

OUTSIDE EXPLOSION

BUYS ANOTHER TORPEDO BOAT

News Sent to Madrid—Two Extended Sessions Held—Discussion of a Grave Character—A Critical Time.

WASHINGTON, March 26.—The court of inquiry appointed to investigate the cause of the Maine disaster has reported that the loss of the battleship was due to an outside explosion.

The state department, by direction of the president, has cabled United States Minister Woodford at Madrid to notify the Spanish government of this conclusion. The president and his cabinet advisers held two extended sessions today, one at 10:30 a. m., and another at 3:30 p. m., at which the report was considered in detail. Members of the cabinet stated after the meeting that the discussion was of grave character and that never since the wrecking of the Maine has the situation seemed so critical.

The Spanish government has cabled to Washington that the Spanish naval commission holds the disaster to the Maine to be of internal origin. The government of Spain, it can be stated positively, is not disposed to turn back the torpedo flotilla now proceeding from the Canaries and would be disinclined to consider a suggestion from this government tending to interfere with the disposition by Spain of her own naval force.

War preparations on an unprecedented scale is being hurried to completion by the war and navy departments and the country is practically on a war footing.

The navy department was informed by cablegram from Lieutenant Colwell, naval attaché to the United States embassy at London, that agents of this government had purchased a torpedo boat that had been constructed for the German government. The new acquisition is of the general type of German torpedo boats and is regarded as a valuable addition to the navy. It is expected that in a few days she will leave for the United States. She is a twenty-three knot vessel and about 150 feet long. While of the same general type as the Rogers and the Foote, of the United States navy, she is a trifle longer. The price paid for her the navy officials declined to state at this time, but it was said to be very reasonable.

Word reached the navy department today that the Spanish authorities have taken steps to supplement the existing fortifications at San Juan de Puerto Rico, the main port of the island of Puerto Rico. The news is regarded as significant. Puerto Rico is the only other possession in which belongs to the Spanish government on this hemisphere besides Cuba. The officials of the department, while acknowledging that information of the foregoing character has reached them, are very chary about imparting any of the details to the press.

The city of Puerto Rico is fortified after the old style prevalent in the early days of the defense, consisting of a wall which completely encircles it, of several forts at strategic points, while the only points of egress and ingress are through massive gates. These fortifications are being strengthened and the armament has been increased by two large guns of formidable pattern and calibre. San Juan has 23,414 inhabitants.

General Flagler, chief of ordnance of the army, today had a long conference with Secretary Alger with reference to additional guns and gun carriages. A few days ago Secretary Alger allotted to General Flagler \$1,600,000 from the emergency appropriation made by congress. After a careful canvass of the situation Secretary Alger gave General Flagler a liberal additional allotment to be used by the ordnance bureau at his discretion, but no information could be obtained either from General Flagler or from the secretary's office as to its amount.

The sum must be a very considerable one, however, as General Flagler said that it was to be used to cover provision contracts entered into for the construction of new guns of various calibres and their necessary carriage.

Pending action on the report of the court of inquiry Lieutenant-Commander Marix, the judge advocate of the court, will be on special duty in the office of the judge advocate general. Here he will be available to supply any information that the president or the secretary of the navy may desire in connection with the proceedings of the court.

The enlistment of men for the naval service is progressing satisfactorily at the Washington navy yard and a good class of men is being obtained. Heretofore the enlistments have been confined to ratings of machinists, seamen and ordinary seamen. On the recommendation of Lieut. J. Robinson, the recruiting officer in charge of the rendezvous, navy department, has authorized him to include the enlistment of coal passers and firemen.

Lieutenant Colwell, at London, has been directed by the navy department to urge the builders of the recently purchased cruiser Albany, to hasten the construction of the ship with all possible speed.

Investigating a Death.

TRANTON, N. J., March 26.—The coroner's inquest into the death of Henry Brown, who died Tuesday as a result of injuries sustained in a boxing contest on Monday night with Jack Smith resulted in a verdict that Brown's death was due to a blow on the head. Jack Smith was held without bail and Robert Smith, who was his manager, was held on \$500 bail and Manager Jack Smith, as well as the seconds of both Brown and Smith, have been held on \$500 bail as witnesses.

