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GENERAL LOPEZ, THE CUBAN PATRIOT.

WITHIN the past year and a-half the name of General Lopez, of Cuba, has been familiar to the press and people of the United States, as the projector and chief of a revolutionary movement contemplated in that island, which was to have broken out in the summer of 1848, but which was frustrated by discovery on the part of the government. Many arrests were suddenly made, and he himself, after being informed that his principal friends had been arrested, (to the number of two hundred, as the account was first brought to him, though it proved afterwards to have been greatly exaggerated,) had time to escape on board a vessel bound for Bristol, R. I. (Rhode Island, not Round Island;) feeling himself reluctantly compelled to take that step to save his friends from being shot, a fate which would certainly have awaited them within three days if he had at that moment, with premature suddenness, raised the standard of the revolution.

Having obtained from the friends of General Lopez some interesting particulars of his life and career, we propose to employ them as materials for a brief biographical sketch, which will serve to make better known to our readers the brilliant career and noble character of a man whose name is probably destined at no distant day to occupy no small space in the history of our times,—so far at least as that history has to deal with the political condition and changes of the American side of the Atlantic.

General Narciso Lopez is now a little over fifty years of age, having been born in Venezuela, in the year 1798 or '9. His father was a wealthy landed proprietor, owning large estates on the *llanos* or plains, swarming with cattle, horses, &c. His mother, who is still living, is one of those women of rare elevation of moral dignity combined with mental strength, whose children, imbued with that noblest inheritance of nature, are stamped from the outset as born for command. General Lopez was their only son that lived beyond childhood, though of daughters his parents had some fourteen or fifteen; and, according to the habitual life of the *llanos*, passed almost from the cradle to the saddle, or rather, we may



perhaps say, to the back of a wild horse without any saddle,—a training well calculated to lay the foundation of that character and habit of fearless hardihood, energy and resolution, which has been illustrated by his subsequent military career.

Though so successful as a soldier, and though that success was achieved only by the display of extraordinary capacity as well as courage, it is singular that General Lopez has never been fond of the military profession and life. He did not enter it from choice, but simply as a resource of desperation, under circumstances forced upon him, at the age of fifteen, by the civil war then desolating all the Spanish South American provinces. His father had been stripped of nearly all his property, or had seen it rendered wholly unproductive, through the operation of that cause, and with such means as he was able to realize had entered into commercial life at Caraccas, assisted by his son, who, boy as he was, was able to bear the burden of a large share of its responsibilities. At the town of Valencia, in the interior, he had the charge of a branch of his father's main establishment at Caraccas, at the period of the sanguinary, and for the time decisive, battle of La Puerta, in 1814, in which Bolivar, at the head of the insurgent troops, was defeated by the Spanish army under General Boves. Bolivar, though routed, sent orders to the garrison of Valencia to maintain the place, which was done with heroism to the last moment, so long as resistance was possible; the inhabitants, who knew that massacre and plunder would immediately ensue on the entrance of the victorious army, uniting in the defense with the few soldiers of the garrison. The town being an open one, this consisted simply in defending the approaches to the "plaza" or square, into which were hastily collected all the property and effects which it was considered most important to protect. The house of Lopez's father happened to be situated at one corner of the square, and the boy took an active part in the defense at that point, and before long found himself recognised by those collected at that point, soldiers and citizens, without suspecting it himself, as their leader *de facto*. His father, however, who was in Valencia at the time, but a man of different mould from the boy who then made his maiden trial in arms, took no part in it. The resistance was prolonged three weeks, but no relief came from Bolivar, who meanwhile abandoned indeed all that part of the country which he had thus compromised, and made his way along the coast towards Barcelona. The inhabitants of Valencia felt bitterly resentful at this treatment by the Patriot leader, who had sacrificed them for the escape of the routed fragments of his own force, by directing them to make a resistance only justifiable on the idea of his coming to their relief; while it could not fail to provoke even a redoubled degree of the usual ferocity with which, in that terrible civil struggle, the conquering party was in the habit of treating any town falling into their possession. Massacre of the men was the general rule—a rule often enough made to include a proportion of women and children. After the surrender of the place, Lopez was separated from his father, being turned off as a child, while his father was herded with the men, supposed, in spite of the capitulation, to be reserved for massacre that night. The boy himself, indeed, escaped that fate very narrowly. With some other companions he had joined a couple of negroes, slaves of his family, among a great number more who had huddled together in one spot for safety, that class not being usually included in the massacres of such occasions; but during the



night, he fortunately issued forth with his two servants, in the hope of being able to do something for his father, or to hear something of him. In this hope indeed he was mistaken, (though his father, as he afterwards learned, did succeed in effecting his own escape,) but the next morning on returning to the place which they had left for that purpose, they found the ghastly spectacle of eighty-seven bodies with their throats cut like sheep. After hiding about for some time, feeling himself constantly liable to the same fate, and reduced to a condition of entire desperation, he determined to seek safety in the only situation in which it was to be found, by enlistment as a soldier in the army; and selected an opportunity of offering himself to a sergeant of more encouraging countenance than the others, by whom, not without some entreaty, he was accepted as a recruit,—the sergeant little suspecting that the boy of fifteen, and small in stature at that, whom he at first told to be off and play, was hereafter to become one of the most distinguished officers in the service. The former did not indeed live to see it, for this good-natured sergeant fell shortly afterwards, it having been Lopez's lot to convey to him, amongst others, the order for the service which was his last.\*

Such were the circumstances which threw Lopez into the military career, and which threw him into it on the Spanish side of the civil war of that wretched period. He was a mere boy, and it was the only chance for life; while at the same time there was probably then no inhabitant of Valencia who would have hesitated to shoot Bolivar, the chief of the Patriot side, as the bitterest of enemies, had they had the opportunity. Spain was then moreover under the republican Constitution of 1812, so that, in the civil war at that period, the cause of liberty did not appear to be solely on the Patriot side. The battle of La Puerta was deemed then to have completely crushed the rebellion in that region, though in fact the struggle was renewed and protracted, with various success, till the final evacuation of Caraccas by the Spanish army in 1823.

