr., "History of Southern Baptist Mission Work in Cuba, 1886-1916" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1965); Wilma Rugh Taylor, *Gospel Tracks Through Texas: The Mission of Chapel Car Good Will* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2005). Taylor includes a chapter on Díaz. There is also, of course, a wealth of

There are many volumes on U.S. Protestant missions during the nineteenth century, but few include Southern Baptists in their analysis.[15] It is clear that these missions and congregations have much to tell us about the histories of Baptists, Southern religion, U.S. religion, Cuban religion, and U.S.-Cuban relations more generally.

Language and Sources

I have made a few choices on language that require explanation. Instead of the inexact "American" or the awkward "U.S. American," I have used the term "North American" to describe citizens of the United States. This follows the Latin American use of the term *Norteamericano*, which, although also linguistically inexact, to my knowledge never includes Canadians or Mexicans. I have used the term "Southern Baptist" to describe members of the Southern Baptist Convention, despite the fact that African American Baptists who lived in the U.S. southern states generally did not belong to the SBC during the time period under study. It should be understood that those whom I call "Southern Baptists" were not inclusive of all Baptists who lived in the U.S. South. I have tried to avoid use of the word "mission" to describe Baptist congregations in Cuba, instead simply describing them as congregations, especially before 1898. The term

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hagiographical literature on Baptist missionaries such as Lottie Moon (China) and Adoniram Judson (Burma).

[15] William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); Daniel H. Bays and Grant Wacker, eds., *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2003). I suspect that this gap is not only because there is so much else to write about, but also because of a residual historiographical and research bias towards mission societies based in the northern states of the U.S. To be sure, the U.S. Civil War interrupted nineteenth century Southern Baptist missions, and those mission projects were never as large or as organized as some of the northeastern societies such as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This was certainly because of many Baptists' discomfort with hierarchical organizations, but it was also because even few secular advocacy or benevolent organizations could compete with the ABCFM in terms of size and impact.

"congregation" is a bit more neutral, being free of the connotations of dependency and colonialism that come with the term "mission." However, the issue of whether Cuban-led Baptist congregations in Havana were dependent "missions" or independent "congregations" of the Southern Baptist Convention became a subject of dispute during the period under study, so I have also tried not to prejudge that dispute.

The greatest source of materials for this dissertation has been the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive (SBHLA) in Nashville, Tennessee. Consequently, the perspective of Southern Baptist leadership is reflected in many sources, including meeting minutes, some correspondence, and periodicals. I have tried to read these documents for what they are—records of elite, white, urban Southern Baptist men who wanted both to preserve their Convention's power as an institution in the South and to spread its influence to Cuba through the evangelical conversion of Cubans. I have also tried to avoid making these documents into something they are not—records of what poorer, rural Southern Baptists, Southern Baptist women, or the majority of Cuban Baptists believed or did. I have tried to read the records from this archive, which often purport to speak for all Southern Baptists or Cuban Baptists, with a skeptical eye. However, the Una Roberts Lawrence Collection at SBHLA also preserved a large collection of letters written by Alberto J. Díaz and other Cubans, and many more were published with minimal editing in Southern Baptist periodicals. In addition, a remarkably complete record of both sides in the occupation-era dispute has survived, found not only in the records of the SBHLA but also in periodicals published by Landmark Baptists. I have supplemented these with sources from other archives and secondary research, in the hopes that it would be possible to recreate the perspective of people who were sometimes

silenced, misinterpreted or used to a particular end by Southern Baptist leaders in the records preserved at SBHLA. In this way I was able to fill in or confirm some details of Díaz's life and interpret the meaning of actions taken by many historical actors in both Cuba and the U.S. South. I was also able to better understand offhand comments made by Southern Baptists about Cubans, especially regarding "delicate" and essential matters that the Southerners may not have wished to be explicit about with their Cuban brethren, such as race, gender and class.[16] Because I was not able to complete a research trip to Cuba, some holes—especially regarding Díaz's congregation, Gethsemane Baptist Church in Havana, and the last years of Díaz's life—remain unfilled.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter one argues that a religious revival, which grew from the same roots as Cuban separatism and the coming war, took place in Havana between 1878 and 1895. The Cuban revival, unacknowledged in previous historiography, was an anti-Catholic movement whose theology was heavily influenced by Baptist doctrine and by Cuban interests in economic and political freedom. The message of the revival reached across class, gender and race lines, although it was not explicitly a radical call for equality. Rather, the revival was a movement for spiritual renewal and self-improvement that appealed to Cubans whose separatist views, spiritual searching, or interest in economic betterment led them to the doors of a Protestant service, despite (or perhaps because of) the opposition of the Spanish and Catholic hierarchies. It was a religious corollary to the

[16] My approach has been influenced by a number of scholars who write about events and people that have been silenced or ignored in the past. See especially Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995). Still, my efforts to write about race and gender in the Southern-Cuban Baptist relationship were often thwarted by the very silence of the records I have used. For further discussion of the production of the archive preserved at SBHLA, see the Epilogue.

broad separatist coalition being built in Cuba in the same years. The revival was institutionalized in a citywide Baptist congregation headed by Alberto J. Díaz.

Chapter two establishes the theology and early biography of Alberto J. Díaz. Three important themes can be discerned from the events of his early life, the narrative he told about it, and the observations Southern Baptists made about him. First, Díaz, like many Cubans of his era, experienced transnationalism in his daily life. Second, Díaz's conversion narrative and his actions as a preacher in Cuba indicate his deep interest in illness as a route to spiritual conversion and salvation. Third, both the Cuban political context of the late nineteenth century and Díaz's knowledge of Cuban and U.S. Southern norms led to his position, at once tenuous and absolutely essential, as a cultural broker between Cubans and Southerners.

Chapter three argues that Southern Baptist leaders and revivalist Cubans shared several important political, theological and social beliefs. These beliefs both catalyzed, and were a product of, the remarkably equal partnership between them before 1895. Cuban and Southern Baptists shared a belief in spiritual imperialism that, in these years, was linked with influential political and social movements in both countries. They also shared an affinity for two particular Baptist doctrines: the personal conversion experience leading to salvation, and the free and independent nature of Baptist congregations. Finally, this group of Cubans shared with Southern Baptists particular beliefs about modes of social organization such as masculinity and gender, class, and status. An exploration of this partnership—this brotherly empire—is framed by the most important of the experiences that built it: the joint Southern and Cuban Baptist purchase and dedication of a large and valuable theater building in downtown Havana in 1891, which

they used as a church. This unlikely cultural alliance between Cubans and Southerners, Cuban Baptists believed, might be a harbinger of similar cross-national alliances that would help them to realize their yearnings for political and economic freedom from Spain.

Chapter four traces the actions of Alberto J. Díaz immediately before and during the second Cuban war for independence from Spain (1895-1898), at the high point of his influence as a cultural broker. Although the documentary record is not clear, Díaz may have served in some capacity as an underground agent of the Cuban insurgent movement in Havana. His main goal, however, was to protect the Baptist congregations in wartime. The chapter finds that neither Díaz nor Southern Baptist leaders practiced a separation between religion and politics during these years. Díaz's vision for Cuba, as expressed in his work with the White Cross medical service and in his testimony before the U.S. Senate, was simply not divided into separate political and religious spheres. He understood the Cuban insurgency as a fight for freedom both from Spain and from Catholic oppression. Southern Baptist leaders valorized the Cuban struggle for independence and supported Díaz's activities. Díaz's influence as a cultural broker was damaged, however, by Southern Baptist discovery of a set of prewar financial transactions that he had undertaken in an attempt to protect Baptist congregations on the island. U.S. political control of Cuba during the post-war occupation meant that his position as cultural broker was no longer necessary.

Chapter five briefly narrates the ambiguous end to the Cuban war for independence by U.S. invasion in 1898, and connects Southern-Cuban Baptist relations with the muddied politics of the U.S. occupation of Cuba up to 1901. Confusion and

ambiguity defined much about life and politics on the island during this first period of the occupation. Until 1901, the political conflicts that characterized U.S.-Cuban relations were irresolvable because no one—including U.S. political leaders—knew how long the occupation would last or what factors would lead to its end. I argue that the conflicts between Baptists, like many other occupation-era clashes, revolved around a discourse in which all participants used the concept of freedom to argue their cases. For Díaz, freedom meant continued control of Baptist congregations and a continued Cuban political struggle for independence, now against the United States. For Southerners, Cuban freedom from Spain meant freedom from a state church, so Cuban Baptists' participation in politics was no longer necessary. After an initial conflict between Southern and Cuban Baptists over issues of control in the Cuban Baptist congregations, the parties reached an uneasy truce. From 1899 to 1901, the partnership seemed to be moving forward. In reality, however, both sides were laying the foundation for the crippling conflict to come—and the Cuban Baptist communities were beginning to split, just as Cuban politics fractured under the pressures of occupation and direct empire.

Chapter six traces the deep divisions that had been wrought in the transnational Baptist brotherly empire by the end of the occupation. The chapter spans two events—Díaz's resignation from the employ of the Home Mission Board in 1901 and the eviction of Díaz and Gethsemane from the Jané building in 1903—and explains the multiple ruptures in the brotherly empire that these events signaled. The first and most obvious split was that between Díaz and the Home Mission Board. The second and perhaps more surprising set of disagreements were those experienced internally by the communities of both Cuban and Southern Baptists in these years. The key cause of all these divisions was

a difference in strategy for proselytizing: should Baptist strategy focus on autonomy, or on status and control? This theological and methodological divide did not fall neatly along national borders, and the brotherly empire built by and between Cubans and Southerners in the late nineteenth century splintered as leaders turned increasingly to practices of control to order their world. As the U.S. increasingly exerted political control over Cuba, disagreements over how to practice independence in daily life led not only to a split between Southern Baptists and Díaz, but to an intimate and tense new relationship between the United States and Cuba in the cultural and economic spheres. The set of divisions experienced by Baptists was one of a multitude of realignments that reordered social relations during the global transition from the nineteenth century to the twentieth.

The epilogue briefly traces the creation of the new Cuban Baptist church, without Díaz, that remained in alliance with the Southern Baptist Convention. Baptists in Cuba quickly found that they needed a new usable history to support and explain the legitimacy of their mission project on the island. These new narratives of Baptist beginnings in Cuba often erased or de-emphasized Díaz, and dismissed the efforts of the pre-1898 Baptist congregations as futile or unable to withstand political upheaval. More recently, Cuban Baptists have recovered memories of Díaz as an embattled patriot. The themes of Baptist historical memory in the South and in Cuba thus mirror much of the teleology of the U.S. imperial and the Cuban nationalist projects. Díaz's complex personal history and the history of the pre-1898 Baptist congregations in Havana defy these categories, and neither Cuban nor Southern religious histories can be confined to them. The history of the rise and fall of the Baptist brotherly empire is clearly part of U.S. imperial and Cuban nationalist histories, yet its complexity also offers a challenge to both.

I.
The Cuban Revival:
Politics, Religion, and the Baptist Church, 1878-1895

On January 26, 1886, Rev. William F. Wood sat down in Havana to write a letter to the *Christian Index*, a leading Southern Baptist weekly newspaper. "There is no discount among the Baptists of this Mission for intelligence, zeal and spirituality," he wrote, describing a Cuban congregation he had visited. "They are emphatically Bible Baptists, a Bible in every house and every hand; their conversation whenever they meet is of the gospel. This is the rule and not the exception." When Wood arrived, having traveled form his home in Key West, Florida, many of the Cuban converts clamored to be baptized; because the leader of their little church, Alberto J. Díaz, was not ordained, they had had no one qualified to administer the ancient rite. But when the congregation walked to the waters of the Caribbean to perform the baptisms outdoors by immersion, as was required for Baptists, Wood experienced firsthand the complexities of being a Protestant in Spanish Cuba. "We had expected to baptize quite a number on Sunday night," he wrote, "but were hindered by the authorities. The law does not tolerate any act of worship outside of a building, except to the Roman Catholic religion. We had previously baptized in the sea at night and in a retired place, but this coming to the ears of the authorities, they had the police to guard the sea shore and arrest us if we attempted to baptize again." The little community in Havana was not discouraged, and they were ready to obey the divine rather than the colonial law. "We wait a more favorable opportunity," Wood wrote.[1]

[1] William F. Wood, "Correspondence: The Baptist Cause in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 64, no. 8 (February 25, 1886), p. 4. Non-Catholic religious expression was only recently legal in Cuba, and still could not be conducted outdoors.

When Wood first arrived in Cuba in 1885, Cubans were already in the midst of a fervent Protestant religious revival. This revival, unprecedented in Cuban history, was led entirely by Cubans and began soon after 1878. The revival grew in the fertile political and social climate of late colonial Havana for the next decade, reaching more people and becoming more enmeshed in Cuban life and politics as the years passed. Though undocumented in academic literature, this movement had some of the same features as revivals described by participants and observers all over the world in many different eras. It has also been largely forgotten by both Southern and Cuban Baptists, for reasons that have to do with the painful split in the Baptist congregations in Havana that followed the second Cuban war against Spain and the U.S. occupation of Cuba.

Religious revivals—like religion itself—are difficult to define, but since at least the eighteenth century they have been a common spiritual experience for people of all races, classes and genders in many parts of the world. The terms "revival" and "revivalism" describe a religious social movement whose participants sought personal spiritual change. Revivals are, above all, intense movements for renewal, although participants define this goal in many different ways.[2] There is a voluminous historiography on various revivals in the Western Hemisphere, including the so-called Great Awakenings in the 18th and 19th century United States, the holiness movements in

[2] Michael McClymond, an historian of religion, prefers not to define a revival at all, instead listing several characteristics that may point to the existence of "a revival." The one defining characteristic, according to McClymond, is "intensified experience," although what this experience is, or how it manifests itself, is largely a matter defined by the participants themselves. This experience must be shared by a relatively large number of people; a revival is communal, not just an individual religious conversion or feeling. These communal experiences may be marked by "bodily manifestations--such as weeping, shouting, fainting, dancing, and so on," and "extraordinary occurrences" that "strike participants as signs of God's working among them." In addition, revivals often lead participants to ponder "issues of lay and clerical authority... [that] raise the question: who is in charge?" Michael James McClymond, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2007), xxii-xxiii.

the antebellum U.S. North, the Azusa Street revival in 1906 Los Angeles, and the later twentieth century Pentecostal and evangelical movements throughout Latin America and the United States. There is much less information on case studies of particular nineteenth century Latin American Protestant revivals. Indeed, many scholars might doubt whether any happened, as the region was supposedly dominated by the Catholic church. Documentation of Cuban experiences in both centuries is particularly sparse.[3]

Revivals can be as hard to document and interpret as they are to define. If participants describe a group experience of heightened religious feeling, but do not use keywords such as "revival" or "awakening," we may doubt that scholars are allowed to define their experience for them as such. In addition, scholars have struggled to find beginning and end dates for particular "revivals" after the fact, and to find causal connections between other types of movements, especially those calling for political change, and these discrete revivals. Some have argued that the search for renewal and occasional periods of intense feeling are constant features of many religions, preferring to see both the complexity and the continuity of religious experiences rather than highlighting a particular event as a revival or a certain person as a revivalist. Calling the

[3] On the "Great Awakenings" of the 18th and 19th centuries in the United States, see Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Thomas S Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Frank Lambert, *Inventing the "Great Awakening"* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1999). For citations on Pentecostalism and holiness, see note 41. Sidney Mintz describes the Pentecostal conversion experience of a Puerto Rican in the 1950s. Sidney Mintz, *Worker in the Cane: A Puerto Rican Life History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974), chap. 7. On the recent growth of Protestantism in Latin America, see D. H. Levine, "The Future of Christianity in Latin America," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 41, no. 01 (2009): 121-145. For one sociological summary of the state of contemporary Cuban religion, see Ana Celia Perera Pintado, "Religion and Cuban Identity in a Transnational Context," *Latin American Perspectives* 32, no. 1 (January 2005): 147-173. The Cuban state's official atheism for much of the latter half of the twentieth century has contributed to a dearth of academic studies on Cuban religion.

Cuban experience during the 1880s and 1890s a revival does not force it into a definitional box, but rather allows us to draw on some of the existing theoretical and historical literature about religious movements to better understand those experiences, their roots, and their consequences.

The movement in 1880s and 1890s Havana had a few characteristics that point to it as a revival. First and most importantly, hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people attended frequent preaching and prayer meetings led by Cuban ministers. It is impossible to say how many of these people were eventually baptized or joined the Baptist congregation that came to be the center of the revival, because baptism and membership lists appear not to have survived. Accounts written at the time, however, emphasize that Cubans packed tents and rented halls to hear the preaching. The crowds especially came to hear the preaching of Alberto J. Díaz, a medical doctor and preacher who was later called "the Apostle of Cuba." Second, the letters and narratives of those involved in the movement emphasized a personal conversion experience and the conviction that its adherents should begin a "new life" after that conversion. This "new life" may have included baptism by immersion, a dedication to "Baptist principles," or simply a renunciation of "old ways" such as Catholicism, alcoholism, laziness, or religious apathy. Third, like other revivals, the Cuban Baptist revival was not isolated or aberrant in its particular social and political context. Its political corollary was the growing Cuban nationalist movement toward unity in the struggle against colonial Spain. After the first Cuban war for independence ended in stalemate in 1878, the 1880s and 1890s saw José Martí and other Cuban patriots working at home and abroad to develop and articulate a political and social program that would be capable of uniting Cubans for a new war. The

revival in Havana did not by any means cause the 1895 revolution, but it was an intriguing facet of Cubans' efforts to define themselves as not-Spanish: the revival grew from some of the same social, political and economic roots as Cuban nationalisms and the separatist movement.

The Cuban revival between 1878 and 1895 was an anti-Catholic movement whose theology was heavily influenced by orthodox Baptist doctrine and Cubans' interest in economic and political freedom. Its message reached across class and race lines, although it was not explicitly a movement for radical racial or class equality. The revival was, rather, a call for spiritual renewal and self-improvement that appealed to Cubans whose separatist views, spiritual searching, or interest in economic betterment led them to the doors of a Protestant service. This chapter first describes the religious context in which the revival took place, especially the social and political stance of the Roman Catholic Church in late colonial Cuba and legal restrictions on non-Catholic worship. Second, it covers the establishment and growth of Gethsemane Baptist Church as the institutional center of the revival. This section explains the myth of denominationalism that has obscured the revival's beginnings and the political repression that worked to catalyze Gethsemane's growth. Finally, it gives an overview of the theological beliefs and the class, racial and institutional composition of the congregation that worshiped at Gethsemane.

Much of the information that has survived about the Cuban revival comes from the writings of Southern Baptist visitors, correspondents, and clergymen, and their accounts should not be taken as unbiased. These Baptists or their organizations were often deeply involved in supporting the Cuban congregations, both through prayer and

with financial gifts, in the years after 1886. One of the most important sources, Rev. Isaac Taylor Tichenor, had been a renowned Southern Baptist preacher, a Confederate chaplain, a mining executive, and the president of Alabama A & M College (now Auburn University). In the 1880s, Tichenor was the reforming leader of the Atlanta-based Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, which had an institutional relationship with the Cuban congregations. Southern urban Baptist clergymen such as Tichenor, who were largely the chroniclers of the Cuban revival, tended to be hostile to forms of religious expression that were not "respectable," as historian Paul Harvey puts it.[4] Throughout the nineteenth century, they fought their own battles in the U.S. South with Landmark Baptists and others who favored charismatic, local, "folk" religion over the institutions and organizations (official doctrine, mission boards, Sunday-school boards, and the Convention itself) favored by the professionals and modernizers in the cities. This New South context colored the Southern Baptist leaders' interpretations of Cuba, and affected how they wrote about the revival, the congregations, and the lives and disputes of Cuban Baptists. In addition, the reports and correspondence printed in Southern Baptist publications about Cuba, such as those in *Our Home Field* and the *Christian Index*, were often intended to help raise funds for the Cuban project, and they may have inflated the numbers of Cubans who were reported to take part in revival meetings. For all of these reasons, Southern Baptist sources about the revival should be read with a skeptical eye.

The experience of being part of a religious revival is a life-changing one, but it is also one that is hard to measure or document. In assessing the consequences of revivals, A. Leland Jamison has written, "The real impact of revivalism is not to be measured in

[4] Paul Harvey, "'These Untutored Masses': The Campaign for Respectability Among White and Black Evangelicals in the American South, 1870-1930," *Journal of Religious History* 21, no. 3 (1997): 302-317.

membership statistics or the number of new religious groups which it has historically brought into being. Rather, its significance lies in . . . the ideas, attitudes, feelings, dreams and hopes which revivalism helped to disseminate and to be expressed."[5] Not all revivals are the same; indeed, the Cuban revival of the 1880s bears little resemblance in its politics, theology or trajectory of growth to its near contemporary, the Pentecostal revival in the Southern and Western United States. But it is clear that the Cuban revival changed the beliefs and the lives of many Cuban and, later, Southern participants. Its effects could be felt for years afterwards, not only in Havana or even in Cuba at large, but in the United States as well.

* * *

For much of the colonial period, the Roman Catholic Church had been the state church of all Spanish colonies. It was not only the sole religious institution allowed to operate in Spanish lands, but was also an important—perhaps the most important—part of how the Spanish state interacted with local people.[6] In Cuba, Spanish law concerning non-Catholic religions had been liberalized after the 1878 Pact of Zanjón, which ended

[5] A. Leland Jamison, "Religions on the American Perimeter," in *The Shaping of American Religion*, ed. A. Leland Jamison and James Ward Smith, pp. 197-198, quoted in Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 475-76.

[6] Hagiographic accounts of the beginnings of Protestant groups in Cuba usually mention that the first non-Catholics to practice in Cuba were Anglicans, who held services during the British occupation of Havana at the end of the Seven Years' War. Other than that interlude, however, Roman Catholicism was the only legal religious organization in colonial Cuba from the 16th century until 1878. Insightful essays on the Latin American colonial Catholic church are in John Frederick Schwaller, ed., *The Church in Colonial Latin America* (Wilmington, DE: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). See also the references in Juan Bosco Amores Carredano, "La Iglesia en Cuba al final del período colonial," *Anuario de historia de la Iglesia* 7 (1998): 67-83.

the first Cuban war for independence. In return for the insurgents' laying down arms and accepting the rule of Spain, the pact called for Spain to reform some laws and allow greater autonomy for Cuba. In the years after 1878, Cubans held local elections, Spain loosened some mercantilist policies, and enslaved people who had taken up arms gained their freedom.[7]

In addition, Cubans were allowed to practice non-Catholic religions after 1878, as long as they did so inside buildings. This restriction on outdoor worship had two goals. First, it restricted the open practice of African-derived and syncretic religions, whose rites were often held outdoors. Second, it was aimed at preserving the privileged status of the Catholic Church by preventing other groups from engaging in publicly visible practices or open proselytizing. The restriction also had the effect of preventing Cuban Baptists from performing baptism by immersion outdoors, which they believed was the only valid way to practice the sacrament. In addition, revivalists were prevented from holding meetings and services outdoors or in a tent, which was extremely common in the U.S. South, for example, and was sometimes necessary due to the large crowds who came to hear Díaz and other Cubans preach. Tichenor described the law and its effects on Baptist worship in 1889:

> The Spanish law confines the toleration extended to Protestant worship within very narrow limits. The Roman Catholic religion is declared to be the religion of Spain and her colonies, and while the law allows its subjects to worship according to other forms, it requires that such worship shall be held in secret. The theory of the law is, that while Protestants may enjoy the right to worship according to their own consciences, they must not exercise this right under such condition as to attract the attention of others. Nothing must be done to entice others to their assemblages. Hence all "public manifestations" are forbidden. There can be nothing to designate a house as a Protestant place of worship. During services the

[7] Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 4-7.

> doors and windows must be closed, so that passers by cannot see within. No processions are allowed; no religious acts must be performed in public. Baptisms out of doors, even at night, are regarded as violations of the law.[8]

United States Baptist publications from these years frequently told dramatic stories of covert outdoor baptisms performed at night in the waters of the Caribbean, like the attempt described at the beginning of this chapter.[9] Tichenor also wrote that by 1889, the Cuban Baptists had become more comfortable in their semi-legal status. His description of what was possible by 1889 was meant to highlight what had *not* been possible in previous years. "Our people can now do with impunity what they could not have done a year ago," he wrote. "There is not the same careful attention to closing of doors and windows during worship. Means are found of giving the public information as to times and places of holding meetings. The newspapers willingly make announcements for us. I observed that when worship or Sunday-school was held at the tent, that the gate leading into the lot where it was pitched stood open, and persons passing along the sidewalk had a good view of those gathered within."[10] Public non-Catholic religious activities, like other forms of subtle resistance against Spanish control of Cuba, were possible—but still legally suspect—by the late 1880s.

Despite a dearth of scholarship on both the practice and the structure of late colonial Cuban Catholicism, historians have argued that the nineteenth century Catholic Church in Cuba was at best understaffed and at worst hostile to Cuban politics and

[8] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.
[9] See also the story of the first three covert outdoor baptisms in Wood's January 23, 1886 letter to Tichenor, published as "Baptisms in Cuba," *Christian Index,* vol. LXIV (February 4, 1886), p. 4.
[10] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.

spiritual needs.[11] Historian Theo Tschuy, for instance, writes, "The revolt against a Catholic Church committed to sustaining an oppressive regime and the revulsion against a poorly motivated priesthood was general.... Despair over the irrelevance of the Catholic Church was profound."[12] Catholic priests in Cuba were overwhelmingly Spanish, and tended to be attuned to the politics and needs of Madrid or Rome rather than those of the people who lived on the plantations and in the towns and cities of Cuba. The Catholic hierarchy in Cuba was politically conservative during a time when Cuban sentiment leaned overwhelmingly toward independence or at least autonomy.[13] The Church hierarchy supported the Spanish colonial state in Cuba during the long periods of popular insurrection and war against Spanish rule, from 1868-78, in 1879, and from 1895-1898.

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[11] The work of Manuel Maza Miquel, a Jesuit priest and an historian, has done much to remedy this lacuna, but more remains to be done. See Maza Miquel's dissertation, "Between ideology and compassion. The Cuban insurrection of 1895-98, through the private correspondence of Cuba's two prelates with the Holy See. (Volumes I and II)" (Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1987); *: Guerra y Paz en Cuba, 1895-1903: Testimonios de los Archivos Vaticanos* , 1997). Scholars have been arguing for years about whether Cubans were and are "less religious" than other Latin Americans, and the alleged inattention or hostility of the colonial Catholic Church to Cubans is seen as both a cause and an effect of Cubans' alleged irreligiosity. Needless to say, there are several problems with these arguments, the most obvious of which is that a failure to have one's name written in membership rolls does not necessarily indicate "irreligion." At the very least, the recent wealth of scholarship on the many thriving African-derived religions in Cuba—including Santería, Abakuá societies, and others—should give us pause when arguing that Cubans were and are irreligious. For example, see Reinaldo L. , *Governing Spirits: Religion, Miracles, and Spectacles in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898-1956* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). Certainly, the socialist state's official atheism had a profound effect on this question, and on scholarship about the history of religion in Cuba, for most of the latter half of the twentieth century. At least two historians of Cuba have lamented the lack of scholarship on the late colonial Cuban Catholic church. John M. Kirk, "Review of Maza Miquel, Manuel, El Alma del Negocio y el Negocio del Alma: Testimonios Sobre la Iglesia y la Sociedad en Cuba, 1874-1894," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24, no. 3 (October 1992): 693-694. John-Marshall Klein conversation with author, January 9, 2009.

[12] Theo Tschuy, "Protestantism in Cuba, 1868-1968," in *Christianity in the Caribbean: Essays on Church History*, ed. Armando Lampe (Bridgetown, Barbados: University of the West Indies Press, 2001), 230.

[13] Maza Miquel writes, "Given the fact that the weight of the institutional church would be on the side of the Spaniards [in the wars of both 1868-1878 and 1895-1898], it would not be difficult for the majority of Cubans to consider the church as one of the forces safeguarding the whiteness and Spanishness of Cuban society." Maza Miquel, "Between Ideology and Compassion," 57.

Critics of the Cuban Catholic Church had much ammunition when they accused the Church of being impersonal, irrelevant, un-Cuban, and theologically backwards.

Díaz and other Cuban Protestants were quick to exploit these problems. In 1891, for instance, Díaz traveled around Cuba to find towns outside Havana where Baptist mission congregations might thrive. On July 15, he wrote a letter reporting on the trip, noting that he met people all over Cuba who seemed interested in religion but uninterested in Catholicism. "In Bermeja, Union de Reyes, Colon, Jovellanos, Cardenas, and Macagua, they all say the same thing with different words; they are glad to throw up the religion of the Pope and come to our church," he wrote. "They all make a question in what we believed and how we baptize. They all hear the explanations with reverence and say 'that is what I believed. I don't care for all the saints and virgins. I believe in God,' etc." This instinctual anti-Catholicism, however, also indicated to Díaz a need for basic theological education among ordinary Cubans. "The people have but very little idea of what is the religion of Christ," he wrote.[14]

In late colonial Cuba, Protestantism occupied a strange social place. Newly legal, Protestant meetings and services often attracted Cubans who were prone to criticize the colonial rule of Spain, particularly those who had taken up arms in the last rebellion and would again take up arms in 1895. It also tended to attract those who might be called upwardly mobile; the liberal reforms after 1878 had allowed limited commercial trade with nations other than Spain, and the class of people who took advantage of this opening often sympathized, for personal, philosophical, or financial reasons, with Protestants perceived to be allied with U.S. institutions. But most of all, new converts to Protestantism seem to have been attracted to the Baptists' rhetoric of individual religious

[14] "Letter from Diaz," *Our Home Field* (August 1891), p. 7.

freedom, which hewed closely to the desire for political freedom that drove so many Cubans to seek alternatives to Spanish rule.

* * *

In January 1886, Cuban and Southern Baptists officially established a Baptist church in Havana. The relationship began because Cuban emigrants living in Key West, Florida, had asked Rev. William Wood to raise money for and advise them in establishing a Baptist church in Cuba. The emigrants wanted to preach to and encourage Cubans who were already rebelling against the Catholic Church in Havana. In November 1885, the Florida Baptist Convention collected $165.45 "for the purpose of inaugurating a mission in the island of Cuba," and its members reported "that our hearts were made to burn within us while he [Wood] talked to us of the way—the door that God has opened to *us* to come over and possess at once the Queen of the Antilles for Christ."[15] In December 1885, Díaz was ordained at the Baptist Church in Key West. The next January, Díaz and Wood jointly established the Baptist Church in Havana, after they baptized "some half dozen of those who had professed faith in Jesus Christ."[16]

Because the Havana congregation had been founded and led entirely by Cubans, it was an anomaly among mission congregations associated with North Americans during the nineteenth century. Although a Baptist church was jointly "established" by Cubans and U.S. Southerners in January 1886, this "official" congregation was simply an

[15] Florida Baptist Convention, *Minutes of the Florida Baptist Convention [1885]* (Palatka, Florida: The Southern Sun Publishing Company, 1886), 10-12.
[16] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "A Brief History of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention" (circa 1900), p. 14, typewritten manuscript in SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 30.

acknowledgement of a core Cuban community that already existed, which had been gathered around Díaz and probably other Cuban preachers as well. Before becoming affiliated with the Southern Baptists, this community met in the Hotel Pasaje in Havana, and later rented rooms in a building on the Prado. They had been registered with the colonial government as a "Society for Religious Worship" and then as "The Reform Church" of Cuba. Tichenor later explained that "Under this reform church they could secure some recognition of their rights of worship from the Spanish authority, and this was the form of organizations at the time of Brother Wood's visit. As Brother Diaz did not regard himself as aithorized [sic] to administer the ordinances [of baptism and the Eucharist], this reform church consisted of members who had never been baptized, and to whom the Lord's supper had never been administered."[17] They had probably been meeting in Havana, led either by Díaz or by other non-Catholic men, since shortly after 1878.

Cuban Protestants in the early 1880s were not overly concerned with adhering rigidly to the denominational fault lines as they existed in the late nineteenth century United States. Although a very few North American Protestant denominations sponsored brief visits of U.S. missionaries to Cuba in the 1870s and 1880s, Cuban Protestantism in this period was born of the experiences of Cuban émigrés in Florida or New York, who converted to Protestantism and then moved back to the island. The history of the Baptist revivalist congregation under consideration here, and possibly other Protestant congregations in post-1878 Cuba, has been obscured by two trends. First, scholars have insisted on labeling Cuban non-Catholics as belonging to one U.S.-based denomination or another. Second, Cuban Protestants themselves later obscured their loose and

[17] Ibid.

unaffiliated status before 1895 for their own denominational or political reasons. Both of these obscuring factors were operative in the case of Díaz (as will be explored in chapter two) and other Cubans such as Manuel Delofeu and H. B. Someillan, whose congregation later became affiliated with the U.S. Methodist Episcopal Church, South.[18]

These congregations should not be understood based on their affiliation with a U.S. organization. Rather, it is clear that a number of Cubans became non-Catholics for their own political, spiritual, or other personal reasons, not because they were strongly convinced that a particular U.S. denomination should have a monopoly on non-Catholic worship in Cuba (although a few, with the zeal of converts, were likely convinced of this). After they had organized small congregations, their organizational and denominational status probably varied depending on the political climate, enforcement of colonial regulations in their particular town, their own initiative and beliefs, which denomination they managed to contact in the United States, the church(es) they had attended and the friends they had made in the United States, and any number of other

[18] On Delofeu and Someillan, see Manuel Delofeu, *Historical and Biographical Notes of the Cuban Mission* (Tampa, FL: Tampa Morning Tribune Electric Print, 1899). Louis A. Pérez gives examples of a number of Protestant churches in Cuba in the 1880s in *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 56-57. His sources, however, are mostly secondary sources of the hagiographic type, written much later. Tschuy, "Christianity in the Caribbean," discusses Díaz, Delofeu, Someillan, and other early Cuban Protestant ministers, but lacks detailed citations for this information. Instead of insisting that each Cuban Protestant community must have had a denominational sign out front, and organizing them by that sign, scholars would do better to investigate the goals, lives and beliefs of the Cubans, as difficult as that is. Tschuy and Ramos, for instance, write that a number of early Cuban Protestant leaders, including Díaz, worshiped together in a congregation in Matanzas that called itself *Fieles de Jesús* (Faithful to Jesus). Tschuy, "Christianity in the Caribbean," 232; Marcos Antonio Ramos, *Panorama del Protestantis*

, Costa Rica: Editorial Caribe, 1986). Although many of these early Cuban Protestants later affiliated with different U.S. denominations, the idea of a loosely organized, unaffiliated group in the 1870s or 1880s makes logical sense considering the difficulties of non-Catholic worship in Cuba. Other bits of evidence, such as Díaz's Episcopalian marriage ceremony, corroborate this theory.

things. Díaz and his wife, for instance, were apparently married in Cuba by an Episcopal minister—a fact that the Southern Baptists grilled him about years later, suspicious of his motives, doctrinal beliefs, and faithfulness to their denomination.[19] In this way, the Cuban revivalists in Havana during the 1880s navigated the different requirements of the Cuban colonial state, their own religious consciences, and U.S. Protestant denominational leaders to be recognized as legitimate non-Catholic religious congregations. The colonial state required them to register as a "society" to have their right to worship recognized. They wanted an ordained minister to baptize them and administer the Eucharist. In the case of Gethsemane church, Baptists in the United States wanted an "official" congregation established in order to legitimate the Havana community's relationship with the Southern Baptist mission boards. Other Cuban congregations may have experienced much the same thing in other towns and with other U.S. denominations.

Cubans had already organized a core group of congregants and even some church institutions by the time they were "discovered" by Southern Baptists. This is why the congregation in Havana seemed to the Southern Baptists to have spontaneously sprung, fully formed and zealous, from the fertile religious soil of Cuba. In addition to his enthusiastic assessment of the Cubans' religious and philanthropic maturity, the Cuban

[19] "Minutes of Conference Between Dr. Landrum, George Hillyer and Dr. A.J. Diaz at Jane Church, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1902," SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. In 1889 Tichenor argued that Southern Baptist doctrines had proven themselves superior to those of other denominations, because Díaz "became a Baptist after a long and patient investigation of many of the creeds and practices of other denominations. First, those of the Presbyterians, then of the Episcopalians, then of the Methodists were carefully examined and compared with the Word of God. In his judgment none of them were conformed to Scriptural teachings, and he could not enter either of these communions." This type of spiritual or doctrinal exploration could be another reason why denominational ties were so fluid among Cuban Protestants in the 1870s and early 1880s. Of course, this particular way of explaining Díaz's conversion also benefited Tichenor's larger narrative about the superiority of the Southern Baptist Convention. Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 5.

Protestant schools also impressed Wood in 1886. The congregations already had "two very promising Sunday-schools, one in Havana proper of over one hundred scholars, and one in Jesus del Monte of over thirty scholars well officered and under admirable management, the only Sunday-schools in Cuba." It seemed to Wood, and to other Southern Baptists, as if God had raised up a mature congregation from nothing, and had planted a faithful Baptist community in Cuba without the intervention, knowledge or assistance of any of the U.S. Protestants' many mission organizations.

Opposition to the Catholic Church cannot by itself explain why so many residents of Havana flocked to the revival services organized by the proto-Baptist church in particular in the 1880s. Many other Cubans certainly avoided religion altogether, practiced at home, or became involved in other religious communities. For those Cubans who did visit revival services or join the Baptist church at this time, however, a powerful mix of religious, political, and personal factors came into play. Rev. José V. Cova, reporting to *Our Home Field* on August 15th, 1889, explained why he thought the Baptist services were so popular in Havana. "In spite of the extreme hot temperature we have this summer, the services are crowded as usual," he wrote, "and they have always the attraction of the novelty, so anxious is the people of hearing the true gospel doctrines explained."[20] Protestant worship was certainly novel in Cuba, and for some it must have been a welcome change merely to participate in services in Spanish. As Cova pointed out, others may have found the Baptist interpretation of the Bible intriguing, and the Baptist emphasis on each individual's freedom—indeed obligation—to experience the divine certainly resonated for many Cubans at this time. Some may have found the democratic style of preaching uniquely empowering. Some Cubans had probably heard that this new

[20] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 2 (October 1889), p. 1-2.

church was allied with North Americans and were interested in developing whatever ties they could to the United States, a natural ally against Spain. Some may have attended Protestant churches themselves during time spent in the United States. Still others were probably moved by the emotionalism of the hymns and prayers. The educational and medical programs run by the church certainly attracted some; they may have wanted their children to attend the schools run by the Baptists, or they may have been grateful for medical attention the congregation offered.

A smallpox epidemic in Havana that began in late 1887 seems to have provided the Baptist congregation with its first opportunity to turn public opinion in its favor.[21] Díaz wrote to Tichenor in October of 1887 that he had "about 48 cases of smallpox in the congregation and expect for moment they all die. I have buried in our cemetery 32 members in two month.... Here is a terrible panic with this epidemic disease; we have 120 or 200 cases daily, and 80 or 90 die. The doctors are afraid of it, and good many of them has leave the city." Díaz and his congregation remained in Havana, working among the sick and their families. Díaz himself tried to attend to the ill as both a medical doctor and as an evangelist, writing that "they all call for me, and I assist them as doctor (M.D.) and as doctor (D.D.)," referring to both his medical and his theological callings. His congregation, too, labored among the ill. "My congregation are all beside me; learned where is a new case of small-pox, and as soon as they know it, some of them go and pray with the sick person, and if have not family, two brethren or sister remaining there all night, and assist him or her until is well. Here is a Lady Association, conducted by my mother, and have about 125 ladys going house by house, carrying medicines, clothes, or foods; they are doing a noble work in the name of our Saviour." Díaz was likely one of

[21] For the theology that underpinned the Cuban Baptists' attention to illness, see chapter two.

the medical doctors in the city who was tasked to vaccinate the public, and he may have employed or used volunteers from his congregation as assistants.[22]

A writer in *Our Home Field*, probably Tichenor, thought that the congregation's service during a time of crisis had helped to turn the tide of opinion in Havana to explicitly favor the little congregation. "The heroic fortitude with which our Baptist people ministered to the sick and the dying during the great plague of small-pox last summer not only showed that they had imbibed the spirit of the Master, but gave them a wide influence among the people."[23] A few months earlier, Tichenor had written that during the epidemic, "our Baptist people went everywhere when the disease was raging, visiting the sick, caring for the dying, burying the dead. The martyr-spirit animated them... they became ministering angels to the poor and the needy." Díaz reported both the grave losses and the spiritual gains that resulted from the epidemic. "We have lost over 150 members of our congregation; they are all in our Baptist cemetery," he wrote. "Last month I baptized on Sunday evening, (the 13th) 105 that were converted during the epidemic disease.... The membership in Havana is 700." Before the epidemic, the congregation had numbered only 350.[24]

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[22] Díaz to Tichenor, October 10, 1887, published as "Tidings from Cuba," *Christian Index*, October 27, 1887, p. 5. "D.D." stands for "doctor of divinity." There is no evidence that Díaz had a formal theological education or degree, but the shorthand neatly expresses the linkage he saw between medicine and theology; see chapter two. In contrast to Díaz's poor assessment of Havana's physicians, Villoldo believed that many medical doctors had remained in Havana and that the 1887-88 smallpox epidemic "was extinguished by the efforts of the mayor of the city and the medical profession. The physicians of the town undertook to vaccinate gratuitously the whole population of the city, for which purpose they divided themselves into small groups and went from house to house." Victor George Heiser and Pedro Villoldo, *A Note on Smallpox in the Philippine Islands; Smallpox and Vaccination in Cuba*, Public Health Reports (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 4.

[23] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 3.

[24] Both the Díaz letter and Tichenor's commentary on it are in "Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 65, no. 3 (January 19, 1888), p. 2.

The spring after the smallpox epidemic, the congregation became embroiled in a very public dispute with the Catholic bishop of Havana. The controversy revolved around the Baptists' cemetery, which abutted the famous Colón Cemetery, a Catholic cemetery operating under a royal decree and the direct regulation of Spain, in Vedado, a western district of Havana. The dispute's broader subject, however, was the place of religion—especially non-Catholic religion—in Cuban public life, a contentious subject during the late colonial years. In addition, Díaz and Gethsemane were testing the legitimacy of cultural protest against the Catholic church and, therefore, against Spain: was there cultural space for anti-Spanish organizing in Cuba?

When the little revivalist community bought land next to Colón Cemetery and used it as a burial space for non-Catholics, they took steps not only toward a possible violation of the law (if they were to have a graveside service, for instance, they would be in violation of the law against non-Catholic outdoor worship), but also clearly undermined the Catholic hierarchy's goal of continued Catholic supremacy in Cuba. A non-Catholic religious community in Cuba owned and operated a cemetery, which meant that the state had allowed them to organize themselves, purchase land, and conduct religious rituals. In effect, they were functioning as a religious body that was legally equal to the Catholic Church. To protest this encroachment, the Catholic hierarchy conducted a campaign in the press and in the streets against Díaz and the Baptists. The Baptists responded by assiduously deploying strategies of engagement with the state even as they protested against the Catholic Church, attempting to drive a wedge between these two great colonial institutions and implicitly questioning the legitimacy of each. At the same time, many Baptists nurtured their alliance with North Americans, likely also in the

hope that their protest against the Catholic Church could eventually develop into a direct protest against the colonial state itself. This was not a strategy that was first "religious" and at some point became "political," or vice versa; indeed, the close linkage of the colonial state with the Catholic Church meant that their protest was both political and religious from its first inception.

Díaz and his small community of Cuban Protestants received legal authorization for their cemetery in late 1884 and purchased the land in early 1885, one year before they "officially" became a Baptist congregation. Using contributions from the Alabama Baptist Convention and from J. S. Paine, a Boston businessman who spent winters in Havana, the Cuban Baptists, led by Díaz, bought five acres of land next to the Colón Cemetery.[25] The royal authorization and purchase of land were met with resistance from the Catholic authorities of Havana. The Southern Baptist publication *Our Home Field* reported, "The bishop of Havana tried very hard to prevent the procuring of a license for this cemetery on the ground that by the law only a church could own a cemetery, but the Captain-General decided that in the eyes of the law 'the Baptist church of Havana was as much a church as the Catholic church.'"[26] This was a great victory in the eyes of the Baptists—their church was recognized on an equal legal footing with the Catholic Church, despite the entrenched influence of the Catholics. They reported that the Catholic bishop had tried to bribe Díaz to close the cemetery and leave Havana; when Díaz

[25] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 3; Díaz to Home Mission Board, published in *Christian Index* (February 17, 1887), 3. The Baptist cemetery can still be found near Colón Cemetery in Vedado. See also Angela Oramas Camero, *Cementerios De La Habana* , 1998), 30-31. Oramas Camero writes that a royal order, dated October 6, 1884, authorized the cemetery, although the first burial did not occur until May 1887. Southern Baptist sources indicate that the Cuban Baptists bought the first property in January 1885.

[26] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 5-6.

refused to be bought, the bishop retaliated by "burning...Diaz's photograph in the cathedral" and publishing a letter in the Havana newspapers that denounced "the Baptist heretic." Soon after, the bishop "sent one hundred men at night who tore up the road leading to the Baptist cemetery so that it could not be used."[27]

The Baptists took great delight in all the efforts of the Catholic hierarchy to persecute their congregation and its cemetery, since every move simply called more attention to the fledging congregation and its charismatic preacher. In June 1888, Díaz wrote, "Our work is in better condition than ever. The papers send reporters to our church, and publish all my sermons." He reported record attendance at his church services, noting that the crowds responded enthusiastically to his denunciations of Catholicism. On Sunday, May 27, he reported,

> the newspapers announced my subject and at 6:30 we had not where [sic] to put the people. We got that theater near by the church and had the meeting there. Four thousand people were present, and the collection was $125. The service lasted three hours. I preached two hours and a quarter. For three times the people can't contain themselves and get up and say, "You are right." I did not speak against the Catholic church, but the people did. I explained to them what "heretic" means—a church that puts *men's* doctrines in it. Then I presented the pure church of Christ, compared it with the Baptist church and with the Roman Catholic, and asked the people, "Who are the heretics? The Catholics or the Baptists?" Ten times I presented this question to them, and they all at once, in a loud voice, say, "*The Catholic Church*!"

The following week, Díaz wrote,

[27] Ibid. *Our Home Field* reported that the bishop's letter was published on April 30, 1888, and that the road was vandalized on May 24. The Southern Baptist press also reported the bizarre story that Rev. V. R. Molino, "one of the most eminent of the [Catholic] priests on the island," had joined the Cuban Baptist congregation. Almost a year later, the Cuban Baptists denounced Molino as a spy for the bishop of Havana. Quote from "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 1ff. His last name may have been Molina. For Molino as a spy and "partially deranged," see Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 5.

> I went last night (Sunday) to hold the meeting in the theater again, and every space was occupied by over four thousand people. I counted one hundred and ninety lawyers and doctors present. The subject was, "Which cemetery has been blessed of God?" The people can't contain themselves. They applaud and interrupt me for more than five times. I called them to order, but they did the same; they could not help it. When I got through they all come around me and embrace me. I had been preaching for two hours and was tired, and the people who were around me suffocate me. I took seat in one of the desk chairs, and as soon as I sit one of the doctors say: "He needs air! Please make room." Then the people took me in that chair, and bring me home on their shoulders. I live almost a mile from the theater. You may suppose how that act drew the attention of the people on the street, and all the people who were at the service they all come; so over seven thousand people bring home the poor Baptist preacher. This morning I was all right, and ready to preach another sermon in answer to the Bishop. The Bishop did not want discussion now, but I do not mind. I answer him just the same as if he accept it. Cuba is coming to Christ.[28]

Díaz and the Baptists had tapped into an anti-Catholic sentiment that ran deep among the people of Havana, or at least among the "lawyers and doctors" who were among the notable people in attendance at Díaz's revival meetings. That the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board used these letters from Díaz in their fundraising appeals to support the Havana congregation should not diminish that fact.

The popular response to the cemetery dispute indicates that the growth of the Cuban Baptist revival was closely linked to popular disillusionment with both Spain and the Catholic Church. The Cuban Baptists understood that their growth and their church's prominence had been catalyzed by this connection to widespread anger at the power and rigidity of the Catholic hierarchy. Díaz clearly believed that he was leading a great revival in Havana, and that waves of conversions would soon follow—in his letters, he repeated over and over again the refrain, "Cuba is coming to Christ." We cannot know, of course, what drew those four thousand observers to the Baptist services in the spring of 1888. Some may have been simply curious, some may have been outraged at the Catholic

[28] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 5-6.

church for doctrinal or personal reasons, some may have enjoyed the spectacle of a fiery preacher railing against the powers-that-be, some may have been fervent anarchists or separatists who saw an opportunity to chip away at the cultural power of Spain in Cuba's daily life. For all these reasons, the prominence of the Baptist revival in the late 1880s was both a religious and a political phenomenon.

The core early community of Protestants had grown, by the late 1880s, into a large congregation that spanned the city of Havana and counted astonishing attendance numbers every week. Both Cuban and Southern Baptist accounts of the Baptist revival services and prayer meetings in Cuba emphasized the incredible numbers of people who attended despite poor weather, intimidation by Catholics or the Spanish authorities, or the short notice given of the time and location of the service. Although their attendance estimates cannot be verified and were probably not exact, it is clear that by the late 1880s hundreds if not thousands of people were attending Baptist services and schools weekly in Havana and nearby towns. These numbers are impressive given that the population of Havana in these years probably hovered just above 200,000.[29]

The community started out small, and was in the hundreds when Wood visited in January 1886. Now on his second visit to Cuba, Wood was impressed because at the Sunday service "at night (though it had been raining,) two hundred and seventy-five [were] present at service." Meetings and services during the week were also "well attended," Wood wrote. "At the prayer meeting in Jesus Del Monte Tuesday night over

[29] The 1887 census counted 200,448 people in what would become the municipal district of Havana (as it existed in 1899). In 1899, the census taken during the U.S. occupation counted 242,055 people in the municipal district of Havana. United States War Department, *Report on the Census of Cuba, 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 179. For a discussion of changes in the constitution of municipal districts in Cuba, see Appendix XVI, p. 698-702. For a discussion of censuses in Cuba prior to 1899, see Appendix XVII, p. 702-713.

sixty were present, the entire membership, on Thursday night in Havana over one hundred and fifty; on Friday night at an out mission the house full." The congregation's Sunday schools for children were also overflowing. "On Sunday, though the weather was bad, sixty scholars present with every teacher, pastor and superintendent, every scholar in the class at the appointed time and every teacher at the head."[30] At the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1886, the Home Mission Board reported that during his trips to Cuba, Wood had found "several hundred as being among those who composed unbaptized organizations banded together for the worship of God."[31]

These reports—hundreds of people at revival services that were only barely legal—were so impressive to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board that they immediately asked Díaz to come to Atlanta and report to them in person, so that they could fully discuss the Cuban congregation's needs and prospects. He traveled to Georgia in July 1886, and it was there that he first met Rev. Isaac T. Tichenor and other Southerners who would be so important to Cuba's Baptists in the coming decades. At the meeting, Díaz's report was received excitedly, and the Southern Baptist minutes noted that in Cuba "there is a large and growing dissatisfaction with Catholicism. The distribution of Bibles, &c. has started a spirit of enquiry." Probably using Díaz's own characterizations of "the mission field" on the island, the minutes noted, "There is an unusual degree of intelligence and education among Cuban Baptists. The field is inviting and will repay for any labor expended there. Bro. Diaz' work commands general respect and confidence of English speaking residents of Cuba." The Southerners were excited to learn that there was "No other evangelical mission but ours in Cuba." The Baptist

[30] William F. Wood letter, dated January 26, 1886, printed as "Correspondence: The Baptist Cause in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 64, no. 8 (February 25, 1886), p. 4.
[31] Report of the Home Mission Board, *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1886, p. 9-10.

presence in Havana was strong, they learned. "Bro. Diaz stated that there are five preaching stations in Havana besides the principal one. About 100 persons attend each station. They meet at private residences &c. About 400 comprise all his attendants."[32] This core group of evangelicals, who had been attracted by the message Díaz preached in rented rooms and private homes, would only grow over the coming years. By 1887, the Southern Baptist *Annual* reported, "There are six men preparing themselves to preach the gospel. The whole island is open to us, and thousands are ready to abandon the system of superstition in which they have been reared and embrace the truth as it is in Jesus."[33] The Southerners had rarely encountered a field that seemed so promising, and that responded to their efforts so quickly.

The attendance figures at all of the Baptist locations grew steadily in the five years after the congregation was officially established. By 1889, Rev. Isaac T. Tichenor reported that "the six preachers in Havana" were holding "twenty-five services a week" at the various locations. Tichenor wrote,

> These services are attended by from one hundred to seven hundred people, depending upon the location and capacity of the place of worship. At the first weekly prayer-meeting held in the theatre there were no less than five hundred persons present. A Wednesday night service held in the tent at a point about two miles from the theatre, there were by actual count found to be seven hundred and twenty-seven in the congregation. The next meeting, when the weather was very unfavorable, there was what Bro. Porta called "a small congregation, only two hundred and ninety." Think of two hundred and ninety at a Wednesday evening service in inclement weather in one of our city churches.[34]

[32] Minutes of the Home Mission Board, July 12, 1886, in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898.
[33] *Annual* of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1887 [n.p.]. This report also says that the congregation that had been officially "constituted" in 1886 had 301 members and that two additional churches had since been organized, although it does not give attendance or membership numbers for the new congregations.
[34] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.

During the periods when Southern Baptist leaders were not in Cuba, Díaz regularly reported on the attendance at various preaching tents and rented halls all over the city, in which the congregations met for worship and prayer. "In Neptuno St., corner Soledad we located the tent presented us by the Board; but the rains and heavy winds have worn it out completely. Our daily school there consists of 200 scholars, and the congregation during the meetings I hold there reaches 700 as witnessed by Dr. Tichenor, consequently I do not wish to abandon that locality."[35] In January 1890, Rev. José V. Cova reported, "The whole state of the mission in Havana is more promising than ever. These Sunday-school feasts have been a true revival and people of all classes are flowing to our missions. Many children have been added during this last week to our schools. The blessings of the Lord are continually upon our work, thanked by his holy name."[36] These consistently large crowds were a main reason why the Baptists decided to try to buy or build a large, central building in downtown Havana that could seat at least 1,000 people. Soon after the congregation moved into their new building in 1889, Díaz reported on a large children's service held there. "Last Sabbath a special meeting was held for the children, they all meet in Jane', (our new house), all the Sunday-schools of Havana; a special sermon was preached to them; a large crowd attended, over 3000 people were present; the children were all happy and the entire aspect was very cheering, also ten were received for baptism this week."[37] Such a large building was necessary to hold the crowds who had been coming to tents and rented halls to hear Baptist preaching—by that time, Díaz had

[35] "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* (October 1889), p. 1.
[36] January 6, 1890 letter from Cova, published in "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 6 (February 1891), p. 3; typed transcription in SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 22.
[37] "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* (October 1889), p. 1. For the purchase of this building, see chapter three.

been preaching in Havana for at least six years, and the crowds showed no sign of abating.

* * *

Who were all these Cubans who came to revival services and prayer meetings, and sent their children to Baptist schools? What did they believe? What did they do when they attended a Baptist service? Making a solid assessment of the racial, class, theological, organizational, political and social character of the Cuban Baptist congregations in these years is a difficult endeavor given the extant sources, but we can sketch the outlines of the community.[38] In general, Cubans who joined the Baptist congregations lived in urban Havana or the surrounding towns, and were probably a racially diverse and, economically, an upwardly mobile group of people. Many had probably spent some time in the United States and were comfortable with certain aspects of the Baptist congregations that can be seen as appropriations of North American Protestant cultural forms. These practices include the less ritualistic, vernacular, open-to-

[38] Although there do not appear to be any extant congregational membership records from these years, my assessment of the nature and character of these congregations is taken from a close reading of the available sources, including the Southern Baptist letters and reports published in *Our Home Field* and the *Christian Index*, and the correspondence and meeting minutes of the Home Mission Board preserved at the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive in Nashville. I have sought to supplement these through research on the biographies of the Cuban Baptist leadership. These sources give a good picture of what the Cuban Baptist leadership believed (both theologically and organizationally), provide Southern Baptists' observations about the Cuban congregations, and occasionally reprint the text of or provide summaries of sermons and addresses given in the Cuban churches. Sources by and specifically about the identities, status, experiences and beliefs of the largely unnamed Cuban congregants have been much more difficult to locate.

all form of their prayer meetings and services, as well as a particular type of celebration of Christmas.

These practices grew out of their beliefs. In particular, many Cubans seem to have found meaning in the deep Baptist emphasis on freedom. Both the theology of human spiritual freedom and the correlating congregational independence, which were core Baptist beliefs in the late nineteenth century, may have felt to some Cubans like a liberation from the strictures of late colonial Roman Catholicism. In addition, these beliefs carried the implication that Baptists were supporters of wholesale Cuban independence from Spain. Most of the congregants probably had separatist political views of one stripe or another: a few may have desired Cuba's annexation to the United States, while many others probably wanted greater Cuban autonomy within the Spanish empire or Cuba's total political independence.[39] All of these people probably saw their membership in a non-Catholic religious organization that was allied with North Americans as consistent with their political views; indeed, it seems doubtful that anyone who was very loyal to Spain would have been interested in a Protestant church. Many congregants probably valued the programs offered by the Baptist churches, especially their schools and the congregation's emphasis on medical care.

[39] The historiography of Cuban separatist and nationalist thought during the nineteenth century is large and sophisticated. By the 1880s, annexationist sentiment had been largely marginalized, and support for total independence from Spain was growing. See Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Lillian Guerra, *The Myth of José Martí: Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Louis A. Pérez, "Between Baseball and Bullfighting: The Quest for Nationality in Cuba, 1868-1898," *The Journal of American History* 81, no. 2 (1994): 493-517; Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires* rez, *On Becoming Cuban*; Gerald Eugene Poyo, *With All, and for the Good of All: The Emergence of Popular Nationalism in the Cuban Communities of the United States, 1848-1898* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989); Rebecca J. Scott, *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba After Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Oscar Zanetti and Alejandro García, *Sugar and Railroads: A Cuban History, 1837-1959*, trans. Franklin W. Knight and Mary Todd (The University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

The institutional structure of the Cuban Baptist revival allowed Díaz to have a great deal of control over churches in many different neighborhoods, and may have facilitated the growth of the revival by fostering a broader sense of community among people who lived on opposite sides of Havana. The different Cuban Baptist "preaching stations" and "missions" that were scattered across the neighborhoods and suburbs of Havana were all part of one umbrella congregation that covered the entire city of Havana, not individual congregations in their own right. The Cuban leadership believed that each Cuban city or town should have only one Baptist church. This was a Protestant organizational structure that the Cubans had borrowed, they would claim, directly from the New Testament. Still, this unique structure would not survive the experiences of war and U.S. military occupation.

The theology of the revival was a particularly Cuban variant of nineteenth century Baptist doctrine. It was not a holiness revival, such as that which was happening contemporaneously in some parts of the U.S. South and West, nor was it a Pentecostal movement such as that which would happen twenty years later in Los Angeles.[40] There is no record of converts speaking in tongues, few indications that congregants experienced "signs and wonders" such as miraculous healing or fainting, and no suggestion that the Cubans preached a theology of holiness. Southern Baptist leaders, such as the men who were members of the Home Mission Board, would not have approved of that type of

[40] On the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, holiness and Pentecostalism, see Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South* (Harvard University Press, 2008); Estrelda Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2005); Charles H. Barfoot, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Making of Modern Pentecostalism, 1890-1926* (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd., 2009); Edith Waldvogel Blumhofer, Russell P. Spittler, and Grant Wacker, eds., *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999); *Fire on the Earth: Eyewitness Reports from the Azusa Street Revival* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2006). For citations on the historiography of earlier revivals in the United States, see note 3.

movement, nor would they have reported on it with the wonderment and admiration that was a constant feature of their writings about the Cuban revival. Furthermore, there is little indication that such an intense conversion experience was considered to be a prerequisite for membership in the Havana Baptist congregation, although new members were required to give a profession of faith, and to submit thereafter to the community's close supervision and discipline.

During the revival, Cuban Baptists believed and taught a theology that Southern Baptist observers saw as "orthodox" Baptist.[41] In an article on the beginnings of the Cuban congregation, for instance, Southern Baptist Rev. H. M. King wrote that a Cuban Baptist who visited Díaz's church in Havana reported back to Baptists in Key West "that he had found the man Diaz on Sunday morning preaching to a large congregation, and that he certainly preached Baptist doctrines."[42] In the same vein, a writer in *Our Home Field* wrote in 1888, "Indeed, we know of no church *anywhere* which has given more indubitable proofs that they are formed on the fundamental principles of the Gospel and are carrying into practice the teachings of the Divine Word."[43] Díaz's adherence to Baptist doctrine was one reason why Southern Baptist leaders were so willing to support the congregations he led in Havana—if they had believed that his teachings were suspect, they would not have embraced the Cuban revival with such enthusiasm.

One theological point—Baptists' emphasis on religious freedom—was probably among the most important reasons why the Havana congregation attracted so many Cubans in the 1880s. The rhetoric of this theology, which was deeply ingrained in U.S.

[41] For Southern Baptist theology and doctrine, see the introduction and chapter three. For the beliefs, theology and education of Díaz, see chapter two.
[42] Rev. H. M King, "Origin of the Cuban Work," *Our Home Field*, March 1889, p. 6.
[43] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 3.

Baptists' historical memories of dissent in England, also spoke to many Cubans' anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish proclivities. Tichenor, for instance, believed that Cubans who attended Baptist services led the effort to broaden religious freedom even when Spanish authorities had limited it. In 1889, he wrote, "These narrow limits [on religious freedom and non-Catholic worship] are being broadened by the force of a public opinion, which is stronger than law. Our people can now do with impunity what they could not have done a year ago." Slowly, the limited freedoms that had been granted after Zanjón were being broadened. The Baptist congregations were now leaving doors and windows open during worship, and were able to publish announcements about their service times in the Havana newspapers. "Such things give one an idea of the extent to which our work has found sympathy," Tichenor wrote, "and the force it has exerted in moulding public opinion in Havana. Anything which broadens the liberties of the people, and relaxes the grasp of Spanish power, is always welcomed by the people of Cuba."[44] Tichenor may have overstated the extent to which the Baptist congregations had "moulded public opinion" in Havana, but it is clear that there was more freedom to worship in Cuba in the late 1880s than there had been only a few years previously. Certainly at least some Cubans who came to Baptist services saw this activity as another way to weaken Spain's hold on Cuba.

Although Southern Baptists did not always know how to react to the inclusive nature of the Cuban congregation, Cuban Baptists sought to minister to all the economic, social and racial classes of Havana during this period. Without membership lists, it is impossible to recreate the actual or perceived racial and class makeup of the Cuban congregations; certain observations made by Southern Baptist visitors, however, hint at

[44] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.

how the congregants fit into the Cuban spectrum of race and class.[45] Visitors from the U.S. South often remarked on the appearance of "intelligence" of the membership, and in the years before 1895 they also occasionally commented on the cross-class and cross-racial nature of the congregation. Southern Baptists, especially the leadership, often held reactionary views of race and class in these years—the denomination was entirely white, engaged in paternalist modes of racism, and leaders encouraged country churches in the U.S. South to be more "respectable," a code word for urban bourgeois norms of behavior.[46] It seems logical that Southern Baptist publications would, if anything, aim to convince their readership that the Cuban Baptists were *more* like the leadership's idea of the ideal Southern Baptist—white, faithful, urbane, and good stewards of the wealth that God had given them. The Cuban Baptists were always described as social and economic leaders: to Southern Baptist eyes, they were people working to reach the middle class if they were not already there, and to push Cuba into the modern world of political and religious freedom. However, published accounts also sometimes mention the racially integrated nature of the congregation.

The cross-class and cross-racial congregation in Havana reflected the contemporaneous, broad alliance being constructed by political separatists.[47] At least before 1895, the Havana congregation welcomed an integrated membership of Cubans who were of varying degrees of African and European descent and whose experiences in Cuba reflected a range of racial identifications. In a letter about her visit to the "Baptist

[45] See the discussion of sources in the introduction. An excellent discussion of the problem of language regarding race, racial lines, and constructions of race in the nineteenth century is in Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 10-12.
[46] Harvey, "These Untutored Masses."
[47] For race in Cuba, especially in the separatist alliance, see Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Scott, *Degrees of Freedom*; Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*.

tent" on Neptuno Street, published in April 1889, Sallie Rochester Ford wrote, "What most struck me in the outset, was the variety in the audience, many colors, all ages and sizes."[48] In his account of his trip to Havana to take part in the dedication services for the Cuban Baptists' new building in February 1891, Rev. Dr. Lansing Burrows remarked on the "large mixed congregation" in Havana, which "impressed the Americans...as something strange."[49] Col John H. Weller of Louisville, Kentucky remarked when he was in Havana for the 1891 dedication service: "In appearance, saving complexion, they [Cuban Baptists] are easily equal to the brethren in any of our home churches. In manner when speaking, far superior. They are generally of the rich Spanish-Cuban color, which to me is strikingly agreeable."[50] These white Southerners, accustomed as they were to segregated churches, would have quickly noticed—and been appalled at—the racially integrated nature of the Cuban congregation. The paternalism inherent in many of these comments is understandable. But why were Southerners' comments about Cubans' race so rare, and why were the surviving comments so polite, and even, in the case of Weller, admiring?

One clue may be in the Southern Baptists' positive descriptions of the class status of the Cuban congregants. Southern Baptists created a deracinated ideal type of Cuban Baptist, whose central attributes then became religiosity and upward mobility rather than a threatening or (to white Southern eyes) incomprehensible racial classification. Southern

[48] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* (April 1889), p. 6. Ford addressed her letter to Tichenor personally, meaning she may have been a visitor to Cuba from Atlanta.
[49] Burrows' account is in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff; typewritten transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.
[50] Weller's account is from "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff; typewritten transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

Baptist leaders tended to emphasize the Cubans' economic "vitality," that they were "forward-looking" and "intelligent"—and the Southerners had plenty of help from Cuban Baptist leaders in this project. During his January 1889 visit to Díaz's rented rooms on the Prado, T. D. Crawford of Oxford, North Carolina wrote, "At eight o'clock that night I was again in his little chapel, and found it filled with well-dressed, intelligent looking people." Crawford also made sure to mention "that Bro. Diaz drove around in his American buggy, a present to him from the Virginia Baptists. This is the only modern vehicle I have seen in the city."[51] Tichenor wrote that during his trip in 1889, he had "conversed freely with many in high social positions; lawyers, physicians, bankers, merchants, editors—many of whom did not hesitate to confess their sympathy with our cause, and their readiness to give it their active co-operation."[52] Díaz also tried to emphasize the privileged social status of those who were interested in what he called "the Baptist cause." In 1891 he traveled around Cuba looking for promising towns in which to plant Baptist churches. He reported that "Puerto Principe and S[antiago] de Cuba are two important towns, the towns are composed of well educated people, the majority of them has been on the United States, and they want to have the gospel. They urge me to establish some work among them."[53] At a time when Southern Baptist leaders were trying to "modernize" rural congregations at home in the South, a Cuban Baptist community that showed signs of social influence and bourgeois solidity—never mind its bizarre tendency to be racially "mixed," they might have thought—would have appealed to those same leaders, and they emphasized these factors in their writings.

[51] "Cuba: Letters from Visitors," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), p. 5. Emphases in original.
[52] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.
[53] "Letter from Diaz," *Our Home Field* (August 1891), p. 7.

Another possibility is that most U.S. Southerners were simply unsure how to fit Cubans into the bipartite schema of racial classification that they understood in the Jim Crow South.[54] Were Cubans of Spanish or other European descent really "white" in the same way that a good Southern Baptist was? Were Cubans whose "color" indicated at least some African ancestry really "colored" in the same way that Southern African Americans were? Did the one-drop rule apply overseas, even in the nearby Caribbean? Southerners probably thought of the Cuban Baptist leadership as white; Díaz, for example, was never described in racial terms, but always with respect, sometimes bordering on hero worship, using the title of Doctor or Reverend. If Southern Baptists had suspected he was anything but "white," they would have described him as such to their readers, and would not have relied on him as they did.[55] White Southerners'

[54] The body of comparative theory and historiography on colonial and post-emancipation Cuban and Latin American versus United States systems of slavery, racial classification and hierarchy is immense. The classic and most recent useful works in the field include Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (Beacon Press, 1992); Herbert S. Klein, *Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967); Scott, *Degrees of Freedom*; Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1985); Alejandro de la Fuente, "Race, National Discourse, and Politics in Cuba: An Overview," *Latin American Perspectives* 25, no. 3 (May 1998): 43-69; Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slave Law and Claims-Making in Cuba: The Tannenbaum Debate Revisited," *Law and History Review* 22, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 339-369; John Hope Franklin, *Color and Race* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968); Robert J. Cottrol, "The Long Lingering Shadow: Law, Liberalism, and Cultures of Racial Hierarchy and Identity in the Americas," *Tulane Law Review* 76, no. 1 (2001): 40; Aline Helg, "Black Men, Racial Stereotyping, and Violence in the U.S. South and Cuba at the Turn of the Century," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 03 (2000): 576-604; Helg, *Our Rightful Share*; Aline Helg, "Race and Black Mobilization in Colonial and Early Independent Cuba: A Comparative Perspective," *Ethnohistory* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 53-74.

[55] For more on Díaz, see chapter two. The equality of the pre-1898 alliance between Southerners and Cubans in the Havana Baptist church (see chapter three) was another reason why Southern Baptists could not seem to fit Cuban Baptists into the Southern racial schema during this period. As Martha Hodes has written about another intimate transnational relationship, "To name and define others is also to establish one's own superior station," and the brotherly relationship between Cuban and Southern Baptists, by its very nature, made Southern attempts to "name and define" Cubans' race fraught with difficulty. Martha Hodes, "The Mercurial Nature and Abiding Power of Race: A Transnational Family Story," *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 1

occasional comments hint that they were deeply uncomfortable with the large "mixed" Cuban population that attended Baptist revival services in Havana, but the overarching modernization project of the congregation led most Southern Baptists to suppress their qualms. Lansing Burrows' assessment, quoted above, of the "mixed congregation" in Havana as something "strange" was probably widely shared among Southern Baptists, but only he expressed it, and only once.

