

The Unionization of Florida Cigarmakers and the Coming of the War With Spain

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THE FORCES and arguments leading the United States to intervene in Cuba on behalf of "Cuba Libre" were numerous and interacting. It is virtually impossible to disentangle them and rank them according to their importance in shaping American policy. The story of how the combination of factors precipitated an armed conflict between Spain and the United States has been told a number of times.¹ Nevertheless, every historian has neglected to mention the role of the American labor movement in creating a climate of sentiment favorable to United States action on behalf of the struggling Cubans.

The organized American labor movement was not large in the mid-nineties. That portion of it that was most vocal in support of the Cubans was probably weak in comparison to the forces of yellow journalism, humanitarians, professional imperialists, patriotic organizations, and political party leaders. Nevertheless, among the workingmen who were urging intervention on behalf of Cuban independence, the leadership was taken by the Cigarmakers' International Union. It was one of the largest, best organized, and most competently led craft unions.² By virtue of its economic successes in the past and the prestige of its leadership by such a figure as Samuel Gompers, the Cigarmakers' International Union was able to exercise an influence far beyond its own ranks.

For several reasons Florida was of special interest to the Cigarmakers' International Union. The cigar industry was expanding there.

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¹ Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People* (New York, 1942); Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York, 1936); Walter Millis, *The Martial Spirit* (Boston, 1931); Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898* (Baltimore, 1936).

² The Cigarmakers' International Union was organized in 1864. In 1896 it had a membership of 29,050, exceeded only by the Locomotive Engineers and the Typographical Union.

It presented a continuous problem of bringing the new workers into the union fold. Although the industrial North was putting most of the cigars on the market, Florida regularly ranked fifth among the states in cigar output. Hence, in an industry that was carried on in most of the states of the Union, Florida was important. A large part of the labor force in Florida's cigar factories had come from Cuba where there was no labor union tradition. It was not easy to sell the idea of unionism to them. The Spanish language was somewhat of a barrier to the activities of union organizers, too. But these Florida cigarmakers had a vital interest in the political activities of Cuba, and union leaders who would ingratiate themselves with the Florida cigarmakers had to understand and sympathize with their political as well as economic aims.

The expansion of the Florida cigar industry was understandable. Southern Florida was similar to Cuba in its climate and soil. The Cuban political turmoil created an atmosphere of insecurity for both management and labor, and Florida was a conveniently located haven. Its stability of government, greater freedom, and better living conditions stood out in sharp contrast to life in Cuba. Besides, the McKinley Tariff of 1890 made it profitable for Cuban cigar manufacturers to transfer their plants to the United States. Then they could import bulk tobacco and turn it into the finished product with the aid of the Cuban labor that was induced to follow.³

The testimony of contemporary participants in the cigarmaking industry describes the importance and size of the Florida portion of that industry. Daniel Harris, speaking for the Cigarmakers International Union, revealed that "we have more cigar makers in Tampa and Key West making clear Habana cigars at the present time [1902] than are in the island of Cuba."⁴ On the same day, J. W. Wetheimer, a New York cigarmaker, singled out the city of Tampa as an example of a community that had been stimulated by the McKinley Act of

³ How relatively small was the importation of Cuban-made cigars to the United States can be gathered from the official reports on American commerce:

1890—1,216,722 cigars	1892—632,504 cigars
1891— 850,658 cigars	1893—615,980 cigars
1894— 441,257 cigars	1895—450,431 cigars
1896— 472,217 cigars	1897—415,564 cigars
1898— 292,670 cigars	

Willis N. Baer, *Economic Development of the Cigar Industry in the United States* (Lancaster, Pa., 1933), p. 137, quoting from *Foreign Commerce and Navigation Reports of the United States*, United States Department of Commerce.

⁴ House Report, Document No. 535, *Reciprocity with Cuba*, Hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means, 57th Congress, 1st Session, Washington, 1902, p. 156.

