

The Report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on Cuba.

The readers of the HERALD have read, no doubt, the very able report of General Banks from the House Committee on Foreign Affairs relative to Cuba, which we published yesterday. This important document will be presented to Congress, it is said, next Monday week. It is one of the most statesmanlike, comprehensive and exhaustive public papers ever prepared for Congress or submitted to the people. There seemed to have been unnecessary delay in working up this matter in the committee, and both the House of Representatives and the public became impatient. There has been some dissatisfaction manifested toward General Banks even for delaying to make the report. But every one will see now that great care and labor have been bestowed in preparing the matter and putting it in shape, and that General Banks comes up fully to the expectations of the country. There will be, undoubtedly, an interesting debate on the subject when the report is submitted to Congress, and the House, probably, will pass some resolution in accordance with the facts and views presented.

The report is a complete refutation of the mendacious and constantly reiterated statements of the Spanish authorities at Cuba and Madrid and the Spanish agents here about the Cuban insurrection being on its last legs. For nearly two years the American people and the world have been hearing these falsehoods. Being unable to put down the insurrection by arms the policy of the Spaniards has been to deceive the world, and particularly the American people and government, by the grossest and most persistent misrepresentation. The very fact that the war has continued so long shows how utterly unreliable the statements, boastings and promises of the Spaniards have been. We shall continue to hear, no doubt, the same old story—for the Spaniards have unbounded faith in the credulity and gullibility of the rest of mankind—but who after this will believe them? Indeed, no intelligent and unprejudiced American has believed their statements about affairs in Cuba.

And what are the facts? In October, 1868, the Cubans began the war for independence with less than two hundred armed men. In one month after they had nearly ten thousand, and in two months twelve thousand. They have now twenty thousand well armed men. There are sixty thousand enrolled and drilled and waiting for arms. The Cubans claim that with a supply of arms they can put into the field, if necessary, three times that force, and all the reports from those who have been engaged in the struggle or know the state of things in Cuba show that this claim is well founded. There is scarcely a native Cuban who does not earnestly desire independence or who would not fight for it if he had the opportunity. The negroes as well as the whites, and even the Chinese, are animated by the same feeling. It would be strange, indeed, if this were not so; for there never was a worse despotism than that of Spain over Cuba, or a more bloody and ferocious war than the Spaniards are waging against the Cubans. The patriots have never lost sight of the object they have in view, and, to use the words of General Banks in his report, "from the declaration of Cuban independence at Yara to this hour there has not been a week, and scarcely a day, which has not been marked in the calendar of war by fierce and bloody contests. No revolution presents a more constant and determined struggle." It is a record of long continued existence of civil war. But, more than that, it is a war that has shown in a remarkable manner the military skill and fighting qualities of the Cubans. At the time the Spanish government and officials in Cuba were promising a speedy termination of the war the Cubans defeated their best generals—Puerto and Goyeneche—in a concerted campaign under Valmaseda. Puerto lost thirteen hundred men and Goyeneche two thousand seven hundred. Surely this is evidence enough, as General Banks says in his report, "of the spirit and capacity of the Cubans for successful warfare." What other proofs do we want of a state of war in which the insurgents are a respectable belligerent power with a good chance of success?

Has not the Spanish campaign in Cuba thus far failed? General Sickles, our Minister at Madrid, writes to the Secretary of State at home and proclaims this fact. This was about the time the Spanish gunboats were being prepared in our ports to suppress the insurrection. After telling Mr. Fish the campaign was a failure he adds, "Their (the Spaniards') great reliance is now on the gunboats from the United States." What a humiliating confession! What a stain upon this free and republican country that the only hope of Spain to crush the rising liberties of an American people was in the gunboats which this country supplied! But the gunboats have done their best, and still the insurrection survives and has a better prospect than ever. No other facts are needed to show that the Cubans are entitled, according to the practice and law of nations, to recognition as a belligerent power.

But there are other considerations which should have weight with Congress and the administration at Washington. The war, as conducted by the Spaniards, is brutal in the extreme. Their conduct of it ought to place them in the position of barbarians and outside the pale of civilization. We need not recapitulate the monstrous atrocities of the Spanish authorities and volunteers. They are stated in the report and are well known through the press. If nothing else could induce our government to interfere these should; for we, as one of the great nations of the world, should defend the rights of humanity and principles of civilization. Then, our own citizens in Cuba have been outraged and massacred by the Spaniards with impunity. The representatives of the American government even have been compelled to flee for their lives and to seek refuge under a foreign flag. Our weak and timid Secretary of State was compelled to admit in a despatch to Mr. Sickles at Madrid, dated June 29, 1869, that "the Spanish authorities in Cuba are impotent for the protection of the lives of our citizens." Never was a great nation so humiliated before by the weakness, incapacity and indecision of the government as ours has been. We might advert to the sympathy of the people of this country for the Cubans, or any other Americans struggling

for republican freedom; to the vast commercial, national and material interests we have in the independence and annexation of Cuba, as well as to the policy which our destiny clearly points out in the present crisis in that island, to show that we ought to give all the aid possible to the insurgent patriots; but all this is apparent to every right-thinking and patriotic American.

The able report of General Banks, which is highly creditable to his head and heart, cannot fail to have a great influence upon Congress and the people as well as abroad. It will enlighten and convince European nations as to the feeling and position of this country on the Cuban question. It will inspire the Cuban patriots to renewed exertions. It will go far to convince Spain that she must part with Cuba. It may lead to a change in General Grant's Cabinet; for how can Secretary Fish presume to hold office with such a damaging record against his un-American and weak policy in this matter? Both the American people and foreign nations will look with deep interest upon the action of Congress when the report of General Banks from the Committee on Foreign Affairs is reported.