



THE MUTTERINGS OF WAR ARE GROWING YET LOUDER

IS GOVERNMENT KEEPING BACK INFORMATION?

STATESMEN ARE GETTING VERY CURIOUS

Believe That the President Wants Time to Prepare for Battle.

There Is a General Strengthening of Coast Fortifications and the South Atlantic Fleet Is Hurrying Northward.

Call Office, Riggs House, Washington, Feb. 21.

Are the administration officials sincere and honest in the expression of the belief that the Maine's destruction resulted from accident, or do they merely assume this conservative attitude to gain time in which to put the army and navy upon a war footing?

This is a question which members of Congress are asking. It is certain that leading Senators and Representatives in Congress who are members of the Naval and Military Affairs Committee have been in private consultation with the President, and the fact that they are secretive naturally creates a belief that these conferences were important. It is known to be an absolute fact that the President requested the Washington Post and Star to assume a conservative attitude, so as not to incite jingoism in Congress to radical action which might precipitate a crisis.

But whether the President and his advisers are really of the opinion that an accident caused the Maine's destruction, or whether the officials wish to temporize in order to put the army and navy on a war footing, is a question excited by the unusual activity in army and navy circles.

It is a significant fact that Senator Perkins and Representative Hilborn, of California, both of whom are members of the Naval Committee of their respective houses, are unusually cautious and discreet in their expressions of opinion. But, however careful they may have been, it is known by their friends that they regard the situation as very serious, and both men are at this time deeply engrossed in the study of naval matters.

I asked Congressman Hilborn to-night if in his opinion the United States was prepared for war.

"Perhaps not," said he, "but we will be prepared in short order should the findings of the naval court at Havana show the Maine's destruction to have been caused by design."

It is very evident that Mr. Hilborn thinks the Maine was blown up by a submarine mine, for in casual conversation to-night he said: "The fact may not be generally known at large, but we have our own harbors planted with torpedoes and submarine mines. New York harbor is thus fortified, and so is San Francisco harbor. A diagram is in the possession of the officers. The entire harbor is checked off into squares or subdivisions, and each one is numbered as accurately as the chairs in an opera-house. Lookouts posted on the bluff have such an accurate knowledge of these harbor subdivisions that they can, by a signal, a flash to the gunners, show the exact location of a hostile ship, and the gunners have their range-finders so adjusted that they can fire a shot and strike any one of these squares. As for the torpedoes and submarine mines in San Francisco harbor, I of course do not know where they are located. Neither does any civilian. These secrets are, for obvious reasons, jealously guarded by the War Department."

HAVANA, Feb. 21.—The board of inquiry into the Maine disaster met at 10 o'clock this morning, with Captains Sampson and Chadwick on the lighthouse tender Mangrove

and Marix present. Captain Sampson presided, and Lieutenant-Commander Marix, recently executive officer of the Maine, acted as recorder. Captain Sigsbee, the commander of the Maine, was the first witness called. He was under examination until 1 o'clock this afternoon, at which hour an adjournment was taken. It is probable that no further witness will be heard to-day, but the board will make a careful personal examination of the wreck, near which the Mangrove is anchored.

Captain Sampson received a correspondent immediately after the morning session of the board. He said in the course of an interview:

"I would be glad to give news, but owing to the delicate situation, the board has decided to make nothing whatever public. I do not know what testimony may develop, and when, and it is only fair to the Spanish Government not to tell the public the testimony until all has been received and the findings have been considered.

"You may say that this rule is absolute. Due care will be taken for the rigid enforcement of it. I have no idea as to how long the court will remain here. No one is authorized to fix the time, as the members themselves do not know. I shall give such routine news of the proceedings as is proper."

Captain Sigsbee, on board the Mangrove, told the correspondent that he was quite pleased with the examination, and that he was able to answer all the questions asked, not only as to his own acts, but as to those of his subordinates on the Maine.

Gunner Charles Morgan, of the cruiser New York, arrived on the Mangrove and is in immediate charge of the divers. The latter have been at work all day, but up to the time of sending this dispatch no discoveries have been made. It is believed that the salvage by the wrecking company will be considerable and valuable.

LATIN REPUBLICS SHOW FRIENDSHIP.

Deny That They Would Form an Alliance With Spain Against the United States.

NEW YORK, Feb. 21.—The statements that Spain, through her agents in South and Central America, is endeavoring to form a Latin alliance against the United States are denied in Mexican cable dispatches to the Herald from the principal cities of the Southern republics. From Argentina comes assurance that the Government would not permit Spain to make overtures in this direction. Mexico's sentiments are entirely with the United States, as against Spain and Chile, it is said, would not embark in any dangerous alliance against the United States.

President Zelaya of Nicaragua tells the Herald that his Government sympathizes with the United States, and President Pierola of Peru, extends condolences for the Maine disaster.

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Feb. 21.—To the Editor of the Herald: Domestic affairs have prevented the Nicaraguans from hearing of the recent incidents between the United States and Spain. Owing to that fact, we are unable to give an opinion thereon. I can, however, assure the Herald that in Nicaragua there is a heartfelt sympathy for the American people.

