

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION.

THE MASSACRES IN HAVANA.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

HAVANA, Jan. 30.—The various massacres which have just been committed in Havana might after night plead for truthful history. There was a savage tragedy at the Villanueva Theater on Friday night a week. A sequel as merciless occurred at the Louvre saloon on the Prado. The house near by, of the wealthiest planter on the island, was searched and sacked. Six other quarters of the city have been visited with murder at the hands of an armed mob. These bloody aggressions and their circumstances engross all of the excitement which now more than ever prevails in the minds of the outraged Cubans. They define with deadlier sharpness than any familiar event of the revolution the hatred daily growing bitterer between whatever is progressive in them and whatever is inveterate in the Spaniards. You must remember that a tyrant in Spain was a worse tyrant when he served out an apprenticeship as Captain-General; that liberalism in the old country is not so liberal in this. Human slavery may account for this difference; but it is certain that the line has been drawn between Cubans and Spaniards. The former entertain disgust and distrust of a wanton, bigot power of which nothing kindly can be remembered by a Cuban, coupled with the forced and now inexpressible desire for independence and liberty. Of the ruling class the Cubans say that they are incorrigible and unconvertible. They are growing more stupid every day. Revolution in Spain is opened out to them like a chapter, but Cuba is illegible. They cherish the blind notion of keeping Cuba for Spain's sake and Slavery's sake, and their ideas end in this obstinate necessity. They defy the revolution, and are ready to react for the old monarchy and the old oppressions. In short, it is Bourbonism which, in apparent contempt of Dulce and the supposed illusion of the Liberal triumphs in the old country, now has moral hold of power in Cuba—Bourbonism which, having left better men, has entered into the lowest of the mob to run them down hill like the creatures we read of in Scripture. Lersundi left the island virtually in possession of the Bourbons, and his legacy to his successor is contained in the late massacres. I do not deny that there is a Liberal side to Spanish affairs on the island, but surely this side could have had no part, certainly no intentional part, in these frightful circumstances. Now, reflecting that stupidity may be sometimes very cruel, a more stupid performance than that of the Villanueva Theater has not occurred in these latter days.

During his administration in the isle, Gen. Lersundi conceived the plan of overawing Havana by means of a large and irresponsible militia of Spanish Bourbonists while he sent his regular troops to the war as they arrived. These men may not all consider themselves Bourbonists now, but they were Lersundists then, which is the same. They volunteered from the poorer quarters of the town to the extent of several brigades, and when mustered into line presented an array of able-bodied men with the hard and sturdy physique which distinguishes the Spaniards from the Spanish-Americans. The dangerous men were allowed to remain unquartered, to take their arms home, and elsewhere carry them about freely. In time a good part of their officers have come to lose all but a shadow of control over them. During the late occurrences it is said that they rallied at will sometimes with and sometimes without their officers to the scene of every affair. They are well armed and uniformed, and some estimate them eight thousand strong at least—a number sufficient to terrorize any city of the size and structure of Havana. In five or ten minutes they could summon thousands of their fellows to the recent disturbances, and have everything terribly in their own way. For several days they have as completely dominated the city as though the Captain-General did not exist; and the worst of it is that the situation cannot be altogether helped until Spanish troops arrive. They say those who know the antecedents of Dulce, and think well of the honor of the man. I have at various times heard that threats have been uttered against the Captain-General's own life by his troublesome soldiery in suspicion of his unwillingness to garrote some Cubans under arrest. Subordinates among them have plumply refused orders from superior officers, as the late massacres must have attested if nothing else. There is some disposition to guess what a soldier and Liberal of Dulce's late record can possibly think of the humiliation which Spain, now supposed to have been liberalized, must somehow have endured in being committed by its own aid instruments to the numerous bloods perpetrated at the theater and about the Prado.

