

Condition of Affairs in the Country—Rumors and Statements Regarding the Insurgents—Puerto Principe Still Surrounded—The Volcano Smouldering.

* NUEVITAS, Jan. 23, 1868.

Some of the sugar estates in this neighborhood are in a disordered state—perhaps one-half of them are abandoned—and the negroes, now free, compose part of the insurgent bands.

The commissioners, Correa and Tamayo, have been here for some days. Both have since gone to Santiago de Cuba. Those whose duty it was to treat with the insurgents in this vicinity have been zealously at work ever since their arrival, very frequently going to and returning from the enemy's camp under a flag of truce.

It appears that there are unequivocal symptoms that some of the insurgent bands are about surrendering their arms; and if they do so the rest will soon have to follow the same course, as the former are composed of the principal families of Puerto Principe.

Yesterday one of the commissioners came to this city with an invitation from the insurgents to Colonel Passaron, the present Governor, jointly with the Commandant of Marine, asking them to make the insurgents a visit and take dinner with them in their camp. The invitation, however, was respectfully declined. The commissioner, therefore, had to return to the camp alone; but when the railroad train left San Miguel for Baga it was seized by the band of General Angel Castillo, together with all the provisions it conveyed, to the value of some \$500. So that had those two important personages accepted the invitation from the other bands it would have created quite a novelty, as they would undoubtedly have been secured and taken triumphantly as prisoners of war. All this appears to be boys' play. In San Miguel, where there is a garrison of 150 men, the officers dine and dance with the insurgents, while bands of highwaymen go about, under the mask of the insurrection, all over the country, burning estates, and killing and robbing people.

On the whole the people seem to get tired of the situation. The troops suffer considerably, more so than the insurgents, being continually annoyed by the mosquitoes and other insects. Many of the men go barefooted and beg the good citizens to supply them with a piece of hide or a remnant of cloth. Both parties are dirty enough to create an epidemic anywhere. They are not allowed to enter the towns; they have no money, and the financial means of the insurgents is *papelitos*—orders or promissory notes for value received.

Communication with Puerto Principe is still closed; but we expect to hear of an early restoration. General Augusto Arango, who is the representative of the bands, has been provided by the Spanish authorities with a *salvo conducto* to pass to Puerto Principe and its vicinity, to make an arrangement with the other chiefs and induce them to surrender, although Generals Quesada and Castillo will not listen to any compromise whatever. At the same time General Arteaga, being considered a sort of petty despot by his own men, his forces have abandoned him altogether. In order to imitate Spain in all things the insurgents will soon have more generals than soldiers.

The amnesty has forcibly contributed to inducing the *comité* to take the command from Augusto Arango and transferring his authority to General Quesada, and this fact led the former to retire with his bands from the revolution altogether. Nevertheless, Cuba may be compared to a volcano. The eruptions may for a short time abate and then of a sudden break out again more fiercely than before.

Reported Rising in the West—The Feeling in the Central Department—Reinforcements—The Peace Commission—Naval Movements.

HAYANA, Feb. 4, 1868.

For the past few days there have been many vague reports of an extended rising in the Vuelto Abajo, the extensive tobacco growing section in the western part of the island. That something of the kind has taken place is certain, as information concerning it has been telegraphed to the government here. But recently forty prisoners were brought here from that section, among whom was a foreign lady residing in Havana, said to be an emissary of the conspirators, and whose arrival there was to be the signal of revolt. The insurgent sympathizers state confidently that two thousand well armed men have started the cry of liberty there and that under preconcerted arrangements the whole section will soon be in revolt.

Private letters and persons arriving also report disturbances in Santo Espiritu, Trinidad, Villa Clara and other jurisdictions. A considerable body of insurgents has taken to the fields near Nueva Barmejia, in Colon, near Sagua la Grande, and the utmost agitation is perceptible throughout all that vicinity.

On the 2d a party of insurgents sent up the cry on the sugar estate "Trapiche," near San Juan los Remedios, and a party of troops were sent out in pursuit from the latter place, and were fired upon from a cane field, in which the rebels had concealed themselves, with results not mentioned. There is a growing feeling here that the disturbances are likely soon and very seriously to affect this end of the island.

The Cadiz mail steamer Puerto Rico arrived here on the 2d, bringing 406 troops, which were immediately transferred to the Moctezuma, and sailed to Nuevitas on the following day. The Spanish war steamer Juan de Austria arrived here from the latter place on the 3d, bringing back Brigadier Lesca, the newly appointed Governor of Puerto Principe, who but recently left here to assume that position. The object of his speedy return is not known; but it is surmised that he came to represent the impracticability of his making his way to his seat of government with the 2,000 troops at Nuevitas.

The efforts of the peace commissioners have evidently served to distract the counsels of the insurgents, if nothing more. The *Diario* states that General Augusto Arango has been assassinated by his companions in consequence of the great discord which exists among them. The revolutionists admit the fact of his death, but state that he was duly tried by court martial and shot for unauthorized arrangements with the government authorities. Your correspondent at Nuevitas, writing on the 29th, makes no mention of this, and it is therefore extremely doubtful. Señor Don Jose de Nunas, one of the commissioners, is expected here to-day or to-morrow.

On the night of the 29th a disturbance took place in Bejucal, insurrectionary in its character. The ringleaders were secured by the police, several of them considerably injured.

For several days past it has been rumored here that an American squadron was coming to Havana to demand satisfaction for injuries done to American citizens in the late troubles here. Rumors of filibustering expeditions are also rife. The French war vessel *Semiramis*, flagship of Admiral Mackay, arrived here this morning. Immediately after anchoring the Admiral called on Rear Admiral Hoff, of the *Contocook*, and was saluted with the usual number of guns. It is now understood that the Royal Alfred is not coming to Cuban waters. Admiral Mundy has, however, given orders for three ships to communicate with Cuba—one to Santiago, one to Nuevitas and another to be held at the disposition of the English Consul General in Havana.