

CUBAN AFFAIRS.

Valmaseda's Tour—The Situation—Junta in Havana—War News—Want of Funds and the War Subsidy—Miscellaneous Gossip.

From Our Own Correspondent.

HAVANA, Saturday, April 1, 1871.

The long talked-of departure of GEN. VALMASEDA to some portions of the Cinco Villas and to the Central Department has as last taken place, the General having left Havana yesterday morning. That this trip is one of necessity, as well as convenience, cannot be doubted. Under the master's eye the horses get fat, is an old Spanish proverb, and VALMASEDA wishes to see for himself what is going on. He knows too much himself about the manner in which big accounts are written of engagements that do not "amount" to anything, and he is also intelligent enough to take such dispositions as will aid the Summer campaign. This last is a treasonable word, because the insurrection, according to official statements, has long been defunct; only small isolated bands remain, which grow in their isolation and become parties of importance. The war will positively last during the Summer. The surrenders of Cuban leaders exercises a certain depressing influence on the insurgent cause, but new men spring up to take the place of the runaways. The change of commanders, however, is not in the slightest degree beneficial to the Cubans, and if BAMBETA also surrenders, which is probable, only a few of the original leaders will remain, these having talent as guerrillas, and influence among the Cubans. The Summer campaign may prove more disastrous to the Cubans than to the Spaniards, unless the former manage to receive sufficient supplies of ammunition, clothing and medicines, articles which they are very much in want of. There is no lack of men, as but few are needed to keep up the war. VALMASEDA'S principal object is to grant such concessions to insurgent leaders as will induce them to surrender. The lesser Spanish chiefs have not the power to grant what VALMASEDA can, and consequently his trip may prove of aid to the Spanish cause, although the Cubans are very sanguine that he will fail in his purpose. There is a very peculiar coincidence in the movements of Captain-Generals and Admirals when they leave Havana. RODAS left when CARO arrived; VALMASEDA left for the first time when Gen. PALACOA arrived; Admiral MALCAMPO left when the oath of fealty to the King was to be taken, and VALMASEDA left the morning of the new King's birthday, when he ought to have held court and had hand-kissing. If all these things are merely accidental, they fit very well into each other, and leave plenty of room for discussion.

JUNTA IN HAVANA.

A proclamation signed by GUINCHO YUCAYO and HATNEY DE YARA, old Indian names, but supposed to emanate from the New-York Junta, although headed by the Permanent Commission of the Cuban Republic in Havana, and dated March 15, has been freely distributed over the city. The proclamation bears a seal, with the inscription, "Eastern Department of the Cuban Republic." There is no doubt that a regularly organized Junta, or Commission, has existed and does exist in Havana, and the members undoubtedly work hard. Evidences of the being of such a body are occasionally apparent, but the members exercise so much care and secrecy, that all efforts made by the Police, spies and the entire Spanish population to discover them, have been fruitless. The proclamation referred to congratulates the Cubans on the success of the Winter campaign, and expresses great reliance on what they are pleased to call their great ally, the yellow fever, to aid them during next Summer. The proclamation acknowledges that the Cuban Republic has afforded material aid to the Venezuelan Government, (the Quesada expedition,) and that the latter, in turn, is preparing to assist at the banquet of independence. The proclamation ends with the phrase, "Forward, ye sons of America; the future is ours." This sentence has vastly roused the ire of the *Diario*.

WAR NEWS.

