

Juan, the fighting continued until the two sides were close together; although many Spaniards had managed to escape. In the thrilling charge up the hill on the rifle pits and stone fort of El Caney the enemy's fire, except from the hills beyond, slackened when the final dash was begun. The execution of the American weapons was so awful that the Spaniards feared to show even enough of their bodies to fire. When the storming party reached the trenches and the fort the enemy surrendered. For some minutes it had been evident that further resistance was useless.

An officer, therefore, found his revolver of little service, even if the difficult task of keeping his men together did not require all his attention. His functions were well defined and well understood. Military tacticians have figured the need of a certain part of an army to direct the rest. They are more useful in this capacity than they would be handling guns. They can serve their cause best by doing the work especially assigned to them. Any mixing up of their duties with those of the privates would be likely to result in neglecting the more important set. Therefore, it is reasoned out, an officer can be more effectively employed than in trying with his own hand to kill the enemy.

Some exceptions are to be noted, such as when troops are stationary and an officer borrows a rifle for a fancy shot. These instances occurred around Santiago, but were, of course, mere diversions.

Granting all this, some men in authority think the carrying of the small arm is justified for one reason, the possibility of having it to use on your own soldiers. One deserter, a volunteer, was shot in this campaign, but the American soldier otherwise showed no inclination to shirk danger. Indeed, most of the examples were of companies and regiments advancing more rapidly than the colonels and generals expected them to do. Colonel Miles, the brigade commander, wanted to charge on the El Caney stone fort with his brigade, but two or three companies of negroes of the Twenty-fifth Infantry anticipated him.

Still, in studying the problems of war, it must be taken into consideration that men sometimes refuse to advance, or actually retreat, in spite of all commands. In a crisis it may be necessary to kill one or two to brace up the rest. Here is where the revolver would be invaluable. On the Almirante Oquendo, just before she was sunk, outside of Santiago harbor, the sailors were so terror-stricken that they refused to stand by the guns. Instead they huddled over to the lee side, and even tried to jump overboard. The officers shot some of them, but the demoralization was too complete, and the lives were needlessly sacrificed. In such a final moment, however, some weapon is necessary to enforce authority.

Except the few troops of the Second, all the United States cavalry in Cuba was dismounted. It carried no sabers or revolvers. The modern idea of the use of cavalry need not be considered here. The carbine is not used when the trooper is mounted. In pursuit the revolver would be efficacious. Old-fashioned cavalry charges would be anachronistic against modern rifles. There might be many months of campaigning with few cavalymen, drawing their sabers or firing their pistols. In drills, of course, the sword is a great card. However, being mounted, the trooper need not consider superfluous weight so much as his brother, the infantryman.

As for swords, they have fewest defenders. Some officers left theirs in the

United States, and carried machete instead to out their way through underbrush. Some did not even have the substitute. Others left their good steel on shipboard or lost it in camp. It was never missed much, except that it will have to be replaced on the return home. Of course, for appearance sake, the sword is indispensable on parade in times of peace. There is a certain moral effect in grasping it and pointing at the enemy while leading a charge. But some officers think that the example of personal bravery is in itself so inspiring to the men that a walking stick would do quite as well as a good blade.

A sword might come into play in instances of cowardice or demoralization, but a revolver would be much better. A suggestion of practical value is that a good pair of field glasses would admirably replace the side arm. The long range of the Krag-Jorgensen and Mauser rifles made such glasses almost a necessity. At 1,000 yards it is not easy to distinguish a man who is crouched or lying down, trying to hide himself. The smokeless powder does not reveal where the rifleman is. Advancing troops must show themselves from time to time, and those on the defensive are likely to have an advantage in this. With the naked eyes the soldier may search long before finding the source of the bullets that kill the men beside him. Having field glasses his officers could pick out the enemy and direct the fire. As the range became less the need would decrease, but accurate information about the number and position of the enemy, the nature of his defenses and the point whence the heaviest fire comes is always of great value.

And the bayonet. In actual conflict it, too, has little use under modern conditions. Rapid-firing magazine rifles settle the issue before the bayonet can be brought into play. A charge with the weapon is not an impossibility, but the likelihood is that if an army cannot stop an onslaught with artillery and musketry it will flee or surrender before it can be reached by a steel blade.

