

most of the night translating long cable messages into the complicated navy code.

One day, while cruising to the South of the island, four columns of smoke were made out faintly against the horizon. In vain the look-outs strained their eyes. One of the officer climbed almost to the truck and scanned the horizon with his glass. But nothing was discovered and darkness soon shut off all hope of following the strangers.

UNDER THE ENGLISH FLAG.

On Sunday, May eighth, the Yale was again off San Juan. Captain Wise and Captain Watkins were both upon the bridge, and as they neared the entrance of the harbor, the former asked "What ship does the Yale most resemble?" "She might pass for the City of Rome," replied Captain Watkins. Thereupon Captain Wise ordered the English colors run up and the "City of Rome" signals displayed, and steered close under the Morro, where every corner of the harbor could be seen. Then having made sure that Cervera's fleet was not within, Captain Wise ordered the borrowed colors of the Yale to be dipped in salute to the Spaniards on the Morro, and as the ship passed close under guns which could have sunk her, the courteous and unsuspecting gentlemen in the fort dipped their flag in return.

Scarcely was this peaceful British merchantman out of range when the English flag was hauled down, the Stars and Stripes were hoisted in its stead and the Yale started in pursuit of a Spanish steamer which had come up from the eastward. At first the stranger tried to reach San Juan, then turned and headed for the harbor of St. Thomas. Meanwhile on the Yale the stokers, who were off watch, had volunteered to go down to the fires. The smoke poured from her funnels and the twin screws drove her at top speed after the fleeing Spaniard. For an hour and a half the pursuit continued and every minute the ocean greyhound drew closer to her prey. When close alongside, "Handsome Dan," the starboard bow gun, sent a shot across the Spaniard's bow. But he still held on his course in a desperate attempt to escape. A second shot did not stop him, nor a third nor a fourth. Then Lieutenant Key sighted the gun himself and sent a shell right over the bridge where the captain was standing. Whether or not, as the Spaniard claimed, the shell really burst above his head and knocked him down, it certainly brought him to his senses. A moment later the steamer hove to and hoisted Spanish colors.

CHASE OF THE RITA.

She proved to be the Spanish steamer "Rita" bound from Liverpool via Corunna to San Juan. She was accordingly seized by Captain Wise. A prize crew, consisting of Mr. Porter and Mr. Walcott (American Line officers and the latter a Yale graduate of '88 S), two engineers, three seamen and two marines, was sent on board and the "Rita" laid her course for Charleston, S. C.

Although the Spaniards on board the Rita outnumbered the Americans two to one and were in possession of arms (as it afterwards proved) no attempt was made to recapture the ship. One evening, however, the Spaniards succeeded in getting one or two of the marines and sailors drunk. Then contrary to the orders of Mr. Porter they held a meeting in the cabin and the officer on the bridge could hear the Spanish captain haranguing his crew in a style worthy the Cortes. Later that night Mr. Walcott, who was on the bridge, saw a man creeping along the fore-castle and apparently trying to aim at him with a long dark object. As he was dressed in white duck he felt that his position was more conspicuous than safe. Nothing more occurred, however.

At first the solitary woman who was a passenger was the object of the pity of the Americans. When the Yale appeared she was all ready to go ashore to be welcomed by the husband whom she had not seen for two years. She and the rest of the Spaniards evidently

expected to be clapped into a dungeon and treated with barbaric cruelty. When they discovered their mistake, however, they soon recovered their spirits and the lady lent a ready ear to the unselfish consolations offered by the Spanish mate. After an easy passage the Rita reached Charleston and was given a true Southern welcome. Later she was sold to the army as a transport, for \$150,000, half of which went to the officers and crew of the Yale as prize money.

FIRED ON AT SAN JUAN.

Meanwhile the Yale continued on her way. Two steamers were stopped and boarded, but one proved to be English, the other Danish. A Spanish steamer was pursued but escaped under the guns of the Spanish batteries of the Morro. On the tenth of May, the Yale a third time approached the harbor of San Juan in search of Cervera's fleet. By this time, however, the Spaniards had learned that the peaceful City of Rome was a dangerous enemy, and, instead of a salute, the guns of the Morro opened fire. All the shots fell wide of the mark, but, a few minutes later, a steamer was seen coming out of the harbor and bearing down on the Yale. The stranger proved to be the Alphonso XIII, and as the six pounders of the Yale were no match for the heavy battery of the Spaniard, Captain Wise decided, much against his will, that "discretion was the better part of valor," and headed out to sea. At the same time he ordered signals to be set as if asking assistance from an American fleet to the northward. Whether this imaginary fleet was that of Sampson or Schley the Alphonso XIII did not wait to see, but, discouraged by the speed of the Yale, gave up the chase.

