

## HAVANA VERY WEAK.

HER DEFENSES COULD NOT RESIST MODERN GUNS.

The Cuban Capital City Has Many Fortifications, but They Are of the Antiquated Kind, Not Strongly Built and Are Poorly Equipped.

### Medieval Fortresses.

Time was when the city of Havana was one of the strong places of the world. That was in the days when battle ships carried as many as 125 pop-guns, against whose puny fire towering walls of massive granite served as an impregnable defense. Modern ordnance, with its monster shot and almost fabulous range, has changed all that, and to-day Havana is not only not the mighty fortress that it once was, but, despite the fact that vast sums have within the last two years been squandered on its defenses, it can now hardly be considered as capable of offering any serious resistance to attack, either by land or sea.

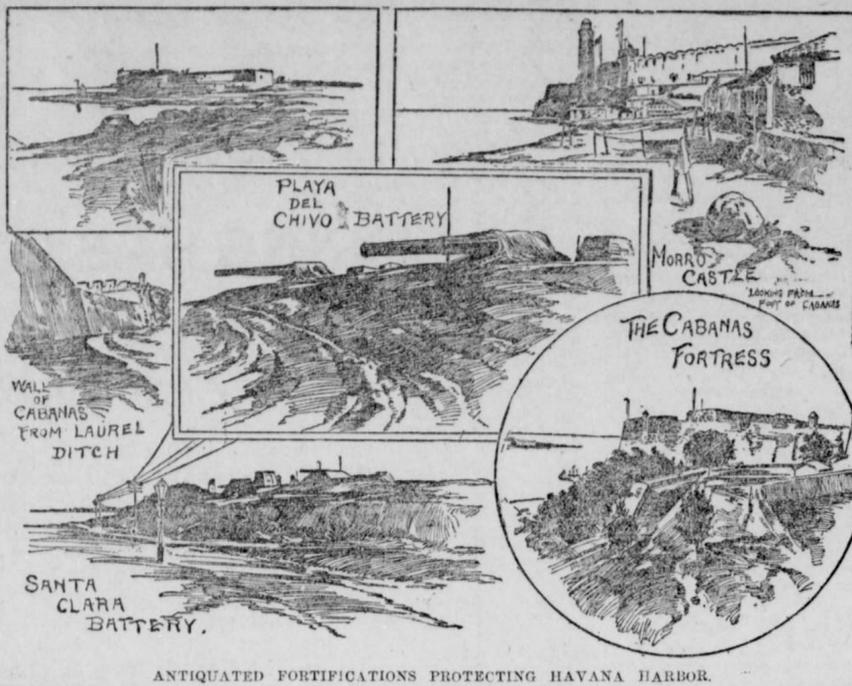
The seaward defenses of Havana may be divided into two classes—those within the harbor and at its entrance, which are interesting only from an antiquarian and picturesque aspect, and the modern works, armed with a few pieces of heavy breechloading ordnance, which, since the beginning of the war, have been erected along the shores east and west of the harbor mouth.

Best known of all the forts of Havana is the world-renowned Morro Castle, the marvelously picturesque medieval stronghold that crowns that rocky eminence at the left of the entrance of the harbor. A hundred years ago its massive bastions, bristling with the heaviest artillery of the period, frowned defiance to the navies of the world. Now the Morro, stripped of all armament save a few harmless cannon, serves only as a prison, as a garrison for recruits from Spain and as a signal station and pedestal for the great lighthouse that towers above the seaward height of the fortress just across the eastern ditch. Dividing it from the castle proper is an outwork known as the Velasco Battery. Across the harbor from the Morro stands the quaint old Castillo de La Punta, a square bastioned stone fort, mounting three or four old Parrotts and a solitary 15-inch Rodman of the kind which is now being removed from Forts Hamilton and Wadsworth to make room for modern ordnance. Beyond the Punta, all the way to the Cavalleria wharf, the shore is fairly encrusted with the remains of batteries, in their day most formidable, but now stripped of armament and used only as barracks or store houses.

The walls of the stupendous fortress known as La Cabana crown the heights on the eastern shore of the harbor from near the southern saltpit of the Morro all the way to the village of Casa Blanca in an unbroken palisade of gray and white stone, stained here and there with broad splashes of vivid red. La Cabana is now nothing but a vast prison and place of execution. Originally designed to mount hundreds of guns, it now possesses only a saluting battery and five small rifles, with a few ancient pieces, which are only available for defense against a land attack. The condition of La Cabana's ordnance may be inferred from the fact that the garrison, after superhuman exertions, was only able to return the Maine's national salute of twenty-one guns with nineteen straggling shots, delivered in what one of the American officers declared to be the "raggedest salute I ever heard."

