

President Roosevelt's War Record.

COLONEL BACON'S HOT SHOT

"I Will Give One Thousand Dollars to Any Person Who Will Prove That One Line of That Article is Not Strictly True."

—COL. ALEXANDER S. BACON, 37 Liberty Street, N. Y.

WAS LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ROOSEVELT A GOOD SOLDIER, OR DID HE HAVE A GOOD PRESS AGENT?

The Republican Campaign Committee has issued a pamphlet called "Roosevelt's Military Record," which has been circulated by the million, and a member of the Rough Riders, acting for the Campaign Committee, is sending it to all Spanish War veterans, with a statement that the President "is now being vilified and abused in outrageous terms for political reasons," and states: "I resent the bitter campaign falsehoods which are being uttered about him."

This pamphlet was probably issued as a reply to my article in the August number of the ARMY AND NAVY CRITIC. It is needless to say that it is not an answer to any charge contained in that article.

In 1900 I issued a brochure on "The Seventy-first Regiment at San Juan," wherein most of the charges were set forth. NO ONE OF THEM HAS EVER BEEN ANSWERED. The August Critic has been issued for nearly three months, and no person has attempted to answer it. I will give one thousand dollars to any person who will prove that one line of that article is not strictly true.

- 1.—The blockhouse on San Juan was captured at about 1:30 p. m., on July 1, 1898, by the infantry, not by the Cavalry.
- 2.—Colonel Roosevelt did not see a Spaniard on July 1st, and was not in a position where he could see one.
- 3.—Colonel Roosevelt's account of his heroic charge on horseback up San Juan Hill is absolutely false.
- 4.—Kettle Hill, a small rise of ground about 800 yards in front of the San Juan hills, never contained a Spanish soldier or Spanish entrenchment.
- 5.—The infantry had lain in advance of Kettle Hill for hours before 1:30 p. m. They did not take possession of Kettle Hill, for no reason except that they had no use for an old kettle.
- 6.—Earlier in the day, the Rough Riders had gone to the right of the road, to Santiago, for half a mile, and lay for hours in the tall grass, neck high, behind Kettle Hill.
- 7.—AFTER the infantry had left the sunken road between Kettle Hill and San Juan, and had captured the blockhouse, Colonel Roosevelt and his Rough Riders came out of the tall grass and went up Kettle Hill.

8.—There were no entrenchments on the San Juan hills, except about 100 feet around the blockhouse. Colonel Roosevelt's statements in his "Rough Riders," written months after the war, do not correspond with official reports, even his own, and are absolutely untruthful.

THE OFFICIAL REPORT.

Colonel Roosevelt's official report, found at pages 12 and 14 of Major General Miles' Supplementary Report, 1898, contains the following:

"Accordingly we charged the blockhouse and entrenchments on the hill to our right against a heavy fire. It was taken in good style, the men of my regiment thus being the first to capture any fortified position and to break through the Spanish lines." (Every word of that statement is absolutely false.) "After capturing this hill, we first of all directed a heavy fire upon the San Juan hill to our left, which was at the time being assailed by the regular infantry and cavalry, supported by Captain Parker's Gatling guns. By the time San Juan was taken a large force had assembled on the hill we had PREVIOUSLY captured."

A glance at the map shows that the hill occupied by the cavalry was far in the rear of the San Juan hills, and the reports of the engineer officers and of the official maps are unanimous that it contains no entrenchments whatever, and there is no record of its ever having been occupied by the Spaniards.

A glance at the map will show how preposterous is Colonel Roosevelt's claim.

Colonel Roosevelt stated in an address to the National Guard Association of the State of New York, on February 18, 1900 (pp. 56, 57, Official Report, N. G., N. Y.): "As for the San Juan fight, it would be an exaggeration to say it was a column's fight. It was a squad leader's fight. No human being in the column knew what he was to do when the column started. We moved forward again, crossed the river and had to halt within range of the Spanish batteries on the hills until we got the order to charge. More by a consensus of opinion than anything else we went up and took the hill."

This is the official report of this speech to the National Guard, but in the actual speech he admitted that he did not see a Spaniard; that they did not know that there had been a battle until it was over.

