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KEEPING PUBLIC IN THE DARK.

President Expects to Hold Report Till Next Week.

President Said to Cherish the Remarkable Hope That Spain Will Arrange Everything in Cuba.

Washington, March 22—The cabinet meeting to-day lasted something over an hour and was devoted exclusively to the Spanish situation in general and to the forthcoming report of the Maine court of inquiry in particular. The tone of the discussion was very firm and determined that there must come an end to the present state of affairs in Cuba.

Secretary Long authorized the statement that the understanding before the cabinet was that the report would reach Washington Thursday or Friday, that it was very voluminous and that its publication and transmission to congress would not occur until next Monday, as the President would require that much time to give the document the mature consideration its momentous character required. Other cabinet officers stated that the general plan included the sending of a presidential message along with the report, stating that Spain has been called upon to make suitable response to the case presented by the court of inquiry. While the cabinet associates of the President maintain their usual reserve as to the exact character of the deliberations, it was conceded that the discussion proceeded on the theory that the coming report would show that the Maine explosion was not the result of an accident, but was due to an external cause. This was not because of any positive information, however, as to the findings of the court. There is no doubt that substantial unanimity exists on the part of the President and all his cabinet, both as to the Maine question and the general subject of Cuba. The possibility of a recourse to invasion in case Spain declined to make suitable response to the representation will make regarding the situation in Cuba, has been discussed. Necessarily the consideration of the Maine disaster has been abstract thus far, and no conclusion has been reached or it is possible until the vital question as to the court's findings are before the President and cabinet. At the same time there is a very evident intention to consider all eventualities, including the recourse to intervention, the recognition of independence and other methods which appear to suitably meet the requirements of such a condition. It is believed to be the intention of the President, however, to bring about a very material and satisfactory condition in Cuba by what shall seem to be the best and most practicable method of obtaining this end. It is the hope of the administration that Spain herself will so far realize the situation as to see the necessity for such radical action on her part with respect to Cuba as shall command the approbation of the country and thus at once put an end to all differences.

Spanish Editozs Talk.

Havana, March 23.—Bishop Manuel Santander y Trutas, the bishop of Havana, has consecrated the central relief station and also the Lee Orphanage. He paid high tributes to Louis Kloppch, the special commissioner, for his system of relief work, and seemed greatly pleased with all the arrangements made to help the poor, as well as the orphans.

La Lucho, in an editorial under the caption of "Expectation in the World," maintains that the American court of inquiry, owing to the short time it was here, could not give a scientific report on the Maine disaster.

"American Naval officers," says La Lucho "are not likely to decide against brother officers. The divers could not give expert testimony, owing to the fact that the machinery was imbedded four feet in the mud. It is greatly to be regretted that more time and care were not given to the preparation of a report for which the whole world waits and is likely to change the entire feel-

ings of a part of the American people toward Spain and Cuba."

La Lucho publishes also an interview with General Lee, which quotes him as saying that he knows nothing of the nature of the report, but is satisfied that General Blanco never conceived the disaster until he heard the shock in the harbor.

Gunner Morgan left the fleet at Key West to-day. With him went the naval divers Fisher, Rundquest and Schluter, and Hanz, the helper. This leaves two navy divers and five civilians on the contract work.

The body of a white man was found in the forward part of the wreck to-day. It will probably be identified by marks on the clothing when the latter has been disinfected. The body was sent to Key West on the Olivette.

The Outlook for War.

The Washington administration is steadily developing its policy of discounting in advance the report of the board of inquiry. It is the fear of President McKinley, we learn from "anti-jingo" papers, that if congress shall receive the report of the board without due preparation it will explode in a dynamic outburst of wrath and forthwith declare war against Spain. Even Speaker Reed is apprehensive that his "reconcentrados" of the house will revolt and break through his trocha. So by hints and suggestions and inferential admissions congress is being seasoned against a surprise.

