

The Cuban Question—General Grant, Congress and the Republican Party.

The President gained an important victory yesterday in Congress on the Cuban question, in the adoption—103 to 86—of a harmless substitute for the resolutions of General Banks, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the substitute resolution being as follows:—

That the President is hereby authorized to remonstrate against the barbarous manner in which the war in Cuba has been conducted, and, if he shall deem it expedient, to solicit the co-operation of other governments in such measures as he may deem necessary to secure from both contending parties an observance of the laws of war recognized by all civilized nations.

This is equivalent to the adoption of the President's late special message on the subject, not only by the House, but by the republican party of the House; for only a small minority of that party voted in the negative. Several important points are thus established. First, the President is sustained by Congress and by his party, which is the responsible party in Congress. Second, his position is strengthened in Congress as the head and executive embodiment of his party in reference to the Presidential succession. Third, he is strengthened in the general policy of his administration—peace, progress, retrenchment, the lessening of our burden of taxes and the redemption of the public debt. Fourth, the attention of Spain and the civilized world is called, in a voice which cannot be disregarded, to "the barbarous manner in which the war in Cuba has been conducted." Fifth, it is left to the President's discretion whether to invite or not the co-operation of other nations in a remonstrance on this subject, and whether he shall or shall not reorganize his Cabinet for a new departure.

This resolution, then, may be well pronounced not only a great victory for the sound administrative policy of General Grant, but a most important victory for the republican party itself over the strong and dangerous temptation to go filibustering into Cuba. We find in some of our democratic exchanges the hope expressed of such a split among the republicans as must result in shelving General Grant as a candidate for the succession. For instance, one of these prophetic democratic organs says that Grant, "in his weakness and political inexperience, has suffered himself to be estranged from the really shrewd and cunning politicians of his party, and has entrusted his fortunes in the hands of a clique quite as selfish and arbitrary, but at the same time infinitely weaker in skill and resources," and that, "following the dictation of these men, Grant has lost what little popularity he had with the people, and has effectually spoiled all his chances for a renomination."

Here the great difficulty which most perplexes the democratic wirepullers for the succession is frankly confessed. It is Grant. If he were only out of the way the course would be clear. How can we shelve him? The only way is to foment discords in the republican camp and bring about such a split as will divide the party upon two candidates in 1872, or rule Grant off the track. This, then, is the game of the democratic leaders and organs; and as all things are fair in war they must be allowed to play it. The same game, however, was played against Jackson, and against Lincoln for a second term, but in both cases it signally failed. While the democracy, therefore, are manoeuvring to bring about the shelving of Grant, they will be acting very foolishly if they neglect to consider the overwhelming probabilities of his nomination for another term. So far they have done nothing in recognition of the "fixed facts" with which in 1872 they will have to deal—facts inevitably demanding a great change from the Tammany programme of 1868.

Meantime the only safe position the republicans can occupy is that of adhesion to Grant's administration, and their only available candidate for '72 is Grant, on his safe and trusty platform of peace, progress, development of our resources, retrenchment of expenses and taxes, and redemption of the debt. This is admitted by the responsible party in the decisive House vote on this Cuban question. It is an admission that Congress cannot now afford to run the risk of raising the price of gold and embarrassing our financial affairs and the business affairs of the country by filibustering resolutions; that there is no necessity for war declarations or materials for Wall street panics for the benefit of unscrupulous speculators and stock jobbers; that the administration must be sustained in fostering the interests of peace, productive industry, European emigration to our shores, financial steadiness and public confidence in our national treasury, and the payment of the national debt. These are the great duties assumed by General Grant, the grand objects to which it is his policy to make all other questions subordinate, and upon this policy he will be sustained by the country. The Alabama claims will keep, and if it does not settle itself meantime we can, with our way clear before us, settle the Cuban question at any time hereafter. St. Domingo is offered as a great bargain, involving no foreign difficulty, and hence General Grant has earnestly labored for this desirable annexation. He will not, however, quarrel with the Senate about it; for he has no notion of repeating the follies of Andy Johnson.

General Grant, in a word, is the right man in the right place at this crisis of peace, as he was in the crisis of the war. He has certain great objects before him now, as he had then, and he sticks to the grand peace idea of settling the debt as he stuck to the grand war idea of capturing the army of Lee. As all his combinations of the war, near and remote, great and small, were directed to the capture of Lee's army, so now all his measures of policy are made subordinate to the payment of the national debt. Upon this grand idea his administration is secure, and his safe and saving policy will command the approval of the country, and the House of Representatives so understands it in endorsing him on the Cuban question.