At the end of the war Lopez, who had thus entered in the ranks, found himself a colonel, having attained that rank at the age of twenty-three through the brilliancy and daring of his services. The first occasion that attracted attention to him was shortly after his enlistment, during an attack upon a certain place which was defended by field-works, there being two bastions connected together by a curtain of about fifty yards in length. The Spanish force being divided into two portions, engaged in attacking the two bastions, the ammunition of the one portion gave out, and signal being made to the other to that effect, the commander called for volunteers to lead three mules loaded with ammunition from the one end to the other, a service requiring a passage along the line of fire of the enemy stationed behind the curtain connecting the two. Lopez was the only one who volunteered, and he set out with the three mules in a

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\* This was on the occasion of the first battle of Maturin, when the Spanish General, Morales, who was defeated, made good his retreat only by sacrificing a column which he ordered to defend a certain position, a service which was certain death, in a war in which prisoners *expected no quarter and were not disappointed*. Exactly three months afterwards, a second battle was fought near the same spot, in which Morales was victorious, and they found the bodies of the column in question, that is to say, their bleached skeletons, to the number of six hundred, laid out on the ground in regular array, by the Patriots, in rank and file, as though by a mockery of discipline in death.



string, according to the custom of the country, the head of each fastened by a cord to the tail of the one before it. At about half the distance across, one of the mules fell dead. The mule killed being unluckily the middle one, it was necessary to untie the cord, and re-fasten the first and third together, all under a severe fire, which was anxiously watched by both parties. He succeeded, however, in reaching his destination unwounded, though his gun was broken by one ball, his pantaloons cut by another, and his cap pierced by a third, with the other mules wounded, but not to death; and the place was taken. The next day inquiry was made, in a general order, for the volunteer who had offered for this decisive service, with a view to his receiving an officer's commission. The commission, however, he declined, considering himself not entitled to be thus raised over the heads of many men both grown and better qualified, for an act which had proceeded more from the despair and recklessness of his situation than from any other spirit; and, in truth, still hoping for escape from that situation, and from the service, to which he was still strongly averse; and the only reward he accepted was that of exemption from the drudgeries of a soldier's work, and of being mounted instead of marching on foot, to which he had never been accustomed. Still, once in the service, the genius of the soldier, and the spirit and emulation of military honor, prevailed over his own aversion to the career; and, at nineteen, he found himself commander of a squadron of horse, a select force, designed for critical occasions to decide pending contests, a corps into which none but picked men were admitted, and with which it was a point of honor never to turn the back; and at the age of twenty-three, a highly esteemed colonel of a regiment of cavalry.

Besides other distinctions, he received during this war the rare military honor of the cross of San Fernando of the second (the most distinguished) degree; a reward not bestowed at pleasure, but which is to be obtained only on a public demand by the person claiming it, and on the institution of a formal process for and against his right, every body being free to interpose an objection, or to depreciate the merit of the act for which it is demanded. In the whole army there was but one other individual who possessed this cross. Lopez, not attaching much importance to the act for which he was urged to apply for it, and moreover caring little for the honor itself, was only induced to demand it by the Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Morillo, who taunted him with being afraid of a rejection of the demand, and who directed his Secretary to draw up the application, almost forcing the reluctant young officer to sign it.

In the negotiations for the withdrawal of the Spanish army, he contributed much to cause the Spanish General (who could have protracted the contest much longer, though with no hope of eventual success) to relieve the country from the further pressure of the evils of war, by his influence exerted in every manner consistent with military honor; and it is no small proof of what must have been the appreciation of all his character, conduct and motives, entertained even by those against whom he had thus served, having been thrown by the circumstances above explained on the Spanish side in the civil contest thus terminated, that on the conclusion of hostilities he was invited by the Patriot government to enter its service, in the same rank held by him in the Spanish army. He declined the offer, not considering that that honor



which had kept him in the service permitted him to accept it; and he retired with the evacuating army to Cuba, in the year 1823.

