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Easter Shopping
 Now the order of the day. Our preparations for an increased trade are now complete. We have provided a grand choice of the newest things to be found in the leading markets;—a correct description of the many novelties we offer is simply impossible. Come and see them.

Fancy Silks Exclusive styles from the sedate black and white effects to the largest fancy plaids.

DRESS GOODS Entire new stock of black and fancies. All wool goods from one yard to the finest imported Silk Crepons at \$2.50.

ORGAN-IES If you are an admirer of textile art you will find them purely artistic treat; they are also the most correct thing of the styles to be in vogue for summer gowns.

WHITE GOODS Plain and figured Nainsooks, Dimities, Pianos, India Linen, Linen Lawns, White Organdies, several qualities of English Longcloth, etc.

BELTS From 10c to the exquisitely jewel-studded at \$2.75.

Ready Made Suits; a choice faintly line that for nobby styles, dainty fit, choice and elegance leaves nothing to be desired;—Estreicher prices (always right)

SPAIN'S AWFUL WAR OF EXTERMINATION

Proctor Tells the Senate What He Saw in Cuba.

Desolation, Distress, Misery and Starvation.

Entire Native Population Struggling for Freedom.

Under Conditions Unparalleled in History.

Frightful Mortality of the Victims of Weyler's Order of Centralization—Spain's Diminished Army—When Will the United States Act?



RUFUS H. PROCTOR.

Washington, March 17.—Senator Proctor this afternoon read to the senate a statement of his recent trip to Cuba. He dwelt particularly on the wretched condition of the reconcentrados. Outside of Havana it was neither war nor peace, he said, it was desolation and distress, misery and starvation. Food from the United States had greatly relieved the suffering, but such aid might cease unless the war was ended. Of the 1,600,000 inhabitants in Cuba, Proctor thought that not over 200,000 exclusive of soldiers, gave allegiance to Spain.

Every town in the four western provinces, Mr. Proctor said, is surrounded by a trocha and guarded so that the reconcentrados could not get out nor the insurgents get in.

Mr. Proctor said the scenes in the hospitals were too terrible for him to describe. He had found the newspaper reports were not exaggerated. Of Spain's military power there were only 60,000 soldiers left out of 200,000 sent to the island. They were poorly drilled and equipped. He concluded by saying:

"I endeavored to state what I saw and heard. It was a spectacle of a million and a half of people, the entire native population of Cuba, struggling for freedom and deliverance, with practical unanimity, from the worst misgovernment of which I ever had knowledge. Whether our action ought to be influenced by any of those things, and if so, how far, is another question. I am not in favor of annexation. The remedial steps may safely be left to the American president and the American people."

WOMEN AND CHILDREN MASSACRED.

Havana, via Key West, March 17.—A horrible crime has terrorized the Cuban population. A train which arrived from Caguas, Matanzas, brought several Cuban women and children, made prisoners by a Spanish army column at El Purgatorio, Matanzas province. The column found about a hundred starving women and children there and massacred them. The arrivals, all wounded, are only a few of the survivors of the assassination. An official statement is given to the effect that the women and children were insurgents.

A LETTER FROM WEYLER

Written Just Before the Maine Disaster.

He Was Ready With a "Terrible Punishment"

If Americans Dared to Send a Warship to Havana.

New York, March 17.—Honore F. Laine, the correspondent recently expelled from Cuba, made public today a letter which Weyler had written to a friend in Havana, in which the following startling statements were made:

"I have read these days that the Americans are pondering about sending one of their warships to that city (Havana). During my command in Cuba they did not even dare to dream about it. They knew a terrible punishment awaited them. I had Havana harbor well prepared for such an emergency. I rapidly finished the work Martinez Campos carelessly abandoned. If the insult made I hope there will be a Spanish hand to punish it as terribly as it deserves."

Laine had obtained the letter from a correspondent in Havana the day before the Maine arrived, and its possession, he claims, was responsible for his imprisonment and expulsion, and would have caused his death had he not maintained the protection of his French citizenship.

YESTERDAY IN CONGRESS

A WAR CLAIM BILL PASSED BY THE SENATE.

Postoffice Appropriation Bill Considered by the House—Rural Free Delivery.

Washington, March 17.—The senate today passed the house bill authorizing the Nebraska, Kansas and Gulf Railway Company to construct and operate a railroad through the Indian and Oklahoma territories. The conference report on the agricultural appropriation bill was agreed to. Twenty-seven minor bills were passed, including one appropriating \$25,000 to reimburse the Southwestern Presbyterian University of Clarksville, Tenn., for injury by the United States troops during the war.

