

Gossip in Cuba.

Talk of Commercial Treaty With the United States.

Habana, Feb. 18.—Advices received here from Madrid report an interview with the Marquis de Apestezuza, the leader of the Cuban conservatives on the subject of the relations between Spain and the United States. Referring to the question of a commercial treaty the marquis said the matter should be carefully considered in order that the interests of Spaniards in Cuba should not suffer. Such consideration could be given owing to the fact that the signing of such a treaty was not urged.

The Diario de la Marina to-day publishes an article eulogizing President Cleveland for his attitude toward the Cuban filibusters and saying that he is determined to punish those who seek to aid the insurgents.

The town of Dimas in the province of Pinar del Rio, was the scene to-day of a hot fight. A band of rebels attacked the fort, the garrison making a gallant resistance. The rebels were finally repulsed. Losses, if any, are unknown.

Commander Perez of the gunboat Florida fired to-day on rebels quarters on the beach at Santa Rosa, Pinar del Rio. The boats occupied by the rebels were destroyed, and the rebels driven from their encampment.

Ricardo Riaz, an American dentist who shot himself at Guanabacoa, died last night. After an autopsy the body will be delivered to Consul General Lee and Dr. Burgess, and will be interred in the Colon cemetery.

CAME TO LAW.

Washington, Feb. 18.—The Spanish government has agreed to release Julio Sanguilly, the American citizen who was arrested in Cuba almost two years ago. When the committee on foreign relations yesterday took the consideration of the call resolution instructing the President to demand his immediate release, the committee deemed it wise to postpone action for one day for the purpose of ascertaining if there had been any developments in the case since the submission except the correspondence of the senate. This morning a message was received from Secretary Olney announcing that the Spanish government had agreed to his immediate release. The committee will, therefore, wait until next Wednesday its regular meeting day, and if the release is not granted by that time a unanimous report in favor of the resolution will be made to the senate.

Postal Card Coupons.

Washington, Feb. 18.—The senate to-day passed without a word of objection a bill which, if it becomes law, will introduce a new postal card system. Its title is "a bill to extend the uses of the mail service."

It was introduced in the early part of last session by Mr. Vilas (Dem.) of Wisconsin and was referred to the post-office committee, from which it was reported back with amendments on the 18th of last month. A week ago an attempt was made to have it passed by unanimous consent, but objection was then made by Mr. Allen, who said from the reading of the bill it appeared to propose the conferring of a monopoly. Mr. Vilas admitted that it did confer a monopoly, but said that, as the company concerned owned the patent for the invention, there must necessarily be a monopoly. Mr. Allen promised to look into the matter, and when Mr. Vilas asked unanimous consent to-day for the passage of the bill, and said that Mr. Allen was satisfied with it, no objection was made and the bill was passed without its even being read except by title. Its purpose is to allow the circulation by mail of the postal cards and envelopes, with coupons attached, patented and owned by a West Virginia corporation, at regular postal card and letter rates (paid on presentation of the coupons from the said cards and envelopes when detached at the office of delivery). The postmaster general is to test the practical operation of the plan in one or two cities, and to suspend its operation if the test prove unfavorable. There are nine sections to the bill, but they do not convey a very clear idea of the plan.

History Repeats Itself.

"Ferdinand! what are you doing with those bloomers at this time of night?"

The voice of Mrs. Peckleigh was stern and severe as she sat up in bed. "Why, I—I am only sewing on some buttons, my dear," weakly paravered her husband, who, in reality, was going through the pockets for small change to buy ice cream sodas.

"Oh, you dear little husband, you!" Mrs. Peckleigh exclaimed, with apparent remorse, but chuckling secretly, for she saw through his excuse, and she had got out five other pairs of bloomers and Mr. Peckleigh had to stay up all night sewing buttons on them to make good his little bluff.

Dr. Zertucha Assassinated.

Madrid, Feb. 18.—A dispatch received here from Habana says it is reported there that Dr. Zertucha, who was Gen. Antonio Maceo's physician, and accompanied him at the time the insurgent leader met his death, has been assassinated.

They Burned Powder

The Fleet Off Charleston Does Target Work.

