



ULTIMATUM TO THE PORTE.

IT IS IN THE SULTAN'S HANDS, OR WILL BE TO-MORROW.

Abdel-Hamid Will Have Time to Think the Matter Over Before Declining Steps Are Taken—Movements of the Allied Fleets and Military Activity in Russia—A Swindling Beggar Wheelies \$40,000 Out of Gallibee Britons—He Sues Labouchere for Libel and Is Worst—King Alexander's Tribulations in Getting a Wife—Grand Duke Sergius Hunting for Secret Enemies—A Queer Organization.

Special Cable Dispatch to THE SUN.  
LONDON, Dec. 19.—It is understood that M. Nelidoff had an audience with the Sultan to-day, and that the ultimatum of the great powers is either in his Majesty's hands now or will be Monday. But up to the moment of writing nothing beyond this is known with certainty owing to the telegraphic delays. The Sultan will have a fair time to consider and take counsel, and the coercive action of the powers may be further delayed, but that such action is imminent is proved again to-day, if proof be needed, by significant movements of the allied fleets and the military activity at Odessa and Sevastopol, which all the stringent precautions of the Russian authorities have been unable entirely to conceal, and by admissions in official quarters where the truth is known.

The Daily News to-day confirms from more than one source the accuracy of the version of the situation cabled to THE SUN the middle of last week. Had not M. Nelidoff been unavoidably detained at St. Petersburg the crisis would have been reached by to-day.

The latest version rendered to his country by that eccentric politician Mr. Henry Labouchere, M. P., has been the exposure of the scandalous career for years past as the "King of the Begging Letter Writers." This fellow, the Rev. George Brooks, was formerly a schoolmaster, but, becoming disinterested with his small stipend and limited sphere of enjoyment, took to the more lucrative profession of begging. Mr. Labouchere got upon his track early in his career and, week after week, denounced the impostor in the columns of Truth with a degree of pungency and consistency that was an alibi to the readers of that smart paper. He spoiled many a deal of Brooks, but for all that there are too many fools in England for a man of Brooks's peculiar talents to starve.

It was his custom to study the weaknesses of public men and ascertain the political and religious views of a candidate, and then to write his begging letters accordingly. By these means he succeeded in extracting large sums of money from Cabinet Ministers, Dukes, Archbishops, directors of the Bank of England, Generals, Admirals, and at least one American millionaire, William Waldorf Astor to wit. His expedient was to obtain a grant of £200 from the royal bounty. This fund is voted every year by Parliament to enable the Queen to help necessitous literary men and women, and Brooks qualified for inclusion in that category by writing a trumpery pamphlet of some kind, in which he looked at the Queen as the donor of the royal bounty. But he did it and success followed him to further and even more ambitious efforts. It also put Mr. Henry Labouchere upon his mettle, and Truth's denunciations thereafter became so vigorous and telling that Brooks's income became so small that he finally had to give up the ruse and desperate expedient of procuring Truth for libel.

No more impudent action was ever brought in any court of law, but such is the operation of the English law of libel in protecting scoundrels like Brooks that the action was by no means so hopeless as it looked at first sight. The case has occupied the High Court of Justice for three days this week, and resulted on Thursday in Mr. Labouchere's triumphant acquittal. It was shown in the evidence that within a period of five years Brooks, by the simple method of "begging letters," gathered in no less a sum than \$40,000, and that while posing as a broken down, deserving man of letters, plunged in the deepest distress, he was keeping up country houses, with servants and horses and carriages. The jury practically stopped the case, and thus, unfortunately, prevented the calling of Mr. Arthur Labouchere as a witness against the beggar. Brooks had duped him, Queen Victoria and the world, therefore, will probably never have an opportunity of enjoying that story. But, in the able hands of Sir Frank Lockwood, who represents Mr. Labouchere, the case was full of fun from head to foot, and the entire country has been read and roared over it every day.