LEVEE WASHED OUT.

Twenty Thousand Acres of Land are Over Flowed.—Hundreds Homeless.

SULLIVAN, Ind., March 26.—The levee on the Wabash river went out with a breadth of 100 feet, entailing a loss of \$100,000. Twenty thousand acres of land are overflowed, and hundreds of families are rendered homeless and destitute. Citizens are responding for miles around in their effort to remove families and stock. Hundreds of cattle and horses are hemmed in. The levee was seven miles long and was built at a cost of \$80,000. The area of farm lands submerged is about 20,000 acres.

The Indiana and Illinois Southern railroad suffers a serious loss. The road officials are directing and rendering every assistance in the work of relief. The water at this hour is making a mad rush through the bottom lands, uprooting trees and taking everything in its path. It is feared that many people, who were slow to take warning, will meet death in the flood.

An Osgood special says: The B. & O., S. W. railroad between Lawrence and Aurora for three and one half miles is four feet under water. Trains go to Cincinnati by North Vernon via the Big Four route.

The Ohio is rising at a very rapid rate, with no immediate prospect of stopping. The conditions are alarming and fears that the levee will break at Lawrenceburg are entertained. The Wabash raised 2.22 feet tonight, this being the highest ever known, and is still rising. The levee below the city gave way this afternoon and the lowlands of Lawrence county will soon be a sea of water. The suffering and loss of property will be great. The lowlands of upper Vincennes and Lecker townships are submerged by White river. The steamer Owensboro left for Beal with a relief party this evening. Three hundred people are waterbound and destitute.

Owing to a break in the Evansville & Terre Haute at Emison, caused by the break at Lower Shaker prairie, all trains on that line are abandoned. The first train on the Indianapolis & Vincennes road since Tuesday reached this city today.

CINCINNATI, O., March 26.—Until the weather becomes settled there can be no reliable prediction in regard to the flood in the Ohio. But for the rain which began about 2 o'clock this morning in the Ohio valley the Ohio river here would not have reached fifty feet. The precipitation here up to 7 o'clock this morning was one-half inch. Tonight rain is reported from the same storm from Portsmouth to Parkersburg. Nevertheless the Ohio is falling at all points above here. From 5 to 8 o'clock this evening the river has risen one-tenth of a foot and at 10 o'clock tonight is sixty-one feet and three-tenths. What it shall be to-morrow depends wholly on whether or not there will be additional rain in the Ohio valleys. All railroads are running trains on their regular lines tonight. The condition of people exiled from homes by the water is the same as yesterday. If there is no more rainfall the river will begin to decline about midnight at about sixty-one and five-tenths feet and after that will run out rapidly.

Working in Unison.

WASHINGTON, March 30.—At the close of the cabinet meeting yesterday Secretary Alger gave out the following statement:

"So far as the being any difference of opinion among the members of the cabinet; they are all in hearty accord with the president. When he read yesterday his message on the Maine there was not a dissenting voice nor a suggestion of change. It commanded the approval of every member. How could the president have said more? He gave congress the report at once and stated that he had forwarded it to Spain and is awaiting her reply. He must take one step at a time. It may be said further that there need be no fear that he will not take the next. He has not lost a moment in presenting not only the Maine incident but the whole situation to Spain. The country can well afford to wait the result of the negotiations which will be promptly made known whatever the result."

The Spanish situation was the absorbing and practically the only subject of consideration at the state, war and navy departments and although the main interest of the day was centered in the cabinet meeting and the general course of congress, yet the active negotiations now proceeding with Spain made the state department hardly less a centre of attention, while the preparations of the war and navy branches went on with unabated vigor. The Spanish minister, Senor Polo, reached the state department shortly before noon and was with Judge Day over half an hour. The meeting was by appointment, one of Judge Day's clerks having been sent to the minister to ask him to come to the department at the earliest moment.

Pending his arrival, Judge Day went to the navy department and had a talk with Assistant Secretary Roosevelt and soon thereafter Mr. Roosevelt returned the visit and had a talk with Judge Day in his office.

Headed for America.

