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**THE LOPEZ EXPEDITIONS
TO CUBA**

1848-1851

A DISSERTATION

PRESENTED TO THE

FACULTY OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

ROBERT GRANVILLE CALDWELL

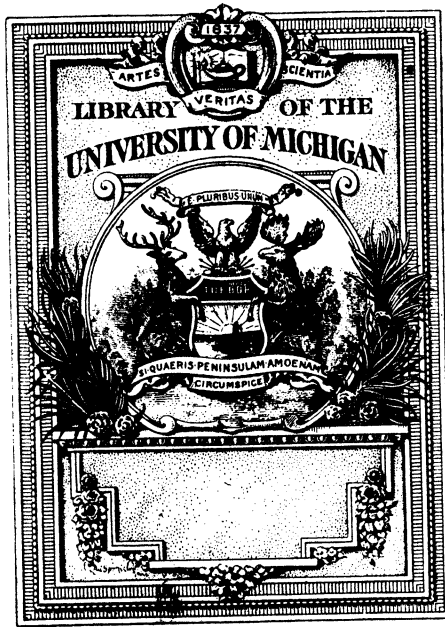
Assistant Professor of History

Rice Institute, Houston, Texas

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PREFACE

It is my purpose to write the story of the Lopez' expeditions to Cuba in such a way as to throw light on both American and Cuban conditions in 1850. The single existing monograph on this subject was written to be read by the author before the Filson Club of Louisville, Kentucky, from material collected for a historical novel. It therefore deals especially with the biographical details connected with the Kentuckians who took part in the expedition. The author, Mr. A. C. Quisenberry, has written with much charm of style, but it lay beyond his purpose to consider the broader aspects of the subject. His account does not aim to be critical, nor has he used any of the Spanish sources. The newspaper accounts seem to have been followed somewhat too readily. The brief account in the first volume of Mr. James Ford Rhodes' History of the United States is remarkable for its fairness and clearness, but necessarily omits details, while the recent volume by Admiral Chadwick entitled "The Relations of the United States and Spain—Diplomacy" treats almost exclusively the diplomatic results of the expedition. The only other account of importance is contained in a large volume by Dr. Vidal Morales, "Iniciadores y Primeros Martires de la Revolucion Cubana." This volume is essentially a collection of documents printed in full, with comments by the author. These documents are of varying importance, and serve to throw light on the Cuban aspects of the subject.

The sources which have been here made use of are described in the bibliographical appendix. Especially valuable are the memoirs by Concha and manuscripts in the Archives at Havana, of which a list is given by Mr. L. M. Perez in his "Guide to the Materials for American History in Cuban Archives."

The story has a threefold interest: First, by means of it we can see the character of Spanish government in Cuba, and discover some of the roots of the process which ended in 1898 in the separation of Cuba from Spain; second, the larger movement of which the expeditions were a part served to disclose at

the very first the inherent weakness of the compromise of 1850; and third, the whole story throws an interesting side light on the views and characters of many Americans in 1850, bringing out heroic qualities which showed themselves among much that was ignoble in these stirring adventures. I believe that the importance of these events, whether measured by their immediate significance or by their results, far transcends their mere military interest. Perhaps there is no other single incident which might equally serve to make clear American political and foreign relations in the year of the great Compromise.

The author wishes to acknowledge very gratefully the kind assistance of Professor Shipman of Princeton University who suggested this particular topic, of Professor Corwin who made some very helpful suggestions with regard to the method of work, of Professor Myers who read the original manuscript and made some important corrections, and of Professor McElroy whose original encouragement and continued assistance have been of the greatest value.

CHAPTER I.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN CUBA IN 1850

Since the Lopez expeditions were essentially part of a much larger movement both in Cuba and in the United States, it is convenient to begin with some account of the political and commercial conditions of the island in 1850.

The head of the government was the Captain General. By the famous decree of May 28, 1825 this official had seemingly been given almost absolute authority. This edict was the outcome of the French reactionary occupation of Spain, and was issued in the name of Fernando VII: "His majesty being formally persuaded that at no time and under no circumstances will the principle of rectitude and love to his royal person which characterizes your excellency ever be weakened; and his majesty, desiring to obviate any difficulties which might arise in extraordinary cases from a division of authority and the complication of command and control by the respective officers, and to the important end of preserving in that precious island his legitimate sovereign rule and the public peace, has been pleased, in accordance with the judgment of his council of ministers, to invest your excellency with full authority, conferring all the powers which by royal decree are conceded to the governors of cities in a state of siege. His majesty consequently invests your excellency with full and unlimited authority to detach from the island, and to send to this Peninsula all officials and persons employed in whatsoever capacity, and of whatsoever rank and class or condition, whose presence may appear prejudicial, or whose public or private conduct may inspire you with suspicion, replacing them in the interim with faithful servants of his majesty who are deserving of the confidence of your excellency, and furthermore to suspend the execution of any orders or general regulations issued in whatever branch of the administration to whatever extent your excellency may consider convenient to the royal service; such measures to be always provisional, and a report thereof to be sent by your

excellency for the royal approval of his majesty. In dispensing to your excellency this signal proof of his royal favor and the high confidence which his majesty places in your perfect loyalty, he hopes that, worthily coöperating, you will use the greatest prudence and circumspection, together with indefatigable activity; and he trusts that your excellency, being endowed through this same favor of his royal goodness with a greater responsibility, will redouble your vigilance in seeing that the laws are observed, that justice is administered, and that the faithful subjects of his majesty be rewarded; at the same time punishing without delay or hesitation the misdeeds of those who, forgetting their obligations and what they owe to the best and most beneficent of sovereigns, violate the laws and give vent to sinister machinations by infraction of said laws and of the administrative ordinances relating thereto.”¹

While this decree had never been repealed and gave to the Captain General a degree of authority which would seem the sheerest despotism to the Anglo-Saxon, there were in 1850 certain very real limitations to this despotic power. These limitations were not meant to safeguard the rights of individuals after the fashion of American and English constitutional limitations, but are rather a good example of Spanish jealousy of officials who were so often corrupt.

The control of the finances in Cuba had never been exclusively in the hands of the Governor General, and, with the creation of the office of Intendant in 1764, this fiscal officer, who received orders directly from the Crown, was made practically equal in rank to the Captain General.^{1a} In 1812 subordinate

¹ Royal decree, May 28, 1825. Text translated by Chadwick in his "Relations of the United States and Spain—Diplomacy" (1909), pp. 224, 225. Chadwick regards this decree as the true constitution of Cuba, but further study clearly shows that the real power of the captain general was not so great as it would seem to be from this order. In fact Captain General Concha took advantage of the Lopez expeditions to complain of the lack of centralization of authority and to secure greater power—a change which made Cuba increasingly a military despotism. The whole subject of the power of the Captain General is discussed at length in a letter from Concha himself "Al Presidente del Consejo de Ministros" dated April 1, 1851. The full Spanish text is given in *Boletín del Archivo*, IV, 107. (Havana.)

^{1a} The Captain General dealt with the Minister of the Interior, while the Intendant dealt with the Treasury at Madrid. Real Ordenes, Feb. 18, 1835.

fiscal officers or Intendants were appointed at Santiago and Puerto Principe, while the previous Intendant was now known as Superintendent. In 1844 the rank of the Governor General was declared supreme; but it was not until 1853 that the office of Superintendent was merged with that of Captain General, when the power in the government was centralized along the lines advocated by Concha.² The Superintendent in the days of his power presided over a "Tribunal de Cuentas" which passed on all proposed expenditures, audited all accounts, and in addition exercised judicial functions in cases where the treasury or its officials were involved. The dealings of this Tribunal were directly with the Minister of Finance in Madrid.

The navy was under a special commander not subordinate to the Captain General,³ while special "juntas," or administrative boards, cared for the civic administration in its various departments. Over these the Captain General presided, but had no other powers than to vote as a member and to carry out their decrees. Of the various boards the Junta de Fomento, or Board of Agriculture and Public Works, was the most powerful and independent. The Captain General presided over it, but its members were elected from the landed and merchant class.

² In addition to the real cedula of Oct. 21, 1853 by which the Captain General became also Superintendent, another decree of August 17, 1854 made the juntas merely advisory bureaus entirely subordinate to the Captain General. This was precisely in line with Concha's recommendations. These changes were direct results of the Lopez expeditions.

³ The separation of naval and military power in Cuba was not due originally to a desire to lessen the power of the Captain General, but to the fact that Cuba was the center of the naval forces of all Spanish America, and that the defence of all those regions was directed from Havana. It was clearly important that the naval commander should not be under the orders of the ruler of any one colony. With the loss of all her other possessions, the separate naval administration was still continued, to the great annoyance of the Captain General. The three chief officers, the Intendant, the Admiral, and the Captain General, met in a Board or Junta de Autoridades to attempt to bring some unity into their diverse functions. Jealousies crept in constantly, for example with regard to the authority over the Contoy prisoners in 1850.

Memorias Sobre el Estado Politico, Gobierno, y Administracion de la isla de Cuba, por el Teniente General, Don Jose de la Concha, Madrid, 1853, p. 37. See also for friction between the Junta and Captain General Alcoy, Zaragoza, Insurrecciones en Cuba, I, 600.

This board which Concha says was "almost on a democratic basis" was a special thorn in his side.⁴

In spite of these limitations, the Captain General had a great variety of functions. For example he was regularly President of the Council of Havana, and could at any time preside over any city council. He was also President of the various Juntas or Bureaus. He was directly in charge of the mails, and had the care of prisoners.⁵ One of his duties was to act as a *Corregidor*, practically a police magistrate, in connection with his office of President of the city council of Havana. The idea of the town and the township, with functions separate from those of the central government and with their own local government, an idea which is so fundamental in Anglo Saxon institutions, was foreign to the constitution of the Cuban government. Thus, in Havana, as well as in other cities, certain petty details of local government fell to officers whose duties were of national, and, in the case of the Captain General, of international importance. In fact, before the days of Concha's reforms, a great deal of the time of the Captain General was taken up in making out and signing papers of no real importance simply because they brought fees which made up his salary.⁶

The Captain General's military supremacy was unquestioned, and this fact brought him close to the administration of the smallest localities. Cuba was divided for military and administrative purposes into three districts: The western with its capital at Havana, the central of which Puerto Principe was the capital, and the eastern, with Santiago de Cuba for a capital. These were under Governors who received instructions directly from the Captain General. Within the provinces were districts of two ranks. The larger towns and their neighborhoods were under Lieutenant Governors who had certain civil duties, among them that of presiding over the *Ayuntamientos*, or town councils. The Lieutenant Governors also commanded the military forces. The less populous rural districts were under Captains who had almost absolute power in the absence of *Ayuntamientos* or township governments of any sort. Each of these officers, nominated by the Captain General and appointed

⁴For a treatment of this whole subject see Perez:—"Guide to the Materials for American History in Cuban Archives," pp. 28-33.

⁵Concha, p. 50.

⁶Concha, *op cit.* pp. 160-174.

by the Crown, bore the relation of a subordinate to his military chief. The pay of Governors and Lieutenant Governors was nominally that of their regular military rank, but they all exercised the functions of judges in both civil and criminal cases and received certain fees in cases tried before them. The Captains had no fixed salary at all and had to depend for an income on one-third of the fines which they collected.

Popular government, so far as it existed at all in Cuba, was represented in 1850 by the Ayuntamientos and Audiencias. The Ayuntamientos, corresponding to our city councils, were corporations containing hereditary members, members who bought their seats from the government, members selected by the government of Cuba, and, in some cases, elected members, as seems to have been the case especially in Puerto Principe. They chose their own Alcalde, or mayor. They existed only in the older towns, some new and important towns having no Ayuntamientos at all. The oldest, that of Havana, dated from 1574. They were subject to the orders of the Governor or Lieutenant Governor, and also to the authority of the Audiencia of their district, which exercised certain administrative supervision over them. In financial affairs they had to get the sanction of the Junta de Proprios y Arbitrios, which was an independent organization. They were naturally inefficient and corrupt, having acquired customs during the centuries which were followed to the detriment of public interests. At the same time they were tenacious of their rights and, like the Parliaments of France in 1789, were useful as starting points of opposition.⁷

The Audiencias were ancient courts with mixed judicial and administrative functions. They acted in an advisory capacity to the Captain General. This advice the Captain General was quite free to disregard, but it served as a means of protest and petition which was especially displeasing to a Captain General like Concha, who regarded the presence of the ancient court in Puerto Principe as tending to encourage pride and insubordination: "Even suppose its members endowed with an exceptional prudence," says Concha, "yet, the commanding general and the governor of the province, if not actually held back, are sure to be embarrassed at least, by the judgments and deliberations of that Tribunal. This Audiencia, being the old-

⁷Concha, pp. 81-94.

est in the Indies (since the first which was established in Española was later removed to Puerto Principe) had in its favor the prestige given by antiquity, by its acquired customs, by the solemnity of its proceedings, and by the very title of 'nobleza' (Highness) given to it by law; and by its side must be obscured, weakened and lessened the military authority, which being newer, has not yet had time to accustom the towns to obedience, submission and respect."⁸ From the point of view of Concha, the suppression of the Audiencia would have certain splendid results. The educated lawyers and others connected with the court would have to come to Havana to make a living, where they could be under the surveillance of the government. The wealth of Puerto Principe as well as its importance would be greatly lessened, and the money spent in keeping up this important court of justice could be used in the defence of the island.

Judicial functions in both criminal and civil suits belonged, (1) to the "Alcades Mayores" of whom there were five in Havana, (2) to the Captains and Governors, (3) to the Audiencias, (4) in special cases, to Juntas and their committees, especially to the Junta de Fomentos, and (5) even to the navy department.

The administration of justice was costly and slow. Saco, an eminent Cuban scholar, who made a study of the complicated system of court procedure and expenses, declared in 1837:—"The condition in which the branch of judicial administration is found is deplorable." Judges, even when found guilty of flagrant offences, could not be punished. Prisoners could be taken from the jurisdiction of native judges and condemned by a court-martial in which every guarantee of individual rights was absent. •The tribunals were only independent in name, for the Captain General could interfere at any time in the administration of justice.⁹

The government which Concha came to head in 1850 was notoriously and almost unavoidably corrupt. Indeed, merchants in their stores and shipmasters at the wharves spoke openly and contemptuously of the proceedings of government

⁸ Captain General Concha to the minister of Justice, dated Havana June 9, 1851. Boletín del Archivo Nacional, Havana, Año IV, Número 3.

⁹ Perez, Estudio Sobre las Ideas Políticas de José Antonio Saco. Havana, 1906. Pp. 36, 37; Saco, Obras, N. Y. 1853, III, 37-150.

officials and counted on certain necessary expenses in the way of bribes. The government attorneys refused to proceed against prominent malefactors. The captains were almost universally corrupt, while even the governors and lieutenant governors were exercising their functions oppressively. When one of these was removed by Concha the town celebrated in true Spanish style. Houses were illuminated, the town was decorated, and dances were given to indicate joy and relief. The removals were wholesale, especially among those engaged in the work of the courts. Nor were all these removals entirely for corruption and inefficiency. The Lieutenant Governor of Pinar del Rio was removed for political causes and replaced by Colonel Elizalde who was to take a prominent part in the difficulties of 1851.^{9a}

¶ The censorship of the press had always existed in Cuba except for two brief periods, in 1812, and from 1820 to 1823. In the period of our story it was particularly strict, for it was the purpose of Captain General Concha to err on that side rather than on the side of too great leniency. In spite of all precautions, however, El Faro Industrial, edited by an American named Thrasher, would sometimes contain an article or a poem with allegorical significance, or phrases would appear, at first sight entirely harmless, but in reality having a double meaning and, in the eyes of the Captain General, appearing both insulting and dangerous. Nevertheless it was impossible to find any plausible excuse for suppressing the paper, until the death of General Ena, who was killed in battle with Lopez. The brief account of his death taken from another newspaper was immediately followed by an article prominently headed, "Laughter" (La Sonrisa). The insult, in the state of public opinion, seemed at this time sufficiently evident and the paper was suppressed.¹⁰

So soon as the *Faro Industrial* was suppressed and the daily papers of Havana were reduced to three, Concha did away with the two highly salaried Royal censors and appointed a clerk who should carry on the censorship under his own immediate direction.¹¹

The most important periodical in Havana was *El Diario de*

^{9a} Concha, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-142.

¹⁰ Concha, p. 282.

¹¹ Concha, p. 283.



la Marina. It had a subscription list of 6,000 and was, of course, published entirely in the Spanish interest. Even this paper was carefully watched by the censor, one article being suppressed by Concha for intimating that the interests of Cuba were distinct from those of Spain.¹²

This suppression of the press and the lack of educational facilities were evils of which Cuba was becoming increasingly aware. The task of the censor was made peculiarly arduous from the necessity of not only guarding against what might seem dangerous in the Cuban press, but also of excluding the publications of a country situated so near as the United States. As a result, friction with Americans was constant.¹³

The attitude of the Cuban Government toward foreigners was one of extreme jealousy. By the Royal Order of Oct. 21, 1817, foreigners were divided into three classes: Transients who were merely visitors in Cuba, domiciled foreigners, and naturalized citizens. Rights of transiency only continued for five years by Spanish law. Domiciled foreigners were required to declare their intention of settling permanently on the island, to profess the Roman Catholic religion, and to swear allegiance to Spain, promising to obey the laws and ordinances to which

¹²Concha, p. 287.

¹³Saco, *op. cit.* III, 225. Perez, *op. cit.* 37. These difficulties were illustrated in the case of Wm. H. Bush, thus described by the Spanish Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Calderon de la Barca, the Spanish minister at Washington: "Your Excellency knows that the paper called *La Verdad*, published in New York, is printed with the specific object of awakening among the inhabitants of Cuba and Porto Rico the sentiment of rebellion, and to propagate the idea of annexation to the United States. The Captain General of the island, in fulfilment of his duty, prohibited the entrance and circulation of this newspaper in the island, and tried to investigate the ramifications in the island of this conspiracy against the rights of Spain, and against the peace of the country. As a result of the efforts made with this object, it was discovered that although not numerous, there were in Havana some wicked Spaniards charged with the task of collecting money to sustain the subversive publications, and to distribute its copies to those who should care to read them. Among the accomplices in this crime of high treason was found a certain Wm. H. Bush, an American citizen, and purser of the American frigate *Childe Harold*. This person seemed to be charged with carrying the correspondence of the conspirators and the copies of *La Verdad*." (Spanish Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Calderon de la Barca, Spanish minister at Washington, Jan. 2, 1848. Unpublished Mss. Havana, Archives.)

Spaniards were subjected. Naturalized citizens were regarded as in every sense Spanish subjects.¹⁴ The question of the treatment of foreigners gained in importance and the causes for friction under Spanish restrictions largely increased, with the beginning of the great rush to California by way of Panama. Thousands of foreigners passed through Havana, as a port of call, on their way to the gold fields.¹⁵ In addition to these transients, at least 400 machinists and engineers came annually from the United States to work on the great plantations during the gathering of the sugar crop. These returned with from \$800 to \$1500 each and without having paid any taxes. During their stay on the island they were natural centers for the spreading of ideas of annexation.¹⁶ The treaty of 1795 between the United States and Spain had an important provision that "in all cases of seizure, detention or arrest, for debts contracted, or offences committed by any citizen or subject of the one party, within the jurisdiction of the other, the same shall be made and prosecuted by order of the law only, and according to the regular course of proceedings usual in such cases. The citizens and subjects of both parties shall be allowed to employ such advocates, solicitors, notaries, agents, and factors as they may judge proper in all their affairs and in all their trials at law in which they may be concerned before the tribunals of the other party; and such agents shall have free access to be present at the proceedings in such cases and at the taking of all examinations and evidence which may be exhibited in the said trials."¹⁷ Now it is perfectly evident that in cases where American citizens were charged with high treason for offences which seemed to an Anglo Saxon trivial, it was especially important to be able readily to invoke the safeguards of this treaty. But neither the Captain General nor the American Consul were granted any diplomatic functions, so that no direct complaint would be regarded, and an American citizen

¹⁴ For a discussion of the status of foreigners with the opinion of the legal advisers of the Captain General on the case of John Thrasher see the documents listed in "Perez' Guide," number 248, and in the Appendix to this thesis, especially the opinion of the Real Acuerdo to the Captain General, Havana, Oct. 20, 1851.

¹⁵ Concha, *op. cit.* p. 95.

¹⁶ Concha, pp. 246, 247. Zaragoza (I. 617, 618).

¹⁷ State papers, I, 546-548, for text of treaty. See Chadwick, *op. cit.*, Chap. 2, for full story of the treaty.

might easily suffer long and unjust imprisonment as well as much financial loss before the matter could be arranged, by the roundabout process, through Washington and Madrid. The remarkable international position of Cuba, in the eyes of the Spanish Government, is thus described by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs:

"Your Excellency knows that the government of Her Majesty has always maintained the position with all foreign powers that its colonies are outside of all the promises and obligations undertaken by Spain in international agreements. With regard to Cuba, the discussions with England to this effect are well known, in which the Spanish Government has declared that the treaties which form the positive law of Spain had been adjusted in times when the Spanish colonies were closed to all foreign trade and commerce, and that when in 1824 these colonies were opened to commerce of other nations they were not placed on equal footing with the home country, but were kept in the exceptional position of colonies. Of this exceptional position of that part of the Spanish dominions, no one has more proof than the foreign consuls, since it is evident to them that the Spanish government has only endured their presence on the condition that they should not exercise other functions than those of mere commercial agents. Thus in 1845 the English government accepted formally the agreement that its consul should not demand the fulfilment of treaties, not even of those which refer to the slave trade."¹⁸ In other words, the Captain General, in his dealings with individuals, was, according to this theory, wholly untrammelled by international agreements. Foreigners were to live in Cuba at their own peril. Of course, the Spanish government could not really expect to be permitted to freely carry out any such policy, but the mere attempt to do so made the government of Cuba very different from that of most civilized states.

Our study of the internal and foreign policy of the Cuban government has now brought us to the central idea of its constitution. In contrast with most governments, the chief function of that of Cuba was not so much the development of the country as its preservation to the Crown of Spain. This policy was the immediate result of the annexation of Florida

¹⁸ Spanish Secretary for foreign affairs to Calderon de la Barca, Madrid, Jan. 2, 1847. Unpublished Mss. Archives at Havana.

to the United States. A royal order to the Captain General of the period states this duty clearly: "You should remember that when once the cession of Florida is made, the importance of the command of this island rises greatly on account of the nearness of a maritime power which brings close to the island the base for future operations. Therefore the defence of the island deserves your greatest attention, and it is necessary to make ready as soon as possible. When the time arrives to fear an attempt by them, prepared in the ports of Florida, the defence of the island ought to be already systematized and planned."¹⁹ This defence of the island continued to be the chief care of successive governors.

While the navy, as we have seen, was under an independent commander, there was at least no doubt of the Captain General's absolute authority over the army. Until the year 1825 the army of Cuba was composed of three regular battalions, a brigade of artillery, and a single regiment of cavalry. The defence of the island, aside from these troops, was left to the militia of the island. With the soldiers who came to Cuba in 1850, the regular army then reached sixteen battalions, two picked companies of veterans, twelve squadrons of cavalry, two brigades of artillery, and two light batteries. Five forts had also been constructed since the English occupation.²⁰

This task of defence, even with so large a number of troops, was made difficult by geographical conditions. With an area about the same as that of Ohio, Cuba stretches in a mighty crescent for more than 800 miles across the waters of the Gulf, separated only by narrow channels from Yucatan, Florida, and Hayti. Internal means of communication were wretched and most points were accessible only by sea.^{20a} The sparsely settled coast offered many secluded nooks to men like Lopez and his followers. In the west a range of small mountains sometimes reach a height of 2000 feet, giving an opportunity for guerilla warfare. The central part of the island is a country of broad plains and shallow valleys. The shore of the northern coast is mainly steep and rocky and lies well back of islands and coral reefs between which the passages are narrow and intricate. It is evident that the island might easily contain

¹⁹ Concha, *op. cit.* p. 46. ²⁰ Concha, *op. cit.* p. 45.

^{20a} Three thousand, five hundred and twenty-three coasting vessels entered Havana in the single year of 1851.

a large total number of troops, and yet be readily open to attack at almost any single point.²¹

During the early part of the eighteenth century the commerce of Cuba had been small and unimportant, consisting chiefly of the more valuable timber in which the island abounded. The first really important steps toward the development of its resources followed the withdrawal of the English from Havana in accordance with the treaty of 1763. One year later^{21a} there was created the office of Intendant of the island whose functions were to organize the customs and to encourage commerce. But duties were still so high, and restrictions so onerous, that Cuban commerce did not readily grow. In 1778 these restrictions were largely removed from Spanish ships and, since these vessels did not come in sufficient numbers to supply the needs of the island, a decree of the following year allowed the vessels of friendly nations to bring foodstuffs to Cuba. As might have been expected these foreigners came in swarms, making use of the permission accorded them to bring in manufactured articles as well. This so aroused the Spaniards that a decree was issued prohibiting the admission of foreign vessels even when only making Cuba a port of call.²² The policy of the government thus vacillated, but the system of prohibitions usually prevailed, except in the troubled period of 1809 and 1810, when the bonds of Cuba to the mother country were weak and the authorities of the island, on their own responsibility, made special agreements admitting foreign ships. Thus the Spanish government grew to tolerate what it was supposed to prohibit until Fernando VII, in 1818, passed a regulation admitting foreign ships with no restrictions whatever. But even after this decree commerce was by no means free. Duties were high and were the gradual accretion of separate orders rather than a system.

The financial situation of Cuba had changed greatly since the loss of Spanish America. As long as Spain held control of Mexico, Cuba was developed from the rich coffers of that great empire. It is estimated that Spain used \$300,000,000 from Mexico in Cuba. In the years from 1789 to 1806 alone the

²¹ Standard Guide to Cuba, 1905.

^{21a} Royal Decree, Oct. 31, 1764. See "Perez' Guide to Archives," p. 29.

²² Royal Decree, Jan. 23, 1784.

amount reached \$50,411,158. Of course, with the loss of all her vast continental empire, this condition could no longer endure. Cuba now no longer received Mexican gold, and instead in 1819 the tide of gold began to flow away from Cuba to Spain. In the first four years, Cuba's contributions to Spain, were small, scarcely reaching \$800,000, but from that time they grew rapidly, being estimated by a Spanish partisan in the period from 1830 to 1850 at \$50,000,000. Although these contributions might be justified by a historical argument, the fact that their parents had received gold from Mexico did not tend to lessen the discontent of the people who were now obliged to pay the taxes.^{22a}

In spite of these exactions, the prosperity of Cuba had been increasing almost as remarkably as that of the United States. In 1775 Cuba had only 170,000 inhabitants, a number which in 1850 reached 1,247,230. The wealth and commerce of Cuba had grown proportionately and their importance to the United States was especially great. In 1842 the American ships which called at Cuban ports were twice as numerous as Spanish ships, and four times as numerous as the ships of France and England combined.²³ In 1826, 1471 foreign ships with a tonnage of 228,757 entered Cuban ports, while in 1851 these had reached 2982 with 727,814 tons burden.²⁴ Exports and imports were also rapidly increasing in spite of Spanish efforts at monopoly. The largest items were sugar and tobacco. The exportation of coffee had suffered on account of Brazilian competition.²⁵

The revenues of Cuba for 1851 were \$12,248,712.065. Of this \$5,964,147.055 came from import duties, the remainder from export duties, license fees of various kinds, a government lottery and miscellaneous sources. Counting the free population at 600,000, this meant a tax of over \$20.00 a head.²⁶

^{22a} Torrente, *Bosquejo Economico Politico*, I, 26, 27, 28.

²³ Torrente, II, 268. ²⁴ Torrente, II, 269.

²⁵ From 1786 to 1790 an average of 1,090,438 arrobas of sugar were exported annually from Cuba, while from 1845 to 1850 this yearly average had reached 18,690,460, an increase of forty-five per cent from the period 1840-45. But the trade in coffee had declined from 2,143,574 arrobas in 1840 to 520,143 in 1850. The output of tobacco had gained steadily. Torrente, II, 278, 9. *Diario de la Marina*, Jan. 1, 1852. Cited *De Bow's Review*, XIV, 109, 110.

²⁶ *Diario de la Marina*, Havana, Jan. 1, 1852, cited *De Bow's Review*, XIV, 115.

The success of the Spanish tariff policy in creating monopoly is well illustrated by the duty on flour. Before excessive duties were levied, the United States in 1826 exported directly to Cuba 113,245 barrels of flour. This number had decreased to 845 in 1851 and to only 100 in 1852. In the meantime, although Spain produced even less flour in 1850 than in 1826 beyond her own needs, her exports to Cuba increased from 31,749 barrels in 1826 to 257,451 in 1850. This simply meant that American flour was shipped to Spain and there was transhipped to Cuba. As a result flour cost two and one-half times more in Havana than in New York. Whatever protection was involved, it could evidently benefit only Spain, while the whole policy was an open invitation to the smuggler.^{26a}

The expenditure of the sums collected in Cuba was such as to give much ground for complaints on account of the large amounts for military and naval purposes, and also because of the large sums sent to Spain and to support the Spanish embassy in the United States. In 1850, which seems to be quite a typical year, the military expenses were \$5,028,889, the naval \$2,042,003, the amount sent to Spain was \$1,506,373, to the legation in America \$57,138, while the total of civil expenses which might be regarded as of direct benefit to Cuba was only \$1,840,756.²⁷ The most statesmanlike of Cuban publicists, Saco,

State of taxation in Cuba and Public Finance—1848-1851. Torrente Vol. II, 365. (These figures are only exact for 1850-1851.)

