

PHILIPPINES CRITICAL POINT.

All Interest is Now Centered There.

On Result of Engagement With Dewey's Fleet

May Depend the Outcome of the Present War With Spain.

Some Anxiety in Naval Circles as to the Destination of the Spanish Fleet Just Sailed From Cape Verde Islands.

WASHINGTON, April 30.—All interest to-day was concentrated on the Philippines, though it seemed hopeless to expect any news directly from that point, which is for the present, at least, the critical point of naval operations.

When Secretary Long left the Navy Department he had received no word from Commodore Dewey, nor from any point in the East. He had been very busy during the day, and the same thing was true of Secretary Alger, both being obliged to give up the greater part of their time to Senators, Representatives and other persons of supposed influence seeking to secure the appointment of constituents to places in the army and navy.

Secretary Long received a dispatch from Admiral Sampson relative to the shelling of the Matanzas batteries, but had no information whatever as to the reported attacks upon Cardenas yesterday. The impression prevails at the department among those who are not taken into the secrets of the Naval War Board that the moves of Admiral Sampson are of a strategic character, and not accidental happenings, as might be supposed from their apparently spontaneous character.

Key West is evidently to be made a base of the first order of importance, so far as the fleet is concerned, otherwise Secretary Long would never have called upon an officer of such high rank as Commodore Reemy to command the station. The Commodore has been relieved at the Portsmouth Navy Yard by a retired officer of equal rank.

Two more retired officers of a high order of ability are to be called into active service Monday, in the persons of Naval Constructors R. W. Steele and W. L. Mintonyne.

The Board of Bureau Chiefs is now engaged in preparing the advertisement calling for the construction of torpedo boats and destroyers. By a special provision of the naval bill, the advertisements will run only three weeks, instead of three months, as is usual. The department will describe only the general characteristics of the torpedo boats, leaving to the builders the submission of plans for their construction.

Chief Constructor Hiehorn said to-day that when the department has placed the contracts for the vessels authorized by the pending naval appropriation bill the Government will have under construction at one time a greater number of vessels than it ever has had before since the war, and a greater tonnage in the aggregate than at any time during the civil conflict. There will be not less than thirty-six vessels altogether thus placed under construction, three battleships, sixteen torpedo boat destroyers, twelve torpedo boats, four coast defense monitors and one gunboat on the lakes.

The honor of being chief engineer of the numerous mosquito fleets, which are expected to be one of the mainstays in the defense of the Atlantic Coast cities, has fallen to a retired officer, Chief Engineer Henderson, who is now a prosperous business man in New York, but has consented to sacrifice his personal interests to fight in the navy.

More electricians are wanted in the navy, and the Secretary to-day directed a special recruiting station to be opened at the Washington navy yard at 1 o'clock Monday to recruit electricians.

The Chinese Minister, Wu Ting Fang, called at the State Department to-day and had a talk with officials concerning the war situation. He did not bring a notice of China's neutrality, nor has he received word thus far from his Government that China will declare her neutrality. The authorities here would not be displeased if China withheld her decree a month later, as such course might be of distinct advantage to the United States in case Commodore Dewey's fleet fails to effect a landing on the Philippines, and is obliged to

seek some open port. With an American fleet in Asiatic waters, this becomes hazardous, unless a belligerent port is captured, or a neutral port remains open. Up to to-day all countries occupying Eastern Asiatic territory had declared neutrality except China. The notice of Corea was given two days ago, thus closing the port of Chemulpo. Japan gave notice to-day, thus closing all Japanese ports, including Yokohama, which is the most advantageous harbor in Asiatic waters, and nearer the Philippines than any other port. The British and French decrees closed Hongkong and ports of British India and French Tonquin. When Wu Ting Fang was seen at the Chinese Legation to-night he said, that having received no notice of China's neutrality, he presumed none had been issued by the Imperial Government. At the same time he had noticed press dispatches that the American fleet left Mirs Bay, which is a Chinese possession, owing to a condition of neutrality.