In March 1889, Tichenor published a story about the Cuban congregation that points to its appeal to a broad range of classes in Cuban society. Although Tichenor probably meant to show his Southern Baptist audience how powerful and influential the Cuban congregants were in Havana society, one effect of his story is also to provide a rare glimpse into the many classes of Cubans who were interested in the Baptist movement. He wrote:

> A lady who was a member of the church, on her dying bed sent for Bro. Diaz. Asking for her Bible, she said to him, 'This is the best thing I have in this world. I desire you to take it and give it to the next Chapel opened in Havana.' At the opening of a new place of worship not long after Bro. Diaz took the Bible, and after relating to the assembly the story of the dead sister's faith in God, and the comfort she experienced from trusting in Jesus in her dying hours, presented the Bible as her gift to the Chapel. A day or two afterwards he received a note from a stranger asking him to call at a certain place. To his surprised he found the gentleman who had sent for him was a Marquis of the Spanish nobility. 'Mr. Diaz,' said he, 'a servant of mine was at your meeting the other evening, and heard you tell of that lady who gave the Bible to your new Chapel. I was the god-father of that lady.... Now, Mr. Diaz, I hear that you design to build a house of worship. Whenever you lay the corner-stone I desire to be present and make any contribution to your building.' He gave no indication of the amount he proposed to give, but he is able to make a handsome contribution to this object.[56]

(February 2003): 85; Martha Hodes, *The Sea Captain's Wife: A True Story of Love, Race, and War in the Nineteenth Century*, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006).

[56] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.

Tichenor wanted to emphasize to his readership that the Baptists were socially accepted in Havana, that they were influential, and that they were slowly coming closer to legal acceptance and equality. For these reasons, he emphasized the nobility of the Spanish marquis, who would make "a handsome contribution" to the building project, and of the "lady" who was a member of the church. But a careful reader will note that one of the key links in the story is the marquis's servant, who "was at your meeting" and relayed the story told there back to his Spanish master. We know nothing about the race, national origin, or political views of this servant, but the fact that he or she seemingly voluntarily attended a Baptist service—one that also appealed to the goddaughter of a member of the Spanish nobility—indicates the broad appeal that the congregations had in Havana in these years. Tichenor's purpose in relating the story was to emphasize the congregation's appeal even to the nobility, but its cross-class appeal may have been more important to many Cubans.

Women regularly attended revival services in Havana, and were baptized and accepted into membership from the very beginning of the congregation. Several women, including Díaz's mother and sisters, were important workers in the congregation's ministries, although they only worked among children and other women. The youngest Díaz sibling, Clotilde, was educated at the Southern Baptist Female College in LaGrange, Georgia after 1891, and by 1898 was the teacher at the Baptist school on Romay street in Havana.[57] Minnie Díaz was with her brother Alberto in New York, and was listed as a

[57] On Clotilde Díaz's education, see Diaz to Rev. J. William Jones, published in "Cuba: Letters from A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 8 (April 1890), p. 1, and Professor C. C. Cox's account in "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6. For her autobiography, see "Talk by Miss Clotilde Diaz," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 11 (July 1891), p. 2; transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. On the Romay

Southern Baptist missionary in Cuba as early as 1887. In 1889, she opened a new Baptist school in the Jesus de Maria district of Havana, and by 1898 she was in charge of a school with 96 pupils on Arsenal street in Havana.[58] Tichenor wrote that the Díaz' mother, whose name went unrecorded except as "Mrs. Díaz," "bears in her face the evidence of a strong will, indomitable energy and unyielding perseverance," and Weller understood that in 1891 she was "very active, having general charge of the women and girls of all the schools."[59] Despite their importance to the Baptists' educational mission, there is no record of women being called on to preach during the services of the Cuban Baptist congregations. Even the names of most women congregants, most notably Díaz's wife and mother, have gone unrecorded.

When they came to a Baptist worship service or prayer meeting in Havana, Cubans experienced something very unlike what they might have if they had attended a Catholic Mass. Revival services were held not only on Sunday, in both the morning and the evening, but also on almost every night of the week in one location or another. Services usually involved some combination of Bible reading, hymn singing, prayer, a collection of donations, preaching by one or more men, and a "call" to conversion, during

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school, see Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898; in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898.

[58] Minnie Díaz's baptism on October 29, 1882 at Willoughby Avenue Baptist Church in Brooklyn, about one month before her brother Alberto was baptized there, is recorded in the Record Book of Willoughby Avenue Baptist Church (1879-1884), Brooklyn Historical Society, p. 97 and 99. For Alberto Díaz's time in New York, see chapter two. For Minnie Díaz, see also Report of the Home Mission Board to the SB Convention in 1887, SBHLA, UR, box 6, folder 21; "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 3 (November 1889), p. 2-3; "The Cut of Miss Minnie Diaz," *Our Home Field* (December 1889), p. 2, with her picture on p. 5; and Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898; in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898.

[59] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6; for "Mrs. Diaz's" leadership of women and girls in the Baptist schools, see Col. John H. Weller's account in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. See p. 38 for her leadership during the 1887 Havana smallpox epidemic.

which a few people might give a declaration of their faith and make public their desire to be baptized into the congregation. Baptisms, done outdoors and by immersion, were performed in secret after the service, often in the Caribbean. Accounts of the services make it clear that some meetings focused on preaching, while others featured more prayer and Bible reading. Every congregant was allowed, even encouraged, to read the Bible, and the Baptist churches were distribution points for Spanish-language Bibles provided by the American Bible Society. Any man in the congregation could preach on a Bible passage if he was moved to do so, and the services were in Spanish, not Latin. On a Wednesday morning in 1886, Rev. William Wood wrote that when he had gone "to Jesus Del Monte last night to prayer meeting, almost every brother read from Scriptures, explained the Word and prayed."[60] T. D. Crawford, a visitor from North Carolina, wrote in January 1889 about his visit to a Sunday morning service that was held at a rented hall. "His little room is a court or hallway, converted into a chapel.... Sunday morning at eight o'clock services began.... Mr. Diaz spoke only a few minutes, the service being about like our prayer-meetings, judging from what I *saw*, for everything was spoken in Spanish, of course."[61] There was no formalized ritual like that of a Catholic Mass and no attention paid to saints or the Virgin Mary.

Joining the Baptist church in Havana was not an easy or automatic process. Anyone could declare his or her desire to become a member through a public declaration of faith. Sallie Rochester Ford reported that in 1889 "at the close of the service" she attended on a Wednesday night, "four offered themselves for membership and were

[60] William F. Wood, "Correspondence: The Baptist Cause in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 64, no. 8 (February 25, 1886), p. 4.
[61] "Cuba: Letters from Visitors," *Our Home Field*, March 1889, p. 5. Emphases in original.

received."[62] Those who made such a declaration, however, were questioned about their beliefs and perhaps given some instruction before they were baptized. The leaders of the congregations sought to make sure that Cubans who wanted to join understood something about Baptist beliefs. Those whom the leaders judged to be interested simply in escaping the Catholic church were not baptized. In 1888, Tichenor made it clear to his Southern Baptist readers that the revival in Cuba was not merely "a turning away from Romanism," but that it was in fact "an intelligent turning to the doctrines of Evangelical Christianity." Tichenor emphasized that although there was indeed a broad movement in Cuba away from Catholicism, a simple dislike for the Catholic Church was not enough to be accepted into communion with the Havana Baptists. "There has been exercised the most rigid care in the reception of members," he wrote, and

> the converts as a rule give the most indubitable proofs of sincere repentance towards God, and simple trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Over 8,000 have applied for baptism, and their names are all recorded in a book kept for the purpose that they may be followed up and fully instructed in the way of Salvation, but only a little over 1,100 have been baptized, because, as Bro. Diaz quaintly puts it: "We only baptize those who give evidence that they are new men and new women."[63]

Similarly, those who saw the Baptists primarily as an anti-Spanish organization were made to wait. Although the Baptists were aware that opposition to both Spain and Catholicism were factors driving Cubans to their services, and they certainly welcomed the crowds of Cubans who came for these reasons, they also sought to make membership in the congregation a matter of declared religious belief—a matter of true conversion. Tichenor believed that these policies still allowed for a healthy rate of growth in the congregation. "The results are seen in additions to the churches at almost every meeting,"

[62] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* (April 1889), p. 6.
[63] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 2.

he reported in 1889. "While I was in Havana these additions averaged about ten a week."[64]

Once a Cuban became a member of a Baptist congregation through profession of faith and baptism, he or she was subject to the supervision and discipline of the congregation as a whole. In March 1889, Tichenor, defending the faithfulness of the Cuban congregation to his Southern Baptist readers, wrote: "The genuineness of this work is seen in the fidelity of the converts to their profession. The discipline of their churches is strict, not to say rigid. Church members are required to live up to the profession they have made." In U.S. Baptist churches at this time, members might be disciplined for everything from gambling to gossip, adultery to drunkenness. The punishments for these sins ranged from simple reprimands to required public repentance or "exclusion," the equivalent of excommunication. The only sin that Tichenor mentioned as problematic in Cuba, however, was a lack of church attendance. "A failure to attend public worship is followed by admonition, and if that fails, by exclusion." This communitarian discipline, Tichenor wrote, seemed to work well for the Havana churches. "Under this strict discipline, the exclusions have been few."[65]

In addition to the theological, rhetorical and political reasons for the Baptist congregations' growth, Cubans were also attracted to these communities for the programs

[64] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.
[65] Ibid. Historian Paul Harvey writes about discipline in Southern Baptist churches: "Disciplinary patterns varied according to gender, race, and social status. Young men most often came under scrutiny for drinking, fighting, and social misconduct. Older men were forced to repent for misuses of power. Church conferences indicted women most frequently for adultery and other forms of more private misconduct." Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate any disciplinary records from the Havana congregations for this period. Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities Among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 82. See also Gregory A. Wills, *Democratic Religion: Freedom, Authority, and Church Discipline in the Baptist South, 1785-1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

and services they provided. Most importantly, the Baptist congregations supported extensive programs for the medical and educational needs of their congregants.[66] The Baptist congregation considered education for children, both on Sundays and during the week, to be one of their most important services to congregants and, apparently, to their local communities as a whole. This service filled a real need in Cuba, but was also a shrewd way for the small Baptist congregation to gain the goodwill of the neighborhood. Public schools were nonexistent in Cuba at this time, and Catholic schools were mostly reserved for the children of the wealthy.[67]

The Baptist schools, like the congregations as a whole, grew quickly. When Wood visited Cuba in 1886, his report mentioned "two very promising Sunday-schools here, one in Havana proper of over one hundred scholars, and one in Jesus del Monte of over thirty scholars well officered and under admirable management, the only Sunday-schools in Cuba. For order, regularity and punctuality, these schools will compare favorably with the best in the States."[68] He did not mention any Baptist schools that met during the week, although by May 1887 the Southern Baptist Convention *Annual*

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[66] The theological base for and activities of the medical program is discussed in chapter two.
[67] Louis A. Pérez writes of Cuban schools in the early twentieth century: "At the time, the public school system operated in varying degrees of disarray and disrepute; public schools were understaffed and underfunded, if they existed at all. Missionary schools thus met real and immediate needs." , *On Becoming Cuban*, 247. I have no primary records about whether the Baptist schools were free for all the children who attended, or whether there was some cost for tuition for all or some of them. One Southern Baptist visitor to Havana in 1891 asserted that the Cuban Baptist schools were "free, all of them," but that remark is rarely corroborated. However, the records are clear that the congregations as a whole, with the assistance of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, paid salaries for all teachers and rent for schoolrooms. This leads me to believe that the Baptist schools in this period were either free of charge or that the fee was very nominal. See Col. John H. Weller's account in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. On anarchist schools in the Cuban republic, see Kirwin R. Shaffer, "Freedom Teaching: Anarchism and Education in Early Republican Cuba, 1898-1925," *The Americas* 60, no. 2 (October 2003): 151-183. For tuition in the Baptist schools after 1902, see the epilogue.
[68] January 26, 1886 letter from William F. Wood, published in "Correspondence: The Baptist Cause in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 64, no. 8 (February 25, 1886), p. 4.

reported that the Cuban congregations had "four Sunday-schools, numbering 17 teachers and 400 pupils; two day-schools, numbering about 150."[69] Just two years later, Tichenor reported that 400 children attended the weekday Baptist schools—and he considered this a good way both to serve the local community and to convert the neighbors. The curriculum of both the weekday and Sunday schools included religious instruction. "With a sagacity which seems sent from above," Tichenor wrote in 1889, "they [Cuban Baptists] are gathering the children into their daily schools and Sunday-schools, in both of which they are taught the truths of the gospel."[70] Indeed, the schools seem to have been a prime way that the congregation sought out converts. During the first quarter of 1887, "Bro. Diaz baptized 168 believers, 24 of whom came from these schools."[71] The number of children in the Baptist schools in 1889 prompted T. D Crawford, the visitor from North Carolina, to remark, "Even the Catholics are amazed at the spread of his work."[72] When the Cuban Baptists moved into their new building in downtown Havana in 1889, one of the first things they did was hold "a special meeting...for the children, ...all the Sunday-schools of Havana; a special sermon was preached to them; a large crowd attended, over 3000 people were present," as Díaz wrote. Sounding like a proud father—which he probably was, by this point—he also reported, "the children were all happy and the entire aspect was very cheering."[73] Even in January 1896, in the middle of war, Cuban Baptist minister José O'Halloran wrote to Tichenor, "The day school has 266 pupils, with an average attendance of 115. The Sunday-school is the same.... Oh! my dear brother, it is a sight worth seeing, our school congregated in Sunday-school: although

[69] *Annual* of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1887 [n.p.].
[70] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.
[71] *Annual* of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1887 [n.p.].
[72] "Cuba: Letters from Visitors," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), p. 5. Emphases in original.
[73] "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* (October 1889), p. 1.

they have poor parents they always come so tidy and clean." O'Halloran too took comfort in the persistence of the children in their studies during wartime. "I would that you could speak Spanish so you could examine them and see for yourself how much they have improved, both in science and religion. They themselves try to do all they can to help the meeting with their presence and their mites."[74]

The congregation's emphases on children must have been especially clear during their celebration of Christmas. Tichenor reported that even as early as Christmas 1888, 2,900 people attended the Christmas celebration.[75] The congregation's celebration of Christmas in 1889, however, was clearly meant to be the icing on the cake in the year when they moved into their new main building in downtown Havana. Apparently, congregants from all over Havana held one main celebration at the new building. On December 15, 1889, there were "public examinations of the children of all the Baptist schools in Havana; the results proved very encouraging and satisfactory, showing us plainly that they are progressing and improving their time; they received their corresponding prizes, bands and medals." The children were rewarded for their performance on exams on the 25th, with "a Christmas festival; there were recitations by a number of the pupils, singing, the distribution of the sweetmeats, presents, etc. and last but not least a tree; the entire aspect of the house was very pleasing and great happiness prevailed amongst the children, who wore their prizes received during the examinations, and blew their trumpets and whistles, etc., received Christmas eve." Díaz reported,

[74] O'Halloran letter, *The Mission Journal* (February 1896), p. 33-34.
[75] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.

"about 3,400 persons were present at the festival and young and old all seemed to enjoy themselves alike."[76]

The next year, examinations and a Christmas festival were held in each of the different Baptist preaching stations and churches throughout Havana. Rev. José Cova reported in January 1891 on separate celebrations held for Christmas 1890 not only at "Brother Diaz's church," Gethsemane in downtown Havana, but also those in the districts of Las Puentes, Cerro, and Pilar. Cova apparently went to them all, and thoroughly enjoyed himself. "All has been joy with us during these happy days," he wrote. The celebration at Gethsemane, held on December 25th, boasted "an attendance of about 2,500 persons. The feast was bright and it has attracted much attention through the whole city." The congregation had decided to hold the children's examinations and the Christmas celebration on the same day. "After the recitations of many children, sweetmeats and playthings were distributed among them and after two hours' entertainment they went out happy and merry." On December 26th, "there was another Christmas tree in the church at 'Las Puentes;' the hall was quite crowded and those Sunday-school children proved by their recitations to have improved a great deal in their Bible classes. The same gifts were distributed among them as in 'Gethsemane Church.'" The preaching station in the Cerro held their celebration on December 30th, "where though they are few in number being a new mission, they proved their good will towards their Sunday-school; the children made their best in pronouncing little speeches and poetries, after which they were heartily applauded and presented with playthings and

[76] January 1, 1890 letter from Díaz to J. William Jones, published as "Cuba," *Our Home Field* (February 1890), p. 2.

sweetmeats." Finally, Cova's own congregation in Pilar celebrated "its own tree feast" on January 1st.

> At six o'clock the building was filled till its utmost capacity; our Sunday-school boys and girls were round the tree. At 6:30 p.m. they began one by one to go up on the platform to say their recitations; many sweet words about the goodness and greatness of God, about salvation by Jesus and tender poetries on religious matter were heard during two hours and a half. Some of them sang with the organ beautiful Cuban and English hymns; it was very remarkable. Bro. Diaz's little daughter, who being only two and a half years old, sang a nice hymn in English. The people made her repeat the song and she readily did it with much assurance and grace. After the last prayer made by a little girl, Christmas gifts were profusely distributed, and we went out very pleased and happy with the progress of our church and Pilar.[77]

During the same period when Victorian Christmas celebrations were growing in intensity and emotionalism in Britain and the United States, Cuban Baptists held their own children's Christmas festivals as well.[78]

The origins of the Havana Baptist congregational structure, and its later consequences, make it clear just how central Díaz was during the early years of the congregation. He served as the main preacher and leader of the downtown church, Gethsemane, which after 1889 met in a large building at the corner of Zulueta and Dragones streets in old Havana. Gethsemane was the first church officially recognized and organized by ministers from the Southern Baptist Convention in 1885. In addition,

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[77] January 6, 1891 letter from J. V. Cova, published in "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 6 (February 1891), p. 3; typed transcription in SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 22.

[78] For various interpretations of Christmas celebrations in Britain and the United States, see Mark Connelly, *Christmas: A Social History* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999); Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Consumer Rites: The Buying & Selling of American Holidays* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3; Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996); William Burnell Waits, *The Modern Christmas in America: A Cultural History of Gift Giving* (New York: New York University Press, 1993). Year-end public examinations of schoolchildren and accompanying performances were common in Latin American schools as community events; see Karen Leroux, "Bringing Horace Mann's Public Schools to the Argentine Republic: The Power of the Local and the Atlantic World Contexts, 1868-1898" (Conference Paper presented at the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Conference, Falls Church, Virginia, June 25, 2009).

Díaz was the acknowledged (although perhaps unofficial) leader of all the Baptist churches that met throughout the city of Havana. Other Baptist preachers who became prominent in these years served their own churches, or "missions," as part of the Baptists' citywide effort to evangelize Havana, and some even developed their own relationships with Southern Baptists in the U.S. However, all of them seem to have acknowledged Díaz as the leader, or superintendent, of Baptist work in Havana in these years.

Cubans organized the Baptist church in Havana to be one large congregation, with each neighborhood "station" or "mission" an equal part of this congregation. In 1889, Tichenor explained the Havana Baptists' congregational structure to his readers in the U.S. South. "They are dotting Havana over with mission stations," he wrote, "where the people in the immediate vicinity are brought under their influence, and then induced to attend the larger assemblies."[79] All of these communities were considered to be part of one "congregation" for the entire city, although they met in different locations and had different preachers at their services. Díaz outlined the structure, writing that the city of Havana was "divided into seven large districts, and it is our plan not to have more than one church in each district; we have organized seven central missions independent of each other, and these seven central missions constitute the Baptist church of Havana."[80] Díaz and some of his early congregants had decided on this rule—one congregation per city, made up of one mission per district—early in their life as a congregation. In 1883 or 1884, he "had written to New York," probably to the Baptist church in Brooklyn where he was baptized, "for the 'constitution and by-laws of a Baptist church,' had received for reply that the New Testament contained the only 'rule of faith and practice,' and by

[79] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.
[80] "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* (October 1889), p. 1.

diligent study of the inspired word had gotten at the true idea of church organization."[81] In other words, Díaz and his congregation had come up with the structure of their citywide congregation themselves, probably through a reading of Paul's letters in the books of the New Testament. These books tell of the apostle Paul organizing one Christian church per city he visited in the ancient world.[82] The story of Pentecost, from Acts chapter two, was also influential. In a letter to a Southern Baptist, Díaz argued that the Cuban Baptists should be organized in only one congregation, even if both English and Spanish were spoken in it, because "on the day of Pentecost they received the Holy Spirit and commenced to preach in different languages and were not divided but continued to be one church. So far as we can see the New Testament plan was one church for each city. Besides this, the by-laws of our church, approved in 1888, obliges us to have the church without division although some members of it may speak English."[83] The Cubans, especially Díaz, believed that the New Testament sanctioned this structure. It worked to funnel converts into a broader community—and, incidentally or not, into a structure with Díaz alone at its head—rather than fracturing that community into separate neighborhood congregations.

The structure of this citywide congregation was similar to an association of churches, although it was a remarkably close relationship. All the churches deposited funds into a common treasury, occasionally met at the large building downtown for special occasions, and seem to have shared financial and personnel responsibility for

[81] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 2.
[82] Paul's greetings in his various letters may have indicated to the Cubans that there was one "church" or "congregation" per city in the ancient world. In First Corinthians, he wrote, "To the church of God in Corinth," not addressing the "churches" of God, for instance, although early Christians usually met in individual homes. See 1st Corinthians 1:2.
[83] Díaz to Paxon, December 23, 1898, with enclosure, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

schools and other ministries. As Díaz explained, "All the missions hold a general meeting every month; we keep a record where all the members of the different centrals have been baptized. We also have a common treasury where we deposit the funds for the demands of the missions as it is required, as in this way we can easily help all our centrals."[84] This common work seems to have been as true for the Baptist schools as it was for the "centrals" or "missions." Tichenor observed, "Sunday-schools are organized at certain localities, and then at a proper time merged into the larger schools."[85] This structure served to make the citywide congregation flexible enough to meet the needs of each individual "mission," and made it necessary for the leaders of all the missions to meet frequently, enhancing the Cuban Baptists' sense of themselves as a separate community. In February 1890, for instance, Díaz wrote to the editor of *Our Home Field*, "On the last Saturday of the month we held our usual general meeting of the Havana church. The representatives of the different missions were present, and each missionary giving a detailed description of the month's work."[86] The "representatives" of each mission, whether these were preachers or active congregants, knew what was going on at the missions in other parts of the city, and they clearly planned schedules together (as is obvious given the dates of their Christmas celebrations, above) and were available to help with extra preaching or teaching needs in other neighborhoods.

The Havana Baptists also welcomed several new ministers during these years, both to assist Díaz and to lead services of their own. José V. Cova, an old friend of Díaz from their schooldays in Guanabacoa, had been sent to school in Portland, Maine during

[84] "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* (October 1889), p. 1.
[85] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing page 4.
[86] February 28, 1890 letter from Díaz to Rev. John William Jones, Editor of *Our Home Field*, published as "Cuba: Letters from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 8 (April 1890), p. 1.

the Ten Years' War and had picked up both English and Episcopalianism while there. When he returned to Cuba, the Episcopal bishop of Florida had shown some interest in beginning a mission in Havana, and Cova had already begun studying for the ministry when the bishop died unexpectedly. Cova later interpreted this as the hand of God: "The Most High's decree had disposed it in this way, because it was no doubt in his designs that such a religion, yet so attached to the formulas of Romanism, would not reign in this country." This experience illustrates just how personalist early missions were—when the Florida bishop died, no one else took up his project in Cuba, and according to Cova, "the exasperated [Cuban] people believed themselves abandoned and shut up the existing chapels." Cova later talked with his old friend Díaz, who invited him to the Baptist church, and Cova's intellectual bent led him to conclude that

> it was necessary for me the course of some time to meditate it [the Baptist church] and comprehend its biblical foundations. As I read over the Scriptures with this object, rays of light shone for me, and the Christian baptism by immersion only granted to those who have a knowledge of what they do, appeared to me by the first time as the only one consistent with the evangelical prescription. Why did I not know it before? ... I was at last at the presence of the true Christ's Church.

He was soon baptized and ordained as a minister in the Havana Baptist church. Other than Díaz, Cova became the most regular Cuban correspondent to write to the Home Mission Board and *Our Home Field*, and he frequently asked Tichenor and others to send Southern Baptist magazines and publications to him in Cuba. In the 1890s, he served a church in the Pilar district of Havana and a mission in the nearby town of San Miguel del Padron.[87] His daughter, Pura Cova Hernandez, later remembered that her father "was in charge of a mission in one of Havana's worst suburbs. It was necessary for them to ask

[87] "Autobiographical Sketch of Rev. J. V. Cova, Missionary in Havana, Cuba," *Our Home Field*, May 1889, p. 5-6. See his letters in *Our Home Field*, especially April 1891.

permission from the Spanish Government, to take several precautions, and to face great difficulties and even fear, in order to hold the first service. The people outside the room in which the meeting was taking place were so provoking and noisy that it was feared that at any minute they would riot in breaking doors and windows. Such conditions lasted for months and years." Despite these trials, Cova was a leader in Cuban Baptist circles until his death in April 1919.[88]

Angel Godenas lived in Key West, Florida, where he joined the Baptist church. In the mid-1880s, he was "the first Cuban licensed by the Baptist church to preach the gospel in Cuba; was sent by the Key West Baptist church, June 10th, 1885, to Havana to preach."[89] It was probably when he was in Cuba on this trip that Godenas found Díaz preaching to crowds in his rented hall on the Prado. Godenas quickly developed into a recognized preacher in Cuba; he became pastor of the Baptist church in Regla, across the bay to the southeast of Havana, when it was founded in late 1887. Godenas was quite young to lead his own church, but his youthful energy seems to have served him well. Tichenor wrote in January 1889, "Angel Godenas is a man of great sprightliness and enthusiasm in his work. He is about 23 years of age."[90] A few months later, Tichenor described him as "bright, quick, active, devoted. It is cheering to see how he consecrates, without thought of self, every energy to the work confided to his hands."[91] Later that

[88] Draft memoir of Pura Cova Hernandez, undated (circa 1930s), SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 1.
[89] William F. Wood letter, "Correspondence: The Work in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 64, no. 34 (September 2, 1886), p. 2; see also King, "Origin of the Cuban Work," *Our Home Field* vol. I (March 1889), p. 6. Godenas is also mentioned as a member of the small community of Methodists gathered for worship in Havana in the 1880s in Delofeu, *Historical and Biographical Notes of the Cuban Mission*, 26. See the discussion of the ambiguous denominational affiliation of early Cuban Protestants, above.
[90] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6.
[91] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing p. 5.

same year he expressed a desire to travel to Tampa, Florida, to raise money to build a chapel for his congregation in Regla.[92]

Several other Cuban Baptist ministers also became active in these years, although much less is known about their early lives. José K. O'Halloran served congregational outposts in the Havana district of Vedado and in the nearby town of Las Puentes, and in October 1889 opened a mission in the Cerro neighborhood of Havana.[93] José Porta, who in 1887 was a Baptist missionary in Regla, was also "appointed as missionary to the sailors" in about October 1888, and at least for awhile was "supported by the liberal contributions of the church at Jamaica Plains, Mass."[94] Tichenor wrote in January 1889 that Porta, "a man about forty years of age, was, before his conversion, a bad man. He is untutored.... but when he rises before an audience to speak for the Master, he is transformed into another man. His language is good. He is impassioned, forceful, magnetic. He moves his audience as no other man in Cuba does, except Diaz, and is scarcely inferior to him in his power over the masses. He loves to preach, and is doing great good."[95] In March 1889 Tichenor called Porta "the right arm of Diaz" and wrote, "with his clear judgment, with his quick perception, with his ready access to strangers, with his one thought, that to serve Christ is the highest duty and happiness of life, [Porta] has won me to him as few men ever did."[96] In 1887 Francisco P. Bueno was listed as a Southern Baptist-supported missionary at a church in Vedado that was "composed of a

[92] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 3 (November 1889), p. 2-3.
[93] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing p. 5; "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* (October 1889), p. 1.
[94] Porta is listed as a missionary in Regla in the Report of the Home Mission Board to the Southern Baptist Convention in 1887, found in the 1887 Southern Baptist *Annual*, p. 32. For the quote, see "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 1, no. 2 (October 1888), p. 2ff.
[95] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6.
[96] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing p. 5.

good class of people," according to Tichenor in 1888. He continued, "Bueno is a good preacher, not so magnetic a speaker as Diaz or [Angel] Godenas, but entertaining and instructive in his addresses. His people in Vedado have evinced commendable industry and taste in rendering comfortable and beautiful their place of worship. They have by far the neatest place of prayer we saw in Cuba."[97] In 1889, Bueno was put in charge of the new mission in San Miguel del Padron, which Cova took over a few years later.[98] Alfredo V. Díaz, Alberto's brother, served as a pastor of a Baptist church in Matanzas, about fifty miles east of Havana, from at least 1887.[99] Alfredo Díaz, who became a naturalized citizen of the United States in April 1883, led "a small church, a good day-school and Sunday-school."[100] By March 1889 he had apparently moved to Havana to assist his brother. Tichenor reported at that time that Alfredo, "though he divides his time between preaching and business for the cemetery, holds his congregations well and is giving strong support to our cause."[101]

Of all these Cuban preachers, however, Díaz was clearly the leader during the revival of the late 1880s. "As to the men and women engaged in this work," Tichenor wrote in January 1889, "Bro. Alberto J. Diaz is *facile princeps* among them. He is the recognized leader of the whole movement."[102] He repeated this sentiment in March 1889: "The Rev. Alberto J. Diaz stands pre-eminent among the Baptists of Cuba. The first to embrace the faith of the Gospel, he naturally became the leader of mission work in that

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[97] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3.
[98] See "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 3 (November 1889), p. 2-3; and "Cuba," *Our Home Field* (February 1890), p. 2.
[99] Alfredo V. Díaz was listed as a Southern Baptist missionary in Matanzas in the 1887 Southern Baptist *Annual*, p. 32.
[100] Roll #53, M1674 (Soundex to New York petitions for naturalization), NARA I. Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6.
[101] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing p. 5.
[102] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 6.

Island, a place which he easily holds by virtue of his ability, eloquence and thorough consecration."[103] Sallie Rochester Ford, a Baptist visitor to the island, found Díaz equally impressive. "I find that Bro. Diaz's work is known to many," she wrote, "and, so far as I have had an expression of opinion, favored by all, while he is greatly beloved and respected."[104] His congregation, too, seems to have held him in esteem at this time. When Díaz was traveling in the United States, he often wrote letters to his family and congregation during his absence. During one of his trips, his wife wrote him,

> We had a very good congregation at church, and Brother Perez was appointed to preach. After the preliminary service we took a collection, and then Alfredo came in a great hurry and gave your letter to Brother Perez. And after the collection he read the letter, and you should have seen the whole congregation weep and cry, just like children. Perez was here today and told me that when I write to you to send you his love and ask you not to write your letters to them like Paul did because you make them cry, the whole congregation, and him too. He did not know how he would be able to make a sermon.[105]

Who was this Cuban preacher, whom both Cubans and Southerners compared to an apostle, and who held such a monopoly over the imaginations of Southern Baptists, especially Tichenor? How did he come to be the leader of this community, and what about his biography and theology so endeared him to people on both sides of the Gulf of Mexico?

[103] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (March 1889), facing p. 5.
[104] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* (April 1889), p. 6.
[105] "Diaz and his People," *Our Home Field* (February 1890), p. 7.

II.
The Conversion of the Apostle:
Alberto J. Díaz and Transnational Religion in Cuba, 1870-1885

In the summer of 1885, Angel Godenas, a Cuban who had joined the Southern Baptist church in Key West, Florida, returned to Cuba as a missionary and colporteur employed by the Florida Baptist Mission Society. His salary and travel expenses were paid "entirely by a sister and brother somewhere in Georgia." Godenas, who was probably about 19 years old at the time, traveled with two or three other Cubans from Key West, passing out evangelical literature and holding prayer meetings. Sometime that summer, they heard rumors of a man preaching to a large congregation in a rented hall on the Prado in Havana, and they naturally went to hear him speak. To Godenas's surprise, the teachings of this preacher, Alberto J. Díaz, closely resembled those he knew from his time at the Baptist church in Key West. Where had Díaz come from, and with whom was he working? Rev. William Wood, a Southern Baptist preacher and missionary to the Cuban community in Key West, was sent down to investigate after Godenas or someone with him wrote to Wood about their remarkable find.[1] Díaz seemed to be an answer to the prayers of these Baptists. He was a native Cuban preaching in Cuba without assistance from anyone. He said that he had come to a belief in Baptist teachings solely through his reading of the Bible. He was by all accounts a mesmerizing preacher, a skilled organizer, and a faithful follower and teacher of Baptist doctrine.

[1] William F. Wood letter, in "Correspondence: The Work in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 64, no. 34 (September 2, 1886), p. 2; see also Harold Edward Greer, Jr., "History of Southern Baptist Mission Work in Cuba, 1886-1916" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1965), 33, who cites H.M. King, "Origin of the Cuban Work," *Our Home Field* vol. I (March 1889), p. 6. For Godenas's age, see Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6. Godenas's name is sometimes spelled as "Godinez."

Wood returned to Florida after about a month in Cuba, clearly convinced that Díaz had been chosen by God to bring "the true light" to Cuba. Wood arranged for Díaz to be ordained for the ministry in Key West in December 1885, just a few months after they had first met and without much in the way of formal theological education. The Florida Missions Board, along with other state conventions, had been trying for years to get the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole to sponsor mission work in Cuba, but up until now neither of the SBC's mission organizations, the Foreign Mission Board or the Home Mission Board, had been willing to sponsor a missionary to Cuba. Finally, the Florida Board had taken matters into its own hands by setting up a mission to Cuban immigrant communities in Key West and Tampa, Florida. The Florida Board hired a bilingual Cuban-American woman, Adella Fales, to serve these communities as missionary and to translate for Rev. Wood, and helped Godenas and others when they wanted to return to Cuba to preach the Gospel. Now they had happened upon Díaz, "a Bible made Baptist and Christian, [who] had heard no Baptist teaching," whose very existence must have seemed to be a miracle.[2] He was exactly the man they needed.

But who was he? How did he come to his beliefs, and what exactly did he believe? Most of what we know about Díaz's early life comes from his own statements about it. Very few records have survived that can confirm or deny what he wrote and said, or what was written and said about him, during his lifetime. Most of the existing biographies of him were published in Baptist periodicals in the United States, or come from things he told to friends or statements he gave at Baptist meetings. They are, on the

[2] J. H. DeVotie and I. T. Tichenor, "The Missionary Field," *Christian Index* vol. 63, no. 28 (July 9, 1885), p. 5; Greer, 33, citing Wood letter of August 16, 1886 printed in the *Christian Index* LXIV (September 2, 1886), p. 2; and H. M. King, "Origin of the Cuban Work," *Our Home Field* vol. I (March 1889), p. 6.

whole, remarkably consistent with each other, and with the genre conventions of the conversion narrative, especially the anti-Catholic conversion narrative. A few facts can be independently verified, but the following narrative of his early life is largely his own.

Three important themes can be discerned from the events of his early life, the narrative he told about it, and the observations Southern Baptists made about him. First, Díaz, like many Cubans of his era, experienced transnationalism in his daily life. The facts of the Cuban political struggle for reform, autonomy, and independence from Spain led many Cubans to move back and forth between the island and the United States (and also elsewhere around the Caribbean and Europe) countless times over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century. These transnational experiences were fundamental in shaping Cuban identity, culture, and politics, and Díaz's personal experience was no different. "Transnational" histories, generally speaking, acknowledge that many people—in their culture, commerce, politics, or the roots and effects of these things—have not lived entirely within the boundaries of one nation-state. The term is widely used but its definition is contested, and few historians agree on what the practice of writing a "transnational history" should be. Here I simply mean that Díaz, like many Cubans of his era and like the Southern Baptists whom he later met, crossed the borders between the Spanish colony of Cuba and the United States multiple times over the course of his life. In addition, this chapter seeks to understand the reasons for and effects of these transnational acts on both the island of Cuba and inside the borders of the United States, and in the lives of the people who acted, no matter their citizenship. The fact of a transnational life, like that of Díaz, opens up the scope of the histories of Cuba, the

United States, Protestantism, and late nineteenth century politics to a scale that must both cross borders and take into account the local contexts in which that life was lived.[3]

Second, Díaz's conversion narrative, his educational background in medicine, and his actions as a preacher in Cuba all indicate that he was deeply interested in illness as a route to spiritual conversion and salvation. This belief mirrors the interest in faith healing that was at its apogee in the United States in these years, but Díaz's theology of illness differed in important ways from that of faith healers. For instance, there is no record of him trying to heal illness through faith alone; indeed, he seems to have emphasized the methods of biomedicine, such as surgeries and vaccines, in his medical practice. Instead, Díaz envisioned the period of a person's illness as a time of vulnerability, a time when that person was uniquely open to the Gospel message that would ultimately bring them spiritual, if not physical, healing. His North American allies seem to have largely missed the importance of this theological belief in his life, but the depth of its meaning to Díaz is in line with what John-Marshall Klein has called Cuba's deep tradition of medical patriotism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1871, Díaz would have been about eighteen years old and may have been studying medicine at the University of Havana, when a group of eight Cuban medical students were executed there on trumped-up charges of grave desecration. The students were transformed into martyrs for the Cuban patriot cause and their deaths quickly became a *cause celebre* in the underground organizing against Spain. Díaz's fervent belief that sick people were uniquely susceptible to the Baptist message, and that medicine could be an arbiter

[3] See "On Transnational History." rez, *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), argues convincingly that Cuban identity and nationalism were especially influenced by transnationalism; see especially p. 37-39.

between the spiritual and political worlds, grew out of this complex of experiences and influences. It led him to do things that his North American allies did not fully understand, and ultimately helped lead to a break between them.[4]

Third, Díaz served as a cultural broker between Cubans and United States Southerners. His fluency in both Southern and Cuban culture allowed him to serve for many years as the primary cultural conduit and interpreter between Baptists across the Gulf of Mexico. He was able to cultivate deep and abiding personal friendships with many influential Southern Baptists, many of whom saw Díaz as a sort of "ideal Cuban." In Havana, his relationship with a U.S. church body strengthened his and his congregation's social and political position, especially when the Spanish and Catholic hierarchy clamped down on the space for non-Catholic and anti-Spanish organizing. His position was both tenuous and essential, like that of many other cultural brokers across time and space, and his effectiveness was deeply linked to the political context in which he worked. Indeed, instead of seeing him as a Cuban who understood Southern culture and used that knowledge to his advantage, Díaz should be viewed as someone whose experiences of cross-cultural encounter defined and explained "other cultures" for participants on both sides of the divide. When the political and social context of the encounter changed in 1898, Díaz's position at the center of the relationship became untenable.[5]

[4] On the medical student martyrs and medical patriotism, see Klein, "Spaniards and the Politics of Memory in Cuba," seven. On faith healing in the United States, see Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician.* For the medical-theological roots of the Baptist dispute, see chapter four.
[5] I have borrowed some theories about "cultural brokers" from a deep literature on them that has recently developed in American Indian history. See especially Hinderaker, "Translation and Cultural Brokerage."

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Alberto José Díaz y Navarro was born around 1853 in Guanabacoa, a town four kilometers east of the Bay of Havana. We can confirm only a few details of his early life and education. He had at least three siblings (Minnie, Alfredo and Clotilde) who lived to adulthood, and his mother eventually worked alongside her children in the Baptist congregations. There is little extant information about his father. Alberto Díaz attended the University of Havana and studied for a medical degree. It is unclear if he ever received that degree; various accounts have him fighting in the Ten Years' War (1868-1878) or being sent to New York for his education or his health.[6] Even if Díaz left Havana simply for his education, he probably did so to escape the oppressive strictures of Spanish colonialism in the capital city. The narrator of a 1916 autobiographical novel about the Ten Years War remembered that "to conspire in Havana in 1870 and 1871 was a dangerous activity and all but absolutely impossible. More than an armed camp, the capital was a prison. On each street corner, a sentry post of armed guards; the cafés and grocery stores were under the surveillance of Volunteers; in every door way, a guard, an

[6] , *On Becoming Cuban*, 58., says without citation that Díaz was sent to New York to recover from war wounds. Other sources usually give the story, outlined below, in which Díaz fought in the war and made a dramatic escape from Cuba. None of these sources explain why or how his sister Minnie and his brother Alfredo also came to live in New York in those years. See especially Rev. H. M King, "Origin of the Cuban Work," *Our Home Field* (March 1889): 6; the biography written by Tichenor in "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888): 1; Jones, "Sketch of Rev. A. J. Diaz, 'The Apostle of Cuba'"; Díaz, "The Cuban Mission." In his naturalization documents, cited in n8 below, Díaz's middle name is given as "Jesús," but in later legal documents it is given as "José."

armed gate-keeper."[7] Thousands of Cubans left the island in these years, many for the United States.

In later years a fantastic story, impossible to confirm, was told about how and why Díaz first emigrated to New York. In 1888, his friend Rev. Isaac T. Tichenor wrote that during the Ten Years' War, "a young captain of the rebel army," Díaz, "was sent by his commander" to deliver a message to an outpost of the Cuban liberation army: the outpost was vulnerable to attack. On the way, Captain Díaz "and his companions were surrounded by the enemy at a point on the seaside." The young captain and his comrades, filled with romantic ideals of war and fear of the Spanish army's brutal methods, "resolved, rather than surrender to the Spaniards, to trust themselves to the mercies of the great deep." Each soldier "selected the most suitable piece of wood at his command and boldly plunged into the sea." They hoped that the ocean current "would bear them beyond the environment of the Spanish soldiers, and that, landing at some secure place, they would be enabled to make their way back to their friends." Instead, "the current bore them far out from the shore," where a boat picked them up late at night. "Having thus escaped from the island," Tichenor wrote, Díaz "went to New York."[8] Whether this story is true or whether Díaz left Cuba in a less dramatic fashion, his travels eventually took him to a city where a small community of Cuban migrants lived.

While in New York, Díaz worked in a cigar factory among other exiled Cubans, including his brother Alfredo, before resuming his medical studies.[9] He also became

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[7] Raimundo Cabrera, *Sombras que pasan* (1916; reprint, Havana, 1984), p. 245; quoted in , *On Becoming Cuban*, 45-46..

[8] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 1.

[9] Alberto and Alfredo Díaz's naturalization records show their occupations (cigar maker and cigar dealer, respectively) and sponsor, Agustín Yorca, whose own occupation was cigar dealer. Alberto was naturalized on November 25, 1882, and Alfredo on April 17, 1883. National

interested in Protestantism, perhaps through the influence of his sister Minnie, who was also living in New York for at least part of the time when he was there. The Díaz siblings, like many other Cubans of their time, probably immigrated to the United States for a multitude of reasons. They could escape the Spanish repression at home, get a better education than they could in Cuba, make a little money, and fulfill the residency requirement to receive U.S. citizenship. That they went to New York instead of Tampa or Key West, and that Alberto may have traveled at least partially to continue his education, indicates that their family was somewhat wealthier than the solidly working-class *tabaqueros* who generally emigrated to Florida.

Alberto returned to Cuba at least once between the time his interest in Protestantism began in the late 1870s, and the time he was baptized in Brooklyn in 1882. Tichenor wrote that during this first trip back to Cuba Díaz attempted without much success to convert his parents, and that he "was in the habit of collecting a number of young men (students of the university and others) to read to them God's word, and expound to them the way of salvation. This excited the bitter opposition of the Priests, and their Persecutions finally forced him to leave Cuba and return to New York." This gathering of "young men" and "students" may have been the group known as the *Fieles de Jesús*, which Díaz and his childhood friend José V. Cova led. Spanish law concerning

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Archives, Washington, D.C., microfilm publication M1674, D-200; see also the original records in National Archives Northeast Region, New York City, Superior Court of New York County, Bundle 332A, Record No. 5 (Alberto) and Bundle 333, Record 176 (Alfredo). Tichenor and Jones both wrote that Díaz had continued his medical education in New York, noting that his specialty was in the eye and ear. Tichenor, "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 1; Jones, "Sketch of Rev. A. J. Diaz, 'The Apostle of Cuba,'" *The Seminary Magazine*, vol. 9, no. 7 (April 1896), 349-353. Jones also wrote that upon his arrival in New York Díaz had "joined himself to some Cuban exiles, who were working in one of the cigar factories, and for a time acted as 'reader' while they worked." If Díaz indeed worked as a *lector* in a cigar factory, he joined a storied tradition of Cuban working class mobilization. See Sariego, "La lectura de tabaqueria: Literacy in the cigar makers' world, 1860s to the 1930s"; Mormino, "The Reader and the Worker: Los Lectores and the Culture of Cigarmaking in Cuba and Florida."

non-Catholic religions was liberalized after the pact of Zanjón, so Díaz's preaching in Havana was not technically illegal.[10] The new laws, however, did not prevent the Catholic hierarchy from using social opprobrium and threats to protect the privileged position of the Catholic church, and it appears that Díaz experienced some of this. The harassment may have convinced him to return to New York and obtain U.S. citizenship. Zanjón also included provisions for a general amnesty granted to all members of the insurgent army; this is what would have permitted Díaz's return to Cuba, if he had indeed been a fighter in the insurgent army.[11]

After the harassment in Cuba led Díaz to return to New York a second time, he took two important steps—baptism and U.S. citizenship—that solidified his credentials as a Cuban patriot, a faithful Baptist, and a cultural broker. Alberto was naturalized as a U.S. citizen on November 25, 1882, and his brother Alfredo on April 17, 1883.[12] In the autumn of 1882, Rev. Robert B. Montgomery baptized both Alberto Díaz and his sister Minnie at the Willoughby Avenue Baptist Church in Brooklyn. "Sister Minnie Diez" was baptized on October 29, 1882, and "Brother Albert Diase" was baptized on November 26,

[10] See the section on church and state in late colonial Cuba, in chapter one.
[11] Tichenor, "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 2. On the *Fieles de Jesús*, see chapter one, n18. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 4-7; Thomas, *Cuba, or The Pursuit of Freedom*, 294. Thomas mentions an amnesty that was finally promulgated in 1885. That Díaz seems to have returned to Cuba earlier than 1885 may indicate that his account of his participation in the Ten Years' War was embellished.
[12] National Archives, Washington, D.C., M1674, D-200. See also the original records in National Archives Northeast Region, New York City, Superior Court of New York County, Bundle 332A, Record No. 5 (Alberto) and Bundle 333, Record 176 (Alfredo). Alberto Díaz's U.S. citizenship is mentioned in Tichenor, "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 2. Although Minnie's two brothers became U.S. citizens in 1882 and 1883, no records exist to indicate that Minnie also renounced her status as a subject of the King of Spain at this time, or to suggest that she married a U.S. citizen. On women's citizenship in the U.S., see Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship*, chap. 1.

1882—just one day after he had become a U.S. citizen.[13] The brothers' decisions to become U.S. citizens mirrored those of thousands of Cubans who lived in the United States in these years. U.S. citizenship offered an extra measure of protection for Cubans whose anti-Spanish political activities put them in danger of arrest or deportation, or whose property was in danger of being seized by Spain. As the historian Louis Pérez has written, "naturalization afforded the basis to claim protection from the U.S. government in a political environment [in Cuba] noteworthy for the absence of civil rights. Indeed, U.S. citizenship redefined the legal relationship between the Cuban people and Spanish authorities."[14] Alberto Díaz clearly considered his new citizenship, in conjunction with his "rebirth" in baptism, to have changed him profoundly.

Two different narratives of how Alberto came to conversion make it clear that his reasons for rejecting the Catholic Church during his time in the United States were tied directly to his identities as a Baptist and a Cuban. In a letter that he wrote to *The Foreign Mission Journal*, a U.S. Baptist publication, in 1891, Díaz's narrative of his conversion experience is very different—less dramatic, more intellectual—from other narratives that were commonly used to give his biography in U.S. Baptist publications in the 1880s and 1890s.[15] The dominant theme here is that Díaz grew into a Baptist at the same time that he grew into a thinking, reasoning adult; Catholicism, in his telling, was a religion for the

[13] Record Book of Willoughby Avenue Baptist Church (1879-1884), Brooklyn Historical Society, p. 97, 101. Their baptisms are also mentioned in J. William Jones, "Sketch of Rev. A. J. Diaz, 'The Apostle of Cuba,'" *The Seminary Magazine* vol. 9, no. 7 (April 1896), p. 351.

[14] rez, *On Becoming Cuban*, 38-39. Pérez continues, "Existing treaty arrangements and international law entitled naturalized citizens of the United States rights that were in almost every instance superior to the guarantees available to Cubans under Spanish law.... For Cubans involved in antigovernment activities, U.S. citizenship was often the only guarantee of due process and protection from arbitrary treatment. Arrests of U.S. citizens immediately transformed an otherwise routine internal matter into an international affair.... Naturalization was also a way to create space inside Cuba, a way to defend nationality by affirming what Cubans were not—they were not Spaniards—and a way to draw distinctions between Cuban and Spanish."

[15] For the conversion narrative that Díaz usually gave, see p. 84-88.

submissive and unthinking person. He also describes the end of his Catholic faith as a long, gradual process, quite unlike the dramatic conversion experience he described in other writings. Díaz wrote that "upon this [Catholic] faith does there seem less occasion for reflection, as every thing is learned by rote." He remembered his Catholic boyhood as perfectly pleasant and himself as having "much love and devotion for the religion," saying that "I probably felt as deep an interest in my religion as Catholics do as a rule." But he also argued that this was merely because he was taught the catechism as a child, and he, like most children, was "not given to much serious reflection on any subject."[16]

He associated his gradual abandonment of Catholicism with his growth into an adult. "Using your own terms," he wrote to the *Journal*'s editor, "as an 'educated and intelligent man' I possessed no Catholic experience. It did not exist. By the time my intellect became sufficiently developed to reflect or have any ideas on the subject, I was entirely separated from the church." Two things in Díaz's life caused him to question what he had been taught as a child: his university studies and his observation of the church's hypocrisies. His childhood faith lasted, he wrote, "until I became sixteen or seventeen years of age, when I entered college and commenced studying philosophy, and all the higher studies that awaken the intellect and cause one to reflect." At the same time, he wrote that he was "observing practices of respected members, seeing the inconsistency of many of the church rules and the impossibility of others, I was brought to such strange doubts or misgivings.... Observing the many instances where members are released from serious duties with sums of money does not tend to strengthen one's faith." This was not a sudden process, he wrote, but a long gradual abandonment of his Catholic faith. "I

[16] "Diaz's Experience as a Romanist," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 2 (July 1891), p. 6. A transcription of the article can also be found in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

made no resolution to leave the church. It simply lost its charm and had no more attraction for me. It all came about unconsciously."[17]

It is especially striking how this particular narrative from Díaz's pen parallels a widely reproduced U.S. prejudice, which held that Cubans (and other Latin Americans) were childlike and thus open to social and political manipulation by priests and other autocrats.[18] Díaz describes his Catholic past largely in those terms—unthinking and following blindly—and writes that his conversion to Protestantism was brought about as much by reason as by faith. Consequently, his view of Cuban adults who remained Catholic was unfavorable, to say the least. He wrote that being a good Catholic was "a matter of obedience to their church discipline according to the priest's dictates. Those who are submissive love it, and those who cannot accept all its teachings grow rebellious or indifferent as a natural consequence." His gradual abandonment of the Catholic Church brought about what Díaz remembered as an "unsettled condition of mind and heart," during the time when he first traveled to the United States. It was then, probably in the early 1880s, that his bout of pneumonia led "a young Christian lady, her heart full of love for God" to Díaz's sickbed, and when her prayer and Bible reading led him to a new Protestant and Baptist faith.[19] This is the more conventional conversion narrative, explored below, that was published and republished in Baptist periodicals in the United States throughout the 1880s and 1890s, at the height of Díaz's fame.

In New York, Díaz joined a small community of several thousand immigrants from Cuba. The poet, revolutionary and journalist José Martí arrived in New York in 1881, and soon began writing for South American newspapers about U.S. politics, and

[17] Ibid.
[18] Pérez, Jr., *Cuba in the American Imagination*, 104-74, 268-69.
[19] "Diaz's Experience as a Romanist," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 2 (July 1891), p. 6.

for New York newspapers, especially the *Sun*, about Latin America. Cuban emigrants, Díaz and his brother Alfredo among them, worked in small cigar factories on the lower east side of Manhattan. A revolutionary *junta* of elite Cuban men and many other Cuban political clubs worked to consolidate support for renewed armed rebellion on the island. It is unclear to what extent Díaz was involved in the politics of the Cuban community in New York during his stay there in the 1880s, but he and his siblings probably read the newspapers or at least heard them read aloud. From 1880 to 1890 there were no less than eight Cuban emigré newspapers printed in New York.[20]

Around early 1883, Alberto returned to Cuba a second time and began a more formal, and bolder, evangelizing project. In New York he had been put in touch "with some noble Christian women in Philadelphia who desired to support a colporteur in Cuba, and was sent back under an appointment of that grand institution, the American Bible Society."[21] In addition to his work passing out pamphlets for the ABS, he also

[20] On the emigré press in New York, see , *On Becoming Cuban*, 44, 508. A bibliography of both Spanish- and English-language work on Martí, including his own writings, would run to several hundred volumes. The recent sources most available to readers in the United States include pez, ; Lomas, *Translating Empire* , *Inside the Monster: Writings on the United States and American Imperialism*; Martí, *Versos Sencillos*; Guerra, *The Myth of José Martí: Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba*; Pérez, Jr., *José Martí in the United States: The Florida Experience*; Belnap and Fernandez, *José Martí's "Our America"*; Kirk, , *Mentor of the Cuban Nation*; , *Revolutionary Democrat* , *Marti: Apostle of Freedom*; Thomas, *Cuba, or The Pursuit of Freedom*, 295-98; Gray, *José Martí, Cuban Patriot*. It is not possible to know the exact number of Cubans in New York in these years without doing detailed work in the census records, because U.S. authorities did not keep track of Cuban immigration until 1925. In any case, in these years Cubans who wished to gain U.S. citizenship, like the Díaz brothers, were reported on naturalization forms as being subjects of the King of Spain, so they were legally indistinguishable from Spaniards, Puerto Ricans, and Filipinos, among others. See Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants since 1882*, 183.

[21] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 2. Díaz's colporteur work with the American Bible Society is documented in ABS correspondence with its North American colporteurs, including E. T. R. Tripp, Thomas Gulick and Andrew J. McKim. Records of the American Bible Society, American Bible Society Library, New York, New York. See also Compagno, "ABS Historical Essay."

rented a hall on the Prado, the most fashionable street in the oldest part of Havana, and began preaching and holding prayer meetings there. He likely supported himself and his family by doing some medical work at this time. He probably married in these years—he and his wife, a member of the Lozano family, had a young daughter by 1888.[22] This congregation on the Prado, probably quite small and embattled, was the one that Godenas discovered in the summer of 1885. After Díaz's ordination in December of that year, the Florida Mission Board immediately employed both Alberto and his sister Minnie as missionaries in Cuba.[23]

Many Cubans shared a common experience of frequent travel between Cuba and the United States in the mid to late nineteenth century, and Alberto J. Díaz and his family were no different. These journeys allowed Cubans to lead and experience transnational politics, organizing, labor, and religion during a period when many of these activities were legally restricted in Cuba itself. These experiences were essential for the development of many Cubans' identity as Cuban, in opposition to Spain, during this period, and historians have noted that they were absolutely essential for the Cuban war effort in the 1890s.[24] For Díaz, experiences in Cuba and the United States led to his strong self-identification as a Baptist and a Cuban, a doctor and a preacher. All of these

[22] For his marriage, see chapter one and Minutes of Conference Between Dr. Landrum, George Hillyer and Dr. A. J. Diaz at Jane Church, Tuesday, January 20, 1902, in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; for his eldest daughter Esther, especially the effect her death had on him, see Díaz to Tichenor, December 3, 1901, in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; for his relation to the Lozano family, see Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898, in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898. Two of Díaz's wife's sisters, Julia and Mary Lozano, are mentioned frequently in later correspondence since they both became teachers in the Baptist schools; unfortunately I have not been able to find any record of Díaz's wife's first name.

[23] H. M. King, "Origin of the Cuban Work," *Our Home Field* vol. I (March 1889), p. 6. See also J. William Jones, "Sketch of Rev. A. J. Diaz, 'The Apostle of Cuba,'" *The Seminary Magazine* vol. 9, no. 7 (April 1896), p. 349-353.

[24] On this aspect of the development of Cuban nationalism, see rez, *On Becoming Cuban*, chap. 1 and 2. For organizing the war effort, see especially Poyo, *With All, and for the Good of All*.

elements of his identity both emphasized and resulted from his opposition to both Spain and the Catholic Church. Díaz's early biography can be seen in this way as a microcosm of the Cuban experience in the late nineteenth century.

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The conversion narrative that Alberto Díaz usually told, when examined in conjunction with his actions as pastor of the Havana Baptist congregations before 1898, show us that Díaz considered the experience of physical illness to be a prime opportunity for spiritual conversion. Díaz's training as a medical doctor likely laid the groundwork for this emphasis in his theology. He himself had experienced an evangelical conversion during a bout of pneumonia when he was living in New York. During his early years as a Baptist leader in Cuba, his congregation's experience during an 1887 smallpox epidemic in Havana convinced Díaz that Baptists should consider physical illness as a prime opportunity to minister to both the physical and spiritual needs of Cubans. This belief led him to purchase a valuable property that he hoped to use as a Baptist hospital. Finally, during the 1895 war, there is some evidence that Díaz led an effort to establish Red Cross "mobile hospitals," staffed largely by Cuban Baptist women, which would not only nurse civilian victims of the war and injured soldiers, but also seek to lead the wounded to a conversion experience. All of these episodes, pieced together from scarce records and offhand remarks in correspondence, should convince us of the remarkable importance that Díaz placed on sickness as a moment for possible spiritual intervention. This emphasis may indicate that many members of Díaz's congregation held similar beliefs,

and is certainly in line with the emphasis many Cubans placed on medical doctors as "defenders and definers of the nation."[25]

There are two elements of Díaz's conversion narrative—which he told again and again and which was often reprinted in North American Baptist publications—that draw our attention to his belief in a conceptual link between health and salvation. The first was his personal experience of pneumonia in New York, which in his telling was the event that first made him aware of the Baptist message. The second is his interest in Bible passages that deal with health, which were the stories that, in evangelical parlance, "convicted" him and led him to a feeling of spiritual conversion. The fact that health had been linked so closely to his own spiritual conversion led Díaz to a lifelong belief that sickness provided a unique window of opportunity for spiritual intervention. He often preached on passages that spoke of health and sickness, and his congregation's experiences in its early years only reinforced this belief.

In 1888, Tichenor wrote about Díaz's illness in New York in the 1870s. "The climate of New York brought upon this child of the sun a severe attack of pneumonia," while Díaz was living in a tenement or boarding house, possibly near or with other Cubans exiled from the island. When he became a U.S. citizen on November 23, 1882, Díaz's address was given as 250 Thompson St., near Washington Square in lower Manhattan, and he was apparently working as a cigar maker.[26] The others in the house knew that Díaz was very ill, and Alice Tucker, "a young lady, who was a Christian and a Baptist" visited him, read to him from her English New Testament, and prayed for him. When he had recovered, "he inquired what was the little book, out of which she read

[25] Klein, "Spaniards and the Politics of Memory in Cuba," 9.
[26] NARA I, M1674 (Soundex to New York petitions for naturalization), roll #53.

every day, and why, after reading it, 'she closed her eyes and talked to herself?'" It may seem strange that Díaz, who grew up Catholic and whose mother remained a fervent Catholic, did not recognize the Bible or prayer when he saw them. Surely some of his confusion was due to the language barrier; his English was often described as "broken" in these early years, and Tucker almost certainly did not know any Spanish.[27] At the same time, he may have never seen a Bible in the vernacular, English or Spanish; at this time Spanish-language Bibles were extremely rare in Cuba, and priests read from the Latin Bible at Mass. Díaz also later explained that he saw a profound difference between Catholic and Baptist practices of prayer; Catholic prayer was done in the church building, before the altar, or with the aid of the rosary or lighting candles. He claimed not to recognize Tucker's less formal style of prayer, which took place in the home and, as he saw it, was far more fervent than Catholic prayer. Tichenor wrote, "His heart was touched by the fact that a young lady, pure, refined, cultured, should take such interest in a poor, exiled foreigner as to watch by his couch of suffering and pray for his recovery. That was a new religion to him." Díaz's fascination with this "new religion," which had led someone to take a direct interest in him in his hour of need, led him to discover that he could get a Spanish Bible from the American Bible Society. He quickly devoured the text.[28]

Díaz's moment of conversion, an all-important experience in Baptists' and other evangelical Protestant's narratives of their spiritual journeys, also occurred through his interest in Bible passages that speak of illness. For Díaz, the moment of conviction,

[27] Even as late as 1896, a Boston newspaper reported that Díaz "speaks the English language imperfectly, but he has plenty of ideas." Díaz himself apologized "for using your beautiful language in this broken way, but I do get mixed up with the singulars and the plurals." "Cheers for Cuba," *Boston Daily Globe*, June 26, 1896, p. 6.
[28] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888), p. 1.

repentance and faith came as he was reading the Gospel of Luke. Tichenor recounted that,

> while reading Luke's account of the cure of blind Bartimeus,[29] his mind and heart were strongly attracted to the story. The helplessness of the poor blind man and the wonderful goodness and power of Jesus overwhelmed his soul with deep emotion. Dwelling upon it for a time he tried to read on, but before he had finished another chapter, he was drawn back by some mysterious influence to read it again. This was repeated time after time, until at length, as his soul was absorbed by this picture of infinite love relieving the darkness and suffering and poverty of the poor blind man, the thought broke upon his soul that *he was just like blind Bartimeus*. That blind man had no eyes with which to see the Saviour, though he was standing before him. Neither had *he* eyes in his soul, with which to see a Saviour so precious, a helper so divine. A poor guilty sinner, he too was blind, and could not see Jesus. The thought overwhelmed him; he fell prostrate upon the floor of the room. For a long time he lay in speechless agony. He had never prayed—*he knew not how to pray*. He could find no words in which to couch the agony of his breaking heart; his moaning and his tears were the only utterances he could command; until, at last, he cried out in the very words of blind Bartimeus, as though his soul was but echoing that wail of anguish: 'Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me.'

For a doctor who specialized in "diseases of the eye," this must have been a powerful story indeed, providing a special insight into the problems of physical and spiritual blindness. Díaz believed that the former was merely a Biblical analogy for the latter, and likely believed that no matter his own medical skill at curing blindness or other physical maladies, the real problem for humanity was its spiritual ill health, its alienation from God. The way in which Díaz described this passage, and his response to it, also reveals the importance Díaz placed on experiencing this type of conversion.

[29] Luke 18:35-43. "As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, 'Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.' He called out, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' 'Lord, I want to see,' he replied. Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.' Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God."

In the autumn of 1887 and into early 1888, Díaz's small congregation, along with the rest of Havana, suffered through a terrible smallpox epidemic. In Havana alone, records indicate that at least 1,654 people died from smallpox in 1887, and 500 people in 1888.[30] Díaz, as both a medical doctor and an evangelist, led his congregation to participate in the city's vaccination efforts. But their work clearly extended beyond vaccination. He wrote that he and his staff prayed with sick people and their families, and helped their neighbors with food, clothing, and nursing.[31] Their attention to the spiritual needs of both the afflicted and their families points to the importance that Díaz placed on the theological problem of illness. In 1890 Díaz wrote to Rev. J. William Jones, the editor of the Baptist Home Mission Board's monthly publication *Our Home Field,* about his methods of conversion during a person's illness. During another season of sickness, Díaz wrote that he labored to take care of "our church members, as they are too destitute to procure medical aid," and that he "also assisted several that were not members, although they attended our church." By offering his services as a medical doctor, he had been "able to speak to them upon the subject of their salvation, and through their sickness they have been saved—are now converted, they being specially blessed through what might have been considered their misfortune. The kind Saviour employing his own means to bring His lost ones back to the fold."[32] Díaz used physical illness not only as an opportunity to care for his congregants' physical health, but as an opportunity to care for their spiritual health as well. He offered his medical expertise to those who had come to

[30] Heiser and Villoldo, *A Note on Smallpox in the Philippine Islands; Smallpox and Vaccination in Cuba*, 4. The population of the municipality of Havana was probably around 200,000 in these years; see chapter one, n29.
[31] For more on the Baptist congregation's activities during the smallpox epidemic, and the consequences of their work, see chapter one.
[32] Díaz to Jones, March 17, 1890, published in "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 2, no. 9 (May 1890), p. 1.

services, but had not been baptized or "converted." By reaching out to them in their time of need with the promise of both physical and spiritual health, Díaz sought to make illness into a blessing: "through their sickness they have been saved."

Díaz's emphasis on the immediate needs of people in Havana, including their need for medical care, led him to envision a comprehensive Baptist system of social services that could place Cubans on the path toward conversion. He believed that the congregation in Havana should "have every institution necessary for the completion of our work, strictly Baptist colleges, cemetery, hospital, printing office and all complete, to carry out all our purposes, without interference or opposition, and in many instances, being a matter of great importance and economy to us." As of 1890, Díaz and his congregation were already "making preparations for organizing a Baptist hospital here in Havana."[33] Aside from his own belief that sickness provided a potent opportunity for proselytizing, he thought that Baptist institutions would give the congregation autonomy from Catholic and secular institutions that could potentially hinder them in their work. It may have been the 1887-88 smallpox epidemic that first convinced Díaz of Havana's need for a private Baptist hospital, where he could combine his medical skills with a consistent program of proselytizing. In February 1894 he took out a mortgage that allowed him to purchase a large piece of property at Calzada de los Buenos Aires No. 33, in the municipality of Havana but outside the central portion of the city.[34] In 1898, a visiting committee from the HMB described the property: it "contains about five acres of

[33] Ibid.
[34] The address is given in a Resolution of the Home Mission Board, March 14, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 8, folder 17a; the circumstances of the mortgage are discussed in chapter four and in Tichenor to Hillyer, April 25, 1902, quoted in "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 31, SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9.

ground, and has on it a one story residence with considerable room therein, and two smaller out-houses."[35] Before the 1895 war began, Díaz had already converted part of the main building into a hospital. A caption to the photo printed in the August 1895 issue of *Our Home Field* gave a short description of the hospital. The photo showed "the Children's Ward. It contains twenty-five cots and four nurses. Besides this ward there are four large apartments for ladies where four beds could be put. Last year Dr. A.J. Diaz performed eighty-one surgical operations, six of which were laparotomy, and only one case died. We need to push this new work."[36] The accompanying story asked for donations to support the work of the hospital. It is unclear how long the hospital was able to stay open during the 1895 war; sometime during the war the congregation apparently converted the property into a Baptist orphan's home, which had also been closed because of a lack of funds by 1898.[37] By November of that year, a Catholic society was operating an orphan's asylum in the building, paying rent to the Baptists.[38]

There is some evidence that, despite initial opposition from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Díaz also set up what he called White Cross mobile hospitals during the 1895 war.[39] His goal was to provide medical services to the soldiers and

[35] Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898; in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898. The mortgage and properties are discussed in more detail in chapter four.
[36] "Havana Baptist Hospital," *Our Home Field* vol. 7, no. 11 (August 1895), p. 1. See Fig. 2.
[37] Handwritten notes on Joerg family (probably made by Una Roberts Lawrence during an interview with Gertrude Joerg), undated, SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 17.
[38] Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898; in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898.
[39] In a meeting of the Home Mission Board on March 18, 1895, Díaz proposed establishing "in connection with the Mission a charity known as the Red Cross, for the purpose of ministering to the wounded of both armies." The Board declined to take up this project, because it "might be mis-understood and considered not germane to our work, and...because of the want of power in the Board to undertake such a work." It is possible that Díaz or another organizer received assistance or authorization from the International Red Cross for this project, but I have been unable to find documentation of such a relationship. Díaz may have simply been inspired by the

insurgents fighting in the war and to any civilians caught in the crossfire, but also to encourage spiritual conversions among the wounded. The *Mission Journal,* a Southern Baptist publication, frequently reprinted letters from Díaz and other Cuban ministers about their activities during the war. During the fall of 1895 they often reported on Díaz's "Red Cross stations" or "Blood Hospitals." In September 1895, for instance, Díaz wrote to Tichenor that his church had decided "to send another committee of the Red Cross to the field," and that he had recently traveled by train to "the city of Sagua, St. Domingo and other towns" to organize the project. The clinics were joint projects between the Baptist congregations and local medical staff. Díaz wrote that he "organize [sic] there with a doctor, one station in each place, three in number. The station itself put the mens [sic] and pay them, and we as a church provide them with medicine and instruments for the operation." Although Díaz made sure to state that "we *are neutral*," such work was not without danger during wartime, even when the main theater of war was much further east. Díaz told a harrowing story of how "insurgents in number of 600....well armed, all on horseback" attacked his train to Sagua la Grande, which had been carrying 200 Spanish soldiers eastward, "for nearly a mile." No one in his car was injured, but he reported that he had "the heart between the teeth" as he laid down on the floor of the rail car to escape the bullets that "fly through the windows like a hail stone's storm."[40] Díaz

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work of the Red Cross, and wanted to do something similar; he later called the program the "White Cross." Apparently overcoming their initial objections, the Board later published news about Díaz's wartime White Cross work in its mission publications.

