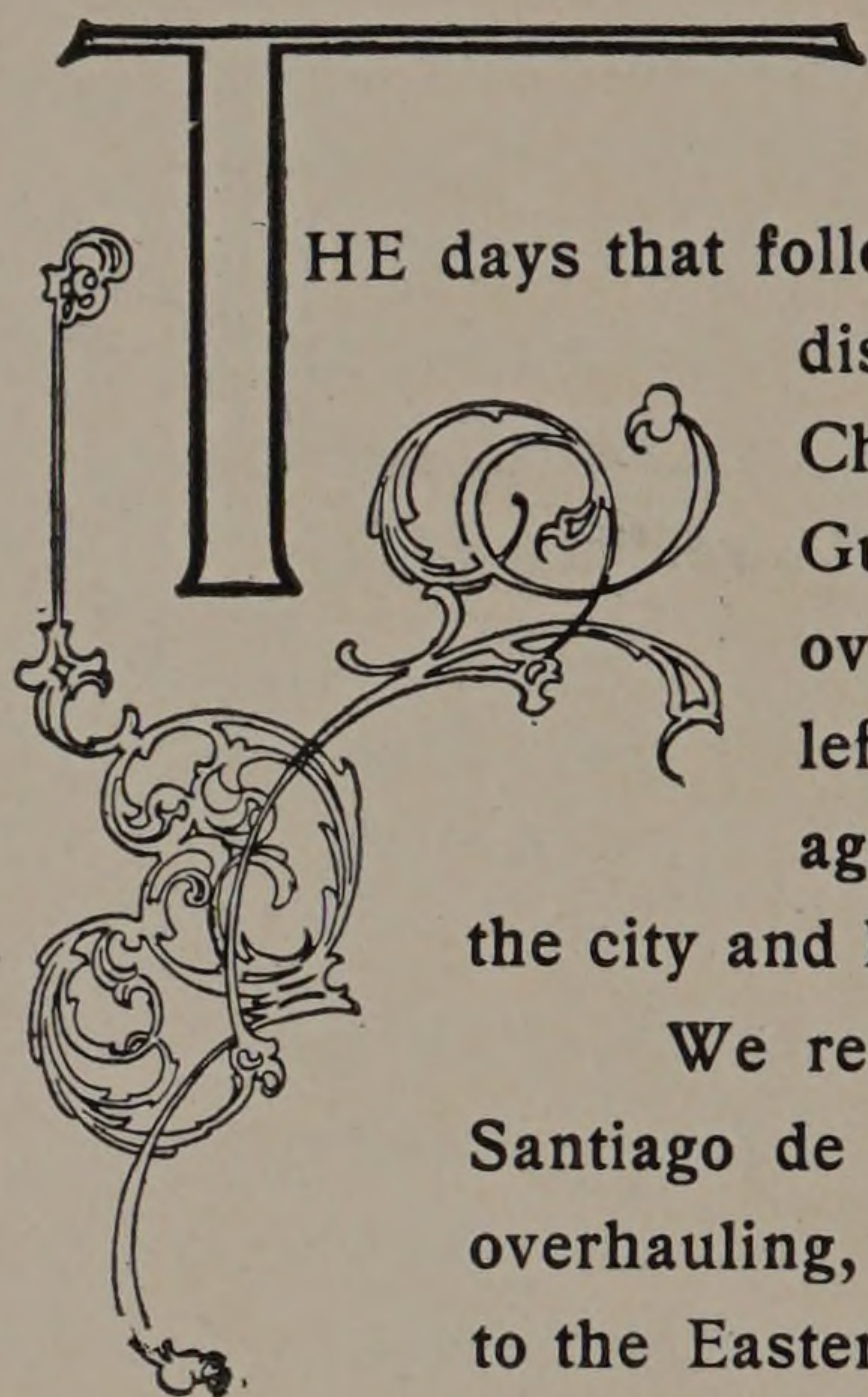


After the Fight July 4th—August 1st.



THE days that followed the great battle of July 3rd, were mixed with excitement and disappointment. After returning from the capture and sinking of the Christobal Colon, to our station off Morro, we were ordered to Guantanamo Bay, which is about fifty miles east of Santiago; to overhaul our boilers, which had not been overhauled since the ship left the Pacific coast four months before. Remaining a few days we again returned to Santiago;— Going, as the rumor had it, to bombard the city and help the army haul down the “Dago’s” flag.

We remained here until Gen. Shafter had received the surrender of Santiago de Cuba. Upon returning to Guantanamo to complete our boiler overhauling, we received the order transferring us from the Sampson Squadron to the Eastern Squadron, under the command of Commodore Watson. Many were the rumors that floated about now. Every one was all excitement and had some new theory of what we were going to do. Some that we were going to Puerto Rico, Cadiz, Spain, and a few said that we were off for Havana to blow the Spanish out of their strong-holds, by dropping in among them a few of our railway trains, as the thirteen-inch shells were called.

These were now days of excitement everywhere; something new seemed to turn up every day. One day especially, the Marblehead’s steam launch had taken a crew and started for the beach to get sand to scrub down the decks. When within about one-hundred yards of the shore some Spainards opened fire on it. Then there was excitement among the whole fleet lying in the bay. Every man was running about his ship looking for the best view of what promised to be a miniature battle. Luckily for the men on the launch, the Spainards were very poor marksmen, for they had fired three or four volleys at them before the launch could turn about and bring her after gun, the only gun she carried, into position. Then would come a crackling noise from the shore followed by a heavy, sharp, report from the launch. The launch all the time going as fast as possible from the danger and also returning the shore fire; like a dog when some superior force is after it, turns, barks, runs and at last puts its tail down and runs with all its might, not stopping to bark or look back till out of danger.

From about July 20th to August 1st, we worked night and day, four hours on and four hours off, never washing our faces for days at a time, but putting in coal,