

The Seizure of the Brig Mary Lowell by the Spanish Authorities.

[From the London Telegraph, April 21.]

Only the other day the Governor of Cuba authorized the illegal seizure of an American ship in English waters, thus curiously contriving to offend the colony's most formidable possible enemy and the only Power strong enough in that part of the world to be her ally and friend. We do not say that in any case it should be our business to interfere for the prevention of Cuban independence; but our good offices might at any time be useful in averting a quarrel between Spain and the United States. Yet, with a mad discourtesy, the government of Cuba manages at once to give the United States authorities a very serious provocation, and actually to insult us, with the further effect of almost implicating us in a show of connivance at the attack on the American vessel, unless we resent the insult! On another recent occasion an American ship was seized on the coast, and the passengers—men of all nationalities—were treated as if they were Cuban rebels; a gross outrage, a violation of the commonest international courtesy and the first principles of public law. Beyond this, in its futile attempt at blockade, the Cuban government has issued a list of trivial articles declared "contraband of war," with food among the number. We speak on early information which fuller reports may in some degree modify; though we have no reason to doubt the substantial correctness of what we have heard. In comparison with larger events the outrages to which we refer may appear small, but they look as if the local authorities had lost their heads. Before this time Spanish officials have brought their country into trouble by a blind and brutal indifference to other people's rights.

What will be the end no one can easily say. It would be rash to predict anything like war because a strong squadron is despatched from New York. It must be remembered that Cuba is not the *bonne bouche* for free America that it was for America ruled by the owners of slaves. When slave States were admissible into the Union the accession of the magnificent island meant the admission of three or four new States casting in their lot with the South. Now, Cuba would be only an additional territorial embarrassment. Emancipation would have to follow annexation; and nobody is quite certain that free Cuba might not have to pass through a period of depression as serious as that which has afflicted emancipated Jamaica. No doubt the Americans might be willing to brave all these risks if they saw the splendid pear ripe enough to drop into their mouths; but it is not ripe, and in the present temper of their politicians they are not inclined to snatch at it. Nor do we know enough of the independent party in Cuba to make sure that they covet a closer alliance with the government at Washington. They are willing, no doubt, to accept aid and arms from American sympathizers; they are willing to see the Spanish administration embroiled with the new President; but men of their temperament and descent rarely attach themselves to Anglo-Saxon rule. We saw that in Mexico. The patriotic section there was republican enough to please its American friends; but it detested annexation not less cordially than the Canadians themselves, and cherished a fear of Yankee invasion as lively as the hatred of the old Spanish rule. We suspect that the Americans will find the same difficulties in Cuba. The islanders will readily accept their aid against Spain, to secure, not annexation, but independence; though they could scarcely spoil their own game more effectually than they do now, by supplying the great republic, in their own hour of crisis, with so broad and accessible a *locus standi*. Meanwhile, England can only "stand by and mark"—with some natural regret if the public servants of Spain, by persistency in puerile folly, manage to irritate her natural enemies, to alienate her best friends, and to lose the last great jewel of her once magnificent colonial empire.