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Trust the people—the wise and the ignorant, the good and the bad—with the greatest questions, and in the end you educate the race.

NEW YORK CITY, Feb. 7, 1898. My Dear Friend: The following letter will bring rejoicing to the hearts of our home people everywhere.

EASTON CASTLE, Jan. 28th, 1898. Dear Lord George Hamilton: Your lordship invited me ten months ago to give you my view of the dispatch that had been addressed to the government of India.

TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY Dead as a Result of the Cruiser Maine Disaster. How the Explosion Occurred no One is Yet Able to Explain.

A Halifax Man Among those Killed—The Funerals of the Victims Largely Attended

HAVANA, Feb. 15.—At a quarter of 10 o'clock this evening a terrible explosion took place on board the U. S. cruiser Maine in Havana harbor.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—After a day of intense excitement at the navy department and elsewhere, growing out of the destruction of the battleship Maine in Havana harbor last night, the situation at noon today after the exchange of a number of cablegrams between Washington and Havana, can be summed up in the words of Secretary Long, who, when asked, as he was about to depart for the day, whether he had reason to suspect that the disaster was the work of an enemy, replied:

"I do not. In that I am influenced by the fact that Captain Sigbee has not yet reported to the navy department waiting to write a full report. So long as he does not express himself, I can certainly not. I should think from the indications, however, that there was an accident—that the magazine exploded. How that came about I do not know. For the present, at least, no other warship will be sent to Havana."

The appalling nature of the disaster and the gravity of the situation that would arise should investigation give a bias for the undercurrent of suspicion of treachery and foul play that ran through all minds, has a sobering effect on public men of all shades of political opinion.

Public men expressed their opinion with reserve when approached for interviews, but everywhere there was a demand for an investigation and full details, in the light of which the horror may be justly viewed.

It is said at the navy department that this disaster is the greatest of the kind in naval history since the sinking of the big British warship Victoria by collision with the Camperdown in the Mediterranean sea, off Malta, in June, 1893.

and that the crew were unable to extinguish it. The first explosion is said to have been caused by over 600 pounds of gun cotton and the subsequent explosion is alleged to have been caused by shells and cartridges.

The passengers of the City of Washington gave up their staterooms to the navy department the afternoon after the explosion of the City of Washington, breaking the tabernacle of the steamer.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—The members of the Spanish legation called at the navy department this afternoon to express their sympathy and condolence. Up to 2.30 p. m. the legation had not heard from Madrid. It was stated that the delay doubtless was due to the fact that in a matter of this gravity the Queen Regent herself would send a message of sympathy and regret, and that this measure would come later.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—The following cablegram was received by the state department from Consul General Lee at 2.15 tonight:

HAVANA, Feb. 15.—Profound sorrow expressed by the government and municipal authorities, consists of foreign nations, or the U. S. state department, which generally flags at half-mast on governor-general's palace on shipping in harbor and in the city.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17.—The government has settled back into waiting attitude in respect to the terrible marine disaster in Havana harbor, the great shock caused by the news has given way to a calmer and more judicial state of mind, and realizing from the events of the day that the court of enquiry is the sole dependence in the search for the cause of the disaster, the naval officials are now resigned to await the results of that inquiry by a court named by the navy department.

There was little new to add to the sum of information as to the disaster during the forenoon. No telegram came, and all that could be gleaned was a denial of some absurd story or other that had crept into print or become current gossip.

The officials at the navy department devoted the day to the effort to correct the lists of living and dead, to receive frantic appeals from relatives of men on the battleship Maine, and last, but not least, in meeting with unwavering courtesy and patience the exacting demands upon their time of the press representatives.

As for the Maine herself, notwithstanding discouraging reports from Lieut. Hood as to her condition, the navy department will make the effort to raise her. While this is required by every credible sentiment, they say that they are bound to remove the hull from the small harbor in any case, and it may be as easy or easier to raise her as it would be to destroy the hull and machinery by the use of divers and dynamite.

At the navy department specific denial was given of the report emanating from Madrid that the Maine had been about to leave Key West for Cuba. It was stated that only two torpedo boats, the Cushing and the Ericsson, are at Key West, and these have not been ordered and will not be ordered, according to present plans, to Cuba. It was strongly asserted that no present purpose existed of sending any warships there.



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ROYAL BAKING POWDER Absolutely Pure. The air of suppressed excitement which characterized the movements of employes and visitors at the White House yesterday was not noticeable.

HALIFAX, Feb. 17.—Lewis I. Barry, one of the victims of the Maine disaster, left Halifax about three years ago. He last wrote home at Christmas. He joined the Maine in April, 1897, and was well known in this his native city.

The explosion so disoriented and twisted the battleship that her remains now appear like a pile of wreckage. All the upper structure, turrets and guns are in a heap, and one boiler has been blown out of its place, affix at 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon was still smoking on deck.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17.—A number of telegrams have been received at the navy department from persons engaging in the diving business, offering their services in the effort to recover the valuables that are in the sunken battleship Maine, and to assist in ascertaining the cause which led to the explosion.

When the Detroit left New York for the south, Feb. 15, she took a few men destined for the Maine. The names of the men were: E. R. Hines, first class apprentice; Eggs (Continued on Page Four.)