	Import Duties	Export Duties	Other Revenues	Total
'48	\$6,174,533	\$709,325	\$4,731,194	\$11,635,052
'49	5,844,783	584,477	4,782,266	11,211,526
'50	5,639,225	757,071	3,655,149	10,051,443
'51	6,364,825	1,793,992	4,821,195	12,180,012

^{26a} Torrente, II, 269.

²⁷ Torrente (II, 366), an ardent Spaniard, gives these figures:

	Military	Naval	Sent to Spain	To other Provinces
'48	\$3,540,805	\$1,527,746	\$1,697,177	\$227,773
'49	3,313,510	1,372,472	1,854,086	214,754
'50	5,028,889	2,042,003	1,506,373	
'51	5,985,963	1,965,444	1,590,958	
	To Legations in America		Civil Expenses	
'48	\$63,310		\$2,563,891	
'49	80,226		2,531,809	
'50	57,138		1,840,756	
'51	76,738		2,352,475	

The American minister to Spain was instructed June 17, 1848, to try

wrote in 1835: "Enormous is the load of taxation which weighs upon us. . . . Perhaps there is no people in the world which in proportion to its resources and population pays as much as the island of Cuba; nor a country, perhaps, where less care is taken to use on its own soil some part of its great sacrifices"²⁸; and again, in 1837, he said: "Almost three-quarters of the \$9,000,000 which the customs produce are used for the army and navy. . . . Great sums are frequently sent to Spain, those of 1836, alone, reaching \$2,540,598 pesos. But so great sacrifices are neither appreciated nor recognized by the very hand which compels them; and to quiet the Cubans and make them feel less keenly their deep wounds, salaried pens are busied in publishing that all the money which goes from Cuba to Spain is the excess of its wealth! But may that be called 'excess' which the island itself urgently demands to satisfy its necessities? Can that be called 'excess' which should be sacredly employed in the establishment of schools and literary institutions, in the construction of roads, bridges and canals, in the development of white population, and in the support of the very many needs which are crying aloud in this abandoned island? To say that in Cuba there is an excess, is the same as to say that a man has an excess who is left hungry and naked by taking away the money which he needs to secure food and clothing."²⁹

But, always, back of minor grievances, in the eyes of thoughtful Cubans, lay the despotic character of the government. The constitution of 1812, brought to Cuba in 1820, had indeed provided for freedom of the press, a native militia, and popular elections; the laws of Spain, until 1837, applied, at least in theory, also to Cuba, although the act of 1825³⁰ with regard to the Captain General's power was scarcely consistent with such a view. In 1836 a liberal constitution was adopted for Spain by an assembly containing Cuban delegates.^{30a} But Cuban liberty ended in 1837. Cuba was denied representation in the Spanish Cortes, and a special law decreed that the island

to secure the reduction of the duty on American flour which at that time was \$9.50 a barrel. At the same time the duty on Spanish flour was \$2. Moore: Works of Buchanan, 1909, VIII, 89.

²⁸ Saco, Papeles III, 86. Perez, 35.

²⁹ Saco, Papeles, III, 172,3. Perez, 36.

³⁰ Royal Decree, cited pages, 2, 3, 4.

^{30a} Clarke, Modern Spain, 1906, p. 135.

should be ruled by royal orders. Without representation or autonomy, tyranny was unavoidable, and even when certain governors made despotism benevolent, it was at best complicated and inefficient.³¹ Such was the Cuban government in 1850.

³¹ On this whole subject see:

1. Complaint of Cuban Junta, 1852. Given in Morales "Iniciadores y Primeros Martires de la Revolucion Cubana" (1901) p. 371.
2. Torrente, I, 30.
3. Saco, III, 116.
4. Concha, 45.
5. Protesta de los Diputados Electos por la Isla de Cuba a las Cortes Generales de la Nacion. Feb. 21, 1837—Madrid. Signed. Juan Montalvoy Castillo. Francisco Arness. Jose Antonio Saco. Van Buren Collection, Library of Congress.
♦ This protest discusses Cuba's historical right to be regarded as a part of the Spanish nation.

CHAPTER II

PUBLIC OPINION IN CUBA

Society in Cuba, in 1850, was essentially aristocratic. The nobles of Cuba were twenty-nine marquises and thirty counts, usually wealthy planters who bought their titles at prices varying from \$20,000 to \$50,000. Nobility not only gave high social position but nobles could only be tried by a high tribunal and could not be arrested for debt. In the same way priests could only be tried by ecclesiastical courts, and soldiers by military tribunals.¹

The classes of population² and the general state of public opinion were thus described by Captain General Concha:

“There are three principal elements which compose the population in this part of Her Majesty’s dominions. One is composed of Spaniards born in the Peninsula and its adjacent islands; the second is made up of Spaniards natives of this country; while the third is composed of inhabitants of the negro race. It is important although sad to have to recognize that although the first are above all interested in the Union of this island to the mother country and would be in the day of peril the strong support of Her Majesty’s Government, it is not so with the second class, there being, of course, honorable exceptions. The third class, for the most part slaves, enemies of both the others, serve as a bridle which restrains greatly the advocates of revolution and disturbance. These elements of the population whose tendencies and spirit I have just indicated

¹ Ely, “Cuba Past and Present”—*De Bow’s Review*. XIV, 105.

² The population was:

	1846	1849
Whites	425,749	487,133
Free Blacks ...	149,226	164,410
Slaves	323,759	323,897
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	898,752	945,440

Havana, 1849, 142,002, 1850, 150,561. This does not take into account the army nor a large floating population. *Diario de la Marina*, Jan. 1, 1852, cited by W. A. Ely. *De Bow’s Review*, XIV, 103, 104.

compose the population of Puerto Principe in a manner much less favorable to the preservation of order than the elements in this part of the island. . . . That is to say, in the department of the center the European Spaniards are 4.61 per cent of the white population while in the western section (*i.e.* Havana) they are 15.84 per cent."

✓ • This meant that the Spanish Government could count on a much larger support near Havana than elsewhere. There were other considerations of the same kind to point to Puerto Principe as a danger point. The number of great plantations near Puerto Principe which might be ruined by war was relatively small compared with the number near Havana, and naturally the slave population was also smaller. In Puerto Principe the blacks were outnumbered and therefore less dangerous, eighty-four negroes to 100 white men, while in the west the proportion was reversed being 118 negroes to 100 white men. The white Cubans of Puerto Principe were a hardy race of cowboys, always a class to be looked on with fear by a tyrannical government, while the wealth of the great planters near Havana tended to make them conservative. Concha mentioned still another danger: "There is still more: the young men of wealthy families receive for the most part their education in the United States . . . and they return to their country with revolutionary ideas, which they spread among relatives, friends, and acquaintances."³

✓ Concha's predecessor as Captain General, the Count of Alcoy, expressed his views, in 1849, as to the state of public opinion in Cuba. The frankness of his statement to the home government is remarkable, although his view of Spanish difficulties, coming from one who wished credit for overcoming them, should probably be considered pessimistic. In general, however, they were the opinions of the best observers: "The secret opinions of the greater part of the natives of this soil, and especially of the young men are unfavorable to the dominion of and dependence on the home country." Many of these young men had noticed the state of the South American republics, and therefore did not hope for a stable independent government. Their ideal was rather to have Cuba become a state of the American Union. "The distance of Spain, the

³ Captain General Concha to the Minister of Justice, dated, Havana Jan. 9, 1851. *Boletín del Archivo Nacional*, Año IV, N. III.

infrequency of communication as compared with the immediate contact with the United States, the lessened respect for our maritime power, and external political influences have distinctly lessened the spirit of Spanish nationality, so that the young men who are accustomed to be educated in large numbers in the University or who go frequently to New York, lose in their earliest years their love for the home country, acquire habits and customs contrary to those they find here established, and are a focus of hostile principles which threaten sooner or later to overthrow order.”⁴

The slave code of Cuba, although not strictly obeyed, was considered at the time distinctly humane. Slaves were required to be instructed in religion by their masters. They could not be worked more than nine or ten hours a day except in the sugar harvest, when they could be required to work sixteen hours. On Sundays and holidays they could only work the two hours needed to perform the necessary work of the plantation. The amount of food and the treatment of the women was regulated by law. The master could give a slave twenty-five lashes, but any severer punishment required a judicial investigation. A slave might purchase his liberty at a price set by three arbiters. The violation of the slave code by a master was punished by a fine of from \$20 to \$200.⁵

While the fear of slave insurrection was ever present and intensely real, there never seems to have been actual danger of a slave rising comparable to that in Santo Domingo. Certain conditions were different. The negroes in Cuba seem to have been particularly docile and there was lack, at least before 1850, of anything approaching the intense revolutionary fervor which caused white men in Santo Domingo to arouse the negroes for their own ends. Nor was the proportion of negroes in Cuba nearly so overwhelming.

Nevertheless these circumstances were not coolly weighed. For the scenes of rapine and desolation in Santo Domingo were burned into the consciousness of every West Indian planter, and the dread of servile insurrection was almost an article of religion.⁶

⁴ El Conde de Alcoy al Ministro de Estado. Havana, Sept. 9, 1849—Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.

⁵ Ely, Cuba Past and Present, *De Bow's Review*, XIV, 104.

⁶ Risings took place at Cárdenas on March 28, 1843, and at Matanzas

It was clearly the policy of the Spanish Government to use this fear to discourage revolution. The picture of Santo Domingo was always kept before Cuban eyes. The Count of Alcoy, especially, regarded it as a means to safeguard Cuba to Spain. He wrote in 1849: "Slavery, which is the principal foundation of the wealth of a country, makes many realize, in spite of their political ideas, the imminent danger which the island incurs and which all private fortunes incur at the least rumor of disturbance or commotion, and it is for this reason that they deplore the eager illusions of those who desire a change without counting the cost. They would rather secure it gradually, or by cession by Spain."⁷

But while the fear of abolition and slave insurrection made for conservatism in method, it also caused many others to fear that England might persuade Spain to abolish slavery as she had already abolished the slave trade, or that England might even make the breaking of her treaties with regard to the slave trade an excuse for seizing Cuba. If any such danger were imminent immediate annexation to the United States was the only remedy.⁸

in the same year (November 5). While these risings in all probability were not at all political, but only due to the cruelty of individual masters they were supposed to be a part of a widespread conspiracy to assassinate the whites. Cuba was thrown into a panic of fear even after the negroes had been easily defeated and put to flight. Some evidence was collected tending to show a conspiracy. The negroes, both free and slave who were suspected of being connected with the conspiracy were severely punished. The slave owners in many cases sought to intimidate their slaves by whipping them cruelly before the others, while as a direct result of the uprising, many of the negroes were killed in battle, others committed suicide, seventy-eight were condemned to death, six hundred to imprisonment for various terms, and four hundred expelled from the island.

For the whole account see Morales, 147-177. Especially—(1) Don Jose de la Concha al Ministro de la Gobernacion, Dec. 21, 1850. (Cited p. 150.) (2) Correspondence of British Commissioners regarding the slave trade, Jan. 1, 1844 (Havana) cited pp. 150-151. Also *Boletin del Archivo Nacional*, A. III, N. VI, p. 8.

⁷ El Conde de Alcoy al Ministro de Estado. Havana, Sept. 9, 1849, Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.

⁸ The use made by the revolutionary propagandists of the fear of abolition by England appears clearly in many of their documents, e.g.:

"Spain has finally granted to England the entire abolition of slavery in Cuba. The treaty was signed and sealed in the first days of August,

In the meantime Spain attempted with more or less sincerity to suppress the slave trade, although Spanish governors regarded British zeal as largely a selfish effort to reduce the prosperity of Cuba as that of Jamaica had been. Diplomatic relations between England and Spain were constantly strained on this account, and war was always a distinct possibility.⁹

The views of Cubans opposed to annexation were represented by Jose Antonio Saco. Saco was a man of remarkable patriotism and purity of character. He was well educated, had travelled widely and commanded the love and confidence of his fellow countrymen. He was forced to leave Cuba in 1834, on account of his liberal opinions, spending the rest of his life in Spain. Although a liberal he was by no means a radical. He desired political liberty for Cuba, but did not believe that revolution was the true means for attaining it. Any widespread disturbance seemed to him to mean almost certainly a race war between white and negro inhabitants; and even if Cuba won independence it would only be to become the seat of a war between England and the United States in which Cuba would be devastated and finally absorbed by the stronger. He dreaded even the peaceful annexation of Cuba to the United States, even though such annexation were possible with the full equality of a state. For Cuba would not long remain Cuban, but become Anglo Saxon. His writings and ideas are an exponent not only of the evils which thoughtful and patriotic Cubans very clearly saw, but also of that conservatism which

and so soon as the affair between Russia and Turkey ends, we shall have on our coasts the British squadron of the Dardanelles. . . . What will be the first consequences of the publication of the treaty as a law? . . . It will begin with the total ruin of agriculture; with this will come misery, for when the slaves are freed they will pour out over the country in bands . . . and after the wasting and consuming of the food . . . will come revolution; but one of those revolutions of the strangest kind. The vengeance of three centuries and a half of suffering and servitude, held back by the influence of an unexampled despotism, . . . will lose its moral check under the sudden change. The most horrible deeds will be the bloody tracks which will mark its passage."

"Los Patriotas," Havana, Oct. 3, 1853. Given in Morales, 375.

⁹ Sedano: "Cuba, 1850-1873," 26, 27.

The authority on this subject is Aimes (Hubert) "A History of Slavery in Cuba, 1511-1868," Putnam's, N. Y., 1906, III & 298 pp.

See also Concha, *op. cit.*, 288-294.

British and Foreign State Papers, e.g. XLI, 421 et passim.

made them dread insurrection and disturbance, and that deep-seated race antipathy born of centuries of misunderstanding and conflict which made even liberty seem a slight boon if coupled with Anglo Saxon domination. For Cuban antipathy was equally great towards England and the United States, though her attitude to slavery made England especially dangerous. If Cuba were a colony or even a dependency of England, sudden slave emancipation would follow. This, to the planters at least, would mean economic ruin, and it might mean all the horrors of servile war.¹⁰

Saco felt that peaceful annexation to the United States would be bad enough so long as Cuba should have so small a white population; but annexation by force or any attempt at such annexation would make Cuba the seat of a terrible conflict. He wrote to his friend Cisneros: "Would not (the government) if it felt itself weak, call to its aid the negroes arming them and giving them liberty? . . . Would there not be some powerful nation which secretly or openly would sustain Spain in the struggle? Would not England give her provisions and those black soldiers who would fully sympathize with our own negroes? She could count on the Spaniards because she would be defending the interests of their government, and on the negroes, for they know that she has given them liberty, while the United States holds them in hard captivity. No, Gaspar,

¹⁸⁴⁴ Saco regarded the future of the negro problem with gloom. He wrote in 1845: "If the slave trade continues, there will be in Cuba neither peace nor security. Slave risings have occurred at all times; but they have always been partial, confined to one or two farms, without plan or political result. . . . Very different is the character of the risings which at brief intervals have occurred in 1842 and 1843; and the conspiracy last discovered is the most frightful which has ever been planned in Cuba, at once on account of its vast ramifications among slaves and free negroes, and on account of its origin and purpose. . . . It is not necessary that the negroes should rise at once all over the island; it is not necessary that its fields should blaze in conflagration from one end to the other in a single day: partial movements repeated here and there are enough to destroy faith and confidence. Then emigration will begin, capital will flee, agriculture and commerce will rapidly diminish, public revenues will lessen, the poverty of these and the fresh demands imposed by a continual state of alarm, will cause taxes to rise; and, with expenses on the one hand increased, but with receipts diminished, the situation of the island will grow more involved until there comes the most terrible catastrophe." (Saco, *Papeles*, II, 133; Perez, 33.)

no, in the name of heaven! Let us put away such destructive thoughts. Let us not be the wretched plaything of men who by our sacrifice wish to obtain our land, not for our happiness, but for their advantage. Let there be neither war nor conspiracies of any kind in Cuba. In our critical situation either one means the desolation of the country. Let us bear with resignation the yoke of Spain. But let us bear it so as to leave to our children, if not a country of liberty, at least one peaceful and hopeful. Let us try with all our energies to put down the infamous traffic in slaves; let us diminish without violence or injustice the number of these; let us do what we can to increase the white population; let us do all which you have always done, giving a good example to our fellow countrymen, and Cuba, our beloved Cuba, shall some day be Cuba indeed!"¹¹

But while Saco stood strongly against any movement to annex Cuba to the United States, he found many Cubans who opposed his anti-annexation views.¹² A proclamation was issued April 20, 1848, signed "Unos Cubanos," which had a very wide circulation in Cuba. This proclamation stated in its strongest terms the case for Cuban annexation to the United States. It considered first the objection that any attempt to gain separation from Spain would be ruinous. It was said that Spain would make use of a servile war to quell insurrection and that in a time of disturbance the numerous slaves would make a break for liberty. But the proclamation pointed reassuringly to Jamaica where in 1832 a negro insurrection was easily stifled although the proportion was seven and seven-eighths negroes to one white inhabitant. In Cuba in 1848 there were 418,291 whites and 619,333 negroes. Such a number of white inhabitants could easily keep in subjection the unarmed and unorganized slaves. Union with the United States would not mean becoming a possession of the United States, but rather would bring all the political and civil rights of Americans. Amalgamation of the races would not extinguish Cuban nationality for every child born in Cuba would be at once a Cuban and an

¹¹ *Revista Cubana*, VI, 545 seq. (1887). Saco to Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros. Paris, March 10, 1848.

See also Sedano:—*Estudios Políticos*, 39.

¹² The anti-annexationist ideas of Saco were criticized by Cristobal Madan, Ramon de Palma, Diaz Quibus, Pedro Jose Morilla, Lorenzo de Allo, Arelino de Ciruhuela and others. (Morales, 658.)

American. "Cuba united to this strong and respected nation, whose Southern interests would be identified with hers, would be assured quiet and future success; her wealth would increase, doubling the value of her farms and slaves, trebling that of her whole territory; liberty would be given to individual action and the system of hateful and harmful restrictions which paralyzed commerce and agriculture would be destroyed." "What is a Cuban today?", exclaims the author of this tract.¹³ "A slave, politically, morally, physically." Then he appeals to his fellow countrymen to aid the scheme of annexation, imploring those who hold the destiny of Cuba in their hands to lay aside hatred and animosity, to generously and patriotically guide public opinion on the path which an imperious necessity advises and which philanthropy and reason demand to save the country.

With this conflict of views, even among educated Cubans who were critical of the United States, it became increasingly evident that the Spanish government was in no mood to lose its richest possession either by cession or insurrection. The Spanish pride was touched and the hope of any peaceful change of government, never very real, became even more shadowy. The limits to which a Spanish Governor might go were suggested by the Count of Alcoy in such a way as to show that the fears of men like Saco were not wholly unfounded. He wrote to the home government as to the means for preserving Cuba: "Among the considerable elements of power with which Spain counts in this island, ought to be mentioned slavery. Permit me, your excellency, to explain my belief in this regard. The interest in preserving their fortunes and in developing the rich crops from which they spring causes all the wealthy inhabitants of the country to fear the first whisper of conflict which may relax the discipline of the slaves, or threaten emancipation. From this fact I infer that slavery is the rein which through fear and interest, will keep in submission the great majority of the white population. But if the event should arrive of foreign war and of inner commotions such as to threaten the dependence of the island, what should be the conduct of the Captain General toward slavery? I, my noble lord, state my solemn belief that this terrible weapon which the government holds in its hand might in the last extremity prevent the loss of the island, and that if the inhabitants are per-

¹³ "Unos Cubanos," Havana, 1848.

sueded that it will be used they will tremble and renounce every fond illusion rather than draw down such an anathema. The chance is remote without doubt, but that very fact makes me express myself clearly: the liberty of all the slaves in a day of gravest peril, proclaimed by Her Majesty's representative in these territories, would re-establish superiority and even strengthen our power in a very real way, based as it would then be on that very class which it seems best today to keep submerged. But if that last resort should prove insufficient, or if it did not suit Spain afterward to retain her hold, it may always be brought about that the conquerors shall acquire Hayti instead of the rich and prosperous Cuba and that the bastard sons who have brought down that calamity by their rebellion shall meet in their complete ruin, punishment and disillusionment. A principle of retributive justice or of harmony with the maxims of modern civilization, to which it is so customary nowadays to appeal, would also call for general emancipation at the moment when, for whatever reason, Spain should decide to renounce the island. . . . So far this trans-Atlantic province is still strongly attached to the mother land, and thanks to the wisdom and maternal solicitude of Her Majesty, I believe that the bonds of union will be still more strengthened; but if the fate of nations brings to this land a day pregnant with such circumstances as to threaten its loss, then national honor and interest alike would demand that every recourse and means be exhausted, without saving anything. If, even then, fortune should abandon us, we should at least leave it written in history that our departure from America corresponded to the heroic story of its acquisition."¹⁴

Such a document throws a flood of light on the unseen difficulties against which Lopez contended. It breathes again the heroic spirit of Cortes and Pizarro with something, too, of their Machiavellian disregard for mercy and kindness. Americans who talked lightly of acquiring Cuba little realized the despairing pride which, in spite of insurmountable difficulties, kept Cuba for Spain another half century after the days of Roncali and Concha.

¹⁴ Unpublished Mss. Archives at Havana. Federico Roncali (Conde de Alcoy) al Ministro de Estado. Havana. September 9, 1849.

CHAPTER III

AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD CUBA

The American desire for Cuba was primarily a manifestation of that spirit of expansion¹ which characterized the pioneer and the colonist; secondarily it was a genuine expression of the desire to give political liberty to an oppressed people, a desire which was quickened in 1848 by the news of the stirring events of that year in Europe; and thirdly in the period from 1848 to 1851 it became increasingly an expression of the growing passion to extend the bounds of slavery. Beginning as an enterprise of more or less adventurous character, the change of base from 1849, when efforts were made in New York, to New Orleans in 1850 and 1851, was significant of the growing breach between north and south. Lulled as the movement was, by the accession of a Whig administration and by the Great Compromise, it was to reappear in new form under the Democratic administration of Pierce.

From the point of view of national expansion, the American desire for Cuba must be regarded as a direct continuation of the early struggle for the commerce of the Mississippi, and of the territorial results of that struggle. Louisiana, West Florida, and Florida were acquisitions which needed Cuba to make them complete from the point of view of commercial independence in the West. Thus, as early as 1809, Jefferson wrote to Madison, speaking of Napoleon: "But although with difficulty he will consent to our receiving Cuba into our Union . . . that would be a blessing, and I would immediately erect a column on the Southernmost limit of Cuba, and inscribe on it 'ne plus ultra,' as to us in that direction. We should then

¹The extreme spirit of expansion was thus expressed by one writer: "The North Americans *will* spread out far beyond their present bounds. They *will* encroach again and again upon their neighbors. New territories will be planted, declare their independence and be annexed! We have New Mexico and California! We have old Mexico and Cuba! The isthmus cannot arrest—nor even the Saint Lawrence!! Time has all this in her womb." Editorial, *De Bow's Review*, July, 1848, VI, 9.

have only to include the north in our confederacy, which would be of course in the first war, and we should have such an empire for liberty as she has never surveyed since creation; and I am persuaded no Constitution was ever before so well calculated as ours for extensive empire and self-government.”²

In 1823, when the danger of British or French acquisition of Cuba seemed great, John Quincy Adams, who certainly could not be accused of any partiality for slavery, or of any desire to see slave territory increased, wrote: “Cuba, almost in sight of our shores, from a multitude of considerations has become an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interests of our Union. Its commanding position with reference to the Gulf of Mexico and the West Indian seas; the character of its population; its situation midway between our Southern coast and the island of St. Domingo; its safe and capacious harbor of Havana fronting a long line of our shore destitute of the same advantage; the nature of its productions and of its wants, furnishing the supplies and needing the returns of a commerce immensely profitable and mutually beneficial,—give it an importance in the sum of our national interests with which that of no other foreign country can be compared and little inferior to that which binds the different members of this Union together. Such indeed are, between the interests of that island and of this country, the geographical, commercial, moral, and political relations, formed by nature, gathering in the process of time, and even now verging to maturity, that, in looking forward to the probable course of events for the short period of half a century, it is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the annexation of Cuba to our federal republic will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself. It is obvious,

² Jefferson, Works, 1904 Edition, XIV (VII). Jefferson wrote to Monroe in 1823: “Cuba alone seems at present to hold up a speck of war to us. Its possession by Great Britain would indeed be a great calamity to us. Could we induce her to join us in guaranteeing its independence against all the world, except Spain, it would be nearly as valuable to us as if it were our own. But should she take it, I would not immediately go to war for it; because the first war on other accounts will give it to us; or the island will give itself to us, when able to do so.”

Jefferson came later to know that the choice of the Cubans would be independence. Jefferson's Works, 1904, XV, 436, 453.

however, that for this event we are not yet prepared. Numerous and formidable objections to the extension of our territorial dominions beyond the sea present themselves to the first contemplation of the subject; obstacles to the system of policy by which alone that result can be compassed and maintained are to be foreseen and surmounted both at home and abroad; but there are laws of political as well as of physical gravitation, and if an apple, severed by the tempest from its native tree, cannot choose but fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain, and incapable of self-support, can gravitate only towards the North American Union, which by the same law of nature, cannot cast her off from its bosom."³

In 1848, the administration of Polk was drawing to a close. The keynote of the policy of Polk had been expansion—expansion for its own sake, although the Wilmot Proviso had introduced the question which was already bringing to a close the period of expansion and engaging all the interests of the nation in the growing question of slavery.

Trist's hasty conclusion of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo had left the administration dissatisfied with the extent of our acquisitions, and yet it was compelled by the rising tide of opposition to allow the treaty of peace to be made on the terms of Trist and Scott. But an opportunity soon came to retrieve this misfortune. Yucatan, an outlying province of Mexico, was in the throes of a race struggle between Indians and whites. Their own government, of course, could do nothing to end the state of anarchy and in this predicament the whites appealed for outside interference. The appeal seemed to Polk eminently opportune and he asked the permission of Congress to intervene for the sake of humanity and on account of the danger of intervention by either England or Spain in case we did not. On May 15, 1848, Calhoun made a speech opposing intervention in Yucatan as unnecessary and because it could bring no possible advantage to us. Yucatan,

³ Instructions to Mr. Nelson, newly appointed minister to Spain, April 28, 1832. House Ex. Doc. 121, 32 Cong. 1 Sess. For the circumstances see Chadwick, Chapter X. See also Letter from Trist to Van Buren, 1837 (?), regarding Cuba. Van Buren, Mss., Library of Congress. He says of the acquisition of Cuba: "It would be a second edition of the Louisiana purchase."

he said, was a barren country and without harbors. It only controlled the passage into the Caribbean Sea, very few vessels passing out by that route. It could make no difference to us who held Yucatan, for England already controlled the Caribbean by means of Jamaica and Balize. The general principles of the Monroe Doctrine should not be carried to such an extreme as to endanger our interests, however useful they might be to safeguard them. Then he continued significantly:

“There are cases of interposition where I would resort to the hazard of war with all its calamities. Am I asked for one? I will answer. I designate the case of Cuba. So long as Cuba remains in the hands of Spain—a friendly power—a power of which we should have no dread—it should continue to be, as it has been the policy of all administrations ever since I have been connected with the government, to let Cuba remain there; but with the fixed determination, which I hope never will be relinquished, that, if Cuba pass from her, it shall not be into any other hands but ours: this not from a feeling of ambition, not from a desire for the extension of dominion, but because that island is indispensable to the safety of the United States; or rather, because it is indispensable to the safety of the United States that this island should not be in certain hands.”⁴

The opposition of Calhoun to further acquisitions in Mexico, and especially to the acquisition of Yucatan, projects on which Polk and Buchanan looked with favor, and his eager desire to acquire Cuba are easily explicable. Mexico and Yucatan were high lands, for the most part unsuited to those crops which depended so largely on slaves for their cultivation. Cuba on the other hand contained many slaves. The danger was great that Spain, either as a means of self defence or under the influence of Great Britain might emancipate these slaves. The effect of such an example on the negroes of our own

⁴ Calhoun, Works, Vol. IV, pp. 467 seq. The propaganda to secure Cuba began in 1845, with the accession of the Democrats to power. In 1846 Senator Yulee of Florida urged in the Senate negotiations for the purchase of Cuba. For the effects of these first movements, carefully watched in Cuba, see letters, Unpublished Mss. Havana, Archives:

1. Del Mtro. de Estado, Oct. 21, 1845-
2. Al “ “ “ Dec. 15, 1845-
3. Del “ “ “ Mar. 26, 1846.

See also Zaragoza, *op. cit.* I, 585.

