

# IS CUBA A BELLIGERENT?

## Quesada's Manifesto to the American People.

### The Patriot Army—Its Equipment, Strength and Resources—The Institutions of the Republican Revolutionists—The Reports of Cuban Conquests and Achievements Confirmed.

General Manuel Quesada, Commander-in-Chief of the liberating army of Cuba, at present temporarily sojourning in this city, en route to the government at Washington, has just completed his official address or manifesto to the people of the United States, of which the following translation presents all the leading points:—

GENTLEMEN—Great would have been my surprise, on arriving in this country and witnessing the turn that the Cuban question has taken it, on the one hand, my knowledge of the character and means of action employed by the enemy whom we are fighting, and, on the other, the antecedents and some facts that have transpired closely connected with our moral and material interests, had not long since prepared me for what has occurred. In fact, all the force of our action was displayed in the interior of the island, because only in the interior could we organize, instruct and discipline the numerous army that we have. The blockade of the island was inaugurated by direct reason of our agrandisement in the interior. Our entrepreneurial force being confiscated by the governments of the United States and England, foreign nations were quite ignorant of the actual position in Cuba, and merely judged by reports published in the official organs of the old Spanish government. Is it not, therefore, very natural that all the circumstances should have appeared advantageous to our enemies? Is it not very natural that Spain should paint the state of the revolution in the blackest colors, and change our most brilliant victories into so many disastrous routings? In addition to the above, some Cubans, led astray by their enthusiasm, have indulged upon the laws of neutrality of some countries. Is it not just that the countries thus wounded should allow their sympathies for the cause of Cuba to cool down? Then again, if our cause is that of liberty and progress; if we desire that foreign Powers recognize and respect the government that we have established in Cuba, it is exactly just to exact that we should commence by respecting the laws and governments whose recognition we aspire to. However, by uniting our efforts it is an easy matter to remedy the misunderstanding hitherto existing. Words are not convincing, but facts will prove. In my official capacity many of my statements, as matters now stand, may seem exaggerated and even untrue. However, to impartial minds, the statements of a representative of the government of the republic of Cuba will carry as much weight with them as the official reports of the Spanish government. Basing myself upon this assurance, I beg to present a report of the

#### REVOLUTION OF CUBA,

in its past, present and its future.

When in October, 1863, while in Nassau, I received the notice of the *pronunciamiento* of Lara, I had but just left Camaguey, convinced that the emancipation of the island depended upon some thousand stand of arms. What must have been my surprise, however, on learning that Cespedes had resolved to meet an entire army with a handful of men, in the hope that the movement would be seconded simultaneously in Puerto Principe and Havana. On leaving Camaguey I had promised to use all my efforts to procure efficient arms and not to return until called upon. After surmounting obstacles that seemed almost impossible, by means that I do not wish to explain, I formed the first expedition that landed on the shores of Cuba, composed of 3,000 carbines, 150 Spencer rifles, 500,000 charges of powder and 200,000 metal cartridges.

I landed at Guanaja on December 27, and I must confess that I never met with such bitter disappointment. I had sent an agent fifteen days beforehand to meet me there with 3,000 men, intending to march upon Puerto Principe. I found there but 130 men, and those brought together by great trouble and difficulty. Numerous small bands were dispersed over the country who could but harass the enemy. In Bayamo the state was worse still. Valmaseda had again visited that locality with his shameful crimes, and had destroyed the foundation laid by Cespedes. Short of arms and ammunition, the valiant defenders of liberty had become disheartened and were leaving the ranks, leaving Cespedes, Aguilera, Marmol, &c., in their despair. Such were the state of things that I encountered in Cuba. I soon saw that discipline and subordination was necessary; but first of all it was important to have my position definitely defined. Leaving the arms in a safe place I went to confer with the existing government, which on January 7, 1869, gave me full powers to act, by appointing me General-in-Chief of the army of Camaguey. My first act was to hand some arms and ammunition to General Cespedes, then to work up the spirit of my countrymen. I called the chiefs of the various parties together and divided the arms, under the express condition that they were to be used against the old Spanish government, in favor of the free government of Cuba, and under the orders of the commander that should be appointed by it. The presence of Brigadier Lesca in Nuevitas, with a force of 3,000 men destined for Camaguey, forced me to concentrate my forces on that line. On February 22, when suffering from fever, I received notice that Lesca had landed at Guanaja, intending to pass the hills of Cubitas towards Puerto Principe. Five hundred men were sent to occupy the best positions, and the result was that out of the 2,000 men of the enemy there were 330 killed and 600 wounded. By the construction of a simple intrenchment the whole force could have been destroyed, but the inexperienced leaders, in my absence, did not think of this. Lesca arrived at Puerto Principe, and I then commenced a series of sorties and marches in Camaguey without any definite object, but merely to keep our forces in continual movement. In this period the fights of Santa Fe, Arroyo Blanco, La Caridad, Imias, Las Yeguas and Savana Nueva occurred, in which the enemy was roughly handled. In this manner Valmaseda passed from Santa Cruz to Camaguey and back. Aguilera passed from Camaguey to Sibanicu and Acosta from Clejo to Camaguey, leaving the roads covered with their dead, their arms and trappings.

