

# War News of the Week—Progress of the Insurrection Throughout the Island—Movements of the Spanish Forces—Skirmishes—Murders and Arrests by the Spaniards.

HAVANA, March 6, 1898.

Our news for the week from various localities in the island is almost entirely through Spanish sources. Its meagre and generally indefinite character is regarded by the Cubans as favorable to their cause.

Dates from Cienfuegos are to the 4th. No further operations or encounters are mentioned. There had been received in the steamers General Dulce and Villa Clara, 200 cavalry sabres, 200 revolvers, two Armstrong guns, two pieces mountain artillery, 100 muskets and plenty of ammunition. The new volunteers are represented as being very enthusiastic. Two hundred cans gunpowder had been discovered in the house of Widow Concepcion Terry.

A letter from a prominent merchant of Cienfuegos, dated February 27, has the following:—"General Dulce really is not believed to be up to the position. Affairs have been driven so far by the insurgents that the principal actors in Havana have all fled, and in good time, such as —. It was he who obliged the insurgents here to rise. The chiefs had almost abandoned the idea, but when he passed through here from Santiago he kindled the fire. They have done immense mischief all over the country, stealing horses, seizing all the arms they could obtain, pillaging the stores of provisions and of course appropriating all the money they can lay hands on. But their time is nearly up, owing to the arrival here of Generals Letona, Pelaez and other officers, with about 2,000 new troops. They have cannon and everything well prepared. One thousand were sent up to Sancti Spiritus. We had here previously 1,500. In Villa Clara there are 500, and the same number in Trinidad. The total is between 4,000 and 5,000 men, and with a good plan of action they will soon clear the country of the insurgents or drive them to the hills to perish of hunger and fatigue. More than one-half have gone to their homes or have presented themselves. Many have been killed. All will soon be settled, and we hope to be able to make the crop. There will be no more cutting of railroads or closing up the river to prevent produce coming down as has been the case lately. The most prominent merchants here will not yet, on any consideration, sell a hog-head of sugar or a cask of molasses on contract, and much less do they think of fixing a price. What they are receiving so far comes in small lots, which they ship on planters' account, hence nothing can be done. I think that prices have run up too high in Havana. Freights are also too high, sixty-five cents being asked to-day. And then there are the export duties. No merchant can live all this out.

The *Diario* of the 4th says that on the 1st a party of rebels appeared at Palmira, in the jurisdiction of Cienfuegos, and frightened the inhabitants, many of whom fled to the city of the latter name. Trinidad news is to the 23rd ult. The *Imparcial* of that date mentions the arrival of 1,000 chasseurs, under General Poello, the Dominican mulatto. They left on the Rapido for Tunas on the coast.

Among those cited to appear by order of the military commissions, under citation dated the 26th, is Frederick Capada, native of Cienfuegos, ex-Consul of the United States, mentioned as the leader of a rebel party and indicted for highway robbery, &c. Also the following:—Arredondo, Barrios, Villegas, Fortun, Zurco and Escobar.

Lieutenant Colonel Buscones, commanding the column of operations, in a communication dated at Manicaragua, the 23d, says:—"The combined column under Commandant Ollo found the rebels in a wood commanding the river Mayajuna, but on the approach of our advance they fled so rapidly that pursuit was useless. It was afterwards discovered that they moved towards our left flank, which created the suspicion that the bulk was in the town and might make defence. We, however, occupied this place without firing, the enemy making no resistance and fleeing on the Villa Clara and Cienfuegos roads." A parley had been held with the insurgent chief Mariano Junnez, whose men were ensconced in the Trapiche plantation, three miles from Manicaragua. Meanwhile the vanguard of the troops climbed a hill called Guanavana, and from thence observed the insurgents in a pine forest of 600 metres in extent, who fired upon them. This was quickly returned and they were soon dislodged. The troops lost two men.

The *Remedios Herald* of the 24th says that Commandant Herrera left Yaguajay with the Chief of District and nineteen volunteers on the 18th. Arrived at Brogneles they came upon an advanced party of rebels; firing followed, in which two of them were killed and one volunteer wounded. They continued their march toward Mayajuna. They met the advanced rebels, who fled, well mounted, to the town, where the volunteers arrived at night. The rebels had captured and shot Captain Chambas, two rural guards and six other Spaniards. They also burned all the archives of the county justice.