It is hardly worth while to speculate at this late day as to the findings of the board. That proof of the external origin of the explosion will be presented in the report is already conceded by the press of the country, the Charleston News and Courier excepted. The only question is whether the board have been able to trace the crime to Spanish officials. This proof we have not expected. But it is not essential. The fact that the Maine was blown up by Spanish agencies is sufficient to compel the demands which will bring the issue to such a point that either the United States or Spain will have to flunk. And it won't be the United States.

The New York Mail and Express vouches editorially for a staff correspondent who wires from Key West that when he told Judge Advocate Marix that he was going back to Havana that member of the court replied: "Don't do it. Havana will be a hot place when the findings of the court are known. It is as much as your life is worth to go there." The decision to abandon the Maine, announced to-day, and the recall of the officers of the wrecked ship as also the Fero, from Havana seem to confirm this and to suggest that the board's report will do more than find that the explosion was external.

The New York Herald's Madrid correspondent is apparently a Spaniard and unmistakably close to the government, whose views he has been reflecting. We therefore attach importance to this announcement from him:

I am in a position to state, and it may be useful just now in connection with political calculations of the immediate future, that the Spanish government will refuse to accept any finding of the Maine commission which may suggest Spanish responsibility. What is more, this intention is known to the United States government. The Spanish ministerial view is that the imputation which such a finding would have, if admitted, would forever be a blemish upon Spain's reputation as a civilized country.

If the report of the commission throws blame upon Spain, which would carry with it a call for indemnity, the Madrid government will forthwith make an appeal to the combined European powers, on the plea of equity and common fairness, to intervene in favor of Spain against what every Spaniard would esteem as a monstrous and iniquitous finding.

Such intervention by European powers the United States would of course refuse to admit. Even if President McKinley were willing to arbitrate the matter, congress would not consent, and if goaded by executive action would out the matter short by declaring war.

But the prospect is that if this attitude shall be assumed by Spain President McKinley will play his second card and recommend to congress the recognition of Cuban independence; and that he will also take such action for the reconcentrados as will provoke Spain to strike the first blow.

A most significant feature of to day's news is the determination of the government to dispatch ten of its swiftest revenue cutters to serve with the war ships in Florida waters as auxiliaries. This is essentially a war measure. Nothing but the expectation of early hostilities would prompt the government to strip its coast of these ranging scouts of the treasury. Their withdrawal for navy duty, by the way, will make filibustering expeditions to Cuba very easy.

We do not see how war can be avoided unless Spain backs down. And that she will thus humiliate herself we cannot believe.—The Star.

HAVANA A PLACE OF DANGER.

Warning that Carried a Great Secret—What Lt. Marix Said.

From The New York Mail and Express we clip the following startling correspondence. The paper from which it comes, is one of the most conservative in America, and in an editorial in the same edition, The Mail and Express tells of the reliability of its correspondent:

Key West, Fla., March 22—I have information from a source which admits of no possible question that the Court of Inquiry will report that the battleship Maine was destroyed in the harbor of Havana, on the night of February 15, by a submarine mine, previously laid by parties unknown.

The report will start for Washington at 4 o'clock this afternoon in charge of Judge Advocate Marix. It should reach there some time Thursday.

Testimony of the survivors, particularly officers, all of whom were awake at the time, proved conclusively at the beginning of the sessions of the court that an accident could not have caused the disaster. This conclusion was reached, for the following reasons:

The situation of the ship's boiler was so far aft that it was impossible it could communicate with the forward magazine, either by heat or explosion.

The explosion was all forward. The condition of the ship shows that the dynamo boiler could not explode, because steam for dynamos was supplied from the main boilers.

Spontaneous combustion of the coal in the bunkers was impossible, because they were thoroughly inspected, as is customary, on that day.

The gases arising from the wreck immediately after the explosion, and which overcame several officers and men, were not due, in the judgment of the court, to the coal in the bunkers, but to high explosives, which always throw out a bad odor and gases.