Most formidable of all the modern defensive works of Havana is the great sand battery at Playa del Chivo, on the sea coast, about three-quarters of a mile to the eastward of the Morro. It was recently declared by an examination of all the new batteries as the "only one in the construction of which the least glimmer of embellishment had been shown." The battery mounts two magnificent twelve-inch Krupp rifles, which, however, are destitute of all protection save what is afforded by a broad but very low parapet of sand.

Half a mile further to the eastward is an unfinished battery of similar construction, mounting four eight-inch



ANTIQUATED FORTIFICATIONS PROTECTING HAVANA HARBOR.

guns and a few small mortars. Both these batteries could be readily taken in flank and carried by troops landed in the unprotected little haven at Cofimmar, three miles to the eastward of Havana. On the heights in the rear of the first battery are several large powder magazines, completely exposed to the fire of ships.

To the westward of the harbor lies a chain of batteries, extending from La Punta all the way along the shore to the mouth of the Almendares River, where there is another sheltered landing place with no other defense than the ancient castle of Carmelo, erected in 1569, the oldest building of European construction in the new world. A force landed here could proceed along the shore road under cover of the guns of the fleet and march into the city, carrying one battery after the other on the way.

Of this range of works, the first, beginning at the eastward, is the Reina battery, a stone structure armed with a few antique pieces of ordnance. Next to it, and within the outskirts of the city, is the Santa Clara battery, an earthwork which ranks next in importance to the big Playa del Chivo battery. It mounts three old style ten-inch Krupp and two twelve-inch Ordnance guns. These latter were built in Spain on a system that has nothing to recommend it beyond cheapness of construction, consisting as they do of a steel tube re-enforced, incredibly as it may seem, with nothing better than a cast iron jacket.

Within a stone's throw of Santa Clara is a little masonry battery, mounting four breech-loading mortars of only eight-inch calibre. The battery is of such light construction as to offer only a trifling protection to the guns. Further westward at the foot of H street, in the suburb of Vedado, is another battery mounting two ten-inch and two six-inch modern rifles.

As the main defense of the city against land attack are the antique castles of Atares and Principe, in the latter of which is a small battery of modern mortars, whose fire is capable of being directed seaward.

### Eggs as Currency.

A \$1,200 farm in Tennessee has been paid for wholly in hens' eggs, the installments being remitted daily, sometimes at the rate of three cents a dozen for the eggs, delivered in four-dozen lots.

### Big Pear Yield.

A single tree in an orchard near Corvallis, Ore., has yielded this season nine hundred pounds of Bartlett pears.

The trouble with a great many men is they are never satisfied with wasting their own time.

### HUMOR AND ITS USES.

It Is the Sunshine of the World, but May Be Overworked.

"Humor is the very sunshine of the world," writes Carrie E. Garrett in the *Woman's Home Companion*. "Hardly any other single gift will go so far to refresh and inspire one in every-day life and keep the heart still young. It steals merrily across that workaday world, animating the dreariest monotony and finding place in the most hopeless destiny. Such a gay traveling companion is humor for the pilgrimage of life!"

"The woman with a sense of humor has a safeguard against ennui, against folly and against despair. She can never be dull so long as the comedy of life is being played before her eyes; with a keen sense of the ridiculous she is not likely to 'make a fool of herself,' and she will never be hopelessly unhappy, for she will find in the most adverse fate something still to laugh at, and after all laughter is your true alchemist. However it may be with the unmusical person, surely the surly individual who cannot laugh spontaneously on occasions is 'fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.'"

"But this blessed gift of humor should be used to lift the shadows of life, not to deepen them. A joke which causes another a pang of humiliation or makes some sensitive heart ache is not only a cruel sort of amusement, but it is also a very expensive indulgence. For just a moment's gratification at having made a 'hit' the 'funny woman' may forever lose a friend, and may even arouse a very genuine spirit of enmity. We learn to forgive, and mayhap forget, many injuries in life's troubled journey, but perhaps among the wounds that rankle longest in the human heart are those which are made 'only in fun.'"