By private letter we learn that a body of 500 insurgents were surrounded in Mayajuna, in the jurisdiction of Remedios, in the savannahs, by troops and volunteers, and but for the arrival of another force would have escaped. As it was, a severe fight ensued, 183 rebels were killed, and the rest (300) made prisoners. These were ordered to dig the graves not only of the killed in action, but their own as well, after which they were all shot, not one being allowed to escape.

From Sancti Spiritus we have news to the 23th. The city was being entrenched and all precautions taken against an attack. Governor Armiñan on the 27th gave notice that, in accordance with orders from the Captain General, he turned over his office to Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Mediavilla, recently appointed Lieutenant Governor and Military Commandant. The latter in an address invokes the support of the people.

The *Fenix* of the 25th mentions a secret reconnoitering expedition under Governor Armiñan, with 150 cavalry, and Colonel Acosta, with a force of infantry. The rebels were surprised at the hacienda Santa Lucia. They numbered 200. Nineteen prisoners were taken. The troops occupied the districts of Cabaguan, Guayos and Santa Lucia. On the 24th Governor Armiñan issued a notice to certain individuals who were under the impression that they were entitled to the amnesty, although they had been captured in action and were travelling armed in the direction of the rebel lines. He declares them to be prisoners of war and subject to the penalties mentioned in the last orders from the Captain General, "Only those who of their free will lay down their arms can avail, not of the amnesty but the pardon (*indulto*)—being outlaws for a short time, without having led or seduced others to the commission of crime." Captain Salcedo, of the Sixth company of the Battalion of Order, left Neiva recently at night with forty-two men. He approached the houses by the cattle farm "Cruces," where were encamped a party of 200 rebels. He killed the sentinel and captured five. Only one man, says the account, could approach at a time, but the rebels soon fled. They lost ten men killed.

The troops have made daily marches of from twenty-seven to thirty miles. On the afternoon of the 27th arrived General Poello and staff. He comes as commander-in-chief of the forces in operation in Moran, Remedios and Sancti Spiritus.

A telegram from Sagua, the 28th, mentions the arrival there of the mobilized volunteers, which left this city on the day previous. They were under Commandant Labanda.

The *Voz de Cuba* says there are 6,000 insurgents in Sagua, mostly from Villa Clara and Remedios. There were 2,000 in San Gil, entrenched on the estate San Miguel. These were attacked by four companies, with four pieces of artillery, and dispersed. The rebels are said to have burned the cane fields. The troops took fifteen prisoners and killed thirteen.

The *Sagua* of the 25th mentions the capture and killing of a young Cuban named Arnoz. He was taken with arms in hand and was a brigadier in the rebel ranks. A coolie who had stopped the train after the destruction of the road by the rebels, thereby preventing much loss of life, had received fifty dollars from the company. The rebels carried off the conductor, engineer and some Chinamen.

The *Voz de Cuba* has somewhat astounding news from Cardenas given without date. It says a party of Cardenas went on board a schooner in the river Sagua la Chica, and finding the skipper, mate and two coolies fast asleep, they not only assassinated the four men, but cut them most barbarously. The skipper and mate were convalescent.

It was reported that a schooner had landed some armed men in Sagua la Chica and that troops had been sent in pursuit. The schooner was sunk by the inhabitants, and the retreat of the rebels. New bands were reported to have appeared in Jaguay Grande.

From reliable sources we have advices from Cardenas to the 31st. A body of the Guardia Civil had called at the estate of Señor Casanova, an American citizen, and asked for the engineer, J. L. Yuba. He had been connected with the insurrection at Jaguay Grande, but had availed of the amnesty and had been furnished with a safe-conduct from the Governor. The guard told the proprietor that his engineer

was wanted to give evidence in reference to a certain matter, and was taken to the road where he was shot dead. Yuba was no less a person than the slave, Juan Latham, who was arrested on the coast of Africa, in connection with Gordon, and escaped from the Tombs in New York, in 1861. (It will be recollected that Gordon was hung.) He has since been on this island.