Since that date he has been a Cuban, having married and established himself in the Island. The re-establishment of absolutism in Spain, by the aid of the French intervention overthrowing for the second time the Constitution of 1812, wholly prevented his resumption of service, though retaining his nominal rank. The system then adopted was to require a "*purification*" from all the officers of the army, especially those suspected of too much liberalism, a process consisting in the abjuration of such sentiments and in an oath of devotion and support to the new order of things. Always not only liberal but democratic, in heart as well as in principles, he would never consent to compromise with his conscience in that respect; and he accordingly remained in retirement until, on the death of the old King, Ferdinand VII., the long smothered liberal party broke forth from under the despotic incubus which had pressed it down, and assumed the ascendant in the government of the country. Maria Cristina, the brilliant, bold but unprincipled widow of the old King, after having caused the latter by his will to devise the crown to her infant daughter Isabel, in disregard of the Salic law which had heretofore regulated the succession to the throne of Spain, and therefore to the exclusion of the rights of Don Carlos, the King's brother and next male heir, threw herself on the Liberal party for support, and even resuscitated from its grave the Constitution of 1812. The absolutist or royalist party soon prepared to rise for the maintenance of the right of Don Carlos, whose character and views made him moreover their natural head. Cristina, in anticipation of the severe civil struggle which all knew to be about to ensue, adopted the vigorous measure of disarming at a blow the whole royalist party throughout the kingdom, so far as it was practicable; a service which the people were summoned, and came forward eagerly enough, to perform, with the aid of the troops that could be counted upon by the Government. This movement, beginning at Madrid, was at each important point the work of a day, and by its suddenness so successful, that throughout the kingdom six hundred thousand stands of arms were wrested from hands in which they would otherwise have soon been employed for the re-establishment of Don Carlos, the priests, and absolutism. It was in the midst of the tumult of this memorable day at Madrid, that Colonel Lopez, (who happened to be at the capital with his wife, to reclaim a large sum of money arbitrarily seized from the family of the latter by the Government in Cuba,) reappeared on the scene, signally distinguishing himself by the activity and boldness which he exhibited, in heading bodies of the people in this operation of disarming the royalists. Always a thorough republican in heart and conviction, he was one of the most enthusiastic to welcome the revival of the old Constitution and the constitutionalist party, and his joy took the natural form of zealous daring in the performance of this practical service to the cause of his principles; a service which was not all one-sided, a considerable part of the National Guard and some of the troops being royalist, and several attempts being made by the latter party to rally and make a stand against the tide of popular enthusiasm that rose and raged around them, and finally overbore all resistance. More than once in the course of the day Lopez was seen driving be-



fore him singly with his sword, considerable bodies of the royalists, armed with their guns, to the principal guard-house, to deliver up their arms, treating them with little ceremony, and making them acquainted with the flat of his sword, and indeed cowing them into obedience to his command as though he had been their own officer.

The consequence of this day was, that he was speedily despatched to join the army, as first Aide-de-Camp to the Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Valdez; and after taking a most active part in the war, being usually selected for the most daring military work, he found himself at its close a General, and covered with military decorations, among which were the highly distinguished ones of the grand-crosses of *St. Hermengildo* and *Isabel la Catolica*.\* Between himself and Valdez (who was afterwards Captain-General of Cuba) a devoted friendship arose, which has never sustained any diminution. The only pure and upright Captain-General sent to Cuba within the memory of man, and therefore necessarily too good to be long left by the Government in that post, Valdez has always been regarded by Lopez as the most virtuous man breathing.

In his political sentiments, General Lopez never wavered from his fidelity to the democratic party, known in Spain as the *liberal exaltado* party. As a known and reliable member of that party, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard of the kingdom, a post created for him at a critical period. He at different periods filled the posts of Commander-in-Chief of various provinces. Though excessively caressed by the Queen Mother Cristina, he early learned to despise and distrust her, and her false, selfish and intriguing politics.

On the occasion of the popular insurrection at Madrid which, resulted in the expulsion of Cristina from the Regency, Gen. Lopez was earnestly solicited by the people to assume the command of the capital, as Governor of Madrid, which, when he found it incumbent on him as a duty of humanity, at a difficult and critical moment, he consented to do. The city being threatened by the army, he made the most energetic preparations for its defense; but happily the withdrawal of the obnoxious Queen Mother to Paris averted the necessity of the struggle, for which he had braced the nerves of the people by the firmness of his resolution and the vigor of his measures. Espartero, on whom the government then devolved, and who was soon after appointed Regent by the Cortes, was anxious to induce Lopez to retain the post of Governor of Madrid; but the latter would not remain, beyond the period of emergency for which he had been called upon by the people themselves, in a situation in which it might become his duty to act against the people for the repression of tumults, and three times pressed upon the Regent his resignation; which was only accepted when he positively refused to take a negative answer, and had relieved Espartero from the difficulty of filling his place, by himself recommending a competent successor.

Anterior to this period he had been appointed a Senator of the King-

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\* Even Carlist historians speak with high praise of their own most formidable enemy, Lopez; relating, among other acts, the manner in which he saved the army and the honor of General Carondelet, who, almost beaten, by a surprise, allowed Lopez, though only a colonel, to rally the flying troops, assume the entire command, virtually supersede the general, and to a great extent retrieve the disaster of the day.



dom, by the Liberal city of Seville. Authorized by the constitution to nominate three persons for the Senate, from whom the crown had to select one, Seville took effectual means to make good its desire to be represented by Lopez, by naming as his colleagues, in the nomination, two candidates whom it was impossible for the court to adopt, the one being the Infante Don Francisco de Paula, the uncle of the young Queen and brother of Don Carlos, and the other being a distinguished Carlist Bishop.