On the night of the 23d the Land-ome Villanueva Theater was crowded in honor of a benefit to some insolents, to use the precise language of the bulls. The anonymous and mysterious character of the insolents excited a suspicion on the part of Spaniards that they were none other than the Cubans fighting under Cespedes; but for all this the insolents stand unrevealed. As usual, when the favorite and rather revolutionary song of "The Good Negro" was sung, uproars of applause and cheers answered the patriotic interpolations made, according to wont, by its Cuban singer. None of these sentiments favored Spain, but were all for free Cuba, and accordingly at the end of the song excitement ran high in cheers for the liberty and independence of Cuba, and for the insurgent Cespedes, as the papers on both sides variously report. It has been said that in the light of the confusion a man mounted a seat, and was making an enthusiastic speech for Cuba when he was shot down. It was also told that a young lady wearing upon her breast the revolutionary colors of Cuba was also shot down at this time. But the first hearsay I do not believe, and the second is not right in point of time. All that we strictly know as to the origin of the massacre is that it began on the outside of the theater in the pause between acts when Cuban audiences usually leave their seats to go out to smoke and promenade. Two papers report that a pistol-shot was fired in the theater simultaneously with a discharge outside. One who was then in the theater informs me that such was actually the case, and that the first shot was fired by a volunteer. Let this be as it may, the papers concur in saying that it was the shouting heard in the drinking saloons and in the portico of the theater that brought the volunteer troops to the ground. Several of the Spanish papers report, what seems quite likely, that "Viva Cespedes!" was among the cries uttered by the Cubans then and there; and another declares that "Muerre España!" or "Die Spain!" was uttered by one of the voices in the crowd. The *Extranero*, a Government paper in the Spanish interest, relates that the sound of volunteers who first came upon the scene, not being able to calm the tumult, discharged their fire-arms in the air. But the sequel, in which nearly all the papers agree as to the main facts, throws every doubt upon this statement. With the presence of the volunteers began an indiscriminate firing. Some of the theater-goers who had pistols shot them off, but the Spanish papers say that all the civilians retreated into the theater, some crying for mercy from the men who were shooting them as they went. The volunteers had been in a few minutes reinforced by hundreds of their armed comrades, who rushed into the theater and began a reckless firing upon the audience. Many hundreds of shots were fired, and doubtless innocent men were slain mercilessly. A young lady, wearing the revolutionary colors, was shot. Fear in mind that those colors are red, white and blue. A woman and a child were shot, and it is probable, killed. The people were driven out of the theater, and the killing continued up to the Prado. It had lasted twenty minutes at least, and before it was quite over, say at about 11 o'clock, there were thousands of volunteers on the ground. The velocity with which they came to the scene, in the first place

has given color and authority to them in the widespread assertion that hundreds of them at least were con- cerned in the bull or horse near the city wall in per- fect expectation of trouble at the theater. There are no doubts as to the unhesitated reality of this merciless attack. Judging by all that I can learn from average testimony eight or ten persons were killed, but a very respectable witness of the affair tells me fifteen or twenty, the wounded being in number pro- portionate to these. Numbers of volunteers were killed or wounded by pistol shots, and a much greater number of the audience.

The Spanish paper observes the fact that women were killed. I am thus obliged to give circumstances in order that they may be plainly seen how com- pletely the Villanueva theater-ploos were at the mercy of their assailants, and how little mercy they received. Not very many of them could have been armed in anticipation of such a horrible affair as oc- curred. Some of them defended themselves as best they could with pistols, no doubt; blood is blood. The volunteers, on the other hand, were thoroughly armed, and numbered hundreds, constantly increas- ing. Conceivably, then, the atrocity of the act—a body of troops running up an audience in the theater, to fire upon it recklessly and savagely, and not quelling their bloody work till they had driven the crowd to a very considerable distance from the scene by means of bullets and layabouts. What was all this but an assassination of the people?

