

# THE CUBAN CAUSE.

MASS MEETING AT THE COOPER INSTITUTE.—  
SPEECHES BY JOHN M'ARON, THE HON.  
STEWART L. WOODFORD, AND OTHERS.

The friends of Cuban independence turned out en masse last evening at the Cooper Institute to express their sympathy with the patriots who are struggling to release their island from Spanish rule. A large and enthusiastic crowd filled the hall and the square outside. Two platforms were erected on the north side of the Institute, on which two bands played national airs while rockets were sent up in large numbers. The platforms were decorated with American and Cuban flags, intermingled with the Irish and German flags. The following mottoes were displayed: "The Cubans are manfully struggling for and shall have their independence." "The American people stand out for Cuban freedom." "No European Power shall any longer control any American country." "Common humanity demands that Cuban Independence shall be recognized by the United States."

In the great hall of the Institute the platform was tastefully decorated. In the center was a portrait of Washington, flanked on either hand by portraits of Grant, McClellan, Farragut, and Mayor Hoffman. The flag of Cuba was tastefully wreathed in the front and rear of the platform. At an early hour the large hall was densely filled, very few ladies, however, being present. A band of music played several patriotic airs during the evening. A number of prominent citizens appeared upon the platform. José Valiente, Gen. Espinola, and other members of the Cuban Junta were also present.

The following resolutions were then unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That we, without distinction of party, we have assembled to make declaration of our opinions in relation to the Cuban revolution for freedom and independence.

The Cuban people, territory, population, and resources sufficient to enable them if independent, to discharge all domestic and international obligations which devolve on every State. For generations they have been a helpless dependency on Spanish monarchs, by whom they have been deprived of their treasure and denied every vestige of political liberty. Whenever their aspirations for freedom have been awakened by the example of our country, Spain has strangled them in blood. A few months ago the Spaniards revolutionized their own Government, dethroned their Queen, and changed their whole political system. Is it thus they did not consult or consider the wishes of the Cubans, when they would still hold them dependent, without any right, save such as would come from a despotic monarch? As regards the Cuban people, we are in favor of a republic, equal political rights, independence in government, and freedom for all the population. This patriot revolution, however maintained for many months, will, we believe, result in the establishment of an independent Cuban republic.

Informed by these considerations, recognizing our duty to favor the cause of political freedom, and responding to the Cuban appeals for our sympathy, we hereby declare,

First, That we bear the sympathy with the Cuban people in their war for independence, and in the grievances to which they point we had full justification of their revolt.

Second, We will support the President in recognizing the Cuban Revolutionary Government as an authority to the rights of a belligerent nation, and to give heart to the brave people who are struggling for a republic, and for those principles of freedom, progress, and humanity, the establishment of which will make Cuba a worthy sister republic of the United States.

