

Our telegraphic report from Europe yesterday brought consoling advices to Mr. Secretary Fish in the shape of an encouraging pat on the back from John Bright's Quaker organ, the *London Star*, "for taking measures to prevent the departure of filibustering parties for Cuba." The only drawback to the pleasure of our worthy Secretary of State, if it is a drawback, is the fact that his measures do not seem to have prevented the departure of a single filibuster. We admit the doubt because private assurances from persons very near to Mr. Secretary Fish insist that he sympathizes with the republican cause in Cuba, that he desires to see it triumph at an early day, and that he is only coquetting with Spain for the purpose of keeping a dreadful European complication off of the backs of the belligerent Cubans. The said private assurances furthermore intimate, with a tone of intense wisdom, that something particularly private in relation to Cuba is going on between our government and that at Madrid—that General Prim has been seen, Serrano looked after, and that the best results may be hoped for if we will not commit the government.

Our experience in both public and private affairs is that straightforward truth and manliness is the best, and, as Sir Boyle Roach said, that the only way to get round a difficulty is to meet it plump. Now, as the administration is about to send a filibustering expedition into the very heart of the Iberian peninsula, under the command of one of our most keen and audacious generals, and as the Cabinet is preparing his instructions, both public and private, we desire to say a few words on the state of affairs in these Spanish-American questions. The first point of interest is that we mean to keep faith—not such faith as Spain kept with us in our late war, but loyal, good faith—with the friendly Powers of Europe and America, and we wish it to be distinctly understood that this determination does not commit us to the policy of assisting Spain to break faith with her own people, or to the waging of a style of warfare in defence of her resisted claims, which shall be an outrage to humanity and Christian civilization. The second point of interest in these great questions is this. In common with the whole world we hold that a prisoner is not to be punished for availing himself of an opportunity to escape, nor an oppressed people for improving an occasion to throw off the hateful chains of a colonial despotism; and we desire that this feeling on our part shall not be hidden from Spain, but rather do we desire that it shall be clearly made known to her.

The third point with which the commander of this new Spanish expedition should be impressed is this:—Should any of our enthusiastic and liberty-loving citizens, believing that the cause of republican Cuba is the cause of freedom, which all true men love, choose to emulate the example of Lafayette, and, running the risks of hostile cruisers at sea and well armed (seeing that we sold them their breech-loaders) foes on shore, proceed to take part in honorable warfare in Cuba, we will not under any circumstances hold that they are pirates, enemies of the human race, or in any way entitled to harsher treatment than what is imposed by the laws and chances of war. The fourth and last point which we desire to be made known to Spain in the outset of any little private discussion is this:—It is the admitted belief of every public man and private citizen in this country that "Cuba gravitates towards the American Union," and we are by no means ignorant of the weakening which recent events have brought to the ties that bind her to Spain. We therefore cannot admit that the latter Power, because she finds it impossible to retain Cuba herself, has the right to do anything which shall have merely the effect to reduce the value of Cuba *per se*, and make it less useful to us when the ripeness of time shall have brought it into the fold of free and independent States.

With these injunctions and a reminder to the commander that he had a finger, if not an entire hand, in the Ostend convention, we think Mr. Fish may venture to send his new expedition into the heart of Spain. We advise both the Secretary and the commander not to expect too much from their enterprise, nor to let the grass grow beneath their feet in the pursuit of it. Events on the American shore of the ocean are hastening to new and greater complications, and if they delay too long their hoped for adjustment of present questions others of more urgent import will push them from the field of diplomatic consideration.