

RECAPTURE OF THE COMANDITARIO.

British Territory Searched by Spanish Troops for the Crew.

Great Excitement in the Bahamas.

The readers of the *HERALD* have been informed of the seizure by Cuban insurgents of the Spanish coasting steamer *Comanditario*, and of her subsequent arrival at Havana, having been recaptured by Spanish cruisers. The following interesting accounts of her proceedings and recapture we copy from the *Nassau, N. P.*, papers. We learn that the excitement at that place was very intense against the Spaniards because of their high-handed proceedings and utter disregard of the usual courtesies of international intercourse.

The *Nassau Guardian*, of March 31, says:—

The Spanish steamer *Yara*, John Lopez O'Connor, master, arrived and anchored at Southwest Bay on Friday, 26th instant. On the 27th she reported as from Havana, entering and clearing the same day for Charleston. While at Southwest Bay she received coal from the schooner *Violin*, which vessel, on her return to Nassau, was found to have a horse and sundry articles on board which had been transhipped from the steamer, and the schooner and cargo were accordingly seized by the Custom House authorities for an infringement of the revenue laws.

The Receiver General went down to Southwest Bay in the lighthouse yacht *Richmond*, followed by her Majesty's steamer *Philomel*, but the *Yara* was out of sight.

The same journal, of April 3, has the following:—

The wrecking schooner *Elva*, Mingo, master, has arrived from Berry Islands. The master reports that four Spanish war vessels were at the Berry Islands yesterday, and that the steamer *Yara* was captured at Great Harbor on Thursday last. This vessel during the chase ran for the land, when her crew scuttled her and went ashore. She was then boarded by a party of Spanish sailors, who stopped the leak, and she was lying afloat when the *Elva* left yesterday.

The master of the *Elva* also reports the landing of about 200 men from the war vessels in search of the crew of the *Yara*; and further, that his vessel was fired at by the men-of-war and boarded by five boats, when his papers were demanded and his vessel searched.

The Hon. L. R. A. Taylor, police magistrate, left to-day in her Majesty's steamer *Cherub* to investigate the affair.

A boat belonging to the steamer *Yara* was seized by the Custom House boarding officer on Thursday night.

The *Nassau Herald* of the same date has the following further particulars of the affair:—

By the arrival of the schooner *Elva* from the Banks to-day we have received the following startling intelligence:—The day before yesterday the Cuban privateer *Comanditario*, alias *Yara*, was wrecked on one of those dangerous reefs in the vicinity of the Berry Islands, where the crew went on shore. They had not long been there, however, when six Spanish men-of-war hove in sight, and immediately landed a number of marines and soldiers on the island, who proceeded to scour over the whole island in search of the Cuban refugees; and not content with invading her Majesty's territories, commenced firing at our Bahama wreckers who happened to be in the neighbourhood. This intelligence may be relied upon as authentic, and is nothing short of a declaration of war against Great Britain.

STATEMENT OF THE CAPTAIN OF THE ELVA.

The following is the sworn evidence given by the captain of the schooner *Elva*, before the Hon. L. R. A. Taylor, and will be read with interest:—

Walter Mingo sworn—I am the master of the wrecking schooner *Elva*, of the port of Nassau; on Thursday evening last, abreast of Stirrup Cay lighthouse, standing in on the starboard tack, about half a mile off the light, heading in for Great Harbor, I saw four steamers, two coming towards me and one larger than the rest lying to, with a small one astern; just as I got abreast of Great Harbor channel, about a quarter of a mile off, one of the two steamed close to me and fired two guns; after she fired I hauled the schooner's jib sheet to windward; she ran broadside to me and spoke me in Spanish, and made signs to me to stop, and if I did not they would fire into me; they loaded the guns, and after seeing this I hauled the jib sheet to windward and she put out a boat, manned by six men and one officer, and they boarded me; the officer asked me where I was from; I told him I was from the Banks; he asked me to show him my papers; I showed him my clearance from Customs at Nassau; he was not satisfied with that, he said he wanted my papers; I told him no; I showed him my wrecking articles, still he was not satisfied; he told me the captain of the man-of-war said he must bring my papers; I would not give him the papers; I said if the captain wants them he must come and take them by force; he then went to the tiller to take it from the man that was steering, to bring her to; I would not allow him to do it; I took the tiller and kept her full and ran into Great Harbor; the man-of-war boat was still alongside, and the smaller steamer, flying the Spanish flag, chased me and could not catch me until I anchored in Great Harbor; as soon as I anchored four boats from the one that was chasing me, with about 200 men, armed, accompanied with officers, came alongside and remained near me resting on their oars; at this time the officer who first boarded me was still on board with a linguist, who interpreted between me and the officer; half-past five o'clock they first boarded me, and quitted about half-past six o'clock; the linguist was not in uniform; he said to me, the officer requires that your vessel be searched; I did not refuse, and he went to the hatchway and went below with me; he satisfied himself that there was nothing but ballast; came up again; the whole of the boat's crew went ashore; the boat with her crew who first boarded went off and joined the ship she came from; these men remained ashore for two hours and a half, armed with guns and bayonets; I did not land, but remained at anchor until a quarter past two o'clock, and weighed anchor and came out, and sailed for Nassau; came in at two o'clock this morning, dead beat down; the *Elva* is sixty-one tons, licensed to wreck; her license is marked eighty-five; carried a crew of sixteen, all told; owned by James Culmer, of Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera, of the said Bahama Islands.

COMMENTS OF THE PRESS.

[From the *Nassau Herald*, April 3.]

We publish in another part of our paper this evening intelligence which has had the effect of arousing the indignation of the whole of her Majesty's subjects in the Bahamas. There probably never was a more unprovoked and wanton insult offered to the dignity of the British nation since the foundation of the monarchy than the one we report this evening. Can there be anything conceived of a more outrageous character than the deliberate invasion of the territories of a Power by another when amicable relations are supposed to exist between them? This act on the part of the Spaniards is the beginning of the end; it has, beyond all question, sealed their fate and has effected the liberation of Cuba from the thralldom of an arrogant and effete Power. It has been said that those whom the gods wish to destroy they first deprive of their senses, and in this instance the saying has been verified; for political insanity could go no farther, on the part of the Spaniards, than the perpetration of the act reported in our news columns this evening. It is to all intents and purposes a deliberate act of war on a friendly nation, without the least notice or slightest provocation; and if we do not much mistake, from the date of this unparalleled insult to Great Britain the Spaniards may date the downfall of their empire in the Antilles. The Spanish nation is as capable of being educated up to the present modern standard of progress as any other people in Europe, who have for centuries labored under the frightful disadvantage of being governed by laws which are a positive outrage on the common sense of the world. But it will take at least fifty years to accomplish this, and in the meantime such demicivilized people must be taught that they cannot violate the well-recognized laws of nations with impunity, but that they will be forced, whether they like it or not, to keep pace with modern civilization and those laws which now govern the community of nations.

We have said that this outrage on the part of the Spanish gunboats is an act of war on her Majesty of England, and we learn that the British gunboat *Cherub* has left, or is about to leave, for the scene of outrage with a detachment of her Majesty's Second West India regiment on board. It affords us the highest satisfaction to notice the promptitude with which his Excellency Sir James Walker, C. B., has acted in the matter, inasmuch as it gives assurance to our wreckers that they will be protected in the fullest sense of the term, and that no Power on earth will be permitted to insult the British flag with impunity or to interfere with any friends who may have sought our protection.