Southern States would be incalculable. From the point of view of Calhoun, our most cherished institutions depended on the continuance at all hazards of slavery in Cuba. This speech, therefore, is immensely significant as marking the point where the desire for new territory was first expressed frankly in the interests of slavery.⁵

From the point of view of Calhoun, the possibility of abolition in Cuba was a pressing danger to the United States. The number of negroes was increasing, since Spain was either unwilling or unable to put a stop to the slave trade. The pressure for the abolition, not only of the slave trade but also of slavery itself, was growing constantly stronger. The demands of England were yearly more imperative. There was every reason to fear that Spain would free the negroes of Cuba without regard to the desire of the Creole owners if the danger of losing Cuba became too great. At the close of the Mexican war the struggle for the maintenance of slavery was already beginning to be a losing one. Clearly the great gains from that war were, more or less unexpectedly, overwhelmingly in favor of the free states. It was this very situation which had led the far seeing Calhoun to be at once an author of Texan annexation and an opponent of the Mexican war. Texas, like Cuba, was suited to slavery. Mexico, on her high plateau,

⁵The importance of the island in 1850 was especially great. The recent acquisition of California and the discovery of gold there made an open route to Panama a vital question. Havana was a natural port of call for vessels engaged in the California trade and an unfriendly power could do much to hinder traffic, as was clearly proved in the case of the *Ohio* in 1853. This vessel bound from Colon to New York was arbitrarily stopped in the harbor at Havana for three days without being allowed to communicate with the shore. The vessel at the time had on board a large number of passengers and a quantity of gold. The captain was not even allowed to send a letter to the consul. At the time the vessel had a clean bill of health except for some cases of ordinary malarial fever which the Spanish authorities refused to investigate. House Exec. Doc. 86, 33 Cong. 1 Sess. 87. (See Chadwick, 249).

For a positive economic argument for acquiring Cuba see Thrasher, J. S.: "Cuba and the United States" *De Bow's Review*, N. O. 1854, XVII, 43. This argument was based on the fact that a slave worth \$400 or \$500 in Havana would cost \$1200 in New Orleans. Cuba could now produce sugar more cheaply, but by annexation, and consequent equalization of the price of labor, the disadvantage of Louisiana would disappear.

would only add to the strength of the already overwhelming superiority of the free territory within the United States.

The speech of Calhoun in the Yucatan debate seemed to quicken the desire of the administration, already committed to expansion, to secure the rich possession to the South. On June 12, 1848, Buchanan wrote to Romulus M. Saunders, our Minister to Spain, instructing him to make every effort to secure Cuba from Spain and giving him authority to make a treaty in which Spain would receive \$100,000,000 if it were necessary to offer so much. The letter discussed fully and frankly the commercial reasons which had weight with the United States in making this offer:

"The fate of this island must ever be deeply interesting to the people of the United States. We are content that it shall continue to be a colony of Spain. Whilst in her possession we have nothing to apprehend. Besides we are bound to her by ties of ancient friendship, and we sincerely desire to render these perpetual.

"But we can never consent that this island shall become a colony of any other European power. In the possession of Great Britain or any strong naval power, it might prove ruinous both to our domestic and foreign commerce, and even endanger the Union of the States. The highest and first duty of every independent nation is to provide for its own safety; and acting upon this principle we should be compelled to resist the acquisition of Cuba by any powerful maritime state with all the means which Providence has placed at our command.

"Cuba is almost within sight of the coast of Florida. Situated between that state and the peninsula of Yucatan and possessing the deep, capacious and impregnable fortified harbor of the Havana, if this island were under the dominion of Great Britain, she could command both the inlets to the Gulf of Mexico. She would thus be enabled in time of war effectively to blockade the mouth of the Mississippi and to deprive all the western states of this Union, as well as those within the Gulf, teeming as they are with an industrious and enterprising population, of a foreign market for their immense productions. But this is not the worst. She could, also, destroy the commerce by sea between our ports on the Gulf and

Atlantic ports, a commerce of nearly as great value as the whole of our foreign trade.”

The moment seemed to Buchanan very propitious to strike for annexation:

“We have received information from various sources, both official and unofficial, that among the Creoles of Cuba there has long existed a deep rooted hostility to Spanish dominion. The revolutions which are rapidly succeeding each other throughout the world have inspired the Cubans with an ardent and irrepressible desire to achieve their independence. Indeed, we are informed by the consul of the United States at Havana that ‘there appears every probability that the island will soon be in a state of civil war.’ He also states that ‘efforts are now being made to raise money for that purpose in the United States, and there will be attempts to induce a few of the volunteer regiments now in Mexico to obtain their discharge and join in the Revolution.’ . . . The consul in his despatch to me also stated that ‘if the revolution is attempted and succeeds, immediate application would be made to the United States for annexation’; but he did not seem to think that it could be successful and probably might not be undertaken without the aid of American troops. To this portion of the despatch I replied, knowing the ardent desire of the Cubans to be annexed to our Union, that I thought it would be ‘difficult to predict that an unsuccessful rising would delay, if it should not defeat, the annexation of the island to the United States,’ and I assured him that the aid of our volunteer troops could not be obtained.”⁶

The United States did not care to use unfair means to acquire Cuba, and, therefore, it was not willing to fish in the troubled waters of a Cuban insurrection. But none the less Buchanan made it very clear to our minister that the Polk administration regarded the acquisition of Cuba as an all important step. The proper price to be paid would depend on the amount of the revenues, for Buchanan seems to have regarded Cuba as a source of direct revenue as well as of indirect advantages. The total revenues under the Spanish regime had in 1844 amounted to \$10,490,252.875, but Buchanan had learned from Calderon, the Spanish Minister, that the surplus to the Spanish Crown had never in any single year exceeded \$2,000,000. From

⁶ Moore, Buchanan, VIII, 90 *et seq.*

the point of view of Spain, then, a fair price would be about \$50,000,000, and Buchanan thought that Spain might be satisfied with such a price.⁷

To the United States, Cuba might furnish as a state two sources of revenue—the public lands and the federal tariff. Most of these public lands seemed to have already been assigned by Spain to private individuals so that the revenue from them would probably be small. But the value of imports in 1844 were \$25,000,000 and were probably more in 1848. The average rate of our existing tariff was twenty-five per cent, within a small fraction, and even deducting those imports which, coming from other parts of the United States, would enter free, and which amounted to one-fifth of the whole, the United States could still count, according to Buchanan's calculation, on an initial revenue of \$5,000,000. There might be an increase in naval expenses to offset this, but on this basis the maximum price to be paid for Cuba could be arrived at. These considerations brought Buchanan to the question of the price:

“Upon the whole, the President would not hesitate to stipulate for the payment of one hundred millions of dollars, in convenient installments, for a cession of the Island of Cuba, if it could not be procured for a less sum.

“The apprehensions which existed, for many years after the origin of this government, that the extension of our federal system would endanger the Union, seem to have passed away. Experience has proved that this system of confederated Republics, under which the Federal Government has charge of the interests common to the whole, whilst local governments watch over the concerns of the respective states, is capable of almost infinite extension with increasing strength. This, however, is always subject to the qualification that the mass of the population must be of our own race or must have been educated in the school of civil and religious liberty. With this qualification, the more we increase the number of confederated states, the greater will be the strength and security of the Union; because the more dependent for their mutual interests will the several parts be upon the whole, and the whole upon the several parts.

“It is true that of the 418,291 white inhabitants which Cuba contained in 1841, a very large portion is of the Spanish race,

⁷ Moore, Buchanan, VIII, 90 *et seq.*

still many of our citizens have settled on the island, and some of them are large holders of property. Under our Government it would speedily be Americanized,—as Louisiana has been. . . . Cuba, justly appreciating the advantages of annexation is now ready to rush into our arms. Once admitted she would be entirely dependent for her prosperity, and even existence, upon her connection with the Union; whilst the rapidly increasing trade between her and the other States would shed its benefits and blessings over the whole. Such a state of mutual dependence, resulting from the very nature of things, the world has never witnessed. This is what will insure the perpetuity of our Union.

“With all these considerations in view, the President believes that the crisis has arrived when an effort should be made to purchase the island of Cuba from Spain, and he has determined to intrust you with the performance of this most delicate and important duty. The attempt should be made first in a confidential conversation with the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs. . . .

“Should you succeed in accomplishing the object, you will associate your name with a most important and beneficial measure for the glory and prosperity of your country.”⁸

The Spanish court was at La Granja when Saunders received his instructions in July, 1848. Going there, the American minister obtained an interview with General Narvaez the President of the Council. By him he was received politely but coldly, and Saunders became convinced that his task was hopeless. He was referred by Narvaez to the newly appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senor Pidal. Pidal refused to give Saunders any hope of immediate cession of the island; he said that although the future seemed doubtful, owing to the strained relations with England, yet Spain felt sure of the safety of the island. There was a hint that the subject might later be reopened, and with that hint the American had to await as contentedly as he might.

In the meantime the story of negotiations to sell Cuba had leaked out and had produced a storm of angry protest in the Spanish press. Thus when Saunders opened the subject again in December the situation had distinctly changed. Pidal spoke emphatically saying that no minister of the crown of Spain

⁸ Buchanan, Works, Edited by J. B. Moore 1909, VIII, 90 *et seq.*

would dare to listen to any such proposition, since the unanimous opinion of the country would prefer to see the island submerged in the ocean, rather than yielded to any other power.⁹

The *New York Herald* took up the question and published the story of the negotiations. Saunders was accused of laziness and incapacity and public opinion caused his recall soon after the advent of the new administration.

This ended for a long time the diplomatic efforts to secure Cuba, an effort hopeless in its very nature,¹⁰ but important in its result. Many now believed that the filibuster must fill the place of the diplomat.¹¹

⁹ See Sedano: *Estudios Politicos*, 23, 24.

¹⁰ For the difficulty of ever persuading Spain to voluntarily sell Cuba see letter of the American Consul Campbell to Clayton, dated Havana June 13, 1850—Clayton Mss. Library of Congress. Campbell regarded the purchase of the island by the United States as practically impossible: "No ministry, whatever false showing they may make, would dare to carry it out. The open attempt would not only drive the ministry from power, but from the array of interests against the alienation, endanger the safety of the throne. These interests are as follows. All offices here are filled from Spain. All prominent officers, lawyers and doctors look to this island as the place to obtain station and wealth. Here their agricultural interests find their market,—the manufacturing interests of Barcelona practically the same. From discriminating duties in favor of Spanish vessels almost all European cargoes are imported under the Spanish flag and the island in this way sustains more than three-fourths of the whole merchant marine of Spain. Large capitals in Spain in the hands of unprincipled men are invested in the slave trade, causing an annual sale of slaves in this island of from three to four millions of dollars. You readily discover that such a union of interests and among a people accustomed to civil war would be too strong for a ministry, if not fatal to a dynasty. That Christina and a ministry could be bought I have no doubt from my knowledge of Spanish character, if the thing could be done in secrecy, but the action of the Cortes and the result would make that improbable. Those different interests would be finally united and arrayed against any measure the tendency of which would be to their infamy."

¹¹ But Buchanan was still hopeful. In a letter of John M. Clayton to Buchanan just after the latter retired from office, dated April 14, 1849, Clayton banters his predecessor for his failure to secure Cuba: "What will you give me to recall Romulus Saunders from Spain? Speak out—do not be bashful. Shall I try to buy Cuba after you have made such a botch of that business? Do you still wish like Sancho to have an island?"

Buchanan answered in more serious vein, April 12, 1849: "We must

That the enthusiasm for Cuban independence was not wholly selfish is proved by its widespread character. In fact the feeling was very similar to that in favor of Hungarian and other Revolutionists who at this time were received as heroes. It is to be remembered that the American of 1850 had almost a fanatical belief in the sacredness of republican institutions and in their applicability to all political conditions.¹² The condition of the island of Cuba and the tyranny of its government had long been painted in the blackest colors. A moderate New Orleans paper described well two classes eager to go to Cuba at this time:

“We know that among the volunteers who will fly to the help of the island of Cuba, there will be found many adventurers like those who accompanied William the Conqueror in his expedition against England; we know that there are some natures, unquiet and restless, for whom repose is a punishment, and action and danger are necessities. But we know that there are also generous and impressionable natures, friends of peace, but believing that war is an honorable and sacred mission when a sword is bound on and drawn in the interests of a great and sacred cause. And why should not Americans do for the

have Cuba. We can't do without Cuba, and above all we must not suffer its transfer to Great Britain. We shall acquire it by a coup d'etat at some propitious moment, which from the present state of Europe, may not be far distant.”

Buchanan blamed the failure very largely on Saunders: “It must be admitted that a more skilful agent might have been selected to conduct the negotiations in Spain, as our present minister speaks no language but English, and even this he sometimes murders. . . . How delighted then am I to feel that you have selected a diplomatist and one fit for the work,—one who possessing no vanity himself and knowing when to speak and when to be silent, is so well calculated to flutter the pride of the Dons,—who by the gentle arts of insinuation and persuasion can gradually prepare the queen mother, the ministers and courtiers for the great surrender,—and who above all is a perfect master both of the language of Louie le Grand and of the knight of the rueful countenance. Cuba is already ours. I feel it in my finger's ends.”

(This ideal diplomat is called “Col. I. W. W.”) Moore. Buchanan. VIII, 360, 361.

¹² Among many examples, Crittenden to Clayton, Frankfort, July 20, 1849, Clayton Mss. Library of Congress: “The great conflict is now going on between popular rights and monarchical or despotic powers. That is the issue before mankind.”

island of Cuba what Byron did for Greece and what Lafayette did for America?"¹³

The state of American public opinion and especially American attitude toward Cuba were watched with the greatest anxiety in England and France and especially by the successive Captains General in Cuba. The *London Times* made no effort to conceal its glee over the growing internal difficulties which lessened dangers of further American aggression. The keenness with which men like Roncali and Concha analyzed American problems at a time when American statesmen were trying to blind their own eyes to the gravity of the situation is very remarkable. Viewing America from near at hand and yet from without, and stimulated by fear to the closest observation, the governors of Cuba were able to lift the veil of a future which men like Webster and Polk and Clay refused to contemplate. Roncali thus analyzed the situation to the Minister of State in 1849: "With the enlargement of the North American republic, there arose long ago the idea of dominating all the Gulf of Mexico and therefore the island of Cuba which is wisely regarded as its key. Enticed further, by the abundance of its fruits and the fame of its fertility, the ambition of the Anglo Saxon race could not forget it in the midst of its acquisitions. But, since the annexation of Texas, and especially since the recent war with Mexico, that project has become so widespread that it is without doubt rooted in the public opinion of a great part of the states, the writings published for that purpose in

¹³ Editorial translated from "L'Abeille de la Nouvelle Orleans," July 28, 1851.

For conservative opposition to any further expansion which became the typical Whig view, see R. Ewing to Crittenden, Feb. 4, 1848. Unpublished Mss. Library of Congress.

F. P. Blair wrote to Van Buren, July 15, 1850 describing sarcastically the desire of Calhoun to make Cuba a part of a great slave empire. Van Buren, Mss. Lib. of Congress.

But Henry Clay told Captain General Concha frankly, on his visit to Havana, that the eventual union of Cuba to the United States was inevitable, although he deprecated any unlawful efforts in that direction. (Concha al Presidente del Consejo, March 21, 1851. Cited by Sedano, "Cuba, 1850-1873," p. 24.) And a writer in *De Bow's Review* said in 1851:—"None can doubt, that, at this moment, there is a well fixed and almost universal conviction upon the minds of our people, that the possession of Cuba is indispensable to the proper development and security of our country"—*De Bow's Review*, IX, 173.

Spanish by children of the island having contributed to that end. Since the idea of propoganda and expansion has been adopted by one of the political parties into which Congress is divided, and since the other which is actually in power (*i.e.* the Whigs) has adopted a conservative attitude, it is easy to see that with the Cuban question a matter of dispute and discussion, Cuban acquisition will serve as a banner to the increased parliamentary opposition which the President already has, and that on the accession of another administration at the end of this term of office, circumstances will grow rapidly more serious, and that which today is unable to inspire grave fears or to produce more than passing evils, will be changed into a grave danger for which preparation should be made. It ought also to be kept in mind that even though the acquisition of Cuba would in a general way be pleasing to that whole republic, the vital dispute which separates the states of the north from those of the south makes them look at it from different points of view: the Southern States would acquire in the federal government an importance which they require for the sake of slavery, if the acquisition should be made preserving slavery, the very consideration which causes those of the north to say to the Cubans that the first steps toward the liberty to which they aspire should be the emancipation of their slaves. This difference of views is therefore very worthy to occupy the attention of the government, and as proof of what may some day take place it is well to note the course which is each time more openly taken in the discussions regarding slavery, a question which in the judgment of very observant men is the cancer which is eating away that nation and which will perhaps bring destruction of the federation."¹⁴

● Roncali clearly saw the two great dangers of Cuba: one of internal discontent, and the other of external aggression. He believed that the American passion for expansion would sooner or later overcome all opposition and bring on a war between the United States and Spain. For this war he was hopeful, for Spain had gained in prestige and power since the close of the destructive civil war.

Captain General Concha, who succeeded Roncali in November, 1850, summed up the situation in much the same fashion.

¹⁴ El Conde de Alcoy al Ministro del Estado. Havana, Sept. 9, 1849. Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.

although he did not quite so clearly grasp the significance of the impending conflict in the United States. He describes the ambitions of the Americans, "the Vandals of the New World," and the importance of Cuba to them, especially when the Atlantic and Pacific should be united by a canal.

"It would be in my opinion a deplorable mistake to expect from the contest which is going on between the slave states and the free states of the union a serious obstacle to these ambitious views. The first class covet Cuba, because by its acquisition they would acquire greater political importance in the Federal Government and would gain the greater utility of their three million slaves; the second covet it because with its overflowing population, the enterprising mercantile and industrial spirit of its inhabitants, and its great fortunes, they might make considerable financial gains; finally, both classes covet Cuba, because there has taken possession of all the most unbridled passion to acquire territory."¹⁵

"There is in the United States a part of the people which eagerly desires the annexation of Cuba. The Southern slave states are very much interested in it, because, if they should succeed in securing it by their efforts, they would leave slavery in existence in Cuba, by means of which they would secure in addition to an offset against the preponderance of the Northern States, an advantageous field for their capital invested in slaves. On the other hand, public opinion has been decidedly unfavorable to Spanish government in Cuba and all the people of the island are supposed to be disposed to rise against the government at the first opportunity which may present itself, as was shown by the very fact that they supposed a brief expedition sufficient for the purpose." It seemed to the Captain General that the party in favor of annexation was only waiting for the very first incident which might serve as a pretext for war against Spain with the ultimate aim of acquiring Cuba. The responsibility of the Captain General was very great, realizing as he did that one false step would be sufficient to plunge Spain into a war from which she would have nothing to gain and everything to lose.¹⁶

¹⁵Captain General Concha, Havana, March 31, 1851. Letter directed "Al Excmo. Sr. Presidente del Consejo de Ministros," Boletín, A. IV; N. IV.

¹⁶Concha, *op. cit.* p. 222.

With public opinion in such a state in Cuba and the United States, with the news of great events in Europe, with the example of easy American victories in Mexico, with even Spanish officials looking into the future gloomily, it is scarcely to be wondered at that men staked all on the chance of a free Cuba, and that Lopez dreamed of great deeds which only needed a leader to make them real.

CHAPTER IV

NARCISO LOPEZ AND THE ROUND ISLAND EXPEDITION

Narciso Lopez, the central figure of the Cuban movement of 1848-51, was born in 1798 or 1799 in Venezuela. His father owned several large ranches and the son soon became an expert horseman on the plains, an accomplishment which later aided him to rise as a cavalry leader.

The civil war under the leadership of Bolivar ruined the estates of the elder Lopez, and he was compelled to engage in business enterprises in Caracas and Valencia. After a decisive battle at La Puerta, near Valencia, in 1814, in which Bolivar and the rebels were for a time crushed, the young Lopez managed to enlist in the Spanish army, and although a mere boy who probably took little account of the political issues involved, according to all accounts, served for nine years with distinction. Under the patronage of General Morales the young Venezuelan was not forgotten; he was strong and utterly fearless and so gained coveted decorations. When the rebel cause was finally triumphant in 1823 Lopez had risen to the rank of Colonel.

In that year the Spaniards evacuated Caracas, the army withdrawing to Cuba, where the young officer married the daughter of a noble family, and became, in his chief interests, Cuban.

Passing to Spain, Colonel Lopez became immediately known as a liberal in the reign of absolutism set up by the aid of French arms which lasted until the death of the old king, Ferdinand the Seventh, in September, 1833. On Ferdinand's death the liberal party championed the cause of the Queen Maria Christina and her infant daughter Maria Isabel, who by the Salic law would have been excluded from the succession, against Don Carlos, the old king's brother and the representative of Absolutism and Reaction. Christina, by means of the dead king's will, managed to gain power, and the Carlists were placed in the position of rebels, their party being especially strong north of the Ebro.

In the coup d'état by which Christina seized the throne, Lopez took an active part and hence became a prominent "Christino," as the followers of the queen were called.

On the appointment of Valdez to the command Lopez became an aide de camp to the Spanish general, a relation which grew into a deep and life long friendship.¹ Promoted to the command of a cavalry brigade of some 3000 men Lopez displayed activity and courage which widely increased his reputation. At one time during an emergency he took over the command at Valencia on the assassination of the real governor, an act for which he was criticised severely.² Later he was for a short time governor of Madrid.

¹From the Diary and Letters of a certain English Colonel named Gurnwood we get at first hand some interesting glimpses of Lopez and his patron Valdez in 1835. These are quoted in Eliot (Edward G.) "Papers relating to Lord Eliot's Mission to Spain in the spring of 1835," London, 1871.

Diary of Col. Gurnwood, April 30, 1835, Eliot, 94. "Overtook the column at Mendaria and breakfasted with Valdes; afterward accompanied the column, 6000 infantry and four mountain guns, commanded by General Aldarna, to Seswa. On arrival there took leave of Valdes and went on to Lerin. Met General Lopez who commands the cavalry. . . . Quartered in the same house with Lopez; joined him and his officers at tea; much exaggeration; most of them for intervention; of course, being cavalry of the guard, they preferred Madrid."

Same May 3rd: "Took leave of Valdes, who in the transactions between us, appeared an honest man—I doubt his being a General." (Lopez at this time was in command of a column of something more than 2000 men).

Gurnwood to Somerset, May 1, 1835, Eliot, 138. "We were lodged last night at the same house at Lerin, with General Lopez—an active intelligent young man. We passed the evening with him and his officers—who, like the officers of cavalry in other services, spoke much, but to little purpose, on the campaign. . . . Valdes is a very gentleman-like person in his manners—not so in appearance, for he looks like a 'Marchand de lorgnettes.' He rides at the head of his column 'en bourgeois' in a great green coat with sugar loaf buttons, and a plushy round hat, something in appearance between the 'marchand de lorgnettes' and an American skipper! I doubt very much his having any professional talent."

There was also a guerilla leader on the Carlist side, Antonio Lopez, who after brilliant movements was captured and shot. (Walton, *Revolutions of Spain*, II, 468.) This Lopez seems sometimes to be confused by magazine writers, with Narciso Lopez.

²Lopez answered these criticisms in a pamphlet now very rare. A copy may be seen in the New York public library: "Constestacion del

On the close of active hostilities Lopez, now a Field Marshal, became a Senator in the Cortes from the Liberal city of Seville. Upon the appointment of his friend, General Valdez, to the supreme command in Cuba, Lopez succeeded in persuading Espartero, the head of the liberal government, to give him an appointment in that island. By the influence of Valdez, Lopez was appointed to a number of prominent positions and finally was made Governor of Trinidad, an important point in the central part of the island.³

Lopez filled with credit the important positions which he occupied gaining the good will of the people under his command. But at the close of 1843 Valdez was relieved by General Leopoldo O'Donnell and Lopez lost his lucrative political appointment, retaining the rank of a Spanish General but without duties. He now engaged in several business enterprises in which partly through mismanagement and also partly through gambling losses he was wholly unsuccessful. His last enterprises were the management of certain mines and plantations near Cienfuegos. In these enterprises although supported financially by wealthy capitalists he became involved so deeply as to be unable to meet his obligations.

Lopez, who had belonged to the liberal party in Spain and who was also somewhat embittered by loss of wealth and influence, had long intrigued against the interests of Spain. Although he himself desired independence for Cuba, he did not wish to risk an effort for independence which might bring abolition. In these circumstances we find him turning for advice to Robert Campbell, American Consul at Havana and an eager advocate of the American acquisition of Cuba. Campbell did not hesitate to express his sympathy, and to say that he had been impressed by the increase of American feeling in favor of acquiring Cuba. But, as an American Consul, he was compelled to advise Lopez of the reiterated expressions of friend-

Mariscal de Campo, Don Narciso Lopez, a varios cargos relativos, a los sucesos ultimos de Valencia," 30 pp. Madrid, 1839.

³ We find Lopez already intriguing for separation from Spain as early as 1842. He desired to preserve slavery, and so feared especially English intrigues. See communication from Francis Ross Cocking, formerly British Vice Consul at Havana to Lord Palmerston dated, Caracas, Oct. 1, 1846, of which a Spanish translation forwarded from Madrid to the Captain General of Cuba, January 24, 1852, is published in *El Boletín del Archivo Nacional*. Havana, A. III, N. IV.

ship and of the treaty obligations existing between Spain and the United States. Campbell said that he had even written to President Polk for instructions in case slavery were abolished in Cuba as a result of the popular movement which was then taking place in Europe. Polk, in reply, had pointed to the disbanding of the army against Mexico as a sure sign that he did not intend any depredations against neighboring territory, and directed Campbell to discourage any talk of war.⁴

From this time on Lopez seemed to have felt very sure that in a last extremity the United States would intervene for the benefit of a revolutionary party.

At the time of his conversation with Campbell or soon after Lopez was plotting a revolutionary movement which was to have had its center at Cienfuegos.

The date of the rising was set for the 24th of June, 1848, but the non-arrival of arms expected from the United States caused some delay. In the meantime a youth who belonged to the number of conspirators revealed the secret to his mother who in turn confided it to her husband. On the advice of his lawyer, the father laid this information before the government. On the sixth of July, Lopez was summoned to appear on important business before the Governor at Cienfuegos, but hearing of the imprisonment of the young man who had revealed the plot, he immediately fled. At Pijuan he caught the train for Cardenas and from there sailed to the neighboring port of Matanzas. He was fortunate enough to find the ship "Neptune" just about to sail to Providence, Rhode Island, and he was soon safe from pursuit on the ocean. Jose Sanchez Iznaga, who had revealed the conspiracy was allowed to escape. Roncali, Count of Alcoy, the Governor General, acted with unusual leniency. No punishments followed the discovery, although the absent Lopez was condemned to death (Mar. 3, 1849), and Iznaga to six years imprisonment.⁵

⁴ See an account of a frank conversation between Campbell and Roncali, reported to the Minister of State, July 27, 1849. *Boletin*, 1906, p. 61.

⁵ For the movement of 1848 in Cuba see the letters given in appendix (Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives):

1. Al m'tro de la gobernacion, Mar. 28, 1848-
2. " " " " " , May 27, 1848-
3. " " " " " , July 14, 1848.

This last is a detailed account, which serves as my chief authority.

The immediate effect of the effort and flight of Lopez was a clear statement of the Spanish attitude to foreign aggression, given in the official organ, *La Gaceta de la Habana*, Dec. 27, 1848.⁶ The *Gaceta* said that "Spain had in the Gulf of Guinea two islands of small importance, namely Fernando Po and Anobon, almost forgotten, but whose sale the nation opposed; and that being the case, even less readily would the Crown dispose of an island like Cuba, clung to so devotedly as the most important of trans-Atlantic possessions, on account of a government, of a religion established for more than 300 years, of laws and of kinship which were not to be sacrificed to a rash and almost unthinkable scheme.

"No Spaniard," continued the statement, "would be able to mention (the scheme) without indignation, and that alone should prove convincing to the authors of such schemes, all the more so knowing that Cuba is prosperous and lives happily under the paternal government of Spain, since its inhabitants compare what the America which once was Spanish is now with what it used to be; and since they cannot avoid turning their eyes toward Europe and the entire world as they thank the kind Providence which has preserved them unharmed in the midst of universal misfortune."

In this letter, the Captain General thus characterizes Lopez: "El Mariscal de Campo, D. Narciso Lopez, tan conocido por los arrebatos temerarios i Imprudentes de su caracter, como por la Veleidad e inconstancia de sus sentimientos y opiniones."

This, of course, is the picture of an enemy. But Lopez seems to have impressed his contemporaries by his enthusiasm more than by his caution and sanity. Proud with his equals in rank, he was kind toward inferiors, and possessed much personal magnetism. At this period he was of short, stocky build, with bright black eyes and snow white hair.

