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LOPEZ'S EXPEDITIONS TO CUBA.

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Our war with Spain and the problems resulting from it have aroused public interest in Cuba. Numerous books and magazine articles have been written about Cuba, but they chiefly deal with events that are quite recent, and the reader who depends on them for his ideas of Cuba's past history is apt to get little more than a confused impression of ever-recurring insurrections without sufficient detail to give them a sense of reality or explanation enough to make them intelligible.

Yet this history has strong claims upon our attention. If we are to deal wisely with Cuba, we must know the conditions which for years have moulded the Cuban character, for a people and their problems are not to be understood apart from their past. Moreover, the island has long played a prominent part in our own politics, both foreign and domestic, and seems likely to continue to do so. Its history is therefore, in a sense, a part of our own.

The expeditions of Lopez, the Filibuster, in 1850 and 1851, illustrate these statements. No one can study in contemporary accounts the injustice and oppression which furnished the occasion for them without getting a clearer conception of recent events. On the other hand, they were closely connected with prominent names and important issues in our own history, and they led to serious complications which threatened to bring on the Spanish war half a century ago.

Narcisso Lopez* was born in Venezuela, but entered the Spanish army at an early age and soon attained the rank of Major-General. He went to Cuba in 1843 and was well received by Governor General Valdes. After some vicissitudes of fortune he retired to private life. This may have given him a better chance to observe the real condition of the native Cubans. Possibly some personal

*For a sketch of the life of Lopez see J. M. Callahan's *Cuba and International Relations*, page 222. Also, an extremely interesting outline in *The Southern Quarterly Review* for January, 1852, pages 1 et seq. The *Montgomery Advertiser and Gazette* for June 4, 1850, contains an account of his life. See also *New Orleans Delta*, May 13, 1850, for a four column sketch.

pique may have started his dislike of the Spanish authority. At any rate, about this time he seems to have begun his plans to free Cuba from the oppression of the Spanish rule.

While trying to carry out these schemes three distinct filibustering expeditions from the United States were organized in the years 1849, 1850 and 1851, respectively. The only excuse for these lay in the condition of the Cubans. It is, therefore, proper to enquire into this at once before discussing the expeditions themselves. Information about the real situation in the island at that time is derived chiefly from three contemporary sources:* the declarations of the insurgent Cubans themselves, books of contemporary travel, and miscellaneous information contained in the newspapers of the day.

In 1849 Lopez in an interview with John C. Calhoun and four other senators described the condition of the island†. It may be summarized as follows:—

(1) The Cubans were allowed no share in public affairs‡. All positions of trust in church and state were given to Spaniards in preference to native Cubans. There were no Cuban representatives

*The first and second sources are often hard to separate. Much of the miscellaneous news in the papers of the day bears evidence of Cuban origin, while some of what is said to come from the insurgents has a suspiciously American flavor. Among the books of travel should be especially mentioned J. G. Taylor's *The United States and Cuba*, London, 1851.

†J. F. H. Claiborne: *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman*, Vol. II, page 53.

‡The accuracy of these statements of Lopez in regard to the Spanish rule is confirmed by the following extracts from the declaration of independence of the citizens of Puerto Principe of July 4, 1851:

"Publicly and by a legislative act, was Cuba declared to be deprived of the rights enjoyed by all Spaniards, and conceded by nature and the laws to nations the least advanced in civilization.

"Publicly have the sons of Cuba been cut off from all admission to the commands and lucrative employments of the State.

"The government has publicly and officially declared, and the journals in its pay have labored to sustain the declaration with foul commentary, that the inhabitants of Cuba have no organ nor right of action, even for the purpose of directing a humble prayer to the feet of the sovereign.

"For having dared to give utterance to principles and opinions, which to other nations constitute the foundation of their moral progress and glory, the Cubans most distinguished for their virtues and talents, have found themselves wanderers and exiles."

This declaration of Puerto Principe was published in the *New Orleans* and other Southern papers. Its genuineness was disputed by some, but there seems no really good reason to doubt its substantial accuracy.

An incident which brings vividly to mind the fact that the Cubans were allowed no voice in the administration of their own affairs, is the dismissal from office of the corporation of Puerto Principe. This corporation, with the authorization of the governor who presided over the

in the Spanish Cortes. There was no freedom of speech or of the press.

(2) An army of 20,000 soldiers was maintained to overawe the people, besides a strong marine force and numerous spies whose duty it was to inform the authorities of any illegal or suspicious movements of the Cubans*. For this and other reasons taxation was exceedingly heavy. From a population of 1,000,000, including slaves, revenues were exacted to the amount of \$24,000,000.

