

THE GRIZZLED VETERAN'S TALE.

General Joe Wheeler Placed on the Stand.

War Investigation Committee Begins With Witnesses.

Says He Considers the Supplies Were Sufficient, Except in a Few Instances, Which Were Only Temporary—Gives Shafter Great Credit for His Zeal—No Serious Complaints of the Medical Department and Wounded Properly Cared For—Nothing That a Soldier Should Complain Of.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4.—The War Investigating Commission began the taking of testimony to-day and Major General Joseph Wheeler was on the stand the greater part of the day. There was full attendance of the commission and the doors of the rooms in which the inquiry was conducted, were for the first time open to the representatives of the press.

General Wheeler's testimony covered the case of the soldiers at the two important points of Santiago and Wikoff. He said, with reference to the conduct of affairs at Santiago, that there had necessarily been suffering in the trenches, but that General Shafter had exercised the utmost efforts to protect his men. There was no complaint of the shortage of land transportation facilities for a time and there had been no tents for a week. The roads were very fair.

The general contended that Wikoff was a model camp, the climate salubrious and the accommodations quite exceptional in character. He considered the hospital capacity equal to the demands upon it, and that no military camp in history was ever so well supplied in all respects as this. Red tape methods were entirely abolished and the demands of the men were met as soon as they were properly voiced.

Chairman Dodge stated to him the scope of the commission's duties and asked General Wheeler whether he had any objections to being sworn. He replied that he had none and Major Miller Recorder for the commission, administered the oath.

Ex-Governor Beaver conducted the examination, developing the essential facts as to General Wheeler's rank and his command. General Wheeler stated that he left Tampa for Cuba on the 14th of June, but that he had no knowledge of the plan of campaign before going aboard the transport. He then told of the voyage.

On June 21st General Shafter ordered him to disembark the next day, which he did with a portion of his command. He rode into the country four miles that day and the next day moved his troops to Jaguaraeta. He then began his reconnoitering, arranging with General Castillo of the Cuban army, to send Cuban troops with his men for the reconnoiter, but unfortunately, the Cubans did not keep the engagement. He told of the first battle at La Quasina, stopping to compliment specially the regular troops and also to speak of their excellent firing.

They soon learned to mistrust the reports and estimates of the Spaniards. General Wheeler had not been able on his own account to secure any accurate estimate of the Spanish loss during the American approach upon Santiago.

Speaking of the proceedings after the first battles, he explained that he had been reported sick and there were some movements just prior to the battle at El Caney which he was not familiar.

"I was not sick," he said. "But I had been on the sick list. Still I had not gone on the sick list. I had a fever, but I appreciated the situation, took medicine and came out all right."

He was in the battle of El Caney and expressed the opinion that more men had been killed in the formation of the line than afterwards. He told of the necessity for wading the San Juan River, saying that the water was about waist deep.

"I ought to say," said the general, in the course of his testimony, "that it was magnificent to see officers of high rank go ashore with their packs on their backs, accepting all the fortunes of war with their men. They slept on the ground with the soldiers. None of us were mounted and we were without tents for seven days."

Speaking of the character of the roads from the coast to the points occupied by the Americans he said that with such attention as they were able to give to them, they were very good. The rains had not been severe up to that time. The roads were narrow, but equal to the demands. The supplies he considered sufficient, except in a few instances, and in those instances the deficiency was only temporary.

On occasions there was shortage of surgeons, but a soldier should complain sick or wounded. According to General Wheeler's belief, the wounded in battle were promptly cared for by the surgeons. After the fight of July 1st all the wounded were carried from the field that night. The witness had heard that there was no complaint of the shortage of medicine among the infantry than in the cavalry service.