His office of Senator afforded General Lopez an opportunity of studying the politics of Spain, the spirit and action of its government, especially in reference to its American Colonies, (Cuba, his country by adoption and marriage, being the principal one,) which, amidst the clash and splendor of arms, he had never before possessed; and he willingly, for a while, forgot the latter, glorious as they had been to him, to avail himself of the advantageous facilities of his position for the former. Disgust and indignation were the first fruits; resolution to be the Liberator of Cuba, the next. The repulse of the Cuban deputies from their seats in the Cortes—a Cortes existing by virtue of a constitution which gave to those deputies the same rights with those whose votes repulsed them—had already awakened a deep feeling of resentment in his breast, as in that of all his Cuban compatriots. Though a soldier from childhood, he had never had other than an American heart, and he soon learned to regard with self-reproach his own glory acquired in the Spanish service, and to despise the glitter of his own uniform as a mere livery, no more honorable in his eyes than that which bedizened a rich man's negro *calesero* in his own country. Such thought in the breast of a man so honest in conviction, so resolute in will, and so fearless in execution, was no barren sentiment; and he deliberately determined to devote the rest of his life to the liberation of his country and the recovery of his own dignity,—measuring the latter by a far higher standard than the vulgar one of rank, military distinction, power or court favor. Resigning his seat as a Senator, he insisted with Espartero on being allowed to return to Havana; a permission which he did not obtain without extreme difficulty, nor till after long resistance on the part of the Regent, it being contrary to the jealous policy of Spain, in the government of her rich colony, the Queen of the Antilles, to allow any *American born* officer of rank or importance to go there. An intimate friendship with Espartero, the noble head of the Liberal or Progressist party in Spain, alone made practicable the importunity with which General Lopez insisted on his demand, which he even enforced by making it the alternative to a resignation of his commission;—and it cannot be denied that his own determined purpose in going, and the consequences which have resulted from it, prove clearly enough the policy of that rule, on the part of the Spanish Government, to which he thus succeeded in causing himself to be made the fatal exception.\*

General Valdez was at this time the Captain-General of Cuba, to

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\* Lopez's secret wishes and views, early adopted, had made him an object of at least so much suspicion, in reference to Cuba, that, several years before, by a proceeding emanating from Havana, and from Tacon, then Captain-General, he had been subjected to a formal trial on the charge of conspiring for the independence of that colony, and of having, at a dinner, proposed as a toast a sentiment to that effect. He succeeded, however, in baffling his enemies, and was acquitted.



which post he had been shortly before appointed, to a great extent through the influence of Lopez, who had urged it strongly as a means of affording to himself an opportunity of returning to Cuba with Valdez. The latter, as his most intimate and devoted friend, solicited permission that Lopez should accompany him, but without success; and it was not till several months afterwards that he finally effected his object, as before remarked, partly through his threat of resigning his commission and partly from the Regent's personal attachment.

It was, we believe, in 1839, that he returned to Cuba. During the period of the Captain-Generalship of Valdez, honor, friendship and gratitude combined, to require him to postpone any steps towards the accomplishment of the great purpose which never slept within his breast. The downfall of Espartero, and the restoration of Maria Cristina to power, supported by Narvaez and the army, by causing the recall of the virtuous Valdez, (who was succeeded by O'Donnell, the predecessor of the present, Roncali,) released him from the personal obligations by which at first he had felt himself fettered; and his friends in Havana were surprised at the evident content and cheerfulness with which he received a change of parties necessarily depriving him of the posts which he held in the military government of the Island. Under Valdez, he was Governor of Trinidad and Commander-in-Chief of the Central Department, as well as President of the Military Commission. He gladly laid down these posts on the arrival of the period of opportunity and freedom for which he had impatiently waited; and creating a pretext for returning to the Central Department in retirement, (retaining of course his position and rank as General, though not on duty,) by undertaking the working of an abandoned copper mine, he devoted himself mainly to his object of organizing preparations for his intended rising of the people against their oppressors;—an object which, it is scarcely needed to say, required extreme caution and tact as well as boldness, though he well knew that the general sentiment of the people was already strongly predisposed to a movement for independence. With this view he exerted himself in many ways to establish a personal popularity and personal relations, as extensively as possible with the country people of all the surrounding region, the *guajiros*; every one of whom is more accustomed to the saddle than to any other seat, so that they may be called a population of cavalry, whom a very little training under the inspiration of such a leader would make a mounted force inferior to none in the world. He employed every mode in his power to make himself personally familiar with them, to win their confidence and to attach them by services and favors;—an operation in which, always lavish and careless of money, he spent with an unreserved hand.

Among other modes of ploughing the ground for the harvest in his view, he made himself a volunteer dispenser of medicines and medical advice to the country people for many a league around, reposing his conscience on some French manuals of practice, and on some smattering of knowledge in that line, which was probably alone enough to place him "at the head of the profession" among the country practitioners of Cuba. In this way he established the most friendly relations with hundreds of families of the *guajiros* of the Centro.

Another mode adopted by him of bringing the country people toge-



ther and of mingling with them, was by making matches for cock-fighting at various points. This favorite popular amusement had been forbidden by the Government, for the purpose of preventing such gatherings of the country people; but having contrived to extort a license from O'Donnell for the occasion of the royal *fiestas* or holidays, though the latter had refused many other applications, he not only got up, with a few of his friends, a grand exhibition which brought together half the country, but he managed to keep it up for the year round at many different places, without being interfered with by the local authorities,—using the shade of some broad tree for the place for meeting. Mingling thus familiarly among the *guajiros*, in their own costume, and as one of themselves, he thus prepared them to be in readiness for the approaching day. Aided by the respect due to his rank, the brilliancy of his military reputation as the well-known bravest and boldest officer of Cuba, his generosity and character for humanity and good nature, he thus established an influence such, that he has always been confident that that whole region would rise at his voice, whenever he should summon the people to rally round the flag of liberty and independence.

Having determined early in 1848, that the proper time had arrived, he was only induced by some friends to postpone his intended rising for a short time, in order to await the results of some communications which had proceeded from a highly distinguished American officer in Mexico, who knew the state of public feeling in the Island. This delay led, through an accidental cause, to the discovery of his plan by the Government, and to the sudden arrest of his friends, and the consequent necessity, as explained at the beginning of this sketch, of his own precipitate embarkation for this country, from whose friendly shores he hoped soon to be able to return. His plan for Cuba has always been Independence and Annexation to the American Union. After his escape, he was condemned to death.\* Against the persons who had been arrested, (some of them perhaps with reason and some without,) no evidence existed, and the greater part were released,—some being sent out of the country.