The second aspect gives force and color to the word that may be said of it. On the day succeeding the Villanueva affair, an outbreak of Calans was re- ported in the poor quarter known as Jams-Maria. I had occasion to pass in that direction late in the day, and heard that a few people had been killed and wounded in a near neighborhood by volunteers. Arms had been discovered in a house, and the man who resisted their seizure had been bayoneted and killed. He was probably the one whom I saw lying curled apparently dead in the midst of some hundreds of volunteers to the hospital. In the course of the day and night, five or six people were said to have been killed, among them some volunteers. On the succeeding day the massacre said to have been not less destructive than the one at the Villanueva Theater, broke out about the Louvre Salon, across from the Tacon Theater, and on that part of the Prado where lately stood the statue of Isola. There are three stories as to its origin—first, that a shot was fired in one of the saloons adjoining the theater; second, that a pistol went off by chance in the billiard and gambling saloon of the Louvre; third, that a shot was fired from the house-top of some passing volunteers. To this story the Spanish side of the argument adheres, but it has upon its face some im- probabilities, as, for instance, that any one should go upon a house-top in a crowded and fashionable part of the city in order to provoke a riot, and that many many innocent people should be killed. On the whole the affair began in a quarrel between persons as usual, but the basis of the massacre is not likely to be so known. Immediately after the shot, the volunteers rallied in crowds, and poured a volley into the saloon of the Louvre. An acquaintance, who lives not far from the Louvre, described the firing to me as if done by platoons. The bugle was sounded between the discharges, and the firing at times was full and regular. When the volunteers entered the saloon, they laid violent hands upon every one within their reach, and forced them to cry, "Viva Espana," or gave them the bayonet. A brother of the British Consul was, I am credibly told, being roughly handled, when an acquaintance among the volunteers said, "Don't touch that man. He is a foreigner." He was then released, and even entered the chamber of a woman confined. Mr. Korner, an American photographer, was killed in a passing carriage by a shot from the sidewalk. British and German citi- zens were killed, wounded, or jeopar- dized. A cordon of volunteers was stretched around the neighborhood, and the sidewalk was dan- gerous to civilians. Following their performance at the Louvre, the volunteers broke into the palace-like house of Don Miguel de Aldama, the richest planter of the island, and suspected by them to be in sympathy with the rebels. It is alleged by the friends of that firing was heard from the house-top, but this looks like a poor and false pretext for the vandalism wrought un- der some pretext for the volunteers. They robbed his servants and despoiled his ornaments. A few old arms were taken from the house and brought to the authorities, and the story has been long current that Don Miguel, now happily with his family upon one of his plantations, has been supplying money and arms to the revolutionists under Céspedes. Aldama is one of the very wealthiest and most influential men of the island. He owns be- tween two and three thousand negroes, and some- where near two thousand coolies. It is a bad omen for Spanish rule if he has given his private influence to the revolutionists—a still worse omen if Spanish rule knows no better than to be seeking the houses of the liberal slaveholders, the only class which has given any cause to lay for the liberation of Cuba. The work of the mob did not cease with the visit paid to Aldama's house. Murders are recorded of half a dozen other quarters of the city. Volunteers have been assassinated. A resident of the neighborhood told me that a body of troops marched against a cor- nish near the Cerro, suspecting the whereabouts of some concealed Cubans. Volley upon volley was fired in spite of the commands of the military officer, but not a single Cuban was found. Summing up the results of the three days' disturbances, it appears safe to say that about fifty people have been killed and assassinated, and a number wounded proportion- ally inside the Louvre and the Villanueva. This fact is the saddest comment on the murderous ex- ploit of the Bourbonism which destined their deaths. One remarkable consequence of the late scandals, so-called, is that all the steamers are crowded, and that numerous families have fled to the plantations, preferring to trust the negroes rather than the mob of whites.

