

TO HAVANA
ARRESTED
IMPRISONED AND DEPORTED
RETURNED

BY

GEORGE CLARKE MUSGRAVE

FROM HIS BOOK

UNDER THREE FLAGS IN CUBA

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY
BOSTON 1899



WITH MY GRATITUDE FOR THE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE OF
KARL DECKER, EUGENE BRYSON, BRONSON REA
LORD SALISBURY
MR. T. P. O'CONNER M.P. AND MR. J. O'KELLY M.P.
MR. CREELMAN, MR. MASSINGHAM, MR. MCKENZIE
AND OTHERS

TO HAVANA - ARRESTED

IN JANUARY 1898, travelling with the Cuban leaders and doing my utmost to assist their cause by carrying news and messages around the country, I was introduced to President Maso, head of the insurgent government, and was asked to carry orders to General Garcia, the Cuban leader in the east.



CAPTAIN G C MUSGRAVE

I reached Garcia's camp at daybreak on February 17th to find the General and his staff heavily engaged in guerilla action against Weyler's troops and in desperate need of assistance. In recognition of my part in freeing Evangelina Cisneros from the Recojidas in Havana; and to afford me some semblance of authority, Garcia gave me a commission as Captain and instructed me to carry despatches to the Americans in Santiago City. It was deemed expedient for me to attempt to reach the capital with General Sanchez, the brave and popular commander of the Barracoa district, and General Demetrius Castillo, who was to assume command of the beleaguered districts of Santiago City.

We left Garcia, who was preparing to oppose the Spaniards with two thousand men, and made a forced march with two officers of Castillo's command, hoping to pass round the enemy by night. A significant heliograph message, however, announced that all operations were suspended, and the column retired. Captain Maestre was sent forward with an escort to accompany me through the dangerous San Luis district, but he fell sick, and unwilling to delay, I pushed forward alone with a servant and guide. Riding on the camino, we were held up by a ferocious looking cavalry squad, apparently guerillas or bandits. Fight and flight were impossible, and we fearfully threw up our hands, to discover that our assailants were Cuban irregulars, searching for horse thieves.

At the zona I luckily met Preval, who had just been to secure mail over the barricade at Sant Ana. Colonel Congera selected guides and a fresh escort, and Preval agreed to accompany me over the mountains. We found food very scarce in the mountains, unripe guava alone sustaining us. It was bitterly cold also, especially at night, and the change developed my latent malaria. Occasionally I shot a jutia, or small species of tree bear, yielding rank but edible meat

Our journey was tortuous but, at length, we reached the Ojo del Toro, and finally sighted La Galleta, beyond which lay Santiago City. On March 18th, after another frightful climb, we reached the fringe of mountains on the coast. The sea rolled in, far below us, and from that ridge, the most extensive view in the world, save the vista of Teneriffe, can be obtained. Away to the south, shrouded in the sunlit haze of the Caribbean, lay

Jamaica; on the east, toward Maysi, glistened the Windward Passage fringed by the southern Bahamas and Haiti. Westward, Santiago seemed a city of Lilliput, nestling at the foot of the range. Two white gunboats, a Ward liner, and the graceful "Purissima Concepcion" resembled four toy ships in a midget harbour, while a tiny train steamed leisurely out by the head of the bay. Beyond rose the opposite spur of the Sierras that extend to Manzanillo.

The travel had been awful, but it was now time to make my attempt to cross the lines. I crawled forward and scaled the first barricade rapidly; the sentry there was chatting with the next post, and I was soon against the wires, and between two forts that loomed up fifty yards apart. The guards lounged round the campfires, cooking their "rancho"; the sentinels whined out *Alerta*, and continued their chat, and, after vainly trying to compose myself, I started over the barbed Trocha. The posts fortunately protruded several inches above the wires, so, scaling the first fence as a ladder, I was able to step across from strand to strand, grasping each post firmly. Hearing a patrol approaching when all but over, I dropped beneath the tangled meshes, soon to realize that in the night air of the tropics hoof-beats are discernible at a great distance. My alarm was needless, for ten minutes elapsed before the "rounds" of guards passed. Then I crawled out, my hands and legs lacerated and bleeding; but I felt nothing of the barbs. I was over, and content. The road to the city was clear at last.