The quarantine bill was taken up as unfinished business, and was approved by Bacon, of Georgia, who said he never would give consent to a bill that denied any community the right to take care of itself in the face of danger from epidemic.

Washington, March 17.—The house stuck close today to the text of the postoffice appropriation bill. The debate was confined to two propositions to increase the allowance for clerk hire in first and second class offices over the \$11,000,000 proposed by the committee, which failed, and to increase the appropriation for rural free delivery from \$150,000 to \$300,000, which prevailed. Much time was spent over the provision prohibiting the expenditure of any money for rural free delivery for payment of special agents, which prevailed.

FOOD FOR THE STARVING.

New York, March 17.—The United States transport Kennel sailed for Matanzas, Cuba, today with a cargo of provisions for the destitute people.

MANY INDICATIONS THAT WAR IS NEAR

Political Significance of Blanco's Banquet.

War Feeling in Havana is now Intense.

Steps for Defense of Our Seaboard Cities.

Massachusetts and Texas Ordered to Hampton Roads.

Movements of Troops and Ammunition From Many Points Southward and to the Seashore—Spain Still Trying to Buy Ships.



CAPTAIN GENERAL BLANCO.

Havana, March 17.—The war feeling is very intense and the people believe hostilities between the United States and Spain may begin at any moment.

The banquet given at the palace last night by General Blanco, in honor of the officers of the Spanish navy, is now regarded as having great political importance. It was remarkable that the only representative of a foreign government present was Senor Vazquez, consul of Mexico. The consuls of England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and Austria sent excuses.

Consul General Lee said today: "I consider the situation serious, but not alarming, and I am sorry to see that the public here believe in the imminence of war. I hope all pending questions between the two countries will reach an honorable solution without recourse to war."

The Union Constitutional says today editorially that war appears imminent.

SPAIN'S QUEST FOR SHIPS.

London, March 17.—Spain is making a desperate effort to secure a navy able to cope with that of the United States. This is shown by the offer just made to the Italian government for the purchase of four cruisers. Three of these are modern first class cruisers and are now a part of the Italian navy. The fourth, the Carlo Alberto, is now building. The Italian consul has been summoned to consider the matter.

GATHERING OF FORCES.

New Haven, March 17.—The government has promised to place three coast defense gunboats, displacing carriages and eight motor boats in the harbor to protect the city in case of war.

Portsmouth, March 17.—Arrangements have been made for transporting troops from their quarters here to Atlanta and the gulf coast forts. Special trains bearing them will leave this evening.

Washington, March 17.—The first disbursement of the fifty million dollars was cabled to the Armstrongs in London today for twelve rapid fire guns, including their mounts and ammunition.

Raleigh, March 17.—Governor Russell received a message from President McKinley asking how many troops the state could furnish in case of hostilities. The reply gave 245,000 as the number.

Atlanta, March 17.—The secretary of war has ordered Company B, of the Fifth Infantry, to report at St. Augustine, Fla., by next Wednesday.

Kansas City, March 17.—Battery B, Fourth artillery, and Battery F, Fifth artillery, which arrived in Kansas City during the night from Fort Riley, left this morning for the south. Battery F, Fourth artillery, is ordered to Fort Monroe.

Fort Riley, Kan., March 17.—Battery F, Fifth artillery, destined for Savannah, Ga., and Battery B, Fourth artillery, for New Orleans, left here early this morning. (Continued on Fifth Page.)

THREE SQUADRONS.

Washington, March 17.—Three squadrons instead of one will be organized on the Atlantic coast to furnish adequate protection to the heretofore defenseless cities from Florida to Maine. The first steps were taken today by Secretary Long in directing Admiral Sigsbee to send the Massachusetts and Texas to Hampton Roads. The headquarters of these squadrons will be Key West, Hampton Roads and Port Royal, S. C.

The war board recommended the new scheme as affording the best protection, since the Spanish fleet would probably not attempt to cope with the great squadron in Florida waters, but abandoning Havana, proceed to New York and other northern ports and create havoc before the American vessels could come to the defense of the seaboard cities.

SPAIN'S TORPEDO FLOTILLA.

Washington, March 17.—The departure of the Spanish torpedo flotilla for Cuba has been made the subject of an inquiry by this government to Spain, as to what the move means. If an answer has been given it is being kept secret. The government is advised constantly of the movements of the Spanish war vessels and if another fleet starts, as reported it is the intention, our answer will be the sending of the flying squadron, now being prepared.

THE HOLLAND A SUCCESS

TRAVERSES A QUARTER OF A MILE UNDER WATER.

The Government now to Test the Boat Using her Torpedo Tubes and Guns.