The rest of General Lopez's life has to be written by a future biographer. To the slight outline we have here given, we will only add a few anecdotes illustrative of that enterprising fearlessness to which, united with a quick and keen perception, fertility of resources, knowledge of men and gift of command, are to be ascribed the rapid and brilliant honors of his military career; respecting which, the most extraordinary circumstance is, that while it was commenced perforce, and as the only chance for his life, his heart has never been in it, and he has never desired better than an opportunity of withdrawing altogether from the military profession itself.

On one occasion in South America, landing with an expedition, somewhat *à la* Cortez, in a wild and unexplored region, occupied by a highly warlike tribe of wild Indians (*Indios bravos*) who never had, nor ever

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\* Among his papers, seized by the government, was a letter to the queen, resigning his commission, which was to have been sent to the Captain-General a day or two before his rising. This has been described, by a friend who had seen it, as a very noble and beautiful production, finely reconciling the duty of military honor with that of patriotism.



have been tamed, and with whom they had a severe engagement on landing, the whole party came well nigh perishing for want of water. Striking into the interior in quest of water, after marching in a tropical climate for a whole day without finding stream or spring, they were at last approached, at about sunset, by an Indian warrior mounted on a magnificent horse, cream-colored, with black mane and feet. Lopez was in advance with a small column when the commander summoned him to consultation. The vessels from which they had landed the afternoon before had sailed, so that they had no return. A number had already died of exhaustion and thirst. They contrived to make the Indian understand their want, and he in turn conveyed to them that he could conduct them to water which they could reach by day-break. But here arose the perplexity, how far he was to be trusted. \* His purpose might be to decoy them away from the relief which they might otherwise perhaps find in the direction they were pursuing, and to lead them off astray to a certain and horrible fate. In the midst of this anxious uncertainty Lopez solved the difficulty in a mode little likely to occur to another, by proposing to mount himself behind the Indian, on the powerful and fresh horse of the latter, and to go at the utmost speed in quest of the water, to verify what was understood from the signs of the Indian; telling the commander that if he returned all would of course be well, while if he did not return it would prove that he was killed, that the Indian was playing false, and that therefore they should in that case infer, that, by pushing on in the direction they were going, they would probably find relief. The offer was accepted, and his companions remained on the spot to await the result, all the bands of discipline being meanwhile wholly relaxed. As it resulted, the Indian conducted him truly, though of course Lopez had to plunge into the depths of the forest and of the night, mounted behind a guide who might lead him only into the midst of enemies. He reached the water, returned, and by conducting them to it saved the lives of the whole expedition. It proved that the Indian was of a tribe hostile to those against whose territory the expedition was proceeding. Some of his wives had been carried off on a foray, and he was in pursuit of them when he came upon the strangers whom he supposed of course the enemies of his enemies, and therefore his friends. The Indian Orpheus was rewarded not only by the recovery of his two or three lost Eurydices, but by liberal presents, and he afterwards proved a serviceable guide.

The occasion on which he received the cross of San Fernando, above alluded to, was as follows. Morillo, at the head of a force of seven or eight thousand men, was pursuing the Patriot army of Paez, numbering about 3,000, over the *llanos* or plains of Venezuela, trying in vain to bring the latter to an engagement. This the latter had of course no difficulty in avoiding, his whole force consisting of first-rate cavalry, while the Spanish army was mainly infantry. Lopez was at this period, as has been above mentioned, at the head of a picked squadron, reserved for decisive moments, with which it was a point of honor never to turn their backs. He had lost half of it in a severe engagement that morning, and with the rest, thirty-eight in number, was marching on the extreme flank of the army, when he received an order from the general to gallop forward and harass the rear of Paez's retreating army. Morillo had not recognised, at the distance, the fragment which remained of Lopez's squadron; which he would never otherwise have sent on such a service, especially after the morning's work. Rash as the order was, it was of



course obeyed. On the perfectly level prairie which was the scene of the operation, what ensued was in view of both armies. Paez, provoked at the insolence of this little squadron, halted, and put himself in person at the head of a splendid corps of about 300 men, his guard, the well-known flower of his army, in scarlet uniforms, and every man superbly mounted; and this corps was seen to detach itself from the main body and rapidly approach the little band, whose destruction seemed inevitable before the swoop of that force. Lopez asked his men if they would stand or turn. The reply was that they would do as he should. His answer was to fling himself from his horse, and command them to do the same, thus *burning his ships*; and then to form his men in line, to stand their ground as long as they could with the lances and carbines which were their arms. He thus repulsed the charge of Paez and his guard, refusing to surrender, and maintaining himself till Morillo could hasten up his cavalry to their support, and till the able Paez, with whom his retreat was of much more importance than the annihilation of this handful of gallant fellows, whom none admired more than himself, withdrew his guard, and left Lopez, with what remained of his dismounted squadron, to receive the cordial embraces of his General, and the plaudits of the whole army, who had witnessed the scene.

