

El Separatista (3/15/1884): "A Harsh Blow to Cuba"

While the Spanish government, with its suicidal policies, has finally ruined and plunged our unfortunate homeland into the most appalling misery; while the parties without patriotism and dignity that currently occupy the field of Cuban politics engage in electoral struggles and waste in them the strength and energy that should be applied to the salvation of the homeland, joining us, breaking forever the ties that bind Cuba to the odious and hated metropolis and putting an end once and for all to the irritating monopolies, the enormous tax burdens, and the exploitation of all classes that are the causes behind the critical situation in which Cuba currently finds itself, other peoples of Latin America, peoples who, like us today, were not long ago Spanish colonies, but who, more worthy than us, broke indignant the yoke imposed on them by their tyrants, those people, following paths diametrically opposed to those of Spain in Cuba, seek their own greatness and the development of their trade relations with this Republic that is the natural market for their products.

Spain, with its absurd policy, with its doubts and hesitations, with its economic errors, has ruined Cuba.

Lately, instead of making decisive and saving resolutions, considering the seriousness of the circumstances, it has limited itself to concluding trade agreements that are only palliative remedies, and what was expected but feared has happened.

The trade treaty between Mexico and the United States has been ratified.

In the current state of Cuban production, burdened furthermore by onerous taxes on its exports, no heavier blow could be received than the conclusion of this treaty, which ensures the free introduction into American markets of Mexican tobacco and sugar.

The futile arguments that Mexican production is still insufficient for its own consumption are worthless. In a very short time and thanks to the influx of foreign capital, mainly American, production will have acquired extraordinary development in a country where the introduction of machinery from the United States is also free and where there are immense fertile lands suitable for the cultivation of tobacco and sugar cane.

From Cuba itself, we are sure, thousands of our farmers will emigrate, going to seek in the sister republic what they lack in our oppressed and ruined homeland: freedom, work, security, guarantees.

While we regret and lament the evils that, from the conclusion of this treaty, will harm domestic production, it should not be thought that in any way we begrudge the benefits that the Mexican republic will derive from it. We profess the greatest sympathies towards the free land of Anahuac, whose prosperity we desire and whose growth we sincerely rejoice in.

Moreover, in reality, we have only ourselves, Cubans, to accuse of our own misfortunes.

The criminal indifference of our people who tolerate the tyranny and exploitation of Spain is the true cause of our ruin.

Let's convince ourselves. The day when all of us united overthrow the government that oppresses us, that day will put an end to our miseries.

Revolution or death! This is the dilemma for Cuba.