

CUBA.

Spanish Review of the Situation—Policy of the Government—Havana News—Rising at Jaguey Grande—Reinforcements—News from Trinidad, Remedios, Holguin and Puerto Principe.

HAVANA, Feb. 20, 1869.

The *Diario de la Marina* of the 19th gives a review of the situation, in which it contends that the insurgents have retired from the large extent of territory lying west from Santiago de Cuba and comprehending Bayamo. It says in evidence of this that the columns of Quiros and Velasco recently passed from the former place to Jiguaní without having been in any way molested. It continues:—"Céspedes and Aguilera, with the bulk of the rebels, have fallen back on the jurisdiction of Holguin, establishing themselves on the extensive haciendas between Nuevitas and Gibara. They have done this to avoid the columns of Valmaseda, to keep in communication with the rebels of Camaguey and to take advantage of the extensive plantations and stock farms of the vicinity, the country which for the past five months has been occupied by them being quite exhausted of meat and vegetables." It then recapitulates the information of late received as follows:—According to a letter received from Santa Cruz, the so-called General Modesto Diaz, a Mexican, and three more chiefs, had been shot. We learn from the same source of the presentation to the authorities of Napoleon Arango. We cannot vouch for the truth of either statement. However, it would appear that the so-called General Quesada is the only one who regards Céspedes as the Dictator Generalissimo, all the others considering themselves fully entitled to act on their own account.

The policy of the government, in its treatment of the insurrection in the Eastern Department, would seem to have changed. Evidently weary of following the insurgents from one point to another to the great injury of the health and morale of the troops, it would seem to have determined to occupy all prominent strategic points and allow the insurgents to wear themselves out. However this may be protracted the contest by this course. It is the only one practicable, as Spanish troops cannot operate in this climate during the warm season, now fast approaching. The papers here announce that all military operations in Santiago de Cuba, Manzanillo and Bayamo have been suspended, in accordance with superior orders. Valmaseda has divided his forces, sending some to the former place, others to Jiguaní, which has been admirably fortified, and retaining others with himself at Bayamo. Loño, who has been often times reported dead, had marched with a column to Manzanillo, bringing a number of ransomed prisoners, the insurgents seemingly having adopted ransom of captured Spaniards as a means of recuperating their exhausted exchequer. Bayamo has been also well fortified, under the direction of Portondu, Commander of Engineers. A redoubt of over 300 metres has been constructed, with a ditch three metres in depth. Half of the town of Zarragocilla was pulled down for the purpose. The garrison has also built barracks and a hospital, rendering the place both impregnable to the insurgents and habitable for the troops.

The *Foz de Cuba* says General Valmaseda has selected Bayamo as the centre of his operations, not only because it is a point of importance, but for the purpose of raising the downfallen spirit of the inhabitants of a burned city, thousands of whom fly to him, swearing fidelity to the Spanish colors. He passes eight hours per day in giving audience to them. The same paper states that the town of Jiguaní, taken by the troops from Bayamo, now holds a respectable garrison, which, joined with the volunteer force, will prevent it again falling into the hands of the rebels. There are also garrisons in Bahía and Palmira.

The Cadiz steamer Antonio Lopez arrived here on the 17th with 542 troops, two major generals, one brigadier and several more officers. The steamer Isla de Cuba, from Barcelona, arrived on the 19th with 1,031 troops and fifty-seven officers. Two war frigates and eight fast gunboats are momentarily expected. The mail steamer Santander is due bringing 1,000 more troops, who had arrived at Porto Rico when the Isla de Cuba arrived there. Just as the latter was steaming into port yesterday a tugboat with the volunteers that had been on duty at the Morro and Cabañas fortresses crossed her in coming to the wharf. This occasioned a general burst of enthusiasm and both forces cried out mutual hurrahs. As the Isla de Cuba went past the French flagship remounts the new troops, chasseurs, were loudly cheered by the French sailors and the ship's music band immediately struck up the Spanish "Hymn of Riego." A committee of the volunteer corps of this city repaired on board the Isla de Cuba soon after to welcome the troops. The flags of the Spanish vessels in the harbor were flying. Permission having been obtained to allow the newly arrived troops to march through the two principal streets, the shops were gayly bedecked with banners and an unusual enthusiasm prevailed as the troops marched along in their new camp uniform.

The Banco Español received last week from New York 21,000 Spanish ounce pieces (\$257,000). This is part of the \$1,000,000 to come in that coin. Considerable relief will thereby be afforded to the mercantile community, and it may tend to lower the rate of gold. At present Spanish gold is worth 3½ to 4 premium. There is still a lively inquiry for American gold and sovereigns.

The new Spanish Ambassador to Washington, Señor Don Mauricio Lopez Roberts, arrived here in the steamer Antonio Lopez. The municipality have named a committee to welcome him. Admiral Hor sent his respects to the Ambassador immediately on his arrival.

Senator Henderson and some other distinguished Americans who arrived here recently paid a visit to the country after General Dulce furnished them with a "safe conduct." The former gentleman has returned from Matanzas, and leaves to-day in the steamer Columbia. Governor Gardner also takes passage in her. General MacGibbon is still in the country. General Steedman is here.