LONDON, March 30.—Ensigns Robinson and McMorris, U. S. N., who have been studying naval architecture at Glasgow, have been recalled by order from Washington. The United States cruiser San Francisco, which, with the New Orleans, called on Sunday last for the United States, is proceeding at nice knot speed, owing to a defect in the San Francisco's engine. The New Orleans has been ordered by Commodore Howell to keep behind the San Francisco

THURSTON SPEAKS

MRS. THURSTON'S LAST REGULST.

The Senate Listens to an Impassioned Speech on Cuba and Her Troubles by Our Junior Senator.

WASHINGTON, March 25.—A scene, dramatic in the intensity of its interest, was presented in the senate today during the delivery of Mr. Thurston of Nebraska of a speech on the Cuban situation.

Not since the inauguration of President McKinley have so many people been on the senate side of the capitol as there were today. The galleries were packed with people, many of whom had arrived at the capitol as early as 9:30 a. m. in order to obtain seats. Even the diplomatic gallery, which is rarely occupied, was filled with ladies and gentlemen from various foreign legations.

Within a few minutes after the senate convened, every senator who could be present, was in his seat and by the time Mr. Thurston had begun his speech dozens of members of the house were either standing or occupied chairs in the area without the usual circle of seats. A jar of ropes had been placed on Mr. Thurston's desk, but he spoke from that of Mr. Hawley in the central part of the chamber.

His first sentence in which he said he spoke by command of silent lips—a delicate and touching reference to the loss of his wife by his memorable trip to Cuba—commanded instant attention. A hush fell over the great audience, which hung with almost breathless attention and interest upon every word.

Some surprise has been expressed that Senator Thurston should appear in public so soon after the demise of Mrs. Thurston, but the first sentence of his speech finishes the key to his action.

Mrs. Thurston's dying request to her husband was that he should leave no time on account of her death to do his utmost to save and free Cuba and its people. In accordance with the request therefore, Senator Thurston sacrificed his personal feeling and delivered his speech—a speech that was his tribute to the memory of his wife.

The speech was very generally regarded as a masterly effort and even those who could not agree with his conclusions conceded the power of his oration. As he neared the end of the speech his voice, which had been clear and rising, noticeably broke. He was almost overcome by emotion, but rallied with an effort and closed in a manner that thrilled his auditors.

Staid and dignified senators turned away and wept, and in the galleries tears welled to hundreds of eyes. It was a remarkable scene and the stillness until the last word had been pronounced was as of death itself.

As Mr. Thurston sank into his seat and buried his face in his hands the galleries were swept by such a tumult of applause as has not in a long time been heard in a senate chamber.

As a brother might have done, Mr. Allen, Mr. Thurston's colleague, from Nebraska, walked to him and placing his arm over his shoulders quietly led him from the chamber. The act was one of the touching amenities among the turbulence and discord of political life.

The Cuban Crisis.

LONDON, March 25.—The imminence of the Cuban crisis has prompted financiers to make efforts to avert war. A movement on foot in Lombard street and among American bankers who are leading it are supposed to have the sympathy and perhaps the co-operation of Rothschild's. The American bankers are endeavoring to secure the influence of financiers and governments, representing to them the damage to the commerce of all nations which a war would involve. The financiers are willing to invest liberally to prevent war, but apparently they are unable to devise a plan promising success. The American bankers tell the diplomats that if the United States demands an indemnity, and Spain is willing to pay it, financiers will gladly furnish the funds.

The best informed diplomats believe the Spanish cabinet and dynasty dare not risk the wrath of the populace which would inevitably follow acquiescence in the demand of the United States for reparation for the loss of the Maine.

Financiers are also seeking to bring pressure upon Washington, through diplomats, but it is believed they have met with little success.

Strike of Coal Miners.

PITTSBURGH, March 25.—A general strike of river coal miners will be inaugurated on April 2, unless all of the conditions of the Chicago agreement are complied with by that date or the operators agree to pay the men upon a run of mine basis. A strike will effect about 5,000 men.

Will Not be Prosecuted.

ROME, March 25.—The chamber of deputies adopted, by a vote of 207 to 7, the committee's report recommending "political censor" against Premier Crispi, who has been accused of complicity in the Bank of Naples scandal. He will not be prosecuted.

