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Democrat Watchman.

Bellefonte, Pa., May 6, 1898.

The Story of the First Real Battle.

British Officer Describes the Fight.—His Story Tells How These Were Sent Out By the American Correspondents.—Spaniards Couldn't Shoot.—Havana Forts Should be Easy Prey to the Fleet.—Puritan's Great Shot Blew Up Half a Battery, and Spanish Loss Must Have Been Heavy.

How the United States fleet smashed the Spanish fortifications at Matanzas is told by the correspondent of the London Daily Telegraph, who is an officer in the volunteer artillery of Great Britain, and both impartial and competent, and who was a witness. His narrative says:

The first engagement of the war was concluded at 2 o'clock this afternoon. An hour before that the cruisers New York and Cincinnati and the monitor Puritan steamed into the bay of Matanzas, drew the fire of the forts at Cardenas and Punta Gorda and returned it with what appeared at least to be disastrous results to the latter.

There were no casualties on board the American ships, and none of them was hit with projectiles.

For some days the Cincinnati, which has been blockading the port, noticed that large bodies of men were engaged in erecting new batteries on a low, sandy point that runs out near the entrance to the port. A report of this circumstance was sent to Admiral Sampson, together with the notification that the torpedo boat Dupont had been fired upon by a concealed battery whose location had not been discovered. Friday's action showed that the admiral resolved to draw the fire of the batteries so as to discover their whereabouts and to demolish the new works that were in construction.

The dispatch boat, on board of which I was, picked up and spoke the flagship about ten miles east of Havana early Friday morning. She was then in company with a torpedo boat.

NEW YORK LED.

We followed, and after a run of about 30 miles we sighted the Cincinnati and the Puritan, lying off Matanzas, and the three vessels immediately stood close in shore at half speed, line ahead, the New York leading and the Cincinnati in the rear.

Matanzas itself is a town of about 40,000 inhabitants, lying on the western side of a river where it empties into the bay. The entrance to the harbor is about four miles wide, and on both sides the Spanish have erected batteries and stray earthwork fortifications, the exact location of which was not known to the blockading squadron.

The New York and her consorts stood straight in until the flagship was almost between the points of Punta Gorda and Cardenas on the opposite shore. She then headed westward and ran slowly along the shore, about 3,000 or 4,000 yards distant from it. It was possible to make out every point with the utmost clearness, and we could see the new soil of the new earthworks, with groups of men standing watching the ships.

It was a beautiful afternoon, and the palm-clad slopes of the hills, with the tall peaks of the Camanaco pass in the background, could be seen with great distinctness. The only vessels in sight were the warships and the dispatch boat. Suddenly the New York checked her speed. Nearly four miles away a blue jet rose out of a patch of red earth and presently a projectile struck the water about a mile short on the monitor's port beam.

THREW 12-INCH PROJECTILES.

The Puritan then stopped, with her stern pointing directly into the harbor, and sent a few shells against the Cardenas battery that had opened fire. They, too, fell short, and she then fired two or three 12-inch projectiles, which took effect close to the battery, but it did no damage as far as I could see with my glass.

A shell which I did not think was more than a four-inch one fell about 100 yards astern of the New York, and a second later a second gun in a different battery sent one screaming over the flagship to fall within a short distance of my vessel.

As soon as the batteries opened fire the New York signaled to the Cincinnati, and the latter ran forward and placed herself about 1,000 yards to the westward of the New York. Both vessels lay port side to the land, between 3,000 and 4,000 yards distant from it, and opened a vigorous cannonade.

The flagship used five of her eight-inch guns and all of her four-inch quick fired that would bear, while the Cincinnati fired six-inch and five-inch guns, and the fire was exceedingly heavy, as both ships and ashore batteries burned cocoa powder. A heavy band of smoke almost hid the land from sight. Through it, however, I was able again and again to see sand bushes around the gun positions rising in clouds, while the water around the flagships was splashing frequently into columns of spray where the Spanish projectiles were falling.

