

COAST GUNS NEED BRACING UP.

Charleston's Longest Range. For Example, Six Miles Too Short.

A report in the New York Times of Captain Kilburne's address to the business men at Plattsburg on coast defence plans is as follows:

Captain Charles E. Kilburne, of the general staff of the army, in an address to the members of the business men's regiment, informed them that experts of the army were now at work developing a new carriage system for the guns mounted in coast fortifications, both in the United States proper and in the foreign possessions, which was expected to increase the range of those guns by several miles. Under the present disappearing carriage arrangement, the maximum elevation of the pieces, he said, was 15 degrees. The 12-inch guns, for instance, as at present mounted, when elevated to 15 degrees had a maximum range of about 15,000 yards. If mounted so as to permit an elevation to a maximum of 45 degrees, these guns should hurl a projectile from 33,000 to 35,000 yards, while in the case of the great 14-inch guns, the range would be increased with a similar maximum elevation to more than 37,000 yards. An elevation of 45 degrees, for the guns of 16-inch calibre would mean a possible range of about 44,000 yards. At these extreme ranges, however, the effectiveness of the guns would be doubtful, and the present intention, Captain Kilburne said, was to alter the carriages so as to permit an elevation of 26 degrees, which, in the case of the 16-inch gun, would mean accurate fire at a range of more than 25,000 yards.

This was one of the problems that the officers of the ordnance and coast artillery arms were studying, Captain Kilburne asserted, and the prospects of success were more than good. Furthermore, three of the ablest officers of the army, two of them of the general staff, and the third one of the famous engineers of the army, were working out the problem of a proper and efficient system of land support for the coast fortifications.

Captain Kilburne spoke for nearly an hour. At the beginning of his talk Captain Kilburne pointed out the need of solving the land support problem for the coast fortifications. "There is just one place in our scheme of coast defense," said Captain Kilburne, "that would not need the entire mobile army of the United States to support it in the event of a crisis. That place is the Long Island approach to New York city, where the fortifications, which are three in number—Forts Michie, Terry and Wright—are on islands and for that reason the strong support needed in the case of the other fortifications would not apply."

Without adequate coast artillery protection on the sea approach to New York through the Ambrose channel, an enemy's fleet, which would not necessarily have to be nearly as strong as our own, could lie, Captain Kilburne said, off the mouth of the Ambrose channel and make it a very difficult and dangerous undertaking for our own ships to get out of the harbor. The ships would have to leave the harbor in single column and it would not be a difficult matter for the enemy to concentrate the fire of all his ships on each American vessel as it emerged. An adequate coast artillery armament on Sandy Hook and at other strategic points in that district would be able to keep the enemy at a safe distance.

The fortifications in the Philippines and in Hawaii, Captain Kilburne said, could not be reinforced in time of war and it was very doubtful if the Panama fortifications could be reinforced under present conditions. In some of the fortifications in the United States proper as many as 25 companies of the coast artillery were needed, the speaker said, to man them properly and yet the strength was not more than ten companies, and in fortifications where ten companies were needed the number on duty was correspondingly smaller.

Our Mortars Up to Date.

Captain Kilburne next touched upon the mortars of the coast artillery, and here the news he gave was good news, for he says that there were no better mortars in the world than those in the American fortifications.

"These mortars," said Captain Kilburne, "are first class, and their high-angle fire is as good as there is anywhere."

The story he told of the big guns was different. Their glaring defect, he said, was the out-of-date disappearing gun carriage system, which decreased the range several thousand yards in the case of the guns of higher calibres. An elevation much greater than 15 degrees was absolutely necessary, Captain Kilburne said, if our guns were to have a sporting chance in a duel with the highpowered long-range guns mounted on modern dreadnoughts of the Queen Elizabeth type. These great naval guns, he said, had completely

EPISTLE STOPS BULLET.

British Soldiers Saved by Testament in His Pocket.

Charles M. Alexander, singing evangelist and partner of the Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, who passed through this city yesterday on his way to Northfield, said thousands of British soldiers were carrying pocket Bibles as they went to the front. The evangelist believed that the Pocket Testament league, which distributed the Scriptures, "would evangelize the British army, both at the front and home." The league was organized in Philadelphia in the course of the Chapman campaign.

Bodies as well as souls are being saved by the pocket Testaments, in proof of which Mr. Alexander shows a New Testament pierced by a German bullet. This book was hit while reposing in the pocket of a British soldier in a trench in Flanders. The steel pellet ploughed through 400 pages, stopping at First Corinthians. This Testament saved its owner's life.

