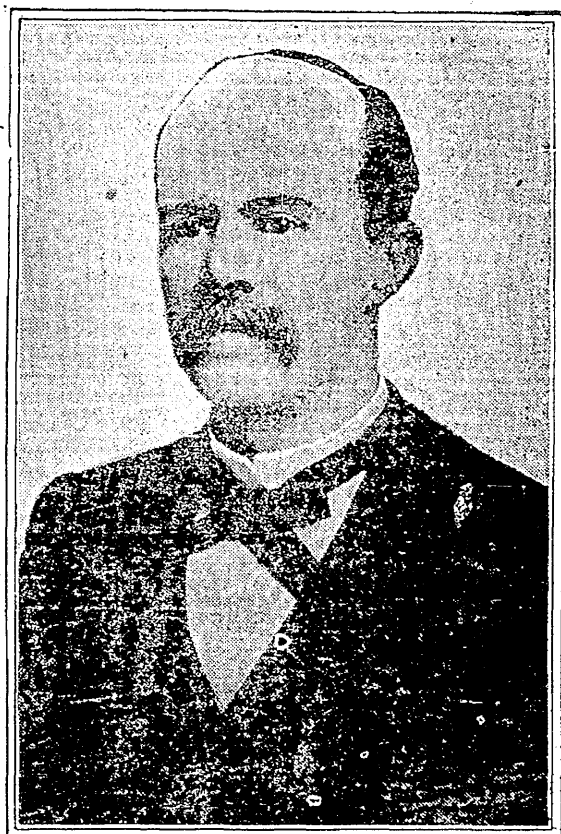


CUBA TO HONOR TURLA, NEW ORLEANS POET

Investigator Finds Here Many Descendants of Patriot Whose Songs Stirred Island to Liberty



RESEARCH work of many weeks in New Orleans finally has brought to light data from which Cuba will pay honor to Leopoldo Turla, one of the most illustrious sons of the island republic. It was in New Orleans that Turla lived for many years and it was here, after he had given all for his country, that he still continued to give. Here it was that the poet-patriot wrote many of the verses that inspired his ragged and hungry countrymen, armed only with machetes, to face some of the best troops from Europe and to continue the struggle over a period many times as long as the American Revolutionary war, until ultimately they won their freedom. Here, too, in an almost forgotten grave, lies Turla's body.

What is more, the investigation has disclosed in this city five generations of the patriot's descendants, although some of them were unaware of the notable part their ancestor played in Cuban history.

Still incomplete is the quest, however, for has disclosed only fragments of the ringing stanzas which came from Turla's pen. Some of these are being gleaned from old newspaper files, some (largely translations) are in possession of families whose forbears knew Turla here, and a few still linger on the lips of the poet's graying grandchildren. An urgent appeal has been made for any other available fragments.

Academy Launches Inquiry
The investigation has been conducted by Mrs. A. M. Hernandez, temporarily residing at 711 Howard avenue, who has done similar work in New York and elsewhere. It was set afoot by the following letter from Jose Manuel Carbonell, president of the National Academy of Arts and Letters, to Consul-General Eduardo Patterson:

Havana, Nov. 5, 1926.
My Distinguished Sir and Friend:

The National Academy of Arts and Letters, of which I have the honor to be president, is preparing a public tribute in memory of the Cuban poet, Leopoldo Turla, who lived in New Orleans from 1855 to 1877, when he died there. In the great number of Cuban newspapers published at that time in New Orleans must be a notice about him, and I understand there is a son of his, a writer, who still resides there! I would be infinitely grateful to you in the name of the National Academy if you would have the kindness to undertake an investigation with the object of obtaining some biographical notes on the poet, the death certificate and data with reference to his life during the many years he resided in New Orleans. If in the public library are found some of his works, we are willing to pay for the necessary photographic copies.

Intuition or good fortune, as she calls it, guided Mrs. Hernandez. Even the date of death at first was uncertain, but this finally was winnowed from ancient bound volumes of the newspapers. The first of several Turlas listed in the city directory was unaware of his distinguished ancestry, but referred Mrs. Hernandez to another and older branch of the family. From a note here and a fragment there the fabric of the patriot's life in Louisiana was pieced together bit by bit, names of the descendants were listed and an outline of his life here was made available. This data has been sent to Havana, and the Cuban colony of New Orleans is waiting word of the exact form the tribute will take.

