

kindness shown to the Cubans or the recognition of their belligerent rights might destroy the effect of his grand sophomorical speech on the Alabama claims. There is the best reason to believe that the President has been influenced indirectly and the Secretary of State directly in this manner; for both of them last summer openly expressed their sympathy for the Cubans and the opinion that the time was approaching when the United States must recognize the belligerent rights or independence of Cuba. There can be no other cause for the change that has come over them, because it is well known, and the Spanish government is obliged to confess the fact indirectly, that the insurrection in Cuba is stronger to-day than it has ever been. General Prim acknowledged that forty thousand troops, besides an immense fleet of war vessels, had been sent to Cuba, and yet there is the most urgent demand for more. Is this not a sufficient reply to the reiterated falsehoods that there is no war worthy of being so called, and that the insurrection is losing ground?

It has been remarked that the greatest events in history sometimes hang, as it were, upon the turn of a straw. We see here that the action of the government of this mighty nation, in a matter that involves great principles and interests, has depended upon the influence of a little lawyer, who happens to be the son-in-law of the Secretary of State, and upon the prejudice, selfishness and inflated vanity of a man who happens to be Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Senate. And this is what the proud American republic has been brought to, from such insignificant causes, on the Cuban question! Must not every American citizen blush with shame for his country? These facts may appear to some incredible; but it must be borne in mind that systematic falsehood and misrepresentations from those in high places, or who have the ear of rulers, deceive such a weak man as the Secretary of State is, and mislead one in the position of General Grant.

Mr. Sumner, for example, stated in his remarks, in reply to Senator Carpenter, on Wednesday, that he understood the Cubans had not abolished slavery, or that their decree to that effect was only a pretext for foreign consumption. Now, it is evident that this remark, like the whole tenor of what he said about the Cubans, was malicious and contrary to what he must know was the fact. He must know that in the constitution of the Cuban republic, article twenty-four, adopted April 10, 1869, it is declared, "All the inhabitants of the republic of Cuba are absolutely free;" and he ought to know that the mass of the Cuban people have been for a long time past desirous of freeing the slaves; that neither the Cuban government nor people wish to see slavery exist, and that it only exists now on the island where the Spanish power extends. So, too, of Mr. Sumner's other garbled and studied misrepresentations to the effect that the Cubans have no regular organized or established government, and that they have not acquired the status of belligerents. If a state of war does not exist in Cuba there never was a war in the world. The very fact that Spain has been compelled to send out and to continue sending out such enormous forces with a view to crush the rebellion shows that war exists on a large scale, though not, perhaps, with large organized armies at certain points. It may be more of a guerilla warfare than that which exists sometimes between the great Powers of the world; but this is a sort of war which the American colonies waged, and that makes all people fighting for independence wage. The Cubans have, however, according to the best information, some sixty thousand men in the field. They have besides, notwithstanding statements to the contrary, a regular organized civil as well as military government, to which all the people yield willing obedience.

There is every reason for any government that might be so disposed to recognize the Cubans as belligerents, even upon a strict interpretation of what is termed international law in such cases. But the United States government has the strongest reasons and motives for even straining a point in favor of the Cubans. Their cause is the cause of republican freedom and republican institutions on American soil; it is one which the whole of our citizens have at heart, and the commercial as well as the political interests of this republic are largely involved. Let us, then, have a broad and far-reaching policy of our own in the case of Cuba—a policy that becomes such a great nation, regardless of what Spain may think or do or what Europe may say.

Cuba Before Congress—The Extraordinary Position of the Administration.

The first significant sounds of the popular voice through Congress on the subject of Cuba were heard in the Senate on Wednesday. On that occasion Mr. Carpenter, the able Senator from Wisconsin, called up his resolution, of which notice had been given the day before, declaring "that, in the opinion of the Senate, the thirty gunboats contracted for in the United States by or in behalf of the government of Spain, to be employed against the revolted district of Cuba, should not be allowed to depart from the United States during the continuance of that rebellion." In spite of the opposition of Mr. Sumner the Senate agreed to take up the resolution, and thus the discussion on the Cuban question was commenced. This was the mode adopted to bring the whole subject before the Senate and to prevent it being buried or squelched in Mr. Sumner's Committee on Foreign Affairs, though the mover of the resolution had no expectation, probably, of any Congressional action in time to prevent the departure of the first division of the Spanish gunboats from New York.

The administration had forestalled, so far, the action of Congress. It seemed to be impatient to aid the Spaniards and to make war upon the poor Cubans, and, therefore, would not wait a few days only to hear what Congress would say. Pretending to defer the whole question of Cuba to the representatives of the people, the administration suddenly released the gunboats before Congress had time to act, and in this manner attempted to influence Congress. The government has really become an ally of Spain against the Cubans, and has made war upon that brave people just as much as if it had sent United States troops or ships-of-war to crush the patriots. The shallow pretence of neutrality or enforcing the laws will deceive no one; for we all know that the administration, which detained the gunboats up to a few days ago, could have held them, if it wished, for a week or two longer, till Congress could act in the matter.

The American people will be astounded at this assumption and treachery of the administration when they have time to reflect upon the matter. But when we speak of the administration in connection with this subject we are disposed to except the President, though he is the head of the government, and in a measure responsible for the conduct of the Secretary of State and other members of the Cabinet. General Grant, we have no doubt, is the friend of Cuba. He has expressed that on several occasions, and throughout his whole public career he has shown the most ardent patriotism, love of liberty, progressive American ideas, broad national views, and the warmest sympathy for the oppressed. We saw this in the case of Mexico, when he was ready to march an army to drive out the European intruders, to liberate the Mexicans from a foreign imperial power, and to vindicate the Monroe doctrine of America for the Americans. Nor do we believe his heart or character has changed. But General Grant does not comprehend fully foreign questions, and, trained in the school of military discipline, he is disposed to leave the business of the various departments of government to those who have charge of these departments and who are supposed to understand what is best to be done. Hence, in the case of Cuba, he has relied upon the representations of the Secretary of State.

The Secretary, who is a weak, timid and incapable man for great affairs beyond the mere routine of his office, has been influenced, probably, by Spanish agents, and among these by his own son-in-law, who, it is reported, receives a fee, or bribe, or whatever it may be called, of forty thousand dollars a year from Spain. He has been influenced, too, no doubt, by Senator Sumner, the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Senate, who is the enemy of Cuba, because, forsooth, he imagines that any