1890. “. . . formerly a mere sand bar, [it] has now become a thriving city of over 30,000 inhabitants with a weekly payroll for labor in its cigar factories of over \$125,000, and its population and industries are constantly increasing.”⁵

“The bulk of Cuba’s leaf tobacco, as of Havana cigars, was sold in the American market [before 1899], for filler in American-made cigars. At Key West and Tampa, Florida, there was a thriving Havana-American cigar industry largely in the hands of immigrants from Cuba.”⁶ As a result of various influences, “Key West and later Tampa became the center of the geographical extension of the Cuban cigar industry upon American soil.” Their product was, for all practical purposes, typical Havana cigars; for “these manufacturers originally used Cuban tobacco, Cuban labor, Cuban methods.”⁷ The number of cigar factories, the total output of cigars, and the domination of Cuban influences together constitute some measure of how big a task was the unionization of Florida cigar workers.⁸

Important as Florida’s cigar production was, it was not the volume of business in itself that created the most perplexing problem for the Cigarmakers’ International Union. Rather, the large number of Cuban workers and the steady stream of Cuban immigrants posed the most serious organizational challenge. They had no trade union experience. Under the Spanish regime labor unions for economic coercion were regarded as a conspiracy. The doctrine of conspiracy had once plagued the American labor movement, but by the nineties it was being rapidly abandoned. The American labor leaders, now free to organize unions and use them with effect against employers, had difficulty persuading the Cubans to organize. Because of their lack of experience in worker cooperation and the use of economic tactics against employers, they were slow to resort to those devices when they arrived in the United States. The improved labor and living stand-

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁶ Leland H. Jenks, *Our Cuban Colony* (New York, 1928), p. 156.

⁷ Baer, p. 106.

⁸ Florida:—

	<i>factories</i>	and	<i>cigar production</i>
1892	284		157,799,627 cigars
1893	413		134,967,443 cigars
1894	400		147,802,909 cigars
1895	515		161,084,191 cigars
1896	571		146,862,476 cigars
1897	606		145,652,240 cigars
1898	555		145,858,604 cigars

United States Treasury Department, *Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue*, Documents numbered: 1628 (1892), p. 30; 1700 (1893), p. 30; 1799 (1894), p. 28; 1902 (1895), p. 37; 1982 (1896), p. 44; 2061 (1897), p. 55; 2150 (1898), pp. 45-46.

ards in the United States seemed to make unionism unnecessary for the Cubans.

As long as the Cuban immigrants took that attitude, Cuba would be the Achilles heel of unionization in the cigarmaking industry. This friction between American and Cuban workers would become a permanent problem unless immigration from the island could be blocked or unionism established in Cuba itself. Cigar workers in the New York area regarded this as a major issue, for many Cubans were entering the United States there. Samuel Gompers recalled in his memoirs that Cuba was "of special interest to cigarmakers. It was important for us that not only Cuban cigarmakers in New York should be organized but that we should spread the gospel of unionism in Cuba."⁹

The difficulty of organizing the Cubans was especially noticeable in Florida. In 1896 the Commissioner of Internal Revenue reported 571 cigar factories with an output of 146,862,496 cigars and 2,369,940 cigarettes.¹⁰ Yet on January 1 of that year, according to the *Cigar Makers' Journal*, there were only six cigarmakers' unions in five different cities with an aggregate membership of 171.¹¹

On July 4, 1896, James Wood, organizer and labor agitator for the Cigarmakers' Union, submitted to the *Journal* a report of his organizing endeavors in the Florida area. He was terribly angry at the cigar manufacturers of Tampa because they were discriminating against American citizens in favor of hiring Cuban workers. Wood asserted "without fear of contradiction that the cigar manufacturers of Tampa, Florida, are the most un-American set of men the United States ever had within its borders." From his contacts in Tampa he gained the impression that "if an American cigar maker wanted a job in any of the shops there he required as much of a push behind him as would be necessary to land him in the United States Senate."¹²

The factory owners attempted to excuse this policy by claiming that "the American cigar makers are not skillful enough to do the

⁹ Samuel Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor* (2 vols., New York, 1925), II, 64-65.

¹⁰ *Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue*, United States Treasury Department, Document Number 1982, p. 44.

¹¹ *Cigar Makers Journal* (May, 1896), pp. 15-31.

¹² *Cigar Makers' Journal*, "Report of Organizer," Atlanta, Georgia, July 4, 1896, by James Wood, organizer and label agitator, August, 1896, p. 14.

