

More Reinforcements to Aid the Spanish Army.

Valmaseda's Cries for Men Answered.

American Machinery to be Prohibited by the Spaniards.

The steamship Morro Castle, from Havana December 25, arrived at this port last evening. Purser Albert will receive thanks for favors received.

The Arrival of Troops and Their Reception—Numbers Since October—The Island to be Made Spanish—Hurrying Reinforcements to the Field—News from the Insurrection—Insurgent Account of the Las Tunas Affair—Burning of Estates—Sequestrations.

HAVANA, Dec. 25, 1899.

Volunteers from Spain continue to arrive and to be received with many honors and some enthusiasm. The reception awarded the Second battalion of Catalans on Sunday last by far exceeded all previous ones. A grand triumphal car, parties in the costumes of the provinces on foot and horseback and national dances formed features of the procession, which occupied more than an hour in passing a given point. On the following day, the 20th, they sailed on board the steamer Motezuma for Santiago de Cuba, from whence Valmaseda is loudly calling for reinforcements, and if the fate of those who preceded them is any criterion, sickness and death await them. A part of the Second battalion, from Barcelona, which arrived on Saturday last and also took part in the festivities, are awaiting the arrival of the balance, and will then sail on the Francisco de Borja for the same point. On the 21st arrived the man-of-war Navas de Tolosa, bringing of officers and men a total of 1,341. The number arrived since October is placed at 17,000, and more are on the way. This number is somewhat above the mark, but is approximately correct. The determination as expressed here is to have out from the Peninsula all that is necessary for the suppression of the insurrection, and not only this, but to prevent the possibility of another. The very great proportion of the volunteers coming out do not intend in any case to return. They are composed of men of desperate fortunes, few of them having any relations with home which bind, with whom any change is necessarily an improvement, and with these it is calculated, following the war, will be created a Spanish element so preponderating as will prevent any outbreak in the future. On the other hand the Cubans insist that these men make the worse possible soldiers, that their allegiance to the government is and always will be doubtful, that in sending them out Spain is giving but another evidence of her weakness, and that the island is surely slipping from her grasp. Whatever the future may determine, it is certain they are hurried off to the field with remarkable celerity to fill up the gaps made by sickness and the bullets of the Cubans.

The almost frantic haste with which reinforcements are being sent to Valmaseda in the Eastern department confirms the reports of your correspondents concerning the ill success of Spanish operations against the insurgents in the "mogote." Official and other papers too are silent concerning them—another confirmation of the same thing. Since the date of my last we have no further details from there.

Telegrams from the Cinco Villas report a fight between the Spaniards and the insurgents under Villamil. The former consisted of a detachment of the civil guard, volunteers, vascongudos and those of Manicaragua. The result is not stated further than that forty-two insurgents were killed and 120 horses captured. In commenting upon the affair the journals parade the "glories of Spain" and the national integrity, the usual substitute for lack of details. Other encounters are mentioned, and in all eighty-one deaths are claimed. Numbers are presenting themselves, "and the leaders, abandoned by their deluded followers, are endeavoring to make the way to Camaguey," says the account, which is born. For a day or two previous to the arrival of the telegram a report was in circulation that General Carbo, commanding in the Cinco Villas, had been whipped, and the Cubans insist that such is the case.

Small encounters reported from Trinidad. A party had set fire to the tile works situated in the Villa Llucci, and to the estate Valle. The estates San Isidro Gutra and Araca Riquelme had also suffered to a small extent from incendiaries. On the 14th an attempt was made to fire the buildings on the estate of Dr. D. Ramon Torrado y Quiroga, but no great injury was done. The night of the 16th the dwelling house of the estate Coromela, situated one league from Santa Clara, was burned. The incendiaries carried off the hands, so they should not extinguish the fire, placing them at liberty a quarter of a league from the occurrence. They also set fire to the estate of Viejo de los Apren, burning the sugar mill and five hogheads of sugar. A number of houses in Agota, one league from Santa Clara, were also burned. The estate of Donna Bibiana Fernandez, in the same jurisdiction, has been completely destroyed, together with forty-five hogheads of muscovado and eleven of molasses. An attempt to fire the field failed, as the cane would not burn. One of the city papers publishes a captured letter from an insurgent officer to a friend, dated October 22, 1899. In reference to the Las Tunas affair it says:—"Our forces numbered 800 and the Spaniards 600. They were strongly intrenched, but it did not avail them. The attack continued for ten hours; we burned nearly the whole town, and failed to take it because our ammunition gave out. The Spaniards lost 250 men, including 105 prisoners, who gave the cry of 'Cuba libre'; four banners and 800 arms were captured. On our side we lost twenty-four killed and eighty-seven wounded. The Habaneros behaved beautifully."

