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The Centre Democrat.

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CHAS. R. KURTZ, Ed. and Prop.

BELLEFONTE, PA., THURSDAY MAY 19, 1898.

VOL. 20, NO. 20.

Awaiting Another Engagement

The Spanish Fleet is Now Sailing in Cuban Waters.

SAMPSON AND SCHLEY READY

To Give Battle to the Pride of Spain's Navy--The Battleship Oregon is Safe--Active Preparations to Invade Cuba--The Naval Battle Must First Take Place--Relief for Dewey.

During the past week no startling events have occurred in the war with Spain. Since our last issue two engagements took place. Sampson's squadron, while hunting for the Spanish fleet, took time to bombard the fortifications at San Juan harbor, Porto Rico, and practically reduced them.

Another engagement took place at Cardinas, Cuba, where the first American blood was spilled. A shell from the enemy burst on the small boat Winslow and five were killed and others wounded. The boat was completely disabled. Great damage was also inflicted on the Spaniards.

The announcement that the Spanish fleet, at last, was in the Caribbean sea, aroused much anxiety. Both Sampson and Schley's squadrons are now after them. Since the government has refused to give out any information, nothing definite can be learned as to the location of the vessels. An engagement is anticipated any moment and there seems to be little doubt as to the result. Should we annihilate these visitors from across the sea, it is quite certain that Spain's honor will be satisfied and, at the suggestion of the other powers, she will gracefully yield. In case we lose, it means more fighting and a prolonged war.

Active preparations are being made to send reinforcements to Dewey, from the Pacific coast at once. While this is going on, the Cuban invading army is being rapidly assembled at our southern sea coast towns, ready to move on the island. It also is quite probable that the President may call for another 100,000 volunteers.

The War News, of the past week, will be found on pages 2 and 3. The news of the past twenty-four hours is embraced in the following dispatches:

LATE NEWS.

New Cabinet Sworn In.

Madrid, May 18.—The new Spanish cabinet took the oath of office this evening.

Flying Squadron at Key West.

Key West, May 18.—The flying squadron arrived at Key West Wednesday. All are well.

For Colored Troops.

Washington, May 18.—It is stated that in the next call for troops the president will ask for 30,000 negro volunteers.

Sampson After the Spaniard.

A Washington despatch says that Admiral Sampson has been informed of the whereabouts of the Spanish fleet, and that he is hot on the chase.

All Cuban Cables.

All Cuban cables, except those running to the United States, will be cut. The naval board intends to cut Blanco from all communication with Madrid.

Welcome the Oregon.

Washington, May 18.—It is reported here that the battleship Oregon has safely joined the squadron of Admiral Sampson who was sent south to meet her.

More Ships.

Washington, May 18.—The navy department this morning issued a circular asking for bids for the construction of three first-class battleships, sixteen torpedo boats and four harbor defense monitors.

Pennsylvania at Manila.

Washington, May 18.—The Philippine expedition has been increased by the addition of the Tenth Pennsylvania regiment of volunteers.

Reports on file at the war department shows the Tenth to be in excellent condition. It is thought that it can start for San Francisco tonight or tomorrow.

The Alabama Launched.

The new battleship Alabama was successfully launched from Cramp's shipyard at noon Wednesday. There was no large demonstration. This fine battleship, with arms and armor, will not be ready for commission for about a year.

Spanish Fleet For Philippines.

Gibraltar, May 18.—The first-class battleship Pelayo, the armed cruisers Emperador Carlos V Alfonso XIII, the reconstructor cruisers Vittoria and Giraldia, the auxiliary cruisers Rapido, Alfonso XII, Buenos Ayres and Antonio Lopez and three torpedo boats, now at Cadiz, are ready for sea. They are expected to sail for the Philippines before the end of this month with 11,000 troops.

They Blew in the Money.

Williamsport Times: Miss Puella Dornblazer, superintendent of Bureau of Associated Charities, has received a letter from a family which recently moved from Nittany valley to this city, requesting the loan of \$5. The family is located in the upper end of the city and the husband is without work. The superintendent happens to know the previous reputation of the family and the request will not be complied with. It is said that on a former occasion they received \$18 from a poor board and then went to Bellefonte, spending the money in car fare and for an oyster supper in the city.

