

CAPTAIN SIGSBEE'S STORY.

His Detailed Testimony Before the Board Regarding the Disaster.

WASHINGTON, March 26.—Captain Sigbee, in testifying before the court of inquiry, said that he assumed command of the Maine April 13, 1898, and that his ship anchored in the harbor of Havana the last time on the morning of May 1. He was there at Havana when the Maine's coming, Commodore Lee having informed the authorities according to official custom. After the Maine was officially sent by the captain of the port of Havana, the ship was berthed in the man-of-war anchorage, off the Machina, or the theater, and according to the regular practice, it was one of the regular buoys of the place. He then stated that he had been in Havana in 1872, and again in 1888. He could not state whether the Maine was placed in the usual berth for men-of-war, but said that he had heard remarks since the explosion, using Captain Sigbee's name, that the Maine was in the usual berth for the statement, that he had never known, in all his experience, which covered visits to Havana for five or six years, of the Maine being placed at that berth, that he had rarely known merchant vessels to be anchored there, and that it was the least used buoy in the harbor.

The Maine's Surroundings.

In describing the surroundings when first moved to the buoy, Captain Sigbee stated that the Spanish man-of-war Alfonso XIII was anchored in the position now occupied by the Maine, about 200 yards to the northward and westward from the Maine. The German ship Griensman was anchored at the berth now occupied by the Maine, and the Spanish man-of-war Charlotte, which came into the harbor a few days later, was anchored to the eastward of the Maine's berth about 60 or 70 yards. In describing the surroundings at the time of the explosion, Captain Sigbee stated that the night was calm and still. The Alfonso XIII was at the same berth. The small Spanish dispatch boat, Le Casco, had come out the day before and taken the berth occupied by the Maine man-of-war, the Griensman, which had left. The steamer City of Washington was anchored about 200 yards to the south and east of the Maine's stern, slightly on the port quarter.

The Coal Was Safe.

The Maine's coal was taken on board about 100 tons, the coal being regularly inspected, and taken from the government coal pile. This coal was placed generally in the forward bunkers. No report was received from the chief engineer that any coal had been too long in the bunkers, and that the fire alarm in the bunkers were sensitive.

The regulations regarding inflammables and points on board, Captain Sigbee testified, were strictly carried out in regard to storage, and that waste oil was subject to the same careful disposition. The inflammables were stored in chests according to regulations. The regulations regarding inflammables in excess of chest capacity, were allowed to be kept in the bathroom of the admiral's cabin.

Regarding the electric plant of the Maine, Captain Sigbee stated that there was no serious grounding, nor sudden flaring up of the lights before the explosion, but a sudden and total eclipse.

As for regulations regarding the taking of the temperature of the magazines, etc., Captain Sigbee stated there were no special regulations other than the usual regulations requiring the magazines to be examined the temperature himself, and conversed with the ordnance officer as to the various temperatures, and the condition of the magazines, and according to the opinion of this officer, as well as Sigbee, the temperatures were never at the danger point.

"I do not think there was any laxity in this direction," said the captain, "in reply to a question of Judge-Advocate Marx."

He had no recollection of any work going on in the magazine or shell rooms before the explosion. The key was called for in the usual way on the day in question, and was properly returned.

Relations With Spanish Authorities.

Speaking generally of the relations with the Spanish authorities, Captain Sigbee stated that with the officials they were outwardly cordial. The members of the automatic council of the government, however, seemed to have had no attention of the navy department the fact that he did not visit them, and that fact brought embarrassment to the government at Washington. The key was called to the department that it was unknown etiquette to call on the civil members of the colonial government other than the governors, and that such an order, Captain Sigbee made a visit afterwards, and as he stated, was pleasantly received and his visit promptly returned by certain members of the council. A party of ladies and gentlemen called, and the president of the council made a speech which Captain Sigbee could not understand, but which was interpreted to him, to which he replied:

"My reply," said Captain Sigbee, "was afterwards printed in at least two papers in Havana, but the terms made me in an automatic government in the island. I am informed that the automatic government in Havana is unpopular among a large class of Spanish and Cuban residents. I had no objection to knowing whether my apparent interference in the political concerns of the island had any relation to the destruction of the Maine."

Exhibition of Animosity.