Going back to Tampa he said that at the season he was there, the first half of June, the site was without objection, but he had felt that it would be wet later in the season. It was his impression Tampa had been selected as a camp site after the beginning of the war and was incidental to the intended movement on Havana. There was, he said, at the times, shortage of supplies at the camp "but nothing," he added, "that a soldier should complain of." They had comfortable tents and the commissary supplies were sufficient. The water supply also was good. He said the men in his command were well taken care of. Moreover, very few men were at that time sick. He had heard that the men were well. General Wheeler said he had no control over any of the supplies which were taken to Santiago on the transports when he left Tampa. This was attended to by the different staff officers. He only knew of the conversation with the latter that there was an abundance of supplies of all character.

Returning to the Santiago campaign, he said that only two regiments had reported a shortage of rations and he immediately telephoned to the rear and the shortage, which was due to an accident, had been adjusted. There was suffering when the men were compelled to lie on the breastworks. The meat was poor and they had no bread, but hard tack. They were forced to live in the sun and water alternately and necessarily there was much suffering.

While they had the full quota of doctors and nurses, he thought that if more had been furnished the men would have been better cared for. As for rations the day's supply was generally sufficient. Whenever the troops were into action they would throw their food away as well as their packs and they often did not recover them.

General Wheeler took up the common report that the Cubans stole goods thus discarded. It was not fair, he said, to accuse the natives, for there was such a loss of foodstuffs and jettison that hungry and poorly clothed as the Cubans were, they were not to be blamed for helping themselves. He said he had seen among the 22,000 who came out of Santiago many ladies of the society who were evidently hungry. In reply to questions he stated he never had heard of any shortage of commissary or ordnance supplies at Santiago, but he had been told that the medical supplies were short, yet he had no personal knowledge of that point. He had seen some wounded men crawling to the rear in the engagements, but as a rule as soon as a man fell in battle he was carried to the hospitals by the Medical Corps. He said that as a rule the quality of hard tack was good. Where there was deterioration it was due to local rains and not to the fact of original inferiority.

The spirit of the army was such, he said, that there was no disposition to complain. "They were all proud to be there and willing to undergo hardships."

Replying to a question from Colonel Denby, General Wheeler said the regulars had shown a greater ability to take care of themselves than the volunteers. The volunteers were more careless, but the volunteer cavalry men were not so regarded as the other volunteers, because they were generally Western men who had been used to camping. He thought this fact had had a strong influence in causing the health of the regulars to be better than that of the volunteers. Captain Howell asked to what he attributed the development of disease after the capitulation of Santiago. General Wheeler replied that it was due to the climate and to the exposure made necessary. All the men seemed to be more or less affected by the conditions. He had, he said, known of no instance of a sick or wounded man dying from want of care from the physicians. So far as he knew there was general commendation of the medical corps, except that on one or two occasions there had been some complaining in regard to the general conditions. He thought there was a deficiency in the number of ambulances, but this deficiency was due to the exigencies of the campaign. General Wheeler also said in reply to Captain Howell that he knew of no case in which a bed of a vehicle was shipped on one vessel and the wheels on another. His memory was not distinct as to complaints from physicians.

General Wheeler said that he had been in his command as to the scarcity of medical supplies, but he thought there were some cases he had them supplied as promptly as possible.

There had been difficulty in getting the transports to lie near in shore as was desirable, rendering it difficult to get at supplies promptly.

In this connection General Wheeler revealed the fact that he had felt somewhat hurt that he had been the fourth command ordered to be landed, when he thought his rank entitled him to the first landing. General Shafter had given the order which thus affected him.

Speaking of the sleeping apartments of the transport, General Wheeler said they were quite warm and there was some discomfort. He had often gone down among the men at night and found that there was comparatively little complaint, except for the heat. Coming back from Santiago to Montauk, he had sailed on the Miami, having chosen it because it was said to be the worst. He found it very comfortable and when they landed, there were only thirty-four sick and only three or four of these were too ill to stand up for inspection. There was plenty of water on the vessel and a sufficiency of ice for the sick, though not for others.

After the destruction of Cervera's fleet, the army was more abundantly supplied than any army in the field had ever been.

