

when Napoleon ordered the arrest of all Englishmen between the ages of sixteen and sixty found in his domains, to be held as hostages for Frenchmen who might be captured on his vessels after war had been declared and they had not heard of it. The modern practice is to allow the enemy's subjects to remain undisturbed so long as their conduct is unobjectionable, and subject to expulsion at any time after reasonable notice upon a breach of the terms being made or if they from some other cause become objectionable or a source of peril. Their property is also exempt from seizure or injury during such time.

It is quite well remembered by those who were old enough at the time and kept posted, that large numbers of Germans remained in France during the trying period of 1870-71, and were not molested in the least by the French authorities or people. In many cases this was largely due to the untiring efforts of the American minister, Elihu B. Washburn, who stayed at his post throughout the war, and by his determination and daring succeeded in having the modern as against the mediaeval doctrine upheld. It is also fair to say that he was ably assisted in his humane efforts by the French authorities, and due to them to add that no German residing in France, nor the property of any such, was even threatened or menaced by them, although on some occasions the populace were hard to restrain and were not without considerable justification for a "break" at such times. It is shown to be a fact that to distinguished Americans of a century ago does the credit belong of breaking down the strict and cruel interpretation of old-time practices regarding the matter spoken of.

Of course the aliens who remain in a country which is at war with their own are subjected to greater restrictions than in time of peace. No matter how great their commerce with their own country, it must be broken off until peace is established. An American having a partnership relation in Spain or Cuba, for example, must dissolve it, at least for the time being. Another inconvenience is, being barred from prosecuting claims in the courts of justice of the country where the alien remains. It appears to be more a matter of understanding and advancement on the part of each of the powers where up-to-date methods prevail than anything else—the more advanced the nation the greater the degree of liberality and tolerance shown in such cases; there are still many nations of the earth that are wholly barbarous, and others with one foot resting timidly upon the soil of civilization, while the other is planted firmly upon the ground out of which came the noxious growths which our country and many others have extirpated. From the advanced class only is anything in the way of tolerant treatment to aliens to be expected at any time, especially when there is war.

#### REGARDING TORPEDOES.

A great many people are making inquiries regarding features of the war brought out by reason of its existence. It is doubtless safe to assume that most of the information obtained by such means would have remained undeveloped but for the situation. For instance, the torpedo, which promises to play, if it has not already played a prominent part in the conflict, is a comparatively unknown quantity, elsewhere as well as in Utah, and therefore is a subject of corresponding interest.

These dreaded adjuncts of modern warfare are divided into two general classes—movable and stationary, the latter constituting what is known as a

mine, and this in turn consisting of the ground and floating mine. The torpedo proper is of two kinds, called the automobile (or self-moving) and dirigible, meaning one that is directed or moved by influences apart from itself. These terms have been contracted so that now the stationary class is known as the submarine mine, while torpedo by itself means one of the movable explosives. Those mines which are buoyant explode by coming in contact with or near to the sides or bottom of a vessel under water, while the stationary or ground mine acts at a considerably greater distance. It is also the case that mines are divided into other classes, these relying for their distinction upon whether or not they are under the control of operators, in all of which cases electricity is the exploding and moving agent.

A writer in Collier's Weekly shows that the depth of water in a harbor has much to do with the form of torpedo used, and in channels where there is less than thirty feet at high tide the mine case, which rests on the bottom, has the shape of the segment of a sphere with a flat bottom. The electrical apparatus is attached to a buoy anchored to the case and submerged four feet. The explosive charge is generally about 250 pounds of dynamite or wet gun cotton. The buoyant mine is a hollow sphere, constructed of steel, having a ring at the top for handling, and directly opposite a hole for loading and inserting the electrical apparatus. Over this is fitted a cap for attaching the mooring chain and cable. It is generally submerged about four feet below low water, and the explosive charge is 100 pounds of dynamite or wet gun cotton. A mushroom anchor holds the mine in position. Another form of submarine mine is one which will explode by contact with a ship's bottom; but as these are dangerous both to friend and foe, they are now seldom used in any scheme for defense.

