

THE NAVAL BATTLE IS ALMOST DUE

It is Now Accepted as a Fact that the Verde Fleet is at Santiago de Cuba and the Looked-for Battle is Imminent.

HOW TO MEET AND DESTROY THE FLEET IS THE QUESTION

Cervera's Object in Putting In at Santiago is Explainable on Two Grounds, Below Stated, But He Can be of No Service to General Blanco Where He Now is—How Will Sampson and Schley Get at Him?

CUBAN INVASION IS NOT TO BE FURTHER DELAYED, IT IS DECLARED

Although General Miles is Said to be Strongly Opposed to Throwing United States Troops into Cuba Now, and Favors a Postponement Until the Fall, the President and Secretary of War Alger are Alleged to be Determined on the "Immediate-Invasion" Course They Have Marked Out—The United States Army, Especially the Volunteer Portion of It, is Really in no Condition for Immediate Service, Military Experts Say, in Cuba or Elsewhere—Some of the New Timber Arriving at Chickamauga Characterized as Being Very Green—But It Would Cost Uncle Sam Several Hundred Million Dollars to Postpone the Invasion Four or Five Months, and, so Far as Can be Learned, the Troops are to be Landed in Cuba as Early as Practicable, Despite the Rainy Season.

Everything emanating from Spanish sources is open to suspicion, and for that reason doubt was cast upon the truthfulness of the Spanish despatch printed in yesterday's Post announcing the arrival of Cervera and the elusive Cape Verde Spanish fleet at Santiago de Cuba.

Since then other despatches have followed, however, and though they all emanate from Spanish sources it is at this writing accepted as a fact that the fleet has finally anchored in the well-fortified harbor of Santiago de Cuba, if Madrid advices are to be believed. The fact that the warships were sighted near the east end of Jamaica on Wednesday tends to confirm the report.

Some of the best ships of Admiral Sampson's Fighting Squadron are believed to be at or near Cienfuegos, where the Spaniards were expected to strike. Cienfuegos and Santiago are 300 miles or more apart.

Commodore Schley, with the Flying Squadron, is supposed to be off Key West or Havana. Therefore, an engagement with the Spanish ships would seem to be two or three days off, provided the Madrid reports be true and that Admiral Cervera makes no further move. His object in putting into Santiago is not clear. Santiago, it is true, is not a blockaded port, but the Spanish ships can be of no service to Gen. Blanco there.

A possible strategic move on the part of Cervera is to lure Sampson or Schley to the east end of Cuba in order to give his own fleet opportunity to strike the Atlantic seacoast by hasty voyage through the Windward Passage. But confidence is felt in the ability and alertness of our ships to circumvent any such plan of the enemy.

Important developments are certain within a very brief period of time now. The object of the visit to Santiago by the Spanish fleet is not so clear, unless it is the only available point for communicating with Gen. Blanco, and can also be used as a coaling and supply station. The Spanish commander, however, must have known that the way was clear or he would not have ventured into the harbor.

HOW TO MEET AND DESTROY IT. By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—The question which will confront the Navy Department will be how to meet and destroy the fleet. Cable messages were sent last night to Key West conveying the information contained in the press despatches, but it is hoped that ere this Admiral Sampson has been informed by his sea scouts of the proximity of the enemy. It is fair to believe that there are some American ships in the neighborhood of Cienfuegos. Late information indicated that Commodore Schley left Key West for that vicinity some hours or more ago, sailing through the Yucatan passage from the west. He may hear of the arrival of Cervera at Santiago, and hurry to Santiago to give him battle. It would be extremely fortunate if at the same time Admiral Sampson should be still guarding the Windward Passage, and also learning of the arrival of the Spanish fleet at Santiago, should close in upon it from the east, thus connecting with Schley and making the destruction of the fleet a very certain possibility.

If the naval Board of Strategy has been thoroughly informed of the movements of the enemy, and has provided against all contingencies, this is the result which the public may expect to happen. It would show good judgment and would tend to remove much of the criticism which has fallen upon that board. On the other hand, if these experts really do not know anything of the whereabouts of the fleet, and have allowed Sampson and Schley to assemble at some distance from Santiago, the Spanish commander need only to coal and supply his ships and then leave the Caribbean Sea by the Wind-

ward or the Mona passage, and strike across the Atlantic for a comparatively short distance and threaten Charleston or Savannah. This could easily be done while our ships were being lured to Santiago.