From Luxury to Poverty
From a home of almost unbelievable luxury Turla had come to New Orleans to die in poverty. His aristocratic family was of true Castilian blood and when he was born in Havana, in 1815, the Turla mansion was among the stately residences of the capital. So lavish were some of these homes, explains Mrs. Hernandez, that in many of them the paving of the courts was inlaid with gold. Their occupants lived in wealthy ease and were surrounded with luxury.

Great events were stirring in the world at the time of Turla's childhood. The Napoleonic wars still cast a somber reflection upon all mankind. The vast dominions of Spain were seething with unrest and from many of them were rising voices for freedom. Scions of proud old names from Andalusia and Cas-



The central photograph in the group shows Leopoldo Turla, Cuban patriot and poet, whose devotion to the freedom of his country led him to give up a life of luxury in Havana, and who died in New Orleans in poverty. To the left is his wife, and at the right his son, Santiago, who, after a rather spectacular financial career, sold the trunk containing the poet's manuscripts. Below him appears Santiago's wife, who was Marie Drouet, member of an old New Orleans family. Below, left, is Mrs. A. M. Hernandez, who has been in New Orleans for weeks, making an investigation on behalf of Cuban government agencies.

tile became members of secret patriotic societies. Gold from the great haciendas was poured out freely, until the Spanish government adopted a rigorous policy of confiscation.

Young Turla was early marked as a poetical genius, and even in college the rare depth and range of his language made him a marked figure. "Every one who knew him," says a contemporary writer, "soon perceived that he was born for a lofty mission—to be the poet, the educator, the unpurchasable advocate of truth, justice and the independence of his native country."

Urged Countrymen to Arm
He published a volume of poems, "Raifagas del Tropico," in 1846, and followed this with several plays, some of which were presented with notable success. However, he wanted wider scope for his plans, so he became identified with the radical, or patriotic, wing of the Havana press. His ringing words struck quick fire. Under the magnetic leadership of General Narciso Lopez his pen became a terrible thorn in the side of the Spanish administration; the theme and tone of his songs grew bolder, until he was openly calling upon his countrymen to arm and win their freedom.

"No one ever realizes today what those Cuban revolutionaries had to face," says Mrs. Hernandez. "They had no weapons. Some of them were almost naked. When a rich family joined them, its property was confiscated promptly and the family was driven into exile."

So it was with Turla. In 1850, a beggarly refugee, he had to flee the island. First he lived in Charleston, S. C.; then moved to Savannah, Ga., but after two years, influenced possibly by the fact that an active Cuban junta was at work in New Orleans, he came here. From then until his death he lived on a mere pittance. Want and privation did not check his fiery pen, however, and his songs poured forth steadily, finding welcome among the even more destitute insurgents who were waging what then seemed a hopeless struggle against the might of Spain.

Ranked High as Poet
He died here on the morning of Tuesday, March 20, 1877. An article in the Picayune a few days later referred to him as "foremost among the Spanish-American poets of the day," and chronicled the fact that he died "obscure and unknown in our midst."

The article, written by a friend, described him as "a poet of a very noble order, who despised inflated sentiment. False tracks and studied application of white handkerchiefs to the eyes he scorned. His noble thoughts were embodied in beautiful and many-colored words, and his enthusiasm was mellowed by remarkable resources of scholarship and a thorough appreciation of art."

"When he read his patriotic poems," the article continues, "arrows of flame shot

through his blood. His impassioned words fell like drops of fire on the hearts of his hearers, his bold eyes flashed and his lips quivered with scorn and hatred. There was a deep music in his poetry, melancholy and solemn, like the sound of the waves in an old house by the sea.... He was a spirited man, who would not do a mean action, although, for the freedom of his country, he might not hesitate at a crime."

His tomb is vault 39, St. Vincent de Paul cemetery, which his body shares with the remains of Julio Chassagne, another Cuban revolutionist. The stone bears the names of the two and the words "Por su patria, Cuba." Until a few days ago it was known only to members of the family and caretakers of the cemetery.

His wife, Senora Rosa Lopez Turla, died May 30, 1893.

The first fragment of Turla's work found here by the investigator was a verse hummed by Mrs. Carolina del Castillo de Turla, 84 years old, a daughter-in-law of the poet. Her eyes lighted as she sang the words:

Corazones les estatus no tunen
Sino formas y ballas; no hayamos
Ni paziones en ella;
Las estatus no saben amar.

Statues have no hearts
But beautiful forms; we find
No passion in them;
Statues do not know how to love.