On another occasion, in the Carlist War in Navarre, he saved the Commander-in-Chief, General Valdez, to whom he was at the time Aide-de-Camp, and a division of his army, under the following circumstances. Valdez had allowed himself to be surprised with only a small part of his army, in a village named Durango, where he had established his head-quarters; the rest of the army being scattered in various directions on different services. Suddenly, through one of those rapid movements of concentration which marked the system of warfare of Zumalacarregui, the celebrated Carlist Commander-in-Chief,\* he found

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\* Zumalacarregui was a truly great man, and Queen Isabella II. probably owes the throne to which she does so little credit to the chance ball that killed this famous chief on the balcony of a house in Bilboa. Zumalacarregui told Lord Elliott, (the English envoy who mediated between the two parties to restore that dreadful civil war to the rules of civilized warfare,) that Lopez was the only one of the Cristino officers whom he at all feared, "*because he always did what he said he would.*" One thing which Lopez effected, greatly annoyed and puzzled the Carlist commander, no other of the Cristino Generals being able to do the same, though several of the latter were natives of the region in question,—this was to organize and keep on foot a Navarrese corps. (the population of Navarre being all devoted Carlists.) Lopez managed to keep up a body of 370 of these, whom he treated with great favor and confidence, making them even his body-guard. They were well known as "*los Colorados de Lopez,*" "*Lopez's Reds,*" from the color of their uniform. Among Gen. Lopez's papers, is an interesting letter from the great Carlist commander. On the taking of a certain town, Lopez protected the life of a wounded Carlist soldier, a Navarrese, who was found in it, and whom the Cristinos were about to dispatch, according to the polite custom of the country and time. Lopez sent him to his own quarters, and thence to another town to be tended and cured. Some months after, the man being now quite restored to health, and leading a very comfortable life under the protection he had received, (practising his trade as a shoemaker,) he was brought to the attention of Lopez who had forgotten all about him, and the latter sent for him, hoping to find in him a recruit for his *Colorados*. He began by asking him what excuse he (L.) could have now that the other was cured, for not letting him be shot, since it was only his being wounded before, which had enabled him to save him. This was rather an embarrassing question. General Lopez then went on to ask, if he were free now, where of all places would he prefer to go, and what to do? The man answered, frankly and boldly, that he would prefer to go and join his old company among the Carlists; a reply which so pleased Lopez that he at once despatched him with a courteous letter to Zum-



himself surrounded in every direction with greatly superior forces. Durango was situated in a valley, encompassed with hills of moderate elevation, of which the enemy suddenly took possession. Escape seemed impossible; a bird alone, as it seemed, could carry the intelligence to the nearest Cristino division, stationed at Ermoa, ten or twelve miles distant, so as to summon it to the rescue. Colonel Lopez, however, volunteered to do it, claiming it as his duty and right as first Aide-de-Camp, and pledged himself to bring up the division at Ermoa. The Commander-in-Chief, though regarding the attempt as desperate, yet yielding to his demand, told him he might then take what force he required for the purpose. "I could not do it with the half of the division," was the answer, "but let me have your piebald horse, which you bought on my advice." It was brought, and Lopez mounted it, taking with him only his orderly, (a fellow on whom he could rely to follow him over and through any thing,) the latter being mounted on Lopez's own favorite charger. Directing him to keep close to him, and to regulate his pace by his own, and, since it was not likely that both would escape, instructing him as to the order to be carried to Ermoa, he set out at full speed from Durango, along a road which passed between two eminences, both occupied by the enemy. Slackening then his speed, as he got well clear of the former place, and approached the enemy, but riding with entire confidence, he and his companion presented the appearance of deserters; and two squadrons which had at first detached themselves from the enemy on both sides to intercept them, slackened the pace at which they moved down upon the road for that purpose. He then, with a nice calculation of the distance at which he might venture it, suddenly clapped spurs to his horse, and rushed through the shower of balls which immediately poured down from both sides and in pursuit, cleared the gauntlet before they could cut him off, and the thing was done. In the words of Valdez's certification, "to the astonishment of the enemy, and of the army, both of whom were watching the operation, he traversed the line," and the army was saved.

In all the acts of heroic daring on the part of Lopez which are familiarly current among the Spanish soldiers, and which, together with his humanity, kindness, and freedom from the arrogant pride habitual to the Spanish officers, have made him so popular with them, it is to be remarked, that the boldness is never recklessness, but is always elicited by a worthy occasion, and combined with that quick and acute calculation of the possibility which is the essence of military genius.

We are unwilling to omit an incident in the military life of General Lopez, in which our readers will not fail to recognise the "high Roman fashion." Together with a large number of others, he was at one time a prisoner in the hands of the Carlists, at a place named Cantavieja, a fortified place in the depths of the mountains of Arragon, which was supposed a safe place of custody. There were about seven hundred prisoners collected there. Lopez was the highest in rank among the prisoners,

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álacarregui, relating exactly what had passed, and adding that he sent him back the man, free to join his old company, as a mark of respect for the man and for him (Zumalacarregui.) Zumalacarregui replied quite magnificently, in a very courteous letter, that he would not be outdone in generosity by General Lopez, and accordingly, in return for his present, sent him back *seven* Cristino prisoners, free to join their companies. Perhaps the incident helped to throw a little light, in the mind of the Carlist chief, upon the mystery how General Lopez was able to keep up a corps of Navarrese, and even to trust himself so unreservedly to them as his body-guard.



