

F 1785

. H 14

1165

H14

F 1785
.H14
Copy 1

BELLIGERENT RIGHTS—FREE CUBA.

SPEECH

OF

HON. J. MARSHALL HAGANS,

OF WEST VIRGINIA,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1875,

ON

ACCORDING BELLIGERENT RIGHTS TO THE CUBAN REVOLUTIONISTS.

I beseech you
Wrest once the law to your authority.
Merchant of Venice.

WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE,
1874.



1785
.H14

12-7867

Ms. S. 9 10 11

SPEECH

OF

HON. J. MARSHALL HAGANS,

OF WEST VIRGINIA.

On the following joint resolution introduced by him January 13, 1875:

“Whereas the heroic struggle of the insurgents on the island of Cuba has excited the sympathy of the civilized nations of the world, and has been maintained for a period of time sufficient, according to the customs and practices of civilized governments, to entitle the insurrectionary government of that island to be accorded belligerent rights in the manner and under the rules known to the law of nations: Therefore,

“Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it is the sense of this Congress that a recognition of said insurrectionary government should be made by the Government of the United States so far as to bring hostilities in that island within the rules known to civilized warfare.”

Mr. HAGANS said:

Mr. SPEAKER: Of all the nations of the globe, ours is the one which, by reason of its own origin, of its history, of all its most sacred traditions, of the fundamental ideas of its government, is under the most lasting obligations, both by reason and sentiment, to sympathize with any people struggling for the rights and liberties which the philosophy of the age has pronounced to be common to all men. Whenever a people propose to throw off a despotism, or undertake to relieve themselves from the evils of government based upon hereditary claims or mere “authority,” and establish a system founded upon popular sovereignty, and where they show that their movement is in reality popular and not unreasonable discontent, they have a claim upon the American people for sympathy, and upon the great American Republic for recognition. And, I think, sir, that since the establishment of the American nation through the war of our glorious Revolution, no people, whether in the eastern or western hemisphere, has sought to overthrow despotic power and to interweave popular rights in their institutions, which has not found its best arguments and the source of its highest eloquence in the history, the example, the men, and the ideas of America. The philosophic historian of the future, in recounting the scenes and incidents of the age, can but record that nowhere in Europe or America has despotic power been curtailed of its cruel demands and freedom gained a victory, save through the almost irresistible aid and example of the fathers of our Republic. By this sign have the nations conquered rulers; by this sign do peoples go forth to freedom’s feasts.

If this position be conceded, and the great Republic of the western world can be justly regarded as the grand example among the nations struggling for free institutions, can it be otherwise than our plain duty to carefully examine into the facts concerning every movement of the oppressed in whatsoever land or in whatsoever clime

it may occur? But, above all, is it not an imperative duty when the event arises within the borders of a realm from whence the cries of appeal come to our shores on the breath of every morning breeze? The chief Executive of the nation has responded to the call, and has, so far as is consistent with his high position, formally called the attention of the country to the insurrection in Cuba, an insurrection which has maintained a formidable strength during many years. In his annual message to Congress at the beginning of the present session he says:

The deplorable strife in Cuba continues without any marked change in the relative advantages of the contending forces. The insurrection continues, but Spain has gained no superiority. Six years of strife give to the insurrection a significance which cannot be denied. Its duration and the tenacity of its adherence, together with the absence of manifested power of suppression on the part of Spain, cannot be controverted, and may make some positive steps on the part of other powers a matter of self-necessity. I had confidently hoped at this time to be able to announce the arrangement of some of the important questions between this Government and that of Spain, but the negotiations have been protracted. The unhappy intestine dissensions of Spain command our profound sympathy, and must be accepted as perhaps a cause of some delay. An early settlement, in part at least, of the questions between the Governments is hoped. In the mean time, awaiting the results of immediately pending negotiations, I defer a further and fuller communication on the subject of the relations of this country and Spain.

These, sir, are words of great moderation. They are in fact the manifestation of a sublime patience on the part of the American Government which the nations of Europe that maintain different forms of government from our own cannot have failed to observe. They are also, when fully considered, a demonstration of the sublime faith of America in republican institutions. The people of this Republic are not unobservant spectators of the heroic struggles of the Cuban patriots, and the inaction hitherto maintained by them can only be attributed to the most singular and interesting conjuncture of affairs in that country from whose remorseless tyranny these patriots would be free.