[40] The story of an attack on Díaz's train is difficult to confirm. The insurgent army commanded by Maceo and Gómez, which began to invade western Cuba from its base in Oriente province in December 1895, was not anywhere near Sagua la Grande or Santo Domingo (which are just northwest of the city of Santa Clara) in September or October of that year. It is possible that Díaz's train was attacked by common "bandits," and that he did not know who attacked the train or embellished the story to impress his North American friends with the urgency of his situation. It is also possible that he invented the story entirely in a ploy to raise more funds. For the

again connected this medical work with the spiritual work of his congregation: "This work is very important for our church [to] give us sympathy and influence."[41]

The goals of this project were twofold: to care for the wounded of both the Cuban and Spanish armies, and to encourage conversion experiences among the wounded. By November of 1895 the Baptist *Mission Journal* reported that Díaz had set up seven of these stations, "distributed throughout the center of the Island where the fighting occurs, and where the Spanish Government has about 20,000 soldiers." The clinics' roster of staff included "a native physician, selected from the locality where the station is situated, two Baptist women nurses, and usually about ten male helpers." Each clinic was assigned a "territory in which it is expected to operate." Within that territory, the staff was to "move closely after the columns of troops, and when a battle occurs the men connected with the hospital go immediately on to the battle-ground and carry out the wounded from both armies as rapidly as possible to the hospital tent, where they receive immediate surgical and other necessary attention." The *Mission Journal* claimed that the hospitals had saved many lives, and that both armies appreciated the service. But it went on to highlight the other goal of this project: conversion.

> It therefore becomes a very easy matter for the Baptist women in connection with these stations to introduce the subject of Christianity to these people. They are well supplied with tracts and leaflets containing appropriate portions of the Bible, and other suitable literature. These they distribute among the wounded and all others with whom they come in contact...they at once have the willing ear of many who have never heard of the plan of salvation. These Christian women are selected and sent out from the Baptist churches as nurses and missionaries.

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insurgent army during the fall of 1895, see Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898*, chap. 7.

[41] "Letter from Diaz," *The Mission Journal* (October 1895), p. 26. Emphasis in original.

The article also printed what it said was a translation of an official document that the Governor General of Cuba, the Spanish official in charge of the island's government, had sent to Díaz to recognize the work of these Baptist "Red Cross stations," or as he called them, "sanitary delegations." It listed five more cities (Jovellanos, Cardenas, Camajuani, Cruces, and Santiago de Cuba) where Díaz had reported wanting to open clinics.[42]

At some points these mobile hospitals seem to have been a personal project of Díaz, rather than a congregational or Baptist project. In a letter of November 14, 1895, Díaz wrote that he had gone "to the interior and help over thirteen wounds that I found in my way. I distribute among them religious tracts and the general international by-laws with regard to sickness and wounds in battle." He made no mention of Baptist nurses or the Red Cross.[43] Letters from the Cuban Baptist ministers José V. Cova and José O'Halloran, reprinted in *The Mission Journal* around this same time, do not mention any White Cross or medical activities.[44] Still, Díaz's identity as a Baptist seems to have been key for him in this medical work: regarding his own attention to the wounded and the laws of war in the interior, he wrote, "Our Baptist movement is highly appreciated at

[42] "Red Cross in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (November 1895), p. 27-28. The printed translation of Díaz's letter from the Governor General was dated September 28, 1895, and signed by "Carlos Munos, Secretary." It named Díaz as the "Sub-Inspector of Hospitality, Gentlemen of the Red Cross."

[43] Díaz to M. M. Welch, November 14, 1895, reprinted as "Brother Diaz' letter," *The Mission Journal* (January 1896), p. 31.

[44] A letter from Rev. J. V. Cova to Tichenor, reprinted in *The Mission Journal* (November 1895), p. 33, makes no mention of any Red Cross activities, but does poignantly discuss some of the deprivations of war. Cova was at that time the minister to a Baptist congregation in the Pilar district of Havana. A letter from José K. O'Halloran, dated from Havana and reprinted in *The Mission Journal* (February 1896), p. 33-34, does not make any mention of Red Cross activities. In 1895 it seems that O'Halloran was still preaching at various mission stations in Havana, perhaps including missions in the Cerro, Vedado, and Los Puentes districts, all of which he was reported to be tending in 1889. For O'Halloran's whereabouts, see Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889, and "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* (October 1889), p. 1. Information about O'Halloran's activities in the years between 1889 and 1895 is scarce.

present by all this people."[45] The fact that Díaz seems to have gone ahead with this medical project, despite having no financial or logistical support from Southern Baptists in the United States, indicates both that he believed deeply in the need for medical care in wartime Cuba and that the North Americans did not fully understand why he was so committed to linking medical and mission work.

In October 1895, Díaz traveled to the United States again, to raise money for his Baptist hospital in Havana. He wrote Tichenor from New York, where he was convalescing with a cold, after a visit to Boston to see J. S. Paine, a longtime benefactor of the Havana congregation who often wintered in Cuba. "I came here with the purpose to see if I can raise $600 for our hospital.... Operation and treatment is all right, but have no money to feed them [patients] at all. So I took my magic lantern and two hundred different views from Cuba and make up my mind to spend a month or two in this country, if was necessary, in order to collect that amount." Paine donated $350, and Díaz confessed to Tichenor that he might rush back to Cuba with just that money, to give it "to my poor little Cuban childrens [sic] before I spent part of it in traveling expenses." By this point it was clear to Díaz that the war would threaten his plans for a Baptist community independent from Catholic influence, and he had nowhere else to turn for help but to his friends in the United States. "The present war we have in Cuba has break [*sic*] all my plans for the self-support of the hospital. We have now plenty sick people but no money." At the same time, he recognized that his health-related projects were harder

[45] Díaz to M. M. Welch, November 14, 1895, reprinted as "Brother Diaz' letter," *The Mission Journal* (January 1896), p. 31. In this same letter Díaz was concerned with proving just how "modern" his congregation was; he wrote, "I baptized in my church four young ladies who belong to good families here, and the congregation that Sunday was nearly eight hundred. I preached about the 'new born,' and have many illustrations from electricity and its power to show the way that we can communicate with our Master."

to justify to the Southern Baptists than support for the congregations or schools—he knew that they did not share his intense association of sickness with salvation. "I did not make an application to the Board [to support the hospital] because I know this is something else besides the *missions*, and your funds is to be use [*sic*] in missions. But how could I wish to impress upon the minds of our Baptist people the importance of this work?"[46]

Díaz's theology of illness and salvation was a central tenet of his faith throughout his life. Although his Southern partners did not always fully understand or appreciate this belief, it continued to influence his actions and his congregation's ministries.

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Díaz's position as cultural broker both catalyzed and reinforced the shared cultural and spiritual beliefs that drove the pre-1895 partnership between Cuban and Southern Baptists. His time in New York during the 1870s and 1880s, like that of other Cubans, gave him a knowledge of and comfort with U.S. culture that was not available to many other Latin Americans. His time spent traveling, speaking and raising money in the U.S. South during the 1880s and 1890s opened another opportunity to him to build relationships with influential Southern Baptists. In Havana, Díaz gathered a group of Cubans who, for reasons having to do with their own social and political context and personal backgrounds, were able to understand, agree with, and work within certain

[46] "Diaz in New York," *The Mission Journal* (December 1895), p. 33. Emphasis in original.

North American and Southern Baptist beliefs and structures as Díaz presented them.[47] In the United States, he awakened in Southern Baptists a vision for global evangelical conversion, beginning in Cuba, which would occupy them for much of the next century.

My approach toward Díaz's centrality, as well as my examination of how Cubans and Southerners saw each other, borrows from what historian Eric Hinderaker has called a "relationalist" view of culture. This method of looking at cross-cultural relationships holds that each dynamic "identity is shaped in the experience of encounter itself," and that "Brokers, rather than being marginalized or endangered by forays across boundaries, were especially active in inventing the cultural identities that they were empowered to represent."[48] Díaz was this kind of cultural broker between Cubans and Southerners. He attracted a particular kind of Cuban through his public preaching in Havana; he was creating a cohesive community that would be comprehensible to Southerners and that, in turn, would understand North American Baptist norms. In the same way, the stories about Cuba and Cubans that Díaz told to Southern Baptist leaders shaped their interest in and understanding of the Cuban congregations, Cuba as a whole, and the Southern Baptist role there. The shared understandings, beliefs and structures that both constituted and grew out of this relationship were built through shared experience, and Díaz mediated those experiences. Neither this transnational religious community, nor the culture they shared across borders, was static. As cultural broker, Díaz played an essential role in

[47] The beliefs and structures that I see as most important in this relationship are outlined in chapter three. Those shared cultural elements, I argue, were a dynamic product of the community gathered in Havana (described in chapter one), Díaz's life experience (described in this chapter), and the process of partnership itself (described in chapter three).

[48] Hinderaker, "Translation and Cultural Brokerage," 368. Hinderaker borrows from and develops the ideas of anthropologist Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*; Clifford, *Routes*.

shaping the communities and in explaining their key elements to participants on both sides.

Díaz's close friendship with Tichenor complemented and facilitated the Cuban's central position as cultural broker of this transnational community. Beginning in the 1880s, Díaz carried on a remarkably detailed and personal correspondence with Tichenor, which lasted until Tichenor's death in December 1902. The correspondence makes it clear that both men considered the other to be a dear friend as well as an important colleague. The friendship was built through shared experiences of travel in both Cuba and the U.S. South, and during a period when each man considered it his life's work to build the Baptist presence in Cuba. Each man saw his complementary parallel in the other, and idealized the other.

Díaz's impressive credentials led the Southern leaders to make the most positive—and at times outlandish—predictions for him and for the congregations in Cuba. The Southern Baptists lionized Díaz, held him up as an "apostle," and gave him most of the credit for the success of the Cuban Baptist church, to the exclusion of both other Cuban Baptist leaders and the sociopolitical conditions that catalyzed the congregation's growth. Their assessments of him explain as much about what Southern Baptist leaders thought was important as they do about Díaz himself; the Southerners presented Díaz not only as an ideal Cuban but as an ideal man. Southern Baptist leaders presented Díaz in three roles: as a man, as a professional, and as a preacher. The combination of these three roles shows us what Southern Baptists believed was the ideal in each of them, and thus why so many of them believed Díaz was the man destined to evangelize the entire island of Cuba. In short, they presented Díaz as a "great man," as a

messiah-figure who had been specially chosen by God and blessed with particular gifts in order to fulfill a daunting task—the conversion of Cuba.

Many Southern Baptist correspondents and publications presented Díaz as an ideal man: kind, genial, modest, and intelligent. He seemed to personalize everything that made for a good Baptist, a general excellence which was perceived as both thoroughly normal and thoroughly remarkable. Cox wrote, "He is witty.... Mr. Diaz is full of genial humor, passing easily into melting pathos.... But Bro. Diaz would be the last one to admit that he was anybody unusual. When Dr. Tichenor, upon one occasion, was speaking from his heart of his estimate of the man, and unconsciously paid him a high tribute, the latter, who was acting as interpreter to the congregation, looked appealingly to the Doctor and modestly said, 'I cannot translate that.'" In 1889, Tichenor wrote that Díaz had "a face brimming over with kindness and good humor," and that "he is a modest, quiet, unassuming gentleman...with a politeness born of a warm and noble nature. You rarely meet a man more truly and constantly kind, and considerate of others welfare." But Tichenor did not stop there. Díaz, in his view, had gifts that made him an ideal cultural broker. "He sees through new things with the quickness of a woman's intuition," Tichenor wrote admiringly. This intuition meant that Díaz understood how to act when among a "foreign" people. "When associating with Americans," Tichenor wrote, "I have never known him to omit a proper action or to be guilty of a blunder. In the many public addresses I have heard him deliver in half-formed English, I have never known him to fail to interest his audience or to do a thing which diminished either their respect for him or their confidence in him. He does and says the right thing at the right time and in the right way, as naturally and uneffectedly as though he was born to do or say just that

thing."[49] The Cuban, with his "woman's intuition" and kindness, understood how to interest North Americans in his work. Southern Baptist periodicals that described Díaz in these terms were doing so for a reason, of course; these were precisely the years when the Home Mission Board was fundraising to buy the Jané building, and describing your most famous missionary in Cuba as an ideal man who understood the American way of doing things was simply a good strategy. That should not prevent us from noting, however, the terms in which Díaz was described: they tell us that at this time, Southern Baptist leaders considered these traits to be those most important in a man, even (or especially) a Cuban one.

The Southern description of Díaz as a professional was more varied. They were particularly impressed by his occupation as a learned and thoroughly modern medical doctor, which contrasted so favorably with the "day jobs" of many contemporaneous Southern itinerant preachers. Southerners also described Díaz with some frequency as honorable or incorruptible, organized, influential, and reasonable. Cox, for example, raved, "Bro. Diaz is moreover a fine physician, which is an invaluable qualification for his many-sided position. He charges nothing for his practice, though his income from this source would be $2,400, or more, a year." Díaz's medical work was also part of his remarkable and incorruptible work ethic. Cox wrote, "He makes medical and pastoral calls all day, preaches usually each night, and three times on Sundays. He thinks only of the Lord's work; to give it up he cannot be bribed nor intimidated, though in constant danger of assassination, more so than is generally known." Moreover, Cox reported, Díaz had the skills of a manager. "He has remarkable executive ability, laying plans, observing details, organizing the various branches and departments of labor, anticipating needs,

[49] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889.

making a little go a long way, meeting and overcoming difficulties." Along many of the same lines, Hawthorne wrote, "Diaz has perhaps more influence than any one on the Island of Cuba. He is regarded not only as a man of superior intelligence and of commanding eloquence, but as a great Christian philanthropist." In 1888, Tichenor made sure to mention that Díaz "was a graduate of the University of Havana, in both literary and medical departments. While in New York, he resolved to perfect himself in his medical studies, and prepare himself to treat more successfully diseases of the eye."[50] A year later, Tichenor elaborated, "He delights in surgery and is thoroughly skilled in that branch of his profession." Tichenor in particular was also impressed by "the scope of his knowledge—in many directions. He learns everything and forgets nothing. All the sciences of his college and medical course, a good practical knowledge of mechanics, of commercial affairs, of history, of the principles of law and government, but above all, a knowledge of men, impresses you that he is no ordinary man."[51] His fellow Cubans also praised Díaz's work ethic and diverse skills. In 1891, Cova wrote, "Bro. Diaz [is] as unwearied as ever. He has no rest attending the several branches of the work; he is not to be found for an hour at any place; he heals the sick and attend the courts of justice; he runs after to see our cemetery business. He preaches in the evening...and his kind manners attract, so much as his words, many people to Christ."[52] Díaz was, to the eyes of these admirers, a renaissance man and a professional to boot.

[50] Tichenor, "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888). Cox and Hawthorne's opinions of Díaz are from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6.
[51] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889.
[52] Cova to editor of *Our Home Field*, reprinted in "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 6 (February 1891), p. 3; typed transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

Part of the Southern Baptist description of Díaz, as both a professional and as a preacher, was the assertion that he was a great leader. This included admiration at Díaz's nationalist and military credentials, as well as the assertion that he possessed the natural qualities of a leader such as charisma and timing. In 1888, while describing an incident when Díaz had managed to disperse an anti-Catholic mob in the town of Las Puentes, Tichenor wrote, "It would have been a great calamity, of course, if the mob had carried out their purpose and burned the church or killed the priest, and the Romanists would have used it to the greatest advantage against our people. But the same over-ruling Providence, which has given Diaz such wonderful influence with the people that they obey his voice as that of a born prince among them, brought him on the scene at just the right time, and the terrible calamity was averted."[53] In 1891, Cox wrote, "An analysis of his character would show him to be a born general, fearless and quick and at the same time cautious, magnetic and modest, indomitable, and thoroughly consecrated." In 1889 Tichenor's profile of Díaz in *Our Home Field* included not only the high-flying nationalist sentiments typical of the nineteenth century, but also the support for the cause of Cuban liberation that was common in the United States at the time. Describing Díaz as "a Captain of cavalry in the rebel army of Cuba" who had "endured incredible hardships," Tichenor wrote that Díaz's military experience had "quickened into highest activity his vigilance, his cautiousness, his courage, his sagacity." The "new insight into human nature" that Díaz gained from war had served him well; Tichenor, who may have been seeing something of himself in the Cuban, thought that Díaz had "carried the results of this experience into the religious conflict now being waged in Cuba." To Tichenor, Díaz was "not without ambition of the nobler sort," but his crowning glory was that he

[53] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888).

had "laid himself and Cuba, his one cherished idol, at the feet of Jesus." This act, Tichenor believed, had brought the great Cuban leader some peace of mind. "For Him [Díaz] accepts ceaseless toil and constant watchfulness... never ending dangers, persecutions in their most trying form... bears them all in his mind and on his heart with a serenity of soul and a cheerfulness of spirit as though he daily walked Beulah's heights and was sustained by visions of the Better Land."[54] With such a leader as this, Southern Baptist readers were meant to think, the evangelization of Cuba simply could not fail.

Southern Baptist writers depicted Díaz's gifts as a preacher with frequency, enthusiasm, and detail. This is not remarkable, considering that for them his main function was as a preacher and revivalist. However, Southerners chose four themes, over and over again, with which to emphasize his greatness as a preacher. First, they wrote that even despite the opposition and persecutions of the Catholic hierarchy, he was having remarkable success in converting even the most loyal Catholic Cubans—including his own mother—to Protestantism. Second, they wrote admiringly of Díaz's emotional investment in his congregation, and even seemed to approve of what other commentators of the time might have seen as a "typically Latin" over-emotionalism. For their beloved preacher, it seems that even the stereotypes of the time could be seen as positives. Third, they described Díaz as a faithful Christian and a loyal Baptist, even though he had had no formal Baptist theological education—making his loyalty to Baptist doctrines all the more astonishing. Finally, they described him as a remarkable orator, even though most of them could not understand his preaching in Spanish. This last characteristic was the best documented and the most frequently repeated.

[54] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889.

The sheer size of the crowds that Díaz attracted to hear his preaching was often emphasized in Baptist publications, but Southerners also made a point of writing that Díaz managed to lead many of these people to conversion experiences.[55] These were frequently presented as successes that were even more miraculous because of the obstacles faced by the Cubans—and why shouldn't the preacher get emotional over such works of God? In 1888, for instance, Tichenor wrote, "Our noble missionary has toiled on amidst the most cruel persecutions, which have really 'turned out to the furtherance of the gospel,' as when he was put in one cell and his Bibles in another, and he not only preached the gospel in the prison, but God so over-ruled and blessed it that both the jailor and the mayor of the city were converted, and Diaz baptized them." In explaining a bit about Díaz's biography and experiences in Cuba, Tichenor wrote, "He had remarkable success as a colporteur, and steadily pursued his work in spite of bitter persecutions. Before he knew it he had become a preacher of great power and wonderful success. His brother was converted and became a colporteur of the American Bible Society, many others renounced Romanism for the simple faith of the gospel, and 'the word of the Lord grew and multiplied' greatly in the island."[56]

The story of the conversion and baptism of Díaz's Catholic mother was one that was frequently repeated, and which contained within itself both the emphases on successful conversion and on Díaz's emotionalism. Tichenor related, "It is an incident of thrilling interest that the mother of Diaz who had so bitterly opposed and persecuted him was the first one to be baptized, and when the loving son received her into the water his feelings so overcame him that he forgot the baptismal formula which he had carefully

[55] For the size of the congregations at Baptist services in the 1880s, see chapter one.
[56] "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888).

prepared and could only say: 'Here Jesus, this is my mother,' as he 'buried her in the liquid grave.'" Who could fault the evangelist for being emotional over the conversion and salvation of his own mother? Argabrite, too, commented on the appropriateness of Díaz's emotions at the dedication service in 1891. "I cannot close without saying a word in reference to Bro. Diaz," the Virginian wrote, "whose cup of joy on Sunday was full, so full that he could hardly speak in his native tongue. When he came to speak in English for the benefit of the English-speaking people of his congregation, while thanking them, and through them all those who had aided in the purchase of the temple for his God, great tears were seen to trickle down his cheeks as he spoke, which told us that his heart was full."[57] The note of admiration in Argabrite's voice is unmistakable.

Díaz's faith and his adherence to Baptist doctrine never failed to gain the admiration of Southern Baptist leaders, particularly those concerned with issues such as purity of Baptist doctrine and opposition to Catholics. In 1889, Tichenor raved, "We would not fear to trust him in a public discussion of the great principles of our faith with any man the Catholic church can put forward as his opponent." His knowledge of Baptist teachings, however, was secondary to his faith for some Southerners. In that same issue of *Our Home Field*, Tichenor admitted, "what wins you to the man and binds him to you forever is his love of the Savior, which dominates his whole being and constantly controls every faculty and power. If any man I have ever known could say with truth 'for me to live is Christ,' that man is Alberto J. Diaz.... In his love of Divine truth, he is as unswerving as the needle to the pole." Part of the reason that Baptist leaders so admired Díaz was their understanding of how Díaz had come to be a Baptist. Although his

[57] Argabrite's account is from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6; Tichenor on Díaz's mother is in "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1888).

conversion narrative was in some ways quite typical, they were intrigued by his examination of the different U.S. Protestant denominations and his reasoning behind choosing the Baptist church. Díaz "became a Baptist after a long and patient investigation of many of the creeds and practices of other denominations," Tichenor recounted. Other Protestant groups—Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Methodists—"were carefully examined and compared with the Word of God. In his judgment none of them were conformed to Scriptural teachings, and he could not enter either of these communions." With his own idea in his mind about what true Christian doctrine would be, Díaz "chanced one Sunday to visit Dr. McArthur's church in New York. At the close of the sermon the ordinance of baptism was administered. That struck him, as it has thousands of others, as the true baptism." This certainty that one of the core Baptist teachings was, to put it simply, true, drew many Southern Baptist leaders to Díaz. He had no Baptist education and no hereditary claim to the church. Instead, he simply compared Baptist doctrine "with the teachings of his Bible. Since then he has been a Baptist, not by accident, not by social influence, but by the force of truth, and he would as soon think of yielding up his hope in Christ as of surrendering any one of the least of the commandments of his King."[58] His logic, they thought, proved their own argument about the biblical nature of the Southern Baptist Convention.

It was Díaz's charisma and his skill as an orator, however, which garnered the most attention from visiting Southern Baptists. Professor Cox of Alabama wrote, "He is an orator of the first order. He should be heard in his own tongue, addressing his own people, to appreciate his impassioned style, and to see how he sways an audience. He understands the art of seizing and holding the attention of a multitude." Cox proceeded to

[58] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889.

relate one of Díaz's stories that had apparently been told to him, or perhaps he was at the meeting and it had been translated for him. "At a miscellaneous assembly of some 1,000 persons under a tent," Cox wrote, "where Mr. Diaz was conducting a meeting, preaching on superstition, he caught their ear by telling of his Catholic cook, who was accustomed to whip her idol when it did not bring her the blessings for which she prayed to it, and who one day was observed to tie a string around its leg and let the image down into the well to drown, as a punishment or extortion." Such images would surely amuse and horrify good Southern Baptists, as well as attract Cubans to Baptist meetings. Tichenor, too, frequently asserted that even the language barrier could not hide Díaz's power as a speaker. "He is an orator," Tichenor wrote in 1889, and "those who have heard him speak in English know little of his ability as a speaker. In his own language, of which he is complete master, he arrests the attention of his audiences with the first sentence, and holds them to the last." Tichenor himself had seen and heard of the power of Díaz's speaking, such as the time when he addressed "an audience of 3,000 people to which he spoke in Havana on the question, 'Who is the heretic, the Catholic or the Baptist?'" Díaz's answer moved the crowd so much "that they carried him home, more than a mile, on their shoulders." For Tichenor, as for many other Southern Baptists who felt the same way, the language barrier simply melted when Díaz spoke. Tichenor wrote, "When in Havana I listened to him as attentively as though he were speaking in English, though I understood not a sentence he uttered. I was in full sympathy with him throughout his sermon. He held me by the earnestness of his utterances and the magnetism of his manner." Whether in English or Spanish, to Cubans or North Americans, Tichenor clearly believed that Díaz was a preacher of rare natural ability. "As a speaker, he is self-

possessed without self-consciousness," Tichenor wrote, "modest and yet free from embarrassment, animated without being boisterous, fluent and yet not verbose, bright and sparkling without being facetious, combining humility in his manner and boldness in his declarations. Often by an apt illustration, or an unexpected turn of thought, throwing an electric brilliancy over the theme he is discussing. His clearness of statement, simplicity of expression, and force of conviction make his audience think his thoughts and accept his conclusions."[59] The message, clearly, was that Southern Baptists were lucky to be in partnership with such a man and such an evangelist.

Southern Baptist leaders were simply thrilled with Díaz; their praise of him often rose to the realm of hyperbole. They soon took to calling him an apostle. Cox, for instance, wrote, "The day of apostles is not past. I am impressed with the apostle to the Cubans each time I see him, I am thankful to God for him, and receive from contact with him new enthusiasm.... Those who know him best regard Bro. Diaz as the greatest missionary American Baptists have ever had, not excepting Judson, and consider that we should give him every support and facility while we have him." Rev. Porter of Florida thought "our grand, prudent, earnest, consecrated missionary, Rev. Alberto J. Diaz, is evidently God's chosen instrument to dispel the darkness and bring deliverance to this people.... one has to visit this land of superstition and priestcraft to understand the full import of what he is doing and what remains to be done." For Porter, Díaz was "a man fearless and full of holy magnetism, zealous, full of indomitable energy, eloquent, and a born ruler of men.... we can say without the slightest reservation that it is our firm belief that the Cuban work is the grandest achievement which has been made for the cause of missions since the days of Paul." To close his long profile of Díaz that ran in *Our Home*

[59] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889.

Field in 1889, Tichenor simply wrote, "Such is Diaz, the Apostle of Cuba. God grant him long life and abundant blessing!"[60]

Southern Baptist adulation of Díaz meant that these leaders often ignored the importance of other factors—both other individuals and the local sociopolitical context—in their assessment of why the Cuban revival and the Baptist church were doing so well. They sometimes slighted the efforts of other Cuban Baptist ministers including Alberto's brother, Alfredo, and José V. Cova, who would later be one of their greatest allies. In 1891 Cova reported that at the dedication service, Tichenor "took Bro. Diaz by the hand and show him to the people, saying: 'Here is the man who brought the Gospel to this people; being without friends, without money, without credit, with his Bible only. This is the man who has realized all this you see now.'" Cova, who served the Baptist church at least as faithfully as did his more famous friend, and who certainly knew more about the political and social context in which the Cuban Baptists worked, could have had mixed feelings about that moment. Along the same lines, in 1889 Tichenor reported that Alberto's brother "Alfredo V. is a man of ability, but perhaps not so fascinating a preacher as Alberto."[61] Tichenor's praise of the other Cuban preachers could be particularly underwhelming. In 1889, he wrote, "The Rev. Alberto J. Diaz stands pre-eminent among the Baptists of Cuba. The first to embrace the faith of the Gospel, he naturally became the leader of mission work in that Island, a place which he easily holds by virtue of his ability, eloquence and thorough consecration.... Along with him are associated others, who though men of lesser note are not unworthy to share with him the

[60] Cox's assessment is from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6; Porter's is from "Further Testimony as to Our Work in Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 9 (May 1891), p. 6. For Tichenor's lengthy profile of Díaz, see "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889.
[61] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6.

toil and the honor of the noble work in Cuba."[62] Few Southerners seemed to acknowledge that the Cuban political or social situation might have something to do with the church's growth. They certainly paid attention to Díaz's struggles with the Catholic hierarchy, which were taken as evidence of Díaz's greatness and the intractability of the bishop of Havana, but that did not translate into an inquiry into the outside forces that were driving Cubans to search out Protestant services.

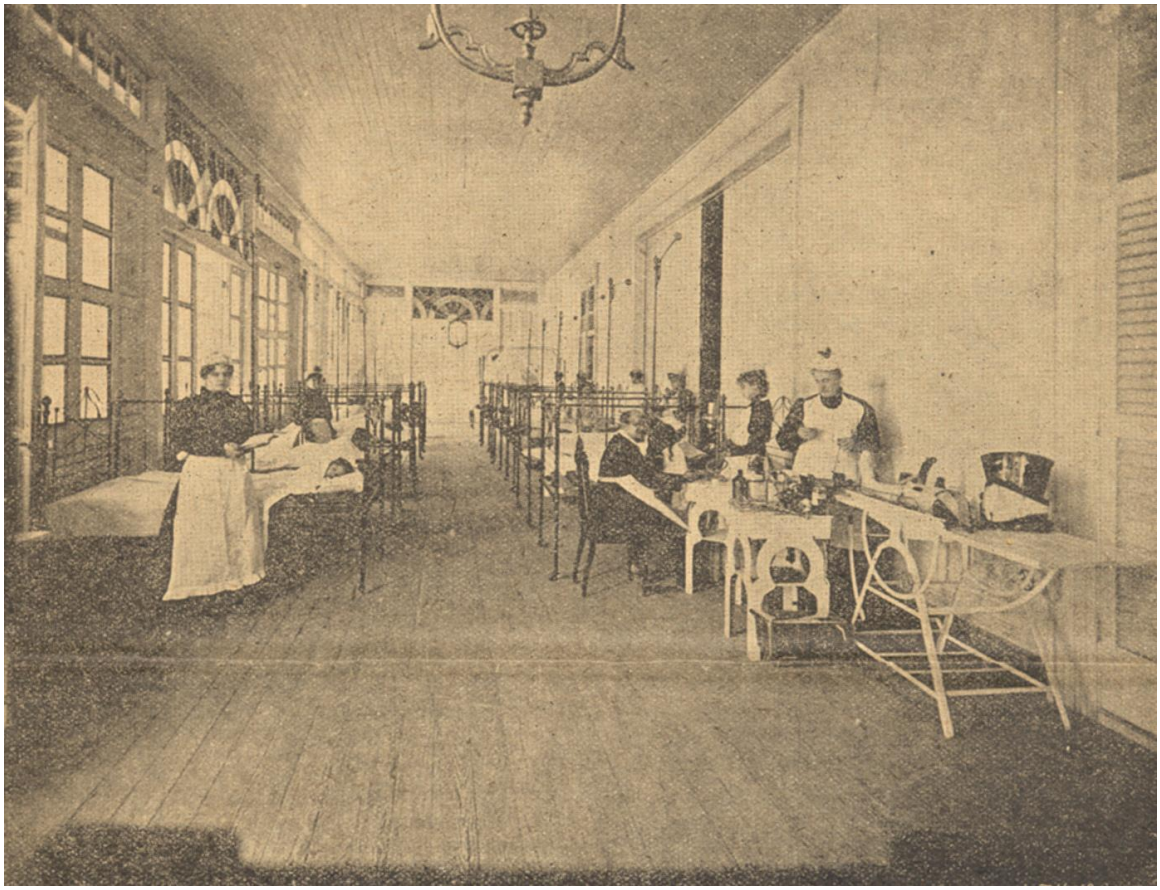
Díaz, like other cultural brokers, occupied a position that was essential for the success of this transnational relationship. He was the essential face of the relationship, and did more than any other person to explain Cubans and Southerners to each other. The importance of his role, however, should not mask the fact that it was also a tenuous one. Hinderaker's observation about two other cultural brokers held true for Díaz as well. Their "talent was to facilitate the debate between cultures; when the debate was over, the cultural space in which they had operated quickly closed." In the 1880s and early 1890s, the ongoing debate in Cuba, Spain and the United States about the future of Cuba meant that there was space in which Díaz could operate. Once that debate was over, however, "the stress, confusion, and indecision that often accompanied brokerage roles" became clear in Díaz's world. After 1898, Díaz would face "bewildering and complicated choices."[63] His position, like that of other cultural brokers in times of political change, became increasingly unstable.

[62] Rev. I. T. Tichenor, "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889.
[63] Hinderaker, "Translation and Cultural Brokerage," 363.

Fig. 1. Alberto J. Díaz. This photo of Díaz, the only one I have found, may have been taken in 1896 in Atlanta; see chapter four.

Photo of Alberto J. Díaz, from "Cyclopedia of Northern Baptist Ministers," a scrapbook collected by E. J. Brockett, vol. 2/C-D, p. 221-22, American Baptist Historical Society, Atlanta, Georgia.

Fig. 2. Havana Baptist Hospital. *Our Home Field*, vol. 7, no. 11 (August 1895), p. 1.



III.
Building the Brotherly Empire:
Cubans and Southerners in Partnership, 1885-1891

On the evening of Sunday, February 15, 1891, as Mardi Gras revelers took to the streets, Southern and Cuban Baptists packed the sanctuary of a former theater building in central Havana. The bilingual service that evening celebrated the dedication of the building for use as a church by a Cuban congregation, Gethsemane, that had been meeting in homes, tents, and rented halls since the early 1880s. Over one hundred prominent Southern Baptists traveled to Cuba for the occasion, including William J. Northen, then the governor of the state of Georgia. The building was spectacular: the 2,000-seat sanctuary had been renovated to include an indoor baptismal font with running water made to look like a natural stream, and there was plenty of space so that Gethsemane Baptist Church could continue to grow. Both Cubans and Southerners addressed the assembled congregation, but no one moved the crowd more than the pastor of Gethsemane, Rev. Alberto J. Díaz. "He was masterly and tender," wrote Rev. José V. Cova, a Cuban who was one of the few bilingual people to write an account of the service. "When remembering that the first time he went to the Southern Baptist Convention to ask for a house of worship, he had left his dead daughter, who was to be buried that same day, in order not to miss the only steamer that could bring him in due time to attend the Convention, he moved himself and many of the hearers to tears at so sad memories." Díaz's sermon text, taken from Simeon's song of praise when the infant Jesus was presented at the temple in Jerusalem, clearly referenced how Díaz felt about his own temple, his own dead daughter, and his own feelings of blessing and sacrificial accomplishment. Díaz may have recalled for his congregation how his absence from his

daughter's burial had left him anguished, but also that he believed his sacrifice had now been consecrated through the purchase and dedication of the theater building. The Southerners did not understand why their Cuban co-religionists were in tears, but they too felt the power of Díaz's oratory. Díaz's close friend, Rev. Isaac Taylor Tichenor of Atlanta, was especially moved by the sermon, writing, "We were gratified at the grand address of Diaz, who melted all hearts, and moved to tears not only his Cuban people, but those of us who could not understand a word he uttered." Despite the language barrier and personal tragedy, Southern and Cuban Baptists built an alliance through joint work and travel, and 1891 marked the consecration of their institutional relationship embodied in the grand building in Havana.[1]

U.S. Southern and Cuban Baptists forged an unlikely bond during the interwar years in Cuba, after the end of the 1868-1878 war for independence from Spain had ended in stalemate and before the outbreak of the 1895-1898 war. These were promising years for the Southern Baptist Convention. The SBC had survived the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction-era military occupations in the South and was experiencing a period of denominational growth. Many whites in the U.S. South, having "redeemed" their political systems from the "threat" of African American power and working to institutionalize the discriminatory legal and social practices of Jim Crow, felt that the promise of their Protestant civilization could and should be spread to both foreigners and North Americans. Southern Baptist leaders thought of "pagans" in Asia, immigrants in U.S. cities, Native Americans on reservations, African Americans in the U.S. South, and

[1] For Cova's report, see "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6. For Tichenor's account, see "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff.

"unchurched" native-born white Americans as populations ripe for conversion.[2] The Southern Baptist Convention, a white denomination rooted in both Baptist memories of dissent in England and the Southern experience of slavery, secession, war and reconstruction, seemed an unlikely partner for the independent Cuban congregation in Havana, but social and cultural ties between the two groups made for a durable personal and institutional relationship in the years before 1898.

The friendship between two leading figures, Tichenor and Díaz, provides a lens to better understand the relationship between Southern and Cuban Baptists as a whole. The friendship of the two men, based on what both felt was a shared view of the world, developed during the long and complex process of building the Baptist congregation in Havana, which was gathered by Díaz and discovered by Southern Baptists years after its beginning. Spanish political and religious repression, Southern doubts about Díaz's truthfulness, and death and illness on both shores tested their friendship, which slowly became the essential link in Gethsemane's alliance with Southern Baptists. Indeed, after Tichenor's death in 1902, most Southern and Cuban Baptists no longer trusted or

[2] Especially useful titles in the rich historiography of politics and religion in the post-Civil War U.S. South include Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction*, 15th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities Among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997); John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987); Robert G. Gardner, *A Decade of Debate and Division: Georgia Baptists and the Formation of the Southern Baptist Convention* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995); Samuel S. Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1999); William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Rufus Spain, *At Ease in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists, 1865-1900* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2003); Michael E. Williams, *Isaac Taylor Tichenor: The Creation of the Baptist New South* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2005); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Southern Missions: The Religion of the American South in Global Perspective* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006); Paul A. Cimbala and Barton C. Shaw, eds., *Making a New South: Race, Leadership, and Community After the Civil War* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007)..

accommodated Díaz. The building in Havana, which both men worked to find and purchase, embodied the disintegration of the alliance as well: after 1902, it became the center of a legal dispute between Southern Baptists and Díaz.

This chapter is organized around a number of personal and public events that were deeply important to both Díaz and Tichenor during the late 1880s and early 1890s. Personal events in their lives mark these years as formative for both. In 1887, Díaz's eldest daughter Esther died, perhaps in the smallpox epidemic that raged in Havana that year. Just days after her death, Díaz and his wife traveled to Louisville, Kentucky to attend their first meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, where the assembled delegates agreed to raise enough funds to buy land or a building in Havana for Díaz's congregation. Later that same year, Tichenor traveled to Cuba for the first time to search for land on which to build a church—a formative experience for the Southerner. The trip cemented in his mind the idea that Díaz and the Baptist church could have a real impact in Havana and Cuba, and by extension on Latin America as a whole, but only if Tichenor could ensure support from the Southern Baptists at this crucial time for the congregation. It was a cause to which he would dedicate the rest of his life.

Over the next few years, the Baptists together located and purchased the Jané building, a former theater at the corner of Zulueta and Dragones streets in Havana. They agreed to pay the owner, a Mr. Jané, $60,000 in American money, in three installments over three years. This commitment brought a flurry of fundraising in the U.S. South and a triumphant climax to the ongoing revival in Havana. U.S. Southern Baptists saw this building as the key to the Baptist proselytization of the entire island, and they believed that Díaz was the key person to carry on that holy work. In their efforts to gain converts,

Cuban Baptists urged the residents of Havana to think of the building, and the Baptist congregation that used it, as embodiments of the hoped-for alliance between the U.S. and an independent Cuba. For Cuban Baptists, Southern Baptists were much more than spiritual brothers; many hoped that similar cross-national alliances would help them to realize their yearnings for political and economic freedom from Spain. This is not to imply that Cubans were insincere in their religious conversions or in their alliance with Southern Baptists. Instead, the relationship was one element of a holistic expression of their religious, political and economic hopes. This story illustrates how Cubans of many stripes, including Cuban Baptists, created and strengthened a workable nationalist alliance against Spain—an alliance that could withstand the rigors of war and prove stronger than the movement that had failed during the war of 1868-1878.

The underlying story of these years is about the social, political and doctrinal beliefs that Cuban and Southern Baptists held in common and which made their partnership possible. The links forged between these two groups of people, Cubans and Southerners, were neither arbitrary nor merely utilitarian. Parallels and convergences between key cultures and structures in Cuba and the South not only made the alliance possible, but meant that it was remarkably deep and meaningful for people in both places; these parallels explain why the friendship between Díaz and Tichenor was so important for both men. They are the reasons why U.S. Baptists became so enamored with Díaz that they lionized him in the U.S. Baptist press, referred to him as "the Apostle of Cuba," and, in a real sense, laid all their hopes for the evangelical conversion of Latin America at his feet. They are the reasons why Díaz was so fluent in Southern culture, despite the extensive time he had spent in New York and despite his continuing ties with Northern

Baptist organizations. They are the reasons why Cubans from all racial and economic groups flocked to a church that was overtly allied with a North American denomination. This section seeks to explore and, as much as possible, explain these beliefs and practices.

First, Cuban and Southern Baptists shared a belief in spiritual imperialism that, in these years, was linked with influential political and social movements in both countries. Chapter one describes the links between Cuban Protestantism, an anti-Catholic and implicitly anti-Spanish movement, and the Cuban separatist nationalism that was deepening in the interwar years. Cuban and Southern Baptists shared the belief that proselytizing was an essential tenet of their faith, and both groups believed that the evangelical conversion of Cubans would be a key element in the political liberation of the island. Cuban Baptists, especially, argued that the ideas of separatism and Protestantism were complementary. Southern Baptists shared the renewed interest in missions, especially foreign missions to "pagan" or "uncivilized" people, which swept U.S. Protestant organizations in the mid to late nineteenth century. Historians have noted the prevalence of this thinking in many different nineteenth century Protestant groups; although the particulars of what type of work they engaged in (work with immigrants, temperance, foreign missions, urban reform) varied quite a bit, many have argued that there was an essential missionary impulse behind all these activities. Southern Baptists, although they would not have agreed on much else with New England Congregationalists, for example, did share this belief in spiritual imperialism. Díaz and

Tichenor, despite their different nationalities and understandings of politics, also shared this mindset.[3]

Second, Cuban and Southern Baptists shared a cultural affinity for two particular Baptist institutions and doctrines: the doctrine of a personal conversion experience leading to salvation, and a core belief in the free and independent nature of Baptist congregations. This might be seen as a circular argument: they were Baptists because they liked Baptist beliefs. However, especially in the case of Cubans who had no hereditary claim to the Baptist church, it is essential to explore the particular tenets of the Baptist faith—as it was described in Southern and Northern Baptist sermons, pamphlets, and conversations—that may have attracted particular Cubans, with their own beliefs, experiences and hopes, to this particular anti-Spanish, anti-Catholic fold. There was certainly no shortage of anti-Spanish organizations in Cuba during the late nineteenth century; what about Baptist teachings made some Cubans join this one? And what was it about those Cubans that drew them to this community? Similarly, it is important to explore what elements of Díaz's biography or personality may have caused him to loom so large in the Southern Baptist imagination. The goal here is not to explain that Baptists on both shores of the Gulf of Mexico were, in fact, Baptists, but to try to explain what doctrines and institutions of Protestantism, and the Southern Baptist Convention in particular, may have attracted particular Cubans to Díaz's church—and to explain what it was about Díaz that led many leaders of the SBC to be so enthralled with him. The

[3] See my discussion of the transnational elements of spiritual imperialism in the introduction. See also Robert M. Crunden, *Ministers of Reform: The Progressives' Achievement in American Civilization, 1889-1920* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); Hutchison, *Errand to the World*..

doctrines of personal conversion and congregational freedom do much to answer these questions.

The Baptist belief in a personally felt call from God to conversion and salvation was important both to Baptists who were Cubans and those who were U.S. Southerners. For Cubans, including but not limited to Díaz, the personal nature of this doctrine likely appealed to them as profoundly different from their experience of Cuban Catholicism. The Catholic Church in Cuba at this time was, according to its many critics, an out-of-touch, hierarchical state church: it was woefully understaffed by a small number of Spanish priests and nuns, unresponsive to the needs and interests of its parishioners. This unresponsiveness was most clearly demonstrated in the Catholic hierarchy's unqualified support for Spain during the 1895 war, when the bishop of Havana reported to Rome that Cuban insurgents were merely masons and disordered ex-slaves. The experience of being a Catholic in Cuba at this time was, for many Cubans, impersonal and ritualistic; the priest was seen as an intermediary between God and the congregation, and worshipers were expected to attend Mass and participate in other rituals, not to experience the divine in a personal and emotional way, as evangelicals insisted they must.[4]

The doctrine of personal call and salvation also explains something about why Southern Baptists were so enthralled with Díaz. They believed that he had come to Baptist teachings not because of his training in a Baptist seminary (he had none) or

[4] Academic historians, even Catholics, have long argued for this interpretation of the nineteenth century Roman Catholic Church in Cuba, which was advanced so forcefully at the time by Cuban critics. See especially Manuel Maza Miquel, S.J., *: Guerra y Paz en Cuba, 1895-1903: Testimonios de los Archivos Vaticanos* (Santo , 1997).

through his contact with Baptist preachers, but simply through his reading of the Bible.[5] His conversion narrative, in other words, reinforced their own claims that Baptist doctrine was the only correct way to interpret the Bible and live a Christian life—because he had come to that doctrine independently, through his own reading and spiritual experiences. In 1885, a Cuban emigrant to Florida, Angel Godenas, was one of a group of Baptists who returned to Cuba to preach and pass out pamphlets. While in Havana, the group discovered Díaz "on Sunday morning preaching to a large congregation, and...he certainly preached Baptist doctrines." Their "discovery" of Díaz, preaching good Baptist doctrine, by himself, seemed to confirm the rightness of being a Baptist. One Florida Baptist noted that Díaz was "a Bible made Baptist and Christian [who] had heard no Baptist preaching."[6] The knowledge, leadership, and zeal of this man, who had no hereditary or educational claim to being a Baptist, confirmed that a personal call from God was the only route to true conversion—and that this call could lead all people to the Baptist church.

According to longstanding, if sometimes controversial, Baptist doctrine, each congregation was a thoroughly independent and non-hierarchical body, not subject to Convention or other organizational strictures.[7] Baptist congregations emphasized the

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[5] Díaz repeatedly presented his own conversion narrative in this way during the 1880s and 1890s. He tended to mention that he attended and was baptized at a Baptist church in Brooklyn, New York, but whether he began attending that church before or after his dramatic conversion experience was left unsaid. See, for instance, A. J. Díaz, "The Cuban Mission," *The Missionary Review of the World* 5, no. 3 (March 1892): 185-192.

[6] Rev. H. M King, "Origin of the Cuban Work," *Our Home Field*, March 1889, p. 6; W. N. Chaudoin, "Correspondence: Florida Letter," *Christian Index* vol. 64, no. 7 (February 18, 1886), p. 4.

[7] The tension between independence and organization was an ever-present one. Tichenor, for instance, spent his later career attempting to build up the Southern Baptist Convention, especially its Mission boards. This push contrasted sharply with Baptists who felt that it was anti-Baptist, or un-Biblical, to set up organizations over and above the congregational unit. These controversies came to a head during the rise of the Landmark movement, discussed further in chapter six. See

charismatic leadership of one or more local people who felt the call to preach, rather than adherence to strict doctrines handed down by church institutions. This emphasis on the independence of local congregations and a lack of hierarchy spoke to Cubans who were sympathetic to the various strains of political separatism on the island in the years after 1878. This congregational organization was a corollary to the belief in personal salvation through a conversion experience; if each person was, in theory, equally open to and equally likely to have this type of personal spiritual experience, then each congregation of believers should be as free as possible to follow the call of God as their members experienced it. For people who felt that they were living in an unfree political system, and who hoped for political liberation in one form or another, this type of spiritual equality and independence must have seemed perfectly natural and desirable.[8]

Finally, this group of Cubans shared with Southern Baptists particular beliefs on modes of social organization such as masculinity and gender, class, and status. There was less agreement on ideas about race, although direct evidence on this point is elusive.[9] Southerners often remarked on how "intelligent" or "wealthy" the members of the Cuban congregations seemed. Since few Southerners spoke Spanish, these comments point not to the actual class or status situation of the Cuban congregants as much as it does to the

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discussions in Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Williams, *Tichenor*; Harvey, *Redeeming the South*.; and in the introduction.

[8] Cuban separatist thought between the wars of independence was a tangled web of many ideological and strategic positions, which sometimes seemed to be working together and at other times seemed to be engaged in an internecine war. For a useful introduction, see Gerald Eugene Poyo, *With All, and for the Good of All: The Emergence of Popular Nationalism in the Cuban Communities of the United States, 1848-1898* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989).

[9] Demographic information about the Cuban congregations that may have been in membership lists has not survived, for instance, and Southern Baptists only rarely commented on the racial and class makeup of the congregation. See my discussion of sources in the introduction, as well as the section on the racial, class and gender composition of Gethsemane Baptist Church in chapter one.

ideas of Southern leaders about respectability, proper dress, and manners. However, Cuban and Southern Baptist men agreed that women should occupy a subordinate place in Baptist life. Women are not invisible from the records, although only a few are mentioned consistently by name; Díaz's sister Minnie, who worked as a teacher in the Havana Baptist schools for many years, was one. It appears that Minnie Díaz occasionally wrote to the Southern Baptists on her own with reports about the schools and the like, but none of her correspondence has survived. Others whom we might expect to be prominent are in fact largely invisible. Díaz's wife, for example, was mentioned frequently as an assistant to him and occasionally as a teacher, but her name is never given in the extant records preserved by Southern Baptists. Many Baptist women worked as teachers in the Baptist schools, but their names are unrecorded and little demographic or personal information about them has survived. There are also indications that most of the teachers were unpaid, and that they were expected to teach because they had been educated in those same schools. Many of these women, especially after 1895, seem to have been orphans whose parents had been members of the Baptist congregation. Female Cuban congregants, like most male congregants, are anonymous in most surviving correspondence and reports.

At the same time, Cuban and Southern Baptist leaders shared a masculine social sensibility that encouraged close, emotional friendships between men—the relationship between Tichenor and Díaz was one of these, but we have no reason to think that it was the only one in the Baptist world.[10] This type of masculine public space, combined with

[10] For "romantic friendship" among North American men in the late nineteenth century, see the Introduction in Axel Nissen, ed., *The Romantic Friendship Reader: Love Stories Between Men in Victorian America* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2003); John D'Emilio and Estelle B.

emotional friendships between men expressed through very personal and even passionate correspondence, was typical of the nineteenth century U.S. and may have been more common throughout the Americas, including in Cuba, than scholars have realized. In the Baptist case, these friendships bolstered a masculine public space in both the South and in Cuba in which men were expected to be both forceful leaders and faithful Baptists, and in which their travails at these tasks could only be shared with other men. Before the 1895 war, being a male Cuban Baptist leader often meant taking a stand against Spain or the Catholic Church, or both, and taking the consequences. After 1898, though, the expectation about what leadership meant changed; for many Cubans, it still had a political bent, while for North Americans an official "separation of church and state" meant that Baptist leadership should retreat into the more private realm of family, congregation and denomination.

All of these factors can help us to explain why there was such a cultural convergence between Southern Baptist leaders and a particular group of Cubans in the late nineteenth century. They help us understand why the Southern Baptists, especially but not exclusively Tichenor, were so impressed with Díaz—in other words, what it was about their own culture that made Díaz so attractive to them. As a corollary, these factors show us that Díaz also felt very comfortable in Southern Baptist culture, and help us understand why and how his own ideas often fit neatly into theirs. They underline how Díaz was able to function for so long, and so effectively, as a cultural broker between the two groups. These cultural factors help us understand how and why the relationship was so deeply felt, and later so deeply mourned, by both parties.

Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

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At the annual meeting in May 1887, the delegates to the Southern Baptist Convention authorized its Home Mission Board to purchase land or a building in Havana, in order to provide a church home for Díaz and his congregation. The SBC met in Louisville, Kentucky, with Díaz in attendance for the first time. The reports on this meeting, from both the Southern Baptists and from Díaz, make it clear that even in the midst of debt, opposition, and grief, they shared a common mindset of spiritual imperialism. This goal, for both Cubans and Southerners, would not only ensure the evangelization of the island, but would also catalyze their other political and social goals. For Díaz, the conversion of Cubans would lead inevitably to both the political freedom of the island and to social progress and respectability. For Southerners, the conversion of Cuba would lead to the conversion of Latin America, and to a vision of social progress that they shared with Díaz. The 1888 purchase and 1891 dedication of the church building in Havana put these commonalities on display again; the permanence that the building signified, and the hopes for Cuba's conversion that it embodied, resonated in the writings of both Cubans and North Americans.

In May 1887, as Díaz prepared to leave Havana for Louisville, his daughter Esther died. Her death colored his entire experience at the convention that year, and seemed to him and to his wife to sanctify the purchase of the building. It is unclear if Tichenor or anyone else in the Home Mission Board was aware at the time of the

personal tragedy that had befallen the Díaz family.[11] In 1901, Díaz wrote Tichenor a long, confessional letter about the profound highs and lows that he experienced in the spring of 1887. He understood that he was coming to Louisville because "a collection will be started for the purpose of buing [sic] a house of prayer in Cuba for my Church." Because of Esther's illness, he had put off the trip as long as he could, but

> precisily the day before the boat leave here....my only child and the first one.... my swet and dear angel….my Esther has die few hours before the boat leave and as I want help you and my Church….with tears in my eyes and a tremendous feeling in my heart; and in a great confution about my family affairs as my wife was nearly creacy [crazy] I decided to go to you and as I can't leave my dear wife alone I took with me….my wife and I gave our last kiss to the remaining of our daugter and put [her] little body in the hands of our members to be buried in the Cemetery…and we both depart from Cuba (I think is the only care in the whole Island)….our heart was broke….abundant tears was shed during our journey, and the only comfort we have was; when we beging [sic] to think 'that our church and Board need that sacrifice'….I spoke on the Convention, and the collection was taken; also many pledges was subscribed and as our part was done, wife and self went downstairs to the Sunday School rooms of the 1st Bapt. Church and while the offering and pledges was counted by the Secretary's we both neeled down and pray and ask God 'to accept our sacrifice and that collection for the good of our Church in Cuba' and while we pray we hear upstair the convention was lead in singing by Dr. Hacher of Richmond they sang the 'coronation'….we thought that hymn was a revelation to us….I stop my prayer and there beautiful words was felt in our souls as a swet shower of blessing….I feel as if I was in heaven in that moment how good we did felt….[12]

For Díaz, the experience of his daughter's death was profoundly linked to the promise symbolized by the church building. His daughter's death, their family's grief and pain, and their difficult journey to Louisville were a "sacrifice" that they offered to God, hardships that they endured for the greater good. The "sweet shower of blessing" that

[11] Tichenor did know eventually: in 1889 he wrote, "The first one to be buried" in the Baptist cemetery in Havana "was the child of our brother Diaz." Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6-7, which describes a visit Tichenor made to Havana in January of 1888.

[12] Díaz to Tichenor, December 3, 1901, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive (SBHLA), Una Roberts Lawrence (URL) collection, box 6, folder 23. Ellipses in original.

they felt in the church basement, as the Convention upstairs voted to provide the funds to buy a building for the use of the church in Havana, must have been a profound release from the "abundant tears" of the previous days. Esther's death tied them even more closely to the building in Havana.

Even in the midst of his grief, Díaz still shared the Southern Baptist goal of evangelizing Cuba through a partnership between the people of the South and the people of Cuba. For Díaz, "our Church" in Cuba was of primary importance, its future the entire reason why he and his wife were willing to forego the funeral and burial of their daughter for a trip to the United States. For Southern Baptists, the 1887 Convention was a chance to celebrate the work that was ongoing in Cuba, which they saw as God's work. Regarding Cuba, the Convention's report argued that "the wonderful work in this field, considering the time and means expended in its prosecution, has never been surpassed in the history of modern missions.... The whole island is open to us, and thousands are ready to abandon the system of superstition in which they have been reared and embrace the truth as it is in Jesus." Díaz certainly would have agreed that Roman Catholicism was a "system of superstition," and the urgency of the Home Mission Board's appeal for funds to help pay for a building in Havana pleased him. His congregation needed the space, and their service to the sick during the next autumn's smallpox epidemic would only increase their visibility and membership.[13]

In January 1888, Tichenor undertook the first of many trips to Havana, in order to look for a building or a plot of land on which to build a church. His report on this trip and on the new church building was published in the Home Mission Board's magazine, *Our*

[13] *Annual* of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1887, under the heading "Cuba," p. xxxviii. For the congregation's activities during the 1887-1888 Havana smallpox epidemic, see chapter one.

Home Field, a year later.[14] His reports about this trip, as well as subsequent trips, demonstrate not only his dedication to the Cuba project of the Home Mission Board, but also his deep regard for Díaz and the development of their personal friendship. The process of purchasing a building in which the Havana Baptists could worship took several years. It was complicated by the need to fundraise in the United States and by Spanish legal requirements that the Southern Baptists found baffling and maddening. This process did, however, have the effect of solidifying the friendship between Díaz and Tichenor, since they spent many hours together looking over various plots of land and buildings in Havana and fulfilling the legal requirements to purchase the building. Between the time when the Southern Baptist Convention authorized the fundraising for the purchase of a building in May 1888, and the time when the building at the corner of Dragones and Zulueta streets in downtown Havana was dedicated with a service in February 1891, the two men learned to trust each other and to rely on one another's expertise.

Spanish colonial law passed in the wake of the 1878 Pact of Zanjón, the agreement that ended the stalemated war between Cuban insurgents and Spain, allowed Cubans to worship in non-Catholic organizations but forbade them to do so outdoors. The Spanish state aimed this regulation primarily at the religious practices of enslaved or recently-freed people, many of whom had been born in Africa and whose rites were usually performed outside. For Baptists who were experiencing a boom in attendance at their revival meetings, however, this stipulation caused major problems, since "tent meetings" of the kind popular throughout the U.S. were not legally possible in Cuba. In addition, Baptist doctrine prescribed adult baptism by immersion, and was frequently

[14] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6-7.

performed outdoors, in a pond or stream—a rite that was illegal under the colonial law.[15] Finally, Spanish laws regulating the purchase and ownership of property in Cuba were, to Southern Baptists, antiquated and discouraging. Spanish law made it difficult for the Home Mission Board, a non-resident corporation, to own real property in Cuba.

For these reasons, the Southern Baptists quickly decided that a building in Havana, large enough to hold Díaz's growing congregation and titled in a Cuban's name, was an urgent necessity for Baptist work. In an 1889 article, Tichenor wrote that "above all," the Baptists in Cuba "need a house of worship for the 250,000 in Havana, which will hold not less than 2,000 people. Diaz will fill such a house from the day of its opening."[16] The annual report of the Southern Baptist Convention of 1887 had agreed: "A house of worship is greatly needed in Havana. It is essential to our highest success in that city and in the island.... with unceasing prayer for Cuba large and liberal offering, equal to all its requirements, should be made."[17] The Home Mission Board dedicated much of 1887 to raising the funds necessary to purchase such a building or land on which one could be built. By January 1888, they reported that they had "collected about $2000. of the pledges for Havanna [sic] church."[18] In a February 1888 report on his first trip to Cuba, Tichenor recommended that "the Board make most earnest efforts to raise $50,000.00 during the next two years for the purposes mentioned in this report," which included a church building in Havana, extra land for the Havana cemetery, and a building and cemetery in

[15] See further discussion of these issues in chapter one.
[16] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6-7. Describes a visit made in January of 1888.
[17] *Annual* of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1887 [n.p.].
[18] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board (HMB), January 16, 1888, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.

Matanzas.[19] At their 1888 annual meeting in Richmond, Virginia, the Southern Baptist Convention agreed to raise this amount for use in Cuba.[20] Southern Baptists believed that the moment had come when such investments were both necessary and promising. The 1887 *Annual* promised, "The whole island is open to us, and thousands are ready to abandon the system of superstition in which they have been reared and embrace the truth as it is in Jesus."[21]

Tichenor and other Southern Baptists made frequent trips to Havana in the late 1880s and early 1890s to locate potential properties, work out the legal aspects of the purchase, and make payments on the building they finally bought. At the Home Mission Board's meeting on January 16, 1888, Tichenor and A. D. Adair, the Board's treasurer, "were appointed to visit Cuba for the purpose of looking after a lot and to purchase said lot if the Treasurer thought best to do so."[22] They traveled to Havana for five days not long after that meeting, and were greeted at the Havana harbor by Díaz and "a delegation from our churches and Sunday-schools." On his first trip to Cuba, Tichenor spent some time sightseeing in Havana (he visited the supposed grave of Christopher Columbus, for instance) and looked in on the "six churches and twelve preaching stations in and around Havana." He also went to Matanzas, where Alberto Díaz's brother, Alfredo V. Díaz, was the preacher.[23]

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[19] Report of I. T. Tichenor and A. D. Adair, Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, February 6, 1888, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.
[20] 1888 *Annual*, p. 35-36.
[21] *Annual* of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1887 [n.p.].
[22] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 16, 1888, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.
[23] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* (January 1889), p. 3, 6-7. Describes a visit made in January of 1888.

The main purpose of that January 1888 trip, however, was to investigate purchasing either a plot of land on which to build, or a building that could serve as Díaz's church. Tichenor reported, "We looked for and found quite a number of eligible lots in Havana for a house of worship." He and Díaz investigated the significant legal and financial questions involved in purchasing property in Havana, but were not able to get all the information they needed. "Most of these lots belong to the government," Tichenor wrote, and "We did not think it prudent to open negotiations for the purchase of one of them at this time.... [Regarding] the question of taxation of church property and the cost of building. We had hoped to be able to lay this information before the Board at this meeting, but it has not yet come to hand."[24] In their next meeting, the Home Mission Board agreed "to draw up a Commission and a separate power of attorney for Bro. Diaz,"[25] probably to facilitate the legal transactions required to purchase property in Cuba. This first trip was mostly exploratory, and seems as if it consisted of many meetings and visits to potential sites.

In May 1888, Díaz traveled to the United States to attend the Southern Baptist Convention in Richmond, Virginia.[26] He was present when the Convention voted to raise $50,000 from its members in the United States in order to purchase a church building in Havana. He probably also heard, and perhaps agreed with, the imperialist sentiments expressed at this meeting. The Home Mission Board, most of whose work was within the borders of the United States, reported "that our country contains within itself in large

[24] Report of I. T. Tichenor and A. D. Adair, Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, February 6, 1888, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.
[25] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, February 28, 1888, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.
[26] 1888 *Annual*, Appendix A, Forty-Third Annual Report of the Home Mission Board, p. 37.

measure the hope of the world. Almost the entire aggressive power of Christendom is lodged with the English-speaking people, and of these a majority now live within the confines of our country." Anglo-Saxon civilization in the United States was, according to the HMB, "young, energetic, full of enterprise, stimulated by freedom of both Church and State and possessing a continent as its home where it may plant all its growing activities and build them to the stars." In order to spread the gospel message throughout the world, the Board believed "our country must be the open hand from which it will be given." Furthermore, everything good about humankind, "the redemptive energies of humanity," were "couched in the heart and brains of this great nation." In short, "our country saved means the world redeemed."[27] Given Díaz's opinions about Spaniards and Catholics, and considering the influence of his time spent in the United States on his views, he may have counted himself lucky to be so involved with these "energetic" Baptist people. He likely planted many of their ideas about Cuba in their minds, during the time spent traveling with Tichenor, Adair and others who would come to Havana in the coming years. He certainly looked forward to the day when Cuba would also be a "country for Christ."

The search for a lot or building in Havana, in conjunction with fundraising in the United States, took up most of 1888. Díaz kept an eye out for eligible lots or buildings in Havana; the first issue of the Home Mission Board's new magazine, *Our Home Field*, reported in October 1888 that after "a long and anxious search" he had found a lot that he liked. The Southern Baptists rarely traveled to Cuba during the summer if they could help it, to avoid hurricanes, extreme heat and illness, and so Tichenor's next trip to Cuba came

[27] Southern Baptist Convention *Annual* for 1888, Report of the Home Mission Board, p. VII. See also Una Roberts Lawrence's typewritten notes on the 1888 Convention, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

in the fall of that year. The Home Mission Board voted on September 21, 1888 to appoint a committee that was "authorized and empowered to make up plans & specifications & all preliminaries, necessary for the erection of a House of Worship in Havana." Tichenor, perhaps alone, traveled to Cuba in October or early November, intending to buy an empty lot and initiate building on it. Instead, he and Díaz located a theater building at the corner of Dragones and Zulueta streets, owned by a Mr. Jané, and they decided to buy it instead of an empty lot. Tichenor may have had some trouble convincing the other members of the Board of the wisdom of this plan; the report in *Our Home Field* admits that "some of our wisest brethren doubted the feasibility of the scheme, and especially whether so large a sum could be secured during December and January." By the end of November, however, Tichenor had "imparted some of his enthusiasm to other members of the Board," and the Board unanimously resolved to "close the trade with the owner of the theatre in Cuba provided the sum of twenty thousand (20000) dollars can be raised by the 1st Feb. 1889." This was a daunting task, and the building's total purchase price of $60,000 was even more intimidating. In December, the Board voted to authorize "Tichenor, as Secretary, if necessary, in closing the trade for the purchase of the 'Theatre' in Cuba, to sign a note for any deficiency, not exceeding Eight Thousand (8000) Dollars."[28] Despite all the other demands on their funds, the Board planned to take on significant debt if it meant that they could purchase the building.

Tichenor, along with others, was convinced that this theater, which they often referred to as "the Jané building," was a great bargain and a structure well suited to the

[28] "Our House of Worship in Havana," *Our Home Field* (November 1888), p. 6; "The Havana House," *Our Home Field* (February 1889), p. 4; Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, September 21, November 23, and December 21, 1888, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.

needs of the ongoing revival and Díaz's congregation. T. D. Crawford, of Oxford, North Carolina, wrote a letter home to his pastor about time he spent visiting Havana. Crawford had a letter of introduction to Díaz, and (clearly understanding his role as fundraiser) the Cuban pastor took the time to give Crawford a tour of Baptist Havana. Among the stops, as Crawford reported, was "the building which he proposes to buy. It is a magnificent structure.... The audience room is immense, double galleries extending around the entire circle, except at the stage. Its seating capacity is 4,000." Crawford was also impressed with the building's location, which was "in the best part of the city, on a broad and handsome avenue, only one block from the Prado and Central Park.... The *land* on which this building stands—the theatre I mean—is worth the money that is asked for the whole." He was enthusiastic in his endorsement of the Home Mission Board's plan to purchase the building. "After looking carefully into his work," Crawford wrote of Díaz, "and getting information from reliable and disinterested persons, I am satisfied that our people ought to give all they can to carry on the mission in Cuba." A Methodist visitor to Cuba, R. A. Hemphill, also seemed overwhelmed by his experience in the new Havana Baptist Church building: "It is a grand structure, and will hold comfortably 2,500 people. I wish I could describe this beautiful temple, but will not attempt it." Sallie Rochester Ford also remarked on the size and convenience of the building, and noted that its storefronts and apartments could guarantee a sizeable rental income to Gethsemane. "No better spot could have been selected for a church than this, corner of Dragones and Zulueta streets," she wrote. "And then the building itself, so capacious and well adapted for the purpose.... The three large houses...and the two large stores, now on Dragones, must bring an income of at least four thousand dollars per annum." Tichenor wrote that

he and Díaz were both "firmly convinced, that there is not in all Havana a house so well located, so admirably adapted to our needs, or so cheap, as the one for which we have contracted." On a trip to Cuba in January 1889, Tichenor also convinced "two of the leading business men of Atlanta, members of another denomination," who were wintering in Havana, to go with him to see the Jané building. "They were struck with what they were pleased to call 'its magnificence,' its splendid location, its adaptation to the needs of a congregation such as ours, and the low price at which it could be purchased. They said to me, 'buy it by all means. Let nothing prevent you from consummating this trade.'"[29] Tichenor was determined to make this building the heart of the Southern Baptist Convention's Cuba mission.

To buy the building without the benefit of wire transfers, international banks, or mortgages, Tichenor personally carried cash from Atlanta to Havana three times—in 1889, 1890 and 1891. In 1902, Tichenor remembered that "I received from the Treasurer of the Home Mission Board the entire amount of said purchase money, and carried it with me to Havana, and in the presence of the Cuban Attorney of the Board, and of Dr. A. J. Diaz, paid it to Mr. Jané. Under contract with Mr. Jané, there were three separate payments, each one of which was made in the same way." We can only imagine the precautions Tichenor must have taken on the train ride from Atlanta to Tampa, on the steamer to Havana, and finally on the ride to the Cuban attorney's office or Díaz's home.[30]

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[29] Other reports put the seating capacity of the theater building at 2,000 or 2,500. Crawford's and Hemphill's comments are in "Cuba: Letters from Visitors," *Our Home Field*, March 1889, p. 5; Ford's assessment is in "Cuba," *Our Home Field* (April 1889), p. 6; Tichenor's report is in "Another Visit to Cuba," *Our Home Field* supplement, March 1889, facing pages 4 and 5.
[30] Tichenor to Hillyer, April 25, 1902, original in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24; also quoted in "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist

Tichenor used the frame of his 1889 trip to Havana to explain to his Southern Baptist readership just what it was about Cuba and the Cuban congregation that he found so compelling. "There is something peculiarly attractive to me about our work in Havana," he wrote.

> Its unnoted beginnings, when one man, without money and without influence, stood alone on the Island, with nothing but his Bible and his trust in God,—its great trials, for its history is but an ever-varying panorama of the bitterest and most unrelenting persecution that priest and potentate could devise—its marvelous success, for nothing in the history of modern missions has surpassed it—its outlook of glorious hope for Cuba, and for all Spanish America—kindle in my heart emotions that possess me, and so control me, that when I am coming to Cuba I feel like one who 'hears the honest watchdog's bark bay deep mouthed welcome as we draw near home.' There is a charm in the spot where the first souls made their good confession; where they were buried in the likeness of His death; where they have met, and when wild persecutions raged without, drawn near to God, and felt like the fledgeling [sic] in its nest on the branches of the storm-tossed tree; in the little white-walled cemetery, where sleep the last martyrs of our faith, awaiting the resurrection of the just; that lifts me so far above the dull things of sense and clay that 'My spirit floats in liquid light, Like skiff upon a sapphire bed.'

To Tichenor, the romantic history of the congregation, and of Díaz himself, seemed like a retelling of the ancient stories of the Bible and the myths of Baptist mission history. Tichenor was not alone in his construction of these hagiographies; other Baptist commentators frequently compared Díaz to Adoniram Judson, a much-mythologized nineteenth century Baptist missionary to Burma, and called the Havana Baptists "martyrs." The Baptist faith seemed to have transformed its Cuban adherents into

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Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 30-31, in SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9. It is also possible that, instead of carrying cash, Tichenor received a guarantee for the amount from an Atlanta bank that had a relationship with a bank in Havana, perhaps through a British bank. The growth of U.S. investment in the Cuban sugar industry in these years made such correspondence relationships more common, and such an arrangement would have been much more secure than carrying such a large amount of cash aboard railroads and steamers. Tichenor's language may have simplified the process so as to more easily explain it to Hillyer, who had not been involved in the Home Mission Board when the purchase was made.

something new, Tichenor wrote. "Diaz is impatient of these enforced [legal] delays [in the process of purchasing the building]. When he was made 'a new mans,' he seems to have been thoroughly transformed, and to have imbibed the spirit of the people among whom he was born again. He is not a Cuban, but an American in all his methods and activities."[31] The closeness of their friendship, and the deep parallels of belief and culture that the two men shared, seemed to both of them to promise great things for the Southern-Cuban alliance.