By this time the Spanish captains had learned that the safest place for their vessels was in port, and were anxious only to keep out of the way of "el crucero Americano, contres climenas" as Mr. Edwin Emerson, Jr. tells in his interesting article in the September Century. Indeed the Porto Ricans were so impressed with the attentions which the Yale paid their coast, that three weeks later a report reached Hampton Roads, that the people of San Juan believed the Yale must have been sunk as she had not been seen recently. She was then quietly recaling in that port.

On the 19th of May the Yale dropped anchor in Cape Haitien harbor, and for the next week hovered round the South-eastern coast of Cuba. For a day or two she lay off the harbor of Santiago. Then, on the 20th the "Flying Squadron" was sighted, and for a time the Yale towed the Merrimac, to the great disgust of Captain Watkins, who exclaimed: "This ship is no tug."

FIRST RETURN HOME.

On the 29th of May her bow was turned homeward, when she passed the St. Paul and received the startling news: "Enemy's fleet entered Santiago de Cuba, and is now blockaded by Commodore Schley." Exactly a week before the Yale had been off the mouth of this very harbor. Just before reaching Cape Maysi, late that afternoon, the log shows that "two steamers were sighted on the port bow, who altered their courses and headed for us." Then follow the orders "hard a-port," and "full speed away from the strangers." One was a cruiser unlike any built by us, with two funnels and two masts, on each of which latter were two military tops. To the eyes of the anxious watchers on the Yale, she bore an unpleasantly close resemblance to the cruisers of Spain. One of the officers, however, had a copy of the *Scientific American* containing a picture of the New Orleans, and the stranger was soon and gladly identified as this latest addition to our navy. On the 30th the Yale passed the flagship New York and received the Admiral's orders "proceed to Hampton Roads." Four days later she dropped anchor off Fortress Monroe. In her bunkers were scarcely ten tons of coal,—enough for just one more hour's steaming.

During the three weeks the Yale was anchored in Hampton Roads, she underwent great changes. Eight five-

inch rapid fire guns of the latest type were added to her battery and mounted on the promenade deck. All but seven of her lifeboats were sent ashore. The ship was given a coat of dull gray war paint, and her bunkers were filled with coal. The Yale and Harvard, it will be remembered, were once under the British flag and were built according to specifications of the Admiralty, in order that they might serve in the English Navy in case of need. All their engines and steering gear are, unlike the St. Paul and St. Louis, below the water line. These two ships, therefore, became the most powerful commerce destroyers which have ever sailed the ocean, for although some cruisers, like the Columbia and Minneapolis, of our own and foreign navies, have attained a speed on their trial trips greater than that of the Yale or the Harvard, yet none of them have the enormous coal capacity and consequent wide steaming radius of these auxiliary cruisers. They could have crossed the ocean, have spent a full three weeks harrying the Spanish coast, and have returned without recaling. The lack of armor, their size, and the large amount of woodwork in the state-rooms would indeed have rendered them very vulnerable to a shell, yet the arrangement of the engine room and the many watertight compartments into which these ships are divided, would have made it almost impossible for one shot to disable them, and their batteries were heavy enough to defeat any enemy (a torpedo boat, for instance) from whom their speed did not insure escape.

During the second voyage of the Yale the writer was on board, and as a full diary was kept, it is believed that accounts written at the time will afford a more satisfactory picture of life on this auxiliary cruiser than any description which could be given after the events were passed.

A REPORT BY DIARY.