It was almost midnight when I crept into Santiago but, within minutes, I realised that I had to immediately leave again. I made my way to a hotel on the wharf where the brothers Barella I knew were good Cubans. They were effusive in welcoming me and, at great risk to their lives, as it transpired, they said that I could stay for the night but that I must leave before first light. They related to me the events that had transpired in the past few days which, in brief, were that, amid rising tension between Spain and America, the USS *Maine* had been sent to Havana. This was seen as an insult to Spain's integrity and led to the issue of a frenzied, soul-stirring manifesto broadcast throughout the city. Such was the impact of this manifesto that, at the height of carnival on February 15th, the battleship had been blown up with the loss of the two officers and two hundred and sixty four Americans aboard her.

War between Spain and American was now certain and imminent and Havana was no longer safe. The crisis was acute and my despatches were now dangerously compromising. Americans were flocking from the Capital and, along with all other foreigners in the city, I had to formulate my plans for escape from the island. I considered, and rejected, both the "buying" of a false passport, and swimming at night to a steamer in the harbour. Colonel Decker, however, was at Key West with the despatch boat "Anita" awaiting the advent of the fleet and, by underground mail, he arranged with me to steam at night to the San Lazaro beach to pick me up. The attempt was to be made on April 1st, but on the previous afternoon I lay resting in a secluded room at El Pasage, sick, worn, and anxious to feel the security of American soil again, when heavy footsteps broke my reverie, and a rough demand was made at the door ...

The Manifesto

¡Españoles!

¡VIVA ESPAÑA CON HONRA!

¿Qué haceis que os dejais insultar de esa manera? ¿No veis lo que nos han hecho retirando á nuestro valiente y querido Weyler, que á estas horas ya hubiéramos acabado con esta indigna canalla insurrecta que pisotea nuestra bandera y nuestro honor?

Nos imponen la Autonomía para echarnos á un lado y dar los puestos de honor y mando á aquellos que iniciaron esta rebelion, estos mal nacidos autonomistas, hijos ingratos de nuestra querida patria!

Y por último, estos cochinos yankees que se mezclan en nuestros asuntos, humillándonos hasta el último grado, y para más vejámen nos mandan uno de los barcos de guerra de su podrida escuadra, despues de insultarnos en sus diarios y desde nuestra casa.

Españoles! Llegó el momento de accion, no dormiteis! Enseñemos á esos viles traidores que todavía no hemos perdido la vergüenza y que sabemos protestar con la energía que corresponde á una nacion digna y fuerte como es y siempre será nuestra España!

Mueran los americanos! Muera la Autonomía!

Viva España! Viva Weyler!

The Translation

SPANIARDS!

LONG LIVE SPAIN WITH HONOR!

What are you about that you allow yourselves to be thus insulted? Do you not realize what they have done by withdrawing our beloved Weyler, who at this hour would have finished the unworthy and rebellious rabble who trample on our flag and honor?

Autonomy is forced upon us, and gives positions of honor and authority to those who initiated the rebellion, low-born autonomists, ungrateful sons of our beloved country!

And finally these Yankee "cochinos," who interfere in our affairs, humiliate us to the last degree, and in greater taunt, order us a ship of war of their rotten squadron, after insulting us in their newspapers and in our own home.

Spaniards! the moment of action has arrived. Do not go to sleep! Let us teach those vile traitors that we are not lost to shame, and that we know how to protest with the energy befitting a dignified and strong nation, as our Spain is and ever will be.

Death to Americans! Death to Autonomy!

Long live Spain! Long live Weyler!



Wreck of the USS Maine, Havana Harbour, Cuba (1898)
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

IMPRISONED AND DEPORTED

I glanced hopelessly at the barred window, seized my revolver, only to realize the madness of resistance, and hesitated, trembling, until a second thunderous demand nearly burst the door from its hinges. Colonel Trujillo and his valiant myrmidons entered as if bearding a tiger in his den when I withdrew the bar, but grew wondrous bold when they found no resistance intended. Said the bewhiskered Trujillo, with a malicious grin of recognition, and tone and manner suave, "General Blanco, sir, wishes to hold conversation with you. To a gentleman as yourself it is needless for me to say my sergeant is prepared for resistance; but a coach is in waiting if you care to come quietly." To the coach I went, as one in a dream, forgetting that I was compounding the secrecy of my arrest by such surrender.

