

### St. Domingo—An Important Movement.

The steamship Tybee, which left our port yesterday as the pioneer of a line of steamers to St. Domingo, carried among her passengers a special commissioner from the government, with orders to proceed to the Dominican republic and report upon its condition at an early day. Whether Mr. Hunt has higher secret instructions we are not informed. This movement is an important one in many respects, and if the administration contemplates aright the new movements and combinations which are going on in the Antilles it may be productive in the highest degree of good to our political and material interests. There is now an unusual activity in questions affecting all of the larger islands of the American Mediterranean, and combinations both favorable and adverse to the United States are being widely discussed.

Cuba is convulsed with the questions of revolution, independence and annexation. In St. Domingo a policy of seeking admission to our Union has been discussed by President Baez, which has awakened efforts against him by Cabral, his former antagonist. In Hayti General Domingue, who is making a powerful resistance to Salnave, months ago wrote to Secretary Seward, seeking a protectorate for the territory he ruled. In Porto Rico a violent explosion against the Spanish rule is only kept down by a force of bayonets much larger than is warranted by the pecuniary resources of the island. In Jamaica the British government is exhibiting a sudden energy in restoring the harbor of Kingston, while the Governor, Sir John Peter Grant, is making extraordinary efforts to stimulate the material labors of the people. Coincident with these internal agitations we witness on the one hand a marked increase of the British, French and Spanish fleets in American waters, and, on the other, a prompt denial of a disposition on the part of Mexico to sell territory, accompanied with a notable acknowledgment of the great increase in that dilapidated republic of the desire for an American protectorate over it.

These outcroppings from the undercurrent of public opinion which is beginning to run so strongly in the countries south of us all point to the necessity for the adoption of a marked and final policy in the premises by our government. Mr. Seward felt this pressure from the march of events in his times and endeavored to meet its requirements; but his great mistake lay in adopting the trader's and not the statesman's view. He believed that all that was required was that an agent should present himself with a bag of gold in one hand and the American flag in the other, and that he had only to hoist the one as soon as the other had been accepted. In the pursuit of this petty and mischievous policy he received a signal rebuke from the Dominican republic in the Samana question, and from the Senate of the United States in that of St. Thomas. Both were merited, for the principles on which his course was founded were of the meanest and most contemptible kind. Questions of national importance merit a higher and a nobler style of treatment.

Fifty years ago a policy was announced by President Monroe which acquired an extended influence in American politics and European Cabinets, because it expressed the sentiment of the American people. During two generations that policy has been the pole star of na-

tional development on this Continent, and the intimations and even threats of serious complications that were to result from it have proved as idle as the summer breeze. That policy was adapted to its era and has consummated its work. It is no longer a question of founding new colonies or extending European influence over old ones. The colonies have become nations, and national development has brought new needs and new demands. The wonderful prosperity of the American people under our system of union has for a long time given impulse to a spirit of imitation in the countries south of us, and failure to attain the same results is now developing a desire to participate in our scheme of government and the material advantages which it brings.

This development is giving rise to a counteracting spirit among the partisans of European rule and European influence. Wherever we find the one we encounter the other, and at this moment both are working with remarkable activity in the islands of the American Mediterranean. There the European idea takes the shape of a "free trade Antilles, confederated under European protection and which shall mediate for the independence of Cuba." It is claimed by the partisans of this movement that the enormous debt of the United States will inflict an unbearable taxation, while our high and protective tariff will destroy their trade and agriculture. The fallacy is an evident one; but yet in the hands of skilful politicians and diplomatists, and without counteraction and argument, it will produce effects which, for a long series of years to come, will be felt to our prejudice. It is likely to be the more successful from the indefinite form and aim of the pro-American feeling. No one can tell what is the best shape for it to take. On one side we find a protectorate to be the controlling form, while elsewhere it takes the equivocal name of annexation.

The action of our government should be addressed to the removal of these doubts and of this misapplication of terms. It is not purchase; it is not acquisition; it is not annexation. The true question for the nationalities south of us is the pure and simple question of admission to our Union. In this shape private feelings and public rights are respected and preserved. Equality before the law is its pedestal, and the preservation of the right of local legislation for local needs is the column of the argument. Herein lies the great importance of the St. Domingo question as presented to us to-day. It will be the formula for the great national growth which is the sequence of the Monroe doctrine. It will consign filibusterism and territorial purchase alike to the dead past. For these reasons it should be consigned to the ablest hands in the government, and when presented to Congress it should be accompanied by an expression of our national policy as consonant with the feeling of the American people to-day as the expression of President Monroe was consonant with our national feeling fifty years ago.