The gun cotton could not have exploded, because it was regularly inspected that day and found to be thoroughly wet, which was necessary, and besides, said gun cotton was mostly situated aft under the ward room, and not in the forward magazine as supposed by the reporters all along.

Lastly, had explosion been internal and in communication with any of the four magazines, all would have gone off, in which event not an atom of the ship would have been left and the greater portion of Havana would have been destroyed.

Another convincing proof that the board will report that the explosion was not caused by an accident is found in the following incident:

I told Judge Advocate Marix that I was going back to Havana to-day. He said:

"Don't do it, Quigley. Havana will be a hot place when the findings of the court are known. It is as much as your life is worth to go there!"

One officer will always be on the watch while the report is en route to Washington. The same precautions will be maintained as on shipboard, one always remaining awake. All will be armed.

Admiral Sicard says that the "report will be most peculiar." This is taken to indicate that evidence of a most startling nature will be disclosed.

The survivors could prove nothing. They could only give their personal experience without opinions. The divers, however, explained everything through soundings.

The Army Reorganization Bill.

Washington, March 22—The military affairs committee of the House to-day completed consideration of the army reorganization bill, and ordered a favorable report upon it. As agreed upon only a few changes were made. An additional section was added as a precaution, providing that nothing in the Act should be construed as an authorization to increase the enlisted force of the army in time of peace. Another amendment provides that "at the end of any war in which the United States may become involved the army shall be reduced to a peace basis by the transfer or absorption through promotion of the supernumerary officers, and the honorable discharge or transfer of supernumerary enlisted men."

Chairman Hull, of the military affairs committee, will secure action on the bill at the earliest possible moment. It may require a special rule to get the bill before the House.

Action of the Torpedo Flotilla Considered Almost Hostile.

Naval Strategists Say Flotilla Should Not be Allowed to Reach Western Waters.

The United States Fleet is Put On War Footings.

Washington, March 24—The last day before the arrival of the report of the Maine court of inquiry was one of unexampled activity in all official quarters. Advice came early that the Spanish torpedo flotilla had sailed from the Canaries for Puerto Rico and from this moment the most energetic warlike measures followed one another in constant succession. The movement of this fleet had been watched with the keenest interest as it was felt to involve serious possibilities which might compel the United States government to protest against the movement as of a hostile character. Immediately upon the receipt of the official dispatch from one of our naval attaches abroad, briefly announcing the sailing of the fleet, the fact was made known to the President and an earnest conference was held between him and Secretary Long and Assistant Secretary Roosevelt.

The seriousness of the movement was fully considered and the President was advised that naval strategists regarded it as essential that this torpedo fleet should not be allowed to reach western waters. What, if any conclusion was reached, is not known. Later in the day the Spanish minister, Senor Poloy Bernabe, called at the state department and spent some time with Judge Day. It was naturally inferred that the approach of the Spanish flotilla was one of the subjects referred to. Whether, however there was any suggestion against this move was not disclosed by either Judge Day or the Spanish minister, both of whom maintained the strictest reticence regarding their conference.

Following the flotilla announcement, important news came rapidly. The first was this announcement by Secretary Long indicating the placing of our squadron and fleet on a war footing: "Admiral Sicard has been granted leave very much to the regret of the navy department, on account of his health.

"Capt. Sampson has been made commander of the fleet at Key West. Capt. Evans has been ordered to take command of the battleship Iowa.

"The orders to the squadron in Hampton Roads have not yet been issued."

Although the announcement did not state, it soon became known that Commodore W. S. Schley was slated to command the "flying squadron."

This announcement was recognized as of unusual importance at this juncture. Admiral Sicard has been in command of the fleet at Key West throughout the critical period of the Maine disaster. Capt. Sampson has been in command of the Iowa, but more recently has been conspicuous before the public as president of the Maine court of inquiry. Capt. Robley Evans is better known as "Fighting Bob."