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What Our Correspondent, S. D. Gettig, Esq., Writes Home for Our Readers—The Last Days at Mt Gretna—All are Well and in Good Spirits—Bellefonte's Donation Appreciated.

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Some of the boys threw off pieces of hard-tack on which their names were written. At Altoona they stopped a short time and got a lunch and then sped on their long journey.

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Editor Kurtz:—Another day of rain and mud in camp Hastings, though not as bad as it was last Sunday. Our company street, since shoveled off last Monday morning, does not get as muddy and has remained nice and solid all day, notwithstanding the continuous rain. Since my letter of last week the National Guard of Pennsylvania has passed out of history, for a time at least, and is now a part of the Volunteer Army of the United States. One of the grandest sights ever witnessed in Pennsylvania took place last Friday, when the entire guard passed in review before the Governor for the last time. Many an eye was dimmed at the thought that this was the last time that Pennsylvania's well organized and finely equipped soldiery would pass in review before anyone, and that her guard had been disrupted and would be no more; and that the old commanders of the guard, who had done so much, to place them second to none in the union, were to stay at home and their commands awarded others. Generals Snowden, Gobin and Wiley were visibly affected. The writer heard Maj. Thompson say that Pennsylvania's soldiery was the best he had ever seen, and that it had so demonstrated it by the short time in which Pennsylvania's full quota, of the 125,000 called by the President, had been mustered in, and that the National Guard should have been mustered in, in-tact. Maj. Thompson was the United States mustering officer stationed here.

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THE ISLAND OF PORTO RICO

Sampson's Fleet Destroyed the Old Fortifications

AN IMPORTANT POSSESSION

Can be Taken Any Time and Why it Should be Held by this Country—Brief Description of the Island and its Resources A Desirable Naval Station—Burdened and Depressed by Spain.

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The Spanish fleet will certainly be destroyed sooner or later, and the whole island of Porto Rico fall into our hands. Gibraltar is a small piece of rocky ground, but it gives the British a position that is a standing menace to Spain, France, and all countries bordering on the Mediterranean and beyond, even to Turkey and Russia. And it is so situated that it is impossible to find a strategic point to balance or nullify its power. So, though of a different character, is Porto Rico. It is the place that in the hands of a powerful, rich nation can easily be turned into a practically impregnable fortress and base of supplies, and there is no other place so situated that it could be made into a rival. In case of war with any South European Power it makes the distance from America to the enemy much shorter than from the enemy to America. And in naval warfare above all other kinds such an advantage, except under almost inconceivable circumstances, is alone sufficient to ensure the triumph of the Power enjoying it.

OF VALUE TO US IN TWO WAYS.

In peace Porto Rico is of great value to the United States in two ways—one as a rich and productive possession, and the other as a key to the Caribbean sea, a sea which will control the great Nicaragua canal. It is settled as a matter of the highest policy that this great canal must not be left uncontrolled, and that no nation except the United States must be permitted to hold that control. We cannot exercise the authority without a foothold in the West Indies, and the only really good position in the West Indies is the group known as the Greater Antilles. In that group Great Britain owns a fine coaling station and military, naval and commercial base in the Island of Jamaica. San Domingo is controlled by the two independent republics of San Domingo and Hayti. Cuba will be free, and whatever influence her position will have on the control of the canal and the commerce through it will be almost directly under the hand of the United States. The possession of Porto Rico thus will complete a chain of defense which will bring the control of the water-way directly under the two great Anglo-Saxon nations of the world. That those two nations will have more interests in common from year to year is clear, for the other European Powers are following policies which bid fair to make it a question soon of Great Britain and America against the world, industrially, at least. With Hawaii on the Pacific side, and Porto Rico on the Atlantic entrance, the greater part of the commerce to the Orient is in our hands and we will exercise the same enormous influence on the world that Great Britain does now through her control of the Suez canal.

DESCRIPTION OF PORTO RICO.

About 1,000 miles due southeast from Havana, 500 from Maisi, the eastern tip of Cuba, opens northward the magnificent harbor of San Juan de Puerto Rico—Saint John of the Rico, or Noble Port, distant from New York about 1,600 miles, and from the Danish island of St. Thomas but 60 miles, the last named lying that much farther to the eastward.

