

The Spanish Army in the Antilles—An Active Campaign all Over the Island to be Commenced—Affairs in the Central Department.

The steamship *De Soto*, Captain Morton, from Havana December 29, arrived in this port yesterday. Purser McManus will receive thanks for favors received.

The Reinforcements all Arrived—The Campaign Throughout the Island—Report of the Operations at Various Points—The Spanish Troops Not Provided with Food—Suffering of the Country People—Indiscriminate Shooting—Executions at Havana.

HAVANA, Dec. 29, 1869.

By far the greater part if not all of the anticipated reinforcements from Spain have arrived. They have been received and feasted by the Spaniards of Havana, and have gone to the field to play their part in suppressing the insurrection. The triumphal arches are down, the flags and other ornaments which bedecked the streets are folded. The merry-makings are over and "grim-visaged war rears its horrid front," facing the preservers of the national integrity. Not far from 17,000 men have landed here since October, and in realization of the importance of finishing the insurrection, in the one or two healthy months which remain to the season, have been afforded scarce a breathing spell before being hurried to the field. The Third battalion of volunteers of Barcelona, the last arrived, took the cars last evening for Batabano, whence they will proceed to Las Tunas, in Santi Espiritu.

From every point of the insurrection comes reports of great activity in the movement of troops. As to the result it would seem to be, like the wearing of stone by water, a tedious process but certain of success if the water holds out. Commencing in the Eastern department, in the jurisdiction of Santiago de Cuba, we find no additional fighting reported. The columns under Camara and Abreu were at Palma Goriana on the 22d. A small encounter took place in the mountains of Niguabo a short time previous. Both commanders mentioned were to move immediately, the troops being kept constantly at work. The success of operations among the Spaniards was materially interfered with by want of a commissariat, of which there was no semblance. In the immediate vicinity of Santiago de Cuba so much tranquillity reigns that the guard has been withdrawn from Punta Blanca, Puente, San Antonio, Santa Ines, Caney and Beneficiencia, leaving the former garrisoned by the artillery.

An English officer of the rank of major, recently went from this city to Santiago, and, being desirous to witness the method of campaigning in the island, accompanied the *Cazadores de Valmaseda*, which recently left that city. He continued with them for four days, when, finding the hardships greater than he cared to endure, he returned. He states that no provision whatever was made for the sustenance of the officers and troops, and after the first thirty-six hours they were foodless. The soldiers were compelled to dig up roots, of which they made a kind of soup, to preserve them from starvation. No enemy was met with in the four days, or any signs of any. The country was very difficult to traverse, and a guide was constantly necessary. On one day the column lost itself in the woods and was compelled to retrace its steps, following back its trail until it arrived at the encampment of the night previous. He expressed astonishment at the apparent content of the men, who were cheerful under circumstances which would cause any other troops in the world to mutiny. He was treated with great courtesy by the officers, who always offered him the first of what little they had.

In the Camaguey the campaign under Puello has commenced, as mentioned in your correspondence from Nuevitas. The journals here as yet have not noticed this. Later information from Holguin mentions that a force of 500 men, divided in three columns, had gone out from there, operating in the section known as "La Escuela." They had caused more than thirty deaths to the enemy. Full 500 persons of different ages and sexes had presented themselves, as say the Spanish papers,

From Trinidad we learn that the *Segundo Cabo*, General Carbo, had arrived there, and, as the result, renewed activity was manifested. The *Imparcial*, of the 24th, says two strong columns, to act in combination, had gone out against the enemy, the one commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Laguidain and the other by Commandant Ollo, and as usual good results were promised. Small encounters by various detachments are mentioned, but of no interest. General Carbo had gone in the direction of Las Tunas, in Santi Espiritu, to prepare for the march of a large body to act in conjunction with Puello in Camaguey. Some women and children have been brought in by the troops in a state of most abject misery. An American lady of intelligence, long time a resident of Trinidad, speaks in most moving terms of the sufferings of the poor people who are compelled to leave their homes in the country, where they raised their fruits and vegetables, kept a few domestic animals and a quantity of small stock and were enabled to live comfortably and come to the city where they find nothing to do. No provision is made for their wants, and many of them are actually dying of starvation. She states that there are full 5,000 insurgents in the mountains of that jurisdiction upon whom the operations of the troops have had no effect whatever. They intrench themselves in the rocky, intricate passes, upon cragged eminences reached by almost perpendicular paths, from which they throw down heavy stones and other missiles on their approaching enemy. On one occasion several bee hives were thrown down on an advancing column, which caused the greatest disorder.

From Santi Espiritu the 23d Brigadier Goyeneche makes report of a tour of inspection and prosecution of insurgents through Moron, Ciego de Avila and the eastern part of Santi Espiritu. He states that the people are better disposed than heretofore and are anxious for the return of peace. Some who had been influenced to enter the insurrection by promises or violence, had abandoned it and offered themselves as guides to assist in pursuit of the rebels. The co-operation of the inhabitants and the disaffection in the files of the insurgents had produced the happiest effects. About one hundred presentations are mentioned of men, women and children. Under the different commanders several encounters are reported. The insurgents at times fled from positions most difficult of access, to reach

which the soldiers were compelled to wade through water waist deep and to cut their way through the woods with hatchets and machetes. A large column had moved against General Acosta, but after making its way through the difficult pass "Liana" the enemy had fled. The encounters, as reported, have but one termination, and no report of the Spanish loss is given. The volunteers of Cadiz had arrived at Santi Espiritu and with those from Asturia had taken the field.

The *Madrileno* of Moron says that so many families have presented themselves there that the end of the insurrection seems to have been reached.

In the Cinco Villas, where Villamil seems to keep the troops well employed if nothing more, the usual number of small fights are reported. A telegram from Santa Clara reports fighting for three days in the valley of Maria, Rodriguez and mountains of Cueva, Zuazo and Revarcadero. Three insurgents killed, many wounded and twenty-five prisoners taken, says the report.

The indiscriminate shooting in the country continues, though the authorities cannot properly be held responsible, as it is counter to their express orders. Within 150 miles of Havana, in a certain locality not within the seat of insurrection, there lived with their families about 100 laboring men who were pursuing their ordinary avocations. Of these ninety were shot at various times, and the balance of ten fled and joined the insurrection. In the same vicinity a gentleman was arrested on his estate and informed that he was to be carried to the nearest town. The detachment started with him in charge, the commander having signified to his men that when he raised his hat and turned it slightly the prisoner should be shot. He rode along beside the officer in quiet conversation, anticipating no evil, when the fatal signal was given and several bullets went crashing through the brain of the unsuspecting victim, who gave a convulsive throw from his horse and fell to the ground. These are but samples of cases constantly reported.

Since the arrival of troops commenced here there would seem to have been an organized attempt to seduce some of them, and particularly the Catalans, who are mostly republicans, from their allegiance. Doubtless the object was to raise a mutiny, which should result in a conflict between the troops, the result of which would have been fearful to contemplate, as doubtless a wholesale massacre would have followed. The majority of the newly arrived volunteers are very ignorant and a cry once started among them, no matter what, and serious results are liable to follow. Many of them have been tampered with, but without any success. As mentioned in a previous letter, certain parties have been arrested, charged with this offence, and yesterday two of them were shot back of the Cabanas fortress. Their names were José R. Crespillo, a native of Andalusia, and José Valdes Rubio. Others are said to be in arrest and like to meet with a similar fate.