Let us, sir, examine into that condition for a few moments. After years of grinding despotism, cruel government, and endurance of rulers whose gross and shameless licentiousness was flaunted in the face of christendom, the people of Spain revolted against their disreputable monarchy and declared their government to be republican. At the head of it for a time was one of the most illustrious statesmen and pure and exalted patriots of the age, Emilio Castelar. This remarkable man, while perhaps the most eloquent orator of his time, is also a versatile and brilliant author. There are few, if any, more profound thinkers now connected with the conduct of human affairs. Though his eloquence is like that of the heroic ages, as illustrated by the "resistless tide" of Demosthenes in the ancient world and the irresistible power of our own Patrick Henry, he is nevertheless one of the most practical of statesmen; so that if it were practicable for Spain now to be republican, she could be so chiefly by the surpassing genius of Emilio Castelar. Beyond all this, the chord that must call forth the tuneful harmony in the American heart is his devotion to freedom in the emancipation of every human being from the blighting curse of slavery. While under the guiding hand of such a central figure, so pre-eminent in nobility and statesmanship, Spain was struggling against fearful odds, which need not be mentioned, but which must strike the commonest apprehension, America could take no active steps that would impede or embarrass a struggle so fraught with precious germs for the future government and well-being of mankind. I have, therefore, no words of condemnation for the sublime patience which our people or authorities have shown in respect to

Cuban affairs, nor for the sublime faith manifested in respect to the establishment of republican government in Spain. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a limit to forbearance even should it lead to conflict. Our patience, while woes unutterable have been perpetrated in the Island of Cuba, and our faith in republics and republican institutions have secured for us the right of moral interference in the affairs of that most unhappy people.

One sentiment in connection with the subject has been submerged by the tide of affairs since the language of the President's message, from which I have read, was received by Congress—the republic of Spain *has crumbled into ruins* and passed out of existence. In its stead we see again that monarchy which has made so many mistakes and shed so much blood. It is a remarkable but perhaps a natural retrogradation of the Spanish nation, yet it reverses the whole aspect of the Spanish-Cuban question as viewed from the western stand-point. Where predilection hitherto encouraged all the legitimate moral aid and comfort from the American people to republican Spain, it is now no less clearly our duty to give all the legitimate moral aid in our power to republican Cuba as against monarchical Bourbon Spain. If the situation at the time of the transmission of the President's message justified his temperate and moderate language, is it not certain that the changed situation now demands that our Government should at once take a firm attitude, if not in recognition of the independence of Cuba, at least in recognition of the belligerent rights of the revolutionists? Has the hour not arrived in which to throw the weight of the moral influence of the United States in behalf of free Cuba.

I propose, Mr. Speaker, in order that we may arrive at correct conclusions as to the duty of the American Government in this important question, to speak of the subject in its general bearings, beginning first, in general terms, with—

SPANISH ACQUISITIONS IN AMERICA.

The history of Spanish conquests in the western hemisphere may be described as a record of avarice, cruelty, bigotry, and lust nowhere else paralleled or even approached in the annals of mankind. If the great discoverer Columbus himself did not set the example of treachery, cruelty, and bloodthirstiness, it must be remembered that he was not a Spaniard but an Italian. He himself who gave to Spain a new world was made the victim, by that people and government, of contumely, cruel injustice, and atrocious ingratitude. We have but to carefully study the lesson given to us by the great sculptor on the door of our Rotunda to learn the ignominy which Spain meted out to him who had conferred the most illustrious renown upon the Spanish monarchy. From that day forth until Spanish rulers were generally expelled from the countries of the western hemisphere, Spanish-American history is a record of cruelty and crime, and has been branded as such with an indelible stigma by the most celebrated of both American and European writers. If there indeed be a parallel to the perfidious cunning, the cold-blooded cruelty, the wholesale massacre of unarmed men shown in the Spanish conquests of America, it can be found only in the dark and bloody and murderous history of the Spaniards of the Netherlands. It would be a "damning spot" in any nation to have produced one Alva; but Spain has produced many, and, most lamentable of all, has gloried in their monstrous deeds. The story of her deeds is in no instance, however, nor has the unvarying tale of outrage and of shame received a more horrible

illustration than is to be found in her dealings with Cuba, "the gem of the Antilles."

It is not necessary for me to enter into a chronological account of events in Cuba, as the historian would do in narrating its history. This is the province of other fields of human inquiry and reflection. Statesmanship has to do with general facts. It acts upon the existing state of things, and has to do with the past only as a light to guide it in present action, and to prepare reasonable precautions and safeguards against the threatened dangers and ills of the future. "I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided," said the great orator of the Revolution, "and that is the lamp of experience." Let us see what rays this lamp will shed upon Spanish domination in Cuba, so that thereby we may be enabled wisely to determine what is our duty for the present and the future welfare of the people of Cuba and those of the United States. Who can doubt that the history of Spanish domination in Cuba has been from the beginning a curse to that island, a hinderance to the cause of civilization, and an unwarrantable interference by a European power with the rightful freedom and independence of American peoples? I assert that so far from there having been any advance in political science in harmony with the spirit of the age, even as evidenced by the improved condition of the race in all monarchies save Spain, the dealings with Cuba by the home government have represented an era covered by the mouldy execrations of centuries, and made insurrections righteous and resistance obedience to Deity. I trust it will not be regarded as unpatriotic, when I declare that the wrongs of the Cuban patriots find more warrant in fact, more warrant in general law and natural right, for their attitude against Spanish domination than the American people had when they declared almost a century ago that they were, and were of right entitled to be, free and independent States.

