

CUBAN AFFAIRS.

ARRIVAL OF THE MORRO CASTLE.

The steamship *Morro Castle*, from Havana Dec. 5, reached this port yesterday. By the courtesy of Purser R. W. ALBERT our Havana correspondence was promptly at hand. Our special representative's letter follows:

The Great Battle at Tacuayabon—The Havana Railroad—Spanish Generals—Confiscation—Prisoners for Spain—Extracts from the Voz—The Havana Consulate—War News.

From Our Own Correspondent.

HAVANA, Saturday, Dec. 4, 1869.

The burning of Tacuayabon, accounts of which I furnished in one of my last letters, is still a subject of comment. I now let my informants, who are well known to me and whose veracity is undoubted, being in addition, corroborated by the letter of your Remedios correspondent, tell their own story. It begins with this startling announcement:

The town of Tacuayabon is not now and never has been a town, or even village, but only a stray collection of huts and about ten buildings of larger proportions, whose united values would not amount to \$15,000. This town, the assertions of the Havana journals notwithstanding, was never burned by the insurgents, and no attempt made by them to do so. My informants were in the town and on a neighboring plantation, when they saw the keeper of the railroad station running in hot haste toward the settlement, shouting at the top of his voice that thousands of insurgents were coming, whereupon all the available fighting men of the settlement took refuge in a very strong stone house, swearing by the honor of Spain that they would die defending the country. Minutes passed, and no enemy yet; herosm began to pale before prudence and several volunteers, accompanied by a few boys, went toward the station, where not a single insurgent was to be seen. When they had gained a little confidence several shots were fired from the bushes, and all ran helter-skelter toward the settlement. At the same time fire was seen to issue from the station house, and stray shots followed the volunteers, who by this time had reached the settlement, and had begun to fortify themselves in a stone house. Two boys were killed and two volunteers wounded; a few insurgents were seen about the burning station house, which, with a few adjoining houses, was completely destroyed. The adjoining houses were inhabited by the Chinese laborers of the railway, on whom the loss falls severely, as three cotton shirts and six pair of pants (somewhat the worse for wear) were completely destroyed. As the houses were built of home materials, palm and banana leaves, the amount of actual loss is much less, and they were all rebuilt in about two hours."

The other heroic deeds performed by both parties have been duly chronicled by the *Diario* and the Cuban sympathizers. My informants unfortunately saw nothing of what the above-named champions relate, and are reluctantly compelled to acknowledge that they fear that neither party would employ them as war correspondents.

THE HAVANA RAILROAD.

for many years under the management of ALDAMA, the present President of the Cuban Junta, who was generally considered a well-meaning but very careless man, has for years been in a very equivocal position. Running through the wealthiest portion of the Island of Cuba, enjoying even a monopoly of the carrying trade in many rich sugar districts, it nevertheless failed to pay dividends to its stockholders. Some months ago, the Government took the road in its own hands, appointing General CLARIJO its manager, aided by some of the stockholders as directors. The Treasury of the island presented a claim of \$260,000, alleged to be due for taxes, duties, &c., and accepted as valid by the former directors. General CLARIJO demanded two months to examine the books and claims. This time was granted, and the result has been that the road not only owes nothing to the Treasury, but that the Treasury is indebted to the road to the tune of \$98,000 for carrying mails, troops, &c. On Thursday the directors held a meeting declaring a dividend of four per cent., and they stated that within a very short time they expected to declare another dividend. No matter what the political sentiments of the Cubans may be who own stock in this road, they are perfectly content to have a Spanish patriot, who declares dividends, to manage the road, instead of a Cuban patriot who does the contrary.

CONFISCATION.

The confiscation or embargo of estates and other property belonging to revolutionary Cubans still continues. The Commission have been enlarged by the appointment of the following well-known gentlemen, those in italics being wealthy and influential Cubans siding with the Spaniards: *Pedro Montalvo*, J. Y. ZANGRANIZ, JULIAN ALVAREZ, J. E. MORE, *Manuel de Armas*, N. TRANCOSO and *M. Ajuria*. The furniture of the ALDAMA and DELMONTE families continues to be offered at auction, and the Aldama plantations are now guarded by Matanzas volunteers to prevent accidents, such as burning the cane and sugar houses. These plantations produce about 60,000 boxes of sugar annually. If the Government can secure the crops of these and other confiscated plantations, a great deal of money will be saved to the taxpayers toward paying the expenses of the war. The Captain-General has ordered that \$9,000 be paid monthly out of the revenues derived from confiscated properties to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bayamo, to attend to the necessities of the poor in that jurisdiction.

