

The Trials and Sufferings of
the Gem of the Antilles.

De Rodas Relieved—Valmaseda to Succeed—A
Triumph for the Bourbons—Progress of the
Insurrection—Movements of the Insur-
gents—A Spock of Trouble with Great
Britain—Bad Treatment of Span-
ish Troops—General Condi-
tion of the Patriots.

HAVANA, Dec. 2, 1870.

It is generally understood, though not authoritatively announced, that General de Rodas has been relieved from command here; that Valmaseda will reach here in a few days to supersede him, and will at once assume the duties and position of Captain General, and, further, that his Excellency is expected to sail for Spain on the 15th. Should this turn out to be true it may be regarded as one of the most important events which have happened in this island since the breaking out of the insurrection.

Those readers of the HERALD who are interested in Cuban affairs and have followed your correspondence from this island, are aware that nearly a year ago intrigues were commenced for the elevation of Valmaseda to the chief dignity of the province. It was well known that he was the most popular man in the island among the Spanish residents. There were two reasons for this. He had been Segundo Cabo under Lersundi and a supporter of the Queen. The Spaniards here had never yielded aught but the coldest allegiance to the revolution, and as now, so they have ever wished for and expected the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne. Valmaseda represented this feeling, and at the same time the to them glorious administration of Lersundi. They have wanted no creature of the revolution to reign over them, and ever since the landing of Dulce have been troublesome, mutinous and threatening. In the second place Valmaseda has ever been the embodiment of their policy in the treatment of the insurrection. This may be summed up in "no communication with the enemy, no quarter, a war of extermination against everything insurrect." It is known how well Valmaseda has carried out this policy.

The power of the Spanish element here, organized and centred in the Casino Español, has been brought to bear in constant efforts for his elevation, and De Rodas in his administration has been compelled to keep up a constant struggle against it. In September last it seemed as if by a bold stroke of policy he had succeeded in winning over the Spaniards to his support. He took up the cudgel in defence of the volunteers against the *Sufragio Universal*, a republican journal of Madrid. He published an article in the local papers, over the signature of "The First Volunteer," defending them, and much enthusiasm in his favor was created. A volunteer uniform was furnished him, which he donned, and appeared before them, musket in hand, going through a portion of the manual, and the occasion of the celebration in honor of the Virgin of Covadonga at Matanzas was taken advantage of to cement a seeming good understanding between them. All this, however, has proved illusory. The intrigues against him did not cease. They could not, for he represented principles and ideas antagonistical to them. Hence they have conquered, and in so doing have acquired a victory over the home government, which, it could hardly be supposed, would appoint an Isabellist to govern this province unless compelled to do so.

The effect of this change will soon develop itself, and need not be speculated upon. The statement that Valmaseda is a Cuban is a mistake. He is from Castile, and, while genial and pleasant in his social relations, is a bigoted and uncompromising Spaniard, and has shown himself the most cruel and bloody commander of the age. It is stated on good authority that he leaves Santiago de Cuba this morning for Havana, and a most enthusiastic demonstration awaits his arrival. While it is confidently asserted that he is to be retained in the position he is about to assume, there are those who claim that De Rodas, having been ordered to Spain, he takes command by virtue of his rank, and that he will soon be relieved by a captain general sent out from Madrid.

With De Rodas go the Intendente (the head of the Treasury), Don Emilio Sagros and a host of office-holders, many of them relations of his Excellency, who, like General Grant, seemed to think it well to look out for his own family.

Brigadier Pedro Caro, who has been for some time past in command of the Central Department, and who was recently relieved by the Captain General, at his own request, has returned to Puerto Principe to reassume his command, in accordance with orders from the general government.

The idea that "Señor Zenea and two other Cubans have sailed for Nassau, commissioned by the Spanish Minister and Señor Azcarate to treat with Céspedes for peace between Spain and the Cuban vessels," as stated in a New York journal, is indignantly scouted here and declared to be impossible, which would seem to be likely enough. The *Diario de la Marina* publishes a long editorial on the subject.

The civil and military bodies of Colon have forwarded to the Captain General their felicitations on the election of the Duke of Aosta as King, congratulating his Excellency and the representatives of the nation on the consolidation of the monarchy on the basis of order and suffrage.

A letter from Nassau, dated the 21st of November, states that two boats have just arrived there containing fourteen persons, who escaped from the island. Their names are not given. Another letter from that place, dated the 16th, and written by a Cuban who recently left the island, says:—"I left (referring to an insurgent chief correspondent), all right, faring as well as ever and not in the least discouraged. Some new additions are every day made, all portending a final and complete triumph. Prospects are bright, and above all things there is a firm determination to get our dues, and consequently public spirit rises as time wears on."

German Barrioz, chief of staff of Cavada, recently captured in the jurisdiction of Cienfuegos, was shot in the city of that name on Saturday last. He was well known in that place and his execution has caused much excitement there. He at one time corresponded for the HERALD.

It is rumored that Don Orustobal Mendoza, recently captured in the Camaguey, is to be sent here to be garroted. A letter from Gibara mentions the killing of the insurgent chief Quintillo Villareal, one of the first who took up arms in that jurisdiction. His father, Antonio Villareal, was killed some time since.

The chief stoleff, known as "the Pole," is still actively operating against the Spaniards in the Cinco Villas.

Four Chinamen have been executed on the plantation Union for the murder of the overseer.

From various districts in the jurisdiction of Matanzas we hear that the crop, which is about to commence, will be more than an average one notwithstanding the hurricane. Several plantations in the district of Holondson have already commenced grinding. The cane damaged by the hurricane recovered its strength, thanks to the favorable rains which followed. The great losses suffered on many of the plantations, in the death of negroes by epidemics, has been mostly remedied by the activity of the owners in contracting Chinese labor.