

advanced some distance towards Santiago, and was taking a course to the rear of the town towards San Juan, and was intending to attack the town from that quarter.

We felt that but little had been accomplished, as far as we were concerned, as the Spaniards had a tricky way of refusing to return our fire and thus give away their positions.

The fighting on the second of July was merely a repetition of the day before.

That afternoon we went through the customary routine of cleaning up the ship, for the next day being Sunday, and the first Sunday in the month, the regular monthly inspection was to take place. This generally lasts an hour or two, for the entire ship, from top to bottom, is inspected by the captain and his staff of officers, nothing is overlooked, and for any dirt or anything out of place the person responsible is likely to suffer.

It was a tired crew which went to sleep that night, but of course the usual two hour watch broke up our slumbers. The next morning we rose at the hour required at sea, and breakfasting early, we used up the spare time until "quarters," which comes at 9:30 A. M., to get ourselves into shape for inspection.

A number of us were sitting on the forward turret and gazing at the Morro. We noticed nothing out of the ordinary until just after the first "quarters" call had been given, when there seemed to be a haze gathering to the left of the Morro, and which seemed to be coming out of the channel. Thinking that it might possibly be another boat carrying a flag of truce, we took a little more interest in it than we would have on any other occasion, for while truce boats had come out before, we in some manner attached considerable interest in whatever this might be. We communicated this fact to the men on deck, who also had noticed it, and as the smoke seemingly came nearer to the mouth of the channel, we were watching it more carefully, when suddenly through the smoke we made out the fighting top of a war ship. In an instant the full significance of the situation grew upon us, and those of us who were on the turret notified the officers in charge of the deck that the Spaniards were coming out. The cry was taken up, and the news spread like wildfire. In an instant everyone seemed to be on the jump, and down the ladders and companionways the crew ran, stopping here and there to tear off some article of the clean clothes which they had put on for the inspection, and shouting, "They're coming out," "The dagoes are coming out, hurrah!" and before the signal had been given for "general quarters" and "clear decks for action," the men had reached their guns and the magazines before ever the keys to the latter had been secured from the captain's cabin.

