

It will be seen by our telegraphic news today from two different and important points—from Washington and Madrid—that questions relating to Cuba and Spanish rule in the Antilles create a great deal of interest. They are like ghosts that have been raised and obstinately refuse to be put down, even by holy water. If they cannot be solved by government they will solve themselves. Negro slavery in the Antilles is doomed, and white political slavery to European domination there is near its end. The news we refer to from Madrid is that of the vote of the Cortes refusing to abolish slavery, and from Washington the resolutions of Mr. Sumner in the Senate yesterday, declaring the sentiments of the people of the United States concerning Spain and her island colonies lying in American waters.

The question relative to emancipating the slaves in the Spanish colonies came up in the Cortes in Committee of the Whole on Señor Moret's bill for gradual emancipation. Señor Castellar proposed an amendment for immediate abolition. This amendment was negatived by a vote of 78 nays to 48 yeas. Thus the Spanish Cortes has emphatically refused to abolish slavery. The Cortes then adjourned till the 31st of October, and Señor Moret's bill was postponed. But while Spain upholds slavery and shows that she is behind the age, the Cubans themselves have abolished the institution as far as their power extends over their native island. Of this there can be no doubt. The twenty-fourth article of the constitution of the Cuban republic, which was adopted by the constitutional convention and unanimously approved by the Cuban Congress at Guimaro on the 10th of April, 1869, declares, "All the inhabitants of the republic of Cuba are absolutely free." This marked difference between the conduct of the Spaniards, who rule Cuba with a rod of iron, and that of the Cuban patriots on the subject of slavery ought to inspire sympathy and admiration for the brave and liberal Cubans throughout the length and breadth of the American republic as well as throughout the civilized world.

It is remarkable that about the same time the Spanish Cortes refused by a decisive vote to abolish slavery Mr. Sumner, without knowing that fact, introduced into the United States Senate resolutions strongly condemnatory of the existence of that institution in the Spanish colonies and of the atrocious conduct of the war in Cuba. If we mistake not the news from Madrid will have a powerful influence upon Congress when Mr. Sumner's resolutions come up for action. It is gratifying to know that this distinguished Senator and chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs has taken such a bold step in favor both of the emancipation of the negroes in Cuba and the independence of the island. He is now following the impulses of his nature and acting in accordance with his previous history in favor of freedom and a high-toned American policy.

The resolutions Mr. Sumner submitted declare that the people of the United States cannot hear with indifference the reports of barbarous outrages which reach them constantly from the neighboring island of Cuba; that they protest against the repetition of such acts, and, in the name of humanity, they solemnly insist that these things shall cease; that they are pained to hear that the pretension of property in man is still upheld in the island colonies of Spain lying in American waters; that human beings endowed by nature with the right of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness are held as slaves; that instead of terminating this pretension at once the Spanish government propose to protract it for an indefinite period by an impossible system of graduation, and that this spectacle is offensive to all who love republican institutions, and especially to the United States, who now, in the name of justice and for the sake of good neighborhood, ask that slavery shall cease. The resolutions declare also that the United States, being once colonies, achieved independence by successful resistance to the European Power claiming to govern them; that their example was followed by the Spanish colonies on the Continent of America; that already the same aspirations for independence begin to stir in the neighboring colonies of Great Britain; that these instances are in harmony with the spirit of the age; that the day of European colonies in this hemisphere has passed, and that, impressed by this conviction, the people of the United States regret to witness the extraordinary efforts of the Spanish government, by violence and blood, to maintain the unnatural jurisdiction in Cuba forbidden by the great law of progress and hostile to the best interests of both parties. Then the resolutions state that the people of the United States declare their sympathy with their fellow Americans in Cuba struggling for independence, as well as for the people of Spain in their efforts to establish liberal institutions, and they call upon Spain to recognize at once the right of Cubans to govern themselves. The President of the United States is charged with the duty of communicating these resolutions to the government of Spain.

It is unnecessary to add anything to these manly and truly American sentiments. They will find a hearty response throughout the whole country. Their moderation, too, cannot fail to make an impression abroad. Nor have we any doubt that General Grant heartily sympathizes with them, however much he may have been misled in this Cuban question or however anxious he may be to avoid difficulties or complications with Spain. If the government of Spain is not hopelessly stupid and insensible to the friendly conduct of our government it will appreciate both the dignified position of this republic and the good advice given on the subject of Cuba. It was not fear of Spain or of war that has led the administration to a policy of abstention and restraint with regard to Cuba—that induced it to oppose popular sentiment—but it was influenced by a high regard for the national honor and with the hope that Spain would come to terms for granting the independence or cession of Cuba. No one doubts that if the United States would indirectly aid the Cubans, and that without violating international law or obligations, Cuba would conquer her own independence; but our government would prefer a peaceful and amicable settlement of the question, either by purchase or otherwise. That, we judge, is the policy of

the administration. But the question is rapidly culminating and cannot be postponed or ignored indefinitely. The Cubans will keep up the struggle and a fearful amount of blood may be shed unnecessarily. Can Spain be made to see that Cuba is lost to her? That is the question. As little faith can be given to her promises as to the Spanish reports of the war in Cuba. The government must not be too credulous or hope too much from pretended negotiations for the independence or cession of Cuba. The only course to pursue on this subject is for the government to maintain a dignified and firm attitude, and, while it honorably observes international obligations, not to forget what is due to public sentiment, to the cause of republican freedom and to that broad policy which claims America for the Americans, so well expressed in Mr. Sumner's resolutions.