Quarter of a Million for Relief.

WASHINGTON, March 25.—An amendment to the sundry civil bill is pending before the senate committee on appropriations, appropriating \$250,000 to furnish supplies to the destitute people of Cuba. It is stated that it will probably be adopted.

Notorious Pontoon.

WASHINGTON, March 25.—Following is the issue of Nebraska position: Increase—Samuel Beckley, Orlington, 25 to 21; James R. Kennedy, Fremont, 25 to 21.

THE VITAL POINT

CUBA MUST HAVE HER FREEDOM.

What Question will be decided today. Relations between the United States and Spain must be settled.—The Ultimate Result.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—The vital point of the Cuban situation, viz., independence, has shifted itself from Washington to Madrid, where the Spanish government is now giving grave and earnest consideration to propositions presented by the government of the United States. On the answer to these propositions probably depends the future course of the relations between Spain and the United States. The Spanish ministry will hold a cabinet meeting today, after the propositions have been submitted to the queen regent, and as a result of that conference it is expected by the administration that a definite answer to its proposals will be received.

The propositions submitted by this country contemplate a complete and immediate cessation of hostilities in Cuba, the return of the reconcentrados to their usual avocations and the independence of Cuba, this last feature to be secured probably on an indemnity basis, by which the island would pay a substantial sum for its freedom from Spanish rule. These propositions take a wide scope and there are many details in the elaborate propositions, the purpose being to present every possible plan promising a solution of the Cuban problem so long as an end of the Cuban war and Cuban independence were embodied in the ultimate result.

A Breakdown on a Point.

It has been made perfectly clear to Spain that nothing less than the close of the war and the independence of the island will suffice as an adequate settlement.

Never before until now has the Spanish government ever for a moment entertained such propositions. Now, in the stress of the emergency, with declarations of war introduced in the American congress, Spain has reluctantly consented to consider them. This in itself has given lively hope of a satisfactory result. But it involves a grave crisis in Spain, and it cannot be foretold what the final action at Madrid will be. Until today there was the best of reason for the official belief that as between peace and war on these propositions Spain would choose war, but more hope apparently is entertained here of Spain being in a yielding mood, as the American plans for solution are being carefully weighed with a view to a final decision. When the answer is received the future course of this government will be determined. It is the view of the administration that the present week will shape the policy of the future, whether it is to be one of peace or one of war.

Hot Heads Restrained.

Many representative men of congress, senators and representatives, called at the White house today and conferred with the president. To the leaders in congress he stated that definite results were expected from Madrid by Friday. This served to allay the intense feeling which had been manifested in congress, and through the influence of the leaders further radical action by the senate and house was for the time being deferred.

At the capitol excitement was unabated. The meeting of the foreign relations committee brought out much interest because of the many warlike resolutions introduced yesterday and referred to that committee. On the house side there was increased excitement. After the vote on the Bailey resolution many members went to the White house to confer with the president and express to him their hope that something might be promised which would relieve the strained situation. The assurance of the president was given to these members that by Friday night, at the latest, something definite could be expected.

The situation at the capitol is one of waiting expectancy. Senators and representatives are willing to give the president an opportunity to carry out his plans, but there is impatience to have some information regarding these plans and some assurance that they will not delay action too long.

Negotiations About Closed.

PHILADELPHIA, March 31.—Negotiations are about closed between the government and P. A. B. Widener of this city for the purchase of the latter's ocean-going steam yacht Josephine. The yacht is 182 feet over all, twenty-eight beam, draws sixteen feet of water and is of 400 tons register. She can carry 300 tons of coal and has a speed of about eighteen knots an hour.

Orders for the refitting of the old monitors Mahopac, Canonius and Mohawk were received at League island tonight.

The big monitor Miantonomah will receive her finishing touches of paint tomorrow and will be ready to sail at a moment's notice. Today additional rapid fire guns were mounted in her fighting top.

Great Interest Excited.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—The navy department has received a dispatch saying that several Spanish warships have left Cienfuegos, Spain. The dispatch has not been learned as yet. The news excited great interest at the navy department.

It has been learned later that the ships which left Cienfuegos are the armored cruisers Infante Maria and Cristobal Colon and the torpedo boat destroyer Thetis.