(3) Many restrictions were placed on personal liberty. No guest even could be entertained, nor could a journey be made, or one's residence be changed, without a permit†.

(4) The power of the Captain General was absolute; he could set aside or make laws at will‡.

These statements are in harmony with the Declaration of Independence of the citizens of Puerto Principe dated July 4, 1851. One paragraph in the latter sums up the whole situation vigorously:

"Human reason revolts at the idea that the social and political condition of a people can be prolonged in which man, stripped of all rights and guarantees, with no security of person or property, no hope in the future, lives only by the will and under the conditions imposed by the pleasure of his tyrants; where a vile cal-

province, addressed a memorial to the queen, requesting that the royal court should not be suppressed in the district. For this they were removed from office with the declaration that the government was not bound in its proceedings to consult the opinion and interests of the country.

*The declaration referred to previously says: "Public is the constant augmentation of the army, and the creation of new bodies of mercenaries, which, under the pretext of the public security, serve only to increase the burdens of Cuba, and add still more harassing vexation to the espionage practised against her people."

†Taylor gives a vivid description of Cuban taxation and its results on page 304. Other books of travel agree with him as to the main facts.

‡The declaration says: "Public are the impediments and difficulties imposed upon every individual, to restrain him from moving from place to place, and from exercising any branch of industry; no one being safe from arrest and fine, for some deficiency of authority or license, at every step he may take."

§Callahan points out on page 15 that the Spanish movement toward liberal government in 1812 had little real effect in Cuba, and that since 1825 the captain general's word had been the law of the island. Taylor gives on pages 298 and 311 some interesting facts about the arbitrary power of the Spanish officials. The declaration says: "Public are the unlimited powers of every description granted to the captains general of Cuba, who can refuse to those whom they condemn even the right of a trial and the privilege of being sentenced by a tribunal."

umny, a prisoner's denunciation, a despot's suspicion, a word caught up by surprise in the sanctuary of home, or even the violated privacy of a letter, furnishes ample grounds for tearing a man from his hearth, and casting him forth to die of destitution or despair on a foreign soil; if he escapes being subjected to the insulting forms of a barbarous arbitrary tribunal, where his persecutors are themselves the judges who condemn him, and where instead of their proving his offense, he is required to prove his innocence."

Two other causes which tended to widen the breach were:

(1) The threat of the government to emancipate the numerous slaves and to turn them against the revolutionists.

(2) The strong race antipathy between the native Cubans and the Spaniards.

Such were the conditions which Lopez and his companions wished to reform. The Spanish authorities soon became suspicious of him and he was forced to flee. He passed to the United States, and finding there many men willing to undergo the trials of any dangerous or adventurous undertaking, he immediately began to make preparations and to collect men for a descent on Cuba.

Among the many well known Americans whom he visited was Jefferson Davis,* of Mississippi. This accomplished gentleman had recently made a national reputation by his brilliant and conspicuous career in the Mexican war. Lopez visited Mr. Davis in the summer of 1849, with the view of inducing him to take command of an expedition to free Cuba. Mr. Davis declined. The command seems next to have been offered to Robert E. Lee, then an officer in the United States Army; but he also declined it.

While in Washington in the Spring of 1849, General Lopez visited Hon. John C. Calhoun. During the conversation Calhoun expressed his sympathy with Cuba and the hope for her speedy independence‡. He favored the cause of Cuban independence,

*See Callahan, page 226. Also see Rhodes, *History of United States*, Vol. I, page 217, and the references there given as authorities for these statements about Davis and Lee.

†From the New Orleans *Weekly Delta* of September 5, 1851, we quote the following extract in regard to Calhoun's attitude towards Cuban affairs. The extract is taken from a letter printed in the *Charleston Mercury*, August 24, 1851:

Charleston, August 24, 1851.

"To the Editors of the Mercury:

"When General Lopez made his visit to Washington in the spring of 1849, the Hon. J. C. Calhoun was the first gentleman in that city who

declaring that assistance would be lawfully offered by Americans in case of insurrection, and that he had no apprehension of European interference.

Later Calhoun became absorbed in the issues connected with the compromises of 1850, and was unwilling to take any definite steps in regard to Cuba, not wishing to distract the attention of the South to external affairs. In the meantime Lopez was gathering men to carry out his plans. He declared that his purpose was the advancement and happiness of the Cuban people, and the acquisition by them of free institutions. Of course, this meant independence. To gain this he considered it necessary to bring to her assistance a force from abroad, around which the Cuban patriots could rally. This course he deemed absolutely essential, since the Cubans were without military equipment, and their movements were hampered by Spanish soldiers and by the all-pervading system of Spanish espionage.