The departments in revolt were then attempting a fusion, having, so far, been under independent governments, and the memorable conference of Guaimaro was held, which resulted in the creation of the federal government of the republic of Cuba, under the Presidency of Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, (April 10, 1869), whose first act was to approve of the decrees for the complete

#### ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

I was appointed general-in-chief of the armies of the republic, and during the time that the Legislature formulated the law respecting the military organization the departments of the Oriental and Ciego Villas were organized on the same footing as the central army, and an interim General Finance Bureau was formed, with special charge to establish the necessary workshops for the manufacture of clothing, arms, &c. Then the events of the Oriente transpired, which were aggravated by the absence of the superior commander, and I determined to go there personally. I arrived at Las Tunas in time to save the lives of eleven Spanish officers and 130 soldiers, who had fallen into our hands at the fight of Las Lagunas, and who had been sentenced to be shot. Making for Holguin I had the first encounter with the Catalan volunteers, who were completely routed by our troops, and we had but 800 cartridges left in the whole army. In the midst of this action I was informed of the landing of Generos from the steamer the Porria, with some arms and munitions of war. Leaving the troops in charge of General Vincente Garcia, I left for the landing place, escorted by my staff and ten riflemen. Several fights took place, there in which the enemy suffered heavy losses in killed, wounded and prisoners. At Bijoru I was officially informed of the landing of 8,000 men, and informed the government of the safety of the expedition by the Salvador. The Spanish troops having horribly mutilated a child, I sent a message to Brigadier Lesca, by means of an officer who had been taken prisoner, inviting him to carry on the war in a manner worthy of the times we live in, as I had previously done to Brigadier Lesca. He replied, "Tell General Quesada that I will settle our account by bullets."

#### LAS TUNAS.

On August 15 I moved towards Las Tunas with one regiment of cazadores, four companies of riflemen and a squadron of cavalry, for the purpose of taking that city, not intending to keep it, but to secure as much material as possible. That memorable day terminated disastrously to the enemy; moreover our forces secured 300 rifles, a large quantity of ammunition, and we could have taken any amount of plunder, but pillage was forbidden under penalty of death. Three of the four commanders were wounded, one mortally; twenty-three prisoners fell into our hands. This action may be considered the most glorious during the revolution. Many attacks were made upon the enemy in order to disintegrate our want of powder; meanwhile I received the first sample of powder that had been manufactured by a commission that had been appointed for that purpose. Giving orders to supply a large quantity I prepared to leave for the West, but on arriving at Jaguayes I was compelled to remain for a double motive. A man by the name of Tejada presented himself and begged to enter the service, and insisted on forming part of my escort. Such conduct being suspicious, he was arrested, and on his per-son were found a pass from the Captain General and a poignard. On being questioned he avowed that his intention was to

#### ASSASSINATE QUESADA AND CESPEDES.

for which the Spanish government had promised to pay \$30,000. At the same time I was informed that an extensive conspiracy had been discovered among the Spanish prisoners confined in the fortress of Najasa, who had sworn not to take up arms against Cuba. The object of the plot was to escape and give full details of our positions to Valmaseda. At my instigation a decree was issued by the Chamber of Representatives by virtue of which all the prisoners were sentenced to be shot, which sentence was carried out upon the 670 officers and men on October 10. The want of assistance and the cool tenor of the American press tended to greatly discourage and unsettle the minds of many of our partisans. Much of which could

have been avoided had the real state of our matters been known. I therefore resolved to leave the island, and on December 15 mentioned my resolution to a junta of commanders. My views were at first discountenanced, but when the immense advantages that would accrue became evident they were willingly acceded to. General Cespedes approved of my action, and delivering the command into the hands of General Jordan, with instructions for action during my absence, the President confided the important mission to me which has brought me to this country, furnished with the credentials which I have had the honor to show. Before entering upon my journey I received communications from General Jordan confirming