and was confined in a small room apart from the rest, with four other superior officers. The governor of the place was a brutal and bloody wretch, who lost no opportunity of outraging his prisoners. He was greatly enraged when a Cristino army, under General San Miguel, now one of the most respectable officers in Spain, began to approach the place to besiege it, overcoming, by extreme exertions, the difficulties which had been supposed to make it inaccessible. The governor thereupon declared that the first gun fired against the place should be the signal for the death of all the prisoners in it, from General Lopez down, (an act perfectly in accordance with the system of war of Cabrera, who commanded for Don Carlos in that quarter;) and offered Lopez permission to write to San Miguel to that effect,—in the belief, of course, that he would dissuade him from the enterprise. Lopez accordingly wrote, indeed, simply mentioning the fact which he had been requested by the governor to communicate, but adding, that General San Miguel would of course carry out his own plans, without regard to this circumstance, which was, moreover, a proof that the governor was afraid that he would not be able to maintain the place against the apprehended siege. San Miguel at length made his appearance before Cantavieja, and began to throw up his siege works. The governor then went to the room in which Lopez was confined, and told him that he deeply deplored the necessity under which he was now placed, of ordering the execution of the prisoners, but offered them another chance, by saying that General Lopez might go out to San Miguel's camp, to explain in person the state of things, so as to induce the latter to withdraw; giving his word of honor that he would return immediately. Lopez accepted the offer, and presenting himself to San Miguel and his officers, who welcomed him as a favorite friend, sat down to a cheerful breakfast, at which he explained the errand on which he had been sent. He executed it, however, in his own way, by advising San Miguel of the best mode of attacking the town by storm, giving him the benefit of the observations he had been able to make of its defenses inside; and it was agreed that the attack should be made the next day. The prisoners had contrived to obtain the promise of some forty muskets from some of the Navarrese soldiers in the place, with which they would make at least some resistance to the amiable purpose of the governor; a resistance which might thus afford a useful diversion during the attack. This being all discussed, together with the breakfast, Lopez rose to depart, which he was not suffered to do till he had overpowered the chorus of opposition he encountered, by the declaration of his inflexible resolution. The governor confessed himself very much astonished to see him back. The town was vigorously attacked the next day, and taken by assault; the prisoners escaping the impending fate, (which, by-the-way, a certain *cura*, or priest, who was one of the principal Carlist officers in the garrison, was the most eager to inflict,) by the rapidity of the operation, and the terror with which the garrison were impressed. "They had no time, and they were afraid of reprisals, that was all," was General Lopez's modest commentary, on a recent occasion, when the inquiries of some friends (who happened to observe on his table a letter directed to General San Miguel at Madrid) elicited the particulars of this story, in which we see at least a ray of the classic glory of Regulus, though he himself was the only one who saw nothing in it remarkable.

We will mention but one other incident in the career of this extraordinary and noble man, for the purpose of exhibiting his practical aptitude



for the direction of popular masses, as well as for military command. Before the expulsion of Maria Cristina from the Regency, when the Liberal Exaltado party had become indignant at the course and indications of the Government, (it being believed that negotiations were on foot for a coalition between her and Don Carlos, through the means of a marriage of the young queen with his son,) and when the people were especially exasperated at the feebleness with which the war was conducted on the part of the *Moderado* government, Lopez happened to be passing through Valencia, accompanied by a single friend, on his way to the army in Catalonia, to which he had been ordered. It was at a period when the Carlist General, Cabrera, was raging through that region. Lopez was a total stranger in Valencia, where he had no other personal acquaintance than the Captain-General, Mendez Vigo. Spending the evening at the theatre, he heard in his place vague reports of some commotion among the people, of which the Captain-General, to whom he spoke about it, made light. After a short time, however, the latter rose and left his box. Ten minutes had not elapsed before an aide-de-camp came in, pale and excited, and whispering, as he passed, to Lopez, that the Captain-General had been killed by the populace, hastened to escort the wife of the latter, ignorant of her husband's fate, to the government palace. General Lopez, in pursuance of his military duty, proceeded there also, and thence to the citadel, whither the authorities of the city had already hastened, and placed himself at their disposal. The general cause of the outbreak was the popular discontent with the Government and its agents in Valencia; its immediate cause, the recent butchery of sixty Valencian patriots by Cabrera in a horrible manner, and the refusal of the authorities in command to make reprisals on the Carlist prisoners in the gaol in the citadel, or to act with energy in the prosecution of the war. The national guard constituted the bulk of the insurgents, whose numbers by the next morning were said to have swelled to thirty or forty thousand infuriated men, who threatened to attack the citadel, demanding, as the first concession to their vengeance, the heads of two or three of the principal and most obnoxious authorities, and the lives of the Carlist prisoners, and then active measures against Cabrera. On learning that General Lopez was in the citadel, whom they well knew by reputation though he had never before been in the place, the leaders of the populace expressed themselves willing that everything should be placed in his hands and under his command. The trembling authorities entreated him to comply with this demand, and to assume the supreme authority of the revolted city, to which he at length consented, as a duty of necessity as well as humanity. Sallying forth alone, in consequence, he soon found himself in the midst of a crowd, raging and shouting around him in deafening and utterly unmanageable confusion, insisting first on the heads of the victims. A den full of hungry and howling lions affords a feeble idea of a Valencian mob on such an occasion, and on that occasion. A sign of faltering would have been fatal. Lopez could only at last by dint of oaths, violence, and even blows, clear a sufficient space around him for intelligible conference with the leaders; and he then insisted that he would assume the command and government of the city only on condition of implicit obedience to all his directions, the first of which was, that every man should immediately retire to his home; that if they were to govern him, instead of his governing them, he would return to the citadel, or they might kill him on the spot, as they had done the



Captain-General. He prevailed, and order was restored,—though he has often remarked that, active as has been his military service, this was the most intense crisis, and the most anxious moment, of his life. The obnoxious individuals of the government he contrived to get out of the way; and in regard to the prisoners, he procured from the authorities the names of all the malefactors under sentence of death, of whom there happened to be a large number, fourteen, already doomed to a fate which was only anticipated a little by executing them as Carlist prisoners, so as to appease the first thirst of the mob for their vengeance; and he then turned their attention into the channel of vigorous preparation for the reception of Cabrera, who was near and threatening the city.