When asked whether there was any demonstration of animosity by people about, Captain Sigbee said there was never on shore, as he was informed, but there was a demonstration of animosity on the Sunday after the Maine's arrival the ferry-boat, crowded densely with people, civil and military, returning from a ball, light at noon, and in the afternoon, about 40 people on board indulged in yelling, whistling and derisive calls.

Every Precaution Taken.

During the stay in Havana, Captain Sigbee took every precaution to guard against the protection of the Maine by placing sentries on the forecabin and poop quarter line and single decks, on the bridge and other points, and a corporal of the guard was especially instructed to look out for the port gangway, and the officer of the deck and quartermaster were ordered to look out for the starboard gangway, a quarter-watch was kept on deck all night, sentries' cartridge boxes filled, their arms kept loaded, a number of hand grenades and fire ammunition kept in the pilot-room and in the spare captain's pantry, and under the aft superstructure were kept additional supplies of hand grenades, which, he said, had never been packed for the second battery; steam was kept up in two boilers instead of one, and positive instructions were given to watch carefully all the hydraulic gear and report defectively.

He said he had given orders to the master-at-arms to keep a careful eye on everybody that came on board, and to carefully observe the ordinary practice that might be held, on the supposition that dynamite or other high explosives might be employed, and afterwards to inspect the routes and passages, and to take note of any person who visited the ship, that very few people visited the ship.

Spanish Officers on Board.

There were only two or three of the Spanish military officers came on board, but according to the captain, they were constrained, and not desirous of accepting much courtesy. The visit was during the absence of the captain. He said he made every effort to have Spanish officers visit the ship to show his good-will, according to the spirit of the Maine's visit to Havana, but with exceptions stated, no military officers of Spain visited the ship.

Items of Interest.

It is stated that sharks have now penetrated into the Mediterranean through the Suez canal from the Red sea.

In France there have been found only two criminals whose measurement by the Bertillon system coincided.

The Adams homestead at Quincy, Miss., has been restored under the direction of the Quincy Historical Society.

The largest room in the world under one roof and unbroken by pillars is at St. Petersburg. It is 620 feet long by 120 in breadth.

Ginger is a tropical production of Mexico, where it grows wild. It has been cultivated from an early period to tropical Asia.

The oldest city in the world is Nippur, the "Chaldean" of Babylon; the foundations were laid 7,000 years B. C., and the ruins have lately been unearthed.

Sardines are now being packed in glass bottles, low wide-mouthed shape. They look much cleaner and they are far harder than the old-fashioned tins.

A substitute for honey has been introduced in Germany under the name of sugar-honey, and consists of sugar, water, minute amounts of mineral substances and rose acid.

The Rev. Thomas Loxham, who for 47 years has been rector of a church near Bolton, England, has given \$60,000 to a part of his parish for the erection of a church and school.

Description of the Explosion.

He then went into a description of the explosion when it took the crash. Its characteristics were a bursting, rattling and crashing sound or roar of immense volume, largely metallic in its character. It was, however, a metallic sound, probably of falling debris, as the vessel's motion of subsidence, attended by an eclipse of electric lights and intense darkness, which he described as having immediately after the Maine had blown up and she was sinking. He hurried to the starboard cabin, but changed his course to the main deck, leading to the superstructure. He detailed the manner of meeting Private Anthony, which is much the same as has been published.

Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright was on deck when Captain Sigbee emerged from the passageway, and turning to the orderly he asked for time, which was given him by the orderly. They were ordered placed about the ship, and the forward magazine flooded. He called for perfect silence. The surviving officers were ordered to get into the cockpit. He was informed that both forward and aft magazines were under water. Then came faint cries and white floating bodies in the water. Shots were at once ordered, but they were really two men, a pig and a whaleboat. They were lowered and manned by officers and men, and by the captain's direction they left the ship and helped to save the wounded jointly with other boats that had arrived on the scene.

Fire amidships by this time was burning furiously, and the spot where the pilot-ship was exploding. At this time Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright said he thought the 18-inch magazine forward had blown up, and that the explosion was, and might explode any time. Everybody was then directed to get into the boats over the stern, which was done, the captain getting into the gig, and then proceeding to the City of Washington where he found the wounded in the dining saloon being carefully attended by the officers and crew of the vessel. He then went on deck and practically blinded for a few minutes, and gave directions to have a muster taken on board, and the City of Washington and other vessels, and taken the berth occupied by the Maine man-of-war, the Griensman, which had left. The steamer City of Washington was anchored about 200 yards to the south and east of the Maine's stern, slightly on the port quarter.

