GOVERNMENT AND THE PHILIPPINES.

Dewey Suggested 5,000 Troops, and 15,425 Were Sent.

MERRITT WANTED MORE.

Gen. Miles Favored Sending all that Were Necessary to Hold Manila and Relieve the Fleet.

Washington, D. C., July 17.—The remarks was prepared at the army headquarters today and given out for publication:

There has been some discussion in the press recently relating to an alleged difference of opinion regarding the number of troops to be sent to the remote islands in the first instance.

Immediately upon receiving the news through the press dispatches of Dewey's victory at Manila, Gen. Miles recommended the dispatch of a military force to the Philippines. The following is his letter:

Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D. C., May 3, 1898.—The Hon. Secretary of War—Sir:—I have the honor to recommend that Gen. Thomas M. Anderson be sent to occupy the Philippine islands in command of the following troops:

Two battalions Fourteenth infantry, two troops of Fourth cavalry, one squadron of Infantry, California volunteers, two battalions of heavy artillery, California volunteers, one regiment infantry, Oregon volunteers, one regiment of infantry, Washington volunteers; the troops to go with all the necessary supplies, equipment and equipage, I have respectfully, NELSON A. MILES,

Major-General Commanding U. S. A.

The force above designated was accordingly dispatched to Manila, and the condition was approved by the President, as follows:

Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C., May 3, 1898.—The troops designated by Gen. Miles, if supported by the merchant marine, should be sufficient for the purpose. Let the troops go from San Francisco, Cal., for service as may be ordered hereafter.

WILLIAM M'KINLEY.

To this time no communication had been received from Admiral Dewey, his last dispatch, dated May 19, not arriving at Washington until June 30. Then later the following dispatch was received from him:

Hongkong, May 19, 1898.—Cavite, May 1.—Secretary of the Navy, Washington: Situation satisfactory. Strict blockade of Manila by squadron. Cable and telegraphing is by land although they have batteries and making no demonstration. Insurgents are in control of the whole island. I believe the Spanish governor-general will be obliged to surrender soon. Can take Manila at any moment. To retain possession and thus control Philippines would require force much larger than I have, a well-equipped force of 5,000 men, although United States troops sent by Pacific mail steamers would be sufficient for purposes of guarding Cavite. Unless United States troops should make provision for entire Philippine archipelago, the force is estimated at 10,000 men. The rebels are reported to have 30,000 men.

DEWEY.

On May 16, 1898, after seeing the news flashed from Admiral Dewey, Gen. Miles made the following recommendation:

Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D. C., May 16, 1898.—The Honorable Secretary of War:—I have the honor to submit the following: In order to make the United States as strong and effective as possible with a view to its maintaining our possessions and our flag on the Philippine islands and at the same time relieve our navy as speedily as possible, I suggest that the following troops be sent: One of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth regular infantry, two squadrons of our Fourth cavalry, one battery of heavy artillery from the Seventh and two batteries of light artillery from the Seventh, and in addition 12,000 volunteers from California, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Oregon, Utah, Washington, North Dakota, South Dakota, Idaho, Wyoming, Minnesota and Kentucky.

I also recommend that two 15-inch guns, two 10-inch guns, with disappearing carriages, be taken as a reserve, to be mounted, also two 6-inch guns and carriages, to be placed in the Barcelo—all to be placed on board ships at San Francisco and sent to Manila, there to be placed as speedily as possible for the defense of that harbor and used to other ends with my rapid-fire guns that are in transit from Europe, as may be deemed best. When this is accomplished, the fleet can be released for more important service. The guns and troops not selected to should be replaced as fast as possible by others sent to San Francisco from the gun foundries and armory on the Atlantic coast. Very respectfully,

NELSON A. MILES,

Major General, Commanding.

The troops designated in the above memorandum were accordingly dispatched, and there were 15,000 more than Admiral Dewey had asked for, but subsequently it was found that Gen. Miles was in the view of the admiral's statement that the Spanish force was estimated at 30,000 men it would be advisable for us to have a preponderating force.