There are three words, sir, in which the history of Spanish domination in Cuba, and in all her other colonial dependencies, might well be summed up. They are: Inhumanity; slavery; ferocity. From the beginning Cuba has been a colonial orange which Spain has been constantly squeezing. The people have been taxed with a colossal enormity, and the revenues of the island have been used to sustain an effete and licentious dynasty abroad, and corrupt, pampered task-masters at home. That the largest revenues might be drawn from her bleeding side, the African slave-trade was openly carried on by Spain longer than any other nation, and was clandestinely engaged in by Spanish grantees of the island for years after the mother country had been forced by the moral sentiment of Christendom to denounce the inhuman practice in the solemn stipulations of treaties.

In the same wrongful interest, and for the same barbarous purpose, all the just rules of national comity have been violated in her commercial regulations with respect to Cuba. A heavy tribute is laid upon everything which enters her ports or departs therefrom; and all this in direct antagonism to Cuban industries and in the interest of the Spanish budget.

But, sir, the material welfare of Cuba and her people is not the only just cause of complaint, nor the only means of unjust discrimination. There is scarcely a principle of civilized, not to say free, government which is not daily and hourly violated on her soil; and there is no act of savage barbarity which is not being constantly committed by the Spanish authorities, civil and military. Is there a man in this House; nay more, is there a citizen of the country, who

was not struck almost dumb with astonishment and horror when the news of the fatal massacre of the officers of the *Virginus* first reached our shores? It matters not what one might have thought of that unhappy enterprise—and it is scarcely necessary for me to deny that it was unlawful—we could not have contemplated the untimely taking off, and the mode of its brutal execution, without feelings of indignation and detestation. Sir, such things have been of daily occurrence in Cuba for many long years, and it would seem that deeds which horrify all other people are matters of calm contemplation and joyous gratulation to the masters of Cuba. They seem to be the iconoclasts of freedom, of human progress, and of liberal civilization.

This, Mr. Speaker, is believed to be no overdrawn picture, and applies with equal force to Spanish history in all of its American affairs. The pages of our Prescott teem with the revolting recitals, and the fascinating volumes of our American Motley demonstrate that no pen can overdraw and no tongue can overstate the measure of Spanish cruelty and perfidy during the last four hundred years. Mankind looks to her for cruel attacks upon all modern ideas as certainly as they expect free trade among British statesman, art in Italy, military prowess in Germany, agitation in France.

The original settlement of the island of Cuba, it will be remembered, was brought about by the Spaniards by the commission of two unmitigated crimes: First, the extinction of the original population, save the remnants of a few hardy tribes in the mountainous regions, by overwork as the enforced slaves of the Spaniards; and, second, the opening and extension of the African slave-trade for the purpose of replacing these poor Indians thus literally done to death by the remorseless avarice of cruel adventurers. The Spanish power had its origin in Cuba in these two foul crimes against humanity; and when it is said that from that day until the present the history of Spanish domination in the Antilles has been constantly worthy of its origin, enough is said to show that it is entitled not to the respect but to the execration of civilized mankind. From the time when the native population had been thus practically exterminated up to the year 1762, sixty thousand slaves had been imported from Africa. From the latter period until the year 1789, about thirty thousand more were imported. At this last date the slave-trade was declared free by Spanish law—the only instance, perhaps, in the history of civilization, except in the case of the notorious “Lecompton constitution,” where law has positively declared, in express terms, that man could have property in man. From 1789 down to a very recent date Cuba was the principal support of this infamous traffic. And to this day the Spanish rulers of the island and the Catalonian volunteers who riot in Cuba look upon the prohibition of the slave-trade by the Christian nations of the world as a wrongful interference with their rights and profits.

What has been the character of these rulers? In the whole history of the island there have been but two or three reputable captains-general; no more. All the others have governed with the sole object of extorting from the people all possible revenue for Spain and all possible profit for themselves. Indeed it has passed into the proverbs of the language, that five years only is sufficient to amass a stupendous fortune as captain-general in Cuba. Gentlemen may conclude for themselves how lamentable must have been the history of such a country. It can be no matter for wonder that there has been little literature or eloquence and no art. All the qualities which enoble man have been there repressed. And I hold it as a complete

demonstration of the high standard in morals and intellectual attributes of the Cuban peoples that, notwithstanding the terrible government by which they have been ever oppressed, they are generally intelligent, chivalric, and brave. Among them now—I mean among the Cuban revolutionists—are men learned in the professions, able writers and orators, skillful in the art of war, and self-sacrificing in their devotion to the disenfranchisement of their country.

What is the present status of the Cuban revolution? What was at first generally called “the Cuban insurrection” originated in the year 1868. In the summer of that year several leading Cubans, men of wealth, character, and standing in society, met together and perfected a plan of revolution. In the scheme to which they agreed there were two leading objects in view, each one of which was entitled to the favorable judgment of mankind. These were: *the independence of Cuba and the emancipation of the blacks*. Many conferences of the friends of these measures were held, and it was at last determined to rise in armed rebellion against Spanish domination in the month of November. Meantime the cause daily gained new adherents, particularly in the eastern portions of the island. Events precipitated the revolution quicker than had been agreed upon, and a conflict of arms between the patriots and Spanish troops occurred in the month of October. From the month of October, 1868, therefore, to the present moment, the Cuban “insurrectionists” as they are called by the home government, but “revolutionists” as they must in justice be denominated, have made more or less formidable head against the government of foreigners. They have three army corps, amounting in all to about twelve thousand men. At one time they had in the field a mobilized army of well-trained and well-equipped soldiers numbering ten thousand three hundred men. At this hour there are more than this in arms against the government. Let us not underrate or underestimate this force. Comparing the population of the two countries, our own revolutionary army was not relatively so large, and no American will quietly permit the heroes of 1776 to be insignificantly denominated “insurrectionists.”

