

OFF FOR CUBA.

Departure of a Patriot Expedition Last Night Comprising 800 Men.

COLONEL RYAN IN COMMAND.

The "First New York Regiment" of Cuban Volunteers Off for the Field.

Last night was an anxious night for hundreds of the friends of the Cuban revolution in this city, for it was the most momentous period yet experienced, so far as the sending of aid to the struggling patriots was concerned, as the failure of the embarkation of the relief despatched last night would certainly have been the severest blow to the revolutionary cause that could possibly be sustained. It has cost months of labor of the most trying and arduous description, considering the embarrassments which have been thrown in the way by the action of over zealous United States officials in this city, by quibbling, knuckling executive officers at Washington, by spying journals in this city who were in the interest of Spain, and the indiscretions of a few of the actual participants in the scheme. In addition to all these obstacles hundreds of thousands of dollars have been expended in the purchase of about 5,000 stands of Remington breach-loading rifles, two batteries of artillery, shot, shell and military stores, the victualling and housing of about 1,000 men, and the chartering of not less than four vessels of different classes.

That such aid was actually despatched from this city last night there is not the slightest doubt, and the writer of this article has personal knowledge of the fact, and that the expedition is of larger proportions, more complete outfit and equipment than all other expeditions combined, and about which so much has been said and written, is also beyond question.

To come, however, to the facts. Yesterday was a rather busy day at the various Cuban headquarters or bureaus in this city, and during the afternoon any one who had called at the different offices could not have failed to observe that all the more prominent officials were absent from their accustomed desks, and it was useless to ask for Señor this or General, that or Colonel the other. Swarthy and polite Cuban clerks and attachés replied to all these interrogatories, "He is not in." And yet everything was quiet and orderly, no flurry or excitement. The officials seemed to have acquired method in their proceeding through the experience they have had in fitting out other smaller bodies of recruits.

At the Casino in Houston street, at Cooper Hall, Jersey City, and other places where the recruits have been rendezvoused, some curious changes have taken place within the past week. On one day the establishments were full and on the next only a few, who appeared to be acting as guards, were present, while the larger squads were nowhere to be seen. This, it is understood, was in consequence of orders issued as a test to determine how many of the men would respond by their actual presence when finally ordered out for embarkation, and also to puzzle and bewilder the Spanish spies and the United States Marshal's deputies. From about two o'clock yesterday afternoon a similar manoeuvre was enacted up to nearly seven o'clock last night: the men were leaving in small squads of from two to five, and separating in various directions, or rather in all directions, and at half-past six o'clock scarcely a man was to be found at any of the barracks, which yesterday morning contained several hundred. Large numbers of these small parties crossed from New York by the Christopher, Cortlandt and Liberty street ferries to Jersey City and Hoboken, as well as by the Whitehall ferry to Staten Island. Men stationed in Jersey City and Hoboken reversed this order of things and came over to the New York side and took passage to Staten Island. The movements were kaleidoscopic in the extreme and had the precise effect they were intended to have; it was not conceived that these sporadic bands were to be assembled at a given hour in three different localities, to almost a moment of time in accuracy, and thus embark under cover of the night for their ultimate destination. None of them carried anything larger than an ordinary travelling bag, as orders had been issued to that effect, and some did not even carry as much baggage as such a receptacle would contain.

A SMALL STEAMER.

The name of which no one pretended to know, and which those who were informed would not give, after being busy in the harbor at her accustomed duties all day steamed up into the shadows of the grand old trees that dot the Elysian Fields off Hoboken about seven o'clock, and came to a mooring "for the night." Shortly afterwards a few men in groups were seen to stroll leisurely up, and after lounging on the pier and along the shore in an indifferent manner they as nonchalantly went on board the vessel, some passing from the pier, while others, taking small boats and sailing outside, passed up a small ladder which had been "negligently" hung over the outer bulwark of the vessel. A few curious idlers asked some of the men where they were going, and were told "to the fishing banks." And for an hour after darkness set in the cry, or rather the whisper, was "still they come!" About ten o'clock all were on board, and the shore was quiet save the ripple of water on the beach and the dripping of rain from the trees. The night was most propitiously dark; the atmosphere, which had been heavy and murky all day, was now hazy and semi-opaque with the drizzling shower, and all on board thought that, at least so far as the weather was concerned, fortune had indeed favored the brave on this occasion. At ten o'clock the steamer had got well out into the stream, and with the ordinary signal lights twinkling drowsily from the yards she passed down towards the Battery. Everything was very quiet on board, quieter, indeed, than the ferry-boats which she passed, and which buffeted the water with their wheels like leviathans drowning. As the unknown steamer got down opposite Trinity church, a little tugboat, a propeller, one of the "devil fish of the harbor" that run screaming about in the daytime as though they felt "so glad," spurted out from the foot of Morris street, and spalled almost in the wake of the larger vessel sped close on her heels down past Bedloe's Island and the Robin's Reef light, when both vessels shut off steam and lay to near Elm Park, Staten Island, the favorite pleasure ground. Here the little tugboat drifted lazily on top of the water, while the larger steamer went slowly alongside the pier and a number of "stragglers" came on board in the same "long drawn out" manner as those who had been taken on board at the Elysian Fields. When the vessel put off from the landing and steamed almost noiselessly through the Narrows and down the Lower Bay, and as she passed near Quarantine station she slackened speed, the little tug ran alongside and about twenty persons ascended rope ladders to the deck of the steamer. All was still, orderly and quiet on board, and in a few minutes the tug turned her bow to the city and her convoy proceeded out past Sandy Hook. Nearly

