

CAPTURE OF THE "BUENA VENTURA" BY THE "NASHVILLE."

## AN ARTIST WITH ADMIRAL SAMPSON'S FLEET.

BY WALTER RUSSELL.

On Thursday afternoon, April 21, 1898, I was at work upon a drawing in my room at the Key West Hotel. The usual quiet of the town was disturbed by unusual cheering beneath my windows. "Viva Cuba libre! Vivan los Americanos!" by Cubans, had been the only sounds of cheering I had heard in Key West; but this cheering was by Americans. In the corridors I found a scene of confusion. Correspondents and artists were making pellmell for their rooms, while others were appearing with hastily packed grip-sack in one hand and wearing apparel in the other. A glance assured me that war had begun.

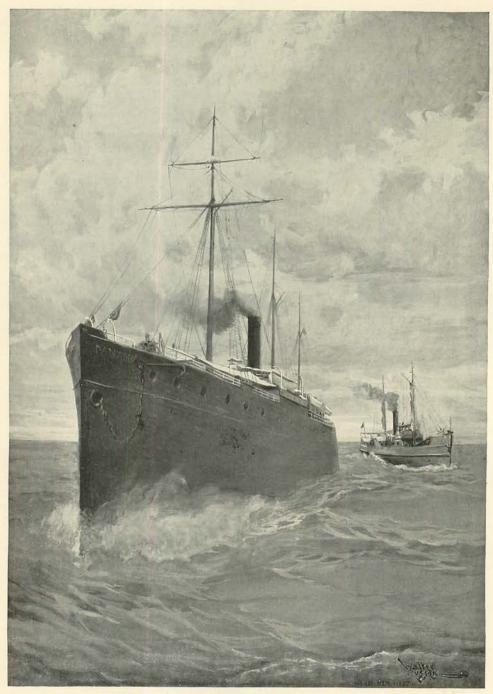
Without delay I placed my half-packed luggage, three cameras, and nine half-gallon bottles of a popular spring water in a carriage at the door, and drove to the despatch-boat Sommers N. Smith, which was to take me, with four others, to the seat of war.

The Puritan, Amphitrite, and Terror were throwing out great volumes of black smoke, hastily getting up steam; the Marblehead, Wilmington, and one or two other gunboats were already under way, moving very slowly. Torpedo-boats were skipping from one ship to the other with messages; sailors who had

had shore-leave, and had been searched for by the master-at-arms's assistants, were being many of them literally shipped on the *Somerset* for delivery aboard their respective ships. An army of correspondents and artists were in Key West, representing newspapers and magazines all over the globe.

Supper was served under the awning of our trim little craft. We were about to push out into the stream, when one of our crew sheepishly sneaked ashore, then another and another. This was a wholly unanticipated defection; but we were not alone in our misfortune, for we soon discovered that the entire crew of the despatch-boat at the next wharf had deserted. Immediately we steamed out half a mile or so to insure keeping the remainder of our crew with us. "Did you think you were shipping to go to a Sunday-school picnic?" thundered our captain to his mutinous men.

That night the fleet lay at anchor between Key West and Sand Key, all ready for an early morning start. We were informed that if challenged we must show a signal similar to the one shown us. For that purpose we lacked one red lantern, and I was sent in a



CAPTURE OF THE "PANAMA" BY THE "MANGROVE." (THE LARGE VESSEL IS THE CAPTIVE.)

I was glad of the opportunity, for it afforded

small boat to the Cincinnati to borrow one. on the ceilings, and over the hammock-hooks. That night we had drawn lots for turns at me a chance to see how Jackie felt about the watch, it being agreed that "discipline" going to war. The American sailor was even would be good for us. One of the party more anxious than I expected. "Remember put several slips of paper in his hat, and the Maine!" was the watchword. It was our hours for watch were picked from its chalked upon the gun-shields, inside turrets, depths. We all sat out the first watch, and then the second. Then, as we were all sleepy, it was agreed that we should postpone our "discipline" until the morrow. That night

"discipline" died.

