

# THE CUBAN FILIBUSTERS.

## Grand Strategic Movement and Victory by the Army of the Hackensack.

## Moonlight Assault and Capture of the Enemy's Position.

## The Prisoners Paroled "on Their Honor."

In the HERALD of yesterday were given the particulars of the disembarkment of the remnant of Colonel Ryan's command of Cuban filibusters on Gardiner's Island and their departure therefrom, together with the announcement that a large number of Cubans had been rendezvoused in a large building on the outskirts of Hoboken and on the margin of the Hackensack river, about four miles from this city. While the report alluded to was being put in type, a Quixotic campaign of the most ridiculous description was progressing under the moonlight in the vicinity of that stronghold of the patriots, the forces engaged in the demonstration being a picked squad of about fifty United States marines, under the immediate command of a major, about fourteen United States seamen, in charge of two ensigns of the navy, and a posse of twelve or fifteen deputy United States marshals. The Army of the Hackensack, it will be seen, numbered an aggregate offensive force of about eighty men, armed with government weapons and in light marching order. The wagon trains, in order that the movements of the army might not be subjected to the dangers which menaced the ancient Roman battalions by reason of their great incumbrance with *impedimenta*, had been reduced to a minimum, and comprised a single barouche, which was occupied by General Barlow, United States Marshal, who seemed to think that General Santa Anna's theory of war was at least worthy of emulation wherever practicable, and a carriage was come-at-able.

The whole force of marines and seamen was drawn from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, under authority conferred upon General Barlow by a special commission issued by the President a few days since. The deputies were drawn from their homes, and the Marshal, as Commander-in-Chief, was drawn in the above mentioned vehicle. The men were embarked from the Navy Yard on board a steam tender, at about nine o'clock on Monday night, and the vessel shortly afterwards steamed slowly around into the North river. Having reached a point about midway between New York and Jersey City, the steamer "lay to" for upwards of an hour, and the men on board were very naturally under the impression that they were on the look out for a Cuban filibustering craft which it was hinted was about to sail. About eleven o'clock the tender ran up the river nearly opposite Weehawken Heights, and then dropped down to the Elysian Fields, where the troops were noiselessly disembarked. The soles of their shoes were padded with velvet to make their tramp less martial, but more catlike. No one spoke above a whisper; every man's heart was "in his mouth," and all the nicker pennies in the pockets of the blue coats and pants were ordered to be thrown into the river, anywhere, for fear the "clink" might give the enemy warning. Coughing was expressly prohibited, and the men wore green shades over their eyes, for fear the glitter of their optics in the dark might be seen by the watchful and wary "Cubans." One Irishman, belonging to the marines, was sent back because he had a habit of thinking aloud, and he was deemed, therefore, unsafe. Having reached terra firma the entire force, being joined by General Barlow and his deputies knelt in a circle under the deep shadows of the grand old trees on the shore, the "Stars and Stripes" were unfurled and the proud old colors drooped of their own accord, and as the night wind sighed through the foliage overhead and the river gurgled on the pebbles of the beach, each man raised his cap reverently and vowed a vow that "whereas none but Americans had any inherent right to strike for liberty, and Cubans were not Americans, the 'lone star' of the 'ever faithful' Isle" had no right to glimmer even in Jersey, and must be squelched ere another sun arose." A noble spirit bursting with patriotism shrieked out on the midnight air "You bet," and the greatest consternation immediately prevailed, and for a time it was thought the expedition would have to be abandoned. When the allusion was made to the lone star of Cuba, several billions of astral pickets overhead winked at their compeers on the blue field of the national flag, as though inviting them to leave such bad company, and barely hinted that thirty-seven against the "lone" one was hardly fair play.