I was taken to the cuartel at the Punta fortress, and within an hour was before some semblance of court martial. Colonel Pagaleri fortunately presided; he showed me much consideration during my examination. I answered all questions frankly; denial was futile, but my heart sank as charge after charge was substantiated by the seizure of the despatches I had risked so much to secure. A letter from the Government to President McKinley, a full list of the rebel forces in eastern Cuba, the official offer of their co-operation with the United States, and three maps I had myself prepared, I felt would seal my doom.

I asked, as my right, that the British consul should be notified of my arrest. "Spies have no rights but the rope," sneered the portly comandante, and I was taken out "incomunicado." My prison chamber was dirty, but the rats broke the solitude; it was at least airy, a large grated frame opening seaward. No bed was provided, but rodents and dirt were forgotten, and I sank on the floor worn in body and broken in spirit, at this sequel that meant failure of all I had tried to accomplish.

I knew nothing of my impending fate. From my window I could see La Cabana fortress, and as the bloody executions of that death ditch recurred to me, I wondered how I should face the rifles of the firing squad. Below my grating the black waters of the bay surged against slimy rocks, and hungry sharks showed occasional fins, as they hunted for morsels expelled by the foetid sewer at Los Fossos. My bars were loose and rusty; but escape from La Punta meant a horrible death below. After retreat sounded, the guards in the courtyard chattered noisily, and interesting snatches of my impending fate were served up for my special delectation. I had accepted those despatches without thought, but I could not now face the penalty with fortitude. Spain could not have been blamed for dealing harshly with me. At such a crisis other countries would have shot me without compunction, and in such a war, life is but of individual value.

On Wednesday morning the "Olivette" passed my bars. Scanning her decks, I saw that she was crowded down with Americans; merchants, Red Cross workers and correspondents leaving the Island. Before my capture, General Lee was preparing to sail, and I suddenly realized that with my secret capture no one would know of my plight, and I might rot in prison before I could communicate with the outer world. But my disappearance

had been rightly attributed; Lewis, McReady, and Bryson had made inquiries, and assured themselves of my capture before they sailed. Long cable messages were sent to England, the British Foreign office was notified, and Lord Salisbury at once wired Havana for full particulars. Mr. Creelman, Mr. Massingham, Mr. McKenzie, Mr. Broadhurst and other prominent journalists in London kindly interested themselves in my behalf. Mr. Labouchere, Mr. T. P. O'Conner, M.P and Mr. J. O'Kelly, M.P. who had tasted Spanish prison in the last war, brought my case before the House of Commons, and the authorities in Havana found they could no longer keep my incarceration there a secret.

But I was not anticipating help from the British Government. When one is identified in quarrels of strange nations, the consequences must be borne. I had frequently gone beyond my province in Cuba, but the Spanish authorities decided to avoid complications by quietly shipping me a prisoner to Puerto Rico. Sir Alexander Gollan was then informed that I had been expelled from Cuba; he reported it to London, and the incident was apparently closed. Fortunately there were some friends who were not satisfied at the Consul General's terse report of my expulsion. Only two boats had left Havana; one to Key West, the other a transport bound for San Juan; and when it transpired that I was not on the American vessel, and that Colonel Perez and a guard were seen taking me toward the Spanish transport, fresh representations were made.

In the stifling lower hold of the transport "Buenos Aires", with a Negro murderer named Hernandez, and several hundred yellow-fever convalescents, my condition was not enviable. When we reached San Juan, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Bronson Rea, then in Puerto Rico, I obtained a change of clothes. At this time, though, The British Government were demanding the release of my friend, Freeman Halstead, correspondent of the "Herald," and also a British subject, then in Morro Castle, under sentence of nine years' imprisonment as a spy for taking photographs of San Juan harbour. Governor-General Maccias, having no wish for further complications over one of Blanco's prisoners, refused my landing and I was rushed off to the "Buenos Aires" again, and sent to Spain.