In the meantime, Gen. Merritt had been appointed to command the expedition to the Philippines, and in a letter to the President, dated May 13, 1898, he submitted an estimate of troops deemed necessary to constitute an expedition comprising 14,000 men, of which number 5,000 were regulars. On May 25 this was supplemented thus by an estimate for a siege battery and a small ordnance train:

Gen. Miles had not seen Gen. Merritt's letter when he wrote the letter of May 16th, given above, but the letter was referred to Gen. Merritt for remarks and was received back with the following indorsement:

Headquarters Department of East, Governors Island, May 17, 1898.—Respectfully forwarded to the adjutant general of the army.—I consider the organization of the force outlined by the letter of General Miles, dated May 16, 1898, as compared to the force I have recommended, as inadequate to the task to be undertaken, and insufficient in efficiency for the expedition to the Philippines.

Two regiments of regular infantry, two squadrons of a regiment of regular cavalry and two light batteries is a very much greater proportion of the forty-two thousand men in the army when the work to be done consists of conquering a territory 1,000 miles from our base, defeating an army of 30,000 men, and then an army of from 20,000 to 25,000 Tagalos, followed by 10,000 or 20,000 of the majority of whom will regard us as the Chinese hated born of race and color.

Hence, I am not greatly mistaken in the suggested command is only a quota of the Fourteenth infantry and only partially available. My letters of May 16th and 19th give the composition and minimum strength of the regular force I deem necessary.

W. MERRITT,

Major General Commanding.

"It was then referred to Gen. Miles for further remarks and was indorsed by him as follows:

Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D. C., May 18, 1898.—Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.—The situation in the Spanish prisons is believed to be very much exaggerated. No reports have been received from far off Cuba to anything like the extent indicated in the above indorsement, while the population of that territory is not nearly as great as we are advised Dewey called for. The force ordered at this time is not expected to carry on a war to conquer an extensive country, and the chief object of the within letter was to suggest a means of quickly establishing a strong force, to command the harbor of Manila and to relieve the United States fleet under Admiral Dewey of the necessity of prompt delay. This, in my judgment, is of pre-eminent importance.

The regiments mentioned in the within letter are available to that department number 15,425. The Fourth Pennsylvania volunteers, which will be approximately 1,000 more. These troops, in my judgment, are all that would be needed to secure the Philippine islands at this time. It is for discussion whether it would be advisable to send additional regiments to be held from New Orleans or Tampa, for the force now ordered to Manila, or to be already informed, 15,000 more than will be required for the purpose.

It is, however, in my judgment, of the highest importance that orders should be sent to place the six hundred marines now at Cavite, Manila, on vessels at San Francisco, and possibly Puget Sound, with the best possible dispatch, and to place the Sixth Massachusetts and Nineteenth Kansas at Manila and mounted as speedily as possible. It may be advisable to send additional guns. These orders should be sent by telegraph and the engineer and ordnance departments should be instructed to expedite the work by every possible means.

NELSON A. MILES,

Major-General Commanding.

"It thus appears that there was no controversy regarding the number of troops to be sent. Gen. Miles, in fact, having declared that more than Gen. Merritt called for, but a difference of opinion as to the composition of the force, Gen. Merritt thinking that the regulars should be taken from Gen. Miles.

Meanwhile, orders had been issued to the commanders of the regular regiments that were designated by Gen. Miles.

Certain newspapers have attempted to show that Gen. Miles did not want more than 5,000 troops to be sent to the Philippines under Gen. Merritt, but the above official correspondence shows this not to be the fact."

Saved by Suspenders.

New Orleans, July 17.—A pair of suspenders saved the life of Charles L. Hebert, curator of the Metropolitan bank today. Hebert had just entered the bank to begin his duties when Engibert Bieber, a discharged soldier of the Second Louisiana, who had been hanging around the bank all morning, opened fire with two Colt guns, with disappearing carriages, in each pocket, to be concealed, also two 6-inch gatling guns, from the Barracks—all he had piled on board ship at San Francisco to sell and go to Manila, there to be shipped as opportunity presented for the honor