Lopez first attempted to invade Cuba in August 1849, but was

called on the General. He even carried his civility to the extent of making a second call before the first had been returned. In his conversation with General Lopez, through Mr. Sanchez and myself, he expressed himself as warmly in behalf of Cuba and her annexation as has any other man in the country, either before or since.

"A short time after a prominent Southern Senator favored me with an appointment in the recess room of the Senate. Mr. Calhoun was invited there, as were also four other Senators, three Democrats and one Whig. The purpose of the gentlemen, as it seemed to me, was principally to learn Mr. Calhoun's views upon a subject of such vital importance to the country. Mr. Calhoun then expressed himself as decidedly as to the justice of our cause, the assistance which would be lawfully proffered by the American people in case of insurrection, and his nonapprehension of European interference, as he had done on former occasions. The gentlemen present fully coincided with his views.

"Such were the sentiments of John C. Calhoun in the spring of 1849. The Wilmot proviso question then assumed increased gravity, and as the contest became fiercer, Mr. Calhoun's views underwent a visible change. He was no longer for action, but for procrastination. He felt, no doubt, that the Cuba question would draw the minds of the people from an internal to an external contest, and that his issue, his 'threshold' issue, might be postponed, if not abandoned. Then, but not 'till then, did Mr. Calhoun express himself as quoted by the correspondent of the *Journal of Commerce*. But Mr. Calhoun's hopes were not realized. The South did not unite even in the absence of the Cuba excitement. Were he now living every consideration invites the belief that, having failed to unite the South upon the admission of California, he would strive to do so, with greater probabilities of success, upon the Cuba platform, thus obtaining for her that 'equilibrium' with which alone can this Union be preserved, through the union of the South.

"I am, gentlemen, very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"AMBROSIA JOSE GONZALES, of Cuba."

frustrated by President Taylor who ordered the entire expedition to be seized as it was on the point of departure*.

Lopez now traveled through the South and Southwest enlisting men for a second descent on Cuba. Many of these men had seen service in the Mexican war. Quite a number served afterwards under Walker in Central America.

He considered it highly important to secure as leader some American whose ability and influence would draw hearty support in men and money from the United States. In the spring of 1850 he visited John A. Quitman, then Governor of Mississippi.† He offered him the leadership. He showed letters of encouragement from distinguished men in the United States, and painted in brilliant colors the prospects of success and the effect it would have on Mexico and the neighboring governments. The idea appealed strongly to the high-strung and susceptible nature of Quitman. But owing to the menacing condition of public affairs, he thought his first duty was to the State of which he was governor. He therefore declined the leadership, but gave the plan his hearty sympathy and encouragement. He advised Lopez to carry a strong and well organized force to Cuba, and cautioned him against treachery.

The second expedition assembled at New Orleans,‡ in the early spring of 1850, and on May 7, Lopez and his party set sail for Cuba

*President Zachary Taylor issued a proclamation dated August 11, 1849. It said that information obtained pointed "to Cuba as the object of this expedition." It emphatically stated that no persons engaged in it "must expect the interference of this Government in any form on their behalf, no matter to what extremities they may be reduced."

In the excitement of the moment the importance of the movement was greatly exaggerated. The *St. Louis Republican* had the following summary of the information from New Orleans, upon an authentic report of which was supposed General Taylor's proclamation had been issued: "Mysterious Movement in New Orleans. The papers of New Orleans are silent about a movement that is going on in that city, which has, if we are correctly informed, the appearance of a military movement against some neighboring country, and is for this reason, contrary to our laws. It is stated to us that a company of fifteen hundred men is being enrolled in that city, who are to serve for twelve months, and to be paid \$1,000 each for the year. They are told that they are to fight, but they have not been informed against whom their warfare is to be directed. It is said that half a million dollars are on deposit in the Canal Bank to use on the enterprise." Quoted in *Southern Advocate* of Huntsville, Ala., August 24, 1849.

†*Life of Quitman*, Vol. I, page 55.

‡On the 7th of May the President was informed in a letter by W. L. Dodge: "The last of the Cubans leave this evening. The whole force is probably between 6,000 and 8,000 of the very best kind of material, all procured and organized in the interior."

on the steamer *Creole*. The Spanish Consul at New Orleans sent a fast sailing schooner to Havana to inform the Captain General of the departure of the Cuban Expedition.† Others had previously sailed from the United States in the *Georgiana* and the *Susan Loud*.

