

Spain and the Cuban Crisis—Is General Grant Ready for Action?

The friendly suggestions of General Sickles to the Spanish government in reference to Cuba appear to have awakened a general outcry of wrath from all parties and factions in Spain against the United States, surpassing the warlike flare-up in England over Senator Sumner's astounding expositions of the Alabama claims. It is a shrewd trick on the part of the Spanish regency to divert the attention of the factions at home from their revolutionary schemes to the danger which menaces the "Ever Faithful Island;" but it is a trick which will serve no practical purpose. Nor will the rash resolve to add twenty thousand Spanish troops to the forces of the Captain General of Cuba. The first Napoleon sent out a formidable fleet and an army of twenty thousand men, under his brother-in-law, General Le Clerc, to reduce the rebellious blacks of St. Domingo, but the expedition turned out a disastrous failure. How, then, is Spain to succeed against the rebellious Cubans? It will be the old story of all the other Spanish-American colonies from Mexico to Chile. Spain fought them all to the last ditch, and each in its turn. She lost them all.

The absurdest of all the absurdities of Spain in this business, however, is her recent attempt at blustering after the fashion of John Bull. This game of bluff is entirely preposterous, notwithstanding the encouragement given to it through certain official or semi-official newspaper organs of England and France. We are satisfied that General Grant understands all this bluster and bravado, and that he is not frightened by it in the least degree. We think we may safely undertake to say that he does not believe that either Spain, France or England entertains any serious thoughts, in any event, of a quarrel with the United States over Cuba; that he earnestly desires to maintain friendly relations with each of those Powers; but that, if necessary to meet it, he will not shrink from the *ultima ratio regum*—an appeal to arms. A rupture between the United States and Spain would settle the Cuban question in ten days; the recognition of belligerent rights in behalf of the Cubans by General Grant would, perhaps, within twenty, certainly in thirty days, establish the independence of the island.

If it is from fear of this recognition that Spain is threatening war she is acting very foolishly. Truly do we believe that her only course of wisdom in regard to Cuba is through the friendly offices of General Grant, to get the island off her hands on the good terms which she may now command for the sake of peace. Humanity and civilization call for the active intervention of the United States in Cuba in behalf of peace. Spain has forfeited there all claims to consideration as a civilized power in prosecuting the war against the Cuban insurgents according to the practices of savages. Action, upon every consideration of humanity, justice and sound policy, is demanded from the administration to put an end to these barbarous atrocities of Spain in Cuba; and we can assure General Grant that the American people of all sections and parties are becoming impatient of longer delay, which many will understand as resulting only from indifference, ignorance or fear. We hear that General Grant, however, is preparing for action; but the action that will settle the Cuban question, no preparation, we think, is needed. A simple declaration will suffice. Is the President ready for action? If not, we, in behalf of the American people, would like to know the reason why?