

BLOWING UP OF THE WRECK.

The Last Appearance of the Ill Fated Machichaco.

HUNDREDS OF POUNDS OF DYNAMITE.

The City of Sautander Absolutely Vacated While the Operation is Carried On—Homeless for Two Days—No Damage to the City or to its Inhabitants.

I write from the midst of the strange scene. One may doubt whether there was ever before a case quite like this one. The cabinet of Government Ministers at Madrid, who for several days seem to have done little else than hold meetings on this matter, at last decided that the submerged wreck of the Machichaco should be blown up as soon as possible. Wednesday morning, the 25th of March, the proclamation was issued that between 9 and 10 o'clock on Friday morning, the 30th of March, the explosion would take place, and that by 8 o'clock all houses within 750 yards of the wreck must be vacated—the streets that immediately marked this limit being indicated. So great, however, has been the demoralization from fear during the last two or three days—wild rumors running through the town that great quantities of nitro-glycerine had been found in the wreck and that there was momentary danger of another explosion—the city was in large part deserted of its 42,000 inhabitants long before the appointed time. During Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday an almost crazy crowd was pouring out of the city to the suburban towns, and every carriage, cart and horse and ox or mule—every available thing and animal and man that could be pressed into the service—was engaged in moving the panic-stricken crowds to the suburban towns and villages and farm houses, and special trains were taking thousands away to more distant points. Hundreds of houses far beyond the proclaimed radius of danger are emptied, their owners leaving them to the care of the military guards that occupy the city as if it were under martial law.

By 5 o'clock of the morning of the eventual day those who had not left before began to stir in preparation for the evacuation of the houses within the prescribed zone by 8 o'clock. From 8 to 9 o'clock it was a sight to see. The streets of that part of the city were alive as never before. The current streamed along all the great roads leading to the suburbs. It consisted chiefly of the middle and lower classes that could not afford to pay for lodgings out of town, and who would leave their homes only when peremptorily ordered so to do by the Government. The soldiers bore the little ones in arms and the youths and maidens carried such simple provisions as poor people could afford—so leaving for those who were poorer than themselves the free rations promised to be distributed by the Government. The Protestant pastor, the school teacher and the carpenter and their families went together to the house of one of the congregation in the suburbs who takes boarders in summer, and who could give them all rooms. The most of the rest of the evangelical community found lodgings with friends.

Even the sick in the hospital and the prisoners in jail, and the old and the young in the asylums and nunns in convents—singularly, all of these were within the danger limits—were removed to places of safety during these early morning hours. The numbers taken to conventual buildings two miles away from the city, and the occupants, both old and young, of the different asylums to buildings near the same place. The seventy patients in the hospital were moved to a shed-like building in the grounds of the annual provincial fair, and the fifty-six prisoners to the bull-ring—most appropriate and suitable of all places for them. Though easy to guard the bull ring, open to the skies and with sheltered galleries, is not only a safe, but a salubrious, refuge for this part of our fellow citizens, who, undoubtedly, will ever remember this event as a most delightful picnic.

At 8 o'clock in the morning, Sautander was a deserted city; the natural fear of the inhabitants had more effectually and more rapidly emptied it than all the commands of the most remorseless of governments, without the help of the panic, could possibly have done.

As the dread hour approached, and throughout these two historical days, Sautander and its surrounding heights suddenly populated by the homeless thousands, presented a sight fitted to move the dearest heart.

The day was splendid. The hot rays of the sun were softened by a thin veil of clouds, and the waters of the bay lay quiet and smooth over the treacherous wreck.

The multitudes of men, women and children who swarmed on every hillside, and who covered every height commanding a view of the dock, might easily have passed as out on a grand romeria (the out-of-door celebration of a church feast day). The only wonder would have been as to who could be the Saint celebrated by a fiesta such as was never before seen nor heard of, and these thousands might have been taken as mere romeros were it not for the many babes in their midst, and very young children, and for their subdued voices as they gather in groups, and for their anxious looks as they intently gaze toward the one spot that draws all eyes.

The great hotels of El Sardinero—the bathing beach about a quarter of a mile away from the city, closed except in summer—are filled now by those who can pay for the accommodation. The Government has erected plain board sheds that will shelter, free of charge, thousands of the poorer citizens and their families who may prefer to spend the night away from the city rather than take the trouble to return to their homes after 5 o'clock

in the afternoon, only to leave them again the following morning—for the same rules will be enforced on Saturday as on Friday.