For the life of Lopez my authorities in addition to those cited, are:

1. Concha, *Memorias*.
2. Torrente, *Bosquejo, Economico Político*. I, 32-37.
3. Vidal Morales, *Iniciadores y Martires de la Revolucion*, pp. 197, 233 ff.
4. Villaverde, "Memoria del General Narciso Lopez"—Unpublished, but used and quoted by Morales, pp. 184, 185.
5. Zaragoza, *Las Insurrecciones en Cuba, 1872*, 2 Tomos. I, 585 ff; I, 554-5.
6. *Democratic Review*, Feb. 1850, XXVI, 97 ff.

⁶ Zaragoza, *op. cit.*, I, 589.

• Lopez arrived at New York in July of 1848 to find an already vigorous movement for the forcible annexation of Cuba to the United States. This movement had begun early in 1847 with newspaper articles critical of the Spanish government in Cuba. *La Verdad* was being published regularly in New York and *La Patria* in New Orleans as means of attack on all Spanish institutions. The organ of the Spanish government, *La Cronica*, sought to answer these charges. The young Cubans exiled or pursuing their studies in New York had formed an organized junta as a center of the propaganda, while an organization in Havana was collecting and forwarding sums of money. The whole movement had gained encouragement from the attitude of a large part of the American press, and especially from speeches by Senator Yulee of Florida in the Senate (May 6, 1847) and even from one by Vice-President Dallas.⁷

In order to gain the largest possible support in the United States, it seemed necessary to secure the services of some well known chieftain of the Mexican war as leader. General Worth seemed likely to win the support of many veterans of the late war and the Cubans first turned eagerly to him. The expedition was to consist of 5000 men and to cost \$3,000,000, and preparations were to be made on a scale which would have required the open coöperation of the Polk administration. Worth seemed to believe the scheme reasonable but died before anything definite could be accomplished.⁸

Lopez, now in New York, was evidently the man fitted both by rank and experience to win support in Cuba, while his enthusiasm and personal magnetism made him the natural leader of the movement. He held an interview with Jefferson Davis and offered him the command of the expedition to Cuba.⁹ As

⁷ Zaragoza, *op. cit.* I, 559-567.

La Aurora was a newspaper published in New York to propagate ideas of Cuban annexation.

The *Courier* of Charleston, S. C., published similar articles.

⁸ Jose Sanchez Iznaga, "A Mis Amigos en Cuba," New Orleans, 1853. Quoted by Morales, *op. cit.* 270.

⁹ The exact date of the interview is in some doubt. Mrs. Davis places it in the summer of 1848, but speaks of Lopez' death as coming within two months *i.e.* 1851. This was probably a mistake, as it is unlikely that Davis or Lee would have at all considered the matter after the failures in 1849 and 1850. Mrs. Davis describes Lopez as a

incentives for the use of his name and influence and for his leadership, \$100,000 were to be deposited before departure to Cuba for the use of Mrs. Davis, while success would be rewarded by a bonus of \$100,000 more or a fine coffee plantation. Davis refused, but was sufficiently impressed to suggest his friend Major Robert E. Lee as one in whose character and abilities he had supreme confidence. Lee's attitude to the offer was described by Davis himself many years later: "He came from Mexico crowned with honors, covered by brevets and recognized, young as he was, as one of the ablest of his country's soldiers, and to prove that he was estimated then as such, I may mention that when he was a Captain of engineers, stationed in Baltimore, the Cuban Junta in New York selected him to be their leader in the revolutionary effort in that island. They were anxious to secure his services, and offered him every temptation that ambition could desire, and pecuniary emoluments far beyond any which he could hope otherwise to acquire. He thought the matter over, and, I remember, came to Washington to consult me as to what he should do. After a brief discussion of the complex character of the military problem which was presented, he turned from the consideration of that view of the question, by stating that the point on which he wished particularly to consult me, was as to the propriety of entertaining the proposition which had been made to him. He had been educated in the service of the United States, and felt it wrong to accept place in the army of a foreign power while he held a commission."¹⁰

Not discouraged by these unsuccessful efforts, Lopez determined to organize and lead the expedition himself. The Club at Havana sent Lopez \$30,000 early in 1849, and contributions in this country swelled the amount to \$70,000.¹¹ Interviews with Calhoun, and other prominent men, convinced Lopez that all depended on getting at least a semblance of a revolution which the American government might use as a pretext for dark man remarkable for his glowing eyes and snowy hair. The interview is described by Mrs. Davis: "Jefferson Davis, A Memoir by his wife," I, 412.

¹⁰ See Pamphlet entitled: "Organization of the Lee Monument Association, Richmond, Va., Nov. 3 and 4, 1870", 12 pp. Richmond 1871. (Library of Congress.)

¹¹ Vidal Morales *op. cit.* 250-252, 253. (Especially letter of Juan Manuel Macias.)

aggression. Calhoun believed that if with any good reason the United States intervened in Cuba, England and France would not attempt to interfere.¹² Everywhere people were hopeful of the practicability of the enterprise,¹³ and recruits were gained in half a dozen different cities. Two steamers were bought at New York and two sailing vessels at New Orleans. An attempt to rendezvous at Cat Island was defeated by the vigilance of the government, but finally 800 men under Col. White, a soldier of fortune who had taken part in the Mexican war, were gathered at Round Island near New Orleans. These plans were all made so openly that they were followed closely by the Captain General of Cuba and by Calderon de la Barca, the Spanish minister at Washington, who was supplied with a large sum from the Cuban treasury to discover the facts and to suppress the movement. The men who enlisted were promised the pay and rations of privates in the United States army, with a bonus of \$1000 each and five acres of land in case of success. Thousands of men were setting out for the gold fields of California, and the general craze for wealth was used as a motive. The officers declared: "The gold is already dug and coined for which you will fight."¹⁴

¹² Claiborne, Quitman, II, 55.

¹³ An article entitled "Cuba" in the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Sept. 1849. XXV, 193 ff, is typical of American optimism: "The practicability of the enterprise is unquestionable. A force of 3,000 to 4,000 Americans, landed in Cuba in the winter months, would have to contend with perhaps 14,000 Spaniards, divided in small garrisons throughout the island, each at the mercy of the people, if those people have a sufficient rallying point. Sixty days probably would suffice to place a provisional government at the head of affairs, declare the independence of the island, organize its revenues, and bid defiance to the power of Spain." Like almost every article in the American press this regards independence as a step in annexation. Annexation would equalize the price of negroes in Cuba and Louisiana and so Cuba with its cheaper negroes would no longer be a rival.

"Under the influence of annexation, the property of the Cubans would immediately equalize with that of similar property in the United States, and the sugar plantations of Louisiana would find, in the hitherto untouched soil of Cuba, the means of underselling the world in sugar; while the capacity of Cuba to purchase and consume the beef, ham, flour, and other supplies of the Western States, would develop itself in an almost limitless degree."

¹⁴ M. W. Means to Secretary Clayton, undated, internal evidence

While White and his men were organizing at Round Island, and other recruits were being enlisted in Boston, Baltimore, and New Orleans, the case of the abduction of Garcia from New Orleans created a good deal of excitement. The newspapers which were pushing the movement against Cuba made the most of the incident which for a little while seemed to promise a serious quarrel with Spain.

Juan Francisco Garcia y Rey was a jailer at the city prison in Havana who, on the night of March 31, 1849, aided Cirillo, Villaverde and Vincente Fernandez to escape. Villaverde was supposed to be connected with the annexationist movement, while the other prisoner was serving a sentence for fraudulent bankruptcy. Taking a sailing vessel for the United States, the party of refugees landed at Apalachicola, Villaverde proceeding to Savannah, and Fernandez and Garcia going to New Orleans. By order of the Captain General the ex-jailer of Havana was placed under strict surveillance by agents of the Spanish consul. The evidence from this point is contradictory and difficult to unravel, but it at least seems evident that a system of deliberate intimidation was employed to make Garcia, who was seemingly rather weak-minded and cowardly, discontented with his present surroundings and willing to go back to Havana.

Either under promise of complete pardon or perhaps by actual violence, Garcia was induced or compelled to go on board a sailing vessel (July 5, 1848) and, without any opportunity to secure clothing except that which he wore, he was carried away to Havana.

The disappearance of Garcia aroused the anxiety of his landlord who published a statement in *La Patria* that his late tenant had been kidnapped and forcibly abducted to Havana. The announcement was seized upon by the *Delta* and given a prominent place. Don Carlos de España, the consul of Spain, was definitely charged with having violated the sovereignty of the United States. The newspaper announcements created the greatest excitement and a popular demand was made for the arrest and punishment of the Spanish consul and his accomplices. Unfortunately it was discovered that there was no

points to Sept. 8, 1849 (?). Clayton Mss. Library of Congress. This letter communicates plans for an extensive filibustering expedition.

T. Ewing, Dept. of the Interior to Clayton, Aug. 7, 1849, Mss. Library of Congress.

statute of either the State or the United States providing punishment for kidnapping or abducting a white man. The charges therefore were "assault and battery" and "false imprisonment," both indictable and punishable offences in the State of Louisiana. The consul objected to a preliminary hearing before a justice of the peace maintaining that a consul was not subject to the State authorities.

The hearing was accordingly held before a Justice of the Peace and a United States commissioner jointly. Fourteen sessions were held and four lawyers employed on each side. The voluminous evidence proved conclusively the Spanish system of espionage in an American city and the doubtful persons and methods employed by the Spanish consul, but the actual use of force in securing the departure of Garcia was not clearly established, the testimony proving untrustworthy and contradictory. The court, however, bound over the defendants for trial before the grand jury.

In the meantime Rey or Garcia had reached Havana and was kept on an American vessel closely quarantined. The reports of the New Orleans papers caused the American Consul, Campbell, to visit the ex-jailer; but in the presence of Spanish officials Garcia stated that he had come to Havana voluntarily.

General Campbell was astonished a few days later to receive a letter stating that the author, Garcia, had been kidnapped, and intimidated into making his previous statement. He demanded the protection of the American flag and his return to New Orleans. The American Consul demanded an interview alone with Garcia, but the Captain General said that the request was insulting and refused to comply with it.¹⁵

On the expiration of the long period of quarantine Garcia was taken and thrown into prison in solitary confinement. On two or three occasions the prisoner was brought before Captain

¹⁵The letter of Garcia to the American consul dated July 27, 1849, was as follows: "My name is Juan Garcia Rey; I was forced by the Spanish consul to leave New Orleans. I demand the protection of the American flag and I desire to return to the United States. P. S. I came here by force, the Spanish consul having seized me under a supposed order of the recorder of the Second Municipality and having had me carried by main force on board a ship at nine in the evening. P. S. I did not speak frankly to you because the Captain of the port was present." Translated from French edition, New Orleans, "*Bee*," Aug. 25, 1849.

General Alcoy who sought to gain information from him regarding the conspiracies to revolutionize the island. Garcia afterward stated that he gave no important information, but the letters of Alcoy show that the prisoner did not hesitate to disclose the plans of his late confederates.

The government at Washington now took a hand in the matter and peremptorily demanded the return of Garcia.¹⁶ On the advice of the Spanish minister to Washington the Captain General pardoned Garcia who was sent back to New Orleans. The ex-jailer arrived there when public opinion had been lashed into fever heat by the press, and the case was practically ended. The grand jury divided equally on the question of returning an indictment, and the United States District Attorney decided to drop the prosecution.¹⁷

¹⁶ Clayton wrote to President Taylor, Washington, Aug. 18, 1849: "I have the honor to inform the President that I have this day received despatches from the Consul at Havana which go very strongly to implicate the Spanish Consul at New Orleans in the abduction of Juan Garcia. The evidence of the conduct of the Captain General of Cuba tends to inculpate him also. Garcia has been imprisoned and the Captain General refuses to permit our Consul to see him. Garcia has written two letters to our Consul claiming the protection of our flag. From all the evidence before me I think Garcia was kidnaped and that the honor of the country demands the most ample atonement for the outrage."

President Taylor replied from Erie, Pa., Aug. 29, '49: "I fully coincide with you in the opinion that the honor of the country demands the most ample atonement for the outrage and that the most decided measures be taken to demand the release of Garcia and his restoration to this country." Clayton Mss., Department of Mss., Library of Congress.

¹⁷ My authorities on the case of Garcia, alias Rey, are:

1. El Conde de Alcoy al Mtro. de Estado. Havana, Aug. 26, 1849. Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.

2. El Conde de Alcoy, al Mtro de Estado, Havana, Sept. 9, 1849. Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.

3. El Conde de Alcoy, al Mtro. de Estado, Havana, Oct. 9, 1849. Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.

4. Daniel Scully. Abduction of Juan Francisco Rey: A narrative of events from his own lips, from the time he left Havana, in company with Villaverde and Fernandez, until his return to the United States, embracing a relation of what occurred on his first departure from Havana; the intrigues and violence by which his abduction was accomplished in New Orleans; his voyage back to Havana on the *Mary Ellen*; his imprisonment there, and return to the United States, to-

While the radical press of the country was advocating the broadest possible interpretation of the neutrality law of 1818 so as to permit the organization of a filibustering expedition and while it was especially emphasizing the supposed outrage at New Orleans in the case of Garcia, President Taylor was taking what measures he could to discourage and suppress any such enterprise. His proclamation was issued Aug. 11, 1848, and was couched in terms which were satisfactory even to the Captain General of Cuba and which, by putting members of such expeditions beyond the pale of American protection, later on, as we shall see, made any effective interposition in behalf of prisoners in Cuba exceedingly embarrassing.

The proclamation announced that there was reason to believe that an armed expedition was about to be fitted out in the United States with the intention to invade either the island of Cuba or some of the Provinces of Mexico. Persons who should so grossly violate the neutrality laws of the United States must not expect the interference of the Government in any form on their behalf no matter to what extremities they might be reduced. Good citizens were urged to discountenance any such attempt.¹⁸

gether with a compilation of the testimony in the preliminary investigation before Judge Bright and Commissioner Cohen, and a review of the same. New Orleans, 1849. 58 pp.

5. *L'Abeille de la Nouvelle Orleans*, Aug. 25, 1849 and the *New Orleans Bee*, Aug. 15, 28, 29, Sept. 11, 1849.

6. Letter of Villaverde, dated April 19, 1849, given in *Dem. Review*, XXV, 201.

7. Calderon de la Barca to Clayton, Aug. 23, 1849. Clayton Mss. Library of Congress.

¹⁸ Richardson: "Messages and Papers of the Presidents." V. 7, for text of proclamation.

The Captain General (Roncali) wrote Sept. 9, 1849 to the minister of state, regarding the men on Round Island (Mss. Havana Archives): "The proclamation of General Taylor, in publicly denouncing this expedition and condemning it in so solemn a way, has surprised them and without any doubt frightened them. In fact, they foresee the new obstacles which his (i.e. Taylor's) prudence will place in their way and they fear the means of watchfulness and precaution which will be adopted here. Nevertheless I am assured that on the twenty-fifth of August the men remained in the same position, and that on the twenty-seventh the secret preparation had not ceased in New York and other places, although these plans are now notorious and threatened by American war ships which are watching if they are going to set sail

President Taylor's proclamation was highly praised by the Whig papers of the North, but the Democratic press criticized it, and even the Southern Whig papers regarded it as unduly severe.¹⁹ The steamship *Albany* effectively blockaded Round Island and cut off all supplies from the men gathered there. By September 4, seven war vessels were in the immediate neighborhood of Round Island and all hopes of a successful expedition from that point were evidently at an end. The men were deserting and a murder committed on the island showed the difficulty of maintaining effective discipline.²⁰ On Sept. 7, under orders from the State Department, the two vessels which had been secured for the purposes of the expedition were seized at New York. The *Sea Gull* had on board some fifty men, while 120,000 rations were found on the *New Orleans*. Warrants were issued for the arrest of five leaders in the enterprise, but on account of the state of public opinion and since the movement now seemed wholly discredited, no further steps were taken by the government, and the two ships were returned to their legal owners.

The results of the expedition were unfortunate both for the Whig administration and for the Cuban Junta. The bitterness of many papers against Taylor and his administration were

since, according to the laws of the country, it seems that the local authorities cannot disturb assemblages, travel, nor other preliminary acts which they may practice within the country, so long as they do not arm, whatever be the purpose of their acts and the method of accomplishing them, whether by word of mouth or by the press."

¹⁹ So loyal a Whig paper as the New Orleans *Bee* regarded the interdiction of supplies as uncalled for. It argued that, so long as the men were engaged in no hostile acts or did not actually sail for Cuba, they should only be kept under surveillance.

"If the day of Cuba has arrived, if her liberation is noted in the book of destiny, she will march to independence by the ways which Providence has traced for her and nothing can arrest the accomplishment of this great deed."

"What is more natural than that the Creoles of Cuba should call to their aid a small phalanx from the United States? These, certainly, for the time made themselves outlaws, but after all it is their affair and we have no interest in it." *L'Abeille*, Sept. 1, 1849.

For the opposite point of view see a pamphlet: "The Round Island Expedition—Defence of the Navy," Mobile, 1849. Reprint of two articles signed "Truth," from the *Mobile Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 18 and 19, 1849.

²⁰ *L'Abeille de la Nouvelle Orleans*, Sept. 4, 1849.

significant of the state of a large body of public opinion. The Cuban Junta had aroused the fears of the Captain General, and insured vigilance on his part. They had exhausted their means, and although a part of the \$53,000 spent was realized from the sale of the ships, the Cubans were no longer united. One body called "El Consejo del Gobierno Cubano" was established with headquarters in New York, while Lopez and six of his friends formed a "Junta to promote Cuban interests." Discouraged by the prospects in New York, Lopez began early in 1850 to operate chiefly in New Orleans. From this time on the movement became more distinctly American and Southern.²¹

²¹ See especially Jose Sanchez Iznaga, in Morales, *op. cit.* 271.

CHAPTER V

THE CARDENAS EXPEDITION

The failure of the attempt in 1848 made caution in a new enterprise very necessary. The neutrality law of the United States, first passed in 1794, and given its final form in 1818, was aimed at just such efforts. The most important clause seemed sufficiently clear and definite: "Every person who, within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States, begins or sets on foot, or provides, or prepares the means for, any military expedition or enterprise to be carried on from thence against the territory or domains of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people, with whom the United States are at peace, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding three thousand dollars and imprisoned not more than three years."¹ Other sections gave to the federal officers the necessary power to enforce this legislation.^{1a} The expression "military expedition or enterprise to be carried on from thence" had not received the very stringent interpretation which was later adopted by the courts during the troublesome times immediately preceding the Spanish-American War.² A large section of the press maintained that the law could only reach fully armed and disciplined bodies of considerable size which should make their attacks directly from some port of the United States. In the new expedition every precaution was taken to remain, if possible, within the letter of the law. At the same time the government had been stung by foreign criticism, and by the persistence of the Spanish minister³ to make every effort to prevent any

¹ Sections 5286, and 5287-90, Revised Statutes.

^{1a} "The Neutrality Law: what does it mean, what prohibit and what permit?" *Democratic Review*, XXX, 497-512. June, 1852.)

A more stringent law to permit the seizure of arms had been passed in 1838 in view of the difficulties on the Canadian border. But this law was to be in force for only two years and applied only to arms likely to be shipped across a boundary with a coterminous country.

² "In Re Horsa," Decisions given, House Doc. 326, 55 Cong. 2 Session.

³ The Spanish minister to Washington at this time was Senor Cal-

further attempts. Caution was thus made very necessary on the part of Lopez and his friends.

In the spring of 1850 Lopez finally gave up the attempt to organize an expedition in New York and travelled incognito by way of the Ohio and Mississippi, stopping for conferences at various points with those who might take an interest in his enterprise.⁴ At Cincinnati he seems to have had an interview with a certain Captain Hardy, a veteran of the Mexican war, who immediately began to organize a company, ostensibly to go to California. Offers were very munificent. The men were to be preferably Kentuckians. They were promised a bounty, \$4,000 in money, with a further offer of Cuban lands to those who served one year. In the meantime they were to receive the regular pay of privates in the American army. Officers were to have high rank in Cuba and their bounty was set at \$10,000. A special encouragement was the likelihood of being joined by some of the Hungarian refugees, at that time so much lionized in the United States.^{4a}

On the fourth of April the expedition embarked on the *Marta Washington*. After taking on 120 Ohio men at Cincinnati, the vessel crossed the river to receive the Kentucky contingent at Covington, and then started on her adventurous journey. The men whiled away a tedious week practising fencing and other exercises which might be useful, and at three o'clock on the

deron de la Barca. He is described as a small man, inclined to be fat, with a good head, a dull heavy face, but with the expressive eyes so characteristic of the Spanish race. He later became Minister for Foreign Affairs, a reward for activity at the time of the Lopez expeditions. His dinners and receptions were considered sure avenues to good society. His wines and Havana cigars were famous, for this gentleman believed in hospitality as an aid to diplomacy. *United States Review*, June, 1855, pp. 450-1.

⁴ Lopez went to Jackson, Mississippi, and had an interview with Governor Quitman. Lopez offered the command to him, but Quitman said that the revolutionary movement should start in the island itself. When it once had commenced he would accept the command. Claiborne's "Quitman," II, 55-58.

Going to New Orleans Lopez received the help of General Henderson and Mr. A de Sigur proprietor of the New Orleans *Picayune*. Vidal Morales 230.

^{4a} Mss. Report, John H. Goddard, special agent of the government to the Hon. Thomas Ewing, Secretary of the Interior, dated Charleston, June 15, 1850. Dept. of Interior.

morning of April 11, 1850, disembarked at Freeport, some three miles above New Orleans. Here they found lodgings scarce, and were soon transferred to Lafayette. They were a turbulent, good humored band of 250 men, constantly watched by Spanish spies, and always in danger of dispersing; but finally on the twenty-fifth, two weeks after their arrival they were safely on board the *Georgiana*, all supplied with tickets to Chagres. Each man was allowed to take his personal belongings in a bundle. About nine in the evening a tug came alongside, and the *Georgiana* was soon being towed towards the gulf. A large crowd had come to cheer the departing bark, among them Lopez, Gonzales and General John Henderson, who stood upon the wharf until the *Georgiana* had disappeared in the darkness.⁵

At the mouth of the Mississippi the *Georgiana* received its guns and ammunition from a fishing smack which had left New Orleans the day before in the personal charge of Mr. Sigur, the editor of the *Delta*.^{5a}

The *Georgiana* seemed to be suspected by the United States revenue cutter which was cruising in the offing; but the government vessel contented itself with sailing around the bark two or three times, and then went away. The muskets turned out to be new regulation army muskets, and in addition the *Georgiana* carried 10,000 rounds of cartridges.^{5b}

The winds were favorable, and, except for the necessity of sheering off from vessels of suspicious appearance, the days were uneventful. About the fifth day the men made out the north coast of Yucatan. Unfortunately the bark was about eighty miles west of the island of Mujeres which was the appointed rendezvous. The winds which had been so favorable in going south were contrary in retracing this distance. It was

⁵ Lieutenant Hardy, Kentucky battalion, "An Authentic History of the Cuban Expedition," 1-16.

^{5a} The vessel was under the command of Captain Benson. The chief officers were Col. Theodore O'Hara and Lieutenant Colonel Pickett. O'Hara was a Kentuckian and a veteran of the Mexican war, while Pickett was a West Point graduate who had already been engaged in the unfortunate Round Island Expedition. Hardy, 16-22.

^{5b} Guns and ammunition seem to have been supplied to the expedition from the stores belonging to the States of Mississippi and Louisiana. See New Orleans *Bee*, June 7, 1850, and especially report of Wm. Marvin, Judge U. S. District Court, Key West, May 21, 1850, to the President of the U. S. (Mss. Dept. of Interior, Wash., D. C.)

only possible to make a few miles each day. After four days of this tedious work the *Georgiana* reached the island of Contoy about ten miles from Mujeres and almost the same distance from the coast of Yucatan.^{5c} With conditions so unfavorable, Captain Benson decided not to try to go any farther, and the first vessel of the Cuban expedition came to anchor in a pretty little bay, ready to make preparations for disembarkation.

The little island of Contoy was found to be a sandy key, entirely uninhabited. It was scarcely more than half a mile in length and very narrow, with a small lake of salt water in the center. The small bay where the *Georgiana* anchored was favorably situated on the sheltered western side, but unfortunately there was on the island no water fit to drink.⁶

The Kentuckians of the *Georgiana* disembarked on the morning of May 7th and immediately built their signal fires to call the *Creole* to the spot. Three fishing smacks were attracted, and anchored close beside the *Georgiana*, much to the anxiety of the men on shore, but the Spanish vessels seemed to have no suspicions, since Contoy was not an unnatural point at which to stop on the way to Panama.⁷

The lack of good water at Contoy made it dangerous to attempt to stay there for any length of time. Accordingly a pilot was secured from one of the fishing smacks, and for four days the attempt was made to get to Mujeres. But the winds were either averse, or there was dead calm; the men were becoming discontented, and even Captain Benson was sick of the whole expedition. The *Georgiana* was forced to return to her old anchorage at Contoy.

The first night after the return to Contoy discontent was growing almost into mutiny, and Captain Benson told some of the ringleaders that if a majority signed a petition to that effect he would attempt to return to New Orleans. As many as fifty or sixty signatures were obtained.

So far no clear explanation of the plans had been made to the men, and that seemed to be one of the chief causes of discontent. Even some of the officers felt it would be useless to go on with men so disaffected. On this account Colonel O'Hara called the men together and made them a speech, promising

^{5c} The island lies about eighty miles from Cuba and is the nearest point of Mexican soil.

⁶ Hardy, 24.

⁷ Hardy, 26, 27.

that, unless Lopez came in eight days, he would return to New Orleans. This seemed to restore the spirits of the men, cheers were given, three for Lopez, three for Cuba, and three for annexation. Other enthusiastic speeches were given by officers called out by the men. An oath of obedience to the Articles of War of the United States Army and to the Republic of Cuba as represented by General Narciso Lopez was signed by almost all the men. Those who did not sign were not to be allowed to accompany the expedition. A lieutenant was sent with the Spanish pilot in a small boat to Mujeres to give the news of the whereabouts of the *Georgiana* to the Steamer *Creole* when it might arrive. The men grew more contented for the Yucatecans had heard the news of the American ship and began to arrive with provisions. Except for an occasional quarrel among individuals there were no further signs of the incipient mutiny.

In the meantime, at New Orleans, Colonel Wheat, an officer who had served with distinction under Scott in the Mexican War, was gathering together a battalion of Louisiana troops. This second battalion was composed of a rougher and more adventurous crowd than either the Kentucky or the Mississippi battalions, and consisted of about 160 men. Some, especially the officers, were veterans of the Mexican War, but not so large a proportion as in the Mississippi regiment.⁸

The *Susan Loud*, carrying this Louisiana regiment, left her moorings at New Orleans at almost the time when her ally, the *Georgiana*, first came in sight of Contoy. She sailed down the Mississippi on the night of May 2nd, and then eastward on the next day. The *Susan Loud* had directions to cruise to a point 26° N. 87° W. in the general direction of Mujeres to wait there until the 7th of May on which day the *Creole* expected to leave New Orleans. The barge should then sail on a direct line towards the mouth of the Mississippi until she met the steamer. The rendezvous was reached at noon on the sixth, and then, for the first time, the lone star flag of Cuba was raised over the waters of the gulf amid the cheers of the "Liberators."^{8a} The day which the *Susan Loud* had to spend

⁸ Hardy, 28-31.

^{8a} The Cuban flag was drawn by Tolon a friend of Lopez in 1849. It was displayed on the office of the New York *Sun* in New York on May 11, 1850, an incident which led to protest on the part of Spain. See C. Villaverde, quoted in Morales 261-2.

at the rendezvous was used in organization, for the men had not been together before embarking, and almost none except the officers had seen their future leader, General Lopez. The filibusters were addressed by Colonel Wheat and then proceeded to divide themselves into ten squads to serve as the basis of future companies.⁹

Whiling away the time in playing poker, with large amounts of the bonds of the future Cuban republic as the stakes, the newly organized filibusters looked eagerly for the expected *Creole*. About one o'clock on the morning of May 4th her smoke was made out ahead, and by sunset even her red signal flag was close enough to be made out. The *Susan Loud* responded by running up a white flag in answer. With the Cuban flag streaming from each vessel's masthead, the two came alongside and General Gonzales came on board the *Susan Loud* from the *Creole*. Almost the whole of the day following the meeting of the two vessels was used in transshipping the men to the steamer. Captain Pendleton of the *Susan Loud* who was well acquainted with various Cuban harbors was also induced to go on board the *Creole*, while the *Susan Loud* was left to follow the swifter steamer as well as she could. The Louisiana men found the Mississippi regiment on the *Creole* disappointingly small. It contained only about 130 men. The

⁹O. D. D. O. "History of the Late Expedition to Cuba, by O. D. D. O., one of the participants"—New Orleans, 1850. PP. 1-19. (For critical consideration of this source see Bibliography). The various squads chose their own officers as follows:

- Company A. Capt. A. C. Steele, Lieutenants, E. Vernon—H. Peabody.
- Company B. Capt. J. C. Davis, Lieutenants, Thixton—H. E. Henning.
- Company C. Capt. T. F. Fisher, Lieutenants, J. H. Dennet—Morris.
- Company D. Capt. T. G. Hunton, Lieutenants, Duncan—Jas. Foley.
- Company E. Capt. J. J. McCormeck, Lieutenants, Bradford—Mitchell.
- Company F. Capt. Thos. Kewen, Lieutenants, E. D. Lane—Woodruff.
- Company G. Capt. N. C. Breckenridge, Lieutenants, J. C. Perkins—
W. J. Burke.
- Company H. Capt. Thos. March, Lieutenants, Parish—Thos. Lawton.
- Company I. Capt. H. C. Foster, Lieutenants, G. H. Sartin—Hurd.
- Company K. Capt. M. J. Morgan, Lieutenants, E. L. Jones—R. A. Harris.

