

A Cabinet Minister's Reasons for Not Favoring the Annexation of Cuba and St. Domingo.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 14, 1869.

I heard a Cabinet Minister remark the other day that "Cuba would not be a desirable acquisition for the United States." Said the Cabinet Minister:—"In the first place, it would destroy our revenue derived from that island. We now obtain from her some fifty or sixty millions of revenue. That would be all lost to us by acquisition. In the second place, I don't think mingling with the Latin race, and particularly the Spaniards, would be beneficial. Just look at the history of the South American republics and of Mexico. Has it not been a series of revolutions, which prove their inability for self-government? I ask you honestly if that is not a fact now? I would like to see Cuba independent; but, after all, I am not satisfied it would be better for the Cubans to succeed. They never could govern themselves; and, were they to become annexed to our Union, I think it would be no advantage. What, for instance, would we do with their negroes? They are not of the same kind as ours. They don't speak our language, and a great portion of them are pure Africans. Our negroes have, to some extent, received the impress of the American character. They are advanced in civilization, compared with those in Cuba. If we were suddenly to become possessed of Cuba I don't know how we should get along with such an element. We would have to revive the Freedman's Bureau, and I don't think our people would relish that. We would find them a difficult class to manage in an enfranchised state; and as to keeping them in a state of bondage, of course that is out of the question. Now, if we could get Cuba on a sort of probation, it would be well enough; that is, if we could exercise a sort of healthy protectorate over it and keep it so for ten or twenty years, until the African element might become civilized or until Anglo-Saxon settlers might neutralize the pernicious influence of the Spaniards and Africans, then we might safely say, 'Welcome, welcome, to our free Union!' But, until then, I think we are better as we are."

The Minister likewise alluded to St. Domingo in the same way, saying that we would have to encounter the same difficulties by its annexation, though not, perhaps, to such an alarming degree. He thought, too, that the possession of St. Domingo would require to keep up a powerful navy for its protection in case of a foreign war, and that both Cuba and St. Domingo, in such an event, would be the first objects of hostile attacks. "We should have to send off there a large fleet," said the Minister, "which might be better employed in protecting our own extended sea coast."

Such are the views of this member of the Cabinet, and I have the best reason to know that they are shared by at least two other members.