

## THE SPANISH GUNBOATS.

Four of the thirty gunboats now being constructed in this country for the Spanish government have been launched and are lying at the foot of Thirteenth street, North river, where they will receive their boilers and machinery from the Delamater Iron Works. These gunboats were contracted for by the government of Spain with the Delamater firm soon after the commencement of the revolution in Cuba, and are designed for coast and river duty. The friends of the Cuban patriots, who have had occasion to observe the extensive warlike preparations carried on by Spain in New York, are, of course, very indignant that circumstances should lead our government to give all manner of aid and comfort to Spain, while the struggling Cubans, who have the sympathy of the whole American people, are denied every class of assistance, and when the revenue cutters brought the captured Cuban expedition down East river to Brooklyn Navy Yard, it was not a little unpleasant for our officers to have their attention called by their prisoners to the ship yards along the river where Spanish gunboats were being hurried to completion for Cuban waters. The Cubans themselves feel very bitter about it, and while they acknowledge the strict legality of facilities to Spain and punishment to Cubans for procuring war material, they cannot perceive how it accords with the spirit of our politics which declares in favor of every people struggling for liberty.

Mr. Charles Mallory, of Mystic, Conn., has a contract with the Delamater Iron Works for building fifteen of the hulls; Mr. Thomas Stack, of Greenpoint, L. I., is to build five, and the Messrs. Pollion, of Brooklyn, have a contract for ten, four of which have, as above stated, left the ship yard. It is expected that one gunboat per week will henceforth be launched from each of the ship yards until the contracts are executed. As many men as can advantageously work together on the vessels are employed at each yard, and the work is being hastened with all possible speed.

The vessels are all of the same size and style, 103 feet long between perpendiculars, 22 feet beam, 8 feet deep, 170 tons register and 5 feet 8 inches draught of water. They are constructed of the best ship stuff, are handsome models, and are to have powerful engines, with twin screws. The bulwarks are very low, and the decks are to be perfectly clear with the exception of the 100-pounder pivot gun on the bow, a couple of howitzers, the masts and steering apparatus, so that when the boats receive their machinery, armament, coal, men and supplies, they will lay so low in the water as to present very little more surface to an enemy than one of the New York tugs. The quarters for the captain and officers will necessarily be rather contracted, but as special attention will be given to economy of space in this department, the arrangement of the quarters will be better than in many gunboats of larger size. The quarters for the men are still more limited and must prove very inconvenient. The space between decks is small, and as all the room that can be spared from the officers and men has been taken for machinery and coal bunkers, the ammunition, supplies, &c., will be kept in lockers occupying the nooks and corners that cannot be better appropriated. It has not yet been decided who will do the joiners' work nor to whom the rigging contract will be given. The joiners' work on one of the boats is being done and will be completed by the day, but as soon as possible this work on the other vessels will be given out by contract.

The engines are built at the Delamater Iron Works. Twenty-five are nearly ready for the boats and one is now going in. They are constructed on Mr. Ericsson's plan for twin screws and are expected to propel the vessels at the rate of from eleven to twelve knots an hour. Their sailing qualities are to be first class, and with their large schooner rig and powerful machinery it is believed that they will make formidable cruisers. The vessels will all be launched by the middle of September, and by the 1st of January they will have their machinery and rigging and be ready for service. The fifth of these boats will be launched on Saturday from the ship yard of Messrs. Pollion, Brooklyn, and arrangements are being made to also launch one at Greenpoint and another at Mystic, Conn., on the same day.