The legal matter of title to the building presented a different set of problems for Tichenor and Díaz. The Home Mission Board gave Tichenor a power of attorney, appointed him "the Attorney in Fact of this Board" at their January 23, 1889 meeting, and authorized him "to purchase a city lot and the improvements on the same, fronting about one hundred and twenty (120) feet on Dragone [sic] street and running back about One Hundred and fifty (150) feet to Zuluetla [sic] street, in Havana Cuba and to pay such cash payment and execute such notes for deferred payments as may be agreed upon."[32] In 1902, Tichenor remembered that when he arrived in Havana in 1889 with the cash, "I found that under the peculiar laws of Spain, governing the title to real estate, that I could not purchase the Jané property for the Home Mission Board. That the only way to consummate the contract was to purchase from Mr. Jané in my own name, and hold in my own right, the title to the property, and subsequently to transfer to the Home Mission Board the right and title thus acquired."[33] It took much longer than Tichenor expected to have the legal matters straightened out. In the meantime, Tichenor "came home and left

[31] "The Havana House," *Our Home Field* (February 1889), p. 4.
[32] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 23, 1889, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.
[33] Tichenor to Hillyer, April 25, 1902, original in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24.

the money in the hands of Brother Diaz to be paid as soon as the title could be perfected.... After waiting for some time he sent the money back to Treasurer [of the Home Mission Board A. D.] Adair who...sent it back to Diaz the afternoon of the day about the first of last November, when he received a cablegram to the effect that the title had been perfected and the money for the first payment was needed."[34] That they left $20,000 in cash, or control over a guarantee they had received from an Atlanta bank, with Díaz was natural but also remarkable: it points to the extent of the trust that they placed in him. Indeed, *Our Home Field* remarked that the whole episode showcased "that rare 'sanctified common sense' which has characterized our noble missionary in all of his management of the affairs of the mission."[35]

The problem of the legal title, whatever its roots, seems to have taken over a year to work out, although the Havana congregation occupied the building for much of that time rent-free. On December 6, 1890, presumably soon after having paid the money sent to him by Adair, the property was deeded to Díaz "as general attorney for Dr. I. T. Tichenor," and Díaz was given the "full power and authority...to rent and collect rents, sell and convey, mortgage or otherwise encumber, and generally to handle or dispose of the same as he might think proper." When investigating their legal claim to the building in the postwar confusion of the autumn of 1898, the Home Mission Board explained that "title was thus taken because of the practical difficulty in having property at Havana

[34] "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff; SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. This account conflicts with that given in the April 9, 1889, meeting minutes of the HMB, where it reads: "The Secretary reported that he had purchased the house in Cuba known as the 'Theatre' for church purposes, paying $20 000 cash and making two deferred payments of $22 500 each." Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, April 9, 1889, transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.

[35] "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff; typewritten transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

conveyed to a non-resident corporation, and because of the necessity under the Spanish law, for a corporation accepting a deed to be represented at the purchase by an agent or attorney." The Southern Baptists seem to have understood that Spanish law required a resident of Cuba to both be present at the purchase of property and to be named as "an agent or attorney" of the Home Mission Board, since it was a foreign corporation. In March 1891, Tichenor executed a quit claim deed in the Atlanta courts that expressed his understanding that the property was the possession of the Home Mission Board, not him personally. When Díaz was in the United States in 1896, he executed a similar legal instrument. Whether a Spanish court would have recognized these documents if the title had been challenged is, of course, unknown. Many of the Southern Baptist leaders wrote that they found the situation baffling, and they did not hire a lawyer who was knowledgeable about Cuban law until after 1895. Tichenor certainly found it troubling, and there is evidence that Díaz worried about it too. This legal confusion probably served to further convince many of the Baptists, both Cuban and Southern, of the illegitimacy and incompetence of the Spanish government in Cuba, and the ambiguity later caused many legal and practical problems.[36]

Díaz's congregation took possession of the building sometime in February of 1889, and quickly began to hold services there. R. A. Hemphill, the "Methodist gentleman" whose February 27 letter about Díaz and the Baptist congregation was published in the Atlanta *Constitution*, wrote, "Services were held for the first time last Sunday night. Dr. Tichenor, Mr. Collier and myself, had the honor of occupying seats on

[36] Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898, in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898; Affidavit of Isaac T. Tichenor, March 4, 1891, filed in Fulton County, Georgia, Superior Court, Grantee: Southern Baptist Convention, Home Mission Board, Deed Book 160, p. 125. See further discussion of legal problems related to property in Cuba in chapter four.

the platform. The Rev. Mr. Diaz preached an eloquent sermon to a congregation of five or six hundred, as attentive an audience as I ever saw. Dr. Tichenor concluded with a short address, Dr. Diaz acting as interpreter. One peculiar thing I noticed: when the collectors went around, everybody contributed something."[37] Unfortunately, the text of these sermons and addresses has not survived.

Over the next two years, as Tichenor and the Home Mission Board raised money to make the payments on the Jané building, Díaz and the Cuban Baptists did some renovations and continued to enjoy the fruits of the religious revival in Havana. Many of the visitors from the United States who attended the Havana dedication service for the building in February 1891 were especially struck by the elaborate baptistery built on the stage of the theater's auditorium, which the congregation used as a sanctuary. John H. Weller of Louisville, Kentucky, wrote to the *Western Recorder* that the "acoustics [are] perfect. Baptistery runs across the stage along the edges of which are arranged artistically shells, growing plants and flowers, giving it a realistic appearance. It is beautiful, and has running water passing through all the time.... I sat as one in an ancient temple of the gods, entranced."[38] Rev. J. C. Porter of Florida said that the "baptistery is the prettiest and most unique we have ever seen, fashioned, as Bro. Diaz told us, after his idea of the river Jordan. The stream of crystal water runs entirely across the platform, and is bordered with rock, growing grass and seaweed."[39] Rev. Dr. Lansing Burrows wrote in the *Christian Index* that the Cubans had painted "'Dios es Amor'—God is love" in the spaces between

[37] R. A. Hemphill to the Atlanta *Constitution*, February 27, 1889; published in *Our Home Field* under the heading, "Cuba: Letters from Visitors," *Our Home Field*, March 1889, p. 5.
[38] Quoted in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff; typewritten transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.
[39] "Further Testimony as to Our Work in Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 9 (May 1891), p. 6. Transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

the arches of the domed interior, and remarked that "a painting of tropical exterior, which had done duty once as a theatrical scene, fills in the wall space in the rear [of the baptistery], so that on a baptismal occasion the appearance is as if it were under the free heavens and in the Master's own land."[40] Since the Cubans could not perform the sacrament outdoors as Baptist doctrine prescribed, they tried to bring the outdoors, including natural running water, into their building.

In addition to his continuing medical practice (which became especially busy during emergencies such as the diphtheria epidemic of 1890), his preaching schedule, and frequent trips to the United States, Díaz also worked in these years to make the Baptist community more self-sufficient. He first mentioned wanting to open a Baptist hospital in 1890, writing that "we are looking up the proper locality at present," and that he was thinking about opening a Baptist college as well. [41] That same year, he asked the Board to help him with the cost of printer's type. He wanted to "have a semi-monthly paper and all Bible leaves, lessons, tracts, and so on" printed by a member of the church who had offered to do the work for free. He knew that his constant requests could be a financial burden to the Board, and he wrote, "I am very sorry to call your attention to these often occurring necessities, but it is unavoidable for the advancement of our schools, and I consider it very important."[42] Díaz knew that his requests for financial help would not always be met, but he was certain that his Southern friends would help him if they could.

[40] "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. Emphases in SBHLA transcription.
[41] Diaz to Jones, March 17, 1890, published in "Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. 2, no. 9 (May 1890), p. 1. See chapter two for Díaz's plans for a Baptist hospital in Havana.
[42] Diaz to Tichenor, February 21, 1890, published in "Cuba: Letters from Rev. A.J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 8 (April 1890), p. 1.

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board was financially strapped in these years; they were in perpetual debt, Southern congregations wrote them constantly to ask for a few hundred dollars here and there, and they were struggling to keep up with the Northern Baptists in the state of Missouri and in Indian Territory.[43] In this context, Díaz took many of the financial obligations of the Havana congregations onto his own shoulders. In 1889, he wrote Jones to report that at the corner of Neptuno and Soledad streets in central Havana, "we located the tent presented us by the Board; but the rains and heavy winds have worn it out completely.... as I have not the means on hand to build a chapel, have procured all the materials necessary on credit to build one and today it is to be completed." This good news was perhaps tempered by Díaz's next words. "I have not ascertained as yet the entire cost of the house," he wrote, "but presume it will be from $500 to $600. The most curious part of it is I do not know where the money is to come from, but I trust in the Lord. He will send it from some quarter to cover the debt. The Lord needs that house there in that neighborhood and I built it; now when it is most needed the Lord will provide."[44] This classic statement of faith also betrays something about Díaz's theory of finance; that is, if his congregation needed a place to meet, then he would provide it using credit—and would trust in God to provide the money "from some quarter" to repay the debt. The Southern Baptists celebrated this statement, and others like it, as proof of the deep faith that the Cuban pastor and his flock possessed. Indeed, in this same issue they called attention to the new chapels that the Cubans were building, as

[43] Williams, *Tichenor*, 175-194..
[44] "Letter from Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 2 (October 1889), p. 1-2. In January 1891, the Board reported that $500 for the "house of worship in Neptuno street and three hundred [dollars] for the house [of worship] in San Miguel" had been taken out of the profit of the Baptist cemetery in Havana. Whether Díaz knew of these profits when he wrote the Board in 1889 is an open question. "Not True," *Our Home Field* vol. III, no. 5 (January 1891), p. 4; typed transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

proof that "our missionaries are beginning and erecting chapels which the necessities of their work demand."[45] The faith that Díaz showed, which in another light could be seen as foolhardiness or poor planning, was interpreted in these pages as boldness, simple obedience to God's will, and faithful care of his flock.

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The February 15, 1891 dedication service brought something between fifty and one hundred visitors from the Southern United States to Havana. Their accounts of the trip and the service, published in hometown newspapers and collected by the Home Mission Board, provide a good window not only into how Southerners viewed Cuba, but also into how the Cuban Baptists presented themselves to their Southern partners and to other Cubans. Díaz planned that the visitors from the South would participate not only in the dedication service in Havana, but that they would have a genuine Cuban vacation as well. He negotiated with Havana hotels to get a reduced rate, and wrote to Tichenor, "One train is ready for the excursion to Matanzas and another for the sugar plantation." He hoped that Tichenor could bring "a couple of hundred" Southern Baptists on the trip, writing that "Their visit here will give us influence among this people and that will help us to develop the Gospel."[46] Díaz was very aware that given Cuba's political climate, many Cubans saw a connection with North Americans as a good thing—not only a potentially serious counterbalance to Spanish rule, but also an independent source of

[45] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 2, no. 2 (October 1889), p. 1.
[46] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 6 (February 1891), p. 3, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

financial and spiritual support. He understood how important it was for the Havana Baptists to cultivate a good relationship with their Southern partners.

North Americans who lived in or wintered in Cuba probably joined the Southern Baptists who traveled to Cuba from the South at services and on day trips during the February 1891 "excursion." Consequently, it is unclear exactly how many people traveled to Cuba specifically for the occasion, although what is clear is that it was a large group, probably between 50 and 100. Tichenor wrote, "at least 200 Americans present" at the dedication service, while Mrs. Loulie M. Gordon, of Atlanta, said there were 100 Americans there. Rev. Dr. J. Lansing Burrows, who had been a longtime pastor in Richmond, Virginia but was now retired in Augusta, Georgia, wrote that "perhaps 50" landed together on the same steamship to Havana. The introduction to all of these accounts, published in *Our Home Field*, said that there were "from seventy-five to one hundred" who went. Mrs. Mary B. Barnes, a resident of Atlanta, regarding several different services that were conducted in English and Spanish over the course of the weekend, wrote, "The congregation of the morning numbering about three to five hundred, many Americans, and that of the night more than fifteen hundred. The delighted eyes of more than a hundred American Christians and those of more than a thousand Cubans witnessed the solemn and impressive ceremonies." Clearly, the official dedication of the church building drew a large number of supporters from the South, which in turn drew an even larger than usual congregation of Cubans.[47]

[47] The Barnes quotation is from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6, while all other quotations are from "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff. For a short biography of J. Lansing Burrows, see his obituary in the *New York Times*, January 3, 1893, p. 5.

Such a large group necessitated translation during services and day trips, although the Baptists held separate dedication services in English and Spanish. Burrows named the Cuban Baptist ministers Díaz, Cova, and Porta as those who provided most of the translation for the North American visitors. Col. John H. Weller, the Sunday-school superintendent of a Baptist church in Louisville, Kentucky, mentioned how happy he was to hear Baptists in Spanish, although he could not understand their language. The dedication of the Jané building on Sunday, February 15, 1891, was celebrated by a service in English at noon, and then by another service in the evening in Spanish. A few speakers at the evening service, such as Rev. Porter King, the pastor of the Baptist church in Key West, Florida, spoke in English and were translated to the largely Cuban congregation. Tichenor was especially moved by Díaz's sermon, writing, "We were gratified at the grand address of Diaz, who melted all hearts, and moved to tears not only his Cuban people, but those of us who could not understand a word he uttered." This refrain about Díaz—that his skills as an orator in Spanish were such that he could emotionally affect even those who did not understand him—was frequently repeated in Southern Baptist writings in these years.[48]

The dedication services on Sunday, February 15, 1891, focused attention on what both Cuban and Southern Baptists believed were the most pressing—and expressly political—issues of the day in Havana: the essential difference between Catholic and Protestant doctrines, and the illegitimacy of Spanish power in Cuba.[49] Southern Baptist

[48] See the accounts written by Durham and Gordon in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff. Durham wrote that the evening service was in English and Spanish, while Gordon said the evening service was mostly in Spanish. The quotation from Tichenor is in the same article.
[49] Service bulletin, "Dedication of Gethsemane Baptist Church, Havana, Cuba, Sunday, February 15th, 1891," printed in English in Atlanta; SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24.

leaders led the noon service in English, and Burrows and Dr. J. B. Hawthorne, of Atlanta, gave speeches that "aimed at a synopsis of Baptist doctrine." Burrows wrote that his own address "touched upon the vital differences existing between the true Christianity of the Bible and that crude, undeveloped and partial type visible in Roman Catholic countries." Barnes wrote that Burrows' address "was a masterly presentation of the fundamental principles of Christianity as opposed to the formalism and ritualism of the Catholic church." Hawthorne, Burrows reported, preached on "the doctrines of Faith, of Obedience as the Index of Faith and of the liberated Conscience, untrammelled by the dictates of temporal power, upon this great distinctive principle of Baptists." Rev. C. H. Nash, of Ocala, Florida, reported that both addresses "brought out so clearly the great ground principles which characterize us as a denomination as the antipodes of Romanism." Barnes wrote, "Dr. Hawthorne's theme was the distinguishing peculiarities of the Baptists," one of which was "that as God alone is Sovereign of the human conscience, no political power has the right to dictate the religious faith or practice of its subjects." Díaz, perhaps feeling overwhelmed at this show of support for his struggle against the Catholic church and for the Cuban struggle against Spain, "attempted to follow with a brief address, but was visibly overcome by his emotion," as Burrows reported. Cova observed, "His heart must have remained satisfied." The Southern Baptists made no attempt to hide their criticisms of Catholicism—indeed, they hoped to publicize these points more widely. Nash wrote that the arguments presented at this service for the superiority of Baptists were so clear "that many express a wish that they might be translated into Spanish and published in some of the papers of the city. Probably something of the kind will be done."[50]

[50] Burrows and Nash accounts are in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February

The evening service was packed with Cubans, most of the speakers were Cuban, and it appears that the speeches were not translated. Many of the addresses celebrated the dedication of the magnificent building as a sign of the progress made by the gospel in Cuba, and retold the story of the early years of Cuban Baptist establishment and persecution with relish. The content of the speeches was no less political than they had been earlier in the day, although North Americans may have been more eager than Cubans to highlight this theme of the services. Cova, one of the few bilingual people to write an account of the service, reported, "the service was performed half in Spanish and half in English.... Brother H. M. King, pastor of the Key West Baptist church, made a tender and eloquent address on the beginning of this mission, the encouragements then promised to her by the Key West church, the trials we have endured and the triumph of Christian doctrine." Burrows was impressed by the class of Cubans who attended this service, writing, "the great house was filled.... A large number of native Cubans and resident Spaniards thronged the galleries. Nearly twenty judges of the various courts, with lawyers and merchants were recognized. Intelligence and character were stamped upon the faces of vast numbers. The proportion of children—well behaved, interested, eager—was large." Burrows, who did not understand Spanish, reported, "Senor Chomat, a jurist and one of the law judges, spoke as representing the general population, who, wearied of Rome, fostered a sincere interest in the Baptists. His address was said to be very remarkable, sounding no uncertain note of opposition to Roman exactions, lauding the principle of soul-liberty and extending hearty assurances of friendship to the American Baptists, who had achieved so signal a triumph." Interestingly, Cova did not

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15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff; typewritten transcription in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. The Barnes and Cova reports are from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6.

mention Chomat's apparently incendiary anti-Catholic speech in the account he gave to the editor of *Our Home Field*.[51]

Cova, a childhood friend of Díaz, may have been so moved by the speech Díaz gave at the evening service that he thought it unnecessary to mention what other people had said. A large proportion of the congregation was moved to tears by Díaz's words, including the Southern visitors, although most of these had no idea why. Cova reported that Díaz preached on a text from "Luke 2:29, 30: 'For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' He was masterly and tender, and when remembering that the first time he went to the Southern Baptist Convention to ask for a house of worship, he had left his dead daughter, who was to be buried that same day, in order not to miss the only steamer that could bring him in due time to attend the Convention, he moved himself and many of the hearers to tears at so sad memories." Díaz's text, taken from Simeon's song of praise when the infant Jesus was presented at the temple in Jerusalem, clearly referenced how Díaz felt about his own temple, his own dead daughter, and his own feeling of blessing and sacrificial accomplishment. Díaz may have explained to the congregation how his absence from his daughter's burial had left him anguished, but that his sacrifice had now been consecrated through the purchase and dedication of the Jané building.[52]

This profound connection between Díaz's travel to the 1887 Southern Baptist Convention in Louisville, his personal suffering, and his attachment to the Jané building would not be fully understood by Southern Baptists, even Tichenor, for many years to

[51] Cova's report is from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6; the Burrows account is from "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

[52] Cova's report is in "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6.

come. Indeed, most if not all of them had had no idea what Díaz said that day, until they read about it from Cova's letter to *Our Home Field* (if indeed they read that letter carefully). "With a few sentences," Burrows wrote, for instance,

> [Díaz] became the master of a throng which had grown somewhat weary under the unusually protracted exercises. His fervid spirit burned with intense ardor, and his passionate utterances swayed his people, then melted them to tears and led them to the heights of religious ecstasy. It was a scene to be remembered; the Apostle of Cuba was aflame with emotion, as he beheld the consummation of hopes fed with the tears of anxiety, and *while he spoke in an unknown tongue to us*, we readily caught his meaning from his graceful, yet animated, delivery. Diaz never appeared to us so great and noble and consecrated as in this hour of his triumph.

Most of the Southern Baptists seem to have assumed that the Cubans, in tears, were moved only by religious feeling or by Díaz's amazing powers as an orator. Nash simply reported, "Diaz manifested especial power, and moved many of his listeners to tears.... The whole service was impressive, and after the benediction there was a cordial handshaking between many of the Cuban and American Christians." Similarly, Hawthorne wrote, "the Cubans say that Diaz is a great orator. I am prepared to believe this statement, because without understanding a word of his sermon on Sunday night, I was so impressed with it that I could not refrain from tears. Speaking in his native tongue he is very impassioned, yet self-possessed and graceful. At the time my tears were flowing so freely I glanced at the congregation and observed that everybody was weeping." Tichenor summarized, "We were gratified at the grand address of Diaz, who melted all hearts, and moved to tears not only his Cuban people, but those of us who could not understand a word he uttered."[53] One cannot escape the impression that, as

[53] The Nash, Tichenor and Burrows reports are published in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. Emphasis added to Burrows quote. Hawthorne's account is from "Some

gifted an orator as Díaz clearly was, his Cuban congregants were moved to tears because many of them knew of his family's grief. They knew that it was directly related to the decision of the Southern Baptist Convention to provide the money for the purchase of the building in which they were now sitting. Díaz's sacrifice had worked for the blessing of the entire congregation. The Southern Baptist visitors, however, remained unaware that Díaz's "triumph" was marked by tragedy. His power to move a congregation to tears was, to them, simply more evidence of his personal magnetism and influence.

While they were in Havana, the Baptist visitors also toured the city and its environs, attended Baptist prayer services at the different locations, and visited a Cuban convert who had been imprisoned. Cuban Baptist minister José V. Cova remembered, "Excursions to different places of the city and country were procured during the days of their stay, that they would find some pleasure among us. Of course they have experienced many surprises with the particular traits of this country." The North Americans also went sightseeing in Havana and in the region around it. Burrows wrote that members of the group "visited and inspected the sugar mills and fruit plantations, the Morro Castle and fortifications, the Cathedral containing the bones of Columbus, the city of Matanzas and valley of Gumuri, the consecrated burial spot of the Baptists, and the homes and shops of Havana." The Southern Baptists also attended different services held by the Cubans.

Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6. Díaz himself hardly ever mentioned his daughter's death and its connection to the purchase of the Jané building. It is unclear whether his Southern Baptist friends knew of her death when Díaz and his wife attended the 1887 Convention. The experience for Díaz was clearly a profound one. In 1901, he wrote an impassioned letter to Tichenor about why he was so attached to the Jané building, referencing his and his wife's painful—and, he felt, sacrificial—experience that year. See Diaz to Tichenor, December 3, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. In 1889, Tichenor mentioned that Díaz's child was buried in the Baptist cemetery in Havana, so he knew some of the story before the dedication. However, he never mentioned it otherwise, so he may not have realized the connection in Díaz's mind between Esther's death and the building.

Cova wrote, "Some of them visited, on different days, our churches in Havana; on Friday, 13th, some of them visited this Pilar Church during the prayer-meeting at 7:30 p.m.... On the following day the brethren visited Rev. O'Halloran's church, at 'Puentes Grandes;' Bro. King, of Key West, and Professor Cox, of LaGrange, were of the party, and I heard it was a most interesting meeting to that church."

In addition, some Southerners made sure to visit the prison where Rev. Francis Arriaga was being held. Arriaga, a Catholic priest who had converted to Protestantism, was reportedly imprisoned because "when he renounced Catholicism (he being a priest) he wrote a card for the press stating his views," and in this article he allegedly "spoke disrespectfully of the Bishop of Porto Rico." Arriaga's imprisonment made a deep impression on many of his Southern visitors. Burrows wrote, "For four months he has lain in the common jail, without even the pretensions of a trial, for having declared his faith in the New Testament order.... [The charge against him] is, of course, but a diaphanous excuse for putting a minister of Christ in prison." Weller took the opportunity to condemn the whole of the Spanish justice system. The Kentuckian noted that for his alleged crime, Arriaga "was seized and placed in the jail where there are about seven hundred prisoners, representing every kind of criminal known to the Spanish law. Where freedom of speech and the press are muzzled it is not surprising that we find newspaper men, Free Masons and Cuban sympathizers called rebels. Mixing freely with these are murderers, cut-throats, bandits and all sorts of criminals. Our brother has been there since November 1, 1890, and will stay until it suits the whim of the Captain General to grant him a trial."[54] These experiences helped the Southern visitors to formulate distinct views

[54] Cova's account is in "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6. Accounts of Rev. Dr. Lansing Burrows and Col. John H. Weller are

of Cuban politics and the context in which their hosts lived. Díaz and the other Cuban Baptists must have provided commentary to their visitors to help them interpret their visits in a particular way.

Despite this discouraging assessment of Spanish power in Cuba, some Southerners thought that Cuban politics were on the cusp of change, and naturally assumed that the Baptist revival would be a key part of the coming revolution. Cox, the Alabaman, saw that "Cuba is evidently passing through a formative period. Political affairs are unsettled, religious views are changing, and a visitor feels as if he were attending the birth of a nation. Our Baptist cause forms a striking feature of this era; the church dedication was historic. New Testament times are seen repeated in this island."[55] The reality of Spanish colonialism and Catholic power were crumbling; in their place, many Southerners believed, the Baptist congregations could step in to encourage new religion and new politics.

The Southerners' impressions of Cuban Catholicism were influenced by a coincidence: the dedication service had been planned for the weekend before the beginning of Lent, which meant that Mardi Gras revelers were taking to the streets of Havana during their visit. The Southern Baptists were horrified by what they saw as religiously-sanctioned debauchery. Nash reported that on the same Sunday as the dedication services "came the annual 'Mardi Gras'—a carnival of all kinds of fantastic display, and the roar was like the 'noise of many waters,' and very far from being as pleasant. The within, at the altar of Divine worship, was in amazing contrast with the

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from "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1, reprinted from the *Christian Index*, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

[55] The Cox account is in "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6.

without, at the shrine of a godless merrymaking." Gordon was under the impression that "most of the passers-by were seeking pleasure-exciting scenes. Brass bands could be heard on all sides tempting the dancers to pass by any holy temple.... What a strange, new scene it was to one from Atlanta, with her church-going people, who respect and reverence God's day. It produced a feeling of wonder and a strange chill of almost fear as we pushed our way through the laughing, jesting crowd into the church." Tichenor and several others thought the Mardi Gras celebrations had impeded some Cubans from attending the Baptist services. Tichenor wrote, "The dedication took place under the most unfavorable circumstances.... In Havana, Sunday was the Carnival, when the day was given up to dances, masked balls, street processions, where thousands paraded in masks and the most grotesque costumes. A more unpropitious time could scarcely have been selected." Barnes thought that the carnival "no doubt diminished the attendance upon the dedication services."

More than one Southerner drew a direct link between the revelers on the streets and the nature of Cuban Catholicism. Cox wrote that the "Catholic church feast" on Sunday "was celebrated in truly mardi gras rioting fashion—if such disorder and uproar on the streets could be called fashion.... It is an easy and safe induction that the infallible (?) church, in Cuba at least, is paganism mixed with traditions of Christianity." Cox, the president of the Southern Female College, explained the challenges faced by the Cuban Baptists as stemming from the nature of Catholicism. "The difficulties in the way of our cause arise, first and last, we might say, from the Catholic power," he wrote. "Persecutions continue.... The civil authorities and even our American consul, whose wife is a Romanist, are in league with papacy.... We have to contend against the

superstition, idolatry, corruption, Sabbath-breaking, and intolerance to which the Catholic church has given rise in Cuba. When religion lies in the direction of indulgence, it is popular." Nash saw Cuban Catholicism as backwards, and as a key reason why Cuba was still under a European colonial yoke. "Cuba, in her state religion," wrote the Florida pastor, "is not yet beyond the darkness of the Middle Ages, and Rome, left with unbroken power, will hold any nation, religiously, in that mediaeval [sic] darkness forever."[56]

Although the Southerners were appalled at Spanish colonial government and the practice of Roman Catholicism in Cuba, they were extremely impressed with Cuba's potential, their Cuban Baptist "brothers and sisters," and the warmth of their reception there. In a comment typical of many of the North Americans, Gordon remarked, "should Cuba be annexed to the United States the [Jané] property would immediately enhance four times its present value." Cox wrote, "The attitude of the press is favorable. On our arrival in Havana, the leading daily published an extra edition announcing our presence, the dedication and warmly commending Dr. Diaz and his work." Barnes noted the official welcome to the large group of Southerners, writing, "The Captain-General, Cuba's highest military officer, tendered us a reception and a most kindly greeting. The governor of Morro Castle received us most graciously, and twice visited the party at the hotel." She was surprised that the U.S. consul in Havana did not follow the lead of the Spanish governors. The consul "gave us no recognition," she wrote, "although three of our prominent members, Mr. Adair, Dr. Burrows and Dr. Hawthorne, called upon him the

[56] The Nash, Gordon, and Tichenor reports are from are from "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. The Barnes and Cox accounts were printed in "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6. Cox wrote "our American counsul," but he was referring to Ramon Williams, the U.S. consul in Havana at this time. Díaz repeatedly told Southerners that Williams was "in league with" the Catholic Church and Spanish authorities in Havana, and Cox may have simply repeated this assessment.

day after our arrival and invited him to the dedication services. He did not attend."[57] The Southerners' comments were split between two sometimes-opposing goals. They wanted to emphasize that Díaz and his congregation were on a solid legal footing in Cuba and had a measure of influence among the people there that was out of proportion to their small size as a congregation. On the other hand, the Southerners wanted to ensure that their readers understood the extent of the Catholic and government opposition that the Cuban Baptists had to endure.

Southern Baptists' negative impressions of Catholicism and colonialism in Cuba were only made more extreme by their experience of Cuban Baptists as intelligent, sober, courageous, and faithful. In their telling the Cuban Baptists were the polar opposite of "Romanists," and were implicitly the people who would lead Cuba into the bright future. Rev. Durham of North Carolina argued, "Never has there been a braver or more faithful little band of Baptists in the fires of persecution through all the ages than these fourteen hundred Cuban Baptists." He was sure that "this native ministry, nothing like it in all the past century of missions, will, under God, give the gospel to the millions of people on this bountiful Island." Weller, the Kentuckian, remarked that everyone participated in the Baptist services. He thought "the singing was excellent, owing to the fact that it was participated in by pupils of the Baptist day and Sunday-schools." He was impressed that "the brethren took active part in the meeting, talking and leading in prayer freely. In appearance, saving complexion, they are easily equal to the brethren in any of our home churches. In manner when speaking, far superior." Cox wrote, "it was refreshing to see a

[57] The Barnes and Cox accounts are from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6; the Gordon account is from "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

church of the New Testament times. I was impressed with the simplicity, faith and zeal of the membership, the silence, attention and reverence of the worshipers in the house of God, even to the smallest children, the hearty singing, liberality in giving, faithfulness and self-denial in service.... A silent rebuke sank into my heart from this infant church for the coldness, formality, and worldliness of our home churches." Dr. Hawthorne of Atlanta reported, "A more earnest, self-denying, heroic, consecrated band of Christian disciples I have never found anywhere. Diaz is supported by a corps of native missionaries who are just as zealous and determined as he, and who have the confidence and affection of the people of that city. After looking over the whole field I am prepared to say that the Southern Baptist Convention has no Mission today which promises so well as the one in Cuba."[58] All the reports about Cuban Baptists glowed.

The Cuban Baptists, too, were thrilled by the visit from the Southerners, but for their own reasons. The visit by a large group of North Americans cemented the Baptists' position as a potentially influential group in Havana, one that seemed to have ready access to all the things that a connection with North Americans could provide. Cuban Baptist minister José V. Cova wrote, even before the visitors arrived, that "The intended excursion to Cuba has awakened much interest, as much in our congregations as among the other people of the town. They styled it the American Council, and are preparing to see our brethren and hear them."[59] Cubans were keenly interested in pursuing alliances with individual North Americans in these years, for political, economic and personal

[58] The Durham and Weller reports were in "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. Cox and Hawthorne were from "Some Further Accounts of the Havana Dedication," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 8 (April 1891), p. 1-6.
[59] "Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 7. Emphasis in original.

reasons, and the large group of visitors from the U.S. probably gave many Cubans the idea that the Baptist church was a particularly good place to start.

Spurred on by their assessment of the Cuban congregants, the Southern Baptists enthusiastically reported on the progress of the Cuban Baptist Church. In May 1891, the Home Mission Board reported on the Cuban congregation to a large crowd at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. "Cuban work was presented Friday night to a house packed, and running over," a writer from the Board later recalled. "The persecutions of our missionaries have turned out to the furtherance of the gospel, and the prospects for Cuba's redemption are brighter than ever before." Rev. Nash of Florida, too, reported that the Cuba project was "a phenomenal success. Where in all the mission work of the Southern Baptist Convention has there been anything like it? The First Baptist Church in Cuba was organized only four years ago; today there are seven churches, twenty-one preaching places, four ordained ministers, seven preachers, and over 1,500 members."[60] The growth of the church was astonishing to the Southerners, especially given the difficult political and religious context in which Cuban Baptists worked.

[60] The report was republished in *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 10 (June 1891), p. 5, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22. Nash's assessment comes from "Dedication of the Baptist Church in Havana on February 15th, 1891," *Our Home Field* vol. 3, no. 7 (March 1891), p. 1ff, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.

Fig. 3. The Jané Building, Havana, Cuba. *Our Home Field*, vol. 1, no. 9 (May 1889), p. 1.

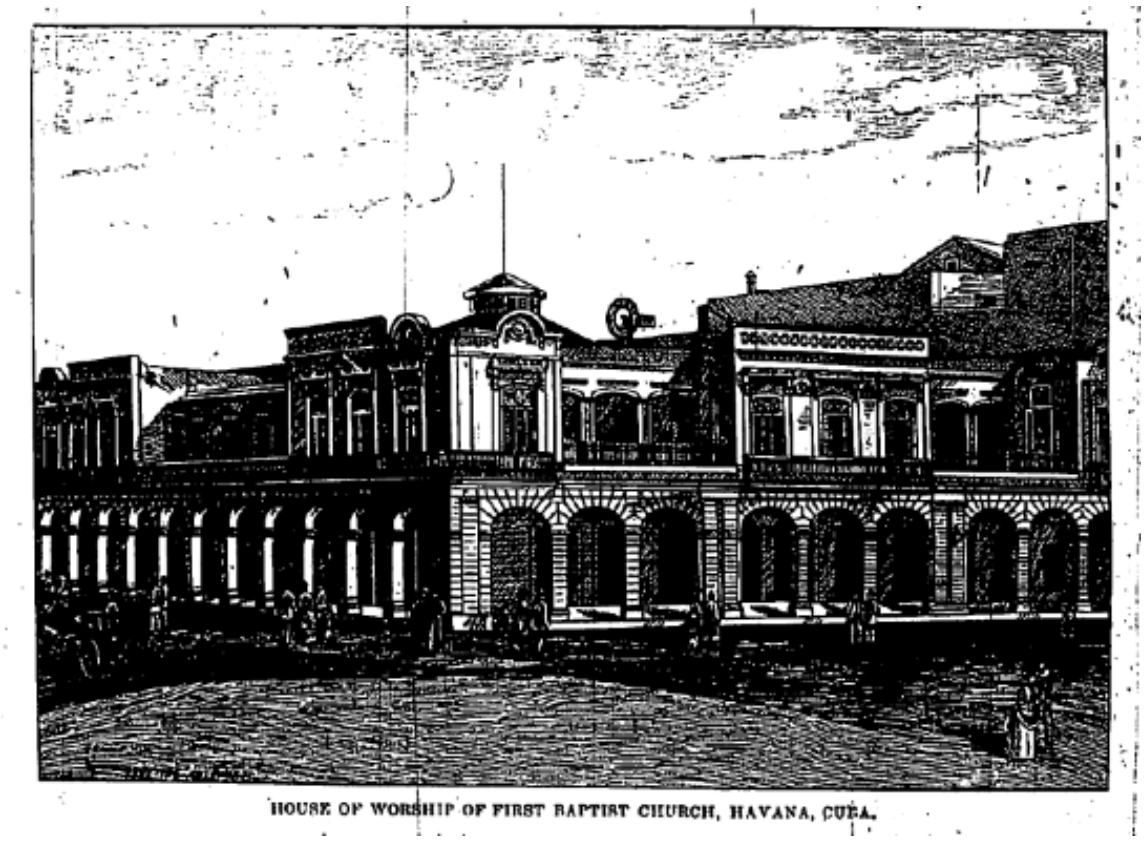
HOUSE OF WORSHIP OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HAVANA, CUBA.

Fig. 4. Rev. Isaac T. Tichenor. Image courtesy of SBHLA.

IV.
The Rise and Fall of a Cultural Broker: Religion, Politics, and War, 1894-1897

In 1895, the beginning of Cuba's war for independence from Spain turned the congregational life of Gethsemane Baptist Church upside down. Many of the men of the Baptist congregations apparently left the city to join the insurgent army. Many others fled to the United States or Mexico to escape the violence and deprivation that the war brought. Women in Havana became the sole leaders of the few Baptist meetings, services and schools that remained in operation. The Baptist effort to provide medical services to victims of the war in Cuba apparently gained them some favor from one Spanish governor in Havana, but his successor did not continue the policy of toleration. At least one town where the Baptists had bought property and gathered a congregation, San Miguel del Padrón, was burned and abandoned during the war. Those who remained in Havana suffered the constant surveillance and privations of a military state, and then of a city under siege.

Rev. Alberto Díaz put into motion a complex series of plans, beginning in 1894 and continuing for the next two years, which were designed to help Gethsemane Baptist Church and other Cuban Baptist communities survive the war and minister to Cubans during it. He acquired the approval of the Home Mission Board to use a few hundred dollars of cemetery income to repair the road leading to the Baptist cemetery, but borrowed an additional $15,000 from friends. He used the money to buy a building and land on the Calzada de Buenos Aires, in the Cerro district of Havana well away from the central part of the city. Díaz intended to convert the building into a Baptist hospital that would be the center of Gethsemane's medical service, which he now named the "White

Cross." He made repairs to the cemetery road and also purchased additional land for the cemetery, anticipating that many more Cubans would want non-Catholic burial for members of their families in the coming years. He floated ideas for educational institutions, including a girls' high school and a seminary to train Cuban men for the ministry, which drew on his vision of Gethsemane as a center of independent Cuban life. Díaz also continued his efforts to gain new allies for Gethsemane. He considered going to Dwight Moody's institute in Chicago in 1894 and made several fundraising trips to the United States in 1895. In addition, he asked the Home Mission Board for permission to apply for a position as a physician at the port of Havana, which would have put him into contact with powerful officials. Just as the congregation had gained the public's goodwill during the smallpox epidemic of 1887-88, Díaz hoped that Cuban Baptists could come out of the independence war stronger than before, ready for the new opportunities that Cuban independence would surely bring. He was prepared for the phenomenal growth of the Baptist congregations to continue, and hoped that this future growth would allow him to pay off the debt that he had incurred. His allies on the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board expressed cautious optimism that Cuba would finally win its independence from Catholic Spain, and praised Díaz and Gethsemane for their wartime initiatives. Díaz's influence as a cultural broker was at its height.[1]

[1] In February 1894, Díaz borrowed $12,000 from "Mrs. Ana Esquan Todd," using as collateral the Jané building in downtown Havana. He borrowed an additional $3,000 from "Mr. Serafin Alio" around the same time. The property on Buenos Aires in the Cerro cost $7,850, and Díaz put its title in his own name. The repairs and additional land at the cemetery cost $6,000. In addition, Díaz bought or built a church in the hamlet of San Miguel ($1,500), made repairs on some of these new purchases ($800), paid taxes, lawyers and fees ($942), paid for insurance coverage and water ($192) and made interest payments on his loans ($1,500). When he bought the property on Buenos Aires, he also took out a $5,000 mortgage on it, and put that loan in Tichenor's name. Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 12, 1894 and November 29, 1898, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA; "Report from

Díaz's actions during the war made no distinction between religion and politics, because his vision for Cuba was simply not divided into religious and political spheres. His White Cross services were an outgrowth of his medical training and of his theology, but they also provided a valuable service during a war in which he had definitely taken the side of the Cubans. For a few months, Spanish toleration of the White Cross allowed Díaz to travel freely around Cuba. He observed conditions in insurgent camps and probably carried messages, even as he tended to the wounded and sought their conversion. He may have been part of the Cuban underground insurgent network in Havana; he told Rev. Isaac T. Tichenor that this was the case in 1896. Soon after, he was arrested for communicating with the insurgents and expelled from Cuba. At this point, his Southern Baptist allies saw no problem with his equation of Cuban political independence and spiritual liberation, and they too made this link. Southern Baptist leaders praised his White Cross work, worked tirelessly in 1896 to get Díaz released from prison, expressed support for U.S. recognition of Cuban belligerency, and in 1898 advocated U.S. entry into the war against Spain. Southern Baptist leaders believed that if

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1894 to 1895" and "Report from 1895 to 1896," from Home Mission Board minutes of September 29, 1897, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. See also A. J. Diaz and I. T. Tichenor affidavits, recorded in Fulton County (Georgia) Superior Court, Deed Book 160, p. 123 and 125. For the most part, I have not been able to locate legal records about these property titles, loans, and mortgages. Recent Cuban policies on foreign-owned property have made it difficult for researchers to access historical legal documents about property in Cuba, and any Southern Baptist copies of legal records appear not to have survived. In 1894 and 1895, Díaz planned to go to the Moody Institute in Chicago, although it appears that he did not make the trip; raised money for his Baptist hospital in Atlanta, Boston and New York in the fall of 1895; and met a representative of the American Baptist Publication Society in Milwaukee in May 1895. See Díaz to Tichenor, October 16, 1895, reprinted in *Mission Journal* (December 1895), p. 33; see also the November 1895 issue, p. 27. Boston Smith of the ABPS mentioned in his scrapbook that he had met Díaz in Milwaukee. See his scrapbook, "Merry Christmas," Boston Smith Papers, American Baptist Historical Society; quoted in Wilma Rugh Taylor, *This Train Is Bound for Glory: The Story of America's Chapel Cars* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1999), 134-135.

Cubans won the war, they would reject the establishment of a state church and might also move closer to a widespread embrace of Baptist doctrines.

The unforeseen consequences of war ruined many of Díaz's plans, and also spelled the end of his position as the unquestioned cultural broker between Cuban and Southern Baptists. When Díaz was expelled from Cuba in 1896, Southern Baptist leaders found out for the first time about the financial transactions he had made in 1894, and they questioned whether he had made the best business decisions. To gain his release from prison, they had launched a publicity campaign in the U.S. that painted him as a model Cuban patriot and innocent evangelist, a decision some of them came to regret. After his arrival in the U.S., Díaz crisscrossed the United States drumming up support for the Cuban insurgency and the White Cross. He gave dramatic testimony before the U.S. Senate about the viability of the Cuban insurgency and the brutality of the Spanish. When Díaz gave speeches to raise money for the White Cross, he increasingly seemed to be soliciting funds for the Cuban *junta* in the same breath. His brief period of celebrity, coinciding as it did with the Board's new doubts about Díaz's financial trustworthiness, led some Southern Baptist leaders to think that his prominence might be a liability rather than an asset for their work in Cuba. Tichenor still thought the best of Díaz and considered him a brother, but younger Southern Baptist leaders rarely felt the same way. As Díaz became harder for them to control, they came to believe that his equation of religion and politics might not be in their best interest.

His Southern Baptist allies struggled to understand Díaz's motivations during these years of war, and in many ways the roots of their future discord can be found in the many possible interpretations of Díaz's behavior. In some things, such as his financial

transactions, Díaz seemed to be an inept manager, not planning for repayment of all the loans and mortgages. At other moments, as in his Senate testimony, he seemed to be far more connected to the Cuban insurgent army or to its underground network in Havana than the more cautious of the Southern Baptists might have preferred. Was Díaz an observer—even if not an entirely neutral one—of the war, selflessly offering his services as a medical doctor to civilian and soldier alike, and trusting in God to send the money to pay for these services? Or was he a Cuban insurgent, passing information to Cuban military leaders by freely crossing the lines of battle under the "white cross" of the medical service? Most of the Southern Baptist leadership would have forgiven him either of these supposed sins. Some of them, following Tichenor, concluded that Díaz had merely been caught up in the excitement of war, hopeful for the liberation from Spanish Catholicism that the insurgency seemed to represent. Indeed, when the Board investigated Díaz's financial dealings in 1896, it officially concluded that he had done what he thought was best for the congregations in Havana, although he may have shown poor judgment. The Board forgave him and eventually paid off the loans in Cuba.

Some Southern Baptist leaders, however, believed that the evidence showed that Díaz was a charlatan and a liar who was trying to steal from the Board. The Board had not given official approval for the purchase of the building on Buenos Aires, the opening of a Baptist hospital, the White Cross work, or the many sizable loans and mortgages. Díaz's reputation among them never quite recovered; some Southern Baptists now saw him as a self-aggrandizer whose stories about medical clinics, insurgent contacts, and evangelical conversions served only to line his own pockets. This faction succeeded in getting Díaz to resign from the Board's employment. Unlike other Cuban Baptist

ministers who had fled the island, Díaz was not assigned to a Southern Baptist congregation or a mission to Cuban exiles in Florida from 1896 to 1898. Instead, his resignation purportedly freed him to work more directly for Cuban independence. He spent a few months raising money for the White Cross, and then, as his celebrity faded, worked for the American Baptist Home Mission Society as an itinerant preacher aboard a railroad car in Texas and Mexico. Throughout this period, his equation of Cuban political independence and religious liberation never faltered, even as he talked more openly about his support for the Cuban insurgency.

The problem of interpreting Díaz's motivations and actions in these years—was he a patriot or a demagogue, a visionary or a thief—is similar to the challenge of interpreting other cultural brokers, whose ethics and goals can only be understood in the context of their political circumstances. As long as those politics are fluid, there is space in which a cultural intermediary can work. Once the political situation begins to harden into something new, however, the position of the broker quickly becomes more tenuous. The beginning of the war for Cuban independence opened up the possibility for an entirely new definition of the relationship between the United States, Cuba and Spain. Díaz, like many other Cubans, was able to work for a few months in a space marked by the Spanish hope that tolerant government would bring an end to the Cuban insurgents. When a new Spanish governor began to clamp down, however, that space closed, just as the likelihood of U.S. recognition of Cuban belligerency seemed to rise. As the parties to the conflict struggled to find a new equilibrium, Díaz reached the height of his influence as a cultural broker. The serious problems in his partnership with Southern Baptists were muted because of the still-fluid political situation: Southern Baptist leaders, even those

who mistrusted Díaz, had no desire to denounce him in late 1896, only a few months after they had lionized him as an ideal Cuban patriot. They preferred to terminate their relationship with him as quietly as possible, and hope for the best.

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In 1894 and 1895 Díaz had reason to believe that his Southern Baptist brethren were encouraging his initiative and independence. A young Southern Baptist minister, E. Pendleton Jones, had been sent to Cuba in 1893 because "owing to the collections of rents etc. the duties imposed upon Brother Diaz were irksome and he was in need of an assistant who should go as his secretary." By the spring of 1894, however, the Board and Díaz had changed their minds about needing Jones in Cuba, possibly because "it would be unsafe for him to remain in Cuba during the summer months," due to infectious disease, and the Board accepted Jones's resignation that autumn. Díaz was given permission to travel to the United States to attend Dwight Moody's Institute, and the Board looked favorably on his petitions to begin a hospital and girls' high school in Havana. They made plans to send the Board's Treasurer, A. D. Adair, to Havana in January 1895 "for the purpose of looking into the matter" of opening a girls' high school. During the period when the Board was considering what to do about Jones, they asked Díaz to travel to Atlanta to advise them. Although the Board eventually asked Díaz not to apply for the position of surgeon at the port of Havana, they did consider this request.[2]

[2] For these developments, see the Minutes of Meetings of the Home Mission Board for February 14, 1893, March 31, May 25, June 27, September 24, October 1, October 3, October 30, and October 31, 1894, and January 29, 1895, in the Transcribed Minute Book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA. Quotes are from February 13, 1893, March 31, 1894, and

By early 1895 the outbreak of war had put a damper on most of these plans. In March Díaz traveled to Atlanta for a Board meeting, where "owing to the peculiar situation of affairs in Havana" the Board decided to halt plans to buy a building for a girls' high school. Díaz also formally proposed starting "in connection with the Mission a charity known as the Red Cross, for the purpose of ministering to the wounded of both armies." This thoroughly modern idea worried the men of the Home Mission Board, who found it "inadvisable," because it "might be mis-understood and considered not germane to our work," and "because of the want of power in the Board to undertake such a work." They were probably correct; the focus of popular Southern Baptist interest in Cuba—no matter Díaz's activities—had always been proselytizing and conversion, not medical relief. As worthy as the idea was, Southern Baptists probably would not have given the funds to the Home Mission Board to support such a radical departure from their usual methods.[3]

Although the war began far from Havana—with the February 24, 1895 insurgent cry for independence at Baire, at the other end of the island—the residents of Havana, including Baptists, soon felt the impact of the war if only indirectly. At the end of September, Rev. José V. Cova wrote to Tichenor with the news from Havana. Although

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January 29, 1895 minutes. Although Moody Bible Institute does have enrollment records going back to 1894, they had no record of Díaz enrolled as a student there. Author conversation with MBI records management office, March 6, 2009. E. Pendleton Jones may also have decided on his own that his services would not be effective in Cuba. In April 1895, he published a short article in *Our Home Field* claiming that "Cuban missionaries speaking the same language and having the same social customs, when properly trained and fully equipped will be better able to spread the gospel among those forty million [in South America] than our Americans. These missionaries must be trained right here; we can't send them to the States to be educated, as experience has proven this to be unwise." Rev. E. Pendleton Jones, "A Gateway to Spanish America," *Our Home Field* (April 1895), p. 5.

[3] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, March 18, 1895, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.

the capital city was never a scene of combat, it was filled with refugees from the countryside and was the site for intense Spanish surveillance. "Though the Island is bitterly suffering with the war now ravaging it," Cova wrote, as of September 1895 "our services and other missionary work is going on with good effect and without serious disturbances. The church meetings are very well attended, and masses of people in actual mourning for the misfortunes in our community, apply for help and comfort." Still, the Havana Baptists were not completely insulated from the war. "Every one coming from the seat of war relates horrible experiences," Cova wrote. "Yellow fever, hunger, sword and fire are desolating our fair Island. All persons living in the country are in peril of death, and they fly for refuge into the large cities. So the land is deserted and crops are abandoned." Cova may have revealed his own political inclinations when he wrote, "the insurgents fill the whole land, carrying death and destruction before them," but it was true that the insurgent strategy developed by Máximo Gómez revolved around depriving Spain of income through the destruction of the Cuban sugar crop and other productive capabilities. The liberation army had not pushed as far west as they would in the coming months, so Cova was able to report that "here in Havana but little is relatively felt, and we hope the Lord will spare this city."[4]

The reason that the Baptist services were allowed to continue, and why Havana was largely spared from fighting, had to do with both Spanish and insurgent strategies for the war. The Spanish captain general, Arsenio Martínez Campos, believed that Cuba could still be pacified, and that good administration of the island would bring about that

[4] "Letter from Bro. Cova," *The Mission Journal* (November 1895), p. 33. For insurgent strategy and tactics, see the excellent book by John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), especially chapters 5 and 10. My understanding of both Cuban and Spanish strategy during the 1895 war has benefited immensely from Tone's analysis.

end. Consequently, he treated the people of Havana with relative tolerance and was responsive to the requests of landowners for protection from insurgent raids. In Havana, this translated into broad tolerance of many activities that could otherwise have been classified as separatist, including Protestant services and Díaz's idea for White Cross clinics. In a letter to Díaz, a secretary for Martínez Campos expressed the captain general's "pleasure and satisfaction for the noble work that has been done with such self-denial by that [White Cross] body, for the benefit of the soldiers who are in the engagements," an endorsement that was reprinted in the pages of the Southern Baptists' *Mission Journal*.[5] This may have been solid as a political strategy aimed at retaining Cuban allegiance, but it was not a winning military strategy. Plantation owners requested countless garrisons of Spanish regulars to protect their holdings. The Spanish military and their Cuban Volunteer allies became thinly spread all over the countryside, waiting for the war to come to them. Their limited numbers made them unable to pursue insurgent bands, which could set fire to a cane field or burn buildings on a town's outskirts without ever encountering Spanish resistance. Civilians were allowed to come and go as they pleased, so that insurgent commanders had good intelligence about the locations of Spanish troops, the activities of the separatist underground in the city, and Spanish policies.[6]

[5] "Red Cross in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (November 1895), p. 27-28. In May 1896 testimony before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Díaz said that he "received authority from the inspector-general to organize and maintain sanitary delegations at different points throughout the island of Cuba" on September 12, 1896; the by-laws for this organization, he testified, were approved on November 18, 1895. *The Condition of Affairs in Cuba: A Hearing Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Composed of Senators Davis and Morgan, in Pursuance of Senate Resolution* (Washington D.C., 1896), 33.
[6] Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898*, chap. 9.

The Cuban liberation army, in units led by Gómez and Antonio Maceo, marched west across the island in 1895 and early 1896, for the most part evading the Spanish and using classic insurgency tactics of ambush and flight on horseback when they did meet. The Cubans were not interested in capturing Havana or any other city. Their strategy was one of total war: Gómez wanted to destroy the Spanish motivation for keeping Cuba. This meant burning sugar cane and tobacco fields, forcing Cubans in the countryside to choose sides, and chipping away at the morale of Spanish soldiers. Insurgent leaders hoped to force the Spanish into a war of attrition that could end only with the Spanish evacuation of Cuba. Disease decimated more of the Spanish army than Cuban attacks ever did, but that did not make the strategy any less effective in the early months of the war. As early as July 1895, a mere three months after he had arrived in Cuba, Martínez Campos himself recognized that he was not capable of implementing a sufficiently brutal counterinsurgency strategy. He wrote to Spain that "I could reconcentrate families from the countryside to the towns," depriving the insurgency of its support base, but that would mean "horrible misery and hunger" which he would be unable to ease. "I don't believe I have what it takes," he wrote.[7] It was in this context that Cova reported that Baptist services in Havana were well attended, and that Havana had largely been spared from war.

In January 1896, the Home Mission Board received an urgent letter from Díaz summoning Tichenor to Cuba. It was dated "Havana, January 8th" but had been mailed from Florida on January 9th—because the Cuban mail was being censored, Díaz had had

[7] Ibid., 121. Tone on insurgency's violence: "It must be remembered...that the war in Cuba was as murderous as it was, not just because of Spanish practices, but also because of the insurgency's use of violence against Cubans deemed to be insufficiently patriotic and the equivalent violence of the pro-Spanish Volunteers. Exemplary violence was a planned and necessary component of the insurgents' strategy" (149).

smuggled it out with a friend or parishioner who was fleeing the island. The letter pleaded with Tichenor: "Come to Havana as quick as possible. It is very important you come. Will explain you at your arrival."[8] At the time, Tichenor was traveling in Florida on the Board's business, but when he received a telegram from Atlanta telling him about the letter, he quickly caught a steamer to Havana.

Upon his arrival, Tichenor "found the city practically in a state of siege," he reported. It was common knowledge that Campos had been relieved of duty and replaced with Valeriano Weyler, "Spain's best and most brutal counterinsurgent." The Conservative Spanish prime minister, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, had had enough of Martínez Campos's humane strategy. Weyler had already plied his trade in the Dominican Republic, during Cuba's 1868-1878 war against Spain, in the Philippines, and in Spain itself putting down royalists and the working class alike. Before embarking for the Caribbean, Weyler told Cánovas that he would force Cuban civilians into cities and towns to isolate the insurgents, and then draw Spanish troops into large armies that could find and crush the Cuban army. Tichenor quickly learned that the insurgents were on Havana's outskirts. "General Gomez with his main body was encamped about twelve or fifteen miles from the city," Tichenor wrote, and "a kind friend proffered to carry me to the headquarters of the Insurgent General, but my consideration for him induced me to decline the offer." Like Tichenor's readers in the U.S. South, we are left to guess about the identity of this friend.[9]

[8] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 11, 1896, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.
[9] Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898*, 155-8. I. T. Tichenor, "Our Work in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (March 1896), p. 23-24.

Two years later, Tichenor described to a crowd of sympathetic Baptists the main reason for Díaz's urgent summons: Díaz told his Southern friend that he had been appointed head of the insurgent forces in Havana province. "The day after I arrived," Tichenor said, "Diaz carried me into a room, shut the door, pulled his chair close up to mine and informed me that he had been offered the position of commander in chief of the insurgent forces in the province of Havana and that he had accepted the position. Like a thunderbolt this announcement fell upon my ears." Tichenor, a Confederate veteran, was reminded of "the time when some of my brethren, myself among the number, had done just as he was doing." He suspected that Díaz was being watched by Spanish spies, and spent the rest of the trip watching out for them. It is not outside the realm of possibility that Díaz joined the ranks of the insurgency as a rebel preacher during early 1896, but neither can it be verified.[10]

This was not Tichenor's only brush with Cuban politics during his short stay in wartime Havana. During his conversations with Díaz and other Cubans, he came to understand the new threat that Weyler posed to both the insurgency and to life in Havana. Tichenor wrote,

> At the time of my visit General Campos had sailed for Spain, and the intelligence of General Weyler's appointment as Captain General had

[10] For Tichenor's speech at the Georgia Baptist Convention, see the report on that convention in *Christian Index* vol. 78, no. 14 (April 7, 1898), p. 4; for his suspicions that he and Díaz were being watched, see "Baptist Property May Be Seized," *Atlanta Constitution* (April 18, 1896), p. 5. My efforts to investigate Díaz's position in the insurgent movement have yielded very little. He is not listed in the *rcito Libertador de Cuba, Guerra de Independencia, Iniciada el 24 de Febrero de 1895 y Terminada Oficialmente el 24 de Agosto de 1898* (Habana: Impr. de Rambla y Bouza, 1901). However, because Díaz fled the island in April 1896, he would not be in official lists of veterans of the insurgent army, most of which were drawn up from surviving muster rolls and soldiers' testimonies at the war's end, in 1898 and 1899. Horatio S. Rubens, the attorney for the Cuban *junta*, named a number of Cuban secret agents in his 1932 book, but Díaz was not among them. See Horatio S. Rubens, *Liberty, the Story of Cuba* (New York: Brewer, Warren & Putnam, Inc., 1932), 212.

> been received. A general feeling of terror had spread over the city. Those who sympathized with the revolution felt that neither their property, nor their liberty, nor their lives were secure when such a ruler governed the Island. Every steamer leaving Havana was crowded with Cubans seeking safety in other lands.

The anxiety that Tichenor saw in Havana was tempered by his knowledge that up until then, the Cuban Baptists had managed to keep their work going. "Up to the time of my visit our mission work had been undisturbed," he reported to Southern Baptist readers. But with the arrival of Weyler, Cuban Baptists were afraid that everything would change. In 1898 Tichenor said that after this visit he understood Weyler's reputation as "a man guilty of deeds that would bring the blush of shame to the face of any man, civilized or savage." He began preparing the people of the South for the possibility that Cuban Baptists would have to abandon their posts. "Whether our brethren will be allowed to continue their public ministrations is a question about which they entertain grave doubt," Tichenor told his readers in 1896. "I would not be surprised at any time to receive a message that they had deemed it best to close their houses of worship, and for the present cease all their public ministrations." Indeed, during his visit he had "urged" the Cuban preachers to "leave the island at the first hint of danger." He did not, however, urge Díaz to leave. When his colleague on the Home Mission Board, Dr. McDonald, asked him what Díaz would do, Tichenor replied, "You are enough of an Irish rebel to know what Diaz is going to do." Tichenor was resigned to the fact of his friend joining the rebellion. He may also have thought that Díaz's U.S. citizenship would protect him; neither Cova nor Rev. José O'Halloran, by contrast, were U.S. citizens.[11]

[11] For Tichenor's 1898 speech, see *Christian Index* vol. 78, no. 14 (April 7, 1898), p. 4; for his writings in 1896, see I. T. Tichenor, "Our Work in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (March 1896), p. 23-24. Cova wrote from Tampa on April 18 that neither he nor O'Halloran were U.S. citizens; see "Diaz Arrested," *Christian Index* vol. 76, no. 17 (April 23, 1896), p. 1.

Díaz may have needed Tichenor's advice—and his signature—in order to make arrangements for Baptist properties in Havana. Tichenor's name, after all, was associated with some property titles in Cuba, and impending changes to these documents may have been another reason why Díaz asked Tichenor to travel to wartime Cuba. Even if he left Cuba, Díaz worried that the Spanish might seize any property held in his name. In any case, after this trip, Tichenor reported that "measures have been taken...to protect our property in Havana." Díaz's power of attorney on the Board's behalf was transferred to Dr. Edward Belot, whose nieces, the Joergs, attended the Baptist services, and Belot and his nieces looked after Baptist properties until 1898.[12]

By the time of this visit, Tichenor had clearly decided that the mobile "Red Cross" clinics were a good idea after all. Since Díaz had set up the mobile clinics using money he had raised independently in the United States and staffed them with members of his congregation, other Southern Baptist leaders may also have felt that there was little they could do to stop the Cubans from providing this service. Regarding the project, Tichenor wrote in 1896, "Some six or seven stations had been established by different divisions of the organization, and great good was being accomplished for the sick and wounded of both armies. The only complaint I heard was that the insurgent bands that

[12] Belot died of tuberculosis in the final months of the war, and his niece Gertrude Joerg took over his duties as property agent (see chapter five). Belot may have been chosen because he held French citizenship, and his nieces were U.S. citizens. Notes on his family indicate that he was born in France, but I have not verified his citizenship; some sources report that he was a United States citizen. I. T. Tichenor, "Our Work in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (March 1896), p. 23-24; Tichenor mistakenly spells Belot's name as "Bellean." On Belot and his nieces, the Joergs, see Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 31, 1896, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA; see also the handwritten notes on the Joerg family (possibly made by Una Roberts Lawrence during an interview with Gertrude Joerg), undated, SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 17. Belot's home was also his business: a "hospital" where he advertised therapeutic "hydropathic" baths similar to those popular in the U.S. and Europe. He advertised in *El País*, the liberal party/autonomist newspaper in Havana, in 1888; for one example, see the March 17, 1888 edition.

sometimes visited these hospitals would help themselves quite freely to the medical stores they found there." Tichenor clearly hoped that this work would continue during wartime, despite the reputation of the new captain general. Díaz reported later in 1896 that the appointment of Weyler had made the work of the mobile clinics more difficult; Weyler forbade Díaz's organization from treating insurgent soldiers, and Díaz had obeyed because "I did not want to break any law, right or wrong."[13]

While in Havana, Tichenor met with Díaz and attended a Baptist prayer meeting, and learned that the churches were shrinking because many Baptist men had left Havana to join the insurgent war effort. For his Southern Baptist audience, Tichenor explained that "the war had diminished our congregations, particularly as to the men.... There were comparatively few men in the congregation, and most of these were old." His explanation of this phenomenon sounds a bit tongue-in-cheek: "For some reason few young men were in attendance." Certainly, Díaz told him that many young Baptist men had left the city to join the insurgents. After the war ended, Tichenor would write, "Many of our members capable of bearing arms became soldiers in the insurgent army. Of our little church at San Miguel, ten out of eleven men fit for military service went into the field." This is almost undoubtedly what Díaz told him in 1896.[14]

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[13] I. T. Tichenor, "Our Work in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (March 1896), p. 23-24; Díaz's testimony is printed in *Condition of Affairs in Cuba*, 23. After Díaz's arrest and exile to the United States, some newspapers began reporting on his efforts to bring medical relief to Cubans under the aegis of an organization called the "White Cross." The White Cross was sometimes described as a medical organization dedicated to supporting only the Cuban insurgency, and sometimes as one that would work with both Spanish and Cuban soldiers. Occasionally the coverage implied that the White Cross had the support of the main Cuban junta in New York. See, for instance, "To Represent White Cross," *Atlanta Constitution* (July 28, 1896), p. 9, and "Diaz Makes Appeal," *Atlanta Constitution* (January 1, 1897), p. 10.

[14] I. T. Tichenor, "Our Work in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (March 1896), p. 23-24; Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "A Brief History of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention" (c. 1900), typewritten manuscript in SBHLA, URL collection, box 10, folder 30.

Despite the anxiety surrounding Weyler's appointment, Tichenor was guardedly optimistic about the prospects for Cuba's independence. But he was careful to couch his predictions in terms of both the foreboding and the contingency of the moment he had witnessed in Havana. "As to the ultimate result of the present struggle, I found strongly conflicting opinions. Those who sympathize with Spain were loud and confident in their expression that the rebellion would be crushed in the next few months," he reported. "The opposite party, with a quiet determination that is the best evidence of an invincible spirit, assured me that the result would be the independence of Cuba at no distant day."[15] The report leaves little doubt about Tichenor's political leanings regarding Cuba, opinions that were strongly influenced by the position of his closest friend there—Díaz.

The Southern Baptist leaders of the Home Mission Board barely concealed their enthusiasm for the cause of the Cuban insurgency over the next few months. They had seen firsthand the stultifying effects of Spanish rule not only on Cuban Baptists' practice of religion, but also on many other aspects of Cuban daily life. In addition, many of these Southerners—some of whom, like Tichenor, were veterans of the Confederate army during the U.S. Civil War—felt a kinship with Cubans who were trying to throw off rule from another shore. Marshall Welch, the Board's clerk, wrote to a South Carolina minister in March 1896 that "there is great reason to expect the Cuban patriots will secure their independence under any circumstances, but more speedily if the U.S. should give such recognition as will allow them to purchase munitions of war, which now seems probable. You will, appreciate of course, the importance to our interest that we should not

[15] I. T. Tichenor, "Our Work in Cuba," *The Mission Journal* (March 1896), p. 23-24.

be known as having expressed any opinion on this question."[16] Tichenor wrote later that spring, "The Spanish authority in Cuba is shaken to its foundation. Cuban men and women are fighting against a tyranny more dreadful to them than death, and for a liberty dearer to them than life."[17] What would be presented in later years as a core Baptist commitment to a separation between church and state was not much in evidence in 1896, when it came to the Cuban war itself or the Cuban Baptist analysis of the war. If other Southern Baptists had known that Díaz was part of the separatist underground or the insurgency in Havana, it would only have added to the Southerners' constellation of reasons to support the Cuban insurgency.

Weyler arrived in Havana on February 10, 1896, and Cuban Baptist leaders soon began leaving the island in earnest. José Cova left for Tampa in late March, and José O'Halloran on April 15. During his time in Havana in January, Tichenor made it clear to Cuban Baptist leaders "that if they were forced to leave the island at any time or if they considered it unsafe to remain there longer, he wished in that event Br. Cova to remove to Tampa, Fla. and continue his work there under the Board. He made similar arrangements in regard to other Missionaries." He told them that the Board would pay their way to Florida and would assign them to congregations in Florida or elsewhere during the time they felt unsafe in returning to Cuba. As to whether or when they should leave, Tichenor left it largely up to them. He told them "that while the Board would not require them to

[16] Welch to Rev. L.C. Ezell, March 4, 1896, in SBHLA, URL collection, box 9, folder 102. Southern Baptist leaders were not the only people in the United States who showed outsized enthusiasm for the cause of the Cuban insurgents; it is hard to underestimate the popularity that the Cubans enjoyed in the United States in these years. Historian Nell Irvin Painter, for instance, has written that "by 1896 many Americans, especially Populists...were petitioning Congress to recognize Cuban belligerency and take active steps to free Cuba from Spanish rule." Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919,* 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), 144.

[17] "Diaz in Jail," *The Mission Journal* (May 1896), p. 19-21.

remain in the island, he would not advise them to leave, but left it entirely with their own judgment as to whether they should leave, and if so when; assuring them that...such action on their part would meet with the approval of the Board."[18]

It was not long before Weyler's new police state closed in on Alberto and Alfredo Díaz. According to Tichenor, Alberto Díaz "had been cautiously superintending" the departure of the other Cuban leaders from the island, especially those such as Cova and O'Halloran who were not U.S. citizens. Early the morning of April 16, Alberto and Alfredo Díaz were talking in Alberto's family home, after his wife and two children had gone to sleep. The police burst in, arrested them both, and carried them off to prison before Díaz could let his wife know what was happening. Both brothers were held incommunicado at police headquarters, unable to communicate with their families—what the Southern Baptists reported as "thrust into solitary confinement."[19] They were eventually charged with "abetting the insurrection."[20]

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[18] Welch to Mrs. L.G. Dawson and Welch to Mrs. Robert McKinney, both April 1, 1896; Welch to Mary E. Wright, February 9, 1896; SBHLA, URL, box 9, folder 102; on O'Halloran, see "Baptist Property May Be Seized," *Atlanta Constitution* (April 18, 1896), p. 5. Some Cuban Baptist men remained in Havana, most notably José Porta, who worked as the Baptist cemetery caretaker until at least July 1896. Porta was also in Havana in the autumn of 1898, so he might have remained in the city throughout the war. See Belot's letter to the Home Mission Board, published in "In Cuba," *Foreign Mission Journal* (October 1896), p. 201-202; and Gertrude Joerg to Porter King, October 18, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

[19] Dr. I. T. Tichenor, "A Brief History of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention" (circa 1900), typewritten manuscript in SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 30; see also "The Arrest of Diaz in Cuba," *The Atlanta Constitution* (April 20, 1896), p. 1.