As soon as order was restored the oath-bound host leaped to their feet and tacitly formed into column, and at the words "One, two, three, go," marched on through the woods, on tip-toe, to the assault. Over two miles of rugged Jersey roads the gallant band stumbled and floundered, and threats were made that if any men during the remainder of the march dared to kick their toes against the clouds and stones, thus making a noise and producing disorder that might prove fatal to the strategy, a drum-head court martial would be instantly convened (without the drum of course) and the offender would be hamstringed forthwith. The wisdom of this policy immediately manifested itself, and no more clod-breaking was done during the eventful night. The command then halted, word was passed in a whisper down the line that a "forlorn hope" was called for, and the whisper, "We come!" went back to the chieftain as half a dozen high-beating breasts protruded themselves to the front. All the deputy marshals then advanced to the front also and handed a slip of paper to the officer, on which were read by starlight the henceforth historic and memorable words: "We go where glory waits us!" The lines were written by some of the deputies, and considerable time was consumed in deciphering the writing, as, for instance, the two first words were spelled as a single word of four letters, &c. The "forlorn hope" then moved off slowly, but with a firm step, and the souvenirs they had left for their friends were sent under a strong escort to the rear.

In a short time the main body took up the line of march, perspiring and lamenting deeply the probable fate of their comrades in the advance and the scarcity of whiskey and tobacco in the rear. General Barlow "had a few cigars along," but he had gone "to the front" in his carriage. Flankers and skirmishers were thrown out, and after another weary march of about half a mile "a solitary" footman was seen returning from the advance. He brought despatches stating that the enemy had begun found strongly posted in a frame house about 200 yards this side of Steffany's floral park, near the Hackensack river. No sooner were the words "floral park" uttered than the idea of victors' garlands suggested itself, and was deemed proudly suggestive of the honors to be won. The reserve was ordered to advance, but with caution, as it was possible that a slight *taux pas* might be productive of irretrievable disaster, for the honor and perpetuity of the Union vibrated in the balance nervously.

About this time, as the reserve was deploying, a deputy marshal was marched back in irons from the front. He had imperilled the plot by incautiously falling over a stump, and a perfect torrent of Spanish reals and doubloons poured from his pockets, making a clang like the jingling of a thousand ramrods. A Cuban clad in a long white garment was seen to peer forth from a window of the blockhouse, shading his eyes with his hand, as though he had just awakened from a fatiguing doze and the moon's rays dazed his vision. The "forlorn hope," with astonishing presence of mind, prostrated themselves on the earth and thus providentially escaped detection. The white-smocked Cuban sentinel scratched himself a few times, stretched out his arms, yawned a loud, sonorous "heigh-o!" and disappeared in the darkness of the embrasure. "Everything was silent—you could hear the crickets chirp." In about ten minutes the "forlorn hope" were on their feet again, and at the word of command, "Scatter!" they betook themselves to the fields and concealing themselves behind stumps and fences slowly surrounded the building and crept up closer. When within twenty-five yards a loud martial voice was heard to bellow out, "Halt at them; down with the hurelings!" and in an instant thirty gallant armed men were piling into the stronghold through windows and doors and forty-one wallow-skinned spectres rose from their couches and flitted like spooks from room to room or with chattering teeth begged for "quarter." Lights were struck and the victors gazed on their prisoners and their booty. Marshal Barlow entered and demanded an unconditional surrender, which was acceded to after a brief parley in an unknown tongue. The arms were then secured and word was sent back to halt the reserve. When all the arms were stacked an inventory was taken, as follows:—

Breech-loading rifles.....	000
Muzzle-loading rifles.....	000
Military uniforms and accoutrements.....	00
Revolvers and side arms.....	0
Table knives and forks.....	82
Flowers.....	7
Tin plates (dinner, not breast plates).....	17
Axes (for meat and kindling wood chopping).....	1

Two bottles, a blanket and some straw used for bedding, with a vast amount of other spoils, were also taken, but had to be abandoned.

As soon as the prisoners had got into their pants and coats—few of them had vests—they were numbered and marched out of the building, General Barlow, with two of the Cubans who spoke some English remaining behind, and under command of an officer of marines the conquerors and the conquered marched off on their return to this city. It was anticipated that an oration might be tendered to the victors as they passed through the streets of the metropolis with their captives, and in order to make the thing effective and create an impression it was suggested that each prisoner should be led, chained,

by a soldier or deputy. The quartermaster reported, however, that he had not sufficient chain, and the idea was dropped.