About the same time the Brooklyn *Blue Label Bulletin*, complaining about organizational difficulties in the metropolitan area, thought it "singular to note that, while all other nationalities have joined our works, the Cuban workers have stood aloof." *Cigar Makers' Journal*, "Cuban Cigar Making," (August, 1896), p. 8.

work required." James Wood discounted that statement as "manufactured from whole cloth, and it is as far from being true as the one in which they endeavor to lead the people to believe that their cigars are made exclusively from Cuban tobacco." As would be expected of a union organizer, Wood defended his fellow unionists as possessing skill that was "equal, if not superior, to that of any cigar maker in Tampa or any other part of the globe." Not only were the manufacturers discriminating among the workers available, but "whenever there are jobs open in the Tampa shops the next ship that comes in from the West India Islands brings men to take them." The result was that "the very men who have devoted their life's labor to the upbuilding and beautifying of this country are forced to walk the streets in idleness, be called tramps and such other scurrilous epithets as can be heaped upon their heads."¹³

If the influx of Cubans was not to be an interminable stream,¹⁴ diluting the cream of America's cigar workers, the vigilant Cigarmakers' International Union would need to take one or more of several possible lines of action. Failing to make rapid progress in organizing the Cubans in America, American labor leaders should try to establish unionism in Cuba.¹⁵ Since that was not practical under the Spanish anti-conspiracy laws, a more stringent immigration policy might be demanded. As a last resort, American labor could help the Cubans gain their independence of Spain and thus open the way for favorable labor legislation in Cuba. Besides, Cubans in the United States might be more interested in cooperating with the unionization activities if it meant American aid to "Cuba Libre."

Political unrest in Cuba was a major stimulus to emigration from the Island to the United States. The Ten Years' War ended unsuccessfully for the Cubans in 1878. Consequently the erstwhile leaders had to flee for their safety. Key West, Tampa, and Ibora City were havens for such refugees.¹⁶ The ardor for Cuban independence was not dimmed by the passage of a decade and a half. When the Cuban revolutionary movement began to stir again early in the eighteen

¹³ *Cigar Makers' Journal*, "Report of Organizer," Atlanta, Georgia, July 4, 1896, by James Wood, August, 1896, p. 14.

¹⁴ In 1893, 1,411 cigarmakers entered Key West from Cuba. In the succeeding years, the numbers were: 1894—1,846; 1895—1,075; 1896—1,041; 1897—378; 1898—116. United States Bureau of Immigration, *Report of the Superintendent of Immigration*, Documents numbered: 1643 (1893), p. 8; 1723 (1894), pp. 8-9; 10-11; 1807 (1895), p. 8; 1893 (1896), pp. 4, 8; 1975 (1897), pp. 14, 25-29; 2060 (1898), pp. 5, 13-19.

¹⁵ Gompers, II, 64-65.

¹⁶ Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint—Tobacco and Sugar* (New York, 1947), pp. 79-80.

nineties, many Florida Cubans were eager to respond. The leading spirit of this unrest, José Martí, delivered an inflammatory address to the cigar workers of Tampa on November 26, 1891.¹⁷

Key West and Tampa now became the principal American centers of pro-Cuban activity. They were the "civilian" camps of the national revolution. Martí regarded Key West as a "creole stronghold, where from all the sufferings and anxieties of life arose all the sublimities of home." He visited there often and mingled with the tobacco workers in their meetings. "The immigrant cigar workers openly contributed ten per cent of their weekly earnings toward the revolution." Salamanca, the Captain General of Cuba, therefore, "plotted to 'destroy the tobacco workers' centers of Key West and Tampa to wipe out the rebels' organization.'" ¹⁸

José Martí established a junta in New York to coördinate the revolutionary activities of Cuban sympathizers throughout the United States. Sixty-one affiliate clubs were organized in Key West and fifteen in Tampa.¹⁹ The New York Junta was conveniently located for conversations with American labor leaders. In later years Samuel Gompers recalled how the Cuban cigarmakers in New York, finding him sympathetic to their political cause, "arranged that I should meet many of the Cuban revolutionary leaders at their headquarters in 48 Broad Street."²⁰ Horatio Rubens, a New York attorney in the employ of the Junta, was in contact with Gompers. Many years later he described one event on which both Gompers and the Junta were focusing their attention—a strike of Cuban cigarmakers in Key West in 1893. Gompers and the Junta were, however, placing the emphasis on different implications of that strike.

