

CUBA LIBRE.

The Impeachment Proceedings Against President Cespedes.

THE MAMBI CONGRESS IN THE MANIGUA.

The Speeches Which Preceded His Deposition— A Severe Lesson to Republican Executives—American Legislators, Please Take Notice.

The historic document, a synopsis of which is given below, although reaching the public so long after the happening of the memorable event in which it originated, loses none of its interest or value as a faithful picture and exact record of the political situation in free Cuba. It shows the patriots in a new and very favorable light. It demonstrates a respect for the law, and proves a determination on the part of the Cubans to preserve their constitution intact—that is worthy of imitation. It does credit alike to the great patriot President who bowed to the mandate of the Legislature, and to the Representatives themselves, for inflexible firmness in what they conceived to be the execution of an unpleasant but imperative duty.

The Chamber of Representatives of the Cuban Republic met in Bijncal, Jiguani, on the 27th of last October. There were present Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, Tomas Estrada, Jesus Rodriguez, Juan B. Spotorno, Luis Victoriano Betancourt, Ramon, Perez Trujillo, Marcus Garcia, Fernando Fornaris and Eduardo Machado. Salvador Cisneros Betancourt was called to the chair.

Perez Trujillo took the floor, and, in the course of his observations, said that the Cuban people, upon entering the struggle for their independence, had two objects in view—that of being masters of their own destiny and of

ENJOYING THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY.
In order to realize these objects the people had decided to perish rather than remain in slavery, and therefore adopted and swore allegiance to the Cuban constitution, where their rights are set forth and the guarantees of their liberties designated. They did not wish to bend the neck to a new form of odious oppression, after shaking off the hateful yoke of Spain. Amid the din of arms a republican form had been given to the government, and the people's representatives were now assembled to watch over their liberties. The people's constancy and virtues throughout this struggle proved them to be amply worthy of that independence to which they aspire. It is in the solemn moments in which they were met that the following proposition was submitted to the patriotism and judgment of the Legislature—namely, that the Chamber of Representatives, in virtue of the powers conceded to it by the ninth article of the constitution,

DEPOSE THE CITIZEN CARLOS MANUEL DE CESPEDES FROM THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC.

In support of this resolution the Speaker went on to say that the mistakes in the policy of Cespedes had been so numerous and notorious as to make comment upon them unnecessary, and hence the Republic felt obliged to do without the man of the 10th of October, 1868, well assured that this is the only means of preserving the country's liberties. Pursuing a personal policy abroad, not only had he been the cause of disunion among the patriots who from afar were aiding the army, but he had openly protected General Manuel Quesada, when the anathemas of the nation, as expressed by the unanimous resolution of the Representatives, passed in December, 1869, still hang over his head. Cespedes had also incurred a vote of censure when it was known that he had conferred extraordinary powers upon Quesada, which vote was, for patriotic motives, afterwards withdrawn by its movers. And notwithstanding this, when the death of the illustrious General Ygnacio Agramonte and the departure abroad of two Deputies made Cespedes think that he had secured his place for ever, he arrogated to himself powers and faculties which constituted him Dictator and named the same General Quesada agent abroad, the instrument of his irrational project.

The citizen Estrada was allowed the floor in support of the resolution moved by Perez Trujillo and said that he deplored the dire necessity which made it incumbent upon him to ask for the separation of Carlos Manuel de Cespedes from the head of the government, because he had hoped that the man of the 10th of October, 1868, would continue in the post where he had been placed on the 11th of April, 1869; but there were too powerful reasons for the present action to admit of their being disregarded. Fortunately, the democratic form of government, which had been adopted in Cuba on the 10th of April, 1869, did not allow any attempt to be made for the purpose of overthrowing it, and least of all

BY THE FIRST MAGISTRATE OF THE REPUBLIC;
he who had sworn to observe faithfully and compel the observance of the constitution and laws of the country. But the acts of Cespedes were so notorious, public and well known to all that it would be a crime if the representatives did not take notice of them and put an end to such abuses by isolating Carlos Manuel de Cespedes from power in the future. The speaker would not enter into the favoritism observed by Cespedes, which he had so often practised in conferring military rank to his friends and relatives, without any merit on their part, and placing them in the most elevated public positions against the voice of popular opinion and contrary to the interest and good of the country. He would confine his observations to those infractions of the constitution, which were of greatest moment to all, and these unconstitutional acts tended to the establishment of a single power in the State. In the month of May last his brother, Francisco Javier de Cespedes, Chief of the Bayamo district, made a complaint against the members of a court martial, because its sentence affected the complainant, the President, regardless of the law which makes the judicial power independent, constituted himself—without any authority—into a court of revision, annulled the sentence of a court of original jurisdiction, and dictated a new judgment that punished all those who had taken part in the former proceedings, not forgetting the members of the court and the Judge Advocate, who conducted the trial. With the object of supporting the new system that had been inaugurated, and thinking, perhaps,

