BROOKLYN'S WAR LESSONS.

SCHLEY AND HODGSON SAY WHAT THEY LEARNED.

Efficacy of the Rapid-Fire Guns —Advantage of the Cruiser's High Speed—The Jackies.

"You can almost read the lessons learned by the Brooklyn during this war in the stars," said Admiral Schley with twinkling eyes. He waved one hand suggestively toward the American ensign flaunting from the taffrail of the armored cruiser as he spoke. "As for the share of the crew and this ship in the victory of the Santiago fight, only one thing can be said—they did their duty as Americans and American ships always have and always will. In all my experience I have never before witnessed such fatally accurate and deadly shooting as was done by our fleet as it closed in on Cervera's squadron during the battle of July 3. But all this is an old story. That we happened to be in the thick of the fight is a piece of good luck for which we are all thankful. The speed of the Brooklyn had something to do with it. And you can give the praise for that to those who designed her and the faithful crew below in the engine and fire rooms. They worked as men never worked before. If you wish me to give an idea of the efficiency of the armored cruiser class of warships as proved by the Brooklyn's experience, I am afraid I must refer you to Mr. Hodgson, the navigator."

Lieut. Hodgson is the cruiser's navigating officer. Admiral Schley said of him in his report of the Santiago battle:

"The navigator, Lieut. A. C. Hodgson, was most steady and conspicuous in every detail of duty, contributing to the accurate firing of this ship (Brooklyn) in her part of the great victory."

Lieut. Hodgson said:

"The lesson learned the by Brooklyn is the same as that learned by every ship in the fleet. We probably can give better testimony from the fact that we were struck by the enemy's projectiles a greater number of times than any other vessel, but really the only additional knowledge acquired is that Spanish shells of the calibre fired by Cervera's ships are useless against the three to eight inch armor carried by the Brooklyn. The marks and scars show that we were reached about twenty-five times, but, as you see, we are still afloat.

"The recent war proved conclusively that vessels of the Brooklyn type find ample protection in the protective deck, which is three inches on the flat and six inches on the slope, in the three-inch belt and in the eight inches guarding the barbette turrets. It is evident that the constructors were happy in their selection of the armor. The injury reported to have been sustained during the Santiago fight when one of the compartments was flooded below the water line was due to a water valve being opened through some unknown cause.

"In regard to the question of armament, it has been claimed in some quarters that a battery consisting entirely of 6-inch rapid-fire guns would be more efficient than the Brooklyn's present battery, which includes eight 8-inch and twelve 5-inch rapid-firers and a secondary battery of twelve 6-pounders, four 1-pounders, four Colts and two field guns. The question is susceptible of argument, of course, but I think the 8-inch guns of the Brooklyn did their share in the Santiago fight. We fired 100 rounds of 8-inch shells. Those, combined with the 8-inch projectiles fired by the Iowa, Oregon and Indiana, worked terrible havoc on the Maria Teresa, the Oquendo, the Vizcaya and the Colon. One of these shells struck the latter ship, landed in the wardroom and exploded, wrecking the compartment and killing a number of the enemy. The Maria Teresa was struck by an 8-inch shell from our ship, which entered the side just forward of the port beam. The projectiles burst and disabled the four crews of the guns on that deck. The 8-inch breechloader is a formidable weapon, and it is certainly not out of place on an armored cruiser.

"The official reports made by the commanders of Admiral Sampson's fleet prove that the main results of the battle off Santiago were achieved by the 8-inch and lower calibers, and the rapid-fire pieces. Too much praise cannot be given to the men at the latter guns for their extraordinary skill and ability. The perfect hail of projectiles showered upon the fleeing Spanish ships by the 5-inch rapid-firers was almost beyond belief. Capt. Eulate's testimony that 'the Brooklyn's fire on our broadsides was frightful, and the men could not stay at their guns,' proves how the crews worked the pieces. Although twelve of these terribly destructive guns are carried, only six could be used during the running fight, as only that number would bear on the broadside, but the six guns did their work nobly. The Vizcaya was hit six times by the Brooklyn's 5-inch breech-loaders, the Infanta Maria five times, the Cristobal Colon four and the Oquendo five. One of the shells exploded a torpedo on the latter vessel with terrible effect. This shows a total of twenty hits, which, when the fact that the target was moving rapidly is taken into consideration, is really remarkable. I do not believe the battery of the Brooklyn can be improved. Results naturally speak for themselves, and the results obtained by the ship in the recent war are eloquent.