INTERESTING NEWS IS NOW EXPECTED. It is a new and interesting situation which confronts the Strategy Board at this time. If there is a battle within twenty-four hours, and the Spanish fleet is destroyed, it will show that the plans of the campaign have been well laid. If the fleet again eludes the American ships, it will demonstrate that in the game of hide and seek which the Spanish are playing they have a decided advantage.

The naval officers last night were confident that the battle would take place. In that event, there ought to be some interesting news from Santiago within the next twenty-four hours. It will come first from Spanish sources, but even this will be better than no news at all.

for some of our belligerent citizens, who are wholly confident that they could settle the Cuban difficulty, out of hand, by the immediate throwing of a large body of soldiers, volunteers, and regulars across the Florida Straits and annihilating the Spanish forces at one fell swoop. It is true that among the arrivals there are many men who have had some more and some less, experience and training in military duties, there is hardly a regiment in the camp, and there are now many of them, which is not highly diluted by the contingent of raw recruits who would be worse than useless in a campaign or engagement.

The matter of equipment is a more simple problem, but even there some time is needed. There are batteries of artillery here with neither guns nor horses. There are cavalrymen with neither horses nor saddles. There are regiments of infantry with neither uniforms or knapsacks. The Fourth Indiana Infantry had not even guns for guard duty. Those which they have used at home belonged to the State, and were taken from them and divided between the Second and Third Regiments. The Thirty-first Michigan had five guns to earth companies and one company of guard duty. Other regiments may be half supplied. Few, if any, are wholly so. And yet, in the minds of many who have but a vague idea of the subject which they determine so readily, we are wholly ready for an active and extensive campaign on foreign soil.

BATTLE IN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS

Secretary Long Credited With Saying So—Americans After Cervera. By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—It was not until late this afternoon that the Navy Department was willing to acknowledge that the Spanish fleet had reached Santiago de Cuba.

The cabinet meeting Secretary Long said he was satisfied of the accuracy of the newspaper reports about Cervera's movements, and it was also said by a man in a position to know that Secretary Long expressed the opinion that the naval engagement would occur within forty-eight hours.

The Strategy Board held a special meeting today, at which the maps of Cuban waters and tables of distances were consulted and a plan of campaign mapped out.

Despatches from Sampson have been received which had an important bearing on the decision of the Strategy Board. There is a general belief in naval circles, excepting the inner coterie which know all that is going on, that Sampson and Schley, with ironclads, are in the vicinity of Key West.

It was reported today that a strong force was guarding the Yucatan passage of the west coast of Cuba, and if this is so these ships are probably under command of Schley, with the object to keep the Spaniards from reaching Havana.

It is plain to everybody that the squadrons will be re-organized, and one sent guarding each end of the island, in the hope of pocketing the enemy somewhere on the Southern coast.

There is ample opportunity, however, for Cervera, to make a quick movement and get out of reach of Sampson or Schley.

The opinion expressed in official circles is that Cervera is at Santiago, not only to communicate with Blanco, but to arouse enthusiasm in Spain and Cuba.

Nearly everybody thinks he will stay there only long enough to fill his coal bunkers.

Still naval authorities are hopeful that the Spaniards will not escape.

NAVAL STRATEGISTS AT WORK

Washington, May 20.—One thing the strategists have not overlooked is that the Cape de Verde fleet is now shut off from getting supplies in the West Indies, except at Cuban ports and for their own transports.

Only two Cuban ports are open to Cervera, viz., Santiago de Cuba and Cienfuegos.

Santiago is another place where the fleet could go to get coal and provisions, and in proceeding there less risk would be run of encountering the American squadron. All these things have been considered by the Strategy Board, and undoubtedly had a part in the arrangement of the campaign.

It was passed today that Schley's vessels had plenty of supplies when they arrived at Key West, and some of them have probably already started out after the enemy, being strengthened no doubt by an exchange with Sampson.

Whether Sampson or Schley is in command of such squadron there is no means of knowing.

Undoubtedly the administration has determined to pursue the Spanish fleet vigorously hereafter. With Cervera shut out from all but a few ports where he can obtain coal and provisions, he cannot plot hide and seek in the West Indies much longer without being cornered.

His evident object is to avoid a fight while keeping the United States naval forces guessing where he is.

That he would like to go into Havana harbor some naval officers do not doubt, but he cannot get there without a severe engagement.

There are four United States vessels of formidable construction and armament to make his dodging about exceedingly dangerous. It is not to be charged of cowardice by going far from the West Indies, and certainly not to Spain or the Canaries, and with this conviction firmly in their minds, the officials are looking forward to the ending of the existing uncertainty within a short time.

