

THE HESPERIAN.

VOL. XXVIII.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, JANUARY 20, 1899.

No. 16.

CAMP COLUMBIA, HAVANA. CUBA, Jan. 7, '98.

J. F. Boomer, Lincoln, Nebr.:

Dear Joe and Delian Friends:—I am out of stationery and must fall back on government issue but if that may be pardoned I will send you a few long delayed notes.

I arrived in Havana harbor New Year's night. The first battalion of our regiment came on the transport, Obdam. It is not my purpose however, to tell you of my trip though at times my feelings were intense enough. Yes! I was seasick.

At 7.30 Sunday night we sighted the lights of Moro Castle and one hour later we were just beneath its massive walls. I cannot tell you the impression it made on me. There surely is no ship which could pass it when its guns are in action. After cruising for an hour outside of the harbor a pilot came to us. Here we heard our first Spanish. We passed the channel and anchored in the harbor for the night.

Havana harbor is a broad expanse of water connected with the ocean by a narrow channel. Along this channel are high precipices, strongly fortified. On going on deck in the morning I found that during the night our position had been changed and we were close to the wreck of some ship. "Maine," "Maine," was the one word that morning. The massive steel plates and beams still remain above the surface. Two masts may still be seen. You in your prairie Nebraska cannot realize what a terrible thing that must have been. Just beyond the wreck of the "Maine" lay our battle ships, Texas, Brooklyn and Cincinnati. Pictures only give you a faint idea of what they really are. But I started to tell you of Cuba. At 2 p. m. Jan. 2 we left the transport and began our march through Havana to Camp Columbia eight miles beyond. Havana is the most picturesque "Midway" imaginable. The architecture is the ancient style. Large porticoes are in front supported by massive stone pillars. In the interior is an open court upon which the various rooms open. The buildings are rarely over two stories. There are no "skyscrapers." The buildings are painted in all brilliant colors. Pink and light blue predominate. The streets are paved with cobble stones. The filth is terrible. From two to three inches of the most horrible sewerage is in the street. The foul smell is almost unbearable. Flocks of vultures hover over the city and harbor. You know what a city must be to attract carrion birds. No wonder dreaded diseases lurk in such places. Children scarcely naked are seen in the streets. I saw one woman standing on the sidewalk with no apparent embarrassment holding a child about one year old entirely nude except for one

shoe. And this upon one of the most favored islands of the world.

The people here seem naturally quite intelligent and they are at present the happiest people on earth. One lady where we stopped to rest spoke English quite fluently but most understand only Spanish. One word of English all seem to know but they have reversed its meaning; that is good bye. I tell you a fellow's heart sinks when some pretty young lady looks upon him with a smile and a pleasant courtesy and then says "good bye." Oh! Joe, war is terrible, but that is worse. The prettiest women I ever saw are in Havana. I cannot describe them, but I am sure I can never be content in the north now.

Yesterday I was in a peasant's house and saw a modern clock and an old sewing machine of an early pattern. On a table lay a spear and the ever present machette. The machette is about the shape and size of a corn knife. They carry them when they work.

This is the mecca of naturalists. Numerous species of flowers are in bloom here now, January. Bugs and insects are everywhere. The ocean shore only three miles away is a solid coral reef.

Well, Joe, I could write all night but there goes "taps" and lights must be out. I would like to hear from the Delian friends as well as you.

Joe Sargeant is in the city with the engineers.

Yours truly,

E. G. WOODRUFF,
First Sergeant Co. B, 3rd Nebr.

A committee of the Y. M. C. A. has been busy making plans for Sunday. The Sunday meetings are increasing in interest and attendance, and next Sunday promises to eclipse all others. Dr. Fletcher Wharton, pastor of the St. Paul's church, will make the address. Special efforts are being made to secure good music. All young men should plan to attend, Sunday, 4 p. m.

Prof. Hodgman expects to resume his class work next semester. He will offer an elective in Taylor's Revised Calculus. The class will recite five hours a week and a credit of one course will be given. An elementary knowledge of trigonometry and analytical geometry alone are necessary. This course will be found fairly sufficient for the engineering courses and will be especially valuable for those students who expect to teach, and desire a general view of this most unique mode of mathematical reasoning. This class will meet at nine o'clock.

ONE PROFIT FROM MAKER TO WEARER, REGENT SHOE CO.