

The agitation on the subject of the abolition of slavery in Cuba has already been opened. At the request of the Captain General a large number of planters assembled at the palace to discuss the question. This movement on the part of De Rodas, in calling together those most directly concerned in the employment of slave labor, was the result of instructions received from Madrid, and is therefore entitled to a greater degree of consideration than if the meeting was the result of a voluntary movement. It shows that Spain is becoming gradually alive to the necessities of greater liberty in her colonial possessions. It cannot, however, be forgotten that a short time after the Cuban rebellion broke out the revolutionists took the question under consideration and boldly declared that slavery in Cuba was forever at an end. Little or no notice was taken of this at the time by the Spaniards, and but slight attention was bestowed on the act by outsiders. The seed then sown, however, is now beginning to bear fruit, and we find in the recent act of the Captain General an acknowledgment that the abolition of slavery has become a necessity in the island. There is little doubt that the question was received with ill favor by the planters, who regard the movement as hostile to their interests. This feeling is not concealed. It is open and determined, and may lead to serious consequences—not open, it is true, but of a character that will increase the perplexities and annoyances by which the Captain General already finds himself surrounded. Add to the insubordination of the volunteers the secret hostility of the planters, and the situation will prove detrimental to the interests of Spain in the Antilles. Instead of two conflicting elements in the island there will be three. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Should the planters and those opposed to the abolition of slavery maintain their position in opposition to the wish of the home government they but hasten the day when the independence of Cuba must be acknowledged.