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SPANISH FLEET HEADING FOR CUBA

Sampson at Puerto Plata—Rumor of an Engagement With the Spanish Fleet is not Confirmed.

WASHINGTON, May 14.—A report is current here that Admiral Sampson met the Spanish fleet south of Porto Rico. In the engagement that followed seven Spanish vessels and the New York and Indiana were sunk. This cannot be confirmed officially, but it is persistently repeated everywhere.

WASHINGTON, May 14.—By far the most interesting strategical information that came to the government today was that the Spanish fleet had been sighted off Curaco island, near the coast of Venezuela. The report was not official, but sufficiently reliable to justify the department in making inquiries on the subject. Consular Smith at Curaco has been asked to investigate; but so far nothing has been heard from him. While some of the naval officers doubted the accuracy of the reports, everybody acknowledged that a movement of this kind was not improbable. Curaco is 500 miles southwest of Martinique. If the Spanish fleet is there it is evident that it is sailing to make some port on the south coast of Cuba without having a dangerous meeting with Sampson's fleet.

Sampson is presumably steaming westward with the hope of encountering the enemy off the north coast of Cuba or Hayti. There is practical unanimity of opinion that unless the Spanish fleet intends to cut and run, Sampson and Schley will hunt it down. It cannot escape. The officials say that it has really gone to Curaco in the hope of making Cuba.

A suggestion that does not find many supporters is that the enemy intends attempting the capture of the Oregon, Marietta and Buffalo. In this case Curaco would not be a bad place to wait but Martinique would be better. All the above is based on the presumption that the report is correct.

Some of the officers are satisfied this evening that the Spanish fleet is making for Cuba.

Information has reached the navy department that the Spaniards are accompanied by colliers, which on account of their slow movement, will retard their progress. Sampson has scout boats in advance of his fighting ships and these will probably locate the enemy before they reach Cuba. With Blanco cut off from communication and Cienfuegos equally powerless to get orders on account of cutting the cables, the fleet would not be able to get advice about the position of the American fleet.

The strategy board held a protracted session this evening.

It was stated that Sampson was probably at Puerto Plata. An authoritative statement was given of the report that an engagement between Sampson and the Spanish fleet had taken place.

CAMP HAYTIEN, May 14.—Sampson's fleet is reported to be at Puerto Plata. One report said that the fleet had left, steaming westward. Nothing has been heard of the Spanish fleet, except that the torpedo destroyer Terror was still at Fort De France Martinique.

THE SENATE'S ACTION DOUBTFUL

Resolutions On the Hawaiian Question Will Probably Pass.

WASHINGTON, May 14.—Monday or Tuesday the Democratic members of the house will hold a caucus for the purpose of deciding what shall be done with the Hawaiian resolution. The Democrats are practically unanimous in opposing the annexation; but while they have the tacit support of Reed, the resolution will undoubtedly pass when it is called up. What its fate in the senate will be

is an entirely different question.

Senator Davies, chairman of the foreign relations committee, asked Senator White, of California, who is an emphatic opponent of annexation, if he intended to fight the annexation resolution. Senator White replied: "Most assuredly I do; and if you attempt to bring that up, congress will be in session all summer." "Then that settles it," said Senator Davis. And from this it is assumed that the chairman of the foreign relations committee has not much hope for success.

THE BATTLE OF CIENFUEGOS

Crews of the Marblehead, Nashville and Windom Fired Upon While Engaged in Cutting a Spanish Cable Last Wednesday.

WASHINGTON, May 14.—The navy department has just received a dispatch from Commodore Remy, at Key West, confirming the report of a severe engagement at Cienfuegos last Wednesday. He transmits the report of Captain McCall, of the Marblehead.

The United States cruiser Marblehead the gunboat Nashville and the auxiliary cruiser Windom steamed up to the harbor of Cienfuegos Wednesday morning with orders to cut the cable connecting Havana with Santiago de Cuba. This task was accomplished but only after a terrific fight between our warships and several thousand Spanish, which lined the shore, concealed behind improvised breastworks.