The position of the First Volunteer Cavalry, half a mile to the right of the road to Santiago and behind Kettle Hill, is indicated by the reports of Leonard Wood, colonel, First U. S. Volunteer Cavalry, and T. A. Baldwin, lieutenant-colonel, Tenth Cavalry (see pages 326 and 341, of General Miles' official report). These reports are verbatim the same. One plagiarizes from the other. As General Wood was somewhere in the rear, he was probably the offender:

"After proceeding about half way to the San Juan Hill (from El Pozo) the leading regiment (Rough Riders) was directed to CHANGE THE DIRECTION TO THE RIGHT, and by moving up to the creek to effect junction with General Lawton's division, which was then engaged at Carey, about a mile and a half toward the right, but was supposed to be working toward our right flank. After proceeding in this direction ABOUT HALF A MILE, this effort to connect with Gen. Lawton was given up, and the First and Tenth cavalry were formed for attack on the EAST HILL, with the Volunteer Cavalry as support."

Colonel Wood says in his report of July 6 (p. 342): "Our first objective was the hill with a small red-roofed house on it." (Kettle Hill.)

After the occupation of the San Juan hills by the infantry, it became necessary to create entrenchments to be captured and Spaniards to be killed by the political colonel, and the only way to do this was to make a bristling fortification out of an old kettle that had been left behind by the infantry hours before.

Colonel Egbert, Sixth Infantry, says in his official report, pages 364-5: "The San Juan Hill fortifications being in plain view, about 400 yards distant, while to our right and IN PROLONG-

some time after I reached the crest, reported that the Sixth and Sixteenth Infantry had captured the hill, which I now consider incorrect. Credit is almost equally due the Sixth, Ninth, Thirteenth, Sixteenth and Twenty-fourth regiments of infantry."

General Miles' official report contains the reports of scores of officers on the battle of San Juan, not one of which bears out Colonel Roosevelt's absolutely false report of the battle contained in his "Rough Riders." There is not any official report of the battle from any source corroborating Colonel Roosevelt's official report of the battle. I therefore repeat the charge that Colonel Roosevelt has obtained promotion to the Presidency of the United States by a report of his own alleged heroic acts at San Juan Hill, which reports were knowingly false. I repeat there was but one blockhouse, and one entrenchment on the San Juan Hills. These were captured by the infantry. This infantry had lain for hours in and around the sunken road in advance of Kettle Hill, and AFTER the infantry had captured San Juan, Roosevelt and his Rough Riders came out of the tall grass, where they had been concealed for hours, and went up Kettle Hill, which had never had upon it an entrenchment or a Spanish soldier.

Colonel Roosevelt had no military experience. He left a position in the navy, where he might have been of some service, in order to take a spectacular position in the army, where he was the laughing stock of regulars and volunteers alike. All the world honors a brave soldier, but all the world despises false pretences.

"Roosevelt's Military Record," published by the Republican Campaign Committee, is a mere collection of platitudes, and the recommendation of Roosevelt for brevet and a medal of honor met with no serious consideration. They were rejected. The letters of recommendation are very guarded,

ed, and no one of them was written by any man who saw the alleged heroic charge against the San Juan Kettle. Roosevelt says, in his "Rough Riders," page 125, that he tried to find General Sumner and General Wood and could not. Colonel Mills was wounded and out of action long before the charge. Recommendations, in general terms, by subordinates amount to nothing. Such unofficial recommendations may be had for the asking.

The charges contained in the brochure, published in 1900, remain unanswered; the charges of the August Army and Navy Critic remain unanswered. And I repeat, and defy any man with knowledge to refute them.

General MacArthur obtained his promotion as Major-General by making a report about his maneuvers in the capture of the city of Manila, which we now know to have been a sham battle, and Admiral Dewey swore before a committee of Congress that the city had practically surrendered to him a week before and it was arranged that the Spaniards were not to fire back.

Colonel Funston obtained his promotion as brigadier-general upon his own report of his own heroic deeds in the capture of Aguinaldo, which we now know to have been put up by Aguinaldo himself, who says, in Everybody's Magazine of August, 1901, that the ladies had come over the day before from Casiguran to Palinan to have a dance, thus traversing the very road over which Funston passed in his horrible privations.

Colonel Roosevelt has obtained promotions by a false report in his "Rough Riders" of his own heroic deeds in an imaginary charge on an imaginary Spaniard.

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LETTERS FROM A PRIVATE.

"I'm Glad I'm a Regular—They Go Ahead and Do Their Business Without Any Fuss or Feathers—But I'm Sorry That We Will Not Get Any Credit For Our Work—They Say Our Charge Will Make Roosevelt President Some Day and That is What We Went To War For."

LETTER NO. 1.
At Foot of San Juan Hill,
July 1, 1898.

