

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

The Disturbances at Havana—Terrible Excitement among the Populace—Violent Scenes on Palm Sunday—Murders and Executions—Full Particulars of the Capture of the Brig Mary Lowell by a Spanish Man-of-War—Official Statement—The Peruvian Monitor said to have Reached a Cuban Port.

HAVANA, March 23.

On Sunday evening a government transport left for Fernando Po with two hundred and twenty-five political prisoners on board, having for escort the war frigate Lealtad. Until within a day or two before this, four hundred prisoners had been selected to go, but representations made to Captain-General Dulce induced him on Friday to reduce the number, and retain one hundred and forty-five of the prisoners for fuller consideration of their cases. The two hundred and twenty-five who went were embarked from Fort Cabanas, and although very many of them belonged to the first classes of society, embracing wealthy sugar and tobacco planters, able jurists, talented lawyers, professors and physicians, merchants of note, fervent priests, and affluent bankers, all were taken on board, ironed and chained. Their embarkation was witnessed by several thousands of persons assembled on the wharves fronting Fort Cabanas, or aloft in boats, that were, however, prevented by government barges from coming near the transport. Most of the spectators were Spaniards, attracted there by curiosity and desires to rejoice over the misfortune of the embarking prisoners and to insult them, as they repeatedly did, with shouts of derision and triumph; magnanimity and decent behavior apparently being totally unthought of. These Spaniards had evidently come with bad feelings and the intention of creating disturbances, and they unfortunately soon found and eagerly snatched at an opportunity for doing the last.

All the prisoners had been embarked before half-past one P. M., and the vast crowd had begun to leave the wharves when a very respectable Spanish merchant, Senor Veguier, (an officer of volunteers but then dressed in citizen's clothes), caught a man trying to pick his pockets, and had him arrested. The Deputy Police Commissioner of the First Ward, Don Juan B. Romero, happened to be near by and took the pick-pocket in charge, and, aided by some policemen, started to lead him to prison. The crowd noticed this, and some one having wickedly stated that the man was arrested for shouting, "*Muera Espana!*" (Death to Spain!) a general demand for his life was made, and cries of "Shoot him! Kill him!" resounded on all sides. Just then a half-witted Cuban, named Francisco Noy, who is known by a thousand persons to be an irresponsible being, defiantly responded to the cries of the Spaniards with the shout of "*Viva Cespedes! Muera Espana!*" He was immediately knocked down, and would have been killed on the spot had not the courageous Deputy-Commissioner Romero, who knew the man, rescued him and then started with him and the pick-pocket for the prison. The crowd followed the Deputy-Commissioner, shouting and yelling like demons, and increasing in number every second. Arrived in front of the barracks, that adjoin the City Governor's palace and face toward the Plaza de Armas, the deputy commissioner realized that his prisoners would soon be taken from him and killed if he continued any further; so he had the barrack gates opened to him, passed in with the prisoners beyond the yard, and soon lodged them safely within one of the rooms of the barracks. The crowd following endeavored to also enter the yard, but the sentinels at the gate were too quick for them, and succeeded in shutting them out. Hundreds of men thereupon began scaling the iron fence, but were intimidated from going over by the officer on duty within, who placed two companies in line of battle in front of the fence, and thus kept the crowd on the outer side. The troops on duty in the barracks happened to belong to the Second Battalion of Havana Volunteers, which is the best-drilled and least-disposed-to-fight battalion in the city, and two companies of which readily obeyed the order to keep the crowd out of the yard.

Unable to reach the men whose blood they thirsted for with tiger-like ferocity, the thousands of Spaniards forming the mob, for mob it was in the full sense of the word, shouted and yelled louder than ever, every moment hundreds being added to their ranks. The day was Palm Sunday. Most of the mob had attended church that morning, and borne off palm leaves, and other leafy emblems, which are in all countries given that day to attendants at Catholic services. Many of the infuriated men still bore these palm leaves and leafy emblems in their hands, and gesticulated wildly with them, thus using them for anything but religious purposes, prostituting the gifts, desecrating the day, and manifesting what little influence the pacific teachings of religion had had upon them. The crowd in front of the barracks and the City Governor's Palace soon became immense, and filled also in part the Plaza de Armas. General Dulce and the Segundo Cabo, General Espinar, repaired to the barracks, and at the same time the officer on duty at the Captain General's palace detached a part of the guard there to clear the Plaza of the crowd. This order was not to be fulfilled without bloodshed. One of the men in the Plaza, who was not participating in the riotous demonstrations, was rather slow in leaving; so one of the guards (a volunteer of the second battalion) struck him a side blow with his gun to accelerate his pace; but this had a contrary effect, the man getting angry and remonstrating with the volunteer. This one thereupon struck him a second time with the side of the gun, which was at once snatched. A lieutenant of volunteers seeing this, ran up, and without saying a word, shot the man with his pistol in the head, killing him instantly.