The Minister believed this condition, if made, was given by the Viceroy, and applies only to the Province of Canton. As to whether the Emperor will decree neutrality he is not able to say. It is remembered, however, that no decree of neutrality was issued during the Franco-Prussian war, and that China has not been in the habit of issuing neutrality decrees on the outbreak of wars in other parts of the world. Now, however, that China is keeping in touch with the methods of international procedure, this former inaction may give way to the adoption of an attitude of neutrality. This would have been done during the Franco-Prussian war had not President Grant used his good offices to bring about an arrangement by which French and German ships at Asiatic ports refrained from hostilities while there.

While China entertains the most friendly feeling towards the United States, Mr. Wu feels that this would not justify the withholding of neutrality if it in any way redounded to the advantage of the United States against Spain, as that would array Spain against China.

China has a large number of treaty ports with fine harbors scattered along her coast. They are well equipped with coal and other supplies, and any one of them would be most advantageous as a harbor for the American fleet in case one was required in the Far East. It is said, however, that even without a neutrality decree by China these harbors could not be used as a naval base of operations. At most they could be used only for temporary refuge and for such coal and supplies as would take the American fleet to the next port.

The authorities feel that the United States would have profited much by securing a coaling station from China during the recent controversy which led to Germany securing Kiau Chau Bay as a coaling station, Russia securing Port Arthur and England securing Wei-Hai-Wei. There is good reason to believe that the friendly spirit of China toward the United States would have made it possible for the United States to have secured the harbor of Mirs Bay or some other advantageous point on the Chinese coast. At the present time, however, it is said that China could not voluntarily grant such a concession without assuming a distinctly hostile attitude toward Spain. It is possible that China's neutrality decree may be issued any day, and yet the delay is in no way exciting the authorities here, owing to the feeling that it leaves China's ports open to Commodore Dewey's fleet.

The Portuguese Minister called at the State Department to-day and gave official notice of Portugal's neutrality. Afterward the Minister expressed regret at the published report attributing delay to Portugal's disposition to favor Spain as against the United States. The Minister says that such reports are unwarranted, and the official dispatch, which he received from Lisbon last night, shows that the authorities at Lisbon acted with promptness. The dispatch stated that the notice of a declaration of war was received at Lisbon on the 26th, whereupon a meeting of the Council of State was called immediately for the following day. This is not the regular Cabinet, but is a political organization which must be convoked of distinguished persons seated. The Council met on the 27th and agreed upon the decree. It was presented to the King on the 28th, and received his signature. The Minister says this action shows unusual dispatch. The dispatch he received from Lisbon stated that the warships of the belligerent powers would not be allowed to make more than a brief stay in the ports of Portugal. As to the return of several of the Spanish torpedo-boats to the Cape Verde Islands because of injury from the collision, the Minister says such injuries, if bona fide, permit warships to remain long enough to permit repairs. This cannot be made an excuse for an extended stay, however.

The War Department has assigned the officers who are to perform the duties of Quartermaster and Commissary of the volunteer troops at the various State rendezvous prior to their mobilization at the central points. In a number of States the officers are the same as those detailed for mustering duty. In the following States independent officers for the Quartermaster and Commissary duties are appointed: Arizona—Second Lieutenant Herschell Tapes, Fifteenth Infantry. California—First Lieutenant S. A. Cloman, Fifteenth Infantry. Kansas—First Lieutenant Harry A. Smith, Fifteenth Infantry, relieved as mustering officer and appointed Quartermaster and Commissary; Second Lieutenant W. F. Clark, appointed mustering officer.

Missouri—First Lieutenant George D. Moore, Twenty-third Infantry. Nebraska—First Lieutenant George McKay Williamson, Eighth Cavalry. New Mexico—Captain Charles L. Cooper, Tenth Cavalry, as mustering officer, Quartermaster and Commissary. Texas—Second Lieutenant Alfred Drew, Twelfth Infantry. Washington—First Lieutenant John H. Whomy, Twenty-fourth Infantry, relieved as mustering officer and appointed Quartermaster and Commissary; Captain Frank Taylor, Fourteenth Infantry, appointed mustering officer.

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SPANISH NAVAL FLEET. Anxiety as to Destination of Warships From Cape Verde.