In 1893 one of the strongest units of the resurgent Cuban Revolutionary Party centered in Key West. To checkmate its moves, official Spanish agents were dispatched to Key West. Therefore, southern Florida was the scene of a potential conflict between Spaniard and Cuban. At this time some Cubans went on strike against a major cigar manufacturer, thus creating a second conflict—employer versus employee. The Spaniards, "believing the strike would definitely weaken the Party fabric," made haste to collaborate with the employers. They had a solution for the problem of the idle cigar factories—imported strike breakers from Cuba. Not only would the strike breakers meet the need of the employers in this particular

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁹ Charles E. Chapman, *A History of the Cuban Republic* (New York, 1927), p. 13.

²⁰ Gompers, II, 64-65.

instance, but they would also saturate the labor market and "save the future moreover from importunities on the part of labor."²¹

The employers took up this proposition. A committee went to Havana, conferred with the Captain General, published advertisements for labor in Havana papers, distributed posters, and soon found interested workers. In December, 1893, "the first group of Spanish replacements of the Cuban workers left Havana for Key West."²² The tension in Key West mounted at once because the recruits from Havana antagonized the Key Westers in two respects: 1) they were breaking the strike; 2) they were Spaniards, hence political opponents. Jefferson B. Browne, collector of customs for the port of Key West, was on the scene and could later recall the apprehension among the Cubans for the political consequence of that manipulated immigration. They feared the effect "the pressure of an appreciable number of Spaniards might have on the secrecy which it was necessary to maintain with respect to their revolutionary plans."²³

According to Rubens, "the transactions in Havana [for labor] were not only public and notorious but had received the active support of the Spanish government." As a lawyer, Rubens was employed by the Junta to prevent the Spaniards from disrupting the revolutionary activities in Key West. Ostensibly, he was assigned to uncover a plot to violate the immigration laws of the United States. In this phase of his activity Rubens had the sensitive and alert ear of Samuel Gompers. In later years, the Junta lawyer remembered that "the President of the American Federation of Labor had been aroused by the flagrant violations of the immigration laws and I was keeping him informed."²⁴

Rubens went to Key West and gathered information on the importation of Spaniards. Because they had been hired before they left Havana, he claimed that the contract labor regulation had been violated. Armed with testimony and evidence of various kinds, he carried his case to the Treasury Department in Washington. A committee of Key West public officials also went to the national capital to defend their action on behalf of the Seidenberg Cigar Company. The Treasury Department officials who had the supervision of the Bureau of Immigration, decided in favor of prosecuting the charges made by Rubens. Eventually warrants for deportation were issued for about

²¹ Horatio S. Rubens, *Liberty, the Story of Cuba* (New York, 1932), p. 40.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 40. Jefferson B. Browne, collector of customs for the port of Key West, seems to be describing the same series of events in *Key West, the Old and the New* (St. Augustine, 1912), pp. 125-128. He dates it in 1894.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²⁴ Rubens, p. 40.

one hundred Spaniards. After more delays over legal technicalities, "ultimately the imported Spaniards were returned to Cuba."²⁵ According to Jefferson B. Browne, the cigarmakers, fighting both for the economic demands and patriotic aspirations of the Cubans, won a complete victory. The result was that "the work of the board of trade and the citizens, in their effort to keep this factory here, were of no avail, for Mr. Seidenberg soon moved to Tampa."²⁶

This description of conditions in the Florida cigarmaking industry demonstrates the intimate and intricate relationship of the American labor difficulties to the Cuban troubles. Such tensions which existed early in 1894, a year before the outbreak of the revolution, could not fail to increase after the insurrection was renewed. Messages to the insurgents were exchanged between Florida and the Island—at times transmitted in the well-concealed and appropriate disguise of a cigar.