Spaniards Express Sympathy.

Various Spanish officials came on board and expressed sympathy and sorrow for the accident. The representatives of the General Blanco and of the admiral of the station were among the Spanish officials who tendered their sympathies. About four or five men were found that night who survived the explosion. By the time the Maine reached the quarterdeck it was his impression that an overwhelming explosion had occurred. When he came from the cabin he was practically blinded for a few seconds. His only thought was for the vessel, and he took no note of the phenomena of the explosion. In reply to the question of whether any of the magazines or shellrooms were damaged, the captain said it was extremely difficult to come to any conclusion. The center of the explosion was beneath and a little forward of the magazine on the port side. In the region of the center or axis of the explosion was the six-inch reserve magazine, which contained very little powder. The 18-inch magazine was in the same general region, but on the starboard side. Over the 18-inch magazine in the loading room was a number of 18-inch shells, which were apparently located. According to Captain Sigbee it would be difficult to conceive of an explosion involving the 18-inch magazine, because of the position of the explosion, and none of the reports show that any 18-inch shells were hurled into the air because of the explosion.

Details of the Explosion.

The captain went into details as to the location of the small explosion. He said that he did not believe that the forward or 18-inch magazine blew up. The location of the small explosion was at the cabin. He stated that he had examined the wreck himself, conversed with other officers and men, but as the Spanish authorities were very much adverse to his investigation, except officially, on the grounds, as stated by the Spanish admiral, that the honor of Spain was involved, he refrained from examining the wreck, but he stated that the cause of the explosion until the day the court convened.

He Said the Discipline of the Ship was Excellent.

The marine guard was in an excellent condition. The report of the medical department shows that about one man and a quarter per day were on the sick list during the past year. The engineers' department the vessel was always ready and always responsive. He paid a tribute to the crew, and said that a soldier, better-natured lot of men, he had never known on board of any vessel in which he had served. He had no fault to find with the behavior of any man at the time of the disaster, and considered their conduct admirable. On his examination by the court, Captain Sigbee said that the highest temperature he could discover was 112, but that was in the aft magazine, and that there were no high explosives, gunpowder, etc., in the forward magazines being considerably lower. There was no loose powder kept in the magazines. All the coal bunkers were well ventilated, and there was full forward coal bunkers on the starboard side was half full, and it was being used at the time of the explosion.

Coal Bunkers Not Hot.

Captain Sigbee testified that he had detailed Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright, Lieutenant Holman and Chief Engineer Holman, all of the Maine, to examine the coal bunkers in relation to any outsiders who might have seen the explosion. Captain Sigbee also gave as his opinion that if coal bunkers A or B had been hot, it would have been dangerous to the 18-inch reserve magazine, that this condition would have been shown on three sides where the bunker was exposed, and that most conditions pertaining to any fire by it would have necessarily noticed any such heat. Captain Sigbee was recalled and examined as to the ammunition on board the Maine. He stated that there were no high explosives, gunpowder, etc., in the forward magazines, and that the regulations prohibited, and that he had never had command of the ship.

WEEKLY MARKET LETTER.

Trade Conditions in the Leading Cities of the World.

The feature of the week in the wheat trade has been the attempt to make the bull clique stand from under the market. The attempt has been an absolute failure, for the Leiter crowd have stood in the breach and bid \$1.04 for May wheat and took all they could get at that price. The "barring" of houses representing Leiter was a sign of lack of confidence on the part of the bears. They know that the clique is amply able to pay for all the wheat it takes, but probably they do not wish to add to the incentive which the clique already has to run prices up. A rather severe break has occurred in the other options, but aside from the better crop reports from the southwest the news has not been bearish. Foreign markets have been remarkably firm and the constant purchase of wheat by foreigners at the seaboard bespeaks a genuine demand. The addition to the contract stock looks bearish, but it must be admitted that a very small percentage of the total receipts grades up to the standard. Some may wonder why Leiter withdrew his support from the July option. Probably because he anticipated a hard fight on the May deal, and considered it a foregone conclusion that a bulge in the May wheat will bring the July back into line in a hurry. The crop situation is looming up against the price of deferred-futures, and the excellent prospects are a strong inducement toward loosening up farmers' holdings and to putting out of line of shorts.