New York, March 17.—The Holland submarine boat made a drive beneath the waters of Staten Island sound this afternoon and ran a quarter of a mile completely submerged, and rose to the surface again. This feat, the constructor said, proved its value as a naval vessel, as it demonstrated its ability to approach a hostile battleship unseen, protected from fire by water.

Armed as the Holland is, with torpedo tubes and two dynamite guns, she would be a terrible antagonist.

A government test will be made Saturday. The torpedo tubes and two dynamite guns will be fired. If the boat proves all her designer promises she will be taken by the government.

FERN GOES TO HAVANA.

Key West, March 17.—Contrary to expectations the Fern sailed this morning for Havana. Admiral Sigsbee said "with the Montgomery at Havana we must have some boat to run errands." Some other vessel than the Nashville is likely to carry provisions to Cuba.

SAN FRANCISCO AT LONDON.

London, March 17.—The cruiser San Francisco arrived today and is steaming up the Thames. The cruiser Amazonas will be taken possession of by the Americans tomorrow.

REGISTER BRUCE DEAD

One of the Most Prominent Negro Politicians in the Country.

Washington, March 17.—B. K. Bruce, register of the treasury, died here this morning. He had been ill for some weeks. Bruce was of African descent and born a slave in Prince Edward county, Va., March 1, 1841. In 1875 he was elected to the United States senate as a republican. He was appointed register of the treasury in 1881 and reappointed by McKinley.

THE GEORGIA DEMOCRATS.

Atlanta, March 17.—The state democratic executive committee, although composed of free silver adherents, today elected Fleming G. duBignon, gold democrat, to succeed Senator Clay as chairman. The committee also provided for a general primary on June 6, in which every county will elect and instruct delegates to the gubernatorial convention June 12.

SUPERIOR COURT.

Testimony in the Roberts-Jarrett case, which was taken up in the superior court Monday, was concluded yesterday, and the argument of counsel begun. F. A. Sordley was addressing the jury when recess was taken.

At noon W. T. Crawford closed the argument in the Haywood mandamus case and left for Waynesville. Judge Hoke has reserved his decision for the present. In the habeas corpus case heard at chambers the custody of the child was ordered to be returned to its natural parents upon the payment of \$125 for his care and keeping since it has been in charge of the respondents.

ESTABLISHED 1888.

THE WINYAH SANITARIUM,

A Special Private Institution for the Treatment of Lung and Throat Diseases.

KARL von BUCK, M. D., Medical Director.

RATES, One dollar PER WEEK and upward, according to the room selected, including everything excepting medicines, which are supplied at cost. A certain number of rooms are reserved at a lower rate for patients whose financial circumstances require it, and to such the medicines are also included. Patients can enter and leave at any time. Advanced cases not admitted.

Winyah Hotel and Sanitarium Co.

At This Season

of the year you need something to build you up, to insure a healthy appetite, and to bring refreshing sleep. Then why not try

Pabst Malt Extract.

the "Best Tonic." It is a tower of strength to the convalescent and a Malt Extract without an equal.

ASHEVILLE DRUG CO.

East Court Square and College Street.

DAVID WAY, Manager.

ALL KINDS

Garden Field and Flower SEEDS

By experience we know it pays to buy only the best seeds. You will not make a mistake in trying ours.

SNIDER'S

6 Court Sq. Arch Front.

WE OFFER:

One lot of 41 gems at 50 cents each.

One lot of 40 gems at 60 cents each.

One lot of 169 gems at 75 cents each.

One lot of 40 gems at \$1.00 each.

One lot of 23 gems at \$1.25 each.—Sold

One lot of 8 gems at \$1.50 each.

One lot of 3 gems at \$2.00 each.

One lot of 5 gems at \$2.50 each.—Sold

One lot of 3 gems at \$4.00 each.

One gem for \$4.00.

ARTHUR M. FIELD, LEADING JEWELER, Church street and Federal square, Asheville, N. C.

Caramel Cereal.

A mixture of Cereals so prepared as to constitute a wholesome substitute for coffee, the only preparation manufactured by the Battle Creek Sanitarium and Health Food Company. All others are imitations.

G. A. GREER.

Little Midget Pickles 40c Per Qt

Sweet Mixed Pickles 25c Per Qt

Chow Chow Pickles 25c Per Qt

Apple Butter 3 lbs for 25c

BYARD'S

Pure Food Store,

Phone 49 19 Merrimon Ave.

A young lady formerly with Huxley, and experienced in dipping bonnets, has taken position with the Candy Kitchen. Bonnets and capotes are made fresh daily. Wash day and orange creams made daily.

GANDY KITCHEN, Phone 284.