

CUBAN AFFAIRS.

ARRIVAL OF THE HAVANA STEAM-SHIP MISSOURI.

The steam-ship *Missouri*, which left Havana on Nov. 19, reached this port yesterday. We are indebted to the courtesy of her purser for the prompt delivery of the interesting correspondence printed below.

Evasion of the Abolition Laws—A Young-Old Negro—What Zulueta Predicted—Position of the Emancipados—Just Policy of De Rodas—Registration of Foreigners—"War" Gossip.

From Our Own Correspondent.

HAVANA, Saturday, Nov. 19, 1870.

The pro-slavery element in the Island of Cuba is represented by all slaveholders irrespective of nationality, as the Spaniards, Cubans, Americans, Englishmen, or Frenchmen are equally zealous to hold up the profitable, unchristian and brutal institution, and are placing every impediment in the way, to prevent the carrying out of the two favors granted to the black population, namely the partial abolition of slavery and the complete freedom of the so-called *emancipados*. The birth of children is often kept a secret, and many who were born after September, 1868, are represented to have seen the light of this world at a much earlier date; and as it is almost impossible to define either a very young or very old negro's age, those under two years are called three, and those over sixty, if they are in the least robust, are declared to be forty-five or fifty. I met an old negro, yesterday, who informed me, with an expression of great wonderment in his face, that, during the reign of Captain-General TACON, (1836,) he was already a grandfather, with quite a numerous stock of grandchildren, some of them being then full grown men, but that he had suddenly become very young again, and didn't know how, his master having stated his (the negro's) age at fifty-three. According to the master's statement, this negro must have been married before he was out of his swaddling clothes, (this is apocryphal, as the swaddling clothes of Cuban negroes consists of the degree of warmth which nature weaves around them,) and a father of a family before he was a year old, for only such reasoning will make the two stories agree. This negro, who was brought here from Charleston, remembers perfectly well having seen Gen. LAFAYETTE, he being then servant to a Mr. PICKETT. The number of such cases, if followed up and found out, would be immense, and the crown officers have to submit to the hatred of slave-owners, if they intend to carry out their orders and refuse to be bribed. Even the Press, as in duty bound, defends the traffickers in blood, and the *Voz de Cuba*, in its editorial of the 9th, howls and whines in the most doleful manner against the carrying out of the law, saying:

"We are informed by Matanzas planters that they have petitioned the Government against the lists which are being formed of slaves over sixty years of age, they taking the official census of 1867 as a guide. This will cause considerable injury to the planters. When the census of 1867 was taken, the age of negroes from Africa was given by those who had this work in charge, and therefore cannot be correct. Article 19 of the decree of the 29th of September, is very formal, and orders a new census to be taken during the months intervening before the close of the present year, and justice and reason advise that this should be done as it was in Havana and other places, in order to examine every individual so as to graduate his age, thus avoiding not only injury to the planters, but also so that the slave receives a benefit to which he is not entitled, as some might be wronged. These errors can be avoided by taking a new census with legality and exactness."

The object of this article is apparent; it is an occult threat to the Government of the Island not to be too strict in carrying out the misnamed Emancipation law, although it only relates to infants and the aged. It expresses the feelings of the strong slave-holding power and their utter disregard of the moral influence and example of the entire civilized world, excepting, perhaps, Brazil. Even a negro over sixty can earn something for his owner, and when did a planter owning slaves ever pay any attention to a slave's welfare or health, provided he produces some money for his owner. The grand secret, however, is that the planters feel that slavery is doomed. The well-known JULIAN ZULUETA truly remarked: "Four years more of slavery and all will be well; any planter who does not make a fortune within that period does not deserve to own a plantation." He spoke the truth. If all planters in Cuba are not immensely wealthy—and if some of them even are in debt—it is simply because they were spendthrifts, and have lived far beyond their means, and allowed their administrators to manage the estate, the latter always working more for their own benefit than for that of the proprietor. The Messrs. SAMUEL & JAMES WELSH, Philadelphia sugar merchants, have just purchased two large plantations and a large number of negroes near Remedios, the first owner having been heavily indebted to them. The price, I believe, was something near \$700,000. But to return to the other class of negroes who are affected by the freedom decree.

