

### The Spanish Gunboats.

One of the Spanish "mosquito fleet," as it is called, went on a trial trip on Saturday up the Hudson. The Spaniards would have been delighted if she could have gone down instead of up our noble river and out of the Narrows. This, however, they expect to see in a short time if the reports are true, for it is said "each of these funny craft will sail probably upon its completion, which will be inside of a month." It is said, too, and evidently under the inspiration of the Spaniards and the contractors, that "the impression prevails that no power on the part of the authorities can detain these gunboats," and that "no law can enjoin them." The action of this No. 1 boat was perfectly satisfactory.

Of course this parade of the action of the completed gunboat was for effect and a little ruse to try the temper of the public and the intentions of the government. If the Spaniards and the constructors be so certain that no power on the part of the authorities can detain these gunboats, and that no law can enjoin them, why did they not test the question by approaching the Narrows. We think they would have found out their mistake. The administration is not so weak and vacillating as to take decided ground one day against the departure of these war vessels and give way the next. Nothing has occurred to lead to such a change. On the contrary, the attitude of the Spanish government on the Cuban question is more likely to strengthen the determination of the administration not to let these gunboats leave our shores. Although the Cubans have not been recognized as belligerents, Spain is not yet at peace with our sister republics of South America, and this government is right on that ground in refusing to let the gunboats escape; but it is also justifiable on the high moral and political ground of saving Cuba from the dreadful consequences of letting them go. Cuba is our near neighbor, and we are interested politically, commercially and in every point of view in the fate of that island. It would be an everlasting disgrace to the United States should we, under the present aspect of the struggle for Cuban independence, give such important aid to the Spaniards, while we refuse any to the Cubans. These "funny craft," as they have been facetiously termed, would enter the little bays, inlets and rivers of Cuba, where large war vessels cannot go, and would make terrible havoc with the property and lives of the population, as well as with the patriot forces. From what we have seen and know of Spanish barbarity this so-called "mosquito fleet" would prove a fearful engine of destruction and cruelty. General Grant and his Cabinet understand this, and will not be bullied or humbugged by Spain to let the gunboats escape. They are not so weak and have too much regard for the universal sentiment of the country to back down from the position taken or to afford such important aid to the Spaniards to crush a heroic and neighboring people fighting for their independence. The shortest and best way to settle this question is to recognize the Cubans as belligerents. Then the sympathies of the American people would soon be shown, Cuba would get all the assistance she needs, and Spanish barbarity and domination in that island would speedily be brought to an end.