Although Samuel Gompers was anxious to prosecute all violations of the immigration laws, he knew that the solution to the Florida unionization problem did not lie there. Even if employers did not import strike breakers, the normal influx of legal Cuban immigrants would have the effect of weakening union achievements in Florida. The job of unionizing those thousands who had entered and were coming into the United States from Cuba was indeed testing the skill and patience of the Cigarmakers' International Union. Gompers knew that the ultimate solution would lie in Cuba—not in the United States alone.²⁷

The insurrection aimed at independence offered just the opportunity that Samuel Gompers and his union needed. Any popular movement that would overthrow the Spanish regime would probably wipe out the legal restrictions against labor organizations. The doctrine of conspiracy would be abolished. While thousands of Cubans cared little or nothing for the opportunity to band together as labor groups, they did want release from Spanish rule. Hence, by paying lip-service and rendering material aid to the noble cause of Cuba Libre, the American Federation of Labor would feel entitled to counsel these new freemen on how to secure their newly won liberties. American labor leaders would expect to be received with hospitality whenever they chose to visit their Cuban brethren. Sooner or later the Cubans would be expected to pay for American unionism's aid.

The American labor movement—AFL and Knights of Labor—appeared in all of its public expressions of sympathy for the Cubans

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Browne, p. 127.

²⁷ Gompers, II, 64-65.

as an unselfish liberator. The immediate stake of American workingmen in the lot of their Cuban colleagues was scarcely suggested. In *retrospect*, Gompers frankly admitted the close connection between his organizational difficulties and the Cuban revolution.²⁸ Horatio Rubens corroborated that version of events by asserting that American labor's concern over the immigration law violations was a factor in aiding the Cuban revolutionaries in the United States.²⁹ The point to be noted is that, as far as labor was concerned, the issue was publicized as one of law violation. The one strong craft union that could have pointed to the damage the Cuban immigration was doing to its union activities made no public complaint about its difficulties. Nor did the Cigarmakers' International Union urge aid to the Cubans in the interest of American unionism. That would have seemed selfish.

The voices of organized labor reminded Americans who were altruistically minded that here was an opportunity to help suffering humanity.³⁰ They recalled to the minds of isolationist and nationalistic Americans that there was a time when the American colonists needed the help of a foreign nation to gain their independence of an alien and tyrannical government.³¹ The Cubans seemed to be striving for the American way of self-determination, popular representative institutions, and equal justice under law. With arguments like these, labor leaders could expect to mobilize the sympathy of non-wage earners as well as wage earners, non-unionists as well as unionists, and craftsmen who had no stake in the Florida situation, as well as the cigar workers who had an interest there.

It would have been unwise to put the issue before the AFL as a case of fighting the cause of cigarmakers. At best, the Federation was a loosely bound body of autonomous unions and rival leaders. If labor needed to be persuaded by its own philosophy of "pure and simple trade unionism," it had to be in the generalized terms of "all men struggling against oppression and suffering . . . to secure the right of self-government." But the heterogeneous labor movement did not dare to go closer to the specific labor problem with which the Cigarmakers' International Union was struggling in Florida. Self-centered and jealous of their own autonomies, the AFL affiliates would

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Rubens, p. 40.

³⁰ *Proceedings* of the 15th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, held at New York, December 8-17, 1895 (Bloomington, Illinois, 1896), pp. 63, 102.

³¹ *Journal of the Knights of Labor* (Washington, D. C.), November 28, 1895; also *Proceedings* of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, Washington, November 12-22, 1895 (Philadelphia, 1895), pp. 73-74.

have been reluctant to be pawns for any one union. The cigarmakers had to obtain their end by indirection.

That there was a deliberate plan to bring the Cuban laborers under the influence of the American labor movement became evident soon after Cuban independence. The Cigarmakers' Union fully intended to exercise jurisdiction over their Cuban brethren. When the Cubans took their independence too literally, the American leaders treated them as ingrates. Instead of organizing branches that would affiliate with the Cigarmakers' International Union, they had the "effrontery" to create a Cuban organization known as the Resistencia! It was to be Cuban in content as well as in form. It aimed to control the cigar industry to the exclusion of the American born workers. It "denied the cigarmakers [the United States union] the right to organize the packers, strippers and sorters and forced the native workmen to declare war upon the ingrates for whose country and freedom many American lives were sacrificed."³²

The editor of the *International Woodworker* who reported this unfortunate turn of events apparently forgot the praises that his fellow unionists had once lavished on the ideal of Cuban independence; for now he claimed openly what had been silently assumed all along—that the American [US] workers were attempting to "organize their [Cuban] craftsmen into one American organization as they *not only have a right to do, but as it is their duty to do.*"³³