Porto Rico was discovered by Columbus, in 1493, on his second voyage, when on his way from the southern West Indies to his original landing place on the coast of Hayti. Fifteen years after the passing of Columbus came another navigator, one Juan Ponce de Leon, the governor of a province of Santo Domingo, 60 miles distant. The Indians of this section told him wonderful stories of the rich island across the channel, and in the year 1508 he landed at Aguadilla

with a force of men and a pack of blood-hounds, bent upon its conquest. Ponce de Leon lives in history as the noblest and the gentlest of those galliard adventurers. And he was—that is, speaking relatively—he was noble and gentle for a Spaniard of that day. But he saw nothing wrong in butting to death the Indian chieftain Agueynaba, who first showed him the rivers with sands running gold, nor in setting on the trail of innocent women and children his famous bloodhound, Berezillo, who drew the pay of a bowman for his service, and who tore to pieces every Indian he ran down and overtook. He was the terror of all the Indians, whom he drove to the hills in troops, but was finally slain by a poisoned arrow sent after him by a Carb.

Ponce de Leon and his mail-clad soldiers finally settled on the present site of San Juan in 1511, and the most interesting relic to be found there to-day is the ancient building called the "Casa Blanca," which was built by the conquistador and occupied by him while governor of the island. Equally ancient with the Casa Blanca are the fortifications surrounding the city of San Juan, for their foundations were laid during the reign of Ponce de Leon. The capital city, with a population of some 25,000 occupies an island, connected with the main by a bridge and a causeway, and is completely inclosed within massive walls of stone and hardened mortar, with a height in places of from 50 to 100 feet. Like Havana, it has its morro, or citadel (literally a round or Moorish tower), and the fortifications are on a comprehensive scale, with bastions and drawbridges, ornate sentry boxes hanging over the sea, and grim, gray walls towering threateningly. One may find their counterpart, on a smaller scale, in the old fort at St. Augustine; and they are similar to those of Havana before her walls were torn down. The peninsula upon which the morro and the lighthouse stand is thrust out into the sea, on one side breasting the thundering surges of the Caribbean, and on the other guarding the placid waters of a beautiful and almost land-locked harbor. This harbor is one of the finest in the West Indies, large, sheltered and capable of accommodating any number of the largest ships, giving anchorage in from three to six fathoms.

Though the main portion of San Juan is inclosed within the walls, through which entrance is only obtained by well-guarded gateways, yet there is a small town by its-self in the Marina, between the fortifications and the wharves. Here is a fine public garden and pleasure palace, with booths and restaurants, as well as the public cockpit, where battles royal are frequently waged. The buildings of the inner city are of stone, massive and substantial, like those of Havana and the City of Mexico.

As to local conditions, San Juan is not an attractive city, under its present management, owing to its filthy streets and lack of attention to sanitation. It is likely to have a visit every year from Yellow Jack, when, owing to its situation, he might as well as not be kept at a distance.

But San Juan is only one port of the island, and there are some harbors that are as fine, if not as large and land-locked. One other on the north coast is Arrecibo; on the east are Humacao and Fajardo, on the west Agudilla and Mayaguez, as beautiful as the heart of man could desire, with their gushing springs and background of pointed mountains, and on the south coast are Arroyo, Guayanilla, and Ponce. This last is the largest, the city having a population of about 35,000, with a vast export trade, chiefly in sugar and molasses. A fine post road connects it with San Juan, running diagonally across the island, with a daily diligence between the two. A system of railroad is in course of construction that will soon connect all the chief coast towns and open up portions of the interior.

The island is about 95 miles in length by 35 or 40 in breadth, and as nearly rectangular as nature will allow in its coast line. The interior is one vast group of mountains. The soil everywhere is very fertile and cultivable, even to the mountain crests the hill pastures of Porto Rico being celebrated for their succulent grasses, upon which feed cattle and horses, which are favorites throughout the islands south.

These are shippable in large numbers, and constitute the chief wealth of a great many people engaged in the business.

Among the hills also are thousands of cafetales, of coffee estates, for here the coffee finds congenial soil and climate for its perfect development, and is a source of profit to many planters who prefer a life of comparative leisure to the bustle of the town and city. In the valleys grow the sugar cane, cacao, bananas, plantains, and, in fact, all sorts of tropical fruits.

With its beautiful scenery, its almost perfect climate, its boundless exuberance

Continued on page 4.