After leaving New Orleans Lopez met others at Contoy, Yucatan, and made final preparations for his invasion of Cuba. Contoy was without the jurisdiction of the United States and of Spain. Here unmolested the revolutionists could make warlike preparations. General Lopez now gave permission to all who were indisposed to continue in the expedition, to withdraw. About twenty-five did so, and took passage in the *Georgiana* for Chagres.||

Lopez in an address to the command promised them the co-operation of the Cubans. Every private was to receive four thousand dollars at the end of the first year, or sooner if the revolution should succeed before the expiration of that time. The men, however, were actuated more from a spirit of adventure than of gain.

Lopez had at first decided to attack Matanzas, but hearing that the Spanish expected this movement, it was decided to land at Cardenas,* which was taken after a stubborn but brief resistance. When the barracks were carried by assault, the Spanish soldiers threw down their arms and many joined the army of invasion. Lopez now issued a strong appeal for volunteers, but the Cubans did not respond. Either from apathy or dread of Spanish punishment they seemed unwilling to risk their lives.

The Spanish troops began to close in on Cardenas, and Lopez saw that without native co-operation its occupation was useless and dangerous. He ordered the troops to re-embark, with a view of attacking Matanzas. Some of the party objected, a council of war was held on board, and it was declared that no further attempt

†Montgomery *Advertiser and State Gazette*, May 21, 1850.

||Two ships, the *Georgiana* and the *Susan Loud*, both supposed to belong to Lopez's party, were seized by the Spanish ship *Pizarro* off Contoy. Their crews and passengers were tried by a marine court, and the British Consul was, on invitation, present at the examination, while Mr. Campbell, the American Consul, had no official information of the fact, and was not allowed to see them.

*In the *Advertiser and State Gazette* of June 4, 1850, Lopez is quoted as saying that the attack on Cardenas was meant as a feint to draw the Spanish soldiers to that point. Then the attack was to be made elsewhere. But there was a delay at Cardenas, the ship grounded on leaving the harbor, and the men refused to make another attack on Cuba. Lopez was therefore obliged to sail for Key West.

to land on the island was practicable, because of the indecision of the native population. To this decision Lopez would not agree, and wished to land an attacking party. When the men refused to follow him he resigned command. The steamer then put to sea with the purpose of reaching Key West, and at nightfall came to anchor within forty miles of that port.

The Spanish authorities sent the *Pizarro*, a fast steamer, in pursuit of the filibusters, and offered a reward of \$50,000 for the capture of Lopez.

The *Pizarro* set out in pursuit of the *Creole* and ran into Key West while the *Creole* was lying at anchor. She set out again in search of her at daybreak. The people of the town having found out the purpose of the *Pizarro*, thronged the pier and hills to watch the issue. Soon they recognized the *Creole* closely pursued by the huge *Pizarro*, which was throwing out volumes of smoke and rapidly gaining. At this juncture the fuel of the steamer gave out, and the *Pizarro* was rapidly gaining. The chances of escape for the *Creole* seemed hopeless, but by using the cargo and the wood work of the ship for fuel, she outdistanced her pursuer and dropped anchor under the guns of the fort. The *Pizarro* was restrained from taking possession of the *Creole* by the presence of the United States officers, who took charge of the steamer.*

Most of the men of the expedition then returned to their homes. The loss of the expedition was fourteen killed and thirty wounded. Lopez, with General John Henderson† and others, was tried for

*A spirited account of this expedition is given by J. J. Roche in his *By-Ways of War*, page 35, et seq.

†The New Orleans *Weekly Delta* for January 27, 1851, contains some interesting statements about the points involved in the trial of Henderson. A test case was made against him, and when it failed the cases of Lopez and the others were dropped. In the trial of Henderson, therefore, the fate of Lopez and the others was virtually being settled. The *Delta* says:

"Lopez, Henderson and others were tried for violation of the neutrality laws. The act under which this prosecution was instituted was the act of April 20, 1818.

The sixth section of the act is as follows:

"That if any person shall, within the territory and the jurisdiction of the United States, begin or set on foot, or provide, or prepare the means for, any military expedition or enterprise, to be carried on from thence against the territory or dominions of any foreign prince or State, or of any colony, district, or people, with whom the United States are at peace, every person so offending shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding \$3,000, and imprisoned not more than three years."

"The third section pronounced penalties against any person, whether citizen of the United States or not, who shall, within the limits of

violation of the neutrality laws, but they all escaped conviction by technicalities of the law, and on account of the sympathy of the people in the section where they were tried.

The United States sent a warship to Havana, demanding the release of the men captured by Spanish authorities off the coast of Mexico. In case any Americans were unjustly put to death, Secretary Clayton informed the Spanish minister that it would in all probability lead to war.† The prisoners were finally released by Spain.

The failure of this expedition did not discourage Lopez and his

the United States, fit out and arm, or attempt to fit out and arm, any ship or vessel with intent that such ship or vessel shall be employed in the service of a foreign prince, etc. * * * to commit hostilities against the people of a foreign State with whom the United States are at peace.