In addition to Col. Wheat, Theodore P. Byrd was appointed adjutant, J. D. R. McHenry, Commissary, L. C. Thomas, Quartermaster, and Thomas Wragg, Sergeant Major. There were 134 privates, making a total of 170. Lieut. Col. Wm. H. Bell and Major George B. Hayden were second and third in command, respectively.

best of good feeling prevailed between the two sets of men.¹⁰ On the 12th of May arms were distributed to the men, and all those who wished it were introduced to General Lopez. The leader of the filibusters is described as a soldierly looking man, well set, about five feet eight in height. He had a fine head, and sparkling black eyes, from which love of adventure shone. In manner he was singularly attractive. The large tall men of the Mississippi battalion pleased him especially. His whole bearing indicated great activity and power of endurance, qualities which always inspired confidence in his men.¹¹

A tropical storm broke the monotony on the 12th. On the same day a carelessly handled fire arm by its discharge killed one of the Louisiana regiment, the first tragedy in what had so far seemed all comedy. On the afternoon of the 13th the coast of Yucatan was sighted, again as in the case of the *Georgiana* too far to the west. In rounding the point of Yucatan and turning south it would have been natural to pass on the seaward side of Contoy. But a sail was seen in that direction and for fear it might prove a Spanish war ship, the light *Creole* kept close to shore and thus early on the morning of the 14th, made out the *Georgiana* snugly anchored on the west side of Contoy, some twenty-five miles north of Mujeres. The whole expedition was now united, the filibusters showing their delight with deafening cheers.¹²

In a conference between Colonel O'Hara and General Lopez it was decided that the *Creole* should go on to Mujeres for water and come back the following day to take on board the Kentuckians. A proclamation was distributed in which Lopez appealed to the discipline and enthusiasm of his men: "Soldiers of the liberating expedition of Cuba! Our first act on arriving shall be the establishment of a provisional constitution, founded on American principles, and adapted to the emergencies of the occasion. This constitution you will unite with your

¹⁰ The officers of the Mississippi battalion were Lieut. Col. W. J. Bunch, Major Peter Smith, Captains A. L. Kewen, Keating, Hawkins, Hale, Mizelle, O. D. D. O. 25.

¹¹ O. D. D. O. *op. cit.*, 24-29.

¹² O. D. D. O. 31; Hardy, 32.

On the island of Mujeres was buried with all due ceremony the body of the man who had been accidentally killed. A young theological student named McCann from Paris, Kentucky, officiated as chaplain, and a salute was fired over the lonely grave. O. D. D. O. 33.

brethren of Cuba in swearing to support in its principles as well as on the field of battle. You have all been chosen by your officers as men individually worthy of so honorable an undertaking. I rely implicitly on your presenting Cuba to the world, a signal example of all the virtues, as well as all the valor of the American citizen soldiers; and I cannot be deceived in my confidence that by our discipline, good order, moderation in victory, and sacred respect for all private rights, you will put to shame every insolent calumny of your enemies. And when the hour arrives for repose on the laurels which await your grasp, you will all, I trust, establish permanent and happy homes in the beautiful soil of the island you go to free, and there long enjoy the gratitude which Cuba will never fail generously to bestow on those to whom she will owe the sacred and immeasurable debt of her liberty."¹³

Before the *Creole* went on to Mujeres, Lopez had a conversation with the Captain of one of the fishing smacks which was going to Havana. Under the appearance of confiding in him, he gave the fisherman information which might mislead the Spanish authorities regarding his true plans. Mujeres turned out to be a pleasant island quite different from Contoy. It was about eight miles long and almost two miles wide, lying some twelve miles from the mainland. The Adjutant General secured some of the inhabitants and soon had them carrying water on board the *Creole*.¹⁴

Some evidences of discontent began to show themselves among the Louisiana men at Contoy while the *Creole* was at Mujeres taking water, especially because some of the men feared that the little steamer could not carry the increased load when the Kentuckians came on board. It was now known that the expedition would number 600 men, and the *Creole* was evidently old and out of repair. The men were assembled on the beach for drill and again addressed by Colonel Wheat in the hope of gaining their full loyalty.¹⁵

On the morning of the 16th the steamer was finally ready to go back to Contoy. When all was ready it was discovered that thirteen men had remained behind. One of these men had

¹³ Hardy, 34. It is, of course, unlikely that this speech is reported verbatim.

¹⁴ O. D. D. O. 34; Col. O'Hara's report in Hardy, op. cit. 65.

¹⁵ O. D. D. O. 39-43.

boasted that they would capture a fishing smack which lay in the bay, and so get back to the United States. On this account the *Creole* took the smack in tow and did not let it go until it was safely away from the dangerous island.¹⁶

When the *Georgiana* was rejoined at Contoy, the two ships were lashed together, and soon the transshipment of men, provisions and water was going on rapidly. After a council of war it was decided that every man should have an opportunity if he wished to go back to the United States. Thirty-nine decided to take advantage of this offer. Of these ten or twelve belonged to Colonel O'Hara's regiment and had only come in the expectation of disembarking at Chagres, if that had been the rendezvous. The deserters were marched around the deck, with their hands tied behind them, among the hisses and groans of the army, and they were compelled to do the heavy work of transferring coal from the *Georgiana* to the *Creole*. As the *Creole* was about to sail they were addressed in a bitter speech by one of the Kentuckians.¹⁷

A heavy sea which had risen since the two vessels were lashed together made the work of transshipment especially difficult¹⁸; but soon the troops were on their way, reduced now from the original 570 to 521, by desertions at Mujeres and at Contoy. The *Pizarro* and *Habanero* had left Havana on the same day to hunt for the filibusters. On account of the wind the *Creole* had to steam more towards the north than she otherwise would and for this reason alone she probably missed meeting the Spanish war ships.¹⁹

¹⁶ These deserters are said to have run up a black flag on the beach. This would seem almost incredibly foolhardy. O. D. D. O. 44.

The men on Mujeres seem to have remained several days until a Mexican war vessel arriving took them all away to Campeche. Here they were received with great curiosity by the people and only lived by means of subscriptions raised for them by some kindhearted people. Some managed after great hardships to get to Sisal and from there to find ships to the United States. Hardy, 92-94.

¹⁷ O. D. D. O. 45, Hardy, 35, O'Hara's official Report, Hardy, 65.

¹⁸ Hardy, 35; but O. D. D. O., p. 51, says the day was calm and favorable.

¹⁹ Each man was supplied with sixty rounds of ammunition. Each officer carried in addition to a regulation sabre a Jennings's Patent Rifle which fired a leaden cartridge 15 times a minute. The Kentuckians were supplied with rifles, the Mississippians with yagers, and the men from Louisiana with muskets. The men wore red shirts, an interesting

The men were crowded on the deck and in the hold, and only those on deck were able to drill at all. The strictest discipline was necessary to prevent bodies of men from passing from one part of the ship to the other; for the *Creole* was very heavily loaded and it was not easy to keep her trimmed in the heavy seas. One lieutenant was court martialled and reduced to the ranks for disrespect to his superior officer, a wholesome lesson to the undisciplined volunteers. Lopez paced the deck spy glass in hand. Once or twice the *Creole* changed her course to avoid some large steamer. On the evening of the first day out from Contoy the exact plan of the invasion was made known. The landing was to take place at Cardenas, and the railroad to Matanzas was to be seized. This important town, thirty miles from Cardenas, should be reached and surprised within twenty-four hours of the landing. It would be the center of recruiting. While 100 picked men proceeded to within nine miles of Havana to blow up an important bridge, enough recruits to bring the number to five full regiments would be armed and mounted. With an army of 5000 men aggressive measures would be possible. Lopez expected soon to be encamped with an army of 30,000 men before Havana.²⁰ At ten o'clock on the evening of May 18th the *Creole* passed the lighthouse fifteen miles from Cardenas,²¹ and under a bright moon sailed past ships and little islands. Soon the beautiful

proof of the effect of the movements in Europe. When steamers were passed these unusual sights were evidently a source of danger. Hardy, 35, 36; O. D. D. O. 60.

²⁰ O. D. D. O. 58; O'Hara in Hardy, 66.

The Adjutant General, later wounded in the battle at Cardenas, was a young man named A. J. Gonzales, a Cuban of good family who at the age of twenty-six was a professor in the University of Havana. Having travelled widely and with a gift for oratory, on being suspected of conspiracy, he had fled to the United States, and became a prominent member of the Cuban Junta. It was he who had been deputed to secure the services of General Worth before Lopez had arrived in the United States. Jose Sanchez Iznaga of Trinidad, J. M. Macias and J. M. Hernandez of Matanzas also accompanied Lopez. O. D. D. O. 59, 60, 61. See Polk Papers which contain letters introducing Gonzales.

²¹ Cardenas had a population of 4,000 to 5,000. In the town the white and especially the Spanish element engaged in commerce predominated. Cardenas is about ninety miles from Havana and twenty-five from Matanzas, and in 1850 the communications with these two places were particularly good both by a highway and a railroad. The greatest sugar plantations tended by large numbers of slaves were in the imme-

little city was in sight. Near the wharf there was some delay until a volunteer took the cable to shore. Not until after the vessel was made fast was the alarm given by the Spanish sentinel.²² The force which was to seize the railroad station, sixty Kentuckians under Lieutenant Colonel Pickett, was the first to land. The railway station proved to be one and one-half miles from the steamer and well beyond the town, but Pickett's company were able to march directly to it and seize it without any opposition.²³ A detachment of the Mississippi regiment under Captain Kewen seized a railroad station within the city, making prisoners a guard of twelve armed men and all the railway employees.²⁴

It was now about five in the morning. The Spanish garrison occupied one side of the typical plaza, or public square, with the governor's house on the other side, directly across the square. Colonel O'Hara with the remaining Kentuckians marched quickly up the main street which led along one side of the barracks and into the public square. The streets were deserted and the town seemed only beginning to realize its danger. As soon as the Kentuckians came near, the sentinels challenged, and the American troops quickened their pace to charge. They were received by heavy firing from behind the walls. At the very first fire Colonel O'Hara received a wound which disabled him and he was compelled to retire to the *Creole*, Major Hawkins now taking over the command.²⁵ The troops were drawn up before the barracks and Lopez in person marched directly up and boldly demanded a surrender. The

diate neighborhood, a fact which naturally tended to conservatism on the part of the whites. A second railroad led towards the interior of the island. Concha, p. 29.

²² O'Hara (Hardy, 66) says there was considerable delay in landing. There is a difference at this point between the two chief accounts. O. D. D. O., p. 65, says that the vessel grounded, and that Faysoux carried the cable to shore. Hardy does not mention the grounding of the vessel, and leaves it to be implied that Captain Lewis carried the cable (p. 39).

²³ Pickett's Report in Hardy, 68.

²⁴ O. D. D. O. 68.

²⁵ Colonel O'Hara's Report, Hardy, 67.

Lieutenant Hardy says that Hawkins immediately gave an order to try to force an entrance, and that Lopez only arrived in time to countermand it, on the ground that it would entail great loss of life. But Hardy seems to be strongly prejudiced against Hawkins.

small Spanish garrison seemed to fear the results of allowing the Americans to storm. The doors were thrown open and the barracks were occupied by a contingent of American troops.²⁶

In the meantime the Louisiana and Mississippi divisions had advanced by separate streets parallel to the main street, one to the east of the plaza and the other to the west. The Mississippi men, finding none to oppose them took up a position in the rear of the barracks, acting as a reserve. The Louisiana men under Colonel Wheat having arrived at a street which led into the plaza from the east, turned sharply to the right and entered the plaza just in time to find that the Spanish garrison, while the doors were being thrown open on the other side of the barracks, were making good their retreat unobserved across the "plaza" into the governor's house. The two parties had just time enough to exchange volleys which did no serious harm except that Colonel Wheat, gallantly leading his men, was disabled by a severe wound. In the meantime the Spaniards succeeded in entering the governor's palace in good order. Lieutenant Colonel Bell now assumed command of the Louisiana troops with orders to capture the palace.²⁷

The Louisianans strengthened by a company of Kentuckians under Robinson, and by Muzelle's Mississippians, charged eagerly on the barricaded doors. With a rush they broke in, only to find that it would be impossible to reach the second floor where the small garrison was stationed. The American fire against the walls was simply a waste of ammunition. Lieutenant Colonel Bell withdrew his troops out of range to give them a breathing spell, and then made a new attack.²⁸ The building was now fired and the palace completely surrounded. Two Spaniards sought to escape, but one was instantly shot and the other surrendered. The heat of the burning building was becoming unbearable to the Spaniards within. At eight o'clock a white flag was displayed and after a short parley both governor and garrison surrendered unconditionally. The garrison which surrendered consisted of about forty men. The prisoners were confined in the barracks.²⁹

²⁶ Report of Major Hawkins, Hardy, 72.

²⁷ O. D. D. O. 67.

²⁸ Report of Lieutenant Colonel Bell, Louisiana Regiment, Hardy, 71.

²⁹ O. D. D. O. 69, 70.

As soon as the barracks had surrendered, Hawkins and the Kentuckians were posted south of the town to guard against any attack from that quarter, but, with the surrender of the governor, there being no signs of danger on the south, all the men were recalled. The citizens were evidently imbued with the idea that these self-called Liberators were real pirates, bent on murder and plunder. All those who could were fleeing to the ships in the harbor or to the hills back of the town. Some offered bribes for the protection of their property. The attitude of the Americans soon reassured them, but did not win positive support. Guards were stationed at the principal stores and everything which was taken was paid for scrupulously. The training of the Americans in Mexico here showed its good effects, for the old soldiers of Taylor and Scott had been accustomed to distinguish conquest from plunder, and habit kept them from excess. The only money seized was the safe at the custom house, which was found to contain eighty-four doubloons; in addition guns and ammunition were seized from the Spaniards, but private property was respected. Indeed, as soon as the governor had surrendered, the Louisiana troops seized the fire engines and easily put out the fire which they had kindled.

The filibusters now had nothing to do. All form of organization was lost, and the men scattered about the town seeking food and rest. The reassured citizens treated them with a half frightened courtesy and the men drank large quantities of native liquors which had a stupefying effect and made successful fighting during the night doubtful. Lopez made every effort to win over some of the citizens, but with little success. They were not hostile, but they showed no sign of anything but good natured hospitality. Some brought old weapons which they had in their possession and which they did not intend to use themselves. Indeed they seemed nervously anxious to get rid of their unwelcome and dangerous guests; the rumor was persistently spread that 3000 men were on the road from Matanzas and would arrive at Cardenas by midnight. A message which Lopez received about three in the afternoon seemed to confirm this news. A small body of Spanish lancers galloped about the outskirts of the town and reconnoitered the situation. Evidently the Spaniards would know of every movement and it would be hopeless now to surprise Matanzas. If the rumor

of a large Spanish force between him and Matanzas were true it was necessary for Lopez to act quickly. To advance leaving a hostile city behind him and to march against a large hostile force in front with a disorganized though brave body of men was a step which had a chance of success, but certainly only a slender one. To remain in Cardenas, to allow the Spanish war ships to concentrate outside the harbor and so cut off all retreat while the Spanish armies were concentrating in front would mean annihilation. There was still one possibility which may have lain in Lopez' mind in the beginning. A quick embarkation in the *Creole* and a flight to the westward, a landing on the most western point of the island at Mantua, a point easier to reach from New Orleans than Havana, the prestige of having already captured an important town, and finally the absence of the intimidating Spanish troops which would be several days' march away on a fool's errand to Cardenas, these seemed the very conditions of success. Lopez was known in the west; he knew the country and the roads, and with the added weapons and ammunition captured at Cardenas, if the Cubans could be induced to rise, they could be armed, and Havana could be attacked on its weakest side. The attack on Cardenas should thus serve only as a blind. Of course, everything depended on the rising of the Cubans. But of the eventual likelihood of this Lopez never seemed to have a doubt. He knew of discontent among the Creoles and among the Spanish troops. He failed to properly estimate the influence of long habits of obedience and discipline; and even in the later disasters of the Bahia Honda expedition, up to the very time when he was captured, he never gave up the hope and even the expectation that the peasants would flock to his lone star flag and that Spanish soldiers could be won to the cause of "Cuba Libre!"

During the day the quartermaster had been engaged in transferring the baggage to the railway station, and all were expecting to proceed to Matanzas. The order given at four o'clock to reëmbark on the *Creole* was received with great surprise. The scattered men began to reunite and the Louisiana and Mississippi men with Colonel Robinson's company of Kentuckians were immediately marched towards the steamer. Part reëmbarked while others assisted in loading the arms and provisions. An aide de camp was sent to recall Lieutenant

Colonel Pickett who with his small band had guarded the depot all the afternoon. These men now retreated to the foot of the main street.³⁰

While the reëmbarkation was going on, Major Hawkins and eighty-five or ninety Kentuckians were drawn up in the square as a rear guard. The retreat of the American troops and the withdrawal of the guard at the depot were not lost on the Spanish forces, which had been on the outskirts of the city. About six companies of Spanish infantry and lancers entered the city with the evident intention of attacking the retreating forces. It will be remembered that there were three chief streets leading back to the shore. The Spanish commander conceived the purpose of sending his lancers down the one to the east and the infantry down the western road, thus passing Major Hawkins' Kentuckians, and separating them from the *Creole*. If this flanking movement had been successful the result would have been fatal. Major Hawkins barely had time to throw a flanking company into each street to check the Spanish attack, while he himself withdrew with his centre to a point on the main street nearer the *Creole*. Baffled on the side street the Spanish lancers, some sixty or seventy in number, formed in the square and wildly charged upon the retreating Kentuckians in the main street. The flanking companies had by this time fallen back and formed on the sidewalks of the main street so the lancers were caught between three fires. As the lancers charged they were met by a raking fire which sent horses and riders in wild confusion rolling on the ground. Those who broke through only did so to meet the fire of Colonel Pickett's men who were drawn as a supporting line at the foot of the street. Regardless of the fate of their comrades a second line of thirty or forty lancers charged again with the utmost gallantry. These were killed almost to a man, those who escaped up a side street coming upon the fire of the Louisiana regiment. Lieutenant Colonel Pickett now took command of the Kentuckians and drew them up behind a barricade of sugar hogsheads. There they remained about one hour without being attacked and then, when all was ready, embarked on the *Creole*. At about nine the steamer got under way, sped on her way by scattering Spanish shots from the wharf.^{30a}

³⁰ Lieut. Col. Pickett's Report. Hardy, 68.

^{30a} There seem to have been twenty-one Spanish soldiers who joined

The harbor of Cardenas is peculiarly difficult to navigate, and it is not strange that in the darkness the *Creole* without a pilot who knew those waters should have grounded. It was already midnight and the Spaniards were now thoroughly alarmed and would soon have steamers on the watch. Every moment's delay made the thought of another landing more and more impracticable. It was clearly necessary to lighten ship, although such a step would make a second landing impossible. The heavier provisions were thrown overboard and then the

the filibusters. Spanish sources minimize the number in the garrison and deny that any joined Lopez voluntarily. The \$1452 secured at Cardenas from the Spanish treasury was distributed at Key West among the wounded and the Spanish deserters. The numbers in the garrison are variously given at from seventeen to several hundred. The company of lancers who charged the retreating filibusters in the evening was probably composed of only thirty men. Hardy seems to be trustworthy in estimating the garrison at one company of infantry. On these points the evidence is conflicting. See: Hardy, 73, 41, 63, 50; O. D. D. O. Torrente, II, 379, I, 43, 44.

The Captain General, June 9, 1850, writing to the minister of state refers to prisoners landed from the *Creole* at Key West. This evidently refers to the twenty-one deserters mentioned by Schlesinger. (Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.)

The losses at Cardenas were as follows: (1) The Louisianans lost some twenty killed and wounded in the morning attack on the governor's house, including Colonel Wheat, who was wounded. None were lost in the evening when the retreat was covered by the Kentuckians, (Lieut. Col. Bell, Hardy 71). (2) The Kentuckians lost forty killed and wounded altogether, largely in the evening engagement. Killed, Capt. John A. Logan, Lieut. James J. Garrett, Rev. Louis McCann, Sergeant Henry Cruse and ten privates. Wounded, Col. T. O'Hara, Major T. T. Hawkins, Lieuts. Sayre and Hardy, Sergeant Robert Wheeling and twenty-one privates, (Report Lieut.-Col. Pickett, Hardy 70). (3) The Mississippians probably did not lose more than six or seven, not being exposed except in the morning. The total Spanish losses may have been almost 100, chiefly in the evening attack. (See Hardy, 43, 44).

General Gonzales, who had been the very life and soul of the enterprise, exposed himself fearlessly to the fire from the governor's house and was wounded early in the day. General Lopez escaped although he was in the very thick of the firing. O. D. D. O. 69.

Among the losses in the evening engagement were those of Chaplain McCann who was shot from a house while retreating to join his regiment, and Chaplain Logan of the Kentuckians and Lieutenant Lexios of the Mississippi regiment who were carried aboard the *Creole* badly wounded. They died in the course of the night and were buried at sea on the next day. O. D. D. O. 78, 79.

arms and ammunition, until the piled boxes projected above the water. As a last resort more than 100 men were landed on a nearby island. This expedient was successful. The vessel floated clear, and early in the morning of the 20th passed the bar and the light ship. There Lopez landed the captured governor and the commander of the garrison.

As soon as the *Creole* was clear of the harbor great opposition arose to Lopez' desire to land at Mantua. A conference of the officers was called and it was found that while Colonel Wheat and four others wished to follow Lopez once more, the majority felt that another landing would be sheer folly. It was decided to leave the whole matter to the men, for with discontented men it was evident that very little could be done. But the men were almost unanimously against landing, only fifteen voting with Lopez. The old general begged to be put on shore with whatever men would follow him. Whether this was done to try to shame all to follow, or from a real belief that the Cuban insurrectionists only needed a leader, the daring request was refused, and by almost common consent the *Creole* turned her prow toward Key West. Nor would any other course have been possible, even granting the widespread and effective discontent which Lopez so strongly counted on. General Gonzales who acted as interpreter was wounded; the Spaniards would be on the lookout and the danger of being captured on the way to Mantua was increased by the necessity of passing Havana; it would now be almost impossible to make an effective surprise; the ammunition needed to arm the Cubans had been thrown overboard; and there was only just enough fuel to take the ship either to Mantua or to Key West. At best only a landing could be effected and there would be no hope of retreating in case of failure. Such considerations as these were decisive.³¹

The *Creole*, by taking a course too much to the east luckily avoided the *Pizarro* which visited Key West in search of her on the next morning. In the evening it was found that the *Creole* was in the shallows some forty miles to the east of Key West. A pilot was taken on board, and it was decided to anchor and proceed by daylight. The twenty-first dawned clear, the last day of the expedition. The *Creole* had proceeded about

³¹ Report of Major Hawkins, Hardy, 73, 74. Report of Lieutenant-Colonel Pickett, Hardy, 69.

fourteen miles when in the southwest was seen the smoke of the *Pizarro*. The Spanish vessel had visited Key West in search of them and was now cruising off that port in expectation of encountering the filibusters. It was now a matter of a race. The *Pizarro* had the advantage of speed, while the light draught of the *Creole* allowed her to take a more direct route nearer the reef. Every bit of coal was piled on the fires; boxes, barrels of resin, everything available was used, and the old *Creole* steamed as she had never done before. The flag of Spain was visible from the *Pizarro*, and the crowded adventurers could be in no doubt of their most imminent danger. Fortunately for them the heavy Spaniard had to stop and take on a pilot, and this made it possible for the *Creole* to enter Key West twenty-five minutes the winner in the race. Anchoring under the guns of the *Petrel*, an American war vessel, the *Pizarro* dared do nothing but protest against the disembarkation of the filibusters.

At Key West the filibusters were welcomed by the citizens. Lopez took passage to Savannah, while the others broke up into small groups and dispersed to their homes as best they might. In this they were aided by citizens of Key West, although a meeting called in their behalf caused a disturbance between their friends and opponents. No attempt was made to arrest any of the filibusters at Key West, but the *Creole* was seized by the United States authorities including all the arms and ammunition on board. The rapidity with which the men disembarked furnished the United States authorities some excuse for not making arrests. Ten minutes after the *Creole* touched the pier, the wounded had been carried off and she was absolutely deserted by soldiers and crew.³²

³² O. D. D. O. 79-82. Hardy, 46-54, 58, 63, Pickett's Report, Hardy, 70, The Spanish Naval Commander in the Antilles, Francisco Avenero, to the Spanish Consul at Key West, House Ex. Doc. 83, 32 Cong. 1 Sess. p. 45.

The ships in the Cardenas expedition were supplied with coal and provisions for thirty days. Iznaga, a close friend of Lopez, gave the total cost \$37,500, entirely secured from American sources. Morales, 271.

In the report for May 21, 1850, from W. C. Maloney, U. S. Marshall at Key West, to the Secretary of Interior, this official states that the number of armed men thrown into the town of Key West exceeded that of "effective male inhabitants." Seven negro slaves who had fled

The expedition and the attempts of the government to prevent it had been already a prolific source of embarrassment to the administration. On May 20th the papers had announced the action taken by the President in sending vessels of the American navy to try to prevent the expedition from landing, or at least to cut off supplies and reinforcements from the United States. This action was made the ground for a bitter attack by Senator Yulee of Florida. He said he was doubtful whether any such expedition were contemplated. If it were, he did not believe it to be clearly illegal under the neutrality act of 1818. He said that the administration showed a desire to usurp powers which the constitution never gave it. It intended to deprive persons of life, liberty and property without due process of law. In attempting to keep provisions from reaching the island the President was himself breaking our laws of neutrality by taking the part in a foreign territory of one belligerent against the other. The President had gone so far as to make war without the authority of Congress. The government seemed to him, as to a very large number of Americans to be taking the side of despotism against liberal progress.^{32a} This remarkable speech called forth a masterly reply from Webster. The Senator from Massachusetts reviewed our promises to Spain repeated through the executive again

on the *Creole* from Cardenas were restored to the *Pizarro* on application of the Spanish consul. (Mss. Dept. of Interior, Washington, D. C.) In the meantime on receiving the news of invasion Roncali issued a proclamation declaring the blockade of the island, placing it under military government, and condemning to instant death all who took part in any way in revolution or in inciting the slaves to rise. He called upon the citizens to show their loyalty. (Zaragoza, I, 597.)

The governor of Matanzas reached Cardenas with a small body of troops about 2 A. M. only to find that the filibusters were gone. About 3500 troops including 1000 militia under the Count of Mirasol left Havana by rail soon after they received the news, and crossing the bay of Cardenas in boats marched beyond Cardenas to the east, where the expedition was expected to attempt a new landing. Zaragoza, *op cit.* 600-602; Concha, 30.

^{32a} The Senator from Florida defended the filibusters saying that they were acting under "their personal civil right of emigration and expatriation." This view would have justified President Taylor's unfortunate threat in his proclamation in 1849 to refuse protection to filibusters as American citizens and these views tied the hands of the government when Crittenden and his men were captured in 1851, and later proved embarrassing in the famous case of the *Virginian*.

and again since Jackson's time. We were not only bound by treaties of peace, amity and goodwill, but we had repeatedly promised that if Spain would abstain from surrendering Cuba to any other European power, she might be assured of the good offices of the United States to maintain her in possession of the island. He held it to be an unquestionable law that American jurisdiction followed the flag, whether that flag floated on the sea or even in a foreign port. This jurisdiction imposed the duty of protection, not only for the benefit of the United States, but, in true justice, for the benefit of a foreign country whose peace was threatened. Further, the act of 1818 imposed it as a solemn duty on the President to preserve the peace of the country by suppressing every unauthorized expedition set on foot in the United States against any portion of a country with which we were at peace. Mr. Webster could not regard the clause of the Constitution which safeguarded life, liberty and property as applying to armed insurrection. He expressed the highest confidence in the President of the United States.³³

When the news of the Cardenas expedition reached Madrid the Spanish government urged very strongly upon the government at Washington the severe punishment of the filibusters. Such punishment was required by the dignity of the American nation: "But if contrary to our expectations the authors of this last expedition should go unpunished as those did who last year planned the Round Island expedition, the government of Her Majesty will find itself obliged to appeal to the sentiments of morality and good faith of the nations of Europe to oppose the entrance of a system of politics and of doctrines which would put an end to the foundations on which rests the peace of the civilized world. If Europe should sanction by her silence and acquiescence the scandalous state of affairs by which the citizens of the United States (or those of any power whatever) might freely make war from their territory against Spain, when the latter is at perfect peace officially with the Union; if it should be tolerated or looked on with indifference that the solemn stipulations which bind the two states should be with impunity made hollow by mobs and that the law of nations and public morality should be violated without other motive than the selfishness of the aggressors, and with no other reliance than force; then civilized nations ought to renounce that

³³ Cong. *Globe*, May 21, 1850—XXI, 1030-1035.

peace which is based on the laws of nations and the terms of treaties, and make ready for a new era in which might will be right and in which popular passions of the worst kind will be substituted for the reason of states."³⁴

The London *Times*, in an editorial for June 8, 1850, voiced much European opinion which severely criticized the government: "The civilized nations of the world are beginning to ask themselves the meaning of this extraordinary state system which unites many provinces for defence of one, if attacked, but leaves that one perfectly free to attack any friendly power in defiance of the wishes of the other members of the corporate government. Had Spanish ships blockaded the port of New Orleans, Spain would have been at war with the United States collectively. An armament is fitted out at New Orleans to invade Spanish territory and the government which represents the United States is powerless to prevent its progress or departure."

