

A Call Upon the Government for Prompt and Decisive Action.

[From the Albany Evening Journal—republican organ—Feb. 10.]

The shocking and unprovoked murder of an American citizen in Havana, and the dangerous, perhaps fatal, wounding of three others, is an event that calls for prompt and decided action on the part of our government. It is true the Captain General is represented as displaying great indignation on account of the outrage, having offered a reward for the apprehension of the murderers. But none of these have been captured, though the slaughter was done in open day and in the presence of a large crowd. And the fact, which would justify a protest in the name of civilized humanity, is that such deeds are legitimate fruits of the policy pursued by the Spaniards in Cuba. Beginning with the shooting of Señor Aldama's daughter at the Havana theatre and continuing to the present time, the record of the prevailing struggle has been a history of unmitigated barbarities, such as rarely degrade even the most savage and brutal populations of the East. Meanwhile the pet volunteers have been allowed to pursue unimpeded their own wild way, and we have yet to learn of a single instance in which their horrid crimes were followed by the infliction of legal punishment. Spain claims to belong to the family of nations, and demands the privileges and protections of such relationship. Other governments have a right to insist, therefore, that the territory of her colonies shall at least furnish an asylum for peaceable and law-abiding men, and not be converted into an arena of murder, where none are safe. The event to which we have alluded presents an imperative reason why our own administration shall make this demand in form.

This is not the first time Americans have been arrested, robbed of their property and murdered by millions of Spain during the present troubles. What has been done to secure recompense for these outrages? Has our flag ceased to afford protection? May our citizens, traveling abroad, be subjected with impunity to every form of indignity and danger? This is a serious question. The honor of a nation is involved in the rights of its subjects, and in the safeguards it throws about them. While we have studiously respected our obligations as neutrals, even against the drift of popular feeling, Spain seems to have looked upon us with a measure of suspicion and aversion which we should feel bound to resent as coming from a stronger power. The mere fact of hailing from the United States seems to be a signal for ill treatment and insult at Havana, and wherever the volunteers are in power. It is time this sort of thing should cease. The abuses practised are not made more bearable from the fact that they are committed by a bankrupt nation.

Mr. Sumner objects to recognition of the rebels as belligerents, or any claim for damages, on the ground that it might involve a war, in which Spain could inflict upon us greater damage than she would suffer at our hands. This is the coward argument. It would make our government indifferent to any injuries hereafter inflicted upon us by a power capable of waging hostilities, and would put our commerce, and the rights of our people abroad, at the mercy of any rival or unfriendly State. The duty of our administration is to inquire first what is demanded from it by a just regard for its own dignity and the honor of our government to decide whether a just cause exists for claiming reparation from the Spanish authorities in Cuba, and to act promptly and decisively, without regard to consequences. In such a quarrel, if one should occur, we would have the sympathies of the civilized world. Nor do we doubt that the result would be not only our own ample justification, but the liberation of Cuba from bondage and the regeneration of the home government in Spain. There is too much torpor and timidity in our coun-
cils.