

# The Campaign in Camaguey—The Spanish Accounts—The Patriots Claim to Have Been Victorious—The Spanish Press on Valmesada's Proclamation—Spaniards Leaving the Country.

HAVANA, May 13, 1893.

We have some slight and most unsatisfactory information from the campaign now going on on the line of the railroad between Nuevitas and Puerto Principe, in the jurisdiction of the latter name. Much attention is attracted towards it, as the Spaniards claim that with its termination will end the insurrection in the island; while, on the other hand, he proposed prevention of the attempt to re-provision the last mentioned place before the rainy season sets in lies at the base of the insurgent plan, which is to starve out the city, occupy it, make it the base of their operations and their seat of government. Having, as they said, finished the insurrection in the Western Department, in Cienfuegos, Trinidad and all the region round about, the Spaniards informed us that there was only Camaguey to conquer, and immediately set about concentrating their forces at Nuevitas. Including those already there and the force under Lesca at Principe, between 6,000 and 10,000 men of all arms were gathered for the campaign. Before anything could be done it was necessary to carry provisions to Principe, as the troops and inhabitants there were in a starving condition. With this end in view Lesca started from that place with about 2,500 men. He left 1,000 men, under Brigadier Ferrer, at the plantation San José, on the line of the road, and arrived with the balance of his forces at Nuevitas about the 17th of April. He immediately prepared a convoy to supply Ferrer's command. He arrived at San José without firing a shot, and immediately returned. On the 24th he started for Principe with another convoy of provisions, on cars drawn by oxen, there being no engine in the jurisdiction. The troops under Letona moved out at intervals between the 24th and 27th. The insurgents meanwhile, only desirous of preventing the arrival of the convoy, commenced the concentration of every available arm near the line of the road. Cespedes and all the prominent Cuban leaders were there, and a desperate effort was determined upon. For many days past innumerable rumors have been rife, all more or less favorable to the insurrection, but as nothing had arrived from there, no reliance could be placed upon them. Yesterday the Spanish gunboat Bazan arrived here from Nuevitas, bringing a few letters written by Spaniards and in Spanish interest, containing some very disconnected and indefinite statements concerning operations. The government publishes nothing.

The *Diario de la Marina* of yesterday morning publishes a letter from its correspondent at Nuevitas, dated the 7th, the gist of which is as follows:—"The column of Brigadier Lesca, on its return to Puerto Principe with the convoy, was harassed considerably by a large number of rebels, who attempted to oppose his march, and, as they persisted, the result was terrible to them. An action took place on the 3d at about fifteen kilometres from Principe. Lesca had under his command the 'Union,' 'Rey' and 'Arragon' regiments of regulars, escorting a convoy of nineteen cars, with provisions. The fight lasted the whole afternoon, during which time the troops made three heavy charges with the bayonet. An eye witness places the number of insurgents killed at 2,000; while the troops had eight killed and thirty wounded. Lieut-Col. Macias and another officer were among the former." The same correspondent says that Lesca, with the troops under Goyeneche had an encounter on the 30th at Soltagracia, and another on the 1st inst. at Bayatabo, when the rebels had 200 killed.

At latest accounts, Letona was in camp at Los Minas, where were also the mobilized volunteers (colored), recently from Havana. Lesca and Escalante were at Juanita. The troops under the former were said to be operating against the enemy, but no details were given. This is the sum of the news as given by the Spanish papers. The *Diario*, doubting having observed during the day that its correspondent had made no disposition of the convoy, in its evening edition stated that "on the 5th it was said in Nuevitas that the convoy had arrived safely at Puerto Principe." A letter from a Spaniard in the former place states that General Letona had been mortally wounded. San Miguel had been reduced to ashes by the insurgents, "after their defeat on the 3d," says the Spanish accounts.

The insurgent sympathizers profess to have information that after the engagement near Principe the patriots were reinforced by the command of the Marquis of Santa Lucia, the attack was renewed, and the troops defeated with great slaughter.

This is all. In summing it up certain facts appear evident. First, That the convoy under Lesca was attacked soon after leaving Nuevitas, and was harassed all the way. Bayatabo is off the line of railroad and on the highway to Baza and San Miguel. If the engagement reported there took place, Lesca must have left the railroad and of course abandoned his position. It is more probable, however, that the action there was fought by other than Lesca's forces. Second, The Spaniards are keeping together on the line of the road, and are not making the active and aggressive movements they promised us. Third, Nothing definite had resulted. The accounts of the losses are simply ridiculous, as with their bayonet charges, the losses of the Spaniards would be the greatest, even though victorious. Fourth, The fate of the convoy is extremely uncertain. Spanish rumors in Nuevitas place it in Principe, while it is positively stated that Lesca is encamped at Juanita, some miles this side of that city. The steamer Barcelona, now overdue from Nuevitas, as is surmised, has been detained to bring wounded.

