

PRESIDENT PALMA OF CUBA.

For the Second Time He Leads the Forlorn Hope.

"If Cuba commands me, I am hers to obey!" Thus spoke Tomas Estrada Palma



PRESIDENT PALMA.

when informed that the Cuban insurgents who are battling so valiantly for liberty had chosen him president of the republic that thus far exists only in name. President Palma is a resident of Central Valley, N. Y., but will leave for the scene of the war as soon as he is officially notified

of his election. "I am not too old to do a little fighting," he says quietly.

President Palma now conducts a large seminary for the education of wealthy Cubans at Central Valley, but for years has been identified with schemes for the liberation of Cuba. He was born in Bayamo, Cuba, 50 years ago, and in 1858, at the beginning of the famous ten years' war, was elected to the chamber of deputies of the provisional government and took the field with a large body of Cuban troops. His courage and his marked ability for leadership won for him one high office after another, and in 1875, before the great war closed, he was chosen president of the republic.

In 1877 President Palma was captured by Spanish troops and placed in prison. When the war ended, a year later, he was set at liberty and made New York his home. A number of years ago he founded the Institute Estrada Palma at Central Valley and has about 50 pupils, the majority of whom are Cubans. His wife was the daughter of a rich Cuban, and the couple have five bright children. President Estrada speaks Spanish, French and English fluently, is exceedingly well educated and has the manners of a courtier. Like most Cubans he is short in stature, but he carries his 60 years lightly and seems to be good for many a hard campaign.

In explaining his election President Palma modestly says: "This revolution is considered a continuation of the last war, and as I then had the honor to be president I am not surprised that they wish me to continue in that office. I shall be president only so long as the war lasts, and when it is at an end the people will be called upon to choose my successor. Our men will be able to maintain their position in the mountainous revolutionary districts for years without surrendering. If we free Cuba and I am chosen president again, I shall endeavor to establish a unionist republic, as Cuba is not yet ripe for the federal system. In all other respects I shall follow the example of the United States, the model republic of the world, for I want for my country a free people and a strong government."