Charleston, Feb. 16.—The day has been an uneventful one with Admiral Bunce's fleet. The ships occupying their positions yesterday resumed the exercises with their main battery at an early hour. By 9 o'clock the roar of the big guns could be distinctly heard in the city. These exercises were practically identical with that of yesterday. The practice was then discontinued until 2 p. m., when it was once more resumed, this time with the four and six-inch guns.

During the afternoon the formation of the fleet was materially altered. The Indiana replaced the Columbia at the southern end of the line and the other five vessels of the fleet were collected about the flagship almost due east of the jetties and five miles to seaward. At night there was some exercising with the Caston signal but no manoeuvres of general interest.

The Vesuvius lay off the coast with the fleet last night, but came into the harbor early to-day and is still off the custom house. The transport Ferd made her usual trip to the city, and coming up once more during the evening is now lying in the Cooper river. Up to a late hour to-night the fleet has been joined by one of the boats recently ordered here. The Terror, Paritan, Katahdin and Ericsson have been expected off the coast all day but none of them have put in an appearance. The battleship Maine will sail for Port Royal tomorrow night or Thursday morning.

Their Work is Done.

Blockading Fleet Will Have Two Days of Play.

Charleston, Feb. 17.—It is understood that the manoeuvres of Admiral Bunce's fleet off Charleston are about over and the remaining days which the ships will remain in these waters will be spent in feasting and pleasure. There will doubtless be a review in the presence of Secretary Herbert of the navy when he sails out in the Dolphin, which came into port this morning, to-morrow, but the work for which the ships came to Charleston has been accomplished and the fleet will break up Saturday. It is understood that the New York, Columbia, Massachusetts, Indiana and Fern will proceed direct to Hampton Roads for coal and from thence to New York, where they will arrive not later than March 2. The Dolphin and Vesuvius will go to the Florida coast looking for filibustering parties, and the Maine will proceed to New Orleans. The Amphitrite will remain until Saturday. To-morrow Secretary Herbert, Attorney General Harmon, Admiral Gherardi and a distinguished party of ladies and gentlemen will arrive in the city. They will be the guests of Charleston during their stay here. Governor W. H. Ellerbe, all the chief State officials and the members of both houses of the general assembly will also be in the occasion. A public reception will be held by Secretary Herbert in the afternoon at the city hall and at night a dinner will be given by the chamber of commerce. Speeches will be made by Secretary Herbert, Attorney General Harmon, Mayor Smyth and others. Friday a military and naval ball will be tendered the visitors by the city. And this will probably conclude the blockade of the port of Charleston.

It is impossible just now to rightly estimate the results of the manoeuvres. Officers who will discuss the matter at all express great satisfaction with what has been accomplished. This consisted mainly in exercises with the search lights and guns of the ships. Nightly there was practicing with the lights on ships' boats sent out for the special purpose. The ship would pick the boat up and then following it with the light a record would be made of the observations taken at all distances until the limit of the light was reached. Practicing with the main batteries was especially important and interesting. With the smaller guns considerable accuracy was developed, some of the ships striking their floating target frequently. The work of the heavy pieces was less accurate, but far more instructive, as the men needed this practice the most. The New York, for instance, struck her target no less than 20 times during the practice with both of her batteries. While the officers do not say so it is probable that the work of the search lights was somewhat disappointing at times. On clear nights the lights achieved perfect results, but they proved utterly inadequate to cope with the heavy fog or mist. On the night which the Vesuvius ran the blockade the lights did not carry 500 yards.

The Maine will leave the fleet to-morrow and proceed to Port Royal where she will coal. It is stated positively by persons in a position to know of what they speak that the ships stood the firing of the great guns well, neither the guns, turrets nor gear of any kind receiving any injury.

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Greece Makes Reply.

She Will Ignore the Mandate of the Powers.

Athens, Feb. 18.—Despite the action of the powers in restraining the Greek troops in Urete from aggressive operations against the Turks and the probability that that island will eventually be handed over to Greece without the necessity of her fighting for its possession, the war feeling here is increasing hourly. The enthusiasm with which the reserves responded to the call to arms has been fully equalled by the military ardor of volunteers who are flocking into the city from all parts, eager to take part in battle against the Turks. It is announced this morning that the king of Greece intends to take command of the northern army in person and this has had the effect to still further inflame the martial spirit of the people.