This has been a day of terror and yet this evening finds me singularly cool and calm. The fighting started about daybreak with an artillery duel, in which our artillery seems to have got the worst of it. I hear that Grimes has been shelled out of his position on El Pozo and that Capron's artillery was worse than useless. You see, our artillery was using black powder, while the Spanish used smokeless powder. So, while we were a perfect mark for them, we could not locate their batteries at all. The casualties have been pretty heavy. I hear tonight that our division has lost about 350 killed and 2000 wounded. Our regiment lost something over 100 killed and wounded, but I don't know just how many. I thought we would be the whole thing on account of having taken this hill, but the adjutant (who is now Lieutenant Koehler) says the Rough Riders will get all the credit because they have their rifles pointed along. And, what do you think, they were not even in the fight. They left the main advance column early in the morning, and going off to the right got lost somewhere in the chaparral and did not get out again until tonight. I just got back from a walk along the line and find the army strung out like this: [Letter contains a map not thought necessary to reproduce.]—Ed.

It is a pretty thin line, but I guess we will be able to hold our position. The regulars are simply wonderful as fighters. They go at it just as if it was sport instead of tragedy, and the fact that men are killed and wounded continually don't seem to bother them at all. They take it as a matter of course. I'm glad I'm a regular. They go ahead and do their business without any fuss or feathers. But I'm sorry that we will not get any credit for our work. They say our charge will make Roosevelt President some day, and that that is the only thing he went into the war for—just politics. Well, I suppose I shouldn't kick, as I am looking for a laurel wreath myself. The adjutant says I'll never be heard of unless I should chance to get killed, when I will occupy one line in the papers in the list of dead and wounded. When I was over on the right flank about an hour ago the Rough Riders were just getting up to the line in the position assigned them. Where they had been all day I don't know, but the talk is that they were having sport on a hill somewhere in the rear. I will probably know more about this to-morrow or next day. It is rumored that we will advance again to-morrow and drive the Spanish into the harbor. They retired in pretty good order to-day, as they only left eight dead on the hill and no wounded, so far as I know.

Just how many are in the opposing army I do not know, but it is family, or of territorial and commercial greed.

By the latter path we abandon humanity, and with drum and trumpet and warship, hurl ourselves into the wretched wrangle which has been going on in the old world since the dawn of history, and the new world then ceases to exist. This is the track into which, tentatively but surely, our Government has been trying to push, with accelerated pace, during the last three years, and now the people of the United States are about to be called upon to say if it be their wish to continue the march. If they say yes, let them marshal their heaviest legions, change their form of government to a dictatorship, and prepare their purses for a drain in comparison to which that of our Civil War was light. The Republic is, indeed, at the parting of the ways.

PARTING OF THE WAYS.

The People Must Decide Whether the Nation Shall Be a Republic or an Empire.

We are now at the parting of the ways—one (Democracy) carries us forward in the grand avenue traced out for us by the founders of our nation, a path of dignity, honor, peaceful, happy advancement, which marks us as the hope of mankind in all that makes for wisdom and good government; while the other (Republicanism) takes us into the great arena where ancient peoples, full of ambitions, civil hatreds, religious feuds, feudal miseries, trailing their slime across the centuries, are facing each other, burdened with armor, to fight out questions of

MOST HUMILIATING FRAUD

Col. Bacon's Review of the Events of July 1, 1898—Daring Capture of an Un defended Field Attended With Imaginary Slaughter.

ROOSEVELT AT SAN JUAN OUT FOR GLORY, HAVING BEFORE HIS EYES THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION.

We now come to the most humiliating fraud in recent history—the celebrated battle of San Juan, in the Spanish War of 1898, which has given scores of brevets for every dead Spaniard.

The first act in the drama was to remove every West Pointer from heads of departments (excepting the engineers and ordnance, which contain graduates only, because West Pointers and contractors are natural born enemies). The next act was to put in command of the army of invasion an officer who was wholly incompetent to serve in a tropical climate, weighing 320 pounds and having permanent physical disabilities.

The facts of the battle are briefly as follows: General Shafter's plan of battle seems to have been all right, but was not carried out. General Lawton was expected to capture El Caney by 7 o'clock in the morning; then turn to his left and form the right wing of the attack on the San Juan hills; the center to be occupied by Wheeler and his cavalry; the left by Kent and the infantry. El Caney was not captured until 4:30 in the afternoon. In the meantime the Wheeler and Kent divisions simply drifted toward San Juan, through a dense jungle, of which there had been no reconnaissance, and the Spanish skirmish line on San Juan exercised itself at target practice from 6 o'clock in the morning until 1:30 in the afternoon, simply shooting at the roads and trails where the American troops were helpless, in column.