So far as could be made out the whole of the Spanish fire from Punta Gorda was directed at the New York. She was not, however, struck once during the engagement. I believe the Spaniards fired only solid shot as no burst of shells was seen by anyone. After the fight I was told that one shrapnel burst about 100 feet above the flagship, but only one observer on the ship herself reports it.

PURITAN'S GREAT SHOT.

The fire of the American ships was excellent, and there must have been heavy loss in the Spanish works. After about 20 minutes' fire the batteries were silenced and the ships ceased firing.

The monitor which had been marking the Cardenas battery with an intermittent fire, was signalled to close up. Almost instantly the Puritan replied with a 12-inch shell, which ploughed directly into the very spot from which the Spanish gun was fired.

As to Blockading.

The blockade of Cuba will recall the blockade of the Southern ports during the Civil War. There will be several essential differences, however, in the two blockades. The Federal fleets had a much larger extent of coast line to guard than they will in the present instance. The Confederates at the beginning of the war controlled the coast from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, and there were many important ports there on which required particular attention at the hands of the blockading forces.

The Cuban coast line is much less in extent, and there are but few important ports along it. The Confederates had a convenient base of operations for the blockade runners at the Bahama islands, belonging to the British, the authorities of which were very lax in enforcing the neutrality laws. The Confederates, however, for a considerable time, had no navy to assist in breaking the blockade, in which case the Spaniards have the advantage. It is doubtful, however, whether any considerable force of Spanish ships will be able to reach Cuba in time to be of service. If a powerful Spanish fleet does come over, of which many profane gossips, and a few naval engagements should result unfavorably to us, the blockade would soon become very effective, and must inevitably result in the surrender of the Spanish land forces. It is true that Porto Rico might serve as a basis for blockade runners, but it will probably not be very long before the ports in that island will also be blockaded.

The chief ports of the Confederates were Charleston, S. C., New Orleans, La., Mobile, Ala., Pensacola, Fla., Galveston, Tex., Savannah, Ga., and Wilmington, N. C. These places were successively taken one after another after longer or shorter periods of blockading. The blockade of Charleston was the most difficult, because of the importance of the city to the Southern cause, and its proximity to the Bahamas, strenuous efforts were therefore made to capture it, all of which failed until Sherman's army flanked the Confederates out of it. For more than three years, despite every attempt to prevent them, blockade runners were able to steal past the strong Federal fleet and carry to the Confederates much needed munitions of war. To supplement the efforts of the blockading squadron what was known as the "Stone Fleet" was sunk at the entrance of the harbor. This fleet consisted of a large number of old merchant vessels loaded with stores and sent off at the entrance to the harbor. The effect of this was, however, not what was anticipated, and blockade runners continued until the fall of the city. On one occasion the Confederates sent out some war vessels that had fitted up in the harbor, and made an attack upon the blockading squadron, which had been temporarily weakened. They captured one of our monitors, and the other Federal vessels quickly took a hand and drove the Confederate squadron back into the harbor so rapidly that they failed to take possession of the captured Federal ship. The claim was made that the blockade had been raised, but this was soon proved to be baseless.

The last Confederate port of importance to be captured was Wilmington, N. C., which was held by Fort Fisher, and was taken January 15th, 1865. The men on a blockading fleet have no easy time of it, as they are compelled to be continually on the alert to resent attacks by the enemy's war vessels, and to detect attempts by their merchant ones to run the blockade.

The blockade fleet is necessarily some distance out in the ocean, and is liable to be driven off its station by storms. When this occurs there is a great opportunity for the enemy's vessels in port to escape, and for such as may be able to make the port from the outside to get in. When a blockade is declared, it must be with a sufficient force, otherwise neutral vessels are at liberty to pass in and out of the blockaded port. After the blockade is established it must also be well maintained, and this it is often difficult to accomplish by reason of storms and the attacks of the enemy's fleet.

