

April 22, telegraphic orders were issued to place the loaded mines in position.

The aggregate number of mines placed was 1,355 at the principal harbors from Maine to California. Preparations were also made for the planting of mines at certain other harbors, but owing to the early destruction of the Spanish fleet, these mines were not placed. The signal corps was promptly organized and performed service of the most difficult and important character. Its operations during the war covered the electrical connection of all coast fortifications, the establishment of telephonic and telegraphic facilities for the camps at Manila, Santiago and in Porto Rico. There were constructed 300 miles of line at ten great camps, thus facilitating military movements from those points in a manner heretofore unknown in military administration. Field telegraph lines were established and maintained under the enemy's fire at Manila and later Manila-Hongkong cable was reopened.

CABLES REFITTED.

In Porto Rico cable communication was opened over a discontinued route, and on land the headquarters of the command officer was kept in telegraphic and telephonic communication with the division commanders on four different lines of operations.

There was placed in Cuban waters a completely outfitted cable ship with war cables and cable gear suitable both for the destruction of communications belonging to the enemy and the establishment of our own.

Two ocean cables were destroyed under the enemy's batteries at Santiago. The day previous to the landing of General Shafter's corps at Calmanera, within twenty miles of the landing place, cable communication was established and a cable station opened, giving direct communication with the government at Washington. This service was invaluable to the executive in directing the operations of the army and navy.

With a total force of over 1,300, the loss by the disease in camp and field, officers and men included, was only five.

WAR REVENUE ACT.

The national defense, under the \$50,000,000 fund, was expended in large part by the army and navy, and the objects for which it was used are fully shown in the reports of the several secretaries. It was a most timely appropriation, enabling the government to strengthen its defense and to make preparations greatly needed in case of war. This fund being inadequate to the requirements of equipment and for the conduct of the war, the patriotism of the Congress provided the means in the war revenue act of June 13th by authorizing a 3 per cent popular loan not to exceed four hundred million dollars, and by levying additional imports and taxes. Of the authorized loan, \$200,000,000 were offered and promptly taken from the subscriptions so far exceeding the call as to cover it many times over, while preference being given in the smaller bids, no single allotment exceeded five thousand dollars. This was a most encouraging and significant result, showing the vast resources of the nation and the determination of the people to uphold their country's honor.

It is not within the province of this message to narrate the history of the extraordinary war that followed the Spanish declaration of April 21st, but a brief recital of its more salient features is appropriate. The first encounter of the war, in point of date, took place April 27th, when a detachment of the blockading squadron made a reconnaissance in force at Matanzas, shelled the harbor fortifications, and demolished several new works in construction.

MANILA'S MAY DAY.

The next engagement was destined to

mark a memorable epoch in maritime warfare. The Pacific fleet, under Commodore George Dewey, had laid for some weeks at Hongkong. Upon the colonial proclamation of neutrality being issued and the customary twenty-four hours' notice being given, it repaired to Mirs Bay, near Hongkong, whence it proceeded to the Philippine Islands under telegraphic orders to capture or destroy the formidable Spanish fleet then assembled at Manila. At daybreak on the 1st of May, the American force entered Manila bay, and, after a few hours' engagement, effected the total destruction of the Spanish fleet, consisting of ten warships and a transport, besides capturing the naval station and forts at Cavite, thus annihilating the Spanish naval power in the Pacific ocean and completely controlling the bay of Manila, with the ability to take the city at will. Not a life was lost, on our ships, the wounded only numbering seven, while not a vessel was materially injured. For this gallant achievement the Congress, upon my recommendation, fitly bestowed upon the actors, preferment and substantial reward.

TONIC FOR THE NATION.

The effect of this remarkable victory upon the spirit of our people, and upon the fortunes of the war, was instant. A prestige of invincibility thereby attached to our arms, which continued throughout the struggle. Reinforcements were hurried to Manila, under the command of Major General Merritt, and firmly established within sight of the capital, which lay helpless before our guns. On the 7th day of May the government was advised officially of the victory at Manila, and at once inquired of commander of our fleet what troops were required. The information was received on the 15th day of May, and the first army expedition sailed May 25th, and arrived at Manila June 30th. Other expeditions soon followed, the total force consisting of 641 officers and 15,058 men.