The Guardia Civil and volunteers are going about shooting and shooting those who availed themselves of the amnesty, and as the result these have all taken to the field again, and are wandering about in bands of from ten to a hundred, desperate and inflicting great injury on property. The officials openly state that the American citizenship of native Cubans will not protect them, as it is not recognized by the Spanish law. Over twenty sugar estates have been burned in that jurisdiction; and the crop will be very materially reduced thereby. Among those burned is the Alava, in Colon, belonging to Señor Eolusta, of this city, which has produced as high as 14,000 boxes the season.

Through Spanish sources we have news from Calbarren to the 24. The rebels in Sagua la Chica are commanded by Montezudros, Ruiz, Corcho, Truñin and Bravel. It was impossible for peaceful people to remain in the country, and they were fleeing to the coast. Six merchants, with great difficulty, got away with their books and a part of their household effects. The rebels, knowing they had money, were at their heels. After promising Don Agustin Cueto all personal safety they hanged him on a sea tree, between the plantations of Garcia and Corcho.

A passenger reports that Marcial Truñin, one of the leading rebels of Sagua la Chica, had been taken prisoner by an army officer and four soldiers and shot.

The *Boo de Matanzas* of the 4th states that an Armstrong gun, of twelve centimetres, had been received there, to be mounted on a tugboat, to be used in cruising in that vicinity.

Revolutionary sympathizers report a landing of 400 Cubans and 100 Americans, all riflemen, at Manati, on the north side. They had with them cannon and 6,000 stand of arms. This is supposed to have some connection with the vessel loaded with men and arms from Nassau reported to have been seen near Ragged Island.

Two engineers, Americans, recently arrived here from Puerto Principe, which place they left on the 13th, coming all the way on horseback. They report that Quesada had driven all the cattle of the country to the rear of his lines to prevent their falling into the hands of the troops. He had 8,000 men near the city and 7,600 on the road to Nuevitas, all well armed and with plenty of artillery. The Spaniards had made an attempt to carry provisions from the coast, which were captured. The engineers came through without being specially molested. Their passports were used at Ciego de Avila, Sancti Espiritu and other places. It is reported in Havana that Quesada is laid up with the small pox, and that many in the hospitals of the island are down with it.

The *Diario* of recent date states that Valmesada and troops were to leave Puerto Principe to meet the column under Lesca, coming from Guanaja. The *Voz de Cuba*, however, shows that it was impossible for him to have been there, and the story is doubtless a canard.

We hear nothing of the march of Lesca on Puerto Principe. Villa Clara dates to the 24th ult. say that in Puerto de Galpe a company of troops had attacked 1,000 rebels, causing them twelve killed and a great number wounded, while the troops had but two slightly wounded. On the plantation of Pedro Ruiz, fifteen miles off, 150 troops from Villa Clara attacked some rebels at daybreak with such impetuosity that the number of killed and wounded was immense. The estate was fired. It was stated that in this jurisdiction 1,100 rebels intended to lay down their arms.

The *Diario de la Marina* publishes a list of the number of troops which have arrived since November 20. The total is 10,177 men. This includes those arriving on the 3d inst., per the steamer Ciudad de Cadiz, which brought 842 marines and chasseurs. The steamer touched at the Canaries, Porto Rico and Gibaru. These troops were received with great enthusiasm, the Fourth and Sixth battalions of volunteers, as they returned from the Cabañas, escorting them through the streets, the Spanish sloop meanwhile being decked with national colors. In addition to the foregoing the steamer Capullas arrived on the 5th with 350 troops and 17 officers.

While operations are suspended in the extreme East troops are being constantly sent to the disturbed localities in the Western department. On the 4th two squadrons of the disciplined cavalry militia, under Colonel Stefani, recently mobilized, left for Eatabano en route to join Colonel Pelaez in Villa Clara. Other squadrons of the same command are in Sancti Espiritu.

The mobilized volunteers recently organized under Martinez Rizo and Commander Gonsales Olivares, have just entered on active service here. The Sub-Inspector of Volunteers, Rafael Clavijo, inspected them before they proceeded to garrison the Morro and Cabañas forts.

The Captain General has given orders that another of the battalions of volunteers in Havana be mobilized and that they take the field, the men being desirous to leave immediately. Ten men will be accepted from each company and an officer of the regular army will be appointed to command them.

The Cubans enrolled among the volunteers of Mariano, nine miles from Havana, have been disbanded. The mountain howitzer regiment is advertising for the purchase of horses and mules. It is contemplated to erect large barracks for the volunteers, in which their arms will be stored when not on duty. Ulice approves of the project.