In consequence of the topographical features of the country, of the military forces opposed to them, and certain circumstances upon which I need not dwell, the patriots have pursued a mode of warfare in small bodies, as a general rule of strategy. It has not been wise policy for them to concentrate their forces. Nevertheless, considerable patriot armies have frequently met equal or greater forces of Spaniards or volunteers, and have fought pitched battles with them. On several occasions they have gained notable victories, and they have everywhere manifested a devotion to freedom, a gallantry in conflict, and a moderation in victory in pleasing contrast to the habitual conduct of their oppressors. From the beginning of the contest they have deserved the moral support of mankind.

I admit, sir, freely that we are to investigate and consider this question not alone from the moral and humane point of view, but must examine it in its legal aspects. Are the Cuban patriots entitled to the recognition of the American Government as belligerents? This question will be answered to a great extent by examining whether they are representative of the Cuban people. If they are, now that they have successfully maintained war for more than six years, they are entitled to such recognition from all governments, most especially from ours. Spanish domination in Cuba has always been an outrage upon Cuban rights both of person and property, and has always been maintained by force alone. There has never been

any right, abstractly speaking, in it. It is not too much to say that it is a constant affront to modern political civilization. It is as if Alva were slaying with the sword and carrying the torch of devastation in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century. It is a horrid anachronism. That such may be known to be the truth, let a few plain facts be stated.

In ordinary times, before the revolution was inaugurated, about twenty thousand Spanish troops were regularly stationed in Cuba. There was the disciplined militia besides, always ready for instant call to arms. The Spanish navy in Cuban waters was never less than from twenty-five to thirty war vessels, carrying over two hundred guns and three thousand men. Since the revolution it has been increased by about thirty light-draught gun-boats, which protect the coast against any aid to the patriots which might be sent from abroad. Why this immense military power? Here is a standing army for a million and a half of people about as great in numbers as our own regular Army, nearly all of which is engaged in guarding our great western frontier. There are no savage tribes in Cuba. This great military and naval force is there to uphold the hateful domination of Spain. Without it that power could not last beyond the hour of the setting sun.

How has this military array exercised itself upon the patriots of Cuba, struggling no less heroically for freedom and independence than did our own ancestors, to whom we gladly accord eternal honors? Since 1870 the regular troops have numbered about twenty-five thousand, the expeditionary corps thirty-three thousand more, and the militia in active service four thousand additional; in all numbering more than sixty thousand in the field, besides seventy thousand "volunteers," the most detested of all the Spanish soldiery in Cuba, in garrison. Here is a standing army, as we may in general terms call it, of more than one hundred and thirty thousand men. Such is the tremendous force by which freedom and independence in Cuba are repressed. How, I asked a moment ago, is this force exercised? Generally, I may say, as Spain has always exercised power, with perfidious and shocking cruelty. I have already referred to the barbarous haste with which the officers of the Virginius were butchered. This cruel act brought a shock to all mankind.

But this is only one instance of the general conduct of Spanish Cuban rule. Eminent American citizens, and the sons of eminent statesmen of our country, have been made to suffer death in Cuba in the most ignominious manner. Who can forget the bloody proclamation of Captain-General Valmaseda against the present revolutionists, in which he declared that every male over fifteen years of age found in the country away from his home should be shot; that every house on which a white flag was not displayed should be burned; and that all women and children found alone on their plantations should be removed to certain designated cities. The fearful atrocities of the volunteers in January, 1869, committed in the capital of the country by the indiscriminate shooting of men, women, and children, which were subsequently sustained by the government, are a stain upon the world. The whole, indeed, is one long tale of horrors. Here is a summing up of this dark story for three years, which I find in a work universally recognized as authority:

According to official reports forwarded to Madrid by the United States minister, thirteen thousand and six hundred Cubans had been killed in battle up to August, 1873, besides forty-three thousand and five hundred prisoners whom the Spanish minister admitted to have been put to death.

Here is a shocking picture indeed! It is admitted by the Spanish minister that fifty-seven thousand and one hundred Cubans had been killed in three years of their revolution, forty-three thousand and five hundred of them having been *murdered*. No other word can fitly describe this most heinous outrage. And still, sir, the "insurrection" is not suppressed. The same terrible cruelties have been in active existence since August, 1873. Every month quite a number of prisoners of war are "put to death." The number at this time has probably reached sixty thousand souls. How long can our Government and our people permit such hitherto unknown crimes to be committed without entering our solemn protest? Are the wretched Cubans to be again exterminated before the nations cry out against the woes she is now enduring?