The *emancipados* are the blacks captured by Spanish cruisers from slavers at sea, or after they were landed. Hitherto these so-called *emancipados* were hired out by the Government to private individuals, the Government receiving \$4 25 per month for each. Captain-General RODAS, who, together with Secretary FERNANDEZ, is denounced as a rank abolitionist, has liberated over 8,000 of these unfortunates, giving them their complete freedom. These liberated negroes first receive the following document, signed by the Captain-General:

SECRETARY OF THE SUPERIOR GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAND OF CUBA.

Whereas, By the documents existing in this office, it is proven that on the — day of —, an expedition of negroes from Africa was captured, among whom was the one numbered —, named —, and known in Africa by the name of —, who is now — years of age; and as said negro has always shown good conduct, and has learned enough to know that he cannot be reduced to a state of slavery, therefore, in the use of my faculties, and in virtue of the law relating to *emancipados*, I declare said — free from all Government supervision, and authorize him to contract for himself with perfect freedom; to dispose of himself as he pleases, remaining only subject to the laws and rules relating to colored people.

Given at Havana, —, 1870.

(Signed) CESAREO FERNANDEZ.

These letters of freedom are given as fast as they can be made out and signed. The contracts which the negroes make with planters or others have also been changed by Gen. RODAS, and they now read as follows:

"The *emancipado* pledges himself to work for a certain person named, or any other to whom this contract might be transferred, on any work in the town or country, during a term of not less than two and not more than six years, pledging himself also to subject himself to the rules, number of working hours, &c., of the place. The contractor pays a salary of ten dollars to every man and eight to every woman, monthly, allowing eight ounces of salt beef and two and a half pounds of sweet-potatoes, or any other vegetable, as daily ration, taking care of the negro while sick, and giving three shirts, two pairs of pants and a blanket to the negro annually. These contracts are to be signed before the authorities."

This undoubtedly is much better treatment for the negroes than received by them hitherto, but is only a little different from the former system. The idea of giving a workman only ten dollars a month, who is obliged to work from fifteen to twenty hours a day in a climate which kills black and white, and of giving him eight ounces of salt meat (of a poor quality at that) and two and a half pounds of sweet potatoes, and neither bread or coffee to live on! How would the black population in the United States like or submit to such an arrangement? The only wonder is that the black population in Cuba has not risen *en masse* and repeated the scenes of Hayti and San Domingo.

REGISTRATION OF FOREIGNERS.

The Consuls of the different nations, with one or two exceptions, have requested their countrymen to come forward and register, in accordance with the law of Spain regarding foreigners in Cuba. The law is much better than the former one, and will cause less annoyance to persons coming here, while it prevents Cubans, to a large extent, from claiming foreign protection, unless they are really entitled to it.

The "war" goes on with slight variations, but we must now expect a change, the dry weather having set in. Operations, on a small scale, continue throughout the island, and, excepting in the immediate vicinity where

Gen. VALMASEDA commands, the Cubans are losing ground to a certain extent. When all signal-towers are built on the line from Puerto Principe to Ciega de Avila, it will be very difficult, if not altogether impossible, for a Cuban force to cross, at least not in any considerable number, and without exposing themselves to defeat... Mr. LUIS VARONA, a brother of CHARLES VARONA, the leader of the insurrection in the Camaguey, was lately captured and executed by the Spaniards. He was but twenty-six years of age, and very talented. Previous to his death he acknowledged that only his love for Miss MARIA DE MARMOL, a sister of the celebrated Cuban General, made him join the Cubans, she having exacted that he should join them. Since then he has behaved bravely. This is not the only case in which young Cubans have joined the forces from similar motives.

QUASIMODO.