"General Henderson, in a speech in his own defense, spoke as follows:

"I contend there was no violation of our neutrality law, because there was no military expedition carried on, or intended to be carried on, from the territory of the United States, and the district of Louisiana, against Cuba. The expedition which went to Cuba was constituted, I admit, from three several bodies of men which went to Mugerres in the *Georgiana Susan Loud*, and the steamer *Creole*; but these people had no connection here in the United States, nor had they any type, form or shape of military organization. True, the men who became officers and those who became privates, went from the United States. So, too, of the arms and ammunition with which they were supplied at Mugerres. So, too, of their food and other supplies there furnished. But all these went from the United States as crude materials, and were combined and organized beyond the territory of the United States, and in a foreign jurisdiction. A law of Congress which would forbid the exportation of cotton cloth does not interdict the exportation of every article of which it is composed. The raw cotton, the machinery, and the men and women to manufacture it may all go to Mugerres and make cotton cloth, and sell it abroad, without violating such a law. And this is true of every conceivable thing, which consists of aggregate materials. * * * It is shown from evidence that I provided no means for any expedition, whether a military expedition, carried on from the United States or not, as General Lopez, by the sale and proceeds of his bonds, provided all the means. * * * I negotiated for the steamer *Creole*, and paid her price, \$10,000 in cash, \$2,000 in my note as cash and \$4,000 in Cuban bonds. But the fact, as proved, is that all these expenditures were paid for in Cuban bonds or their proceeds, and nothing was contributed by me. Now the means provided by Lopez from the sale of his bonds are as direct as if raised by the sale of a bill of exchange brought with him from Cuba, and just as direct as if he had handed me the money in gold to pay for the *Creole* so bought. * * * The offender under this law must be an actor, and guilty of an action made penal by the statute. He must responsibly participate in a forbidden act. He must have begun, or set on foot, or provided, or prepared the means for a military expedition, to be carried on from the United States, etc. I have done neither; and, therefore, have I not offended the law."

†"Warn him," said Clayton, * * * "that if he unjustly sheds one drop of American blood at this exciting period, it may cost the two countries a sanguinary war." Von Holst, *History of United States*, Vol. 1850-54, page 54.

sympathizers. In some respects it could scarcely be called a failure. The invaders had shown bravery, had defeated the Spanish soldiers within a few miles of Havana, and had withdrawn only because they had not been supported by the natives—a fact for which they readily found explanations that were at least plausible. They had evaded and escaped the Spanish warships and been given protection and a hearty welcome home by the United States garrison at Key West. To crown it all, the leaders had been tried before a United States court, and had come forth with flying colors. Moreover, in Cuba itself there were encouraging signs. In the summer of 1851 the revolutionary movement became more general, especially in the central and eastern departments. The citizens of Puerto Principe drew up a formal declaration of independence. Trinidad and Villa Clara did likewise.

Lopez was as much a hero as ever, and set to work organizing a third expedition. New Orleans was again the point of departure, and here in the summer of 1851 he gathered his force. Many of the men had already seen active service, some of them in the Mexican war. There were also many men who joined from youthful enthusiasm and recklessness.

The organization* of this force was confided to General Pragay, formerly Adjutant-General in the Hungarian Army. There was also a complete corps of engineers, composed chiefly of Hungarians under Major Rugendorf. This Hungarian contingent was composed of Kossuth's compatriots, who like himself were forced to flee from their country after the termination of their unsuccessful revolution. There was a company composed exclusively of Creoles and Spaniards, including the soldiers who deserted to General Lopez at Cardenas, all under the command of Captain Gotay. The rest of the command were Americans, mostly from New Orleans and Mississippi. There were men in the expedition from all the Southern States, and there were a few from the cities of the North. These were commanded by Colonel Crittenden, a nephew of the Attorney-General of the United States, a graduate of the West Point Military Academy, and by Colonel R. L. Downman of Georgia, with Major J. A. Kelly, Captains Saunders, Brigham, Stewart, Ellis, Victor Kerr and others.

There were large parties formed throughout the South for the

*See *New York Tribune*, September 2, 1851.

purpose of going to Cuba. Many of these, on account of lack of transportation, were unable to join the expedition.† Others reached New Orleans too late to join Lopez. Among the latter was a body of Kentuckians, under Colonels Pickett, Bell and Hawkins.

Lopez having completed his plans for the third expedition, ‡ sailed from New Orleans on the *Pampero* early in the morning of August 3, 1851. Touching at Key West he was informed that the Cuban revolutionists were anxious and ready to join him.* He immediately set sail and landed at Morrillos, Bahia Honda, about fifty miles from Havana. Knowing his force to be too small to engage the Spanish reinforcements, which were coming, Lopez decided to march to the interior, to Las Pozas.

