

SECRET HISTORY.

Queen Isabella, during the early part of our late war, was tempted to recognize the nationality of the South, but was prevented by fear that if once established the South would take pains to annex Cuba. We were assured by one highly connected with the Bourbon administration of Spain that this was the overruling fear of the Queen in her final resolve not to enter into open hostility to the United States. She lived, we have heard, to regret what she esteemed her error. Isabella was a woman of more shrewdness as a politician than either her face or her fame would suggest; and notwithstanding her spiteful regret that she did not recognize the Confederacy, and make Cuba a base of supplies equally for Maximilian and Jefferson Davis, there are probably some of her countrymen who think she did well by forbearing.

Another version of the story of contemplated war upon the North by Spain has come to us from a not undistinguished source in Madrid. It is told us that Isabella, under teaching of the French interest at that Capital, was about to order her fleet in Cuba to open fire upon any of our vessels which took prizes within six miles of her boundaries. This order would have been an overstrained effort at war, contrary to the international code; but it was the design of the Emperor of the French to create a diversion in favor of his Mexican experiment, and Isabella was to reap the benefits of alliance. If we are rightly informed, our friends in the Spanish Capital were keenly active, and the misstep of the Queen was prevented. Those who were mainly instrumental in effecting this result were persons in familiar relations with Isabella, and eminent in the current history of Spain. Their action was as prompt, we are told, as the danger to ourselves was imminent; and we presume this assurance is given us, not in order to arouse a prejudice in their favor with a view to such conspicuous relations as they may assume in the future toward ourselves, but from a sense of justice to those to whom we owe at least an acknowledgment for having acted honorably and sagaciously. Though every policy of wrong-doing is necessarily fatal, and especially so in the case of a subsidiary nation, we cannot be blind to the formidable character of the policy conceived by Napoleon and urged upon Isabella. We know of no other so likely to have secured the object aimed at—the success of the South and of the Mexican Empire. Both Spain and France would have lost inevitably in the end—the one Cuba and the other Mexico—but in the meanwhile the hour hand in the clock of American civilization would have been put back. We have reason, then, to rejoice that the scheme of France to make use of Spain, to her own eventual mishap, and to destroy the power of the North, was frustrated.