

CUBA.

Admiral Hoff's Views of Cuban Affairs—A Protracted Struggle for Independence—Spaniards Becoming Dissatisfied With the War—Activity of the Spanish Fleet.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 16, 1899.

Admiral Hoff had an interview to-day with the Secretary of the Navy and Admiral Porter concerning the condition of affairs in Cuba. Nothing especially new was elicited beyond what has already appeared in Admiral Hoff's despatches to the Navy Department while in command of the West India station. The stories which were put in circulation some time ago with regard to the Admiral sympathizing with the Spaniards as against the Cubans were entirely without foundation and were never credited at the Navy Department. The Admiral's instructions from the government were to observe a strict neutrality as between the belligerents and look after the interests of American citizens resident in and trading with Cuba. His position was naturally one of great delicacy, requiring tact and discretion and at the same time firmness. Like nearly every other American of course his sympathies personally were with the struggling Cubans, but his instructions from our government prevented him from making any ostentatious parade of them. On all proper occasions, however, he did not fail to embrace whatever opportunity offered to aid them, and he possesses numerous evidences of the gratitude of the Cubans for his conduct. Admiral Hoff thinks the struggle in Cuba will be a protracted one, unless the matter should be settled by the negotiations now pending between Minister Sickles and the Spanish government. He thinks, however, that the policy adopted by our government is the correct one, as the best way to get around the Spaniards is not to irritate them or arouse their hostility. It is his opinion that the leading men of Spain are beginning to see that they cannot hold Cuba, and that the best policy is to accept the basis of settlement offered by General Sickles. The Spanish fleet in Cuban waters, the Admiral says, is quite formidable and very active in watching the coast. In addition to the large war ships they have a number of light draught vessels that are constantly running around the island watching everything in the shape of a vessel. In sailing up and down the coast the Admiral's flagship was frequently followed by these vessels until they could ascertain from his movements where he was going and who he was. The health of the squadron, the Admiral reports, was severely tried, and several of the officers and men died of yellow fever, notwithstanding the most strict sanitary regulations were maintained on every ship. The past season has been the most sickly that has been experienced in the West Indies for many years, and the Spanish troops have suffered severely from this cause. To-morrow Admiral Hoff will have an interview with Secretary Fish.

The Steamship Cleopatra All Right.

HAVANA, Sept. 16, 1899.

The steamship Cleopatra arrived below the guard-ship to-night.