His purpose was to reach the mountains from which he thought he could beat back the Spaniards, while he organized a strong and effective fighting force, around whose standards the Cuban insurgents could rally. This was probably the correct movement. His fatal mistake was the separation of his forces, which resulted in the capture of Crittenden's party, thus giving an early impression of his weakness and destroying all hope of assistance from the Cuban insurgents.

Orders were given Crittenden to remain with one hundred and fourteen men and guard the extra guns and ammunition. The plan was for Lopez with the rest of the command to proceed to Las

†The New Orleans *Delta* of August 26, 1851, stated that there were three thousand men in the city desiring transportation to Cuba. The number probably was greatly exaggerated, but there is no doubt that many more men would have gone had the transportation facilities been greater.

‡The account of this expedition given by President Fillmore in his second annual message, December 2, 1851, is interesting, as it gives very fully the standpoint of the administration. See *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Vol. V, page 113. The best original sources of information in regard to this expedition are long letters by Kelly and Summers, both officers in the party. These are to be found in the *New York Tribune* of September 23, 1851. Many other letters can be found in the papers of the time. Of these one by Van Vetchen is interesting, but seems strongly biased.

*The *New York Tribune* of September 9, 1851, said. "One of the rumors that have reached us in connection with this disastrous expedition is that when it sailed from New Orleans the intention was to proceed to Puerto Principe, but that on arriving at Key West, Lopez found there a letter from a well-known speculator at Havana, with whom he had before had some correspondence, informing him falsely that the *Vuelta de Abaja* and *Pinas del Rio* were in full revolt, and that he would accordingly do well to go there with his forces. This advice he decided to follow, not suspecting its treachery, and so fell into a snare set for him by Concha."

Pozas and thence transmit wagons that night, so that Crittenden could come on with the stores early next morning.

Lopez arrived at Las Pozas about twelve o'clock that day, and having procured some carts sent them towards Crittenden's party. He believed, and assured his men, that they would not be attacked for two or three days, and the men gave themselves up to careless ease and enjoyment. On the next day at Las Pozas they were attacked by a large body of Spanish troops. The Spanish were repulsed and retreated in the direction of Crittenden's command. But Lopez's party lost a number of men, including General Pragay, Colonel Downman and Captain Gotay.

In this engagement the men fought as they thought best, few orders being given. General Lopez was in the thickest of the fight. Although he was insensible to fear, it was quite perceptible that he was oppressed by the aspect of affairs. After the battle he ordered Captain Ellis's company and another to pursue the enemy, and to go through to Crittenden. They attempted to do so, but finding the enemy too strong, they returned to Las Pozas.

Meanwhile Crittenden's party,* having been ordered to join Lopez at once, set out for Las Pozas. While they were breakfasting on the roadside without proper precautions, they were suddenly attacked by a superior body of Spanish troops. These were repulsed, but the surprise taught them no lesson, and before they were ready for the march and while still unprepared, they were again attacked by a large body of troops.

After beating off the attack, Colonel Crittenden took eighty men and started off to charge the enemy, leaving Captain Kelly with orders to maintain his position until his return. Kelly waited several hours, and then thinking he must have formed a junction with Lopez, set out for Las Pozas, and after a difficult march, joined Lopez just before the evacuation of that town.

Crittenden, after leaving Kelly, attacked the Spanish, but was

*The *New York Tribune* of September 3, 1851, quotes the following from the *Delta* in regard to Crittenden. The writer's name is not given:

"We knew him first in the Mexican War, and in many a bivouac shared his blanket. * * * A few days before he left we met him, and a wish that we could accompany him was expressed. We earnestly advised against embarking in the enterprise; we spoke our incredulity of the report that the Cubans had risen. He answered that he was no freebooter; that he could not be induced to join the expedition were not the people of Cuba in arms against their rulers. That a revolution had actually commenced, that the Cubans were in the field, he assured us he knew from statements of parties who had given him their confidence."

finally defeated and forced to flee. He was now without ammunition or supplies, and without any knowledge of the country. With a small band of followers he wandered about for two days and nights, without a morsel of food or a drop of water. At last they reached the beach and embarked upon four small vessels, with the intention of returning to the United States.* While on the water they were overhauled by Spanish warships and carried as prisoners to Havana, where they were at once condemned to death and executed.† Claiborne, who seems to have been in close touch with the expedition, gives the following vivid description of the scene:‡