[20] Despatches from consul Ramon Williams in Havana to the U.S. Department of State, April 17-25, 1896, U.S. National Archives, Record Group 59, microfilm publication M899; the charge is given in a telegram from Williams to the Secretary of State, April 22, 1896. That same day, another telegram and letter from Williams reported that Díaz was "charged with having forwarded correspondence to insurgent generals (Gomez and Maceo)." Williams reported that he had been in contact with the chief of police, who told him that the correspondence in question had been "captured with a party of young men who had rendezvoused just outside of Havana on the 15th instant to join the insurgents." Initially, the Southern Baptists understood only that the Díaz brothers had been "charged with having in their possession communications which in some way implicated them with the insurgents"; see Welch to Mr. D. Henry Sheldon (of Chicago, Illinois),

Soon after their arrest, José Porta managed to send a cablegram to Atlanta that said only: "Diaz in jail." News of their arrest was reported from Havana by the Associated Press, and was published widely on April 17 in newspapers across the United States.[21] The Home Mission Board met on April 18 to write a statement calling for Baptists across the United States to hold public meetings, contribute to a fund for Díaz's legal defense and support, and contact officials in the U.S. government who might be able to influence Spanish authorities. Tichenor and his allies, not only at the Home Mission Board but also the editors of Baptist publications like the *Christian Index*, sent telegrams and letters to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Hoke Smith (who was from Georgia and may have known Tichenor personally), and the Secretary of State, Richard Olney. Tichenor in particular was moved to the heights of his rhetoric in his analysis of Díaz's situation and what Southern Baptists must do about it. In the May 1896 issue of

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April 17, 1896, in SBHLA, URL, box 9, folder 102. The *Christian Index* reported that Díaz had been charged with "conveying information from the insurgents to parties in the United States"; "Diaz Arrested," *Christian Index* vol. 76, no. 17 (April 23, 1896), p. 1. Press reports on the charges against the brothers were similar, although the details changed. A *Washington Post* item from April 18 claimed that the arrest of the Díazes "was due to the declarations made by some prisoners who were captured at Vivera, near Havana, and to documents that were found in their possession." On April 20, the *Baltimore Sun*, citing a Spanish government minister, reported that Díaz was charged with "being implicated in a contemplated uprising against the government on the outskirts of Havana." Cova, Tichenor and other Baptists, at the time, routinely denied the charges against the Díaz brothers. Tichenor, for instance, made a statement in which he said: "We are unable to learn the cause leading to the arrest of Diaz. I do not believe, however, it can be any serious or just cause. Even if he were inclined to become connected with the insurgents, which he is not, he is a man of wonderful tact and brain and would not for many reasons do anything that might compromise himself or endanger his work and his trust. He was a captain in the last rebellion and since that time has been looked on as an enemy by the Catholic authorities." "Baptist Property May Be Seized," *Atlanta Constitution* (April 18, 1896), p. 5. Cova wrote, "he is charged of promoting correspondence between the insurgents and the United States, but I am almost sure that it is a mere pretense to cover the true cause of his arrest. "A Letter from Diaz," *Atlanta Constitution* (April 22, 1896), p. 2.

[21] Welch to Mr. D. Henry Sheldon (of Chicago, Illinois), April 17, 1896, in SBHLA, URL collection, box 9, folder 102. See also the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, *Hartford Courant*, *The Sun* of Baltimore, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *San Francisco Chronicle* and *Atlanta Constitution* for April 17-25, 1896.

the *Mission Journal*, he wrote, "We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the life of our Brother Diaz is in great jeopardy.... The imprisonment of Brother Diaz will impose unlooked for expenses on the Board.... Nothing must be spared that will mitigate the suffering or spare the life of our brother. Money is valueless when counted against the life of such a man." Tichenor's goal, in widely publicizing Díaz's imprisonment, was to use public opinion in the United States to directly shape both Spanish policy and the will of the United States to protect citizen missionaries abroad. "If Havana could know that ten thousand Baptist churches by one concerted movement swelled a fund for Diaz's protection and freedom," he wrote, "how that would hold back the threatened blow and change the purpose to destroy! How it would affect our authorities at home to know that a million and a half of Baptists were in earnest in their efforts to save a man so honored of God." It did not take long for Southerners to respond to Tichenor's call for public action. As early as April 19, public meetings took place in Chattanooga, Nashville, and Memphis, Tennessee; Columbia, South Carolina; and LaGrange, Woodstock, and Macon, Georgia, to organize fundraising for Díaz and to write resolutions that would be sent to authorities in Washington.[22]

The U.S. consul at Havana, Ramon Williams, saw Díaz on April 17, and reported that he was being held in police headquarters and that he was "as well as might be expected under the circumstances." In contrast to the treatment other Spanish prisoners received during the war, and perhaps in recognition of his U.S. citizenship and the attention paid to his case in the United States, by April 21 Díaz was imprisoned in "a spacious dry well ventilated room in an upper story." The pressure that Southern Baptist

[22] "Diaz in Jail," *The Mission Journal* (May 1896), p. 19-21; "To Aid Diaz," *Atlanta Constitution* (April 19, 1896), p. 20; "Sympathy for Diaz," *Atlanta Constitution* (April 20, 1896), p. 2.

telegrams had put on the State Department had clearly been communicated to the Spanish authorities in Cuba; Consul Williams wrote that he had been told that "proceedings are being hastened by order of Captain General and result is expected in a couple of days." On April 22, Díaz wrote to Tichenor about an interview or statement he had made to the Spanish. He wrote, "yesterday I was compelled to declare before the Military Jury.... The question was.... If I ever send letters, or parcel of letters to the insurgents. I answered No. If I gave horse to a man with the purpose to enjoy the Rebels. I say No.... On Sunday I ask for my Bible to the Chief of Police, and a lightning or thunder never produce a similar effect. I did not read my Bible last Sunday.... I will be put in the sweating house, but I communicate with God. Pray for us." Despite the efforts of his Southern Baptist allies and the U.S. consul to obtain his release, Díaz saw only the view from inside prison, and he could perceive few reasons to believe that Spain's decision would be favorable. Soon after Díaz wrote that letter—perhaps that same day—the order came down for the Díaz brothers to be released. They were set free on the condition that they leave Cuba immediately; they were granted an extension, however, and left Cuba the next week.[23]

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His imprisonment turned Díaz into a minor celebrity in the United States. Popular sympathy for the Cuban insurgency was building, and the U.S. Congress was considering

[23] Telegram received from Consul General Williams in Havana, April 21, 1896, and letter from Williams to William W. Rockbill, Assistant Secretary of State, April 25, 1896, U.S. National Archives, Record Group 59, microfilm publication M899; Díaz's letter is quoted in Welch to B.F. Johnson (Richmond, Va.), April 27, 1896, in SBHLA, URL, box 9, folder 102.

a resolution that would have urged the president to officially recognize the insurgents, which would have allowed them to buy arms in the United States. In this climate, local newspapers from Washington to Chicago to San Francisco published stories about Díaz's biography, his imprisonment, his release, and what he thought about the state of the war in Cuba. After Díaz arrived in Tampa, he traveled to Atlanta, where he gave interviews to the *Atlanta Constitution*, had his picture taken, and preached in a number of Baptist churches. He traveled with Tichenor to Chattanooga, Tennessee, for the annual Southern Baptist Convention, where "no other speaker [seemed] to so hold the interest of the audience as Diaz."[24] From Tennessee, Díaz went back to Atlanta for a few days and then on to Washington, D.C., where he testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. That summer, he preached in Southern Baptist churches scattered all over Georgia and other states, and traveled to give speeches in Chicago, Boston, Hartford, Connecticut, and Baltimore. The story of his imprisonment and forced exile was included in a special appendix of the 1896 edition of Gonzalo de Quesada and Henry Northrop's book *The War in Cuba*, which was one of many books that aimed to convince the U.S. public of the rightness and inevitability of Cuban independence.[25]

His imprisonment and sudden fame made Díaz's rhetorical linkage of religion and politics even stronger. Wherever he spoke, the Baptist preacher roused the crowds with descriptions not only of the Catholic persecution of Protestants in Cuba, but also of

[24] "The Baptists," *Atlanta Constitution* (May 12, 1896), p. 2; see also "The Southern Convention," *The Watchman* vol. 22, no. 20 (May 14, 1896), p. 20; for Díaz in Atlanta, see especially "Diaz Returns to His Friends," *Atlanta Constitution* (May 7, 1896), p. 7.
[25] Gonzalo de Quesada and Henry Davenport Northrop, *The War in Cuba* (Liberty Publishing Co., 1896), 545-7.

Spanish atrocities and the virtue and bravery of the Cuban insurgents.[26] Before he even arrived in Atlanta, Díaz gave an interview in Jacksonville, Florida in which he said that two Cuban rural districts had seen "more than 100 persons butchered" over the previous two weeks, and that the Spanish colonel in charge there "then reported them to the outside world as having been killed in battle. Among those killed were children twelve and fourteen years of age. The victims were compelled to dig their own graves before being shot."[27] In Atlanta, he told the *Constitution* that Spanish opposition to his church had turned violent. The Spanish authorities, he said, "think that the preaching and missionary work of Protestant churches is prejudicial to the interests of Spain." Someone had set two bombs in his church "and exploded them during service," and they had also "sent 300 men to the church and had them to create disorder while the service was going on."[28] At the Southern Baptist Convention, he made a "confident prediction that the insurgents would persevere and ultimately secure the freedom of Cuba," and said that he "attributed his imprisonment and the purpose to take his life not to political but to religious motives."[29]

In his May 18, 1896 testimony before Senators John Morgan, a Democrat from Alabama, and Cushman Davis, a Republican from Minnesota, Díaz provided evidence that was designed to support the drive for U.S. recognition of Cuban belligerency, which

[26] Descriptions of Díaz's speeches and the crowds that came to hear him that were printed in U.S. newspapers should, of course, be taken with a grain of salt. The U.S. presidential campaign during the summer and fall of 1896, combined with the Hearst-Pulitzer circulation wars, contributed to the inflation of not only circulation numbers but also probably of the relative prominence of anyone who agreed with each particular newspaper's line. Democratic newspapers, such as the *Atlanta Constitution*, certainly gave credence to Díaz's story at least partly because it fit with their position on the Cuban war and their demands that Democratic president Cleveland intervene in support of the Cubans.
[27] "Made to Dig Their Graves," *Atlanta Constitution* (May 3, 1896), p. 17.
[28] "Diaz Returns to His Friends," *Atlanta Constitution* (May 7, 1896), p. 7.
[29] "The Southern Convention," *The Watchman* vol. 77, no. 20 (May 14, 1896), p. 21.

was under consideration in the U.S. Congress.[30] The two senators were members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, which was holding hearings designed to determine "what are the rights of the United States, under our treaties with Spain, as to the trial of our citizens arrested in Cuba and now under condemnation and sentenced to death...for alleged offenses of a political or other character against the Spanish laws or Government."[31] But the questioning indicated that the real aim of the hearings was much broader. As a native Cuban and a U.S. citizen who had recently been forced to leave the island, Díaz's testimony could help the pro-Cuban members of Congress to make their case for belligerency, which if recognized by the president would allow Cubans to buy arms and supplies in the U.S. for legal shipment to Cuba. Díaz's testimony focused on Spanish atrocities against Cubans, the effective organization of the civil government of the Cuban republic-in-arms, and the strength and composition of the Cuban insurgent army. Díaz also testified about his work providing medical care to both sides in the war, which he presented as the reason he was able to move around the island, even behind insurgent lines. His testimony largely supported the picture of the Cuban insurgency that the leaders of the Cuban *junta* wished to provide to the U.S. Congress. Díaz described the insurgency's popularity among Cubans, its capacity to provide the services of a

[30] On May 5, 1896, soon after Díaz arrived in Atlanta, Tichenor wrote to Hoke Smith, the Secretary of the Interior, that Díaz "has had exceptional opportunity of seeing the atrocities committed by the Spanish Soldiers.... If the Government wishes to obtain knowledge of these outrages, he is prepared to give names and places and times of occurrence.... If requested, Dr. Diaz is ready to go to Washington and make such statements in relation to these matters as he has knowledge of." It is possible that Smith put Tichenor and Díaz in touch with Senators Morgan and Davis. Tichenor to Hoke Smith, May 5, 1896, in SBHLA, URL collection, box 9, folder 102.
[31] *Condition of Affairs in Cuba*, 2.

government to the territory under its control, the strength of its army, and the injustice and illegality of Spanish leaders in repressing it.[32]

In response to questioning from both senators, Diaz sought to establish that he was a neutral observer of the war in Cuba, and that the U.S. Senate could trust his information. With the outbreak of the war in 1895, Díaz said that he "did not know exactly what to do. As a captain of the [Cuban] army [during the Ten Years' War] on one side, and as a minister of the gospel on the other side, I was a little troubled myself, but I concluded to take no part in the insurrection, but just to help both parties, and then I organized what we call a White Cross Society.... based on the Red Cross Society of Geneva, for the purpose of treating both sides." Senator Morgan, especially interested in establishing Díaz's neutrality, asked him,

> Q. And you say you had determined not to take part with either party in the political struggle that was going on there? A. Yes, sir.
> Q. Have you kept to that resolution faithfully? A. Yes, sir.
> Q. And you have not taken part? A. I have not taken part on either side.
> Q. In any way? A. In any way; just helping the wounded and sick, that is all.

Morgan continued to question him about his frequent travel to the United States, which Díaz said he had only undertaken in the past year to attend Baptist meetings. Morgan asked him repeatedly: "Both visits you made were for the purpose of attending Baptist conventions? ... You did not come here on a political mission? ... [The trips] had nothing

[32] Díaz clearly blamed the policies instituted under Gen. Weyler for the worst abuses of the war. However, he also seemed sympathetic to low-rank Spanish soldiers, arguing that the Spanish government purposely deceived them as they were sent to fight in Cuba. Díaz testified, "The difficulty with the Spanish soldiers is that when they are brought from Spain and reach Cuba they are not allowed to speak to anybody.... The Spanish people in Spain deceive these young men—tell them they are going to fight negroes, etc. The officers are not real officers, but sergeants made captains and corporals and privates made lieutenants.... They are told that all the Cuban army is negroes, and here they find them white and hear hurrahing for freedom and for republicanism, and say, 'Well, I am a republican myself. If I had known that I would not fight against them.'" Ibid., 30.

to do with politics or with the war?" Díaz answered all of these charges with the same claim: he had renounced politics and war and was simply a Baptist minister trying to bring medical care to war-torn Cuba. To do so, Díaz reported that he had written the bylaws of the White Cross Society and sought their approval by the Spanish government. "They approved it," he said, "and the second article says we have the right to constitute neutral camps in order to just take care of the sick and wounded.... We organized about forty delegations to take care of all sick and wounded. We have treated there about 2,000 Spanish soldiers, but as soon as Mr. Weyler came he ordered us to stop—not to take care of the insurgents by any means, only take Spanish troops."[33] Despite his best efforts to remain neutral, Díaz testified that he had been forced to take sides.

Yet Díaz's work with the White Cross had given him a unique view into the war as it was practiced in the field. He testified that Spanish approval of the White Cross bylaws had given him the right to "cross the lines any time I pleased" in order to inspect his clinics, deliver medical supplies or tend to the wounded. Although he claimed that he did not set out to visit the camps of the Cuban army, "when I went to inspect a delegation sometimes I found them in my way. Sometimes, as military operations required, they stopped me and kept me for two or three or four days...and if they had something to do in the medical line I did it—made surgical operations." In this way, he claimed, he had made some observations about the insurgent army and the functioning of the civil arm of the insurgency.

Díaz's claims about the Cuban insurgent army reflected the line of the Cuban leaders in New York and Washington, who wanted the U.S. Congress to believe that the Cuban army was strong, well supplied, and composed of respectable patriots. He

[33] Ibid., 22-23.

hesitated to give numbers when asked about the strength of General Maceo's army in Pinar del Rio, saying "really, I could not tell you because of the way they appeared; the way they came was an immense crowd of people all riding on horseback. It was a large crowd. I could not exactly tell how many," although when pressed he said that he thought the army was "very strong" and "well armed." When asked by Sen. Davis if Maceo had "some thousands of men under his command or only a few hundreds," however, Díaz said, "Oh, I think he had some seven or eight thousand men." After that exchange he seemed to warm to his task, reporting that General Gomez had ten thousand men in Havana province, General Aguirre had two thousand men serving as his personal escort and ten to fifteen thousand soldiers elsewhere in Havana province, and that General Masó commanded an army of ten thousand men that was protecting the Cuban government-in-arms. He reported the astonishing feats of this larger-than-life Cuban army, including that Maceo's army had "destroyed" an entire Spanish regiment of one thousand soldiers, leaving only 15 survivors. He reported that Gomez himself was "an old man, about 72 years of age" but that his health was "pretty good." Díaz reported that Aguirre's force "came around the little tent I had" while he was amputating someone's arm, but that the insurgents "just looked at what I had been doing, and kept everybody away and did not molest us at all." Díaz reported that he had already known something about the movements of Aguirre's army, because "a great many of them had been in my congregation."[34] Díaz managed to burnish his patriot credentials at the same time as he was proclaiming his own neutrality.

Díaz stepped outside the boundaries set by the Cuban *junta* about information on the Cuban army, simply by being too forthcoming about its racial composition. The *junta*,

[34] Ibid., 24-5.

led in the U.S. by Tomás Estrada Palma in New York and Gonzalo de Quesada in Washington, focused on the valor and unity of the insurgent army to the exclusion of any discussion of its racial composition. The leadership of black generals, such as Maceo and Quintín Banderas, were acknowledged, but not emphasized in accounts for the U.S. press.[35] Few North Americans, white or black, probably knew that the Cuban army was integrated throughout its ranks, even to the point where officers whom North Americans would have classified as "black" commanded men that North Americans would have thought of as "white." By avoiding the whole thorny topic, the *junta* also hoped to avoid the possibility that the Cuban war would be classified in the mind of the U.S. public as a "race war," thus frightening white North Americans with the specter of black rule and "another Haiti" in Cuba. Such an association could endanger years of careful work.

Díaz did not skirt this question as skillfully as the *junta* might have liked. When Senator Morgan asked him, "what class of people did that army consist of," meaning Aguirre's army, Díaz answered, "the best class of young men in Habana, generally," perhaps roused to defend the unit that was so closely linked with his congregation. When questioned more closely about Maceo's army, however, Díaz first claimed that they were "very fine people, too; white people; doctors, lawyers, druggists.... intelligent people." When asked even more specifically about "the private soldiers in Maceo's army," Díaz answered both truthfully and by reminding the senators of the cause for which all the soldiers were fighting. He responded, "Well, they have some colored people, too—many—and they have some of these intelligent people as private soldiers, a great many of

[35] The exception is the black press, much of which followed Maceo closely throughout the war. See, for instance, the *Daily Crusader* of New Orleans, cited in Rebecca J. Scott, *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba After Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 3.

them people who do not want any rank; just wanted to be soldiers, just to do that in the democratic line to encourage others." About Gomez's army, he testified that they were all "respectable," and this apparently included white soldiers "as well as negroes." Maceo's army, Díaz said, was about "one third negroes." Aguirre "had more white people" in his army. Finally, when asked by Senator Davis, "are the negroes and whites in separate companies and regiments, or are they all mixed up together?" Díaz responded, "Well, I do not know very well, but, as I say, they mingled. Q. In the same organization? A. The same organization."[36] Neither the senator from Minnesota nor the senator from Alabama was likely happy to hear this news about a racially integrated military in Cuba, but instead of pressing their witness further, they moved on to a discussion of the civil government that the insurgents had managed to set up in Cuba.

Díaz gave an extremely idealistic picture of the capabilities of the insurgency's civil government as it operated in the parts of the island controlled by the insurgents, implicitly arguing that the Cubans controlled just as much as, if not more of, the island than the Spanish. Cuban prefects, he testified, were "in charge to find supplies for the families of insurgents," and "if the men are sick or wounded the prefects take care of them." The civil government's tax collectors "divide themselves into different places and collect all the revenue," sometimes so successfully that "they have no place to put the money. Sometimes Gomez has mules loaded with money—going from one place to another with money." When asked if "the people of Cuba voluntarily and freely pay taxes to the Cuban government, or are they forced to do it," Díaz answered, "they freely do it." The Cubans even had a printing press, Díaz said, and a "post-office department" with

[36] *Condition of Affairs in Cuba*, 26. On the cross-racial and cross-class nature of the Cuban army, see Scott, *Degrees of Freedom*, chap. 5.

postage stamps. The president, Salvador Cisneros, and his cabinet worked from their headquarters in Cubitos, and when asked if they had "ever been disturbed," Díaz answered, "No, sir." The Spanish government, on the other hand, had "not one" tax collector in that territory, nor any judges. Díaz admitted that "in the larger towns" the Spanish government had some control, but "in the smaller places they have nothing of the kind—no mayors, no aldermen." The Cuban "civil officers," or local authorities, had no headquarters, Díaz admitted, but moved around the island depending "on the persecution of the Spanish." The efficiency and valor of the Cuban insurgent government was reflected in the way that Cuban towns received the Cuban army. Díaz testified, "every time they approach any town all the people come out with flags and welcome them. That is natural. The majority of those boys belong in those cities. They can not be received in any other way." This support of the Cuban populace, Díaz said, resulted in "an abundance" of food in the countryside, so much that soldiers in the insurgent army "never trouble themselves about what to eat." In areas under insurgent control, he testified, people "can stay there for twenty years if they want to, with plenty to eat." It was a different story in Cuban cities, however. There, he testified, there was "misery...because they have no resources."[37] Like most other incongruities in Cuban life, he said, this one was because of Spanish, not Cuban, policy. Díaz's testimony clearly sought to draw a picture of overwhelming Cuban popular support for both the civil and military arms of the Cuban insurgency, which was reflected in the effectiveness of their governance and the abundance of their supplies.

The most sensational part of Díaz's testimony regarded Spanish atrocities in Cuba that he had personally witnessed. He had written down part of his testimony ahead of

[37] *Condition of Affairs in Cuba*, 27-28.

time to be read into the committee's official record; here he gave names, dates and details of Spanish killings and abuses in Cuba. These details were both specific evidence of the cruelty and brutality of Weyler's counterinsurgency strategy in Cuba, and proof that Spanish rule in Cuba was entirely dependent on violence rather than a reflection of popular sovereignty. Before that testimony was read into the record, the senators questioned Díaz about the practices of the two armies toward their prisoners. The insurgents, Díaz said, "give quarter and take prisoners and give them an invitation to join the rebel army. If they do not accept it they give them parole." The Spanish army, on the other hand, "in a great many cases they do not give quarter." When Sen. Davis asked, "What do the Spaniards do with the prisoners they take?" Díaz answered,

> A. Kill them.
> Q. Is that a universal practice? A. Yes, sir; universal practice.
> Q. Do you mean to say the Spanish butcher their prisoners? A. Yes, sir.
> Q. Universally? A. Universally; yes, sir....
> Q. What do the Spaniards do with the women when they catch them? A. Kill them.
> Q. Do you mean to say they kill them the same as men? A. They kill them; yes, sir.
> Q. What do they do with the children? A. Kill them.
> Q. Do you mean that to the full extent of what you say, that they kill men, women, and children? A. Yes, sir.
> Q. How do soldiers treat women when they catch them? A. Oh, insult them.
> Q. Do you mean by insult them they ravish them; do you know anything of that kind? A. Yes, sir.
> Q. Now, these statements you have made impress me very seriously and I want to be certain. Am I to understand that in case of an engagement the Spanish troops give no quarter, and that either then or after the engagement they kill every insurgent, man, woman, and child? A. Well, not the insurgents, because they never have that chance.... but the general rule is when they have a battle the insurgents retire and the Spanish troops come in, and any person they find in the neighborhood they kill—men, women, and children, non-combatants.[38]

[38] Ibid., 31-32.

Díaz's description of both insurgent and Spanish actions after a battle comports with the strategies of each party at this phase in the war. Insurgents wanted to harass the Spanish army but not engage in direct battle, and Spain wanted to clear the countryside of all potential supporters of the insurgency. The results, as Díaz found during his travels in the country, were insecurity and massacre. Díaz made a distinction between Cuban insurgents and non-combatants—a distinction that Weyler's counterinsurgency policies simply did not make. Díaz's testimony on these points was supported by his written statement, in which he gave details of "the methods of warfare and cruelties practiced by General Weyler" since the beginning of February 1896. He wrote about cases in which he had treated the wounds of non-combatants, including two children under the age of two; battles and massacres that he had witnessed near the towns of Campo Florida and Punta Brava; the Spanish use of exploding bullets; a body with 71 bayonet wounds that he had examined at a busy corner in central Havana; the Spanish bombardment and destruction of two hospitals run by the White Cross in the Cuban countryside; and the imprisonment of children "as rebel sympathizers" in Havana.[39]

[39] Ibid., 34-37. One of the cases about which Díaz testified was the battle of Punta Braba (or Punta Brava), on February 22, 1896, and the massacre of twenty-two people in the nearby town of Guatao soon after. A correspondent for *Harper's Weekly* confirmed both Díaz's story about the massacre and his work for the White Cross. See Thomas Robinson Dawley, Jr., "A War Correspondent in Cuba," *Harper's Weekly*, September 12, 1896. Dawley reported that he was in Guatao a few days after the massacre, and "as I was gazing about me a man rode up with a white cross sewed upon his sleeve. He saluted me, and as he dismounted and tied his horse in the shade near one of the houses, an old man came out and talked with him. As I stepped up to get a better view of the church, they spoke to me, and invited me within to rest. I was given a seat and a cigar, and the old man begged to be excused for the disorderly state of his house.... I had not been in the island long enough readily to distinguish a Spaniard from a Cuban, and the man with the white cross I naturally took for a Spaniard, as he was in the hospital service. But I was soon set at ease on this subject, for the old man rightly guessed that I was an American, and then said he: 'We are Cubans. We are alone, and we can talk with frankness.' Then I learned the story of how, a few days previous, the company of mounted soldiers came dashing into the quiet village and shot the peaceful villagers down where they stood; and not satisfied with this amount of bloodshed, they sprang from their horses and dragged fathers from their houses and husbands from the arms of

Finally, Díaz tried to convince the Senate that Spain's actions during the war in Cuba, particularly those targeting the Baptist church and him personally, threatened U.S. property and interests. Díaz may have spoken with President Cleveland about these points, too, when he called on the president at the White House on May 21st.[40] Before the Senators, Díaz testified that valuable Southern Baptist-owned properties in Cuba were in danger, that his right as a U.S. citizen to speak with a representative of the U.S. government while imprisoned had not been respected, and that he had been "persecuted" precisely because of his U.S. citizenship and his relationship with a religious organization based in the United States. Early in his testimony, the senators had asked about Baptist property in Cuba, and Díaz told them that title to the properties was held "in the name of Dr. Tichenor, the corresponding secretary of the Home Mission Board," as trustee. He testified that the "church itself," by which he meant the Jané building, was worth "about $140,000," that the hospital in the building on Calzada de Buenos Aires was "worth about $20,000," and that the cemetery "brings to the board an income of $6,000 or $7,000 a year." In addition, Baptist property in San Miguel, Díaz said, was worth "about $2,000."[41] When he left the island, he said, these properties had "been abandoned," although he admitted that "some of the members [of the Baptist church] have taken possession of it" and that he did not know if Spanish authorities had attempted to seize

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their wives, and cruelly shot them in cold blood before the eyes of their screaming women and children. They had shot thirteen of these villagers, and were dragging nineteen more to the slaughter, when their captain rode up and ordered the massacre stopped. Now all the families who had the means had fled from the place as though it had been cursed by a pestilence.'" For Díaz's version of events at Punta Brava and Guatao, see *Condition of Affairs in Cuba*, 34.

[40] "Rev. Dr. Diaz Sees the President," *Washington Post*, May 22, 1896, p. 4. The *Post* reported, "The call was of an informal character. Dr. Diaz met the President when the latter was in Cuba several years ago, and yesterday renewed the acquaintance."

[41] *Condition of Affairs in Cuba*, 21.

any Baptist properties.[42] He was trying to convince the senators that there was very little preventing the Spanish from seizing the Cuban Baptist property, since "none remain except the women missionaries," and none of these were U.S. citizens, who might be able to appeal to the U.S. consul or use the implicit threat of U.S. protection to their advantage.[43] Regarding his rights while imprisoned, Díaz testified that he and his brother were "isolated" for eight days, and when asked if "any charges at all [were] presented against you," Díaz answered, "No, sir, not one." The senators confirmed that he had completed the naturalization process to become a U.S. citizen and that his citizenship was publicly "known" in Cuba, then asked, "Did Weyler allow you to have any communication with the American consul?" Díaz answered, "No, sir."[44] Finally, Diaz's written statement alleged that he and Alfredo "were persecuted for the reason that we were American citizens and had charge of American church institutions in Habana." He linked their personal experience of arrest and imprisonment with an incident when the Baptist church as a whole had been targeted, which had come during a time of heightened attention to U.S. politics. "During the excitement attending the passage of the belligerency resolutions in Congress," he testified, "two dynamite bombs were placed in the church and exploded while we were holding service, but only resulted in the breaking of glass and causing a panic in the congregation." At the very least, Díaz painted a picture that alleged that the Spanish government was not fulfilling its treaty obligations to American citizens in Cuba, and that property owned by a U.S. church body was being targeted as akin to an act of war. His final statement during his testimony urged "the

[42] Ibid., 30.
[43] Ibid., 22. Díaz here neglected to mention that he had transferred his power of attorney over the Baptist properties to Edward Belot.
[44] Ibid., 32. This version of events conflicts with that of Consul General Williams as reported in his despatches to the U.S. Department of State; see above.

honorable Senate to either recognize the belligerency of the Cubans or to have the United States intervene [f]or the sake of humanity and civilization. Those are the only methods of putting a stop to these frightful barbarities."[45] In May 1896, at least, Díaz did not suspect that U.S. intervention could turn out to the detriment of Cuban independence.

While Díaz was absent from Atlanta during the summer of 1896, the Home Mission Board in Atlanta received a letter from Cuba that drove the first wedge into the relationship between Cuban and Southern Baptists. Dr. Edward Belot, who since Díaz's departure had a power of attorney over Baptist properties in Cuba, wrote to the Board in late June to inform them of the mortgage that Díaz had taken out on the Jané building in 1894. At their July 28 meeting, the Board "was then made aware for the first time of the existence of a mortgage on the church property, Havana, Cuba, amounting to $12,000.00, placed on it the 11th of February, 1894, at 10% a year interest.... If four months interest are left unpaid the property is seized." This news came as quite a shock. In the middle of a war, without a fast, confidential and reliable means of communicating with their brethren in Cuba or transmitting funds to them, how would the Board be able to pay this new expense and prevent their most valuable property from being repossessed? "The matter was fully discussed," the minutes noted dryly, and a subcommittee was appointed. Once "Dr. Diaz returned to the city from Maryland as was expected he would do within ten days," the subcommittee, which included Tichenor, "would have a full, free interview with Dr. Diaz, and ask for his statement or explanation," and the Board would then investigate its options.[46]

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[45] Ibid., 37.

[46] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 28, 1896, and Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee on Appropriations of the Home Mission Board, August 11, 1896, both in transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA. The *Atlanta*

Meanwhile, Díaz traveled around the United States, preaching on the Cuban insurgency wherever he went and learning quickly about what the crowds wanted to hear. Between June and September 1896, he spoke in Baptist churches in Boston, Cincinnati, Connecticut, Chicago and Baltimore, and traveled to New York as well. Newspaper accounts of his speeches indicate that he was just as interested in promoting the Cuban insurgency as he was in discussing the Gospel. At the "international Sunday school convention" in Boston, Díaz told a story about how his younger sister, Clotilde, had pushed him to start Sunday schools for children in Cuba, and then continued on to a discussion of the Cuban war. "He hoped that Cuba would soon gain its freedom," the *Boston Globe* correspondent reported. "If the United States would give Cuba its recognition of her belligerent rights the war would soon end." But Díaz's sermon in Boston went further than that, calling for explicit U.S. intervention in Cuba's war. "He unfolded an American flag, and pointing to one spot he said: 'There is little Cuba, not in a tide of blood, not surrounded by enemies, but protected by friends.... This is the only solution to the Cuban trouble,' said he, then throwing the American flag over the Cuban flag, he cried, 'Let all the nations of the earth fire at it if they please.'"[47] At Mt. Auburn Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Díaz reportedly said, "What the insurgents most need is ammunition. The filibustering expeditions that have already landed have done a world of

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Constitution reported that Díaz was in Atlanta in early July and again as of July 25, but he was in Baltimore by the beginning of August. He must have departed for Baltimore just before Belot's letter arrived from Havana. See "Diaz a Filibuster?" *Atlanta Constitution*, July 15, 1896, p. 5, and "Dr. Diaz Back Again," *Atlanta Constitution*, July 25, 1896, p. 5.

[47] "Cheers for Cuba," *Boston Daily Globe*, June 26, 1896, p. 6. This address was the closest that Díaz ever came, in sources that I have found, to sounding like an annexationist. Because he never expressed that type of politics at any other moment, I suspect that he was either "playing to the crowd" in Boston or that the newspaper correspondent interpreted this speech in a way that Díaz did not intend. As will become clear in chapter six, Díaz's belief in complete Cuban independence only became stronger during the U.S. occupation.

good for Cuba's cause.... The army is made up of two-thirds of doctors and lawyers, and the other one-third negroes. They are all fearless men, and will ultimately be victorious."[48] At the South Baptist Church in Hartford, Connecticut, Díaz "gave an outline of his religious work in Cuba during the last twenty years and dwelt at length upon the present situation in the island." He clearly knew that his U.S. audience was hungry for news about the Cuban war and how it related to "religious work" there. Invariably, the newspaper accounts focused on war news and Díaz's analysis of the insurgency and its needs, often merely skimming over his biography and the story of the Baptist churches in Havana. His props included the flags of Cuba and the United States, and, according to the *Hartford Courant*, a Cuban machete.[49] The *Chicago Tribune* reported that Díaz "is a Baptist rebel" who "talks cheerfully about his experiences and exhibits a most refreshing optimism."[50] An "immense throng of people" came to hear his speech at Immanuel Baptist Church in Chicago on a Sunday night, all of whom were reportedly "eager for the freedom of stricken Cuba." The newspaper correspondent found the crowd's enthusiastic applause at certain points of Díaz's speech to be an "unusual spectacle in a house of worship."[51] In Baltimore, Díaz gave an interview claiming that the Cuban insurrection "is caused by excessive taxation without representation" and that "the insurgents now have practically the control of the island except in the larger cities."[52] In all these speeches and sermons, Díaz's message and analysis of the Cuban war mirrored what he told the U.S. Senate, openly mixing Cuban religion and politics.

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[48] "Exchange Gleanings," *Sioux City Journal*, June 29, 1896.
[49] "Cuban Freedom Predicted," *The Hartford Courant*, July 8, 1896, p. 8.
[50] "Diaz Talks of His Tribulations," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 17, 1896, p. 2.
[51] "Plaudits for Dr. Diaz," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 20, 1896, p. 5.
[52] "Cuba's 'Baptist Bishop,'" *The Sun*, August 1, 1896, p. 7; see also "Spanish Strategy in Cuba," *The Sun*, August 3, 1896, p. 8.

The Board waited until late September for Díaz to return to Atlanta from his triumphal tour. On August 11, as it considered what to do about the mortgages on the Cuban properties, the Board slashed its spending on grants to everyone from state mission boards to individual churches. At the same time, a special committee of seven people—not including Tichenor—was appointed "to investigate the matter of mortgages upon Cuban property," and Díaz was to be "ordered to come to Atlanta and report to said Committee." By their September 7 meeting, some members were clearly getting anxious about his absence. Díaz had apparently written to them that he "could not now come," and the Board's secretary "had written again urging him to come." At that point the Board voted to put the matter in Tichenor's hands, "with the understanding that he urge Brother Diaz to come as soon as possible."[53] By the end of September, Díaz was finally back in Atlanta to be interviewed about the mortgage and finances in Havana—and about why he had neglected to tell the Board about these transactions. He met with the committee appointed to investigate the Cuban mortgages on September 28, 1896.

Díaz explained that, using the Jané building as collateral, he had borrowed money in order to purchase the Buenos Aires property, convert it into a hospital, and make repairs to the cemetery road. The Board had not approved this transaction in advance, although it had approved Díaz's request to use five hundred dollars from the cemetery's income in order to repair the road to the cemetery.[54] Some members were clearly upset that Díaz had failed to report the debt to the Board in 1894, yet the subcommittee

[53] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, September 7, 1896, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.
[54] At its January 12, 1894 meeting the Board "decided to allow Bro. Diaz of Cuba to borrow five hundred dollars for the purpose of repairing the Cemetery road, the said sum to be taken out of the income derived from the Cemetery." See Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 12, 1894, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.

concluded that his heart had been in the right place. “Whatever judgment may be formed as to the conduct of Dr. Diaz in placing such a mortgage without the knowledge of the Board and in failing to report the fact to the Board,” the report stated, “your Committee was persuaded that Dr. Diaz did what he thought would be for the best interests of the Board and its Mission work in Havana.” The subcommittee found Díaz’s explanations more understandable in the context of the changes that Cuba had undergone in the two years since Díaz had contracted the mortgages. “Dr. Diaz fully believed that the mortgage could be paid by the accruing rents of the property,” the committee found, but the war had clearly undermined those plans. The report was careful to state that Díaz “gave very prompt and complete explanations in regard to each and all of the properties held for the Board,” and that “he presented a detailed account of the finances” for 1894 and 1895. The members of the subcommittee were convinced of Díaz’s good intentions regarding the mortgage and properties, even if they thought that his judgment had been lacking.

Tichenor probably led the committee in their effort to understand and forgive Díaz’s mistakes. In 1902, Tichenor remembered, “Dr. Diaz confessed...that he had committed a wrong in placing this mortgage upon the property of the Board without its knowledge or consent. He stated, in palliation of his offence, that...he regarded the institution of a Baptist Hospital in Havana as very helpful to our cause in that city, and that he believed the Buenos Aires property to be a very valuable one; that he thought he would be able in the course of a few years, to pay off the indebtedness, and present the property to the Board unencumbered.” With the assistance of Andrew Cobb, a judge and a Southern Baptist, Tichenor immediately took steps to protect the Board’s title to the properties in Cuba. Because these steps were limited to documents that could be filed

with the U.S. courts, they would not necessarily have any legal standing in Cuba. In any case, there was little more that could have been done at that point.[55] In 1896 and 1897, Porter King and others on the Board's Cuba Committee recommended "that the interest past due on the loan covering our property in Cuba be paid, and that payment of interest on it be kept up." The Board instructed Belot to "get such information as he can about the advisability of selling the hospital property there, or retaining it," although they did not take any action on that property, on Calzada de Buenos Aires, until after 1898.[56] With the war in Cuba still ongoing and the outcome unsure, Board members were simply trying to meet the financial obligations that they had, and explore their options for the properties in the future.

As Díaz's relationship with the Home Mission Board became more strained in late 1896, he and his brother Alfredo embarked on ever more political work. They may have been associated with the Cuban *junta*, the quasi-government based in New York that worked to organize filibuster expeditions, raise funds, buy arms and supplies for the insurgent armies, and coordinate policy with the insurgent army and its leaders on the

[55] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, October 3, 1896, transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA; Tichenor to Hillyer, April 25, 1902, original in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24. Díaz executed a quit claim deed, renouncing his claim to the Buenos Aires, Cemetery, and San Miguel properties, on September 30, 1896. This document was filed and recorded with the Fulton County, Georgia courts on January 15, 1902. Tichenor signed an affidavit about his understanding of the legal ownership of the Jané building—that although his name was on the deed "for convenience and to avoid the trouble of a technical objection," the building actually belonged to the Home Mission Board—on March 4, 1891. That document was also filed and recorded in Fulton County on January 15, 1902. See quit claim deed and affidavit regarding deed grantee Southern Baptist Convention, Home Mission Board, Book 160, pages 123 and 125, Fulton County Superior Court, held in the Record Room of the Clerk of Superior Court, Atlanta, Georgia.

[56] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 2, 1897, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.

island.[57] In November, Alberto Díaz traveled to New Orleans to speak "at the invitation of the Cuban revolutionary clubs," where he was introduced by the minister of the Valence Street Baptist Church, another of the congregations supported by the Home Mission Board. Díaz spoke at length about the perfidy of the Spanish in Cuba, his wartime medical work there, and the valor of Maceo, who had recently been killed in battle. Díaz was also made an honorary member of the Rafael de Quesada Cuban revolutionary club of New Orleans and spoke at three Baptist churches during his visit.[58] Alfredo Díaz, for his part, gave an interview to the *Atlanta Constitution* in which he said that he had been sent to Atlanta "by the Cuban authorities at New York to establish headquarters for the White Cross movement and to raise as much money as possible for the purpose of sending expeditions to Cuba."[59] By December 1896, both brothers were reportedly involved in White Cross fundraising work in Atlanta, and Alberto's interviews and speeches stressed political and military questions far more than they did religious work.[60]

By January 1897, Alberto had "established himself at the head of the Cuban junta in Atlanta," and the local Democratic newspaper, the *Constitution,* was more than willing to use him as a source on the war in Cuba.[61] Díaz told the *Constitution* that he was "the

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[57] Both Alberto and Alfredo Díaz corresponded with the Cuban *junta* in New York, although I have not yet been able to examine these letters. Archivo Nacional de Cuba, *(1892-1898)*, vol. 1 (Havana: Archivo Nacional de Cuba, 1955).

[58] "Diaz, the Hero of Cuban Missions, Speaks Last Night Upon the Cause Dear to Him," *New Orleans Times Picayune*, November 8, 1896; and "For the Cause of Cuban Liberty," *New Orleans Times Picayune*, November 9, 1896.

[59] "To Represent White Cross," *Atlanta Constitution*, July 28, 1896, p. 9.

[60] See, for instance, "Will Care for Wounded Cubans," *Atlanta Constitution*, December 25, 1896, p. 5, and a letter from Alberto Díaz that was dated from Atlanta, titled "Cuban White Cross Society" and printed in the *Arkansas Baptist* (January 13, 1897), p. 16.

[61] The *Constitution* helped to establish him as such; the relationship was surely beneficial for both parties. Quote is in "Dr. Diaz Quits the Board," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 23, 1897, 3.

special personal commissioner of President Cisneros, of the Cuban republic." In this capacity, he rejected Spain's offer of home rule—but continued colonial status—for Cuba, saying that personal letters to him from Antonio Maceo (dated from Pinar del Rio the previous September) and Aguirre proved "that the universal sentiment of all Cubans is the unconditional independence of the island of Cuba, and that is all they will accept." A few days later, Díaz produced a telegram from Tomás Estrada Palma, the head of the Cuban *junta* in New York, denying rumors that Gómez had agreed to negotiate with Spain.[62] When Díaz let the newspaper know that he was going to "sever his connections with the missionary board of the Baptist church," it must have come as a surprise to no one. The reason had to do both with Díaz's politics and with the Board's property in Cuba: "it has been deemed wise for him to leave the board" because "the Baptists own extensive property in Cuba and they fear that it will be imperiled by Dr. Diaz's active work in behalf of the Cubans." The *Constitution* generously opined that Díaz "is doing as much for the Cuban cause in this country as any man outside of Washington," and that although he "is a great missionary worker and does not like to leave the work...his sympathy for Cuba takes precedence."[63] No mention was made of some members of the Board's displeasure about Díaz's financial dealings and the mortgages in Cuba. They may have wanted to keep quiet any problems they had with their star missionary, whose name had become synonymous with both Cuban freedom and Baptist missions—at least in Atlanta.

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[62] "Spain's Plan Not Liked By Cubans," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 3, 1897, p. 13 and "Liberty or Death," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 9, 1897, p. 2; see also "Dr. Diaz Hears from Maceo Direct," *New Orleans Times Picayune*, December 2, 1896. Maceo was killed in Pinar del Rio on December 7, 1896.

[63] "Dr. Diaz Quits the Board," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 23, 1897, 3. There is no information in extant Home Mission Board records about any discussion between Díaz and the Board over his resignation in January 1897.

After Díaz officially stopped working for the Home Mission Board, he continued to raise money for the White Cross Society in Atlanta and gave a few more speeches in other cities. He also renewed his relationship with the American Baptist Publication Society (ABPS), whose railroad chapel car, the *Good Will*, was in Texas. In late 1897, he traveled to Texas and spent several weeks aboard the *Good Will* in San Antonio and in some border towns; the plan was to send Díaz and the car to Mexico, but events in Cuba intervened. Like other missionaries stationed aboard chapel cars, Díaz held regular evening services in the car itself and visited families during the day in the towns where the railroad reached. His time aboard the car, though, also included medical work. Boston Smith, a Baptist minister from Minnesota who organized the work of the chapel car, reported that when he visited Díaz aboard the car in San Antonio, he "found the bookcase, instead of containing a well-selected library, filled with surgical instruments of all kinds. Opposite the bookcase was an operating table. 'Why, Doctor, what does this mean?' I asked. He told me in his broken but intensely interesting way, how from nine to eleven o'clock each morning he treated, free of charge, all the sick and afflicted who came to the car. This, he said, gave him entrance into the homes and hearts of the people." Even in Texas, with the war in Cuba raging, Díaz used medical care to gain the trust of local people in order to witness to them.[64]

Díaz's activities in 1897 and 1898 are difficult to trace. Some sources say that he traveled to Mexico; others that he continued to raise money for the White Cross, or perhaps for the Cuban *junta*, in Atlanta or through another speaking tour around the

[64] Quote is from Taylor, *This Train Is Bound for Glory*, 135. See also Wilma Rugh Taylor, *Gospel Tracks Through Texas: The Mission of Chapel Car Good Will* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2005); Mary Emily Wright, *The Missionary Work of the Southern Baptist Convention* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1902).

United States. Because the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board no longer employed him, their meeting minutes and publications do not discuss him. After the initial rush of publicity in the summer and fall of 1896, he disappears from the newspaper record.[65]

In Cuba, the Baptist congregations scattered or went underground, although they did continue to meet. In late July 1896, Belot wrote to the Board, "Four different meetings are held regularly; one in Buenos Aires, one in Neptuno, another in Concordia, 111, and in Mission street. Neither civil nor ecclesiastical officials interfere, as meetings are held with special permit of government, and neither police nor clergy show ill will.... The schools go on in the same way, neither increase nor diminish in attendance."[66] After forcing the Díaz brothers to leave Cuba, Weyler and the Spanish government discerned no further threat from Cuban Baptist meetings. The leaders who remained, other than Belot, were women; this factor, too, may have led the Spanish to see Baptist services and schools as harmless. Díaz's mother and his sister Minnie are both mentioned as leaders, and Minnie continued to lead one of the Baptist schools. In November 1897, a report written by Rev. Porter King, chair of the Board's Cuba Committee, recommended "that the salaries of the missionaries in Cuba, there being four of them and all females, be continued at least for the present."[67] Gertrude Joerg, Belot's niece and a member of the Baptist congregation, took charge of the Jané building when Belot died of tuberculosis in early 1898. Baptist services probably continued in homes and smaller buildings, although

[65] The records of the American Baptist Publication Society, housed at the American Baptist Historical Society, have no evidence of Díaz's employment with the ABPS in 1897 or 1898, but the records are incomplete. Author communication with ABPS, March 2010.
[66] "In Cuba," *Foreign Mission Journal* (October 1896), p. 201-202.
[67] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 2, 1897, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA. Board meeting minutes refer to correspondence with Minnie Díaz, but it appears that none of these records have survived. See Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, December 12, 1897, Transcribed minute book 1875-1898, Box 2, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, SBHLA.

it is doubtful that they used the Jané building or widely publicized their services. Any change in the status of the Baptist congregations would have to wait for the watershed year of 1898.

Fig. 5. Newspaper coverage of Díaz's time in prison. "Baptist Property May Be Seized," *Atlanta Constitution*, April 18, 1896, p. 5.

BAPTIST PROPERTY MAY BE SEIZED

Fears Are Entertained for Baptists' Holdings in Cuba.

DR. TICHENOR MAY GO THERE

Diaz in Jail in Havana and Held on a Serious Charge,

AND IT MAY RESULT SERIOUSLY FOR HIM

He Was a Captain in the Former Rebel War—Dr. Tichenor Issues an Address.

Will the valuable property of the American Baptists in Cuba be confiscated?

The arrest of Alberto J. Diaz, the representative of the Baptists in Cuba, brings

"On the afternoon of April 16th a telegram from Havana was brought to the home mission rooms containing these words:

"'Diaz is in jail. PORTA.'

"This startling intelligence brings the board face to face with the gravest difficulty of its history. Diaz has been in jail before, but then the charges against him were trivial. If he had been found guilty the penalty would not have involved life or liberty. Then there was profound peace upon the island, and partisanism did not torture into crimes the careless words of familiar conversation, or base a charge of treason upon the loose expressions found in a letter to a friend.

"Widely different are the conditions prevailing now. The Spanish authority in Cuba is shaken to its foundation. Cuban men and women are fighting against a tyranny more dreadful to them than death, and for liberty dearer to them than life.

"The Spaniards have repudiated their ablest commander because of his justice and his moderation, and have supplied his place by the most bloodthirsty and cruel

A. J. DIAZ.

A. J. Diaz, from a Photograph Taken in a Havana Jail Several Years ago.

BAPTIST CHURCH IN HAVANA.

V.
The Ambiguities of 1898:
Freedom and Control under Occupation, 1898-1901

In late November 1898, Porter King gave an interview to the *Christian Index*, a Baptist weekly newspaper in Georgia, to report on his recent trip to Cuba. "We did not have as extended an opportunity of conferring generally with the leading citizens of Havana as we would have liked," he said, but "those with whom we talked desired an early termination of the present status of governmental affairs, claiming that the condition was now a very unsatisfactory one." King, a respectable forty-one year old attorney in Atlanta who had a gift for florid speech and rhetorical elision of the pressing topic at hand, had traveled to Havana with two of his Home Mission Board colleagues in order to check on the Baptist community and properties there. The "leading citizens" of Cuba with whom he spoke had apparently expressed "the hope that the United States would soon establish some permanent form of government." The form that this government would take, however, was still unknown. "Annexation is favored by many, while others have different views," King reported. "Stability of government is desired by the substantial people of the city, but in what form, and just how it shall be accomplished, is now being discussed among them."[1]

This chapter connects Southern-Cuban Baptist relations with the politics of the U.S. occupation of Cuba up to 1901. Confusion and ambiguity, such as that which King described and exhibited in his own choice of words, defined much about life and politics

[1] "Our Mission Work in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 78, no. 48 (December 1, 1898), 1. King exhibited and pursued the qualities of "respectability" described so well in Paul Harvey, "'These Untutored Masses': The Campaign for Respectability Among White and Black Evangelicals in the American South, 1870-1930," *Journal of Religious History* 21, no. 3 (1997): 302-317; Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities Among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

on the island during this first period of the occupation. Only in late 1900 and early 1901, when serious discussions about what exactly the U.S. would demand in return for an end to the occupation took place under the auspices of the Cuban constitutional convention, did it become clear that the occupation would someday end. Before that time, few if any North Americans knew what path Cuba would now take to independence, or indeed, whether the United States would accept an independent Cuba at the end of the occupation. The Teller Amendment, discussed below, seemed to forestall the U.S. annexation of Cuba, but influential leaders of both U.S. political parties were dedicated to finding a way around those restrictions in order to annex Cuba.[2] Similarly, Cuban Baptists began to doubt the fidelity of their Southern Baptist brothers to the ideals of Cuban independence and congregational autonomy that the Southerners had so often voiced in the years of Spanish colonialism. The Southerners seemed enthusiastic about their new opportunity to direct and control Cuban missions, and they jumped enthusiastically into a frenzied competition with other U.S. denominations over the right to plant Protestant congregations all over the island. Cuban Baptists, especially those close to Díaz and members of the main congregation that met in downtown Havana, were alarmed at the prospect of Southern control over the direction of Baptist evangelizing efforts in Cuba. They wanted an independent Cuba as much as they knew that congregational independence was a key Baptist doctrine.

The conflicts between Baptists, like many other occupation-era clashes, revolved around a discourse in which all participants used the concept of freedom to argue their

[2] The historian David Healy characterized the occupation as one long "search for policy." The lack of a clear U.S. policy for how to end the occupation or how to define its goals meant, in effect, that Cuban independence was compromised before it even began. David Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963).

cases. The disagreement that first split Baptists in late 1898 centered around the question of whether Gethsemane congregation was an independent congregation equal to any other in the Southern Baptist Convention, or a mission congregation subordinate to the Home Mission Board. By explaining both the Cuban and the North American sides in the debate, and by paying attention to the political context in which the dispute took place, we can shed light on the differing conceptions of freedom that came to light during the conflict. Over the course of the occupation, disagreements over the meanings of independence, freedom and autonomy would lead not only to a split between the Southern Baptists and their most charismatic Cuban preacher, Díaz, but to a tense and intimate new relationship—cultural, political, and economic—between both the governments and the people of the United States and Cuba. Until 1901, however, the political conflicts that characterized U.S.-Cuban relations were muddied because no one knew how long the occupation would last, or what factors would lead to its end. After an initial conflict between Baptists, then, a regenerated partnership between Southerners and Cubans reached an uneasy truce. From 1899 to 1901, the partnership seemed to be moving forward, while in reality, both sides were laying the foundation for the crippling conflict to come—and the Cuban Baptist communities were beginning to split, just as Cuban politics fractured and became unworkable under the pressures of empire.

* * *

In February 1898, the explosion of the U.S.S. Maine in Havana's harbor acted as the long-awaited excuse for direct U.S. military involvement in Cuba's war. Cuba's

Spanish governors and Spain's diplomats had worked assiduously to secure official U.S. neutrality since 1895. But the accidental explosion, combined with the interest of influential U.S. imperialists in the supposed curative effects of war on North American character, proved too forceful to deny. The moribund U.S. army began mobilizing regular and volunteer troops to support an invasion of Cuba. In April, the Senate and House approved a Joint Resolution authorizing war, and U.S. troops began moving to Cuba's southeastern coast, an insurgent stronghold, in June.[3]

Alberto Díaz rushed back from Mexico to be part of the U.S. invasion of Cuba, boosting the now-joint Cuban-U.S. cause on his way. On April 23, President McKinley called for 125,000 volunteers to join the U.S. Army for the invasion, and by May 2 the Atlanta *Constitution* was already reporting that Díaz would "volunteer as a surgeon in the ranks of the volunteer army of the United States."[4] Three days later, the *Constitution* interviewed Díaz as he passed through Atlanta on his way to the Southern Baptist Convention, which was held in Norfolk, Virginia that year. He apparently had some trouble finding an appropriate unit in which to volunteer, as he first "tendered his services

[3] The historiography of (as it is variously named) the War of 1898, the Spanish-American War, or the Spanish-Cuban-Filipino-American War is enormous. Excellent overviews of issues particular to Cuba and the U.S. invasion are provided in Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983); Ada Ferrer, "Cuba, 1898: Rethinking Race, Nation, and Empire," *Radical History Review*, no. 73 (Winter 1999); David F. Trask, *The War With Spain in 1898* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996). In recent years, scholars interested in globalization, culture, imperialism, and gender have explored the broad causes and meaning of this war. See, for example, Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). The Joint Resolution—passed by the U.S. Congress to support President McKinley's declaration of war against Spain—is discussed in more detail below, especially its specific provisions regarding Cuban independence.

[4] "Dr. Diaz Will Volunteer," *Atlanta Constitution*, May 2, 1898, p. 5. Other Southern newspapers printed similar rumors; see, for instance, "Surgeons Will Go to Work," *Charlotte Observer*, May 3, 1898.

to Governor Atkinson" of Georgia, but was soon "informed...that the governor has made all the appointments of surgeons." Next, "it was suggested to the doctor...that he would be the very man to go with Roosevelt's Rough Riders from the west and he said he would think it over." As if its loyal readers did not know of Díaz's unique qualifications for U.S. military service in Cuba, the *Constitution* remarked, "knowing Cuba so thoroughly, he would be invaluable.... Dr. Diaz is a fine athlete. He can mount a horse at full run as readily as a cowboy. He carried a machete along to the convention and remarked that he intended to take it to Cuba. He is going to the war if it lasts long enough for him to get there."[5] Using his connections with prominent Southerners, Díaz hoped for a meaningful military appointment that would put to use his skills and knowledge of Cuba so that he could again participate in what he surely thought of as its liberation.

Southern Baptist leaders, for their part, were by all accounts thrilled at the prospect of war—as they framed it—on Cuba's behalf. All of a sudden, many of them became jingoistic imperialists, and they shared Díaz's enthusiasm at the prospect of U.S. intervention in Cuba. In late March or early April, Tichenor gave an emotional speech at the Georgia State Baptist Convention in which he told the heretofore secret story of Díaz's leadership in the Havana insurgency.[6] At the same time, Tichenor was careful to tie the coming war and the prospect of political change to Cuba's religious "redemption." "Cuba is coming to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, she is quickly coming," he said. "The day dawn of her redemption, thank God, is at hand, and when the Spanish shackles fall from her, we, the Baptists of the South, must enter every village, every hamlet and every town, until all her children shall rejoice with unspeakable joy at the glad news of

[5] "Dr. Diaz May Go With Roosevelt," *Atlanta Constitution*, May 5, 1898, p. 8.
[6] See chapter four.

salvation."[7] At this same convention, Tichenor and the former governor of Georgia, William J. Northen, shepherded through a resolution in support of religious freedom in Cuba, which they then carried to the Southern Baptist Convention.

In Norfolk, the full Southern Baptist Convention voted on the resolution for religious freedom in Cuba, proposed by Northen, on May 6. The *Christian Index* reported that the resolution petitioned "our government at Washington to use every effort toward securing equal religious liberty for every inhabitant in the island of Cuba." When asking the Convention's support for the resolution, Northen "said that it was a God given privilege to worship God at the dictates of conscience, and Southern Baptists wanted to see this privilege given to every inhabitant of Cuba. The resolution, on motion of Mr. Northen, was adopted, and Dr. Hatcher was appointed to present the matter to President McKinley."[8] Along with Hatcher and a few other prominent Southern Baptists, Tichenor and Díaz traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet the president.

In Washington, the Baptists presented the Convention's resolution to President McKinley and discussed with him their desire for Southern Baptist missionaries to accompany the U.S. army during the invasion of Cuba. Díaz, for his part, was apparently more interested in making an impression on McKinley by publicly praying over him. On May 12, the *New York Times* reported, "as the result of representations made to-day to the President and [Army] Gen. [Nelson A.] Miles by prominent members of the Southern Baptist Convention...the commanding General has granted permission to three missionaries of that convention to accompany the army to Cuba." It is unclear from the

[7] Report on the 1898 Georgia State Baptist Convention, *Christian Index* vol. 78, no. 14 (April 7, 1898), 4.
[8] "The Southern Baptist Convention, Forty-Third Session," *Christian Index* vol. 78, no. 19 (May 12, 1898), p. 1.

records whether or how this agreement was carried out, although Rev. D. H. Parker wrote frequently to the *Christian Index* about his service as an army chaplain—and, apparently, an unofficial Southern Baptist missionary to Cubans—from his post at Guantánamo in the autumn of 1898. At the Baptists' meeting in the White House with McKinley, Díaz, who as the *Times* reported was "a native Cuban and an ardent patriot," "now looks forward with joy to the opportunity of returning to his native land under the American flag, to which he now owes allegiance, and which is to bring to his oppressed people, as one of its chief blessings, the right to worship as they see fit." Díaz's joy apparently manifested itself in what the Associated Press called "a strange occurrence." "With a long line of people looking on, A. J. Diaz...dropped on his knees in front of the President, kissed his hand and whispered a prayer for his welfare.... President McKinley was much embarrassed. The people who formed the great circle in the midst of which the little scene was enacted were so impressed that all conversation ceased." This little piece of drama, if the overzealous newspaper reporter did not create it out of whole cloth, may have heralded an appointment for Díaz as a staff interpreter. In this same story the AP reported, "Diaz will go to Cuba with General Miles as an interpreter attached to the staff."[9]

Rumors that Díaz was joining or had joined the U.S Army were printed frequently in the U.S. press in these months. In May, the *Atlanta Constitution* reported that he would volunteer as a surgeon in the Georgia volunteers, and the *Charlotte Observer* claimed that

[9] "Baptists Send Missionaries," *New York Times*, May 12, 1898, p. 3. On Rev. Parker at Guantánamo, see Chaplain D. H. Parker, "A Letter from Guantanamo, Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 78, no. 41 (October 13, 1898), p. 5. Parker wrote, "My ministerial duties to the regiment are virtually at an end, as the troops are so far distributed to different fields; my duties as postmaster are merely nominal, and evangelism seems to be my mission here." On Díaz and McKinley, see the Associated Press report, "Kissed M'Kinley's Hand, A Grateful Cuban Visitor Surprises the President," printed in the *Kansas Semi-Weekly Capital*, May 13, 1898.

if he wouldn't be able to get to Cuba with the volunteers, then he would join the regular army instead. By June, the Home Mission Board's newspaper, *Our Home Field*, reported that since it was "perfectly natural that he should desire to serve the United States in the present contest for liberating his native island from the domination of Spain," Díaz had gone "from Norfolk...to Washington where he was appointed volunteer aid on the staff of General Miles, and immediately entered the service as interpreter." In August, the *Constitution* reported a slightly different story, namely that Díaz "went with the first expedition to Santiago as a member of Shafter's staff and it is stated by those here who know that he has been there ever since." Despite the many reports of Díaz's military service, documentary evidence about the details of his enrollment in the U.S. volunteer army or employment on the staff of either General Miles or General Shafter has been elusive.[10]

The U.S. invasion of Cuba began on June 14, 1898 when U.S. troops came ashore east of the city of Santiago, but it quickly threw the question of Cuba's independence into

[10] For reports on Díaz's wartime military service, see "Dr. Diaz Will Volunteer," *Atlanta Constitution*, May 2, 1898, p. 5; "Surgeons Will Go to Work," *Charlotte Observer*, May 3, 1898; "Dr. Diaz," *Our Home Field* vol. 8, no. 11 (June 1898), p. 1, typewritten copy in SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 21; "Dr. A. J. Diaz Was Not Among the Drowned," *Atlanta Constitution*, August 12, 1898, p. 7. Collections which appear to have no record of Díaz's U.S. military service in 1898 include the Regular Army enlistment records, 1894-1912 (NARA, RG 94, Entry 91 [Enlistment Papers], Box 340), which are organized by last name; and the compiled service records of Volunteer Army soldiers who served during the war with Spain, NARA, microfilm publication M871, roll #28, which are indexed. Unfortunately, there is no centralized or efficient way to search the extant records for staff translators or surgeons in the Army of 1898. Staff are often mentioned in returns, for instance, but their full names are rarely given. The papers of General Nelson A. Miles, housed at the U.S. Army Military Historical Institute in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, provided no mention of Díaz by name. A comprehensive history of General Shafter's units in Cuba, written by one of his aides, does not mention Díaz by name; see John David Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: C. Scribner's sons, 1899). The author was not able to travel to consult Gen. Shafter's papers, which are housed at Stanford.

doubt.[11] The U.S. military's relationship with Calixto García's Oriente unit of the Cuban insurgent army was not good, and its relationship with the Cuban Assembly, the provisional government of the Cuban republic-in-arms, was even worse. The competition and distrust between these two wings of the independence movement, and their different strategies for dealing with the United States, did not help. Valorized in the U.S. press as heroic freedom fighters, the Cuban insurgent army's mixed-race character and general poverty had been largely hidden from the U.S. public. At the same time, and in contrast to the picture presented in the press, many U.S. policymakers believed that the Cuban insurgency was almost exclusively black and bent on the destruction of white landowners. Consequently, U.S. elites feared that what appeared to be the impending Cuban victory against Spain would turn into a "race war." U.S. leaders did not want Cuba to become "another Haiti," the specter of chaotic black rule that had haunted much of U.S. white elites' thinking about Cuba during the nineteenth century.[12] Both the officers and soldiers of the U.S. army quickly discovered that their allies in Cuba were not what they wanted or had expected. They decided not only that the Cuban army could not help them in the fight against Spain, but also that Cubans in general could not be trusted with independence.[13]

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[11] Col. Leonard Wood, who would become the military governor of Santiago province before he was appointed the military governor of all of Cuba in 1900, was part of the invasion force as the leader of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders. The historiography on Wood, Roosevelt, the Rough Riders, and the U.S. invasion is far too large to be adequately covered here. The two most recent treatments of Wood, both more critical than earlier studies, are Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Jack Edward McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2006).

[12] See Díaz's Senate testimony on this point, discussed in chapter four. See also Pérez, *War of 1898*, 14.

[13] There is an excellent discussion of the two armies' changing views of each other in Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, chap. 10-11.

To many North Americans, their Cuban allies were beginning to look like the real enemy. When U.S. army general Shafter accepted the surrender of Santiago from the Spanish on July 17, and then signed a cease-fire on August 13, 1898, the Cuban insurgent army was not invited to the negotiations or to sign either document. Neither were they permitted to enter the city of Santiago itself. The Cuban Revolutionary Party in Washington was asked to ratify the armistice once it was already signed, and the provisional government in Cuba ratified it later. Negotiations between Spain and the United States revolved around the Spanish desire to remain armed and to secure transportation back to Spain, and the U.S. demand for unconditional surrender. Questions about the status of Cuba's independence, what constituted the legitimate government of Cuba, and the future disposition of the Cuban army were left unaddressed. As the historian Louis Pérez has written, "The war was over. But it was not certain who had won what."[14]

* * *

The problems of immediate postwar life in Havana were pressing; Cuba in the autumn of 1898 must have been a profoundly difficult place to live. The end of the war only made the poverty, marginalization and desperation of many Cubans more obvious. The terms of the armistice left the Spanish army—and not the Cuban *Ejercito Libertador*—officially in control of most towns in Cuba until the U.S. could deploy enough soldiers to take over. In Havana, this meant that the door was wide open for violence, recriminations, and difficulties of every kind. Food was scarce. Disease was

[14] Ibid., 210.

everywhere. The Spanish wartime effort to cut off Havana from the insurgent army had also led to widespread starvation, as city dwellers could not acquire enough food to eat from the countryside. This situation was exacerbated by widespread devastation in the country, since both the insurgent and Spanish armies had used strategies of total war in their effort to starve out their enemies. Consequently, most of the island's agriculture was utterly destroyed. Refugees and *reconcentrados* from the countryside flooded into the city. The U.S. Red Cross and the army tried to send food aid and supplies, but their attempts to get cargo unloaded and supplies distributed were quickly overwhelmed by the scale of the need. Everything was poorly organized, if it was organized at all.[15]

Gertrude Joerg and her sister Teresa, members of Gethsemane Baptist church, had remained in Havana throughout the war, and did what they could to prevent starvation in the days following the cease-fire. Their uncle, Dr. Edward Belot, had acted as the Board's property manager since Díaz's exile in 1896. When Belot died of tuberculosis in July 1898, Gertrude Joerg took over his duties. In the late summer of 1898, the two women wrote to their Southern Baptist contacts describing the privations of life in Cuba and the actions they had taken to relieve some of the suffering. At their September meeting, the Home Mission Board noted that Gertrude Joerg had written, "there is still considerable suffering among the people for the necessaries of life. That, while there is peace, it is as Miss Gertrude Joerg says, 'regular Spanish peace, everything nearly as high as ever, and some things higher. Food is brought here and not allowed to land.'" Teresa Joerg reported, "Potatoes on the wharf selling at $25.00 a barrel, no vegetables worth anything,

[15] On the war, see John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006). On the situation immediately after the war, see Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, chap. 11-12. On the extent of economic and agricultural destruction in Cuba due to the 1895 war, see , *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 99-104.

and eggs today...are difficult to find, and twenty cents apiece. No bread at all; since the first of July we have bought one pound of inferior meat, 45 cents a pound, made soup and eaten the boiled out meat.... Some of our Church people have suffered dreadfully." To do what she could to alleviate the scarcity, Gertrude Joerg gave permission to the U.S. Red Cross to use the Jané building for storage and distribution of relief supplies, as soon as they were permitted to unload them from boats in Havana harbor. "If the Red Cross are allowed to land and distribute their supplies there will be plenty," she reasoned in a letter to the Board, "and I have taken the liberty to say they may store in the corridor and first gallery of the church, supplies to be distributed to those who can prepare them at home. We can reach five hundred, or more, whom we know are worthy, and we and our intimate friends will take charge of this place."[16] The Baptist building—large, centrally located, a few blocks from the docks, and in the care of North American women—became a center for the distribution of Red Cross rations and medical supplies in Havana not long after the cease-fire was signed.

When Díaz reappeared in Havana that autumn, Gertrude Joerg openly expressed her suspicion of him to her Board contacts. She believed that she had good reason to be

[16] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, September 13, 1898; in SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898. The Joerg sisters, who were born in Pennsylvania, went to live with Dr. Edward Belot, their uncle, in Havana because of their sister Anna's health. Gertrude first moved there in 1890, although her sisters and mother had lived there on and off since 1869. They were part of Díaz's congregation when he first preached in Havana in the rented space at 115 Prado. Their uncle's home, at 67-69 Prado, had been his place of business as well: the "Baños de Belot" provided "homeopathic" treatment and, Gertrude claimed, had been the first building in Havana with running water. The home became a boarding house during the war, and Gertrude claimed it "had been a rendevous [sic] for Am soldiers" as well. One of their wartime tenants was the British consul, who helped them communicate with the U.S. government and the Southern Baptists during 1898 and lent them money as well. Handwritten notes on Joerg family (probably made by Una Roberts Lawrence during an interview with Gertrude Joerg), undated, SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 17; see also Porter King, report on postwar situation in Cuba and Home Mission Board resolution, September 13, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

suspicious of Díaz. He had left Cuba when things got rough, after all, and now he wanted to pick up where he had left off, without what she felt was the proper attitude of respect and deference to those who had faithfully suffered through the war in Cuba. Perhaps more importantly, though, Joerg believed that Díaz was dishonest; she had learned from her uncle about the mortgages that Díaz had taken out in 1894 without the knowledge of the Board. Although the Board had officially concluded that Díaz had done "what he thought would be for the best interests of the Board and its Mission work in Havana,"[17] Joerg had concluded that Díaz's poor judgment was the most important element of his character, and that it explained his political activity as well as his financial transactions. In October 1898, she wrote to Porter King, the chairman of the Board's standing Cuba committee, "Diaz is carrying a very high hand.... What he does do, and which seems to me very dangerous, unwise and decidedly unchristian, is that every opportunity he attacks, publicly from his pulpit, the catholics, the Spaniards, their flag, and in fact makes himself and the church as conspicuous as possible."[18] She believed that Díaz was stirring up trouble in Havana, after having been back for only two months at the most.