U. S. S. Yale, Fortress Monroe, Va., June 22, 1898.—We are still anchored here, from us. Although the darkies have been piling coal into the ship for three weeks, I can still hear them down on the lighter laughing and talking. We certainly will not come here for coal next time, but go straight to New York. Ernest Carter, Yale '79, and now Assistant Paymaster on board the ship, was ashore all day yesterday arranging with the authorities in the Navy Yard for a lot of supplies which we are to take down to the fleet off Santiago. He and I take great pride in our uniforms. He particularly enjoys standing on a barrel shouting directions to the sailors who are getting supplies on board. The sailors are many of them from the Illinois Naval Reserve. Most of them have never seen salt water before, and show a tendency to give more orders than they obey. One is Professor Hatfield of Northwestern University, a well-known philologist. I take great pleasure in the salute which he gives when I, an officer, pass him. The American Line officers have now been given commissions in the Navy and are to act as watch officers and sail the ship. Captain Watkins has the rank of commander and will act as navigator. The ship is now an auxiliary cruiser with a crew of 430 souls all told. The regular naval officers on board are Captain Wise, Lieut. Key (the executive officer), Passed Assistant Surgeon Pickrell, Lieut. McCully (ordinance officer), Ensign Williams (signal officer), and Lieut. Thorpe, in command of the marines.

My work as Captain's clerk is mainly a sinecure. Typewriting has to be done for about an hour every morning, but the Yeoman, who was formerly an expert accountant and has given up a good position ashore for the chance of seeing some fighting, does most of the work, and when we get to sea there will be even less to do. Lately the office has been rather busy with the red tape of enlisting all the old crew and the Illinois Naval Militia. A good deal of trouble was experienced with the former. Many refused to enlist, some deserted after enlistment, and one engineer who received a commission ran off before it reached here.

As yet things are in a very chaotic state. Every morning at 9.30 the crew is mustered on deck and put through gun drill. It comforts me greatly that I am not the only greenhorn on board. All the former American Line officers have to learn gun drill, bugle call, etc. So far we have all learned one call—that for dinner. All the officers mess in the grand saloon. The tables and carpet, from the middle under the dome, which it is thought may come down the first time we fire the guns, have been removed. The two captains sit at one table in the forward end of the saloon. The ward-room table is by the door. The junior officers, including Carter and myself, sit on the port side, and close by is the steerage mess where the cadets eat. By special arrangement the chief steward, an official unknown on a regular man-of-war, is to cater. The crew mess in the after saloon, and the second cabin is fitted up as a sick bay. I have a very comfortable room on the promenade deck with a bath next door. All the suites were taken when I arrived.

The ship has a new mascot. It is a little black billy-goat, which has been named "Eli" by the sailors after one of our guns. I find that all the men take a lively interest in the two guns and in the relation of the College to the ship.

We are now wrestling with the army. First they wanted us to take 1500 regulars. Captain Wise agreed to take 1200 as a limit. The troops are now ashore and number considerably more than 1200. The Major is trying to persuade the Captain to take a lot of horses. He sees no reason why the promenade deck should not be filled with them. When asked how we could work the guns if we met a Spanish ship, he replied "Why, throw the horses overboard."

CAPTAIN WISE.

I have never seen anyone who could dispatch official business like Captain Wise. He rushes into the office, tears open a dozen or so of the big navy envelopes, and throws them to me to stamp "Approved," or "Forwarded," or "For Endorsement." After that he reels off a telegram which has to be copied for sending by wire, by mail, and for file here. Then everything has to be in a certain form, endorsed in certain ways. Yesterday the Yeoman sealed and sent off some letters before the official signature was affixed. Captain Wise went for him in a way that gave me a wholesome dread of any similar mistake on my part.

Captain Wise was once in command of the Amphitrite and afterwards of the Texas, and has been lately at the navy yard at Norfolk. As an instance of the kind of man he is, when he took command of this ship, Captain Watkins left the head of the table for him, but Captain Wise insisted on his resuming it. Yet, when one of the cadets learned that I was sitting one seat below one of the old officers of the ship, a hundred times better seaman than I, but who received his commission one day after I did, the little fellow was greatly shocked, and seemed to think of course I would turn him out. The seriousness with which naval men take such points of etiquette is hard to appreciate. Captain Wise, at least, is above it.

THE SOLDIERS ARRIVE.

June 24th.—Yesterday afternoon the expected soldiers arrived. In the morning a lighter had come alongside with most of their luggage and with two horses. These were hoisted on board after several attempts had been defeated by the vigorously expressed objections of the animals. The troops arrived on one of the Washington and Old Point steamers and came alongside with the regimental band playing. Every available point of view was full of men. Brigadier-General Duffield was standing on top of the pilot-house. The troops number about 1300. They are from Michigan, the 33d and 34th, and are a fine lot physically. They are lean, wiry, rather slouchy, but very independent in their way of walking and looking about them. They are dressed entirely for work and go about most of the time without their coats, with ragged suspenders showing.

They all wore a broad grin as they