

United States, and *La Correspondencia* takes it for granted to be true."

"Not a bit of it," he said, emphatically undiplomatic, with an emphasis which imposed credence upon me, and as a diplomat never lies or fibs the only option remaining was to believe.

"Is it a fact, then, that all these journals have been mistaken—that they are entirely at sea about your mission?" I asked.

"Evidently, in so far as I have seen them." I have no instructions whatever about Cuba," he said again, quite undiplomatic and without the least hesitation.

This was dialogue No. 1, during which there was evidently no desire to mimic a diplomat except on my part.

Dialogue No. 2 occurred when it was reported that a *hombre particular*—private gentleman—formerly if not now a tea merchant, named Forbes, was actually engaged in the vast speculation of purchasing Cuba and retailing it per acre and town lot to its inhabitants, with the full concurrence of Cuban patriots and endorsement of the United States Minister to Madrid.

"General, pardon me," said I, "but is it really true what is said of Mr. Forbes?"

"Aoon, poon, not a word, not even a syllable," he answered, emphatically.

"But the agent of a telegraph corporation has telegraphed it as a fact, Mr. To-morrow morning all New York will wonder at it," I urged.

"I cannot help it. If that body has a credulous individual here, I am sure I am not answerable for any mistakes he may make," said he, with a smile.

"May I safely, then, relate it?" I asked.

"Certainly," he said; "you may deny every word and syllable safely and quote me as authority."

Thus far there was no attempt to exhibit straight-backed, narrow-minded diplomacy, to look with jealous eye upon my attempts to get information. If the General's face can be taken at odd times as an index of his thoughts, at that time I can heartily vouch for his candor and courtesy. The telegram about Forbes created just such an impression as might have been imagined. It happened to have been Reuters's agent who had been so glib, and not the Associated Press man, and it has only been one of many sent from Madrid to New York by one of the two agents of a similar kind.

The day before yesterday General Siskies informed me that if the government would interiere at all between Spain and Cuba it would be only from motives of humanity, to endeavor to check useless effusion of blood, or to interpose with advice or a suggestion upon which a compromise or peace could be made between the two countries; but as for purchasing Cuba he did not believe the United States government had the least intention, as the government did not want it. The American government might also, from public pressure, be compelled to recognize the Cubans as belligerents, in order to secure lenient treatment of prisoners and to terminate the wholesale executions that were too frequently, it was feared, occurring in Cuba. With such benevolent, soul-consoling phrases, I left the presence of General Siskies, ready almost to make oath that Cuban negotiations had but thus far advanced, unless the whole had been emitted under the shadow of diplomacy.

Thus far your correspondent has not been remarkable for journalistic brevity, for necessity in this case demanded full details. With the object of making all sides and shades of what I am about to relate clear as the sun's disc have I been so circumlocutory.

But here is what upset the entire gravity of Madrid, what inclined the populace and middle classes of the capital from their just and natural equilibrium. Without emendation, *verbatim et literaliter*, it follows what is translated from the *Epoca* of the evening of the 6th inst.:

Grave reports have reached us which afflict our Spanish hearts. It is said that the representative of the United States, whose presence is a sad omen to the interests of the country, has sent, in compliance with the orders of his government, a note to Spain, in which he informs the authorities that opinion in the North American republic will probably oblige that government to the recognition of belligerency in favor of the rebels of Cuba. Something else the despatch contains which we may not mention, because it was not the certainty of the above. The Ministry, which is in Madrid and not at Vichy, has not adopted any resolutions as yet, but have contented themselves with transmitting knowledge of its receipt to Messrs. Frim and Murela and to our representatives abroad. When we wrote yesterday, full of deplorable premonitions, our hearts told us we might expect greater evil. Cuba is in danger! and to this cry we must not respond dismayed, but with the spirited enthusiasm of our best times. Cuba is in danger! and for the salvation of this beautiful portion of the Spanish territory the entire army must be transferred to those shores to present a gallant array of the vitality of our country. If there are Caristas, if there are republicans, if there are Isabelinos, if there is any party who must be extirpated and flattered to resistance, come fight on it and them, who, when the moment has come when it is indispensable to use all our efforts for the preservation of Cuba, shut their eyes. The revolution has conceded the right of reunion; well, then, what occasion more opportune for exerting it to demonstrate to this great republic what public opinion here is, when the question of saving the integrity of our territory arises? Let the men of all parties unite, in all the cities, in all the villages, in all the hamlets. The loss of Cuba will be the disaster of the revolution; in the salvation of Cuba all parties are interested.