In the south, the trend of public opinion was wholly favorable to the filibusters, and made their conviction almost impossible. A prominent Whig paper stated the situation clearly: "Our administration will disown all participation in it as an infraction of right, justice and good faith, but the design appeals with almost irresistible power to the great heart of the nation, and enlists the interests of the masses."³⁵

In spite of much opposition the administration showed genuine good faith in its earnest endeavors to bring the filibusters to punishment. The *Creole* was confiscated, and Ewing, Secretary of the Interior, wrote to the District Attorney at New Orleans: "It is the earnest desire of the President that all leaders engaged in organizing and setting on foot the late expedition against Cuba shall be brought to trial and punishment. It is a matter in which the good faith of the nation is implicated and it will not do to confine the retribution of justice to an obscure and worthless foreigner and suffer our own citizens who know the law which they have violated to escape unpunished.

"These men have worked great mischief. They have done

³⁴ Copia de un despacho dirigido al ministro Español en Washington y Circulado a los representantes de España en los Cortes de Europa, Madrid, June 23, 1850. *Boletín del Archivo Nacional*, 1906, p. 63.

³⁵ New Orleans *Bee*, May 14, 1850.

whatsoever they could to bring the laws into disrepute. They have disturbed our relations with a foreign power, with whom we desire peace and commerce, and they have sacrificed the lives of many of their ignorant and unreflecting fellow citizens who confided in them and followed their fortunes. Theirs, in its consequence, at least, is no common crime—and more than ordinary care should be taken to punish it and to prevent its recurrence in the future.”³⁶

In spite of the evident good faith of the administration, public opinion proved too strong to allow any convictions. Lopez was arrested at Savannah and released for lack of evidence. Everywhere he was received as a hero. His achievement in capturing Cardenas was considered only a foretaste of greater successes. He arrived at New Orleans on June 7, 1850, ready for a new enterprise.³⁷ At the preliminary hearing before the commissioner, the investigation was much hampered by the refusal of practically all the witnesses to answer important questions on the ground that they would incriminate themselves. To some direct questions they answered that their sense of honor forbade injuring those who had confided in them. When pressed they denied all knowledge.³⁸ In spite of these difficulties the Grand Jury at New Orleans found true bills against sixteen of the leaders.³⁹ Ex-Senator Henderson

³⁶ Ewing, Secretary of Interior, to Logan Hunton, June 10, 1850, Confidential, original Mss., Dept. of Interior.

³⁷ New Orleans *Bee*, June 8, 1850. Lopez is thus described: “Gen. Lopez has an exceedingly prepossessing appearance. He is apparently about fifty years of age. His figure is compact and well set. His face which is dark olive, and of the Spanish cast, is strikingly handsome, expressive of both intelligence and energy. His full dark eyes, firm, well-formed mouth, and erect head, crowned with iron grey hair, fix the attention and convince you that he is no ordinary man. Unless we are greatly mistaken in the impression we have formed of him, he will again be heard of in some new attempt to revolutionize Cuba. He certainly does not look like a man easily disheartened.” *Mobile Tribune*, quoted N. O. *Bee*, June 3, 1850.

³⁸ N. O. *Bee*, June 3-June 18, 1850. “The Cuba State Trials”—*Dem. Review*, 1852.

³⁹ Copy of Report of Logan Hunton to Secretary of State Webster regarding state of prosecutions, New Orleans, Oct. 2, 1850. Mss. Dept. of Interior.

The following had been indicted: Narciso Lopez, Theodore O’Hara, John F. Pickett, R. Hayden, Chatham R. Wheat, Thomas T. Hawkins, W. H. Bell, N. J. Bunce, Peter Smith, and A. J. Gonzales (these nine

was selected for trial on the ground that he had helped to organize the expedition. Although the charge of the judge was uniformly favorable to the prosecution, three successive juries were divided and failed to convict. The prosecution of the other fifteen was then dropped. Similar efforts to secure conviction of those connected with the expedition failed in New York and Ohio. The juries seemed to interpret the law as well as to estimate the facts which were clearly against the prisoners. The action of these juries furnished the Captain General of Cuba a text to compare jury trials with those before military tribunals to the disadvantage of the former, and many Americans regarded these trials with misgivings as a sign of a widespread lawlessness, while others were pleased at the evidences of what they regarded as a love of liberty.⁴⁰

The administration of President Taylor, which was to close so soon with the unexpected death of the old hero on July 9, had to deal with one delicate and important problem growing out of the Cardenas expedition. It will be remembered that the *Susan Loud* had proceeded towards Contoy after transshipping the men, and that the *Georgiana* had been left at the island in Mexican waters to carry back the thirty-nine men who refused to accompany the *Creole*. On May 18th the two sailing vessels were seized by the *Pizarro* and *Habanero*, and the fifty-two men on board were taken to Havana for trial, the vessels following with prize crews^{40a}. The American consul

last being either colonels or majors in the expedition), L. J. Sigur, editor of the *Delta*, Donahen Augusten, militia general and commander of a military company or regiment called the 'Legion,' John A. Quitman, Cotesworth Pinckney Smith, Judge of the Supreme Court of Mississippi, John Henderson, former U. S. Senator, and J. L. O'Sullivan, formerly editor of the *Democratic Review*.

⁴⁰ The Cuban State Trials, *Democratic Review*. 1852.

The indictment and arrest of Governor Quitman of Mississippi created the greatest excitement. Governor Quitman at first threatened to use the militia to defend the threatened sovereignty of the State of Mississippi, but finally resigned and allowed himself to be arrested. He was released on bail, Feb. 7, 1851, and when the third trial of General Henderson failed through the inability of the jury to reach a decision, all the cases were dismissed. Claiborne's "Quitman," II, 75, 6.

^{40a} The accounts by Hardy and O. D. D. O. do not mention the arrival of the *Susan Loud* at Contoy before the departure of the *Creole*. But the Captain General reported that both vessels were captured at Contoy forty-eight hours after the departure of the *Creole*. El Conde de

✓ and the captain of the sloop of war, *Albany*, demanded the release of the prisoners, on the ground that they were captured in neutral waters. On the refusal of this demand, a special commissioner was sent by the state department to emphasize the previous demand, and to state that the President would regard the punishment of the prisoners as an outrage.⁴¹

With regard to the prisoners, Secretary of State Clayton argued that even an intention to commit a crime did not constitute a crime and directed the American commissioner at Havana to "warn" the Captain General "in the most friendly manner and in the true spirit of ancient treaties, that if he unjustly shed one drop of American blood at that exciting period it might cost the two countries a sanguinary war."⁴² Clayton was anxious that the prisoners should be remitted by the Captain General to the United States "to encounter a punishment, which, if they are honorable men, will be worse than any he could inflict, in the indignant frowns and denunciations of good men in their own country."

The American minister at Madrid was also instructed to Alcoy al Mtro. de Estado, Habana, May 27 de 1850. Unpublished Mss. Havana Archives.

⁴¹House Ex. Doc. 83, 32 Cong.; 1 Sess. p. 45.

The *London Times* commented on the Contoy Prisoners: "They incurred the guilt and liabilities of piracy at the moment they put to sea on their errand of pillage; and they were amenable to justice according to the laws of nations at any period of their expedition, subject to no other condition than the legal proof of their guilty intent." It is needless to say that so extreme a view would find little to sustain it in International Law. *Times*, July 19, 1850.

⁴²J. J. Crittenden wrote Clayton, June 22, 1850, Clayton Mss. Library of Congress: "You have had an arduous time, indeed, in the number and importance of the foreign difficulties and questions that have been thrown upon you. But you have no cause to regret these labours. You have performed them with a signal success and ability, that cannot fail to be rewarded with the public applause. The attitude you have taken on the Cuban affair is exactly the right one—popular, proud and national—brandishing the laws of the land over the heads of Lopez and his lawless followers, and at the same time giving Spain to be warned that she is to shed no drop of American blood *unjustly* or in revenge."

↓ In a letter dated July 9, 1850, the Captain General complained bitterly to his home government of what he deemed the deliberate effort of Secretary Clayton to bring on a war between the United States and Spain. (Unpublished Mss. Havana.)

carry the protest of the American government directly to the Spanish ministry. The claim of the American minister that the Contoy prisoners were chiefly bona fide passengers to California seems very much open to question,⁴³ but he stood on firmer ground when he protested against the right of Spain to arrest violators of an American law on neutral territory any more than on American territory. Señor Pidal, the Spanish Minister of State, did not attempt to quote any precedents for his position, but argued that the moment any such band of men left American territory, they became pirates, without any nationality. If Spain had to wait until such a force actually landed in Cuba her difficulties would be largely increased, and she would suffer great losses unnecessarily. It was impossible for her to yield to the demand of the United States.⁴⁴

While the negotiations were in progress, the Contoy prisoners were tried by the maritime court, after some dispute with Captain General Alcoy with regard to jurisdiction. The maritime court was certainly more lenient than the Captain General would have been, and all but three were found not guilty on the ground that they were deceived as to the true object of the expedition. The master of the *Georgiana* and the mates of the two vessels were sentenced to long terms of penal servitude in the African prison at Ceuta, but owing to the American demands were pardoned and sent back to the United States from Cadiz, November 16, 1850, a notable diplomatic victory for Secretary Clayton.

It seemed to be the policy of Webster, who now became Secretary of State, to try to conciliate Spain, and the two sailing vessels were accordingly confiscated by a Spanish prize court, although it was in time of peace, without any serious protest from the state department.⁴⁵

⁴³ Chadwick, 233, 234, adopts the view that those found "not guilty" were bona fide passengers to Charges. With this view the Captain General agreed. (Letter to minister of State, June 9, 1850, Unpublished Mss. Havana). Hardy and O. D. D. O. give the impression that they had intended to go to Cuba, and had lost their courage.

⁴⁴ Mr. Barringer, minister at Madrid to Mr. Clayton, Secretary of State, Aug. 7, 1850, House Ex. Doc. 83, 32 Cong. 1 Sess.

⁴⁵ House Ex. Doc. 83, 32 Cong. 1 Sess. The American position was later stated clearly (Senate Resolution, June 16, 1858, quoted by Chadwick, page 236): "American vessels on the high seas, in time of peace, bearing the American flag, remain under the jurisdiction of the country

In Cuba the immediate result of the expedition was the appointment of a Captain General of great energy and ability, Don Jose de la Concha, to succeed Roncali. Concha had been commander of the Spanish cavalry. He received his appointment in September and thus had two months to plan his policies before arriving in the island November 10. The new Captain General frankly expressed at the beginning his ideal: "A government of force" to make certain peace and security, and at the same time "a government of justice which would permit no abuse." It was to be a benevolent despotism. Instead of indefinite fees, he demanded fixed incomes for government officials, that he might be able to eradicate corruption. But all reforms, as in the days of the Roman proconsuls, must be from above.

In addition to his appointment of Concha, the Duke of Valencia, as Prime Minister, took immediate steps to increase the defensive power of the island. At great expense and without any delay troops were organized and sent to Cuba. These were made up of four new battalions of infantry, four squadrons of cavalry, a battery of light artillery for use in the mountains, and a company of working men to act as sappers. In addition to this he opened a line of four vessels between Cadiz and Havana to keep Spain in constant communication with the island.⁴⁶

to which they belong, and therefore, any visitation, molestation, or detention of such vessel by force, or by the exhibition of force, on the part of a foreign power, is in derogation of the sovereignty of the United States."

Torrente believes (I, 49) that war with Spain would have resulted if Clayton had remained Secretary of State.

⁴⁶Concha, op. cit. 134-136; 174, 201.

These measures were due to the recommendations of Roncali to the Minister of State, June 9, 1850, Unpublished Mss. Havana.

CHAPTER VI

THE CLEOPATRA AND THE PAMPERO

Those who knew him had been entirely correct in characterizing Lopez as a man not easily disheartened. The failure of his attempt in the summer only spurred him on, and in November, 1850, we find Lopez actively and hopefully engaged at New Orleans in preparations for a new expedition. All the friends of the Cuban adventurer took special pride in carrying on their plans at the very time that they were under indictment for the previous offence. The new expedition was to sail from the coast of Georgia where the supplies were being collected, though the steamer was to be secured at New Orleans. One could be had for \$25,000, but only half the money had at that time been collected. The promoters of the new scheme argued that the expedition to Cardenas had served to arouse the expectations of the Cubans and to make the new landing almost sure of success. Lack of money was the great difficulty. General Henderson wrote to Claiborne: "I need not tell you how much I desire to see him move again, and it is more useless to tell you also how wholly unable I am to assist him to make this move. With my limited means, I am under the extremest burdens from my endeavors on the former occasion. Indeed I find my cash advances for the first experiment was over half of all the cash advanced to the enterprise, and all my present means and energies are exhausted in bringing up the arrearages. Yet I still believe in the importance, the morality and the probability of the enterprise; and I believe it is one the South should steadfastly cherish and promote. I feel it more especially incumbent on us who have once failed to retrieve ourselves from so much of the opprobrium and reproach as the defeat has cast upon us. For we all know that, could we succeed, we should win all those triumphs which success in such enterprises never fails to command. And would not such triumph be glorious? . . . I believe you yield equal consideration to the importance of this subject as I do; and, as a Southern question, I do

not think, when properly viewed, its magnitude can be overestimated."¹

Preparations during the fall and winter centered around Savannah, where many recruits were gathered. The plans were constantly modified, and as constantly revealed to the Spanish Minister through a spy named Burtnett, who also called himself Burnham and Duncan Smith.

Burnham gained the entire confidence of the filibusters, and they revealed their plans. They were to assemble at a point on the coast of Florida and give out rumors of an attack on the south coast of Cuba. While the Spaniards were expecting them in that direction, eight or ten small expeditions would sally out against various points on the north coast. Thus Cuba would rise at once and the conflagration would be so widespread that the Spaniards would not know where to turn. Already the plotters thought they could depend on 14,000 Cubans. They considered the opportunity greatest in the West. The invasions were to take place at points where the leader of each party was known and had friends. The Spanish troops were regarded as highly dissatisfied. Burnham learned that many leading southern gentlemen had supplied money. Some of the bonds of the Revolutionary government had sold at forty cents on the dollar. Thousands of rifles had already been purchased and placed at convenient places to be removed at a

¹ Claiborne's "Quitman" II, 69.

The whole movement had come to be considered Southern, as was clearly shown when the prosecutions against those indicted in 1850 were dropped.

The New Orleans newspapers published the following telegram from Natchez, dated March 8, 1851: "So great was the joyful excitement in Natchez last night on the termination of the Cuban humbug in your city, that the night was made voiceful with the roar of cannon. Fifteen guns were fired for Quitman and fifteen for (the) Southern States. Many persons pulled off their stockings (sic) for cartridges, and fired several for mankind in general."

In March, 1851, Henry Clay visited Havana and was entertained by Captain General Concha. Clay told the Captain General that he regarded filibustering expeditions as foodhardy but not always avoidable. He frankly acknowledged the great strategic importance of Cuba to the United States, and prophesied that by peaceful means it would some day be acquired from Spain. This interesting conversation was reported in detail to his home government by Concha, March 31, 1851. (Unpublished Mss. Havana.)

moment's notice. Estates in the South had been mortgaged that the owners might share in the future wealth of broad plantations well stocked with negroes. Having discovered these plans, Doctor Burnham promptly disclosed them to his employers, "knowing," as he piously said, "that no matter what might be the result, so far as I was personally concerned, I had justice and right on my side."

The first consignment of arms for the new expedition was to sail from New York in the steamer *Cleopatra*, and all the plans were arranged in detail with every chance of success, for experience had taught Lopez and his lieutenants the value of secrecy and caution. On a certain Wednesday evening in April 1851, the chartered sloop *William Roe* was to leave South Amboy, while the steamer *Nahantee* was to start from the foot of Eighteenth Street, New York. The *Cleopatra* was to wait just outside quarantine, to be distinguished by three lights hung one above the other on her stern pole. The *William Roe* was to await off Sandy Hook burning as a signal a blue light every five minutes until she saw a similar signal in answer. The *Cleopatra*, awaiting off quarantine, was to make the excuse that her captain had been called on shore on business at the last moment. All these plans were virtuously recounted to the Spanish Consul and to the government officials.

Burnham would have preferred a dramatic close to the whole incident, but the Federal government was satisfied to detain the schooner at South Amboy on a technical flaw in her papers. The crew of the *Cleopatra* unfortunately got drunk, and, not getting away in time, she too was detained on a writ of attachment for \$3,000 due to her previous owner for repairs. Provisions on board the steamer were mortgaged to pay the debt, but on the evening of the twenty-sixth all the principal parties implicated were arrested.² On the testimony of Burnham, John L. O'Sullivan, Captain Lewis and Louis Schlessinger were indicted by the Grand Jury, but all efforts at conviction failed owing to mistrial, and the matter was dropped.³

² The *Boletin del Archivo Nacional*, 1906, contained the Spanish version as written by Burnnett, while what seems to be an English translation is edited by L. M. Perez in the Reports of the Southern Historical Association, X, 346 et seq.

³ Late Cuba State Trials, *Democratic Review*, April, 1852.

The *Cleopatra* and provisions were not confiscated, but being returned

On April 25 President Fillmore issued a proclamation which was even more severe than President Taylor's of the previous year. It stated that there was reason to believe that an expedition was preparing, that the leaders were foreigners abusing the hospitality of the United States, and that such expeditions could only be regarded as "adventures for condemnation of the civilized world." Those who violated our neutrality laws would therefore not only make themselves subject to the penalties of our own law but would "forfeit their claim to the protection of this government, or any interference on their behalf no matter to what extremities they may be reduced in consequence of their illegal conduct."⁴

Although the *Cleopatra* expedition had ended in complete failure, the attempt was followed by interesting events in the island of Cuba. The new Captain General was convinced that a landing was sure to be effected sooner or later and made preparations accordingly, distributing his forces with the greatest care.⁵ His determination was expressed in the following proclamation to the Governors and Lieutenant Governors: "It has come to the knowledge of the Government that a new incursion of pirates is preparing, similar to the one which took place at Cardenas during the last year. It is proposed, without doubt, as it was then, to sack defenceless towns and to disturb the order which reigns in this beautiful part of the Spanish monarchy. But the loyalty of its inhabitants, the valor and discipline of the troops and the measures taken by the government, are the surest guaranty that its destruction will follow immediately the news of its disembarkation. You must, then, above all see to it that the news of this invasion produces no alarm in the district which you command.

"To exterminate the pirates, whatever may be their number, it is not necessary to have recourse to extraordinary means; the ordinary means on which the government can count are enough and even more than enough. Any act, on the other hand, which is unusual would produce anxiety and uneasiness among the peaceful inhabitants; it might cause, perhaps, an

by the government officials, were resold and became the basis of a new expedition. (Iznaga, quoted by Morales, 272.)

⁴ Moore, Digest of International law. III, 788, Richardson's Messages, V, III.

⁵ Concha, 143.

interruption of business, and would thus occasion a real and important loss for public and private interests. It is necessary, therefore to avoid any measures which may remove from the towns of that district the confidence and sense of security which the government inspires. The actual situation, however, imposes on the authorities the double duty to cause order to reign, and not to appear to obtain it by unaccustomed means which are only expedient when circumstances are really dangerous. And this double object will be achieved if that vigilance, activity and prudence are in evidence on which I should be able to count from you. But you must not forget that in these circumstances one of the most important duties of the authorities is to quiet minds, and hush suspicions, to take care, finally, that not for a single instant there should be disturbed that harmony which now more than ever ought to reign among the inhabitants of the island. Working to this end, I have the most entire confidence that this event will end fortunately, making certain the peace which the island needs to continue on the path of prosperity which it has so far followed.”⁸

“The chief anxiety of the Governor General concerned the prosperous city of Puerto Principe. Young men in the city were in communication with Lopez, and public opinion was bitter on account of the suppression of the ancient Audiencia or Parliament of the city. Even the women were selling their jewels to aid the rebellion. *

When things were in this state at Puerto Principe, the Captain General received a petition from the city council asking that their Audiencia be not taken away. This petition was dated one month previous to the date on which it was sent to the Captain General. Evidently, as it seemed to him, they had dared to send the petition to Spain without asking his consent and had even waited a month before sending it to him so as to make sure of getting their side of the case in first. What astonished Concha most was that the commanding general who was supposed to represent military discipline in the district expressed great satisfaction in joining his petition to theirs. Such a show of independent spirit was peculiarly pleasing to Concha. It was a welcome opportunity, as he tells us himself, to show his power. He immediately met the petition, which seems to have been entirely respectful, by suspending the city ✓

⁸ Concha, 219.

council and dismissing the commanding general. In this course he felt particularly justified since he had reason to believe that many members of the council were thoroughly disaffected.

1/5^N The new commanding general, Don Jose Lemery was a man after Concha's own heart. Active and shrewd he had none of that pride in local institutions or local government which had wrecked the career of his predecessor.

"I charge you most earnestly," said Concha to his new lieutenant, "along with active zeal and decided energy, to also use that judgment, that caution, that politeness and prudent courage which are the only means by which an absolute authority can master circumstances, without giving occasion for unnecessary quarrels or complaints founded in an excess of that very energy which when prudently joined (to these qualities) and cautiously directed, produces the result which ought to be its object, namely to frustrate the realization of the criminal purposes of Her Majesty's enemies and thus to avoid the necessity of exemplary punishments, always lamentable, but in the last resort inevitable."⁷

For a little while the active measures of Concha in suppressing all evidences of discontent thoroughly frightened the secret insurgents. But in spite of Lemery's care inflammatory broadsides soon began again to appear. Lemery now thought it time to display that "prudent energy" which had been enjoined upon him. One night he ordered the arrest of sixteen prominent citizens under suspicion of disloyalty. The majority of these were members of the old Ayuntamiento. Joaquin Aguero and one other succeeded in making their escape outside of the city, where Aguero became the leader of the first active Cuban movement. He encamped and entrenched himself on a high hill where he was joined by other fugitives to the number of

⁷ (1) Concha, op. cit. 205, 6, 7, 8.

(2) Concha, Havana, April 1, 1851. Letter directed "Al Sr. Presidente del Consejo de Ministros"—*Boletin*, IV, 4, (66).

(3) Concha, Havana, July 21, 1851. "Al Excmo. Señor Presidente del Consejo de Ministros," *Boletin*, IV, 81.

(4) Concha, Havana, Aug. 1, 1851. "Al Excmo. Sr. Ministro de la Gobernacion del Reino," *Boletin*, IV, 83.

Very clear evidence that Lopez had much to justify his hopes appears in the letter of Concha, dated July 21. In this he says: "The desire of the inhabitants for annexation or independence already amounts to fanaticism."

fifty. With this body, on July 7, Agüero proceeded to attack Las Tunas. The Spanish forces showed great activity. Lemery was able to disperse without bloodshed a party of insurgents which was gathering in the suburbs of Santa Cruz. On the other side General Manzana, from the town of Cuba, made a remarkable forced march of forty hours through a pouring rain and, reaching Las Tunas, saved it from any further danger. Agüero was captured and his remaining followers were driven to hide themselves where they could.

The plot of Agüero spread to other parts of the island but, being so quickly put down, it was only in Trinidad that a few young men under leadership of Armenteros appeared in open rebellion. Passing from farm to farm they gathered about fifty horses. Immediately the Governor of Trinidad, and the Lieutenant Governors of Villa Clara and Cienfuegos marched out against them. Surrounded on all sides they had no other alternative than to hide themselves in a thickly wooded mountain, where they had to abandon their horses. Without even a show of resistance, the majority were captured, while some few managed to make good their escape to their houses. The military court to try the prisoners was placed under Carlos Vargas. Concha says that from this time on the inhabitants of the central region remained "blindly loyal to the Government."⁸

Late in July, in spite of careful censorship, news began to arrive in New Orleans of successful risings in Cuba. All stories of failure were credited to Spanish sources, and the press which had tended to become somewhat critical of López became again optimistic. Great public meetings were held. Proclamations of Cuban liberty were read. \$50,000 were raised to show the sincerity of this movement, and men thronged to enlist. These men were evidently of a higher average class and actuated by more worthy motives than in any of the previous expeditions. Cuban liberty was now the cry,—for the Americans of 1850 were easily aroused by any effort sincerely made to throw off

⁸My sources for this movement are:

- (1) Concha, *op. cit.* 209.
- (2) Torrente, *op. cit.* I, 53, 54.
- (3) Zaragoza, *op. cit.* I, 620 ff.
- (4) *New Orleans Bee*, July 23, 1851.
- (5) Vidal Morales, *op. cit.* 275 ff. especially, 300, 1.

what they regarded as the shackles of despotism. Of course, the old desire to save Cuba to the cause of slavery was curiously mixed with a sincere enthusiasm for political liberty. It is even said that Garibaldi, then in the United States, was approached and urged to act as leader. Lopez and Sigur were the centers of attraction in New Orleans.⁹ It is no wonder that the officer of the custom house did not feel himself called on to make extraordinary exertions, and the steamer *Pampero* of about 500 tons burthen was bought and equipped and made ready to carry the first contingent of the new expedition without serious opposition. To Lopez and his chief lieutenants all difficulties seemed now overcome and success within reach.¹⁰

⁹ As to Sigur one witness says: "Sigur era entonces el hombre mas importante de N. Orleans. En materia de vida o muerte, no se podian obtener cinco minutos de conversacion con el, tan precioso era su tiempo. No podia andar por las calles sin ser acometido en cada esquina por media docena de personas que le ofrecian levantar companias o regimientos para la causa Cubana." (Boletin—1904, pp. 19.)

¹⁰ My chief authorities are:

- (1) New Orleans' Papers, July 24, 1851-Aug. 2, 1851. Especially *Bee*, July 24.
- (2) Colonel Haynes Memorial, Cong. *Globe*, XXIV, 217.
- (3) Iznaga, in Morales, op. cit. 273.
- ✓ (4) Correspondence of Freret, collector of customs, with the Secretary of the Treasury. (Pamphlet, New York Public Library.)

Freret was severely blamed and finally dismissed for incompetence on account of the *Pampero* affair.

The answer of the Department to the excuses of Freret was dated Aug. 14: "The Department considers that under its previous instructions you had full authority to act in a case like that of the "*Pampero*," where the object of the parties was so obvious and notorious as being connected with an illegal attempt against the territories of a friendly power. It is of course impracticable for the Department to give special instructions to meet every case of the kind which may occur, but you must exercise a sound discretion in detaining vessels which you may think are engaged in any unlawful expedition, and about departing from your district. . . . The Department considers that there can be no real difficulty in discriminating between parties embarking as bona fide passengers for the Pacific Via the Isthmus, and those who assume to be such and go in transient and frequently unsuitable vessels, but who are really destined to act as an armed expedition against the citizens or territories of a friendly power.

You are again requested and instructed to keep a vigilant lookout for any such unlawful expedition, and to use all the means in your power to check and break them up."

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CHAPTER VII
THE LAST ATTEMPT

On the morning of Sunday August 3^{1a} at daybreak, the steamer *Pampero* sailed from the foot of Lafayette Street, New Orleans. An enthusiastic crowd was there to speed the parting adventurers and the air rang with joyful shouts from shore and from the ship. The *Pampero* was towed down the river to Balize where the difficulties of the filibusters began. It was found that the ship was too crowded to put to sea. In fact Captain Lewis refused to go farther until some of the eager adventurers were left behind. One hundred men were to be denied the boon of accompanying the expedition. The companies were assembled and each captain selected the men who seemed least fitted for so arduous an enterprise. A very few chose voluntarily to be left behind. That night they were placed on shore, but in the morning it was discovered that many had come back on board and the situation was almost as bad as ever. Colonel Downman urged and entreated, but they said they had started for Cuba and intended to get there. In the meantime a tug had arrived with the arms and ammunition and all were busy transshipping these to the *Pampero*. This work sufficiently discouraged some, so that a few were persuaded to return, and Captain Jackson's whole company, by dint of force and persuasion, went back to New Orleans, promising to come in the next expedition; for the *Pampero* was to be only a forerunner of a large invasion. One day was given to drill and organization. At sunset on the fifth the *Pampero* was towed over the bar and started on her journey of adventure. Of these sons of Anglo Saxon rovers who sailed light heartedly out upon the blue waters of the Gulf, the majority were to suffer incredible hardships under a tropical sun and to leave their bones in a land whose history,

^{1a} Schlesinger, *Dem. Rev.* XXI, IX, gives Aug. 2. Aug. 3 is given by the account in *Boletin*, Havana, 1904, and President Fillmore, *Message*, Dec. 2, 1851.

since the days of the Great Genoese, had been one endless repetition of just such bloody tragedies.