THAT THE REPRESENTATIVES WOULD NOT AGAIN ASSEMBLE.

the President introduced a new law of military organization which was published in the last days of May. He afterwards issued a circular to the commanders of army corps, delegating to them a portion of the extraordinary powers vested in him by Congress, and in virtue of which the military law above referred to had been published. This new power conferred upon military commanders enabled them to bring before them the proceedings of all courts martial and to suspend, alter or annul all their proceedings. These facts, in the opinion of Estrada, were sufficient to show the animus of Cespedes to overleap the bounds of all democratic forms of the Republic and to DIRECT THE REVOLUTION BY MEANS OF A DICTATORSHIP.

The speaker said that there were two sacred motives which impelled the heroic Cuban people to take arms against Spanish rule; one was to emancipate themselves from the metropolis, and the other, to plant their liberties on the solid basis of popular democracy. And it is just as criminal in any one to propose terms with Spain under terms that did not embrace the independence of Cuba, as to make any attempt whatever against the rights of the people.

The next speaker was the citizen Machado, who supported the deputies in their motion against President Cespedes. The first magistrate had committed grave offences against the country, in systematically attacking the rights of the people. The speaker remembered how on numerous occasions, the Chamber had noted with indignation the conduct observed by the Executive in matters connected with the election of national representatives. He also recollected the duty incumbent upon them to propagate harmony and good feeling between the two powers of the State, and endorsed the flattering hopes that had been entertained of seeing the faults of the day corrected to-morrow. A desire of harmony

was the only reason that could induce the Chamber to tolerate the proceedings of the Executive. The hour had come when the administration of Citizen Cespedes could not be endured. It was demonstrated that since January, 1871,

THE PRESIDENT HAD SEVERAL TIMES INFRINGED THE CONSTITUTION

and fundamental laws of the land. The facts were that wherever President Cespedes had been there the articles 8, 9 and 16 of the Electoral law were transgressed and also the sixth and twentieth articles of the constitution. It was, therefore, apparent that the tendency of the President's course was to accomplish

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES.

so that the heroic people of Cuba, who have sacrificed so much, might at the end of five years find themselves deprived of the defenders of their legislative rights and of their liberties as well, and that they might easily pass under

THE YOKER OF THE ASSASSIN OF LIBERTY.

Citizen Fornaris manifested sentiment in presence of the necessity which exists of deposing the First Magistrate of the Republic. He mentioned the unjust suspension from command that had been suffered by Major General Modeste Diaz from the month of March last; the trial of Colonel Francisco Guevara by the Secretary of the Interior, Citizen Miguel Bravo y Santillan, and the transferring of this case to the jurisdiction of Brigadier Francisco Javier Cespedes, in whose division Colonel Guevara commanded a regiment, which trial was ordered for the purpose of finding out if, in times long gone by, Guevara had used, in conversation, some phrases that were offensive to the present administration, and that, notwithstanding the wholly insufficient proof which was brought against this distinguished officer, Colonel Guevara had been sentenced to a month's suspension from command. In consequence of these and other arbitrary acts on the part of the Executive the speaker thought that President Cespedes should be made responsible to the Chamber, and therefore he supported the motion of Messrs. Trujillo and Estrada.

Citizen Spotorno claimed the privilege of the floor, and in a few expressive, frank phrases, acknowledged the urgent necessity there is for voting in favor of the proposition. President Cespedes should not be allowed to use the privileges which the constitution concedes only to the legislative body. In contravention of the law he had, of his own authority alone, nominated and made secretaries to fill the different branches of the Cabinet.

Brigadier Marcus Garcia held the President responsible for the unhealed wounds inflicted upon the Army of the Villas, whose interminable misfortunes

MERITED THE SYMPATHIES OF ALL GOOD MEN.

