

## CUBAN AFFAIRS.

### News from the Puerto Principe Region—Fugitive Expeditionists—Court-Martials and Volunteer Outrages—The Killing of Volunteers.

From Our Own Correspondent.

HAVANA, Wednesday, May 4, 1870.

The Puerto Principe region, or, as it is generally termed, the region of the Camaguey, remains still the principal seat of war. That is to say, the public expects news from thence, principally, perhaps, because the Captain-General is there, and perhaps, also, owing to the fact that at one time the Cubans were strongest in that quarter. The news which is received in Havana from the Camaguey is extremely favorable to the Spaniards, but this is not astonishing, as we never receive any unfavorable news from Spanish sources, who would communicate, privately and officially, tidings of a grand victory, even if only one man had remained alive to tell the tale. Whenever the Spanish troops are defeated, which little accident happens occasionally, notwithstanding the silence of the Press and Government, we merely have a dull report of it at the time, and only learn the particulars weeks or months after. None of the journals have regular correspondents in the field, and if they had, the public would be none the wiser, as the Censor would take very good care that nothing unfavorable to the Spanish cause should be published. The news from Puerto Principe is all contained in two lengthy communications from Mr. FERNANDEZ, the Captain-General's Secretary, and gives a very clear and succinct Spanish account of what has taken place there within the past few days. The documents being very lengthy, I limit myself to making an extract giving their most important features, without vouching for the truth of all or any, although they present the appearance of truth and may be such. If the public does not place implicit confidence in the news furnished by the Government, the blame must be laid at its own door, as the instances of having been taken in by rose-colored versions are too numerous to mention. The present documents, however, present traces of truth. They begin with news received from Santa Clara, and stating that the Cubans commanded by IGNACIO AGRAMONTE, MAGIN DIAZ and BEMBETA, and numbering about eight hundred, had concentrated near Najara to attack and surprise the column of Major MONTANEZ, returning from Puerto Principe to Santa Cruz del Sur, but that he managed to get through easily and killed twenty-six of the enemy. The remainder of the document relates to the capture of the Prefect BETANCOURT, and includes a copy of a letter in which the Cuban Colonel JOSE INCLAN resigns his office, and demands only a private's place in the ranks of some regiment, giving as a reason for resigning, the intrigues and machinations existing in the army. On the 26th, fourteen armed men arrived with their families at Puerto Principe from Magarabomba. On the 27th the contraguerrillas returned, bringing eighty-four persons, eleven prisoners and eighty horses, with their accoutrements, captured at Guanabo, where they also killed sixteen insurgents. Col. BENE-GASSI, the Commander of Guaimaro, arrived at Puerto Principe on the 28th, reporting that all the troops were in good health, and that the Cascorro and Sibanica volunteers had celebrated the delivery of arms to them with great rejoicing. Four hundred and sixty persons had arrived at Guaimaro in two days, seeking the protection of the troops, and many more were expected, while the fortifications are being strengthened and increased in number. Twelve men, with arms, had also arrived at Puerto Principe. They formerly belonged to the Regiment Rey, but were captured by QUESADA at Sabana Nueva, together with the remainder of the detachment, who were executed. The lives of these men were saved through the intercession and strenuous efforts of that young Cuban hero and gentleman, BEMBETA, under whose command they served until lately. The resignation of IGNACIO AGRAMONTE as Commander-in-Chief is confirmed, and the position has been abolished, Gen. FRED. CAVADA having been appointed chief of operations, and BEMBETA Commanding-General for the Cinco Villas. Prefect BETANCOURT, alias Barbaras, and JOSE MARIA RAFETI, of Porto Rico, a subprefect, who had been captured a few days before, were executed. An intercepted letter of DOMINGO STERLING VARONA states that in the early part of April, MODESTO DIAZ lost 180 men by cholera in three days.