WASHINGTON, April 30.—A cablegram was received here this morning stating that the Spanish torpedo boats Azore, Rayo and Ariete had sailed this morning from St. Vincent, Cape Verde Islands, for the Canaries. The Azore and the Rayo, the cable said, were towed by the transports San Francisco and Ciudad Cadiz. The fact that the two torpedo boats were in tow of transports naval officers regarded as a sign that in the collision which these vessels are reported to have had yesterday the machinery of the boats was disabled beyond the possibility of repair at St. Vincent. It is by no means a safe undertaking to tow a torpedo boat that long distance between Cape Verde and the Canaries, and it would not surprise naval officers if one or more of the little boats were missing when the remainder of the small fleet arrived at the Canaries.

Anxiety is felt as to the destination of the more formidable part of the Spanish fleet that has sailed westward from Cape Verde. If they are headed for Cuba the Navy Department calculates that they are likely to reach Porto Rico about May 7th. It is not to be expected, however, that the arrival at Spanish ports would be made public by the Spanish authorities controlling the cable, and supposing that they are not detected by any of the United States naval vessels which will possibly be thrown out as scouts, the first news of the arrival of the fleet on this side of the Atlantic would be some neutral vessel trading between Porto Rico and an outside port.

The strategy involved in the Spanish movements is rather puzzling to the naval officers. Assuming that the four cruisers have actually started to Cuba, it would seem that if they arrive at Porto Rico they would be in imminent danger of capture or destruction at the hands of Admiral Sampson's squadron, which is unquestionably superior in offensive. In other words, the cruisers would be situated as were the German and Vienna before the outbreak of hostilities, when they prudently fled from the port of Havana.

It was reported in department circles to-day that the flying squadron was about to sail from Fortress Monroe. The officials refused to affirm or deny the correctness of the statement, but it is assumed that if the report is true the vessels are to be used as scouts to detect the approach of the Spanish vessels. It is not expected that in case the armored ships were sighted by Commodore Sampson and destroyed, they would be replaced, unless the circumstances were peculiarly favorable, for he has but two armored ships in his squadron to pit against the four heavily armored Spanish vessels. He would, however, be able to hang on the flank of the Spanish squadron and annoy them greatly while rushing ahead one of his flyers, the Columbia or Minneapolis, to warn Admiral Sampson and secure reinforcements in the shape of a battleship that would insure victory in action.

No word has yet come from the Philippines, and, as already explained, even if there has been an action between Commodore Dewey and the Spanish naval force there, the Navy Department is scarcely in a way to hear of it for several days. Even if the Commodore should manage to land at Manila, he probably will be unable to operate the cable, owing to a lack of skilled operators, and perhaps the apparatus itself may be disabled before it falls into his hands. There is good reason to believe that the Commodore will not attempt to attack Manila in the beginning. The report that he took aboard before leaving Hongkong one of the most popular leaders of the Philippine insurgents is regarded as evidence that the Commodore relies largely upon insurgent support to maintain his footing in the islands. If this be so, he would very likely avoid Manila, the Capital, and seize first another port where the insurgents are in greater strength, and where there are no fortifications to overcome.

While there is no doubt that one of the objects of Commodore Dewey is to crush the Spanish squadron in the East Indies as the most effective method of protecting the important trade interests in that quarter, it is beyond doubt part of his purpose to seize and hold a port which would be a coaling station. The coaling station is not only desirable, but is absolutely necessary from a naval point of view, unless the United States is prepared to surrender all commerce in American bottoms to the whims of a fully realizing nation, the naval officials will proceed with their campaign.

Whether the station will be retained after the war by the United States is not now determined. It is positively asserted that, up to this moment, these European monarchs have taken no official form, and as yet no protests have been lodged with the Department of State. If any such should be made based on diplomatic reasons it would not be hard for our Government, pointing to the exact location of the enemy, more amused than concerned by the report from Madrid, originating with Captain-General Blanco that the Austrian and French Consuls at Matanzas have lodged a protest against the bombardment of that place by Admiral Sampson. They say in the first place there has been no bombardment at that place, and owing to the distance that Matanzas lies away from the fort at

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CABANAS FIRED UPON.

The Lesson Taught at Matanzas Repeated.

Captain Sampson Again Silences the Spanish Guns.

Nothing Definite Known as to Dewey's Fleet in the Philippines.

Though It is Thought at Singapore That a Naval Battle May Have Already Taken Place Off the Island.