Soon after the arrival of the warships off Cienfuegos, four boats were launched and proceeded in shore for the purpose of grappling for the cable, in order to cut it. The ships lay to about 1000 yards off shore. It was observed that the Spanish troops had assembled ashore, but it was not known that the heavy guns had been placed in a masked battery and that the old lighthouse, far out on a neck of land, had been transformed into a formidable fort.

The small boats proceeded cautiously, and for more than an hour worked unmolested on the cable. When the work was about completed the shore battery fired a shell at the boats. It was followed by others and the Spanish infantry opened fire then with their rifles. Then like a flash the Marblehead sent a shell inland, and followed with a perfect shower of shot. Then the Windom cut loose with her four-pounder. In the meanwhile the Spanish bullets flew in all directions about the small boats. The bluejackets were not dismayed, and protected by the terrific return fire from the warships, the work was continued until the task of cutting the cable was accomplished.

When the boats returned to the ships, Regan, who was in one of the Marblehead's boats, of which there were two, was found to have been killed. Six men were badly wounded.

The Spaniards had by this time suffered a severe loss. Their shots from the lighthouse struck the warships several times, and although they did not do much damage, the fire aroused the determination of the American officers to exterminate the fort. Thereafter for a moment the fire of the ships was concentrated on the lighthouse, and the improvised fort was blown to pieces. As there were great numbers of Spanish in and behind the fort at the time, there is no doubt that many of them were killed.

The Marblehead and Nashville used their heaviest guns as well as their small, rapid-firing guns, and hundreds of shots were thrown into the Spanish troops. On board the ships a number of men were slightly wounded. Commander Washburn Maynard, of the Nashville, was slightly wounded by a spent bullet.

One of the cables had been cut when the Spaniards opened fire. The marines in the boats replied at once, and machine guns on the forward launch sent in a stream of bullets, while heavy shells from the warships drove the Spaniards from their rifle pit on shore. Seven men badly wounded was the count, and on them, Regan, died on the way back to the ship. Lieutenant Winslow was shot in the hand and a number of others were more or less injured.

OTHER NATIONS MAY FIGHT

France and England May Yet be Involved in War.

POINT A PITRI, via Hayti, May 14.—A conflict between France and England is imminent here. The local authorities have ordered all the French troops now stationed at Basseterre to proceed at once to Martinique with all their arms and ammunition.

GATHERING AT THE PRESIDIO

Twelve Thousand Volunteers Will be Encamped There Inside of Ten Days—Scene a Busy One.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 14.—It is expected that within ten days 12,000 volunteers will be encamped at the Presidio. General Merriam has advised those in charge here that arrangements must be made at once to care for that number.

Contracts will be let next week for a large amount of subsistence. Nine thousand blankets were ordered yesterday and 10,000 pairs of shoes will be bought today. Four hundred horses and an equal number of mules will at once be purchased for the artillery and cavalry divisions of the Manila expedition.

A guard of 19 men from the coast-defense vessel Monterey will watch the loading of the City of Peking with coal and stores for the American fleet at Manila. The Peking will carry as many troops, as she has accommodations for about 2000. No extra berths will be provided, and the vessel will get away the early part of the week. The City of Sydney will have extra accommodations put in 'tween decks and the stowage, and the Australia will also be fitted out in that manner. It is expected that all the vessels chartered as transports will get away within the next ten days.

SPANISH LOSS WAS IMMENSE

It is Admitted That Three Hundred Were Killed and Six Hundred Wounded at Manila.

MADRID, May 14.—A Spanish report from Manila admits that the Spanish lost 300 killed and had 600 wounded when Dewey annihilated the Spanish fleet. The dispatch, which was to El Liberal, was dated May 9.

It came by special steamer to Hong Kong. It says:

"The arsenal has surrendered and Cavite has been evacuated by our troops. The Spanish losses were 300 men killed and 600 wounded. The enemy suffered

considerably, including one officer killed on the Olympia. The Baltimore was damaged. Our shells did not burst and all the enemy's shells burst.