It is conclusive, I think, sir, from the above statistics that the revolutionists do represent the people, and that the Spaniards are intruders. Otherwise the insurrection, if it were a mere insurrection, would have been long since repressed, and peace, even though it were the peace of death, would have been restored. That it is a genuine revolution sustained by the people is undoubtedly true, and their claims for belligerent recognition are full as great, if not indeed stronger, than were those of our forefathers under like circumstances when their belligerency was promulgated by the powers of Europe. In proportion to population the Cubans have more men in the field than they, have fought as many battles, won as many victories, and have suffered more by pillage and hunger, devastation and want, exile and death.

Their cause does not rest here, Mr. Speaker. There are still other powerful considerations in behalf of their recognition as belligerents at our hands, and to some of these I will invite the attention of the House.

I affirm that the Cuban patriots are entitled to recognition by the law of nations. I do not propose to enter into any elaborate discussion of the principles of the law of nations bearing upon this case. Such learned discussions are more appropriately conducted, as it seems to me, in the field of diplomacy than here. I desire, however, to make the application of a principle in the international code which is announced by all the great authoritative writers on the subject, and will not doubtless be questioned here or elsewhere. The purport of this principle, as it is propounded by all the recognized authorities, is this: That where a population sustains a government in hostility to the established authority until it attracts the sympathy of the world by its valor and determination to be free, and evinces its ability to maintain its opposition during a considerable period of time, it ought to be so far recognized as to be brought within the rules of civilized warfare by a guarantee of belligerent rights. This is an understatement of the scope of the principle rather than an overstatement; and I believe that under circumstances as thus stated a sovereign nation would be wholly justifiable in recognizing a people so described as possessing a government of their own.

Perhaps, sir, that instance of the recognition of a revolutionary government by other powers in modern times which approaches more nearly the case of Cuba, was the recognition of the Greek revolution by the powers of Europe in 1827. This is expressly approved both by Wheaton and Woolsey, confessedly the most eminent of American writers on international law. Says Woolsey:

In modern times the interference of Great Britain, France, and Russia, on behalf of the Greeks in 1827, was avowedly dictated by motives of humanity. The

Greeks, after a bloody contest, had so far achieved their independence that the Sultan could not reduce them. Accordingly his vassal, Mehemet Ali, of Egypt, was allowed to send an army of subjugation into the Morea, and the atrocious scenes of fanatical war were renewed. The Greeks applied to France and England for help or mediation. At length, in consequence of the battle of Navarino, October 20, 1827, and the French occupation of the Morea, the peninsula was evacuated by Mohammedan troops, and finally the independence of Greece was acknowledged.

Mr. Wheaton, in his *Elements of International Law*, says of these events, and he is quoted and approved by President Woolsey, that—

The Christian powers of Europe were eminently justified in their interference to rescue a whole nation not merely from religious persecution, but from the cruel alternative of being transported from their native land or exterminated by their oppressors. The rights of human nature wantonly outraged by this cruel warfare were but tardily and imperfectly vindicated by this measure. "Whatever," as Sir James Mackintosh said, "a nation may lawfully defend for itself it may defend for another people, if called upon to interpose." The interference of the Christian powers to put an end to this bloody contest might, therefore, have been safely rested upon this ground alone, without appealing to the interests of commerce and of the repose of Europe.

Mr. Speaker, there was no one argument in behalf of the recognition of the independence of the Greeks in 1827 which does not apply with greater force to the Cubans of 1875. The Greeks had not held out so long against the Turk as the Cubans have maintained themselves against the Spaniard. Not half so many of them had been so inhumanly slain in cold blood. They had not proclaimed the principles of liberty so emphatically and unreservedly. They had not fought with more gallantry nor endured with more fortitude. They were, it is true, the descendants of a great and glorious race; of a race which had done more than any other to illustrate the greatness of the human mind, and to make for it the sublimest records in poetry, in eloquence, in sculpture, in architecture, and in song. On this account the sympathies of mankind were greatly stirred in behalf of the Greek revolutionists. The most illustrious poet of England then living escaped from the embraces of beauty and the voluptuous elegance of wealth to aid the Greeks, and there gloriously ended his brilliant and erratic life. One of our own lyrics sprang from the same inspiring theme. Clay, and Webster, and other of our great orators and statesmen rarely spoke with more power and eloquence than when they poured out their rich gifts in behalf of the Greek revolution. I beg to say, with all deference to the riper experience and more mature reflection of others, whether in the past or present, that neither humanity, nor liberty, nor Christian civilization was in the smallest degree more insulted and outraged by the Turks in Greece than all have been insulted and outraged by the Spaniards in Cuba during the whole history of the island, and especially since the month of October, 1868. As the best writers on the law of nations unite in telling us that interference in Greece was perfectly justifiable on the score of humanity alone, so I hold the proposition to be invulnerable to just criticism in the position I feel warranted in assuming, that the American Government should at once recognize the belligerent rights of the Cuban revolutionists. If our Government should go further and recognize their independence, it would have ample and well-grounded reasons to sustain it in the recognized principles of international law. But so much as this I do not now insist upon.

