

Protection of American Citizens in Cuba— Reinforcement of the West India Squadron.

Within the past week the government has been in receipt of information from prominent and responsible parties in Cuba concerning the condition of affairs in that island and the jeopardy in which the lives and property of American citizens are placed. All these accounts agree upon the point that the Spanish authorities are utterly regardless of the rights of Americans resident in Cuba, and do not hesitate to imprison American citizens and destroy their property any more than they do that of the so-called insurgents. In view of these facts the Secretary of the Navy has directed the reinforcement of the West India squadron. Several war vessels now attached to the Pacific squadron, where there is very little to do, have been ordered to proceed at once to the West Indies and report to the officer commanding that station. As an additional precaution two iron-clads of the first class have been ordered to proceed to Key West and hold themselves in readiness for any orders that may come from the officer in command of the West India squadron. It is the intention of Vice Admiral Porter, who is directing this matter, to place such a force in the vicinity of Cuba as will show the Spanish authorities that our government intends to protect the rights and property of its citizens in that island. It is not supposed by the authorities here that the appearance of this force in Cuban waters will lead to any trouble between this country and Spain, except the Spanish authorities in Cuba should be so rash as to initiate hostilities. The object is to preserve peace, but the instructions to the commander of the squadron will secure the prompt redress of any injury to Americans in Cuba.