The Morning Post.

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THIS MAY BE AN EVENTFUL DAY

And Spain is Likely to "Hear Something Drop" in Washington.

ADVANCE REPORT FROM BOARD ENQUIRY

Has Been Formulated and Despatched to the President, and is Expected to Reach Him Today.

DESIGNED TO PUT ADMINISTRATION ON GUARD

And By Acquainting the President With the Nature of the Final and Formal Report of the Court of Enquiry Enable Him to Make His Plans Accordingly—No Doubt of Its Stating that the Explosion Which Wrecked the "Maine" Occurred From Without the Ship, But Doubtful Whether the Blame Has Been Fixed—Should It Show Official Spanish Complicity There is a Hot Time Ahead for Spain—Final Report Expected During the Coming Week.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

Key West, Fla., March 18.—The naval Board of Enquiry held another meeting on board the "Iowa" today, but of course its secret proceedings are not available to outsiders.

The rumor is still current here to-night, however, that a special advance report has been forwarded to the President and that it will be in Washington tomorrow.

The return of the cruiser "Montgomery" from Havana this morning without accident, and without any of the "Maine's" crew that remained there, was the naval event of the day. The "Montgomery's" officers report all quiet in Havana.

The arrival of the torpedo-boat "Foote" gives a flotilla of six to Commodore Kimball, all in perfect condition.

REPORT TO BE MADE TODAY.

Board of Enquiry Has Prepared and Already Despatched a Special Seport to the President Which Will Reach Him Today.

Special Despatch to The Morning Post.

Washington, March 18—It is definitely ascertained today that the Naval Court of Enquiry now at Key West, which for a month has been investigating into the cause or causes which produced the explosion that blew up and wrecked the United States cruiser "Maine" in Havana harbor and sacrificed the lives of hundreds of its officers and crew, have formulated a special report to the President, which they have already despatched to Washington and which will be in the hands of the President tomorrow.

While this report will not be a full and complete one of the court's findings, it will be full and comprehensive enough to state, and give the reasons and evidence for stating, what the ultimate formal report will be.

EXPLOSION FROM THE OUTSIDE.

It will contain sufficient evidence adduced before the court by the witnesses examined at Havana to prove that the explosion occurred from outside of the ship that it wrecked, and doubtless full enough to wreck, and prepare the President and the administration, as it is thought, for what is to come when the final, and more elaborate and comprehensive report of the court is made in due course, so as to enable the administration to take such steps in the premises as it shall deem necessary or proper.

The official formal report of the Naval Board will be submitted to the Secretary of the Navy, and this, it is understood, will be in the latter's hands during the coming week, most probably.

The naval officers here, the Naval Department officials, ex-Secretary of War Proctor, recently returned from Washington, and others in this city today who are in a position to express an intelligent opinion on the nature of the special report expected here tomorrow, all unite in saying that they have not the slightest idea what the report will state, until it comes, that the explosion occurred outside of the wrecked vessel, and within it. That much may be regarded as a fact.

That the explosion was the result of official complicitiy—or, more speaking, whether the Board has come to determine that it was—is another thing. No one knows at present whether the report will express itself on that point or remain silent with reference to it.

It is not known at the hour this report is filed whether the President will give to the public the contents of the special report, or any part of it.

There are good reasons why he should not, especially if it is of the character anticipated or more definite than may now be supposed. But, still, it is possible, of course, that the administration may deem it the part of wisdom to give out an official statement in reference to its contents.

MOVEMENTS OF THE ARMY.

Uncle Sam's Blue Coats Hurrying to the South Atlantic Seaboard.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

Birmingham, Ala., March 18.—Battery F, Fifth Artillery, U. S. A., passed through Birmingham tonight, from Fort Riley, Ark., en route to Tybee Island, Ga. Lieut. Newcomb, who is in command, said that at every place they stopped on the trip the greatest enthusiasm was shown by the crowds at the depots.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

Cincinnati, Ohio, March 18.—Battery F, Fourth Artillery, U. S. A., 75 men strong, passed through here tonight, on their way to Fort Monroe, Va., from Fort Riley, Ark. Ten thousand people here and in Covington lined the tracks and cheered the soldiers.

Atlanta, Ga., March 18.—Company B, United States Army, stationed at Fort McPherson, near this city, will leave Monday for St. Augustine, Fla. The commanding officer said that in a week or two only a few soldiers would be left at the post here; that the remainder would be sent to reinforce the artillery troops on the coast.