And acknowledged before there is occasion to withstand an attack with bayonets. But the moral effect of the weapon is important, even if it is never drawn from its scabbard. An army known by the enemy to be without bayonets would be at a great disadvantage. For instance, at El Caney the Spaniards were aware that their foemen had the steel ready to affix to their guns, and that an encounter at close quarters would mean the slaughter of most of them (the Spaniards). This very conviction led them to cease firing earlier than they otherwise would have done, and to surrender when the Americans came up to where they were. Had the assailants been known to be without bayonets, the resistance would have been longer and more desperate. This aspect of sentiment is an effective argument for the retention of the bayonet.

In addition, the weapon has important uses. To the soldier it is what the hairpin is to a woman. The heavy, swordlike blade serves as an intrenching tool in an emergency, a hatchet, a knife or a can opener. With the butt end he grinds his coffee in his tin cup. He would be lost without it.

LETTER FROM D. J. DAVIS.

Manila, P. I., Sept. 4, 1898.

Dear parents—Today being Sunday I thought that you would possibly like to hear from this side of the world and of what we are doing; and I have time today and can't tell what we may be doing tomorrow, as things are very unsettled at present. We may have trouble with the insurgents at almost any

minute. Yesterday morning we roped the guns ready for morning and expected orders all day, but none came. We have to pull the guns, so use long ropes like the old-time fire engine. It is just a week today since we arrived here from the steamer, but it seems longer. We are located in an old Spanish barracks on the edge of what is called the new city, on the north side, in comfortable quarters, surrounded by a ten-foot wall. We also have plenty of water and a good plunge bath, which is worth a good deal to us; but we may have to move almost any day, as some of the companies who are not so well situated are trying to get us out. I hope they will not succeed, as we could not get quarters as good anywhere in town, as everything is full.

The only thing is, the mosquitoes are very bad at night, worse inside than out, and they sting terribly. They only bother us at night when we want to sleep, and there is no getting away from them.

The weather is very hot and oppressive at times, especially when the sun shines, and some of the boys have fallen in their tracks. We had an awful hot walk a week ago in coming from the boat with our blankets; five of the boys fell out. I had heard a great deal about Manila and what a fine place it is; but excuse me, there isn't anything here for me at present. The place is not clean and the natives are about as undesirable a lot of people as one would wish to associate with. They resemble the Chinese more than any other people that I know of, and I really believe that one third of the population or more are Chinese. They almost all go barefooted and wear very little clothing. Knee dresses are fashionable among the natives and it is a great change from anything I ever saw. It makes one think that there are more places than one on earth, and it is a good experience—one that I am glad of having—but I don't like the idea of staying here in the barracks for two years with nothing to do; but from the most reliable source of information at present it seems that we will be here yet for about six months. It all depends on what is done at Paris. All the boys who came first are ready to go home now, as none of them like the country, and when it isn't hardly safe to go around town while under martial law it isn't hardly safe to go very far into the interior, and it will not be for a number of years yet. A lot of troops are needed to keep order and put down trouble that is sure to arise at times; although the people profess friendship they cannot be trusted.

I suppose that you were interested in the taking of Manila and knew about it long before I did, but you don't know what an awful hard time the Utah boys had as well as I do. The most surprising thing of all to me is how they ever managed to pull these big guns through mud, hub deep, across fields that had been soaked for almost three months, with a tropical rain; up day and night with nothing to eat but hard-tack and coffee, and to stand up under the fire they did. The only time the Spanish would leave their trenches and do any firing was at night, and the darkest wet night to be had. The guns had no shelter, and that is the way the Utah batteries fought all the time. In getting their guns ashore they were lowered into a freight barge and then were knee deep in mud and water, with taken in shore as far as possible, then run over board into the sea in about four feet of water, then pulled ashore; but the most remarkable thing of all was that not a man was killed and only one slightly wounded in the arm, while some of the regulars, who were in the trenches with them, were blown all to pieces. One of the sights was shot off