Another volunteer added increased brutality to the cowardly murder by running his bayonet into the body of the man after he fell. The lieutenant, I understand, now endeavors to justify his crime by saying that he killed the man for having shouted "*Viva Cespedes!*" There is not a word of truth in the justification, and the wretch that makes it is but adding one crime to another. A German jeweler and a young American, who were but a few feet from the officer when he committed the murder, deny the use of such language. Besides, the murdered man was a Spaniard, a clerk in a hardware store on Obispo street, and, though not a volunteer, was as decided an opponent of Cuban nationality as his murderer, though the latter did not know this, otherwise he would in all probability not have acted as he did.

The killing of the man in the Plaza immediately drew most of the mob there, and it feasted its sight with the bloodshed, and lauded the murdering lieutenant, who took good care to claim the credit of the killing, very much under the false impression that the victim was a Cuban. The viewing of the lifeless body, all covered with gore, was but an appetizer to the mob for more blood, and soon the surging, shouting, yelling mass was again in front of the barracks. About this time courageous Deputy Commissioner Romero appeared on the street, and was hooted at, which led him to address those nearest him, telling them they knew not what they were about; they did not understand the cases of the two prisoners, and had better go home. This caused considerable disorder for a short time, during which the deputy commissioner was killed, a volunteer in uniform, said by some to belong to the Fifth Battalion, but this is not positive, shooting him through the head, and declaring at the same time that he was no better than an insurgent. This murder created a visible commotion, and General Dulce was led by it to appear, and announce that the volunteers should have justice. This did not, however, satisfy the mob, and their clamor for blood continued as violently as ever, at least a dozen cries of "*Muera to Dulce!*" ascending from the crowd; and one of the loudest-voiced individuals shouted to the Captain-General so as to be extensively heard: "Decide at once whose head we are to have, yours, or that of the map." In the face of this very unflattering reception, General Dulce retired, and afterwards many officers of volunteers circulated among the mob and told all hands that General Dulce had ordered a military commission of volunteers to try one of the men, who was to be condemned and shot in less than an hour.

The prospect of more blood, and of the sight of an execution, delighted the mob, and at once the shouting and yelling ceased; and additional troops coming up, including General Dulce's body-guard, the crowd willingly moved off from in front of the barracks and the Plaza, and anxiously awaited the feast of blood promised it. This was indeed to take place. General Dulce had truly succumbed to the brutal demands of the mob, and a human being was to be sacrificed as the price of quietude. A commission composed, as promised, entirely of volunteer officers, some of whom had been also clamoring for blood, was told to try the pick-pocket for treason. This commission commenced its proceedings in the peculiarly Spanish style of first ordering a priest to confess the accused, and a hearse to bear his body to the grave, and then called the pick-pocket before it, together with half a dozen witnesses. These last were not sworn, but were simply asked what they knew about the case, when about one-half said they thought they had heard the accused shout "*Muera Espana!*" and the other half were positive he did use the words, probably confounding him with Noy, who was not tried because he was wounded and was known to be half-witted. Not a question was the poor pick-pocket allowed to ask the witnesses, nor to say a word in his own behalf. Without writing a line, or even taking a vote, the man was declared by the Fiscal, or Judge-Advocate, to be sentenced to death, and was at once turned over to the pre-ordered cares of a priest for confession and preparation for death. Whether the pick-pocket's sins were few, or whether the priest, being a Spaniard, did not deem the poor fellow worthy of much attention, the confession business did not take up much time, but was over in a few minutes. Afterwards the condemned man was given up to those detailed to shoot him.