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Can be Taken Any Time and Why it Should be Held by this Country—Brief Description of the Island and its Resources A Desirable Naval Station—Burdened and Depressed by Spain.

According to the most reliable advices at hand, Admiral Sampson's fleet of nine vessels appeared off San Juan de Porto Rico last Thursday morning, and, not having encountered the Spanish Cape de Verde fleet, immediately proceeded to invest the fortifications of that city, and soon reduced them. His reduction of the defenses gave us control of the island, as all remaining defenses are weak and can easily be reduced whenever the Admiral has opportunity to give his attention to them. Before he does so, however, he will undoubtedly have tried conclusions with Spain's Cape Verde fleet, which was sighted off Martique while he was bombarding San Juan.

The Spanish fleet will certainly be destroyed sooner or later, and the whole island of Porto Rico fall into our hands. Gibraltar is a small piece of rocky ground, but it gives the British a position that is a standing menace to Spain, France, and all countries bordering on the Mediterranean and beyond, even to Turkey and Russia. And it is so situated that it is impossible to find a strategic point to balance or nullify its power. So, though of a different character, is Porto Rico. It is the place that in the hands of a powerful, rich nation can easily be turned into a practically impregnable fortress and base of supplies, and there is no other place so situated that it could be made into a rival. In case of war with any South European Power it makes the distance from America to the enemy much shorter than from the enemy to America. And in naval warfare above all other kinds such an advantage, except under almost inconceivable circumstances, is alone sufficient to ensure the triumph of the Power enjoying it.

OF VALUE TO US IN TWO WAYS.

In peace Porto Rico is of great value to the United States in two ways—one as a rich and productive possession, and the other as a key to the Caribbean sea, a sea which will control the great Nicaragua canal. It is settled as a matter of the highest policy that this great canal must not be left uncontrolled, and that no nation except the United States must be permitted to hold that control. We cannot exercise the authority without a foothold in the West Indies, and the only really good position in the West Indies is the group known as the Greater Antilles. In that group Great Britain owns a fine coaling station and military, naval and commercial base in the Island of Jamaica. San Domingo is controlled by the two independent republics of San Domingo and Hayti. Cuba will be free, and whatever influence her position will have on the control of the canal and the commerce through it will be almost directly under the hand of the United States. The possession of Porto Rico thus will complete a chain of defense which will bring the control of the water-way directly under the two great Anglo-Saxon nations of the world. That those two nations will have more interests in common from year to year is clear, for the other European Powers are following policies which bid fair to make it a question soon of Great Britain and America against the world, industrially, at least. With Hawaii on the Pacific side, and Porto Rico on the Atlantic entrance, the greater part of the commerce to the Orient is in our hands and we will exercise the same enormous influence on the world that Great Britain does now through her control of the Suez canal.

DESCRIPTION OF PORTO RICO.

About 1,000 miles due southeast from Havana, 500 from Maisi, the eastern tip of Cuba, opens northward the magnificent harbor of San Juan de Puerto Rico—Saint John of the Rico, or Noble Port, distant from New York about 1,600 miles, and from the Danish island of St. Thomas but 60 miles, the last named lying that much farther to the eastward.

Porto Rico was discovered by Columbus, in 1493, on his second voyage, when on his way from the southern West Indies to his original landing place on the coast of Hayti. Fifteen years after the passing of Columbus came another navigator, one Juan Ponce de Leon, the governor of a province of Santo Domingo, 60 miles distant. The Indians of this section told him wonderful stories of the rich island across the channel, and in the year 1508 he landed at Aguadilla

with a force of men and a pack of blood-hounds, bent upon its conquest. Ponce de Leon lives in history as the noblest and the gentlest of those galliard adventurers. And he was—that is, speaking relatively—he was noble and gentle for a Spaniard of that day. But he saw nothing wrong in butting to death the Indian chieftain Agueynaba, who first showed him the rivers with sands running gold, nor in setting on the trail of innocent women and children his famous bloodhound, Berezillo, who drew the pay of a bowman for his service, and who tore to pieces every Indian he ran down and overtook. He was the terror of all the Indians, whom he drove to the hills in troops, but was finally slain by a poisoned arrow sent after him by a Carb.

Ponce de Leon and his mail-clad soldiers finally settled on the present site of San Juan in 1511, and the most interesting