

Cuba and the Filibusters.

Several weeks have elapsed since our special correspondents in Cuba announced that it was slack tide with the revolutionists, and this fact has recently been communicated to the government by Admiral Hoff, who states, in his official report from Havana, that neither party seems to be doing much just now. Coincident with this state of affairs the Cuban Junta in this city made public a few days since an urgent appeal to that body from the insurgent Generals Marmol and Figueredo to send them arms and ammunition; and the tenor of all our advices from Cuba is uniform in the statement that the revolutionists are sadly deficient in these essentials. At the present moment the partisans of Cuba are making great exertions in this country to send to their friends in Cuba these necessary supplies, and the agents of the Spanish government in this city are equally active in its behalf in forwarding similar material. The only difference between the two consists in the fact that one side does its work silently, but efficiently, while the other endeavors to do its labor with a great show of results and a parade of movement, after the style of the old filibuster days of Lopez and Quitman.

But there is no similarity whatever between the two movements or between the aims and results of the respective agitators and leaders. The position of the Cuban question of to-day and the means available for its triumph are widely distinct from those that attended the same question in 1850. Even the attitude and principles of the combatants are changed, as will be seen by a very cursory but exact review of the history of the Cuban question. The aspiration for a free government among the people of Cuba is coincident in its inception with the revolutionary struggles of the Spanish colonies of the Continent. It first took form soon after the restoration of absolute government in Spain by the Duke d'Angouleme, with a French army of one hundred thousand men, in 1823. At that period a conspiracy, which ramified from Mexico under the name of the "Black Eagle," gave the Spanish authorities much uneasiness. This was followed by another, called the "Sons of Bolivar," connected with the projected invasion of Cuba by General Bolivar. The invasion scheme was defeated by the attitude President Adams took against it, and the secret societies were effectively suppressed by the judicious policy, combining firmness with moderation, pursued by Captain General Vives.

From this time the Cuban question slept until 1848, when it was resuscitated by Lopez. At this period an abolition party had been developed in Spain, which gave life to the desire for separation among the great slaveholding and agricultural interests. Lopez was executed in 1851, and the Cuban agitators sought Quitman as a leader. The advent of Pezuela as Captain General of the island, with directions to prepare the country for the abolition of slavery, so alarmed the wealthy and planting interests that they embraced the cause of independence with great fervor, and the coffers of the Cuban Junta of 1852-3 received abundant supplies of money. The Spanish government, alarmed at the portentous growth of the Quitman movement, changed its policy, and the filibuster attempt subsided. All through these agitations peace reigned in the island, excepting two short periods of a few days each, when Lopez made his descents, and the plan of revolution rested entirely upon a proposed invasion by an organized body of armed men, the leaders of which looked for assistance from the people when it should be seen that protection could be afforded to those who joined the movement.

The revolution which now rages in Cuba is of an entirely different character. It has been the people who have moved first, and the wealthy class, particularly in the western or sugar-producing district, has not sided with them. In the eastern and central portion of the island, where the slaveholding interest is comparatively small, all classes have embraced the revolution. Freedom has been proclaimed for the slave, and hatred to the Spaniard is the burning motive in every Cuban breast. But the people are poor, and as the wealthy classes of the west took no part in preparation and have not since made remittances as they did in 1852-3 to the junta in this country, the resources of the revolutionary agents here are small. Nor are their needs the same as were those of 1853. Then a strong force was needed as a nucleus for the revolutionary movement, and the army of Quitman presented many of the brightest names of our army of that day, with thousands of organized followers. To-day the revolution has its thousands of men in the field, but is sadly wanting in arms, munitions and leaders skilled in the art of war.

These causes have made the change which is seen in the Cuban movements of the present day. There is no opening for the thousands of armed filibusters of the past. To send men to Cuba would be waste; for it consumes the available means which should be expended in arms, and thus diminishes the supply of these. Such numbers only as are sufficient for easy and successful landing of munitions are all that the case requires and the means of the present junta will warrant. It is for this reason that we see no prominent military names now connected with Cuban affairs and with such small ventures as those that leave our shores. But these very facts make the movement more worthy of our sympathy and support. The revolution is truly a popular movement in Cuba, and not a filibuster movement outside of it. The call for arms and not for men is a proof of the strength and righteousness of the cause; and the fact that a mass of unarmed country people have driven the Spanish troops in more than one-half the island to take refuge in barricaded towns is a significant evidence of the popular senti-

ment. Their affairs may be at slack water for the present, but all revolutions have their defeats as well as their victories, and there is strong promise of success in the fact that the men who are making the present revolution in Cuba call for arms, and not for filibusters.