Thus says the *Epoca*, conservative organ. Public unanimity for the salvation of Cuba is a demonstrable fact, is now being demonstrated wherever a knot of two or more men gathers in the streets, in the cafes, in the lobbies of the theatres, at table d'hotes and private reunions. *Las Novedades* lifts its little war-whoop on high and says:—

If what is said predicating our misfortune be true Spain will rise as one man to exterminate in a radical manner the iniquitous Cuban rebellion and for the salvation of the richest pearl of the Spanish diadem.

American readers must also digest what the chiefest of the republican organs, *La Igualdad*, professes to think upon this explosion of the *Epoca*. On the following morning it contained this:—

*La Epoca* of last evening gave notice that General Siskies, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at Madrid, has informed the government, according to instructions received from the United States, that the state of public opinion in the great American republic was such that it would probably oblige his government to recognize the insurrectionists of Cuba as belligerents. This notice is of transcendental importance, and the mode in which *La Epoca* publishes it augments its importance. It is therefore incumbent on the government to publish immediately the despatch of the United States Minister and its response, that the country may know the truth—all the truth—on a subject of such magnitude and importance. For the present we shall on a preliminary basis, in the terms of the note or despatch of General Siskies, which appears dubious, because they are not those which governments use in communicating such serious resolutions. We believe further that if the said despatch speaks of probable recognition of the Cuban insurrectionists as belligerents, there is hypocrisy in its words and had faith in the intentions of the United States government, and that the recognition is a work already resolved upon of consummation; for we cannot comprehend how such resolutions could be announced without an intention of their immediate execution. To-day we may safely say that the fate of Cuba is in danger, which fact is no surprise to us, because so little has been done for the prevention of filibusterism. The insurrection had been crushed long ago if the government had not committed the unpardonable error of appointing the poet Ayala Minister of the Colonies and Don Domingo Dulce Captain General of the island, who, besides being in a ridiculous state, had demonstrated previously his inaptitude for the government of that opinionless isle.

Other periodicals, ministerial as well as partisan, contain articles which chime feelingly with the above three. They believe it a fact that either the United States government has already recognized the belligerency of the Cubans, or decided to do so. There is but one exception. *El Imparcial*, ministerial organ, which attempts palliation, a soothing intercalation, a clever embolism of its own, amid all the frightful political ruck that the diplomatic bombshell of General Siskies has created. Without quoting it, suffice it to say that the *Imparcial* disbelieves the report; nay, proceeds to deny it unequivocally; according to its version Siskies never wrote a note or despatch about the Cuban question. And after a fulsome tribute to General Grant and the great republic pours vocal oil upon wounded vanity, &c., &c.

There was but one person to whom a correspondent could go to obtain information—he was General Siskies. The General was courteous, as usual, but he was remarkably reticent, diplomatically cautious. In answer to axiomatic inquiries of correspondents he gave nothing definite; was apparently surprised at the sensation; could not divine what originated it. He benefited the newspapers had gone off half-cock; they were too hasty in taking an extreme view. In answer to a statement made that his despatch would appear next morning in the *Gaceta* he said he guessed it would not. From the General there was nothing to be had, evidently. Diplomacy this time had set its seal with a vengeance upon him. Though the fact was an extort among the vilest of the poplacho, journalistic suffocation and precaution were of no avail with General Siskies. He permitted all of us, so far as he was concerned, to drift helplessly on an uncertain sea. However, without the Legation's consent, your correspondent gives his view of it. There is not the least doubt that the *Epoca* is right. It is a fact that General Siskies did communicate in that wise to the State Department; it is a fact that the State Department received such note as mentioned, containing precisely what the *Epoca* said it did. On this point I write with authority, but I cannot add more to what the *Epoca* says, for there is nothing else except the diplomatic Q. B. S. M., the polite valedictory of a government official, "Honor to be, Excellency, servant, kiss hand, a La-iz, D. E. Siskies."

