

THE SLAUGHTER AT THE THEATRE.

General Dulce Declines to Proclaim a Free Government.

Effect of the Amnesty Proclamation.

Cuban View of the Fall of Bayamo—Céspedes Delays the Uprising in the West—The Conciliatory Meeting—Press Agitation—Markets.

HAVANA, Jan. 20, 1899.

The patriots of this city admit the fall of Bayamo, but affect to treat it as of small importance in its effect upon the insurrection, and, in fact, they make a very fair case. They say there never was any reason to suppose that Bayamo could hold out against the superior discipline, arms and artillery of the troops any more than any other city. It is practically as remote from the seaboard as any other point in the island. True, in a direct line from Manzanillo the distance is short, but the road is impassable. This is evident from the fact that Valmaseda approached it from Nuevitas on the north side, though the distance was three or four times as great. As the result it required a large concentration of troops and expenditure of money to reach there. The Spanish forces were harassed at every step by the guerrilla forces of the patriots, and their losses must have been great. All this, say they, is followed by a barren victory. Bayamo is of no importance to the patriot cause in a strategic point of view, as a base of supplies, or in any manner whatever, and on the approach of the troops it was abandoned. There had been no concentration of force to defend it, and, in reality, little fortification. The stories in reference to the proposed desperate defence to be made there were only for the purpose of drawing a large force thither at great loss and expense to the enemy, while, in the meantime, the warm weather would be coming on and the patriots would be in a position to inaugurate their combined movement westward, which has for some time been determined upon and which is to be followed by an uprising of the people all along their line of march. Meanwhile all possible exertions are being made to concentrate as many arms as possible in the localities where the troops are to take place, and it is anticipated that the movement will be one triumphal march across the island. It is further stated that Céspedes has expressed the earnest desire, and, in so far as his authority was recognized, has commanded that no uprising take place in the West at present, as the time is not yet come, his plan being to employ all the Spanish troops in the East to harass and wear them out until the yellow fever season arrives, and then, as stated, to make a combined movement west. As an evidence of the truth of these statements is pointed out the fact that the insurgents of Puerto Principe for the most part did not interfere with Valmaseda's march, but allowed him to go on while they concentrated a large and well-armed force in the vicinity of the city of that name, either to attack it or otherwise, as circumstances might dictate; also the fact that Quesada, with his arms and force, permitted Valmaseda to proceed without any effort to attack or turn him aside.

The following is a translation of the announcement as made by the *Diario de la Marina* of this morning:—"The Commanding General of the troops in active service, through the military commandant of Manzanillo, manifest to the Captain General that on the 16th, at twelve o'clock, he entered Bayamo, it having been set on fire by the enemy, as had been done with the pueblo of Daiil. The taking of Cauto and the action of Salado, where the insurgents lost 125 killed and an immense number of wounded, caused them to disperse and give themselves up to pillage to procure provisions preparatory to concealing themselves in the mountains."

The official journal of last evening contains the same statement telegraphed by the Military Commandant at Trinidad, who received it from the same official at Manzanillo.

Another peace meeting was held on Monday evening at the residence of Don Miguel Cardenas, where it was agreed to accept the report of the committee theretofore appointed, reducing the various questions to one single point, namely—"the right of self-government for the island of Cuba, with all of its guarantees for the insurance of permanency, to put an end to the evils which have befallen the country."

A commission was named, consisting of Señors Sterling, Morales Lemus, Bachiller y Morales, eminent lawyers; Count Pozos Dulers, proprietor, and J. Foer, planter, to consult with the Peninsular or Spanish party. More than sixty persons were present, from among the most distinguished in the city.

The *Diario* of yesterday states that the first company of contra-guerrilla volunteers which had arrived at Moron were to leave on the 11th to reconnoitre the environs in search of the bands which were reported to be marauding in that district. The second company, consisting of 109 men, Captain Lacasa in command, recently left here on the steamer *Elayo*. The same journal states that in that part of the jurisdiction of Puerto Principe which borders on Moron and Santi Espirito only small parties were seen, which may be considered rather as bands of malefactors than insurgents. A respectable number of troops, made up of cavalry, militia and volunteers, there stationed, frequently go over the territory in reconnoitring parties.

