

## The Blockade at Santiago, June 11th,—June 30th.



ATURDAY, June 11th, we were in our usual position in the line of blockade, that is, next to the end of the semicircle formed around the entrance to Santiago, beginning on the right with the flagship New York, then the Oregon, Iowa, Texas, Brooklyn and the New Orleans on the extreme left.

In the daytime we lay out about four or five miles from shore, but as darkness came on we crept up within two and a half miles from shore, the battleships forming the first line, and the cruisers and converted yachts forming a second line outside.

Each ship took turns keeping a search-light on the entrance, usually only one search-light was on at a time, all other lights were out except when a signal was flashed from one ship to another with the electric signal lights.

Two steam launches went in every evening to watch the entrance for torpedo boats; they were armed with one pounders and Colt automatic guns, and they carried rockets for signals, in case the fleet or torpedo boats tried to run out of the harbor. The Vesuvius came up with the blockading fleet near the middle of June and every night from the cover of a battle ship, she would cough and wheeze, and although we could see no flash from her guns, we knew that two-hundred and fifty pounds of gun cotton were flying rapidly towards shore. The batteries from shore almost invariably returned the fire, but their shells fell harmless.

Wednesday the 15th, reveille sounded at 3:30, mess at 4:00. We cleared for action and just as day began to break, general quarters was sounded and the fleet began to bombard the shore batteries. Shells flew around us but we were not hit. The west battery was silenced and we were through firing by 8:30. We had another breakfast and then coaled ship all day. Before daybreak on the seventeenth, we left for Guantanamo Bay to coal; about 7 A. M. we steamed into the bay and began coaling at once from two colliers. We had been working but a short time when a Spanish light battery was seen wheeling into position on a bluff, a mile or so off on our port bow. The Dolphin, Marblehead, and both colliers opened fire immediately and made it so hot for the battery that they did not fire a shot. Eighteen Spanish prisoners were on one of the colliers; they had been captured a few days before and when taken, had had no food for three days and no pay for eleven months. They were a ragged, hungry, and dirty looking crowd, and seemed quite content to remain prisoners.

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