DON'T WANT TO FIGHT.

Cervera May Have Sailed From Santiago Already. By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Key West, May 20.—The impression prevails here that the Spanish fleet reported at Santiago de Cuba is already on her way back across the Atlantic, because it is thought the principal object of Cervera's visit was to supply Blanco with arms and ammunition.

The strong desire on the part of the Spaniards to conceal the whereabouts of the fleet is taken as an additional indication that their purpose was other than to fight.

THE WAR REVENUE BILL

The Reading Completed in the Senate Yesterday.

PROPOSED ISSUE OF BONDS

Senator Daniel Speaks Against That Feature of the Bill—Aldrich Offers the Provisions for Bonds and Certificates of Indebtedness Proposed by the Republicans, But, Pending Action on the Substitute, the Bill Went Over Till Monday—Minimum of Personal Property to be Taxed Changed From \$5,000 to \$10,000

By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—The Senate today, after passing the bill to create an auxiliary naval force, continued its discussion on the war revenue bill.

Senator Daniel (of Virginia) spoke against the proposed issue of bonds, which was part of the Republican plan. He was not willing to mortgage posterity and add a debt upon future generations which would be a constant temptation to extravagance.

He pointed to the financial conduct of the late war by the Republicans and asserted that the interest on bonds then issued was being paid by the present generation and would be paid by the next generation probably.

The committee amendment, striking the tonnage tax from the bill, was agreed upon.

When the inheritance tax section was under discussion, Mr. Aldrich moved that the minimum of personal property to be subjected to tax be increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

This after some discussion, was agreed to.

The reading of the bill was completed, and Senator Aldrich offered the provisions for bonds and certificates of indebtedness agreed upon by the Republicans as a substitute for the sections proposed by the majority of the Finance Committee.

Pending action on the substitute, the bill was laid aside, and adjournment taken till Monday.

LATEST AS TO INVADING CUBA.

The Powers that Be Still Undecided as to the Immediate Occupation—Over 100,000 Volunteers Mustered in

By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—The project for occupying Cuba with a large military force is still a matter of much uncertainty.

Influences for and against the immediate carrying out of the invasion proposition are being strongly exerted, but the conservatives, who believe in postponement, seem to have secured at least a temporary endorsement of their position.

More than 100,000 volunteers have been accepted for service in the volunteer army.

NO FLEET AT SAN JUAN.

Only Two Ancient Spanish Gunboats in the Porto Rican Port. By Cable to The Morning Post. Puerto Plata, May 20.—There is no Spanish war fleet about Porto Rico, Admiral Cervera is not hiding in San Juan. So this port of the West Indies may be temporarily eliminated from the game of hide and seek.

In the harbor of San Juan de Porto Rico are two gunboats, ancient as to armament and insignificant as to fighting ability. With them is the armed transport Alfonso XIII, which sailed across from Spain carrying troops and munitions. But when we passed San Juan there was no effort to molest us, so far as outward appearances go the bombardment of the forts did little injury.

The German steamer Valencia, which stopped at every important port about Porto Rico, confirms the news of our scouting. She saw no Spanish fleet. But in port here we can hear stories of the appearance of the Spaniards off Martinique, Tortuga, Curacao and other widely separated points. Tortuga, on the west coast of Hayti, reports two cruisers steaming eastward on the 15th. They are supposed to have been American scouts.

TREATMENT OF WOUNDED.

Provisions of the Geneva Treaty Bearing on Their Neutrality. By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—At the direction of Secretary Alger, the War Department has issued a general order, giving extracts from the treaty articles of the Geneva convention, bearing on the neutrality to be accorded equipments and individuals engaged in the treatment of the sick and wounded. In the same connection the department published the regulations, which have been adopted for the observance of the treaty and the requirements that on persons and equipment engaged in caring for the sick and wounded shall be displayed the red cross.

Article 6 of the convention says specifically that wounded or sick soldiers shall be entertained and taken care of, to whatever nation they may belong. Those who are recognized after their wounds are healed as incapable of serving shall be sent back to their country. The others may also be sent back on condition of not again bearing arms during the continuance of war. Commanders-in-chief are given the power to deliver immediately to the outposts of the enemy soldiers who have been wounded in an engagement, when circumstances permit this to be done.

LATER SAID TO HAVE SAILED.

Barcelona Embark for the Philippines. By Cable to The Morning Post. Barcelona, May 20.—Between eight and ten thousand troops are embarking here for the Philippines.