The sequestration bureau continues actively engaged. The property of the following Cubans, residents of San Antonio de los Baños, is announced embargoed—viz: Jose Gonzales Mujica, Horacio Baños, Jose Alejandro Fundora, Jose Prieto y Armas and Manuel Prieto y Armas; also the following residents of Cienfuegos:—Jose Igueron, physician; Diego Andros Echeruendia, notary; Luis M. Arredondo, notary; Felix Bonyou, formerly government employe; Juan G. Diaz Villages, Carlos Cerice, Apud Capreira and Manuel Leiva, planters. The property of Mrs. James Duggan, whose husband was sent to Fernando Pó, and whose property was embargoed on the supposition that it belonged to her husband, has been released and restored to her.

The *Voz de Cuba* contains a long article referring to the comments of the American press on Valmesada's proclamation. It is foolish and defiant of public opinion throughout the world. It exclaims:—"Would that the system which Count Valmesada now proclaims in Bayamo had been adopted from the commencement of the rebellion." Evidently the editor of *La Voz* is among that numerous body of Spaniards who never learn.

The telegram from the United States, which stated that orders had been sent to Admiral Hoff not to permit any boarding or searching of vessels under the American flag, has created the greatest concern among the Spaniards here, as they fear trouble will arise.

General Dulce and his wife recently made a visit to Matanzas, on matters connected with the extensive property of the latter. He was enthusiastically received, and reviewed the troops and volunteers stationed there. He returned here on Monday last.

A number of Spanish families are leaving the island. The editor of *La Prensa* sails by the next steamer for Cadiz. Of late a great many Spanish merchants have been sending their funds abroad, and an unusually large amount of bills have been purchased.

The seven men composing the crew of the English schooner *Golrairie*, which was captured off Nuevitas a few months ago, have been released and taken away by a British man-of-war to Nassau. It is believed that the twenty-two Cuban passengers found on board of her will be sent to Spain.

Señors Zulaster and Sánchez, both men of wealth and commanders of volunteer battalions, are about leaving for Spain. It is announced on good authority that they will endeavor to induce from the home government a revocation of Dulce's sequestration decree on account of its injustice and a fear of terrible retaliation from the insurgents.

By decree dated the 6th inst., the territorial tax imposed for the year 1889-'90 on the net produce of all rustic and urban property, as also that of cattle raising, is reduced to \$2,970,805, it being one-half of the contributions for the year 1868-'69. The tax as now decreed is calculated to be \$20-100 per cent on the net taxable capital.

The papers call attention to the fact that there has been a lack in the supply of water for the city recently. The city is supplied from the river Solerendares, through the aqueduct, and there has heretofore been a superabundance. The cause of the present scarcity is not understood.

The Cubans of this city, having private information of operations in the field, are chary of communicating it, as they say the *HERALD* reproduces it with so much celerity that information is furnished the Spanish authorities.

The *Diario* states that the coasts of Cuba are guarded by thirty-eight vessels of war and armed craft of all classes. The war steamer *Ferdinand el Catolico* arrived here yesterday from a cruise for coal and supplies. She will go out again soon. The *Eclipse*, flagship of Commodore Philimore, which arrived from Jamaica on the 6th, sailed yesterday for Nassau. During his stay the Commodore had several interviews with the Captain General, concerning which entire reticence is maintained. The *Philomel* arrived on Tuesday evening from Jamaica, with despatches brought there by the English steamer. She remains here for the present. The *Heron* sailed for Jamaica yesterday, with despatches from the Commodore to Admiral Munday.

The sloop-of-war *Saratoga*, Commander Whiting, with a considerable number of apprentices on board, arrived here on the 10th.

The government at Washington has sent orders to Rear Admiral Hoff to furnish a war vessel to carry General Nelson, the new Minister to Mexico, and his family, to Vera Cruz, on their arrival here. The *Narraganset*, Commander Pillsbrow, has been named; but as her accommodations are extremely limited, doubtless some other vessel will be sent.

The *Contocook* is at Key West. She will return here on Saturday, the 16th.

Mr. Edward Lee Plumb, the new American Consul General, arrived on the 11th, per steamer *Columbia*, and entered on the duties of his office at once. He

made an official visit to the Captain General this morning.

On the 2th inst. Dr. D. Vicente Antonio de Castro y Bermádez, a prominent physician and citizen of Havana, died. The deceased was well known in the United States and elsewhere, both in a personal and professional capacity. He was a frequent contributor to medical journals, and, I believe, had prepared a work for publication. He occupied a high place on the roll of Masonry, and was looked up to and regarded as a recognized leader by Cuban Masons. His funeral takes place this evening.