#### FUGITIVE EXPEDITIONISTS.

Within the past few weeks the Spanish papers have contained numerous paragraphs announcing that the Cuban leaders are wandering about the coast trying to escape. This report, at first discredited, is no longer doubted, as the departure of JORDAN furnished at least one proof, and now we have news of another. The Spanish gun-boat *Soldado* met or found a boat, apparently proceeding from the Cuban coast, at La Guajaba Key, or, as it is often styled, Guajaba Island. Provisions and other effects were found in the boat, and among the papers a passport to Gen. GOICOURIA to leave the country, and an appointment for the same gentleman as Ambassador to Mexico, both being signed by President CESPEDES. According to other documents found in the boat, GOICOURIA's companion was GASPAR AGUERO. It is a somewhat remarkable fact that CESPEDES chooses his Generals as Ambassadors—let me instance QUESADA, JORDAN and GOICOURIA—in other countries. Generals remain at the head of their armies. The *Soldado* landed some men to register the key, and went after assistance, over a hundred men being now looking for GOICOURIA. The key being a very large one, it is difficult to find anybody hid on it, especially as in case of necessity the fugitives could cross over to Roman Key, and it is more than probable that some other boat was in waiting on the other side of the key to take off the fugitives.

#### COURT-MARTIALS

are still being held everywhere, and phlebotomy is actively carried on. FRANCISCO ESQUEMBRE, the Parish priest of Yaguaramas, of whose trial and sentence I have already written, was executed at Cienfuegos on the 30th ult. Pious persons made strenuous efforts to have him pardoned, but the attempt proved a failure. The most important court-martial, however, which has taken place for some time, owing to the notoriety it obtained, has just been held in Cardenas. Some time in March or April, 1869, two young Cubans named ESTEBAN PARODI and JOSE MARIA MORA were arrested on suspicion of being implicated in the revolution, and on being tried were sentenced to eight years' imprisonment each. The Judge who sentenced them was dismissed. Some very suspicious facts having come to light, the case was retried by the Supreme Court, and the accused absolved and ordered to be set at liberty. On the new Judge presenting himself at the jail to liberate them, the volunteers on guard not only refused to obey the order, but also threatened to kill the bearer of it, whose life was only saved at the time by the intercession of a Colonel of volunteers. The entire volunteer force of Cardenas flocked to arms, and threatened to kill the lawyer and Judge who had intervened in the case; only a rapid flight saved them, the volunteers remaining under arms, and sending a commission to see Havana to Gen. RODAS, who was absent at the time. The Governor of Matanzas went to Cardenas, made a conciliatory speech to the volunteers, and promised them that the sentence of the Supreme Court should not be carried into effect, whereupon the volunteers dispersed. The result of this row and the appealing of the volunteers were secured by the offering up of PARODI's and MORA's lives, for they will undoubtedly be executed. A few noble men, among the volunteers themselves are, however, making efforts to

have a petition signed asking that the young men be pardoned, as their execution will be a foul blot on the reputation of the Cardenas volunteers.

#### KILLING OF VOLUNTEERS.

Nearly every mail brings the information that in different parts of the country some volunteers have been killed, either in discharge of their duties, as at the Capitanla del Horno, while attacking the enemy, or else by some bands of Cubans, who surprise them singly or in small groups. The latest case reported is the killing of five volunteers at Alvarez, in the Sagua jurisdiction, a father, seventy-five years of age, and his four sons. The party who attacked these men numbered about forty, three of them whites and the rest negroes, and was commanded by a cousin of the murdered men. The other case is of a party of men composed of ten volunteers, ten regular soldiers and about forty more men, who were driving a herd of cattle from Juan Criollo to Sancti Spiritus. On the road they were attacked by a Cuban force superior in numbers, commanded by CORRARANO and DORADO. The two Spanish officers, four volunteers and four soldiers, and eight others were killed, the Cubans attacking them with the machete, when the rest of the Spaniards, according to the *Voz*, had no other remedy than to run away, which they did with such a good effect as to arrive safely at Sancti Spiritus on the following day. The Sancti Spiritus paper adds that the Cuban chiefs DORADO, JUAN BENIGNO GOMEZ, GARCIA, and others have their families residing in the city, and that nevertheless they commit these barbarities without fear of retaliation, because they are satisfied that the Government forces would not act like them. This slur of the *Voz* is very contemptible, as it may be taken as a covert invitation to kill these families, and throwing out a hint that the above-named leaders killed women and children instead of killing soldiers and volunteers. Perhaps the *Voz* thinks that the people of Sancti Spiritus deserve great credit for not having killed these families already, as if an inoffensive woman or helpless children were responsible for the acts committed by men. Too many innocent people have already fallen victims to the fury of both factions, without having recourse to the killing of women and children as acts of retaliation.

QUASIMODO.