Their numbers were little more than 400.¹ The Commander-in chief was of course General Lopez, while in his staff were foreign officers of distinction who had fought and lost in the battles for freedom of the old world. The chief of staff was the Hungarian General, Pragay, who was accompanied by Colonel Blumenthal, Major Louis Schlesinger and other Hungarian officers. The engineers were Cubans and Hungarians, while a few Germans accompanied the expedition without any special leader. The staff included two surgeons who were to do good service to Spanish as well as to American wounded.

The Cuban company, under the command of Ildefonso Oberto, numbered 44 men. The Americans were divided into two battalions, of 232 and 122 men each. The first battalion was commanded by Colonel Downman, a veteran of the Mexican war and a good disciplinarian. Respected by his men and an active and skilled officer, his death in the first engagement was an irreparable loss. The Lieutenant-Colonel of the battalion was William Scott Haynes of Tennessee. Robert Ellis commanded the so-called guards of Sigur; this company of 51 men had, as its lieutenants, Breckenridge, Labrizan and McDonald. The four other companies of this battalion were under the command of Captains John Johnson, Brigham, Gotay, and William H. Stewart.

The second battalion was designed to serve the artillery which was to be embarked at St. John's on the coast of Cuba. ✓ Its commander, Colonel William L. Crittenden, a nephew of the Attorney General of the United States, had been educated at West Point and had served in the Mexican War with distinction. At the time of the expedition he was an officer of the Custom House at New Orleans.² His battalion was divided into three companies under Captains Kelly, James Sanders, and Victor Kerr, which companies contained 40, 49, and 18 men respectively.

¹ The account in the *Boletin*, Havana, 1904, gives the number as 434. Schlesinger in *Dem. Review*, XXXI, No. IX, 216, gives the number at "a trifle over 400."

² Schlesinger states, *Dem. Review*, XXI, 213, that Crittenden gave information to Lopez as to the movements of the Custom House officials which materially aided in the escape of the *Pampero*.

The first two days were entirely uneventful. There being only one small stove, it was difficult to cook the rations which were given out, but Colonel Downman arranged the hours so that there should be as little conflict as possible. Lopez and his staff took only one cooked meal a day. On the seventh there appeared the smoke of a vessel which seemed to be pursuing the *Pampero*. The filibusters changed their course, but in the morning the vessel was still in sight. Cartridges were given out and all stood ready to repel an attack. Fortunately, about nine in the morning the strange steamer seemed to be satisfied that it had mistaken the character of the *Pampero*. In any case, it changed its course and was soon lost to view. On the tenth a pilot was picked up and the expedition reached Key West. The filibusters had been dreading to find war vessels stationed at Key West, so the precaution was taken of hiding all the men below. Great was the rejoicing to find port and barracks both empty. It seemed an omen of success. The soldiers poured out on deck to enjoy what for many was to be their last day as Americans and within the jurisdiction of their native land. But gloomy thoughts were absent. The hospitable inhabitants came on board in crowds bringing champagne and other luxuries. Healths were drunk and good cheer reigned supreme. Rumor had it that three towns were in insurrection and that Cuba was ready for the attack which would make her free. The original intention had been to proceed to the St. John's river and there take the artillery which had been stored away. But the news from Cuba changed all. If the island was in insurrection, rapidity was urgent; before Spain could quell the disturbances she should in another quarter have a more formidable enemy to meet. Very probably other considerations had weight too. The St. John's River was very far away, and the *Pampero* might be intercepted at any moment. Even if she entered the river, it was not easy to guarantee that she would have a chance to sail out. Then, too, in Cuba rapidity of movement would be essential. The troops must reach the mountains and must do it without the delay which artillery would occasion. The roads were execrable, and so small a force could not hope to lay siege to a town. On the other hand, the American soldiers were wonderful rifle shots. In that weapon must lie the chief dependence of the filibusters. In any case, the *Pampero* was only

a preliminary advance guard and, if they could hold their own, the men at New Orleans who were already eager to start would soon come with artillery and other equipment. Furthermore, not only did Spain and the United States have vessels watching for the *Pampero*, but France and England were soon likely to issue like orders.

For these reasons it was decided to go directly by the shortest route to Cuba. On the evening of the tenth the little force bade farewell to their friends at Key West. Captain Lewis raised anchor and the *Pampero*, amid loud huzzahs, directed her prow towards the Cuban coast. At daybreak land was clearly visible, and by nine o'clock it was found that they were within ten miles of the Morro at Havana; two vessels had started in pursuit; but, changing her course, the light speedy *Pampero* had soon left these behind. Once again the *Pampero* turned toward the island and taking two men from a schooner to act as pilots, arrived off Bahia Honda at eight o'clock in the evening, (Aug. 11, 1851). The mate of the *Pampero* was sent to reconnoitre, but soon came back to say that his boat had been fired upon and that the fort seemed too well manned to make a landing at that place practicable. Lopez now decided to make the landing at Morillo, a short distance to the west of Bahia Honda. When about a mile from the shore, the *Pampero* grounded, and it became necessary to disembark in small boats. The first boatload contained Colonel Downman and a detachment under Captain Gotay. The Spanish patrol on the shore fired but did no damage, though a bullet passed through the cap of a lieutenant. The first troops to land succeeded in getting possession of two large flat boats, and with these all the troops were landed at daybreak. The men were permitted to lie down for two hours, but sleep was impossible on account of the swarms of mosquitoes.

In the meantime information of these movements had not failed to reach the alert Concha at Havana. The recent disturbances in the Central Department, even aside from the stream of proclamations and the open announcements in the American papers, would have been sufficient to warn the governor of Cuba of his danger. He was not surprised on the night of August 11 to receive word from the Captain of the Port that two American vessels of suspicious character had appeared off the mouth of the harbor. One had seemed to be

an American war vessel. The second and more suspicious of the two stopped and seemed to hesitate, finally steaming away to the northwest. Nothing more concerning the strange vessels was heard by the Captain General until half past two in the morning when a messenger arrived from Mariel, a fort to the west of Havana. The Spanish frigate *Esperanza* had put in to Mariel to report having seen a steamer loaded with men. The steamer had carefully avoided the *Esperanza*, so that the Captain had been unable to ascertain her exact character. Concha had now no doubts as to the true character of the strange steamer. Word was sent out immediately to make the *Pizarro* ready to carry troops, and at seven-thirty General Don Manuel Ena with 750 men was already embarked and ready to sail. The steamer had in tow a schooner which had been made ready previously to carry thirty horses.

Concha had been led from intercepted letters and other information in his possession to expect the hostile force to land at Mantua on the extreme western point of the island. It seemed to him particularly suited to the filibusters' purpose since its nearness to New Orleans would make it an ideal point on which to await reenforcements. Roads and means of communication to Mantua were so bad as to make it almost unapproachable from the land side. The wealth of the district farther east had made it necessary to station all the troops of Colonel Elizalde at Pinar del Rio, leaving Mantua without any garrison at all.

Fearing for Mantua, the Captain General was on the point of sending the *Pizarro* to the extreme west, when the Captain of the schooner which Lopez had detained arrived with news of the true direction which the filibusters had taken. The situation particularly pleased the Captain General. It was probable that Lopez would march by way of the mountains in the general direction of the Capital. Colonel Morales was therefore sent by rail to Gunajay where 400 men were soon collected to meet the enemy from in front. General Ena was to land at Bahia Honda and from there cooperate with Colonel Elizalde, who advancing from Pinar del Rio in the southwest would crush the enemy whose escape to the sea would be effectually barred by Ena. The command of the coast at Bahia Honda would also effectually cut off the large reenforcements which were now the chief danger. The 400 men at Gunajay would hold

the passes in front of the enemy. Thus Lopez and his men were virtually surrounded almost as soon as they landed.³

Ignorant of these dangers, the filibusters continued their work of disembarkation. By nine o'clock all the arms and provisions were safely landed, and Lopez was ready to take his march to Las Pozas, a village ten miles away.⁴ There were no carts at the landing place, and it seemed necessary to leave the provisions and to send back for them as soon as carts could be procured. Lopez was anxious to march on with the whole force, but General Pragay persuaded him to detach Crittenden's 120 men to guard and bring up the provisions and arms. By half after nine the larger column was on its way, and by a fairly rapid march reached Las Pozas at twelve-thirty. The march in the heat of the day, made by men who had not slept or eaten since the day before, was a fitting introduction to the hardships of a filibuster's career. Guards were stationed at various points in the village and carts were sent back to Crittenden to bring the arms and ammunition. The carts, under the escort of five members of the Cuban company, had gone about half way to the landing place when they were attacked by a crowd of peasants. These cut loose the oxen and dispersed the escort; but Lieutenant James of Crittenden's force came up at this time and the negro drivers found other oxen, so that all were able to join Crittenden. Thus, on the morning of the 13th, Crittenden started slowly to join Lopez. The two carts drawn by a single yoke of oxen each were heavily overloaded and the journey was necessarily slow and painful.

In the meantime interesting events were taking place at Las Pozas where was Lopez with his 325 men. Having arrived about noon on the 12th, the tired soldiers had an opportunity to eat and drink. Strict orders were given against any one taking property without paying for it. Guards were stationed at the instance of General Pragay to guard the stores and to prevent drunkenness. The very best order prevailed. On the night of the 12th, while Crittenden was awaiting the ox carts at Morrillo, Lopez and his men slept on their arms

³Concha, *Memorias*, 210, 211.

⁴The *Pampero* having landed her force at El Morro returned by way of Key West, intending to go to Jacksonville and there embark new forces under General Gonzales. (*L'Abeille de la Nouvelle Orleans*, Aug. 30, 1851.)

ready for the attack which was soon sure to come. In the morning, while some of the men were cooking their rations and others were bathing in a small creek, the alarm was given. The enemy had attacked and routed the outposts and were already within 200 yards of the village. The companies were quickly formed, and the company of Johnson on the left withstood the first Spanish attack until he was reinforced by Captain Stewart and the Cubans under Oberto. A division of the enemy were seen to be stealing around the right to make a flank attack from the cornfields. Captain Ellis occupied a hill on that side from which he could guard against this attack with ease. The center was formed by Captains Brigham and Gotay. The firing was now brisk along the whole line, and the Spaniards gradually fell back while the American line advanced. Reinforced, the Spaniards charged again on the advantageous American position, but were hurled back with severe loss. One body only, occupying the road to Las Pozas, maintained their position. On these Colonel Downman charged with fifty men, enough to cover the road. The Spanish line held until the filibusters' bayonets were within a few feet, and then fled. But Colonel Downman allowed the pursuit to go too far. His small number of men were in turn charged and defeated, he and Captain Oberto being killed.⁵ On the whole the Spanish firing was too high to be effective while the Americans kept up the reputation of their revolutionary forefathers for a deadly aim. The company of Ellis which was not needed longer to cover the right, since the enemy had given up their flanking movement, was now called to the front to make sure of the road where Colonel Downman had charged and fallen. But the enemy did not press their late advantage, the whole force retiring from the field in good order and leaving the filibusters in control of Las Pozas.

The whole battle had lasted two hours under a boiling sun,

⁵ Schlesinger, *Dem. Review*, XXXI, 357, gives the forces which were opposed at Las Pozas at 800 Spaniards and 275 Americans; Concha, *Memorias*, 213, gives the Spanish forces at 400, and the Americans at 350. Probably 400 Spaniards and 325 Americans actually engaged is approximately correct. Schlesinger very severely criticizes the Americans for their unwillingness to charge, at the same time complimenting their remarkable marksmanship. He also blames many of the evils of the expedition on the lack of discipline and insubordination of the Americans.

being desperately contested every moment. The losses to the 325 Americans were twenty killed and twenty-five wounded, while among the 400 Spaniards the losses were undoubtedly very much greater. But the filibusters were to miss the experienced wisdom of Colonel Downman while four other officers were killed and seven were wounded, including General Pragay, the Hungarian chief of staff.

It was perfectly evident by this time that the Spaniards would soon reach so accessible a spot in overwhelming numbers, and, therefore, an immediate junction with Crittenden was imperative. If Crittenden were joined and the stores were saved, the enterprise, which was certainly serious, as the men must now have seen, might yet succeed. For with plentiful ammunition and full forces a retreat might be made to a town farther inland and more defensible. There the filibusters could organize insurrection and await the large American reinforcements which they expected, or possibly even the hoped for war between the United States and Spain. But without their supplies even a Cuban uprising could do little good. For, with what could they arm any Cubans who might join them, having barely enough themselves to maintain a short campaign?

About two or three of the afternoon, just after the battle, Lopez sent the company of Ellis, now under Lieutenant McDonald, the body which had felt the battle least severely, together with the company of Stuart, about ninety men in all, to watch the movements of the enemy and if possible to make sure a union with Crittenden. They advanced three miles along the road by which the forces had come to Las Pozas, and found the Spaniards on both sides of them in large numbers. Receiving an order from General Lopez, the main body turned back, while eight volunteers pressed on with a message to Crittenden. The Spaniards were soon so numerous in the direction in which they were going that any communication with Crittenden was clearly hopeless, and the messengers hid in the thick underbush until they could get back to Las Pozas.

The anxiety regarding Crittenden was now very great. It was certainly important to press on rapidly towards the mountains, and yet, so long as there was any hope, Crittenden could not be left behind. About midnight (13th) there arrived Captain Kelly with thirty-three men of Crittenden's party. Crittenden had moved along very slowly during the morning,

changing the leisurely oxen at every opportunity. At a distance of four miles from Morillo the little force had made camp and were engaged in eating when they were attacked.

The men rushed to arms, Crittenden himself came up with the rear guard, and the enemy were repulsed, allowing the Americans to finish their meal. Unfortunately the Spanish main forces were now arriving and it was quite evident that Crittenden's forces were hopelessly outnumbered. The Spaniards attacked once more only to be again repulsed; but to remain on the defensive while the numbers of the Spaniards were constantly growing was hopeless. Crittenden decided to divide his forces, and leaving Kelly with his forty men to guard the provisions, he and the remaining eighty charged against the Spanish troops. Almost immediately the Spanish forces attacked Kelly and he was separated from Crittenden. In a tangled country which neither leader knew, the little forces could not hope to reunite. Crittenden had made, on a smaller scale, the same fatal mistake of dividing an already small force which Lopez had made the day before. Situated as the forces were, the event showed that, however important the arms and ammunition might be, it was madness to separate troops which could not hope to successfully defend them even if united. The policy of maintaining a base of supplies and a rearguard, undoubtedly good and necessary tactics for a large army, was opposed to the lightning rapidity of movement which alone could bring success to a small band of guerillas. At the same time the dilemma was almost hopeless. For to abandon the additional arms would make it impossible to arm any Cuban insurrection which might take place, or to replace the ammunition which might be used. As for food, the country could supply quite easily the needs of so small a body.

Kelly and his handful of men were forced back on the provisions. There, seeing that a defence of them was entirely hopeless and his scouts getting no trace of Crittenden, he decided to attempt directly to reach Las Pozas. But by this time the road was well covered by Spanish troops so that Kelly and his men were compelled to advance through the thickets.

After wandering about all day, in the evening Kelly found a negro who guided his men to the edge of a forest within sight of Las Pozas. He could not be sure which side occupied the town, so, sending on the negro with a scout, he himself halt-



ed with his men until they should bring word. The scouts returned with the report that the town was full of men in blue shirts. Kelly accordingly advanced to be reunited with Lopez.

After the battle, Lopez sent out a party to bring in the wounded. The party found twelve Spaniards still living. They were placed in huts and their wounds bandaged. From the battlefield, also, were collected necessary clothing and 11,000 cartridges, which were later to prove especially useful.

After midnight all hope of seeing Crittenden again was given up, and the diminished band of 300 men started towards the mountains. To carry the wounded was impossible; and it was necessary to leave these wretched men behind. The next day they were shot by the advance guard of the Spaniards. Two or three of the more slightly wounded and especially Captain Ellis were able to find horses and accompany the main body. Each soldier carried his gun and 120 cartridges. During the early morning of the fourteenth these troops who, on the day before, had fought a battle, marched twelve miles over a steep rough road. At nine o'clock they halted for the day, killing a cow and roasting the flesh on the bayonets. In this way many bayonets were soon rendered useless. The meat was eaten without bread or salt. At five in the evening they continued their march in the tropical twilight until eight, and then slept on their arms until about midnight when the moon came out to light their weary march. The next morning the troops reached a large and well wooded plantation. Here the tired men hoped for a good rest. Two cows had been killed and green corn was gathered for a feast, when Lopez called a council and announced that the little band had missed its way during the previous night. Instead of going southwest toward San Cristobal as they should, they had swerved north and were within three miles of their landing place at Bahia Honda, where there were known to be 1300 Spanish soldiers. The only chance of safety was a forced march. The food had to be left behind and the troops, who had already on the day before left behind ten stragglers, marched five miles over a wretched road. On this forced march many good men were again left behind, and of these only one managed to catch up with the main body. Halt was made long enough to kill a cow and gather corn, and the starving men were strengthened and cheered by a good meal. In the afternoon the march was continued, and the



soldiers were encouraged by the accession of two Cubans who were heartily welcomed. These were the first and only recruits to join the expedition. The battalion halted at eight in the evening, but there were so many stragglers that it was midnight before they were reunited. The rough ground and thickets had destroyed the men's shoes. All were practically barefoot.

In the meantime, Crittenden had been separated from Kelly on the thirteenth, as we have seen, while the battle of Las Pozas was still going on. Repulsed in his charge, he had sought to join Lopez by another road, but had met General Ena and his troops, who had just withdrawn from the battle. Compelled to take to the thick woods, the men had passed two nights in great wretchedness without anything to eat. The force was too small to reach Lopez and could do nothing more on the island. The fifty survivors went back to the coast, and, taking four boats, put out to sea in the vague hope of reaching Key West. On the second day they were captured and taken to Havana.

It was three o'clock on the morning of the fifteenth when Concha learned that the naval forces had captured Crittenden and his fifty men. The order refusing quarter to the prisoners was recent and plain, and Concha was determined that it should be respected. Having been captured by the naval forces within the keys to the north of the island, Concha feared that there would be some conflict with regard to his jurisdiction in the matter. He would have preferred if the prisoners had been shot immediately as soon as they were captured thus avoiding all formalities and all the excitement which an execution in Havana must produce. He did not care to have them tried at all and especially by a naval court. He feared that a naval court, jealous of his power, might not recognize his order which refused all quarter. The Contoy prisoners had come before such a naval court, and what had been the result? After a long statement by the judge to the effect that the prisoners were genuine pirates they had been freed. It was only later and after a wearisome trial that the two captains and a pilot of the *Susan Loud* and the *Georgiana* were condemned to prison. Such weakness may have been necessary for reasons of public policy then, but Concha did not intend weakness or doubt of his authority to be displayed in this case.

He immediately summoned the officer of the day and the chief of police, and, in the presence of his rival, the admiral, gave the order in no uncertain terms that at seven o'clock in the morning the troops of the garrison should be drawn up in readiness beside the castle of Atares. Before seven-thirty Concha ordered that every pirate should be dead.

The Captain General had hoped by these measures not only to avoid conflict of authority but also to prevent the news of the capture spreading in the city until the men were actually executed. The previous order called for the execution without trial of any enemies caught upon the soil of Cuba. After giving the order for the early execution it seemed to Concha that he should make assurance doubly sure. Embarrassing questions of international law might arise which would give the United States a pretext for declaring war. There was not the least doubt as to the character of the prisoners, and yet, they had not been captured on the land but trying to escape by sea. To secure at least a form of trial, two attorneys with interpreters were sent on board the *Esperanza*, the vessel to which the prisoners had been transferred, with orders to receive the confessions of the prisoners as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, at least from the Captain General's point of view, these declarations were made slowly, since questions and answers had to be translated by the interpreters. At half-past seven, the time set for the execution, only ten prisoners had made their statements. More attorneys were secured and sent on board with instructions to hasten proceedings as much as possible; but even with their aid the examinations went on until half-past ten. The sentence was immediately signed by the impatient Captain General and carried out at eleven.⁶ Two steamers carried the news to New Orleans on the very day of the execution.⁷

⁶ Fillmore, Message, Dec. 2, 1851. Concha, *Memorias*, 223, 224. The American newspapers published accounts of terrible atrocities perpetrated on the bodies of Crittenden and his men.

⁷ A letter from Mr. William May, from U. S. Frigate *Saranac*, Sept. 16, 1851, to his brother Dr. Frederick May of Washington is among the Crittenden Mss., Library of Congress.

May states that "the prisoners who were shot at Havana were afterwards mutilated, dragged by the heels, outraged in a manner our Indian savage would revolt at; ears, fingers, pieces of skull (*sic*), brought away for exhibition, and nailed or hung up in public places.

While the tragedy was taking place at Havana, Lopez and his men were pushing on as rapidly as they could in their hopeless march towards San Cristobal. Many of the men were shoeless. The little band on the sixteenth was still near the sea coast, probably to the east of Bahia Honda. Early in the morning they came upon a number of Spanish soldiers who

"Crittenden and the fifty prisoners taken with him were brought to Havana in the Spanish frigate *Esperanza*. The next morning at ten o'clock on the day they were shot they were conveyed to the shore in a boat. Crittenden, one of the last to leave the boat and stiff and slow in moving, was told to be quick and brutally struck in the face, some say with a sword (others and an eyewitness told me that it was a hand blow), seized and bound but not subdued, he grit (*sic*) his teeth and spat in the face of the cowardly dog of a Spaniard.

"They were led out in tens and shot and when the work was not completed, club'd (*sic*) with the bute (*sic*) of muskets. One poor fellow, only slightly wounded, got up and took another position out from the slain, when he too was despatched. To a man they walked boldly up and with unflinching eye met their doom. Jeered, spit upon, struck by the inhuman crowd, they scornfully stood up with head erect and disappointed the crowd in their hope for show of fear. Crittenden was about the twentieth shot, and alone was brought out—he *did* kneel, was *forced* to kneel, but as he gave the signal, a privilege granted him, he attempted to face round, as a true soldier would die. The crown of his head was literally blown off.

"Ten of bodies (*sic*) only were coffined, the rest, what was left of thim (*sic*), thrown into a pit. And thus these brave men died before each other's eyes, without one friendly voice to sooth their last moments, to say a kind word or to receive their last message."

The New Orleans *Crescent* published a report from an American correspondent describing the execution and stating that Kerr and Crittenden refused to kneel with their backs to the firing squad. It is this report which contains Crittenden's supposed words: "An American kneels only to his God, and always faces his enemy." Other accounts say nothing about this dramatic incident which is in all probability a New Orleans embellishment. (New Orleans *Crescent*, given in Jones, 'Cuba in 1851,' 65.)

Concha "Al Ministro de Estado," Havana, Dated, Aug. 31, 1851. *Boletin* IV, 80.

In this letter Concha praised very highly the conduct of Consul A. F. Owen and Mr. C. F. Platt, Commander of the American gunboat *Albany*. When on the night of the 15th Crittenden's party had arrived at Havana and when it was generally known that on the next day they were to be shot, a number of Americans plead with the American Consul to interpose in their behalf with the Spanish government: "With the greatest dignity he refused such a proposal, answering that, according to the solemn declaration of the President of the United

fled to a fortified house near the shore, leaving behind six splendid cavalry horses and some wine and provisions which were especially appreciated. The road now turned sharply to the right and, leaving the shore, Lopez and his men reached the crest of a range of hills and then went down into a pleasant valley where the ripe fruit satisfied both hunger and thirst.

States, they had lost their nationality at the moment of embarking on a piratical expedition, and he expressed this very view to me personally when, after the severe punishment had been accomplished in the presence of all Havana, a punishment which the citizens received as a just expiation of the horrible crime committed by those wretched men, he came to me on the night of that very day, the 16th, to give me news of another expedition which had just been sent to him, in order that by my authority I might use those precautions which would bring safety. So much for Mr. Owen. Commander Platt showed himself equally energetic and worthy of the consideration of this government, on the morning of the 16th." The city had been very much excited and the American captains of vessels in the harbor had come to wait on Commander Platt to take measures for their safety. He had told them dryly to go back and attend to their own ships and not to meddle with anything which took place.

The Spanish authorities issued a semi-official account of the execution, published in various newspapers: "The troops formed a square. They had on their war uniform—the blusa and straw hat. On the arrival of the troops (the cavalry and the civic guard), the multitude, on foot and on horseback, took places on the heights, on the plain on the sea, and (at) a great distance upon the edifices of Jesus del Monte and el Ceno, incessantly cheering the Queen and Spain—eternal idols of that army and this people so much calumniated by the United States.

"El Señor Mayor de la Plaza read the usual edict, and the criminals appeared ten at a time, and after being shot were taken away from the place of execution to make room for their companions. The first chief was shot alone, the two second chiefs were shot together—all in the midst of incessant cries in favor of the Queen and Spain.

"Justice being done, the Lieutenant Rey, in a speech to the soldiers and the people, expressed himself in strong and worthy terms, saying that the punishment inflicted was merited by these men, who, without a God, without a law, without a flag, come in order to attack our nationality, our religion, our Queen, and all other objects dear to our hearts.

"The vivats to the Queen, and to the Country were repeated with more energy; the troops defiled, and the people went to the place of execution, where they looked for what the criminals had left.

"Ten funeral cars were waiting to convey to the cemetery the mortal remains of the fifty pirates. Those cars had been furnished by the funeral agencies, and were ornamented according to the circumstances of the tragedy.

"The justice of man is complete. God has pardoned the young

A wealthy planter welcomed the filibusters and placed the resources of his plantation at their command. At five in the afternoon the march recommenced and this time in the general direction of the sea. It seemed to be the main purpose of Lopez for a day or two to stay in the general neighborhood

culprits, who have lost their lives by trusting their faith to the infamous falsehoods of the New Orleans papers." (*London Times*, Sept. 5, 1851.)

Of letters from various prisoners that of Crittenden himself is most full:

"Ship of war, Esperanza,
August 16, 1851.

Dear Lucien :

In half an hour I, with fifty others, am to be shot. We were taken prisoners. We were in small boats. General Lopez separated the balance of the command from me. I had with me about one hundred—was attacked by two battalions of infantry and one company of horse. The odds were too great, and strange to tell I was not furnished with a single musket cartridge. Lopez did not get any artillery. I have not the heart to write to any of my family. If the truth ever comes out you will find that I did my duty, and have the perfect confidence of every man with me. We had retired from the field and were going to sea, and were overtaken by the Spanish steamer *Habanero*, and captured. Tell General Huston that his nephew got separated from me on the 13th day of the fight and I have not seen him since. He may have straggled off and joined Lopez, who advanced rapidly to the interior. My people, however, were entirely surrounded on every side. We saw that we have been deceived grossly, and were making for the United States, when taken. During my short sojourn on this island I have not met a single patriot. We landed some forty or fifty miles to the westward of this, and I am sure that in that part of the island Lopez has no friends. When I was attacked Lopez was only three miles off. If he had not been deceiving us as to the state of things, he would have fallen back with his force and made fight, instead of which he marched on immediately to the interior. I am requested to get you to tell Mr. Green of the Creston House that his brother shares my fate. Victor Kerr is also with me, also Stanford. I recollect no others of your acquaintance at present. I will die like a man. My heart has not failed yet, nor do I believe it will. Communicate with my family.

This is an incoherent letter, but the circumstances must excuse it. My hands are swollen to double their thickness, resulting from having been too tightly corded for the last eighteen hours. Write to John and let him write to my mother. I am afraid the news will break her heart. My heart beats warmly towards her now.

Farewell. My love to all my friends. I am sorry that I die owing a cent but it is inevitable.

Yours, strong in heart,

To Dr. Lucien Hensley."

W. H. CRITTENDEN.

(*New Orleans Bee*, Sept. 3, 1851.)

of the shore, puzzling the Spanish troops by winding marches. Here it would be possible to join any new forces from New Orleans which might land and with them make a decisive attack on some important point. To halt for any length of time at any one place was impossible since provisions would fail and time would be given to the Spaniards to concentrate in overwhelming numbers. This movement along the coast, with the putting to sea of Crittenden and his men, was interpreted by the Spaniards as an attempt to attack some fortified post on the sea coast from both land and sea. If Lopez could have captured such a position, he might have established a base to which other filibusters might come, or, at any rate, made sure his own escape in case of failure. For this purpose, however, the artillery left behind at the St. John's River would have been invaluable. All the while, Lopez labored under the delusion that the Spanish troops were almost ready to come over bodily, and on each encounter gave the signal to fire only with extreme hesitation, fearing that he might have friends before him. If he had known that no reinforcements could arrive, he should certainly have pushed on rapidly for the mountains. It is to be remembered also that even on the sixteenth the fate of Crittenden's men was entirely unknown to him, and it was important to allow a junction to be made if possible. Halting for a few hours in a strong position on the night of the sixteenth, evidences of the presence of a large number of the enemy in the immediate neighborhood were apparent. In fact the next morning the advance guard composed of the Cuban Company came in contact with Spanish troops, firing on them without effect. At noon was reached the great coffee plantation of Frias, property of the wife of General Lopez. At this place Lopez hoped to be able to remain for several days while the enemy followed false scents in other directions. But scarcely were the troops ready to eat the plentiful food, when a sentinel fired his gun as a signal, and came in to announce that a large body of lancers were advancing by the same road which the Americans had recently followed. This was the beginning of the second important engagement of the expedition. (Las Frias, Aug. 17, 1851).

