

Mass Meeting at the Cooper Institute.

Immense Attendance of Cuban Sympathizers—No Orators, Yet One Too Many—How a Great Gathering Was Spoiled of Its Enthusiasm.

A mass meeting on behalf of the Cuban patriots was held last evening in the Cooper Institute. There was a crowded attendance, there being but little standing room when the proceedings commenced. Tasteful and handsome decorations gave to the hall quite a festive and lively appearance. Appropriate emblems and banners adorned the platform and vicinity, while beautiful wreaths of neatly interwoven flowers in graceful arches depended from the ceiling. Altogether the scene towards eight o'clock was very animated and was rendered not a little interesting by the presence of a number of the Cuban fair, many of whom occupied seats on the platform. The strains of national music prepared the audience in some measure for the stirring eloquence that was earnestly anticipated. Unhappily, however, those announced to speak did not, with one or two exceptions, put in an appearance. That misfortune might, to some extent, have been easily remedied, there being abundance of well known oratorical talent at hand; but with an indiscretion not by any means to be overlooked, the speaker who succeeded the chairman dived headlong into a discussion quite foreign to the subject at issue, and urged it with persistency equalled only by the unwillingness with which it was listened to. The length of time so occupied debarred a number of other speakers from delivering addresses, the consequence being that the monster gathering was suddenly dispersed.

Shortly before eight o'clock Mr. ALGERNON SULLIVAN called the meeting to order and nominated Horace Greeley as chairman.

Mr. GREELEY said he would be gratified to be allowed to make a few remarks. He was sure there was no fear of any disaster or disruption. He had a few words to say as to the gentlemen who cautioned them that this meeting was likely to bring them into collision with the government. They had no such purpose. In the long struggle between the patriots of what was called Spanish America and the mother country it was always the privilege of the people and the right of the American people to instruct their government, and it might be to instruct their government in its better purposes and resolutions. The people told the government that it was the interest and the spirit and pleasure of the people that this Continent should be continued a free republic. The people believed that they had a right to express their ideas, and they did so, not in any disrespect to their government, not in any hostility to their government, but in furtherance of what in the nature of things must be the spirit and purpose of their government. With regard to this struggle, to which they were witnesses, and with which they avowedly sympathized, he would say that in the first place it was a fact not to be belittled and far from being denied that the struggle against Spanish rule in Cuba was now some eighteen months old. In every one of those months they had been told that the rebels were crushed or about to be crushed, generally alternating—now they were just being crushed, and now they were crushed altogether. But it was well known that the insurgents were not crushed out. Now, if this struggle were taking place on a broad continent, and if there was space of thousands of miles, there might be some excuse for such statements; but they knew that the warfare took place on an island scarcely larger than the State of New York. The struggle was still prolonged, proving unmistakably that there still existed a state of belligerency there. For square yards of lying they ought to have been defeated long ago, but the continued struggle for eighteen months showed the state of belligerency, and there was now going on actual and active warfare, just as much so as there was at the beginning. Nobody could doubt that there was actual warfare going on there, and he hoped the government would believe and recognize it, for it was now high time. After alluding to the question of European colonization, showing that it was the American idea and resolution to be no longer ruled by European power, he referred to the slavery at present going on in Cuba. It was almost too late to talk about it. They already knew that Spain did not mean to abolish slavery. That was beyond all dispute. Spain had no purpose to do it, because if she had she would have done it long since. Spain had already shown that she meant to maintain slavery and insisted upon maintaining it. It was a fact that there was a convulsion going on in Cuba. Spain would maintain slavery as a part of her power. Slavery would go on in Cuba until the Spanish flag went out, and not before. Spain insisted that labor should be subservient to capital and their side; the Cuban side insisted that Cuba should sell itself and be paid for itself, and that, among other things, would be the foundation of the republic of Cuba. After some further observations Mr. Greeley introduced to the audience