Only reluctance to cause needless loss of life and property prevented the early storming and capture of the city, and therewith the absolute military occupancy of the whole group. The insurgents meanwhile had resumed the active hostilities suspended by the uncompleted truce of December, 1897. Their forces invested Manila from the northern and eastern side, but were constrained by Admiral Dewey and Gen. Merritt from attempting an assault. It was fitting that whatever was to be done in the way of decisive operations in that quarter should be accomplished by the strong arm of the United States alone. Obeying the stern precept of war, which enjoins the overcoming of the adversary and the extinction of his power wherever assailable as the speedy and sure means to win a peace, divided victory was not permissible, for no partition of the rights and responsibilities attending the enforcement of a just and advantageous peace could be thought of. Following the coming of the comprehensive scheme of general attack powerful forces were assembled at various points on our coast to invade Cuba and Porto Rico.

FIRST FATALITIES.

Meanwhile, naval demonstrations were made at several exposed points. On May 11 the cruiser Wilmington and torpedo boat Winslow were unsuccessful in an attempt to silence the batteries at Cardenas, against Matanzas, Worth Bagley and four seamen falling. These greivous fatalities were strangely enough among the very few which occurred during our naval operations in this extraordinary conflict.

Meanwhile, the Spanish naval preparations had been pushed with great vigor. A powerful squadron under Ad-

miral Cervera, which had assembled at the Cape Verde Islands before the outbreak of hostilities, had crossed the ocean and by its erratic movements in the Caribbean sea, delayed our military operations while baffling the pursuit of our fleets. For a time fears were felt lest the Oregon and Marietta, then nearing home after their long voyage from San Francisco of over 15,000 miles, might be surprised by Admiral Cervera's fleet, but their fortunate arrival dispelled the apprehensions and lent much needed reinforcements. Not until Admiral Cervera took refuge in the harbor of Santiago de Cuba, about May 9, was it practicable to plan a systematic military attack upon Antillean possessions of Spain.

Several demonstrations occurred on the coast of Cuba and Porto Rico in preparation for the larger event. On May 13, the North Atlantic squadron shelled Sam Juan de Porto Rico. On May 30, Commodore Schley's squadron bombarded the forts guarding the mouth of Santiago harbor. Neither attack had any material result. It was evident that well-ordered land operations were indispensable to achieve a decided advantage.

HOBSON'S FEAT.

The next act in the war thrilled not alone the hearts of our countrymen, but the world by its exceptional heroism. On the night of June 3, Lieut. Hobson, aided by seven devoted volunteers, blocked the narrow outlet from Santiago harbor by sinking the collier Merrimac in the channel, under a fierce fire from the shore batteries, escaping with their lives as by a miracle, but falling into the hands of the Spaniards. It is a most gratifying incident of the war that the bravery of this little band of heroes was generally appreciated by the Spaniards, who sent a flag of truce to notify Admiral Sampson of their safety and to compliment them upon their daring act. They were subsequently exchanged July 7.

By June 7, the cutting of the last Cuban cable, isolated the island. Thereafter the invasion was vigorously prosecuted. On June 10, under a heavy protecting fire, a landing force of 600 marines from the Oregon, Marietta and Yankee, was effected on Guantanamo Bay, where it had been determined to establish a naval station. This important and essential port was taken from the enemy after severe fighting by the marines who were the first organized force of the United States to land in Cuba.

The position so won was held, despite the desperate attempts to dislodge our forces. By June 16 additional forces were landed and strongly entrenched. On June 22 the advance of the invading army under Major General Shafter landed at Bulquhi, about 15 miles east of Santiago. This was accomplished under great difficulties, but with marvelous dispatch.

MILITARY ENGAGEMENT.

On June 23rd the movement against Santiago was begun. On the 24th the first serious engagement took place, in which the First and Tenth cavalry and the First volunteer cavalry, Gen. Young's brigade of General Wheeler's division, participated, losing heavily. By nightfall, however, ground within five miles of Santiago was won. The advantage was steadily increased. On July 1, a severe battle took place, our forces gaining the outer works of Santiago and El Caney and San Juan were taken after a desperate charge, and the investment of the city was completed. The navy co-operated by shelling the town and the coast forts.

NAVY TRIUMPHS.

On the day following this brilliant achievement of our land forces, July 3, occurred the decisive naval combat of