The organs of Spain treat the events described in a manner which shows that they cannot and will not learn further, and that, fixed in their ultimate notions as to Cuba, they are in error and unbending. Far from saying a word for the Cubans in the Villanueva affair the *Times* of Cuba wholly takes the side of the Spaniards, and classes them as exploiters in the pursuit with some success elsewhere. There is no dis- crepancy of the least with which it is contended that the Cubans have been castigated for their treason, and in an article devoted to the subject of Clemency and Energy, it is held that if in the first place the islanders had been treated with summary harshness there would not now be an insurrection. The *Diario*, on the side of the volunteers, laments the affair, but does not see how the process of the British Riot Act can at all apply to Havana. An article in *La Prensa* praises the volunteers, alludes to certain traitors unworthy of the rights which the Government con- cedes them, commends the layout, and thanks the energy of some persons for saving the lives of a num- ber of people at the theater. I need not say that there are journals in Cuba having no more discretion or feeling than to treat the Villanueva affair as a success; but such is the melancholy fact. Since that event, and especially since the killing at the Louvre, the *Prensa* and the *Diario* have at times con- voked calm and moderation. But an iron temper crops out in one of the latest editorials, from which I am led to apprehend that the Cuban cause will encounter a desperate, perhaps relentless, enemy in the study and by no means cowardly nature of the ruling Spaniards. "What ought we to do in the actual circumstances?" That which in all circum- stances Spaniards have done when they have known the intentions of the enemy. Meet the attack with resolution and energy, and if we have to succumb sell our lives as dearly as possible. Treat the enemy as he treats us, and if he does not wish to give a quar- ter, neither shall we give it nor ask it." I ask you to observe that the organ of the Spaniards here recog- nizes the revolution. In some other remarks of the *Prensa* the rich planters and eminent natives of the island are credited with the ability to dominate the situation and save the island. Then why don't they do it? Because they are not supposed so to do—virtually so to do. The most significant acknowl- edgment of the revolution, the organ of the Govern- ment, thinks it necessary to state that the character which he receives from Spain can Gen.

Dulce remain at the head of the island; moreover, that Cuba is as much a province of Spain as Cata- lona or Aragon, and hence, that she is to be governed in the same way as any other province. Was it really needful to announce that the Captain-General, having failed for the time in his policy of what the Cubans call Dulcification or Sweetening, was not becoming Culinized? The same official paper notes that a poisoner was found on a man who tried in vain to see the Captain-General at 9 o'clock in the evening. But probably Gen. Dulce has not yet been threatened except by his friends.

To return again to the subject of the massacres, it appears that they have injured the apprehension that the Government will be moved to retire the liberal concessions which have just been made to Cuba. This is the language of a solitary paper, the *Spektor*, I believe. "Such things," it continues, "have been printed in our papers as no Government can read with indifference, and these were the in- citements of the scandals of Villanueva, the house of Aldama, and the streets beyond the walls." I have heard an independent society inveigh against the manner in which the minor presses of the city have used their new-found liberty. A dozen of these papers start up in a week or half a week, and go on with a will, and the wind is blowing in the face of the Government. It is given lavishly to keep up a currency of this kind. Cuba is awake with the swarm of newspapers as she never was before. But after reading them, and talking about them, and examining the tone of the Spanish press, I cannot perceive what harm they have done for which men should be maltreated in their persons and shot down like sheep. Not many of the volunteers who wrought the mischief on the Prado could begin to read the papers which, it is said, fired them to do it. Intrinsically there was little or no danger in these papers; they furnished, as presses usually do, a saving escape for the passions; and it would have been the worse for Gen. Dulce if he had tried the policy of repression, and had he not been so much of a man. The people might direct their fires, and their cause with newspapers, but his business was to address himself to overt acts, to win while they were talking if he could. The mis- take in the case was not in establishing a free press, but in establishing an irresponsible aimed mob that had no claim to authority, if it did not actually in some instances lead the authorities. I have read in one of the newspapers that the troubles of Villanueva would not have occurred "but for imprudences on the previous night, which ought and might have been avoided." This seems to hint that the revolutionary cheers of Thursday night provoked a sequel of delir- ious revenge, which is far from the notion the jour- nals are anxious to convey. The people might have been told that the night in question, and the Villanueva theater on the night in question, and the hear witness to the enthusiasm and hilarity of the cheering in answer to the sentiments of the Good Negro, and to the quiet disgust with which they in- spired a very few Spaniards present. The audience was as respectable as need be seen in point of appearance, and, as on the following nights, was composed of a great many young men, college students, law students, and others of the kind. I saw nothing, heard nothing for which any man deserved to suffer wounds or death. The Villa- nueva Theater is especially a Cuban theater, and it may be for this reason that its assailants allowed themselves so much odds and margin in the doings of the fatal night. It is not more to be unfairly un- derstood in the Spanish provinces that there is any other way of treating free speech, or very free speech, than by giving it the bullet and the bayonet, or the dungeon. You of the North can hardly understand the force of the principle of repression which Concha and the rest bequeathed to Cuba. The Cubans have been kept under somewhat like the negroes, and surely ought to appreciate whatever blessing there is in human slavery plus the bullet. But to do the au- thorities of Havana justice, I believe that the recent scandals, as the papers rather unappreciatively call them, were not committed by their order, but in- dependently of all control.

