

## A SEARCH FOR CUBAN LEADERS.

Reconnaissance Over the Sierra Cubitas—Paucity of Results—Military Skill of Insurgents—Cubans Accused of Poisoning Springs—Disappearance of Valmaseda—Report from the Eastern Department—Another Gross Outrage on an American Citizen.

HAVANA, June 15, 1870.

The Sierra Cubitas lies to the west of the line of railroad between Puerto Principe and Nuevitas, extending to the Jigüey river, which empties into the sea opposite Cayo Romano. It is remarkable for its gloomy recesses, its difficult passes and extensive caves. Lying, with reference to the coast, opposite the point of embarkation usually selected by the insurgents when leaving the island, it has been used habitually as a place of concealment while waiting an opportunity to do so. As the Spanish authorities, either affectedly or really, suppose that many of the prominent insurrectionary leaders are endeavoring to escape, it was thought that a careful and minute reconnaissance through the Sierra mentioned would be likely to result in a rich prize of prisoners. With this end in view several columns which had been operating over the Camaguey were combined and commenced their march from Guanaja, on the coast, to which point they were probably taken in launches. On reaching the mountains the column was broken into several detachments, and a very minute examination was made throughout the section.

A report of the result is furnished us in an extraordinary issue of the *Gazette*. It starts off by announcing a loss to the enemy of 164 killed, seventy-nine prisoners, 1,114 presentados, one banner, two archives, more than 500 horses, much ammunition, two rafts, five boats and some arms. The Spaniards had seventeen wounded, two of whom had died from the effects. There was but one formal encounter, and that with a party commanded by Antonio Rodriguez, called Madriales, formerly of the Spanish army. This party had constructed over the river Maximo a bridge, defended by many of the resources of military art. It comprised a point of passage to the river where it was not fordable. It was commanded by a fort from which a cross-fire could be opened upon it, and was only approachable on three sides, by narrow serpentine paths, through marshy ground. Within this had been constructed all the barracks necessary for the garrison, which, in its composition and the temper of its chiefs, presented a cohesion, a boldness and strategy without example among the insurgents. As says the report, from this abode, which they considered impregnable, they made excursions in which were committed horrible cruelties on the unfortunates who fell into their hands, and, more than once, when threatened by the troops, they retired without dispersion, contrary to the practice of the insurgents.

As soon as the existence of this place became known the command of Colonel Bergel, which arrived first near the point, was ordered to attack and destroy it. The insurgents, however, did not defend the position, but by a secret path passed to the Sierra, where they were met by the marines of the Isabel la Católica, who attacked them, killing the chief, Madriales, and another, thought to be Francisco Agnero, from letters found on his person. Aside from this party only small groups of from ten to twenty men were seen.

A list of chiefs killed on this and other occasions is given as follows:—Gregorio Loret de Mola, Manuel Rivero Arteaga, Joaquin Guzman, Francisco Castellanos, Enrique Loret de Mola, Antonio Rodriguez, Romualdo Sanchez, Oscar Cespedes, Luis Rivero, Manuel Carmona, Rafael Zaldivar, Fernando Pujol, N. Laborda, Pedro Rusco, Juan Diaz Uma, Santiago Guzman.

The death of Dr. For la, the insurgent Minister of War, from a fever, is reported. Cespedes is said to have abandoned the Central Department.

It is stated that the insurgents are now poisoning those springs of water which the Spanish soldiers are likely to drink, and that on one occasion the Catalan volunteers surprised two men in the very act. An alleged order of Ignacio Agramonte is published, in which the destruction of the canefields is directed and the poisoning of the spring at Sabana Nueva. This charge is a very old one, and has been made by one side or the other during almost every civil war of which history speaks. It is easy to make and difficult to refute. As usual, no one has been poisoned, and it is extremely doubtful if there is any truth in it whatever.

No further military operations are reported from the Central Department.