Mr. Labouchere is now engaged in hunting Brooks for the costs of the action, but he is not likely to get anything. Brooks was sufficiently astute to have conveyed his money to his wife or to have put it in some other way out of the hands of his creditors. It is probable that he will be added to the big total which, as Mr. Labouchere told the Judge, he has spent since he became the owner of Truth in exposing swindlers of various descriptions. That total already exceeds \$200,000, and it is likely to increase regularly as in the past. At present the money is held against that spendthrift as he has not the gain of most interesting matter for Mr. Labouchere's paper.

SPAIN IS FULLY AROUSED.

THE BITTEREST FEELING SHOWN TOWARD THIS COUNTRY.

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In the cafes and in every public place the situation is excitedly discussed, and everywhere the determination is expressed to uphold the Government to the last extremity in maintaining its rights. Despatches from other cities show the prevalence of a feverish feeling among the populace, and it is the consensus of opinion that it would take very little to so incense the people as to provoke much trouble for the Government should it show any sign of weakening before the "unwarranted pretensions" of the United States.

The Government itself, while deprecating the action of the committee, maintains a dignified attitude, and though some uneasiness was at first expressed, this has been allayed by the receipt of despatches containing Secretary of State Olney's statement to the effect that, no matter what action the Congress may take on the independence resolution, the recognition of the independence of Cuba rests entirely with the American Executive.

The attitude of President Cleveland and Mr. Olney has heretofore met with the high approval of the Government, and the opinion is freely expressed in Government circles that there will be no change in their attitude on the Cuban question. It is declared on good authority that Spain has notified the American Government that it is willing to go far in order to meet the views of the United States regarding the independence of Cuba. It is said that the United States has notified the Spanish Government that it will concede an early date autonomy to Puerto Rico on the lines laid down in the bill adopted by the Cortes last year.

IS CONGRESS DEFERRED?

Secretary Olney's Statement on Cameron's Resolution.

WON'T RECOGNIZE CUBA.

The Secretary Declares That the Executive Is Supreme.

Secretary Olney is as yet the only competent authority willing to express an opinion on the subject. His views of Congressmen generally on this point are not of great value, because few of them have studied it. Even the members of the United States Supreme Court are uncertain in their minds as to whether Secretary Olney is right or wrong, as the question raised has never been passed upon by the court.

The Secretary of the Senate has stated to THE SUN correspondent that there is no doubt whatever in his mind as to the entire effectiveness of a law of Congress passed after a Presidential veto without the approval of the Executive. The only man, however, who appears to have made a study of the question is the Chief Justice of the United States, who has stated in a hearing upon the particular case that he has no doubt whatever in his mind as to the entire effectiveness of a law of Congress passed after a Presidential veto without the approval of the Executive.

Washington, Dec. 19.—Secretary Olney gave to the press to-day this statement as to the nature and effect of the proposed resolution recognizing the independence of the republic of Cuba:

"I have no objection to stating my own view of the resolution respecting the independence of the so-called republic of Cuba, which it is reported is to be laid before the Senate on Monday. Indeed, as there are likely to be serious misapprehensions regarding such resolution, both in this country and abroad, and as such apprehensions may have injurious results of a grave character, it is perhaps my duty to point out that the resolution, if passed by the Senate, can probably be regarded only as an expression of opinion by the eminent gentleman who vote for it in the Senate, and if passed by the House of Representatives, can only be regarded as another expression of opinion by the eminent gentleman who vote for it in the House. The power to recognize the so-called republic of Cuba as an independent State rests exclusively with the Executive.

"A resolution on the subject by the Senate or by the House, by both bodies or by one, whether concurrent or joint, is imperative as legislation and not as an act of advice or recommendation. The Executive is bound to execute the law, and he is bound to execute the law in the manner in which he shall exercise his constitutional functions.

"The operation and effect of the proposed resolution, therefore, even if passed by both Houses of Congress by a two-thirds vote, are not that it may raise expectations in other quarters which can never be realized. It may inflame popular passions, both in this country and elsewhere; may thus put in peril the lives and property of American citizens who are resident and traveling abroad; and will certainly obstruct and perhaps delay the best efforts of the Government to secure such citizens due protection. But, except in these ways, and unless the advice embodied in the resolution shall lead the Executive to revise conclusions already reached and officially declared, the resolution will be without effect and will be regarded as a declaration of opinion toward the two contending parties in Cuba."

