

Harbor Defenses at the Mouth of the Columbia River.

THE stranger, entering, or leaving, the harbor of Astoria, on a deep-sea vessel, would be entirely unconscious, so far as physical manifestations go, that he and his vessel could be made instantly an object of annihilation by the concentrated fire of two score of powerful guns from three separate, and equi-distant forts on the two shores that flank the ship he rides, yet such is the case, despite the calm and peaceful aspect of things down that way.

Fort Stevens, the greater of the group, and the headquarters of the artillery district of the Columbia, lies behind its long, low and impervious embankments, grass green and park-like, on the famous Clatsop Spit, to the south of the entrance, while Fort Columbia hides its frowning front in the verdure of Point Ellis on the Washington shore, and Fort Canby has embattled refuge on the southerly range of Cape Hancock beneath the giant shadows of North Head; the three forming an impregnable barrier (along with the auxiliary agencies that usually accompany such fortifications), to the advance of any hostile force, however great and well-manuevered.

In times of peace (which, happily, in this land of good nature and business acumen, is pretty much all the time), the manning of these great forts is kept at the minimum prescribed by the military regulations of the Government, while the equipment is maintained, as to its range of appliances, at the best standards, and this, like the personnel, is susceptible of immediate and adequate expansion at the hour of necessity. Fort Stevens, at the present time, is under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John V. White, his authority extending to the other posts of the district, as well: First Lieutenant Benjamin H. Kerfoot, is adjutant of the coast artillery district; Captain Thomas B. Lamoreux serves as artillery engineer of the district, and First Lieutenant Edward Canfield, Jr., is on duty there, as district quartermaster.

There are but three companies on service at these posts just now, but under the concentration scheme of the Chief of Artillery for the United States army, Fort Columbia is to be abandoned to the meagre services of a few care-takers who will look after the armament, and Fort Stevens will be garrisoned by five full companies of artillery regulars; its working detail being now covered by the 93rd Company, Coast Artillery, commanded by First Lieutenant Edward Canfield, Jr., with Lieutenant John P. Kieler, as second in command; and by the 34th Company, Coast Artillery, commanded by Captain Percy Willis, with Lieutenant Edward Cullen, as his second in command. Captain Frederick Phisterer, Coast Artillery, is in full command at Fort Columbia and of the single company serving there, the 33rd, Coast Artillery, with Lieutenant Francis J. Behr, second in command; the staff officers of the district being Surgeon Chester J. Stedman (with the rank of First Lieutenant), serving at Fort Stevens; and Surgeon (Contract) George B. Tuttle, on duty at Fort Columbia.

The company now at Fort Columbia will be transferred to Fort Stevens, as well as one company from Fort Casey, Washington; a new company to be organized outright at Fort Stevens, to make up the complement to be assigned to this important post. One of the five companies to be established at Fort Stevens later, will be assigned

exclusive to torpedo duty, the other four doing gun duty, as usual. This will increase the efficiency of this post very largely in all matters of drill for service work.

During the past summer there were lively times at Fort Stevens during the artillery maneuvers held there from July 6th to the 15th, in which seven companies of the Oregon National Guard participated, and contributed greatly to the advancement of the latter branch in the knowledge and practice of artillery, and was a source of interest and delight to the thousands of visitors who flocked to witness the spectacular work of the men and officers of the assembled garrisons daily. So successful was this experiment, that it is generally conceded in places best posted on such matters, that the maneuvers will be repeated annually; the object sought, being the proper equipment of the guardsmen for serious work in the great task of joint coast defense whenever occasion for it shall arise. It is known that this will occur again this summer, and the officers are anticipating fine results and a good time.

The armament of the fortifications at the mouth of the Columbia, at this time, consists of eight 12-inch mortars; eight 10-inch breech-loading rifles; two 8-inch breech-loading rifles; nine 6-inch breech-loading rifles, and six 16-pounder, rapid-firing guns; beside a complete mining equipment of electrically-served torpedoes, for use in the channels of the Columbia at the proper time.

At this time there are extensive improvements underway at Fort Stevens in the enlargement of the quarters of both men and officers, \$45,000 being engaged now, out of an appropriation of \$200,000 for this and correlated purposes; and when these are done it will have enhanced the importance and utility of the post to an extraordinary degree.

The reservation at Fort Stevens aggregates 982.42 acres of land, and is practically all devoted to the varied lines of use inseparable from such an establishment, parks, parade grounds, building sites, road ways, fortifications, including a magnificent rifle range of 600 yards; and the last foot of the reservation will be employed as soon as the big and comprehensive scheme of land defenses, now being perfected by a special board of officers, shall have been fully developed, approved and applied.

