

THE SPANISH GUNBOATS.

Spanish and Cuban Opinions on the Seizure.

Extraordinary Meeting of the Cuban Junta.

Progress of the Work on the Vessels.

Visit of President Grant to the United States District Attorney's Office.

The news published in the *HERALD* yesterday of the seizure of thirty Spanish gunboats, by Marshal Barlow's orders, is at present the great topic of talk in Cuban and Spanish circles. In the latter the affair met with the most unqualified denunciation, and Uncle Sam, nephews and all, were most heartily damned in the purest and most vigorous terms of the Castilian dialect. In Cuban circles this so-called Uncle was applauded much beyond his deserts, and in his action toward old Mother Spain, his recent course toward the patriot band, led by Don Carlos Ryan, was utterly forgotten—forgotten so far that the interpretation was generally accepted that a change of foreign policy was inaugurated and a new line of neutrality entered upon. Under this happy delusion the Cuban Junta had an extraordinary and informal meeting yesterday, whereat Marshal Barlow's action underwent discussion and had various constructions put upon it, foremost of which was that the administration, influenced by popular opinion, and anxious to recede from its position of partiality to Spanish power and pretension, had made the first move towards lending a helping hand to the struggling Cubans and of weakening the resources of their adversary. General joy might be said to animate the Cuban countenances on the street, and no doubt seems to exist among those who know a little of the feeling in the councils of the Junta that another enterprise will soon spring into existence towards aiding the patriots of the "Ever Faithful Isle." Marshal Barlow, it is presumed, will act a less strict and severe part; will, perhaps, in the phrase of common parlance, "keep his weather eye shut" when the next filibustering expedition gets under way. Altogether, the Cubans are delighted that Spain is deprived of her thirty gunboats. The Spaniards, however, think this government the most singularly managed institution on the face of the globe, and pronounce its course in reference to these gunboats nothing short of vulgar outrage, which no nation professing to enlightened acquaintance with international law would be guilty of. The Spanish organ, *El Cronista*, calls the proceeding an unmitigated villany, an interference without justification or explanation, with a matter of perfectly legitimate character which has the sanction of precedent here and which is allowed in every country of Europe.

Marshal Barlow says that he acted on the strength of a despatch received from the State Department, informing him that these gunboats were intended to operate against our republican ally Peru, and by virtue of the authority conferred upon him jointly with Judge Pierpont, he seized the vessels, and now holds them at the discretion of the government. He has not, however, interfered with the progress of building the boats, nor does he intend to take any further action beyond the notification to Messrs. Deamater, Poulton and Stack that the gunboats cannot be allowed to leave the harbor of New York with hostile intentions to Peru. Yesterday 130 men were busy in the shipyard of C. & K. Poulton, of Brooklyn, on the East river, working away upon four of the gunboats lying on the stocks. Two of them were skeletons, with their stout, strong ribs of oak just about to receive the exterior clothing of locust wood; the other two were finished, so far as the mere outside is concerned. The whole order to Messrs. Poulton was to build ten boats, and having put up their schooner rigging and copper fastenings to send them around to the Delamater Works on the North river, foot of Thirteenth street, to get their machinery and joiner work put in. Six boats were sent from Poulton's shipyard for this purpose and four remain behind. None have received the benefit of a christening—no long Spanish names illuminate their sterns—they are simply designated by numbers, beginning at number one. The last of Poulton's building will be number ten. Stack, of Greenpoint, began with number eleven and will terminate with number fifteen. He has delivered three to Delamater, one of which was launched and sent around yesterday, thus making the total now lying at the foot of Thirteenth street and its immediate neighborhood nine. Four of these have received their machinery, and Delamater, nothing daunted by Marshal Barlow's official visitation, will proceed to rig out the remainder with the necessary engines, boilers, &c.