Now hear what the Cuban side has to say after the massacres. "No suppose," coolly says *La Tribuna*, "that the present is the last day for Spain." This sentiment is important, the Italian and our inde- pendent. *La Tribuna* is the confessed leader of the Liberal party in Cuban journalism, and represented the most advanced phase of the idea of autonomy, without ignoring the efforts of those who have fought for Cuba, or being blind to the natural aspirations of the Cubans for the liberty and self rule which it is not believed that Spain will give them. Once again it argues the cause autonomy and liberty, with Serrano and Dulce for witnesses—one at the head of Spain, the other, chief of Cuba. It will hear anything here that in the information given in 1897 both these men subscribed to the belief that if Cuba were not needed her just demands she would have been satisfied if not rescued to rebel. Serrano declared his belief that the humiliation of the Spanish rule would so far offend the high spirit of his race—a spirit which had not degenerated in the souls of Cuba and Puerto Rico—that it might carry them into ways not less ruinous for the Antilles than perilous to the domination of Spain in America. He recognized that the complaints of the Cubans were just, their aspirations legitimate; that no reason existed why Spaniards like himself and his fellows should have neither press nor representation, nor any part in the Government, nor one of the Constitutional guaran- tees to which the Peninsula people have right; that there is no reason why a Government, military and police, and the highest to the lowest grade, shall be the one only regimen of the Antilles that is not precisely the moment for the Government not to forget the circumstances, internal and external, which favor the political reforms demanded with urgency by the Antillanos, and that those reforms should be granted without delay. All this and more was written in 1897. What has become of Serrano's word? Here is what Dulce said then: "The Cubans aspire to be Spaniards because they understand that the state in which they find themselves for more than thirty years implies a kind of estrangement or expulsion from the great family to which they belong. Consider now the question of rights, not only under the aspect of interest, but also principally under that of duty. For it is well known that considerations of this kind can work in the souls and hearts of men of Spanish race." What is Dulce's latest utterance? Let us read his proclamation after the affair at the Villa- nueva Theater:

"HAPPENING: Last night was committed a great scandal which shall be chastised with all the rigor of the laws. Some of the disturbers of public order are in the power of the public tribunals. Fearful citizens, con- sidering the rights of the nation, have taken up arms, the national territory and honor, justice shall be done, and prompt justice."

Does Dulce mean to be ambiguous? It is presum- able that he does not. What, then, does he mean by telling the defenders of national honor, who subse- quently wrought for him the bloody handiwork of the Louvre, that they shall have justice, and prompt justice? It is probable that more Spaniards were killed and wounded than they care to tell Cubans that themselves if any justice can be possibly be comprehended in this promise? Who are the men under arrest—Cubans or Spaniards? Cubans, of course. So runs the current of common inquiry and feeling among the latter. We hear it whispered that Dulce is in the power of the volunteers; he has no other soldiers; he must act a part. He is taking marines from the Spanish war-vessels since the affairs beyond the walls—so much for his opinion of the rioters. What we know of Dulce from the official organ is that he will govern the island as one sent from Spain, and that he considers it as en- titled to no more rights than any other province of the same country. This view will hardly assist the autonomy movement, and those who go further. We shall see how Dulce proposes to keep Cuba from "estrangement or expulsion" from the Spanish family. Meanwhile it looks as if he had gone quite over to the arms-bearing majority, and had lost the confidence which he had at first invited. Many will doubt whether there is a place of victory in the situation for any leader who is not straight- forward, but it may be that we cannot yet judge of its entire facts. Had Dulce, indeed, ceased to merit all confidence, it would appear to have been better for the man who was shot for crying "Die, Spain!" to have shown such as much nuancing and more safety the Captain-General's own cheering—a provision-

cheer worthy of a provisional government—"Live Spain with honor."

