

**The Question of Arms—Comparison Between the Spaniards and Patriots—The News Reports—Continued Call for Reinforcements—Retaliatory Murders.**

HAVANA, April 3, 1893.

Céspedes, the originator and leader of the existing revolution in this island, remarked that the question of the termination of the insurrection is one of arms entirely. Whether or not correct therein, he certainly has the credence of the Spanish government, which, in lively appreciation of the fact, is furnishing her forces with the most approved arms with as much celerity as her limited exchequer will permit. The troops of Spain here and elsewhere have been and for the most part still are armed with what is known as the Spanish Enfield. It much resembles the English Enfield, having the same calibre. It is a very inferior arm, even among muzzle-loaders and is poorly constructed. There are some thirty or forty thousand of these in the island; most of the troops are armed with them, and they have been furnished to the volunteers for duty in the cities and forts. Since the commencement of the revolution about ten thousand improved breach-loading rifles have been imported by the government from New York, and the volunteers have purchased some 3,000 or 4,000 additional.

In the matter of the importation of arms the authorities manifest the extremest jealousy, prompted in good part, as I am informed from high authority, by their desire for uniformity in the armament of their forces; but, I suspect, more through fear of their ultimately falling into the hands of those inimical to the government. They would much prefer that all such importations should be done through them, and, as I have been informed, will undertake to dispose to the volunteer organizations such as may be consigned to them and meet with their approbation, accounting to the importers. As, however, the credit of the authorities here is not of the highest order, I do not learn that any very extensive arrangements of this character have been entered into.

As to the arms of the revolutionists, on the other hand, but little is known with certainty. The insurrection was started practically without arms. Until recently it has been carried on with a few old rifles, such as were found on the estates and ranches, fowling pieces and machetes. The common people have very generally made lances for themselves out of anything that was at hand, and a few small cannon have been manufactured by banding pieces of cast-iron pipe with the hard woods of the country and plugging the breach. From the best information that can be obtained it is evident that not more than one-fourth of the revolutionists now in the field are armed with firearms. The first invoice of arms of any importance was brought by Quesada in December last, consisting of 3,000 rifles. Since that time various expeditions have landed; but even after being successfully accomplished great secrecy is maintained in reference to them for fear of compromising those having connection with them here and in the United States and preventing similar landings in the future.

Although through the barrier of falsehood and misrepresentation which the Spanish authorities throw around operations in the interior the truth finds its way but slowly, yet from time to time enough is known to justify the conclusion that the troops are making no headway in suppressing the insurrection; that, on the contrary, matters are going on from bad to worse and that the ultimate success of the Cubans is probable. Nothing more would be needed to show the falsity of the reports made by the Spaniards in reference to the various encounters than their complete uniformity. General or Colonel somebody finds a large number of rebels entrenched on an estate, attacks them at the point of the bayonet, dislodges them, killing 200 and dispersing the rest. "Our loss was one wounded," or "a party of rebels were surprised at breakfast on the cattle farm La something by six volunteers and a few of the Guardia Civil, and 104 killed; their chief was captured and instantly shot." Such are the stories, varying in no one material point, which take up whole columns of the *Diario* and other city papers, and in which it is as difficult to find one grain of truth as that well known "needle in a haystack." Occasionally, through a soldier returned wounded, a letter from an officer too chivalric to lie or the arrival of a foreigner from the scene of operations, we get a slight glimpse behind the curtain, by no means revealing "200 insurgents killed and one Spaniard wounded." Some time since we had accounts of a fight near Jagney Grande, in which piles of rebel dead were heaped up. Two members of the cavalry militia returned here report that no less than 100 of the troops were placed *hors de combat* at the time; that the insurgents were advantageously posted in a wood from which they could not be driven out, though several times charged, and their losses, though heavy, could not be ascertained. Doubtless many of the encounters which take place have a somewhat similar result, accounting for the fact that with all their reported successes the Spanish forces are making no headway.

Information has reached here from the vicinity of Cienfuegos that the insurgents have commenced a system of retaliation, and that, owing to the conduct of the volunteers on the occasion of the departure of the political prisoners from Havana, they shot seventy Spaniards. A Spanish officer, writing from Puerto Principe, after stating that the city is almost abandoned by the population, that only troops are seen, complains of the manner in which the war is carried on and the barbarities which are perpetrated. The rebels are made aware of every execution, and immediately after a Spaniard and perhaps more are shot in retaliation. He says that sooner or later every captured rebel will have to be treated as a prisoner of war; and it would be far better to recognize them as such at once instead of disgracing ourselves in the eyes of the world, and at the same time causing an equal slaughter of our countrymen, who fall into the hands of the murdering insurgents in great numbers, and some of whom are ruthlessly shot down after every execution. He states that three or four rebels are shot every day in that city, and the officers are becoming horrified at so many blood scenes.

Forces continue to be sent to the interior. Eight hundred recently left here via Batabano to reinforce Valmaseda. Advices from Manzanillo state that a column had arrived there from Bayamo and was to return soon with a convoy of provisions and ammunition.

The steamer *Moctezuma*, which left here on the 2d, carried a few hundred troops for Nuevitaa.

The war steamer *Pizarro*, from Cadiz via Porto Rico, arrived on Thursday with 274 troops.

On the 1st arrived here Colonels Acosta and Chinchilla, the first commanding the volunteer Battalion of Order and the latter the battalion of San Quintin regulars. They come to consult with General Dulce regarding the campaign and ask for reinforcements.

The war steamer *Guadalquiver* recently arrived at Batabano, having in tow a sloop (dag not stated) found abandoned. She was picked up in front of Sigüanea. It is officially known that she had landed her arms.

The coasting steamer *Villa Clara*, from Batabano five days since, had not arrived at Cienfuegos, and fears are entertained of her capture.

A sea captain recently from Manzanillo, reports that he saw fighting every day from the harbor.

All Mexicans who have served in any army resident in Cuba have received their passports to leave by the first steamer for their native land, obliging them to go there and not elsewhere.

A committee of volunteers from Matanzas has arrived here with a view of arranging a celebration with their *compères* here. That body in Matanzas are represented as still more insubordinate than those here, threatening and mistreating citizens and carrying matters with a high hand.