Shut below in that filthy transport were over a thousand invalid soldiers, yellow-fever convalescents. To be invalided from Spain's army was to be an invalid indeed, and the poor wretches packed in the sorry bunks were too weak to move. They vomited and defecated where they lay, and the condition between decks may be imagined, but not described. At night those who had died were carried out and dropped over the side; but the thought of repatriation in their beloved Spain buoyed up the men wonderfully, though many died directly they reached the shore. When I was first conducted below, some of these poor fellows reviled me as they lay in their misery, "Yankee pig", "mambi" and "nanigo" being among the most complimentary appellations. Seeing that one young soldier, after a fit of retching, was hanging exhausted over his bunk, I gently laid the limp form back, and readjusted the blanket, thinking nothing of the incident. His comrades witnessed this simple act of common humanity. No more gibes were cast at me, and before I had divined the reason of the change, a few petty services

to the stricken men had gained me the friendship of every soldier below decks,

The disembarkation at Cadiz on April 15th was a memorable sight. On the starboard side, steam launches, gay with bunting, brought out high army officers in resplendent uniforms, diplomats, and a vast crowd, to welcome officers and officials returning rich to Spain. The port gangway led down to large floats manned by Red Cross helpers, who lifted the emaciated forms of fever-stricken soldiers from the terrible hold, placed them temporarily in clean uniforms to save the comments of the crowd on the wharf, among whom were country people, wives and mothers and fathers, in the last extremes of poverty, waiting to see their dear ones. They had walked fifty, sixty, and seventy miles to greet the returning heroes. They waited on in suspense and gave pitiful cries of horror at the wrecks Cuba had sent them. It was inexpressibly sad. As I watched those silent tragedies, tears blinded my eyes, and I forgot my own distress, impending imprisonment as a spy, possible deportation to North Africa, and the anxiety of my friends to learn my fate. One group of Andalusian women at first failed to recognize their boys, and then, with gurgles of pain at the change, yet joy of reunion, they clasped the saffron-hued skeletons in their arms: "My son! My son!" Two soldiers died on the pier, and a frenzied mass of relatives surged forward, impelled by a sickening dread for their individual dear ones. But the guards drove them back; the ambulances were now full, and the people were forced to endure the suspense until the next day

The chief of police assured me that I should be sent to Africa on May 1st, and there was some excitement among the crowd of sight-seers when I was taken ashore. The advent of a "Yankee Spy" had been heralded, and with minds inflamed by the spectres of manhood from Cuba, their jeers and expletives aroused neither my wonder nor resentment.

On the day before the formal declaration of war, though, I was released upon the demands of the British Government. The charges formulated against me for bearing arms against Spain were withdrawn when the Spaniards found that I must be sent to England for trial under the Foreign Enlistment Act, when impolitic truths of their rule in Cuba might be evolved. Being captured before a declaration of war, the designation "spy" could not be sustained, and I was ordered over the frontier, with a warning not to return to Cuba on pain of death.

Chaperoned by two celadores of police, ordered to see me over the French boundary, I arrived in Madrid the next day, finding nothing to indicate the war on hand, except that the great daily papers had three of their columns devoted to it. I was more amused than flattered to find one-third of a leading column devoted to my presence in Spain. It seems to me to be seems an inexplicable editorial vagary to give an equal space to the manifesto of President McKinley that involved two nations in war, and to one who, as the papers themselves remarked, was extremely ignorant, for he spoke execrable Spanish



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SYDNEY, SATURDAY JUNE 11, 1898

[PRICE, SIXPENCE.]

Spain's Treatment of War Correspondents.

The London "Daily Chronicle," in the most recent files to hand, made strong complaint against the exceedingly arbitrary action of the Spanish authorities in arresting at Cuba, and deporting to Spain, its special correspondent, Mr. G. C. Musgrave. Mr. Musgrave, writing from San Sebastian (Spain) under date April 19, told the story as follows:—"On returning from Santiago de Cuba openly to Havana I was arrested in the Hotel Passage on March 29. Four days later, and after a brief examination before Colonel Pagaleri, held in the Carcel del Orden Publico, practically 'incommunicado,' I demanded permission to see the British Consul, but, despite my protests, I was placed on board the Buena Aires on the Wednesday following, and embarked for Spain. At the time of arrest, being sick with fever and three months of hardship in the bush, I was lounging, clad only in a thin alpaca suit and house shoes. Inspector Perez, who took charge of me from the military police for embarkation, behaved most insolently, absolutely refusing to allow me to speak to my interpreter, who was on the quay, and declining permission also to my request that a policeman accompany him to my rooms for suitable clothes. I was also unable to draw upon a draft at the bank, and was quite without money. A guard was placed over me on the ship, my berth being in the steerage full of sick soldiers, filthy from the campaign, and many invalided from yellow fever. Once the vessel left I was treated with every consideration by the Police Sereno and the ship's officers, and obtained a berth in the same fetid atmosphere; but in the preferential section, divided by a screen. At Puerto Rico the chief of police boarded the vessel, and I was again guarded closely, though the Vice-Consul came out and had a brief interview, but took no action, having only received friendly notification from New York. Here, as in Havana,