THE CUBAN QUESTION

The Cabinet Members Meet With President McKinley Sunday.

WASHINGTON, March 26.—The president saw a number of members of the cabinet yesterday at the White house. They dropped in one by one until almost a quorum was present. With them was Assistant Secretary of State Day, who presumably had some dispatches to show the president. The meeting was not a special cabinet meeting, but was simply a talk between the president and his advisers such as occurred last Sunday concerning matters on which he desired to consult them. The Cuban question and the report of the Maine board of inquiry were the subjects discussed, but so far as could be ascertained, one of the members of the cabinet saying subsequently that there was nothing new or startling in the situation. The presence of Judge Day would infer that there were advances from Minister Woodford, but further than an acknowledgment that communication is in progress between the state department and the minister, nothing could be ascertained.

At the state, war and navy departments there was during the earlier portions of the day little semblance of the Sabbath. Chiefs of bureaus, messengers and telegraph operators were at work. Probably never since the days of the late war have so many officials gathered at the war and navy departments on a Sunday. Dispatches that came there regarding the movements of ships and other matter were received, and as many of them required prompt answer in the present emergency, replies were forwarded. Secretary Long, however, did not appear at the navy department during the day. Mrs. Long has been ill for some time and the secretary in part shook off official cares and spent the majority of the day with her.

Assistant Secretary Day spent a portion of the Sabbath at the state department and there received a call from the Spanish minister, a rather unusual procedure, indicating important matters for consideration. The conference lasted some time.

Tonight Commodore Willford S. Schley, just appointed the commander of the "Flying Squadron," left for Norfolk. It is expected that tomorrow he will hoist his flag on the Brooklyn, which is to be the flagship of the squadron. The only other vessel of the fleet now at Hampton Roads is the Massachusetts. Of the remaining three the Texas is in New York receiving munitions, and the Columbia and the Minneapolis are at League island, where the final work preparatory to their sea service is being hurried to completion. The latter will be at Norfolk about the middle of the week.

Both Sides Hope for Peace.

The developments of the day in the Cuban situation indicate steady progress in the negotiations, but the government of this country and Spain look, at least for the present, to peace. It is stated on good authority that Spain's wish is to secure a cessation of hostilities in Cuba rather than engage in war with the United States and that it is more than probable that the negotiations between the government of the United States and the Spanish ministry will take that turn in the immediate future. The present Spanish ministry has professed a pacific disposition from the beginning and indications are strong now that it will avail itself of the good offices of the United States to the fullest extent that public opinion in Spain will allow in bringing to an end the hostilities in Cuba. To what extent the United States may go in assisting Spain in her present design of securing an armistice is not determined, but the conservative element in the administration consider the manifestation of this desire on the part of Spain for even a temporary peace a direct result of President McKinley's diplomacy and they are naturally disposed to contend that the president should be left free for the present at least, to pursue a policy which promises much in the way of preventing war between this country and Spain and also of bringing to a close the hostilities in Cuba. Hence there will be an effort on the part of the peacefully inclined in congress to continue to hold that body in check and to prevent inflammatory utterances there until this promising diplomatic lead may be exploited.

Terrible Disaster.

ST. JOHN'S, N. T., March 28.—The seal steamer Greenland, which put in a Bay de Verde last night with a story of terrible disaster to her crew on Wednesday and Thursday while among the ice floes in search of seals, arrived here this afternoon.

She reported twenty-five men dead, twenty-three missing and sixty-one so fearfully frostbitten that about twenty of them will lose their limbs.

The colony is aghast at the magnitude of the disaster, nothing like which has ever been known here. Already a relief fund has been started to assist the relatives of the deceased.

The Greenland has 14,000 seals. She reports that the Aurora has 18,000, the Diana 19,000 and the Iceland 11,000.

Passed Off Quietly.

MADRID, March 25.—The elections for the popular branch of the cortes have passed off, on the whole, quietly. The indications are that the government of Senor Sagasta will have an enormous majority, estimated at 300 of the 433 seats in the congress.

Disorders are apprehended at Bilbao, where the polling caused great excitement. The military judge at Bilbao issued a warrant for the arrest of three socialist municipal councilors.