The liberty of the press here continues to manifest itself by some very striking peculiarities. *La Prensa*, which should have existed some 230 years ago, fills its columns daily with long and tedious legends mainly for the purpose of combating the liberal publications which have appeared of late. In its number of yesterday it betrays its animus and that of the party which it represents by the following:—"Independent of the causes which may have influenced the insurgents, causes far from being so noble as our colleague (*La Verdad*) supposes, the authorities offer them amnesty. If they do not accept; if they persist in their determination to prescribe the race of their fathers; if they desire to separate from Spain, deliver themselves up to the United States, expel the Spaniards and give away the property of their compatriots born in other provinces to foreigners assisting them, we will find ourselves under the necessity, without any boast of pride, to finish with them by force of arms; and if by a series of extraordinary events we should be attacked by foreign enemies, allies of the insurgents, we would, as we have said at other times, set fire to the domain, which dates from the times of the Catholic kings and which has grown and developed far more than other countries close at hand, until nothing is left but ashes and ruins."

La Verdad, the new liberal paper started here, is meeting with a success which has no precedent in this island. The publishers have already issued 14,000 copies of the first number. The second has just appeared, it being published but once in five days at present, but will be made a daily after the 1st prox.

In an article responsive to one appearing in the *Voz de Cuba*, a Spanish liberal paper, it says:—"It is public and notorious that when Count Valmaseda commenced to treat with the revolutionists of Puerto Principe, who have given the most importance to the insurrection, they were disposed to lay down their arms, provided positive guarantees were given them of liberal reforms, and Lersundi having denied these, not being authorized to grant them, they again returned to the field." Referring to a statement previously made, it says, "As to the assertion that the insurrection is daily becoming more vigorous, we were the echo of the public voice, and the simple fact of the continuous sending of new forces to the points occupied by the insurgents proves that we were correct. Besides this the government creates alarm by preserving the most profound silence, which leads to the spread of rumors more or less grave in character, a deal of which turn out true. Secrecy and silence in these cases are ominous. With respect to the war call of races alleged to have been cried in Bayamo, that is not true. We have seen a copy of that document (Céspedes' proclamation of emancipation), and we regret that, owing to the law of the press, we are prohibited from granting it. But we are ready to convince our colleague that there is no call to a war of races. In conclusion, we desire the *Voz de Cuba*, which justly boasts of being frank and cordial, never to infer anything from our expressions beyond what we say, as we intend nothing beyond that."

Since the first rumor of Valmaseda's taking of Bayamo Spanish gold has been selling at four to five per cent premium. It is now firm at the latter figure. The sugar market shows symptoms of activity.

The French flagship *Semiramis*, having on board the French Admiral of the Antilles station, is shortly expected here from Port au Prince.

The sugar estate of Colonel Acosta, as stated by a person recently from Santi Espirito, has been destroyed by the insurgents. It is styled Flor del Valle. Colonel Acosta commands a battalion of the Volunteers of Order.

Among the passengers that arrived on the 17th in the French steamer from Vera Cruz was Mr. Emile Le Sere, who has obtained the concession of the Tehuantepec Railroad under certain modifications, and proceeds to New York in the steamer Morro Castle.

An American citizen, a native of Cuba, named Theodore Cabias, was arrested a few days ago. The Consul has cognizance of the case.

The Fray at the Villanueva Theatre—General Dulce Declines to Proclaim Free Government—Movements of the Insurgents in the East—Consular Report from Santa Cruz—News Items.

HAVANA, Jan. 23, 1899.