Portland Market.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 74@75c; Valley and Bluestem, 77@78c per bushel. Flour—Best grades, \$3.85; Graham, \$3.40; superfine, \$2.35 per barrel. Oats—Choice white, 36@37c; choice gray, 33@34c per bushel. Barley—Feed barley, \$17@18.50; brewing, \$20 per ton. Millstuffs—Bran, \$18 per ton; middlings, \$23; shorts, \$18. Hay—Timothy, \$12.50; clover, \$10 @11; Oregon wild hay, \$9 @10 per ton. Eggs—Oregon, 11 @12c per dozen. Butter—Fancy creamery, 45@50c; fair to good, 40@45c; dairy, 35@40c per lb.

Cheese—Oregon full cream, 12@14c; Young America, 13@14c.

Poultry—Chickens, mixed, \$3.50 @4.00 per dozen; hens, \$4.00 @4.50; geese, \$6.00; ducks, \$5.00 @6.00 per dozen; turkeys, live, 11 @12c per pound.

Potatoes—Oregon Burbanks, 40 @50c per sack; sweets, \$1.75 @2 per cwt. Onions—Oregon, \$2.25 @2.60 per sack.

Hops—14 @16c per pound for new crop; 1896 crop, 4 @6c.

Wool—Valley, 14 @16c per pound; Eastern Oregon, 7 @12c; mohair, 20 @22c per pound.

Mutton—Gross, best sheep, wethers and ewes, 4 @c; dressed mutton, 7c; spring lambs, 5 @c per pound.

Hogs—Gross, choice heavy, \$4.25; light and feeders, \$3.00 @4.00; dressed, \$5.00 @5.50 per 100 pounds.

Beef—Gross, top steers, \$3.50 @3.75; cows, \$2.50 @3; dressed beef, 6 @7c per pound.

Veal—Large, 6 @8 @c; small, 7 @8c per pound.

Seattle Market.

Potatoes—Yakima, \$14 per ton; natives, \$11 @13; sweets, 3c per pound; 60 @ 60 pounds, \$1.

Butter—Fancy native creamery, brick, 25c; ranch, 14 @15c; dairy, 10c; Iowa fancy creamery, 23c.

Cheese—Native Washington, 12 @13c; Eastern cheese, 12 @c.

Eggs—Fresh ranch, 14c; California ranch, 14c.

Meats—Choice dressed beef steers, 8c; cows, 7 @7 1/2c; mutton, 8 @c; pork, 7c; veal, small, 8c.

Poultry—Chickens, live, per pound, hens, 12c; dressed, 14c; turkeys, live, 12c; dressed, 16c.

Fresh Fish—Halibut, 6 @7c; steel heads, 7 @8c; salmon trout, 12 @c; flounders and sole, 3 @4c; tom cod, 4c; ling cod, 4 @5c; rock cod, 5c; smelt, 3 @5c; herring, 4c.

Olympia oysters, per sack, \$3 @3.50.

Corn—Whole, \$23; cracked, per ton, \$23; feed meal, \$25 per ton.

Barley—Rolled or ground, per ton, \$25; whole, \$24.

Flour—Patents, per barrel, \$4.25 @4.50; straight, \$4.00; California brands, \$4.65; Dakota brands, \$5.40 @5.75; buckwheat flour, \$6.

Millstuffs—Bran, per ton, \$17; shorts, per ton, \$18 @19.

Feet—Chopped feet, \$18 @20 per ton; middlings, per ton, \$34; oil cake meal, per ton, \$35.

Hay—Puguet Sound, new, per ton, \$12 @14; Eastern Washington timothy, \$13; alfalfa, \$12; straw, \$7.

Wheat—Feed wheat, per ton, \$23.

Oats—Choice, per ton, \$23.

San Francisco Market.

Wool—Nerada, 11 @12c; Oregon, 12 @14c; Southern coast lambs, 7 @8c.

Hops—15 @17 1/2c per pound.

