

The Quaker City Muddle.

- Whenever Spain gets into any trouble with her dissatisfied colonists the first step of the Spanish officials is to send a few thousand dollars to New York as a detective fund to find out what the American sympathizers with the Cuban malcontents are doing. No sooner does the gleam of the Spaniard's gold irradiate the detective vision than information and knowledge of vast proportions flow in upon the Spanish official. Conspiracies, treasons, piratical expeditions and filibuster operations of a magnitude proportioned to the amount of pay forthcoming for the information fill the air around him, and, passing through the alembic of his imagination, are poured into the ears of the Cabinet at Washington and the government in Cuba. We have no doubt the Spanish spies earn their money, if not with facts, at least with the fruits of a fervid and gold stimulated poetic vein which serve every purpose that facts would serve.

! This seems to be the case just now with the steamship Quaker City, which government has been watching for a month past with all the vigilance of a cat over a mouse hole, and which in a moment of pro-Spanish enthusiasm it has at last pounced upon. A showing of the facts by the British Minister satisfied even our slow and timid Secretary of State that a muddle was before him, but with wonderful wisdom he consulted with the Treasury Commander, and then both together jumped into it. Rising from the unexpected situation, it is gravely announced that as they have put their feet in it they will let the courts get them out. The case is a pertinent example of the injustice which, under the fallacy of complying with our neutrality laws, can be so wantonly inflicted on the citizen. The owner must go to law and spend a quarter, a half, or it may be the whole of his property in question to prove that the government has got into a muddle, and then whistle for justice. We advise Secretaries Fish and Boutwell to look before they leap next time.