At five o'clock the next morning all hands took a plunge into the sea. Then we saw the New York signaling. Soon the flag-ship was moving, followed in double, indented column by many other ships. Two torpedo-boats were doing scout duty on each side of us. We covered about seven square miles of the Atlantic, no ship more than four hundred yards from the one immediately preceding it. It was an impressive sight. The sun beat down with tropical fervor; but with an awning over our heads, and an ice-box at our side, war up to that point was luxury. As we passed one ship, then another, down the line, and shouted to some friend by megaphone, invariably the cry came back, "Remember the Maine!"

The Nashville was seen to leave the line of formation. With my field-glasses I saw on the horizon a smoke-stack, two masts, and a flag with a peculiar device—a Spanish flag, sure enough. One or two others joined in the chase. So did we. When the Buena Ventura had surrendered, a boat was lowered from the Nashville, and I was close enough to note the eagerness of our sailors, and the joy on the face of the young officer detailed to board the prize. The crew of the Buena Ventura were soon reassured and the captain pacified; and our sailors, pulling away at ropes and chains, their cutlasses dangling at their sides, soon brought the ship about, and prize and escort disappeared below the

horizon, en route for Key West.

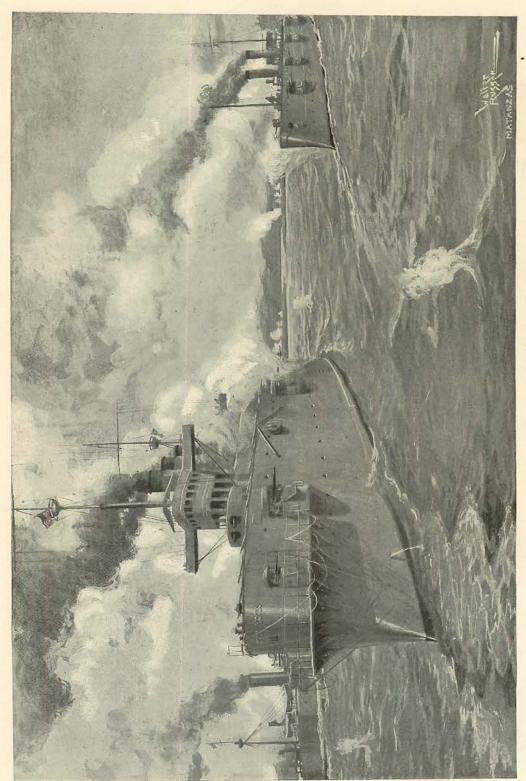
Toward five o'clock that afternoon the coast of Cuba loomed up ahead. A faint suggestion of masonry, with a thimble-shaped tower, appeared later. That was Morro Castle. A puff of smoke was seen issuing from the bow of the New York, followed by a loud report. She turned sharply to the east, and ran like a race-horse toward a pinhead on the horizon. Black smoke curled from her three funnels. Chief Engineer McConnell was getting all that was possible from her boilers. Soon the prize began to run close in to shore, while shot after shot went flying after her. Our little yacht tore through the rough water in a frantic endeavor to keep up with the race. The seas off Havana are treacherous in the extreme. Soon two sick men were watching the exciting race. In due time the Pedro, our second capture that day, was on her way to keep the Buena Ventura company. She made a the fight, while his eyes dilated. He leaned

noble run; five miles more would have put her safe in Matanzas harbor.

Off Matanzas I witnessed the first serious bombardment. After our ships had fired for five minutes, the Spanish batteries answered, the first shell striking about a hundred yards to the left of the New York, and out toward us. The Spaniards banged away wildly, their shells either going over our heads or falling widely right and left. Our shells rained into the Spanish batteries, raising columns of sand mixed with black specks (I wondered if the black specks were Spaniards) high in the air, the dust blotting out the distant mountains for a moment. The New York had a monopoly of the firing until the Spaniards returned the fire. I could see the Puritan's guns training upon the enemy long before permission was given from the flag-ship to fire. When a few puffs of smoke had revealed the Spanish batteries, the Puritan and the Cincinnati were allowed to try their skill. The signals had not reached the yard-arm before advantage was taken of them. In all about one hundred and five shots were fired by our ships, the last one, a thirteen-inch shell from the Puritan, entering the battery upon the left shore, utterly demolishing it. The fire ceased as suddenly as it began, and then the three ships steamed toward Havana for a mile or two and stopped.

