

# WASHINGTON.

## United States Mediation Between Spain and Cuba.

## Minister Sickles' Note to the Spanish Regency.

## Extreme Measures to be Adopted by the Cubans.

## Butler Preparing for an Onslaught Upon Congressional Extravagance.

## MORE GOVERNMENT PLUNDERING.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19, 1862.

**Position of the United States Towards Spain and Cuba Unchanged—Minister Sickles' Note to the Spanish Regency—Cubans Determined to Render Their Island a Desert Sooner Than Submit to Spanish Rule.**

The tone of the British and Spanish press on the Cuban question, as conveyed by cable, is not regarded in official circles here with any alarm. The London papers seem to misunderstand the question entirely and the position which our government occupies towards Spain. That position has in no material point changed from what it was when the Spanish Regency formally accepted the United States as a mediator for the settlement of the Cuban difficulty.

The note said to have been written recently by Minister Sickles, and about which the Spanish press is reported to be so indignant, was nothing more than a gentle reminder that as the good offices of our government had been accepted by the belligerents it would like to proceed to business. It contained no threat, but intimated that circumstances might arise which would force the United States to act independently, and that protracted delay on the part of Spain was dangerous.

These circumstances have already been alluded to in my despatches as the destruction of everything on the island of Cuba within reach of the insurgents, so as to make it untenable for the Spaniards. It is no secret that if the pending negotiations fail, this is the policy which the Cubans have marked out for themselves. The crops now coming forward on the plantations, I am informed by Señor Lemus, will never be gathered except favorable action should in the mean time be taken by Spain on the Sickles' proposition or some other looking to the independence of Cuba. Among the reasons he assigns is that the Cuban planters firmly believe that as soon as the crops are gathered they will be seized and confiscated by the Spaniards and the proceeds devoted to the support of the Spanish army and navy. The planters argue that as they are likely to lose their crops in any event they would rather destroy them than have them contribute to the support of their enemies. This action becoming general on the island would, of course, produce a condition of affairs which would demand the interference not only of the United States, but of other civilized commercial nations.

There are still strong hopes entertained by our government that Spain will eventually accept some proposition which will secure the independence of Cuba and put an end to the war. It is known here in official circles that Napoleon has advised Prim to sell Cuba for whatever he can get, bring home the Spanish troops and devote the money and troops to subduing the Carlists and other factions in Spain.

The idea of any serious difficulty arising between Spain and the United States on account of any contemplated action of our government relative to Cuba is not thought of in official circles here. It is not supposed that Spain, with all her traditional pride and obstinacy, would be so reckless as to go to war with the United States in her present condition, especially with the moral certainty of not only losing Cuba without getting any money for it, but of getting badly whipped into the bargain.

## Lively Times in Congress in Prospect—Expected Tilt Between Butler and Schenck.

Ben Butler, it is understood, is preparing a speech to be delivered early in the coming session, on the extravagances of the peregrinating committees of Congress. He will, it is said, confine himself especially to the Ways and Means Committee, of which his competitor for the leadership of the House, General Schenck, is chairman. Schenck and some other members of the committee, having heard of Butler's intention, are preparing to answer him. It is said they possess some facts, gathered in the course of their investigations in the East, about Butler's connection with certain manufacturing institutions, which will not be very creditable to him. Butler is a good fighter, so is Schenck, and a lively time may be expected.

## The Public Debt Statement.

The indications are that the public debt statement, to be issued on the 1st of October, will show very little, if any, reduction, the payments for the present month having been very heavy.

## More Treasury Plunderers.

Dunbar, the horse doctor, about whose case so much fuss was made in Congress last spring, on account of an appropriation of \$25,000 to pay him for instructing army veterinary surgeons and farriers in his system of curing horses' feet, is again a subject for the serious consideration of government officials. The disbursing quartermaster here recently made up Dunbar's account, it seems, and tendered him the balance due, \$10,333, with the request that he would sign a receipt in full of all demands against the government. This, it is said, Dunbar refused to do, contending that he was entitled to another month's time, and also \$2,000 for the services of his son, a young lad in his teens. Dunbar's experiment in curing horses' feet for the government it is said will cost the Treasury not less than \$90,000, and yet it is not certain whether his system will ever be practiced by its veterinary surgeons. His system may be good, or it may not, but it seems inexcusable extravagance to be paying out such large sums if our army veterinary surgeons and farriers intend to slight it after receiving instructions at such heavy cost.

## Payment of Pensions.

An appeal was recently taken by certain pension attorneys in Pennsylvania from instructions of the Commissioners of Pensions with regard to the mode of paying pensions, and also the lawful fees to pension attorneys or agents, which is now by check on the United States Treasurer. The attorneys or agents want both their fees and the pensioners' money to be paid in currency. The Secretary of the Interior, in reply, says that a check on the Treasury is believed by the pensioners to be as good as currency, and that the department is in possession of proof that pensions paid to pensioners are as often sadly reduced at the hands of middlemen; that it feels bound to use every measure in its power to prevent what has grown to be a notorious abuse. Reports are frequent that attorneys have fallen under the ban. The Secretary agrees with the Commissioner of Pensions that the request of the appellants should not be allowed. If any agent shall decline to receive and transmit such checks drawn to the order of the pensioner himself, the Commissioner of Pensions will be instructed to regard all powers of attorney given by pensioners to such agents as annulled, and shall seek communication with the pensioner himself.

## Cashier of the Union Square Bank, of New York.

John Jay Knox, Deputy Comptroller of the Currency, has received the appointment and decided to accept the Cashiership of the Union Square National Bank, which has recently been organized in the city of New York. Mr. Knox has for several years past, in addition to his duties in the National Bank Department of the Treasury, had charge of the correspondence of the Mint of the United States and branches, and in the year 1861 made a report upon the branch mint in San Francisco.

## Personal.

Senator Cole has left Washington for his home in California.