AFFAIRS IN CUBA

A DIGNIFIED FIRMNESS.

The Spanish Answer has Been Made and is in the Hands of the Authorities.—Marked by a Conservative Tone.

WASHINGTON, March 29.—The United States government has presented through Minister Woodford at Madrid a cable prepared note dealing with the distressing condition of affairs in Cuba, and making clear that this government cannot much longer withhold such definite action as will bring the present struggle and the suffering it is occasioning to a close. The note was submitted to the Spanish government the latter part of last week.

The Spanish government has made its reply to the note of the United States thus submitted by Minister Woodford. A brief cable dispatch was received from Minister Woodford, but this is believed not to have conveyed the Spanish reply, as it was confined largely to an inquiry. It can be stated positively, however, that the Spanish answer has been made and it cannot be doubted that it is in the hands of the authorities here.

Both the note of the United States and the answer of Spain are marked by a conservative tone, which, however, does not overcome the dignified firmness which characterizes the representatives of both governments.

The United States note clearly indicated that the situation in Cuba could no longer be tolerated, and in detail recited the distressed conditions prevailing and the apparent inability of the present Spanish policy in Cuba to bring these conditions to a close.

The Spanish answer is reassuring and furnishes a basis for every hope that all differences may be adjusted on a basis satisfactory to both governments.

Outlook More Hopeful.

The cabinet meeting, which was called at 10:30 o'clock yesterday, was largely devoted to the reading of the president's message, sent to congress at noon. Several minor changes were made in the wording of the message and after it had been dispatched to the capitol some time was spent in the considering of late messages from Minister Woodford. Although the details of these dispatches are not made public, it is known that they are reassuring in character and give a basis for the belief that the present strained relations may yet be satisfactorily relieved. Although reticent as to the details, a member of the cabinet said after the meeting that the conditions were much more hopeful than three days ago.

It is undoubtedly true that Spain is willing to make important concessions to the United States and is willing to go even so far as to agree to withdraw its troops from Cuba on conditions which, if not satisfactory to this government, are more liberal and conciliatory than any thing hitherto received and clearly indicate a purpose to avoid war, even if it means that end Spain is compelled to make sacrifice never before considered. Notwithstanding these hopeful signs, the negotiations have not passed the danger point, nor is it believed that the government will accept any compromise that does not involve prompt cessation of hostilities, even if the question of the future government of Cuba be left to future negotiations.

New Guns Completed.

LONDON, March 29.—Forty rapid fire five and six-inch guns completed by the Armstrongs and destined for the United States will be shipped immediately.

Lieutenant Colonel Alfred E. Bates, United States military attaché, started to lay on a tour of Germany, Austria and Belgium in an endeavor to purchase guns.

The United States military attaché at Berlin, Lieut. H. T. Allen, after scouring the country, reports that no guns are procurable in Germany. The Krupp stock was all ordered before the guns were begun and that concern is unable to sell any to the United States. It is expected, however, that the United States will be able to secure a lot of guns made in Belgium for the Belgian government, which does not need them. But it is doubtful whether these guns will be deliverable at an early date.

BRUSSELS, March 29.—A high official of the German foreign office, said today to the Associated press representative:

"Germany will joyfully greet any step to improve Spanish-American relations, but this interest does not go so far as to induce Germany to participate in offering mediation. Moreover, there is no indication that America is inclined to suffer such mediation, nor on that basis."

Nothing Less Than Freedom.

NEW YORK, March 27.—"The United States may make arrangements with Spain, but the Cubans will never consent to an armistice or any other plan but independence," said Horatio B. Hobbes, counsel for the Cuban junta.

"The Cubans would be thankful for the interest shown by this country, but would have to respectfully decline all such propositions. It is an absolute loss of time for the United States to entertain any negotiations of the kind with Spain."

Ordeal Explored.

ROME, March 29.—Signor Francesco Crispi, former premier has gone to Palermo to explain to his constituents his action, during his premiership, in connection with the Bank of Naples scandals and other proceedings that have been recalled under consideration by the chamber of deputies, from which he resigned as a protest against the "political censor" passed upon him at the recommendation of the parliamentary committee of investigation.