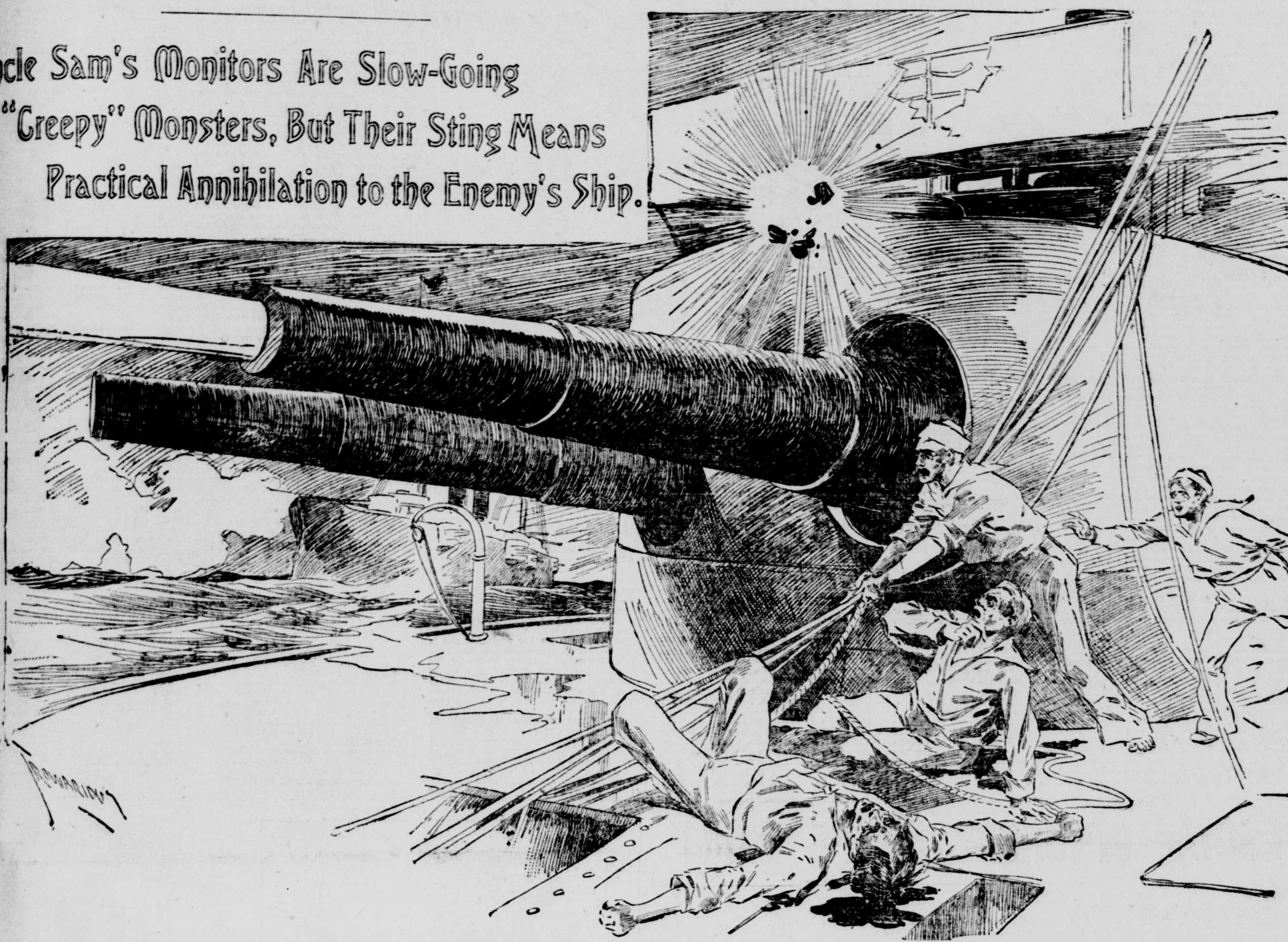


SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 1898.

Uncle Sam's Monitors Are Slow-Going  
"Creepy" Monsters, But Their Sting Means  
Practical Annihilation to the Enemy's Ship.



## THE MONITOR MONTEREY'S BIG GUNS IN ACTION

decks is exposed to the enemy's fire, and serious injury to the machinery is likely while the machinery so far beneath the waves renders it unlikely that that portion of the vessel can be crippled.

The crews and officers of Sampson's fleet are composed of the most intrepid, while the Terror and Puritan, that were with them, delayed the rate of speed on the run to San Juan and return, as they could only steam an average of seven knots to sea, and were obliged to burn a greater quantity of coal, they were at times taken in tow. So to them has been applied the term "tarantulas of the navy," but they are also scourges like the venomous creature from which they take their pseudonym.