The authorities at Fort Stevens are quite proud of the fine range at their service there, as well as of the splendid records achieved on it last summer, when, it is reported, that one of the regular companies there made the flattering record of 100 per cent in target work; and the same authority is quoted for the statement that the range is at the service of any organization of a military or naval character that may need its use.

Fort Stevens, as well as its allied forts on the north shore of the Columbia, is amplified, in point of general equipment, by the use of the great mechanical plants situated nearby, at the inner end of the immense sea jetty under course of construction at the mouth of the river, receiving from there all the wooden and iron and steel work, that is wrought into the improvements and repairs of the three posts, a very practical aid when it is considered that, in default of such a convenience, the heavy supplies of this sort would have to come from the government plants located at transcontinental distances.

These three forts are among the most engaging and interesting of the show places about Astoria, and are visited by thousands, season after season and chief among the standard attractions of the forts is

the perfect courtesy of the officers and men in the handling of the great crowds that throng the reservation during the summers. All are in easy access from Astoria, the steamer Major Guy Howard, of the engineering department of the United States giving frequent and quick daily service, besides direct rail communication to Fort Stevens twice a day all the year round, via the Astoria & Columbia River Railway.

Social and Fraternal Life of Astoria.

THE IRVING CLUB.

Standing for the best traditions of the city's hospitality, culture and social expression, the Irving Club, of Astoria, for 16 years has kept open house here, and welcomed thousands of distinguished guests from abroad, while maintaining and dispensing its exclusive and compensating comforts and pleasures for its own clientele.

It was founded and incorporated in November, 1892, by the following well known gentlemen: C. W. Fulton, president; W. T. Chutter, first vice-president; E. W. Tallant, second vice-president; H. G. Smith, secretary, and Frank Patton, treasurer, with Messrs. G. C. Fulton, F. J. Taylor, F. L. Parker, H. F. Prael and S. S. Gordon, as directors.

The club is now housed in superb quarters on the fourth floor of the beautiful building belonging to the Astoria Savings Bank, and ranks with best habitats of the sort on the Pacific Coast for the quality of its regimen and service, and for its ability to care for its honored guests. It is among the proudest institutions of the city and has a home clientele that includes the ultra representatives of the professional and business world of Astoria.

At this writing its destinies are in the capable hands of H. F. Prael, president; E. Z. Ferguson, first vice-president; A. A. Finch, second vice-president; J. R. A. Bennett, treasurer, and Otto F. Heilborn, secretary.

FRATERNITIES.

Astoria is famous for the fraternal spirit that finds expression here and the abundant work of goodwill done by the thousands of people who take this quiet and effective way of dispensing their time and money in the amelioration of the burdens borne by their fellows. Thousands of dollars are paid out annually from the scores of lodges maintained here and an infinite amount of good is done along

the silent and methodical lines of craftwork.

There are 40 of the leading elements of this kind, notable among which are the following:

Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, Temple Lodge No. 7; one of the first group of Masonic lodges under the Oregon jurisdiction.

Royal Arch Masons, St. John's Chapter, No. 14.

Order of the Eastern Star, Fern Chapter, No. 38.

Ancient Order of United Workmen, Seaside Lodge, No. 12.

Degree of Honor, Charity Lodge No. 53.

Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, Astoria Lodge No. 180.

Foresters of America, Court Astoria, No. 8.

Fraternal Order of Eagles, Aerie No. 17.

Grand Army of the Republic, Cushing Post, No. 3.

Woman's Relief Corps, Cushing Corps, No. 3.

Improved Order of Red Men, Concomly Tribe, No. 7.

Degree of Pocahontas, Katata Council, No. 1.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Beaver Lodge, No. 35.

Rebeksahs, Gateway Lodge, No. 77.

Knights of the Maccabees, Gateway Tent, No. 33.

Ladies of the Maccabees, Columbia Hive, No. 8.

Knights of Pythias, Astor Lodge, No. 6.

Uniform Rank, K. of P., Astoria Commandery, No. 1.

Rathbone Sisters, Astoria Temple No. 25.

Modern Woodmen of America, Astoria Camp, No. 5665.

Royal Neighbors of America, Hamblen Camp, No. 2015.

Native Daughters of Oregon, Nancy Dickerson Welch Cabin, No. 6.

Order of Pendo, Clatsop Council, No. 278.

Order of Washington, Astor Union, No. 9.

Sons of Hermann, Teutonia Lodge No. 5.

(Continued on page 31.)

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