BLUE JACKETS ON "AMAZONAS."

Latest Foreign Acquisition to U. S. Navy Formally Turned Over to Uncle Sam in London Yesterday

By Cable to The Morning Post.

London, March 18.—The Brazilian cruiser "Amazonas" was formally turned over to the United States this morning, Lieut. Colwell receiving the warship on behalf of the Government.

This afternoon the cruiser "San Francisco" arrived at Gravesend, and saluted the fort, the salute being returned. Th Sailors aboard the "San Francisco" for that purpose then boarded the "Amazonas" and took possession.

SPAIN GETS ONE ALSO.

By Cable to The Morning Post.

London, March 18.—A despatch from Rome says that Spain has purchased the new Italian cruiser "Varese."

The Italian armored cruiser "Varese," said to have been sold to Spain, is of steel, has 6,840 tons displacement, is 238 feet long, and has 59.8 feet beam. Her maximum draft is 24 feet, she is driven by two propellers, has 13,000 indicated horse-power, and is estimated to steam twenty knots an hour. The cruiser has an armored belt of six inches of Harveyized steel, and she has six inches of Harveyized steel over her gun positions, with deck plating one and one-half inches thick. Her armament consists of two 10-inch guns, ten 6-inch quick-firing guns, six 40.7-inch guns, ten 2.2-inch guns, ten 1.4-inch guns, and two Maxim rapid-fire guns. Her normal coal supply is 1,000 tons, and she carries a complement of 470 men.

"Oregon" Sails for Key West Today.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

San Francisco, Cal., March 18.—All the preparations have been completed for the sailing of the battleship "Oregon" tomorrow.

All on board are confident that she is to join the squadron in Cuban waters.

PICK OF NAVY AT HAMPTON ROADS

That the Most Strategic Point—The Big Monitor "Puritan" Nearly Ready to Proceed to Key west.

Special Despatch to The Morning Post.

Norfolk, Va., March 18.—The big monitor "Puritan," which is the most powerful warship in smooth water in the world, and which is now at the Gosport navy yard here, will soon be ready to go to Key West according to orders from the Navy Department.

To assist her on guard she will have the double-turreted monitor "Miantonomah" and the monitor "Amphitrite." The two last named vessels are now at League Island and Port Royal, respectively.

The naval orders of yesterday will result in the gathering at Hampton Roads of the pick of the navy, that point being the best strategically on the Atlantic coast. It is centrally located and vessels there can reach any point on the Atlantic coast in very short order, which is just now considered very desirable in case any fast Spanish cruiser or torpedo destroyers should turn up with the intention of attacking American cities.

HIGHLY IMPORTANT DISCOVERY

Made Yesterday at the Maine Wreck—Highest Explosive on Board Found Intact.

By Cable to The Morning Post.

Havana, March 18.—Among today's discoveries in the "Maine" wreck is the startling one made by Gunner Morgan.

He found a lot of gun-cotton in the crystal tubes in which it was kept. The tubes were intact and the gun-cotton was absolutely dry. This was the highest explosive on board the battleship, and yet it is intact.

Your correspondent saw some of the tubes today in Captain Sigsbee's stateroom on the "Fern."

WAR PREPARATIONS TO CEASE?

Statements to That Effect in a Washington Paper Which are Apparently Contradicted in the Same Issue.

Special Despatch to The Morning Post.

Washington, March 18.—The Post this morning states that there are reasons for believing that the Washington administration has reached some sort of agreement with the administration at Madrid looking to acessation of hostile preparations by both counties; that the agreement has advanced far enough to make that result probable already; that as an outcome of negotiations which are to be entered upon at once the Spanish flag will continue to float over Cuba, etc.

The halting of the Spanish torpedo flotilla at the Canary Islands and the orders issued yesterday dividing the formidable fleet of U. S. warships at Key West, as stated in these despatches last night, is declared to have been a part of the program in carrying out this policy.

These statements, however, have been read with a great deal of mental reserve by those in a position to know of such developments had they actually occurred, as is the additional statement, on the same authority, that Spain is to be allowed to still further experiment with its scheme of autonomy, which, as Senator Proctor yesterday declared to the United States Senate, is the "worst misgovernment he ever saw," and which has been characterized by the newspaper correspondents at Havana as an utter, total failure so far.