An indication of what may be expected in the way of assistance from Macedonia in any possible conflict with the Turk is shown in steady accession of Macedonians to the Greek ranks. A force of 1,000 Macedonian volunteers in one body crossed the frontier yesterday and joined the Greek army.

In reply to the demand of the diplomats representing the great powers, that the Greek flotilla commanded by Prince George be withdrawn from Cretan waters at once M. Skouzes, minister of foreign affairs sent to each minister a note saying the withdrawal of the flotilla will be impossible until Crete is completely pacified and furthermore, that the Greek government will not rescind its orders to the Greek force in Crete to oppose the landing of Turkish troops upon the island.

Colonel Vassos, commanding the Greek military forces in Crete, has established headquarters at Gonia and is making preparations to attack the town of Selino.

MUSSELLMANS ARE MASSACRED.

Canea, Feb. 18.—Rumors of a wholesale massacre of Mussulmans at Sitia have reached here. Some of the reports placing the number of killed 2,000, which includes almost the entire Moslem population of the town. It is said that men, women and children were killed indiscriminately by the Christians. It is impossible at present to confirm the reports, but the rumors have created the deepest anxiety here. General Bor, who is in command of the gendarmie at Canea, has sent two Italian officers of the gendarmie to Sitia in a gunboat to inquire into the truth or falsity of the reports.

The fort at Voucoulis, which is garrisoned by 500 Turkish troops, has been besieged for several days by a large force of well armed insurgents. Yesterday the commander of the besieging force called upon the Turkish commander to surrender and promised safe conduct to any of the garrison who chose to accept it.

The Turks refused to surrender on any terms. It is stated that the garrison has provisions enough to last for 20 days and a plentiful supply of ammunition. It is reported that Greek troops started to-day for Voucoulis to aid the insurgents in the capture of the place.

The Situation in Europe.

From day to day the press dispatches have brought the news of the stirring events along the Mediterranean; of how Greece, unable to bear longer the oppression of her kin in Crete, has made ready for action, King George and the opposition dropping all differences and uniting for the one object of staying the hand of the Moslem. The hints sent across the Atlantic to explain the action of Greece from a diplomatic standpoint are probably wide of the mark. A simpler solution suggests that a noble people who hark back to the glory of old days with their unapproachable splendor, need no other spur than the cry of the desolate and oppressed. This has stirred Greece. King George sits none too securely on that throne in Athens. He dares not cross the will of his people fired by such an impulse. That is all the explanation necessary to understand the Greek movement.

But there are other practical consequences apt to result in case Turkey declares war, as she will do unless affairs change front. Greece alone could not confront Turkey. The little kingdom must per force seek aid. Will the powers grant it? Have they put Greece forward purposely to draw the Turk into a war, intending thus to find an excuse for crushing the Moslem power? All known circumstances—notably the declarations of the Marquis of Salisbury—are opposed to such a belief. The more rational conclusion is, as we have said, that Greece goes it alone.

It would fare ill for this brave kingdom were it not for another grim power that has a deep debt against the Turk. Russia has watched Constantinople from afar. Ever ready to pounce on it and sweep the Ottoman out of Europe, she has been constantly frustrated by the allied powers. The White Czar has declared his purpose of old and all his recent

policies point to one end. Soon or late his guns will wake an echo in the Dardanelles. He would want no better excuse than the one offered by Greece. Hence the concern of the allied powers; hence England's firm resolution to preserve the balance of power—or as some German wittily said, England wants to keep the balance of power.

So it will be seen that the apparently insignificant uprising in Greece may lead to mighty consequences. The czar has avowed his intention of putting the Suez canal under international control—a blow which was aimed at England and which went home. From an unexpected quarter the event has come which may bring on the much dreaded European war—in which all the powers will be more or less involved—and in which Abdul Hamid may be most gloriously and signally revolved out of political existence. But time will bring us the tale of it.—State

Taxes.

For several years the expenses of municipal, county and State governments in South Carolina have steadily increased and the burdens of taxation grown heavier. The creation of new officers and positions in the State government have each year made greater demands for money, and each new creation by its own force demands others, and thus each year more money is appropriated.

This is true also of the county governments. The Keowee Courier, in a well written editorial, shows that the expenses of the county government of Oconee county have been doubled under the new County Government system and that the demand for more and larger appropriations is inevitable under the system.