Mr. CASSIUS CLAY, of Kentucky, who addressed the meeting and said that after eight years' absence in the service of his country he stood before them once more. He then referred to two incidents in his personal history, on which he wished to make some little explanation. It had been alleged against him that he was not a diplomatist, and that it had been shown this by the celebrated "Tunis" letter. He explained that he was instigated to write that letter by Fremont and Motley, and after England had declared her views by a proclamation as to belligerency. Mr. Clay referred also at some length to his major generalship of the United States Army, which he said was offered to him by President Lincoln before he (Mr. Clay) went to Russia as United States Minister. When he accepted the major generalship subsequently, he did so only in view of the interests of his native land. Passing from these merely personal topics to the Cuban question, he said the Cubans were laboring under a persecution that, compared with that of our forefathers in 1776, was liberty itself. In every country professing to be free the Habeas Corpus act was only suspended in times of great danger to liberty. The Cubans were a million and a half of people, and they have been in a state of siege. For three centuries this island has been the subject of old Spain. The liberties of Mexico and St. Domingo had been fought for before the liberties of Cuba had been thought of. Their proportion of taxation was at the rate of twenty-two dollars per head, while Spain (the mother country) only contributed seven. Yet despite this heavy taxation there were no schools nor asylums, and no great expenses on behalf of this people. In 1868, after frequent attempts at revolution, the great mass of the people remained quiescent; and their representatives were invited to meet the Spanish government and among other things agreed upon at this meeting was the removal of the iniquities of the Custom House, and the Cubans intimated that that would be sufficient. They were dismissed by the representatives of the Spanish government with kind words. The custom rates, instead of being diminished, were increased and raised to fourteen per cent. During the last two centuries no people had been so tyrannized over and oppressed as the Cuban people. There were several reasons for the spathy of the American people, one was the question of the legitimacy of the revolutionary cause, and the other was that they were advised not to touch the question of belligerency because it jeopardized the claims America had upon England in the question of "The Alabama." He wished, however, to show the people of the United States that the question of the belligerency had nothing whatever to do with the claims America had against England. He held that Mr. Seward was mistaken when he held the British nation responsible for the declaration of belligerency on the 15th of May, 1861. Upon that question America must back down, and back down entirely; for America could never recover a cent from England on that ground. England owed it to herself to declare a state of belligerency when a certain set of events had occurred. Mr. Clay then urged at great length, amid noisy demonstrations of impatience by the audience, that England had so far compromised herself by direct acts on the Alabama question as to render it inevitable that she must meet the just claims of America. Mr. Clay concluded by a few hastily gathered up sentences on behalf of Cuban freedom and brought his speech to a very abrupt close.

Resolutions were passed sympathizing with the people of Cuba, who for more than a year had carried on war against Spain in vindication of the inalienable rights of self-government; asking, also, President Grant to accord the rights of belligerency to a people struggling to free themselves from an oppressive government; asking also that the President, the Senate and the House of Representatives be requested to proclaim in legal form the existence of a state of belligerency between the Cuban patriots and the Spanish nation. Further resolutions, organizing a charitable aid society for Cuba were also passed.

Colonel BANGMAN, of New Jersey, next addressed the meeting. He believed that the interest of the American people, as well as the interest of Cuba was involved in the recognition of belligerent rights. He considered that the Cubans were more unjustly taxed and oppressed than any other people that had ever rebelled. The history of Cuba might be written in a single sentence—she had been despoiled to pay for the privilege of being robbed and returned. He did not believe in breaking any honorable compact; he would not have anything done that would cast discredit on the American flag; but on the other hand he would have it understood that while it might be an unsettled question whether the State had a conscience, there was no doubt that a nation like this had a heart, and the heart of this people beat in earnest sympathy towards a people struggling for that which they had a right to, for all people had a right to govern themselves. The speaker reviewed at some length the question of the

independence of Cuba, and strongly advocated the interference of the government to effect that object.

Mr. LIPPY very ably addressed the audience, pointing with eloquent emphasis to the struggles of France and of Ireland for liberty, and expressing his great satisfaction that he lived in America where these struggles for freedom were ended. He believed that the freedom and justice proclaimed by the Nazarene would be the policy sooner or later of the entire world. It was only in republics that the people were the fairest governed and had the fullest liberty. He also spoke on the Alabama question, and said that there would be no difficulty when the proper time came to collect the "little bill" from England. If there was any difficulty the Fenians would assist. (Cheers and laughter.)

Mr. THEODORE TOMLINSON then spoke in eloquent strains, urging a more zealous demonstration in favor of Cuban liberty.

The meeting adjourned shortly after ten o'clock.