As indicating how much credence should be given the above statements, the fact may be again noted here that a bill (referred to in last night's despatches to The Morning Post) for the reorganization of the United States army on a war footing of 105,000 men has been introduced in both houses of Congress, and that it is done with the full endorsement of the administration.

The generally accepted theory here is that the White Squadron at Key West was divided into three divisions in order to better protect the Atlantic coast cities, as stated last night in these despatches.

THE STORY DENIED.

At 2 o'clock this (Saturday) morning the following cablegram from Havana was received by The Morning Post denying the above story:

Havana, March 18.—According to a despatch from Madrid tonight, the Government denies that negotiations are pending between Spain and the United States for the withdrawal of the American squadron from the vicinity of Cuba, and for the cessation of war preparations in both countries. The Government says, also, that the torpedo boat flotilla's trip to the Antilles has not been suspended. All the newspapers here attack President McKinley's policy with regard to Spain.

ANOTHER DENIAL OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS STORY.

By Cable to The Morning Post.

London, March 18.—A despatch to The Standard from Madrid says, that Prime Minister Sagasta has contradicted the reports about Spain's purchase of warships, and the indefinite postponement of the departure of the torpedo flotilla from the Canary Islands. The despatch does not state what warships are referred to.

Another Fatal Spanish Explosion.

By Cable to The Morning Post.

Madrid, March 18.—An explosion of fire damp occurred today in the mine at Belmez, near Cordova, causing a large loss of life. Seventy bodies have already been recovered, and it is feared that many more are still in the mine.

MIDNIGHT CAPITAL BUDGET

Latest Washington Developments as Wired The Post.

WAR PREPARATIONS ARE UNABATED

Commander Sicard's Illness Will Compel the Designation of Capt. Sampson to Command the White Squadron—Coast Defense Work Being Vigorously Pushed and Uncle Sam's Blue Coats Hurrying to the South Atlantic Seaboard Coast As Sociated Press Story That War Preparations Were to Cease Printed Yesterday, Shown to be Worse Than Untrue.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

Washington, March 18.—Midnight.—There is no cessation of the efforts of the Navy Department to buy ships and war munitions.

Enlistments are being made in the army and navy, and ships are being distributed where they will be most effective.

Work on the coast defenses is being pushed vigorously. Both the cavalry and infantry are being moved to the Atlantic seaboard as rapidly as circumstances will permit.

The purchase of the torpedo boat destroyer "Tupy" from Brazil is now practically assured. The United States is in need of such a craft, for they are very effective, and Spain has several of them already.

COMMANDER SICARD ILL.

The condition of Commander Sicard's health has given the Navy Department great concern recently and it is probable that Captain Sampson, of the "Iowa," will succeed to the command of the fleet should hostilities break out.

The announcement that the "Massachusetts" and the "Texas" had been withdrawn from Key West and sent to Hampton Roads, was a subject of enquiry at the Cabinet meeting today, and most positive assurances were given by Secretary Long that the orders were not due to any sugggestion from Spain.

There is no intention, it was explained, to detach the North Atlantic squadron from Florida waters to satisfy Spain's qualms in the pending emergency.

The President today authorized the allotment of $2,975,000 for use in the engineering branch of the army, in constructing seacoast defences, mounting guns, and for other work in connection with that department.

The War Department has answered all inquiries in reference to new coast defences with the statement that no additional projects will be considered. The funds which the President will authorize that department to use are to be applied to the completion of the works already under way.

Contracts were made by the War Department today for the delivery of a large quantity of armor-piercing and deck-piercing steel projectiles of large calibre. The contracts were distributed among three companies, in quantities suited to the capacity of each plant, in order that the ammunition may be delivered at the same time, and as early as possible.

A FORMAL REPORT EXPECTED MONDAY—PRESIDENT'S PLANS.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

Washington, March 18.—The situation growing out of the critical stage of the Cuban question is still surrounded in mystery and uncertainty. As the crisis approaches the very air becomes filled with rumors mostly startling but largely untrue.

The latest rumor was that the dynamite cruiser "Vesuvius," which left St. George, Fla., last Wednesday, was steaming up the Potomac river, having on board the members of the Naval Board of Enquiry, with the all-important report in its inside vest-pocket. The "Vesuvius" has reached port but the officers and the report did not arrive.

The fact is that the formal report will not be in Washington until next week—probably on Monday.