Millstuffs—Middlings, \$20 @23.50; California bran, \$16.00 @16.50 per ton. Onions—Silverskins, \$2.00 @2.50 per cental.

Eggs—Store, 11 1/2 @12c; ranch, 12 1/2 @13 1/2c.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 18 1/2 @c; do seconds, 17c; fancy dairy, 16 1/2 @c; do choice, 15 @16c per pound.

Cheese—Fancy mild, new, 9 @c; old, 9c per pound.

Fresh Fruit—Apples, 40c @ \$1.40 per large box; grapes, 25 @40c; Isabella, 60 @75c; peaches, 50c @ \$1; pears, 75c @ \$1 per box; plums, 20 @30c.

Potatoes—Early Rose, 55 @75c.

Citrus Fruit—Oranges, navels, \$1.25 @2.50; Mexican limes, \$5.50; California lemons, choice, \$2.25; do common, 50c @ \$1.00 per box.

Hay—Wheat, \$18 @22.50; wheat and oat, \$18 @21; oat, \$14.50 @16.50; best barley, \$17 @19; alfalfa, \$10.50 @11.50; clover, \$12 @13.50.

Dear Sir:

"Pshaw!" he said; "that's nothing. Why, when I was a boy I fell out of a third story window and struck right on my head. Of course it hurt me some at the time, but I got over it all right." "How do you know you got over it all right?" his wife asked. "It's hardly possible that you would have had any ordinary good sense if that hadn't happened to you."—Cleveland Leader.

POLITICAL PARTIES COMBINE.

Populists, Silver Republicans and Democrats of Oregon Join Issues.

Three state conventions met in Portland last week, the Populist, silver Republican and Democratic. A union of forces or fusion in the result. All parties united on the platform adopted by the Populists at Friday's session, and agreed to a division of the offices by a conference committee. The platform as adopted reads:

United in a common cause for the sacred purpose of preserving the principles of government by the whole people, in fact as well as in name, restoring and maintaining equality, under that government of all classes, we, the people's democratic and silver-republican parties of the state of Oregon, hereby unite for the purpose of carrying out the great underlying principles upon which we are all agreed, and we hereby present and declare our principles, and to the carrying out of which we solemnly pledge each and every one of us, as follows:

First—We demand the free and unrestricted coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the consent of foreign nations; and we are unalterably opposed to the policy of the present republican administration in degrading the national credit, and in the turning over of the money-making power of the government to the national banks, as presented by the bill drawn by the republicans for the treasury, and introduced by President McKinley; and we especially denounce the attempt by said bill to fasten the contract treasury note and to force the same through the local subdivisions of the government.

We demand a national money, safe and sound, issued by the general government, and we demand the contraction of the issue, to be a full legal tender for all debts, public and private; also a just, equitable and efficient means of distribution direct to the people through the local subdivisions of the government.

We demand that the volume of circulating medium be increased to an amount sufficient to meet the demands of the business and population of this country, and to restore the just level of prices of labor and products.

We favor such legislation as will prevent for the future the demonetization of any kind of legal-tender money by private contract.

We demand that the government, in payment of its obligations, shall use its option only in the issue of greenbacks, and that they are to be paid, and we denounce the present and preceding administrations for surrendering this option to the holders of government obligations.

We demand that there shall be no further issue of United States interest-bearing bonds.

We demand that postal savings banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the savings of the people and to facilitate savings.

We demand the election of United States senators by direct vote of the people.

We demand the immediate reformation of the system of law-making by the repeal of local, state and national, and the submission by congress of all important national questions for an advisory vote of the people, until such time as the national constitution shall have been amended so as to provide for direct legislation.

We demand that the constitution and laws of the government, in all departments of the government, be enforced, and that the influence of trust corporations and monopolies be removed from the packing of the highest courts of the land with corporation lawyers, too ready to do the will of their law employers, and to set aside the rights of the people.

We are opposed to government by injunction.

In state matters, we demand: That simple and well-guarded registration laws be enacted and well-enforced.

A more equitable mode of appointing judges, and the removal of the present system of law-making by the repeal of local, state and national, and the submission by congress of all important national questions for an advisory vote of the people, until such time as the national constitution shall have been amended so as to provide for direct legislation.

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