A sharp little American craft, said to be a "blockade runner," was lying in port the other day, and a few nights ago it gave us "the slip," unknown to the authorities, so it is alleged.

A gentleman who arrived from Matanzas last evening reports that a body of rebels are within twenty-five miles of that place, and the *Aurora* of the 17th states that on the following day 100 men of the First battalion of volunteers were to leave the city for Holodron to scour the country in that vicinity, where some bands of insurgents existed.

A letter from Puerto Principe, the 20th, written by an insurgent chief, has reached here. He says:—"We have Puerto Principe at our mercy, and should long since have taken it were it not for the resultant destruction and injury to our wives and children, whom Menz holds in the place to protect it. There are over 2,000 troops in Nuevitas, the gress of whom we are eagerly waiting, as we are all prepared for the n."

A letter from Manzanillo gives a very different coloring to the march of Quiros from Santiago to Jiguaní than is given in the *Diario*. So far from being unmolested, he was compelled to fight all along the route, Céspedes himself being in command of the insurgents. He had his horse killed under him.

The *Dutro* says of certain insurgent chiefs:—"Maceo, Acosta, the Milanese, Aguilera and others of the daring generals are wandering at the head of hordes of robbers. Marinol, who raised the Spanish colors at Sainadillo, asking for amnesty in order to assassinate our soldiers with his 4,000 negroes behind the walls, has resumed his habitual occupation of setting fire to estates and pillaging friend and foe."

The movements of the insurgents in Cienfuegos, Trinidad and Villa Clara continue to form the subject of interest here. The Spaniards affect to consider them the last expiring effort of the natives, and claim that with their suppression the thing will be practically over.

The *Foz de Cuba*, in its issue of the 17th, says in reference to the risings in Jaguey Grande:—"The Escayan volunteers, 'Chapelgorris,' or Red Caps, who went in pursuit of the seditions of Jaguey, belong to the squadron of Guamas, and number 250 men, under Claudio Herrera. The rebels did not dare to face them, but fled to the mountains. Owing to the roughness of the country, which is as bad as possible, being known by the name of 'Dog's Teeth,' and the fact that the volunteers had to contend with the large stagnant marshes known as the swamps of Zapata, the issue has not been determined. Thus far twenty-five horses and a medicine chest have been captured." The same journal says:—"Although thus far no rising is reported at Santiago de las Vegas, demonstrations have been made tending to disturb the peace."

A private letter from Trinidad, the 17th, says:—"The insurgents are gaining ground every day. Dulce's amnesty proclamation expires on the 21st, and it is anticipated that matters will then be worse than ever, as, from all accounts, the rebels have paid no attention to it."

The Trinidad *Imparcial* of the 17th says that the insurgent bands which left that city and went in the direction of St. Spiritus had committed some depredations. An encounter had taken place at the cemetery of Guina de Miranda, in which the rebels had three killed and lost some horses. They surrendered about 100 men, commanded by Rojas and Brava. Various skirmishes between the rebels and government forces are reported, in one of which it was presumed a "so-called" General Otto Schmidt was wounded, as his horse was captured. The headquarters of the insurgents were at Siguanea, from whence they sallied out to the alarm of the inhabitants. All through Colon Bamba, Corral Falso and Sabanilla the insurgents are very numerous, but they avoid any encounter with the troops. A party of sixty had been surprised in the Oropo forests and all made prisoners. The troops burned their camp and took many horses and arms. Among the killed was Señor Guerra, a proctor of Colon.

Data from Cienfuegos the 18th state that the artillery column which went out from Havana had taken Mantecaragua after an obstinate fight, which resulted in the capture of 200 rebels. Two companies of troops with the mobilized volunteers were garrisoning the place. They had made several sallies, in which they encountered insurgents with small loss, though a considerable number of the soldiers were sick. From Villa Clara news had been received of the arrival of the artillery column, which had entered the city after firing two cannon shots. No results

were given. On the 17th the insurgents burned the bridge at the Santa Cruz station, which makes the fourth bridge destroyed on the road from Cienfuegos to Villa Clara.

The jurisdiction of Remedios has undergone a fearful state of alarm. A great many of the families are feeling away—the majority to Havana, Calbarien and other ports—and not only is this the case from the towns, but also from the rural districts. The telegraph is completely destroyed, the mails are interrupted, every branch of industry is paralyzed and the distrust daily increased. All articles of necessity are enormously high.

From Holguin we have dates to the 7th. The troops were in possession of the town, but there was no communication outside, as the insurgents surrounded it within the distance of a pistol shot. No people are permitted to enter the town. All have been ordered to keep from twelve to eighteen miles distant with their cattle, provisions, &c. On the day mentioned a column was to start for Gibara to combine with the force expected there, and to see if it were possible to bring in a convoy of provisions. A letter from Gibara says that a column of 400 men left Holguin on the 8th, leaving behind to garrison the town 200. They somehow came suddenly on the enemy entrenched at the Puso de Tobalo. They were attacked, says the account, in detail, and the troops arrived at Aurás, fourteen miles distance, in five hours' march, taking with them the carts with which they started and capturing four prisoners, some rifles, powder and saddle horses. Their loss was two lancers and a lieutenant of sharpshooters wounded. An attack had been made upon Holguin previously, which was repulsed after the insurgents had burned thirty-seven houses of various sizes.

