

Cuba—Congress, the President and His Secretary of State.

General Banks, of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, it is expected, will shortly introduce, perhaps to-day, some resolutions from the committee, suggesting to the President a bolder and more definite line of policy on the Cuban question than that which has been and still is pursued by our present easy-going, do-nothing and "waiting-for-something-to-turn-up" Secretary of State. The other day, in the House, when, on a motion to strike out from an appropriation bill the item for the consulate at Santiago de Cuba, Mr. Voorhees, of Indiana, opened his batteries on the atrocities of the Spanish authorities of the island, and against the humiliating, shilly-shally and anti-American course of our State Department in this business, his earnest denunciations—so far awakened the genuine American sentiment of the House that if in the glow of the general excitement a resolution had been offered conceding belligerent rights to the Cubans it would doubtless have been adopted by acclamation.

We expect a report from General Banks and his committee to some extent representing this general Cuban sentiment of the House. At the tail end of the last session of Congress one of the last acts of the House was the passing, unanimously, a joint resolution (which went over in the Senate) authorizing the President to proclaim belligerent rights in behalf of the struggling Cubans, and assuring him in this proceeding of the support of Congress and the country. We may safely say, therefore, that if during the present session the House Committee on Foreign Affairs has made no report upon this Cuban question it is because General Banks, from a courteous respect for the representations and assurances of Mr. Secretary Fish, and in deference to the wishes of the President, has been patiently waiting for "something to turn up" until the patience of the House is exhausted.

Several months ago, from an official or semi-official reconnoissance and report on the situation of the belligerents in Cuba, we were assured that the insurrection was substantially at an end; that all that was left of it was an insignificant gang or two of banditti in the mountains; that these banditti were so hedged in that they could do nothing, and that, with some twenty thousand Spanish troops on the island and a Spanish fleet patrolling the coast, law and order would soon be re-established from one end to the other. More recently some of the principal Cuban chiefs have left the island and come to this country—a fact, which, *prima facie* of itself, would seem to be conclusive against their cause. Yet, from the representations of General Jordan, it appears that in numbers the fighting Cubans still on hand could speedily finish the great work they have undertaken if they were only one half supplied with arms, and that, even with the insufficient and inefficient weapons with which they have been and are fighting, they are competent to prolong the struggle indefinitely. At all events, the best news that the Spanish authorities at Havana can furnish us now embraces, with the daily surrender of squads of insurgents, executions of others by the half dozen at a time, and the burning of sugar plantations by the squads who still keep the field.

We have not been, however, so much disappointed in the assurances from Washington of the end of the Cuban insurrection as in our expectations of something from Spain in the way of a settlement through the diplomacy of Mr. Fish. It has been a long time since we have had even a hint of anything going on between General Sickles and the government at Madrid. In short, from all that we see and hear, Mr. Secretary Fish is satisfied with things as they are going on, because he thinks they are tending to the restoration of the full authority of Spain over Cuba, and because he is opposed to the acquisition of the island. We apprehend that this is the secret of his unsatisfactory Cuban policy—opposition to the annexation of the island—and he opposes it, no doubt, because it involves a programme of annexation and expansion entirely too large for his conservative notions of our foreign policy.

Mr. Secretary Fish, then, is behind the age, and too far behind the public sentiment of the country for the State Department. We have seen enough of his feeble statesmanship in the matter of the permit to the Canadian steamer *Chicora* to pass through the Sault Ste. Marie canal to satisfy us upon this point. He is a most amiable, pleasant and excellent man; but he is not the man for the State Department in these progressive times. The House of Representatives, we have reason to think, is of the same opinion, and if, from its approaching action on the Cuban question we are favored with a change or two in the Cabinet, we shall hail it as an event upon which to congratulate the President, Congress and the country.