AN AMERICAN CITIZEN'S ACCOUNT.

The following is a private letter from a trust- worthy American, residing in Havana, to a friend in this city:

HAVANA, Jan. 27.—Dear Sir: What has transpired in this city in the past week, necessarily calls forth an anxious feeling on the part of peaceful citizens who have heretofore kept aloof from local politics.

I will endeavor to relate concisely the chief inci- dents, leaving to the American press to glean the truth from the Havana papers, which are the more unfair that the Creoles have no daily papers.

An entertainment of a decidedly Cuban character had been prepared, and was believed by the Spaniards to be intended to raise funds in support of the insurrection in the eastern part of the island. It took place on Thursday the 21st, and was attended by a crowded audience. The enthusiasm among the Creoles rising to a high pitch, some of the actors, it is said, hailed from the stage the independence of the island, and shouted *Vivas* to Céspedes (the Re- publican General) amid bursts of applause. There is no hiding the fact that the entertainment was politi- cally distasteful to the great bulk of uneducated clerks and shop-keepers, who, being natives of Spain, had been previously organized and armed in volun- teer corps through the one-sided policy of Leandru, who had succeeded in keeping the Creoles without arms. A second entertainment of the same nature was then announced; ladies were invited and urged to attend by the Creoles, who appear to have enjoyed especially the outburst of patriotism elicited by such means. Unhappily these overt manifestations of sympathy with the rebellion, in the presence of armed opponents excited, like themselves, should be considered as wild acts of temerity. It was defining the day of the 22nd, the day of the 23rd, and the 24th, demonstration was to take place on Friday, the volun- teers, or more properly speaking the Battalion of Ramon Herrera, stationed themselves when the hour came in ambushes in the districts of the ancient dance and Céspedes. Then the guard in sight fired a couple of shots probably in the air; the volunteers came out from their hiding place and stood in the squares, they next rushed into the theater and shot or fired at those whom they considered obnoxious.

Among the persons who were shot, there were some whose crime consisted in their wearing the revolution- ary colors, a father and his son, and other inoffensive individuals. The excited and armed Spaniards went out in ambulances in the districts of the ancient Calle del Prado and all around the Villanueva Theater, stationing themselves in groups and firing at the passers by who hesitated in joining the cry of "Viva Espana." Later in the evening the volunteers yet more excited by wine, rushed into the house of an old lady, the owner of the Villanueva theater, and whose dwelling is ad- jacent to it. They sacked the house, broke the furniture to pieces, and pressed on from room to room, killing several persons, among them a young lady, her daughter had taken refuge. The Chief of the Police, acknowledging his inability to control the in- furiated volunteers, requested the old lady to open the door and crying out "Fire Espana!" which she did. The following Saturday and Sunday the volunteers were seen going through the streets pre- ceding the houses of the nobles and movements in preparation, and that they were fired at, while in reality they killed many with no exposure to themselves, always at the cry of "Viva Espana!"

In the barrio of Jesus Maria the slaughter was con- siderable. Gen. Espinosa was seen on that day vainly endeavoring to appease the volunteers, re- questing them to return to their homes and to their families, but they paid no attention to his dis- tinguished chief, though they well knew that he executed the commands of the Captain General. In the barrio of Jesus Maria the slaughter was con- siderable. Gen. Espinosa was seen on that day vainly endeavoring to appease the volunteers, re- questing them to return to their homes and to their families, but they paid no attention to his dis- tinguished chief, though they well knew that he executed the commands of the Captain General.

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