The President will demand reparation before sending in his message to Congress. He will set forth the text of his communication to Spain, but it is the opinion of those who are well-informed that he will confine his statements and recommendations to the "Maine" incident, postponing the general phase of the Cuban question until later on.

Some of the Cabinet officers who think Spain has been dealt with too leniently, say that the present plan would prolong the starvation of the Cubans, and postpone the prospect of Cuban independence.

Those who favor the enforcement of a radical policy believe now is the time to act, not only with regard to the "Maine" incident, but also with the question of ending the war and giving Cuba her independence.

If the government had heeded the advice of the late Samuel J. Tilden in 1885 in regard to coast defense the present administration would not be so pressed to make adequate preparations for meeting possible hostilities with Spain.

IN THE CONGRESS YESTERDAY.

Postoffice Appropriation Bill Will Carry $225,000 for Pneumatic Tube Service in Large Cities—Date for Inaugurating the President to Be Changed. Etc.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

Washington, March 18.—After agreeing to the conference report on the Agricultural Appropriation bill, the House today, in Committee of the Whole, resumed consideration of the Postoffice Appropriation bill.

The appropriation of $225,000 for the pneumatic tube service was retained in the bill by the vote of 108 to 65.

All the amendments to cut down or limit the expenditure of $30,500,000 for railroad transportation were futile.

An amendment was agreed to, making it a misdemeanor to "pad" mails during the quadrennial weighing.

The House adjourned with the bill uncompleted, and it will come up again as unfinished business.

Washington, March 18.—The Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections today ordered a favorable report on the joint resolution proposing an amendment to the constitution changing the inauguration day from March 4th to the last Wednesday in April.

GEN. WHEELER'S RESOLUTIONS.

Following is the text of resolutions introduced in the House by Gen. Joe Wheeler, of "Wheeler's Cavalry" fame, who for many years has been a member of Congress from an Alabama district:

"Resolved, That a joint committee, consisting of five members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Vice-President, and five members of the House, to be appointed by the Speaker, be created to report without delay to the two houses an address to the government of Spain, declaring in firm, and diplomatic language, that Americans and American interests in Cuba must be protected, and that the atrocities now being perpetrated in that island must cease.

"Resolved, That the Executive be requested to immediately transmit this address to the government of Spain by such methods as he may deem most advisable, together with a letter of endorsement and approval of this action on the part of Congress."

NORTH CAROLINA POSTMASTERS.

A Batch of New Fourth-Class Ones Named by the Postmaster General Yesterday.

Special Despatch to The Morning Post.

Washigton, March 18.—The following fourth-class postmasters were today appointed for North Carolina:

John T. Johnson, Belleport, Beaufort county, vice Swindell resigned.

Jacob A. Dore, Caldwell, Mecklenburg county, vice Knox resigned.

Jas. Gatling, Eva, Perquimans county, vice Farmer removed.

Rufus A. Lockey, Fallston, Cleveland county, vice W D. Lockey removed.

J. T. Horner, Farmer, Randolph county, vice Newby resigned.

James M. Graybeal, Graybeal, Ashe county, vice Elishu Graybeal resigned.

Hanna J. Pate, Hope Mills, Cumberland county, vice Judd removed.

T. A. Hinnant, Mocksville, Wilson county, vice Barnes removed.

Grandy Gallop, Riddle, Camden county, vice Torlessey removed.

Hugh Cameron, Swann Station, Macon county, vice Waddell removed.

W. R. Beal, Timberlake, Person county, vice Timberlake removed.

Jas. O. Parsons, Weaversford, Ashe county, vice Debord removed.

Buckley Walker, Woodsdale, Person county, vice Robertson removed.

THE RALEIGH POSTMASTERSHIP.

Senator Pritchard Expects to Select His Candidate Today, and to Select Durham's Postmaster Also.

Special Despatch to The Morning Post.

Washington, D. C., March 18.—Senator Pritchard says that he expects to be able tomorrow to arrive at a determination as to whom he will endorse to the President for appointment as postmaster at Raleigh and at Durham.

Most of the candidates for both offices are here and will have a conference with the Senator then.

FRANCE'S ULTIMATUM TO CHINA

In Which Seven More Days are Given the Celestials to Comply With Certain Demands.

By Cable to The Morning Post.

Pekin, March 18.—France has given China eight days to meet these demands

1st. China shall not alienate any territory south of the Yang-Tse-Kiang valley, this being a check to Great Britain's needed extension.