EIGHT HUNDRED MEN

were on board of her, banded together, enlisted to fight the battles of Cuban independence under the name of the "First New York Regiment."

On her deck stood, front and foremost, the dashing Union Army scout, Indian trapper and general fighter, wherever fighting is needed, Colonel W. A. C. Ryan, Captain Peters, General Spear, the Fenian cavalryman, Colonel Courrier, Captain Anderson, of Richmond, Va., and Dr. J. S. Dorset, also of Richmond, Va., and who goes out as medical director of the expedition. General Golacart, of Nicaraguan filibustering reputation, and an ardent and soldierly, though rather elderly, patriot, was reported to be among the number. The gentlemen just named formed part of the party who embarked on the tug at the foot of Morris street, they having all previously rendezvoused at the Stevens House, near Bowling Green, and within easy access of the pier. The embarkation of the men had been superintended by a number of the less notoriously known officers, principally those who had never been arrested in this city, and who were consequently less liable to be recognized by peeping officials from the Marshal's office. At midnight the expedition was fairly and clearly under way. No

ARMS OR AMMUNITION

of any kind, save a few side arms, consisting mainly of revolvers, and about two dozen Remington rifles, were on board. Nor were there any stores of particular importance, beyond what the satchels and carpet bags of the men contained, and rations sufficient to subsist the regiment for two days. Colonel Ryan on last Friday personally informed the writer, who has had several interviews with him since his escape from the Deputy Marshal, that neither arms, ammunition or stores would be taken out from this port, all the materiel of that description having been shipped on board a vessel which sailed nearly two weeks ago, and which is awaiting this expedition at sea. The vessel referred to is, beyond doubt, the Quaker City, about which such a rumpus was raised by the United States authorities a few weeks since. It will be remembered that the Quaker City furnished abundant proofs prior to her sailing, about a fortnight since, that her cargo of arms and stores were not intended for the Cubans. Nor were they indeed at that particular time and under the attendant circumstances, but the commander merely changed his mind shortly after leaving New York, and is waiting for the customer who sailed to his market last night.

THE EXPEDITION

does not number quite 800 men, exclusive of officers, but that is the estimated number of officers and men on board. Colonel Ryan is commander-in-chief, and will command the force as a regiment on their arrival in Cuba. Dr. Dorset, was formerly medical director on the staff of General Reauregard during the war, and a friend of General Jordan, who was also on the same staff, and who took out the expedition in the Perit a few weeks since.

THE REGIMENTAL FLAG

is a unique and beautiful little standard. It is of

sky blue silk, about five feet long by three feet wide, and bordered by a heavy buff fringe. The staff was of stained oak, about eight feet in length; but it was found necessary to cut off more than five feet of it last night, as it was an inconvenient article to carry about where detectives might be lurking. A small golden eagle volant surmounted the staff, and two golden cords with bullion tassels were attached therefrom.

The device of the banner was as follows:—



All the lettering was in gilt, and the arms of the State of New York were admirably executed in colors.

COLONEL RYAN,

after his escape from the United States officers on Wednesday night last, went in a carriage to the house of a friend in Brooklyn—the "friend indeed" who tied Downie in the Casino. There he cut off his long flowing hair and stained his face with iodine to darken his complexion. But three persons of the whole Cuban Junta knew of his whereabouts. At five o'clock on Thursday afternoon he was notified that it was unsafe to remain at that retreat any longer, and in the guise of an express wagon driver he went to the house of a lady friend near Clinton and Atlantic streets with a basket on his arm. Here he remained in a third story back room until Friday night, when he came to this city in the guise of a policeman without a shield, and actually took up quarters within two blocks of Ludlow street jail—where he was wanted so badly—remaining there until about nine o'clock last night, when he was driven in a carriage to the Stevens House, and proceeded thence to the tug at the foot of Morris street.