

CUBA.

The Diaz-Quintero Excitement Abating—War News—Slavery Question—Its Solution—Planters Putting Their Houses in Order—Canary Islanders Ready to Take the Place of "ye Darkies."

HAVANA, August 23, 1870.

The Diaz-Quintero excitement is passing. Fourth of July ebullitions of loyalty toward Spain on the part of the volunteers have given way to conjectures upon the Franco-Prussian situation. What to do with the nigger is perhaps more discussed among thinking men in Cuba to-day than is the insurrection. Persons whose opinions are of value, in fact the majority, know the "handwriting is on the wall." Slavery must go. There is evidently something on foot among the Madrid leaders regarding this question in Cuba and Puerto Rico, for the proper officials are at present at work engaged in taking a census of all slaves in Cuba of age. All provident planters expect abolition; that the day cannot be far distant, and are busy setting their houses in order accordingly.

These arrangements consist in part in managing their present estates as centres, inducing whites, mostly Canary Islanders, already settled in the country, to grow sugar cane on shares, or the planters will buy the cane of them delivered at the sugar mill at fixed rates. The class of men who go into this can be relied on to carry out their part of the agreement, as they are essentially an agricultural people, inured to the climate, and, what is pertinent to the case, industrious. Moreover the Canary Islands afford a surplus of population disposed to emigrate. They are looked upon as among the most loyal subjects of the Spanish monarchy, and it is a certainty they can grow nothing that will give them such large profits as raising sugarcane, so long as they can have a cash market therefor within sight of their doors. They are the people of all others most likely to prove available as tillers of the soil in Cuba.

The various reconnoissances and scrimmages had since August 1 in the insurrectionary districts, as far as heard from, result, according to official reports, in a loss to the insurgents of 124 killed in surrounding country—Manzanillo, Bayamo, Jiguaní and Hoguán—and about Sancti Espirito and Moron thirty-eight killed, which small number, at the last-named places, proves Bembeta had not been as active there with the reinforcements received from the Camaguey region as was expected. Total insurgents killed since August 1, 222, excepting those who fell in the action the report of which reached here some days ago, where Colonel Campillo's force was said to have caused a loss to the insurgents of over 200 killed, no details of which have been received in this city. The plan set on foot by many Spaniards here to reimburse losses to loyal men by reason of the insurrection—selling embargoed estates—is more than likely to fall through, as the proceeds of these estates will, no doubt, be used as intended at first—towards paying the loans made to the government by the Spanish Bank of Havana and for general war expenses.

Captain General Rodas has ordered the property of Mrs. Anna Duggan to be restored to her. Mrs. Duggan is a native of the United States. Her husband is a Cuban, and was one of those sent to Fernando Po in March, 1869, from whence he escaped. His property, as well as that of his wife, was at that time embargoed, but all is restored to them now in a very handsome manner by General Rodas through the friendly unofficial intervention of Mr. Consul General Hall.

FACTS FROM CEBI.

What Has Been Done and is Being Done to Free Cuba by Force of Arms—The Cubans and Their Resources.

Colonel L. C. Batley, who has just returned from Cuba with General Ryan, makes the following statement in regard to what he and others experienced during their stay on the island:—

When General Jordan left the island the military command devolved upon Frederico Cavada, the present general-in-chief, or rather major general, chief of the General's staff. Jordan was always opposed to the burning of houses, cane fields, &c.; Cavada, on the contrary, has laid waste all the property in the vicinity of the Cuban encampments. Had it not been for this system the enemy would have continually formed encampments in their vicinity and their communications would have been entirely cut off. One instance will give an idea of the kind of plantations that are burned. It was owned by Molina. The house was one of the handsomest in Cuba, being built of stone, tile roof and portico in front; one story in height—houses of two or three stories being only found in the cities. A palm leaf house in the rear of the house was the kitchen; for the cooking is done outside the principal building. A fire is kindled upon the ground, a kettle suspended from sticks, and when the preparation is thus completed the repast is transported to the planter's house. About fifteen or twenty men are usually detailed for this burning purpose; the fences are torn down for fuel and every combustible object that can be collected is appropriated to the work of destruction. The houses, though very picturesque from their surroundings, have, nevertheless, a prison-like appearance, as there are no sashes to the windows, but only iron bars for security. Glass would impede the circulation of air, and as both summer and winter are alike hot everything is done to promote ventilation.

HOW AMERICANS ARE TREATED.

A Spanish sergeant who was captured at Las Tunas informed the Cubans that the feeling of the Spaniards towards the Americans is that of deadly hatred, and they openly avow that they would rather kill one American than fifteen Cubans. This may be esteemed as complimentary to the Americans, as probably their estimate is founded upon the fact of their being better soldiers and therefore more formidable enemies. The Americans, when captured, are treated in the most barbarous manner; the Spaniards gouge out their eyes, cut off their ears and limbs and actually hack them to pieces. The Cubans, when taken, are generally shot or cut to pieces. Women and children often suffer the same butchery.

THE CUBAN TROOPS.

There are in Cuba no well organized or disciplined troops, all the Cubans being novices in all military matters and unused to warfare. It was not until the arrival of Colonel Ryan that a perfectly disciplined and thoroughly organized corps was successfully formed and equipped with the best arms. This regiment, which is styled the First Regiment of Cuban Cavalry, is composed of the best fighting material, both white and black, and is led by the most valiant and intelligent officers—all of the General's selection. It is the only regiment of regulars on the island, and is, therefore, more envied by the Cubans and more feared by the Spaniards than any other. An incident of its valor will show this to be true. General Ryan was informed by one of his spies (of whom he has many, not only in the cities, but also among the Spanish ranks) that about 400 Spaniards, composed of cavalry and infantry, were outside the city, in quest of fuel, fruit and vegetables. The General immediately ordered "boots and saddles," and with forty of his escort swooped unexpectedly down upon the unwary enemy with drawn sabres and machetes. The rout was complete, more than a hundred mangled bodies were left on the field of action, while, after a struggle of over two hours, General Ryan retreated in good order, with only one officer wounded. He captured a quantity of arms, horses and equipments. A boy of fourteen years of age was taken prisoner. The General spared his life and sent him back to the city with the scalp (:) of a Spanish major.

THE SOCIAL STATUS OF THE LOWER CLASSES.

No one who has not lived in Cuba can form an idea of the ignorance and indolence of the lower classes of the inhabitants and the negroes. Their habits of life, their want of ambition, all combine to render them unfit for exertion or military duty.

The following is a list of General Ryan's staff:—Lieutenant Colonel L. C. Batley, Chief Engineer and Military Instructor; Major D. Castillo, Adjutant General; Major P. Mendíez, Aide-de-Camp; Captain H. M. Earl, Aid and Chief of Scouts; Captain A. Miranda, Aid; Captain W. S. Ashby, Inspector General and Chief of Ordnance; Captain H. H. Harrison, C. S.; Major I. M. Paraga, Medical Surgeon; Major T. L. Mercer, Chief of Artillery; Captain S. Rio, Assistant Quartermaster; Lieutenant M. A. Ramoa, Assistant Surgeon.