The Parrott Foundry at Cold Spring, opposite West Point, will furnish thirty 100-pounder Parrott guns and sixty howitzers, and by the time all the work is accomplished it is presumed the fascinating Señor Roberts, the Spanish Minister at Washington, will have sufficiently wound himself into the good graces of Secretary Hamilton Fish to secure a permit for the peaceful departure of the fleet to the waters of Peru. Looking at these boats as they appear in the North river the spectator is not to-day very much impressed with their formidable presence. It entered the mind of the *HERALD* reporter that they a good deal resembled belligerent tugboats and were little calculated to strike terror into the souls of a filibustering band or spread dismay among the fleet of Peruvian monitors. They are built of white hackmatack, oak and locust, coppered and copper-fastened, schooner rigged, with pair of propellers, and pierced for one Parrott gun forward and two howitzers abaft. They are swift sailers, easy to manage and admirably calculated for running in and out of the creeks and inlets on the Cuban coast or for ascending rivers that can furnish a draught of at least six feet of water.

One of our iron-clads, such as the Puritan or Dictator, would blow the entire thirty out of the water without experiencing much fatigue. The remaining fifteen of the entire contingent are at Mystic, Conn., where four of them have been already launched. Marshal Barlow received a telegram from his deputy there yesterday, stating that his orders were fully carried out, and that the requisite notification had been served upon the builders. It is an error in the statement that an actual seizure has been made, either at Mystic or here. The utmost latitude will be permitted the builders in rigging up and fitting the vessels for sea, but to sea they cannot go without furnishing evidence that they are not designed to make war upon the friendly Power of Peru.

President Grant, appreciating the importance of the seizure in the bearing it has upon our international relations, started off early in the forenoon of yesterday to have an interview with District Attorney Pierpont, at his office in Chambers street, and furnished us with another characteristic instance of the way we do things in this country. He asked of the first clerk he fell in with if Mr. Pierpont was in. "Don't know; inquire in the next room," said the clerk, without lifting his eyes from his work. Into the next room the anxious inquirer went. "What can I do for you?" asked the clerk, as if he had power to create a better world if he only had an order. "Is Judge Pierpont in?" asked the stranger. "Guess not; that's his room yonder." The gentleman opened the door of the room and found a third clerk, to whom his question was repeated. "Don't know when he will be in." "Tell him the President called," said the stranger, and quietly left the room, feeling no doubt that a President has as good a right to be "plugged off" as any other man. The President got out upon Chambers street, looked inquiringly up and down that thoroughfare, then pulled a copy of the *HERALD* from the breast pocket of his stylish black coat, and set to work reading the interesting account published of the seizure made the previous day. After going carefully over it, and looking once more up and down the street for a trace of Pierpont, he put the *HERALD* in his pocket and started in the direction of the Astor House. Such is life.

Marshal Barlow's Raid Into Connecticut—"Seizure" of the Fifteen Gunboats at Mystic—How it was Done.

MYSTIC, Conn., August 4, 1890.

Evidently there is great consternation and trouble in the Spanish camp. Such is the belief here among a few wide awake men, who speak ominously of a matter brought to their notice this morning. United States officials have visited, in company with revenue officers, the prominent shipbuilders in this cozy, quiet New England town, armed with portentous looking documents, inquiring into the nature of the authority, and upon whose account the fifteen gunboats ordered by the Spanish government are building, and directing their seizure. A bombshell thrown at dead of night into a peaceful camp would not prove more unwelcome or disastrous. What will be the effect of this visit remains unknown at present, yet enough has leaked out to satisfy the curious that the legion of Spanish officers and their retinue of earnest, anxious, prying agents who have for months publicly and privately gloated over their success in obtaining aid from the United States in the matter of marshals, marines and revenue cutters for the purpose of demoralizing Cuban expeditions, breaking up "filibustering" encampments and imprisoning the exponents of patriotism within the dismantled walls of Fort La-

Fort and other grim-gray confines, to denote that the government at Washington, have decided that what is sauce for the goose is suitable for his male. Events certainly point unerringly to the fact that some important action has been determined upon, if not ultimately to hold the gunboats in question, to put them under such surveillance that it will be long, very long, before they shall, with their improved machinery and array of formidable and fearful guns, slip in and out of the bays and inlets of Cuba, destroying everything that cannot be called part and parcel of the unopposed hosts of Spain.

