

# THE CUBA QUESTION.

**The President and Cabinet Unanimously in Sympathy with Cuba—Mr. Fish Not Opposed to Recognition—Prospects of a Speedy Solution of the Controversy.**

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So much has been said in the dark in regard to the policy of the administration concerning the Cuban question that a few words by way of explanation may not be ill timed. A review of the events connected with the uprising of the people of Cuba develops two things:—First, the moral influence of the United States particularly upon the popular mind in the adjacent islands and countries, and second, the rapid crumbling away of the colonial system in this hemisphere and the attendant efforts of the people to erect a political fabric similar if not part of the American plan. St. Domingo and her sister so-called republics have already thrown off their allegiance to their mother governments and have ever since been struggling against every popular passion and rival faction, in the vain hope of establishing responsible governments, peaceable and affording security to life and property. Cuba is the latest candidate for independence, and in her struggle naturally looks to the United States for assistance, or at least protection against the murderous hostility, the semi-barbaric ferocity of Spanish dominion. The United States, in view of her diplomatic obligations to those who represent the governing power of the Spanish people have kept aloof from the pending struggle. It is a wise provision of international law only to recognize responsible and organized governments, otherwise the world would be quite occupied in looking after every ambitious individual who might imagine himself a deliverer, and in consequence disturb the peace of communities. There are certain stages of incipient growth which are necessary as preliminary to every great movement, and in this Cuba is no exception. It is well known that the cause of Cuba has the sympathy of a majority of the American people, from the President down to the humblest citizen. For this popular sentiment Cuba has every reason to be thankful, and may anticipate the realization of every hope at the proper time.

The popular voice in the United States, though recognized as the seat of power, is, at the same time, not always controlled by that spirit of discretion, particularly as regards foreign questions, which must necessarily be observed in the intercourse of nations. There are numerous interests which rebel against a policy dictated from such a source. It would undoubtedly be gratifying to a majority of the people to undertake a war with England. But would it be policy? The people desire to entertain the British lion, notwithstanding his demure conduct of late, to a sound drubbing, for no other reason, however, than the satisfaction of giving vent to the popular indignation at the want of international integrity on the part of England toward the United States during the late rebellion. The time will unquestionably come, and is coming when such a war will be part of the American policy, and then we can have all the war we want; but today it is not policy, there are hundreds of interests adverse to such action, and therefore the part of prudence is harmony. The part of a wise government is to act when it is to its interest. The administration has already openly exhibited its concern in the affairs of Cuba in the seizure of the Spanish gunboats fitting out in American ports. The President was well aware that to allow the fleet to depart would not only prove a fatal blow to the cause of Cuba, but would lead to other complications, particularly with regard to Peru. The course, therefore, taken was but fair towards all parties. Much complaint, and one of the chief causes of animosity towards England was her indecent haste in recognizing the rebels of the South as belligerents. This act alone led to all the unfortunate transactions incident to the disreputable part taken by the English government and people in favor of the rebellion. In the face of these matters of history it may be considered as eminently inconsistent, after all that has been said on the subject, for our government to enact the same thing.

But as for this the President has his attention particularly directed upon the progress of the struggle in Cuba. To say that Mr. Fish is the only impediment in the way to recognition is an act of injustice to that distinguished gentleman. He differs in no wise from the sentiments of the President and his ministers, and, as the head of the administration, there is no doubt, is ready at the proper moment to act in accordance with the wishes of his chief and associates. Were the President to request the Secretary of State to issue a proclamation according belligerent rights to the Cubans, there is no doubt but that important document, and concerning which there has been so much clamor in the country, would be forthcoming at once. But such action is not now timely or prudent. The government having inaugurated other means of using its interposition is not as yet compelled to resort to forcible measures with the prospect of offending the supercilious pride of Spain and be subjected to the annoyance of watching her puerile hostility. The Spanish authorities evidently realize their situation better than we do, and by allowing that consummate Spanish pride to have a little scope will leave a clear field for the prosecution and completion of any negotiation that may be going on secretly between the United States and Spain. The latter Power is inevitably doomed to lose her foothold on the American Continent, and to make the most out of this unfortunate state of affairs for her is all that is left for her to do.

Secrecy is one of those rare virtues which is seldom found, and when found commends itself. The seeming delay in the recognition of belligerent rights in the Cubans is no indication of a backwardness on the part of the administration; but on the other hand, could the plain facts be known, the course adopted would be fully endorsed. The government is not going to publish its policy beforehand, therefore when the question is matured it will be plenty of time for comment and congratulation. It must, meanwhile, plainly be borne in mind that Mr. Fish is not opposed to the recognition of Cuba, but is thoroughly in accordance with the views of the President.