The situation was clearly volatile—Díaz denounced the Spanish from Gethsemane's pulpit while Spanish soldiers were still encamped in and around Havana. What is particularly striking is that Joerg made no mention of any anti-American rhetoric Díaz may have employed. This may mean that he was trying to unify his congregation using a further rejection of Spain rather than any anticipatory rejection of the North American occupation, whose meaning was still profoundly unclear. Joerg did not consider Díaz's views wrong, exactly, but she did clearly feel that it was "unwise" to

[17] See chapter four. Quote is from the minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, October 3, 1896, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 22.
[18] Gertrude Joerg to Porter King, October 18, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

make the church so "conspicuous" by giving such explicitly political sermons. She wrote King, "Diaz proposed to try and show to the public last Sunday evening why it was right for him to go to the war and meddle with politics. It sounds much as if he was trying to convince himself and the church that he has done right. There were rounds of applause."[19] It seems quite possible that many of the Cubans in the congregation responded more positively to Díaz's fiery sermons than Joerg did. Joerg may have been right that the politics of the sermons made Gethsemane a target for Spanish vengeance. Díaz, however, seems to have been betting that drawing a Cuban congregation, one sympathetic to separatism and independence, back to his services was a solid defense against Spanish violence and simultaneously a way to reestablish his place among Cuban patriot leaders. On October 22, the Board wrote directly to Díaz about the need for "prudence and caution in the use of the Church building."[20] This suggestion seems to have surprised and angered Díaz more than it led him to tone down his rhetoric. By late October Joerg was pleading with the Home Mission Board to send someone down to defuse the tension, relieve her of her duties as property manager, and rein in Díaz.

On the morning of Sunday, November 13, a Board committee consisting of King, committee member E. L. Connally, and Tichenor arrived in Havana. None of them spoke Spanish, so they relied on Díaz and others to translate for them. In the evening, they went to the usual services at the Jané building, where about 500 people gathered in the congregation. Tichenor preached, according to the report later submitted to the Board,

> a most excellent and interesting address on Baptist history, and impressed upon the congregation the freedom of individual opinion taught by the

[19] Ibid.
[20] Secretary of the Board to Díaz, October 22, 1898, excerpted in Díaz to Paxon, December 23, 1898, with enclosure, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. An original or complete copy of the October 22 letter appears not to have survived.

> Baptists, that the freedom thus claimed for ourselves allowed equal freedom to others, and he counseled conservatism and prudence in the trying times that surrounded them, a faithful adherence to and proclaiming of the Baptist faith, but no unnecessary antagonism or provoking of the Catholics, who so largely predominate there.[21]

Tichenor may have intended to encourage the Cubans to lay violence and war behind them, and to continue their pursuit of spiritual freedom with lawful and private means. We do not have a copy of the text of this sermon, so we cannot know exactly what he said. To many of the Cubans in attendance, many of whom probably generally saw U.S. Baptists as allies in their efforts toward political and cultural independence from Spain, these themes must have seemed to twist the meaning of the prewar Protestant message with which they were familiar. If the Baptist principle of freedom had meant revolt against Spain and Spanish Catholicism, why did it now also mean "conservatism and prudence," when that revolt had finally been won and the oppressor, both political and spiritual, had finally been overthrown? Surely Tichenor did not mean that they should allow the Spanish to continue to control Havana. Surely he did not mean that the Spanish should be absolved of all guilt for wartime atrocities, such as the devastating policy of reconcentration, or that they should not be held responsible for the current dire state of food prices, disease, and tension in Havana. Surely he did not mean that the Catholic Church's support for Spain during the war should be overlooked, or that the Catholic bishop of Havana should be allowed to have an important political role in a new Cuban polity. Surely he did not mean that Cuban autonomy should still be limited. These political concerns seem to have gone entirely unrecognized by the Southern Baptists, Tichenor included.

[21] Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898, SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898.

The Board committee worked to resolve the most pressing legal and financial matter before them, which was the state of the titles to property in and around Havana held in the names of Tichenor or Díaz. Neither Cubans nor Southerners knew how the U.S. occupation or the possible independence of Cuba would affect property titles that had been registered according to Spanish law. Now the Board wanted to make sure that property titles were held corporately in the Board's name, and that however the Cuban legal system changed, the Board's corporate ownership of those properties would be protected. In November 1898, a Cuban attorney worked with Tichenor and Díaz to sign over their individual titles to the Board, and to register those titles in the proper offices in Havana. Now, neither Tichenor nor Díaz was individually responsible for the finances, titles, or mortgages on the Board's property, and the Board was protected from claims to the property by either of them. Everything seemed to be on a solid footing, so that plans for missions could move forward.[22]

Tichenor, Connally, and King left Havana believing that the way had been cleared for a flourishing Cuban Baptist mission project to reappear in Cuba. To the Board in Atlanta, they optimistically reported,

> We believe that there is now a brighter prospect for the island of Cuba, and for our Baptist work there, than ever before. The oppression of Spain, and her unjust and tyrannical treatment of these people have driven them from her, and the Catholic Church being looked upon by them as part of the Spanish rule, many will also revolt from it, and there will be for the first time a free and fair opportunity to present our faith to those of this persuasion, and those who have no religious belief at all.... What will the fruitage be when these adverse circumstances are removed? Can we not, in

[22] Minutes of a called meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898, SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898; draft of resolution giving power of attorney to Daniel and Conant, with handwritten changes and additions, March 16, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

> the Providence of God, work for, pray for, and expect great things in Cuba?[23]

The Board clearly believed that there was a basic agreement between themselves and the members of Gethsemane. Díaz, too, clearly looked forward to working with the Board again. In early 1898, he had been employed by the American Baptist Publication Society in Mexico, traveling and speaking. He had hoped that they might continue to employ him in Cuba, but they had recently declined to support him if he wanted to be pastor of only one church. He deeply wanted to work for his own congregation again, and was by all accounts thrilled that the Southern Baptists agreed to reestablish a relationship with him and Gethsemane. But he wanted to do everything in the right order, so that there would be no misunderstandings. On December 12, he wrote Tichenor that he wanted to "say 'yes' immediately" to the Board's provisional offer to pay his salary as pastor of Gethsemane. Only his "debt of gratitude" to the Society prevented him from doing so. Instead, he said, he would wait to receive the official offer from the Board before writing to the Society.[24] Neither party seems to have foreseen how profoundly they would disagree in the coming months.

* * *

The first conflict that arose between Baptists in Havana and those in the U.S. South revolved around two related questions of church life and governance, both linked to the themes of independence, sovereignty and freedom that defined the occupation

[23] Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 29, 1898, SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, Box 2, transcribed minute book 1875-1898.
[24] Díaz to Tichenor, December 12, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

period. The first was a matter of definition: what was Gethsemane's nature and structure as a congregation? Was it an independent Baptist church, similar to congregations throughout the U.S. South, or was it a mission congregation, subordinate to the Home Mission Board? If a mission serving English-speakers was initiated in Havana, would that community be a part of Gethsemane, or separate? Were Gethsemane's preachers free to preach as they saw fit, and was the congregation free to offer or deny their pulpit to anyone as they saw fit? The second issue was a matter of control: who would make decisions and control resources? These questions of control were clearly related to different conceptions of Gethsemane's nature as a congregation, and they came to the fore in disagreements about Gethsemane's finances, personnel, and the matter of a Board agent in charge of property in Cuba. Who would control Gethsemane's fundraising and financial decisions: the congregation or the Board in Atlanta? How would the church's two major sources of income—Gethsemane's collections from its members and contributions from the Home Mission Board—be used, and who would hold the checkbook? Who would have the power to hire and fire missionaries, teachers and pastors? Who would hire the property agent, and would that person be answerable to the Board or to the congregation? The different answers to these questions given by Cuban and North American Baptists show the profoundly divergent interpretations of Baptist theology and governance, Cuban and North American agency, and Cuba's future that were in play in occupation-era Cuba.

In mid-December 1898, Gethsemane Church received a letter from the Board that sparked the dispute. It was particularly bad timing: relations between Cubans and the United States were poisonous. Spain and the U.S. signed the Treaty of Paris officially

ending the war in early December, and Cuba's absence from this treaty prompted protests from insurgent commanders across the island. The official ceremony handing over power in Cuba from Spain to the United States was scheduled for January 1, 1899. In the days leading up to the ceremony, the U.S. governors abruptly cancelled the Cuban army's triumphal parade into Havana for fear of "disorder." Cuban military and political leaders, many of whom had fought against Spain for decades in Cuba and abroad, were denied the right to participate in the transfer of power ceremony. Havana erupted in anti-American sentiment, with public demonstrations and taunting of U.S. soldiers in the streets, as the North Americans entirely shut Cubans out of the political process.[25]

Díaz told Tichenor that he and his congregation had been directly affected by this context. On January 3, 1899, he wrote, "Before I say anything, I must confess our wickness [wickedness], the oppressive conditions in which we has live, make us sometimes suspicious; and are afraid to lose our freedom. So; we are more than carefull before we accepte [sic] any proposition."[26] Here Díaz was probably referring to the psychological legacies of Spanish colonialism, but he was also implicitly telling Tichenor that U.S. imperial politics in Cuba would affect Cuban perceptions of Board initiatives. He was arguing that North Americans had to be mindful of the local context, which included, particularly in December 1898, Cubans' strong impression that the U.S. was setting the stage for a complete denial of Cuban political sovereignty.

It is doubtful that many members of the Board fully understood the extent to which these questions affected their brethren in Havana. On January 4, 1899, J. William Jones, the editor of the Board's monthly magazine, *Our Home Field*, wrote to Díaz:

[25] Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 257.
[26] Díaz to Tichenor, January 3, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original.

> Now that Cuba is free (for I have no idea that the American people will justify any action of our Government which will give Cuba a new master now that she is free from Spain) and the door for the preaching of the gospel will be thrown wide open, let there be no bickerings between the brethren who were pioneers in the field, but let us with united hearts and hands go forward to realize, under God's blessing, the motto which you put in your church—'Cuba for Christ.'[27]

Díaz may have admired this noble sentiment, but he also would have doubted that Jones understood what was really happening in Cuba. To him and his congregants, there were plenty of signs that the new U.S. military government did intend to "give Cuba a new master," possibly even through forced annexation. On this question, Díaz was right: Leonard Wood, by now the military governor of the province of Santiago and only a year from becoming governor of the entire island, was a notorious annexationist who had the ear of many prominent Republicans—most notably Theodore Roosevelt, who by this time had been elected governor of New York. Wood's plan—to tutor Cubans in the art of government only until annexation could be engineered—did not come to fruition, but Cuba's independence was not a foregone conclusion in the autumn of 1898.[28]

Within this setting, and with Tichenor becoming more ill by the day, Board chairman King sent Díaz a letter spelling out the Board's five recommendations to Gethsemane congregation. The first had to do with personnel. The Board thought they "should engage yourself [Díaz] as a Missionary, to take the pastorate of the Jane church at Havana...you to devote your entire time to the pastorate, and to such matters as are incident thereto...but not to have charge of the business matters or affairs of the Board, thus relieving you of these matters, and enabling you to devote your whole time to preaching and looking after the spiritual interests of the church." They also recommended

[27] J. William Jones to Díaz, January 4, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21. Emphasis in original.
[28] Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 279.

"that our present Missionaries and teachers be retained, and that those who are now absent from the Island, return thereto as soon as practicable." Clearly, King framed these personnel matters as decisions made by the Board, but he likely assumed that they would meet with no resistance from Gethsemane. King probably thought he was merely proposing to retain the status quo. In addition, the Board recommended that an English-speaking pastor be sent down from the United States, to organize a separate congregation that would serve the expected flood of North Americans who would be flocking to Cuba during the occupation. King wrote that "our belief being that a large English-speaking congregation can be formed, the Committee recommended to the Board the placing of an English-Speaking preacher at Havana, to organize and act as pastor for an English-speaking congregation." King wrote later in the letter that they had not begun looking for someone to fill this position yet, but that they wanted to sent a prominent U.S. preacher down to Havana to "take hold and stir up a rising good meeting, and see if we can't put the Baptists squarely in the lead, where they are now indeed, and help to so create interest as to permanently keep them there." This revival, they thought, would make the Baptist congregation publicly known in Havana, and would draw both Cubans and North American expatriates to Gethsemane Church.[29]

Gethsemane Church saw the Board's personnel recommendations as a gross imposition on their congregational independence and local autonomy. A committee elected to communicate their concerns with Baptist brethren in the U.S. protested,

> That the church [is the] only authority for the election of pastors and the sending of missionaries to preach the gospel.... That we will accept no pastor imposed upon us, but such only as shall be elected by the casting of lots in a regular and public assembly.... That the English services in

[29] King to Díaz, December 9, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

> Havana are a branch of our church so the missionary in charge of this work ought to be elected and pid [paid] by us.[30]

In addition, on December 31, Gethsemane's clerk, Pablo Valdes, wrote to Tichenor in a clear bid to head off some of the Board's recommendations. Valdes wrote, "The Baptist Church here has appointed as Pastor Rev. A. E. Carlisle (from Texas) for the English Speaking branch of this church and he has accepted.... As we look to you as helpers of this work could you assist us in the support of these brethren?"[31] Díaz also wrote personally to Tichenor on January 3, 1899: "We have been taught that Pastors, only the Church could appoint them.... We think the Church know its members better than any agent from outside so let the Church select their missionaries and pay them through the Treasure of the Church and the reports will be send to you as Secretary of the Board."[32] To the members of Gethsemane, the Board did not even have the authority to legitimate the status quo in hiring decisions, much less hire a new pastor and decide that a separate congregation should be formed. Such decisions were the prerogative of the local congregation alone: Gethsemane even demonstrated that it had English-speakers on hand who were ready and willing to begin a mission to North Americans, if the Board wanted to go in that direction and was willing to cooperate with the funds to do so. What was imperative was that the local church would make such decisions.

The Board's second recommendation, as proposed by King, was to appoint an agent to manage Baptist finances and property in Havana. The property agent was to be a professional intermediary between the Board's treasurer and the treasurer of Gethsemane

[30] Díaz et al. to Paxon, December 23, 1898, with enclosure; typewritten copy in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original. See also Minutes of Home Mission Board meeting, February 7, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21; an original of these minutes is in SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900.
[31] Pablo Valdes to Tichenor, December 31, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.
[32] Díaz to Tichenor, January 3, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original.

congregation, funneling funds from each into common projects like rents for schoolrooms, salaries for teachers and pastors, and upkeep of property. The Board likely thought of the agent as a staffperson whose duties would prevent any confusion or uncertainty similar to that which they had experienced during the wartime years and due to the mortgages taken out by Díaz. Many members of the Board certainly believed that Díaz was simply more suited to preaching than to management. They wanted to hire someone in Havana who would oversee matters in Havana in the way that many similar professionalizing, progressive reformers in the United States were beginning to.[33]

The Gethsemane committee saw this "agent" in a very different light: as an authority imposed from above, without the input or consent of the local church. If taken in the worst light, this "agent" might be the beginning of a hierarchy that smacked of Catholicism. They wrote, "we shall not recognize any other officers but the pastor and deacons of the [church]. The Board has a right to have an agent here to look after their property interest, but such agent will never be recognized as an officer of the churches in Cuba."[34] They did not mind the Board having a staff-person to handle its affairs in Cuba, but the congregation wanted it clear that this person would have no official standing within their church. In the same vein, Díaz wrote to Tichenor that they were concerned that this recommendation meant that "an agent with authority will be impose[d] [on] our missionaries and he will exercise a regular fisc[al power] in our Treasure and [in] others

[33] King to Díaz, December 9, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. The classic work on Progressives as managers is Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967). For further discussion of the Progressive trend in Southern Baptist mission work, see chapter six.
[34] Díaz et al. to Paxon, December 23, 1898, with enclosure, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original.

Churches." Díaz in particular feared that the agent might become "a superior officer, or a detective," or that

> this authority [given] to the agent will destroy the moral influence of our Pastors, because the people will look [at] these pastors as men who can't be trust[ed]. This agent represent[s] a kind of a Bishop. We are not oppose[d] to the agency of the Board we think this is a wise thing to do, but let the agent collect rents, pay taxes, repairing in the building [sic] etc. But this work is entirely separate from the Church work.[35]

Díaz and his congregants were clearly still influenced by their Catholic past: they interpreted the idea of this Board "agent" as a dangerous imposition of hierarchy from above, "a kind of a Bishop," someone who might have a right to control their church's money and censure their ministers. They appreciated the practicality of having someone to manage finances, but wanted it made clear that such a person would not have any power over their "Church work," i.e. the work of preaching, evangelizing, and teaching. They wanted it made clear that the agent would serve their congregation, not have power over it.

In a related issue, King's December 9th letter to Díaz made it clear that the Board wanted to pay off the mortgage on the Jané building as quickly as possible.

> You and your congregation further to agree that a Treasurer of your congregation should be elected, or appointed, to whom all funds should be turned over that are raised...and that such Treasurer shall keep an accurate and correct account of the same, using said funds in the payment of the incidental expenses of the church, such as for lights, water, janitor service and the like, and the excess of receipts to be turned over to the agent...for use in payment, as far as it will go, of the principal or interest of the mortgage indebtedness on the Church, and that such Church Treasurer shall have a monthly accounting and settling with our said agent.[36]

Considering that the interest rate on the mortgage loan was 10%, their desire to have every resource go toward paying down that debt was understandable. They certainly felt

[35] Díaz to Tichenor, January 3, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original.
[36] King to Díaz, December 9, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

that Gethsemane could afford to contribute anything over and above their operating expenses toward this end, and that identifying a church treasurer was a logical way to go about handling this. It seems here that it the tone of this recommendation and its connection with the proposed property agent, rather than the idea itself, was what worried the congregation. When Díaz wrote to Tichenor in January, he said that the congregation interpreted the recommendations in this paragraph "as dictation.... Our interpretation is: Confiscation of our funds, and natural[ly] we have no liberty of action in our work."[37] The agent, they worried, would have access to the money that congregants had contributed to their local congregation, and which they felt should be under the congregation's control. Questions of finances and the proposed property agent revolved around the deeper issue of whether the Board would have a cooperative or a directional relationship with Gethsemane congregation. The Gethsemane committee outlined their operating principle firmly: "We will gladly accept the co-operation of any sister church and of the Board, if they shall be pleased to help us with money, prayers or advice, and shall consider the same a christian [sic] courtesy; but the payment of missionaries, evangelists, pastors, prophets and doctors as they are members of our church shall be made through our Treasurer."[38] The church recognized that their membership could not yet afford all the costs associated with running a large, and hopefully influential, urban congregation. But they also felt that preserving their local autonomy was vital, especially when so much else about Cuban autonomy seemed to be in danger.

For the Cubans, perhaps the most puzzling proposition that the North Americans had made in the autumn of 1898 had to do with who was allowed or invited to preach

[37] Díaz to Tichenor, January 3, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original.
[38] Díaz et al. to Paxon, December 23, 1898, with enclosure, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original.

from Gethsemane's pulpit. On October 22, the Southern Baptists had expressed concern over Joerg's report that Díaz and others were taunting Spaniards from the pulpit, and had asked not only that he tone down his rhetoric, but also that no one else be allowed to preach at Gethsemane without prior approval. In late November, the committee returning from Cuba had coincidentally met Warren Candler, a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Florida as he led a group down to Cuba to investigate the possibility of starting a mission there. Tichenor and his party had cordially offered Candler a letter of introduction to Díaz, and had written to Díaz suggesting that Candler be invited to preach at Gethsemane. To Díaz, this was at least very puzzling, and at worst hypocrisy. Why was Díaz not allowed to offer his pulpit to Baptists that he knew in Havana, but was expected to hand it over to a Methodist *bishop* from the United States, whom he had never met? In December the Gethsemane committee decided to clear up the confusion, declaring, "that our pulpit shall be free and will be open to all the pastors and members of the Baptist churches and closed to all others."[39] Díaz explained their decision to Tichenor, writing, "So we protest, and say, if a Baptist could not speak here, the Methodist Pope will not be allowed neither."[40]

All of these disagreements point to the question that was at the core of the dispute, and which would continue to be an issue throughout the occupation period. Was Gethsemane an independent congregation or a mission? At no time in the past had the congregation ever been led by North American missionaries or directed from the Board's headquarters in Atlanta. This dual nature of Gethsemane—funded largely by North

[39] Ibid. I have not been able to locate an original of the October 22 letter, but it is excerpted in the December 23 letter.
[40] Díaz to Tichenor, January 3, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

Americans but created and led by Cubans—led to the dispute over how to define the base from which the Baptist church's postwar influence in Cuba would be extended.

In correspondence during the fall and winter of 1898-99, members of the Board did not explicitly talk about bringing Gethsemane more in line with their idea of what a mission congregation should be, and most members probably did not even realize the extent to which they were asking Gethsemane to change. During the years of war they may have forgotten just how independent Gethsemane's beginnings had been, a forgetting that was deepened by personnel changes and Tichenor's illness. The members of the Board changed over the years, and Díaz's main friend and advocate, Tichenor, who had the most institutional memory about Cuba of any member of the Board, was beginning to suffer from a serious illness. The immediate problem the Board needed to solve was the uncertain property situation in Havana, so that they could make the most of the new religious freedom in Cuba. The Board's attitude was summed up in a January 4, 1899 letter from J. William Jones, the editor of *Our Home Field*, to Díaz:

> Every Baptist church is, of course, free and independent, and if your church chooses to declare itself independent of the authority of the Home Mission Board at Atlanta, it has a perfect right to do so. <u>But in doing so they cut themselves off entirely from all support from the Home Mission Board</u>, which is the agent of Southern Baptists.... Inasmuch as you are the Missionary of the Home Mission Board, and your church a Mission Station of the Home Mission Board, you are amenable to such rules and regulations as they may see fit to adopt. If you decline to acknowledge their authority or obey their instructions you have no right to use in any way their property. You are free, of course, to go anywhere to worship—in hall or chapel, or if you choose, now that the Spanish despotism is broken, in any open lot in city or country, with the vault of heaven for your sounding-board, and the stars for your chandeliers. Neither the Board nor anybody else has thought of denying you or your church this right, but it only insists that if you exercise this right <u>you must not use their property, or interfere with their rights</u>. This is the simple issue.... it seems

> to me the Board is perfectly right in every regulation and instruction they have issued.[41]

Neither Jones nor anyone else near the Board seems to have understood that this linkage of funds with direction from Atlanta was an utterly new one for Gethsemane. The Havana congregation had never considered itself anything other than an independent congregation, and thought of the funds coming from the United States as a donation towards their common work of evangelizing Cuba, not as a down payment on the right to control the Cuban church.

Díaz and Gethsemane, on the other hand, saw very clearly that the Board wanted Gethsemane to be more subordinate. The Cubans saw in these recommendations a clear and very urgent threat to their autonomy as a congregation, as Christians, and as Cubans. They responded with a multifaceted strategy of letter-writing, aimed at clarifying the Board's intentions, outflanking the Board by asking advice and gaining support from other Southern Baptists, and mobilizing allies who might work in the United States for their interests. The Cuban Baptists saw themselves as equal to the Baptists of the United States, and they sought advice and allies from those brethren in their growing conflict with the Board.

The Gethsemane committee's main grievances were all related to control of the activities of their congregation, which they considered independent, longstanding, and faithful to organizational principles reaching back directly to the New Testament. They believed that the Board was trying to regulate who could preach, what could be said, and who made the rules in Cuban congregations, and they thought these regulations were contrary to the principle of independence and equality of all churches. Their church's

[41] J. William Jones to Díaz, January 4, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21. Emphases in original.

freedom, a core Baptist principle, was directly related to financial control. Their reading of the New Testament led to the idea that there should be only one Baptist church in Havana, and that any mission stations, other worship meetings, or Baptist schools should be linked to and part of that one Baptist church. A different language, to them, was not a sufficient reason to set up a different congregation. When Díaz wrote to Tichenor, he reinforced some of these points. "I know you understand the proposed resolution of the Church, we shall be independent but we will contribute and cooperate with you as usual. In previous years we have given 5000 or 6000 dollars a year and we hope we are able to continue doing the same."[42] The Cuban Baptists recognized that they needed financial assistance from the U.S. Baptists for the time being. It is likely that they believed that this need stemmed from the recent devastation of war and the exile of many of their members, not because their congregation was analogous to a new mission initiated and directed by the Board. They wanted assistance and cooperation, not direction—and they believed that their longstanding status as a Baptist congregation entitled them to this aid.

The basic disagreement in 1898, which would resurface in 1901, was that leaders and members of Gethsemane believed that their longstanding status as an independent congregation should translate into their continued independence. They accepted assistance, but not direction, from their co-religionists in the South. The Home Mission Board, in contrast, believed that their financial stake in both the congregation and the properties in Havana gave them a right to control Gethsemane as a mission, not relate to it as an equal and independent congregation. The Southern Baptist motivations for this belief were twofold. Some leaders of the Board were justifiably concerned that Díaz might make more miscalculations as a financial manager if he regained his former

[42] Díaz to Tichenor, December 31, 1898, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

influence in the congregation, and they wanted to protect both the Board and Gethsemane itself from these problems. At a broader level, however, the occupation presented a new generation of Board leaders with the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to both expand and professionalize their mission project in Cuba. They saw Board control of that project as a key foundation for the successful evangelization of Cuba. What they missed was the probability that such a project of control would clash with the forceful rhetoric of freedom and sovereignty then present in Cuban political life, multiplied by prominence of that rhetoric in both the history of Gethsemane congregation and in Baptist thought.

In January, the Board decided that their recommendations had been misinterpreted, and that only face-to-face meetings could resolve the dispute. King, Tichenor, and Dr. W. D. Powell arrived in Havana on Sunday morning, January 22, 1899. Powell was an important addition to the group: he had long been a Southern Baptist missionary in Mexico, was fluent in Spanish, and knew Díaz well. It quickly became clear that the dispute was a serious one; in their report back to the Board, this committee wrote, "The reception given us by the church was kind and respectful, but it was evident that there was more or less of unexpressed coolness and misunderstanding."[43] The Board committee believed that the dispute stemmed from two causes, the first a misunderstanding over translation, and the second the "suspicion" of the Cubans, as Díaz put it, due to the December 1898 U.S. attempts to exclude Cubans from postwar politics. The financial and administrative terms under which Baptist missions in Cuba grew during the occupation were largely the ones the Board had laid out in the autumn of 1898,

[43] The only information we have about the resolution of this dispute comes from the reports of the Board. See the Minutes of Home Mission Board meeting, February 7, 1899, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21. Original minutes are in SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900.

although the central matter of defining Gethsemane's status as either a congregation or a mission was left unresolved. This left the door open for further conflict, which strained the Baptist communities to the breaking point in 1901 and 1902.

The Gethsemane committee appointed to meet with the Board group first asked "if it was the Board's intention to carry out [their plan] without modification, whether agreeable to their Church, or not.... Dr. Powell advised us that what had...been put in the letter to prevent misunderstanding, was really susceptible, when translated into Spanish, of the interpretation that the proposition of the Board was an order, or ultimatum, to the Church." The Board committee assured the Cubans that the letter had been meant as a proposal, which the congregation could discuss and modify. With this assurance that they were essentially regarded as an equal partner in the planning, Gethsemane's leaders were able to get most of the Board's plans approved by the congregation. Furthermore, the Board acknowledged that the politics of occupation had affected their relationship with the Cuban Baptists. "Our former communication was received at Havana at a time just after the close of the war, when there was a great deal of feeling against the Americans by the Cubans because the latter were not allowed to take such part in governmental matters or in the transfer of Spanish authority to other powers as they had hoped for, and we doubt not that this feeling, and the excitement of the times, had much to do with the way in which our propositions were received."[44] With these two matters out of the way, the Board saw no reason why there should be further misunderstandings in the future.

The practical arrangement worked out between Gethsemane and the Board in January 1899 had some key new features, which seem to have been designed to acknowledge Gethsemane's leadership role in Baptist missions in Cuba. For example,

[44] Ibid.

both parties approved the creation of an Advisory Board, which would "consist of the pastor of Gethsemane church and [the Board's] property representative, and when we select an English speaking preacher and place him there, he shall be added to the [Advisory] Board. Thereupon, Gethsemane Church shall select an additional representative on its part as a member of said Board." Although it would have only an advisory and no decision-making function, the makeup of this Advisory Board, divided equally between Board employees and leaders of Gethsemane, was clearly intended to acknowledge that the Board and Gethsemane were equal partners in their common work of evangelizing Cuba. This idea probably contributed to the resolution of this particular dispute, but in coming years, the Advisory Board does not seem to have come to fruition. When the Board did appoint a bilingual missionary, Rev. Charles D. Daniel, in 1901, no mention was made in its correspondence or meeting minutes about the existence of the Advisory Board.[45]

Other arrangements that were agreed upon in January 1899 took shape largely in the way that the Board had envisioned in November 1898. Gethsemane agreed that an English-speaking congregation would be a necessity in Havana, although this project, which resulted in the establishment of Calvary Baptist Church, did not begin until 1900. The Board kept an employee to manage its legal and financial arrangements in Havana and eventually hired a Havana attorney, with no apparent connection to Gethsemane, to fulfill these duties. Gethsemane paid its own operating expenses and contributed to Díaz's salary out of its members' contributions, in the same way they had done before the war. The Board paid the remainder of Díaz's generous salary as well as those of other

[45] Ibid. On Rev. Daniel's arrival in Cuba, see below; see also "Brother Daniel's Letter," *Our Home Field* vol. 13, no. 7 (February 1901), p. 1, in SBHLA, box 5, folder 39. Daniel's full name is given in a resolution dated April 7, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24.

teachers, missionaries and staff directly through their agent (i.e. they did not funnel that money through Gethsemane's treasurer). The Board paid off the mortgage on the Jané building and retained legal title to other Havana properties. These arrangements were approved in a congregational meeting at Gethsemane, and later approved by the Board in Atlanta. They were proposed to continue in force for a year, and in fact continued to be in effect for longer than that.

* * *

The ambiguity and internal conflict of the mid-occupation period, from 1899 to 1901, would only later devolve into crisis; this was as true for Baptists as it was in the political sphere. Behind the scenes, several actions taken by Díaz—including his claim that Gethsemane congregation owed him several thousand dollars in back pay—would later surface as key elements in the conflict between Díaz and other Baptists, both Cuban and Southern. The conflict between Baptist preachers Díaz, José Cova, and José O'Halloran began to simmer. Tichenor's longstanding illness from rheumatism continued to take its toll, limiting his ability to work for Southern-Cuban Baptist unity. Many administrators of the U.S. military occupation simultaneously worked towards a recognition of Cuban independence and the establishment of political, economic, and constitutional limits on that independence. Cuban leaders worked to thwart any suggestion that either annexation or an extended period of military occupation would be acceptable to the ideals of *Cuba Libre*, and they struggled to unite the fractious Cuban

body politic behind a plan that would satisfy Cuban needs and ideals while also encouraging the North Americans to leave.

On the surface, however, these two years appeared to be about common goals, exciting opportunities, and momentous decisions. As a result of agreements reached in 1898 with other U.S. Protestant groups, Southern Baptists were intent on expanding their base for missions beyond Havana, and so they began to work more intensely and directly with several Cuban Baptist leaders—especially Cova and O'Halloran—who had previously been marginal. They also began the process of establishing a congregation in Havana for English-speakers, primarily U.S. expatriates. While disputes about the nature of Cuban independence and the desired "ends" of the occupation were ongoing, Cuban and U.S. political leaders made great strides toward institutionalizing a Cuban state, by holding a census and both local and national elections, as well as through postwar recovery work in food relief, education and infrastructure.

As in any moment of territorial expansion, this period brought new competition, in this case between U.S. Protestant mission groups over potential Cuban converts and influence in Cuban society. In meetings where they discussed how to work cooperatively instead of competitively, white U.S. Protestants used this potential conflict to rhetorically heal divisions among themselves, without consulting Cubans, Puerto Ricans, or African-Americans. For Southern Baptists, who were accustomed to describing Díaz's Havana congregations as the only non-Catholic religious organizations on the island, this institutionalized competition was both a welcome sign of Cuba's new religious freedom and an unwelcome complication for their own mission work. The Southerners became concerned with spreading their organization—along with Southern Baptist doctrine and

social practices—beyond their base in the province of Havana. In a conference between American (Northern) and Southern Baptists held on November 23, 1898 in Washington, D.C., leaders of the two denominations agreed that because "there is an urgent call for the vigorous prosecution of evangelical missionary work among the people" of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the American Baptist Home Mission Society and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board would divide the two islands among themselves. The Northern Baptists' Home Mission Society would "prosecute its work in the island of Porto Rico, and in the two eastern provinces of Cuba; while the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention should prosecute its work in the remaining provinces of the island of Cuba." Landrum, who attended the conference, recognized the potential for conflict among U.S. Baptists and rejoiced that a division of territory in the Caribbean had proven that North and South could be reconciled. He wrote, "Some misunderstandings had arisen, some alienation was growing and alarmists imagined they discovered a big storm of bickering and strife about to burst above the heads of American Baptists. The delegates... [depended] on God for wisdom and were led without an unkind word to a wise and satisfactory agreement. The conference was an occasion for exhibiting, proving and confirming the unity of American Baptists." This unity did not extend to Cuban Baptists, who apparently were not invited to the conference nor consulted about this decision. In this way, white Baptists in the U.S. exported their institutional disunity to the Caribbean while simultaneously excluding African-American Baptists from the conversation entirely.[46]

[46] "Our Mission Work in Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 78, no. 48 (December 1, 1898), 1. An editorial in this same issue of the *Christian Index* gave rather lukewarm support to the idea that African Americans, too, could participate in the new U.S. Baptist "unity" by preaching to Cubans and Puerto Ricans. But the editorial did not go so far as to suggest that the National Baptist

After the agreement between U.S. Baptists was reached, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board worked to keep "its" new territory out of the hands of other Protestants—Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Quakers—who began sending U.S. missionaries to Cuba in 1898 or very soon after.[47] Baptists worried that other Protestants would not present the Protestant message in quite the right way for Cubans, and they also certainly wanted the prestige and influence that would come with large numbers of adherents—they hoped for a "revival of the revival" that Havana had experienced under Díaz in the 1880s. The *Christian Index* editorialized that in Cuban mission work, "the Baptists of this country ought to take a large share.... The doctrines are especially suited to the people who, disgusted with Romanism, find joyous deliverance from it in the simple Baptist principles, which give to each man freedom to think and act for himself, while they give him ready and close access to God, with no

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Convention, an African American denomination, should also be given territory in which to work on one or both of the islands. "It is understood that the Negro Baptists are desirous of engaging in the work also, and that some steps have been taken by them in that direction," the *Index* editorialized. "We hope, and feel sure that our hope is not a vain one, that the Boards, North and South, will encourage and assist the Negro brethren in the carrying out of their God-inspired wish to preach the gospel in the regions beyond." See "The Evangelization of Cuba and Puerto Rico," *Christian Index* vol. 78, no 48 (December 1, 1898), p. 6. This episode presents a striking parallel to the narrative of reunion between the politics of the white North and the white South, which came especially at the expense of African American equality, but also of the independence of Cubans, Filipinos, and Puerto Ricans. See David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Harry Stecopoulos, *Reconstructing the World: Southern Fictions and U.S. Imperialisms, 1898-1976* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[47] Histories of Protestantism in Cuba, with some justification, universally treat 1898 as the moment of creation for non-Catholic Christianity on the island, with only brief nods to Anglican sailors' missions or what they describe as a few isolated converts before that year. After 1898, the number and variety of Protestant missions in Cuba increased exponentially. See Marcos Antonio Ramos, *Panorama del Protestantismo en Cuba: La Presencia de los Prot*

, Costa Rica: Editorial Caribe, 1986); Jason M. Yaremko, *U.S. Protestant Missions in Cuba: From Independence to Castro* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000). Yaremko notes that Díaz, O'Halloran, and a few other Cuban preachers led something akin to a revival in the 1880s, but his focus is primarily on Protestant missions after 1898.

creed or church or priesthood to stand between. The truth as Baptists hold it is the most perfect antidote to the poison of Romanism that the world has ever seen, and it behooves the Baptists to apply it to the diseased ones for their salvation." Other Protestants, Southern Baptists knew, simply did not have the same pure message that Baptists had to offer, to which many Cubans had already responded. After Landrum and Kerfoot traveled to Havana in January of 1900, Landrum reported,

> Once well nigh every Cuban was Romanist or Baptist. Not so now. I took the Protestant statistics of Havana. Southern Methodists have come in since the American occupation. Their work is in its infancy yet, but Methodists are pushing folks. They report four American missionaries, two of whom can speak Spanish, and one Cuban preacher and four assistants. They have four preaching places, four day-schools and four Sunday-schools. Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Quakers and 'Disciples' (or Campbellites) also are beginning operations. It will not be long before the conditions confronting Baptist work in Havana will differ but little from those found in Baltimore, for example.[48]

Despite their fifteen-year head start and a history of great success in Havana, Southern Baptist leaders worried that other Protestant missionaries would surpass them in the struggle for Cuban souls.[49]

Southern Baptists wanted to cement their influence in Protestant Cuba by expanding beyond Havana. Between 1899 and 1901 they provided increased funds and institutional support for Cuban Baptist ministers in congregations and towns throughout western Cuba. In addition, the Home Mission Board focused especially on establishing

[48] W. W. Landrum, D. D., "News from Cuba. Visit of Drs. Kerfoot and Landrum.---'Cuba Para Cristo.'" *Christian Index* vol. 80, no. 5 (February 1, 1900), p. 1.

[49] In 1902, U.S. Protestants met in a conference similar to the one that American (Northern) and Southern Baptists had held in November 1898. The 1902 conference in Cienfuegos resulted in an agreement to divide what were called "unoccupied" Cuban towns among mission groups representing each denomination. To avoid any sense of conflict, towns with a population of less than 6,000 should be home to only one Protestant group, whichever had been first established there. The participants agreed that larger towns and cities could support more than one denomination. See Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 3rd ed. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 131.

Baptist elementary schools in association with each congregation, and there is some evidence that they looked into placing Cuban children who had been orphaned by the war in the care of Baptist Orphan's Homes in the U.S. South.[50] In the provinces of Pinar del Rio, Matanzas, and Santa Clara, the Home Mission Board supported new or reopened congregations in the cities of Santa Clara, Matanzas, Cienfuegos and Sagua la Grande during this period, as well as missions in a number of smaller towns. Many Cuban Baptist leaders who had fled Cuba during the war returned in late 1898, and were asked to establish congregations in new cities rather than returning to Havana. Rev. José V. Cova moved to Matanzas with his family, including his daughter Pura Cova, who in December 1899 was the first woman financially supported by the Home Mission Board in Cuba to be given the title of missionary (rather than teacher); she was paid $16 per month.[51] In October 1899, José Cova asked the Home Mission Board for "a printing press, to be used in publishing tracts and similar articles, and the possible issuing of a newspaper at Matanzas."[52] The Home Mission Board expressed guarded interest in the idea of a Cuban Baptist printing press, but a school that the Covas established in Matanzas was more readily funded. In November 1900, the Board recommended that the school budget in Matanzas be increased, because "it seems of special importance that these Christian schools should be kept up if possible, notwithstanding the inauguration of the public

[50] At its February 6, 1900 meeting, the HMB resolved "to put Miss Gertrude Joerge [sic] in communication with Baptist Orphan Homes in the Southern States with the view of securing homes for orphan Cuban girls now being cared for by Miss Joerge." Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, February 6, 1900, SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900.

[51] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, December 12, 1899, SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900. In contrast, Rev. Ricardo Elizari, who was employed as a missionary in Sagua la Grande on a temporary basis beginning in September 1900, was paid $50 per month. See chapter six, n19.

[52] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, October 3, 1899, SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900.

school system."[53] In autumn 1898 Rev. José O'Halloran, who had spent most of the war in Key West, was sent to Santiago in the wake of the U.S. invasion, but after the November conference that awarded eastern Cuba to the American Baptist Home Mission Society, O'Halloran was sent to Santa Clara and then to Cienfuegos to try to gather Baptist congregations in these two major cities.[54] In October 1899, Rev. A. U. Cabrera, who had been a Methodist minister before he was recruited and baptized by Cova, was sent to work in Santa Clara.[55] Dr. Eduardo F. Rodriguez of Sagua la Grande, whom O'Halloran baptized and described as "a wealthy, cultured, practicing physician who had for a long time previous shown himself unusually consecrated and spiritual," was put in charge of a fledgling mission in that city, and proceeded to do missionary work without pay.[56]

The increased interest in regions far from Havana meant that the Southern Baptist Board relied much more on previously marginal ministers, especially Cova and O'Halloran, rather than exclusively on Díaz. In November 1900, for example, questions arose about Rev. Ricardo Elizari, a former Catholic priest and Methodist minister, who for two months had been working on behalf of the Board in Sagua la Grande. The Board asked Cova and O'Halloran to spend a week in Sagua la Grande, "preaching there and

[53] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 6, 1900, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20.
[54] For O'Halloran in Cienfuegos, see "Christmas Boxes," *Foreign Mission Journal* (January 1900), p. 245-246.
[55] For Cabrera's recruitment and Baptist baptism, see Minutes of a Special Meeting of the HMB, July 18, 1899, in SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900. For Cabrera's move to Santa Clara, see Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, October 3, 1899, typewritten original in SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900.
[56] O'Halloran letter, published as "Christmas Boxes," *Foreign Mission Journal* (January 1900), p. 245-246.

studying the field."[57] The report must not have been favorable—at their December 1900 meeting, the Board decided that it was not "practical" to employ Elizari any longer, and asked O'Halloran to "arrange the matter of conveying this information to Bro. Elizari."[58] The Board newly relied on other Cuban Baptist leaders for information, mediation, and to deliver bad news, functions that had formerly been filled by Díaz alone.

This change did not mean that Díaz had fallen out of favor completely—on the contrary, several Board members still routinely wrote glowing accounts of his work for publication in the U.S. South. Landrum, for instance, wrote in February 1900 that Díaz "is most deservedly the leading native evangelical preacher on the island.... The success of his evangelistic efforts constitutes one of the marvels of modern missionary enterprise." Landrum simply believed that the end of Spanish rule and the advent of U.S. occupation in Cuba meant that a new day had dawned for Cuban Baptists. "What may be called the 'sentimental' era of mission work in Havana is passed," Landrum wrote.

> Our leading preacher there is no longer a persecuted patriot, whose courage and devotion to the freedom of his country attracts to him thousands of adherents of all shades of religious opinion. Once *his* was the only voice which proclaimed, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' For years his was the only brave and brawny arm which struck for civil and religious freedom against both crown and church. Now, though, Diaz is the same intrepid and enthusiastic exponent of the gospel he was at the beginning. The conditions surrounding him are not the same. Freedom's battle is won. Religion is as free in Cuba as it is in Georgia. It is no longer a sensation to witness a baptism in Havana. They occur often. A Baptist is no longer a hero who manifests 'the dissidence of dissent' in a priest-ridden, pope-dominated country. He is simply a follower of Jesus Christ, worshipping in his own way, which is no longer strange to the people of Havana. Baptists in numbers, influence and aggressiveness are

[57] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 6, 1900, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20.
[58] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, December 4, 1900, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20.

> the leading evangelicals of Cuba. With God's blessing, they always will be, but they now have sharp competition.[59]

To meet the challenges of these new "conditions" on the island, Southern Baptist leaders looked to multiple Cuban Baptist leaders, including Díaz, in their quest to expand their base and "occupy" as many towns in western Cuba as they could.

There was one matter, however, which clearly showed that Board members did not trust Díaz as completely as they once had. In February 1900, the Board resolved to keep "the management of property interests and religious matters separate."[60] This was clearly an attempt to prevent a recurrence of the problems they had had with Díaz's property decisions before and during the war, especially since the Cuba committee reported the next month "that the mortgage indebtedness on the church property at the corner of Dragones and Zulueta Streets has been paid off."[61] The Board wanted Díaz's gifts of preaching and evangelism to benefit Cuban Baptists—he was put in charge of a project to preach and open several missions in the province of Pinar del Rio, west of Havana, while still serving as the main pastor of Gethsemane congregation—but at the same time the Board sought to transfer some administrative duties to other Cuban Baptist men. This plan also led the Board to consider the possibility of sending a Southern Baptist preacher and missionary to Cuba for an extended period of time—the first time this would be done since the brief tenure of Rev. E. Pendleton Jones in 1893.[62] When Rev. Charles Davis Daniel was first sent to Cuba in January 1901, his main task was to

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[59] W. W. Landrum, D. D., "News from Cuba. Visit of Drs. Kerfoot and Landrum.---'Cuba Para Cristo.'" *Christian Index* vol. 80, no. 5 (February 1, 1900), p. 1.
[60] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, February 6, 1900, typewritten original in SBHLA, HMB Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900.
[61] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, March 3, 1900, SBHLA, Home Mission Board Minutes AR 331-1, box 2, original minute book 1886-April 1900.
[62] See chapter four.

pastor a Baptist congregation set up to minister to English-speaking expatriates from the U.S., but some members of the Board saw him as an ideal intermediary for property, financial, and administrative duties as well.

The congregation in Havana that became Calvary Baptist Church, which Daniel led from 1901 until his return to the U.S. in 1906, was first gathered in January 1900 as the result of "revival services" held for English-speaking U.S. expatriate Baptists during Kerfoot and Landrum's visit to Havana.[63] These two prominent Southern Baptist preachers traveled to Havana in order to, as Landrum put it, "hold an old-fashioned protracted meeting in the house of worship of the Gethsemane church. And I was ordered to take a Baptist census, so far as Americans were concerned. In a word, I was to preach the gospel to my own countrymen in my own language, and report results. If, in Dr. Kerfoot's judgment, as well as in that of Dr. Diaz and myself, it seemed expedient to organize an American Baptist church, I was to aid in doing it." While Kerfoot visited Cuban Baptist congregations and ministers in other cities, Landrum "kept busy carrying out instructions, praying and preaching and visiting" in Havana, where he found "hardly more than two thousand Americans," of which "possibly from three hundred to five hundred were Baptists.... about one hundred were willing to acknowledge themselves as such." His revival services in English attracted "fifty-five or sixty.... My audiences never exceeded seventy five persons at any one time." When it came time to organize an English-speaking church, "about thirty American Baptists...agreed to keep house for Christ after I left. They will worship under the ministry of Rev. B. W. N. Sims, formerly

[63] Calvary Baptist Church (Iglesia Bautista El Calvario) still exists, housed in the building in old Havana that was purchased by Díaz and Tichenor in 1889. Calvary dates its origins from an organizing meeting held in 1902, although a fledgling English congregation was meeting before that date. See their blog, at http://elcaminoalpadre.blogspot.com/ (accessed June 4, 2010).

residing in Missouri, but stopping temporarily in Havana." These small numbers did not discourage Landrum. "Whatever one may say of the quantity, I assure you the quality is all right," he assured his Southern readers. "Thirty more intelligent or more devoted Baptists I scarcely know anywhere.... I must tell you that a congregation of thirty organized American Baptists is not small in Havana, but, on the contrary, is the largest evangelical body in that city whose worship is conducted in the English tongue." Southern Baptist readers also had no reason to worry that there might be friction between Cubans and Americans, or between Spanish- and English-speakers. "Cuban Baptists, who so far outnumber them, are warmly sympathetic with the Americans and delight to attend their worship, even though rendered in unknown accents," Landrum reported. "Dr. Diaz himself and all his people were most affectionate to Dr. Kerfoot and myself and proved themselves deeply grateful for all the generosity bestowed upon them by Southern Baptists."[64] The two congregations shared the Jané building, meeting and holding services at different times.

The ambiguity, waiting, and negotiations that characterized Baptist relations from 1899-1901 were also evident in Cuban politics. The most important questions—when and how the military occupation would end and what kind of government would take its place—were much more pressing to Cubans than they were to most U.S. administrators, who sought to define Cuban independence in a way that benefited U.S. commercial and political interests. In addition, the most influential U.S. leaders in Cuba worked against Cuban independence in the long term. Leonard Wood, who was Cuba's military governor

[64] W. W. Landrum, D. D., "News from Cuba. Visit of Drs. Kerfoot and Landrum.---'Cuba Para Cristo.'" *Christian Index* vol. 80, no. 5 (February 1, 1900), p. 1. Any Cuban Baptists who felt that this new congregation might disobey their congregation's rule of one congregation per city (see chapter one) apparently kept their feelings to themselves. Only later, when other factors had triggered conflict, did Calvary's existence become an issue in the dispute.

from 1899 to 1902, believed for most of his tenure that his duty was to create an environment in which a Cuban government would eventually ask to be annexed to the United States. Unlike the other territories that the United States had gained from Spain in 1898 (including Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines), the language of the Congressional Joint Resolution authorizing war specifically covered Cuba, which had provided the primary *casus belli* for the U.S. in 1898. The McKinley administration refused to recognize either the Cuban insurgents as belligerents or the Cuban Assembly as the legitimate government of Cuba, so the Congressional resolution simply proclaimed, "the people of the island of Cuba are and of right ought to be free and independent." In addition, the Teller Amendment included as Article IV of the Joint Resolution—introduced by Sen. Henry M. Teller of Colorado, a Silver Republican who would become a Democrat in 1901—specifically stated that the United States "disclaims any disposition of intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island [Cuba] except for pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people." This detailed statement eschewing a claim to Cuba tied Wood's hands there in the years after 1898—he could not work for annexation as directly as he wanted to.[65]

Wood worked to limit Cuban sovereignty at the same time that he was officially responsible for enshrining that sovereignty in the structure of a new, independent state. The language of the Teller amendment left a sizable loophole open for Wood, in the form of the phrase "except for pacification thereof." Wood chose to define "pacification" very broadly, expanding his own powers as military governor, denying the right and ability of Cubans for self-government, and lengthening the stay of the U.S. army as a consequence.

[65] Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, chap. 9 and 14.

He included factors as diverse as profitability of investments; progress in sanitation, rebuilding, and new infrastructure; "acceptable" forms of race relations; a census; limits on suffrage; local and national elections; and, finally, a new constitution enshrining the U.S. right of intervention in Cuba, in his ideal schema of when Cuba would be "ready" for independence. Not long after he became military governor of the island, Wood defined "stability" as the moment "when money can be borrowed at a reasonable rate of interest and when capital is willing to invest in the Island." He argued to President McKinley that Cubans' agitation for independence proved that they were not ready for it: "The Cuban people, as a whole, realize very fully that they are not ready for self-government," he wrote, "and the only people who are howling for it are those whose antecedents and actions demonstrate the impossibility of self-government just at present." When the 1899 census of Cuba was published in the spring of 1900, showing that two-thirds of adult Cubans were illiterate, that data only bolstered Wood's view that suffrage rights in Cuba should be based on property ownership or literacy. Only the intervention of a group of Cuban generals preserved voting rights for all veterans of the Cuban liberation army, and universal male suffrage was clearly out of the question as long as Wood was in the governor's palace.[66]

Cuban leaders understood Wood's preference for annexation. To prevent him from making Cuba into a U.S. territory, they worked assiduously to bring about Cuban independence through an end to the military occupation. Soon after Wood became military governor on January 1, 1900, for instance, José Miró accused him outright of working for annexation instead of independence. Miró, like other Cuban former generals

[66] Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902*, 131; Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, chap. 14 and 15.

and political leaders, was caught between two bad options. They could try to work with Wood, who opposed Cuban independence, in an attempt to pacify him and move the U.S. government toward an end to the occupation. This strategy would get them in trouble with the large part of the Cuban populace who wanted immediate independence. On the other hand, Cuban leaders could lodge official protests every time one of Wood's policies was contrary to Cuban independence, but this plan would lead Wood to label them as "radicals," and in Wood's mind become further evidence that Cubans were incapable of self-government. With the knowledge that the vast majority of Cubans favored independence and the separatist general Máximo Gómez had exhorted Cubans to collaboration and reconciliation, most leaders chose to prioritize absolute, immediate independence—which necessarily meant doing whatever it took to end the occupation—over other political or policy options. In late July 1900, Wood announced that elections for a constitutional convention would be held on September 3 according to the same suffrage laws that had earlier been used for municipal elections. The small number of Cubans who were eligible for voting complied, thinking that the faster Cuba had its own constitution, the faster the occupation would end.[67]

[67] Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902*, 128; Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, chap. 16. "Voters for the June 1900 municipal elections were required to be Cuban-born males or sons of Cuban parents born while in temporary residence abroad or Spaniards who had renounced their citizenship. All voting males were to be twenty years of age, free of felony conviction and residents of the municipality in which they intended to vote at least thirty days preceding the first day of registration. In addition, the voters were required to possess one of the following: ability to read and write, real or personal property worth $250, or honorable service in the Liberation Army prior to July 18, 1898." These restrictions created an electorate that was approximately 5% of the Cuban population, and resulted in fierce protests from across the island. Nevertheless, Governor Leonard Wood was unhappy with the outcome of both rounds of voting, which sent a large number of *independentistas* to office in the municipalities and what Wood called the "worst agitators and political radicals in Cuba" to be delegates to the Constitutional Convention. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 310-311.

In February 1900, after his January visit to Havana, Rev. W. W. Landrum understood the demands of Cubans who wanted immediate independence, but did not see a corresponding pro-Cuban-independence political movement in the U.S. What is more, Landrum papered over the political conflict with a quintessentially liberal appeal to a higher good. "Cuba for the Cubans! Such is the cry of the patriots of the island," he wrote. "Independence, absolute and unqualified political independence is Cuba's ex-soldiers' slogan. Gratitude towards the United States is now a lively expectation of favors to come." But Landrum failed to see the other side of the equation as clearly. "Cuba for the Americans! Such is the covetous shout of commercialism," he opined. The Southern Baptists, as a rule, refused to see the evidence that many North Americans were indeed imperialists who—for economic and commercial reasons, to be sure, but also for political and ideological reasons—wished to forestall Cuban independence entirely. Landrum mediated between these two opposing sides by rhetorically referring to the brotherly empire that Cuban and Southern Baptists had built before 1898. "Cuba for Christ, is the motto of Southern Baptists," he wrote.

> Press it to the fore. It alone unifies all our brethren off and on the island, submerging all political and financial considerations in the supreme good of salvation. Salvation through Jesus Christ is the grandest thought of the Lord God Almighty concerning the 'Queen of the Antilles.' It is the all inclusive word which takes in Cuba's temporal and eternal welfare. It is the all inclusive word which shuts out all that would harm Cuba, whether coming from within or beyond her own shores.

Protestant religion, Landrum wrote—and even more specifically, Baptist religion—was the only force that could unify Cubans and North Americans, erasing their very real political disagreements and saving their eternal souls.[68] This formulation put Cuban

[68] W. W. Landrum, D. D., "News from Cuba. Visit of Drs. Kerfoot and Landrum.---'Cuba Para Cristo.'" *Christian Index* vol. 80, no. 5 (February 1, 1900), p. 1. Landrum's use of the rhetoric of

Baptists in a very tenuous position, caught for the first time between the ideals of *Cuba Libre* and the goals of the transnational Baptist brotherly empire.

* * *

The Home Mission Board sent Rev. Charles Davis Daniel to Cuba in January 1901. Daniel was born in Alabama, but spent part of his childhood in Brazil because his father fled the United States at the end of the Civil War. After seven years in Brazil, Daniel's family had returned to the United States around 1872 to live in Texas, where he had married Lena Kirk in 1885. Daniel had then been a missionary in Brazil and among Mexicans in Texas before being hired by the Home Mission Board to go to Cuba. When it appointed Daniel as a missionary to Cuba, the Board asked him to lead the fledgling congregation of English-speakers in Havana and agreed to let him travel there temporarily while he decided if he could live and work on the island permanently. At six feet three inches, Daniel was extraordinarily tall by Cuban standards, and fluent in Spanish and Portuguese as well as English. He tended to use martial language when writing about the competition among Protestant denominations for converts in Cuba. "Weigh well the following facts," he told Southern Baptist readers in December 1901. "In the four Western Provinces (our territory), Baptists have 20 workers, Methodists 24,

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"gratitude" and "favors" is especially telling. See Louis A. Pérez, "Incurring a Debt of Gratitude: 1898 and the Moral Sources of United States Hegemony in Cuba," *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 2 (1999): 356. The rhetoric that erased political disagreements through management or mediation, in favor of a supposed greater good (in this case Baptist religion), was a common theme running through much Progressive thinking in the U.S. An influential critique of this rhetoric is in Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Schmitt contends that the liberal strategy of erasing political disagreements was in itself a political move.

Presbyterians 19, Congregationalists 9, Episcopalians 9, Friends 4, Disciples 4. All are rapidly increasing laborers on this field. Baptists should take four important points in the next five months. One man can hold two of them. The first to enter has the advantage. May God enable us to enter them first." When he decided in late 1901 that he could work in Cuba more or less permanently, he did more to shape the Board's vision for Cuba than anyone since Tichenor.[69]

After he arrived in Havana on January 9, 1901, Daniel reported back to the Board about the piety of the Cuban Baptists and the immense opportunities for a Southern Baptist missionary on the island. On his first night in Cuba, he visited the English-language "prayer service" led by the Disciples (learning that at least two Baptists attended those services), and soon after had noted how many missionaries each denomination supported in Havana. He spent a day "tramping the city, and forming the acquaintance of as many people as possible, and inviting them to attend our first English service next Sunday morning." Díaz, Cova, and the other Cuban Baptist ministers impressed Daniel, who wrote that Díaz "received me very kindly" and was "second to none in ability." When he went to the Thursday night prayer meeting held in "the splendid Baptist church-house" and led by Díaz, Daniel wrote, "There were about seventy-five present. It was a very fine prayer service. The Holy Spirit was evidently in the hearts of those who talked and led in prayer. I enjoyed this prayer service more than I

[69] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, December 4, 1900 and January 5, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20. Daniel's biography and conversion narrative is given in "New Missionaries," *Foreign Mission Journal*, July 1885, p. 2. Quote is from "Letter from Rev. C. D. Daniel" and "Brother Daniel's Letter," *Our Home Field*, vol. 12, no. 7 (Feb 1901), p. 1-2 (a typewritten copy is in SBHLA, URL, box 5, folder 39). See also "The Republic of Cuba," undated, unsigned draft (probably written by Una Roberts Lawrence in 1936), in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

can express by pen or tongue." He found that Cova, in charge of the Baptist church in Matanzas, was "a superior Christian gentleman, a real companionable fellow. He is a man of God and God is honoring his labors. I have never received a heartier Christian welcome than he gave me." Daniel clearly understood his role as letter-writer, fundraiser, and Baptist booster; one of his first letters to Tichenor, published in the *Christian Index*, emphasized how desperately Cova "does need a church-house!" The Episcopalians and Methodists both had new church buildings in Matanzas, Daniel reported, and "The Methodist congregation has doubled since they began work on their house, so Bro. Baker, the pastor, told me. You see it gives the work the appearance of stability." Daniel even managed to find out how much each building had cost. He was surprised to see as many as 80 Cubans attending an evening service at Cova's Baptist church in Matanzas, he wrote, and was "perfectly delighted at the manner of conducting the meeting, and the conduct of the members in church.... At the entrance, a Bible was presented to each, who took his seat and read till time to commence services, which began and closed on time. There was no whispering and laughing in the house. After four earnest prayers for specific purposes, interspersed with singing, the pastor gave a very fine exposition of the first chapter of Hebrews." Daniel certainly knew something of the storied history of this island and its Baptist leaders, and by all accounts he was thrilled to join them in the work of ministering both to pious Cubans and to any Baptist expatriates living in Cuba.[70]

But the military occupation was a dark cloud that hung over Daniel's time in Cuba. "The presence of American soldiers in this country is a real hindrance to missionary operations," he wrote. "The soldiers are, many of them, an irreligious,

[70] Rev. C. D. Daniel, "Cuba—First Impressions," *Christian Index*, vol. 81, no. 5 (January 31, 1901), p. 4; and Daniel to Tichenor, January 16, 1901, published as "Letter from Rev. C. D. Daniel," *Our Home Field* vol. 12, no. 6 (February 1901), p. 1, SBHLA, URL, box 5, folder 39.

immoral, lewd, drunken crowd of fellows, who assume the air of conquerors and frequently boast that the stars and stripes will never be taken from Cuba. Thus a hatred for Americans and American customs is being created.... Dr. Diaz, of Havana, and Bro. Cova, of this place, both speak of the American occupation as the greatest hindrance to gospel work." This instinctive hatred for North Americans, so different from the admiration that Díaz, Cova, and other Cuban Baptists had nurtured in the 1880s and 1890s, was directly attributable to the reality of occupation. In addition, Daniel joined other Protestant leaders, both Cuban and North American, in complaining that the U.S. military authorities treated Cuban Catholicism with too much respect. "The military leaders here pander to Romanism and have frequently treated gospel workers with contempt.... the government, in its efforts to conciliate the natives, had perhaps gone too far in this direction."[71]

Daniel's criticisms of the occupation were observant, but also missed the point. The U.S. soldiers were helping to create a new "hatred for Americans and American customs" in Cubans, but not only because they were "irreligious" and "lewd." The simple presence of U.S. soldiers on Cuban soil was a daily reminder for Cubans of the abortive nature of their independence—the best soldiers no more or less than the worst. The military government's policies toward the Catholic church were a drastic change from those that had been in place under Spain, especially when the military government ended the practice of paying priests' salaries out of state coffers. If they also seemed to treat missionaries "with contempt," it was likely because they did not play as active a role in encouraging Protestant missionary activity as missionaries on the ground would have

[71] Rev. C. D. Daniel, "Cuba—First Impressions," *Christian Index*, vol. 81, no. 5 (January 31, 1901), p. 4.

liked. Daniel did not cite specific instances of this "contempt," so we cannot be sure. The deeper problem, to which Daniel contributed by his very presence and his participation in Cuban Baptist matters, was that the route to Cuba's future independence was unmapped, and so the island's sovereignty was contested on a daily basis. The Baptists' disputes, during this same period, were rhetorically and practically linked to these unanswered questions about Cuban sovereignty and independence. Daniel, as a Southerner sent to Cuba at least nominally to work among Cubans, was the first real harbinger of a new age for Cuban Baptists. Where before they had clearly been equal partners in their own evangelizing project, now it seemed that every day brought a new hint that the Southerners intended to take charge. No good behavior from soldiers or favorable government policies could change that fundamental part of the equation—despite a long war, in every aspect of their lives Cubans were still not the final authority. Southern Baptists thought that their vision for a brotherly empire had finally been achieved. Cuban Baptists saw this same vision crumbling before their eyes.

VI.
Divisions in the Brotherly Empire:
Evangelism and the Reordering of Alliances, 1901-1903

In 1902 and 1903, Baptist periodicals in the U.S. South published radically different interpretations of both events in Cuba and the character of Rev. Alberto J. Díaz. Rev. Charles D. Daniel, the lead Southern Baptist missionary in Cuba, had decided by September 1903 that Díaz's evil character was the root of all Baptist problems on the island. In a lengthy, polemical letter that he never sent, Daniel told lurid tales of Díaz's harassment of other Cuban Baptists and quoted at length from letters Díaz had supposedly sent to his Cuban coreligionists. "These letters speak for themselves," Daniel wrote. "In them Diaz has drawn the picture of his own character, and it is black and repulsive beyond description." Daniel described the Cuban preacher as an inveterate liar, an immoral manipulator who was willing to deceive thousands of innocent Southerners and dig up the bones of poor Cubans from the Baptist cemetery, all to make a quick buck. Rev. T. D. D. Clark, on the other hand, felt quite differently. In May 1903 his celebratory poem, dedicated to Díaz as the Apostle of Cuba, was published in the *Arkansas Baptist*. Taking his inspiration from the well-publicized story of Díaz's life, Clark described the Cuban as "a patriot brave" and "a blazing meteor in the sky of truth." Clark also clearly saw Díaz as a tragic hero in his troubles with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Díaz was "a lone sea crag enswathed in leaping spray; / Serene in solitude, firm mid assault;" but his "shifting fortune" meant that "the life that blesses must be sacrificed."

Díaz had preached the gospel to "priest ridden Cuba," but his persecution, even by his Southern coreligionists, was a sign from God of his ultimate sanctification.[1]

These two opposing views of Díaz in the U.S. South, well-entrenched by 1903, were evidence of the deep divisions that had been wrought in the transnational Baptist community by the end of the occupation. This chapter spans two events—Díaz's resignation from the employ of the Home Mission Board in 1901 and the eviction of Díaz and Gethsemane from the Jané building in 1903—and explains the multiple divisions in the deteriorating Cuban-Southern brotherly empire that these events signaled. The first and most obvious division was that between Díaz and the Home Mission Board, as evidenced by Daniel's poisonous writings about Díaz. When Díaz offered his resignation and the Board accepted it, the parties did not agree about why the Cuban was resigning or what his resignation meant for the future of Gethsemane Baptist Church. This basic disagreement about what had happened was a symptom of the profound divergence between the plans for the evangelization of Cuba that Díaz and the Board harbored at the end of the U.S. occupation. Díaz believed that Cuban sovereignty and a militant anti-Catholicism, along with medical and educational services for his congregation, should continue to drive Cuban Baptist proselytizing on the island. When the Board accused him of wrongdoing, Díaz felt certain that the Board's information was tainted by rumors being spread by his Catholic enemies. The Board, on the other hand, wanted Cuban Baptist churches to become solid, respectable pillars of the community in independent Cuba, which meant targeting "the better sort"—whiter, wealthier Cubans—for

[1] Rev. C. D. Daniel, "Cuba," c. August 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24 (a copy, marked "Mss. letter in file in safe: Diaz Settlement," is in folder 21), p. 14; Rev. T. D. D. Clark, "Mission Compend. of Rev. A. J. Diaz," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 19 (May 20, 1903), p. 7. Daniel typed his 20-page, single-spaced letter in response to an August 12, 1903 article in the *Landmark Baptist*, but it was never published.

conversion. Members of the Board believed that Gethsemane and Díaz should pull back on both the church's involvement in politics and its anti-Catholic rhetoric. These steps would put the 1895 war behind them, accept the U.S. occupation, and prevent elite, ambitious Cubans from being alienated by the Baptists. The Board also worried increasingly about what it saw as Diaz's poor management decisions.

The second and perhaps more surprising set of divisions were those experienced internally by both the Cuban and the Southern communities of Baptists in these years. As the disagreement between the HMB and Díaz worsened, each sought to exploit divisions in the others' ranks to win control of the Jané building and the Baptist missions in Cuba. Landmark Baptists centered in Arkansas and Texas, who criticized the SBC as too centralist and elitist, were some of Díaz's most important U.S. supporters in 1902 and 1903. Landmark Baptists argued that new methods had begun to take root in the HMB, whose interest in installing management, control, and hierarchy in Havana reflected a shift from a traditional Baptist theology of congregational independence. The Landmark embrace of a sectarian Baptist emphasis on the local congregation endeared them to Díaz and led to the establishment of the General Association of Landmark Baptists in 1905, but did not prevent Progressive methods and interests from taking root in the SBC itself.[2]

[2] Landmarkism originated in the mid-nineteenth century as a sectarian movement that sought to explain why "old-fashioned" Baptist theology was superior to that of other U.S. Protestants, particularly Methodism. This distinctly localist, rural criticism of urban Baptist leaders took its name from James R. Graves' 1854 pamphlet, *An Old Landmark Re-Set*. By the late nineteenth century, as the historian Paul Harvey explains, Landmarkers most often criticized the institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention "as centers of power through which elites presumed to command their subjects." The mission boards came under particular attack in the later period. Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities Among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 88-91; Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 722-23. The General Association merged with the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas in 1924 to become the American Baptist Association (not to be confused with the larger American Baptist Churches USA), which is still in existence. See www.abaptist.org.

At the same time, some Cuban Baptists preferred Progressive methods of order, hierarchy and professional management. They wanted a continued alliance with the HMB instead of Díaz's emphasis on Cuban autonomy, where control would be centered in Havana and in himself. Some Cuban Baptists were interested in attracting "the better sort" to their services, spreading Baptist congregations beyond Havana, and preserving their access to North American resources. They had less interest than Díaz in fighting for Cuban Baptists' congregational independence from North American control. These Cubans—many of them the most prominent Baptist leaders aside from Díaz, such as Rev. José V. Cova—allied with the HMB in the dispute, and continued to lead congregations outside of Havana. In the capital city, these Cubans joined Calvary Baptist Church, which continued to worship in the Jané building after Gethsemane's eviction.

Several simultaneous levels of causation, both essential and mundane, made these divisions insurmountable. The key cause of the split was a difference in strategy for the evangelization of Cuba, which was both a theological and a methodological disagreement. These different strategies revolved around the interrelated questions of who would control Baptist proselytization, which Cubans it would target, and where it would be centered. Díaz, his congregation, and Landmark Baptists in the U.S. envisioned an association of independent Baptist congregations in Cuba that would be loosely headed by Díaz himself in Havana and financially supported by independent Baptist congregations in the U.S. South. Cubans would be attracted to these congregations because they represented Cuban independence, because they would continue to offer social services such as free schools and medical care, because they criticized hated institutions such as the Catholic Church and U.S. political and economic power on the

island, and because Díaz's charismatic preaching still brought in crowds. The HMB, joined by some Cuban Baptists, envisioned dependent Cuban Baptist mission congregations spread all over the island and coordinated by a Southern missionary in Havana who answered to Southern Baptist leaders in Atlanta. Cubans would be attracted to these congregations because each individual congregation would be ministered to by a Cuban; because they offered the possibility of an alliance with a powerful U.S.-based institution, which could provide advice, funding and a relationship with North Americans; and because they represented the norms of a modern life that also brought private investment, support for a racial hierarchy, and seeming order to Cuba. Both visions for proselytizing offered the Baptist theology of individual conscience, conversion experience, and personal salvation, although with the different emphases on congregational autonomy vs. organizational hierarchy described above. The roots of the disagreement stretched back to the beginning of Díaz's ministry in Havana and the support of Tichenor and the SBC for that ministry. Díaz's beliefs in illness as a route to conversion, in one central congregation for each city with satellite house churches and mission tents, and in the necessity of a combative opposition to the Catholic church met direct criticism from Southern Baptists for the first time in these years. Only the direct U.S. hegemony over Cuba after 1898, and the new closeness in the Baptist relationship made possible by the occupation, led each side to realize the intractability of their disagreement.