This is the refrain of a poem Turla wrote for his close friend, Angel de Castro, a Spanish musician living here and who frequently set Turla's compositions to music. De Castro was in love with beautiful Irene Sahugue, but she was cold to him. The poem is said to have been written with the object of melting her heart, but although Turla could send his countrymen to die with a

smile on their lips, his lyrics were powerless to turn the affections of the lovely Irene. She married the musician's rival.

Mrs. Carolina de Turla is the widow of the poet's son Eugenio and resides at 2316 Burgundy street. Another surviving daughter-in-law is Mrs. Louise Lambert, widow of Manuel Turla, 84 years old, living at 2425 Burgundy street. She is the mother of five children, Rosa, aged 60, married and the mother of five; Manuel, 58, married but with no children; America, 55, married and with five children; Anita and Carolina, single. The children of Mrs. Carolina de Turla are Aurora, single; Carlos, single; Eugenia, widow, mother of two children, and Anita, single. The two daughters of this branch of the family are earning a modest competence as seamstresses, and the other, Miss Aurora, supplies her wants by teaching the catechism to children and preparing them for their first communion. Mrs. Lambert is almost blind.

Walter M. Veale, Sr., of 917 Spain street, a great-grandson of the poet, is engaged in clerical work.

The roster being prepared for the Cuban academy will include these names as well as those of various young people who comprise the fourth and fifth generations.

Meanwhile search has been instituted for a

mysterious trunk containing the poet's original manuscripts and believed to be somewhere in New Orleans. It was entrusted to his son Santiago, who married Marie Drouet, member of a prominent French Creole family. Santiago was a traveling salesman, but fortune smiled thrice upon him, at one time for \$10,000. He soon ran through his modest windfall, however, and the hard-pressed family sold the trunk to a second-hand dealer. Several trunks containing old documents already have been examined in the hope that they might contain the poems.

There is a possibility that the inquiry may be extended to New York. At the time of his death Turla had just commenced a translation into Spanish of "The Voice of Silence," a poem by William Winter, once famous as literary critic of the New York Tribune, and highly esteemed by the Cuban writer.

Many of the elder generation of Orleanians recall the verse of Turla and voice surprise that no previous attempt has been made to collect all his writings and to pay him fitting honor. Mrs. Hernandez, however, is hopeful of final and complete success, and in the meanwhile goes unflinchingly about her work of collecting every bit of available data and every stray stanza from the pen of the poet-patriot.

The Seven Deadly Sayings - - - Continued from Page One

Consider the trest arrangement possible and one of the oldest—the unfaithful husband, the wife and the other woman.

The whole suspense for the reader lies in one question. What is the wife going to do about it? To the surprise of every one, she ignores facts, publicity, the whole blatant situation and clings with blind faith to the husband, or she chooses to remain with him "for the sake of the children."

Another woman in the same social environment has her suspicions aroused at the least hint that her husband is interested elsewhere, and is determined on a divorce, which she hopes to obtain on purely presumptive or circumstantial evidence.

Take another of life's headlined dramas: The man who has maintained his family in luxury, and suddenly goes on the rocks. In addition to the shock of the wreck, he has to

break the news to his wife. Although the blow falls as heavily on her as on him, she shows the utmost sympathy, and says in effect: "Never mind, we'll get along, we'll manage somehow."

A Contrast in Luck

That is his luck. At the same moment, his partner breaks the news to his wife. She reproaches him bitterly for his failure to avert the catastrophe, taunts him with his lack of business sagacity, until the man, foreseeing nothing but a life of struggle and recrimination, goes into another room and shoots himself.

Who can truthfully repeat the line about the colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady in the face of such feminine diversities of temperament as these?

"Women are so illogical." This pronouncement, coupled with the tone in which it is

said, will invariably rouse the latent fighting spirit in the most meek and dove-like woman. And why? Because of the injustice of it.

And let us not forget the dear, familiar, "A woman must always have the last word." As the saying stands, I never have been able to make out whether it is a compliment or the reverse.

Is it a tribute to our argumentative gifts, or our cleverness in thinking up so many telling tags to a conversation, or the rapidity with which we get our second, third or even fourth wind? I don't know. Some woman wiser than I will have to tell you.

"Fidelity, thy name is woman!" Will you believe that men still quote it? But they do. This saying has the musty fragrance of past centuries about it. It belongs with "The fair sex," and "The ladies! God bless 'em."