I demanded to know my specific crime, or see an order for my detention or expulsion. These were not forthcoming, the ship's police having orders only to place me at the disposition of the chief in Cadiz.

"The kindness of the purser and other Spanish officers of the vessel did much to relieve the hardships of the voyage; but the cold was intense, with my tropical clothing, and after the fierce heat of Cuba, and I landed in Cadiz in most uncomfortable condition. The prompt action of the British Consul there saved me from further annoyance, and having been duly handed over to the Spanish police, they wired Madrid for instructions, and I was quietly placed at liberty, under surveillance. Obtaining funds, I left by rail without further annoyance, beyond a search at the railroad station and a celador watching me on the train until Seville, where I managed to lose him.

"If my expulsion were ordered, forcible embarkation on a Spanish transport was not included. If the Consul-General in Havana was notified, he sent no one to inquire into my condition. I have lost everything, even my watch and purse, containing a small sum, being left in the hotel. Under General Blanco's policy it was said that the island would be opened up, and people be once more allowed free access to the interior. Such reforms existed only on paper; the pacificos to this day are shut in and starving, and apparently my one crime was passing through the Spanish lines. Should this merit forcible expulsion, the ordinary rights of a British subject surely should protect him from treatment which was in no wise necessary in dealing with such a case. Spain has ever declared that war does not exist in Cuba, and the question also arises as to her right to enforce rules only consistent with a state of war. I had passed from one end of Cuba to the other, only asking the leaders if they would accept autonomy, and receiving unanimous rejection. If the obtaining of such vital truths—necessary for Spain, for all concerned, in establishing peace—can be held a crime, the sincerity of the new regime must surely be questioned."

Reprint of article written in San Sebastian following my release from Cadiz in April 1898

HANSARD

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (AUTHORISED EDITION) FOURTH SERIES
COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE SIXTEENTH DAY OF MARCH
TO THE FIRST DAY OF APRIL 1898.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 1st APRIL, 1898.

EXPULSION OF BRITISH WAR CORRESPONDENT FROM BUENOS AYRES

MR. J. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government has received information of the arrest by the Spanish authorities in Havana of Mr. Musgrave, the special correspondent of the Daily Chronicle in Cuba, and a British subject, and of his deportation on the steamer Buenos Ayres; whether Mr. Musgrave was permitted an appeal to the British Consul, and for what offence he was arrested; and whether Her Majesty's Government will press for his release?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) : I beg at the same time to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if it be true that Mr. George Clark Musgrave, correspondent in Cuba of an American and of an English journal, has been arrested; whether he was arrested without a warrant, and whether he has been deported from Cuba; and whether the British Consul at Porto Rico, where Mr. Musgrave will touch on his way to Spain, can be instructed to demand the release of Mr. Musgrave on the ground of the illegality of his arrest, and because his arrival in Spain at a moment of excitement may be attended with serious danger to his personal safety?

MR. CURZON (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs): A telegram has been received from Her Majesty's Consul General at Havana stating that Mr. Musgrave has been expelled from Cuba by the order of the Governor General, and that he left for Spain on the 30th of March. There is nothing in the telegram to show that Mr. Musgrave is still under arrest or even under detention, and accordingly the steps suggested by the hon. Members do not seem to be called for. The Consul General is reporting fully on the matter by post, and I shall be happy to give the hon. Members what information I can at a later date.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Is it not a fact that Mr. Musgrave has been sent away, and is in custody?

MR. CURZON: That is not the conclusion I draw from the words of the telegram. The Consul General reported that Mr. Musgrave had been arrested and expelled, and had left for Spain; but I do not gather from the words of the telegram that he left under arrest.