Several engagements have taken place in the Eastern Department where the Spanish troops have been put to their mettle in order to make headway against and repel the attacks of the Cuban General, MODESTO DIAZ, who has become so bold of late as to attack superior forces of the Spaniards, whenever he cannot easily retreat. Several times lately his efforts have been crowned with success. DIAZ sent a portion of his forces toward Santiago de Cuba, with orders to attack a convoy; the Spaniards learned of it in time, and sent the pack mules lightly, and in addition sent the contra-guerrillas to follow within easy distances. The Cubans were completely caught; they attacked the train guarded by 230 men of the Reus Battalion, when the contra-guerrillas of RUIZ fell on their rear and thus took them between two fires. Some surrendered insurgents reported that the Cuban loss was seventy-one killed, but this statement must be erroneous, as the Cubans only numbered 220 in all, and the fight lasted but an hour. In Cuban warfare it takes two days at least to kill that number of any one party, and these *presentados* are more given to lying than telling the truth. At Barrajagua Holguinera nine Cubans were killed by the forces of Cols. CAMPILLO and CALLJAS; five more were killed at Arroyo Blanco, and several men were killed when the Cubans returned and attacked the settlement. The Cubans attacked with great impetus, but the troops and volunteers were too numerous... The Cuban General, ACOSTA, who was riding toward Bavamo with three companions, was betrayed by a countryman of his who had surrendered, and all four were captured and shot. The Cuban *presentados* are undoubtedly the meanest and most contemptible human beings that exist. A "Digger Indian" is a jewel compared to them. Too cowardly to fight, they ought at least to have sufficient principle not to betray their friends and countrymen in arms, but they do it, and that's the end of it.

WANT OF FUNDS.

The Island Treasury is in want of money, and the screws are being put on to squeeze the people. The war subsidy has been increased, according to a decree published in the official *Gaceta*. The war subsidy will in future be collected as follows:

ARTICLE 1. On and after the 1st of April next the impost created as a war subsidy on exports shall be collected at all the custom-houses in the island, in conformity with the subjoined tariff, No. 1.

ART. 2. On and after same date a special tax is established on all animals slaughtered for consumption, as per tariff No. 2, annexed.

ART. 3. The war subsidy on articles of importation shall be collected on and after the 1st of July next, in accordance with the appended tariff, No. 3.

ART. 4. On and after the same day, 1st of July, 1871, a tax of five per cent. per annum is established on the net product of all city property throughout the island, after deduction of one-fourth part for repairs, &c., and on the same day the tax of twenty-five per cent., which was collected by municipalities, will cease to be exacted.

ART. 5. All the taxes mentioned in this resolution are to be of a transitory character, lasting only the time that may be necessary for the withdrawal from circulation of the notes issued or that may hereafter be issued by the Spanish Bank as advances to the Treasury.

ART. 6. The proceeds of these special taxes are entirely and exclusively to be destined to said amortization, and the Intendancy General of Finances will assume the duty of placing them monthly or in any shorter periods at the disposal of the Spanish Bank.

ART. 7. The Intendancy General of Finances is hereby authorized to adopt the requisite measures for the execution of the present decree.

ART. 8. The present resolution shall be communicated to His Majesty's Government, together with the antecedents that have occasioned it, for superior approval.

(Signed.) EL CONDE DE VALMASEDA.

HAVANA, March 25, 1871.

This tax, although called temporary, will endure, and paragraph five leaves the door open for any amount of notes to be issued by the Spanish Bank, and proves that the Government will not redeem any—in fact, will not be able to redeem them, for many years to come. The Island Treasury is now indebted to the Spanish Bank to the tune of thirty-nine millions of dollars. To secure this amount to the note holders and to redeem the stock and scrip of the stockholders the bank has about two millions of dollars in its vaults; and notwithstanding this the note holders have full confidence in the notes of

the bank, and they are only at a discount of three to four per cent.

MISCELLANEOUS GOSSIP.

Friday being the Saints-day of the new King of Spain, the national flags are hoisted on the public buildings, and the forts and men-of-war fired salutes at morn, noon and night. The enthusiasm displayed by the population could be placed in a canary bird's eye and not hurt him.

The heavy southerly wind which has been blowing for some days, and on Friday amounted almost to a hurricane, has been very destructive to sugar plantations, several of whom caught fire, and all the remaining cane was burnt. These calamities are very distressing, added to the decreased yield this year, and fall principally on the poorer classes, who lose their employment by the destruction of the plantations.

QUASIMODO.