The two railway companies, both of whose stations are near the fated dock, are not permitted to receive nor discharge passengers nearer than a quarter of a mile of the town.

The aspect of the city itself is impressive beyond measure. Especially within the radius of danger, not a soul is seen in the deserted and silent streets. Doors and windows of shops and dwelling-houses alike, through all the streets, are closed, and the blinds are shut, and the stillness of death pervades the avenues that in the morning were swarming with life. It is not the silence of a city long ago destroyed, or abandoned to its fate, and that is crumbling in ruins. It is the stillness of a robust and beautiful person, in the full tide of life and strength, suddenly struck into the silence of death, but still standing erect and as perfect and beautiful as when the currents coursed in strong life through its veins.

Every street opening upon the danger-zone is guarded by two, four or six Civil Guards in their bright and picturesque costumes, and no one is allowed to cross those limits who does not hold a pass.

The members of the fire department, with additional engines and material loaned for the occasion from neighboring towns; companies of sappers and miners, under military command, with their picks and axes and shovels; and ambulances perfectly equipped for serious work, are strategically placed, and are ready to answer at a moment's notice, and companies of infantry and cavalry guard the city at all points.

The authorities, both civil and military, are quartered on the wharf just beyond the danger limit, and in full view of the site of the wreck. With them are representatives of the press, delegates from neighboring cities, representatives of the trade and industries of the city, and a few other prominent citizens.

These headquarters have telephonic connections with the corps of experts who, from a bomb-proof shed near the wreck, conduct the operations of the day and direct telegraphic connection with the office of the Minister of the Interior at Madrid. Buglers are stationed at intervals on the main streets of the city, who are to give warning by bugle call a minute or two before the explosion, and this will be repeated from bugler to bugler out to the suburbs.

Mounted messengers are also on hand to carry the news of the results of the explosion to given points in the suburbs, from which it will be quickly given to the anxious watchers and waiters on all the hill sides.

At last the hour strikes. Two torpedoes, each charged with fifty pounds of dynamite, are placed in the hull of the wreck. At half past nine a report is heard like the boom of a distant cannon, the ground trembles slightly and a large white dome of water rises with a central jet about thirty feet in height, with which is mingled pieces of timber and iron which, however, fall again into the water. It is plain to the nearest observer that even the dock is without injury, and telephonic reports are in a moment received from the districts where the houses were most exposed to damage from the concussion of air (within which is our mission house) announcing them intact. The swift riders take the news to the people on the suburban hills, and the Governor telegraphs it to the Minister of the Interior at Madrid.

In less than half an hour the Minister replies, congratulating the Governor and the city, saying that Madrid and all Spain follow the course of events with avid interest, and exhorting the Governor not to stay his hand until every vestige of danger has disappeared.

The first explosion was made at 9:30 in the morning, and they were continued at 10:30, 10:40, 11:40, 12:45, 4:15, 4:25. A few minutes after the last torpedo was fired the bugle sounded "attention, and home again!" and all the bells, led by that of the Cathedral, pealed the "Gloria," the signal that all who wanted to might return to their homes for the night. As the night was clear and mild, besides the hundreds of well-to-do citizens who preferred to spend the night in the Sardinero hotels thousands of the poorer classes camped out in the tents and the extemporized sheds.

I took a room on the third floor of an hotel facing the bay, about 500 yards from the wreck, and commanding a perfect view of the scene of action—but the hotel was just within the radius of danger as marked by the Government.

There are but few guests here, and among them the three members of the Government commission of experts, superintending the operations of destroying the wreck, and though the orders for yesterday were to hold good for today, the commissioners informed me that, on their responsibility, I might remain in the hotel during the day, if I wished so to do. So here I have sat at the large window writing this letter. I raise my eyes from the paper and see my friends, the engineers on the dock and in the steam launch, sinking the torpedoes into the wreck. When the bugle calls, I look, and see them withdrawing from the spot, and the next moment a billowy mass of foam rises from ten to fifteen feet into the air, followed sometimes by a sharp report, as of a cannon fired nearby, and at others by a muffled boom, as of a mine sprung in the hills far away.