A disturbance took place at the Villanueva theatre last evening which resulted in the killing of several

persons, and the wounding of others. This theatre is mostly patronized by Cubans, and it is asserted that the performance of last evening was given in aid of the insurrection. The boxes were mostly taken by natives, and a number of Spaniards who applied for places were informed that they were all engaged. One or two of the local papers seem to have had a premonition that a disturbance would take place, and *La Prensa*, in its evening edition, advised all honorable people to be on their guard. At the hour of opening the house was well filled; the piece was of a local character, and during its performance some one shouted—"Viva the land which produces the sugar! Viva Cuba!" and other cries. This continued for some time, when some person shouted "Viva Céspedes!" which was followed by a tremendous excitement. The volunteers in attendance, who would seem to have lost their wits, fired a volley into the audience, which was followed by a number of random shots. The reports in reference to the killed and wounded are numerous and exaggerated. The scene that followed beggars description, as there were present women and children. The audience began to pour out as rapidly as possible, during which an occasional shot was heard, which added to the panic.

The number of persons killed at the theatre was seven, of whom one is a baby. The wounded and bruised cannot be ascertained: they were many. The fight commenced at half-past nine P. M. by shots fired outside by the volunteers, which were answered from inside by the Cubans. It lasted till half-past two this morning. The report of the Cuban meeting in favor of self-government for this island was recently submitted to General Dulce, with a request that he would promulgate it. He replied that he had no authority to do so, and could only remit it to Spain.

The fact that the insurgents of the Eastern Department have determined to move westward seems to gain confirmation. They are reported as appearing in large numbers in Villa Clara and other points more in this direction than those heretofore occupied, and they have entirely disappeared from the vicinity of Santiago de Cuba and along the south-eastern coast. While the main object, doubtless, is to bring active operations nearer to Havana, another, equally important, is to keep the troops engaged in marching and countermarching until the warm weather, that great ally to the natives, sets in.

We have nothing determinate as to Valmaseda's movements since the abandonment of Bayamo by the insurgents on the approach of the troops. The *Diario de la Marina* says letters have been received from Manzanillo the 16th, stating that Don Pedro Ramirez has just arrived with despatches from Valmaseda, who was occupying the place where Bayamo once stood, it now being reduced to ashes.

Adverse rumors in Matanzas state that the arrival of General Valmaseda was expected in Manzanillo yesterday. It is reported here that some sailing steamers have been chartered to bring the troops to Havana.

The United States consular agent at Santa Cruz, under date of the 16th, writes to the acting Consul General in this city as follows:—

From the very beginning of the insurrection I put up the American flag over my property, situated nine miles from this port, expecting that the insurgents would respect it, and as they did until the 15th instant, when they obliged some families of the vicinity to go on my place and bring there the chief of the insurrectionists, named M. A. Agüero, came with a small force and took away all the men, obliging them to abandon their families and follow them to the war. They also carried off some of my horses. I am now obliged to sustain those poor families there with my cattle, vegetables, &c. I do not know the exact condition of my property, as I do not go there, the insurgents having killed several persons in the vicinity of late. I cannot expect any protection from the authorities here, as they have but fifty soldiers. Is there no way of getting protection from the government of the United States?

The Spanish Bank (*Banco Español*) has filed a suit at law against *La Verdad* for libel, that paper having published a communication declaring that institution, like others of the same character, to have been fraudulent in its operations, with other charges of a severe character.

The restrictions established by Lersundi not permitting any passengers to land for many hours after the arrival of steamers and until the list is seen by the Captain General and a landing permit given still continues.

The North German Confederation war steamer *Victoria* has sailed for Lagayra, having on board Baron Grahov, Russian Minister to Venezuela and his family.

Withdrawal of the Insurgents from St. Jago—The Slavery Question—Effect of the Amnesty Proclamation—Reported Removal of Céspedes from Command.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Jan. 15, 1899.

Affairs here are somewhat improved at present, partly owing to the activity of our new Governor, General Simon de la Torre, and partly owing to the course pursued by the rebels, who have withdrawn from this immediate neighborhood, and the government troops take possession, without opposition, of all the points which they recently occupied, and many of which they had fortified with much labor.

