

Spain forced her sovereignty upon the Philippines. But the "blood treaty" of that year by which this was accomplished, nevertheless recognized the autonomy of the islands; and when in 1814 Spain attempted to exercise absolute sovereignty over the Filipinos, they made an armed resistance. It was not until 1837 that their rights were forcibly wrested from them by Spain, and from that time to the present they have been fighting for their liberties. Their struggle, continues the protest we quote from, is now crowned with success. "The Spanish government has ceased to hold any dominion by deed and by right, and the only authority which exists there and preserves order is that constituted by the Filipinos," who "renewed their sovereignty by the solemn proclamation of the Philippine republic on the 1st of August, 1898, and by the establishment of a government and a regular and well ordered administration created by the decisive votes of the natives." Senor Agoncillo, in an interview at Washington on the 27, said:

What we ask is independence and we believe we have gained that by right. The American government has not yet outlined its policy. Until that is done, we cannot definitely decide upon our own actions, except that in the meantime we will demand independence. What we may seek to do should the American government decide to extend its authority over us is an entirely different matter and does not enter into the question as it is now presented. Spain has been at war with the Filipinos as well as with the United States. The Spanish prisoners will not be surrendered by our government until a treaty of peace is entered into between Spain and our republic. They are held as prisoners of war, and the treaty between Spain and the United States does not affect them at all.

The last important Spanish stronghold in the Philippines, Iloilo, the capital city of the Island of Panay, and the next Philippine city in importance to Manila, has been surrendered by Spain. News came at first by way of Madrid. Gen. Rios, the Spanish commander, telegraphed on the 24th that on the 23d he had "formally surrendered Iloilo in the presence of the military and naval commanders, the mayor, and the foreign consuls," and that he had "charged the German consul with the protection of Spanish interests." This dispatch gave no intimation as to whether Gen. Rios had surrendered to the Americans or to

the Filipinos; but because Gen. Otis had been ordered to send troops to Iloilo, it was surmised that the surrender was to the Americans. The probabilities, however, were the other way; for it was not until the 23d, the date of the surrender, that President McKinley ordered Gen. Otis to send troops to Iloilo. As the distance from Manila is not far from 300 miles, it would have been quite impossible for Gen. Otis to have complied with that order in time to accept the Spanish surrender on the 23d—especially as the 23d comes several hours earlier in the Philippines than at Washington. His report of compliance was dated the 26th. Aside from the matter of dates, it was also probable that the Spanish commander would have mentioned Gen. Otis's troops had he surrendered to them. There could have been little doubt that the surrender was to the Filipinos. This soon proved to be the case. On the 28th the following dispatch from Gen. Otis was received at Washington, dated the 27th at Manila:

Sent Col. Potter on fast vessel to Poilo on 24th to communicate with Spanish Gen. Rios; latter evacuated evening of 24th and Potter 39 hours late; insurgents took possession of city on 26th; and Potter found Aguinaldo's flag flying. Cannot now report probable results; will not hear from there for four days, as no cable communications. Spanish forces have evacuated all stations in southern islands except Zamboanga, Mindanao, by orders, as they say, from Madrid.

The American expedition to Iloilo consisted of two regiments under command of Gen. Miller. They went by transports under convoy of the warships Baltimore and Callao.

Upon the receipt of Gen. Otis's dispatch, a conference was held at the white house. The result was not made public authoritatively; but Washington news dispatches at the time of this writing are to the effect that it was decided to order American reinforcements from Manila to Gen. Miller at Iloilo. Agoncillo claimed in an interview that "by all the rules of right and justice, the town of Iloilo, having been captured by the insurgent forces, belongs to them, and their flag should not be taken down." He added:

The Americans have no right there. They did not assist the insurgents in the taking of the place. The Filipino forces captured it without aid from any one. They should be allowed to enjoy the fruits of their unaided victory.

Fighting had been in progress before Iloilo since December 1. At the outset the Filipinos captured all the Spanish trenches except one. They then notified Gen. Rios to remove women and children from the city. After that, conflicting reports were received until the 19th, when it was reported that the Spanish admitted their inability to hold their position unless speedily re-enforced. The Filipino forces about Iloilo were at that time said to number 25,000. Four days later, Gen. Otis was instructed from Washington to "take immediate possession of Iloilo."

Along with the news of the fall of Iloilo, reports received in this country indicate a political crisis in the government of the Philippine republic. The congress of the republic, which had been in session at Malolos since last September, adjourned on the 26th—unexpectedly, according to the reports; and at about the same time President Aguinaldo's cabinet, appointed in July, resigned. Before adjourning, the congress adopted a constitution for the republic. A request was thereupon made by President Aguinaldo, in the message he proposed submitting to the congress, that in view of the critical condition of affairs, certain sections of the constitution which limit the power of the president be temporarily suspended. He also requested the addition of sections conferring absolute power upon the president during the critical period. Among these sections was one empowering the president to declare war. Upon submitting a draft of his message to the cabinet Aguinaldo found that his requests would be strongly opposed; and it is inferred that they may have caused the sudden adjournment of the congress and the resignation of the cabinet. The reports of the difficulty are, however, very meager and unsatisfactory.

We stated last week that on the 20th the American flag was raised in Cuba for the first time over a Havana stronghold. It appears now that this was done by Maj. Russell Harrison without orders and in contravention of the promise of the United States evacuation commissioners that no American flags should be raised in Havana or its suburbs until January 1. Maj. Harrison was formally reprimanded by Gen. Lee, and ordered to haul down the flag, which he did.

It was impossible, however, to prevent a display of flags, and the Span-