HANSARD Archive References:
Text: S4V0055P0-03449 to S4V0055P0-03453
Image: S4V0055P0I0949 (col 1667)

Hansard report of question raised in
the House of Commons on 1st April 1898

RETURNED

TWO DAYS LATER WE REACHED SAN SEBASTIAN, where my two shadow celadores left me as I crossed the Urumea into France at the Irun frontier. Once over the border, French antipathy to America became strongly marked. At Bordeaux a large crowd yelled, Viva Espana! and Death to McKinley! and even in Paris hostility was painfully evident. Though Rochefort denounced Spain, French sympathy, directed by the Bourse and holders of Spanish bonds, was strongly for the Spaniards. Crossing from Boulogne to Folkestone, were several American families, going to England to escape painful manifestations, and for days there had been a general exodus of Americans from Paris. The antithesis of this feeling in England was distinctly refreshing. Never were the two great English-speaking countries on more cordial terms, and with few exceptions, press and people extolled America's "holy war". The feeling was universal.

Seven days later I reached New York again en route for Cuba. The full report of Dewey's victory in Manila on May 1st had just arrived, and it stirred the Americans as victory alone can stir a nation. The very sky was obscured by myriads of the stars and stripes, for Old Glory fluttered from every point of vantage. From the Hudson came the discordant screaming of a thousand steam sirens; bay tug, ocean greyhound, and ferryboat joined to rend the heavens, while an immense crowd of patriots filled City Hall Square, before the Journal bulletin boards, and sang the National Hymn while tears of effusive joy and gratitude ran down many a face.

Reaching Washington on May 5th, I made preparation to cross the Spanish lines and re-enter Havana City on secret service. Finding however, that an army of invasion would leave for Cuba in a few days, I hurried to Tampa to join the Fifth Army Corps. The regular army was then mobilized, and outwardly all was in readiness for a forward move.

General Wesley Merritt, then the only West Point general officer in the United States Army, was named for commander of the invasion, and when his appointment to lead the Philippine expedition was announced, it was universally supposed that General Miles would take the army to Cuba. But to the surprise of every one, General William R. Shafter was placed in command of the forming Cuban expedition. An officer weighing considerably more than three hundred pounds, and suffering from gout, seemed the last man to lead an army into a difficult country like Cuba, where the activity and intelligence of the leader could do much to overcome the obstacles of the country, and mitigate risks to the health and life of those exposed to such a climate.

Shafter's appointment though, was a mere indication of the lack of system in the War Department apparent at Tampa where confusion reigned. The size of the army was increased sevenfold by a mistaken stroke of the pen; and since the available transportation facilities under the Stars and Stripes could not have carried more than 25,000 men from the coast, the Administration is frequently blamed for not first devoting its entire energies to securing the logistics and equipment of a small army for service, before

the vast resources of the National Guard were called upon, and the department paralyzed by the immense mobilization.



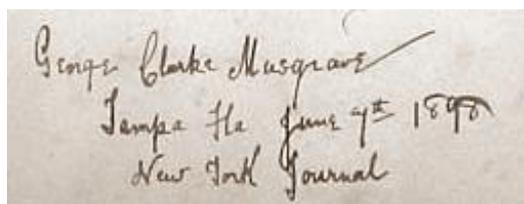
Tampa, assuredly, was not an ideal spot for the preparation of an army of invasion. The white Florida sand made good camping-ground; but though drier, the climate is scarcely less enervating than that of Cuba. The great drawbacks, however, were the limited railway facilities and the fact that everything in Tampa was expensive. This ensured a great hardship on officers and men, who frequently were forced to purchase necessaries of food and clothing that the commissariat should have provided. Despite this exorbitance, though, life was tolerable in the palatial Tampa Bay Hotel, the great winter resort which became army headquarters. Here the band played at night in the Oriental annex, under flourishing palms, and officers danced with bright-eyed Cuban senioritas, a number of whom had fled from Havana.

Eager groups animatedly discussed the war. The bronzed Indian fighters from the plains sharing their enthusiasm with the young subs just from West Point, and the civilian appointees, swelling 'neath their newly acquired rank and uniform. When Colonel Roosevelt's Rough Riders arrived, it was distinctly refreshing to find the sons of millionaires and professional men of prominent families serving as troopers in the ranks with cowpunchers, packers, and "bad men" of the West, all actuated by the same patriotism, and all deserving honour commensurate with their individual self-sacrifice.