When a large portion of the patriots of Villaseñor, who had passed through many dangers and privations, reached Camaguey, soliciting arms and means to continue the war, they were received by the Executive with a criminal indifference. When many of the Cubans presented themselves to the enemy in Camaguey those groups of unarmed men were incessant victims of Spanish ferocity, and many of their skeletons bleached along the road from Magraba to the trocha of Camaguey, appealing, like a standing protest, against the heedlessness of the government of Cespedes. The forces of the villas, to the number of 1,600 men, under the command of General Salomé Hernandez, still hoping to receive aid from the Executive, took up the line of march and burned their last cartridges, after which they determined to remain at Camaguey rather than again bow the neck to Spanish despotism. Although this was at the time when the Venezuelan expedition reached the coast of Cuba, they were again doomed to disappointment, many of them

PERISHING OF MISERY AND SICKNESS.

This is the dismal picture which the column of the Villas presents, whose enthusiasm, if properly seconded, might have led even to the gates of Havana. But the administration of Cespedes is alone answerable for many calamities, suffering and useless martyrdom. The citizen Garcia also charged that the President had violated the constitution by establishing special military honors in his published additional articles to the army regulations, and in having attempted to impede the reassembling of the Chamber. He concluded by energetic denial of the calumnious report spread by the President which attributed to the Chamber any ideas of treason or irascible combinations with exiled Cuaoans, also the suggestion contained in the President's last message, in which it was intimated that the quarrels of the Executive and Legislative powers would lead to rebellion and brigandage in the country.

The citizen Rodriguez proceeded to express his opinions. After animadverting severely upon the policy of the Cespedes administration, he said that the principal reason of his present action was based on the fact that President Cespedes had arrogated to himself the extraordinary war powers and had issued the circular of the 10th of July last, by which he modified the organization of the judiciary and had

SWEEP AWAY ALL JUDICIAL CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES.

In addition to these abuses of authority, the President had in many ways violated the constitution adopted by patriotic suffrage.

The citizen Luis Victoriano Betancourt was the last who spoke to the motion. He asked how long would the Chamber bear with the President's abuses, and until what time must his name be made the symbol of disorder, injustice and tyranny? To-day, when the enemy showed his back to the patriot soldiers, to-day, when the earth was covered with Spanish blood and the sky illuminated with the glory of Cuba, it is not outside enemies, but inside foes, that we are to fear. The Chamber, which represents the people, must be

FIRM AS THE ROCKS AND COOLD AS ICE.

It should proceed freely to depose Carlos Manuel de Cespedes from the high office of President by the same right which it exercised in the case of the citizen Manuel Quesada, general-in-chief of the liberating army, and by the same means which it will use in deposing all who do not obey the law. IN REVOLUTIONS THERE ARE NO INDISPENSABLE

MEN.

and the Presidency of the Republic is not a place that can be conferred like a seat in the theatre, nor can it be inherited, like the thrones of kings. Does the President think that the destinies of the people can be trifled with, or that he is to remain in power to the end of time? Arabia has a prophetic book called the Koran; Rome has a sacred one, that which is the Bible, and Cuba possesses a volume is named the Constitution. In this Republic he who transgresses the constitution is unworthy to direct democracy or to guide the country's destinies. In the free town of Guaimaro the free people of Cuba invested Carlos Manuel de Cespedes with the Presidential toga, and he ascended to this elevated post not by his individual will, but through his merits and the suffrages of the people. During more than four tempestuous years of revolution, he was pilot of the new republic, and in this memorable time he ran against many rocks and snags in his course, because of not following the luminous tracks of Abraham Lincoln, the father of negro emancipation, and of George Washington, the father of American liberty. I well know his valor as a soldier and his sufferings as a patriot, but I also know that the President impeded the co-existence of the three republican powers of government.

HE PLACED OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF CONGRESS RE-ASSEMBLING.

he invaded the inviolable precincts of judicial power and pretended to make himself superior to what knows no superior in the world, that is, popular will. He touched with a daring hand the book of the law, in place of laying down all his pride and ambition on the altar of his country, and of remaining on bended knee before the consecrated host which is called the constitution.

The vote was now taken and the motion carried. The citizens Estrada and Fornaris then introduced a motion by which the President of the Chamber, Salvador Cisneros, was called, in conformity with the provisions of a decree passed on the 13th of April, 1872, to the chair of the executive power in place of the deposed President and until the absent Vice-President of the Republic could return to the country and assume the reins of government. The President substitute then took his oath of office, promising to labor for the happiness of the people, asking that the wrath of Cuba and

MIGHT FALL UPON HIM IN THE EVENT OF HIS NOT COMPLYING WITH THE DUTIES IMPOSED BY THIS GREAT TRUST.

Signed, EDUARDO MACHADO, Secretary.