

CUBAN AFFAIRS.

ARRIVAL OF THE STEAM-SHIP COLUMBIA.

The steam-ship *Columbia*, from Havana July 30, arrived at this port yesterday. We are indebted to the courtesy of the purser, Mr. MAGNA, for the early delivery of our files and letters.

Gen. Rodas and the Commercial Interests—The Elections for Representatives in the Cortes and the Candidates—Defense of the Volunteers—Valmaseda the Modern Dr. Sangrado—Miscellaneous.

From Our Own Correspondent.

HAVANA, Saturday, July 30, 1870.

It has long been considered an established fact that the Island of Cuba, and the City of Havana particularly, is the land of strange anomalies and peculiar contrasts. The proofs are visible everywhere, and demonstrate themselves daily in the social, political and religious aspect of affairs, and the country in general. "All signs fall in dry weather," says the old proverb, and if the same proverb is applied to Havana, dry weather must prevail at all times. The war in Europe, which has affected the commercial community all over the world, has only produced a temporary ripple here. The notes of the Spanish Bank, which went up to six per cent. discount, have again receded to four per cent. discount, and not the slightest sign of speculation in gold is apparent. Commerce is watching with wonder and disgust the paternal solicitude of the Captain-General, who quietly suppressed the telegrams announcing the declaration of war, and continues to suppress all war news from Europe, founding his action on the ground that the news might produce great injury to commerce. The merchants are, as a matter of course, highly indignant at this un-called-for and injudicious tutelage of a man, who undoubtedly is a good man and a good soldier, but whose ideas of commerce and its necessities are very narrow and of the wrong kind, and who offers a gratuitous and stupid insult to the mercantile community, in treating them like school-boys incapable of managing their own affairs. Instead of preventing a panic, RODAS has simply planted the basis of one, by keeping the merchants and public in general in a state of doubt and uncertainty. Merchants are unable to make such arrangements about their business as a thorough knowledge of the situation abroad would enable them to do, and the minute the failure of a single house largely connected with the Havana trade will be announced, a general panic and distrust will be inaugurated and strike at the very foundations of Government and private credit. The consequences will be far more disastrous here than they would be in other commercial cities, owing to the anomalous state of affairs and the peculiar mode of conducting mercantile operations here. If we add to this the existing state of war in the island, the depreciation of all kinds of property, and the problematical character of the notes of the Spanish Bank, it must be admitted that the inauguration of a crisis will be the death-blow to the prosperity of Cuba, and its commerce in particular. Yet, strange to say, the shares of the Spanish Bank are sold at twenty-four per cent. premium; and, as I stated above, the notes of the institution are only four per cent. discount. But as this discount would be largely increased should everybody attempt to convert the notes into specie, the Government and the planter who buy their supplies abroad would soon find that utter ruin was staring them in the face. The Government would need a much larger amount of currency to meet its foreign engagements, while its income would diminish in proportion, and to impose higher taxes than those exacted at present would be almost an impossibility, and might produce domestic complications.

REFORMS—THE ELECTIONS.

The latest reform, and one that will produce a great effect, has just been inaugurated. Hitherto all places not enjoying the title of city or town, have been governed by a Crown officer, called the Capitan de Partido, who combined the functions of police magistrate, governor, county sheriff, mayor, constable, coroner, assistant collector of contributions, registrar of births and deaths, taker of the census, principal figure and high functionary at religious processions, together with any number of minor attributes, and no improvements could be inaugurated or nuisances abolished without his consent. In future all Capitanias de Partido will elect a mayor and aldermen, who naturally will decide as to the amount of money to be raised by taxation and how to be expended. But if anybody supposes that this measure has been inaugurated for that purpose it would be an error, as the slavery question is the cause and basis of this, as well as of many other reforms. The first duty of the new city or town councils will be the formation of the lists of persons who are entitled to vote for Deputies to the Cortes, the qualifications being the amount of taxes they contribute, or membership in one of the learned professions. The elections will hardly be held before October, and perhaps not until November, as it will take a good while to prepare the lists and hold them in accordance with the red tape system so prevalent where the Government is interested. This reminds me of a conversation your correspondent once held with Mr. ACEVEDO, the former chief editor of the *Diario*, who wished to be informed in what manner the Americans managed to lay the foundation of a town today and have it erected and peopled in a couple of months. After explaining the subject to Mr. ACEVEDO's satisfaction, he gravely remarked, "I see now, we Spaniards cannot do the same; as we can never build one town at a time, we must build two and a half towns; one for the people, another for the archives and documents, and a half a one to quarter our employees." Mr. ACEVEDO was undoubtedly well acquainted with his countrymen and their manner of doing business.

THE CANDIDATES FOR THE CORTES.