Let us inquire for a moment into the precedents in such cases as the one now presented, and see whether by the light of comparison the Government would be justifiable in taking the course I advocate. In the age which succeeded the religious reformation in Europe, writers on international law expressly tell us that religious sympathies induced Protestant countries to aid each other against the superior

might of the Catholic, and to aid the votaries of their faith within Catholic states in order to secure for them religious freedom. Says Wheaton :

The great Catholic and Protestant powers mutually protected the adherents of their own faith in the bosom of rival states. The repeated interference of Austria and Spain in favor of the Catholic faction in France, Germany, and England, and of the Protestant powers to protect their persecuted brethren in Germany, France, and the Netherlands, gave a peculiar coloring to the political transactions of the age. This was still more heightened by the conduct of Catholic France under the ministry of Cardinal Richelieu, in sustaining, by a singular refinement of policy, the Protestant princes and people of Germany against the house of Austria, while she was persecuting with unrelenting severity her own subjects of the reformed faith. (*Elements of International Law*, page 93.)

Those who have given themselves the intellectual pleasure of reading the works of Motley well know how the great Queen of England made armed interference in behalf of the Dutch in their long and heroic struggles with Spain. The energetic threats of Cromwell against the persecutors of the Waldenses had a notable influence in curbing the cruelty of the Duke of Savoy. I might give many other instances of interference on account of religion and humanity, but it is not necessary.

To the principle of the recognition of revolutionary governments when reasonably successful, the American Government is peculiarly indebted. But for the recognition of American independence by France and other European powers, and the armed interference of the former in our behalf, it is certain that our revolutionary struggle would have been indefinitely protracted. The Government of the United States is the child of the very principle which, in modified and liberal form, I am advocating as applicable to the Cuban revolution.

The republic of Mexico and the states of Central and South America are illustrations of the same truth. After the revolted colonies of Spain in the western world had for some time made head against the established government in their endeavor to institute republics in the place of monarchical dependencies, and when Spain undertook to procure the assistance of European governments to put down these revolutions, both Great Britain and the United States energetically protested against the right of the allied powers to interfere by forcible means. Hence the South American republics were successful; and after many heroic acts, challenging the admiration of the world, were admitted into the family of nations. If some of them have not been all the while since so well governed as they might have been, if the bright anticipations of the friends of freedom have not all been realized, still it can be triumphantly asserted that by these memorable events humanity and freedom gained substantial victories. If Cuba had then been wrested from the domination of Spain, as was greatly desired and openly advocated by the friends of republics in South America, it would perhaps have been far better for the people of the western world and in the end for mankind. There was then left in the West a remnant of kingly power, the influence of which has been only evil and that continually. However this may be, and I will recur to this point again in a moment, we shall find if we trace the history of the republics of South America that in no single instance was there as much cause for revolt as there has been constantly and now is in Cuba; that in no instance was the revolution shown to be more decisively a popular movement, numbers being taken into consideration; that in no instance were more just principles of government proclaimed by the revolutionists; nor was the contest of arms more bravely conducted. It is confidently asserted that, where one good

reason or just ground for the recognition of the South American republics existed, tenfold stronger arguments appeal upon behalf of Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, out of these renowned contests for liberty on the part of the revolted colonies of Spain in the western world there arose a distinctive American doctrine of governmental policy. It was then that the Government of the United States declared that it should consider any attempt on the part of the allied European powers to extend their peculiar political system to the American continent as dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States. It was further declared by the then President of the Republic that with the existing colonies or dependencies of any European powers in America they had not interfered and would not interfere, but with respect to the governments whose independence they had recognized, they could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any manner their destiny, in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. (See Wheaton's Elements of International Law, page 97.)

This is the Monroe doctrine, and it has become the traditional policy of the United States. In the abstract principle, this doctrine means that European political institutions are not suitable to America. It gives no welcome to monarchy or aristocracy. I agree that to this doctrine with its explanatory phrases the existence of Spanish domination in Cuba is not repugnant. But the existence of that domination, there, is in opposition to the principle upon which this traditional policy of the United States is founded. It is clear that the United States ought to be quick rather than slow in recognizing republics in the western hemisphere.

I hold, sir, to the Monroe doctrine in its broadest signification and widest application. It is a logical result of American freedom and civilization, and is a necessity for the political regeneration and progress of mankind. Liberal doctrines are a demand of the times. The superstitions, the political shams of other ages are not for this continent. They should be banished herefrom; every relic of mere authority, every vestige of the blasphemous pretense of *jure divino*, every sentiment of hereditary claim. For such things the American continent should have no permanent abiding-place.

