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FIRE ON FISHERS

Baltic Fleet Sinks British Vessels.

SHOTS KILL TWO MEN

Russians First Turn on the Searchlights.

OFF SPURN HEAD IN A HAZE

Leading Ships of Fishermen Allowed to Pass.

MURDEROUS FIRE THEN OPENS

Steam Trawler Crane and Another Vessel Sent to the Bottom—Two Others Have Holes in Hulls Above Water Line.

HULL, England, Oct. 23.—I. M. Jackson & Co., solicitors for the owners of the 50 Hull fishing-boats have notified the Foreign Office and Admiralty of an attack on the Hull fishing fleet by the Russian Pacific fleet (commonly designated as the Baltic squadron).

The official information is that soon after midnight Friday the Russian squadron fell in with the Hull fishing fleet in the North Sea. The first portion of the fishing fleet passed safely. Then the Russian ships turned their searchlights on the British vessels for some time and a little later opened fire.

The steam trawler Crane was sunk, and the decapitated bodies of her skipper and mate have been brought to Hull. The boatwain and other members of the crew, who are understood to be seriously wounded, are on board the missing ship. The only slightly injured member of the crew has arrived at Hull.

The steam trawlers Moulmein and Mino have arrived at Hull seriously damaged by shots, the latter having 16 holes in her hull. It is feared that other damage was done to trawlers and that at least one more was lost with all hands.

HEADS TORN FROM BODIES.

Skipper and Mate of the Crane Instantly Killed.

HULL, Oct. 23.—According to other reports the affair occurred 20 miles off Spurn Head. The Russian ships were steaming in line. The leading ship of the fishing fleet passed without incident, though most of the Russian vessels turned searchlights on the trawlers long enough to prevent any mistake as to identity. After the bulk of the squadron had passed, it opened fire, nearly all participating in the firing.

The Crane was struck below the waterline and raked above deck. Skipper Smith and Third Mate Leggett had their heads carried clean away by a shot, many of the crew being seriously injured. Another trawler also was sunk, but the Moulmein, which brought the news to Hull, has no particulars as to her fate.

The news has created an intense sensation and indignation in Hull. The Moulmein arrived with her flag at halfmast. Her skipper states that the trawlers were fishing about 20 miles east of Spurn Head at 1 o'clock Saturday morning, the weather being hazy, when the outlines of several vessels, apparently warships, sailing in line, were dimly seen. Whilst the crew were watching the warships, searchlights were flashed upon them, in the glare of which the Moulmein's crew observed what they took to be torpedo-boats approaching, apparently with the intention of boarding the Moulmein.

The torpedo-boats steamed away, however, and soon the fishermen were horrified to find they were being fired upon. First one and then another trawler was struck by the flying shot. What seemed to be a round shot went through the Moulmein's galley.

The Mino, lying near by, also was struck with many shots, but fortunately the damage was above her water line, and none of the crew was struck. The bombardment lasted about 20 minutes. When it had ceased the fleet sailed southward and some of the trawlers sent up rockets.

The Moulmein steered in the direction of the rocket. Soon cries were heard, and the Crane was found sinking with another trawler taking off some of her crew. Those seriously injured were removed to a mission ship and the bodies of Smith and Leggett were placed aboard the Moulmein. The other men with minor injuries were put aboard the trawler Seagull, which at a late hour had not arrived at Hull.

Crowds have gathered around the dock here, but no further information is available. Representatives of the fishing fleet started late tonight for London to confer with the authorities there. No motive can be assigned for the extraordinary procedure of the Russian warships. The only survivor of the Crane who has yet reached here is J. A. Smith, son of the deceased skipper, and who, with the captain of the Moulmein and the

captain of the Mino, is going to London to consult with the authorities.

Young Smith was asleep in his bunk when the firing aroused him. Just as he was getting up, a shot struck the starboard and penetrated to the forecastle, smashing a lamp near which he was standing. He rushed on deck, where the searchlights revealed the horrible sight of his father and Leggett lying headless and the deck strewn with the injured.

It was soon found that the vessel was sinking and signals for assistance were sent up. Smith and others occur in the details of the firing that have already been given.

Fleet Sighted Off East Borneo.
LONDON, Oct. 23.—The Russian Pacific (Baltic) fleet, comprising seven battleships and four cruisers, passed over in three sections between 6 o'clock this morning and 2 o'clock this afternoon, and later passed East Borneo. They were watched by large crowds from shore. Nothing has been seen of the torpedo flotilla, which, however, may have passed during the night, as Lloyd's at noon reported four Russian torpedo-boats passing St. Catherine's Point, "apparently" boarding a steamer bound east.

A dispatch from Cherbourg reports that three Russian torpedo-boats, escorted by the auxiliary cruiser Korea, are moored in the roadstead there to take coal, water, etc.

RUSSIANS WERE VERY NERVOUS

Feared Japanese Torpedoes in Danish Water.

SPICAL CABLE TO LONDON TIMES AND PORTLAND OREGONIAN.

COPENHAGEN, Oct. 23.—Today's papers state that the Russian officers showed great nervousness during the passage of the Baltic fleet through the narrow Danish waters. They evidently feared Japanese mines. No one here believed, however, that there was the slightest danger, especially in view of the precautions which were taken by the Danish authorities. Even in the smallest provincial towns every traveler and foreigner was watched with almost ridiculous vigilance.

Wednesday evening last a telegram arrived from the Czar for Admiral Rodjestyensky, addressed to the Russian consular agent, M. Rodjestyensky. The agent ordered two fishermen to leave in a launch and deliver this dispatch. When they approached the Admiral's ship, searchlights were thrown upon the launch with a glare so intense that the fishermen were completely blinded and some blank cartridges were fired. The Russians did not allow the launch to come nearer, but launched a boat, to which were the fishermen delivered the dispatch.

