

SPAIN

General Sickness' Despatch—What the Minister Demanded—Abstract of the Official Note—The News System in Madrid—Telegraphing to the Herald Under Difficulties—Anxiety Regarding Cuba—Action of the Cortes Commission—Death of a Princess—The Commission to Suez.

MADRID, Sept. 13, 1898.

Here we have another version of the diplomatic note sent by General Sickness to the State Department at Madrid. All those sent to you already are correct, but they were but abstracts of the letter upon which, for the time, your correspondent was compelled to depend, and now, to corroborate what has been sent and to give you fuller details, I send the following, which is the American version, and may be considered as a semi-official rendering of the despatch. The General writes, at somewhat more length, as follows:

The General commenced by stating that he was incensed by the manner in which the Spanish government against the aid conduct of the war in Cuba, and then proceeded: "The manner in which the war is conducted, the horrible atrocities that are being committed, the execution of two innocent American citizens at Santiago de Cuba, the executions of Cuban prisoners, who, though taken in arms, were human beings and deserved consideration, and that these enormities are contrary to the spirit of modern civilization, and call down upon their condemnation from America, from England, from France and all other nations, and that the Spanish government, said, to look at facts which cannot be palliated, which tell too of a state of the intense misery into which a large and prosperous island, with nearly a million inhabitants, has been reduced, and that the mode of warfare which even in the most barbarous times would have been deemed cruel. The war has already lasted a full year, during a large portion of which the Spaniards have been attacking their object. Two-thirds of the island is in possession of the Cubans, many important towns near the sea coast are garrisoned by their troops, they have well equipped armies, with full supplies of arms and the munitions of war, and their troops are sanguine that they can keep the field against all the forces Spain can bring against them. From a simple insurrection, as it has been termed, the rebellion has developed into a stern, determined war between two fractions of the same race, one of which battles for independence and the other for the maintenance of which cannot maintain. The Cubans, and the peoples of America and Europe can no longer but credit them. Within twelve months the Spanish government have not advanced from the position in which they were inaugurated. Troops have been despatched thither, army after army, fleet after fleet, for the purpose of suppressing the rebellion, but the rebellion has not only not been suppressed, but the Cubans are very near the time when they must be called an independent nation, and the recognition of the independence of the Cubans as belligerents will be no more than we readily accorded to the present government of Cuba, a year ago, the people of the Peninsula rose in revolt against tyranny and oppression. Spaniards, who have always been notorious for their love of liberty and hatred to despotism, should not be separated from their brothers in Cuba, for they have been actuated by the same feelings which prompted the people of the Peninsula to throw off the yoke. When Cuba rose for her independence the government of the United States, when it was evident that it could not be otherwise, was compelled to recognize her as a separate State, free forever from Spanish domination in like manner as the Cubans in arms to-day fighting for their liberty. When there is every prospect of their success why should the United States government withhold the recognition to which they are entitled? There are serious things to be taken into consideration, which have induced the government of the United States to take this step, besides the cause for which the Cubans are so gallantly contending, besides their prospects of success. The once enormous trade and flourishing commerce of a prosperous island have been ruined; the entire country is rapidly becoming a waste; the wealthy plantations, the sources of a vast revenue, are idle and desolate; many of them have been confiscated upon mere suspicion and their proprietors exiled to Fernando; the aristocratic rich in castle have been seized upon and the mansions put to the flames; industry is paralyzed; many of the best citizens have emigrated; the bone and sinew of the country, the young men, the pride of a happy State, are being destroyed in a fruitless contest on one side for possession, and so much is Cuba impoverished that it must take a century to restore her to her former condition. Within the last twelve months. The continuation of such a course, civilization and the present enlightened age cannot permit, and the American people, who more than all others profess to love liberty and are close neighbors of the Cubans, are so loud and united in their demands that their government dare not much longer hesitate upon a course humanity declared should have been adopted long ago. That the American government has hesitated, and refrained from intervention hitherto, is because it hoped to hear that negotiations were being made towards reconciliation, that Spain could be led to see the fruitlessness of continuing the desperate warfare; it remained neutral because the American people loved and respected Spain and had regard for international obligations and the traditional comity that had existed between the two countries. But it must be remembered also that the Cubans shared the comity, good feeling and friendship that the American government and people entertained for Spain, that something is due to their Cuban friends; something also is due to the widespread sympathy in America for Cuba. The instincts of the American people for the cause of liberty cannot be suppressed, and it is now too evident that the government must succumb to the popular opinion as expressed in the press and in assemblies.

Great as Spain is, powerful as she may be, she is further off than ever from the consummation of her empire. Her treasury is depleted, the country has been taxed to the utmost in the vain effort to suppress the rebellion, and it is impossible to maintain the struggle any longer. The time is therefore near when the government of the United States must exercise the duty that humanity, civilization, the century, justice to the cause it proffers, impose upon it.