### Ivory Used by the Ancients.

The earliest recorded history—we might say prehistoric, the hieroglyphical—that has come down to use has been in carvings on ivory and bone. Long before metallurgy was known among the prehistoric races, carvings on reindeer horn and mammoth tusks evidence the antiquity of the art. Fragments of horn and ivory, engraved with excellent pictures of animals, have been found in caves and beds of rivers and lakes. There are specimens in the British museum, also in the Louvre, of the Egyptian skill in ivory carving, attributed to the age of Moses. In the latter collection are chairs or seats of the sixteenth century, B. C., inlaid with ivory, and other pieces of the eleventh century, B. C. We have already referred to the Ninevah Ivories. Carving of the "precious substance" was extensively

carried on at Constantinople during the middle ages; combs, caskets, horns, boxes, etc., of carved ivory and bone, often set in precious stones, of the old Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, are frequently found in tombs. Crucifixes and images of the virgin and saints made in that age are often graceful and beautiful. The Chinese and Japanese are rival artists now in their peculiar minutiae and detail.—*Popular Science Monthly*.

### Buial Money in China.

A kind of Chinese money which is largely manufactured and sold is worthy of mention, although the traveler need not trouble himself with it except as a curiosity. This is prepared for the especial purpose of burning at the graves of deceased relatives as an offering to the dead. The denizens of the other world are supposed to require and to be capable of receiving money in this way; but the Chinaman is far too practical a person to part in such a fashion with the currency of the empire. Instead he buys for a few "cash" a large supply of silvered and gilded pieces of paper, or of imitation coins blocked out of cardboard.

Although these have no purchasing power on earth, they are supposed to count for much in the transactions of the spirit world. By this practice one is reminded of an old story of a miser who left his belongings to his son on condition that a certain sum of money should be buried in the coffin with him. The son was, however, a clip of the old block, and carried out his father's wishes by placing in the coffin a crossed check for the required amount, assured that it had little chance of being presented at his banker's.—*Chambers' Journal*.

### Punishment for the Ungodly.

The American Bible Society has received from Peru the cheering information that four of the men who have been most active in obstructing evangelical work have died within twelve months.

### Russian Curiousities.

There are many curious things sold in the Russian markets, and one can buy eels and snakes and chicken legs. Lambs' feet are sold as a great dainty, and calves' feet are bought for soup.

After a man has been married three or four times, he must feel a good deal like a horse that has been owned by three or four different owners.

Some people are born tired and some seem to have been born for the purpose of making others tired.

The woman with small feet may be vain, but she walks on her pride.

### WHAT ONE TORPEDO DID.

Knocked a Great Hole in Steel Bottom of the Rebel Brazilian Aquidaban.

Before the rebel Brazilian fleet in the harbor of Rio Janeiro, under Admiral De Gama, surrendered in 1894, Rebel Admiral Mello had sailed out of the harbor in the Aquidaban. The torpedo boats sent by the Brazilian government to find the ship came upon her in the harbor of Desterro, down the coast. The Gustavo Samplo, which did the torpedoing, is a torpedo gunboat, having a bow tube and two broadside launching tubes, two twenty-pounder rapid firing guns and four three-inch rifles. She, in company with a torpedo boat something after the style of the Cushing, entered the Desterro harbor, where the Aquidaban was at anchor, shortly after midnight, April 16. The torpedo boat advanced and at 100 meters fired her bow torpedo. At 75 meters she launched her broadside. Both missed. The Samplo then advanced and at 75 meters fired her bow torpedo, which missed, and at 50 meters her port broadside. The last torpedo struck the Aquidaban about ten feet below the water line and twenty-five feet abaft the bow, making a hole twelve feet square on the port side and a round hole three feet in diameter on the starboard side. The plates for several feet around the hole on the port side were crushed in.

The Aquidaban sank in shallow water and was afterward raised and repaired. The cut published herewith is from a photograph taken of the Aquidaban when she had been placed in dry dock for repairs, and gives an excellent idea of what kind of hole is made in the bottom of a steel ship when a Whitehead torpedo strikes her.

In the civil war in Chile, in 1891, the government cruiser Blanco Encalada was sunk by a torpedo in the harbor of Valparaiso. It was at night and she was lying at anchor with no searchlights going and no torpedo nets down. An insurgent ship came steaming in

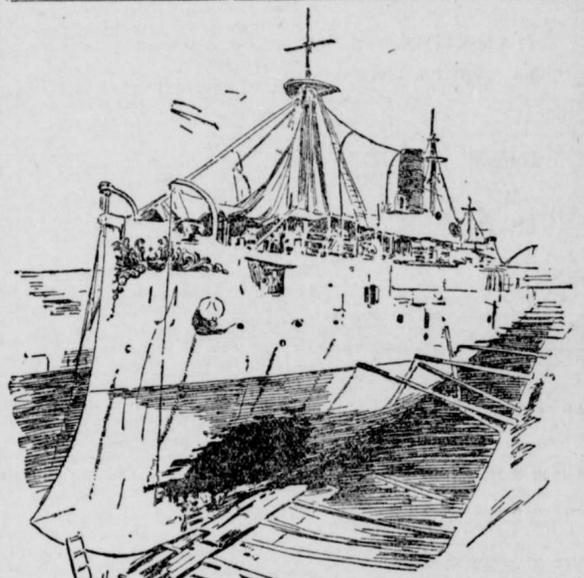
so that by turning his head slightly inside the helmet the diver can see for some distance around him.