This morning, and even at this writing, the work of construction upon the boats is going on without interruption, but Charles Mallory, the old shipbuilder, an elderly, hearty, hospitable and intelligent gentleman, who, at the inception of the giving out of the contracts for the construction of the vessels, agreed to accept fifteen of them, and who afterwards sublet or sub-contracted with Messrs. Hill & Grinnell and Messrs. George H. Greenman & Co., his neighbors, for the building of several are in the closest communication with each other, and judiciously from eloquent visits and innumerable shakings of their respective heads, every brilliant filibuster in the land may take heart and forgive "Gardiner's Island." The action of the Washington authorities, or the extent to which they may at present proceed, is not clear. What is known is this—Last night some time Captain Walcott, of the revenue cutter James Campbell, stationed at New London, received a telegram from Washington, the contents of which surprised that sailor. His pilot, who is acquainted with the "ins and outs" of the coast hereabouts as well as he is with his own nose-rod—"for don't you know I used to fish here in a snook," was at shore at home; instantly he was sent for and upon arrival on board about midnight the Campbell slipped anchor and under a propitious breeze from the north-northwest scudded to his place and cast anchor before morning just outside of Noank light-house, two miles distant. Meanwhile the earliest o'clock Boston express train from New York last night had as passengers the sleek, well fed, happy looking deputy United States Marshals A. H. Winslow and J. A. Christie, who were speeding also to the haven. Part of the valor which they exhibited when marching under a peppering sun on Gardiner's Island, in company with a squad of marines, to capture the camp of filibusters there, was still visible in their excited eyes.

This morning, in the still hours, more welcome here among the quiet hills than in a crowded city, they arrived, and to bed at once they went. At half-past nine o'clock Captain Wilson, with what documents he possessed, called his boat, and with his frank pilot were rowed from Newark to the village. Winslow and Christie expected them, and with becoming dignity, yet discontented spirits, smoked their cigars and lounged under the cooling shade of friendly trees near the hotel on the main street. They did not wait long. The glittering uniform of Captain Wilson's companion soon denoted to them that "per agreement" they were on hand, and not far away was their vessel, representing beleaguered nationality. Close conversation followed. Strangers in such a group in a country village at all times attract attention, and the few passersby turned and looked, but forgot them in an instant as they muttered, "Only yachtsmen on a cruise." Singularly enough, at the same moment, Mr. Mallory, who had been up to his shipyard looking about attentively to note the progress of the gunboats, had driven back to his edifice and just alighted, when, as old Cato, his horse, who has taken him over the same familiar ground more than a score of years, turned to seek the shade of the trees under which Captain Wilson and his "friends" were earnestly discussing some abstruse point regarding their line of conduct. He noted also the group with his eagle eyes. Raising them and studying his general face he inquired:—

"What strangers are these; do you know?"

"No, sir," returned his companion, "but kind o' guess them's yachtsmen, on a little bun."

"Ah, it may be, but I thought that uniformed fellow looked like an officer of some kind."

Soon after Mr. Mallory was better acquainted with him, as the sequel will prove.

In this animated conversation Captain Wilson, Marshals Winslow and Christie, with the pilot, for a while continued, when they took up the line of march for the shipyard of Messrs. Hill & Grinnell. Here they inspected the three gunboats still on the stocks, almost ready for launching, remaining but a few minutes. Thence they journeyed to the yard of Messrs. Greenman & Co., where they also inspected the two vessels on the stocks. From this place they called at Mallory's yard, and then repaired to his office, where for a few minutes the old gentleman was confronted with—

"Is this Mr. Mallory?"

"Yes, sir."

"We have come," spoke Captain Wilson, "to see you on private business, but of a public nature. These gentlemen are Messrs. Winslow and Christie, deputy marshals. Can't we retire?"

With this the group retired to an inner room, where a conversation, not loud but earnest, was maintained for fully thirty minutes. Emerging from his rooms with the official party, Mr. Mallory, with that peculiar smile distending his lips for which he is famous, handed his clerk a letter with "Put that in an envelope and mark it 'public document.'" There was but little more. The smiling Christie and Winslow sought the hotel, bought several cigars, and departed with Captain Wilson about eleven o'clock. Perhaps they are now fraternizing freely on board the Campbell.

But Mr. Mallory was troubled. He did not seem satisfied, and in answer to one or two interrogatories made by immediate friends appeared to avoid answering, assuring them "It is only some private parties up here looking out for certain interests; it's nothing."