Nothing, sir, in this age of progress stands still, not even a doctrine. It is constantly receiving new applications. I believe in extending the application of the Monroe doctrine. The hour has perhaps arrived when we should proclaim that kingly institutions are contrary to the genius of America, hostile to the development of American civilization, and ought not to be endured on our borders. But this doctrine should not be thrust upon peoples at the point of the bayonet or at the cannon's mouth. I urge no unfriendly interference with the affairs of other governments. With our hereditary policy of non-interference in the affairs of other nations I heartily agree. This, however, is an age of the power of public opinion, as was most forcibly and eloquently proclaimed by Mr. Webster when he advocated the recognition of the Greek revolutionary government. What he then said with so much truth and power is even more applicable to the present situation of affairs than it was at that time. Since then a grand power has gradually arisen to illumine the world, which was then in its infancy. The press with its myriad arms has literally reached intelligence to every hamlet, and almost to every home, throughout a vast portion of the whole world. There is a higher standard of intelligence in the general body-politic of every nation, in consequence of these and other incentives to mental in-

provement. Just how much the splendid civilization and the advance of the political science of our times is due to the influence of our own Republic can never, perhaps, be fully estimated. We know that it was immediately followed by great popular movements in Europe. The French Revolution, that terrible rebound from the enthrallment of the dark ages, was largely due to our own; and though it was accompanied by many unfortuitous scenes and events, it purified the political atmosphere of a continent, emancipated the human mind from ecclesiastical, monarchical, and aristocratic thralldom, and made that civilization possible which boasts of a Tyndall and Watson in science; Buckle and Guizot in literature; Gladstone and Bright and Cobden, and our own Lincoln, in statesmanship. Who can doubt, indeed, that to the influence of American republican institutions, in respect to resistance to authority and the assertion of individual rights, which have permeated Christendom, countless benefits have been conferred upon the race? Shall it be said that such an influence shall be "cabined, cribbed, confined?"

What are some of the practical aspects of this question? Cuba although our near neighbor, and at one time in geological history doubtless an integral part of the North American continent, has comparatively more intimate and profitable commercial relations with other nations than with ours. This fact, somewhat humiliating to our commercial activity, is to a considerable extent due to the decadence of American shipping, one of the deplorable results of the late war, and to other causes. But there are other reasons for it. These grow out of Spanish legislation; treaties between Spain and other countries, and the regulations in respect to customs in Cuba, hostile to the interests of American commerce in that island. Notwithstanding these impediments, our imports from the Spanish West Indies for the year ending June 30, 1873, were over \$55,000,000, and our exports over \$17,000,000, making a total annual trade of more than one hundred millions, which would have probably been increased to over one hundred and fifty millions but for the reasons to which reference has just been made. By reason of our proximity to the islands, of their productions which find so readily a market in our ports, and which are so readily exchanged for those of our own country, our trade with them ought to be every year largely in excess of the sums just named.

But I shall not occupy the time of the House with the recital of mere commercial statistics. I prefer to deal with more comprehensive generalizations. Cuba is the key to the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. Upon these waters are the republic of Mexico and several of the states of Central America. They are upon the line of our travel and transportation by steamship and the Panama Railroad, between our Atlantic and Pacific sea-board. The commerce of all these countries on the Gulf and the Caribbean Sea and of the West Indies is more naturally tributary to the United States than to any other nation. Nevertheless we have only a small share of it all. The incipency to our supremacy in all this commerce will be found in Cuba being in the possession of a government free and progressive in character, and entertaining fraternal sentiments by reason of having extended to it in gloomy hours words of comfort and cheer. In full accord with the law of nations; in the interest of American ideas of politics and civilization; in the interest of our trade and commerce now and for the future; in the interest of humanity and to prevent a further wanton effusion of blood, I insist on this as the time for the exercise of the great prerogative of nations in admitting a suffering people to the councils of national individuality and greatness.

Before I leave the subject of our commercial relations with the West Indies, I beg to refer for a moment to a question which was recently discussed by the American people—our acquisition of San Domingo. The underlying reason for that acquisition was never fully understood by the general public. It was not claimed by those who favored the proposition that gold flowed down the mountain slopes of the island; that the rich exuberance of nature supplied all the necessities of man without a struggle, or that the inhabitants would be altogether a desirable class of citizens. The true reason why the United States should have acquired it was, because thereby our people would have assumed a commanding position in the commerce of the West Indies, and of the neighboring Spanish-American states. Another good reason for its acquirement was to be found in the fact that the possession of San Domingo by the United States would have opened in the future a vantage ground in our honorable possession of other West Indian islands; and finally to our undivided political and commercial supremacy in this portion of the globe—a consummation most devoutly to be wished. It is a matter of regret that this acquisition was not completed when the wise statesmanship of the day proposed it, and had so far prepared the initiatory steps that but a few strokes of the pen would have settled it forever. Such opportunities are rare, and only the sagacity which peers into futurity can fully appreciate their rich importance in the passing moment.

Mr. Speaker, it will be readily perceived that if the statements I have shown are correct there are many grave and important considerations connected with what is generally known as the Cuban question. There lingers the only remaining relic of monarchy and Bourbon despotism on our continent. Everywhere else there is some form of representative government. There, for almost as long a period as Washington and his compatriots contended against the British Crown in this country, have the Cuban patriots withstood their fierce and vindictive oppressors. They have constructed a government modeled after the American Constitution. They have declared for universal emancipation. Their principles of governmental science, if they succeed, will be our principles; their civilization will be our civilization. They are our friends and brethren and they should receive the assurances of our moral support.