Twenty-one torpedoes were fired this day, about half of which were "full charges" of fifty pounds of dynamite each, and the rest of twenty-five pounds. Those that I saw exploded were at the following hours, of which I made note: In the forenoon: 10:05, 10:20, 11:12, 11:35, 11:50; afternoon: 12:30, 1:10, 1:20, 2:10, 2:35, 2:45, 3:00, 3:15, 3:30, 3:45, 4:00, 4:30.

Five minutes after the last explosion the bugles sound a glad strain, that was repeated from one to the other, to the outskirts of the town, calling the wanderers home; for there was no more danger, and all the church bells rang out the joyful news. As if by magic, almost in an instant, the roads were swarming with the returning multitudes, and the recently silent streets were filled again with surging life.

WILLIAM H. GULICK. Santander, Spain, March 31, 1894. (NOTE: In my letter of the 25th of March, I mentioned thirteen or

eighteen as the number of persons who lost their lives in the second explosion of the 21st of March. The exact number was nineteen.]

THEOSOPHY AGAIN.

Mrs. Third's Lecture at the Foster Hall.

Mrs. M. M. Third delivered another lecture on Theosophy last Friday. She said, in part:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—Spirit and matter are regarded by Theosophists as the same thing—that is, as the two sides of a coin, joined for all time, but presenting different aspects: spirit representing force, and matter the clothing which nature has put on in all her different aspects. It is the ancient thought that matter is the clothing or passive side of spirit. It has been declared that there are seven aspects in nature; and so in the universe, being regarded as embodied consciousness, there are always seven great grades of consciousness or intelligence. From the highest to the lowest, consciousness is everywhere. On the highest planes it is perfectly developed, and there we say divine intelligence reigns. Intelligence and life are eternal. From this plane of divine intelligence, all things have come forth. Conscious life has always energy of its own, the great primeval forces which may change from plane to plane, but make the great sea of forces, however it may seem to us. The primeval force in nature is what is described in philosophy as the monad. It is life always acting in a suitable medium.

It has been proven in the last few years that sound produces form. It is claimed by philosophers that from sound have really originated all forms, and, by the energy of nature, this has produced various forms on various planes. From the plane of mind, this force speeds outward and begins to produce ethereal forms. These grow more and more dense as the energy moves from plane to plane.

Modern science tells us that there is no design in evolution—that all is the result of blind force, and still blinder matter. To us there is design everywhere. To us the evolution or unfolding of any form implies some design of nature. Always we find some model, something in the shape of a design on which all things grow. To our conception it is the monad, the conscious life in nature, which has woven the garments about the spirit, and begins to unfold the cover it has made, and out of that garment to weave a more conscious position, to lift it to a higher plane. This conception is radically different to modern science. But it tells us what science is beginning to explain more and more—what life is.

According to our philosophy, when the monadic force has begun to go backward toward the spiritual, it first passes through the mineral kingdom, then the vegetable, then the animal, and finally to man. The great intelligences have given of their life to all the lower planes, but to man alone is given their divine intelligence. In his intelligence has reached up nearly to the divine plane. He has become the temple of the living God. So this intelligence is reflected upon him and regarded as a ray of the divine mind. Man is a God in an animal form, a promise of divinity, having a capacity for infinite unfolding.

The theory of cycles has been adopted recently by some scientists. It is, that all things come and go in cycles, or circles. In our philosophy, all these cycles are repeated, and there is no limit to the number of times that men shall come into the world to be perfected. In no one life can any one individual be perfected. Nations and races must again and again study the evolutions of life to become perfect. It can no longer be denied that the world in the past has seen many great civilizations, which have not been lost, but have proceeded upward. Nations and races, all decay, and their intelligence anew succeeds.

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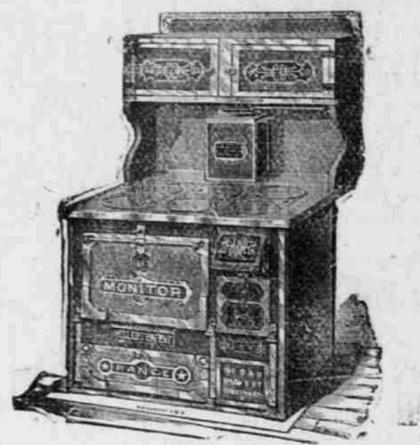
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