The chosen place of execution was on the ground facing the office of the captain of the port, in front of the bay, and only a few paces from where the man was supposed to have committed the tremendous crime of shouting

"*Muera Espana!*" With wonderful calmness and fortitude he marched from the barracks to the fatal spot and met death fearlessly and bravely. The discharge that terminated his existence was the signal for prolonged cheers from the thousands of Spaniards that witnessed the execution. Their shouts were so great and numerous, and exultations so loud, that one ignorant of their characters or the events transpiring, would have been deceived into supposing they were celebrating some mighty triumph, instead of being occupied in disgracing themselves by unmanly, unchristianlike, and brutal rejoicings over the killing, after a very farcical trial and prostitution of governmental authority and general desecration of God's holy day, of a poor, unprotected, friendless pick-pocket. After the execution, the mob dispersed, satisfied for the time being, and, with the exception of the killing of a negro man on Sunday night on Officios street, by a detachment of volunteers, upon the pretence that he had shouted *Viva Cespedes*, no further disturbances have occurred here. A portion of the volunteer force on duty at the execution, subsequent to its termination, passed in front of the Captain General's palace, and General Dulce stood on the balcony with uncovered head while they were marching by. A voice from the ranks proposed *Ahora Viva Dulce!* (Now, hurrah for Dulce!) and a few really weak vivas were given in response. These cheers must have grated very harshly upon his Excellency's ears, not so much because of their paucity as because of the significant *Ahora* (now) with which they were proposed, showing plainly they were given not to the man or officer, but as a recognition of his undignified concessions to a mob clamoring for blood.

HAVANA, March 24.

The British gunboat Cherub came into port yesterday evening from Nassau, N. P., and brought news of sensational importance, since they tell me of a great insult to and outrage upon the American and British flags by a Spanish man-of-war. I have told you of an American sailing vessel having shipped on arms and ammunition and a number of Cuban passengers from an American steamer, that had been disabled in her machinery, at or near Nassau, and of her having put into Ragged Island port, Bahamas, where she was closely watched by a Spanish man-of-war, the Andalusia. By the arrival of the British schooner Margaret at Nassau, from Ragged Island, the startling announcement was conveyed that the vessel in question had been captured in an English port of entry by the Andalusia, in direct violation of International and British laws. By the Margaret there came as a passenger to Nassau Mr. Walter Wilson, the Custom House officer at Ragged Island, who had had charge of the American brig Mary Lowell, the vessel in question, in the capacity of pilot and custom house officer, for a period of eighteen days, and who had the hatchways sealed down with the seal of her Majesty's Customs. To the urbanity and courtesy of one of the officers of the gunboat Cherub I am indebted for the following copy of Mr. Wilson's official report: of the capture of the Mary Lowell, he having been on board of her at the time:

On the afternoon of the 15th, at about 4:20 P. M., I was in the act of removing the brig Mary Lowell from Man-of-War Anchorage to a safer place known as the "Harbor," when I was ordered to heave to and lower my sails by the commander of the Spanish gunboat Andalusia, who, finding that I did not do so at once, gave the order three times in a loud voice, to fire into us. Upon this, I immediately heave to, when a boat came alongside containing fifteen men well armed, and under the command of two officers, one of whom demanded permission to come on board. I replied that he might do so as a private individual, but not in an official capacity, upon which he came on board. We had not, however, been in conversation more than a minute or so, when an order from the captain of the gunboat was given to the men in the boat to board the brig, which they accordingly did, and immediately took formal possession of the vessel. I may here mention that the order, three times repeated, to fire into us, was prevented from being carried into execution by an officer who placed his hand on the cap of the gun, to prevent its being fired.

I remonstrated with the officer who boarded me (who, by the way, could speak English fluently) in as energetic a manner as was consistent with my duty, asking him whether he was aware of the illegality and gravity of the act which he was about to commit, and whether he knew that the brig Mary Lowell under my charge was an American vessel, and that she was in British waters and under British protection, and, moreover, that I was an officer in the employ of her Majesty's government of the Bahamas; to which he replied, "that he was only obeying the orders of his superior officer." He then ordered me to get into the boat and go on board the gunboat, as the commander wanted to see me. I then, with the six men that were with me in the brig—four of whom belonged to her, and the other two of whom I had brought from the shore—got into the boat and proceeded to the Spanish man-of-war. On going on board I asked the captain what his intentions were, and what he wanted with me, to which he simply replied that I must at once go on shore. To enable me to do so, he gave me the boat belonging to the Mary Lowell, in which my brother, George W. Wilson, who was on board of the man-of-war, together with myself and the two men from the shore, reached the land. The other four men belonging to the brig, who were all British subjects, were detained as prisoners on board the Spanish gunboat. During the entire of the above proceedings, as narrated by me, the American flag was flying from the main deck of the brig, until I was obliged to lower my sails, when it was carried to the side of the vessel and spread over the rail. On our leaving the Mary Lowell, the American flag was removed, and almost immediately afterwards the brig was made fast to the gunboat, which proceeded with her to sea in a south-westerly direction.