Since the war began Mr. Alexander has devoted considerable attention to distributing Testaments among Kitchener's soldiers. The plan is to have every recipient sign a pledge card signifying his willingness to carry the Testament always and read a chapter each day. Mr. Alexander spent two months in the training camps on Salisbury plain, in which time 9,708 soldiers joined the league.—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Yes, They Asked Him.

When Wm. H. Crane was younger and less discreet he had a vaulting ambition to play "Hamlet," says the Kansas City Star. So with his first profits he organized his own company and he went to an inland Western town to give vent to his ambition and "try it on."

When he came back to New York a group of friends noticed that the actor appeared to be much downcast. "What's the matter, Crane? Didn't they appreciate it?" asked one of his friends.

"They didn't seem to," laconically answered the actor.

"Well, didn't they give you encouragement? Didn't they ask you to come before the curtain?" persisted the friend.

"Ask me?" answered Crane. "Man they dared me!"

altered the coast artillery situation in this country, and the time was at hand when the deficiencies must be made good.

"Until then we are up against it," Captain Kilburne said, "when we take in consideration the fact that these great guns of which I speak can fire accurately at a range of 25,000 yards."

Captain Kilburne then pointed out the necessity of increasing the force that now mans the sea coast defenses.

"All that we ask of congress," they said Captain Kilburne, "is that they give us enough men to man one-half the guns. That done, we think we can guarantee the rest of it."

The mine problem is another that must be solved quickly if we ever get into trouble, for, as Captain Kilburne put it, "mines must be placed within 24 hours after a war is declared, so rapidly do events move in modern warfare."

The speaker referred to the part that the fleet would play if the country ever became involved in war. The fleet in the Pacific, if we were to play the part some persons had laid out for us there, should be unequal, Captain Kilburne said, of the opposing fleets in that ocean. He referred to the need of adequate and properly defended naval bases in the Pacific, and said that in addition to the bases in Hawaii and the Philippines there should be another at Guam, making it possible for the fleet to steam from base to base for its coal and supplies without having to rely on colliers, which would have to be defended in battle.

Captain Kilburne cited the fact that a frontal attack on fortifications by a fleet never had been successful. The attack of the allied fleets on the fortifications in the Dardanelles he described as a hopeless failure until troops were landed to attack from the land side. The Japanese success at Port Arthur, he said, was an instance of a victory due not to a naval frontal action, but to the effectiveness of the attack made by the Japanese troops on land.

"A great many of us think," added Captain Kilburne, "that if troops had been landed in the Dardanelles at the time of the first attack from the sea, the allies would be a lot farther along than they are now."

The speaker then gave some interesting details concerning an American ordnance. It was at this point that he told of the work now under way to increase the range of the big guns by substituting for the disappearing carriages, other carriages which would permit a greater elevation and greater range.

OHIO'S CONSTITUTION.

Has No Stability and is in Need of Radical Changes.

Under the present Ohio State constitution, with the initiative and referendum provisions, it is possible to submit every year a given plan for amending the constitution, providing the requisite number of signatures can be obtained on the petition, says the Springfield (Mass.) Union. Pursuant to this privilege the advocates of State-wide prohibition propose to press their cause just as often as conditions permit, with a view to getting their doctrine ultimately into the constitution. As against this policy an organization called the Constitution Stability league is about to file a petition for a constitutional amendment that will prohibit the recurrent submission of proposals that have twice been rejected by the voters.

The plan of continually submitting a proposal to amend the constitution is open to decided objections, and prohibition advocates would be among the first to recognize this were their ideas already incorporated in the constitution. For one thing, the practice involves an expense the State cannot fairly be called upon to assume. A deeper objection is that it tends to place, sooner or later, in the constitution measures that do not really command the degree of favor entitling them to such adoption. A proposal may be rejected ten times and then be carried by a margin barely sufficient for its adoption, through overconfidence of its opponents or some accidental factor. Once written into the constitution, a provision commands a certain degree of advantage, especially when a two-thirds vote is necessary for its repeal. Under the Ohio constitution a majority vote is sufficient for the adoption or elimination of any constitutional measure. Should the annual attempts to obtain constitutional prohibition succeed it is to be expected that the opponents of prohibition would then take up the fight and press their cause until a reverse vote were obtained, possibly the year after the supporters of prohibition State in a similarly continuous struggle.