The next important move was a determination to create a joint commission from the war and navy departments so as to bring them into harmonious action on all measures. Capt. Barker, the naval aide of Secretary Long, was designated to represent the navy department in this common plan of action. The representative of the war department has not yet been named. It will not be necessary for these two officers to leave Washington, as they can best arrange a joint plan of action in conference with the bureau chiefs of the two departments here. Then at the close of day came an announcement that the navy department had succeeded in purchasing eight steam yachts and four steam tugs, presumably at and near New York, for use in the auxiliary naval fleet. The boats are about 400 tons each, and in an emergency would be suitable as torpedo boats. The yachts purchased are among the fleetest along the Atlantic coast and are said to be somewhat similar to the Mayflower recently purchased by the Ogden Goelet estate. This acquisition to the navy is regarded as an exceptionally valuable one at the present time, as the greatest need is felt for small craft, suitable as torpedo boats and dispatch boats. The names and amounts paid for the various yachts and tugs are not disclosed.

Throughout the day the White House presented an animated appearance, senators and representatives from both political parties calling to confer with

the President. Among the callers were senators Cullom, Fairbanks, Lodge, Aldrich, Jones of Arkansas and Spooner, and Representative Bailey, the Democratic floor leader in the house of representatives. The uppermost question at all the conferences was the Maine disaster and the anticipated action of the President in laying the report before congress. The conferences showed that the President still hoped for peace, but there would be no abatement of preparation to meet the other alternative.

The President said to several of his visitors to-day, in discussing the situation, that he would do everything consistent with the honor and dignity of the country to avert war, and he still believed war could be averted. He also said that he believed the government of Spain was as anxious for peace as we were, but at the same time he did not hesitate to admit the gravity of the situation. The President frankly acknowledges that he believes the report of the board of inquiry will find that the Maine was blown up from the outside. His programme has been definitely decided. It is his purpose to treat the blowing up of the Maine as an accident. The report of the board will be sent to congress on Monday with a very brief message, relating the events leading up to that point and informing congress that the facts contained in the report have been cabled to Madrid to be laid before the Spanish government by Minister Woodford. No demand will be made upon Spain, but the laying of the facts before the Spanish government will be equivalent to calling upon Spain for an explanation and such action as she may deem proper. It is the purpose of the house leaders to refer the report and message to the committee on foreign affairs without debate, and to this purpose it is believed the Democrats of the house have acquiesced, reserving the right to demand action if a report from the committee is too long delayed.

Much will then depend upon Spain's response, but there are those close to the President who believe that from the time the report is sent to congress it will drop out as a factor in the situation. The second part of the President's programme removes the Maine question and involves intervention on humanitarian grounds within a week or 10 days after the report of the board goes to congress. It will be intervention to relieve the starvation in Cuba and upon Spain's acquiescence in or objection to this act will depend peace or war. A prominent member of the house said to-day that, in his opinion, the next two weeks would determine which it would be.

Such information as exists here leads those close to the President to believe that the Spanish government will go to any length it dares to preserve peace. The queen regent is especially anxious to prevent war and it is believed the ministry will go just as far as it can without jeopardizing its own existence and the survival of the present Spanish dynasty.

With the report in Washington tonight, it will be laid before the cabinet at the regular meeting at 11 o'clock tomorrow, and at that time the President and his advisers will begin the grave work of weighing the conclusions reached and determining the action that is to be taken. The formal plan of its transmission to congress next Monday is already arranged, but with the report and evidence before them, the President and his advisers for the first time will be in a position to outline the character of the message which is to accompany the submission of the report to congress and to arrange definite plans of detailed procedure, which as yet has not been worked out.

The Spanish authorities here have been informed that some time ago Capt. Sigsbee asked permission to use dynamite in the destruction of the wreck of the Maine. This was refused by Captain General Blanco for the reason, it is officially explained, that as there are evil disposed persons who insist that the Maine was blown up from external causes the Spanish authorities do not want the wreck destroyed, as it affords all the evidence obtainable as to the actual cause of the disaster.