Subsequently, when convinced that reticence would longer be of but little avail, he detailed the "burden of his grief" in the conversation with the marshals in his private office. It was represented by them that, by order of President Grant and authority vested in them by Marshal Barlow, of New York, they were present to seize and detain the fifteen gunboats of which he had control, believing that they were intended to act against Peru—a government at war with Spain—and when asked for their authority by him he was handed the following document:—

UNITED STATES MARSHAL'S OFFICE,
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK,
New York, August 3, 1890.
To Deputy Marshals CHRISTIE and WINSLOW:—

I hereby direct and authorize you, by command of the President and by virtue of the authority in me vested to enforce the neutrality laws, to proceed to Mystic, Conn., and seize and detain fifteen vessels there building for the Spanish government.

They are seized for a violation of the neutrality laws, in that they are intended for use against Peru.

You will call on all persons for assistance if necessary.

FRANCIS C. BARLOW,
United States Marshal Southern District of New York.
Process served August 4, 1890.

CHRISTIE and WINSLOW.

Further, they expressed themselves as satisfied that "work should continue on the boats," but that under no circumstances should they be allowed to go to sea, and then departed, as before advised. That was all and sufficient.

Keepers have not been placed on board, and the "seizure," if such it is, is a misnomer, as directions have only been left that the vessels should not leave this port. That would be quite impossible for some time to come, though the greatest expedition should be used in their completion, and then by the terms of the original contract made by Mr. Mallory with C. H. Delamater, of New York, the hulls, when finished, are to be towed there to receive the machinery.

Could courtesy go further than that showed by the authorities to the big shipbuilder of Mystic?

To Peru and to sea! Why, bless me, the thought is absurd," quoth Mr. Mallory, chuckling pleasantly; "they haven't got any engines or boilers; no copper, no cables, no sails, and won't have for a long time. To Peru!" he repeated; "ha, ha; none of them to leave on a voyage to the Pacific. Guess something's wrong about this."

Later in the afternoon, when the full intelligence of the action taken in New York in relation to the gunboats, as so simply given in the *HERALD*, was received, then began with true Yankee inquisitiveness a thousand questions to be put to Mr. Mallory. Seated in his little office, he assured all his visitors, among them many old men, that he had been "warned" only, but that work should progress as rapidly as formerly on the vessels.

"And there a cutter out here at Noank?"

"No."

"Has it gone?"

"Yes."

"Well, I am monstrous glad."

Such was the burden of his tormentors; but calmly he disposed of them all, in the meantime giving directions about "stuff for the boats."

About two o'clock Collector Marshall, of the port of New London, in his ambitious zeal to have a "say," called on Mr. Mallory, but did not give him any additional information than what he had already received.

Lieutenant Patéro, of the Spanish navy, who has resided here since the keel of the first gunboat was cut, in order to superintend the entire work, was in blissful ignorance of the action taken by the authorities until "after dinner," when, with a shrug of his petty shoulders and a smirk of the lip, he moved away from his informant, apparently unconcerned; but a close observer could have detected in his face a crestfallen look that denoted that Patéro did not at all relish the proceedings.

The state of the work upon the vessels now here is as follows:—Mr. Mallory is building Nos. 21 to 24, inclusive—eight; Hill & Grinnell Nos. 13 to 20, inclusive—five, and Greenman & Co., Nos. 25 and 30. Of these Mallory has launched two, Hill & Grinnell two, but Greenman none. The others could be launched within a fortnight, but the hitch in this respect is that by the terms of the contract so soon as the hulls are in the water a certain amount upon the aggregate price agreed upon for them shall be paid to the builder, and although it is vouchsafed that there is a fund of a million of dollars in gold in the hands of a trusted emissary, to be expended lavishly on these boats, payments "up around Mystic" have been a slow, very.

As I write Mr. Mallory is speeding up to the shipyard behind his old and faithful animal, Cato, and from my window I can hear the cheery voices of his workmen, who know nothing of the "seizure," their mingling pleasantly with the "chip, chip" of their axes, the buzz of their saws, the "swish" of their planes, in all demonstrating that Mallory will keep his word, and the work on the boats "shall go on."

Late to-night Marshals Christie and Winslow shook the dust of New England from their feet and hastened to New York, their brown noses still browned under the heating snuffs of a Mystic sun, chuckling quietly over the easy consummation of their business.