Then Chairman of the Hon. John McKean, who remained in the hall, in obedience to the invitation of the friends of Cuba in this city, he appeared before them to unite with the assembly in giving such encouragement as we may lawfully give to any people struggling to be free and independent. In a Government so popular in its character as that under which we live, a responsibility is laid not only on the officers selected to administer our public affairs, but on each individual citizen. Whenever a great occasion arises which it must become the duty of our public agents to act. In our judgment it is eminently proper that the people should in their primary assemblies make known to our agents the wishes of the masses of the people. The occasion which has called you together is the present revolution in the island of Cuba, and you are called upon not only to express your sympathy with that movement, but also to point out to our public agents the policy which ought to be adopted by the Government of the United States. I need not tell you that the contest in Cuba is the death struggle between the representatives of a foreign despotism in Spain and the natives of the island of Cuba. The people of Cuba are denied freedom of the Press—denied the right of petition—the right to acquire or dispose of property except under certain restrictions—denied the security of person from illegal arrests—denied the right of representation, whilst robbed by the taxation of the home government in Madrid. In a word, not a grievance enumerated in our Declaration of Independence but exists at the present time in Cuba. The oppressions have for years past given cause to uprisings of the people, but never has the opposition to the government taken such shape of power and capacity of resistance to the armed force of the Government of Madrid as at the present time. From all we can learn, the war which is waged against the men struggling to give independence to the native isle is carried on by the Provisional Government of Spain with a spirit of savage ferocity revolting to every sense of humanity. The supreme authority in the island is nominally in the Governor—Gen. Dulce, but he is nothing more than a puppet in the hands of the hordes of volunteers, who are the offshoots of Spain, sent to pillage and murder the unfortunate native Cubans. If no other reasons existed, we should insist that a stop should be put to a policy which is calculated to dishonor the age in which we live. In order to show the deep interest the United States have taken in Cuba it is only necessary to refer to our diplomatic history. It will be seen that we have assumed that the right of self-protection authorized us to pursue a policy in respect to this island which we would scarcely presume to enforce in relation to any other territory. We have uniformly held the doctrine that no power but Spain should hold the island—a doctrine which is an exception to our general policy, which has been that every nation has a right to dispose of its territories as best may suit its interests. The Cuban is peculiarly an American question, says the distinguished Frenchman who has of late years turned his attention to a history of our institutions with great force. Geographically "Cuba is America. What reason exists why she should not be so politically?" Now, we would ask what is her geographical position? The island is almost within sight of Florida, between that State and the peninsula of Yucatan. It is within a few hours' transit from our coast. If the island was under Great Britain, or any great maritime power, she would command the Gulf of Mexico—she would command and be able to blockade the mouth of the Mississippi. The navigable streams of that portion of the United States empty through the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico, amounting to over 35,000 miles, with a testimony and ever increasing population—all would be at the mercy of a great maritime power, having Cuba, with its magnificent harbor of Havana. Cuba lies before us, as has been said in one of our diplomatic papers, a "continual source of annoyance and embarrassment." That the island ultimately lost to Spain no statesman can for a moment doubt. It is only a question of time. Let us look back since the beginning of the present century and see what has been achieved by the United States. We have acquired Louisiana, Texas, California, and, within the past year, Russian America has been added, and we are now in treaty for the Danish island of St. Thomas, which is absolutely necessary for us in a military and naval point of view. In this acquisition we see carried out the prophecy of the great Napoleon. In addressing the Council of State, in 1802, he said: "I foresee that France would be compelled to renounce her ocean colonies. That before 50 years those that were American would become the domain of the United States, and it was that consideration which settled in my mind the cession of Louisiana." In connection with this remark a philosophic French traveler said of us in the *Revue Universelle*, in April, 1868: "It is a curious destiny—that of North America—to be not only the country of the future, and toward which to draw all emigration gravitates, but that in a short time will change, perhaps, the political and commercial laws of the world, and at the same time produce most of the gold and silver in the entire world." Mr. M'Aron, in conclusion, reviewed at length the reason why the United States should immediately recognize Cuba as a belligerent.

The President then introduced Lieut. Gov. Woodford, who was received with prolonged cheers.

Lieut. Gov. Woodford said: Mr. President and fellow citizens, I do not come to make a speech to stimulate your enthusiasm with the fervor of poetic words. You are all up to fever heat already. [Laughter.] Nor yet do I come with the sophistry of logic to demonstrate the great justice of this cause, but to tell you in sober words a simple story, and to ask your judgment as men, a Christian people, upon this cause of liberty, free government, free justice, and American progress all over this continent. On October 1st the telegraph flashed to our city the message that an insurrection had broken out in Cuba. It was spontaneous—if I may be allowed to use the term—that it indicated that it was not the result of a conceived plan. It was the plea that the hour of Spanish disaster was the hour of Cuban opportunity, and that when Spain was struggling to overthrow the Government and to arrange a new system, this was the time when the Cuban was to reach his hand over the Gulf and say: "You who have followed me 'stars and stripes,' now is the hour when we wish to become part of you." Mr. Woodford then said that the struggle for independence in Cuba was maintained by a few scattered sons of the planters on one hand, with a few soldiers whom they could supply with arms. Opposed to them were the trained and well-equipped bands of Spanish soldiers. From a sporadic insurrection had grown an organized rebellion, and finally a *de facto* government. The speaker elucidated the principle of self-government for Cubans from the example that a child, when grown to the age of maturity and having acquired citizenship, has a right to be free from parental control. He contended that the Cubans have not only a right to govern themselves, but to determine from whom they will seek counsel. He asserted that that Government deserves to be overthrown which does not protect the rights and personal securities of every individual citizen. This he showed Spain had not done. It curbed the opinions of the press, denied the trial by jury, and by the establishment of a State religion fettered the consciences of the citizens. It was he thought too late in the nineteenth century for the adoption of such measures, and civilized nations would never suffer any race to be thus thrust under the bell of the despot. (Cheers.)

