

and therefore concluded to give us a final impression. After careful calculations and considerations, five o'clock, finds them ready for action.

We are lying broadside to the castle. Three or four hisses, not unlike that of hot lead dropping into water, are heard. These are small shells for making sure their range in order to save their costlier ones for subsequent work. They have not miscalculated the distance—the 'Frisco will be theirs sure and that soon. Then follow six and ten inch shells fierce and fast. We are off, stern to, "four bells" (full speed) with twenty-four fires blazing away in the bowels of the ship and as many brawny hands manning them. The whizz and buzz of steel is heard aloft and abeam and amidst it all we have been struck by something that has made the whole ship tremble from stem to bow. Fortunately for us the shell has exploded before it strikes us and but a portion of it penetrates our stern above the rudder post. Thus twenty-five shells pay us their passing compliments and all the while we are steaming away as fast as our engines will carry us. The fire was not returned, as per instructions, and the same night found us lying out at sea at a more comfortable distance. The next morning the Topeka, flying the despatch flag, came along side and gave us the news that Spain had accepted our terms. Thus ended the blockade of Havana de Cuba.

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