The people of Madrid are very much excited about it, but all agree that the government should exert every atom of power to save Cuba; that the government should show America what vitality is still left in the country, what honor is still left in Spanish honors; how speedily filibusterism and insurrectionism can be despatched to Tophet darkness; how nicely Tophet could teach Americans a new phase seldom regarded of the Monroe doctrine on the azure surface of Mexico's Gulf.

## SPAIN.

**Major General Siskies and Cuba—The Course of Diplomacy in Madrid—General Siskies' Tact and Mode of Proceeding—The Herald Correspondent's Interview with the Minister—The Forbes Mission Story—Siskies a "Bad Omen"—Opinions of the Press—The Note.**

MADRID, Sept. 9, 1893.

Major General Daniel E. Siskies possesses a State diploma to carry on negotiations according to fixed principles of the diplomatic school with Spain either for the concession of the island of Cuba to the United States for certain moneys or for the amelioration of the condition of the Cubans now in arms against Spain, with an ultimate view of recognizing their belligerency when fair opportunity presents itself, and to inform the government of the United States of his opinions concerning Spain, her possessions and prospects, &c. The possession of this document—this State diploma—entitles him to the name of ambassador, and as ambassador or representative of his government he has been recognized by the Spanish authorities. That he has been busy collecting all information regarding Spain every one may well guess; that he has sounded all sorts and conditions of people for their views is equally certain; that he has furnished Secretary Fish with abundant data for the formation of that gentleman's judgment is a self-evident truth. Whatever Secretary Fish may do in connection with Spanish affairs may be said to have been the result of the opinions and views entertained by General Siskies, his agent.

The vicarious functions performed by the representative of a great newspaper, with its hundred thousand readers, may be said to be analogous to those performed by any of Secretary Fish's agents. The newspaper representative and the State diploma holder or ambassador may both be considered as privileged spies. One collates news for his newspaper, the other collates news for the Secretary of State; one represents the great public, the other represents one man—a government official. It happens sometimes that these two representatives come together. The first, if efficient, must pay his respects to the second; the latter need not stir from his chair of ease to receive the journalist. Circumstances arise often whereby the ambassador regards the journalist with a jealous eye. Affairs of importance may engage the ambassador—a secret negotiation, a treaty intrigue which it behooves the journalist to trace out and transmit to his paper early intelligence of, but which the ambassador is loath to impart, as his reputation as a diplomatist might be ruined by premature divulgence or a too glaring exposure.

According to the real technical European definition of a diplomat America cannot boast of having any, but it has clever lawyers and talented men to whom secret negotiations may confidently be entrusted. One of these clever, talented men is General Siskies. He has been here in Madrid some two months, and, as heralded, on some important mission relating to Cuba—at least so all believe. Whatever the nature of the mission has not transpired; but the invidious enviousness of Spaniards possessed of ultra-Españolismo believe it minacious to the interests and honor of Spain. The Spanish press have been halting between two opinions since our new minister's arrival, are often verging an explosion, upon giving utterance to their doubts and fears and denouncing Siskies, his mission and his country; but the apparent hesitancy of the ministerial organs to pronounce have hitherto checked the more lymphatic journals, and then the extreme courtesy and pleasing candor of General Siskies have sadly nonplussed the poor, hard driven Spaniards.

Thus was your correspondent tempted to see this General, to satisfy doubts that would arise, in spite of what he had already told me, bluntly and candidly, that there was not a word of truth in the reports afloat concerning his mission. The following dialogue occurred upon first introduction between General Siskies and myself:—

"General," said I, striving to appear as diplomatic as possible in his presence, "are these reports of the *Epoca* and *Correspondencia* true?"

"What reports?" he asked, with a diplomatic affectation, I thought.

"The *Epoca* reports that you have come here to open negotiations for the concession of Cuba to the