Meantime the torpedo boat and destroyer are kept in the background. It would seem to be a safe proposition, even judging from this great distance, that their utility as war craft has been somewhat if not considerably overrated. Perhaps it will be found in actual engagements that instead of being certain destroyers they are certain of destruction when undertaking an independent assault upon a well armed vessel. It would seem to be the case that they are of least value in the open sea and of the most value nearer shore or in places where the ship attacked has not a fair opportunity for maneuvering and thus keeping respectful distances between them. That the torpedo boat is, however, a thing to be watched and shunned is well assured.

#### PORTO RICO.

An encouraging word came almost directly from the White House on Thursday. It was to the effect that in about two days Porto Rico would be under the control of the United States. The time seems rather short for such a vast consummation, but so far those in charge seem to have understood their business thoroughly and made few if any mistakes; still, some allowance must be made for a possible miscalculation. It will be a great achievement for this country even if the time required for its accomplishment should be extended for a few days; although, as things are going, it seems that nothing is now likely to be lost by haste.

Porto Rico is the most easterly island of the Greater Antilles. It is situated at what might be termed the elbow of a group extending from Cuba easterly some 1,000 miles, the continuation of

the group being southerly and ending at the island of Trinidad, off the north-western coast of South America. It is 165 miles long at its longest part and is about forty miles in width, the total square mileage being 3,800. Its population is not definitely known, but probably equals 500,000. A great number of navigable lagoons appear on the northern coast, and at certain times of the year most of the rivers emptying into the sea are navigable.

A range of mountains runs through Porto Rico from east to west, the mean height of which is about 1,500 feet, but there is one peak 3,678 feet high. Extensive plains are to be found in the interior and there are tracts of fertile land from three to ten miles in width along the coast. The soil is very fertile, the yield of sugar being greater to a given number of acres than in any other part of the Antilles. The minerals found are gold, silver, copper, and large quantities of salt.

The island was discovered by Columbus in 1493, and taken possession of by Spain in 1509. Somewhat in accordance with Spanish usage in late years, and decidedly in line with its policy during most of the intervening time, the policy of extermination was adopted, and in a few years the natives had all succumbed to the murders, persecutions and vile practices to which they were subjected by the invaders.

The capital is San Juan, containing probably 25,000 people. It is situated on an islet of the northeastern coast, and is connected with the mainland variously. It is a strongly fortified place, and has been four times attacked by Great Britain, only one of the assaults proving successful. These were some time ago, and while the fortifications are relatively weaker now than then, it must also be remembered that no such engines of destruction were in existence in those days as will now be brought to bear upon the defenses of the Porto Rican capital. Its capture is not counted upon as a greatly difficult undertaking, but undoubtedly it will resist to the last.

#### SPANISH NAVAL STRATEGY.

There are indications that the Washington authorities have information regarding the movements of the Spanish fleet lately stationed at Cape Verde islands, not communicated to the general public. When last seen it was steering west, and the presumption was that it would turn up either at Porto Rico or off the coast of Brazil to head off the Oregon and its consort, the Marietta. Several days before the departure the Spanish minister of marine announced that its destiny was to engage the blockading squadron, but this announcement was accepted as conclusive evidence that nothing of the kind was contemplated.

In this connection it is interesting to review the strategic movements so far of the formidable Spanish fleet. Before war was declared the squadron that has now disappeared was sent out from Cadiz, presumably for the purpose of defending Porto Rico and Cuba. But instead of going west it went south, and turned up at Cape Verde islands, where it was anchored until the neutrality proclamation of Portugal drove them out. But previous to the departure it was reinforced by the two cruisers that fled from Cuba when most needed to defend the ports of that island.

Another formidable naval force was reported as having left Cadiz for the purpose of blowing up Schley's squadron and then bombard our Atlantic coast cities. But this enemy, when last heard of, was on the lookout for American merchant vessels in the Mediterranean and the English channel. Similar tactics have been in evidence in