The American position was admirable to receive a cavalry attack. A thick fringe of mango trees, with their large stems and dense foliage, made a natural parapet, difficult for horses

to pass, and useful for American sharpshooters. The Spanish commander halted at the main house of the plantation and took a deliberate view of the position. Lopez was deceived by this delay into the belief that the Spaniards were intending to join him, and gave the word not to fire. The commander of the cavalry suddenly ordered the charge, a hopeless measure against such a position. The Spaniards were driven back, although many of the best shots among the filibusters did not fire, obeying Lopez' previous command.

Two of the Spanish lancers taken prisoners said that General Ena was in hot pursuit with 1000 Spanish infantry. The Americans, having lost many on the march, now numbered only 250 effective men, and the danger of being surrounded and destroyed was very great. A Spanish force, evidently the main body, was passing to the rear with the intention of cutting off the retreat of the filibusters. There was just time to retreat to a high hill, where the Americans could not easily be surrounded. A great cheer arose for General Lopez and for the cause of a free Cuba, a cause in which the filibusters still believed. The Spaniards by their hasty firing had missed the opportunity to seriously injure the Americans in their retreat to the hill. It was now too late. The firing went on for half an hour. General Ena in leading a flank attack fell mortally wounded and his second in command decided to withdraw his troops. The Americans charged the retreating Spaniards without effect, when, finding that the Spaniards were unlikely to return to the attack, the filibusters turned again towards the mountains. This remarkable contest bore some resemblance to the battle of New Orleans, of course on a small scale. The Americans lost two killed and three or four wounded, while the Spaniards lost their commander, second in rank only to Captain General Concha, and a considerable number of men. From this time Concha himself commanded the Spanish troops in person.^{7a}

The night which followed the battle was spent at an old Spanish fortification where 100 men might have held their own against a very much larger number of troops. The rain fell in torrents, and it was impossible to keep up the fires sufficiently to cook the meat which had been secured. The majority of the men marched on the next day without food. One of the stragglers left behind near Bahia Honda came up with the news

^{7a} Concha, *op. cit.* 215.

that they had been in the very outskirts of the town on the night of the fourteenth. He had hidden in the bushes and then gone to a plantation where he was kindly treated and given food and clothing. That evening halt was made near a saw mill, where the ammunition could be kept dry in spite of the torrents of rain. Two oxen were killed and with the abundant growing corn the men were able to enjoy a good meal again. Instead of halting to regain lost energy, Lopez considered it necessary to press on. The road was now almost impassable. Men walked in mud to their knees. With the sultry heat, the weight of guns and ammunition became intolerable, and when the slippery foothills were reached, the soldiers began to throw away the extra weights. Many guns and much ammunition had been rendered useless by the rain. When the plain near San Cristobal was reached, the party of filibusters was stretched out over five miles of road, while some had fallen dead from the effects of the sun and fatigue. The cartridge belts were old and not well suited to protect the ammunition. As a result much was useless.

Here, for the first time, open discontent showed itself. A committee was appointed in true American style to wait on Lopez and find out exactly what he intended to do. He answered that by mistake the troops had come too near to the city of San Cristobal. It was said that the alarm had already been given there and the only safety lay in beating an immediate and hasty retreat. The troops absolutely refused to move another step without rest, preferring to risk an attack than to die of fatigue. Up to this time the men had been hopeful and trusted General Lopez to get them out of their difficulties. Daily he had told them that they would soon reach a strong body of Cuban insurgents with whom they could attack a strongly fortified place. The Spanish troops would join them if there seemed to be any chance of ultimate success. There is no reason to doubt that Lopez was sincere in these protestations. He took a larger risk in appearing in Cuba than any of his men. He was an outlaw long since condemned to death, and in case of failure could hope for no mercy. His whole attitude toward the Spanish troops shows that he expected them to come over to his side, while his delay near the coast was evidence that he expected reinforcements. The attitude of many Cubans was undoubtedly favorable to his cause. Success

would have secured friends, just as failure made the loyalists seem to include all the people of the island. It is to be remembered that much the same thing happened in the American Revolution when in many cases the number of loyalists seemed to vary inversely to the American successes. The failure to reunite with Crittenden, the stern example made of his men following the failures of Puerto Principe, took the courage out of the party of revolution and sane Cubans sought now to gain the good will of the government by pushing down a lost cause.⁸ These were the immediate causes of failure while deeper still lay the great issues of annexation or independence, and of slavery or abolition, which divided the Cuban people. The greater issue in America between extension of slave territory and conservatism lessened chances of whole hearted American support which five years earlier might have been hoped for with some confidence.⁹

Reluctantly, on the evening of the nineteenth of August, Lopez allowed his men to barricade themselves with trunks of trees on a spot near San Cristobal where they could only with great difficulty be attacked. The rain, so fatal to all their hopes, kept falling, and for the first time deep discouragement settled upon the party. It was evident that even Lopez, who had always been buoyant in his hopes, was fearful that no assistance could now be looked for. In fact he told the men that their only chance lay in reaching the high mountains where the enemy could not pursue them. Evidently the situation was desperate.

⁸One of the reasons for the failure of Lopez to arouse the Cubans lay in the very fact that his followers were foreigners. The assistance of political insurrection in a foreign land is acknowledged to be peculiarly difficult. In the words of Captain Mahan: "The natives of the soil, among whom such a force appears, either view it with suspicion or expect it to do all the work; not unfrequently are both jealous and inactive. It is well, then, to give malcontents all the assistance they require in materials of war, to keep alive as a diversion every such focus of trouble, . . . but it is not safe to reckon on the hatred of the insurgents for their own countrymen outweighing their dislike for the foreigners. It is not good policy to send a force that is incapable of successful independent action, relying on the support of the natives in a civil war."

Used as these words were, of a very different episode they apply with peculiar force to the Lopez expeditions. (Mahan: "Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution." I, 97).

⁹Smith, *Parties and Slavery*, p. 9.

The retreat was commenced on the next morning. The American troops, commanded since the death of Downman, by the inexperienced Haynes, now observed few of the forms of discipline. Men marched where they pleased without regard to company formation, though some still kept their guns as their only hope of safety. Halt was made in the afternoon at a plantation called Aguacate, where a terrible storm occurred, the usual rain being accompanied by great wind. If anything had been dry before it was now thoroughly wet. At eight on the morning of August 21, the pickets were called in and Lopez gave orders to march. But the men demanded breakfast first and no new pickets were sent out. While the men were at breakfast, 400 Spanish troops stole up through the cornfields and were within twenty yards before they were discovered. Three or four Americans were killed at the first discharge. The Cuban Company was dispersed in all directions, but the American battalion under Colonel Haynes managed to seize their guns and form on a hill where a defence might be made with bayonets and the few guns which were still serviceable. Lopez and his staff retired from the field and Haynes gave the word to follow. Captain Johnson failed to hear the order and held his ground until his twenty men were compelled to scatter to avoid being captured. They were not seen again by their companions until they all gathered in prison at Havana.

The rain, which still fell in torrents, for once did a good turn to the cause of the filibusters by covering their flight. Splashing through a swollen creek where the Spaniards seemed loathe to follow, cutting their way through the bushes with swords, travelling without path or knowledge of direction, the main body still kept together and managed to make good their escape. Of the 220 men at Aguacate only fifty or sixty had guns fit to use, but only four Americans were killed in the attack. Six prisoners were taken by the Spaniards and immediately shot. In the evening 140 men alone managed to collect around the smouldering fires, while the tropical rain continued. On the 22nd the now hopeless band managed to advance two or three miles into a wild and uninhabited country. Lopez' horse was killed for food, the only food the men had had for two days. On the twenty-third the same story was repeated, the men wading up a creek in lieu of a path and eating the roots of the palmetto. The only possibility seemed to be to wander about the mountains until death brought relief.

At last on the morning of the twenty-fourth the rain ceased. In the bright sunshine the men regained their spirits and climbed trees to get a view of some hut or house, but the tree covered mountains seemed piled up in endless chains with no cabins or smoke to give evidence of human habitation. The column marched on until midday when Captain Stewart climbed a tree, taking with him a compass. In the distance he could make out a cultivated level. Following the direction given, a march of three or four miles brought the company to a path which led into a familiar road. It was the same which they had covered already on the nineteenth and twentieth when traveling towards San Cristobal. The men were halted and an inventory taken. There were about 140 men with sixty-nine guns, most of these quite useless, many even lacking bayonets. Only about a dozen men had shoes, while many had their feet terribly lacerated by thorns and stones. To move at any but the slowest pace was impossible.

A council of war was held and plans of safety were discussed. Some thought that the party should then and there break up into small groups to try to reach the sea, others that their only hope lay in remaining united. As was natural in so desperate a situation, Lopez had to listen to many complaints from the men, who had seen no signs whatever of the promised revolution. The real nobility of Lopez' character showed itself in his begging the men to purchase life for themselves by giving him over to the Spaniards. All, now thoroughly ashamed, refused, and only a few would have consented to abandon him. It was decided to stake all on the issue of one desperate chance, and, armed with knives, bayonets, and a few guns, to boldly attack San Cristobal, which was defended by 500 well equipped Spanish troops. This plan, four days before, might have had a chance of success. On the twenty-fourth it was only a counsel of despair. The march had commenced when suddenly Spanish cavalry came up behind; a few still believed in the legend of a successful insurrection and raised the joyful cry: "Patriots, Patriots," but the charge of the cavalry dissipated this last fond hope and scattered the men in small groups in every direction. So ended as an organized military expedition the last Lopez attempt against Cuba.

The men who were captured on the twenty-fifth were shot on the spot, but on the twenty-sixth orders reached San Cristo-

bal from the Captain General to give quarter to all who might surrender. Fifty were captured near San Cristobal and a large number also near Bahia Honda. The prisoners were all treated well by the Spanish authorities, though many strayed in the mountains fifteen or twenty days more before they were captured, living on roots and wild plants.¹⁰

The Captain General regarded the capture and execution of Lopez as vital to the safety of the island. Lopez had lived long in Cuba, and knew conditions well. His worst enemies acknowledged his singular charm of manner and his capacity for arousing confidence and admiration. The arrival of the captive Lopez at Havana on August 31st was thus the signal for great rejoicing among the Spanish sympathizing people of the Cuban capital. They felt that his death would put an end for the present to all such expeditions. While the old Spanish general, whose life had been a romance, lay in prison awaiting shameful death, the city wore the appearance of a holiday. Twenty thousand citizens had gathered to watch the execution. Briefly the Captain General addressed them, his words passing from mouth to mouth being instinctively obeyed: "I wish," he shouted, "the deepest quiet to accompany the fulfilment of the law." Twenty thousand men stood quiet until the grey head of the man in the chair fell forward under the garrote.¹¹

Of the prisoners taken after the execution of Crittenden, some were freed at the request of their friends, while others, about 160 in number, were sent as prisoners to Spain. The administration at Washington was in a quandary with regard to them. The feeling in the United States was very strong in their favor, being increased by sympathy for their families and friends. At the same time the administration could not help but feel the danger of encouraging such movements by

¹⁰ My chief authorities for this narrative are:

1. Concha, *Memorias*, pp. 210 ff.
2. "Personal Narrative of Louis Schlesinger of Adventures in Cuba and Ceuta," *Dem. Rev.* XXXI.
3. Expedicion del General Narciso Lopez, Agosto—Septiembre de 1851. *Relacion de un expedicionario*. Documentos ineditos para la Historia de Cuba pertenecientes al Archivo Nacional. *Boletin*, Havana, III, 1904.

These sources agree on the important points, but disagree in details, and have been followed with caution.

¹¹ Concha, 220, 221.

leniency. Previous proclamations made it impossible to do more than to request the release of the prisoners. It could not be demanded as a right.¹² Fortunately the prisoners were finally pardoned by the queen, thus relieving the situation which had begun to grow tense.¹³

¹² Fillmore, Message, Dec. 2, 1851.

¹³ Cong. *Globe*, XXIV, 217.

CHAPTER VIII

RESULTS

The news of the execution of Crittenden's men reached New Orleans by the *Crescent City*, August 21, 1851. From the point of view of the Captain General the policy of severity seemed justified, for the city was full of men eager to go to Cuba on the first news of success. Steamers were in readiness, and arms abundant.¹ The news of the execution was received with rage by the Americans, and with corresponding glee by Spaniards. The *Union*, the Spanish organ, published an account of the execution with approving comments. Placards were immediately put up threatening destruction to the office of the paper. In the afternoon a mob was organized, and proceeded to carry out the threat against the *Union*, and also similar measures against Spanish coffee houses. The office of the Spanish consul was attacked early in the evening, but the mob was persuaded to desist. Later the mob returned, broke open the doors, defaced the portraits of the Queen of Spain and of the Captain General of Cuba. The Spanish Consul Laborde, either in fear for his life, or for effect, took refuge at first in the house of a friend and later fled to Havana. Similar destruction of Spanish property took place on a smaller scale at Key West where the people were especially favorable to the filibusters.² Excitement was increased by the news that the *Falcon*, an American steamer on her way from Chagres, had been fired upon by the Spanish authorities.³ When the news arrived at Mobile an incident occurred which might have brought disgrace upon the American name and which could easily have led to the war which the radicals desired. By an unlucky chance a Spanish brigantine named the *Fernando VII* had been shipwrecked on its passage from

¹ Freret, Correspondence with Treasury Department, Pamphlet, New York City Library.

² The authorities for these incidents are given by Moore: "Digest of International Law," VI, 815.

³ New Orleans *Bee*, Aug. 22, 1851.

San Juan to Havana. The crew and the passengers, numbering fifty-seven, managed to escape with their lives, and had just arrived at Mobile, hungry and exhausted. Among them, unfortunately enough, were a number of Spanish soldiers, including a lieutenant of the Spanish army. The fact of their arrival soon became known and a crowd of several hundred enraged men surrounded the Spanish consulate, threatening to beat and lynch the Spaniards. Fortunately, five or six of the most influential citizens of Mobile were able to quiet the rabble, while the Spanish officer was spirited away; and the Spanish consul managed to get the men safely on shipboard for Havana.⁴

Public meetings took place at towns so far apart as Louisville, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh. At Baltimore a procession was formed parading the streets with the American Consul at Havana burning in effigy. Even in places like Philadelphia, where opposition to the expedition had been great, the news of the execution of Crittenden's men produced a complete reversal of feeling. At Philadelphia the meeting was presided over by an ex-mayer of the city, and a long list of resolutions were adopted. It was demanded that the United States should propose to Spain immediate autonomy for Cuba. In case war should result from this ultimatum, the United States should continue to fight until Cuba was independent. The following resolutions are typical of the feeling both north and south:

“Resolved, That the President of the United States ought to be authorized by Congress to send, with such naval escort as he may deem proper, a special envoy to Spain, to offer the government of that a country a choice of the alternatives of withdrawing from Cuba the military force which has been sent from Europe to the unhappy island, or of allowing to the island a free local legislature, chosen by universal suffrage, with an unlimited toleration of differences in religious belief and the privilege of an unrestricted intercourse with the rest of mankind.....

“Resolved, That Congress ought promptly to repeal all laws of the United States which may be construed to prohibit an armed intervention by citizens of the United States for the relief of those who suffer under the tyranny of the present

⁴ Sedano, *op. cit.* 58-62, especially certificate of the Spanish Consul. Sedano was present in Mobile and witnessed the scene.

despotic military government of the Spanish colonial dependencies of America.

“*Resolved*, That the President and Congress ought to insist, in their respective departments, upon a national atonement by Spain for the late atrocious act of assassination, without a trial, of citizens of the United States, who in a cause as noble as that of LaFayette and his associates, volunteered their services in the aid of liberty in Cuba, and when made prisoners of war were publicly butchered without a trial; or upon a national disavowal of the atrocity and punishment of its perpetrators by Spain.”⁵

The outcome of the whole affair was political capital which the Democratic press was not slow to use against the Whigs.

While public meetings were denouncing Spain, the indefatigable Calderon de la Barca was not slow to demand redress for the outrages at New Orleans and Key West. The losses sustained by Spaniards became the subject of correspondence between the Spanish minister and the department of State. Crittenden explained that the punishment of the perpetrators of mob violence was under our system a matter of the state government. The position taken by Webster was that the Federal government was under obligations to make good the losses of the Spanish consul; but that it could only be asked to indemnify those private citizens who had recourse to the same courts with Americans as an act of comity and not as a duty.⁶ The pardon of the prisoners of the *Pampero* expedition, led to the introduction of a bill in Congress to provide for indemnification of all losses to Spaniards by mob violence.

On August 25, 1852, this bill was the subject of an animated debate in the Senate. Clemens of Alabama could see no reason why the federal government should be called upon to indemnify citizens of another country for losses. They had the same remedy as citizens of the United States would have under the same circumstances. They had been attacked not as Spaniards but as undesirable citizens who were supposed to be unduly elated over the recent murder of Americans in Havana. The Senator concluded: “These men saw proper to excite a popular mob, and they felt the results of it. The laws

⁵ N. O. Bee, Sept. 4, 1851.

⁶ Crittenden to Calderon de la Barca Oct. 14, 1851. (Crittenden Mss. Library of Congress).

For Webster's views see Moore, Digest, III, 812.

are open to them; let them seek redress where an American citizen would have to seek it."

Underwood of Kentucky thought that our duty as hosts to citizens of another nation put us under peculiar obligations. If there had been a specific article in a treaty on the subject, the matter would certainly not have been doubtful. Even without a treaty such a precedent would be useful to us in cases where our own citizens suffered losses of the same kind in foreign countries.

Senator Mason, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, pointed out a distinction in our responsibility for the losses sustained by the consul and those by private Spanish citizens. The consul was directly under the protection of the government, while the citizens of Spain in New Orleans were living voluntarily for business reasons under the local state and municipal laws and authority. It was an act of wise magnanimity, however, to pay for all losses, especially in view of the fact that Spain had already pardoned the prisoners of the expedition in deference to our wishes.

The bill, as finally passed, placed \$25000 at the command of the President to compensate Spanish citizens for such losses as after due investigation he found that they had incurred.⁷

If we turn from the immediate results in the United States to foreign countries, we find that the second landing of a filibustering expedition aroused the anxious hostility of Great Britain and France. The London *Times* expressed these fears editorially Sept. 9, 1851: "In a naval point of view the possession of the port of Havana by the Americans would be an occurrence of first rate importance. It would be to the Gulf of Mexico what Gibraltar is to the Mediterranean. It would place under their guns the vast line of traffic which more and more connects the eastern and the western oceans; it would leave almost at their mercy the islands and colonies of European States, which would speedily become fresh objects of their ambition. . . . The French government has long perceived the extreme importance of the subject, both as regards the resources of Spain and the navigation of the western seas; accordingly, the French squadron in the West Indies has been reinforced, and instructions have been forwarded to the officers in command to assist the Spanish authorities by all the

⁷ Congressional *Globe*, XXIV, 2340, 2341.

means in their power to repel the attack of any party of American or other adventurers. . . . If the Southern States are allowed to incorporate Cuba, and to strengthen the slaveholding interest in the Union by that enormous acquisition, the North will turn in self defence upon the nearest territory which it may seize to restore the balance of power, and that territory is our own. One act of rapine and violence will follow another, until the cry will be for the expulsion of European authority from the North American continent and the West India Islands."

France and England issued orders to their naval commanders to prevent by force, if necessary, the landing of adventurers from any nation on the island of Cuba with hostile intent. This action led to a solemn warning in the Presidential message of 1851. President Fillmore said in this connection: "The maritime rights of the United States are founded on a firm, secure, and well defined basis; they stand upon the ground of national independence and public law, and will be maintained in all their full and just extent. . . . No American ship can be allowed to be visited or searched for the purpose of ascertaining the character of individuals on board, nor can there be allowed any watch by the vessels of any foreign nation over American vessels on the coasts of the United States or the seas adjacent thereto."⁸

England and France now proposed a tripartite convention with the United States to guarantee the possession of Cuba to Spain after the fashion in which the nations of Europe were later to guarantee the integrity of the Turkish empire. The essential articles of this convention were as follows: "The high contracting parties hereby, severally and collectively, disclaim, now and for hereafter, all intention to obtain possession of the island of Cuba, and they respectively bind themselves to discountenance all attempts to that effect on the part of any power or individuals whatever.

"The high contracting parties declare, severally and collectively, that they will not obtain or maintain for themselves, or for any one of themselves, any exclusive control over the said island, nor assume nor exercise any dominion over the same."

⁸Curtis, Webster, II, 551. Crittenden to Sartiges, Oct. 22, 1851. Senate Docs. 32 Cong. 1 Sess. I, 76. Fillmore, Message, Dec. 2, 1851.

This proposal, so contrary to the historic policy of the United States, was discussed and rejected in an able reply by Secretary Everett. The Secretary of State restated the feeling of the administration that the United States could not view with indifference the possession of Cuba by any European power other than Spain. Any compact with England and France to guarantee the present status of Cuba seemed to Everett unequal and unjust: "France and England, by entering into it, would disable themselves from obtaining possession of an island remote from their seat of government, belonging to another European power, whose natural right to possess it must always be as good as their own—a distant island in another hemisphere, and one which by no ordinary or peaceful course of things could ever belong to either of them. If the present balance of power in Europe should be broken up, if Spain should become unable to maintain the island in her possession, and France and England should be engaged in a death struggle with each other Cuba might then be the prize of the victor. Till these events all take place, the President does not see how Cuba can belong to any European power but Spain.

"The United States, on the other hand, would, by the proposed convention, disable themselves from making an acquisition which might take place without any disturbance of existing foreign relations, and in the natural order of things. The island of Cuba lies at our doors. It commands the approach to the Gulf of Mexico, which washes the shores of five of our States. It bars the entrance of that great river which drains half of the North American Continent, and with its tributaries forms the largest system of internal water-communication in the world. It keeps watch at the doorway of our intercourse with California by the isthmus route. If an island like Cuba, belonging to the Spanish crown, guarded the entrance to the Thames and the Seine, and the United States should propose a convention like this to France and England, those powers would assuredly feel that the disability assumed by ourselves was far less serious than that which we asked them to assume."

In concluding his despatch Everett pointed out the direct connection between the Lopez expedition and the proposed convention: "I will intimate a final objection to the proposed convention. M. De Turgot and Lord Malmesbury put for-

ward, as the reason for entering into such a compact, 'the attacks which have lately been made upon the island of Cuba by lawless bands of adventurers from the United States, with the avowed design of taking possession of the island.' The President is convinced that the conclusion of such a treaty, instead of putting a stop to these lawless proceedings, would give a new and powerful impulse to them. It would strike a death blow to the conservative policy hitherto pursued in this country toward Cuba. No administration of this government, however strong in the public confidence in other respects, could stand a day under the odium of having stipulated with the great powers of Europe, that in no future time, under no change of circumstances, by no amicable arrangement with Spain, by no act of lawful war (should that calamity unfortunately occur), by no consent of the inhabitants of the island, should they, like the possessions of Spain on the American Continent, succeed in rendering themselves independent; in fine by no overruling necessity of self-preservation should the United States ever make the acquisition of Cuba."⁹

Aside from the immediate results of the expeditions for the United States, the deeper result was a revelation to the Americans themselves of the inherent weakness of the Compromise of 1850 and of the close connection of any question of expansion with the question of slavery. This fact makes of the succeeding events, and especially of the Ostend Manifesto, a new chapter in American history.

A brief view of the direct results of the expedition in Cuba itself brings this account to a natural conclusion. Lopez had made use of the American desire for annexation, but he had felt that the question was one which must be left to the free choice of the people of Cuba.¹⁰ Among them the old desire to

⁹ Mr. Everett, Secretary of State, to the Count Sartiges, Dec. 1, 1852, S. Ex. Doc. 13, 32 Cong. a Sess. 15.

Moore, Digest, VI, 457-471.

¹⁰ Macias afterwards testified that Lopez used the idea of annexation to some extent to gain the good will of the Havana Junta and so to unify the policy of the Cuban revolutionists. He did this reluctantly and with a genuine desire to see Cuba independent. Annexation would solve the problem of the abolition movement by putting slave property under the protection of southern sentiment. The dread of slave uprisings was, as we have seen, a real obstacle to the party of Independence. Macias, who of course as a member of the Junta and a close friend of Lopez was in a position to testify, wrote in 1875: "General

throw off the Spanish government was not dead, although it had not been sufficiently organized or aroused to bring immediate help to the old Spanish general. But the trend from now on became clearly away from the idea of annexation to one of complete independence. The future disturbances in Cuba were, after 1851, far more distinctively Cuban, while the movement of 1848-51 was essentially American.

Concha used the events of August 1851 to urge strong measures for defence and suppression of insurrection. The building of great roads, a strong army and navy, and a completely centralized and military administration were his ideals and recommendations.¹¹ The recommendations of Concha were substantially adopted, and by an order of September 30, 1851 the system of control of Cuba from Spain was changed. It was stated to be the purpose of the government to centralize power more fully in the hands of the Captain General. Instead of a special ministry for the Provinces, Cuban affairs of a general character were placed directly in the hands of the prime minister with the aid of a special advisory council. While this step certainly shows the growing importance of the Cuban problem, it is not easy to see that any very great centralization was accomplished, since affairs of the army, navy, and treasury in Cuba were to be in charge of three separate departments at Madrid. Nevertheless the direct control of the prime minister was supposed to be a means making for rapidity and harmony.¹²

From now on the powers of the Captain General were exercised more despotically than ever.

On account of his activity in aiding the prisoners, Mr. J. S. Thrasher, an American merchant resident in Havana and the editor of *El Faro Industrial*, fell under the suspicion of

Lopez (I remember the fact well) always maintained in the circle of his friends that the people of Cuba had alone the right to decide in so important a matter, and that the duty of the liberating army was to submit it to its consideration." Letter of Macias to Luna. Quoted in Morales, 253, *La Independencia*, N. Y., Mar. 4, 1875.

¹¹Concha "Al E. S. Presidente del Consejo de Ministros," Havana, Nov. 7, 1851, *Boletín*, IV, 105.

¹²(1) In the opinion of Sedano the extremely centralized power urged by Concha was a mistake from which many of the worst evils of Cuba were to flow. Sedano "Cuba, 1850-1873," pp. 34.)

(2) Reales Decretos, Sept. 30, 1851, Torrente, I, 107. (Cuba, 1850-1873, p. 34.)

the Captain General. The newspaper was suppressed and Thrasher himself was arrested, his correspondence being seized. In spite of the protests of the American consul, Thrasher was brought before a military court and, without delay, found guilty as an accomplice of the filibusters and condemned to eight years imprisonment in Ceuta. This sentence was approved by the Captain General without hesitation. Although Thrasher had been condemned according to Spanish law, he was soon pardoned—an act which seemed to invite breaches of hospitality by foreigners in Cuba.¹³

Many Cubans were banished for belonging to the revolutionary Juntas. A conspiracy commenced by former friends of Lopez, and known as that of Vnelta Abajo, was easily suppressed by the government, and when Concha gave up the command in April 1852 the island was indeed outwardly quiet,—but seed had been sown which was to bear much bitter fruit in days to come.

¹³ Concha, *op. cit.* 226, 227. Concha Al Presidente del Consejo, Dec. 3, 1851. Unpublished Mss. Havana.

This document gives fully the details of the trial of Thrasher. It is a good example of high-handed judicial measures.

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NOTE: No attempt has been made to include titles other than those actually consulted in preparing this monograph.

CHAPTER I

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The copy in the Library of Congress has written across the face, "Deposited by J. C. Davis, in office of Clerk, U. S. District Court: Eastern District of Louisiana, New Orleans, August 8, 1850. (signed) Robert M. Lusher, Clerk." This would seem to be the earliest complete account published of the Cardenas expedition by a participant. Hardy, in his account, publishes an appendix with selections from this pamphlet as by "an observing writer in the South." J. C. Davis was Captain of Company B, Louisiana regiment, and the internal evidence leaves no doubt that he is the author. The account is written in a semi-humorous style, evidently by a man of some education. It seems, on the whole, a trustworthy account of the main incidents, though differing considerably at some points from Lieutenant Hardy's account. Since Davis sailed on the *Susan Loud* and Hardy on the *Creole*, the two accounts are supplementary to each other. The speech by Prentis is evidently the one delivered in defence of Lopez when he was arrested at Savannah.

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