Capturing Prizes.

The Ambrosia Baiter Taken in by the Monitor Terror.

KEY WEST, May 4th.—Still another prize steamed into the harbor to-day. She was the Ambrosia Baiter, a little Cuban coasting steamer, taken by the monitor Terror last night off Cardenas. The Baiter looked like a toy boat but the juvenile Spaniard was richer than she looked, as it was learned when \$70,000 of silver specie was found stored away in her, besides valuable cargo of bananas and 300 casks of wine. She was bound from Port Limon, Costa Rica, for Havana by way of Cardenas with seven passengers and a crew of ten. It is needless to say the Terror had no difficulty in making the capture. One blank shot sufficed to bring her to, and Carpenter Luther D. Martin with a party of marines was put aboard to bring her in to Key West.

About the time this capture was made, the Norwegian steamer Ita, from Philadelphia for Cardenas with 1,600 tons of coal, attempted to run the blockade and land her cargo, but was summarily turned back to Key West, where she arrived this afternoon.

The monitor Terror on Sunday took a little prize, news of which was first learned to-day—a Spanish schooner Saco, with a cargo of sugar. A prize crew was put on board. She has not arrived yet, but is probably delayed by the recent rough weather.

War Benefits Some People.

The war in which we are now engaged is not an unmixed evil, but, on the contrary, for some people it is really a beneficial occurrence. The needs of the government have already made necessary the purchase for the military establishment of 450,000 yards of woolen goods. Bids have also been called for the supplying of 1,400,000 yards of kerseys and flannels and for 75,000 blankets of five pounds each. The consequences of this war, among others, will be the relieving of the dullness that had prevailed in the woolen manufacturing business, because the stocks that were on hand will be sold off. It will also allow of fresh manufacturing in that line, and the wool that had been bought and stored away in anticipation of tariff changes will now be manufactured into woolen goods.

The war certainly must have an improving effect on the business mentioned. The wool markets, if prices prevailed, would be weak, on account of large supplies of raw material and the nearness of another clip, but warfare will have a steadying effect.

Subscription for the Watchman.

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Big War Expenditures.

Secretary Alger Estimates His Department Will Need \$34,000,000 to Meet Deficiencies.

WASHINGTON.—The secretary of the treasury to-day received from the secretary of war estimates of deficiencies in appropriations required for the use of the war department for the remaining two months of the present fiscal year aggregating \$34,019,997. In his letter Secretary Alger says that the acts of Congress, approved April 22 and 26, 1898, authorizing the enrollment of a volunteer army and placing the regular army on a war footing will necessitate this increased appropriation for the organization, support and maintenance of the new forces. The several items in the deficiency appropriation asked for are as follows, cents omitted:

Signal service of the army, \$21,000; pay, etc., of the army (volunteers), \$5,766,661; pay, etc., of the army (regulars), \$1,425,253; subsistence of the army, \$2,739,643; regular supplies, quartermaster's department, \$1,000,000; incidental expenses, quartermaster's department, \$750,000; horses for cavalry and artillery, \$1,500,000; barracks and quarters, \$3,000,000; army transportation, \$6,000,000; clothing and camp and garrison equipage, \$10,000,000; contingencies of the army, \$20,000; ordnance department, \$3,747,405; medical and hospital department, \$50,000; equipment for engineer troops, \$50,000; torpedoes for harbor defense, \$500,000; expeditionary force to Cuba, \$150,034; total \$34,019,997.

This estimate, which will be transmitted to Congress, is entirely independent of the allotment made by the President to the war department from the \$50,000,000 defense appropriation. This will indicate that up to July 1st next (two months) the increased expenditures on account of the war will be approximately \$90,000,000.

Secretary Alger's recommendations will be promptly taken up in the House committee on appropriations and will be made part of the general deficiency appropriation bill, making the measure foot up an aggregate of over \$50,000,000. Representative Sayers, of Texas, minority leader of the committee, said to-day there would be no opposition from the Democrats to immediate passage.

