

WASHINGTON.

THE CUBAN QUESTION—MONITORS FITTING OUT FOR CUBA—A DEMAND TO BE MADE FOR THE RELEASE OF THE AMERICAN PRISONERS—PROMPT ACTION OF THE HOUSE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRESIDENT—ANOTHER SPEECH FROM SENATOR SPEAGUE—THE NEW-YORK COLLECTORS.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO TRIBUNE.]

WASHINGTON, Thursday, April 8, 1869.

Cuban matters are becoming more important and interesting each day, the interest being enhanced by the action of our own Government, and the presence here of intelligent representatives from the insurrectionary forces, who are daily gaining influential friends by the representations which they are enabled to give. There can no longer be any doubt of the attitude of our Government in reference to the American prisoners held by the Spanish authorities, nor of the decision to maintain a faithful neutrality between the contending parties on the Island. There is no doubt, however, that our Government will unhesitatingly demand the immediate and unconditional release of all the American prisoners, and that all efforts at interference on the part of citizens of the United States will be peremptorily dealt with. This is rendered more apparent each day by the action of the President, and heads of Departments. The Navy Department is especially active in its preparations to prevent interference by our citizens. Rear-Admiral Poor, the commandant of the Navy-yard at Washington, received instructions today to fit out an iron-clad monitor with all possible dispatch, and it is more than probable that she is destined to swell the largely-increased naval force in the West India. Telegraphic orders have also been sent to Commander John H. Upham to proceed with the apprentice-ship *Saratoga* (now at New-London, Conn.), without unnecessary delay, to Havana, and report for duty to Rear-Admiral Hoff. It is also known, semi-officially, that instructions will soon be issued for the preparation for service of the iron-clad monitors *Dictator* and *Monimus*—two of the best vessels of their class in the possession of the Government, and now laid up at League Island.

Efforts are being made by parties belonging to either one side or the other of the Cuban difficulty, to open negotiations with the Navy Department for the purchase of a certain few of our monitors, and have asked the lowest price which the Government will receive for them. Secretary Brie and Admiral Porter, however, are wary of these overtures, and have thus far declined to entertain them. Admiral Hoff communicates to the Government the fact that the Spanish authorities have upon several occasions arrested American citizens in Cuba, upon the mere suspicion of their complicity with the Rebels. Frequently they are held for a long time without trial, and when their cases come up they are discharged for want of evidence. This practice has become so common with the Spanish authorities that Admiral Hoff deems it his duty to call the attention of the Government to the fact, in the hope that some action may be taken to prevent such arrests in future.