There are many persons reported as probable candidates for the office of Deputy to the National Cortes. The list so far is composed of ultra Spaniards in politics, and natives of Spain. The most prominent are Mr. RIZO, Vice-President of the Spanish Bank and former Administrator of Lotteries—a man of talent and judgment, and the only man among all who cannot be charged with a desire to satisfy his ambition, as he has already been a member of the Cortes; next is Mr. SUARER VIGIL, Colonel of the Volunteer Artillery Regiment, a lawyer by profession, and at present the counselor of the Board of Embargoed Properties; Mr. MANUEL CALVO, a planter, residing in Madrid at present, and formerly at the head of slave traders; Mr. DURAN CUERVO, a lawyer; the elegant Colonel of Volunteers, RAMON HERRERA, who considers himself a shining light among all classes of society; Mr. RUIZ LEON, editor of the *Voz de Cuba*; Mr. JUAN ARIRA, editor of the *Diario*; Mr. GILE GELPI, ex-editor of the *Prensa*, and Mr. FERRER DE CONTO, of the *New-York Cronista*. The latter says he has no desire to represent Cuba in the Cortes, and if he desired a seat in that body, he would run for some borough in Spain. Only two Cubans are mentioned as probable candidates for the office, namely: Mr. JUAN POEY, a Havana planter, and Mr. TORRIENTE, a Matanzas planter, both of them being staunch adherents of the Spanish cause, and very ultra on the slavery question. In Spain, all Deputies serve from motives of patriotism, receiving no salary, but enjoying the advantage of being selected to fill a seat on the Ministerial bench, or some other high Government office. The Cuban members will receive \$10,000 per annum from the island treasury, which is a sufficient inducement, beyond a doubt, to make many patriots show their colors and talent. One or two of the above-named gentlemen have already cultivated the acquaintance of their American friends, in order to learn some of the election tricks practiced in the United States, and it is stated that one individual has sent to New-York for a member from the Sixth Ward, in order to learn "the ropes." It is doubtful, however, if ballot stuffing and repeating could be carried on here, although your correspondent

has seen several men, who to his knowledge had been dead and buried for several years, take out their passports and leave the country, their names appearing conspicuously in the passenger lists.

DIAZ QUINTERO.

Perhaps no man has been more talked of than Mr. DIAZ QUINTERO, a member of the Spanish Cortes, who stated in a discourse pronounced in that body on the 13th of June, that the Cuban volunteers were a dishonor to the country and ought not to exist; also, that PARODI and MORA of Cardenas, had been executed. The journals are daily filled with columns of protests from all parts of the island, signed by volunteers, Gen. RODAS having also written a letter in which he declares that he also is a volunteer, and calls QUINTERO a crazy lunatic. The Colonels of the Havana volunteers have written a letter to the Cortes requesting that Mr. QUINTERO be censured, and that the words he used be expunged from the Congressional register; also that they declare that the volunteers are well-deserving of the country, and not a dishonor, as Mr. QUINTERO states.

THE WAR.

Gen. CARO has returned to Puerto Principe, the results of his grand campaign being no more than what has been accomplished by many a Spanish Captain, who went out with only a single company. VALMASEDA has probably arrived at Santiago de Cuba by this time, in order to assume command of the troops there, and try to drive MODESTO DIAZ and companions out of the department. He will undoubtedly succeed—on paper, and then write a voluminous report. As VALMASEDA had a "Te Deum" sung about a year ago in the Cathedral of Santiago de Cuba, to celebrate the disappearance of the insurgents and conclusion of the rebellion, he ought to have a religious ceremony performed. VALMASEDA himself would make an excellent representative in every respect of the renowned Dr. Sangrado.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Cable expedition is expected to reach Santiago de Cuba about the 4th of August. Several cases of Asiatic cholera have occurred in the Cerro suburb, where all the foreign merchants and wealthy people reside. Other cases have occurred in the city, the number of deaths from that disease being about twenty daily. Business is extremely dull in all branches; the largest cigar manufactories are either decreasing the number of operatives, or else closing altogether. A prolonged war in Europe would be of incalculable injury to the manufacturers, and throw five thousand cigar-makers out of employment. The misery among the poorer classes is daily increasing.

QUASIMODO.

War News from Cuba.

To the Editor of the *New-York Times*:

Some days ago the dispatch of the Associated Press, from Havana, announced two things: First, that Captain-General DE RODAS having been offered reinforcements declined any, as altogether unnecessary. Secondly, that Gen. CORNELIO PORRO had been slain by his countrymen for having shown a purpose to surrender to the Spaniards. The Press dispatch from Madrid, dated Aug. 1, in the papers of this City this morning, gives a conclusive answer to the first transparent falsehood. For it states that DE RODAS has asked for a reinforcement of fourteen thousand men, in which connection I take occasion to say, that that number would not replace the casualties which have occurred in the Spanish ranks in Cuba since Dec. 1, 1869. The answer to the other misstatement is a letter from Gen. PORRO to myself, dated as late as the 12th of July, a letter characteristic of the patriot who wrote it, hopeful of the early independence of his country. The dispatch from Havana is characteristic of all from the same source—they are invariably false either in letter or spirit.

THOMAS JORDAN.

NEW-YORK, Tuesday, Aug. 2, 1870.