Mundane reasons determined how the split happened and made its effects more deeply felt, especially by Cubans. Díaz was particularly pained by Tichenor's decline and by the Board's new lack of trust in him; his letters from this period fluctuate wildly

between anguish and stubbornness. For weeks and months at a time, he seems to have been unable to decide what course of action to take in his dealings with the Board, and his counsel to Gethsemane may not have been the wisest in this period. But more blame for the bitterness of the split rests with the Southerners. Poor management by the HMB, the decline in Tichenor's health, the lack of a replacement for Tichenor's knowledge and concern about every aspect of the Board's relationship with Díaz, and even bad mail service delayed HMB decisions about Cuba for weeks, sometimes months. As the conflict deepened, HMB leaders adopted a strategy of waiting for Gethsemane and Díaz to come around to the Southern way of seeing things, and of delaying punitive measures as long as possible—but this strategy, too, appeared to the Cubans to leave them in limbo. The delays made Cuban Baptists feel that Southern Baptists had no interest in answering their queries, planning for the future in Cuba, or leading the charge for conversions on the island. No Southern Baptist leaders were ready to use the strategies Tichenor had developed in the 1880s and 1890s to tie Díaz and Gethsemane to the HMB. No Southerner visited the Cuban churches continuously, developed a personal friendship with Díaz or other Cuban ministers, became interested in Cuban political struggles, or listened to particularly Cuban Baptist ideas for methods and an expression of Baptist theology that would attract unconverted Cubans to the Baptist churches. The HMB also suffered from extreme institutional instability in these months, due to turnover in its ranks and the 1901 deaths of two members of the HMB with responsibility for Cuba (Porter King, the head of the Board's Cuba Committee, and Dr. F. H. Kerfoot, its Corresponding Secretary). Rev. Charles D. Daniel, sent to Cuba as the HMB's permanent representative, spent several months of each summer in Texas recovering from illness or visiting his

family, who did not move to Cuba with him. His absence, and the HMB's unwillingness or inability to make decisions or communicate regularly with Cubans in his absence, exacerbated the tensions that already existed. These problems drew out the length of the crisis and contributed to its bitterness. The end result of all these seemingly mundane problems was that Cubans were left wondering, sometimes for months, about Southern answers to the most basic and essential questions about their congregational life in Cuba. Would the Board accept or reject Díaz's resignation? Could Gethsemane worship in the Jané building, or would it have to find another church home? Would the salaries of Cuban teachers and ministers be paid next month?

Díaz's and Gethsemane's legal claim to the Jané building sparked the lawsuits over the Jané building that marked the final dissolution of the relationship between Díaz and the Southern Board. This claim was a threat to the Southerners because of the building's monetary and institutional importance, but also because it represented a methodological and theological challenge to the Board. For the Board, it was the moment when all members finally agreed that Díaz would not be returning to the Southern fold. The Cubans' legal claim was implicitly an attack on Board assets and control of "mission" congregations, at the precise moment when the Board wanted to expand its presence in Cuba through the purchase of more property and the "planting" of more missions. Before Díaz began to speak publicly about his congregation's claim to the property, and before Gethsemane approved documents that laid forth an official claim, the Board hoped that Díaz and Gethsemane would eventually return to the Board's fold. But in response to the legal claim, the Board accused Díaz of character flaws and mismanagement, accusations that it marshaled in support of its public efforts to retain

both the title of the Jané building and the loyalty of Southern Baptists. The charges that Southern Baptist leaders made against Díaz in response to his claim to the building—charges of financial mismanagement, dubious legal arguments and property decisions, and inability to get along with other Cuban Baptists—had been made before, and they may very well have carried some truth. In previous years, however, both Southern and Cuban Baptists had ignored, forgiven or explained away Díaz's faults because his charisma and local following had been seen as more important for their long-term joint work. Now, Díaz was asked to resign and he and his congregation were evicted from the Jané building for two reasons. First, the members of the HMB and some of his Cuban coreligionists had come to believe that the world had changed—Díaz's faults now outweighed his gifts in the modern atmosphere of post-occupation Cuba. Second, and more portentously, the HMB feared the precedent that could be set in Havana. If Gethsemane were allowed to gain control of the Jané building, all their plans for Southern control of Baptist missions in Cuba—and anywhere in the world, in the future—would be at risk.

Díaz's claim for local congregational control of the most important Baptist building in Cuba was also a theological challenge. Landmark Baptists in the South made this same challenge, and Landmark publications and leaders supported Díaz in the property dispute. The idea that local congregations—not denominations or boards—were the only entities that could legitimately send and support missionaries was the basis of both Landmark criticism of the Southern Baptist Convention and of their support of Díaz. Landmarkers based these criticisms on their interpretation of the example of evangelism given in the New Testament, which involved apostles and local congregations, but neither

boards nor denominations. "We believe the teaching and apostolic examples found in the New Testament are equivalent to absolute mandates—they are authoritative—and we dare not depart from them in our practice," wrote the editors of the Landmark *Arkansas Baptist* in 1903. The Boards and other denominational leaders "tell us that we may have many methods and practices not found in the Bible," and this interpretation "believes in the authority of 'common sense' and commercial wisdom, or the 'combined wisdom of the denomination.'" Landmarkers derided this interpretation of the Bible, practiced by the Home Mission Board, as that of "organized work" in missions, which smacked of Catholicism. The Landmarkers, in alliance with Díaz, condemned this practice as a theological innovation, a sinful deviation from God's plan as laid out in the Bible.[3] The Board, in turn, saw the criticisms of Díaz and the Landmarkers as both a power grab and a heresy.

Southern Baptist leaders attempted to impose the ideas of "organized work" in Cuba after U.S. direct political control was achieved in 1898, an act that marked them as Southern progressives.[4] The problems caused by what the Board increasingly saw as

[3] Untitled editorial, *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 1 (January 7, 1903), p. 7.

[4] Terms such as "Southern progressivism" or even "progressivism" are useful here only insomuch as they help to place Southern and Cuban Baptist leaders in the context of the broad ethos and strategies that permeated life in the U.S.—and, as I argue, in at least some parts of Cuba—in this era. For my purposes, Southern Baptist leaders and their Cuban allies were progressives because they were driven by an organizing, centralizing, and sometimes coercive impulse similar to that which drove other historical figures marked as progressive; see Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967); Robert M. Crunden, *Ministers of Reform: The Progressives' Achievement in American Civilization, 1889-1920* (New York: Basic Books, 1982). Many historians have described the progressive ethos, its origins and practices in the U.S. South. Among the most influential works are Dewey W. Grantham, *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983); William A. Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Louisiana State University Press, 1951). 1898, as the date when Southern and Cuban Baptists came into much closer and more regular contact, marks the beginning of this regime of Southern Baptist progressivism in Cuba. Even if they had wanted a variant of progressive control and

Díaz's ineffectiveness as a manager may have sparked the Southern Baptist push for wholesale reform of Baptist operations in Cuba. But the particular forms that their proposed reforms took—focusing as they did on centralized financial control from Atlanta—was a product of the historical moment. Progressive ideas were becoming more widespread, and at the same moment an even closer political relationship was forming between Cuba and the United States. As one historian noted some time ago, occupied Cuba and other U.S. imperial possessions provided a unique laboratory for the ideas and methods of U.S. progressives in this period.[5] Overseas as at home (Cuba, of course, fit into both these categories in this period), the most lasting elements of U.S. "progressivism" to survive were those that were essentially conservative, those that aimed at preserving and ordering the social, political and economic status quo. The historian Robert H. Wiebe has pointed to a bureaucratic revolution that "stressed techniques of constant watchfulness and mechanisms of continuous management" as one of the most important changes in values during the progressive era.[6] The bureaucracy that the HMB sought to impose on Díaz, and the one that he and the Landmarkers resisted, was a new one that aimed at just this type of allegedly beneficial oversight and management.

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organization in Cuban Baptist life before 1898, Cuban control of Baptist institutions on the island before that date meant that Southern Baptist leaders were clearly unable to convert their desires into action. Southern religious historians sometimes equate Southern progressivism in white churches with the social gospel, but I find that Southern Baptist Home Mission Board leaders were much more influenced by their organizational impulse than by an interest in liberal social reform—of course, the two were not mutually exclusive. For social gospel as Southern progressivism, see Harvey, *Redeeming the South*, chap. 7.

[5] Howard Gillette, "The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1899-1902: Workshop for American Progressivism," *American Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (1973): 410-425.

[6] Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*, 145; for the essential conservatism of "progressive" reforms, see Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916* (New York: The Free Press, 1963).

The split between the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the Cuban congregation led by Díaz was only one of a multitude of splits that reordered political, economic, and social relations during the global transition from the long nineteenth century to the twentieth. The coalitions built by and between Cubans and Southerners in the late nineteenth century, both religious and political, splintered under the pressures of empire and growth as leaders turned increasingly to progressivism and bureaucracy to order their world. Those who believed strongly in freedom in whatever form, religious or political, or who stood to lose from the imposition of the new bureaucratic order, attempted to reform their institutions and then abandoned them as the progressives gained the upper hand. Díaz, Gethsemane, and the Landmark Baptists should be seen in this light. They were representatives of a road not taken, members of a tradition that prized autonomy over the new, modern progressive order.

This chapter first covers Díaz's resignation, then discusses the halting attempts of the Board and Díaz to negotiate a new relationship as each searched for new allies and new ways to implement their very different strategies for Cuba's salvation. Flashpoints in the U.S.-Cuban political relationship, including the Platt Amendment and the end of the occupation in May 1902, were essential catalysts for some of the changes in both Southern and Cuban thinking in this period. Finally, the chapter analyzes the turn toward bitterness in the Cuban-Southern relationship, as the dispute over the Jané building dragged on and the Baptists turned to the courts. Gethsemane's eviction from the building, in September 1903, marked the final, painful dissolution of a relationship that had started out very differently twenty years before.

* * *

Over an eight-month period from April to November 1901, Díaz attempted to resign from his position as a missionary of the Home Mission Board, was convinced by Tichenor to withdraw his resignation, was asked for and offered a second resignation, and again tried to withdraw or modify his resignation. Ultimately, his resignation was prompted by political strife in Cuba and catalyzed by the knowledge that his goals and those of the Board were no longer in sync. The Board's acceptance of his resignation was hastened by his disagreements with other Cuban Baptist ministers and by another instance of his financial mismanagement. But the question of Díaz's resignation was complicated by the question of how severing that long relationship would affect Gethsemane congregation and the Jané building. Ending Díaz's employment with the Board called into question Gethsemane's entire identity as a church—after all, it had been many years since the congregation had existed independent of the assistance offered by the Southern Baptists. Without Board support for Díaz, would Gethsemane still have use of the Jané building, and if not, where would the congregation worship? Could it support its pastor on its own, independent of the Southern Baptist Convention? Could the congregation exist without its charismatic founding pastor? Could it, or would it, employ a different pastor and remain in partnership with the Board? Could it—and its many ministries, schools and tent missions—exist without its splendid building? Could it survive in a Cuba whose main benefactor—and main adversary—was now the United States?

Three issues dominated the drama of Díaz's resignation. First, he continued to be motivated by a central concern with Cuba's political independence, now from the United States rather than Spain. At the same moment when the United States was browbeating the members of the Cuban Constitutional Convention into accepting a set of limitations that crippled the sovereignty of the infant Cuban Republic, Díaz grappled with the Southerners' new demand that Cuban Baptists must separate politics from religion in their churches. Second, in addition to the complex question of Gethsemane's ecclesiological identity as distinct from Díaz, the HMB or the Jané building, the resignation raised questions about the institutional structure and control of all Baptist churches in Cuba. Díaz had long been widely recognized as the leading Cuban Baptist minister. If his relationship with the HMB was severed, what would the future bring for other Cuban Baptist congregations and ministers? How would they relate to the HMB without Díaz's mediating influence; how would they relate to Díaz without the HMB? Lastly, his resignation was accepted in the end because the Board questioned—once again—Díaz's moral leadership, management skills and financial sense. His decisions and leadership style seemed to clash with those of most other Baptist leaders on the island, including the Southerner Rev. Charles D. Daniel and the Cubans Rev. José Cova and Rev. José O'Halloran. His management of Gethsemane congregation was called into question when the HMB became aware that the congregation had agreed to owe a dubious debt to Díaz, for back pay related to Díaz's management of the Baptist cemetery years earlier. Although some members of the Board repeatedly expressed their desire that Díaz realize the error of his ways, repent and return to the Southern Baptist fold, the

break between the Southern Board and their former star missionary was painful, and final.

After the muddied politics of the early period of occupation, Cuban-U.S. politics in 1901 and 1902 moved at lightning speed and with grave consequences. By January 1901 the Cuban constitutional convention had finished a first draft of the new Cuban constitution, laying out a republican plan of government for the island. However, United States administrators had still not officially addressed the pressing question of what the U.S. would demand from Cuba in return for an end to the occupation. The question of what future relations between Cuba and the United States would look like was part of the task with which the delegates to the constitutional convention had been charged; in other words, the Cuban framers had to create a new government for the island at the same time that they negotiated with the island's occupiers about what that government would do.[7] Cuban negotiating power was practically nil. Because the Cuban electorate had sent to office a pro-independence "political class" with which the U.S. administrators were not pleased, Leonard Wood and his allies in Washington decided that the only way the U.S. could withdraw troops from Cuba was if the Cuban state itself was structured so as to be ultimately responsive to U.S. interests, not to the Cuban people. As the historian Louis Pérez has written, the U.S. would "concede to Cubans self-government but deny them sovereignty."[8]

In late February 1901, the official U.S. statement of what the U.S. would demand from the new Cuban state in return for an end to the occupation was enshrined in the Platt

[7] David Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 147.
[8] Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 322.

Amendment. Offered by Senator Orville Platt as an amendment to the army appropriations bill, the amendment set up significant limitations on Cuban sovereignty and demanded that the Cuban government should enshrine the provisions of the amendment in a treaty to be signed with the U.S. The Platt Amendment limited the ability of the Cuban state to enter into treaties with other nations or to borrow money as it saw fit; demanded that all laws and actions taken by the U.S. military government on the island be ratified and enforced by the new Cuban government, making special mention of plans for the "sanitation" of Cuban cities; and decreed that "Cuba" did not include the Isle of Pines, a large island off Cuba's southern coast that North American colonists had their eye on. Most notoriously, the Platt Amendment twisted the meaning of Cuban independence by requiring the new Cuban government to agree "that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, [and] the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty." To drive the point home, the U.S. required that, in order for the U.S. "to maintain the independence of Cuba," the new government on the island would be required to "sell or lease to the United States land necessary for coaling or naval stations at certain specified points."[9] Because the elected representatives of the Cuban populace did not conform with U.S. elites' ideas about who should rule Cuba, the government of the United States required the Cuban constitution to conform to its ideas about how Cuba should be ruled.

The Cuban response to news of the Platt Amendment's diktats was immediate and overwhelming. Hundreds of towns and individuals sent protests to the military

[9] Platt Amendment, attached to the 1901 army appropriations bill; *Statutes at Large of the United States* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901), 897-898. See also Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, chap. 17.

government, and demonstrations were held in front of Wood's residence in Havana and across the island. The public outcry encouraged the delegates to resist approving the terms of the Amendment, although it was not clear if negotiations could be held or if a return to armed conflict was the only option. In April, the delegates sent a commission to Washington to find out the intentions behind the Amendment. When Elihu Root, the secretary of war, and Senator Platt assured them that the terms of the Amendment were not intended to impair Cuban independence, the commissioners decided that this informal assurance would have to be enough. Key opponents of the Amendment slowly accepted that, as Manuel Sanguily put it, "independence with restrictions is preferable to the military regime." Domingo Méndez Capote feared that if the delegates rejected the Amendment, the North Americans would conclude that Cubans had voted to accept "an indefinite protectorate." On June 12, by a vote of sixteen to eleven, with four abstaining, the constitutional convention voted to include the entire text of the Platt Amendment as an appendix to the new Cuban constitution.[10]

During the heightened atmosphere of protest against the Platt Amendment in the spring of 1901, some Protestant congregations in Cuba may have held "political assemblages" in their church buildings. It is likely that Díaz convened such a meeting in the Jané building, or preached on political topics during worship.[11] When the Home

[10] Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 324; Healy, *The United States in Cuba*, 169.
[11] Díaz denied holding any such meeting, but readily admitted that he had preached on the separation of church and state; the precise content of his preaching is unknown. For Díaz's defense against the charge of holding political meetings, see "General Association Proceedings," *The Landmark Baptist* vol. 23, no. 44 (November 4, 1903), p. 2-4. Members of the Board clearly believed that Díaz had held an explicitly political meeting, separate from worship. In addition to the April letters discussed here, an October 10 letter from Porter King, the chair of the Board's Cuba Committee, to Díaz said that King believed "that politics and political meetings have too much prevailed in the work at Havana; and we intend that political meetings shall not hereafter be held at the Jané Building." Such meetings are not mentioned explicitly elsewhere, and the date on

Mission Board "incidentally" heard the news about political meetings at Baptist missions, it quickly wrote to all its missionaries in Cuba to clarify its policies on the use of church buildings, the separation of church and state, and Cuban-U.S. relations in general. In an April 22 letter to Díaz, the Board first assured him that they believed "that the United States Government should act in perfectly good faith with the people of Cuba, and strictly observe every pledge which was made to them at the beginning of the war with Spain," a reference to the Teller Amendment, which had prevented the U.S. from annexing Cuba outright and also charged the U.S. with the "pacification" of the island. The Board continued, "We desire to say further that our especial business in Cuba is a matter of religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in no sense whatever a matter of politics. One of the greatest achievements that the Baptists have ever made in this country and in all their history, has been their work in securing in the United States an absolute separation between Church and State." The theme of separation of church and state was one that Southern Baptists returned to again and again during the period of occupation, but never at a more fraught moment than this one. "We recognize the fullest right and liberty of every man to hold his own peculiar political views," they continued, "and to trust, however, that our brethren in Cuba will see their way clear to plant themselves unmistakably upon this vital Baptist principle...and that they will be able to keep all strictly political matters entirely out of the churches with which they are connected." Hoping, perhaps, to lead by example, the Southerners referenced their own history. "But for this fundamental Baptist principle our churches, many of them, would have been torn in pieces during our great civil war in this country in 1861-1865," the committee wrote.

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which any meeting was held was never given. King to Díaz, October 10, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

"The observance of this principle enabled the brethren of widely different political views to live in unity in the same church with one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."[12] The Southern Baptists believed that adherence to the separation of church and state could keep the peace between the people of Cuba and those of the United States—and among Cubans themselves—just as it supposedly had in the U.S. South in the 1860s.

The Southerners' statements of principle led finally to their real purpose in writing. They warned Cuban Baptist leaders not to mix religion and politics—as the Cubans had during the separatist movement in the 1880s and 1890s—in the atmosphere of occupation in 1901. "We make special request of our brethren," the Southerners wrote, "that the house of God in which they worship shall be kept sacred to our divine religion, and to purely moral and charitable purposes, and that they be not used for any political meetings, or political purposes of any kind." In these moments of profound political mobilization on the island, the Southerners wanted Cuban Baptists to take no official part in the debate about the Platt Amendment or the end of the occupation. The reason given here by the Southerners, however, did not expressly revolve around the principle of

[12] Porter King, F. H. Kerfoot, I. T. Tichenor, and E. L. Connally to Rev. A. J. Diaz, April 22, 1901, typewritten copy in SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 21 (a second copy is in box 6, folder 23); see also the Board's explanation of why they sent these letters, and the reply they received from Rodriguez in Sagua la Grande, both of which are in "A Good Letter from Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 12, no. 11 (June 1901), p. 1, a typewritten copy of which is in SBHLA, URL, box 5, folder 39. The Southern Baptists' description of the supposedly peaceful history of U.S. churches during the Civil War was the very stuff of which the myth of the Lost Cause was made. Their invocation of that myth here is particularly fanciful. The very existence of the SBC, after all, was due to sectional—and expressly political—disputes over slavery and missions among North American Baptists. The sleight of hand required to turn civil war and the attendant denominational separation into a lesson on the separation of church and state is a remarkable example of how rhetorical reunion in the U.S. was created in the late nineteenth century at the expense of people who were nonwhite or lived in a U.S. possession. See David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1988); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (University of Georgia Press, 1983).

separation of church and state that they had laid out so clearly earlier in the letter—rather, it revolved around fundraising. "The sentiment in our country is very strong against the use for political purposes of houses which have been dedicated to the worship of God, however dear may be a cause," they wrote, "and we are persuaded that our people would lose much of their interest in Cuban missions if they felt that the houses which they are furnishing to our brethren and sisters in Cuba were being used for any other purpose than for the simple and direct propagation of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Southern Baptist leaders wanted their Cuban brethren to forego political messages from the pulpit and all other meetings, sermons, or statements that might be construed to be in any way "political," lest Home Mission Board fundraising suffer. The Baptist principle of separation of church and state, honored in the breach during the Cuban revival of the 1880s and 1890s, gave way in 1901 to more practical concerns about popular sentiment in the South and the Board's ability to raise money.[13]

[13] Porter King, F. H. Kerfoot, I. T. Tichenor, and E. L. Connally to Rev. A. J. Diaz, April 22, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21. On the Cubans' free mixture of religion and politics in the 1880s and 1890s, with the blessing of the Southerners, see chapter four. At the end of 1901, members of the Board found it advisable to make clearer statements about their support for unqualified Cuban independence, even as they continued to exhort Cuban Baptists to a separation of church and state. In a letter to Díaz and Gethsemane congregation, McConnell and Hillyer stated at the outset that they knew that "the US prior to the late war with Spain, declared its policy against attempting to annex the island of Cuba to said US or coerce the people of the island in any way and...we as individuals are of the opinion that the faith of the American people thus pledged should be kept and observed.... If we as individuals did anything, it would doubtless be in favor of Cuban independence, because our sympathies are that way. But as above stated, church and state matters must be kept separate and as a Board we have not taken and cannot take any steps in any political matter. Least of all and most assuredly, we have not taken, could not countenance and would not in any way countenance any word or deed that would militate against Cuban independence, with the broadest civil and religious liberty in the island. This is the natural thought and aspiration of every true Baptist." McConnell and Hillyer to Havana Baptist Church, December 20, 1901, quoted in "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 11-15, in SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9. See also Hillyer to Diaz, January 6, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

The political tension in Cuba, as well as the simmering disagreements between Baptists, led Tichenor to ask Díaz to keep a low profile. Tichenor, wrote to Díaz to advise him not to attend the next meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, which was to be held beginning May 10, 1901 in New Orleans. The tensions between the Board and Díaz, as well as between Díaz and other Cuban ministers, it seems, were more heightened than the Board's publications indicated. Tichenor wrote Díaz that although "I would be glad to see you and talk with you fully and freely about our Cuban work," it was also true that "other brethren in Cuba would be glad to attend the Convention. Many of them have never been present at its meeting." Tichenor thought that if the Cubans could together "agree upon a good man...and united on sending him to the Convention, the effects would be good both in Cuba and in the Convention." But, he wondered, "can this be done? Would not the attempt to make such a selection result in relations still more strained among our brethren there?" Tichenor also worried that Díaz's presence at the Convention might cause more problems for the Board than it would solve. The Southerner acknowledged, "there are men in the Southern Baptist Convention who are not your friends." Questions of imperial politics, too, were a consideration, and on this point Tichenor was adamant: Díaz was a lightning rod. "The present strained relations between the two countries is embarrassing our work both in this country and in Cuba. Your prominent position, and your pronounced opinions on political questions complicated with the embarrassing questions as to the time and place of their utterance, would, I fear, tend to awaken further opposition." Above all, Tichenor did not want disagreements that were currently below the surface to be aired in the very public context of the annual Convention. "Differences of opinion between the Board and its missionaries are much

more easily adjusted between them than they could be in the Southern Baptist Convention," he wrote. "Once made the subject of controversy in that body, they would be like fire in the prairie, unextinguishable until nothing but ashes remained." For all these reasons, Tichenor advised Díaz that he should not travel to New Orleans for that year's Convention. Instead, "on invitation which may very probably be sent to you by the Board," Díaz should plan "to come to Atlanta, adjust any matters that may need to be understood, and give us your wisest and best thoughts about work in Cuba." Rather than seeming to shut out his good friend and the Board's longest-serving ally in Cuba from decision-making, Tichenor wanted Díaz to think strategically about how he could influence the Board and the entire SBC, without exacerbating the many existing tensions in the process. He also clearly wanted the Cubans to work out their problems among themselves.[14]

In a response sent to Tichenor, Díaz affirmed the Baptist principle of the separation of church and state. "We all agree," he wrote back to the Board on May 9, "that Church and State must be separated." Moreover, they could set their minds at ease on the question of whether the Baptist churches had endorsed a particular political position. "You may assure your Committee that the building we are using as house of prayer never has and never will be used as the means of any political creed," he wrote. He offered three of his own reasons why the Jané building would not be given over to politics. First, "because we must be consequent with our history and practices." Second,

[14] Tichenor to Diaz, April 22, 1901, SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 21; a duplicate copy is in box 6, folder 23. Tichenor's delicate phrasing regarding Díaz's "pronounced opinions on political questions complicated with the embarrassing questions as to the time and place of their utterance" may indicate that Díaz had been holding political meetings in the Jané building or perhaps expounding on the Platt Amendment from his pulpit, or it may just be that Tichenor worried about giving Díaz a platform by asking him to speak to the entire assembled Convention in New Orleans.

acknowledging the fractiousness of Cuban politics, "we must respect the different political beliefs that we have in our Church among the members of it." Third, echoing the divide that Landrum and Tichenor before him had seen between affairs of heaven and affairs on the earth, Díaz wrote, "we are not looking for secular power, we only seek for the kingdom of the Lord J.C. and consequently we must be neutral on this subject." This third point was similar to the response the Board received from another missionary, Rodriguez in Sagua la Grande, who wrote that "amid the manifold aspirations and struggles of this society at this present day, Christ will surely be the most active force for good." The Cubans, it seemed, agreed that it was best if spiritual liberation was the only message preached from Baptist pulpits in Cuba.[15]

Despite this broad agreement, Díaz also felt that he had lost the confidence of the Board. Because of this lack of trust, he offered to resign as their missionary. "By the month of Nov. of this year I will send you my resignation as Missionary of your Board," he wrote in this same letter, although he also stated that he would "continue as Pastor of my Baptist Church in Havana." His reason, he wrote, was that "I have observed my brethrens of the South pay more attention to the arguments of my enemies than to me, showing, they have no confidence on me." He preferred to work independently, rather than tiptoeing around disagreements and feeling that other Baptists were working against

[15] Díaz to Cuban Committee, May 9, 1901, typewritten copy in SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 23; Rodriguez's letter is quoted in "A Good Letter from Cuba," *Our Home Field* vol. 12, no. 11 (June 1901), p. 1, a typewritten copy of which is in SBHLA, URL, box 5, folder 39. Although he does not do so explicitly, Díaz here appears to deny his own involvement in Cuban politics; elsewhere he admits that he was involved only because he wished to keep any establishment of religion out of the structure of the new Cuban state. One possibility is that Díaz's involvement in the presidential campaign of Bartolome Masó came after he wrote this letter in May 1901. He wrote that he only campaigned for Masó because of the candidate's position on the separation of church and state, which he may have assumed would be acceptable to his Southern co-religionists. See below.

him behind the scenes. “I can stand and I do the best I can in fighting the enemy when is before me, and that is what I like, to fight in open battle, then I feel good,” he wrote, perhaps nostalgic for his open battles against Spanish Catholics in the previous decades. “Fortunately I have not been whip yet, and of course I will not, as I fight for principles and righteous.” Now, however, he felt that he was being persecuted by those he thought were his friends. “I must confess you, I feel mean, depressed and discouraged all together, when I see my own dear brethrens taking my enemies side against me,” he wrote. He feared that the Southerners had forgotten the many sacrifices he had made while bringing the Gospel to Cuba. “You know I has been in jail six times, and have 125 trials on the courts for the development of the blessed Gospel; really I did enjoy and feel proud to suffer such persecutions for my Master but, when I know my own brethrens believed what my enemies say and are against me, that is the end of the question.”[16] If his sufferings were good enough for God, and there was no disagreement about the separation of church and state, he seemed to ask, then why had he lost the confidence of some of his allies in the U.S. South?

Díaz still had the friendship of Tichenor, however, and the Board’s emeritus corresponding secretary—who was still suffering from the rheumatism that had caused his resignation in 1899—delayed the Board’s consideration of Díaz’s resignation and asked the Cuban to withdraw it. On May 16, after he returned from the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Tichenor immediately wrote to Díaz to tell him that he was going to ask the Cuba Committee of the Board “to withhold this [resignation] letter until I have opportunity to write you more fully, and hear from you in relation to the matter.” The Cuba Committee’s next regular meeting was not until the first week of June, and to

[16] Díaz to Cuban Committee, May 9, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

Tichenor, the shock of Díaz's sudden offer to resign meant that the problems in Cuba had to be addressed soberly and thoroughly, not quickly. Five days later, he wrote Díaz more fully about the proposed resignation, and asked his Cuban friend to withdraw it entirely. "I think the course you propose to pursue is a very unwise one, and will lead not only to injury of the Board and personal injury to yourself, but injury also to the cause in Cuba," he wrote. Apparently referring to internal conflicts among Baptists in Cuba, Tichenor assured Díaz, "while I am well aware that some thing [sic] have alienated certain brethren from you, and given occasion to other brethren who have always felt unkindly to you, I am sure that there is nothing which has transpired, either in Cuba or in our Board, which should lead to such a result as you contemplate." As far as the Southerners were concerned, Tichenor assured him, "there are no complaints against you proposed or entertained." Whatever the problems were among Cuban Baptists, "none of our missionaries in Cuba...have said anything to the Board deregatory [sic] to you," and the new North American superintendent, Rev. Charles D. Daniel, "has spoken of you and written about you in terms of great kindness.... He has the highest estimation of your ability as a man and as a preacher of the Gospel of Christ." Tichenor did not know of any irreconcilable grievance Díaz had against the Board, and so "I really think that there is no ground for the line of conduct which you propose to take." Tichenor believed that it only remained to find a strategy for solving the problems that did exist.[17]

[17] Tichenor to Díaz, May 21, 1901 (dictated), SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Tichenor suggested both that he could live in Cuba for a few months and that Díaz should make an extensive tour of the U.S. South, in order to improve communications between the Cuban and Southern Baptist people. This schedule of travel and exchange may have helped to dispel some of the rumors and heal some of the divisions among Baptists, but it never came to fruition. Tichenor, as emeritus secretary, no longer had the power to unilaterally extend an invitation from the Board to Díaz to come to the U.S., and no one else on the Board did so; Díaz, however, believed that he had been invited, and cleared his schedule only to be told that he had not received an official

When the Board did meet, however, it became clear that most of its members disagreed with Tichenor's handling of the resignation. The Board met on June 7th and again on the 25th, and its Cuba and executive committees met jointly on June 22nd to discuss the situation on the island. After what seems to have been a period of internal disagreement, the Board voted on June 25th to ask for Díaz's resignation. The reasons for this decision were only vaguely stated, but clearly had to do with the Board's impression that Díaz was not able to cooperate with other Baptist ministers on the island, including Rev. Daniel. The June 25th meeting minutes only explained, "upon mature consideration, the Board is of the opinion that it will be best for the work of the Board in Cuba, and best for Dr. Diaz, that his relations with the Board be severed." The Board originally wanted a much speedier resignation—taking effect August 1st—than Díaz had previously offered, but at the June 25th meeting resolved that the resignation would "take effect on, or before January 1st," 1902. They asked Daniel to personally carry the news to Díaz.[18]

Tichenor explained to Díaz that the Board was asking for the Cuban's quick resignation because he had disregarded a disciplinary action taken by another Cuban Baptist church. Tichenor wrote on June 7 that he had been glad that Díaz had agreed to withdraw his previous resignation, when "there came to the office information in relation to another matter which, in my view, made it necessary to put your letters and mine before our Cuban Committee." The problem had to do with a Rev. Elizari or Elisario, who had spoken from Díaz's pulpit at Gethsemane. Elizari had previously been

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invitation. In addition, Tichenor's illness was apparently too far advanced to permit him to travel to Cuba. See Tichenor to Díaz, April 25, 1901; Tichenor to Díaz, May 21, 1901 (dictated); Díaz to Tichenor, June 13, 1901; and Tichenor to Díaz, June 17, 1901, all in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

[18] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, June 7, 1901; and Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Home Mission Board, June 25, 1901; both in SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20. F. H. Kerfoot, the corresponding secretary, died on June 21.

"excluded" from the Baptist church in Santa Clara, Cuba. Rev. A. U. Cabrera, the Cuban Baptist minister in Santa Clara, Rev. José V. Cova, the minister in Matanzas, and Tichenor had all written to Díaz to ask that Elizari should not be allowed to preach in Havana because he had been expelled from another Baptist church in Cuba. When Tichenor discovered that Díaz had not complied with this request, he wrote his Cuban friend "that you had thus disregarded not only the request which I had made of you, but were destroying the fellowship of the Churches in Cuba. I confess I was not only greatly surprised, but exceedingly pained to receive this information." Tichenor worried that Díaz's decision to ignore the discipline meted out by the Santa Clara Baptist church might "destroy their [Baptist churches'] mutual good, and the love which ought always to exist between Christian bodies." Whatever Elizari had done to receive banishment from Santa Clara, and whatever the reason why Díaz chose to ignore the requests of his fellow Baptists, this dispute was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. The members of the Home Mission Board had lost all faith in Díaz's management methods.[19]

[19] Quotes from Tichenor to Diaz, April 22 and June 7, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folders 21 and 23. The particulars of the Elizari/Elisario situation are difficult to piece together from the scant sources that mention him and the vague way in which he is often discussed. During a January 1902 meeting between Díaz and the Southerners, discussed below, Díaz explained that Elizari/Elisario had been a Catholic priest but that Díaz had converted him "during the war and under the shelling." Elisario had then joined the Methodist church, but, "finding they had bishops," he later joined the Baptist church. Díaz said that because he "had a great friendship for him personally," he had asked Elisario "to speak from the pulpit on the errors of the Catholic Church," but "had never allowed him to preach or pray in the church." When Cabrera wrote Díaz about Elisario's exclusion from the Santa Clara Baptist Church, Díaz claimed that he had written to Cabrera for more information but had never received a reply. In any case, Díaz explained, "about a week or two ago I saw him drunk and at once told him I must dismiss him," an incident which might also explain the reason for the Santa Clara Baptist Church's exclusion of Elisario in the first place. "Minutes of Conference Between Dr. Landrum, George Hillyer and Dr. A.J. Diaz at Jane Church, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1902," SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. For discipline in the Cuban Baptist churches, see chapter one. C. D. Daniel, "Cuba," undated correspondence or article, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24 (a copy, marked "Mss. letter in file in safe: Diaz Settlement," is in folder 21), p. 8-12 also comments on this incident, and quotes letters that have not otherwise survived between Díaz, O'Halloran, Cabrera, Tichenor and Cova.

The reasons why Díaz offered his resignation and the reasons why the Board accepted it, then, were very different, and the ensuing dispute over the shape of their new relationship had much to do with this misunderstanding. Díaz wrote to Porter King a number of times to try to explain his reasons for resigning, which boiled down to his feeling that the Board believed the rumors being spread by his Catholic enemies, and therefore had no confidence in him. "Several Baptist papers has been send to me and they always have something to criticize this mission and self," he wrote to Porter King on September 28, "and as the Board never say any thing I thought they were [agreed] between the brethrens that they do not want me.... Notwithstanding they do not say nothing (the Board) I present my resignation for the purpose to let them free and do with me just what they want and were convenient to the cause. This reason and no other has been the motive of my resignation." Rather than spending time and energy defending himself, Díaz preferred to resign, effectively saying that he would rather work independently than be the subject of a dispute among Baptists in the United States or in Cuba. "By your letter I observed that you think I have some prejudices against the Board. I can assure you that is not so," he wrote to King. "I love them, and consider them as my best friends and this is precisely why I present my resignation to them. Not because, they have [done] any thing to me; but because I thought I do harm to them, by occupying the present position."[20] If the Board would see the falsity of the rumors and defend Díaz in the U.S. Baptist press, there was no reason why the rift should continue.

As the weeks wore on, Díaz became increasingly distressed that his friends in the U.S. South did not seem to understand or believe his explanations. On October 21, he

[20] Díaz to King, September 28, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23 (typewritten copy in folder 21).

wrote to King again, attempting to answer some of the accusations that he had heard about his conduct and leadership in Cuba, including that he had held political meetings at the church. "I, as Christian and gentleman [sic] with my hand upon the Bible and with a clear conscience," he wrote, "declare that in the last 12 years since this building was purchase [sic] by the Board only one night was call a political conference in which I spoke in general line of what was the problem before us, without going into any of the platform of our political parties." Both Rev. Daniel and John S. Paine, a Baptist from Boston who had been one of the earliest supporters of Díaz's ministry in Cuba, had attended this meeting, Díaz wrote. He blamed the misrepresentation of his political activity on the continued power of the Catholic church in Cuba, and specifically on the U.S. consul, Ramon Williams, whom he felt had opposed him for years. "I was misrepresented by this man Mr. Williams since the beginning; I was presented before Mr. Cleveland as liar imposter," Díaz wrote to King. "So, I am no surprice if I was accused now as An Anarquist or having politician on the Church.... I have such strong enemies that they do not want I preach and my own friends like you and the Board believed just what they say." Díaz was becoming embittered by the continued distrust and ignorance of these new members of the Board, who did not seem to appreciate his history in Cuba and the realities there. "I do not blame you or say nothing against you, or the Board, as you are all news [new] in this particular kind of work you do not know the smart enemies the Roman Catholics are," he wrote to King. "I feel depress with such stories and I am disgust with these reports send from here against me. I have no plan yet I do not know what to do tomorrow," he admitted. But he knew that he could no longer work with the Board. "This is my idea at present to keep away from your ways in order no to do harm."

Díaz's anguish and confusion over the dissolution of his partnership with the Southern Baptists was only beginning.[21]

* * *

Once Díaz's resignation was offered and accepted, he and the Board entered an extended period during which their relationship slowly deteriorated. They disagreed not only about the reasons why they no longer worked together, but also about the relationship Gethsemane and its ministries would have to the Board in the future, and the purpose and history of the Jané building. The Board failed to address multiple questions about the future of Gethsemane church, the Jané building, and their relationship with Díaz throughout the summer and into the fall of 1901. Because of turnover in the Board's leadership and its failure to act speedily, Díaz and his Cuban followers came to believe that the Board had little concern for the continuity of evangelistic work in Cuba. In addition, the Cubans had ample time to reconsider the meaning of ownership of the Jané building. They concluded as early as December 1901 that rightful title to the building should be determined by the intent of the donors who had given money for its purchase; the Board's legal papers, they argued, had been acquired through fraud. When the Board repeatedly hired people whom Díaz identified as Catholics—lawyers and architects, for example—for work on the Jané building, Díaz and his followers concluded that the Board itself was corrupt. It became clear to Díaz and his congregants that the Board was impeding the progress of the Gospel in Cuba, so Díaz began searching for new allies in the United States. He found them among members of the Landmark movement, a loose

[21] Díaz to King, October 21, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; emphases in original.

coalition of white Baptists in the U.S. South who opposed strong church institutions such as the Home and Foreign Mission Boards of the SBC, and even sometimes the idea of a permanent "Convention" itself. Most members of the Board, for their part, came to think that Díaz was manipulating his Cuban followers for his own financial gain. At the same time, other Cuban Baptist ministers such as Cova and O'Halloran worked increasingly closely with the Board and with Rev. Daniel, the only Southern Baptist who had regular contact with Díaz. Díaz's relationships with these Cuban Baptist leaders suffered, although the reasons for this breach are less clear. By 1903, the Southerners concluded that in order to have the best legal standing for an inevitable court case over the title to Baptist properties in Havana, they had to evict Díaz and Gethsemane from the Jané building and support a new Baptist congregation there in its place.

The Board and Díaz disagreed about what Díaz's resignation meant for their joint mission programs in Cuba, a problem that continued to plague them over months during which their relationship deteriorated into mutual distrust. Díaz had written to Tichenor as early as May 10, 1901 that although he wanted to resign as the Board's missionary, he had no intention of resigning from the pastorate of Gethsemane.[22] Díaz asked Tichenor if Gethsemane could continue to meet in the Jané building. "Could we use the Church building for our worship there," he wrote, "if not please notify me in time in order to get a tent and seats in case we cannot meet there." When his resignation was finally requested and accepted in late June—and his resignation date pushed back to the end of

[22] Díaz planned to return to his pre-1891 method of making a living, by combining his ministry at Gethsemane with his services as a medical doctor. He wrote Tichenor that he would "open my office as Doctor, M. D. as I will stop on the employ as Missionary of your Board by Nov 1, 1901. I continue as pastor of Gethsemane." His medical training would provide an alternate source of income for his family and at the same time contribute to Gethsemane's mission in Havana, just as it had before the Board began its support of Díaz in the late 1880s. Díaz to Tichenor, May 10, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

November—the Board as a whole did not seem to understand that Díaz believed he was freeing the Board from paying his salary, but not at the same time leaving Gethsemane or the building. No one on the Board worked quickly to iron out the many details that Díaz repeatedly mentioned in letters to multiple Southerners, including Tichenor and Porter King. Díaz wrote to King on August 22, for example, to ask,

> I will continue as Pastor of the Baptist Church of Havana City. Could I use the Jane's building as I been used now for preaching the Gospel? In my Havana organization will the Board continue to help the teachers, missionaries and houses rent for missions and schools or their salaries and houses rent will be drawn off? Will your committee make a separate organization of our S. Schools or do you let them in connection with our missions? I wish you mention every thing in this line on time in order not to go into a rush on the end of November.

In addition to these unresolved questions about Baptist property, staff and ministries in Havana, the Board was thrown into confusion when Dr. F. H. Kerfoot, the corresponding secretary (who had replaced Tichenor in that post and who was in charge of all official Board correspondence), died on June 22, 1901. Although Kerfoot had been ill for some time, the Board's new corresponding secretary, Dr. F. C. McConnell, did not take over his duties until mid-September 1901. The Board did not consider Díaz's longstanding questions about the future of Gethsemane and the Jané building until August 7, and did not write to Díaz about them (despite repeated letters from Díaz asking if he and Gethsemane could continue to worship in the Jané building) until after its meeting on September 9. The delay certainly frustrated Díaz, who meanwhile was receiving long and complimentary letters from Tichenor, and whose anxiety—about the future of Gethsemane and about the Board's future plans in Cuba—was palpable.[23]

[23] Díaz to Tichenor, May 10, 1901 and Díaz to King, August 22, 1901, both in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 2, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20; Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Home

When Porter King did write to Díaz on September 10, he tried to ascertain what kind of relationship Díaz foresaw between himself, Gethsemane and the Board. At the same time, King tried to make it clear that the only non-negotiable facts were that the Board would continue working in Havana and that Díaz would not be the minister of a congregation in the Jané building. In his own verbose way, King explained, "It is the purpose of the Board to continue its mission work in Havana, and in connection therewith to carry on schools and continue the employment of missionaries. It is the hope of the Board that agreeable relations can be formed between the Gethsemane Baptist Church... and the Board for a continuance of this work." The Board viewed Gethsemane as an entity entirely separate from Díaz, one that could be negotiated with and possibly retained as a Southern Baptist mission; King also assumed that Díaz wanted to start a new congregation in Havana. "The Board will certainly need the use of the Jane Building," King told Díaz, "and it will not be practicable for that building to be used for the Board's work... and for its continued use by you also, as pastor of a Baptist Church at Havana." With Díaz out of the picture, King wanted to know if the Board could expect cooperation from Gethsemane. If both parties were able to agree on "satisfactory terms," then "it is altogether probable that no changes, or if so, but slight ones would be made in the matter of employing teachers and missionaries and the paying of house rent" by the Board in support of schools and other missions in Havana. But if Gethsemane "desires to continue its work entirely separate and independent of the Board, and at some other place, then it may be necessary for the Board to start anew its entire plan of work in Havana, and

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Mission Board, August 7, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20; Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, September 9, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20. Tichenor's remarkable letters to Díaz in this period include those of July 26, 1901 (in SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 23) and August 9, 1901 (typewritten copy in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21).

secure such missionaries and places for schools and houses of worship as it may select. We hope this may be avoided." This letter opened more than two months of haggling between Díaz, Gethsemane and various Board members over their future relationship. The process opened old nationalist wounds for Díaz and betrayed the disarray of the Board.

Díaz's reply gave almost no specifics about Gethsemane's future attitude toward the Board, but he did warn King about the political context and consequences of growing Southern Baptist control over the Cuban churches. He had heard rumors that Daniel was to be appointed to "take charge of the Pastorship of Havana and my own church," and he told King in no uncertain terms that such a move would drive Cubans away from the Baptist church. "I am American citizen and are identify with your methods," he reminded King, "but allowed me to say that if you put here before any congregation an American Minister today, no matter who will be, Henry Ward Beecher or D.W. Talmage, they will not succeed, as this political movement has created profound division between Am & Cubans." Díaz may have misunderstood King's questions about Gethsemane's goals, or he may have believed that he was giving the Board the more relevant advice. By this time, Díaz was saying, many Cubans no longer perceived the U.S. as their ally; it was now clear to Cubans, even sympathetic ones like Díaz who were "identified with your methods," that there would be serious consequences to working with the Americans. For Díaz, one of those consequences was that Americans you considered your dear friends might condone attacks on you and try to place one of their own over you in your own hometown, your own congregation, and your own life's work.[24]

[24] Díaz to King, September 28, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23 (typewritten copy in folder 21).

Despite his misgivings, Díaz tried to comply with the Board's wishes by encouraging the congregation of Gethsemane to be independent of him. He attempted to resign from the pastorate of Gethsemane, but the congregation refused to accept his resignation. The pain he felt as he tried to separate himself from his longtime congregation made him rethink his decision to resign from the Board, and he began to ask about a new or redesigned position with the Board. He wrote to ask Tichenor's advice, opening his letter by saying, "really I do not know what to do, as I want do just what is right." He described his resignation letter to Gethsemane, and wrote that after reading it aloud, the congregation "all unanimous vote no to accept my resignation," then "they appoint a committee to investigate if they has been doing any thing wrong and to persuade me to take my resignation back." The committee met separately with Díaz, and after telling him officially that the congregation had voted not to accept his resignation, "then one of the committee, the oldest, ask me in a familiar way—Pastor why do you resigned? This simple question touched our hearts in such way, that none of us could help at all and I unconscious say 'I do not know,' and we all like childrens begin to cry until we needle [kneel] down and pray for an hour." Díaz did not know how to resolve the situation—he wanted to work independently of the Board, but did not want to abandon his congregation. He simply could not stand to work apart from the congregation that he had gathered fifteen years before. "I been in jail six time and I have 125 trials on the court; I has been into two mobs banish twice," he told Tichenor, "but I really confess I never felt as I do feel with the separation of my Church. I have loose one child and I loose my own father but I tell you that the intense feeling I have at present is greater than all those feelings. I never thought that I will love my Church as I experiment

[experienced] today." His congregation's loyalty made Díaz want to explore a different way of working with the Board, perhaps as a part-time pastor to Gethsemane and "evangelist" to other churches in Cuba. "In order to have a clear idea of what I could do," he asked Tichenor, "will you be Kind enough as to inform me the kind of work that I may have in case I acept [sic] a position as Evangelist for the whole Island." He even seemed willing to take back his resignation as the Board's missionary altogether. "In case I could not accept the position as Evangelist, could I be left on my Church an[d] be missionary of the Board?.... I can preach for Gethsemane and twice a month...I can have meeting with any of the other Churches and during the week I can help the others as often as it require." His longstanding relationship with Gethsemane, forged during fifteen of the most difficult years of Cuban history, made him rethink his disagreement with the Board entirely.

When he received King's October 10 letter, however, Diaz realized that new Southern Baptist beliefs about Cuban missions and Cuban politics would be a fundamental obstacle to his reconciliation with King and other members of the Board. King first reiterated that the Board would need complete use of the Jané building for its own work, and then wrote, "Really, Brother Diaz, we are of the impression that politics and political meetings have too much prevailed in the work at Havana; and we intend that political meetings shall not hereafter be held at the Jané Building." King, at least, seemed to believe that an underlying problem between the Southerners and Díaz was a political one; he intended to enforce the separation of church and state among Cuban Baptists by severing the Board's ties with any Cuban, most importantly Díaz, who was deemed "too political." King also took care to explain Daniel's position in Cuba to Díaz, writing that

the Board wanted "to keep an American representative in Cuba, who is to be the mediator between the Board and all Cuban workers." King's self-described "candid, plain" description of the Board's new personnel policies towards its Cuban missionaries expressed his growing exasperation with Díaz's Cuban-centric way of doing things. "We trust our Cuban brethren and friends will approve of it," he wrote to Díaz about the Board's new policy, "but if they do not, we cannot help it, but we shall not continue spending the money of the Baptist Denomination of this country in supporting a work with which we are not allowed to come in touch in the manner indicated." The Board wanted friendly relations with Cuban Baptists, King seemed to be saying, but if the Cubans disagreed with the new structure of Southern Baptist-controlled institutions in Cuba, they would just have to keep quiet.

Díaz's reply addressed the charge of being too "political" that King had made against him, and made it clear that he thought all the Board's new ideas stemmed from rumors that were being spread by Díaz's Catholic enemies in Cuba. "In the last 12 years since this building was purchase[d] by the Board <u>only one night</u> was call a political conference in which I spoke in general line of what was the problem before us," he wrote to King, and "the gathering was select and numerous as Rev Daniel can tell you," since both he and J. S. Paine had attended the meeting. "I am not surprised [at] the report against me," he told King, "but I am astonish[ed] that you has let the enemies of our Baptist denomination surprise you[r] good faith." He went on to recount three rumors that the Board had heard about him during their time of partnership, and how each had been spread by one of his Catholic enemies in Cuba but eventually disproved by Tichenor or other members of the Board. Díaz wrote that he would not be surprised if he "was

accused now as An Anarquist or having politician on the Church," because "I have such strong enemies that they do not want I preach." But he was indignant that "my own friends like you and the Board believed just what they say," although he knew that the younger members of the Board "are all news [new] in this particular kind of work you do not know the smart enemies the Roman Catholics are." His advice to King, effectively, was not to believe all the rumors he heard from Cuba about Díaz; while King and the Board learned that lesson, Díaz would "keep away from your ways in order no to do harm."[25]

King never read that letter. On October 24th, he died suddenly in Atlanta.[26] King's death, spurred the members of the Home Mission Board into action regarding the relationship between themselves, Gethsemane, and Díaz. Still, their actions extended only an extra month of stability to Gethsemane and, if anything, confirmed that the situation in Havana was unstable. George Hillyer, a judge, was appointed to take King's place as Chairman of the HMB Cuba Committee and as the Board's attorney for Cuban matters.

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[25] Díaz to King, October 21, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; emphasis in original. The three rumors that Díaz said had been spread by Cuban Catholics and disproved by Tichenor stemmed from accusations made before the 1895 war. "Molina and Godines," Díaz wrote, had accused him of being "a dictator as I have full power over the other Missionaries," but Tichenor and other Board members had investigated and found the accusation to be untrue. Ramon Williams, the U.S. consul in Havana prior to 1898, had reportedly spread rumors that Díaz had spent "the $20,000.00 Dr. Tichenor deposit[ed] on my hand," and that he had "a liquor saloon and a gambling house, and also a hotel or assignation house," but the Board had found both reports to be false. Díaz accused Williams of being "a faithful Episcopalian to the Romish Church," and wrote, "I was misrepresented by this man Mr. Williams since the beginning."

[26] Díaz sent his October 21 letter to King through Tichenor, as he often did (see Diaz to Tichenor, October 21, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23), but Tichenor was out of town and did not return to Atlanta until after King's death on the 24th. On King's sudden death, see "Hon. Porter King," *Our Home Field* vol. XIII, no. 4 (November 1901), p. 2; "In Memory of Honorable Porter King," *Our Home Field* vol. XIII, no. 5 (December 1901), p. 2; "Honorable Porter King," *Our Home Field* vol. XIII, no. 5 (December 1901), p. 5; and Tichenor to Diaz, October 28, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Tichenor wrote that King died of apoplexy, which was a term used to describe any sudden loss of consciousness followed by death; it may have described a stroke or heart attack.

The Board wrote an official letter to Daniel "authorizing him in behalf of the Board to take possession of the Jané church property in Havana on Dec 1, 1901," the day after Díaz's resignation was to take effect. But at the same time, the Board recommended "that if the Gethsemane church is resolved to continue him [Díaz] as pastor, Bro. Daniel is authorized in behalf of the Board to courteously and fraternally offer the use of the bldg ... until Jan 1, 1902."[27] This action gave Gethsemane an extra month to decide on a course of action, but it remained unclear whether any existing church would worship in the Jané building after the first day of 1902. Díaz's resignation from the HMB took effect on November 30, 1901, but Gethsemane still worshiped in the Jané building and Díaz was still their pastor.

Compounding Díaz's anxieties during the fall of 1901, the first Cuban presidential election was approaching; U.S. support for the annexationist candidate, Tomás Estrada Palma, made his presidency practically inevitable. The U.S. military governor, Leonard Wood, packed the *Junta Central*—charged with monitoring the election and counting the ballots—with Estrada Palma's supporters, and dismissed several mayors who opposed his candidacy. As the head of the now-dissolved Cuban Revolutionary party (PRC) in New York, Estrada Palma's separatist credentials were impeccable, so he could be counted on to gain support from at least some voters. More importantly for Wood, however, Estrada Palma represented the only faction of the Cuban separatist coalition that had steadfastly sought to remove Cuba from Spain's orbit only to place it in a position subordinate to the United States. When asked in July 1901 what he believed Cuba's ultimate destiny would be, Estrada Palma answered, "Why, to be part of the United States, of course. There is no

[27] Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 5, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20.

other alternative in the end, but for the present...the Cubans want to taste what they have been fighting and dying for just for once, even if for a little while—and that is Cuba Libre." Wood thought that Estrada Palma, a Quaker who did not travel to Cuba until after his election, was the last best hope for the annexation of the island.[28]

Díaz supported Bartolomé Masó, who had been the head of the Cuban provisional government on the island during the war, in the presidential race. Since the end of the war in 1898, Masó had taken positions that were directly opposed to Wood—and opposed to those that Estrada Palma had espoused. Where Estrada Palma had supported Wood's suffrage restrictions and the Platt Amendment, Masó opposed both. Díaz campaigned for Masó in public, but said that his support was based only on Masó's support for the separation of church and state in Cuba.[29] Masó's opposition to annexation and his support for the absolute independence of Cuba could not have hurt his chances with Díaz, but they earned him the ire of Leonard Wood. In a letter to the White House in October 1901, Wood complained that Masó had "gathered about him the radical and discontented element," and he would "fear very much for the new government under his control." When both Wood and Elihu Root, the U.S. secretary of war, rejected Cuban petitions to make the *Junta Central* less partisan, Masó withdrew from the election.[30]

The combination of the rigged election, his strained relationship with the Board, and the uncertain future of Gethsemane filled Díaz with anguish. Throughout December 1901, he searched for a solution to the twin problems of how he could remain with Gethsemane and how the congregation could remain in the Jané building. On December

[28] Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 370-73. Quote at 372.
[29] Díaz to Tichenor, March 3, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24 (copy in folder 23). See below for the context of Díaz's statement about Masó.
[30] Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 370-73.

3, he wrote to Tichenor about his disbelief that Gethsemane was about to be thrown out of the building that the congregation considered its home. "I never has felt as I did feel since the Thanksgiving day," Díaz wrote.

> I face the death many, many times and never had felt the strange feeling that I have now, what in the world I did to be treated as I has been.... on the 1st of Jan. 1902 the Baptist Church of Havana has been [thrown] off from their own house as a poor creature that having not money to pay the house-rent is put off by the landlord.... How a Church with such brilliant history, and such powerful marks from the Almighty could be treated as we are at present?... over 13 years has been pass and all what we did; all what we work, all what we give was nothing, nothing, and now without any form or consideration whatever the rude order has been giving to us to go away from our own house.

He reminded Tichenor that they had bought the Jané building together, that Cubans and Southerners in partnership had decided to put the legal title for the building in their own personal names, and then in the name of the Southern Board, simply to avoid its seizure by the Spanish. "You and I together has been gathering the nobles contribution that our Baptist people from home & abroad has donated for the purpose of buying this place for this Church," he wrote. "I remember very well what you told me '<u>that if the title was not made in the name of our trustees was because you all were afraid of the confiscation of the property by the Spanish people.</u>' You know how consecrated I has been on this matter." Whatever the disagreements between Cuba and the United States, or between himself and the new members of the Board, Díaz refused to believe that the consequence should be homelessness for his congregation.[31]

While Díaz's letters to Tichenor pleaded for understanding and help, he also wrote to other members of the Board to see if they would consider reconciliation with him. After reviewing letters he had received from the Board describing what he now

[31] Díaz to Tichenor, December 3, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. Emphasis in original.

thought had been his two separate jobs in Havana—"Pastor" and "Superintendent"—Díaz wrote to Tichenor to ask if the Board would re-hire him to be Gethsemane's pastor. "I did resigned as Superintendent," he wrote, "but as pastor of the Gethsemani Church I think I am entitle to the salary of $125. Am I correct? This church is numerous but poor, and precisely now after this devastated war they are unable to support the pastor. Could the Board support the pastor for another year and me see if by that time we can meet all our obligations?"[32] Díaz designed two late December letters to George Hillyer, the new head of the HMB Cuba Committee, to express the importance and faithfulness of Díaz's work in Havana, in the hopes that the Board would re-hire him. He listed four different street missions in addition to Gethsemane as locations where he preached during the week, and reported that on Christmas Day he "have present at our church building 5,000 people counted at door, and among them were the family of Rev. Daniel and himself."[33] His work throughout Havana as a Baptist preacher, he was implicitly telling the Board, was valuable to the Baptist evangelical project as a whole, and it would benefit all of them to work together. His disagreements with the Board went unmentioned in letters to anyone but Tichenor; during this month Díaz slowly began to hope that he could solve the immediate problem of his own income and Gethsemane's impending homelessness by regaining his position with the Board.

In case reconciliation didn't work, however, Díaz began formulating his argument opposing the HMB's legal title to the Jané building. When he wrote to Tichenor on December 3 that "our Baptist people from home & abroad has donated [money] for the purpose of buying this place for this Church," he had hit on his strongest point in

[32] Díaz to Tichenor, December 10, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.
[33] Díaz to Hiller [sic—Hillyer], December 12, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21. See also Díaz to Hiller, December 28, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

Gethsemane's future legal struggle with the Board. If Baptists had contributed their money towards the purchase of a building *for Gethsemane*, or for Díaz to preach in, then that building should not now belong to the Board. After all, there was no further danger that Spain would seize the Baptist properties. Díaz and the members of Gethsemane came to believe that the legal title to the Jané building and other Baptist buildings in Havana should rest with the local congregation, and that the Board's wartime requests to Díaz to turn over these titles had been fraudulent. Díaz began developing these arguments sometime in late 1901. In December of that year, according to reports that reached the Board, Díaz "made a rather inflammatory speech before his congregation, tending to incite them to set up some sort of claim to the Jane or theater property, part or all of it." Gethsemane and its pastor would return to these same arguments, about their moral right to ownership of the Jané building, again and again in the coming years.[34]

The Southerners rejected Díaz's overtures toward reconciliation and reiterated their complete ownership of the Jané building. They emphasized the independence of Baptist churches, but wrote that the Board was willing to work with Gethsemane only as long as its pastor was "in harmony" with the Board and with other Baptists on the island. Rev. Daniel wrote to Díaz on December 4th, asking him to tell Gethsemane "that as agent of the Board in Cuba (Not Superintendant) I will do every thing in my power to help them whether they work with the Board or independently." In a letter that he hoped Díaz would read to the assembled congregation, Daniel wrote, "if you desire to continue as you have up to the present and will call a pastor who is in harmony with the other churches supported by the Board in this island, it will continue assisting you as in the

[34] Díaz to Tichenor, December 3, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 10-11, in SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9.

past. Now if you desire to become independent of the Board it offers you this house till the first day of Jan, 1902." This would give Gethsemane a bit less than a month to find a new place to worship. Daniel continued, "The Board has not the least desire to coerce you. I recognize that all the Baptist churches are absolutely free and independent." Although the Board might recognize Gethsemane's independence, Daniel was in effect attempting to coerce Gethsemane into calling a pastor other than Díaz, offering them Board financial support and the continued use of the Jané building if they did so. At the same time, he made it clear that the Board would "continue gospel work in this city, increasing it as rapidly as possible," no matter what Gethsemane did.[35] Along the same lines, McConnell and Hillyer in Atlanta wrote to Díaz that Gethsemane's members, "like all Baptist churches, are free and independent of all earthly power, looking only to the Lord Jesus as the great head of the church under the revealed work of God. Yet we desire to be very near to you and to have your cooperation in all our work." To that end, they offered to confer with Gethsemane "on the subject of temporarily allowing them the use of the assembly hall in the Jane property for church meetings or public worship.... This however would be on condition that not only the church itself but your pastor are in harmony and cooperation with us, with our missionaries and other Baptist churches in the island of Cuba and with Brother C D Daniel our representative." The Board believed that since Gethsemane's membership had "reached nearly 3000 in number that the time has arrived in the Lord's good providence when you should be able to be self supporting,"

[35] Daniel to Díaz, December 4, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; Daniel to Havana Baptist Church, undated but probably written sometime between November 30 and December 4, 1901, quoted in "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 13-14, SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9.

just as any other "infant or mission church" would. The Board wanted to preserve its relationship with Gethsemane, but it refused to work with Díaz in order to do so.[36]

By the beginning of 1902, the outlines of the multiple splits in the transnational Baptist community were becoming clear. When Gethsemane continued to meet in the Jané building after January 1, a planned Board trip to Cuba was moved up by at least a month. Although Daniel hoped that a Board visit would resolve the immediate matter of possession of the Jané building, he worried that the dispute now ran deeper than just that between a Board and its missionary. Daniel wrote to Hillyer on January 3 that Díaz "has declined to give up the property.... However I think when you come, and he sees that a bluff game will not work, he will yield. He is anxious to be reinstated by the Board." Daniel hinted that the Board's problems were bigger than just one renegade missionary—Díaz's supporters in the South had been lining up behind him, independently of and against the Board. "He seems to think that a letter written him by the Seminary, trustees and faculty will hold for him the property," he wrote to Hillyer. "I did not read the letter. I think you would do well to get a copy of his letter to the Seminary, also their reply in reference to this matter." The Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky had been going through a division of its own in recent years. Landmarker faculty and students there—who believed that "Boards," and sometimes even the SBC itself, were un-Biblical

[36] McConnell and Hillyer to Havana Baptist Church, December 20, 1901, quoted in "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 11-15, in SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9. Hillyer sent another similar letter (dated January 6, 1902) to Díaz; this letter had been approved in advance by the Board. See Hillyer to Diaz, January 6, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. The Board did not want to immediately establish a new congregation in the Jané building to compete with Gethsemane, although Calvary, the English-language congregation, already met there. On January 7, 1902, the Board authorized a letter to Daniel "stating that it was not the policy of the Board to take any steps at present looking to organization of another church in Havana but that the Board would bend its efforts to maintain in cooperation with the existing church." Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 7, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21.

innovations—may have taken on Díaz as a *cause celebre*. Daniel wanted the Board to find out exactly what Díaz's supporters were saying to him, and what he was telling them. He was anxious for his allies on the Board to arrive. "The earlier you can come the better," he wrote to Hillyer.[37]

The Board committee left for Havana on January 15. For all the rancor of the previous months, during its visit the committee quickly accomplished many of the Board's objectives in Cuba—including an official, notarized admission from Gethsemane that the Board owned the title to the Jané building.[38] On January 20th, a Gethsemane committee adopted a resolution which read, in part, "the Gethsemane Baptist Church knows that the title to the said Jane' property is fully and unconditionally vested in the

[37] Daniel to Hillyer, January 3, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21 (another copy in folder 24). Landmarkers had forced the resignation of William H. Whitsitt, the president of the Louisville Seminary, in 1899. See Harvey, *Redeeming the South*, 148-49.

[38] The Board committee's time in Havana may have been eased by a long, heartfelt letter that Tichenor wrote to Díaz, which the committee delivered in person upon their arrival in Havana. In the letter, Tichenor assured Díaz of the "spirit of true Christianity" that he would find in the members of the Board who visited the island, and of their desire for "the most harmonious and brotherly relations with you." He feared that "for months past" Díaz had "entertained wrong views of the spirit and intentions of the Board," and he wanted Díaz to know that none of the Board members held any grudge against him, that the source of their discord was not personal enmity. But he feared that the true source of Díaz's disagreement with the Board was structural, so that Díaz might ask the Board members to do things that they could not do. "To these brethren, as representatives of the Board, as well as to the Board itself, great interests have been confided by the brethren of the Southern Baptist Convention," Tichenor wrote. "There are things which they cannot yield, and there are interests which they cannot sacrifice." Tichenor could not bring himself to say directly that the Board would never allow Díaz and Gethsemane to own the Jané building outright. Instead, he wrote obliquely of "things," "interests," and "guardianship of all the rights of the Southern Baptist Convention in its work in Cuba." The Board, Tichenor included, had come to believe that only they could hold that trust for the Southern Baptist Convention. The Cuban congregation would not be allowed to guard those "great interests." "I realize the fact that you and I may never meet again," he wrote by way of closing the letter; he clearly believed that he was dying of the rheumatism that plagued him. Still, he emphasized that his illness and his love for Díaz would not change his counsel. "If we do not meet until that day when we stand before the great white throne, I would be willing for you, if it were possible, to take this letter in your hands and laying it down at the Saviour's feet, tell Him that this was my counsel to you as my brother, and my friend. I would not be ashamed of it there." He had almost two years left to live, although it appears that he and Díaz never did meet again in person. Tichenor to Díaz, January 15, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23.

said Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and freely admit the same to be true," and the congregation also "hereby solemnly declares that said Home Mission Board is the only and sole and absolute owner of said property; and said Gethsemane Baptist Church has no claim upon or in regard thereto." The resolution also asked the Board to continue to allow Gethsemane to worship in the auditorium of the building; this resolution was unanimously adopted in full at the next meeting of the entire congregation, and subsequently notarized. On January 30th, a day after the Board members had left Cuba, Gethsemane sent an official letter to the Board expressing "our gratitude for all the fostering care the Church received from the Board in the past and our unwavering loyalty to Baptist principles and of our desire most cordially to co-operate with you in the future. In all these things our pastor agrees with us." The letter affirmed their desire to cooperate with the Southerners and asking that Gethsemane and its pastor, Díaz, "become once more the beneficiaries of your board." They wrote that although they counted about 600 members, "the great majority of the members are poor in this world goods. Not one is rich except in faith and good works." Nevertheless, the congregation taught "that every Christian should give for the support of the Gospel ministry," and they hoped "to become a self-supporting Church meeting all our own expenses," just as the Board and Tichenor had each suggested.[39]

At the same time, minutes taken during the Board committee's meetings with Díaz reveal the depth of the divide between Díaz and other Cuban Baptists and between

[39] Gethsemane Baptist Church to Home Mission Board, January 30, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; Report of the Special Committee of the Home Mission Board, February 11, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24 (this report is also quoted in full in the "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 16-21, SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9; it is also given in Una Roberts Lawrence's transcription of the Board's regular meeting minutes on Feburary 11, 1902, in SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21).

Díaz and the Southern Board. There were three main types of problems discussed at these meetings, which took place over three days.[40] First, they discussed problems between the Cuban Baptists, especially between Díaz and O'Halloran. Second, the Board committee quizzed Díaz in detail about the many rumors they had heard about him, including whether or not he had been an Episcopalian minister, and about the accuracy of a biographical pamphlet about him. Finally, they discussed Cuban church matters including the question of whether Cuban or North American missionaries should work in Cuba, what duties Díaz had had in the past as the superintendent of Baptist work in Cuba and as manager of the cemetery, and how Díaz related to other Cuban Baptist churches. The trip did not come close to solving these longstanding, contentious disagreements; instead, the Board committee elected to "wait and see" on the thorniest problems. They did not resolve the question of whether the Board could continue to support Gethsemane by giving it access to the Jané building while the Board's relationship with Díaz, who remained as Gethsemane's pastor, was still rancorous. Neither did they attempt to mediate a dialogue between the Cuban Baptists whose problems with each other remain mostly opaque in the records.[41]

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[40] "Minutes of Conference Between Dr. Landrum, George Hillyer and Dr. A.J. Diaz at Jane Church, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1902," SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. The minutes themselves indicate that Landrum, Hillyer and Díaz met on January 20st, 21st or 22nd, and 26th. The Report of the Special Committee of the Home Mission Board, dated February 11, 1902, in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24, notes: "During the absence of Bro. McConnell visiting distant parts of the Island, the other members of the Commission held a long and earnest conference with Dr. Diaz personally. Short minutes of this conference were noted down at the time, and preserved. They have been filed in the Secretary's office, and can be referred to as far as necessary."