"Admiral Dewey has had a long conference with the foreign consuls. The Yankees took and burned our merchant ships. Corregidor island was betrayed. "The consulate assembly is discussing the horrible situation created by hunger and misery. We are isolated by the blockade and are in fear of an attack. Since the cable was cut little has happened. The blockade continues.

ONE MORE KLONDIKER GONE

Swift-Water Bill Falls Through the Ice and Perishes.

DYEA, Alaska, May 9, via Seattle, May 14.—News was received today from the lower end of Lake Bennett, that W. R. Gates, better known as "Swift-Water Bill," well known as a Klondiker plunger and mine owner, and who spent the winter in California and was returning to Dawson City, fell through the ice yesterday and was drowned. No particulars are obtainable. Gates was conveying a theatrical vaudeville troupe to the Klondike, consisting of a dozen women and fifteen men. It is not known here whether any others were drowned. Gates was daring and foolhardy, and has experienced many narrow escapes from death in shooting rapids on the Yukon. He owned a quarter interest in the richest claim in the Klondike.

EUROPEAN VIEW OF THE MATTER

LONDON, May 14.—The moment is at hand when the American government and people must decide the destinies of Christendom for at least generations to come. Had it not been for the sharp veto of the British government, the United States would have been confronted several years with a difficult problem—whether to withdraw Dewey ignominiously from the Philippines, or fight combined Europe. The statement made to a prominent member of Salisbury, falls far short of conveying an adequate idea of the manifold perils and plots of the situation.

Colonial Secretary Chamberlain's speech yesterday advocating the Anglo-American, represents the desire of the British government. Fear of such an alliance is the only thing preventing the unfriendly sentiments of continental powers finding expression. A proposition to send a demand to Washington to limit the campaign to the West Indies and enforce the demand with the combined fleets came to the British government from three powers. It was rejected by the cabinet, which was equally anxious in favor of granting the United States the fullest British support in resisting interference of neutral powers.

The European interference was not prompted by friendly sentiment for Spain. Her defeat and the loss of her colonies was a foregone conclusion. The powers are desirous of discussing the question, looking to a division of the spoils and agree that the United States shall retain nothing outside of the West Indies. It is impossible to state when the first overt act will come.

THIRTY THOUSAND TROOPS FOR MANILA

It May Be Necessary to Send That Number—Men Will Be Supplied With Modern Arms.

NEW YORK, May 14.—General Wesley Merritt, commander of the department of the east, notified the war department today that it will be practically impossible for him to arrange his affairs so as to leave for the Pacific coast inside of a week or ten days. General Merritt, during his visit to Washington, when he consented to accept the military governorship of the Philippines, impressed upon the department authorities the absolute necessity of arming the men who are to make the long journey, with the very latest and most approved arms. The department will furnish 15,000 troops with the latest pattern of the Krag-Jorgenson rifles and will equip them for a tropical campaign in every particular. It is probable that some men may leave the coast before the modern arms can reach them, but every effort will be made to have them fully equipped before they embark, and if these efforts fail, newer arms will be sent forward as rapidly as they can be

assembled in San Francisco and transported across the Pacific.

While it is said tonight that 15,000 men is the number which will leave the coast for the Philippines, there is every probability that the number may be largely augmented and that an additional force will follow within the next few days. This will certainly be done if it is true, as reported from Europe, that the Spanish authorities are preparing to send 20,000 additional troops to Manila by way of the Suez canal. Instructions have been sent to the agent of the war department in London to investigate the truth of this report; and should it prove authentic, General Merritt is likely to have at least 30,000 men behind him, instead of 15,000, before he shall have occupied his new position a month.

PATENT WAS APPROVED.
Deed to Over Eight Thousand Acres in the Roseburg District.

WASHINGTON, May 14.—The secretary of the interior has approved for patent to the Oregon & California railroad the list of land, selected under the grant, embracing 8993 acres, in the Roseburg district.

William Lake and son arrived Saturday from Kansas, having come all the way overland by team, says the Condon Globe. Mr. Lake has traveled about 3000 miles by team during the last two years looking for a location, and when he struck Gilliam county he concluded that this country suited him and that he would locate right here.

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