For the future he said that the men should be kept off the ground and he well sheltered from the rain by good tents. There should also be much care in regard to transportation facilities and as to medical and commissary supplies, he said in reply to a question, that the tents had been left on board the transports so no time should be consumed in removing them.

"We were there for duty," he said, "and we felt that prompt disembarkment was our duty."

AMERICAN PEACE COMMISSIONERS.

They Confer With Major General Merritt.

He Gives Them the Views of Himself and Admiral Dewey.

Will Give His Personal Views of the Philippines To-Day—President Faure Received the Spanish Commissioners Yesterday and Afterward the Americans, and Received McKinley's Message.

PARIS, Oct. 4.—The morning was cold and disagreeable, favoring in-door work, of which each Peace Commissioner has plenty on hand. The American Commissioners determined to devote to-day's session to a conference with Major General Merritt, the session beginning at 10 o'clock and lasting until 1 o'clock in the afternoon. General Merritt detailed to the Commissioners his personal views and those of Rear Admiral Dewey regarding the physical, geographical, moral and political conditions prevailing in the Philippines.

General Merritt's exposition of his personal views and judgment of the Philippines was not finished to-day and he will meet the commission again tomorrow, when he will continue to discharge his errand here.

President Montero Rios of the Spanish Commission and his colleagues were busy to-day with telegraphic and other correspondence. Senator Rios denied himself to all callers.

A newspaper, "Le Petit Bleu" this morning declared it has authority for the statement that it has been decided that "an adjustment" relative to Cuba will be first discussed at the next meeting, owing to incidents which have recently taken place in the Philippines.

The same newspaper remarks that Senator Rios yesterday bought three copies of a work on international law by one of our most eminent jurists, "Le Petit Bleu" does not accept the view that the work of the commission will be concluded before December, but expresses the belief that it will require a longer time.

The United States Ambassador, General Horace Porter, will give a dinner in honor of the Americans to-morrow afternoon and next week General Porter will give a dinner in honor of both commissions at the United States Embassy.

The Spanish Commissioners were received this afternoon by President Faure at the Elysee Palace. The members of the Spanish Commission were introduced by Ambassador Leon y Castillo, and Senator Rios expressed the gratification of the commission at meeting the President of France.

At 4:45 p. m., immediately following the reception of the Spaniards, the members of the American Commission were received by President Faure at the Elysee Palace. General Porter met the Commissioners on the steps of the Court of Honor and they proceeded to the grand salon.

President Faure, surrounded by a few members of his official household, received General Porter, who presented Judge Day and the other members of the commission in turn, after which Judge Day presented to President Faure a cable message from President McKinley. It was dated September 30th, and was addressed to "His Excellency, M. Faure, President of the Republic" and was signed "William McKinley, President of the United States." It read as follows:

"On this occasion, when the commissions of the United States and Spain are about to assemble at the capital of France to negotiate peace, and when the representatives of this Government express their cordial sympathy and the good will of the republic, I tender to you my most friendly personal greeting and the assurances of my grateful appreciation of your kind courtesies to the American Commissioners."

President Faure, in replying, courteously expressed his appreciation of the cordial sentiments uttered and heartily reciprocated them.

President Faure said that everything possible would be done for the comfort of the Commissioners and concluded with saying: "As the name of Lafayette is held dear in the United States, so is the name of Washington revered in France."

The President then added that he would immediately transmit directly to President McKinley his reply to the latter's cordial message.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS.

They Open Their State Convention at Worcester.

Proceedings Were of a Most Harmonious Nature.

WIDDER'S TRIAL.

