

## Cuba—The Forthcoming Proclamation from Washington.

Events are evidently culminating, both in this country and in Cuba, which will call from the administration of President Grant at an early day a proclamation of our status on the Cuban question. The revolution in Cuba is too patent and the movements of its friends in this country are too active to render silence much longer possible. In this condition of things it is well for us to look at the record. The experience of the past will, if rightly accepted, afford us valuable light for our future course. Proclamations affecting the Cuban question have been issued by two previous administrations—that of General Taylor on the 14th of April, 1849, and that of Mr. Fillmore on the 25th of April, 1851. The first of these was issued a short time previous to the sailing of the first Lopez expedition, and is a calm and dignified State document. Cuba was at this time in peaceful subjection to the Crown of Spain, and General Taylor's sets forth in moderate terms the fact that persons undertaking to make war against the territory of a friendly Power will "subject themselves to the heavy penalty denounced against them by our acts of Congress, and will forfeit their claims to the protection of their country."

The proclamation of Mr. Fillmore was issued on the occasion of the preparations for Lopez's second expedition to Cuba, and is remarkable for the antagonistic feeling which it breathes against the general tone of American thought, and which at the time caused universal censure in public and in private circles. We give the introductory portion of this curious document as a landmark in statecraft. If it had been prepared by a Spanish satrap it could not have echoed more perfectly the views of Spanish colonial despotism:—

Whereas there is reason to believe that a military expedition is about to be fitted out in the United States with intention to invade the island of Cuba, a colony of Spain, with which this country is at peace; and whereas it is believed that this expedition is instigated and set on foot chiefly by fore'gners who dare to make our shores the scene of their guilty and hostile preparations against a friendly Power, and seek by falsehood and misrepresentation to seduce our own citizens, especially the young and inconsiderate, into their wicked schemes—an ungrateful return for the benefits conferred upon them by this people in permitting them to make our country an asylum from oppression, and in flagrant abuse of the hospitality thus extended to them; and whereas such expeditions can only be regarded as adventures for plunder and robbery, and must meet the condemnation of the civilized world while they are derogatory to the character of our country, in violation of the laws of nations and expressly prohibited by our own; now, therefore, &c.

This document is the last that has emanated from an American administration. Its chief peculiarity consists in its rejection of that political hospitality which is the boast and pride of every land where the English tongue is spoken, and in branding as "adventurers for plunder and robbery, who must meet the condemnation of the civilized world," of that glorious list of names led by Lafayette and which includes a Dondonald and a Porter, an O'Higgins and a De Lacy Evans. The ground on which the friends of that administration defend this proclamation are that at the time when it was issued Cuba was in a state of peace and had not shown, by any overt act of the people, that they desired separation from Spain.

Whatever may have been the condition of Cuba at that time it is widely different now. The sword has been drawn. The Spanish garrisons have been driven to concentrate in large masses by the unanimous uprising of a people without arms, without military organization and without skilled leaders. Every mail, every pulsation of the electric telegraph from that island brings tidings of battles fought, of captures made, of executions performed with unheard of cruelties, of deportation of shiploads of political suspects, of murderous shootings by mad volunteers into crowds of unarmed people, of the murder of women and children because their husbands and fathers are in the field, of the burning of towns, villages and plantations, of the fleeing of the inhabitants to the woods and mountains, and of the ever varying tide of success and defeat in the unequal battle. In the midst of this terrible picture stand the undaunted Cespedes and his noble bands, striving in their country's behalf with admirable heroism, and pleading for the sympathy of every freedom-loving heart; while the myrmidons of Spain clamor to their Crown for more men, thousands more of men, to suppress the revolution, appeal to the binding effect of treaties which they of late so willingly ignored.

Cuba has drawn the sword and cast away the scabbard. This fact must be taken into consideration by the administration in its consideration of the terms of the proclamation which, in the natural course of events, it will soon be called to issue. The entire field of diplomacy is to-day agitated with the question, for it touches nearly almost every present national existence. But it must be resolved on higher and more permanent principles than those embraced in the wordy fallacies of diplomatic reasonings or the weak clauses of existing treaties. Had these prevailed a Stuart would have still ruled England, a Bourbon France, Italy remained a geographical expression, Prussia be limited to the duchy of Brandenburg, Bomba sovereign in Naples, Isabella still on the throne of Spain, and not a republic in existence from the St. Lawrence to Cape Horn. The throes of national birth are governed by higher laws than commercial treaties and international arbitrations. We call upon the President and his Cabinet to bear these in mind in preparing to meet the question which the sword of Cuba is forcing upon them, and we hope they will meet it in a truly American spirit and in consonance with the march of the American idea. Spain, as an unnatural stepmother, has driven the Cubans to the last appeal of peoples and of kings, and the great republic should lead the world in admitting them to the rights and sympathies of honorable warfare.