PHILIPPINES EXPEDITION.

Merritt in Washington Receives His Final Instructions—Troops Leave San Francisco Today.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—Apparently no preparations remain unfinished for the embarkation of the military expedition for the Philippines on the day designated by the War Department.

Today it was officially announced that from 2,000 to 3,000 regular and volunteer troops would leave San Francisco tomorrow, and decided progress was made in the preparations for embarking the whole force of about 15,000 between now and the middle of July.

Another transport ship, the Zealandia, was chartered today by the government.

General Merritt arrived here this morning and had a long consultation with President McKinley, Secretary Alger and Gen. Miles, and received final orders for conducting the expedition and acting as military governor of the Philippines.

Great latitude is given Gen. Merritt respecting his important command, his position being similar to that of Captain General of Cuba.

His wish for 5,000 regulars will probably be complied with.

REGULARS FOR GEN. MERRITT.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—Orders have been sent to the Eighteenth and Twenty-third regiments of infantry, stationed at New Orleans, to break camp and start to San Francisco at once.

These regiments are among the best in the service, and are in every way worthy of Gen. Merritt's important command.

The other regular troops already designated by the War Department will be eight companies of the Fourteenth Infantry, several troops of the Fifth Cavalry, and at least half of the Third Artillery.

The only volunteer company from the East to go is the Tenth Pennsylvania.

Several other regiments have asked to be allowed to join the forces under Merritt's command. The Ninth Massachusetts is eager to go, and the One Hundredth and Fifty-ninth Indiana has presented a petition, unanimously signed by the officers and men, for the same privilege, and two companies from Texas have asked that they be allowed to join the expedition.

THE QUEEN WIRES CERVERA

Her Congratulations On His Safe Arrival at Santiago. By Cable to The Morning Post. Madrid, May 20.—The Queen Regent today wired her congratulations to Admiral Cervera on his safe arrival at Santiago, in reply to the following telegram which the Madrid government received from Cervera:

"Entered the port of Santiago de Cuba without incident, accompanied by my squadron. Saw two American warships off Santiago de Cuba. They withdrew upon the arrival of the Spanish ships."

SPANISH SHIPS AT CADIZ.

By Cable to The Morning Post. Gibraltar, May 21.—Trustworthy information has been received here that the Spanish battleship Pelayo and other vessels of the reserve fleet are still at Cadiz, their departure having been postponed.

SAN JUAN BOMBARDMENT AGAIN.

Additional Details Continue to Be Drawn From the Scope of Sampson's Exploits—The Forts Not Silenced, But Town Would Have Surrendered Soon.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post. New York, May 20.—Two British steamships, which arrived here today, brought to shore the end of the story of the bombardment of San Juan by Sampson's squadron.

There is a general agreement that the forts were not silenced, and that the damage to the town was not great.

The stories of the loss of life are conflicting. It was at first said that sixty were killed, but finally the number dwindled down to six, all of whom, it was said, were men employed at the forts.

Nearly all the big guns were dismantled. Many of the intelligent residents say the authorities would have surrendered the town if the bombardment had continued two hours longer.

THE SOUTHERN METHODISTS.

Election of Various Officials at the General Conference in Baltimore Yesterday. By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Baltimore, May 20.—Today was the day of elections in the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, South.

Rev. H. M. Dunose, of Jackson, Miss., was elected General Secretary of the Epworth League, and editor of the Era. Rev. Dr. Tigert, of Nashville, was re-elected editor of the Methodist. Rev. James Atkins, of Asheville, was re-elected editor of Sunday school publications.

The Commissioners to the Ecumenical Council, to meet in London in 1901, are Bishops Chandler and Galloway, and Rev. Messrs. Whimsier, Lambuth, Atkins and Lee and Mr. R. W. Featross.

Gen. Lee's Staff.

Special Telegram to The Morning Post. Washington, May 20.—Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's staff is as follows: Lieut. Col. Joseph H. Dorst, Assistant Adjutant General U. S. Volunteers; Lieutenant Col. William R. Loomis, Chief Engineer U. S. Volunteers; Lieut. Col. Curtis Guild, Jr., Inspector General U. S. Volunteers; Lieut. Col. Oliver F. Wood, Chief Commissary of Subsistence U. S. Volunteers; First Lieut. Robert E. L. Michle, Adjutant Second Cavalry; Aides, Fitzhugh Lee, Jr., Alger Sartoris and Charles Carbonell. All are ordered to report to Lee at Tampa, Fla.