ON TO SPAIN

and to prisons is the watchward of the Spaniards against all those who are considered disaffected or enemies to the Government. Colonel UPUETA, who surrendered the town of Bayamo to the Cubans, and who was sentenced to imprisonment by order of a court martial, went by the last mail steamer to serve out his time in Spain. Seven more went by the same steamer, among them Mr. ADOLFO MOLINER, a Cuban planter, who was arrested at 3 in the afternoon and left at 5. Mr. MOLINER, although a member of the volunteer force, and apparently only anxious to make plenty of sugar, has long been suspected. The real cause of his transportation has not transpired, but the *Voz de Cuba* undoubtedly referred to his case in the following very significant article:

"We know that owing to different causes foreign to the present question there are in Cuba many insurgents whom the people qualify as sympathizers, who live among us, shake hands with us, hold lucrative positions, carry the national cockade proudly, and contribute to patriotic subscriptions, make numerous protests of flaming Spanishism, while remaining, nevertheless, our worst and most dangerous enemies."

Speaking of a probable rupture between Spain and the United States, the same journal says:

"The Spaniards have suffered and will suffer much, but what are these sufferings when we are sure of saving our national honor? We may sustain some losses, but the Americans would lose honor and interest at the same time, and if the God of battles should abandon (which is improbable) the cause of right and reason to give the victory to the iniquitous and unjust, Spain can always talk like FRANCIS I. after the battle of Padua. But what would the American Union say if the fate of arms should be against her? Where could she hide her shame and dishonor?"

Within the past few days the *Voz* has moderated its tone considerably, and appears to be ashamed of having indulged in such braggadocio.

THE HAVANA CONSULATE

has again undergone a change, owing to the resignation of Mr. PLUMB and the temporary appointment of Mr. HALL, the efficient Consul at Matanzas, whose permanent appointment by the President is desired by the mercantile community and all American citizens. The course of Mr. PLUMB during his term of office has been most admirable, and might be taken as a model for all Consuls in foreign countries. Unostentatious and gentlemanly, he has exercised more influence than any previous Consul. The respectable and neutral portion of our population

regrets him; those who hate men who are accustomed to act as gentlemen and to tell the truth under all circumstances, are glad of his departure. Mr. PLUMB's administration has been a stormy one, and he has succeeded in obtaining the liberty of more Americans by ex-official interference than the public at large would suppose. Mr. HALL, his temporary successor, is a man of great experience, and has had quite a lengthy residence in Cuba.

WAR NEWS.

The Spanish war steamer *Guadalquivir* having on board a part of the volunteer battalion recently organized in Havana and Matanzas, known as Cazadores de Valmaseda, entered the port of Cienfuegos on the 28th ult. These troops formed part of the forces employed in the much-talked-of search through the Cienaga de Zapata after rebels that were not there. The *Guadalquivir* received them Cochino Bay, an anchorage immediate to the ground where the hunt took place. The result of only a few days campaigning was astonishing—clothes torn to shreds, some men left minus one shoe, others with none at all; Panama hats, the brims of which had been left hanging on the bushes in the swamp. A few heroes had even lost their guns in the mire. The difficulties that might present themselves to one passing through Montezuma Swamp in New-York, or the low lands that border the Kankakee River in Northern Indiana, are as nothing compared with La Cienaga de Zapata, so the poor success of the Spaniards in beating the ground for rebel game is not to be wondered at.