Dwight Townsend, esq., was the next speaker. He referred briefly to the cheering prospect for Cuban independence, which the present large and enthusiastic meeting afforded.

The Rev. Dr. French then came forward, and said it afforded him great satisfaction to see such a large audience present. He would be glad had the Rev. Mr. Beecher been present, who could say more on the subject than he could. He (Dr. French) had recently received a letter from one of his old friends, Gen. Casson, Generalissimo of the Cuban Army, and he would read a few extracts of it which showed how much the Cubans had their liberty at heart. The General's letter went on to say: "Providence has destined us to be free, and the chains which heretofore bound us are to be cast away for ever. They have even now commenced to snap. It could not be otherwise. The example of the people of our great nation is always before us, and we will follow it. Our efforts may doubtless appear doubtful. We will depend on the aid which we may expect from your great nation. We have always acted with freedom, and has always helped the weak. Cuba desires her protection."

THE CUBAN MELTING.

As the hall was too small to receive all the people who had gathered, an outside meeting, which was attended by from 1,500 to 2,000 persons, was organized. Charles A. Watersburg, esq., called the meeting to order, and on his motion the Hon. Allyn A. Sullivan was chosen Chairman, and Albert W. Orr, esq., Secretary. Mr. Sullivan addressed the meeting at some length. He said the Cubans in their struggle for freedom and independence deserved the sympathy and aid of the American Republic. Spain had ruled the island of Cuba, which is as large as the State of New-York, in a military way, drawing titles from it without admitting Cuban representatives to the national councils. Spain herself

had risen, a few months ago, to change her Government, and now did not want the Cubans to decide upon their own Government. But the Cubans, demanding the same right for themselves that the Spaniards did, had rushed to arms for their freedom and independence, emancipating their slaves, and they now deserved the unequivocal support of the American people. The speaker then read the resolutions adopted by the inside meeting, which were unanimously adopted by the audience, with three cheers for the Cuban patriots. Mr. McMaster of the *Milwaukee News* was then introduced. He addressed the meeting on the duty of the Press with regard to the cause of the Cubans, gave a sketch of their struggle, and showed the want of consistency, honesty, and liberality in the action of Spain toward the inhabitants of the island. The Rev. Mr. French then read the letter referred to above, and said there was no possibility of Spain's preventing the Cubans from getting their freedom and independence. He then made a few personal remarks on Gen. Guesada, who had assisted Juarez in breaking down the attempted empire in Mexico. He said a sound public sentiment favorable to Cuba ought to be fostered throughout the country, and when the Cubans have conquered, they may, if they choose so to do, join their island, as a new State, to the United States. Commodore Levy then spoke declaring himself willing to draw his sword for Cuban liberty. Capt. James D. McClellan, the last speaker, said that in America there was room only for free government. Cuba belonged geographically to the United States, and might become one of them if their people would so choose. They ought to be morally aided in their struggle and the rights of belligerents should be recognized by the Government, to show the Spaniards and Cubans that the sympathy of the American people is fully with the latter. All the addresses were received with great applause by the audience, and the meeting closed with three hearty cheers to Cuban independence.

## ANOTHER CUBAN EXPEDITION FROM NEW-YORK.

It was reported yesterday, on good authority, that a steamer, painted black, except her name, which was concealed under a strip of white canvas, sailed at about 3 p. m. for Dead Man's Cove, a port within four hours' sail of Cuba. It is said that the steamer has been lying at the foot of Hubert-st. for the past two months, during which time a large quantity of arms, ammunition, and stores have been stowed away on board of her. In addition to her crew, she carried 10 Americans, 6 negroes, and 16 Cubans, in all 100 volunteers, who go out to join the patriotic army. U. S. Marshal Barlow had no information of the expedition.