In the anomalous situation into which necessity had thus thrown him, as the apparent head of a rebellion against the government, while he had only accepted the helm in a hurricane amidst the rocks, to steer the ship to safety and calm again, he was denounced at Madrid, where his democratic principles had already made him an object of jealousy and fear; and the general commanding a neighbouring division of the army approached the city, summoning him to submission. He replied by explaining privately the truth of his position, adding, at the same time, that if the other approached nearer he would defend the city with the people, disclaiming responsibility for the consequences. He thus restored tranquillity, and satisfied the people; and to complete the system of his measures urged the general, (who had recognised the propriety of Lopez's course, and had then been admitted into Valencia,) to proceed at once to attack Cabrera. The latter refused, pleading want of sufficient force. "How much more would suffice to put you in sufficient force?" "Two thousand men," was the answer. "Well, you shall have them to-morrow." "But where are they to come from?" "I will furnish them from the people of Valencia." "Nonsense, national guards, volunteers, good for nothing." "I will command them myself, and be responsible that they shall be the most effective force of your army." The proposition was at length accepted, and the battalion was organized, to the number of 3,000, in one evening and night, ready to march the next morning. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed, and it was a contest who should be admitted into the battalion. Cabrera was pursued, brought to action, and completely routed,—the Valencians having, in effect, done the best part of the work. After this, there was no further trouble with them; and Lopez resigned his singular dictatorship, which he had held, independent of the authority of the Government, on a tenure of quasi-revolution, for about a month, and went on his way to his original destination. The Commander-in-Chief, in sending to the Government the account of the battle, recommended, as usual, a great number of decorations and promotions, through all the grades of the victorious army, beginning with a recommendation of the Grand Cross of "Isabella Catolica" for General Lopez. From the disposition of the Court at that time towards him, that recommendation was the single one not accepted; which elicited from the Commander-in-Chief the reply to the Ministry of War, that if it had on the contrary rejected all the rest, and accepted that one alone, it would have been more just; for that neither would the battle have been fought without General Lopez, nor without him would it have been won.

A nobler laurel still, than that of any of his military honors, is due to General Lopez, for the well known character which attached to him in Cuba, as one to whom a tale of wrong or oppression was never told with-



out the certainty of finding him willing to hear, quick to sympathize, and never backward in exertions to redress. While Valdez was Captain-General, he was the channel for most of the petitions and complaints of all kinds, which ascended from the unfortunate and the poor, to the supreme power. On one occasion, with O'Donnell, Valdez's successor, when, by persistence, he had induced the Captain-General to revoke an oppressive decision which he had just made, in the case of a poor old widow applying for a pension, Lopez told him that he (O'Donnell) must bear with him, for that, under his predecessor, he had many a time twenty-five cases in a day, in which he had to urge the petitions of the poor, who made him their advocate, and he produced an appalling list of memoranda of cases which he had then been solicited to present. Not unfrequently has he been known to make journeys from the interior (the Central Department) to Havana, for the sole purpose of claiming justice for a poor *guajiro*, improperly imprisoned or otherwise wronged. And in the army the common soldier always knew General Lopez as a sure friend, to whom he would never have to look in vain for justice or generosity. The truth is, that, combining readily with a very kindly disposition, his democratic principles have naturally generated an habitual sympathy with the poor and the oppressed, which an earnest and resolute energy of character has ever tended to make practical and active. On one occasion, when reproved by the Captain-General, Valdez, for descending from the dignity of his rank, in appearing as the defender of a subordinate officer, before a court-martial composed of members of corresponding grade, his reply was, "that any court representing the law and the dignity of justice, was far above his or any other military rank; and moreover, that if his general's *faja* (sash) was to forbid his defending the cause of the humblest soldier whom he believed to be wronged, he would throw it off, and prefer to return to the rank of lieutenant:" a reply which Valdez afterwards acknowledged to have been right, and to have raised still higher the attachment and respect in which he had always held General Lopez.

This is the man who (not without the aid of some Cuban patriots in civil life, some of whose names are before the world, others, not less worthy, being necessarily reserved,) has undertaken the noble mission of emancipating Cuba from the yoke and the abomination of Spanish tyranny, with a view to her entrance into our Union. North and south, east and west, we apprehend there are few who will not wish the movement God-speed. That the people of Cuba are themselves anxious for it, is a truth familiar to us through many accumulated evidences. If any one could doubt it, the one simple fact, that *only one lady attended the Queen's Birth-night ball*, in the city of Matanzas, last October, (and that lady the wife of an official,) would suffice to prove the unanimity of the public sentiment, especially when we regard the time and circumstances under which the brave beauties of Matanzas dared to make so open a demonstration. General Lopez's *prestige* with the army, together with its discontent, also well known, added to the popularity which he possesses with the country people, especially of the Central Department of the Island, will probably make the movement a rapid and easy one, whenever he may think it the proper time to make a voyage to Cuba;—if indeed he still contemplates such a voyage, at some future day, when, under an administration less sympathetic with every anti-popular cause, he may not find the Navy of the United States applied to the inglorious service of the blockade of our own shores.