Since the disgraceful conduct of the volunteers at the Villanueva theatre and Louvre coffee house, they have not been allowed to walk the streets armed, unless on duty.

Several ladies of Havana are subscribing money towards the support of the volunteers. It is headed by General Dulce's wife for \$304. Several Cuban ladies, the wives and relatives of Spaniards, are among the subscribers.

The *Moctezuma*, which sailed for Nuevitas, Gibara, Santiago, &c., was detained one day by order of the authorities. She took \$50,000, in gold ounces, for military necessities; also 50,000 cartridges and other war materials.

The Spanish merchant ship *Mannuela* has been engaged to take 300 and odd insurgents to Fernando Po, and it was given out that 150 volunteers, mostly of the Sixth battalion, would escort them, receiving two dollars per day. It is now said, however, that the volunteers may not go, and that a war vessel is to act as convoy. It is stated that Don Carlos del Castillo, an aged and most respectable gentleman, who has been chief manager of the savings bank for more than twenty years and since its foundation, is to be among the unfortunates thus transported; also Dr. Oria, recently arrested, and Don Miguel Embil.

Arrests continue daily. Among the more recent is a Cuban merchant named Rigueme, and Señor Solmerga. General Dulce, it is said, has a list of those who have contributed money to the insurrection, and, as many of them have neglected to leave when they could, he has them in his power.

Dulce is known to have an immense number of spies throughout the city, and waiters at the hotels and coffee houses and hackmen are said to be thus employed.

Since the supplementary decree of Dulce, defining *trayectoria* to be, among other things, "the propagation of alarming news," both natives and foreigners are very quiet, and it is an extremely difficult matter to learn anything save what is favorable to the Spanish cause, all of which must be taken with many grains of allowance.

It is stated that a petition to the government at Madrid is going around for signatures, prompted by the volunteer commanders, asking that Dulce be recalled from the command of the island.

The authorities allowed the *Prensa* to publish the telegram from Madrid that Caballero de Rodas relieves Dulce, but it is considered by some of the bloodthirsty Spaniards and the volunteers as a mere trick, and it is generally believed that Rodas relieves Valmesada only.

According to official notice issued from the office of the Secretary, dated the 3d inst., the Captain General has been pleased to recognize Mr. Henry C. Hull, late Consul of the United States at Matanzas, as Vice Consul General of that nation in this city.

The *Official Gazette* of the 4th has the following:—

BANCO ESPAÑOL DE HAVANA.  
From and after the 4th inst. and in accordance with authorization of his Excellency, the supreme political Governor, published in the *Gaceta* of February 25, this institution will facilitate the exchange of gold for notes to the extent of \$10. Published for the information of the public.

MIGUEL DE LA FUENTE, Chief Manager.

HAVANA, March 3, 1898.

According to an official communication of the Bishop of Havana to the Captain General he has resolved to devote for the space of three months one-sixth of his income, say \$250 per month, to sustain the volunteers. He has also invited the clergy of the cathedral to contribute to the same end, and they have agreed to devote one-tenth of their monthly pay thereto. The Jesuits College of Belen and others of the religious orders have made a subscription for the same purpose.

The number of Cuban passengers, as appears on the official list, who have left this port during the past months of February and January for the United States is 1,447. Elsewhere 707. The numbers in 1898 were 265 and 588 respectively. Of course this does not include the very large number who have stolen away without passports. On the 2d arrived here the steamer Thomas Brooks from Santiago with 157 coolies and seventeen blacks, brought from estates by owners to prevent their falling into the hands of the rebels.

The schooner J. D. Lincoln, which cleared from here for Sierra Morena after the decree closing ports which had not Custom Houses, which was allowed to load and return here and was then refused clearance, was after investigation cleared, and sailed on the 3d for Portland.

The lighthouse at Point Lucrecia it will be remembered was destroyed some time since by the rebels in hopes of wrecking the Spanish mail steamers bringing troops from Cadiz. The only result thus far reported is the loss of two American vessels, one of which was the Nellie True and the other the Franklin Spofford.

As I close this dispatch for the steamer there is a rumor about town that a great battle has been fought in Sancti Spiritus, in which General Poello was killed.