

THE CUBA QUESTION.

The insurrection in Cuba is now passing into its second stage. Spain having successfully asserted her independence of a degraded and oppressive monarchy, her children naturally followed the example, and endeavored to rid themselves of a system which was quite as degrading and oppressive to them as ever the Bourbon dynasty was to the Mother Country. It has been for centuries the Spanish policy to ignore all rights of her colonies, but providing money in no scanty measure to the necessities of Spain to pour on, to their shores crowds of hungry officials, not always of reputable character, and often adventurers who as literally "left their country for their country's good," as if they had been transported by the legal tribunals. All the places of trust were filled by these offcasts from Spain, and no opportunity was ever given for native talent, while native industry was cramped and shattered. No wonder, therefore, that one by one Spain's colonies have slipped from her grasp, and the last and the most cherished excites all the energies of the Home Government to prevent the dire example to be followed by the Queen of the Antilles. Dulce, personally popular in Cuba, and fully enjoying the confidence of the Home Government, came out charged with the impossible duties of recognizing the rights of the Colony and reconciling them with the pretensions of Spain. It was a significant fact that even he was accompanied by shiploads of needy applicants for office, shelved by the Provisional Government and sent out to prey on the Goshen of Cuba. As was to be expected, his mission has failed and he has been forced to assume the offensive. In the mean time his successor is on the sea to supersede him, and the scabbard is thrown away. Let us look at the forces in opposition, both physical and moral. The native Cubans to a man—even women and children—are sworn to win their independence. Those even who cannot take arms cheerfully give up their property, and, if such cases exist, those who are neutral or lukewarm have their possessions sequestered by their friends and neighbors for the cause that all have at heart. It may be taken for granted that the whole native population are unanimous for emancipation from Spain. On the other hand, the whole power of the Mother Country is pledged to prevent it. Independently of national honor, which ranks higher in the Castilian mind than in most nations, the material worth of Cuba is so great, the practical value of such a colony, especially in the present impoverished state of Spain, so thoroughly present to the mind of every Spaniard, that they will strain every nerve to prevent her breaking the chain. Such a war will be one of the most popular that could be presented to the people, and most nearly touches their pockets. In the sympathy which every free-born man must feel for the native Cubans, we must be careful not to underrate the resources of Spain, or to ignore the serious reasons she has

for abhorring the independence of Cuba, as a direct robbery upon her public and private purse. There is also a third element in the contest, and that not the least, though by no means apparently prominent, viz: the recently and prospectively emancipated colored population. It is worthy of observation that the insurgents recognized the principle only when the news arrived of its proclamation by the Provisional Government at home; nor is this to be wondered at, for men are seldom in a hurry to divest themselves of valuable "property" they hold as their own. We have not yet sufficient evidence of what the action of the colored men has been up to this date to be certain of what it will be. Then as to the moral phases. All history is apt to reproduce itself; nor are the Castilian races in any portion of the globe much different from their immediate, nor indeed their remote, progenitors. The Spaniards are very chary of foreign intervention, accept it grudgingly, set it in the front of the battle, give it all the labor, all the expense, and appropriate all the result possible, repaying the aid with an ingratitude which has no parallel in the history of nations. Both sides are well aware that upon the amount of American help depends the success or failure of this struggle for independence. Commercially as well as politically the welfare of Cuba must be a vital question for American politicians.

With this view of the case, which it is just to present as the fair deduction from the latest news, we cannot but add our fullest sympathy with the cause of the Revolution. If the revolution is good for Spain, it is good for her splendid colony. We commend prudence, statesmanship, and persistency. Cuba has her fate in her hands, if her true sons will it. Nations, like men, have periods when destiny seems to stretch out its hand. They are the wisest who do not fail to see it. May Cuba and her gallant sons be wise with the best wisdom.