Colonel Teddy Roosevelt - June 1898

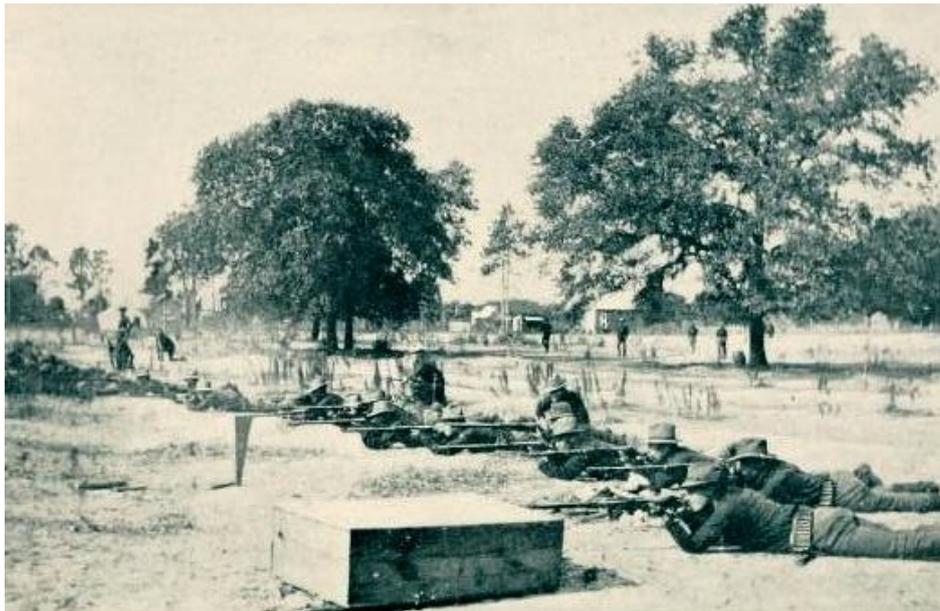
Gathered in or around headquarters were considerably over a hundred war correspondents and artists, representing newspapers from every quarter of the globe. Evidently Lord Wolseley's idea that the "drones of the Press" were the curse of modern armies was not shared by the war lords of Washington. It was surprising to



find that the vast majority of correspondents, even those representing great New York dailies, had never seen a shot fired in anger, and were absolutely ignorant of military affairs. There were, of course, exceptions and London sent some

tried veterans, among them; Robinson, Wright, Sheldon, McPherson, Hands, and Atkins; but many held passes who would never be permitted to accompany an army in the field by the British War Office. The rigours of home camps soon proved too great for much of this impedimenta, and it was a greatly diminished but very fit body of Press knights who finally landed in Cuba.

Hundreds of expatriated Cubans living in Ybor City formed themselves into companies of volunteers and, swelled by natives from all parts of the country, three strong contingents were raised, commanded respectively by brave old Lacret, who had slipped over from Cuba a few weeks previously, and Generals Nunez and Sanguili. Colonel Janiz, the brave little doctor of Camaguey, was now his chief of staff. Karl Decker, Herbert Seeley and I were honorary members, and among other officers I was delighted to find young Mass, now a major, Frank Agremonte, Aguirre, and other brave fellows whose past services in Cuba and consequent sufferings in Spanish prisons had by no means deterred them from responding again to their country's call. General Nunez was joined by Colonel Mendez, two sons of the Morales family, and two New Yorkers, Thorne and Jones, all of whom did excellent service later in Cuba. Dr. Castillo took charge of the "Florida," and landed the expeditions safely.



Troops Drilling at Tampa Bay Hotel - June 1898

The military authorities punctiliously enforced trivialities to the letter, and it was surprising to see the laxity and consequent disorder in more important matters. Sanitation and the water supply of the camps seemed a secondary consideration; and the issue of rations and suitable outfits to the army would have discredited a staff of school-boys. The officers of the regular regiments smiled grimly, but could say nothing. Seven miles of freight cars were stalled in the sidings between Lakeland and the Port. The stores had been rushed forward indiscriminately, no manifests were provided, and no specific attempt was made at headquarters to evolve order from chaos. A few

details of intelligent non-commissioned officers could have gone through the cars and tabulated their contents; but if beans were wanted, a search was made until they materialized, and the same cars would be overhauled by men searching for beef or tomatoes later in the day. Thus only the most necessary stores were brought to light, and tons of provisions, delicacies for the sick and medical stores were never unloaded.