Would-be tinkers with the constitution should be debarred from these annual engagements. After a proposal, submitted through the initiative, has been decisively rejected, it ought not to be brought before the voters again for five years. The better plan, however, is to return to that recognition of the merit of representative government which requires that constitutional amendments shall be approved by the legislature before they can be made part of the fundamental law by a popular vote.

Cotton for Japan.

Considerable anxiety exists among Japanese importers of American cotton over the possibility of the Pacific Mail steamship line being withdrawn from the Pacific after November 4, as reported, says the New York Times. According to a translation from a Japanese newspaper that has been received from Kobe by the bureau of foreign and domestic commerce, it is feared, that the withdrawal of the ships of this company from the Pacific will become a serious handicap to the continuance of the Japanese cotton spinning industry.

It is pointed out in the translated article that the Pacific Mail line has for some time been handling fully 60 per cent of American shipments of cotton to Japan. Thirty per cent of the remainder has been handled by the three Japanese steamship lines and the remaining 10 per cent by the ships of the Great Northern railroad. With American cotton exports to Japan totaling about 400,000 bales annually, the Japanese interested in the subject are wondering who is going to carry the approximately 240,000 bales that are now carried by the Pacific Mail line. It is shown that by increasing the number of steamers and other boats operated, the Japanese lines can take care of part of this amount, but it is not thought that all of it could be handled, even with the resources of the Japanese lines taxed to their limits.

As a last resort it is pointed out that a certain amount of aid may be obtained from the Panama and Suez canal boats, but in view of the conditions in Europe and the present high rates charged on ocean freights, it is said that not much aid can be expected from that source.

Some Liar He.

Two aged Scotchmen were discussing high winds within their memories.

"I mind it bein' his a wind," said one, "that it took the crows three oors to free hame frae the corn fields, an' that is no mair than a mile."

"Hoot, man!" the other replied, "I've seen it that windy that the crows had to walk home."

MYTH PROVED TO BE REAL.

Ancient Grasshopper Myriads Trapped and Held in Glacier.

Grasshoppers on ice, in ice and of ice is the phenomenon to be found in Grasshopper Glacier, once considered a myth, but the existence of which as one of the wonders of the West has been confirmed by geologists, national forest officials and prospectors who have reached the upper headwaters of the East and West Rosebud rivers in the Beartooth mountains of Montana.

Investigation has shown that the "myth" of Grasshopper Glacier is a fact, according to Billings (Mont.) correspondent New York Sun. The correspondent of New York Sun. The frozen in a solid mass of ice. Many of the specimens are as perfect as if preserved in alcohol for exhibition.

In the opinion of scientists who recently made a first-hand study of the fabled glacier the insects were caught in a periodic southward flight and succumbed to the cold in their attempt to cross the mountain range. The huge ice mass, under whose crust the grasshoppers are buried, is virtually under the shadow of Granite Peak, 12,842 feet high, the highest in Montana.

Only recently has its existence as a perpetual glacier been verified, though as long as 40 years ago it was traditionally known in early Montana mining camps and mountain towns. It was considered then merely a fanciful tale of pioneer prospectors and fur trappers who had penetrated to the upper reaches of this branch of the rugged Rockies.

J. C. Whitam, deputy supervisor of the Beartooth National forest, one of the few men who have seen the Grasshopper Glacier, brought back to civilization a small vial containing the nearly perfect remains of several grasshoppers found embalmed in the ice. These were forwarded to the Smithsonian institution, Washington, D. C., but unfortunately were badly broken in transit.

The Granites, of Caribou county, afford perhaps the most picturesque alpine scenery to be found in accessible parts of the United States. The Grasshopper Glacier, which is one of a number discovered by the James P. Kimball survey, is thus described by Dr. Kimball:

"From observations made during the survey it was determined that grasshoppers brought to life on the prairie, when in periodic southerly flight in a direction toward the mountains, are compelled by successive stages to rise and surmount the massive barrier of the mountain range. On the summits they are combated by head winds and frequently violent high mountain air currents, the occasional terrific force of which to be thoroughly appreciated must be encountered on the summits of the range.

"Such portions of the grasshopper flights as are so unfortunate as to be compelled to settle on the glaciers in order to seek shelter from the opposing insurmountable winds become chilled by contact with the snow and ice surface of the glacier and are overcome, remaining unable to rise for a newly attempted flight. The glacier then becomes their sepulchre."

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