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Mr. Roosevelt's Decision.

In discussing the question as to who was in command in the battle of Santiago bay, Mr. Roosevelt contradicts himself. He concludes that Admiral Sampson was in command and in order to sustain this position, he quotes from several of the captains and also points out that when Admiral Sampson sailed away, he hoisted the signal, "Disregard the movements of the commander-in-chief," but did not hoist the signal to the second in command to take charge. Mr. Roosevelt even quotes Admiral Evans as saying that he received no signal from the Brooklyn and should not have heeded any if any had been made, as he considered Admiral Sampson as present and in command. In the same statement, however, Mr. Roosevelt, referring to certain points in which Schley was condemned by the court of inquiry, says: "It seems that if Admiral Schley was censurable, he should not have been left as second in command under Admiral Sampson." In another place Mr. Roosevelt says: "If Admiral Schley was guilty of reprehensible conduct of the kind which called for such notice from Admiral Sampson, then Admiral Sampson ought not to have left Schley as senior officer of the blockading squadron on the 3d of July, while he (Sampson) steamed away."

In another place Mr. Roosevelt says: "Admiral Schley, at the outset of the action, hoisted the two signals of 'Clear ship' and 'Close in,'" but, probably fearful lest Schley would obtain the slightest credit because of these facts, Mr. Roosevelt adds that these acts "were simply carrying out the standing orders of Admiral Sampson as to what should be done if the enemy's ships attempted to break out of the harbor." Mr. Roosevelt also admits that "during the action not a single order from him (Admiral Sampson) was received by any of the ships that were actively engaged." And yet after all these statements, Mr. Roosevelt concludes that Admiral Sampson was in command.

Then, after devoting most of his efforts to the question of the command, Mr. Roosevelt concludes that, after all, that question is one of nominal character. In considering certain points on which the court of inquiry had censured Admiral Schley, Mr. Roosevelt points out that these offenses were in effect condoned when the department failed to call Schley to account for them and when Admiral Sampson "left Schley as senior officer of the blockading squadron on the 3d of July, when he (Sampson) steamed away."

Then Mr. Roosevelt says that the court of inquiry "should have specifically condemned the failure to enforce an efficient night blockade while Admiral Schley was in command." This night blockade was also condoned in the same way, and yet Mr. Roosevelt criticises the court for condemning Schley on condoned offenses and then coolly proceeds to criticise the court for not condemning Schley on another condoned offense.

In several places in his statement Mr. Roosevelt seems to take particular pains to associate Mr. McKinley's name with the matter under discussion. One cannot avoid the suspicion that Mr. Roosevelt was seeking to protect his decision from severe criticism by appealing to the popular affection for the dead president. Indeed, in one place Mr. Roosevelt bluntly says that the matter before him "is, in effect, an appeal from the action of President McKinley three years ago. And again he says: "What I have to decide therefore, is whether or not President McKinley did justice in the matter." And then in another place Mr. Roosevelt says: "I find that President McKinley did substantial justice and there would be no warrant for re-

versing his action." And again Mr. Roosevelt says: "Under such circumstances it seems to me that the recommendations of President McKinley were eminently proper and that so far as Admirals Sampson and Schley were concerned, it would have been an injustice for him to have made any other recommendations."

If Mr. Roosevelt was really convinced that President McKinley was on trial, Mr. Roosevelt was not in a frame of mind to do justice to Admiral Schley. Even though Mr. McKinley's acts were to be passed upon, Admiral Schley would yet be entitled to justice; but the truth is, that Mr. McKinley's acts were not necessarily under consideration. When Mr. McKinley sent in his recommendations for promotion of the various officers concerned in the Santiago squadron, he acted upon information that came to him from the naval department which was then under the control of men who were hostile to Admiral Schley. Since Mr. McKinley acted in these matters, the court of inquiry has been held and the evidence has been presented. It will be remembered that the evidence given before the court of inquiry served to confirm the popular impression concerning the battle of Santiago bay and no one will be justified in saying that in the light of this testimony, Mr. McKinley would have rendered a decision adverse to Admiral Schley.

Referring to Sampson and Schley, Mr. Roosevelt says: "There was nothing done at the battle to warrant any unusual reward for either;" and then he says, "It was just to Admiral Sampson that he should receive a greater advance in numbers than Admiral Schley;" and referring to the advancement of Sampson, Mr. Roosevelt said: "It would have been unjust for him (McKinley) to have made any other recommendations."

If there was nothing done at the battle to warrant any unusual reward for either, it seems strange that Sampson, who was not even a participant in the battle, is entitled not only to receiving the prize money, not only to a greater advance in numbers than Admiral Schley, but is entitled to the honor and credit of being known as the actual commander; while Schley, who, to say the least, was in the battle, not only is deprived of any honors or credit, but is actually the recipient of a severe condemnation.

The really serious feature of the president's statement is that relating to the loop. Mr. Roosevelt condemns the loop and gives a finely veiled hint of cowardice when he says: "This kind of danger must not be too nicely weighed by those whose trade it is to dare greatly for the honor of the flag. Moreover, the danger was certainly not as great as that which, in the self-same moment menaced Wainwright's fragile craft as he drove forward against the foe."

In his statement of facts concerning the battle of which statement Mr. Roosevelt says, "There is no room for doubt on any important point," Mr. Roosevelt says: "For some minutes the Spanish and American vessels steadily approached each other and the fighting was at its hottest stage. Then the already damaged Spanish ships turned to the westward, while at the same time the westernmost American vessel, the Brooklyn, which was nearest the Spanish line, turned to the eastward, making a loop of three-quarter circle, at the end of which she again headed westward, farther off from and farther behind the Spanish vessels

(Continued on Page 12.)

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