"The efficient work of the marines manning the secondary battery must not be forgotten. They handled the light guns coolly and skilfully, notwithstanding their exposed position, and the question as to the advisability of utilizing the marine guard in such work should be considered settled."

The Lieutenant was asked how, in his opinion, armored cruisers compared with battleships as proved by his experience on board the Brooklyn. From the manner of his reply it is evident that he is an enthusiastic advocate of the Brooklyn class.

"Both the battleships and fast armored cruisers are necessary in every fighting fleet," he said, "but I think, from the greater range of the latter and their higher speed, tney are really of more value than the battleships. The moral effect on an enemy naturally exerted by craft like the Indiana or Iowa must be admitted, but for quick, sharp work, great speed and cruising range and effective action the armored cruisers cannot be beaten. What better fighting machines can be found in any navy than the New York or the Brooklyn? They have a speed of twenty knots or more, splendid batteries, ample armor, a coal supply of 1,461 tons and a radius of 6,088 knots at a ten-knot speed. With the new foreign policy of the United States (to which they are not yet committed, of course, but which is surely bound to follow), such vessels as the New York and Brooklyn will be of the greatest value. Future naval building programmes will certainly include that type of ship."

In reply to a question as to the conduct of the Brooklyn's crew during the Santiago action, Lieut. Hodgson spoke in warm praise. The coolness and daring, the sangfroid shown by all on board, from the oldest man down to the youngest apprentice, was something absolutely marvelous.

"If it had not been for the series of thuds proclaiming the landing of the Spanish shells against our sides and the terrible rending and crashing sounds as the enemy's ships blew up, one would have thought the whole affair was simply a drill at general quarters. One of the lessons learned by the Brooklyn (but it is really superfluous) is the wonderful capabilities of the American man-of-war's man as a fighter. It has not required years of actual practice to place the Yankee bluejacket at the top of the heap. We have men aboard here who, if dressed as citizens, would give a Quaker odds on meekness of appearance, but when that fleet slipped out past Morro Castle and made for the west, they fought like demons. If you should ask one of the boys what he thought of the fight, he'd probably grin and shrug his shoulders. 'It was merely a scrap.'"

The one peculiarity of construction in the Brooklyn most prominent to the casual observer is her lofty and ugly-looking smoke funnels. She carries three, which tower above the decks almost as high as the signal masts. These stacks were advocated by Chief Engineer Melville, and the testimony of the engineering force of the cruiser is in their favor. The lofty funnels really give the result which is usually obtained by the use of forced draught—a device which experience has proved liable to lead to the ruin of boilers. The forced draught system causes severe expansion and contraction strains and usually starts leakage at the tube ends. This is not present in natural draught, and the Brooklyn's experience has shown that as good results can be obtained by lengthening the smokestacks as by the employment of the forced draught system.

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WINSLOW'S BATTLE SCARS.

The Torpedo Boat Welcomed at Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Battle scarred and weather beaten, but for practical purposes as strong as ever, the torpedo boat Winslow, which distinguished herself last May in the Cardenas engagement, arrived at the Brooklyn Navy Yard yesterday and took her place among the other boats of her class. After her present commander, Lieut. A. P. Niblach, had reported to Admiral Bunce, visitors were allowed on board the little fighting craft. For want of space at the Cob Dock the Winslow was not put alongside the dock, but was placed on the outside of two torpedo boats, so that to reach her it was necessary for visitors to walk over the deck of the Cushing, which lay next to the dock, and then over the Foote, which lay between the Cushing and the Winslow.

Lieut. Niblach said that shortly before the Winslow reached Quarantine her steam steering apparatus got out of order, as occasionally happened in rough weather, but it was soon fixed. The boat, he said, had received all the necessary repairs at Mobile after the Cardenas affair, but, like all the craft in the navy which had been kept on a continuous strain for the last four months, she needed a rest and refitting. Before going into blockade duty many of the comfortable equipments of the boat were discarded, and now that the war is practically over, the Winslow is to regain some of the comforts of a war boat on a peace footing.