The last Comptroller General's report shows that in several of the counties, the rate of taxation for county purposes is enormously increased.

In Chester county a levy of seven mills for county purposes is asked by the county supervisor, in Fairfield 5½ mills, Georgetown 6 mills, Greenville 8 10 21 mills, Kershaw 6½ mills, in Lancaster 19½ mills, Lexington 6½ mills and Pickens 10½ mills—while the levy for the counties was formerly not exceeding 3 mills—very few of the counties ask for a levy less than four mills. Of course, added to this levy we have the State tax and the school tax of three mills, which will aggregate about 8 mills this year.

Not only so, but municipal taxes are increasing so rapidly that soon it will be cheaper to live in a hired house in any city than to live in one which the inhabitant owns. The State, county and municipal taxes, insurance rates and the interest on the money invested in the house will amount to more than the rent which would have to be paid for the same house. With all this, new methods are being devised to create more offices—a bank examiner, insurance companies, a labor bureau of statistics and commissioner of labor, are suggested by bills introduced in the Legislature.

With this it is sought to put the telegraphic lines and express companies under the railroad commission, and thus, with increased labor put upon the already over-burdened commissions, new clerks and increased pay will be demanded.

It would be delightful if an era of real, genuine reform could be inaugurated. Taxes be reduced. The prospect, however, is now not very favorable for such reduction. There is nothing that now escapes the tax gatherer, new schemes each year are devised to reach every kind of business and property. The loss of the phosphate royalty, and the new county governments will increase the expenses of the State and county governments while the municipal taxation does not stand still.—Columbia News

A Valuable Prescription.

Editor Morrison of Worthington, Ind., "Sun" writes: "You have a valuable prescription in Electric Bitters, and I can cheerfully recommend it for Constipation and Sick Headache, and as a general system tonic it has no equal." Mrs. Annie Steele 2623 Cottage Grove Ave. Chicago, was all run down, could not eat nor digest food, had a backache which never left her and felt tired and weary, but six bottles of Electric Bitters restored her health and renewed her strength. Prices 50 cents and \$1.00. Get a Bottle at J. F. W. DeLorme's Drug Store.

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AS TO ALIENS.

Washington, Feb. 17.—After a four hours' debate in the senate to-day the conference report on the bill to amend the immigration laws was agreed to by a vote 34 to 31. As the report had already been agreed to in the house, the bill as modified in conference now goes to the President. It adds to the classes of excluded aliens all persons over 16 years of age who cannot read the English language, except that admissible immigrants may bring with them or send for illiterate parents or grandparents over 50 years of age, wives and minor children. It also prohibits from employment on public works aliens who come regularly or habitually into the United States for the purpose of engaging in any mechanical trade or manual labor, and who have not made declaration of intention to become American citizens. The secretary of the treasury, however, may permit the entrance of aliens for the purpose of teaching new arts or industries. And the act is not to apply to persons coming here from Cuba during the continuance of the present disorders there.

Four Democratic senators (Chilton, Faulkner, Hill and Martin) voted for the report and four Republicans (Hansbrough, Hawley, Mantle and Shoup) against it.

After the immigration bill was disposed of the senate proceeded to the consideration of executive business, and at 6 p. m. adjourned.

Crisis in Spain.

Madrid, Feb. 17.—El Dia, in an article on the political situation, asserts in the most positive terms that a ministerial crisis is impending and that it is possible that Senor Sagasta will return to the premier-ship. The paper also says that there is a likelihood that Gen. Roman Blanco, late governor-general of the Philippine islands, will replace Gen. Weyler as captain-general of Cuba.

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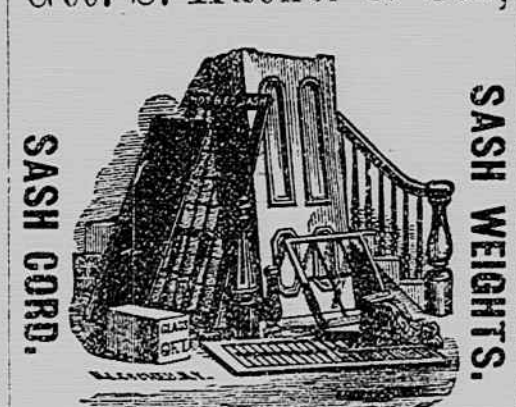
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