Is it not high time that some of the nationalists surrounding the battle of San Juan were raised? The War Department, when asked how many Spaniards were in Santiago when it surrendered, and how many Spaniards were killed and wounded at San Juan and El Caney, states in a letter that they have no records that throw any light on the subject. Prominent officers, who have knowledge, give evasive replies. Lieutenant Jose Muller y Tejero, second in command of na-

was reinforced by another company. The artillery on San Juan consisted of two old pieces that looked as if they were a hundred years old, mounted on rickety old carriages. They were left behind. This echelon of San Juan was attacked by 7500 Americans with light batteries and a Gatling battery—thirty to one. The American loss at San Juan, in killed and wounded, was more than a thousand by the official figures. The Spanish loss was substantially nothing. Every Spaniard killed or wounded four Americans. The percentage of American loss at San Juan was twice that of the British at the "bloody" battles of Tugela River. The Spanish loss is unknown, but was practically nothing.

One of the regular officers, who was one of the first to ascend the San Juan Hill and occupy the blockhouse, when asked, before the Seventy-first Regiment Court of Inquiry, "What did you see on arriving at the top of the hill?" replied "Nothing." Q. "Nothing at all?" A. "Nothing but scenery." Q. "No Spaniards?" A. "Well, a few might be seen in the distance retiring to their trenches." The fact is that as soon as the Americans formed the line of battle and proceeded up the hill at about 1:30 p. m., the Spanish skirmish line retired to their breastworks around Santiago, which were never captured, but were surrendered with the city on July 17.

About 800 yards in front of the San Juan hills was a small stream called Purgatorio Creek, with densely wooded banks. It flowed close by a slight rise called Kettle Hill, which was also far in front of the San Juan hills. As far as known, Kettle Hill had never concealed a Spanish soldier in the history of the world, and its only fortification consisted of an old iron kettle that gave its name to the Americans. For hours the infantry had been lying in a sunken road, in advance of Kettle Hill. No one thought of going on top of it because there was nothing to go after. But when the infantry left the



val forces of the Province of Santiago, in his history, which has been translated in part by the Navy Department, gives only 3000 effective Spanish soldiers in and about Santiago on July 1. Escario and his column did not break in until the 3d, and there were about 2100 sick in hospital. Their food consisted exclusively of rice and water; their ammunition was scarce; their artillery consisted of thirteen pieces of antique patterns some of which they did not dare discharge. Santiago had not been prepared for a siege. These 3000 men had over ten miles to cover, and were attacked at five different points simultaneously: (1) The fleet menaced Morro Castle and the Socapa battery at the mouth of the bay. (2) Five thousand Cubans, whose losses were heavy—Bonsal says (p. 444) their percentage of loss was fifty per cent, greater than the Americans—were active, and harassed them on the west. (3) Aquadores was menaced by a demonstration of Michigan troops just landed. (4) El Caney was attacked by about 6000 men; and (5) San Juan by about 7500.

According to Lieutenant Muller, the San Juan hills were occupied by a mere skirmish line of 250 Spaniards. Captain Nunez says, in his history, also translated in part by the Navy (p. 113), "that the advance echelon of San Juan, consisting of two companies under the command of Colonel Vaquero,

sunken road and captured the blockhouse, Colonel Roosevelt and his Rough Riders marched from the millet field, behind this hill and Purgatorio Creek, and frantically charged up Kettle Hill! It was attended with little more danger than an attack on the City Hall in New York. The San Juan hills directly beyond it had no entrenchments, and had already been abandoned by the Spaniards.

His slaying the fleeing Spaniard less than thirty feet away sounds much like murder. No regular officer found it necessary to establish his reputation by an account of exultant blood-thirstiness. They accepted the painful duty of fighting the enemy as one of the sad necessities of war and sought to win no glory by gloating over the widows and orphans they were forced to make. Colonel Roosevelt stands out against the lurid horizon of war as the solitary autobiographer from the days of Caesar till now to write himself down boastfully as a slayer of his fellowman, and that, too, at such close range.

Having examined under oath about 100 participants in the San Juan engagement, and having in my possession the stenographer's transcript of their testimony, I am prepared to state that Colonel Roosevelt did not so much as see a Spaniard on July 1, 1898, and was not in a position where he could see one.