It may be, sir, that these people will be reduced by the Spanish Crown; it is physically possible; but that reduction will be only by extermination. This monstrous cruelty the law of nations commands the world to prohibit. About ninety thousand troops have been sent from Spain to Cuba to suppress the insurrection since October, 1868. The expenses have been to that nation nearly \$70,000,000 annually, or more than four hundred millions to the present. And yet to this hour so violent is the struggle, that Spain murders the prisoners captured by her armies. These atrocities should be ended, if it can only be so done, by armed interference upon the part of Christian peoples. But the acknowledgment of belligerent rights will go far to obviate any such final resort. Nor can this be regarded as an insult or menace to Spain. All nations stand upon an equality of rights. Among these is the freedom of opinion. No nation can assume to bar the voice of another. The moment a nation deems that a revolutionary movement is entitled to belligerent rights, or indeed a more complete recognition, it has a right conceded by the voice of modern opinion and action to so declare.

Only a few more words, sir, and I am done. The Congress needs not to be assured of the American sentiment in behalf of universal

liberty. It has been manifested at every period of our national existence. Never has a struggling and oppressed people sought to escape from the iron hand of despotic power, that the American heart did not beat in kindly sympathy. It was so in the great French struggle of 1789. No people were more earnest in behalf of Greek independence. No nation so heartily admired Bolivar and his heroic compeers who achieved South American independence. When popular revolutions occurred in Hungary, in Germany, in Italy, in France, in Ireland, no eyes so kindled with generous enthusiasm at victories for freedom, or saddened with news of misfortune, and no arms were so hospitably opened to receive the defeated chieftians, as were those of the worthy sons of the sires of 1776.

I appeal to this Congress to place itself in full accord with this American sentiment. The organized cruelty of Spanish rule in Cuba is an affront to the age, and its bitter malevolence is only exceeded by its hideous monstrosities. We owe it to the past, it is the duty of the present, and the future will ascribe it to our highest honor, to accord the rights acknowledged by the common laws of modern warfare to the Cuban revolutionists.

I make this appeal, sir, because I see this fair island like another Niobe of nations, with her garments dripping with the blood of her slain children; her helpless feet bathed in the bright Caribbean waters, the tears of her sorrows, and her disheveled locks rent by the fire-storm of contumely and wrongs. The very genius of destruction seems to throw its fell shadow over her broken limbs and bruised form. Even her burial is forbidden by the angry passions of her destroyers, that her misfortunes may be eternal.

Sir, one of our own great masters has hewn in immortal marble the figure of another prostrate nation. Art has contributed one of her grandest triumphs to celebrate the enthralldom of that people whose memories awaken the most sublime inspirations of the human soul. It is a form of surpassing beauty and perfection. With manacled hands it stands erect in conscious loveliness. But the lineaments of the sculptured face, as with averted head it seeks a last fond glance of the native land, betrays no pain; nor does the shadow of fear find a lodging there; nor are those delicate limbs and that chaste form marred by the stroke of wrong or stung with the arrow of unhappy fate. A deep, an almost holy resignation overspreads the countenance that turns to gaze upon the joys of the past, indifferent to the future. Sir, no such conception can portray the living Cuba. Her outward form, so lovely in the hands of its Creator, bears every impress of sorrow; her limbs are fettered in almost deathless bands; her breast is torn and bleeding from the foul grasp of her ruthless ravisher; her countenance, alas! turns not back to halcyon days and scenes of other years, for her youth was but the birth of woes.

Possessing as she does in nature's store all that makes life desirable, both in climate and in soil, in forest and in field, in mountain and in plain, in lake and in river, in ocean and in shore, she yet eats not the bread of her own toil. Robber feet press her soil, robber hands snatch the fruits of enforced labor, and robber hands wield the scourge of her afflictions. Still, sir, she is undaunted. Like her own palm, the queen of the forest, which defies the hurricane blasts that sweep over her breast and proudly dashes the storms from her peerless brow, the spirit of free Cuba is undying. It sighs in the morning breeze laden with the aroma of her own perfumed breath. It moans its wail, deathless hopes adown the ravines of her lofty mountains. It rolls up from her plains on the widening beams of a

tropical sun's constant rays. It hurls its defiant shout in the midst of her raging tempests. It raises its sonorous voice in the deep roar of her sounding seas; and everywhere and at all hours its voiceless essence pervades all true hearts and cherishes all true souls.

Sir, the peans that stir the Cuban heart reach our shores. Shall they awaken no echo in the breasts of their more favored brethren? I hope the hour is not far distant when we may see the new Cuba, arisen from the reddened couch where she now in anguish lies covered with the wounds of shameless and wanton power, and clothed with the mantle of liberty, sit down at the feast of nations, where the jewel of her own sovereignty shall be among the brightest gems in the diadem of republics that crowns the western world.

2 R

○

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

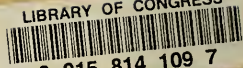


0 015 814 109 7



. H14

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 814 109 7