LIMA, Peru, Feb. 21.—To the Editor of the Herald: Accept my salutations. In reply, will say that the Peruvian Minister in Washington must by this time have expressed to your Government the condolence of the people of Peru and mine for the painful accident to the Maine.

Buenos Ayres has never attempted to influence the policy of Argentina, nor would any diplomatic effort in that direction be permitted by the Government. I am able to say that on high authority. The officials of Argentina heartily disapprove the act of Senator De Lome, formerly Minister to the United States, in criticizing President McKinley, and applaud the energy of the American Government in the matter. The disaster to the Maine has been widely commented upon, but public opinion as to the cause has not taken definite form. The public anxiously awaits the result of the Government's investigation.

VALPARAISO, Chile, Feb. 21.—The assertions that Spanish diplomats in the South American republics are working to obtain their support against the United States took every one here by surprise, and as far as Chile is concerned they are absolutely unfounded. It is true that Chileans, in spite of their old quarrel with the mother country, are deeply attached to Spain, and Spanish residents in Chile are numerous, but Chilean statesmen have often proved their disinclination to embark in dangerous enterprises, such as an alliance against the United States, for which



GOING TO HER DOOM.

The American battleship Maine passing Morro Castle on the way to her anchorage in Havana harbor, at the point where her wreck now lies, and where so many of Uncle Sam's brave boys in blue sleep beneath the murky water.

OFFICERS OF THE MAINE EXPECTED THEIR SHIP WOULD BE DESTROYED

One of Them Said to Have Written That the Worst Would Happen if the Vessel Remained in the Harbor of Havana After the 15th of February, the Fatal Day.

"An officer of the Maine in a recent letter to his wife said, 'If we do not get out of here before the 15th of February something serious will happen.'"

This announcement made from the pulpit of the Church of the Advent by the Rev. J. A. Emery Sunday night created a profound sensation.

In almost every city or village of the United States, no matter how large or small, it is safe to say that some reference was made from at least one pulpit yesterday regarding the terrible disaster to the Maine.

When Mr. Emery entered his pulpit Sunday evening and announced his intention to dwell upon this topic the congregation took it as a matter of course. His subject was "Be Thou Faithful Unto Death," and as he entered into it his words were followed closely.

"It may not generally be known," he said, "but it is nevertheless a fact, that when the ship entered the harbor of Havana her gallant crew knew they were risking their lives, but they never murmured nor sought to swerve from the path of duty. Yesterday I was talking to an intimate friend of mine, a retired naval officer and a man in whose word I place implicit confidence. In speaking of the disaster he mentioned a very dear friend of his, who was a prominent officer on the Maine, but whose name I will not mention. This officer, in a recent letter to his wife, spoke in no uncertain terms about the perilous position of the Maine in Havana harbor, and furthermore stated that he was positive if the Maine did not leave Havana harbor before the 15th some catastrophe would result."

On the evening of the 15th the Maine was blown out of the water by some unknown agency, and there in the mud and filth of the bay with the gnarled and twisted iron lie the bodies of the brave boys who were "faithful unto death."

At the close of the sermon the preacher was surrounded by a number of his congregation, among whom were many of the coolest heads in the city, eager to learn more of the sensational incident he brought to light, but beyond reiterating his former statements he would have nothing to say. Mr. Emery is not by any means a sensationalist, and the members of his congregation are satisfied that he would make no statements without having fully investigated them and having full confidence in their authenticity.

Yesterday afternoon a Call reporter visited him at the diocesan house on California street, where he was in company with a number of prominent Episcopal clergymen, and questioned him regarding the story. He was very reticent, and positively refused to divulge the name or rank of the author of the sensational letter.

"The incident I mentioned in my sermon Sunday evening is perfectly true, and were I at liberty to mention the name and standing of my informant the doubts in the minds of a great many people would at once be set at rest. As it is I feel almost sorry that I mentioned the incident in my address Sunday evening, and had I known there was a reporter in my congregation I would never have done so, as the story was related to me casually in conversation and I feel now almost as though I had betrayed the confidence of a friend. The letter in question was received by the officer's wife a few days prior to the dreadful explosion which sent over two hundred of our brave boys to an untimely grave in the bottom of the bay. She at once wrote to my friend knowing that he, as

a military man, could be considered fairly good authority on such matters, told him that it had occasioned her a great deal of uneasiness and asked his advice in the matter.

"He was not greatly alarmed at first, thinking perhaps some of the Jack tars who had tarried a little too long on shore had been excited by the idle gossip of the Spanish rabble along the water front and had carried the gossip on shipboard, adding a little to it by way of giving it proper color.

"Whatever his conjectures may have been excited by a rude awakening on the morning of the 15th when he read in an early copy of The Call the particulars of the dire disaster, and the meaning of that terrible 'something will happen on the 15th if we don't get away from here' dawned upon him in all its horrible reality.

"There have been some doubts as to who is responsible for the wreck, but how could an officer select the day in advance?

"I read the stories in the papers from day to day and determined on selecting the disaster to the Maine as the topic for my Sunday evening address, but was in doubt as to

REV. J. A. EMERY.