[41] Díaz told the Board committee that O'Halloran was in trouble with the Cuban law "under the charge of false swearing and swindling," and that his legal parentage, and therefore his status as an heir, was somehow in question, but these charges are not well explained in the records. Díaz also indicated that the Board, or perhaps a Cuban Baptist disciplinary committee, knew previously about "charges against O'Halloran of false swearing, subornation of perjury, etc., drunkenness and dealing in lottery tickets," but that they "have never been decided, but delayed at request of Dr. Tichenor." The Board committee took no action on these charges—they may have

The depth of newer Board members' distrust of Díaz was in evidence throughout their meetings. They asked him about a number of rumors that were circulating about him in the U.S. South and in print. Landrum, for instance, asked Díaz "about a story we had heard to the effect that he, Diaz, had been an Episcopal clergyman before his alleged conversion in New York," making it clear that the newer members of the Board had doubts not only about Díaz's loyalty to the Southern Baptist Convention, and even to Baptist theology, but also about the truthfulness of his "alleged" conversion narrative. Díaz explained that "he had never been an Episcopalian at all," although he volunteered that during his early years preaching in Havana he had "put on a white surplice at the persuasion of an Episcopal minister, who performed the ceremony when he, Diaz, was married." Díaz explained "that after his conversion he had for a few years carried on an interdenominational work in Havana, chiefly distributing Bibles, and did some preaching," and that at that time "they had made no distinction among Protestants. Soon afterwards the company accustomed to meeting there took a vote and selected the Baptists as the church of their choice." The Board committee, no longer benefiting from Tichenor's institutional memory, did not understand that Gethsemane and Díaz had arrived at their convictions as Baptists through their own independent study and conversion experiences in the 1880s; the committee members were suspicious of Díaz because he and his congregation had not followed the more conventional route of being

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decided informally to take O'Halloran's word over Díaz's. Nor did the Board attempt to mediate the dispute between Díaz and O'Halloran, which took place over the next few months through the mail. "Minutes of Conference Between Dr. Landrum, George Hillyer and Dr. A.J. Diaz at Jane Church, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1902," SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23. See also Díaz to O'Halloran, January 28, 1902, and Díaz to O'Halloran, April 21, 1902; both of these letters and other undated correspondence from O'Halloran are quoted in C. D. Daniel, "Cuba," undated (c. 1903), marked "Mss. letter in file in safe: Diaz Settlement," SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21. See also Díaz's disagreement with Cabrera, discussed in note 19 above.

established as a Baptist mission congregation under a U.S. Baptist missionary.[42] The committee also "asked Diaz about a printed pamphlet of his life, in which he ignores the work of the Home Board and makes no mention of Dr. Tichenor." Díaz replied, "there were some errors in it arising from the fact that what he wrote was in Spanish, which Mr. Paine caused to be translated." The minutes of the meeting do not report what Díaz said to correct these "errors" about Tichenor and the Home Mission Board, but the nature of the Board inquiries reveals that their suspicions about Díaz's integrity and willingness to cooperate with them ran deep.[43]

The Board committee also suspected that Díaz had not been entirely honest about his methods for managing the Cuban churches, and their questions about his management and recordkeeping pointed to their interest in the need for a new, standardized management style of missions in Cuba. The very beginning of the meetings, in fact, opened when Hillyer said that the Board wanted "to get up a system of printed blanks for making monthly reports of receipts and disbursements, to be made by the different missionaries to Brother Daniel and to be by him consolidated and sent in with his own report." Only after the Board members had made clear their interest in professionalizing the missionaries' methods of reporting did they question Díaz about two problem areas, first asking about the cemetery and then moving on to questions about the church's membership numbers. Landrum asked Díaz about his 1898 statement to the Board "that

[42] The lack of institutional memory among the members of the Board was a key problem at this point; for both McConnell and Hillyer this was their first trip to Cuba. See "Gone to Cuba," *Our Home Field*, vol. XIII, no. 7 (February 1902), p. 2. See also the discussion of the process of the anti-Catholic revival in Havana in Chapter one.

[43] "Minutes of Conference Between Dr. Landrum, George Hillyer and Dr. A.J. Diaz at Jane Church, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1902," SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; the pamphlet referred to is probably *Cuba Para Cristo, Cuba for Christ: Baptist Missions in Cuba, An Extract from the Autobiography of Dr. A. J. Diaz* (Havana, 1901).

the income of the cemetery had been $5000 or $6000 a year," presumably before the war. Díaz replied that the cemetery's income in years past "was not sent to the Board, but was used here and reported to the Board." He gave the committee an account of the cemetery's current expenses, and reported that because after 1898 "the Catholic cemeteries have been opened to the Protestant public, the income of this cemetery has fallen off so that it does not pay expenses; that his own salary as Adm'n. is several years in arrears." The committee was shocked to learn that Gethsemane had agreed to pay Díaz for his administration of the cemetery, separately and in addition to what the Board had paid him for his duties as a minister for Gethsemane. The Board committee was especially surprised to learn that "the debt of the church to him amounts for the years past to $10,000 or $12,000 on the cemetery business." The committee also asked Díaz if his congregation really had "2 or 3 thousand" members. In answer, Díaz explained "that during his ministry of 20 years he has baptized over 3000 members and that by deaths and removals, many names are not to be now counted. The present membership is not over 600 to 800." He included in that number the members of not only the 400 members of Gethsemane, who worshiped at the Jané building, but also those people who worshiped at "mission stations" in other parts of the city. "They are all very poor," Díaz concluded, perhaps anticipating another question the committee members had, with "contributions say $1 at weekly meeting and say $2 on Sundays." These problems in Díaz's management of the Cuban congregations and properties were more serious than the Board members had believed before their trip to the island.[44]

[44] The legal title to the Baptist cemetery was even more unsettled than that to the Jané building. Díaz had signed a quit claim in September 1896 that gave the cemetery property, or part of it, over to the HMB. That quit claim was finally recorded and filed in Fulton County Court on January 15, 1902, just days before this meeting. However, Díaz also claimed in the meeting "that

After the trip to Havana, many members of the Board continued to have serious reservations about Díaz's reliability as a Baptist minister; some of their reasons were expressed publicly throughout the South, while others were kept quiet. At their February 11th meeting, the Board agreed to prepare a statement on their work in Cuba for publication. The statement subsequently published in Baptist publications make it clear that the Board wanted it known publicly that Díaz was "out of harmony" with other Cuban Baptists, that he had been involved in Cuban politics to the exclusion of his evangelistic duties, and that he had not managed the cemetery and the Board's other properties to their satisfaction. It is also clear from these articles that the Board wanted Gethsemane's large debt to Díaz for his cemetery management duties kept quiet. McConnell wrote in both the *Christian Index* and *Our Home Field* that the committee "recommends in favor of granting the church the privilege of the use of the house for the present." At the same time, he noted that the committee had recommended against paying Díaz to be Gethsemane's pastor, since "Cuba has been in the throes of a revolution," and McConnell hoped "that patience shall be exercised towards Dr. Diaz, knowing the weakness of the flesh, and expressed a hope that Dr. Diaz would early convince the brethren of his sincerity in his purposes." What exactly this "weakness of the flesh" had been, McConnell declined to say, although it seems that he was referring to Díaz's politics. He also wrote that the committee had lingering "dissatisfaction with his [Díaz's]

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the title of the land is in him, Dr. Diaz, but the cemetery as an institution belongs to the church." Because Gethsemane had agreed to owe the debt to Díaz for his unpaid backdated salary as cemetery administrator, the Board members worried that if Gethsemane owned the cemetery, Díaz could someday seize it as payment for the debt. Indeed, in his meetings with the Board committee Díaz admitted that "the debt above named was capable of enforcement in law and the cemetery could be levied on and sold for the debt. But, he said, he had no idea of doing such a thing." "Minutes of Conference Between Dr. Landrum, George Hillyer and Dr. A.J. Diaz at Jane Church, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1902," SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; A. J. Díaz affidavit, recorded in Fulton County (Georgia) Superior Court, Deed Book 160, p. 123.

services," mentioning specifically that "Dr. Diaz' management of our missions in the island of Cuba, as Superintendent, were not satisfactory as respects the disposition of the hospital, cemetery, etc.... As regards reports made to the Board of work accomplished," and finally, "Regarding the use of his own time while a missionary of the Board. He devoted his time to a political canvass, placing another man in his pulpit to preach, who was not acceptable to the Board." McConnell was careful to write "that no objection was made to Dr. Diaz on account of his political opinions, but on account of the use of his own time while a missionary of the Board, for the purpose of partisan political canvassing." McConnell and the Board would leave it to other Cuban Baptists to decide when Díaz had sufficiently repented and changed his ways. "Dr. Diaz' course had met with the disapproval of other devoted missionaries in the island," McConnell wrote, and "it is deemed eminently desirable to know that Dr. Diaz' fixed purpose is to be an humble minister of the gospel before he is recommended to be reappointed. This will be ascertained by those who are daily associated with him, and will be signified to the Board by a petition signed by all the other missionaries under the auspices of the Board." The Board declared the problems in Cuba to be at an end, and believed that their "denomination may well be assured of a steady and hopeful prosperity of the missions of the island." Gethsemane's debt to Díaz—and the possibility that he could seize control of the cemetery—were left unmentioned.[45]

Díaz, meanwhile, began making plans for a new, independent Baptist mission in Havana, to be headed by him. He solicited contributions for his independent mission from allies in the United States who might disagree with the Board's plan of action

[45] "The Diaz Affair Amicably Adjusted," *Christian Index* vol. 82, no. 9 (February 27, 1902), p. 4. The Board's statement was also published as "The Diaz Affair Amicably Adjusted" in *Our Home Field* vol. 13, no. 7 (March 1902), p. 2.

toward him and Gethsemane. He knew that a new mission would not be able to provide financial support for his family, so he hoped to gain personal income by restarting his medical practice. In any case, he planned to continue preaching in Cuba. He wrote to both McConnell and Landrum on February 25th about his two-part plan to support his family and begin a new mission. Díaz told McConnell that he had written "to several friends on the States to see if they could help me and assist in my work." To Landrum he wrote, "I follow your advice and I been writing to several friends and Societies of the States to seek for employment and also here." He assured the Southerners that he would continue preaching independently, and that he bore them no ill will. "You can be sure that I will—by the will of God—continue my preaching," he wrote to Landrum, "but if I succeed in helping myself I never will trouble your Board any more, and if we can will be glad to help you." He had one last request of the Board, however, which he wrote to both men about: "One other Dr. and myself are willing to rent the Buenos Aires property to establish a Sanitorium or hospital," he wrote, "and we take for 20 month making a regular lease: we fixed for you the floors and the other repairs if any be necessary including the painting of all building." To begin his medical practice anew, he needed a building, and he hoped that the Southern Baptists might rent him the building in the Cerro, which needed so many repairs that the Board was thinking of selling it. The Board acknowledged his request to rent the Buenos Aires building at their meeting on March 4th, but no action was taken. Díaz met with some success in his quest to find new sources of funding for his independent mission; on March 10 he wrote a letter to Annie Armstrong, thanking her for a donation and describing his new mission work, with a focus on its permanence and independence.[46]

[46] Díaz to Landrum and Díaz to McConnell, both dated February 25, 1902 and both in SBHLA,

In 1902 and 1903 Díaz also cultivated his burgeoning alliance with Landmark Baptists in Arkansas and other old Southwestern states, and he soon identified himself and his congregation as Landmark Baptists. He wrote frequently to the editor of the *Arkansas Baptist*, W. A. Clark, to whom he had been introduced by Tichenor. Díaz became a primary rallying cry for Landmarkers, who saw all their worst fears about centralized power and urban leadership realized in the Board's treatment of him and his congregation. The *Arkansas Baptist*, a Landmark newspaper that changed its name in July 1903 to the *Landmark Baptist*, published a piece in March 1903 claiming that Landmark Baptists "only object to the unscriptural methods adopted and power assumed by many boards; notably the Home Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in its relentless and cruel persecution of Dr. Diaz, of Cuba." In April, it called Díaz "our missionary" and contrasted him with Daniel, the "Home Board Bishop." Soon after, a letter from Díaz to his allies in Arkansas read, "thank God our members are 'Landmarkers.'"[47] Landmark Baptists in the old Southwest, already predisposed to

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URL, box 6, folder 23; Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, March 4, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21; Diaz to Armstrong, March 10, 1902, original in SBHLA, URL collection, box 6, folder 24 (typewritten copy in folder 23). Annie Armstrong was the head of the Women's Missionary Union, which was affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. For the Board's discussions about what to do with the Buenos Aires building in the Cerro, see Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, December 9, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21; Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 1, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21; and Greer dissertation, p. 167-173. Greer's citations include some records which appear to have been lost, including the HMB Minutes of January 8, 1903 and February 3, 1903; "A penciled note in files of Home Mission Board, Atlanta" (regarding the visit to the sanitation department to ascertain the number of interments in the Baptist cemetery in the past year); HMB Minutes of April 23, 1902; a copy of an article from *The Arkansas Baptist* that was apparently reprinted in the *Havana Post* on March 2, 1902; and the "Fifty-Eighth Annual Report of the Home Mission Board," *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1903, p. 163 (for the missionaries associated with Díaz). Most of this information was gleaned from the February 3, 1903 minutes, which included the report of the January 1903 visit to Cuba.

[47] An untitled editorial in the *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 21 (June 3, 1903), p. 8 recounted how Clark and Díaz had met at Díaz's first visit to the SBC, and stressed that "a regular correspondence has been kept up" between them ever since. J. H. Milburn, "Dr. Eaton Disposed

criticism of centralized institutions on theological grounds, saw in Díaz an example of why the Southern Baptist Convention had to be saved from the inevitable corruption that came with "organized work."

Despite his plans and his new allies, Díaz could not hide his anguish as his relationship with the Southern Baptist Board disintegrated. From the end of January through the beginning of March, 1902, Díaz's mood swung from optimism to depression and back again. At this point, he felt abandoned by his friends on the Board, and he was more troubled by that than by any political or doctrinal issue. Over a period of two days at the end of January, he wrote a quick succession of three letters to Tichenor that illustrate how his mind fluctuated between anguish and acceptance. On January 30, he wrote to Tichenor with a sense of resignation about what the Board committee had accomplished during its visit to Cuba. "The plan of the work that I carry on...has been changed," he wrote, "But, [since] Bro McConell thought this is the best I obey him. My whole work has been place on the hands of bro Daniel and I'll be confined to preach in the Station [illegible] Gethsemane. Very well, the Lord knows what to do, and if this new plan He don't like, it will not work." The next morning he marked another letter to Tichenor as "Confidential" and wrote, "I agree in all Mr. McConell wants as I have neither the Spirit of antagonizing your Board nor the money to carry on the work. But feel very sad; very, indeed I think I am dying by inches.... I feel very, but very low. I think I have no moral power, no friends etc. The very mens I taught on this work are my bitters enemy." That afternoon, he went to see Rev. Daniel to "put all the work in his hand," and the two of them talked over the new organization. Later that same day, Díaz

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to Tolerate the Gospel Mission," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 10 (March 11, 1903), p. 3, 6; "General News," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 13 (April 8, 1903), p. 5; Letter from Díaz published as "Another Persecution," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 14 (April 15, 1903), p. 2.

wrote a second letter to Tichenor, saying that he "began to feel better and I am allright now; as I did understood something I was unable to understood by the Board's Comitte. I feel great deal better now. So, please don't pay atention to my two letters as I think every thing will work harmonious and for good."[48] Díaz might have been glad to know that Tichenor was not his only professed ally in the South; some Board members still believed they could work with him again in the future. On February 15, McConnell wrote to Díaz to tell him that although some members of the HMB were not willing to rehire or reappoint him, McConnell himself was dedicated to "changing the adverse opinions concerning you among our brethren." He suggested that Díaz needed to "convince your brethren [in Cuba]... that you mean to give your life work to the faithful discharge of the duties of pastor and preacher" in order regain the trust of his brethren in the South.[49] But by the end of February, Díaz had changed his mind again, and concluded that his relationship with the Board was unredeemable. "I did all in my power and ability to remain with the Board as their employ," he wrote defiantly to McConnell, "but your own words proof me that you dont want or need my services."[50] The Southerners had other Cuban men with whom they agreed on key questions about Cuba's future, both as a political entity and as a Baptist mission field, and these were the people who would be judging Díaz's faithfulness. Instead of accepting this reversal, Díaz decided that his political activity and his methods of working were irreconcilable with the new Southern Baptist ideals and goals.

[48] Diaz to Tichenor, January 30, 1902 and two letters dated January 31, 1902; all three are in SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24.
[49] McConnell to Diaz, February 15, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24.
[50] Diaz to McConnell, February 25, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23; emphasis in original.

As the U.S. occupation of Cuba entered its final month, Díaz began to liken his "persecution" by Southern Baptists and other North Americans in Cuba to his treatment by the Spanish in the 1880s and 1890s. "A tremendous persecution is at hand carried on by the American Catholics in Cuba," he wrote to Tichenor on March 3. "I am alone. The dear members of the Board whom I love as you well know have treated me and my church in such a way as no unconverted Cuban would treat a negro slave." He reminded Tichenor that they had together "told the Cubans, Baptists and others that this building was bought for them to worship God in," and that they had "gone through City after City, State after State, people by people begging their money for the Gethsemane Church of Havana." The Home Mission Board was now making him into a liar. "Now your Committee come and tell them, 'This is not yours; and if your Pastor has told you this he has not told the truth.'" His understanding of Gethsemane's "moral ownership" of the Jané building grew out of this interpretation of the building's history. "I told the Committee that we all recognized their rights to the building as Trustees of the S. B. Conv.," he wrote Tichenor, "but we can't give up the place of worship unless this taking back be the will of those who contributed the money for the purpose." At the same time, Díaz knew that his occupation-era political activities and opinions had made it likely that some members of the Board would never trust or protect him again. This was true even though he explained his political activities as directly related to an orthodox Baptist position on the separation of church and state. Díaz pointed out that some Southern Baptists seemed to have forgotten about his prewar and wartime political actions, which they had heartily supported. "Dr. Landrum the President of the Board, in a recent letter published in the papers, says that I have committed a great fault as I stumped for Gen.

Maso the defeated candidate," he wrote to Tichenor. "It is true I did and I made several speeches on the streets, as Gen. Maso promised the Cubans that he would not consent that one cent should be used in supporting any religion and as I believed in that I tried to help him as I did with Mr. McKinley on his first election in the States, when he told us he would help Cuba. This is my only crime."[51] His crime, of course, was not a crime at all; rather, the Southern Baptists who had forgotten his history, impugned his character, and tried to tear his congregation apart were the real criminals.

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The identities, methods and interests of the cultural brokers that had made both Cuban and Southern coalitions possible also began to change in these years. Díaz's own stock as a cultural broker had been falling since at least 1898—perhaps even since 1896—and others began to fill the gap that he left, especially as Tichenor's health failed. Because the politics of the U.S.-Cuban relationship had stabilized into something very unlike what they had been before 1898, the HMB no longer needed Díaz to explain Cubans and Southerners to each other. They had the option of other Cubans, many of whom more readily agreed to the Board's desires for hierarchy and control; they also had a Southern missionary in Cuba who was supposed to be their permanent agent and who agreed with the Board's goals and methods. The occupation period saw the rise of a new kind of Cuban cultural broker to mediate the U.S.-Cuban relationship, one more attuned to modern and progressive U.S. norms than to Cuban autonomy. More importantly, however, Cubans no longer wanted or needed a cultural broker like Díaz to mediate

[51] Diaz to Tichenor, March 3, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24 (copy in folder 23).

between them and the United States—instead, other Cubans such as Cova became the new breed of cultural broker. The role of the U.S. in all aspects of Cuban life was so clear, and in many cases so oppressive, that Cubans understood that an alliance with North Americans no longer meant support for Cuban independence. A U.S.-Cuban cultural alliance could mean many other things now: profitable trade, racial subordination, political manipulation, or a particular kind of subordinate mission relationship. But it would no longer be a brotherly empire.

On March 20, 1902, the U.S. occupation of Cuba came to an end and Tomás Estrada Palma, scion of a new kind of cultural broker, took office as independent Cuba's first president. Like the island's political economy under Spanish rule, the Cuban Republic's political economy under the Platt Amendment "served the interests of foreigners, as did local elites." In this way, Cuba's nominal political independence was not mirrored by a concomitant economic independence, or even by a workable independent politics. The new Cuban reality shattered the separatist coalition and created a new kind of cultural broker to mediate between a nominally independent Cuba and the United States. These Cubans "were dedicated to the ideal of *Cuba Libre* but also cared for the United States," and exhorted their fellow Cubans to live up to the expectations of the North Americans who controlled so many of the resources in postwar Cuba. If Cubans could prove that they were reasonable and worthy of independence, then this new type of cultural broker was certain that the United States would continue to live up to the promises embodied in the Teller Amendment. Many of these Cubans resisted outright annexation of the island, but relied on their allies in the U.S. to channel Cuban energies into an appropriate form, an ideal that they based on the North American forms with

which they were familiar. When Cuba and the United States signed a Reciprocity Treaty in 1903, providing for fewer barriers to trade between the two countries, new cultural brokers acted as agents as Cuba became part of the North American economic orbit. Cubans educated in U.S. colleges and working for U.S. firms became key to the island's political and economic functioning.[52]

In the Baptist world in Havana, too, a new type of cultural broker was emerging as the old one faded away. Daniel increasingly moved to push Díaz out of that role, and Gethsemane church rebelled against the deference to North American interests that being an effective cultural broker now required. On the same day that the U.S. occupation ended, Gethsemane held a congregational business meeting in which they declared null and void the quit claim to the Jané building that they had drawn up the previous January. The congregation now claimed that the procedures followed during the Board committee's visit in January had been incorrect, thus making its actions at that time invalid.[53] In addition, the quit claim was invalid because only "the wills of donors" who had given money for the building could determine the building's ownership, so Gethsemane "wants to know beforehand whether the money sent for buying the building was given to the HMB in order that the Gethsemane church could have a suitable place

[52] My thinking on these issues has been influenced by the work of Louis Pérez, especially in *Cuba Between Empires*, chapter 21; and *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 3rd ed. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), chapter 5 (quote at p. 148). Pérez discusses those whom I have called cultural brokers in *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, p. 113-117.

[53] Gethsemane's written protest stated that the January quit claim was invalid: "(First) because the church members had no time to study and discuss the questions. (Second) because they assembled in a day that is not the fixed one for church business as would be the 3rd Thursday of the month. (Third) Because that meeting was composed in a majority of childrens and visitors as they were invited by an entertainment give to welcome the committee of Atlanta. (Fourth) Because when they came to the vote many children and visitors vote too." Translation of Act of Gethsemane Church, Havana, March 20, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21.

for worship or usufruct the building." Finally, the quit claim failed to recognize that Gethsemane itself had contributed money to the purchase and upkeep of the building as well. Gethsemane celebrated the date of Cuba's independence by challenging the Southern Baptists' control over the most important Baptist resource in Havana. As Díaz's *independentista* streak became divorced from the reality of Cuba's attenuated independence, other Cubans, especially José Cova, slowly filled the gap. In the years to come, Cova and other Baptist Cubans became the ones most prominently associated with Southern Baptist evangelizing in Cuba, aligning their interests and values with those of the U.S. denomination and acting as the Southerners' most important allies in Havana and throughout western Cuba.[54]

The leaders of the Home Mission Board recognized by the spring of 1902 that their dispute with Díaz and Gethsemane had become irresolvable, so the Board moved to redirect popular Southern Baptist interest in Cuba. "Our other stations on the island of Cuba are in a prosperous and hopeful condition," the Board's Cuba Committee reported in April, "and those in charge of them are diligent and faithful in their work, thoroughly and cordially in harmony with our Board and worthy of all confidence and support." While regretting "that Dr. Diaz has pursued such a course," since "the inevitable effect is that he has removed himself further from our Board and its work than ever before," the Board outlined a plan for expansion of Baptist missions in Cuba. They envisioned a Southern Baptist-directed mission organization that revolved not around Díaz and Gethsemane, but around planting new Baptist churches in many different towns, strengthening Calvary Baptist Church in Havana, and formulating a new plan for Baptist

[54] Translation of Act of Gethsemane Church, Havana, March 20, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. The growing influence of Cova and other Cubans after 1902 is discussed in the epilogue.

schools to charge tuition, so as to reach "the more well to do and influential classes."[55] At the same time, Board members began to harden their public position on Díaz and Gethsemane as they looked toward the May 1902 Southern Baptist Convention. The Board's strategy for dealing with Gethsemane's new combativeness revolved around preparing for the possibility that they would have to oppose this community, which they had previously and very publicly lionized; they communicated with their attorneys in Havana often during 1902, giving direction about how exactly to prepare for an imminent lawsuit against Díaz and Gethsemane.[56] In addition, Board writers introduced other Cubans to their Baptist readers, providing Southerners with alternate Cubans to support and wordlessly marginalizing Díaz. In the May 8th edition of the *Christian Index,* for example, Rev. Daniel introduced Rev. E. V. Carbonell, a Cuban Baptist who had worked in Florida, to his readers. "He is intelligent, eloquent, brilliant, consecrated," Daniel wrote about Carbonell, who would eventually be named to lead Calvary Church in Havana. Daniel emphasized that other Cuban Baptists, although not as famous as Díaz, continued to work tirelessly on the island. "Southern Baptists should be proud of and thank God for such men as J. V. Cova, at Matanzas; E. V. Carbonell, at Colon, E. F. Rodrigues, at Sagua la Grande; A. U. Cabrera, at Santa Clara, and others," Daniel wrote. "On no other mission field in the world can there be found such an intelligent,

[55] "Report by Committee on Cuba," April 21, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 23 (a draft with handwritten changes is in folder 24); Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Home Mission Board, April 23, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21.
[56] See directions to Dr. E. Ferrer y Picabia, the Board's attorney, in a letter dated July 16, 1902, excerpted in Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 29, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21; and those dated September 8, 1902 and discussed in Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, October 7, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21.

consecrated band of native gospel ministers as we have in Cuba."[57] Daniel did not even mention Díaz.

At the May 1902 Southern Baptist Convention in Asheville, North Carolina, the broken alliance between Díaz and the Home Mission Board was on display for all to see. Because the Board knew that Díaz was planning to attend the SBC and Tichenor was too ill to travel, Hillyer asked Tichenor to write down the histories of the Board's properties in Cuba, Díaz's actions, and what the HMB knew and when they knew it; in the absence of Tichenor's mediating presence and institutional memory, at least the Board would have a written statement of his understanding of the Board's early relationship with Díaz and Gethsemane. Tichenor sent not only a record of his own recollections but also a collection of papers and letters documenting the Southern Baptist experience in Cuba.[58] Díaz apparently paid his own way to the convention, and once there, asked for time to address the meeting as a whole. What happened next is unclear. In 1903, a statement authored by the Board explained that "a resolution looking to have him appear and speak before the body" was introduced, and "referred to a committee in the usual way." This committee "invited Dr. Diaz before them and as often happens they came together informally before the committee organized." Díaz "was asked to withdraw for a moment until the organization could be effected. He did so and in a short time they sent to call

[57] Rev. C. D. Daniel, "About Missions: Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 82, no. 19 (May 8, 1902), p. 4. Cova wrote for Southern Baptist publications with more frequency during these months than he had in the past; see Rev. J. V. Cova, untitled article, *Our Home Field* (May 1902), p. 1 (typewritten copy in SBHLA, URL, box 5, folder 39), and J.V. Cova, "From Cuba," *Christian Index*, vol. 82, no. 25 (June 19, 1902), p. 4. In "From Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 82, no. 47 (November 20, 1902), p. 4, Daniel mentioned that Carbonell was acting as Calvary's pastor.

[58] Tichenor to Hillyer, April 25, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24; also quoted in "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 30-31, in SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9. See also Tichenor to Hillyer, May 6, 190[2], SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24. This is likely the origin of many of the letters now in the possession of the SBHLA.

him in when he refused to come." Díaz undoubtedly saw things differently. In the confusion of translation and in the absence of someone to shepherd him through the Convention's processes, he believed that he had been shut out of speaking to the Convention, where he had always been so cordially honored in the past. Díaz was deeply offended and finally convinced that he would never again work with the Board or with anyone in the Southern Baptist Convention.[59]

Gethsemane responded to what they saw as the poor treatment of their minister by stating their formal claim to all income derived from the Jané building, and the rationale they would use to legally challenge the Board's title, in a long letter to the Board. The church first stated its intention "to live an independent life" in accordance with the wishes of the Board. But in order to do this, the congregation needed full rights of use of the building that it believed it should legally own. The congregation stated its understanding "that the financial committee of the church can pay the whole work of this city with the rents of the flats, ... the contributions of the members and those sent from abroad, so that we respectfully ask the HMB to transfer to the committee on finance or trustees the rent for the building in order to be able to carry on the work." Gethsemane wanted to "expand in our mission in Havana and pay for the repairs on the building etc. without the intervention of a Roman Catholic lawyer." But their request to the Board went beyond mere expediency. "Letters received from every corner of the U.S. state that they have given their money as a donation for Diaz and his church but never to be a property of the

[59] "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," July 24, 1903, p. 32, in SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9. "The committee reported these facts to the convention and the matter was dropped," the 1903 statement continued. "It has been heralded abroad that the convention refused to hear Dr. Diaz but the facts are as above stated. It may be assumed as a matter of course that if Dr. Diaz had appeared before the committee and manifested a brotherly and proper spirit they would have recommended that an hour be set apart for him to speak and the convention would have granted it."

Board," Gethsemane's letter stated. "As long as the Board was in charge of paying all disbursements of the work in Havana, there was a reason that the rents of the church building were collected by the Board." But since the Board wished to separate from Gethsemane, the circumstances had changed. Because Gethsemane would now "make all disbursements it is elementary rule of honesty and Christianity that the church must collect the rent, contributions and so on in order to pay all missionaries and church work." The congregation argued that since contributions made for the purchase of the building had been intended to benefit Díaz and Gethsemane, the Board should now turn over control of those assets to the congregation so that it could continue its work independently of the Board.[60]

Gethsemane's letter made clear the congregation's frustration with the Board, its belief in the Baptist doctrine of the separation of church and state, and its desire to put "terrestrial" problems behind it so that it could focus on gospel work. Not only did Gethsemane state the right of its representative to "the very same cordiality and hearty welcome as we have always done with you," but it also noted that "since January 1902 we have been waiting for your behavior in a Christian way and we've also being trying to use every peaceful measure before going to claims in a different ground.... We are also sorry to state that our Board has not put any attention to this affair in the Christian spirit of justice." The Board's lack of attention to affairs in Cuba had put the congregation in a bind, since it believed that airing Baptist disputes in public would only damage the work of evangelization. "We feared and fear that that our claims if goes into public opinion in Cuba shall stop the development of the gospel in Cuba," the letter said, "as the Romanists

[60] Gethsemane's letter, dated June 27th and postdated in Havana on July 3rd, was quoted in its entirety in Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 29, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21.

shall point out and our quarrels destroy the work of so many years." In adherence to its longstanding position "that the religion must be separate from the government," Gethsemane wanted to resolve its problems with the Board in private, rather than in the courts. The Board "must show their love to Jesus and Christian work...by settling this affair as is suggested.... Otherwise we will be compelled to exercise our rights as a matter of business, not as a Christian's affair as we want to. We want to put an end to this difficulty which hurt the feelings of our brethren. We know that if this happens, the gospel will lose grounds in Cuba." Gethsemane wanted only "to devote our energies only to the Christian work instead of losing time in such terrestrial discussions."[61] The congregation had no desire to air Baptist disputes in public, but if the Board continued to drag its feet in decisions regarding Cuba and deny the Cuban church's right to its own assets, Gethsemane would be forced to make public claim to its rights, including its right to property.

Judge George Hillyer, on behalf of the Home Mission Board, wrote a reply to Gethsemane that stated its right to the title and income from the Jané building, but also "deferred" their "formal answer...until our Bro. Daniel can return to Havana." In the meantime, the Board acknowledged, "your church is worshipping in our Jané church building, being there holding subject to our title but by our consent." At the same time, the congregation "must understand that the title to the church building including the flats is in our Home Mission Board as trustees for the Southern Baptist Convention, and we cannot say or do anything that would militate against that title. Nor can we consent for

[61] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 29, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. At the end of the letter, the congregation reminded the Board of the right to private property enshrined in the new Cuban constitution: "Constitution of Republic of Cuba, 14th of April 1902 Article 23, page 8, 5th paragraph. 'In no case the state could not confiscate the properties.'"

your church or anyone else to do so." For these reasons, the Board wrote, "rent of the flats will continue to be collected and applied with other funds of the Board."[62] This letter—although probably mailed from Atlanta shortly after it was written on July 16th—was returned to Atlanta in October by the postmaster. Hillyer also wrote in July to the Board's attorney in Havana, Dr. E. Ferrer y Picabia, asking him to collect rents from the tenants of the Jané building as usual and making him aware of Gethsemane's claim to the building. Ferrer replied on July 19th that he had had no trouble collecting the July rents, and that "under the present situation it would be for the Gethsemane people to sue the Board in order to get said possession [of the flats], and I have no doubt that they would lose their suit unless they proved to be entitled to said possession according to the tenets, rules, etc. of the Baptist church." This, of course, was precisely the claim that Gethsemane was making—that the "tenets, rules, etc. of the Baptist church," especially the doctrine of congregational independence and the intentions of Baptist donors, meant that title to the Jané building should be theirs. Ferrer's reply may not have provided much comfort to Hillyer or the other members of the Board, and due to poor mail service, Gethsemane congregation was again left wondering about the Southern Baptist response to their action.[63]

From the fall of 1902 until the spring of 1903, relations between the Board and Gethsemane were in a holding pattern as each side prepared for what both saw as an imminent legal battle. Each side spent a great deal of time strengthening their alliances on

[62] Hillyer was at this time the chairman of the Board's standing Committee for Work in Cuba. The full text of Hillyer's letters to Gethsemane and Ferrer, as well as Ferrer's reply, were included in Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 29, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21.

[63] For the return of the letter "by the postal authorities without having been delivered," see Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, October 7, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21.

the opposite shore, and a brief Board visit to Havana in January 1903 did nothing to resolve the property dispute. Díaz wrote frequently to his Landmark allies in the South, excoriating the Board for its heavy-handed attempts at control of the Cuban congregation, accusing the Board of collusion with Catholics, and burnishing his image as the leader of a faithful, embattled Baptist congregation.[64] The Southern Board worked to stabilize Calvary Baptist Church, the English-speaking congregation that worshipped in the Jané building, and published frequent praise in the Southern Baptist press of Cubans who were loyal to the SBC.[65] The Board stopped paying the salaries of some of their Cuban Baptist missionaries whom they believed were followers of Díaz and "gospel missioners" also being paid by Gethsemane, although Díaz claimed that they had in fact fired people who had never been employed by his organization.[66] When the Board's Cuban attorney took a

[64] For Díaz's correspondence with Landmark leaders, see, for instance, "A Cuban Idea: Havana City Baptist Missions," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 4 (January 28, 1903), p. 3; "Another Persecution," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 14 (April 15, 1903), p. 2, in which Díaz calls the members of Gethsemane "Landmarkers"; and "Some Serious Charges," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 15 (April 22, 1903), p. 12. Díaz also continued his long friendship with J. S. Paine, a merchant from Boston who had known Díaz since at least the 1880s and who had been an early contributor to his work; see Paine's letter to his minister in Boston, published in the *Havana Post* and reprinted as "Letter of Mr. J. S. Paine," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 7 (February 18, 1903), p. 3. Paine apparently died in Havana in May 1903, and was buried in the Baptist cemetery; see *Havana Post*, May 17, 1903, quoted in Harold Edward Greer, Jr., "History of Southern Baptist Mission Work in Cuba, 1886-1916" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1965), 180.

[65] Adalee Branham, one of two women who were briefly Southern Baptist missionaries in Cuba before illness forced their return to the U.S., wrote to the Board in June 1902 that Calvary was "a mere family affair" that could not afford to pay its own expenses. The Board needed another congregation in residence at Jané to bolster its own claims of ownership, so it scrambled to find a permanent Cuban minister for the congregation and agreed to pay Calvary's expenses. For Branham's letter, see Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 1, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. The Board attempted to bring Cova to Havana to act as Calvary's pastor (see Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 4, 1902, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21), but Cova declined the position; in the meantime Daniel wrote that E. V. Carbonell was Calvary's pastor (see C. D. Daniel, "From Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 82, no. 47 (November 20, 1902), p. 4). For an example of Southern Baptist praise of "loyal" Cuban Baptists and of Rev. Daniel, see Rev. J. G. Chastain, "From Cuba," *Christian Index*, vol. 82, no. 52 (December 25, 1902), p. 4.

[66] The Board stopped payments to "Mrs. Diaz, Miss Minnie Diaz, Mrs. Hernandez, Rev. Pablo Valdez and Miss Lozano" in the spring of 1903. For their decision to do this, see Minutes of a

position with the Cuban government, the Board hired a North American attorney, Ernest Conant, who was resident in Havana.[67] Gethsemane, meanwhile, had retained its own attorney, begun a girls' school in part of the Jané building, and allowed a few church staff or members to take up residence there.[68] In January 1903, a few members of the Board visited Cuba and suggested that other Christians mediate the dispute, rather than taking it to the courts. After a day's consideration, a Gethsemane committee rejected the idea, apparently believing that mediation would not resolve the legal question of title to the

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Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 4, 1902 and January 1, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. The list of names of those dismissed is given in the Southern Baptist *Annual*, 1903, p. 163. However, Díaz claimed in a letter to the *Landmark Baptist* that the "missionaries of Gethsemane church at that time were F. P. Bueno, Alfred Diaz, Julio Sanchez, Marte Lozano, A. Luzano and M. L. Fajairo," and that the Board had "been unjust by dismissing those faithful missionaries who worked for twenty years honestly and faithfully." See "Diaz Heard From," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 23 (June 17, 1903), p. 13.

[67] For Ferrer, see Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 1, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21, and "A Friend in Havana," *Christian Index* (January 8, 1903), p. 6, which thanks Ferrer for having "check-mated all the shrewd moves of Dr. Diaz," whom it calls a "man of schemes"; Conant is first mentioned in extant Board records in Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, March 3, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21, although his firm was probably hired during the Board's January 1903 trip to Cuba. Conant had a law partner whose last name was Page, and the firm also sometimes "associated with them Mr. Desvernines in bringing necessary suits." Minutes of a meeting of the Home Mission Board, May 29, 1903, SBHLA, URL collection, box 10, folder 21. Pablo Desvernine had been the head of the Cuban cabinet appointed in 1899 under John Brooke, the first U.S. military governor of Cuba, and was later a professor of law at the University of Havana; if the Southern Baptist had the benefit of his legal advice, then they had gained an extremely influential Cuban ally. William Belmont Parker, *Cubans of To-day* (New York: Putnam, 1919), 435-36.

[68] Gethsemane's attorney, whose name is given only as Ortolazas, was mentioned in "Baptists To Have Trouble," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 18 (May 13, 1903), p. 3, which was a reprint of an article from the *Havana Post*. The specificity of the Board's instructions to Conant and Daniel, which include directions to "remove any school that may be found in the Jané bldg and especially to eject any person or persons who may have taken any room or rooms for sleeping apartments," lead me to believe that they had fairly accurate knowledge of Gethsemane's activities. See the Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, March 14, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. In addition, in April Díaz wrote to his Landmark allies "that the board would not consent for the sexton to live in the building nor use the upper galleries where there are accommodations for about 300 children, for mission school where we are teaching 200 girls already." His letter was reprinted as "Baptists Presented By a Baptist Board," *Arkansas Baptist* vol. 23, no. 18 (May 13, 1903), p. 6.

Jané building.[69] It had been six months since Gethsemane had stated its own desire for a quick resolution of the dispute out of the public eye, and the congregation had had enough. All the components were in place for a battle in the Cuban courts.

The two parties filed lawsuits in May 1903, although the Board discussed trying to evict Díaz and Gethsemane from the Jané building as early as mid-March. In April, the Board voted to instruct its attorneys to inform Gethsemane that "the qualified occupancy" of the Jané building that the church had enjoyed "will be terminated on the first day of January next, 1904, and that by or before that date the said church, its pastor, its servants, visitors and friends, are required to vacate the premises." The Board did not want to act "with unnecessary precipitancy or harshness," but wanted its attorneys to "feel free to proceed with cautious deliberation" to gain complete possession of the building. Rev. Daniel and Conant, however, quickly suggested via cablegram that the eviction should take place as soon as possible and "suit must be brought at once."[70] The Board and Gethsemane filed suits within days of each other, each attempting to assert their right to

[69] The only surviving Board report on this 6-day trip to Havana is incomplete (see Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, January 29, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21). I have gleaned the events of this trip from a 1965 dissertation that apparently had access to a complete copy of these or other Board minutes (it cites minutes of February 3, 1903, which I have been unable to locate) that included a report on the trip. See Harold Edward Greer, Jr., "History of Southern Baptist Mission Work in Cuba," 168-69. Greer writes that the Board based its proposal for mediation on the sixth chapter of First Corinthians, "which advocates that disputes between Christians be decided by other Christians and not be taken before law courts of unbelievers."

[70] Minutes of a meeting of the Home Mission Board, March 14, April 21, and May 29, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. The Board's letter to Conant and Daniel, as well as Daniel's April 29 cablegram reply and the Board's discussion of an immediate versus "deliberate" eviction process, are all contained in Minutes of a Called Meeting of the Home Mission Board, April 30, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. The Board was split on the issue of how quickly to move forward with the lawsuit and eviction. At the April 30 meeting, F. C. McConnell, the corresponding secretary, "expressed an earnest wish that the matter might be deferred" and that Gethsemane should be given plenty of notice before being asked to leave.

both possession of and title to the Jané building and other Baptist properties in Cuba.[71] The Board, because it held a title that was presumed to be valid (although its validity was one of the main points that Gethsemane wished to challenge), began the case in a stronger position and was able to quickly ask the judge to evict Díaz and Gethsemane from the Jané building. Cuban law, in the civil law tradition, looked more favorably on the rights of whoever was in possession of property in question, and the Board wanted to establish its exclusive possession. This action would be preliminary to a court finding in the matter of the title's validity, although its possession of the building would strengthen the Board's case.

On September 5, 1903, the *Havana Post* published the news of the eviction of Díaz and Gethsemane from the Jané building the previous day. "The ejectment proceedings brought by the Home Mission Board against Rev. Alberto J. Diaz...took place on time," the *Post* reported.

> At about nine o'clock the house was opened by the janitor and Rev. Diaz and a number of the members of his Church gathered within. The official representing the Judge entered the building, and on seeing the people gathered there, asked if they wanted to pray, because otherwise he would commence at once his ejectment proceedings. Dr. Diaz asked for a few minutes, but as there was no motion made towards the holding of the services, the Judge proceeded to remove the property from the Church.
>
> This was the signal for general weeping among the women present, and hot words from the male representatives of the Church and those representing the Court, and some bad words were exchanged, most of them anything but complimentary. Everything which was not considered personal property of the Board or Dr. Diaz was put into the Street, with the exception of the Church Bible and the communion service, which out of feeling of respect was left within the Church.
>
> Rev. Diaz piled his goods up in the Street in anything but an artistic way and then had pictures taken with those of the weeping women, so as to make an altogether dramatic effect. Many people attracted by the

[71] I regret that I was unable to acquire any legal records created during the course of these lawsuits. See chapter four, n1 on the difficulty of foreigners' access to Cuban historical records regarding property.

> unusual scene stopped and watched the proceedings and were taken in the picture also.[72]

The Board's attorneys were given exclusive possession of the building, and even Rev. Daniel and Calvary Baptist Church, the Board's allies, had to request access to the building from Conant in the next months. The news of the "dramatic" eviction scene was soon broadcast around the U.S. South, to Landmarkers and Board supporters alike. The Board had recently begun receiving the Havana *Post*, and Conant wrote them with his own account of the eviction. The Board had adopted a detailed statement that gave their interpretation of "the Díaz affair" in July, and approved an amended version of it in September. This Statement was provided to Baptist publications like the *Christian Index* and *Our Home Field*.[73] Díaz sent the *Landmark Baptist* a cablegram, which read, "Gethsemane furniture and Bible in the street," in time for their September 9 issue. Landmark allies also published accounts of the Board's actions, including the eviction, in their periodicals during the fall of 1903.[74] The interpretations of what had happened, and why, differed profoundly. The eviction and the dispute between Díaz and the Board signaled a fissure among Baptists in the South, in addition to that which already existed between Cuban and Southern Baptists.

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[72] Article from the *Havana Post*, September 5, 1903, quoted in Harold Edward Greer, Jr., "History of Southern Baptist Mission Work in Cuba," 182. The HMB's "Statement on Cuba" quotes this same article, p. 38. The photograph discussed here is probably the same or a similar one to that published in the November 4, 1903 issue of the *Landmark Baptist*, p. 9. See Fig. 6.
[73] Minutes of a Meeting of the Home Mission Board, July 24, September 10, and October 6, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21; "Statement on the Situation in Cuba by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," adopted on July 24 and approved in amended version on September 10, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9. The Board's 1903 Statement will be discussed further in the Epilogue.
[74] "Diaz Cablegram," *Landmark Baptist* vol. 23, no. 35 (September 9, 1903), p. 9; "Home Board Inquisition," *Landmark Baptist* vol. 23, no. 36 (September 16, 1903), p. 14; "Home Board to be Exposed," *Landmark Baptist* vol. 23, no. 37 (September 23, 1903), p. 9; "General Association Triumphant!" and "General Association Proceedings," *Landmark Baptist* vol. 23, no. 44 (November 4, 1903), p. 1-4, 9; see Fig. 6.

In October, Díaz traveled to a large meeting of Landmark Baptists in Little Rock, Arkansas, which was the occasion for a formal investigation into and condemnation of the Board's treatment of Díaz and Gethsemane. The Landmark General Association found that Díaz had been "completely vindicated," while reporting that the evidence "convicts the Home Mission Board of criminality from a Baptist standpoint." An investigation committee "found that Diaz was charged with four offences," namely that he had mortgaged the Jané building, that he had held the title to the Buenos Aires building in his own name, "that he had dabbled in politics" by holding political meetings in the Jané building, and that he had "allowed an objectionable person to preach in his pulpit." After investigating both the Board's published statement on Cuba and "a great pile of letters and other documents" that Díaz had brought from Cuba, the committee concluded that Díaz had been authorized by the Home Mission Board to take the first two actions. In addition, although the committee granted "that putting this mortgage on the Jane Building was a business blunder," it argued that Díaz's power of attorney "would have allowed him to sell outright all of the church property and to put the money in his pocket, if he had been thus evilly disposed." The fact that he did not do so "shows that he was and is an honest man with whom valuable property can be trusted." Díaz denied the third charge, and in any case "the evidence showed that the politics preached by Diaz was the doctrine of the separation of church and state—a very precious Baptist doctrine for which our forefathers died." The Landmark committee found that the fourth charge was regarding Rev. Justin D. Fulton, whom they described as "a sound and earnest Baptist preacher," and whose specialty was warning North Americans about the supposed dangers of Catholicism; Rev. Fulton was apparently "objectionable" to the Board, but to

neither Díaz nor the Landmarkers. The Landmarkers, critics of hierarchy in Baptist life and organizations, found that the Board's charges against Díaz were groundless. "The committee found from the evidence that Dr. Diaz was innocent of any wrong doing," the *Landmark Baptist* reported the next week.[75]

The same Landmark committee, however, found that the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board had tried to exert far too much control over Gethsemane, a sovereign Baptist church, and over its minister, Díaz. "From the same documents," the investigation committee reported, "it was found that the Board was guilty of exercising Episcopal authority over Diaz and the Gethsemane church." The Board had "trumped up" the charges against Díaz in order "to furnish the Board an excuse to get rid of a Landmark Baptist, which sort of Baptist that Board hates." The conflict over hierarchy and control in Baptist organizations, then being played out in the conflict between the Southern Baptist Convention and the Landmark Association, was at the same time being worked out in Cuba. Díaz, invested as he was in the quintessentially Baptist ideas of freedom of conscience and local independence, "was too much of a Baptist" for the hierarchical, organized Board. Benjamin Bogard, an editor of the *Landmark Baptist* and a key ally of Díaz, wrote that Díaz's plight had shone new light on the conflict ongoing in Baptist circles in the southern U.S. "I am glad that men and women are still willing to suffer martyrdom if need be, for Baptist principles," Bogard wrote in praise of Díaz and Gethsemane. "I am glad this thing has come to light for it shows us whither we are drifting. If it had not happened we might soon have been beyond help or hope. But a reaction has set in. Baptist independence has asserted itself." True Baptist principles in

[75] "General Association Proceedings," *The Landmark Baptist* vol. 23, no. 44 (November 4, 1903), p. 2-4. The Baptist General Association meeting took place on October 31st.

the U.S. South might be saved, Bogard thought, because a preacher and his flock in Cuba had shown just how far the SBC had "drifted" from its origins.[76]

By late 1903, the reshuffling of alliances between Baptists in Cuba and the U.S. South was complete. Progressive Cubans like Cova remained in alliance with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, united in the quest to minister to as many Cubans "of the better sort" as possible. They believed that hierarchy and direction were a necessary part of an efficient missions organization, and provided a new type of cultural broker for the progressive Southern Baptists who wanted to retain control of Baptist properties in Cuba. Anti-hierarchy Baptists in the South, united under the Landmark banner, allied with Díaz and his congregation in a struggle for what they saw as the freedom-loving souls of Baptists everywhere. They wanted no part of the Board's "organized work," seeing it as an imitation of the Catholic church and the "trusts" dominating economic life. Such concentration of power in a few dangerous institutions, the Landmarkers believed, threatened not only each congregation's responsibility to spread the gospel, but also each individual's ability to respond to the divine call as they heard it. The brotherly empire, built by Southerners and Cubans in the 1880s and 1890s, had dissolved, and in its place were two separate alliances, only one of which would survive the next decade.

[76] "General Association Proceedings," *The Landmark Baptist* vol. 23, no. 44 (November 4, 1903), p. 2-4.

Fig. 6. Eviction of Gethsemane Baptist Church from the Jané building, September 1903.

Photo from the *Landmark Baptist*, vol. 23, no. 44 (November 4, 1903), p. 9.

Epilogue
The New Cuban Baptist Church and the Creation of Memory, 1903-1920s

Except for scattered mentions, Alberto Díaz disappears from the Southern Baptist archival and periodical record after about 1904.[1] Even as the litigation over the Jané building and other properties in Cuba continued, the Southerners and their Cuban allies had no further need for Díaz, his family, or Gethsemane congregation. Calvary Baptist Church, which began as an English-language congregation, moved permanently into the Jané building and began holding services in both Spanish and English. Although Calvary now opened its doors to Cubans as well as North American expatriates, for quite a few years it served an extremely small congregation. Rev. C. D. Daniel became Calvary's minister, but his failing health led the Home Mission Board to begin looking for a Southerner to replace him. Rev. Moses N. McCall, of Georgia, arrived in Havana in February 1905, became Calvary's minister in April of that year, and took over as superintendent of Southern Baptist missions in western Cuba when Daniel left in 1906. Baptist evangelism in Cuba had entered a new age.[2]

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[1] Scattered references to Díaz's activities in his later life should be taken with a grain of salt until more research can be done. The only source I have found that mentions his death is Una Roberts Lawrence, *Cuba for Christ: A Study of the Field and Work of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Cuba* (Little Rock, AR: Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, 1923), 91, which merely records that Díaz "died some years ago." While Lawrence writes that Díaz in his later years was "lost to Baptist mission work entirely," a Florida Baptist website, citing Lawrence, claims that he later joined the Presbyterian church (http://www.floridabaptisthistory.org/biographies/biographiesd.html, accessed January 9, 2011). Marcos Antonio Ramos also mentions that Díaz later had links with the Presbyterian church, but does not give his date of death. Marcos Antonio Ramos, *Panorama del Protestantismo en Cuba: La Presencia de los Protestant*

, Costa Rica: Editorial Caribe, 1986), 239. I have been unable to gain access to Landmark Baptist periodicals after 1903, so it is unclear how much contact Díaz had with his new allies in the South after that year.

[2] Moses Nathaniel McCall, *A Baptist Generation in Cuba* (Atlanta, GA: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1942), chap. 1. "The Republic of Cuba," undated, unsigned draft (probably written by URL in 1936), SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 21.

The most striking difference between the old Cuban Baptist church and the new was the type of Cubans who were to be targeted for Baptist conversion. Díaz had used free medical care and fiery sermons to attract independence-minded, anti-Catholic Cubans of diverse racial and class backgrounds.[3] Now, Cuban Baptist leaders and their Southern allies consciously focused on attracting whiter, wealthier Cubans to their schools and services, and made few appeals based on politics, opposition to Catholicism, or ideals of social change. In 1903 Baptists hoped to attract Cubans who were sympathetic to the United States, just as they had in the 1880s. But the meaning that Cubans assigned to the United States had changed profoundly in the intervening years. Now, many Cubans who hoped for an alliance with the United States—whether in their political, economic, or cultural lives—believed that the United States was a modern nation defined by the rule of law, a capitalism marked by increasing corporate concentration, racial order through white supremacy and segregation, and limited democracy. There is some evidence that Cuban Baptists leaders after 1903 hoped to make Cuba into a similarly modern nation, although further research is needed. Rev. José V. Cova, who remained as the Baptist minister in Matanzas, and Daniel were the most prominent advocates of this strategy, although there is evidence that Baptist leaders in other towns followed it as well. As early as October 1901, for instance, Cova reported that a service to dedicate the Baptist chapel in Sagua la Grande attracted "600 persons.... The better kind of people in the city was present, and not a single colored person as is so frequent in this country.... Among the number was the British Vice-Consul in the city, a most venerable old man, several well looking gentlemen, and a number of ladies of fine

[3] For Cubans who were attracted by Díaz's message, see chapter one.

appearance."[4] The whiteness, power and wealth of his parishioners was one of Cova's favorite themes whenever he reported back to Southern Baptist leaders.

Baptist leaders in Cuba believed that two projects would attract the types of Cubans they wanted in their pews: new church buildings, and Baptist schools that charged tuition. In September 1904, Cova wrote in the *Christian Index* that Baptists should build new houses of worship in Cuba, because they "would give us, in the sight of the people, a character of more pronounced respectability, as well as of durable permanence in the country.... and in a material sense, the church built, would attract better classes of people to hear the gospel and unite with a church that would assume a high level of respectability and power." Daniel made a similar argument in the July 21, 1904 issue, when he wrote, "on mission fields, as at home, one man's soul is worth as much as another man's soul, but some men's influence is worth vastly more than some other men's influence. In Cuba it is exceedingly difficult to reach the influential without chapels to invite them to." Tuition-charging schools, which would attract parents who were financially able to keep their children separate from the new system of free public schools, also received more attention from Baptist leaders after 1903. Rev. E. F. Rodriguez, a physician and the Baptist pastor in Sagua la Grande, advised the Home Mission Board as early as 1901 "that a separate school be opened in that city for colored people," but his recommendation was the only one in the Southern Baptist record that called for segregated schooling, or indeed, for the education of Afro-Cubans at all. After their committee's January 1903 visit to the island, the Home Mission Board "felt it might be wise to begin charging a moderate and reasonable tuition instead of operating free schools," wrote historian Harold Edward Greer. The Board recognized that "there were

[4] *Our Home Field* vol. 13, no. 3 (October 1901), p. 1, SBHLA, URL, box 5, folder 39.

many people especially in the cities who were able to pay tuition and who were unwilling to send their children to free schools." More exclusive schools and modern chapels would attract what Rev. E. V. Carbonell of Colón called "the best people of the city" to the Baptist churches.[5]

Baptists in western Cuba also found that they needed a new usable history to support and explain the legitimacy of their mission project on the island. The Home Mission Board led this effort by reinterpreting its history with Díaz and asserting that this very history supported its claim to exclusive title to the Jané building. First, the Board attempted to minimize contact between Board-allied Baptists and Díaz. At a meeting on October 6, 1903, the Board recommended that "Brother Daniel and all our missionaries in Cuba abstain as far as possible from any discussion with Dr. Diaz or about him." The next month, it authorized the translation into Spanish of its own recent "Statement on the Situation in Cuba," which had already been printed in Southern Baptist periodicals in the U.S., and ordered 1000 copies of it to be printed and distributed in Havana. The lengthy "Statement" gave the Board's interpretation of the history of its properties in Cuba. It gave some details about the mortgages on those properties, but was mostly an extended narrative of Díaz's relationship with the Board, with special emphasis on the contentious period of Díaz's resignation beginning in 1901. The purpose of the "Statement" was, first and foremost, to assert to Baptists in the U.S. and in Cuba that the Jané building had

[5] Rev. J. V. Cova, "Cuba," *Christian Index* (September 29, 1904), p. 4; Rev. C. D. Daniel, "Church Buildings for Cuba," *Christian Index* (July 21, 1904), p. 2-3; Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Home Mission Board, November 5, 1901, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 20; Greer dissertation, p. 167-173 (Greer's citations include the Home Mission Board Minutes of January 8 and February 3, 1903, the latter of which has been lost); Rev. C. D. Daniel, "About Missions: Cuba," *Christian Index* vol. 82, no. 19 (May 8, 1902), p. 4, which quotes a letter from Carbonell. For Baptist leaders' interest in "respectability" in these years, see Paul Harvey, "'These Untutored Masses': The Campaign for Respectability Among White and Black Evangelicals in the American South, 1870-1930," *Journal of Religious History* 21, no. 3 (1997): 302-317.

always belonged solely to the Home Mission Board. Despite the ongoing litigation and Díaz's history of holding the building's title in his own name, the authors of the "Statement" were confident enough to write, "the title of the Board being absolutely perfect, any claim adversely thereto no matter by whom or what it may be, is necessarily groundless." To make their case to the Baptist public, the Board had to explain why the claim being mounted in the Havana courts by Díaz and Gethsemane—which appeared to many observers to be well-founded in both Cuban law and the Baptist theology of congregational independence—was in fact illegitimate. The Board did so by narrating the complicated history of Díaz's resignation and the Board's communications with Gethsemane, which it asserted "was fully informed in advance that the Board would not tolerate any such claim of title to the property of the Board." Díaz, by implication, knew that the Board owned the building's title, but for unknown reasons continued to pursue his claim to the building anyway.[6]

The Board's new usable history in Cuba also put forward a reinterpretation of the experiences of Díaz and Gethsemane before 1898, implicitly arguing that the early period of Cuban-led evangelism on the island was ineffective. These new narratives of Baptist beginnings in Cuba often erased or de-emphasized Díaz, dismissed the efforts of the early Baptist congregations as futile or unable to withstand political upheaval, and praised the beneficence of the Southern Baptist Convention. Even Rev. J. V. Cova, who had known Díaz for years and was now the most prominent Southern Baptist-allied Cuban minister, made this argument. In September 1904 he wrote in the *Christian Index* that "The time in

[6] Minutes of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, October 6 and November 3, 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 10, folder 21. Una Roberts Lawrence's typed transcription of the Board's complete "Statement" is in SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9. The "Statement" also quoted in full quite a few letters to and from Díaz, some of which have not otherwise survived.

which the presence of a gospel missionary in a place was a new and sensational event is now past. Today everybody knows what his appearance means and what he wants. He can not count on provoking emotions; the work consists only in provoking convictions." This state of affairs was very different from the open opposition and underground enthusiasm that Díaz and Cova first evoked in Havana in the 1880s. Cova described the setting for Baptist evangelism in the Cuba of 1904 as perhaps more difficult—ministers could not count on mere "emotions" or "sensation" to gain adherents—but certainly more honorable.

The most important reinterpreter of Cuban Baptist history, however, was Una Roberts Lawrence. Lawrence worked for the Woman's Missionary Union from 1916 to 1926, and for the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board from 1926 to 1947; the archive she collected in the course of her work has been the most important source for this dissertation. Her books and articles on Cuban Baptists have served as definitive works on Cuban Baptist beginnings and, despite her efforts to minimize his importance, on Díaz himself. Lawrence's writings shaped the narratives that Cubans, Southerners, and many scholars have adhered to ever since. Her 1923 book, *Cuba for Christ*, for instance, begins the story of the Cuban Baptist church in the 1880s not by introducing Díaz or his Cuban congregants, but through the story of Adella Fales.[7] According to Lawrence, Fales was a nine-year-old Cuban girl who attended the Baptist church in Biloxi, Mississippi before her family moved back to Cuba. On the island, Adella "grieved much over leaving her Sunday School," and so when her family later moved to Key West, Florida, she sought out the Baptist church there, met Rev. W. F. Wood, and inspired him to try to

[7] Greer's narrative, too, begins in the U.S. South and mentions Fales prominently. See Harold Edward Greer, Jr., "History of Southern Baptist Mission Work in Cuba, 1886-1916" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1965), 32.

evangelize Cuba. As a young woman, Fales worked for the Baptist mission to Cuban émigrés in Key West, which sent Wood to Cuba, where he "discovered" Díaz preaching in Havana. By moving the essential action of the story from Havana to Florida, and by focusing on Fales and Wood rather than Díaz, Lawrence removed all agency from Díaz and from the other Baptist Cubans living in Cuba. She also made Díaz's leadership of the congregation in Havana remarkable only in that it was something to be discovered by Wood, rather than exploring what it meant in the Cuban context of its time—an interpretation sometimes followed by later scholars.[8]

Lawrence painted a picture of Díaz that kept him as a dramatic—but ultimately secondary—player in the Cuban Baptist story. In her telling, Díaz became only a fiery orator with a tragic end, rather than the linchpin of the entire Baptist project in Cuba before 1898. She wrote that he was "a most romantic figure.... just the type to stir the imagination," and repeated the basics of his early biography as they were written in Baptist pamphlets of the 1880s and 1890s. She told the stories of the smallpox epidemic, the purchase of a Baptist cemetery, and the efforts of "the Roman Bishop of Havana...to prevent such serious inroads upon his power over the people," but barely ever mentioned

[8] Una Roberts Lawrence, *Cuba for Christ*, 76-78. For Fales, see chapter two. When she wrote *Cuba for Christ*, Lawrence was the "young people's secretary" for the WMU, and she later edited a series of curricula for teaching about Cuba missions in Southern Baptist Sunday Schools. It seems likely that a desire to position Fales as a model for Southern Baptist children to emulate led Lawrence to feature Fales prominently in her narrative of Cuban Baptist history. For the curricula series, see McCall, *A Baptist Generation in Cuba*; Herbert Caudill, *Meet the Youth of Cuba* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1942); Mildred Matthews, *Tia Tells a Story* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1942); Marjorie Jacob Caudill, *Carmita of Cuba* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptitst Convention, 1942); Etna Olliphant Moseley and Gloria Young [psued.], *Dear Margaret: Letters Home from Cuba* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1942). For Lawrence's biography, see the 2004 finding aid to the Una Roberts Lawrence collection, AR-631, SBHLA. Scholars who have largely followed Lawrence's interpretations regarding Wood and, to a lesser extent, Fales include Harold Edward Greer, Jr., "History of Southern Baptist Mission Work in Cuba"; Michael E. Williams, *Isaac Taylor Tichenor: The Creation of the Baptist New South* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2005); John Benjamin Lawrence, *History of the Home Mission Board* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1958), 74-78; Arthur B. Rutledge, *Mission to America: A Century and a Quarter of Southern Baptist Home Missions* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1976).

Díaz by name. Instead, she valorized both the "little congregation" in Havana and the leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention, especially Tichenor, who bought "a magnificent theater" for them. The confused status of title to the building was elided, as was Díaz's role in its purchase. She wrote that Díaz resigned "voluntarily" in 1901 because "financial irregularities in his disposition of the funds for the mission caused his coworkers to lose confidence in his administration of the work," but her assessment of his meaning for Cuban Baptists went far beyond a subtle erasure from his role as the preeminent leader of Baptists in Cuba.[9]

The trajectory of Díaz's life story, Lawrence believed, had implications for how Southern Baptists should do missions, how they should think about Protestantism in Catholic countries, and what they should expect from "native" leaders of Protestant missions. They should take notice when a charismatic figure like Díaz beckoned from an unconverted land, but should not rely on such figures to do the hard work of leading a mission. "Alberto Diaz is one of the most spectacular figures in Southern Baptist mission history," Lawrence wrote.

> Coming out of a Roman Catholic country, he had no background for the development of his brilliant native gifts save the stunting and warping influences of a conscienceless church. The fact that he disappointed the high hopes that centered in his romantic personality in nowise alters the fact that it was through his remarkable conversion, and his fiery testimony that Southern Baptists became so intensely interested in the redemption of Cuba. He re-entered the employ of the American Bible Society, but eventually became involved in the turmoil of politics that swept over the island upon the establishment of the Republic, and to the deep regret of his

[9] Una Roberts Lawrence, *Cuba for Christ*, 78-91. Pura Cova Hernandez, the daughter of Rev. José V. Cova, remembered the early years of the mission in similar terms; see the undated draft of her memoirs (circa 1930s) in the Una Roberts Lawrence collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive, box 7, folder 1.

> friends and those who had once labored with him, was lost to Baptist mission work entirely. He died some years ago.[10]

The reliance of Southern Baptists on Díaz for two decades was thus transformed from an essential part of their plan for Cuba, and for the whole of Latin America, into a sad mistake. The theological and methodological conflict between Southern and Landmark Baptists, between Díaz and the new generation on the Home Mission Board, was turned into a regretful story of a promising Baptist preacher being seduced by the corruption of politics. Other Baptist writers were even less sympathetic to Díaz than Lawrence was; Daniel, for instance, described him as psychologically unstable and even outright devious.[11]

The Southern and Cuban reaction to the Díaz controversy has deeply influenced both the historiography of religion and Cuban Baptists' historical memory of their own beginnings. Southern Baptist accounts of the Convention's missionary activities, following the hagiographies about him dating from the 1880s and 1890s, usually explain his success in Havana as a product of mere "emotion"—but in retrospect, this dependence on "emotion" became a negative, rather than a positive, aspect of his appeal. In any case, Southern Baptist accounts after 1903 couch their discussions of Díaz solely in the context of his resignation, lawsuit and eviction.[12] General historical accounts of Cuban Protestantism or Cuban politics sometimes state that Protestantism in Cuba only "really"

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[10] Ibid., 90-91. I have found no other evidence that Díaz was again employed by the American Bible Society after 1901.

[11] Rev. C. D. Daniel, "Cuba," c. August 1903, SBHLA, URL, box 6, folder 24 (a copy, marked "Mss. letter in file in safe: Diaz Settlement," is in folder 21). Most scholars have avoided these types of characterizations of Díaz; see Williams, *Tichenor*, 136-141, which only speaks of Díaz's "resentment" of Board control and the possibility that he was motivated by Cuban nationalist feeling. Scholars have subtracted Daniel's explanations for Díaz's actions, but have not often attempted to add a deep alternate explanation or motivation for those actions.

[12] Home Mission Board, "Statement on the Situation in Cuba," SBHLA, URL, box 7, folder 9; Una Roberts Lawrence, *Cuba for Christ*; John Benjamin Lawrence, *History of the Home Mission Board*; McCall, *A Baptist Generation in Cuba*.

grew after 1898.[13] The history of Cuban Protestantism, largely controlled by Cubans before 1898, has rarely made an impact on the historiography of missions or transnational religion in general. Indeed, study of the history of Cuban religion as a whole is sorely lacking. These gaps mirror a general lack of attention to Southern missions in the historiography of religion, making the Southern-Cuban Baptist relationship doubly invisible.[14] The invisibility of both Cuba and the South in the historiography of religion is certainly not only a result of the Díaz controversy. Still, Southern Baptists' attempts to hide, explain away, or otherwise disguise the history of Cuban Baptists has not helped this history garner the attention it deserves.

Even today, Cuban Baptists often remember their history as one beginning without controversy soon after 1898. Díaz, when he is remembered at all, is seen as a charismatic, sometimes tragic preacher, doomed to failure. Evidence of Díaz's mismanagement and financial problems are featured prominently in these histories. Calvary Baptist Church, founded in 1902 as an English-speaking congregation, still holds worship services in the building at the corner of Dragones and Zulueta (now renamed Agramonte) streets in old Havana. El Calvario holds frequent conferences and revivals in its large sanctuary and assists fledgling Baptist churches in many towns throughout Cuba. Its website includes a page on the history of the church. It gives a list of the founding members of the church and an account of the meeting when Calvary was constituted, on January 24, 1902. It acknowledges that the building had been occupied by another Baptist church, "Getsemaní," since 1889. While the original plan for Calvary was to "build a building for the new church," in the meantime, "the Spanish- and English-speaking

[13] For scholarly treatment of Cuban Protestantism, see chapter five, n47.
[14] Further discussion of these scholarly gaps is in the introduction.

congregations met at different times." But early in 1903, "the administrative troubles of pastor Díaz brought a crisis, and Gethsemane church stopped using the building." After the handover of power to Cuban Republic in May 1902, "leaders and many members of Gethsemane joined Calvary church, which in a very short time stopped using English and converted into the only Baptist church in Havana."[15]

Some Cuban Baptists do see more of the conflict in Cuban Baptist history. This interpretive position often leads then to lionize Díaz as a patriot, ignore the controversy over his management methods and financial problems, and criticize the U.S. missionary enterprise. In a 2004 report to the *Baptist Studies Bulletin*, Francisco "Paco" Rhodes, a professor at the Protestant Evangelical Seminary in Matanzas, writes that beginning in 1886 Díaz provided "energetic leadership" to Baptists, the majority of whom "were sympathizers or collaborators with the patriot party." Rhodes writes briefly of Díaz's imprisonment "when the liberation war erupted," and that the U.S. occupation "provided opportunity for the American missionary agencies to enter Cuba." This flood of attention from the United States, Rhodes argues, meant that "much of the authority and power became concentrated in the hands of the missionaries. The patriotism of Díaz caused tensions with the missionaries, and eventually he quit the Baptist ranks." The power of U.S. mission organizations in Cuba, Rhodes writes, also functioned to export to the island "the existing divisions among Baptists in the United States," especially the different social divisions, racial hierarchies, and theological emphases of North and South.[16]

[15] "Historia de la Iglesia Bautista El Calvario," http://elcaminoalpadre.blogspot.com/2007/09/historia-de-la-iglesia-bautista-el.html, accessed January 17, 2011. Translations by the author.
[16] Francisco "Paco" Rhodes, "The Baptists in Cuba," *The Baptist Studies Bulletin* 3, no. 5 (May 2004), http://www.centerforbaptiststudies.org/bulletin/2004/may.htm.

The themes of these Baptist historical memories mirror much of the teleology of both the U.S. imperial and the Cuban nationalist projects. Histories of conflict have been minimized, heroes sought out and scrubbed clean of any flaws, villains demonized, advocates for alternate polities remembered as inherently flawed or unstable, the growth of centralization and hierarchy presented as unmitigated progress. Imperial and nationalist histories thus become Manichean stories of good versus evil, morality tales in which actors must represent either light or darkness. Díaz's complex personal history defies these categories, and neither Cuban nor Southern religious histories should be confined to them. The history of the rise and fall of the Baptist brotherly empire is clearly part of both U.S. imperial and Cuban nationalist histories. Yet it offers a challenge to the teleology of both nation-states. The structure of neither the U.S. empire nor the Cuban state was a foregone conclusion. This history traces how the transformation of U.S. power in Cuba, from primarily economic and cultural before 1898 to directly political after 1898, had unforeseen consequences for Cuban religion. Both Cubans and Southerners acted to understand and influence their shared, new world after 1898. In the process, many of them worked to reinterpret or hide the history of their unique, but ultimately compromised, brotherly empire.

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