ATLANTA (Ga.), April 30.—A special to the "Journal" from Key West says: Port Cabanas, a small fortified town thirty-five miles west of Havana, on the northern coast of Cuba, was fired upon Friday evening and somewhat demolished. The fire began at 6:30 and lasted fifteen minutes. Then shots were fired from the New York's batteries. The New York and Helena tried to draw the fire from the batteries of Havana and Mariel, but failed.

About noon the New York steamed up the west coast. Following the flagship for quite a distance came the Iowa, Indiana, Helena, and torpedo boats Porter and Ericsson, but after Havana was passed, where the Helena went in so close that a crash gun from Morro was momentarily exploded, the ships, with the exception of the torpedo boats, soon returned to their station.

Under a full head of steam the flagship bowled along until Mariel was reached. It was easy, from aboard the dispatch boat, without glasses to see the commotion raised by the presence of the warships in the pretty little village. The people rushed about wildly, and small boats quickly put in shore. But there was no apparent life in either of the forts on the two hills that cover the approaches to the harbor. The Porter steamed within half a mile of them, and the New York swung leisurely at anchor at a mile range.

After Admiral Sampson had surveyed Mariel to his apparent satisfaction, he sent the flagship clipping merrily further up the coast. Again the flagship rode unconsciously half a mile from the forts, and the Porter and Ericsson pushed their way ahead. Suddenly there was a roar of a heavy gun, a puff of smoke from the shore, and the little torpedo boat came scurrying back under the lee of the flagship.

The officers and men disappeared from the decks of the New York like magic, and in less time than it takes to tell it, one six-inch gun from her bow belched forth. The evening was fading fast. Quick, good work was necessary. Another shot from the flagship, one more from the shore, and the fort's guns were silenced. Three six-inch shells had sufficed. Five more shots put a quietus on the fortifications.

The first shot was fired at 6:20. At 6:35 the New York let go two six-inch shells at the fortifications. There was no answer from the shore. Ten minutes later the flagship let go two of her eight-inch turret guns, and the shrieking shells left a trail of fire easily seen in the dark shadows of the evening. At this time the shore was hardly visible, and the New York put back to her station.

THE CABANAS AFFAIR. IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Full Details as Given by a Witness on Board the Flagship.

ON BOARD THE FLAGSHIP NEW YORK, April 29, 11 a. m. (via Key West, April 30.—Copyrighted, 1898, by the Associated Press).—The full details of the Cabanas affair are that the New York was lying quietly outside the picturesque harbor of Cabanas about two miles off shore, an inspection trip of the coast having just been completed. The flagship was accompanied by the torpedo boats Porter and Ericsson. A return to the station off Morro Castle, Havana, was contemplated, and the band was playing its usual dinner music, when, from a hill to the eastward of Cabanas harbor, came the sound of volley firing. It was plainly a small arms attack, though no smoke was seen. The enemy was thought to be hidden close to the beach, and in front of a ruined white building, which sloped as if it once had been the hacienda of a tobacco plantation. Now and again individual firing was heard, and well-regulated volleys continued at intervals. It was conjectured that one troop of cavalry, dismounted, was doing the firing.

The officers of the flagship stood on her deck trying to ascertain definitely the exact location of the enemy, more amused than annoyed at this novel method of attacking an armored cruiser. However, Rear-Admiral Sampson and Captain Chadwick decided that the lesson taught at Matanzas must be taught again at Cabanas. "Man the port battery," was the order.

At a few minutes past 6 o'clock the 4-inch guns in the after port battery sent a shot flying over the water into Cuba's soil, raising a little cloud of dust about 100 yards in front of the hacienda, and just above where a Spanish cavalry stood. Before the hills, growing dim in the evening mist, had ceased echoing and reverberating the first report, the other 4-inch gun in the after battery had landed its projectile. A few more shots from this battery were fired, and the ground was evidently damp, as no dust arose, and it was hard to tell where the shell fell. They were fired at 3,400 yards range. The Spaniards were not heard from after the first shot.

The New York then turned her bow eastward. The target practice was apparently over for the evening. Her starboard batteries now bore on the coast.

