

Sympathy for Cuba in Congress.

The outburst of sympathy for Cuba in Congress on Tuesday was very significant, and the more so because it was unexpected at the time. The feelings of the members of the House seem to have been pent up by inaction on the part of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and by long waiting for some decisive action in favor of Cuban independence. They were restrained too, no doubt, by a desire on the part of the republicans not to embarrass or push the administration on the Cuban question. But there was a limit to this forbearance and long waiting. The House became impatient, and the instant an opportunity occurred, though the question came up in an indirect manner, there was a spontaneous burst of eloquent invective from all sides against Spanish atrocities, the pusillanimous conduct of the Secretary of State, and the disgrace that had been brought upon the republic. Seldom has there been heard in the halls of Congress more eloquent and earnest language. The denunciation of Spanish cruelty and impudence, of the slaughter of American citizens in Cuba, and of our government for not protecting them, was severe in the extreme. The sentiment of the American people in favor of the struggling Cubans and against the worst despotism in the world found utterance through the Representatives in Congress. General Banks, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, who has had charge of the various resolutions offered on Cuban matters, was brought to his feet in the most apologetic manner. With the noblest instincts and earnest desire to favor the Cuban cause for independence, he has delayed action out of regard to the administration. He has been the victim of the weak and temporizing policy, and probably of the misrepresentations also, of the State Department. His friendly feeling for the administration, and his desire not to embarrass it, got the better of his judgment and noble sentiments. But he was told plainly there was no obstacle to any report he might make, and that it was his own fault that decisive action had not been taken with regard to Cuba.

As to the assaults upon Consul Phillips by Mr. Garfield, they had nothing really to do with the question. Mr. Phillips was the American Consul—the representative of his country—and his private affairs, though probably misrepresented for effect, had nothing to do with the gross insult to the flag and republic in his person. Nor had they anything to do, as General Logan properly said, with the shooting of American citizens by the blood-thirsty Spaniards. The flag of the United States has been humbled. It could not protect either our citizens or the representative of the republic. Mr. Phillips was compelled to implore the protection of the British flag and to escape under its folds. What a humiliation to this great country! Then, as to the struggle for liberty in Cuba, General Logan well remarked, "No government has ever yet sat so quiet as the present administration while a struggle was going on between oppression and liberty." Mr. Voorhees "implored the members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, who had access to that fossil or dead man who presided over the State Department, to tell him that the blood of American citizens was crying from the ground for action—against his imbecility, sloth and want of regard for the honor, glory and safety of this once great and honored republic." The Cuban question is not a party one either in or out of Congress. The best and most ardent republicans are in favor of Cuba, as well as the democrats, and this animated debate showed that. There is no doubt, too, that General Grant heartily favors the cause of the Cuban patriots. This was clearly shown while General Rawlins was alive and a member of the Cabinet. But he has deferred to the Secretary of State and has been misled by him, probably. The cause of liberty in Cuba so far, and all the great interests we have and feel in it, have been sacrificed apparently through the evil influence of those who are near the Secretary. There is reason to fear that Spanish gold to agents in this country who had the ear of the Secretary of State has been the price of much of the blood spilled and many of the atrocities in Cuba. The United States has only to say the word and Spanish barbarities will cease, and, in the end, Cuba will be free. But if the government has not heart and courage enough to say that word, let it at least protect Americans in Cuba. Let not this republic be despised throughout the civilized world for its weakness and indifference to the fate of its citizens and honor of the flag.