

Cuba and St. Domingo—Our Southward March.

It appears from our Washington despatch published yesterday that the President listened very attentively to the verbal report of ex-Vice Consul La Reintrie—who has just returned from Cuba, where he has been residing in official station for more than two years—frequently interrupting him and asking him questions. In the opinion of this official the Cubans have adopted a wise policy in not accepting open battle in the field against well organized and disciplined troops; and the question of their success is merely one of the ability of Spain constantly to reinforce her wasting and diminishing army. In this statement we do not doubt that Mr. La Reintrie has hit the nail on the head. The interest exhibited by the President shows that he is fully alive to one of the most prominent and urgent questions in American politics. Cuba will not only be very soon applying to our government for recognition as a State under her newly organized republican form of government, but at no distant date will make formal application for admission as a State within our Union.

It behooves our public men, and particularly those in the government, to study these questions, and to take care that the government does not lose the present most favorable occasion to advance our national policy. The initial question in these movements—the one that requires immediate attention and action—is the one opened by the offer now made by the Dominican republic. Torn by selfish leaders and factions for several years, St. Domingo has found a period of rest under the rule of President Baez. But the effort and expenditure required to repress the bushwhacking discontent of a few unscrupulous politicians diverts the revenue of the government from its true application in behalf of peaceful development and maintains the public authority in a state of constant poverty and weakness. Enterprise and industry, wanting the natural protection which should secure their peace, disappear from the land; commerce decays and society is deprived of its highest stimulant to progress. President Baez has wisely sought to strengthen the fabric of peace by a close connection with the great republic, and his offers should be wisely considered and acted upon.

The admission of St. Domingo as a State of the American Union would guarantee her a republican form of government and at the same time relieve the Dominican people from the extraordinary efforts and sacrifices they are now compelled to make to preserve the public peace. Nor would there be any increase of cost to us. The presence of the American flag, sustained by the moral power of our government, would suffice to preserve the territory from foreign aggression and domestic broils. The arts of peace would prosper, industry and trade revive and public and private wealth increase. All of these advantages can be secured by the simple negotiation of a treaty by the Secretary of State with the agents of the Dominican republic, and the whole matter can be ratified and ready for presentation to Congress on the meeting in December next.

Such a treaty is not to be looked upon as a mere attempt at petty annexation. It is, in fact, the arrangement of the formula of our coming southward march, and will be the proudest monument of the administration which establishes it. With slavery the era of filibustering passed away. We have now to digest the form of that peaceful annexation the spirit of which is already evident in the countries beyond our southern border. Close upon St. Domingo will follow Cuba, Mexico (either in portions or, perhaps, in one grand mass), and then the rest of the States and the isles of the American Mediterranean, to the isthmus of Darien. This whole field opens with a most promising aspect to the administration of President Grant, and it is only the first step which requires skill and wisdom. If this is rightly taken, as it can easily be in the case of St. Domingo, the succeeding ones will follow of their own accord. The administration must recognize the duty before it and act up to the national spirit in this great field now open to us.