

THE CASE OF THE LIZZIE MAJOR.

The following are the particulars of the boarding of the schooner *Lizzie Major*, by the officers of the Spanish frigate *Fernando El Catolico*, and the taking from the vessel of two Cubans. The letter appears in *The New-Orleans Picayune* of the 20th inst.:

NEW-ORLEANS, April 17, 1869.

I desire, through your columns, to present to the public an account of a high-handed outrage perpetrated upon an American merchantman, on the 25th ult., while on her passage from Calbarien, Cuba, to New Orleans, by the commander of the Spanish frigate *Fernando El Catolico*. The *Lizzie Major* sailed from Havana, March 8th, for Calbarien, thence to New-Orleans. Two Cubans, P. S. A. Annibale and Ramon Rivas, took passage for the United States, having passports in due form, signed by the Captain-General, Dulce. They also shipped a horse and carriage, the property of a friend who had previously left the island. At Calbarien the papers of the vessel and the passports of the passengers were accredited by the proper authorities, the latter being allowed perfect liberty as to their movements. While at Calbarien, on the 15th ult., two men, father and son, were brought from Cay Frances, charged with an attempt to leave the island. A guard of volunteers was placed over them, who demanded their instant execution. The captain of the post went to telegraph for regulars from Remedios to control the volunteers. During his absence the guard shot the prisoners, tore the clothing from their bodies, and after dragging them through the streets, left them unburied. At the expiration of 24 hours the wives of the murdered men begged their bodies for burial, when the ruffians refused them, and, with the most opprobrious epithets, threatened to shoot them also. A few days after two men were shot by the same volunteers, because one of them cried "Viva Cuba." On the 25th the *Lizzie Major* sailed from Cay Frances, at 10:40 a. m. was hove to and boarded by a lieutenant from the above-named Spanish frigate, being then 16 leagues from port and 20 miles from the nearest land. He was accompanied by the first engineer, an Englishman, as interpreter. The officer inquired if there were passengers, to which the captain replied in the affirmative, and the passports were exhibited. He then demanded that the hatches should be removed, that he might examine the cargo, which the captain refused to do. The lieutenant then returned to the frigate, carrying the passports with him. After considerable delay he came back, and ordered the passengers to prepare to return to Calbarien. He again demanded the removal of the hatches, and was again refused. He threatened to take the horse and carriage, and remarked that it was a great favor that the vessel was not seized. Finally, upon the captain's urgent representation in favor of the lad Ramon Rivas, an orphan on his way to join his friend, the officer permitted him to remain. Immediately after the return of the boat to the frigate she came in charge of a midshipman, who ordered the boat to get his baggage and go into the boat. The midshipman went into the cabin, followed by his boat's crew, who rushed in, saying they came to take possession of the vessel. The captain asked what all these men wanted in his cabin. The officer replied that they came after the baggage. They then returned to the frigate, and allowed the *Lizzie Major* to proceed on her voyage after a detention of three and a half hours. All this took place while the American flag was flying aloft, and against the protest of Capt. Dulce. He said to the officer: "You should respect the flag under which I sail." The latter replied: "We have got the biggest ship and the biggest guns, and will do as we please."

A. W. GILES,

Master of Schooner *Lizzie Major*.

Extract from the Log of Schooner Lizzie Major,
March 17, 1869.

At 6 a. m. hove up anchor and proceeded to sea. At 9:40 a. m., discerned a large steamer to the northward, bearing toward us. At 10:40 a. m., in lat. 23° 23', long. 79° 23', and 19 miles from the nearest point of Cuban coast, she came within a cab's length, and fired a gun as a signal for us to heave to. Sail was reduced, and vessel hauled to the wind in compliance to signal. A boat was lowered from the corvette, in charge of two officers. On coming aboard, the manifest and passports of passengers were demanded. After a rigid examination of the papers, the officers informed the master that Mr. James Annibale and Master Ramon Rivas, with a horse and buggy, would be taken on board of the steamer and transferred to Cuba, upon the basis of the above-mentioned not being indorsed on the Spanish sea letter. (The passengers, with the horse and buggy, were regularly cleared in the Custom House at Havana.) The officer then ordered the master to lay by until he could communicate with his commander. After an hour's absence, the officer returned aboard, and ordered the passengers in the boat, and insisted on the master opening the hatches, to which the master objected. After some hesitation on the part of the officer, he said, in consideration of the age of Master Ramon Rivas, he would not take him away; and also stated that his commander would have seized the schooner had he not complied so readily to the signal gun; to which the master replied: "Sir, being on the high seas, and out of your jurisdiction, I protest against you or yours from touching or removing any passenger or cargo from my vessel; and should you insist, the act will be reported officially, and your Government held responsible for all damages that may arise through this illegal detention." The above protest was of no effect. The elder passenger was taken aboard of the steamer, and the schooner ordered to remain by until further orders. A third boat came alongside and took Master Ramon Rivas, and the vessel permitted to proceed on her voyage. She proved to be the Spanish corvette *Fernando El Catolico*.