A moment or so later Captain Chadwick saw the Spanish cavalry, then mounted, ascend a hillside toward the hacienda, and he personally trained a 4-inch gun and planted two shots, the second one plumping right among the Spaniards, who scattered in all directions.

The New York then steamed about toward Morro Castle, and the band of the flagship continued its musical programme.

Most of the crew were on deck watching this little lesson given to the Spaniards, but there was no excitement.

The trip, which ended in the target practice at Cabanas, commenced about noon, when the flagship, with the Ericsson and Porter, started westward. The Admiral was anxious to personally investigate the blockaded harbors. When Mariel, twenty-five miles from Havana, was reached the flagship came to a standstill, and the gunboat Castine, which was guarding that port, was hailed. Captain Berry thereupon went on board the flagship and had a consultation with the Admiral. A careful inspection of Mariel harbor revealed the presence of two small Spanish gunboats and four schooners, well in behind an old fashioned martello tower on one side, and a dimly fort on the other.

The combined battery of the two "fortifications" is one muzzle loading cannon. The last block house of the westward trocha loomed up on a sharp bluff shadowing the little town.

It is believed that in spite of its peaceful appearance, mines have been laid beneath the smooth waters of Cabanas harbor.

The blockade continues as before. The flagship lies to the westward of Havana. The torpedo boat Porter, while close in to shore last night, reports having been fired on by the Cofijarral battery, which is to the eastward of Morro Castle. The Porter escaped unscathed.

The coast of Cuba is being carefully patrolled by the Spanish cavalry.

Captain Taylor of the Indiana came on board the flagship to-day and had a long consultation with Rear Admiral Sampson.

News of the movements of the United States army is eagerly awaited by the fleet, and there is much speculation as to when the troops will be ready.

The weather, which is cool and calm, could not be more suitable for military operations.

While the Dauntless, the dispatch boat of the Associated Press, was making her way from Key West early this morning, she was sighted by the flagship. The lookouts on the New York were unable to make out her identity, owing to the mist and the distance which separated her from the flagship, and a 4-inch shell was fired in her direction. It was aimed at the Dauntless, but was only sent near enough to make her leave to. The Dauntless, thinking she was being fired at by the Spanish boat, promptly put about and steamed away. The ship was recognized, and a few minutes later the recognition became mutual, and the Dauntless ran alongside the New York. Lated she proceeded to Matanzas.

Hearing that mines and earthworks were being placed and built at Mariel, in the province of Pinar del Rio, not far from Havana, the flagship then moved in that direction, accompanied by three torpedo-boats, but there were no signs of movements at Mariel, and the flagship proceeded to a point twenty-five miles west of Havana, and about ten miles beyond Mariel. There suspicious movements were observed ashore, probably by workmen on the fortifications. Consequently the flagship fired three shots in that direction from one of her big guns. The firing, however, brought no response, and the flagship returned to her station.

A strict watch against a possible torpedo attack is being kept on board the flagship. All the available officers take control of the cables at the Philippine Consulate, paymaster's clerk and Assistant Surgeon.

The small craft captured by the Wilmington yesterday was only taken to Key West because her crew were members of the second Spanish naval reserve. It is thought that they might be members of the crew of one of the torpedo gunboats, for which vessels a very sharp lookout is being kept.

A Naval Battle Already Thought to Have Taken Place.

NEW YORK, April 30.—A dispatch to the "World" from Singapore says: The naval battle between the United States and Spanish fleets may have been fought off the Philippine Islands, it is thought here.

The deepest interest in the result of it is felt in this British colony.

Admiral Montojo, the Spanish commander, has only three effective fighting ships among the large number under his command. These are the single-sew second-class cruiser Reina Christina, of 3,000 tons, and the single-sew third-class unprotected cruisers Don Antonio de Ulloa and Don Juan de Austria, of 1,150 tons each. The rest of the fleet will be little fighting value while in combat with the modern vessels of the United States squadron.

The truth regarding the battle is not likely to be known until Commodore Dewey, the American commander, gets control of the cables at the Philippine Islands. All telegraph messages from there now are vigilantly watched and rigorously censored by the Spanish officials.

GERMANY STRICTLY NEUTRAL.

Emperor Joseph Pleads With the Kaiser To Assume an Unfriendly Attitude Toward America, But the Latter Insists on Retaining the Good Will of This Country.