We steamed alongside the New York, shouted our congratulations to Admiral Sampson, who stood upon the bridge, and offered to take to Key West any mail or despatches he might have. He accepted our offer. Suddenly a blue-shirted, bare-armed creature with flying hair appeared through the superstructure door, and spoke to an orderly, who, raising a megaphone to his lips, shouted: "Mr. — wants to know how long you will wait for him to finish his article for the - ?" And picturesque Mr. stripped for action, was given ten minutes.

A great monotony overhangs the whole fleet on blockade. Sometimes two or three ships are together; more often they are ten miles apart. We lay near one or another the greater part of the time, and occasionally went aboard for a chat with her officers and crew. The day following the bombardment of Matanzas we sighted the Iowa. Some one suggested that we go tell Captain Evans about the fight. We steamed alongside. Captain Evans stood on the bridge over our heads. Then came the cry (always the first cry from the ships to a despatch-boat), "What's the news?" We told him about



ENGAGEMENT AT MATANZAS, APRIL 27.

we had finished, and then replied, in his own characteristic way, "Why don't they give us a chance?" This called forth laughter from our boat, and cheers from the *Iowa*. A small boat was lowered from the *Iowa*, and a bag of

as far as he safely could over the rail until Iowa, and fell in with another craft, a torpedoboat towing a small prize to report to the New York; then steamed up the coast to Cabanas. Every night all lights were extinguished, and we lay, quietly drifting, the only incident usually being a flash from a blinding search-light mail came aboard, with a request to send it to till the invisible patrol, having satisfied her-Key West by our tender, which made daily self regarding our identity, would hood her trips to us for news. We moved away from the search-light, and disappear in the darkness.

## WILD EDEN.

## BY GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY.

THERE is a garden inclosed In the high places, But never hath love reposed In its bowery spaces; And the cedars there like shadows O'er the moonlit champaign stand Till Light, like an angel's hand, Touches Wild Eden.

Who told me the name of the garden That lieth remote, apart, I know not, nor whence was the music That sang it into my heart; But just as the loud robin tosses His notes from the elm-tops high, As the violets come in the mosses When south-winds wake and sigh. So on my lips I found it, This name that is made my cry.

There, under the stars and the dawns Of the virginal valleys, White lilies flood the low lawns And the rose lights the alleys; But never are heard there the voices That sweeten on lovers' lips, And the wild bee never sips Sweets of Wild Eden.

But who hath shown me the vision Of the roses and lilies in ranks I would that I knew, that forever To him I might render thanks: For a maiden grows there in her blossom, In the place of her maidenhood, Nor knows how her virgin bosom Is stored with the giving of good, For the truth is hidden from her That of love is understood.

No bird with his mate there hovers, Nor beside her has trilled or sung; No bird in the dewy covers Has built a nest for his young; And over the dark-leaved mountains The voice of the laurel sleeps: And the moon broods on the deeps Shut in Wild Eden.

O Love, if thou in thy hiding Art he who above me stands, If thou givest wings to my spirit, If thou art my heart and my hands,— Through the morn, through the noon, through the even That burns with thy planet of light, Through the moonlit space of heaven, Guide thou my flight Till star-like on the dark garden I fall in the night!

## L'ENVOY.

Fly, song of my bosom, unto it Wherever the earth breathes spring; Though a thousand years were to rue it, Such a heart beats under thy wing, Thou shalt dive, thou shalt soar, thou shalt find it, And forever my life be blest, Such a heart beats in my breast,-Fly to Wild Eden!