

## AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Washington, April 29.—Secretary Long has received a brief dispatch from Admiral Sampson reporting the firing on Matanzas.

The admiral says that a few shots were thrown at the defenses.

He gives no details of the affair or its results.

Madrid, April 29, 10 a.m.—It was officially announced today that the fortifications of Matanzas have not suffered "in despite of 300 shells fired by the American fleet," and that "not one man was killed or wounded thereby." In official circles the stories of the bombardment received from the United States are received with shouts of derision.

Madrid, April 29, noon.—Captain General Blanco in his report of the Matanzas bombardment says the French and English consuls have entered protests on the ground that no previous notice was given.

On Board the Flagship New York, off Havana, April 28, 10 a. m., via Key West, April 29.—At 10:15 p. m. when the bombardment was at its height, and after it had been in progress for 19 minutes, Rear Admiral Sampson ordered "Cease firing" to be sounded. A few shots rang out from the Cincinnati and Puritan before they caught the signal.

On the shore all was quiet. Not a soul could be seen there, and there was no more firing. The earthworks a quarter of an hour before had presented a fairly regular outline, but now they had a ragged appearance. Big gaps were plainly visible at Quintas da Recreo but there was not a sign of life there. Admiral Sampson had effectually stopped the work on Punta Gorda. He had drawn the fire out of the enemy and had discovered exactly the quality and location of their batteries, besides affording his three ships good target practice.

Incidentally he had put the fear of American guns into Spanish hearts. It would have been perfectly feasible for these three ships unaided to have steamed past the fortifications right into Matanzas and taken it or shelled it at pleasure. The only risk run would have been from mines. However, Matanzas was not wanted, luckily for it. After satisfying himself that this object had been accomplished, Admiral Sampson headed back for Havana.

The Puritan and Cincinnati were left to look after Matanzas and they will see to it that Matanzas is not the scene of much fortification work in the future.

The readiness to assume this task can be judged from the fact that shortly after the signal "Cease firing" had been given, Captain Chester asked permission to reopen.

This was refused, Admiral Sampson evidently thinking that Matanzas had had enough for one afternoon.

During the bombardment the New York's engines at intervals went slowly astern, keeping a steady range of 4,000 yards on Punta Gorda and 7,000 on Quintas da Recreo, the machinery working perfectly, not only in the engine room but throughout the whole ship. This is especially true of the electric ammunition hoists and turret training gear, two of the most essential parts of a ship's equipment during action. From the naval point of view, if any lessons were learned from the bombardment through the range at which the shooting was carried on, was a satisfactory test of marksmanship.

The distance, however, prevented the staff from ascertaining the effect of the heavy explosive projectiles on the earthworks.

Quintas Da Recreo appeared to be an old style of fort, low and lying near the water's edge. The battery was probably behind a recently constructed sand-work.

From the lay point of view the bombardment appeared to demonstrate several things; it proved that the officers, from Rear-Admiral Sampson down, are perfectly cool, in the face of danger and action; that they have superior control over the men at the most exciting and trying moments, and that the latter are as steady and as courageous when the guns roar and the shells whistle as when the muster to morning and evening quarters in time of peace.

In the second place the bombarding gave a very thoughtful though frightful illustration of a warship's death-dealing powers. Had a single ship been in the place where the shells fell, it seems as if she would have been blown to bits before she could have returned the fire. When a ten thousand ton ship, usually as steady as a rock, shakes and trembles like a frightened child; when firmly fitted bolts start from their sockets and window panes and wood work are shattered; when the roars goes up from port and starboard and you feel your feet leaving the deck and your glasses jumping around your forehead, while a blinding, blackening smoke hides everything from sight, then it is you first realize the terrible power of a modern warship's batteries.

Scenes of intense interest occurred on the flagship's deck during the bombardment. The center of attraction naturally was about the forward bridge where Rear Admiral Sampson paced up and down, his long glass in hand, pausing now and then to watch the effect of the shots, impassive as if at target practice off the Dry Tortugas. Captain Chadwick was at his side, in the dual capacity of chief of staff, and captain of the ship, equally calm, and giving orders continuously regarding the direction of the fire and the handling of the ship. Lieutenant Stanton, assistant chief of staff, Lieutenant Commander Potter, executive officer of the ship, and Lieutenant J. Roller, the navigator, all were on the bridge and as busy as they could be. Three men were at the wheel and the usual staff lookout and signal boys were in their places.