Secretary Olney's statement is regarded in Washington as in many respects the most remarkable utterance issued from a member of the Cabinet since the foundation of the Government. It is probably the most important statement of his opinion that Secretary Olney has ever made, and the more closely it is read by public men the greater becomes their surprise at the autonomy of the Secretary of State.

There is no good reason to believe that he consulted President Cleveland as to the propriety of issuing the statement, and it is not to be supposed that the Secretary of State is a man who is in the habit of asking advice from anybody, and there is evidence to support the belief that he alone is responsible for what is accepted quite generally in Washington as the open defiance of Congress by the Administration.

Some of the Senators were surprised at the Secretary's statement, and it was to be expected that they would be surprised. Others, who have had cause to become acquainted with the fearlessness and bulldog pugnacity of the Secretary of State, saw in his announcement a marked illustration of his customary disregard of public and Congressional opinion.

Surprise at his unexpected action is not confined wholly to those members of Congress who are favorable to the passage of the Cameron joint resolution or some other declaration in behalf of Cuba. Even the opponents of such legislation freely express their wonder at the course of the Secretary of State.

All of the Congressmen are willing to make public their views, but the indignation and surprise of those who question the propriety of the Secretary's public statement and the correctness of his opinion that executive action is necessary to make operative an act of Congress are well expressed by the opinion of Senator Chandler, who says:

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MADRID, Dec. 19.—The excitement in this city and elsewhere in Spain, caused by the receipt of the news of the action of the Foreign Relations Committee of the American Senate in deciding to report in favor of the independence of Cuba, was intense.

A wave of popular indignation has swept over the whole country and the bitter feeling against the United States has been greatly intensified. There is no denying the fact that popular feeling is in favor of boldly defying the United States and notifying the American Government that Cuba will be retained by Spain if it takes her last dollar and last man to uphold her sovereignty.

In the cafes and in every public place the situation is excitedly discussed, and everywhere the determination is expressed to uphold the Government to the last extremity in maintaining its rights. Despatches from other cities show the prevalence of a feverish feeling among the populace, and it is the consensus of opinion that it would take very little to so incense the people as to provoke much trouble for the Government should it show any sign of weakening before the "unwarranted pretensions" of the United States.

The Government itself, while deprecating the action of the committee, maintains a dignified attitude, and though some uneasiness was at first expressed, this has been allayed by the receipt of despatches containing Secretary of State Olney's statement to the effect that, no matter what action the Congress may take on the independence resolution, the recognition of the independence of Cuba rests entirely with the American Executive.

The attitude of President Cleveland and Mr. Olney has heretofore met with the high approval of the Government, and the opinion is freely expressed in Government circles that there will be no change in their attitude on the Cuban question. It is declared on good authority that Spain has notified the American Government that it is willing to go far in order to meet the views of the United States regarding the independence of Cuba. It is said that the United States has notified the Spanish Government that it will concede an early date autonomy to Puerto Rico on the lines laid down in the bill adopted by the Cortes last year.

When the situation in Cuba warrants such action, reforms will be inaugurated there that will be satisfactory to all parties, and will include administrative autonomy, such measure of political and economical autonomy as will be compatible with the interests of the Crown, and a change in the tariff laws that will conduce to the extension of the trade of the island with the United States and to closer commercial relations.

Of course, the Government will not for a moment consider any question involving the abandonment of the island, and it can be emphatically announced that it would not dare to do so. The temper of the people is fairly aroused, and any government, Conservative or Liberal, would be signing its own death warrant should it ever suggest the ending of Spanish rule in Cuba.

Efforts have been made to obtain authoritative statements from some of the Ministers as to the situation, but they decline to present to express any views on the subject. It can be said, however, that no governmental circles in Madrid are growing out of the Cuban resolution is entertained, and it is believed that the professions of friendship made by President Cleveland and Mr. Olney through Mr. Hannis Taylor, the American Minister here, are thoroughly sincere.

An important factor, however, is the Cortes, which at present is not in session. It is thought that that body might be compelled by popular clamor, were it in session, to take some action that would result in the overthrow of the Government, but as it does not meet for several months all danger from that source is removed.

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