Washington, March 22.—The negotiations for the purchase of ships abroad is going steadily forward, but there was a regrettable disappointment in this connection to-day. The authorities had been exceedingly anxious to get the big torpedo cruiser Tupy, built for Brazil. She is one of the most formidable torpedo craft afloat, her size placing her in the cruiser class, while her torpedo armament gives her the effectiveness of torpedo boat and cruiser combined. It was learned positively to-day, however, that the Brazilian government would not part with the Tupy, and this closes the efforts for one of the best ships under negotiation.

In a small measure this was offset by the success of the navy department in securing a trim little Yarrow built launch, which though very small, will serve as a harbor torpedo boat. She is of the same class of craft as the Moxoto, built for the Brazilian navy.

Shot at and Thought he Was Dying.

It is a queer fact that the mind can so influence a man that conditions altogether unnatural will be brought about.

You may take a man who is in perfect health and make him positively ill by telling him that he looks bad. Further than that physicians say that persons can bring on certain diseases just by thinking that they have them. Once in a French prison a man was condemned to die and physicians desiring to make a test of a theory asked permission to use the criminal as subject.

They told the man that they were going to bleed him to death, and that in half an hour after they opened an artery he would be a dead man.

The criminal was blinded and then his arm was scratched, but not deep enough to cause the blood to flow. Through a small tube water was allowed to flow over the arm of the man to give him the idea that he was really bleeding. The doctors stood near and discussed the man's condition as the minutes passed just as though he was dying from loss of blood. They noticed that the man grew weaker and when the half hour had elapsed he died.

Several nights since in the operating room of the Associated Press in The Chronicle building, one of the two operators sent out for some cocoa cola and without telling the other operator what it was got him to drink several glasses from the pitcher. One of the young men had never before drank cocoa cola, nor had he touched beer in his life. The operator, after he had finished, told his friend that he had been drinking bock beer. The young fellow believed it, thought he was drunk, and actually quit work for over two hours trying to sober up.

There was yet another similar incident in Augusta on yesterday.

John Thompson, a negro, was shot at by another negro named Richard Smalley, and the pistol ball struck him in the chest. The affair occurred on Telfair street near Tench.

Thompson fell to the ground moaning that he had been killed. Smalley had fired at him at close range. A big crowd gathered around the prostrate form of the negro and closely examined his shirt front where the hole made by the bullet was seen.

Then the ambulance came, and thinking that he was bleeding internally Thompson went to the Lamar hospital. There he was hurriedly stripped and physicians began looking for the ball. It fell out of the man's clothing and rattled on the floor. There was no wound at all, only a bruised spot.—Augusta Chronicle.

Free Rural Delivery.

Washington, March 22.—Congressman Stokes this morning completed arrangements at the postoffice department for the extension of the rural free delivery of mail in his district in South Carolina. Naturally he feels some elation over this, as he was largely instrumental in procuring increased facilities for the rural districts when the appropriation bill was pending last week. His argument on the bill in general, and especially on the free delivery then, was considered by his friends as strong and convincing. Congressman Stokes's district is perhaps one of the happiest selections for a test of the system. Though it has about 180,000 population it is almost wholly a rural community, there being only three Presidential offices in its limits, and they of the third class. It is none too well supplied with even the poor facilities afforded by fourth-class postoffices and star routes, there being only 183 postoffices within its limits.—News and Courier.

Darlington, March 23.—Special: Mr. Samuel Melton, of Darlington, was drowned at Lowther's Lake today. He was a member of a fishing party and fell out of his boat. Before anyone could assist him he was drowned.

We have bright, honorable merchants in this town, and they give the public what it demands. They never offer us a substitute something "just as good."

Royal makes the food pure, wholesome and delicious.



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