The conning tower with its heavily protective sides was without an occupant. The whistling of a few shells could not drive the men who direct the fighting squadron from their unprotected point of vantage. Directly beneath the bridge on the superstructure, just aft of and slightly above the forward turret, stood Chaplain Royce, ready to give the last consolation. The chaplain and three doctors were the only persons on board who sincerely hoped they would have no work to do.

Near the chaplain stood Richard Harding Davis, representing the London Times, Ralph H. D. Paine, representing the Philadelphia Press and the correspondent of the Associated Press. All others on board were at their regular stations, directing the gun crews, rushing up ammunition from below or standing patiently in their engine room waiting to back on or go ahead as the telegraph signalled.

The way the jackies worked at their guns was splendid. Many of them were stripped to the waist.

The muscles stood out on their bare tattooed arms. The perspiration ran down their faces, and, mixing with the gun powder, made grim streaks of black over their skins. When "cease firing" sounded, disappointment was written

visibly on their faces. But the decks were quickly swept, the shrouds rehooked, the guns cooled and washed, and at dinner, when the band played *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, there were few signs to show that the flagship New York had been into action for the first time in her career. About 300 shots were fired during the bombardment, 104 of which were from the New York. The cruiser Cincinnati did wonderfully quick and rapid work with her batteries. The Monitor Puritan probably fired fewer shots than the others, apparently not using her rapid-fire guns, but taking careful aim with her twelve-inch monster at Quintas da Recreo.

Those on board the flagship who had never been on a warship when she fired both batteries at once, and who had never heard the shells whistle, thought the experience was not so bad as anticipated. The noise of the guns deafened some slightly, but the timely application of wool to the ears deadened its effect, and taken all in all the shock of the broadside was not so great as had been expected.

The town of Matanzas at no time was in danger from our fire. It lies well to the south of Punta Gorda. If the Spaniards had any killed it must have been in the fortifications. Several persons on board believe the Spanish loss was severe and advance more or less plausible theories, but Admiral Sampson or Captain Chadwick venture no explanation on the subject.

The characteristic incident of the bombardment of Matanzas and one that will go down in history as an instance of Yankee pluck occurred in the sick bay on the flagship. Eleven sailors were lying there, listening to the shots, all eager to get on deck. Suddenly as if moved by a common impulse, four of them sprang from their cots. One had malaria, two had gripe and another high fever, but their ailments were forgotten as they rushed out to their gun divisions and took their usual stations.

Despite their entreaties to be allowed to stay, they were ordered back to the sick bay. It hardly necessary to say that those four splendid specimens of "the man behind the gun" were not reported for breach of discipline.

It was reported to the flagship on its return to the Havana station that two torpedo gunboats had endeavored to run the blockade during the day and had been forced back into Havana by the Wilmington and the Iowa. A sharp lookout was kept throughout the night lest these tiny craft should try to repeat attempt.

The torpedo boat Winslow arrived from Key West last night and Major Meade, of the marines, was put on board the flagship. The Winslow proceeded to her station. The night was quiet and no incident of interest occurred.

On Board the Flagship New York, April 29, 11 a. m., via Key West, Fla., April 30.—(Copyrighted, 1898, by the Associated Press.)—The blockade continues as before. The flagship lies to the westward of Havana.

The torpedo boat Porter while close into shore last night reports having been fired upon by the Cofiar battery, which is to the eastward of Morro castle.

The Porter escaped unscathed. The coast of Cuba is being carefully patrolled by the Spanish cavalry.

Captain Tayler, of the Indiana, came on board the flagship today, and had a long consultation with Rear Admiral Sampson.

News of the movements of the United States army is eagerly awaited by the fleet, and there is much speculation as to when the troops will be ready.

The weather, which is cool and calm, could not be more suitable for military operations.