The Queen Regent of Spain Appeals to the Czar of Russia to Assist Her in Her Conflict With the United States.

DEWEY'S FLEET. Would Have a Difficult Task in Capturing Manila.

HONGKONG, April 30.—(2:30 p. m.)—The British steamer Meanton, which has just arrived here from Manila, reports having seen the Spanish fleet cruising outside of Manila. She also met the British steamship Emerald, chartered by the banking companies of this place, which is on her way to Manila to take on board the specie there. She did not see any vessels of the United States fleet. The latter is supposed to be close at hand, trying to communicate with the insurgents preparatory to continuing on to Manila.

If the reports which are current here are correct, the United States fleet has a difficult task to accomplish. It is said that the entrance of Manila Bay is commanded by from fifty to sixty heavy guns, well placed, and it is added that it will be impossible for the American warships to enter the bay without battleships, or without the co-operation of a strong land force. Therefore, it is believed, Commodore Dewey will not attempt to force an entrance into the harbor, but will blockade it until the insurgents move on Manila.

Agents of the insurgents here are trying to charter a steamer, in expectation of being able to transport a force of insurgents to the vicinity of Manila, and capture the strong fortress of Cavite, inside Manila Bay.

The cable to Manila is still intact, but the transmission of news regarding military movements in the Philippines is hindered.

The British warships and torpedo boats at Hongkong have been forbidden to commence fresh repairs, which would seem to indicate the possibility of a movement in the near future upon the part of the British fleet.

GERMAN CRUISER IRENE.

Sails For Manila to Protect German Interests There.

NAGASKI, April 30.—The second-class German cruiser Irene, carrying a crew of over 350 men, has started for Manila, to protect German interests. She is a steel vessel of 4,400 tons displacement and 8,000 indicated horsepower. She was built in 1887 and capable of steaming about nineteen knots. Her heaviest guns are four five-inch rifles and eight four-inch quick-firing guns.

LOYAL JEWS.

Demonstrate Their Patriotism For the Cause of the United States.

CHICAGO, April 30.—Three thousand Jewish residents of Chicago to-day took part in probably the most unique demonstration of patriotism in the United States since the war with Spain began. In the language of the most ancient of nations, and according to the forms of the religion of Moses, prayers were offered in the Jewish Tabernacle of Anshe Knesseth Israel for the protection and guidance of President McKinley, for the success of our army in the war with Spain, and the continued welfare and prosperity of the United States Government.

Rev. Israel Kupper, the Rabbi of the congregation, conducted the services, which took the place of the principal Sabbath celebration. A large number of those in attendance are still unacquainted with the English language, being chiefly Russian refugees. The men had their shoulders draped with the regulation scarf and gown prescribed by the religious rites.

William Zolotoff delivered the principal address. He alluded to the fact that in a land of liberty the Jews assembled as respected citizens of a great nation to pray for the success of the army of a nation that had persecuted and oppressed their ancestors.

"The persecution of the Jew," he said, "was the beginning of the decline of Spain. To-day Spain is tottering to extinction, while the people she sought to destroy are hopeful and strong. The Jew who enjoys the freedom of this country is willing to give his life to the end that freedom to the possessions of Spain in this hemisphere be attained, and he will rejoice in the downfall of the nation that once drove his people from her shores."

Death of a Retired Army Officer.

ST. PAUL, April 30.—Brevet Brigadier-General Edwin C. Mason, U. S. A., retired, died at his home in this city at 2:15 o'clock this afternoon. His affection was acute heart disease, with numerous complications. The General was 67 years of age, and his life had been chiefly spent in arduous duties in the military service. He was stricken while at church some weeks ago.

Fred Grant Commissioned a Colonel.

ALBANY (N. Y.), April 30.—Governor Black has commissioned Frederick Dent Grant as Colonel of the Fourteenth Regiment.

Accquitted of Murder.

CAMDEN (N. J.), April 30.—The jury in the case of Eli Shaw, charged with the murder of his grandmother last October, this morning returned a verdict of not guilty.

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Emperor Joseph Pleads With the Kaiser To Assume an Unfriendly Attitude Toward America, But the Latter Insists on Retaining the Good Will of This Country.

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