The captain of the Mary Lowell had left her and Ragged Island sometime before the capture of the vessel, and her Cuban passengers had all gone off ashore, many of whom came back to Nassau in the schooner Margaret with Custom-house officer Wilson.

The good people of Ragged Island were thrown into a high state of excitement by the capture and consequent insult to their flag, and some were even desirous of proceeding to extremities, not only in consequence of all this, but also in consequence of certain threats which had been made from time to time by the commander of the Andalusia. The early departure of that vessel with her prize, however, precluded these desires from being carried into execution. The good people of Ragged Island have sworn vengeance against Spaniards, and the first Spanish vessel that puts into their port is likely to get a warm reception. In Nassau the capture also created no small excitement. Governor Walker at once pronounced it an outrage, wanton and unpardonable in its nature and execution, which demands prompt and vigorous measures in vindication of the honor and integrity of the British Empire. With this view of the case, his Excellency forthwith prepared despatches for the home government, and sent them to Havana by the Cherub for telegraphic transmission. Her Britannic Majesty's Consul General here, the Hon. James Graham Dunlop, has taken the matter of the capture in hand with zeal and energy. Yesterday evening he was to have had an interview with Captain-General Dulce on the subject, but the latter was prevented by a review of the Havana volunteers, and by a lengthened conference with a junta of rural property-holders from attending, so the interview will take place to-day. The capture of the Mary Lowell is likely to lead to serious diplomatic complications between Great Britain and Spain, in which the American Government will necessarily have to take a part against the latter power. The Andalusia is supposed to have brought her prize to Neuvas, and as we have no mail steamer from there before next Saturday, we will probably have to wait till then before hearing the Spanish version of the capture.

The schooner Margaret also brought to Nassau from Ragged Island two Peruvian officers from one of the rams purchased in the United States, and which recently left Key West for St. Thomas. These officers report that the ram to which they are attached, while on her way from Key West, parted the hawser which connected her with a consort steamer which had her in tow, and while endeavoring to make it fast again, the ram steamed into the steamer and, very unfortunately, sunk her, by which accident seven lives were lost. The ram then put into Ragged Island. The two Peruvian officers also report that they cannot say what has become of the other ram and her consort steamer, but suppose they must have reached St. Thomas by this time. My urbane and courteous acquaintance of the Cherub informs me that a rumor prevailed in Nassau that this second ram had not continued her voyage to St. Thomas, but had made for a Cuban port, which she was to attack in the interests of the Cuban Republican Government. I think that but little faith can be put in the truth of the rumor. The ram, or monitor, at Ragged Island is the Mance Capao, of two guns, 150 men, and commanded by Captain Carello. The steamer she sunk was the Havana.

P. S.—A Cuban friend has just informed me that one of the Peruvian monitors is in the small port of Naranjo, District of Holguin, with her consort steamer. Generals Marciano, Marmol, and Peralta, of the insurgent army, have been on board, and have had long and important interviews with her commander. My Cuban friend declares his information comes from tip-top sources. It unquestionably tallies with the rumor mentioned above as prevailing in Nassau when the British gunboat Cherub left the place; and therefore I am now led to think there may be great truth in both the information and the rumor.

EL CAZADOR.

—Oshkosh has purchased a seven acre site for the Normal School, and entered into a contract for the erection of the building, the mason and brick work of which alone will cost \$43,300. It is to be one hundred and six feet long, seventy-two feet wide, and three stories high. The tower will be in one of the angles, and somewhat higher than that of the high school which is about one hundred and sixty feet. The entire cost of the building and ground will be in the neighborhood of \$70,000.