2d. A railway concession and prolongation of exclusive mining rights in Lung-Chau and Yunnan.

3d. Coaling station near Haian, and direction of imperial postal service, transferred to Frenchmen.

WINSTON DEMOCRATS

Decide to Nominate Candidates for City Offices by the Primary Plan

Special Despatch to The Morning Post.

Winston, N. C., March 18.—The Democratic Executive Committee of the town of Winston today decided to hold primaries in each ward o nthe third Monday in April, for the purpose of nominating candidates for mayor and aldermen, of which latter there will be fifteen.

D. H. King was elected chairman of the committee.

WEEK'S BUSINESS RECORD

Financial Report of Dun and Bradstreet's.

THE SOUTH HAS THE BEST OF IT

Outgo of Cotton Surpassed All Expectations Although the Price Had Advanced Activity of Southern Steel Trade—Big Fruit and Vegetable Shipments—The Eastern Fellows Hold Off on Account of War Indications and New York Banks Lost a Million to the Interior, But Recovered Through Gold Importations—Demand for Cotton Goods Increasing.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post.

New York, Mrch 18.—Bradstreet's tomorrow will say: The aggregate volume of the country's business continues sufficiently large to allow favorable comparisons to be made with past periods.

Aside from the quieting in demand at a few leading Eastern markets, where the uncertainty as to the outcome of the foreign complications is advanced as the reason for the unwillingness to embark in new business, the situation is one possessing nearly all of the favorable features noted for some time past.

Better weather has improved the retail trade at the South, while the wholesale business is maintained at a satisfactory volume.

New Orleans reports a trade in excess of that of last year, and the outlook is encouraging.

Southern iron manufacturers are active, and the fruit and vegetable shipments promise to be early and heavy.

The other favorable features are summed up in the liberal shipments of the leading cereals, the unprecedented totals of exports at New York, the fewer business failures, and the slightly larger bank clearings.

Cotton and print-cloths have declined, the position of the latter being very depressed, and prices during the past week reaching the lowest quotation on record.

Dun's weekly report of business will say tomorrow:

Neither peace nor war reports have changed the onward current of business. Orders for more than $25,500,000 of gold from Europe have blocked any drift toward stringency in the money rates.

Exports of products have continued at a rate considerably increased, and the demand for products of the great industries shows a steady expansion.

The backbone of the situation is, that the excess of merchandise exports is again more than 41,000,000 in February, with an increase of 2,600,000 of miscellaneous products—2,100,000 provisions, 4,500,000 cotton, and 7,000,000 in breadstuffs, compared with last year.

The out-go of cotton surpasses all expectations, though the prices are stronger than last week.

Receipts from plantations continue much greater than at the corresponding date for the largest crop ever heretofore produced, so that guesses about the future crop are now the main reliance of speculators.

Wheat also moves, in spite of all speculation. Atlantic exports have been 1,824,569 bushels, against 1,253,390 last year; and from Pacific ports 1,371,826 bushels, against 268,505. Prices closed ¼ higher for the week.

Little encouragment appears in the market for cotton goods, with print-cloths one-sixteenth lower than a week ago, and standard grades undersold by many of less note. The demand is large, but not large enough.

In woolen goods, on the contrary, a material advance in prices has raised the only obstacle to increased transactions.

Bessemer pig iron and grey forge are both slightly stronger than Pittsburg, the proposed combination valley furnaces helping; but pig iron is not changed in price elsewhere, nor are finished products at any point, except wire nails and steel rails.

The New York banks lost about $1,000,000 this week by transfers to the interior, but gained much more largely by the receipts of gold from Europe.

The stock market was affected all the week by the anxieties regarding foreign affairs, and at one time railroad stocks averaged 1.49 per cent. per share less than a week ago, but recovered all the loss.

Railroad earnings continue 7.9 per cent. larger than last year.

The failures for the week were 208 in the United States, against 216 last year.

Wilkes Railroad Bond Case Again Postponed.

Special Despatch to The Morning Post.

Winston, N. C., March 18.—Ex-Judge Avery came here this afternoon for the purpose of arguing the Wilkes county bond case before Judge Starbuck.

His Honor is sick, however, and confined to his room at Chester, S. C., and the hearing was consequently postponed until next week, when it will come up before Judge Starbuck at Morganton Court.