NEW YORK, Oct. 4.—The committee appointed by the State Republican Convention at Saratoga went to the home of Colonel Roosevelt, the nominee for Governor, at Oyster Bay Island to-day. Senator Platt was unable to attend through illness. Dr. Chauncey M. Depew made the notification address to Colonel Roosevelt, complimenting him on the unanimity of his choice by the convention. Colonel Roosevelt replied as follows:

"I herewith accept the nomination tendered by the Republican party in convention assembled. I deeply feel the responsibilities which attach to the chief executive of a commonwealth larger and more populous than many an old world kingdom. In accepting this nomination at the hands of the authorized committee of the Republican State Convention, I take this opportunity of extending through you to the Republican party of the Empire State my heartfelt thanks for the distinguished honor conferred upon me. If elected, I shall strive to administer the duties of this high office in the interests of the people of the State as a whole, knowing that I owe my position to the people, and to them I shall hold myself accountable. I take it that the promises made in the platform adopted at Saratoga are as binding as any others, and to the fulfillment of the pledges made therein I promise my best efforts. The party's past has been glorious, and while this would not atone for failure to perform present duty, it does give adequate reason for believing we shall meet each duty right that the party in the future may give as great a cause for thankfulness and pride as do the achievements of the past."

"National issues are paramount this year. It is not more possible to conduct a State election now without regard to national issues than it was possible to do so to conduct one in 1861 or 1863. As it then was, so it now is the interests of the nation as a whole which are of vital and absorbing interest to every citizen. Then, as now, the Republican party was forced to find new issues, to confront new problems. Then, as now, it was forced to make precedents. In 1861 we had a Republican President, for its great destiny; in 1868 we have to take a long stride towards the accomplishment of that destiny. The Republican party, therefore, in its State platform, does well to reiterate the promises under which it was possible to elect a Republican President, pledges which made it possible to restore prosperity to our country, and to put the nation where it is possible to work out the glorious future which is now before a reunited nation. The issues for honest money, for protection to American industry, for the upbuilding of a merchant marine, adequate to carry the commerce of the world, and to form a naval militia in times of war, are as vital this year as they were in the great contest which was so successfully fought in 1868."

"We must not forget to strengthen our navy and build up our army, so that they may be equal to meet every demand made upon them as we work out our destiny. Hawaii and Porto Rico are ours, and in the East and West Indies the interests of the nation shall be safeguarded."

"Nor is it alone on national issues that the Republican party has its duties to perform. The record made by the Republican Administration of the State of New York is a guarantee that upon all questions affecting the property rights and interests and liberty of all citizens, the Republican party can be safely trusted. As we pledge ourselves to uphold the national honor abroad, we pledge ourselves to enforce strict honesty at home."

"The National Guard must be raised to, and kept at, the highest standard of efficiency. It has amply proved its courage and patriotism, and we are bound to see that soldiers so brave and so willing are properly armed and equipped on the best possible system."

"I heartily congratulate the Republican party on its success at Saratoga, and I shall earnestly strive to discharge the duties of the chief executive that at the time of the end of my term the people shall find that their interests have been safe in my hands."

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NOTIFIED OF HIS NOMINATION.

Committee Waits Upon Colonel Roosevelt.

He Signifies His Acceptance of the Nomination.

Extends His Thanks for the Distinguished Honor and Will Strive, if Elected, to Administer the Duties of His Office for the Interest of the People as a Whole and to Carry Out the Platform Pledges.

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MURDER AND SUICIDE.

Richard Dickson Kills the Woman Who Refused His Attention.

He Gives Them the Views of Himself and Admiral Dewey.

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The United States Ambassador, General Horace Porter, will give a dinner in honor of the Americans to-morrow afternoon and next week General Porter will give a dinner in honor of both commissions at the United States Embassy.

The Spanish Commissioners were received this afternoon by President Faure at the Elysee Palace. The members of the Spanish Commission were introduced by Ambassador Leon y Castillo, and Senator Rios expressed the gratification of the commission at meeting the President of France.

At 4:45 p. m., immediately following the reception of the Spaniards, the members of the American Commission were received by President Faure at the Elysee Palace. General Porter met the Commissioners on the steps of the Court of Honor and they proceeded to the grand salon.

President Faure, surrounded by a few members of his official household, received General Porter, who presented Judge Day and the other members of the commission in turn, after which Judge Day presented to President Faure a cable message from President McKinley. It was dated September 30th, and was addressed to "His Excellency, M. Faure, President of the Republic