The government of Spain has yet time to dispose of the Cuban question honorably and satisfactorily to Spaniards, Cubans and the world. The people of Cuba demand liberty, the progress they have made shows that they will succeed. Some demand independence and others desire that Cuba should be annexed to the United States. The American government offers to open negotiations for the satisfaction of the wish of the Cuban people. If they desire liberty and independence the United States is in duty bound to follow the course of Peru and the Southern American republics. If the Cubans desire annexation to the United States the American government is willing to purchase the island from Spain for a sum of money hereafter to be agreed upon. Whatever decision the Spanish government may arrive at, if it persists in prosecuting the war it must be done on humane principles, for humanity demands it. It is in a kindly spirit that I give these facts before you. I have written frankly, as a soldier should write to a military Power, and as I am a representative of the government of the United States, and of the entire American people, I have said in my duty but I have written otherwise.

In the above may be found the truthfulness exposition of the sentiments of the American nation—a clear-viewed representation of the determination the people of the great republic had arrived at. The soldierly ambassador has done his work nobly, with fearlessness and candor—even had the courage to write thus explicitly directly after his reception by the Regent but from the warm-hearted ferocity, his face still beaming with pleasantness from the pleasant memories of an evening spent in the palace of a Spanish noblemen. Deny it who can, this was work cut out for the General that few men could face, conscientiously refusing upon performing it to the best of his ability. But that for days after the pitth, summary and substance had been telegraphed, written, guessed, rumored, murdered in toto all over the world by all conditions of people, diplomacy's prohibition would not permit General Sickness to give even this much to a correspondent that he might transmit it post haste or by telegraph to the anxious American people through the Herald, is what I cannot understand, nor ever will understand it as being wise or right. Why should the General's reputation be injured or even impinged or blurred the slightest by a disclosure of what is contained above? Wherein could an ambassador be annoyed or be censured, as when he writes for the above report? By withholding it reckless journalists could reveal in license and have their outing at whatever was thought of. Such gossamer, such able work, such fantasies as were created were not a few nor came by any means.

Monday afternoon I first heard a despatch of the above nature had been sent to the State Department by General Sickness. This was a good two hours before the Epoch, the first evening paper, had been issued. It had the semblance of truth, and after seeing two persons who ought to have known something about it, I hurried to the telegraph office to transmit the tidings to London for the Herald. The telegram consisted of ninety-nine words, and was written with care. It was handed through the pigeon hole, cleared the numbered order in Spain and sent to London, and I was paid for. However, as it was deposited in the litter box and mechanically shut up to the operator, I scattered out of the office with a feeling of relief, and I was again and again and imagined my telegram flying over the Atlantic, through the mountains, over the Pyrenees to Bordeaux, and under the waters of the British Channel, to the Atlantic, and the Atlantic, and the Atlantic, to your agent's office.

The next day I had another, a congratulatory despatch, with a few more facts condensed, and arrived before the Epoch, with it from London. It was a usual pigeon hole, the receiver, knowing me, looked at the despatch suspiciously, could not read Span-

ish, but yet his nose smelled Cuba, for it reared of snorted potentially, and eyes woke up from various repose.

"Can't be sent," said recitator in Spanish, dactylity.

"Why not?" asked correspondent.

"Because it is about Cuba," said the other.

"How do you know; you can't read English?" said correspondent.

"No, but I see two Cubas in it and one Sickness; and one Sickness added to two Cubas will make up Cuban question."

"Great Jupiter Olympus I waters did you learn all that?" asked correspondent.

"Sodor," he shrieked out, "enough for you, the telegram can't go, for the government has prohibited all despatches about the Cuban question."

Emphatic and clear as this was that response, and proved that I was anti-somnolent. Correspondent again—"Has my yesterday's despatch gone?"

In a short time, after a search, telegraph man said "No, it is marked 'surto' (without course)." Readers may imagine what they please, but that answer was my welcome one. Here a telegram had laid twenty-four hours after being paid for, and it was marked "surto."

I asked again, "Have any telegrams gone of this nature?" The answer was "No, they ought not to have gone, but perhaps one might have gone with the usual relations about Cuba."

"Those of to-day?" I asked. "Yes, there is one gone for the Associated Press. It was too long, I suppose, to translate," he volunteered in addition.

Associated Press? I would have liked to wish it speed well on its course and chew patiently the result of governmental and telegraphical stupidity. The next thing to be done was to find out what had happened to the kindly return of the gold paid for despatch.

"Oh, we can't pay you the money back so quick. You must write a letter to the Director General de Comunicaciones, and enclose with it a certificate signed by me as to the man in a matter of course wise, as if a stranger was expected to know the bungling circumlocutory style of doing business in Spain."

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"And where does his fax come from?" I asked. "His office is in Calle Carretas, over the Post Office."

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