All merchantmen had been notified to hoist the national flag when meeting the Baltic fleet. The schooner Hugh failed to do so and immediately a blank charge was fired to hasten the performance of the ceremony. According to a local newspaper, Russian will soon be the Copenhagen shipbuilders, Burmeister & Wain, an order for several warships. This firm built the Imperial yacht Standard.

Sir Mortimer Refuses an Interview.

LENNOX, Mass., Oct. 23.—The Associated Press dispatches telling of the firing on the Hull fishermen in the North Sea by the Russian Baltic fleet was delivered to Sir Henry Mortimer Durand at his Summer cottage tonight. It was read with much interest, being the first intelligence the Ambassador received of the affair.

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QUIET IN ISLANDS

Judge Parker's Accusations Are Refuted.

WRIGHT GIVES THE FACTS

Philippines Are Prospering Under American Rule.

TAXATION IS NOT OPPRESSIVE

No Disposition to Violence Among the Vast Mass of the People—Public Expression of Opinion Is Not Checked in Any Way.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23.—The following cablegrams from Secretary of War Taft to Governor Wright, of the Philippines, and from the Governor to the Secretary, in reply thereto, were made public at the War Department today:

"October 20, 1904. To Mr. Wright, Manila.—The Democratic candidate for President, on the 15th of the present month, in a public address, said: 'But two classes of our people can hope to be benefited by our holding the Philippines—the class which is always hunting for special Government privileges, and the class which seeks to make of office-holding a means of livelihood. The latter class in the Philippines comprises some officials of whom a student of statistics there recently said: 'Of the character of many in office, too little can be said. At the best they are inefficient; at the worst, dishonest, corrupt and despotic. The islands seem to have succeeded in getting the very dregs of our people.'"

Parker's Terrible Charges.

He also said: 'The situation in the Philippines today is so terrible that it passes the comprehension of our people at home. Agriculturally, the country is for the time ruined. Land is going out of cultivation; the population is ill fed, and in some places unable to get work. The country is overburdened with taxation; disease is prevalent, the farms and plantations in the hands of ladrones, the price of products poor and unremunerative. 'Public opinion has no free expression; newspapers are bought up or are brownbaited into silence; men of influence who criticize the commission are ostracized; the press produced by the commission is controlled; the character of the country is being ruined; there is no longer a free expression of opinion through the press or otherwise is recognized here as in the United States and practiced with the same freedom; the only limitation being responsibility for libelous and seditious utterances; the law relative to those being drawn from Federal and state statutes of the United States. 'No newspaper has been subsidized or brownbaited, nor has anyone been ostracized for criticizing the commission. The latter have frequently been the subject both of criticism and attack by newspapers and individuals. Political questions, including immediate independence, are every day discussed freely and without interference; theatrical plays are not censored. 'Stamped on American flag. 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'These general statements as to peace and order are intended to apply to all of the islands inhabited by civilized Filipinos except the island of Samar. It has a population in the mountains of the interior, many of whom have never seen a white man, who are semi-savage and have a weakness for raiding towns along the coast. They are also religious fanatics, generally directed by a pope claiming to be invulnerable. 'Seven months since there was an eruption of these people, who plundered and burned a number of barrios and archipelago, until the country is opened up by roads and schools are established, occasional disturbances of the character indicated may be expected. 'No check on Free Speech. 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GOVERNOR WRIGHT IN REPLY.

The reply of Governor Wright was received here from Manila at 1 P. M. today (October 23), and is as follows: 'Manila, Oct. 23.—Secretary of War Washington: With reference to your telegram of the 20th, quoting recent utterances of Judge Parker upon the administration and conditions here and requesting statement of facts relating thereto, I report as follows: 'First—The statement that any considerable number of officials have proved corrupt, inefficient or despotic does great injustice to a body of hard-working, self-respecting Americans, whose character and service will compare favorably with any employees of the Federal or state governments. Whilst there has been a number of defaults by subordinates, they are few as compared with the whole, and have been promptly detected and punished. The total defaults since July, 1901, the beginning of the Civil Government, was \$78,153. There is no ultimate loss. The Government is protected by insurance. 'Civil Service Law is Enforced. 'We have a comprehensive civil service law rigidly enforced, under which the antecedents and qualifications of employees are scrutinized. Defaults, with few exceptions, were appointed during disturbed conditions, prior to the inauguration of the law. 'As to complaints of oppression, such acts are exceptional and promptly investigated and corrected. Relations between the American officials and Filipinos are as a rule cordial. 'Second—Nothing warranting the statement that towns are in ruin, lands are going out of cultivation, people ill fed, unable to get work and the country ruined agriculturally. Towns are in the same state as before the insurrection, save a few burned by insurgents, which have been rebuilt and reoccupied. Towns are generally populated as before. Sanitary conditions generally are improved, labor generally equals and in some cases exceeds the supply, and at increased wages. 'Rinderpest Has Been Checked. 'In 1901 and 1902 epidemics of rinderpest destroyed probably 70 per cent of the animals used in agriculture, causing a reduced area of cultivated land and considerable distress, which the commission relieved by inaugurating public works through aid generously extended by Congress. We have succeeded by inoculation in checking the rinderpest. Those localities most seriously affected have drawn from those where the disease did not prevail and this, together with animals imported and the natural increase, has caused a steady increase so that at the present there is under cultivation nearly all the lands heretofore uncultivated. 'During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1904, exports were \$30,226,157; imports, \$23,221,250. Exports fell off as compared with the previous year be-

FORCES LINED UP

Great Activity in the Debatable States.

REPUBLICANS IN THE LEAD

New York Herald Gives Forecast Two Weeks Ahead.

ROOSEVELT'S ELECTION SURE