The air tubing is of strong, flexible rubber, through which the fresh air from above is driven down by means of a pump. This tube, before reaching the opening in the helmet through which the air is supplied to the diver, is carried through a ring on the breastplate at the diver's left shoulder. This is so that he may be able to grasp it quickly, without having to grope for it, in case he needs to signal to those at the pump above. One pull on the tube means that he wants more air and two pulls warn the pumpers that he is getting too much. If the air were supplied in excess the suit would become so buoyant that it would tend to rise. After being passed through the shoulder ring the tube goes around and enters the helmet at the back. From here the air passes through a flat rubber tube to the top of the helmet, where the single tube divides into three branches, one of which goes down to the nostrils and the other to the ears.

After the air has been breathed it passes on down inside the suit, inflating this sufficiently to overcome a certain degree of the hydrostatic pressure. Without air inside the rubber would be pressed against the diver's body and limbs by the weight of the water, and would drive the blood up into his head. There is another opening in the back of the helmet, through which the foul air finds its escape. This may be seen coming up to the top of the water in the form of bubbles. The life rope by which the diver is lowered and raised is about as thick as an ordinary clothes line. It is wound securely about his waist and fastened under his arms. Three pulls upon it signify to those above that the diver wishes to come up.

### Temperature of Food.

The temperature of the things we eat and drink is hardly ever noticed; still, it is of considerable importance that food or drink should be of the right



WHAT A TORPEDO DID TO THE AQUIDABAN.

and fired three torpedos at her in rapid succession. One of them hit and the Blanco Encalada sank rapidly. She went down in deep water and could not be raised.

The first torpedo of which there is any record in warfare was one which blew up a British armed schooner off New London in 1777. It was a floating torpedo, which was sent against the British ship by the tide.

### DIVER'S WORKING SUIT.

It Is Made of India Rubber and Is Enough to Care the Fish.

The work of a diver is attended by many risks, but dangers become familiar through long custom, so his task usually has few terrors for him. He descends trusting to the proper working



ENOUGH TO SCARE THE FISH.

of the mechanism by which he is supplied with air and to the strength of the life line, which lowers and pulls him up.

The diving suit, which is the one generally used now, is made of India rubber, with a helmet and breastplate of copper. Outside of the rubber, to protect it from hard usage, an extra suit of canvas overalls is worn, and after a rough piece of work this canvas is frequently torn to shreds. Around his waist the diver wears a belt made of bars of lead fastened crosswise on a leather band. His shoes are of metal, heavily weighted, so that he can maintain an erect position easily, and the entire suit with which he enters the water weighs about 175 pounds. This is necessary to enable him to sink to the required depth. The helmet is supplied with windows of thick glass, one in front and two others at each side of it,

temperature. For healthy people hot articles of food should be served at a temperature about that of the blood, but for infants it is imperative that milk should be given at blood heat. Drinks intended to quench thirst are about right at a temperature of from 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Drink or food at extremely high or extremely low temperatures may do great damage, and are most harmful when swallowed rapidly. Drinking water is best taken at 55 degrees, seltzers and soda water should be slightly warmer and beer should not be cooled to more than 60 degrees; red wine is best at 65 degrees; white wine at 50; champagne is the one liquor which is best at the lowest temperature allowed, but should not be taken colder than 45 degrees. Coffee and tea should not be taken hotter than from 105 to 120 degrees; milk is considered cold at 60 degrees, when it will be found to have the best aroma.

### There Were No Postage Stamps.

In these days postage stamps are a familiar necessity. Their loss would occasion almost as much confusion and difficulty as the loss of our money system; and yet, fifty years ago the world never had seen a postage stamp nor even an envelope.

