

In the early and purer times of the American republic its citizens had reason to be proud of their country and government. It was respected, too, by all nations. The flag was hailed everywhere as the emblem of freedom and right. None but despots, monarchs and the privileged aristocratic orders of the Old World hated or were unfriendly to the United States. The mass of the people in all countries looked to this land of liberty as the hope of the world—the country which, through its example, growing power and active sympathy in the cause of freedom, should in time regenerate the world. Never did a people struggling for liberty and independence look in vain to the great American republic for encouragement. In former days oceans and continents even were no barriers to American sympathy for those who were struggling to be free. In the Polish and Hungarian insurrections, in the French, Italian and other revolutions, and in the struggle for popular rights in Ireland, England and elsewhere, the people who rose against their oppressors found a friend and a hearty God-speed in the United States. Friendly international relations with the governments or rulers against whom the people rose did not prevent the American Congress from proclaiming its sympathy with the oppressed, or of giving them every encouragement possible. Nor was the republic afraid of war in defence of the rights of its citizens. Every student of history knows that the war of independence was brought on by resistance to an unjust tax only. It is known, too, that the war of 1812 with Great Britain, the first Power in the world then, sprang from a determination to protect the flag, which had been insulted by the claim of England to the right of search. Our fathers did not weigh the consequences of war, even with the first Power of the world, when principles of right, national honor or national policy were at stake.

But how is it now? At the very time when this nation has proved itself to be the most powerful one on the earth; when no nation or combination of nations could wage successful war against it; when the greatest Powers could hardly be driven into a war with it, this mighty republic has abandoned the cause of freedom, has become the friend and ally of the worst despotism, and has failed to protect its own citizens abroad. Yes, it cringes and trembles before the threats of a third rate Power. We do not exaggerate. Look at the conduct of the government in the case of Cuba and at the outrages upon American citizens on that island. It has given effective aid to Spain to crush the Cubans, has prevented, by an overstrained vigilance, any assistance to the Cuban patriots, and has obstinately resisted the generous impulses and will of the American people in refusing to recognize the belligerency of the Cubans. And this we understand, and have reason to believe, is because the administration, or at least the Secretary of State, is afraid of war with Spain. The cunning and bragging Spaniards have made this timid administration and weak man in the State Department tremble. The same tactics the Spaniards have followed in Cuba—the tactics of bombast and falsehood—to suppress the insurrection they have used effectively at Washington. The same is being tried upon the press and people of this country. But they will fail here, for the independent American press cannot be influenced in that way, and neither it nor the people are as cowardly as the administration. As a specimen of the bombastic and mendacious tactics of the Spaniards we publish the following letter just sent to us by

AN INDIGNANT SPANIARD.
NEW YORK, Feb. 12, 1870.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—
In to-day's HERALD you write again on the Cuban question and you manifest the same nonsense than ever in all your articles. It seems to me incredible that public writers of a newspaper, whose editors claim to be a leading journal, state so many blunders in order to mislead the people. You say that the policy of the government should be open and broad, declaring belligerent rights to the Cubans. Where are the cities, towns and ports of the rebels to declare belligerent rights, as provided by the international laws of all nations? This is to talk like a child, without sense of any kind. If Congress grants belligerent rights to the Cubans the Spanish government has the right of search to all American vessels not only on the line of blockade but on the high seas, and this would be worse for the American commerce. This right of the Spanish government is provided in the treaty of the year 1795, and would be enforced by our navy. You say that a war with Spain would be like a child's play, and you would take possession of all Spanish America in less than one month. What a nonsense. The whole American nation could not take possession of any Spanish domain if the government and people of Spain are willing to defend them as they are now. Your navy that you call powerful cannot compete with ours in any respect, and I am sure that if the two nations were at war you would suffer the worse of it, because our iron-clads are newer and so well built and officered that you cannot present one in all your navy capable of making any harm at all to any of them. If the Americans could land in any Spanish possession they would fight in battles, and this is the best of all for our disciplined soldiers. The war in Cuba has not ended, because they always fly from place to place in large and small bands, and our soldiers cannot find them at all ready to fight. This state of war cannot be ended as in pitched battles, and it is necessary to hunt them like wild beasts in their places of concealment.
SERAFIN BUSTO, 157 Pearl street.

It would be superfluous labor to attempt to answer this exalted Spaniard, and we only notice the letter to show the ignorance, bombastic pretensions and folly of the Spaniards, and the sort of stuff which has made Mr. Secretary Fish, other members of the administration and Mr. Sumner tremble in their boots. We can hardly think General Grant has sunk so low. We cannot believe that the man who proposed to march an army across the Rio Grande to drive the French out of Mexico—that he who was ready to measure swords with the first Power in Europe—is afraid of a third rate and demoralized nation like Spain. A war with Spain would be really—in the language the indignant Spaniard has given us credit for—but child's play to the United States. No Spaniard could put his foot on the soil of this republic to do any damage if there were war. We would soon have a navy out that would make short work of the boasted Spanish iron-clads and other war vessels. We would seize the possessions of Spain in America, and that would indemnify us for the war, and, if necessary to proceed to extremities, we would lay Cadiz and the other seaboard cities of Spain in ashes. As to the question of the right of search Spain would have, should we recognize the belligerency of the Cubans, under a treaty of 1795, as the writer of the above letter asserts, the sooner we abolish such an absurd treaty, if it really exists, the better. Let us get rid at once and forever of all these Old World trammels as far as the American Continent and its islands are concerned. The time has come when we should have no more treaties or trouble with European nations on questions affecting

America. Henceforth our motto should be "America for the Americans," and we should inaugurate a bold and comprehensive policy to separate Europe and European governmental influence from this hemisphere. We are in a position to do this; we ought to do it, and it is the true policy for the United States to pursue.

Do we want an opportunity in the case of Cuba? Does not the blood of American citizens—of those young men from New York, Greenwall, Foster, Johnson and Gardner, who were fired upon by the brutal volunteers—give the government the opportunity to demand the cessation of Spanish rule in Cuba? Do not the multiplied and continued outrages on our citizens in that island, the interests of our commerce and a true American policy, call upon the government to seize the present occasion for ending Spanish rule there? As long as Cuba belongs to Spain we shall have trouble about the island. It has been, in fact, a constant source of trouble with Europe. The time has arrived when we can end all that. Give the Cubans that fair chance to which they are entitled, and let the sympathies of our people have fair play in this struggle of American liberty against European despotism, and the question will be settled without involving the necessity of war with Spain. Should Spain, however, make it a case of war, better that than submit to occupy our present anomalous and humiliating position and see Cuba lost. Will the President overrule the cowardly policy of Secretary Fish with regard to Cuba? Will Congress carry out the will of the people and boldly declare for the freedom of Cuba? Have we any statesmen of large views and with courage and ability enough to demand, in the name of the people, the independence and annexation of the Gem of the Antilles?