After marching two or three miles in exultant spirits, the reserve having already been joined, General Barlow came up from the rear, and ordering the troops to halt alighted from the wagon train. The men were formed in a compact mass on the river bank, and the Marshal, holding a cigar in his fingers, which gave him an imposing appearance, addressed the captive phalanx under the mellow moonshine, which, by the way, actually permeated his remarks. He told the prisoners that their conduct was inimical to the treaty obligations of the United States with the government of Spain, "with which we are at peace," and in violation of the principles of the recognized laws on the subject of neutrality. They should not engage in such enterprises as they were extremely undignified and hazardous withal, and they were, furthermore, injudicious and fraught with imminent danger to the persons of the prisoners themselves. The United States was powerful, and would certainly suppress them, while they were incapable of resistance. As good citizens and law-abiding people, therefore, they should refrain from any such violation, and though no actual violation had here been proved there was strong presumptive evidence of the intent. In fact, "a nod was as good as a wink to a blind horse." He would, therefore, not further detain them, but with the understanding that they would desist and disperse he would parole them unconditionally.

The men remained mute while he addressed them, and it was thought a great impression had been made upon them, and that they would all volunteer to serve as special deputies to enforce the laws. It was subsequently ascertained, however, that only three of the whole number could either speak or understand English. What "sweetness wasted on the desert air!"

General Barlow then reformed his forces, said "Good night, boys," to "the captives set free," jumped into his carriage and drove off at the head of his command, returning to the Navy Yard early yesterday morning.

The Cubans returned to their frame house barracks and after expressing their extreme disgust of the United States government and its officials, from General Grant down to the deputies, they turned into their straw nests and were soon wrapped in a nightmarish slumber. Thus closed the last campaign of the "Army of the Hackensack."

It was learned in this city yesterday from parties who know all about it that the men who had been seized were merely a lot of young Cubans who were themselves in destitute circumstances, without money or even decent clothing, and who had been taken charge of by a number of wealthy Cubans in New York. All of them had been identified, with the recent expedition, and Cubans here deemed it their duty to provide for them, at least for a time, until they could find employment and provide for themselves. The house on the Hackensack was hired because it was commodious and was leased at a very low rental, and the men—many of them—were ashamed to be in this city in their present pitiful plight. They were not even provided with beds, but slept on bare straw, and were maintained at a cost of about forty dollars a day, including rent, their food being of the coarsest, though substantial, description. One of them came into this city yesterday in a highly indignant mood and penned the following epistle:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—  
Even in the United States, that model republic, there are not wanting authorities who, animated by gratuitous animosity and assisted by the armed force, dare to attack inoffensive individuals and violate private dwellings.

At midnight on the 19th inst. the Marshal of New York, accompanied by a company of armed soldiers, proceeded to a house situated in a field in Hoboken occupied by about forty Cubans, and while they (the inmates) were asleep they were taken by regular assault, hemmed in by the troops and marched on towards New York. After marching about five miles the Marshal, doubtless aware of his arbitrary act, placed them at liberty "out of consideration." This resolution was taken after causing them much annoyance. Moreover, he had no proofs whatever of armament or of anything else of which to accuse them. Two of the occupants of the house were left behind under the pretext to look after it, and the Marshal submitted them to a severe interrogation and even offered them money if they would disclose where the arms were concealed. This offer was indignantly refused by the two young men in question. The Marshal will be cited before the proper authorities by me to answer for his conduct in this matter. MANUEL M. RODRIGUEZ.

New York, July 22, 1893.

No order has yet been issued with regard to the anticipated release on their own recognizances of the members of the late Cuban expedition now confined at Fort Lafayette. Yesterday District Attorney Pierrepont and General Barlow had the matter under advisement. It is understood that Mr. Pierrepont will visit the fort to-day, and will then, with the least possible delay, consult with Secretary Fish, who is at present at his home in this city, and recommend their prompt discharge, should he have found the Cubans willing to give assurances that they will not join any other expedition of a similar kind.