

Annexation in the West Indies—The President and Congress.

It will be seen by our correspondence from St. Domingo and the news on the subject of the treaty of annexation, published in another part of the paper, that the wish to be annexed and under the protecting flag of the United States is almost universal among the people of the island. Wherever a vote had been taken on the question an overwhelming majority was in favor of that. General Grant, too, it is evident, earnestly desires the annexation of St. Domingo and the completion of the bargain the State Department made to that end. On Tuesday night the President, it is said, called Secretary Fish and Senators Carpenter, Patterson, Ferry, Ross, Sprague, Morrill, Pratt, Tipton, Gilbert, Cragin, Revels, Rice, Abbott, Howe and Harris to the White House to confer with him on the subject of the St. Domingo treaty. The same day he and a portion of the Cabinet, it is reported, were at the Capitol using their influence to get the treaty ratified. We know that he has been a good deal at the Capitol lately, and have no doubt that this was one of the objects that took him there. Nor is it merely because General Grant does not wish to see his foreign policy and the acts of his administration defeated that he is so anxious about the St. Domingo treaty; he has, we believe, a larger view of the matter than that. He regards the annexation of St. Domingo as an important step to the acquisition of Cuba. To use a military simile, he thinks this would be an excellent flank movement. He is pursuing the same tactics with regard to Cuba and the West Indies generally as he did when he sent General Sherman on that stupendous raid through Georgia and South Carolina as a co-operative and flank movement on Richmond. He believes that with St. Domingo in our possession Cuba could not long remain under Spanish rule, even if the present revolution in that island should fail, and that, in fact, it would have an important moral effect in favor of Cuban independence and annexation. In this matter, then, the President has a statesmanlike foresight, and is pursuing a comprehensive policy. Mr. Seward, when Secretary of State, had similar views. His expression that the islands of the West Indies were the buttresses of the American republic showed this, and his negotiation for the island of St. Thomas was a part of the same policy. General Grant, however, begins nearer home, and proposes to take territory that is more valuable in itself and more important in a strategical point of view.

The Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, under the control, in a great measure, of Mr. Sumner, does not seem to comprehend the policy of the President or to have any sympathy with his views. Mr. Sumner is the "Old Man of the Sea," who has no idea of the destiny of this country, who is opposed to its natural progress, who stands in the way of our development southward, and whose mind is narrowed down to petty local things. The difficulty about both the St. Domingo treaty, and probably about the St. Thomas treaty also, as well as concerning the recognition of the Cuban revolution, lies chiefly with this narrow-minded Senator. How humiliating to think that the Senate of the United States should be controlled in such important matters touching the progress and interests of the republic by this man. We hope Senators will show hereafter more sense, patriotism and independence. Mr. Sumner is a croaker, an obstacle and a dead weight in our noble ship of state, and the best thing his colleagues can do is to throw him overboard.

The time has come when this country is called upon to take a bold and comprehensive policy with regard to the whole of the West Indies and the Continent of America. Our depressed commerce can find there a vast field for development. The West Indies, particularly the most productive of them, as Cuba and St. Domingo, if they belonged to the United States, would do much to revive and increase our commerce, to enlarge our tonnage and employ our shipping and to add greatly to the variety of our products. We could become the first sugar and coffee producing country of the world, as we now are the first in cotton production, besides obtaining a great number of other products of the tropics. These possessions would give us, too, the naval and military command of the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and all the channels of commerce to and through the West Indies and with Central and South America. Nothing is plainer than that these islands, in a political, strategical and commercial point of view, ought to belong to this mighty republic. We neglect our destiny and interests if we do not seize every opportunity to dispossess European Powers of the Antilles and to annex them to this country. Let us hope the Senate, and the House of Representatives as well, will sustain the President in his efforts to acquire St. Domingo and to make a flank movement upon Cuba. Now is the time to pursue a bold and comprehensive policy with regard to the West Indies and American interests generally in this hemisphere.