

The Landing of the Grapeshot—Capture and Shooting of Americans—Another Extermination of the Mayari Expeditionists.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, June 19, 1869.

The landing from the schooner Grapeshot took place in Balleguiri Bay on the 1st inst. The adventurers did not number more than forty. The Spanish official account says that this small party has been completely exterminated and all its arms, including two cannon and ammunition, captured. The following particulars, gleaned on the spot and of a reliable character, have been furnished me. As stated, the landing took place on the 1st and the news thereof reached Guantanamo on the 3d. Immediately a force of 200 left by land and another of 100 by water, with a view of surrounding the filibusters. The land force, it seems, was surprised by them and a sharp contest followed, in which the Spaniards lost several killed and wounded, among the former a lieutenant. The others lost one man killed, named George Smith, a native of London, England, and late sergeant of a New York engineer corps. What followed is hard to get at. The adventurers would seem to have been scattered, at least a portion of them, as several have been captured and two or three killed. The Spaniards say they must all sooner or later be captured or die of hunger and thirst, as they are shut in a barren and desolate region, covered with cactus, where there is but one spring within a circuit of eight leagues, and that is, closely guarded. The Cubans, however, insist that the main body has made good its escape inland, having united with a party which landed near Baracoa, and together marched to join the insurgents. As the adventurers are known to be guided by a noted character named Policarpo, a native of Guantanamo, who has been under the ban of the Spanish authorities and escaped their vigilance for years, and is thoroughly conversant with all that section of country, they have probably escaped. Among the former are a Swiss, named Jacob Meyer, and an Italian, name not given, both naturalized American citizens. They were brought here on the 9th, simultaneously with a prisoner captured at Mayari, calling himself Juan de Dios Palma, from New Orleans. The three were publicly shot on the morning following their arrival. It was made a gala day by the Catalan element, who seemed delighted to have a number of Americans to vary the executions of late so frequent here. The shooting took place at eight A. M., instead of the usual hour of six, in order to give all an opportunity to witness the spectacle, which had a great advantage over a bull fight, inasmuch as three men were certain to be killed. Crowds of Spaniards repaired to the slaughter-pen, to see what they humorously styled "the fresh meat." The victims walked firmly to the place of execution, and all died like heroes. Palma made a speech, expressing regret for his conduct, accusing the Cubans of cowardice and eulogizing the Spanish soldiers for their bravery and humanity. He also wrote a letter, which has been published, expressing the same ideas. In consequence of this the *Bandera Española* (government organ), lauds him to the skies and calls him a talented, noble and generous-minded man, and expresses surprise that such a person should be shot like a dog, without trial. The Cubans say Palma was induced to speak as he did by promises of pardon. Following the execution was a triumphal parade over the four cannons captured at Mayari. Two are of steel and the others of brass. The latter are exactly like those used by the Spaniards here, which has given "disloyal" people occasion for ill-natured remarks. One of the steel guns has been placed in the Plaza de Armas, in the position heretofore occupied by the famous Monte Cristo cannon, brought from the St. Domingo war, which venerable piece was turned off its perch to make room for the new comer—an awful instance of the instability of popular favor. On Saturday, the 12th, another prisoner was brought from Guantanamo. He was a young Cuban of good family in Havana. On Monday he followed the others, dying with the same serenity. On Wednesday, the 16th, was brought here an American, a native of Indiana, named Speckman, a sailor. He stated that he shipped on the Grapeshot for a voyage to Jamaica, knowing nothing about the real nature of the venture until a tugboat brought the filibusters aboard. Against his protest he was obliged to assist in discharging the cargo on the Cuban coast and was forcibly detained by the expeditionists. When he gave himself up he had a gun in his hand. Mr. Phillips, the American Consul, obtained permission to visit him, and afterwards, I am told, waited upon the Governor. If for the purpose of seeking for mercy it was useless, as yesterday morning Speckman was taken out and shot, going through the ordeal with great bravery. On the 11th the steamer Moctezuma arrived here, having been detained to carry troops from Nuevas to Puerto Padre. She brought no news of importance, but soon after twelve o'clock M. flags began to appear over the Catalan residences, bands to parade the streets and in the morning the Plaza and Palace were illuminated. In explanation the indefatigable *Bandera* appeared in an extra, announcing that "it was reported" that Colonel Benegasi had defeated the 600 Americans from Mayari, utterly exterminating them and taking from them all they had. This is the third extermination this unfortunate party has suffered. Subsequent arrivals fail to confirm the report.