General Shafter's force was ever sailing "tomorrow" until "manana" took on a Spanish significance. The waiting seemed endless but the order for a general advance at last arrived on June 5th. Its promulgation at 10 pm. is history; this was war and it emanated from the commanding general that "All who were not on board the transports by daybreak would be left behind."



Troops Embarking for Cuba from Tampa Bay - June 1898

Officers and correspondents dashed off to their quarters to pack, dress, and catch the 11 o'clock train for war. It arrived at 5 the next morning and we reached the embarkation pier at 6. Whole battalions were moved in the rush. Regiment after regiment had hurried down to the narrow pile dock, which was soon packed indescribably with men and baggage. Troops at the extreme end of the pier were afterwards assigned to transports moored at the shore end, and vice versa. The embarkation resembled the sailing of a vast excursion party rather than a military movement. With the capacity of each transport, and the roster of each regiment before him, the youngest officer could have made effective assignment and saved such dire confusion, which took two days to untangle, and entailed much sun-exposure and hardship on the soldiers. But toward evening, June 7th, all was ready.

Boom! went a saluting gun, and away went transport after transport; the bands playing, the troops, relieved from the tedium of the wait, cheering as only such enthusiasts can cheer. But a gunboat, previously a private yacht, had sighted two tramp steamers, and from unexplained reason, taking them

for Spaniards, showed a clean pair of heels to Key West with the tidings. When this erroneous news was cabled to headquarters, the order:

!! Stop the Expedition !!

was sent urgently from Washington. The leading transports were headed off far down the bay at this time, and only recalled after a long chase by the "Helena". A weary wait ensued and the men, cramped on the vessels, which were fitted and filled like cattle-ships, grew sick with the delay. The water grew stale; the lack of exercise, and the foul air of the crowded holds in the fierce semi-tropical heat, soon affected the troops. The halt laid the foundation of many a subsequent death, beside the loss of a dry week in Cuba.

One week later we sailed. On the 13th the flag ship "Seguranca" signalled the start; and with colours flying and bands playing, the vessels glided out to mid-stream and dropped down toward the sea. As the battery on shore boomed out a farewell salute, the soldiers swarmed to the deck and rigging, and the air was rent with a shout of triumph from sixteen thousand throats. The cheers were taken up on shore and echoed and re-echoed in pine forest and everglade. They were not evoked only by the usual zest for war shared by all men, the savage lust to fight which lies dormant in the piping times of peace. Those troopers knew they had a mission to fulfil. They remembered the blackened wreck in Havana Harbour, and the sailor comrades sleeping in that foetid slough; they thought also of the women and children crying aloud for deliverance from starvation and despair, and of the ragged patriots fighting for liberty as their own fathers had fought.

Petty politicians have used the war for their own purposes, thimblerriggers have not been idle; but to the close observer it was evident that the war was a war of the people, the will of the multitude, inflamed perhaps by much exaggeration and misrepresentation, but nevertheless exerted for a just purpose when unvarnished facts stand forth.

Twenty hours after the start was signalled we rounded Dry Tortugas, and in double column the fleet headed Cubawards, flanked on either side by the guard of warships. The massive cruiser "Indiana" held to the shore side, while the aggressive torpedo boat "Porter" dashed inshore at intervals, on the lookout for any lurking gunboat of Spain that might emerge on a forlorn hope, sink a transport, and meet the inevitable fate gloriously. The "Annapolis", "Bancroft", "Castine", "Helena", "Morrill", "Manning" and "Hornet" guarded the fleet of transports on the voyage, with the "Detroit", "Osceola" and "Ericsson" acting as scouts.

The first land sighted was the sandy loam on Cayo Romano, and as the sun set in tropical suddenness, a fire flickered from the summit and was answered by a second flare on the distant heights of Cubitas: a message from the watchful guardia costa to the beleaguered Cuban Government, which has meted isolated justice in spirit rather than in letter, that the day of Cuba's triumph was at hand.

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