Just previous to their departure Governor Muñoz despatched from here a strong column to operate against the insurgents after a month of inaction. It proceeded to Guantanamo, or Cumberland Harbor, by sea, and after stopping there one day marched upon Sabanilla, having been reinforced in the latter place by 100 troops and about as many volunteer cavalry quartered there. Sabanilla is a sugar estate, distant about fifteen leagues from this city, and General Marmol was reported to be entrenched there with at least 4,000 men under his command. Arrived there the troops found the place deserted, and at once set out on their return, reaching a point within a day's march of St. Jago on the 4th, without having fired a shot. Here the contingent which had joined at Guantanamo left them, returning to that place through this city. The remainder of the column proceeded to Palma Soriana, and, leaving a garrison of 150 men there, came back to Cobre, surprising on the way a body of insurgents posted in the Puerto de Bayamo district, nine miles and in sight from here. The firing lasted about half an hour, and the insurgents were defeated with loss. The loss of the troops, as officially reported, was one officer killed and three men wounded. The Cubans, however, insist that their loss was much heavier; instead of but four as stated they came into town at least 150 short. Their loss certainly must have been greater than reported, if not in action, from sickness. Cobre was found deserted, and the column arrived here on the 8th, carrying with it the dead body of the officer who had been killed the day before. His funeral took place next morning and an immense number accompanied the remains to the cemetery, the deceased, a lieutenant, being very popular here.

The next day the insurgents were again in Cobre, and on the day following again abandoned it on the approach of a force sent out from here under the orders of Colonel Camara to garrison that town and occupy some other points of strategical importance.

The slavery question naturally excites much attention at present, and since the so-called provisional government emancipated all the slaves, in their movements to the interior the rebels have carried off by force all the able-bodied males, having entirely cleared several estates. Many negroes, as well as whites, imagine that the proclamation of Céspedes was an emancipation, which it is not, but rather the establishing of a sort of "freedmen's bureau." The decree has created much alarm here. It had scarcely been published in Cobre when the chiefs of the revolution went to the estates and took away the best negroes, telling them they were free. They carried away over 4,000 toward Cauto. The majority of the planters will not be able to grind their cane; for even in the event of the negroes not making use of their freedom they have already suffered irreparable loss by the rebellion, and as the merchants will advance nothing they will be entirely without pecuniary resources.

The steamer *Cienfuegos*, which arrived on the evening of the 12th, brought news of the arrival of Dulce and of the amnesty proclamation. The latter caused considerable excitement here, as the Catalans, who are a very vindictive people, will be satisfied with little sort of extermination of the insurgents. There was some grouping on the Plaza, but nothing more than loud talk followed. Apart from the military operations heretofore recounted there have been various small sorties from the town, but all of little consequence. In one of these a major of volunteer cavalry, named Saturnino Fernandez, was guilty of the atrocity of cutting off the dead insurgents' ears and bringing them into town, showing them triumphantly to those who cared for such a disgusting spectacle.

General Dulce's amnesty proclamation has, so far, been a success in this quarter, since already some 400 people have taken advantage of it to present themselves here and at Cobre. Among them and in command of a greater part of them is a certain Jesus Perez, formerly an officer under government, who had deserted with his whole band. In addition to the actual insurgents under his command and who surrendered with him, he had a large number of slaves in his custody, who will be restored to their owners.

It is stated that in Palma 122 insurgents had availed themselves of the amnesty—of which number there were twenty-four whites, sixty-three mulattoes and thirty-five negroes. It was reported that among others the Dominican General Gomez intended to accept the amnesty. The insurgents presenting themselves are said to be the scum, who are worthless brigands, and have only served to eat rations and commit depredations on their own account.

The government and Spaniards are jubilant over the withdrawal of the insurgents from the vicinity of this city (St. Jago). Provisions are much cheaper, and the aqueduct will soon be repaired.

It is reported that the political and civil control of the revolution has been taken from Céspedes, leaving him only the military command. This was done while he was at Guaymaro, from which place he had sent a protest to Bayamo.