

# THE ALTAR OF LIBERTY.

## Enthusiastic Cuban Meeting at Irving Hall— Spontaneous Offerings to the Cause of Free- dom—The Daughters of the "Queen of the Antilles" Rivalling the Women of Carthage.

Once more have the fair daughters of Cuba given evidence of the sincerity of their sympathies for the noble cause of the freedom of their native soil. Not even the rage of the storm that prevailed last evening could restrain their ardor to answer the appeal made on behalf of their struggling brethren. The impulsive Southern blood that flows through their veins shone forth prominently, not in flowery words, but in acts of sacrifice, of self-abnegation. Jewels and trinkets, even to articles so much prized by young ladies of all classes, were indiscriminately deposited upon the altar of freedom, and one and all came forward to offer a tribute to the flag of the republic of Cuba. It must, however, not be supposed that the ladies alone contributed to this noble cause. Cuba was well represented, and that also by men, both colored and white, who were eager in their mutual congratulations respecting the anticipated succor that would accrue to those who are shedding their blood upon the field of battle. At eight o'clock General Quesada, accompanied by Colonel Varona, Chaplain M. French and a few friends, ascended the platform and were greeted with hearty cheers by the audience. After a short prelude performed by a military band the General advanced and addressed the meeting. In his speech he stated that since his arrival in this city he had constantly hoped to have an opportunity to address the Cubans resident here, united. Business connected with promises made to his brothers in arms, however, had hitherto prevented him from carrying out his project. Could they for a moment doubt the love he bore towards them, or his devotion to his country? Schooled in misfortune, a poor soldier of fortune, he could not command eloquence and would therefore make no pretensions. Calumnious reports had been spread respecting him, and more than once had reached his ear, but he had a salve for all such evils, and that was forgiveness. Moreover, such trifles could not raise obstacles in his path when he was striving to convert

### SLAVERY INTO THE PARADISE OF LIBERTY.

Soon he hoped to return to his country, and felt sure that he would not go alone. He was strong in the conviction that all good patriots would join him under the banner of independence. If they would be spared to live their lot would be freedom; if doomed to die it would be immortality.

Colonel VARONA next rose, and, in an eloquent and telling speech, warmed up his hearers to the real object of the meeting. Touching upon the misguided rule of Spain he laid stress upon the necessity of providing means wherewith to complete the aim of the insurrection in Cuba. Especially the wealthy Cubans should consider this fact. The lower classes can be excused in many cases on account of ignorance, but in the presence of education and wealth there was none. If support is granted it must be effective. Several obstacles had presented themselves in this country to the recognition of the Cubans as belligerents, such as

### SUMNER, FISH AND THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.

and that was generally well known. If the necessary means were forthcoming they would soon possess a flourishing island. If not it would be an island of ashes and

### ONE HUGE CEMETERY.

The cross had to be borne, and it were better that each one should bear his share cheerfully and contribute his mite.

General QUESADA now proposed that some members of the audience should come forward, even ladies, for in the cause of freedom they had shown themselves fully equal to the men.

General ARISMENDI, of Venezuela, presented himself and addressed a few words expressive of the high sentiments he entertained of the cause of Cuba and his desire to aid it by his personal efforts.

Señor HOSTOS, of Porto Rico, was the next speaker, and his appeal was most effective. Alluding to the struggle now being carried on in the Spanish colonies in the West Indies he argued how useless such efforts must be unless effectively aided by the requisite means. He also touched upon the coolness that had been shown to the cause of freedom by those whose duty it was to sacrifice their all for the independence of their native soil. Complaints had been made respecting the inefficient action of the Junta, but the reason was simply that it had not the necessary means at its disposal. The present situation was serious in the extreme, and he hoped that all would understand what was wanted.

Chaplain M. FRENCH then rose and addressing the meeting expressed the fervency of the love he bore for the Cuban cause. He hoped that the day was not far distant when they would all meet in Liberty Hall in the city of Havana.

### THE CAPITAL OF FREE CUBA.

The government of the United States had many difficulties to contend with; but he was sure that the Cuban cause had the sympathies of Senators, members of Congress and the American people in general. The cause of freedom would ever be blessed with divine protection, and that fact had been verified in the late war in this country. Even in spite of the protection granted to the South by France, England and other Powers, liberty had triumphed. If Cuba can free herself single-handed so much the more to her credit. As to Spain, she is poor indeed, and it would be an act of kindness towards her on the part of the United States government to recognize the Cuban insurgents as belligerents. Surely no nobler cause could exist than that of liberating a sister country from the yoke of oppression, and as such he appealed to all those who could afford to lend. It would be money well invested and sure to receive a good return.

Señor SERAFIO RECIO then arose and in a short and eloquent speech alluded to the sacrifices made by the Roman women, and earnestly called upon each one to aid the cause of freedom, even were it ever so trifling.

Here the speaker deposited his gold watch and diamond ring upon the Cuban flag that covered the table amidst thundering applause. When the cheering and clapping of hands had somewhat subsided he added that he sincerely hoped that that diamond might be converted into powder that would prove as terrible in its effects as the lustre of a diamond excelled everything else in brightness.

General Quesada stepped forward and deposited his watch in like manner, and then followed a scene that probably has never before been witnessed in this city or land. Offerings came rushing in from all sides.

### WATCHES, DIAMONDS AND TRINKETS

were hurriedly grasped in the enthusiasm of the moment, and all were anxious to be foremost to give positive evidence of their devotion to the cause of their struggling brethren. Thundering cheers rent the air as each successive gift was handed up, and great was the excitement caused in cautiously catching the many objects that were handed from the gallery. In fact the allusion to the women of sparta proved that not only were such acts to be found among the ancients, but that noble hearts still exist, and can be found in our midst, when called upon, to assist a noble cause.

When the commotion had cooled down General Quesada thanked the donors in the name of his country, remarking that being unable to express his gratitude he could only assure them all that he had a heart to love them and a sword to defend them.

Señor Hostos remarked that such enthusiasm was better than flowing words; it was effective. The events of the evening would be handed down in history as a phase in the history of Cuba.

The meeting concluded by Chaplain M. French handing his watch to General Quesada, remarking that, as a soldier, he must keep his men up to time, and begging him to use it with that intent, to be returned when they met again in Liberty Hall in Havana.

It was difficult to form an exact idea of the value of the articles presented, but a rough guess would induce the estimate of at least between \$8,000 and \$10,000 having been collected last evening.