

# CUBA.

## A New Secret Organization in Havana—Its First Proclamation—The Laborers Called to Action.

HAVANA, Dec. 19, 1867.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Of all associations in this island endeavoring to forward the revolution and to conquer the independence of the country, the most powerful, complete, respectable and efficient in every respect is that of the laborers. It has in its ranks in all the important cities, towns and villages throughout the island the most influential, learned and wealthy men of all classes in each place, and the work undertaken by them is of the most perfect and satisfactory character that has been seen in this country yet.

The association has been in operation but a short time only, and all prospects before them are already very encouraging and promising.

The enclosed document is the first one issued by them, and I recommend it to your perusal, requesting also its publication in your widely circulated paper, if advisable, as it describes the broad basis on which our present glorious revolution is founded and shows its principles and designs on all important questions. I am, dear sir, yours respectfully,

JUAN BONA,

Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Association.

The following is a translation of the proclamation accompanying this communication:—

Laborers! Now or never. Unity, discipline, reserve, liberty. Government of the country by the country. Union for the defense of families. Guarantees for the future. By persuasion or by force.

Cubans! The patience of nations towards their aggressors becomes exhausted, as the divine goodness tires of the pertinacity of the wicked. The supreme moment has come for Cuba to shake off her fetters and recover her rights by the force of reason, if timely, or by the force of her arms, now that the war trumpet sounds in her ears and despotism urges her on to combat. The Spanish nation has now shown us how to acquire liberty; do not let us despise the lesson. Our brethren of the Eastern Department are already fighting heroically for that of Cuba. Let us follow their noble example, and let us prove to Spain and the entire universe that injustice and slavery have not been all-powerful in so degraded love of our country.

Cubans! Now or never! The moment is propitious, the cup of suffering has overflowed, and liberty, with mass, its excesses to boil over. The events now transpiring in the East prove the impotency of our oppressors; that which our brothers are doing, unarmed, cannot we do the same, with more resolute and numbering more enthusiastic patriot? Yes! the glory of triumph is sure; inaction is intolerable.

If hitherto, the respiration of Cuba has been suffocated, to-day she can aspire to the ambient air of life with more dilated and vigorous lungs, and can say, face to face to her tyrants, "I also desire to be free!" We will not offer the shameful series of our wrongs to simulate your energy. Three centuries of oppression need no comment to render odious; thirty years of living promises render them valueless for the present and for the future. Now at this hour, when a revolution, Spain so prides herself, could have hastened the day when at least a part of the spoil would have fallen to the share of Cuba, what does the government of Spain send her in return for her exemplary resignation? Vain offers, positive falsehoods, supported by a fresh army that has to be paid by the Cubans. To quiet the complaints of the country, the laws gathered by its agents, already insupportable, only serve to augment the pressure. To the humbling observations of the neighbors it only replies insult, imprisonment and exile; it feels the palpitations of an illustrious and generous people, and, terrified by its panting, the only means to pacify it was to declare war and murder. Spain, impatient to realize its barbarous threats, has kindled the discord between races, attributed to the most unfortunate and undefended internal factions, and gave orders in the forts to fire the cannon and hoist the black flag, that spreads alarm and error in the bosom of families; in the midst of this people whom by its means it has filled with anxiety favors the arming of an exclusive party, and armed able criminals and garrisons, so that all who excited its suspicions should be sacrificed, and, as it were, form a second St. Bartholomew's night. In order to prevent such a dark deed and prevent us from sinking further into the abyss opened by the government of Spain we have organized the Association of the Laborers, which opens its ranks to all the good, to all the lovers of their country's freedom; at the same time lovers of order, of family ties, of property, and above all, lovers of the dignity of man and of his rights in all social relations. As a powerful organization the patriotism of its members and the justice of its cause augurs its triumph over the oppressing government, which, in its impotent wrath towards the coming liberation of Cuba, had the only wish of seeing it reduced to a heap of ashes.

The Laborers, on the contrary, animated by the love for their native land, aspire to the hope of seeing Cuba happy and prosperous by virtue of its own power, and demand the inviolability of individuals, their homes, their families and the fruits of their labor, which it will have guaranteed by the liberty of conscience, the liberty of speech, the liberty of the press; by peaceful meetings, by locomotion; in fact, they demand a government of the country, for and by the country, free from an army of parasites and soldiers that only serves to consume and oppress it. And as nothing of that kind can be obtained from Spain, they intend to fight it with all available means and drive and uproot its domination on the face of Cuba. Respecting above all and before all the dignity of man, the association declares that it will not accept slavery as a forced inheritance of the past; however, instead of abolishing it as an arm by which to sink the island into barbarity, as threatened by the government of Spain, they view abolition as a means of improving the moral and material condition of the workingman, and thereby to place property and wealth in a more just and safer position.

Sons of their times, baptised in the vivid stream of civilization and therefore above preoccupation of nationality, the Laborers will respect the neutrality of Spaniards, but among Cubans will distinguish only friends and foes, those that are with them or against them. To the former they offer peace, fraternity and concord; to the latter hostility and war, war and hostility that will be more implacable to the traitors to Cuba, where they first saw the day, who turn their arms against them or offer any asylum or refuge to their tyrants. We, the Laborers, ignore the value of nationality, but at the present moment consider it of secondary moment. Before nationality stands liberty, the indisputable condition of existence. We must be a people before becoming a nation. When the Cubans constitute a free people they will receive the nationality that becomes them. Now they have none.

Cubans, of the great family of America, we and our brothers of Porto Rico are the last to bear fetters, and we hear the sound of the lash over the slave's back. The world of Columbus despises and casts us off for being so humiliatingly privileged. Let us shake off its leprosy and join honored people, and, converting our irons into swords, let us keep the ignominious instrument of punishment to cast it at the vampires and executioners who dishonor and inundate Cuba with blood.

Liberty, independence, order, moral and material prosperity will be the recompense of our efforts.

Union, fraternity, discipline, and, above all, the love of free Cuba, is all that we take.

THE JUNTA OF THE LABORERS.