#### THE DEFEAT OF PUELO

in Las Minas de Guaymaro, of Valmaseda in Las Tunas and of Goyeneche, first at San Miguel and afterwards at Najasa. General Cavada informed me that in obedience to my orders a strong column would advance upon Colon and fire the canefield in its march (January, 1870), and on the 23rd of that month I left the shores of Cuba, leaving the island in a state of prosperity, which can be judged from the following statement:—

#### RESOURCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA. LIBERATING ARMY.

	Ordnance.	Quartermasters.	Las.	Total.
General of Staff and Commander-in-Chief.....	1	1	1	3
Lieutenant Generals.....	1	1	1	3
Major Generals, com. of districts.	1	1	1	3
Colonels.....	15	15	15	45
Lieutenant Colonels.....	24	24	24	72
Captains.....	240	240	240	720
Officers.....	4,500	7,200	47,000	58,700
Soldiers.....				
Total.....	5,085	7,284	47,000	61,683
The above list includes infantry, cavalry, artillery and engineers.				
SANITARY CORPS.				
Chief medical officer.....	1	1	1	3
Local chief officers.....	6	10	43	59
Doctors of second class.....	10	27	94	131
Operative surgeons.....	2	50	30	82
Attendants.....	2	10	6	18
Military hospitals.....	15	15	15	45
MILITARY ADMINISTRATION.				
Quartermaster General.....	1	1	1	3
Commissary Generals.....	6	15	12	33
Sub-Commissaries.....				
WORKSHOPS.				
Armories.....				9
Shoe factories.....				13
Smiths' shops.....				13
Power factories.....				5
Carpenters' shops.....				9
Tanneries.....				62
Percussion factories.....				3
General stores.....				3
Commissaries general.....				26
Sub-commissaries.....				3
POSTAL SERVICE.				
Postmaster General.....	1	1	1	3
Inspectors.....	27	70	28	125
Postmasters.....	15	250	152	517
Postillions (12 to 15 years old).....	27	70	33	130
ARMAMENT.				
Firearms (long).....	3,000	5,500	7,200	15,700
Firearms (short).....	333	815	2,410	3,558
Artillery.....	4	7	2	13
Machetes.....	4,812	7,200	49,893	61,905
Lances in store.....				2,200
Sabres in store.....	140	216	145	501
HOESER.				
In active service.....	1,300	4,870		No returns.
In stables.....		2,500		No returns.
MULES.				
In active service.....	336	427		
In stables.....		1,800		

#### OBSERVATIONS.

In the territory occupied by the liberating troops there are sixteen public schools, six Catholic churches, one Episcopal (under care of the Rev. Santa Rosa), and four Masonic lodges. The stores contain sugar, tobacco and hides to the value of many millions of dollars for want of means of exportation. Large deposits of guano have been discovered at Najasa and Cubitas. The tanneries of the army turn out about 4,500 hides monthly. The shoe factories furnish 3,000 pair of shoes per week. Machetes and lances are manufactured in the armories and old guns are converted to the Remington system. One powder mill turns out two arrobas per day (about fifty pounds), and the others are not yet in working order. The laboratory furnishes daily 1,500 percussion caps and 1,000 capsules.

The rations of the troops consist of beef or pork, two pounds; rice, plantains, boniatos, or yucas at discretion; sugar, four ounces; aguardiente, two ounces; coffee or equivalent, two cups; cigars, two; cigarettes (for officers), ten. In the Central Department there are numerous plantations at work for account of the State, and the crops of tobacco, coffee, rice, corn, &c., are as abundant as in times of peace.

Such is the present situation of Cuba. As to its future, who can for a moment doubt it. The revolution has passed through the first period, that of the rising, to the second, which is the struggle; and when revolution attains that period they are invincible. The contest may be more or less bloody or protracted, but most necessarily result in the extermination of the enemies of liberty and justice. Can it be possible that, after tasting the sweets of liberty, the slaves will again return to slavery? No! Is it possible that, after pronouncing its unanimous will by the people, the masses, the sovereign people, there can exist a human tribunal capable of revoking it? Never! Liberty is the canon of the universal law of progress. The law of progress is a divine law, and against the divine laws the strength of man is impotent.

M. QUESADA.