All naval authorities are now agreed that monitors are indispensable auxiliaries to the torpedo boats, gunboats, cruisers and destroyers of the navy. For hard, heavy bombardment and close shore fighting against batteries and forts they are particularly valuable, as they are almost impervious to the shells which may be thrown at them and which usually rebound and explode in the air. For coast and harbor defense they are absolutely unequalled and can only be disturbed, if at all, by the crafty torpedo boat when the opportunity is given the latter to make a deadly sniping missile at them. But, torpedo boats are very weak with small shot as a Mauser bullet, and a single projectile from the guns of a monitor could blow them out of the water into infinitesimal fragments. The torpedo boat, on the other side, is dangerous.

Those monitors that are in the navy representing the ideas of thirty years ago are actually becoming the possible factors in coast defense, supplementing the forts, fortifications, and they are useful in actual battle. The Nahant, for instance, manned by the New York naval reserves, carrying two 15-inch smooth-bore guns, is stationed at the entrance of New York harbor. Just what proportional destructive strength a 15-inch smoothbore can have in comparison with an 8-inch or even a 6-inch gun, cannot be a question of conjecture. The smoothbore is very efficient in their day, but the ribbed gun long ago demonstrated its signal superiority. The length of the gun also adds to its destructive power of the projectile.

The Ajax is another of the old turret monitors built thirty-five years ago, that instead of being allowed to rest in mud was used by the naval militia of Camden, N. J. Her armament at present, for the commission, is similar to that of the Nahant.

Boston harbor is defended by the old time monitors Lehigh and Catskill. The latter was taken to the Massachusetts capitol as a national reserve, and both of them, with the use of the new 12-inch and rapid-fire guns, are manned by the naval militia. The Lehigh, built by John Ericsson in 1862, saw considerable service during the following three years, and the Catskill was the only monitor to engage during the civil war was struck nearly sixty times by cannon balls from the fort.

The Montauk, armed with two old smoothbore guns, has been assigned to the duty of guarding the entrance of 1855, she still presents a valiant appearance. The Jason, another of Ericsson's pets, has been "in ordinary" since the civil war, but will probably prove of great service as a harbor defense ship, mounting the new guns comprise her main armament. Larger than many of her companions, she has a displacement of 1,500 tons and develops 3.0 horsepower.

But it is the modern fighting monitors, the aggressive ships and not purely defensive ones like those guarding our harbors, that the public interest centers. With the Nahant, the Terror is the Mantonmouth, the Terror is the Puritan and the Puritan is the Terror is a remodeled vessel, her keel having been laid in 1815, but with her powerful armament of four 12-inch and two 6-inch guns in her main battery and six 6-pounders in her secondary battery, she is a foeman worthy of the respect of any foe.

The Mantonmouth is another remodeled Ericsson monitor, and practically a new ship. Her reconstruction was finished in 1862, but before she was finished she was towed to Annapolis. There she rested in the mud of the Severn river for several years, but when the reconstruction was taken away and rebuilt of steel.

The Amphitrite is a modern double turret monitor, ostensibly intended for coast defense only. She carries four 16-inch rifled guns in her main battery and six 6-inch guns in a heavy secondary battery. The Terror is of the same class, though her keel was laid twenty-four years ago. She also carries four 16-inch guns and has a displacement of 1,600 tons, and gives her an exceedingly formidable appearance.

The Monarch is another powerful monitor, with an armament almost identical with that of the Amphitrite. She carries four 16-inch instead of four 12-inch guns. These five steel projectiles weighing more than 500 pounds, are effective at a distance of more than six miles, and will carry several miles farther even than that.

Though they are the sailors' bugaboo because of their unyieldiness, the more than possible possibility of their engines becoming disarranged, and the fact that they have a low rate of speed and their voracious appetite for coal, they are machines of great destructibility, veritable floating fortresses that are superior under certain conditions in death dealing to any other class of warship in existence.

ROGER P. BARNUM.

## MAIL FOR CAMPS AND FLEETS; ROUTES TO BE ESTABLISHED IN CUBA.

Commodore Schley's flying squadron, where it is sent out by the local postmaster to the fleets and delivered by the dispatch boats to the proper officers of each ship, who attend to the distribution of the letters.

The mail for the armies at Tampa goes south in the same way. The pouches are delivered to the postmaster and the army officials must apply to him for the mail. Great care is exercised in the handling of the mail after it leaves the postoffice at Tampa. Special messengers are detailed by each commanding officer to get the mail for the troops in particular vicinities, and they transport it to the camps, where it is kept in a stated place, at which the messengers call for the letters. The mail for Chickamauga passes through Washington, but goes out on another road.

Since the outbreak of the war, no mail has gone to Cuba or come out of the island to the United States. No postal communication will be established until our troops are landed.

At this particular juncture the post-office department is maintaining considerable reserve as to the destination of the mails. This is for the purpose of concealing the fact where the troops are sent to the fleet, which might be divulged through undue publicity of the movements of the mails.