The *Fanzal* of Puerto Principe to the 11th contains the following items of interest:—

On the 3d were shot in that city Don Luis Medal, Don Isidro Garcia and Don Tomas Almeida, of the Upton expedition. The three prisoners recently captured on Cayo Romano, and who it was thought had given false names, had arrived. They had been on the Key for three months, subsisting on shellfish and wild fruits. They are believed to be youths of good families, led away by the Cuban Junta in New York. The health of the Captain General continues good. That of the Commanding General, Don Pedro Caro, who had been suffering from a fever, is quite restored.

The rains had not set in, but, it is claimed, military operations will not be suspended. From Holguin, the 10th, it is announced that tranquillity reigns throughout the jurisdiction. Ferrer, who is in command there, reports one or two small encounters of no interest or importance. What has become of Valmaseda is a question which is now agitating the public mind. He could not say and he said of less were he consigned to the tomb of the Capulets or of any other family. A number of weeks has passed without any report from him or mention of his name in the journals. A long report of affairs in the Eastern Department, where ostensibly he commands, appears in the *Oficial Gazette*, but no reference is made to him. This report is not satisfactory to those desirous of preserving the national integrity, but is rather calculated to afford gratification to the ungodly rebels who have no pride in the famed expression "*Somos Españoles*." The rainy season has set in, and the condition of the roads is fearful. Nevertheless, the persecution of the insurgents has not ceased, though "they manage to elude the vigilance of our troops and to shun all serious encounter." As none are met with in Manzanillo it is claimed the parties there are diminishing. In Bayamo various columns continue in pursuit of Modesto Diaz, but the precautions which this chief takes, the system which he has of placing advance guards at a considerable distance from his position, his not remaining in one place more than a day or two, combined with his great knowledge of the country, render his capture difficult. A number of small fights are reported.

Dates from Santiago de Cuba to the 8th inst. announce the arrival of General D. José Merito Calvo, the new governor, who had assumed the duties of his position. No military operations reported.

An official report from Santo Clara, the 1st, says that after Manuel Caridad Sunday had presented himself and, with some of his band offered his services to the government the other parties who were wandering through Camarones and Cumana-yagua united with those of Cartagenes and Yaguaramus, in which parties were concentrated the bulk of the insurrection in Cienfuegos. A considerable force was sent out against them, which they managed to elude, and finally the troops were divided into small columns and an active pursuit kept up. In the encounters which have followed a number of both sides have been killed, but nothing determinate has been accomplished.

From Santi Espiritu and Moron come reports of thirteen encounters. Among some documents captured were found some very stringent orders against presentation to the Spanish authorities or against any communication with the Spaniards. A despatch from St. Domingo, in the jurisdiction of Sagua, mentions the capture of the chief José de la Merced Leon, known as "El Tuerto" (the one-eyed). He is accused of horrible crimes in that district. The captain of the Chapelgorris of Macagua telegraphs of an encounter with forty insurgents, in which five were killed and a number wounded. Dates from Gibara to the 10th mention an attack by the insurgents on a convoy moving to Las Tunas, in which they were driven off. In Trinidad, on the 8th, was shot the youth D. José Verguera, for disloyalty.

The recent discussion of the Phillips case in Congress has not been sufficient to prevent a continuance of outrages upon American citizens. The latest case is the arrest of a young man from New York named Joseph Duany, and his imprisonment on suspicion of being the son of our Count Duany, who, it seems, had committed some offence against the Spanish government many years ago. Duany is about twenty-two years of age, was born in Cuba, but went to the United States when he was three years old, where he has ever since resided. There is no shadow of charge against him save of being the son of a man he is not. Since his incarceration he has been in a room containing nothing but a broken chair, not even being provided those necessaries which, in all civilized countries, are accorded to the worst criminals. The energetic remonstrances of Consul Biddle against his imprisonment and treatment have only been vouchsafed the response that he could have a bed and other necessaries if he would pay for them. The young man is in an extremely nervous condition, and the matter at the best is likely to result seriously to him. The matter has been represented to Washington, but it is perhaps hopeless to expect any energetic action from that quarter.