

Cuba—The Insurgents Abolish Slavery.

The revolutionists in Cuba have at length hit the keynote to success in decreeing the abolition of slavery. By telegraph we learn that this decree was issued in the Central Department by the insurgent Assembly of Representatives, and that the freedmen may either become soldiers or remain cultivators of the soil. The effect of this decree must be damaging to the interests of the whole western end of the island; where, as yet, the patriot effort has met with small success. It will cause a great commotion among the thickly settled districts, and must act as it acted upon our own territory when Mr. Lincoln issued his emancipation proclamation and thus broke the backbone of our rebellion.

The insurgents now propose to concentrate their forces and establish the headquarters of their government near Santiago de Cuba, in the southeastern part of the island. Thus the revolution is every day becoming more consolidated and of firmer texture. There is now but one direction for it, and that is onward; for every hatred that ever existed or has been created in the Cubans by Spanish misrule has full opportunity to vent itself and find redress. The efforts of the Spanish troops to suppress the movement are every day becoming more impotent. The rage of the "volunteers"—the wreckers of Cuba, as they may very justly be termed—is venting itself in wholesale slaughter that would disgrace even the government of England in its East India massacres. The Spanish troops are also committing great outrages upon the plantations, and a war of desolation appears to already exist. We have often stated that this would be the policy of Spain when she found that there was no longer a hope of clinging to the island. When she leaves it of her own accord it will be when this rich treasure house has been completely wrecked and given over to internal anarchy.

It becomes a very serious matter for the United States to consider our present and future relations to the island of Cuba, and act at once with reference to our interests. Every day destroys what it will take time and millions of dollars to build up again after the island comes into our hands. It is not for the interest of this Continent that we should permit any European Power to desolate any part of our territory. In the first place there is no sense in the idea that a nation in this age has a right to possess a colony. It is in opposition to every ruling and civilized principle of the nineteenth century. Much less right has any Power to desolate a forcibly held colonial possession, when that colony desires to have what we claim is due to all mankind—a government of its own, where every section can be represented in common with all the other districts or provinces of the government. Cuba has never had this. The only privilege she has received is that of supporting old Spain in her indolence, ignorance and arrogance.
