

# The Operations in the East—Reported Insurrection Between Insurgent Leaders—Reports from Bayamo.

HAVANA, Jan. 16, 1893.

If the accounts of recent operations in the East, as received here from Spanish sources and published in the government journals, are correct, the insurrection in this island has received its death blow and peace will soon be restored. But very few, however, give them the slightest credit, and the question "What news from Valmaseda?" is asked with as much eagerness as ever.

As the news appears in the local journals it is much like chaos, "without form and void," consisting mostly of bold statements, with a singular absence of dates and places, which gives rise to the supposition that they are intended to aid General Dulce in his conciliatory policy. I collate it as given.

The steamer Pelayo left Santiago de Cuba on the 8th, and brings dates from that place up to that time. On the 7th a fight took place on the heights across the bay from the city, which could be plainly seen from the harbor by the aid of a telescope. It was thought that the insurgents were worsted, from the fact that after the firing had ceased their flagstaff was no longer visible and the troops were engaged in destroying the works. Thus much is reliable.

The *Diario de la Marina*, a government paper, without giving its authority, states, editorially, that the column of 800 men which left Santiago recently, composed of infantry, cavalry and a section of artillery, landed at Guantánamo, and that news had since been received that the column had attacked the insurgents at two points simultaneously and routed them, capturing many horses, munitions and provisions, besides causing great losses to the enemy. Before the sailing of the Pelayo on the 8th the column had arrived at Cobre (where the enemy had left), after having marched as far as Palma Soriano, coming down by Barajabo in company with the two small columns that had gone out from Santiago. It further says the government forces had beaten the enemy in one of their strongest positions near the hills of Puerto (across the bay), where they carried the trenches, after a few shots, at the point of the bayonet. On the 9th no forces whatever were to be seen, either at Santiago or Cobre, and it was thought they were concentrating near Lara and points adjacent.

The same paper states that the Santiago journals give "official news" of the fights of General Valmaseda, at San Juan, Cascoreo and Guaymaro, and of his arrival at Tunas, where he formed a combat on with Lolo and forthwith marched on Bayamo. Later advices, it continues, afford the information that the latter place had been taken by Valmaseda after an action in the environs which lasted two hours, and where the artillery caused great havoc. It was Valmaseda's intention to proceed at once to Baird.

The Havana papers contain the following, taken from the Santiago *Diario* of the 8th:—

General Valmaseda, in an official communication which I have just received, says that since his departure from San Miguel his march has been a series of triumphs obtained by his columns over the enemy, that Colonel Lolo had joined him in Tunas, and a ter compelling the enemy to fly in all directions he had simultaneously taken Sibanicu, Cascoreo and Guaymaro, and that he expected shortly to fight the insurgents in this department.

SIMON DE LA TORRE, General Commanding.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Jan. 7, 1893.

The *Diario* of this city gives news from Gibara, without date, to the effect that Colonel Benegasi, commanding the "Volunteers of Order," was recovering from his wound. Small groups of insurgents were occasionally seen from that place, but beyond the reach of cannon shot. No intelligence had been received from Moigum and the interior since the arrival of the troops. The same journal states that a column of 100 troops and volunteers went out from Nuevitas on the 6th and met only a small party of insurgents, whom they attacked, killing three, one of whom was a colonel. The insurgent chief who commanded near San Miguel had sent a flag of truce to the commandant of the troops stationed there offering to lay down his arms, provided the offered rights were conceded and a general amnesty granted. As the reply was to come from Havana the insurgents had meanwhile retired from the environs of the town. As no mention is made of the foregoing fact by your well informed correspondent at Nuevitas writing on the 11th, I place no reliance on it.

A clergyman and a peasant, who had arrived from Santa Cruz, were several days prisoners in the rebel camp. They state that the chiefs in Puerto Principe and those in the Eastern department were not in accord. The cholera had broken out very seriously in Bayamo, and it was reported that Valmaseda had left but a small force there to prevent the spreading of disease, which would result from the collection of a large number of persons and the lack of wholesome food.

The *Trinidad Imparcial* of the 8th has news from Ciego de Avila to the 4th. Acosta, with his battalion, was expected on that day. It claims that the insurgents had been defeated, and that their commander, Colonel Valdes, had been displaced by the chief of the rebels, reduced to a private's rank and sent to Guaymaro. The same paper states that Valmaseda had taken Sibanicu and Cascoreo, and then proceeded to Guaymaro, which he must have taken after burning Arenillas.

The *Diario*, in its evening edition of the 15th, states, on the authority of a person who left Guaymaro on the 3d, that on the 27th ult., as Valmaseda was about arriving, the chief of the rebels gave orders that the citizens, including the women and children, should abandon the place under the severest penalties. At the earnest solicitation of a certain wealthy gentleman and the curate the two were allowed to remain. The moment the insurgents were left to themselves, says the *Diario's* informant, they proceeded to sack the town. Valmaseda arrived the following day, and, suspecting what had occurred, ordered that his troops should refrain from entering any house until the curate and the gentleman referred to had done so, in order that they might witness that the pillaging had not been done by his soldiers. The troops left on the 28th for Tunas. On the way some shots were exchanged with the rebels, a number of whom returned to town the following day, with one killed and several wounded. The citizens afterwards returned to their homes.

Notwithstanding the statements from a variety of sources, as thus recorded, confirmatory of reports that Valmaseda has taken Bayamo, the *Official Gazette* up to this date makes no mention of it, or of any operations of that chief.

## Reinforcements for Puerto Principe—Disensions Among the Leaders—Quesada Wants to be General-in-Chief—Ruin of the Plantations.

NUEVITAS, Jan. 14, 1893.

The steamers Barcelona and Moctezuma arrived here yesterday with about 1,500 troops, and it is stated that they will soon leave for Puerto Principe. They will have a hard march, as the rains have been extraordinarily heavy of late and the roads are in a very bad condition. An American who left Puerto Principe on the 9th states that he met various bodies of insurgents, each numbering about 200 men and moving toward that city. One of the leaders informed him that they were concentrating for the purpose of attack on the place on or before the 16th. They expected to gather about 10,000 men, and were well supplied with good arms and ammunition. They had eight small field pieces.

It appears Governor Mena had information of the intended attack, as he was employing a great number of bricklayers and laborers in building barricades and parapets on the buildings and breastworks in the streets. He had of troops and volunteers about 3,500 men, with sixteen or more cannon. The streets of Principe are very narrow and crooked, the houses have heavy brick walls, and I have no doubt the Governor will be able to keep off the insurgents for a long time and until reinforcements arrive.

The three commissioners, Armas, Corea and Tamaga, are here and have sent messengers to the insurgents. I am of the opinion that they will not be successful in their mission at present.

Disensions exist among the insurgents. Quesada is working hard to be made General-in-Chief. There are already two strong parties, but the majority are for him.

The sugar estates are going to ruin; the field hands are getting more and more independent every day; they pay no attention to the overseers, and in fact do as they please. I hope soon to forward some better news, but at present everything looks dark for the prosperity of this island.