Samuel Gompers was fully aware that different groups were urging "Cuba Libre" for various reasons of their own. He told the AFL convention in 1896 that "it was necessary for the different classes interested in Cuba to unite to achieve their purpose just the same as it was for the wage-workers to unite with the capitalists in baronial times."³⁴ Because there were capitalists who also desired intervention in Cuba, the danger of imperialism was to be reckoned with. Whatever capitalists might hope to derive from an independent Cuba, Gompers established, as pointedly as the circumstances allowed, that labor, too, had its material interests involved. After all, the wage-earners of "baronial times" had not collaborated with the capitalists out of sympathy for the capitalists. His audience was allowed to infer

³² *International Woodworker*, "Ingratitude to Patriots," December, 1900, p. 140. The woodworkers had no important stake in Cuba, but their spokesmen were obviously aware of the intentions of the cigarmakers' union toward that island. This editorial expression reveals something of the sympathy that the cigarmakers' situation aroused among other unionists.

³³ *Ibid.* Italics supplied by the writer.

³⁴ *Proceedings* of the 16th Annual Convention of American Federation of Labor held at Cincinnati, December 14-21, 1896 (Bloomington, Illinois, 1897), p. 53.

that when he told them that "the independence of the Cubans is essential to their [Cuban] economic organization." Gompers was not so altruistic as to think only or mainly of "their [Cuban] economic organization." The consequences of Cuban independence and economic organization for United States unionism were what counted.

In short, the interest which Samuel Gompers expressed in the cause of Cuba Libre was essentially that of every alert unionized cigarmaker. He was a card-carrying member of the Cigarmakers' International Union. More importantly, he had been one of its founding fathers and guiding spirits. While working in New York cigar factories he had come into contact with Cuban workers and become fully aware of the implications of the Cubans for American unionism. Gompers was convinced that nothing less than unionization within Cuba would meet the need. But since a labor movement was practically impossible under Spanish rule,³⁵ the obvious solution was Cuban independence. No wonder that Gompers could recall years later that "when the Spanish-American War began in 1898, I was glad of aid for the Cuban revolutionaries. . . ."³⁶

That Gompers' enthusiasm and his behind-the-scenes scheming for Cuban independence were motivated primarily by a cigarmaker's concern to solve his union's difficulties can easily be inferred from Gompers' well-known labor union philosophy and leadership activities. He had long since abandoned the role of social and political reformer. "Pure and simple unionism" was job centered. Labor had no business wasting its energies on irrelevant matters.³⁷ To a member of the Cigarmakers' International Union, intervention was another way of protecting his job.

Samuel Gompers could not let even the AFL presidency distract him from the problems of his own craft union. For him, there could be no worthwhile AFL that was not based on vigorous, disciplined craft unionism. Gompers proudly regarded the cigarmakers' union as the "first constructive efficient American trade union organization." No other AFL affiliate had so much at stake in the Cuban crisis. Any intervention in Cuba to protect American unionism would be for the benefit of the cigarmakers. This dependable hard core of AFL strength could not be allowed to weaken. So vital was this issue that Samuel Gompers was glad to aid the Cuban revolutionaries even though he

³⁵ Gompers, II, 64.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 65.

³⁷ Gompers' labor philosophy is succinctly reviewed in Foster Rhea Dulles, *Labor in America* (New York, 1949), pp. 154-155. Fuller discussions can be found in Gompers, II, and Louis B. Reed, *The Labor Philosophy of Samuel Gompers* (New York, 1930).

“was apprehensive lest the United States inaugurate a regime of imperialism.”³⁸ It was a calculated risk, and the wave of imperialism which swept the United States after the Spanish American War did not surprise Gompers. In the end it was the Cuban cigarmakers themselves who upset his calculations. Cuba gained her independence from Spain. The Cigarmakers’ Union was thenceforth to find it increasingly possible to solve the Florida unionization problem because the Cuban cigarmakers would be disciplined by unionism before they emigrated to Florida. On the other hand, the American craftsmen were frustrated by the unwillingness of their Cuban colleagues to submit to paternalistic influence. The Cuban cigarmakers insisted on their union independence too.

³⁸ Gompers, II, 65.