The Charleston Will Start Again.

By Telegraph to The Morning Post. San Francisco, Cal., May 20.—It is reported tonight that the cruiser Charleston sails tomorrow and the repairs to the Charleston were completed today.

MECKLENBURG'S 123d

Unveiling of the Independence Monument at Charlotte.

VANGUARD OF REVOLUTION

Prize Poem Won by Rev. Dr. W. W. Moore—Ex-Vice-President Stevenson is Introduced by Editor Caldwell and Delivers the Address of the Occasion—Procession a Mile Long—Durham's Contingent in Grey Uniform—Governor Atkinson and Other Distinguished Visitors Present—Most Successful Celebration of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.

Special Telegram to The Morning Post. Charlotte, N. C., May 20.—The 123rd anniversary of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence was fittingly celebrated here today, by the successful carrying out of the interesting program mapped out for the celebration, which included the unveiling of the beautiful monument, heretofore alluded to in The Post.

Ex-Vice President Adlai E. Stevenson delivered the address of the day in a most eloquent and acceptable manner.

A large number of visitors, including many Confederate veterans from various sections of the State, were present, and the latter participated in the ceremonies of the day.

Several distinguished visitors from other States were also present, but Governor Johnson, of Alabama, who was expected, was unavoidably prevented from coming.

The city has been in holiday attire for several days, and today was beautifully bedecked in honor of the event, and the Mecklenburg celebration of 1895 will be remembered as one of the most pleasant and successful of any such celebrations which history records.

Among the celebrated personages present today were the widows of Generals "Stonewall" Jackson, D. H. Hill, and Rufus Barringer.

ANOTHER ACCOUNT.

Special Telegram to The Morning Post. Charlotte, N. C., May 20.—The day of the unveiling of the monument to the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration was in every way favorable. The procession was a mile long, floats, carriages, cavalades of horsemen in continental uniform, but greatest of all the veterans. There were four brigades, in command of Generals J. G. Hall, J. H. Bay, Parker and London.

The Durham contingent, in gray uniforms, led by Col. J. S. Carr, made the finest appearance.

F. B. McDowell, President of the Monument Association, was master of ceremonies.

Rev. Dr. J. H. Howerton led in prayer. Editor J. P. Caldwell, of the Observer, introduced Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson, the orator of the day, who made an eloquent speech.

Governor Atkinson, of Georgia, followed in a short speech.

The Observer's prize for the best poem was won by Rev. W. W. Moore, D. D., of Hampden-Sidney, Va., entitled the "Vanguard of the Revolution," which was read by Colonel H. C. Jones.

The monument, which is built of Vermont granite, and is an obelisk forty feet high, was then unveiled by a number of young ladies, the descendants of the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.

There was great enthusiasm among home people and visitors alike.

CRUISER NEWARK READY.

She Will Be Placed in Commission Today—The McGee Also Ready. By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Norfolk, Va., May 20.—The cruiser Newark will be placed in commission tomorrow, unless something now unforeseen occurs.

Her repairs are now practically completed, and she will come out of the dock tomorrow about as fit for fighting as anything of her class afloat.

The torpedo-boat McKee is also ready to sail. All of her stores are aboard. It is stated that she will shortly proceed south, avoiding the danger attendant on rounding Cape Hatteras by passing through the Albemarle and Chesapeake canals.

HAD A SECRET CHAMBER

In Which Were Stowed Away Arms and Ammunition. By Telegraph to The Morning Post. Key West, Fla., May 20.—A secret chamber has been discovered on the prize steamship Argonauta, captured off Cienfuegos two weeks ago by the Gunboat Nashville, in which there were 50 cases of ammunition and 150 Mauser rifles.

Among the passengers on the Argonauta when captured were Col. Corcoran, of the Spanish army, and 28 other officers and soldiers, now prisoners of war at Fort McPherson.

Two more prizes, a bark and a steamship, have been captured by the Cuban blockading fleet, and are now on their way to this port in charge of prize crews. One of the prizes is the bark Carlos Gracia.

Spain Conciliating Philippine Insurgents.

By Cable to The Morning Post. Hong Kong, May 20.—It is reported here that the Spanish Governor of the Philippine islands is conciliating many of the insurgent chiefs with high appointments, while other chiefs are succeeding in federating the rival tribes.

Washington, May 20.—The Senate today confirmed the nomination of ex-Governor John Gary Evans, of South Carolina, to be Inspector General.