Only ten men of the crew of twenty-one who were in the fatal skirmish in Cardenas Bay on May 11 arrived on the Winslow. Five of the crew, including Ensign Worth Bagley of Raleigh, N. C., were killed; five were promoted to be warrant officers, the highest rank which can be attained by an enlisted seaman, not a graduate of the Naval Academy, and one man left when his term of service expired. On Aug. 16 Lieut. Niblach relieved Lieut. J. B. Bernadou, who was in command when the boat was under fire, and who was wounded on deck, and at the same time Ensign C. A. Brand succeeded Ensign J. B. Latimer, who had taken young Bagley's place immediately after the fight. There are only two commissioned officers on the torpedo boat.

Lieut. Bernadou, whose wound in the leg did not incapacitate him from duty, went to Washington from Key West and is now in the Ordnance Department. Ensign Latimer also went into the service at Washington. The remaining ten of the original war crew were kept busy yesterday afternoon showing the dents in the iron and steel work of the boat and in telling the people the names of the men who were killed and those who were promoted for unusual bravery. The men who were killed by the bursting of the same shell which killed Bagley were: J. V. Meek, seaman; John Varneries, oiler; J. Deneefe, fireman, and Josiah Tunnel, the negro cook. The men who for their unusual bravery under fire were promoted to the rank of the highest noncommissioned office in the navy are: Chief Gunner's Mate Brady, Gunner's Mate R. E. Cox, First Class Quartermaster Daniel C. McKeon, First Class Fireman Gray and First Class Fireman William Patterson.

Of the twenty-six scars on the Winslow, plainly visible, the majority are in the prow. When the masked batteries on shore first fired upon the Winslow, which had fallen into the trap of pursuing a decoy Spanish gunboat, she was going full speed head on toward the batteries. Several of the shells, therefore, struck her in the prow and set fire to the oilroom, and then passed on into the engine room, breaking the steering apparatus. One shell struck the anchor and drove a piece of it almost through the head of the forward port side Whitehead torpedo. Had this piece of broken anchor struck the explosive head of the projectile it would have blown the torpedo boat to atoms. But it only sunk into the wet guncotton, and therefore did not do any material damage. The piece of shell which struck Lieut. Bernadou in the leg only stirred the commander up to the boiling point, and after he tied a handkerchief around the wound he continued in the fight until the revenue cutter Hudson, which had not been disabled, towed the Winslow out to safety under the protection of the guns of the Machias. It was not until the hand-steering apparatus had been adjusted and the Winslow had turned away from the masked batteries that the shell came which struck down Bagley and the four men. Most of the visitors were surprised when the seamen explained to them that the fatal shot came from the rear on the port side at an angle of 45° and struck the men, who were all on the starboard side, amidships. The popular pictures of the explosion of the shell killing the five men make it appear as though the shell came from the front and from the starboard side. The most serious injury to the boat from a shell was one which struck her about three feet above the water line on the starboard side and disabled the first low pressure cylinder of the starboard screw's engine. The Spanish on shore certainly had good aim at Cardenas, for both conning towers of the Winslow, in each of which is a steering apparatus, were punctured by three-inch shells. It so happened that in both cases the pilot had gone below to see about the disarranged gear, or he would have been killed either in the fore or aft conning tower. The two smokestacks show several holes and many dents from smaller calibre guns.

Relic hunters and personal friends of young Bagley who were allowed on board the Winslow at Mobile on the Fourth of July carried away with them several square feet of the oilcloth on which Bagley stood when he was shot down. As there was some difference of opinion among the members of the crew as to his exact location when the shell exploded, some persons cut bits from the deck covering from one place and some from another near the rear smokestack. Some, to make sure, cut little pieces from both places near the rear funnel. As the commanding officer knew that the whole deck would have to be recovered upon reaching the Brooklyn Navy Yard, he generally looked the other way when he saw the Alabama men whip out a pocket knife.

Lieut. Niblach said that the Winslow would probably be several weeks in refitting. To some of the members of the crew who inquired about mustering out, he said that no formal orders had been received, but he had been led to understand that all members who had enlisted for this war only would be honorably discharged upon application, as the war was now practically over.

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