Lieutenant Rowan Landed.

On the Cuban Coast.—On his Way to the Camp of Garcia.

KINGSTON, Jamaica, May 4.—First Lieutenant Andrew S. Rowan, of the Nineteenth infantry, under orders from the war department, was landed on the Cuban coast, somewhere west of Santiago, probably before dawn on Monday. His Cuban guides and an open sail boat were used. The guides have not returned.

Lieutenant Rowan is on his way to the camp of General Garcia. He will represent the war department in arranging for the co-operation of the insurgents in the invasion of eastern Cuba by the forces of the United States. The time and place of the invasion will be controlled by events and the character of Lieutenant Rowan's despatches.

Lieutenant Rowan was detailed from the bureau of information for this dangerous service—dangerous, because, in his civilian dress, he is liable to be arrested as a spy. He speaks Spanish and knows Cuba, having written a book on the subject. Moreover, he is an expert map maker.

Lieutenant Rowan left Washington under instant orders on April 9th. He was directed to wait here, prepared to go to Porto Rico or Cuba. As he went to eastern Cuba, it is inferred that a blow will be struck there before one is struck at Porto Rico.

The expectation is that General Calixto Garcia will dispose his forces to cover a landing for United States troops as presently intended. A courier with Lieutenant Rowan's first dispatches to the war department will probably leave General Garcia's camp next week.

The Pay Soldiers Receive.

The present pay per day of officers and enlisted men of infantry when in the service of the State is as follows: Major, general, \$30.25; brigadier general, \$15.20; colonel, \$9.72; lieutenant colonel, \$8.33; major, \$6.25; captains, \$5; first lieutenant, \$4.17; second lieutenant, \$3.89; first sergeant, \$3; sergeants, \$2; corporals, \$1.75; musicians and privates, \$1.50. Enlisted men, after serving a full term of enlistment, three years, are entitled to 20 cents in addition to pay during their second and third term of consecutive enlistment. In case the guards are called into the service of the United States the pay of commissioned officers remains as above, but the enlisted men receive the pay of men in like grade in the regular army, which is from \$13 to \$26 per month.

Officers Detailed by Alger.

WASHINGTON, May 4.—Secretary Alger has detailed officers to muster into the service of the United States from the several States the troops called out by the President's proclamation. The officers are to go without delay to the rendezvous of the state troops and report their arrival to the Governors of the States, and execute the work assigned to them as soon as possible. This word is the mustering of the men into service, and when accomplished the volunteers will be under direct control of the government and subject to the discipline and requirements of actual military life. The officers selected for Pennsylvania, and who will go at once to Mount Gretna, are Major William A. Thompson, Second Cavalry, and Captain Alexis R. Patton, Fifteenth infantry, assistant.

A Sensation Spotted.

A colored preacher wanted to deliver a startling sermon. He had heard of sensational methods and determined to give his congregation a surprise. A small boy was taken into his confidence as a confederate and stationed on the roof just above the pulpit. In the lad's keeping was entrusted a pigeon, which was to be let loose in the church from a convenient hole at the proper moment. The church was packed and the preacher having stormed denouncement raised his voice and cried, "And the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove," but no dove appeared. He repeated his sentence. Still no dove. At his third outcry a black face appeared at the hole in the roof and the query came, "Pa'son, a cat's done eat de Holy Ghost, but I'se got de cat. Shall I throw 'm down?"

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Growth of the M. E. Church.

The Methodist church, which at the close of the Revolutionary war numbered 15,000, has increased to 5,600,000, which includes about one-thirteenth of the population of the United States. It has 34,000 ministers, 55,000 churches, valued at 135,000,000. In the number of ministers, church organizations, church buildings and in the value of churches, the government census in 1890 places the Methodist church in advance of all others.

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