The steamer Guipuzcoa, which recently arrived from Spain, brought a decree of the government granting the title of Ciudad Invicta to the city of Manzanillo, and Muy Ilustre to the municipality.

There is some reason to suppose that the *Voz de Cuba* will shortly suspend publication for want of support. Though one of the most bigoted of Spanish journals, it is, in the matter of enterprise, a long way ahead of its old foggy contemporaries, and its suspension would be a source of regret.

The Committee on Festivities are preparing for a grand celebration on the arrival of the gunboats.

The property of the following persons has been confiscated:—D. Manuel Pascual, Antonio M. Roz and Pablo Perez, now working for the insurrection in New York; and Juan Mendive, Jose Valdes Pauli and Pedro Martin Rivero, the first in Paris and the last two in New York.

The following disposition has been made of political prisoners, subjected to Council of War:—D. Jose Luis Aguilera, sent to Peninsula; D. Joaquin Maria Carmona, to change residence in the island; Juan Ramon Tehada.

The Duties on "Centrifugal Sugars"—Reported Decision of the New York Collector—Excitement Among the Sugar Buyers—It is Happily Allayed—What Constitutes Refined Sugars—The New Tar.

HAVANA, Dec. 23, 1899.

There has been much excitement in business circles here for the past few days, owing to a telegram from New York announcing that all sugars purged by the centrifugal process were, according to a decision of the Collector of the Port of New York, to be regarded as refined, and the duty of five cents per pound henceforward collected instead of three and one-half cents, as heretofore. Happily later information states that the government will not collect such additional duty, and the ordinary transactions—for the moment suspended—are going on as usual.

The decision as originally announced was regarded as resulting from the influence of the refiners, who were accused of endeavoring to bring about such interpretation of the law of June 30, 1884, as would throw all imported sugars into their hands, and great indignation was manifested. The native and Spanish planters and merchants, not always controlled by good sense, were in favor of reprisals, and talked of waiting on the Captain General with a request that no more American machinery be allowed to enter the island, while American merchants engaged in the purchase of sugar here manifested their determination to bring a test case before the courts at once. The matter has resulted in calling attention to that portion of the act of Congress bearing on the point, which is vague and susceptible of more than one interpretation. The duties are thus laid down:—

On all sugar not above No. 12 Dutch standard in color, three cents per pound.

On all sugar above No. 12 and not above No. 15 Dutch standard in color, three and a half cents per pound.

On all sugar above No. 15, not stove dried, and not above No. 20 Dutch standard in color, four cents per pound.

On all refined sugars in forms of long, lump, crushed, powdered, pulverized or granulated, and all stove dried or other sugar above No. 20 Dutch standard in color, five cents per pound.

The question, too, "what constitutes refined sugar?" was much agitated. Centrifugal sugars are those purged of molasses mechanically instead of the old and slower process of natural drainage, and though the result is both quicker and better they can in no proper sense be called refined sugars unless that term is applied to any improvement on the very lowest grades.

The affair has grown out of the antagonism which

exists between the sugar merchants and the refiners, and it is anticipated that its effect will be to call the attention of Congress, which will furnish the slight additional legislation necessary to place the duties on a footing not to be misunderstood.

The merchants and planters of this city are at loggerheads in reference to the amount of tare to be allowed upon sugar. Heretofore it has been sixty-two pounds upon the box. By a unanimous resolution of the merchants here they now demand fifteen per cent, which will make it, say, from ten to fifteen pounds more. The planters are indignant, and threaten to ship their sugars on their own account. Almost insuperable difficulties lay around this, and it is probable they will have to succumb. All purchases thus far made this season by the merchants have been upon the new basis, though the speculators have bought to some extent on the old, they not having come into the arrangement.