The news from Puerto Principe is not later than the 28th ult., when everything remained as it was two months ago, only that provisions and articles of first necessity were scarcer. The city is garrisoned by 3,000 troops and volunteers. Nearly all the insurgent forces were between that place and Nuevitas, but nearer to the latter, where Brigadier Lesca and his column still were on the 13th inst. From Moron, Remedios and Espiritu Santo there is nothing new. A small party had risen in Banao, in the latter jurisdiction, but almost immediately after availed itself of the amnesty. In both the jurisdictions of Trinidad and Cienfuegos it is tranquil enough. The insurrection of the West is, in fact, confined to the hills of Manicaragua and the swamps of Zapata, although some parties, not numerous, are at other points of the jurisdiction of Santa Clara. In Matanzas, Cardenas and Sagua there is nothing new, but the vigilance adopted there will never be too much. It concludes that the insurrection in the west will be put down at once, at all events within a fortnight, and that once overcome the resources will be ample to carry on the war with energy in Camaguey and further on. Early in October the army was small and the volunteer force scarcely able to preserve its organization. At this moment the government has over 70,000 men of all arms, and the volunteers disciplined and instructed "are equal to veteran troops and the navy has multiplied and done immense service on land and sea."

I have given this résumé in full as explaining the reasons why the Spanish residents, who derive their information from the papers here, regard the insurrection as contemptible and hope for an early restoration of peace. Meanwhile information reaches us through various sources of continued risings in various directions, indicating a simultaneous movement. A gentleman who recently arrived here from Cardenas states that on the 17th a body of 2,000 men had appeared at Palma, near that place, causing great excitement in the section.

Operations in the East—Cholera at Santiago—Sugar Crop—Military Movements Unimportant.

SANTIAGO, Feb. 13, 1869.

News from the country continues meagre and unimportant. The sugar estates "Caridad" and "Esperanza," as is said, have been burned by the insurgents, who are still in tolerable force in the neighborhood or at Bayoe de Canto. General Figueroa is in command in that district and is held responsible for this destruction. But I am inclined to believe them acts of private vengeance on the part of the negroes against their masters rather than the work of rebels.

The cholera continues, and yesterday there were twenty-two fatal cases in town. There are many of the troops in hospital suffering from cholera and yellow fever. Some 5,000 men are expected here from Spain soon, and if these have to set to work at once they will suffer heavily from the climate.

At Guantanamo the sugar crop is being rapidly delivered, and three vessels have already cleared for New York. The exports for 1868 show a large increase over those of 1867, and the present year would have been still greater had it not been for the insurrection, which will reduce it at least 20,000 hog-heads. Of tobacco, instead of about 40,000 bales exported from here, there will be scarcely any.

Military operations here are few and neither interesting nor determinate. About 500 men and several small convoys left here this morning, probably for Palma Soriano and San Luis. A good many of the paid country volunteers are deserting, partly from fear of cholera and from dislike of the service.

Certain reports place Donat Maemol (chief of the insurgents of this jurisdiction) at Sagua de Tanamo; but the more generally received opinion is that he has marched for Puerto Principe. Colonel Villar, recently arrested for taking out some insurgent prisoners here, intending to smother them without authority, has, I am informed, been sent to the Morro for thirty days.

The French war steamer Sarconf arrived here on the 8th, leaving for Havana this morning.

Her Britannic Majesty's ships Vestal and Heron arrived yesterday and left soon after, the one for Bermuda and the other for Havana.

Cuban Ladies' Association for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded in the Patriot Army of Cuba.

ROOM NO. 3 ST. JULIEN HOTEL, }
NEW YORK, Feb. 25, 1869. }

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

I shall be indebted to you if through the medium of your journal you will allow me to correct an error that has been to a certain extent publicly circulated respecting the object of our "Cuban Ladies' Association for the Relief of the Wounded in the Patriot Army of Cuba," of which I have the honor to be the secretary. We can assure you that our mission is purely that of peace and charity. Our object is not revolutionary in any manner or sense, nor can our present movement have any political character. Animated by the most ardent sentiments of patriotism and moved to pity by the sufferings of our brethren in Cuba, who are shedding their blood for the redemption of their country, and being unable to render them personal assistance, we have associated ourselves for the sole and well considered object of procuring them medicines and hospital stores, which we will prove later by the weekly publication of the lists of articles acquired by the association and remitted to the camps of the Cuban patriots.

As this error tends to derogate our object we beg you will correct it in time and receive our lasting thanks.

I remain, with the greatest consideration, your respectful servant,

EMILIA C. DE VILLAVARDE, Secretary.