Before the days of postage stamps it was customary to pay in cash at the postoffice the charges for transporting the letter, and the postmaster stamped the word "paid" above the address. Our first stamps were of two denominations, 5 and 10 cents. The first bore the likeness of Franklin in rose color, and the second that of Washington. Envelopes were not in use in those days, but a sheet of paper was carefully folded and sealed with a red wafer. For a letter of one sheet of paper for a distance less than 300 miles the 5-cent stamp sufficed. When envelopes, including the stamped envelope, came in in 1851, a revision of postal practices was necessary, and weight, instead of the number of sheets of paper, became the standard of measure. Postage was in that year very much reduced, and the 3-cent price for the half-ounce letter was adopted.

### Peaches Once Poison.

The peach was originally a poison-almoid. Its fruity parts were used to poison arrows, and for that purpose were introduced into Persia. Transplantation and cultivation have not only removed its poisonous qualities, but turned it into the delicious fruit we now enjoy.

## BUTCHERY OF VIRGINIUS' SAILORS BY SPAIN

THE black episode of the *Virginus* is still fresh in the minds of the American people. It shows what may be expected by any government that handles Spain with too much consideration in diplomacy. The *Virginus*, known originally as the *Virgin*, was a British blockade runner during our civil war. In 1870, when the Cubans were trying to break away from Spain, the *Virginus* resumed the old occupation, only with a change of base. For three years it succeeded in carrying on its business without being captured. It was under the command of a citizen of the United States, Captain Fry. The crew were partly American and partly Cuban. But one ill-starred day the *Virginus* came upon another vessel, the *Tornado*, which had been built in the same shipyard as itself and for the same purpose, but which had drifted in the fortunes of ownership into Spanish hands. After a hot chase the *Virginus* was run down and captured. Captain Fry protested that his was "an American ship, carrying American colors and papers, with an American captain and crew." All this was true, but far from being "saving truth." The vessel and all on board were taken to Santiago de Cuba, the passengers thrown in prison and Captain Joseph Fry, the commander, and his crew kept on board the *Tornado*. Drumhead court-martial was held for the trial of the prisoners and almost immediately four of them were shot in the back, their heads displayed on spikes and their bodies trampled by horses. The trials, condemnations, and executions of the others were in squads. In the first batch was a gallant soldier of our own war, but a British subject, Brigadier General Washington Ryan. In the last batch Captain Fry himself was shot. With such indecent haste were these executions made that the news of the capture of the *Virginus* had not yet reached Havana nor Madrid. General Juan Burriel, the governor for that Cuban province, caused the cable to be cut that the American consul, E. G. Schmitt, at Santiago might be prevented from making any communication to his government, and the United States consul at that place was not allowed to leave the consulate or have any intercourse with the prisoners until the last day. Not a man would have escaped, but before the entire work of butchery had been finished a British gunboat came along in that region and heard what was going on. The



captain lost no time in reaching Santiago, and without waiting for the slightest ceremony demanded that the slaughter cease or he would bombard the town. That sort of pluck and promptness, from the days of Drake down, have made Great Britain a great nation. In less than ninety days ninety-three men under sentence of death were saved by the brave and humane interference of Sir Lambton Lorraine of the *Niobe*. He told the Weylers, or butchers, of Santiago de Cuba that he represented the United States and Great Britain both, and if any other man was harmed he would shell the town. That settled it. The Spaniards are full of bravado, but in the face of resolution and courage he quails.

For a time public indignation in the United States ran very high. Mass meetings were held in many places, the newspapers showed deep resentment of the insult to the American flag and the atrocities which American citizens had suffered. Immediate vengeance was called for and the government made a faint show of preparations for war. It went so far as to threaten to withdraw Minister Slekkes from Madrid, but on the eve of his withdrawal Spain consented to consider proposals for restitution and indemnity. Then followed a series of diplomatic negotiations, the final result of which must have made all Spain chuckle with delight. The men who had been rescued by the *Niobe* were put on board the *Virginus* in the remote port of Bahia Honda, and there, before a handful of witnesses, the Spaniards went through the farce of a salute. The Spaniards should at least have been compelled to take the *Virginus* into the harbor at Havana, and there, in the presence of all the people, made to pay homage to the United States. Spain paid the sum of \$80,000 in full indemnity for the lives of fifty-three persons murdered by its representatives, while all communication of these victims was shut off from the country to which they might have looked for protection. The total survivors of the crew were fifteen and of the passengers eighty-seven, who were surrendered at the same time as the vessel. This closed the episode of the *Virginus*, which aroused more indignation in this country than any other event save the firing on Fort Sumter in the memory of men now living. The blood money was pocketed and the insult to the flag has remained unavenged to this day.