"Stripped to the shirt, their hands bound behind their backs, they were carried in front of the castle of Atares, guarded by the Spanish troops, and dogged by the ferocious rabble. * * * Pale as ghosts, attenuated by exposure and fatigue, they fearlessly faced their grim executioners, and calmly surveyed the apparatus of death—the leveled muskets and the file of dead-carts waiting for their remains. No invocation for delay, no cry for mercy, no last promise of treacherous revelation with the hope of pardon, was heard from them during the protracted ordeal. In squads of six they were successively shot down, the officers being reserved for the last. When ordered to his knees Crittenden replied, 'Americans kneel only to their God.' They were ordered to reverse their position. 'No,' said Victor Kerr, 'we look death in the face.' 'Cowards,' cried Stanford, 'our friends will avenge us.' 'Liberty

*See letters of Crittenden, New Orleans *Delta*, October 12, 1851. Also see Stanford's letter, *Delta*, August 25, 1851.

†A full description of the execution is given in the *Delta* of September 1, 1851. Claiborne gives the names of those who were shot.

‡When the news of this execution reached New Orleans there was great excitement. The *Delta* of August 22, 1851, said: "The men who had come to New Orleans too late to go to Cuba not only took no part in this violence, but volunteered their services to preserve order. Amongst these was a party of Kentuckians under Colonels Pickett, Bell, and Hawkins. The first act of vengeance on the part of the mob was the destruction of the printing office of the Spanish paper, *La Union*, which had taken the part of the Spanish authorities and had denounced the filibusters. The office was destroyed, but no violence was used upon the inmates. The shops of several Spaniards in the city were destroyed. The rioters next visited the office of the Spanish Consul. The Consul's sign was torn down and burnt, and his headless effigy borne by the crowds through the streets of the city." His papers were scattered and the picture of the Spanish monarch was defaced. For the injury done to the Consul and his office our Congress afterwards granted an indemnity.

‡*Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman*, Vol. II, page 90.

forever!" exclaimed Lieutenant James, and his last words mingled with the crash of musketry, and echoed over the sea. The corpses of the fifty lay upon the ground."

Lopez, meanwhile, remained at Las Pozas until Captain Kelly arrived with about thirty men and assured him that it was vain to wait longer for Crittenden. The army was then put in motion for the mountains. About midday on the 17th they marched to a plantation formerly owned by Lopez. While here they were approached by a strong body of troops. Lopez did not wait for the Spanish to attack him, but led his men in a wild charge against them. After a spirited engagement, in which General Enna, the second ranking Spanish officer in Cuba, was killed, the Spanish retired, and Lopez continued his march into the interior.

Several days were spent in marching, and as it was during the rainy season, much damage was done to the arms and ammunition of the command by the heavy and incessant rains. The food supply was inadequate, the store of ammunition was very low, and the men for the first time became discouraged. When they arrived at Rosario they demanded of the General what prospects of aid he had, and not being satisfied with his assurances, determined to leave him and proceed toward the coast. The next day they were surprised and attacked by the Spanish. The greater part of their muskets being damaged by the storms, they were unable to withstand the attack, but scattered and retreated to the mountains.

The command was now entirely without food, their arms and ammunition were made useless, and still the rains continued. In this condition they were again attacked. Scattered in small bands they continued their wanderings, being in the most deplorable condition from exhaustion and hunger. Soon all of them were either captured, or surrendered from exhaustion.

The little band with Lopez numbered but thirty, and these were reduced to the lowest stage of suffering and starvation. He begged these to leave him and surrender, because there would be no chance for them if caught with him. Finally he left them, accompanied by one faithful friend. Wounded and exhausted from fatigue he was pursued and captured by some Catalans. He surrendered, exclaiming, "Kill me, but pardon my men." On the 31st he was taken in the *Pizarro* to Havana, and the order for his execution issued.

The New York papers give the following account of his execution:*

"At the fatal hour General Lopez was brought out and ascended the platform with a firm step. His person was enveloped in a white shroud. The executioner then removed the shroud, and there stood the General in his full military uniform before the assembled multitude. His appearance was calm, dignified and heroic. Not a muscle quivered. He looked upon the preparations for death unmoved; his countenance changed not, and his whole bearing was firm and manly.

The executioner now removed his embroidered coat, his sash, cravat, and all the insignia of his military rank, in token of disgrace. General Lopez, with his hands tightly bound together in front, stepped forward, and in a strong, clear voice slowly spoke to those around as follows:

"I pray the persons who have compromised me to pardon me as I pardon them.

"My death will not change the destinies of Cuba.' (The executioner, standing a little behind, here interrupted him in an insulting tone, with 'Come, be quick, be quick.')

