

VARIOUS

THE GREAT ROUND
WORLD AND WHAT IS
GOING ON IN IT, VOL. 1,
NO. 51, OCTOBER 28,
1897

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Magazine for Boys and Girls

General Weyler's efforts to remain in Cuba have not met with success.

In the face of the letters and petitions from his admirers in Cuba, and the demonstrations made by the soldiers in his favor, Señor Sagasta, the Spanish Prime Minister, has decided to recall him, and send out General Ramon Blanco in his stead.

The news was received with delightful surprise by the many people who disapprove of Weyler's cruel conduct of the Cuban war. It had been feared that the efforts of his friends would have had weight with the new minister, and prevented Weyler's removal for the present.

Señor Sagasta seems to be a man of his word. He stated that if he were called to take charge of the affairs of Spain his first act should be to recall Weyler, and he has not swerved from his determination.

As we told you last week, General Weyler sent a despatch to Señor Sagasta announcing that he would not resign his office, and offering his services to the new Government.

The day after the despatch was received, a cabinet meeting was held, at which it was decided that General Weyler must be recalled.

The matter was therefore arranged with the utmost politeness on both sides.

General Weyler in his message stated that it was impossible for him to offer his resignation to the ministry, because he was not merely acting as the Governor of Cuba, but as Commander-in-Chief of an army engaged in war, and in the last capacity he could never allow it to be said of him that he had offered to resign while in the face of an enemy.

He added that he knew that he had the approval of the people of Spain and of some of the parties in power, but that he would also like to feel that he had the confidence of the ministers. This confidence, he declared, would enable him to finish the war, which he stated to be almost at an end.

This very artful letter had no effect on either Sagasta or the Government. The sentence about the approval of the people of Spain and of some of the parties in power was undoubtedly meant as a hint to the Prime Minister that the General had powerful friends, and that it would not be a wise thing to interfere with him.

Sagasta, however, replied to him, that while the ministry

recognized and valued the work he had done for Spain, a change was considered desirable, and so he had decided to recall him.

When the news of Sagasta's action reached the people, there was much excitement both in Spain and Cuba.

In Spain it was reported that General Weyler meant to defy the Government, and keep his post in spite of Sagasta's orders, and that he had threatened that he would use his influence with the soldiers, and carry them with him over to the Carlists, if Sagasta did not instantly withdraw the recall.

The Cubans, on their part, were panic-stricken. They have such a dread of Weyler that they expected he would revenge himself on them for his disgrace.

In Havana some of the Cubans hired armed men to protect them from attack, and others crowded the steamship offices in an endeavor to escape from the country before the catastrophe came.

The fears of the people were, however, set at rest by a statement from the Captain-General that he would never be guilty of any act which could cause his Government trouble. He therefore hastened to assure Señor Sagasta of his willingness to obey the wishes of the Government, and gave up his command in Cuba.

He asked permission to leave the island at once, but Sagasta cabled to him that he must remain where he was until Oct. 20th. General Ramon Blanco will sail for Cuba on Oct. 15th. The newly appointed commander of the forces in Cuba was

Governor-General of the Philippine Islands at the outbreak of the war there, but was recalled for political reasons.

Unfortunately, his record for cruelty is not far behind Weyler's, and so the savage character of the war in Cuba is not likely to be changed by the change of commanders.

The Cubans know Barman Blanco well. He was Captain-General of the island in 1879, when the second insurrection against the Spaniards started.

Under him was Camilo Polavieja, who as Governor of the Philippines has made for himself an unenviable reputation for cruelty.

To these two men was intrusted the task of suppressing the revolt.

The insurrection of 1879 was not a very serious affair; the Cubans as a body took no part in it; but notwithstanding this fact, which was well known to the authorities, fully fifteen hundred men of position in Cuba were arrested, and many of them put to death without being tried or given an opportunity to prove their innocence.

The Cubans have not forgotten this, and they have little to hope from General Blanco, especially as he has announced his intention of dealing with the present trouble in the same manner that he did with the revolt of 1879.

He will find, however, that matters have changed considerably since 1879.

In those days a mere handful of the Cuban people were in

arms against Spain; now he will find himself among a people who are unfriendly to the cause he represents, and who have besides organized themselves until they have a government to direct their movements, and an army of veterans to protect them.

Were this not enough to make his task a difficult one, he will find to his cost that the soldiers of Spain on whom he must rely are ill, poorly fed, and angry with the Government because it does not even pay them the pittance due in return for their services and sufferings.

It is true that General Blanco is to take twenty thousand fresh troops with him. But sickness and disease are ravaging Cuba, and the new-comers, unused to the climate, are likely to be the first to fall victims to the fevers and plagues that are turning the beautiful island into a pest-house.

It is said that Sagasta has ordered General Blanco to continue the war as long as there is an insurgent in arms against Spain, but that he does not intend to conquer the people by force of arms alone.

The soldiers are to punish the Cubans if they will not obey the Government, but Señor Sagasta means to try and win the friendship of the people by giving them a kind and liberal form of government under which they may prosper and be happy. With this policy he hopes to bring the war to a speedy end.

General Blanco's first act is to be to repeal some of the cruel laws made by Weyler, especially those which have driven the unfortunate peasants into the towns to starve, while their

ungathered crops lie rotting in the fields.

Whether these efforts to secure the friendship of the Cubans will be successful or not, the future alone can tell.

At present the Cubans are not disposed to listen to any offers. They persist in their declaration that they are fighting for freedom, and that the change of ministers or captains-general makes no difference to them. They are not going to lay down their arms because Weyler is recalled, nor yet because Sagasta offers them Home Rule.

As a last act before he leaves the island, General Weyler has pardoned a great number of Cubans whom he had exiled from their country, and these men are now free to return to their homes.

In the mean while the Cubans have won two brilliant victories in Havana Province, and have also gained possession of a seaport town called Santa Maria, in the province of Pijar del Rio.

General Weyler has stated that he has pacified the eastern part of the island, and has only a little more work to do before he will have the west completely subdued.

In direct contradiction of this statement comes the news that Bayamo, Holguin, Jiguani, and other towns held by the Spanish in Santiago province (which is Eastern Cuba) have all been abandoned by the Spanish troops since the fall of Victoria de las Tunas.

With these towns abandoned, the insurgents do not need such a large body of troops in Santiago, and so a strong force under

the leadership of General Garcia is making its way westward to join the army in Havana and Pinar del Rio.

This army crossed the trocha without any difficulty, attacked the town of Taguayabon in Santa Clara, captured it and plundered it with very little opposition from the Spaniards, and marched triumphantly on toward Matanzas province.

The news has reached Havana that this body of men which is marching toward the city is the flower of the insurgent army. It is stated that it consists of infantry, cavalry, and three batteries of artillery, and is well supplied with arms and ammunition captured from Las Tunas.

A messenger from Cuba has arrived in this country, who states positively that the elections have been delayed, and that as yet no one has been chosen to fill the office of President. He adds that Señor Bartolome Maso is the favorite, and it is supposed that he will be the successful candidate. The news of the election of Señor Capote may not have been true, after all.

This messenger, who is named Aguirre, says he is the bearer of some important messages and papers to the Cubans in America, but he will not say what they are until he has laid them before the proper authorities. It is thought that they may have something to do with the exchange of prisoners, and the recognition of the belligerency of the Cubans by the Spanish army.

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