El Voluntario, a journal published at Manzanilla, notices the capture of the insurgent partisan Don MANUEL CODENA, a person who, on account of his great wealth and intelligence, exerted much influence in the rebel ranks. In the Santa Clara District a detachment of the volunteer battalion, Tiradores de la Patria, surprised and took at the point of the bayonet (i. e., after the rebels, in accordance with their usual tactics, had vacated the premises) an insurgent encampment. They killed two men, and captured four guns and six horses. The Spaniards continued the pursuit and routed about 400 insurrectionists under command of VILLAMIL and ROLOR from another fortified camp. These were seen to carry off their wounded. The volunteers lost one killed and had a man bruised. A company of regular troops reconnoitering the Maguez hills, killed one rebel and captured eight horses. Another detachment of troops not far from Santa Clara, at a point known as La Sierra, after a sharp skirmish, took and destroyed a rebel camp, killing three and wounding several. Seven insurgents presented themselves to the authorities of St. Clara within the past week. The telegraph lines forming part of the central *red* through this district are being repaired and put in working order. In the sugar estate Fortuna, ten armed men repulsed a large squad of insurgents, killing and wounding several. Several estates in this jurisdiction were fired last week, but the guards succeeded in putting out the fires before any serious damage had been done. At San Juan y Martinez two volunteers were murdered at their homes. This crime, of course laid at the door of the insurgents, is attributable most likely to motives of personal revenge. Day before yesterday the partisan LUIS CANALLO, with four of his men, gave themselves up to the officer in command at Villa Clara.

SANCTI ESPIRITUS.

Letters notice the capture, by a company of contra guerillas, under command of Major HILARIO DE SANDOVAL, of two encampments where several rebels were killed and many arms, twenty horses, and eleven insurgents were captured, including a leader, CEPADA. A few days later the same officer took another camp, where he found forty horses, a large quantity of salt, provisions, &c. The writer of the letter adds that insurgents in small parties are presenting themselves daily to the officer commanding at Sancti Espiritus. The Remedios journals have in their columns of local news, among other items, some relating to the burning of the sugar estates of Don PELAYO VIGIL, Donna GERTRUDES PALMERA DE BONACHEA, Señor GARCIA Y LAREDO. The rural Police of Remedios captured a few days ago a party of runaway Chinese, eighty in all, half of whom managed to escape; the remainder were taken to Remedios, and their only reply to all questions asked was "*No sabi*," "I don't know." Perfect Chinese know-nothings were they, evidently. On the surroundings of

TRINIDAD

fires were occurring almost daily in the cane fields of the various sugar estates, but as all of them have more or less volunteers as guards the fires are generally extinguished before much damage was done. The insurgents hardly ever succeed in firing the building, their endeavors being confined to the cane fields on the outskirts of the estates, and as yet the cane is too green to burn well.

MISCELLANEOUS GOSSIP.

Official notice has been given of the reopening to the public of the telegraph line as far east as Remedios. Several steamers with troops from Spain are expected to arrive in this port to-day, and great preparations are being made to receive them. General CARBO, second in command, leaves to-day or to-morrow to assume command of the troops, some 15,000 in all, operating in the jurisdiction of Cienco Villas. General CARBO is known to be energetic and honest, so much is expected of him. The family of the Captain-General and several hundred soldiers arrived to-day in the Spanish mail steamer. All passes granted to travel about the island have been recalled for inspection, in order to discover the persons who sold or gave their papers to the insurgents. The shares of the Spanish Bank sell at from 15 to 18 per cent. premium; the notes of the bank are at a discount of 2½ per cent. against gold. The monthly circular of SOSAT & USLAR, Cardenas, speaking of the crops, says:

"For several reasons the sugar campaign of 1869-70 is commencing earlier than we are accustomed to. The unfavorable rainy weather during the last crop season did not allow many of our planters to work all their standing cane, which they now hasten to do, the weather being favorable and the yield good. Although the insurrection, which so far has hardly done any injury to this district, appears to be dying out gradually, the apprehensions for confiscations on the sugar estates have not been removed, and their owners are anxious to secure of their crops as much as possible before the approach of the dry season, when the burning of cane fields is not an unusual thing, and less with the circumstances we labor under. The yield is satisfactory, and although many planters complain of the harm the dry weather of the last months has done them, the prospects on the whole are favorable, and we have hopes of a good average crop in this jurisdiction."

QUASIMODO.