"General Lopez, turning his head partly around, fixed his eye on the man, and said sternly, gritting his teeth, 'Wait, sir.' He then continued:

"Adieu, my beloved Cuba. Adieu, my brethren.'

"The General then stepped back, seated himself on the stool. A priest with the crucifix and taper stood on one side of him, the executioner on the other. The collar was then placed around the prisoner's neck. The priest now placed the crucifix between the General's hands, and, just as he was in the act of inclining his head to kiss it, the executioner swung the fatal screw, and the head of the unfortunate man at the same instant dropped forward, touching the crucifix. He never moved again. There sat the body of one of the bravest men that ever drew breath, but a moment ago alive, now a ghastly corpse.

"The execution was conducted in the most orderly manner and in perfect silence. No shouting or any other exhibition of applause was manifest. Whether this was the result of the news from New

*New York Tribune of September 9, 1851.

Orleans or the express orders of the Captain-General, is not known."*

After the failure of this third and last expedition under Lopez, the United States and Spain were engaged in diplomatic discussion in regard to the execution of Crittenden's party, and also as to the disposal of the prisoners remaining in Spanish hands. The President's policy had from the first been as conciliatory toward Spain as any reasonable person could ask. By proclamations, by instructions to the civil officers, and by the use of the navy, every effort had been made to stop the expeditions. The President's vigorous denunciation of the filibusters was cited by the Spanish Governor of Cuba as an excuse for his immediate execution of Crittenden's party, and was also given by the United States Consul at Havana, Mr. Owen, as an explanation of his failure to extend to them either sympathy or assistance.* He publicly expressed his regret at the New Orleans riot, and recommended to Congress that an indemnity be granted to the Spanish Consul there.† After the execution of Crittenden's party was announced, he took measures to ascertain whether any of them were American citizens, and if they were, by what evidence their guilt of a crime deserving so summary a punishment had been established; and also to ascertain the facts in relation to the alleged firing on the United States mail steamer, *Falcon*, by a Spanish ship of war, and how far this proceeding was approved by public authority. For this purpose Commodore Foxhall A. Parker, commanding the Home Squadron, was sent to Havana in the *Saranac*.

The diplomatic situation was a difficult one, but the President's course was a conciliatory one, and was in the end successful. The

*Great mass meetings were held throughout the United States to express sympathy with the Cuban revolutionists and to denounce the conduct of Spain. Many were held in New Orleans, which was the center of the anti-Spanish feeling. An immense gathering assembled in Philadelphia, numbering it was said 12,000. Large crowds gathered also in Savannah and Mobile. In New York the crowd was estimated by the *Herald* to exceed 4,000. In the evening there was a procession. "On the whole," said the *Herald*, "the meeting passed off very well; at least 15,000 persons were in attendance."

†On April 25, 1851, he had warned those engaged in these enterprises that they would "forfeit their claim to the protection of this Government or any interference in their behalf, no matter to what extremities they may be reduced in consequence of their illegal conduct."

†See his second annual message, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Vol. V, page 118.

Americans captured subsequently to the execution of Crittenden's party were carried to Havana.† Some were released here, but most of them were transported to Spain. After a short captivity these were all released.||

The chief cause which led to the failure of Lopez's plans was undoubtedly the lack of Cuban support, but this was itself due, at least in part, to the incompetence of the Cuban leaders. Men of discretion were needed, who would know the proper time to strike and would comprehend the combinations necessary for a revolutionary movement. Furthermore, the Cubans were destitute of arms and ammunition. The extensive system of espionage enabled the Spanish authorities to pounce upon any suspected person with such promptness as to cut him off from all communication with his friends.

The small size of the force carried to Cuba by Lopez was, moreover, a fatal blunder. Had he carried a sufficient force to hold the Spanish in check for a reasonable time, it is not impossible that the Cubans might have rallied around his standard and their cause might have been successful.

Unfortunate also was the division of the forces and the destruction of Crittenden's command early in the campaign. The report of this, exaggerated as it was, dampened the ardor of the Cubans. They took it to be a failure of the whole enterprise, and those who had gathered at various points dispersed.

After the failure of the expedition of Lopez, there is easily perceptible a change in the attitude of the American people toward Cuban Independence. The desire for annexation was still widespread in the South, and indignation at the treatment of the prisoners by the Spanish authorities was slow in dying out; but the Cubans had failed to strike for their independence at the critical moment, and American sympathy for them was greatly diminished.

†For an account of the diplomatic negotiations see Curtis, *Life of Daniel Webster*, Vol. II, pages 547 *et seq.*

||The *New York Tribune* of September 23, 1851, gives a list of the captives, but the spelling is so inaccurate as to throw doubt on its trustworthiness.