

Additional Details of the Hornet's Visit to Nassau.

Heavy Defalcations in Havana—A Cashier Absconds with \$70,000—He is Mourned by His Employer and a Beautiful Belle—A New Mode of Evincing Hostility to Spain.

HAVANA, Dec. 22, 1870.

Through private letters received here some additional details are furnished of the arrival of the Hornet at Nassau. One of these, of date the 17th, states that her expressed desire for coal was a mere pretext, as she had on board 120 tons. Of passengers and crew she had sixty-seven men, thirty of whom were Cubans, some of them well known. The celebrated Camacho, the man who led the party which captured the Comanditario some year ago, was in command. The Spanish corvette Bazan was in port on the arrival of the Hornet, but left on the evening of the 15th. On the night of the 15th the Hornet sailed, followed immediately by her Majesty's gunboat Philomel. Neither the latter vessel nor the Bazan could keep up with her for a moment. The Bazan is very slow, of great draught of water, and of little use, therefore, in these waters at this season. The Cubans in Nassau are reported as very much incensed at Governor Walker for the course he pursued in sending the Philomel to watch the Hornet. Another letter, dated the 19th, states that the Hornet took on board at Nassau some armament, doubtless that left by the Salvador. Various rumors were rife as to her destination, some stating that she was going to St. Domingo and others to Vera Cruz for the purpose of taking on board the people recruited by Quesada.

A very unusual event for Havana—to wit, an extensive embezzlement or robbery of funds—has just come to light in the well known shipping and mercantile house of Miguel Antonio Herrera & Co., and who rank among the most extensive business firms of the city. The matter has been for two days past a subject of much comment among commercial men, but there are so many singular features involved in the case that no reasonable theory or motive for the commission of the crime can be adduced; and as the defaulter has absconded and thus far eluded pursuit he has carried the actual theory, as well as the money, with him.

From particulars gleaned by inquiring of the victimized firm, it appears that for a period of about fifteen years they have had in their employ as book-keeper and cashier, successively, a young Cuban named Angel Alvarez, and from his well known habits of temperance, punctuality and general business capacity, great confidence was reposed in him. So even and irreproachable was the general tenor of his habits after business hours that his employers and all his intimate acquaintances invariably knew where he could be found at any hour of the evening or early in the morning, and during the working hours of the day he was always promptly at his post. In the performance of the duties of his position in the house of Herrera & Co. Alvarez was required to negotiate bills of exchange. For this purpose a large amount of money was habitually retained in the safe, subject to his control. A short time since the firm went into liquidation, and at present the affairs of the concern are almost closed up. In a few days, at most, the accounts would all have been balanced, and anything like a deficiency or error would have been detected.

In the early part of the present week one of the partners of the firm, by mere incident, happened to look at the account of the firm on deposit with the bank and discovered that the cash on hand was considerably in excess of the deposits. The partner, without his suspicions being in the slightest degree awakened, remarked casually to Alvarez that there must be a large cash balance on hand, and the cashier quietly responded—

"Yes, I have about \$50,000 in the safe."

The partner suggested that it would perhaps be as well to deposit at least a portion of it to the credit of the firm the next morning. Alvarez assented to the proposition mechanically and nothing more was thought of the circumstance until Thursday morning, when it was observed that the invariably punctual cashier was not at his accustomed post. Inquiry revealed the fact that he had not been seen that day. The safe was soon afterward opened, and it was found that the \$50,000, which Alvarez had stated was in it a day or two before, was *non est*. The bank book showed no recent deposit of that amount to the credit of the firm, and, in fact, none had been made. A few hours established the fact of the embezzlement of the funds and the flight of Alvarez, and the amount, though not definitely ascertained, will probably reach \$70,000.

The defaulting clerk was born in this city and here his parents still reside. Implicit confidence was placed in his integrity—to such an extent, in fact, that upon the reorganization of the firm, after the closing of the business under the present name, he was to have been admitted to a personal interest in the copartnership. He was also betrothed in marriage to a young and beautiful lady of Havana, and his devotion to her was not the least of the evidences of the regularity of his mode of life. It was his custom to call upon and salute his affianced at her residence every morning, at a fixed hour, while on his way to business. This habit, which would doubtless seriously inconvenience a fashionable New York belle, will not appear so singular when it is understood that people generally are very early risers here, much of the labor of the day being accomplished during the early morning. Having closed his business for the day Alvarez always repaired to his betrothed at precisely half-past seven o'clock P. M., remaining in her society until half-past ten o'clock, when he retired directly to his own residence, to repeat next day the same routine of toil and courtship. Alvarez was not addicted to gambling or any form whatever of "fast life," in the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, and his betrothed is not his companion in flight. The books of the firm have not been falsified or in any way tampered with by the delinquent clerk—he simply appropriated the cash and decamped.

At first it was suspected that he had sailed for Key West, as he was a Cuban by birth, and would there have met many of the expatriated youth of this city, who would doubtless readily have exerted themselves to shield him. This opinion borrowed color of probability from the fact that Señor Herrera, senior member of the firm, is colonel of a regiment of Spanish volunteers, and consequently has few admirers among native Cubans. Later impressions, however, lead to the opinion that Alvarez sailed on the English steamer Corsica, thence for Vera Cruz, on Thursday.