

celebrated launch *Lucy*, which had been hit in the bows and sunk in shallow water, was again at work, having been repaired at the workshops on Ilha das Euxadas.

On the 27th the fighting was again hot at the Armacao. The report of the taking of that place by the Government was confirmed, greatly to the disgust of the Custodistas in Rio. In the afternoon a party of men from the Fleet made an attack in launches, but although backed by the guns of the warships, did not effect a landing. Great spirit was shown on both sides. At about five p.m. firing between the forts became very hot, but did not last after seven p.m.

The 28th was almost absolutely quiet. On the 29th not much was doing. An occasional cannon shot was heard from the forts and Armacao. Some rifle fire was maintained against Villegaignon and was returned by that place in a desultory way. The *Trajano*, which had received some damage from shot, was being towed to an anchorage for repairs, and while this was being done the launch *Gloria* was struck by a shot from one of the Nictheroy batteries. She was badly hit and made for land, sinking in shallow water which just covers her deck. The usual duel came off between the Government forts and heroic Villegaignon, which for two months has bravely fought its guns against no less than four adversaries, able to use five guns for each one available in Villegaignon.

The Ilha das Cobras, under Saldanha de Gama—"Emperor of Lilliput," as the papers say—is being steadily fortified. New breastworks appear every day, and many guns are placed in positions commanding the city, and most suitable for firing into the town. All this is being done under the guise of neutrality! Although the question of Saldanha's neutrality was practically decided when Villegaignon adhered to Mello, he has not so far done any active fighting on the behalf of the Fleet. His sentiments are all for restoration, and many believe that nothing is lacking but an accord with Mello for Saldanha to drop his mask, which, from a military point of view, is criminal, and declare for the Empire. There can be no doubt that the Ilha das Cobras will before long adhere to the revolt.

The papers are most bitter in regard to the position assumed by the Admiral; yet taking into consideration the fact that he will eventually declare against Floriano, he has probably gained many more advantages for the final success of the revolt than he would have got had he declared at first. The manner in which he has succeeded in holding the Government in check is no less remarkable than novel in the history of South American revolutions and of military affairs generally. The Vice-President, however, should have demanded his adhesion to one side or the other long before this, and if his answer was for the Fleet, have opened fire on him at once. He has converted some of the buildings on the island into a Hospital de Sangue, and has hoisted the Red Cross flag over them. All the wounded from the Fleet, and they are many, are received there; and those who recover are allowed to go on board again. Nearly every day two or three coffins are landed at the Arsenal da Marinha and are received by the Government and buried. On Sunday three coffins were brought over and placed in hearses that were waiting. One contained the body of a colonel, the two others were seamen.

The next day the papers raised a tremendous row because one of the coffins contained the amputated leg of a negro, in addition to its proper occupant. In Brazil, and I suppose in all Catholic countries, an amputated limb receives burial in the same way as an entire corpse. By the way, the Red Cross Association, according to the papers, is not recognized in Brazil! Just now the wounded are being transferred from the Ilha das Cobras to the Ilha das Euxadas, and it can only be supposed that this removal in conjunction with the constant preparations for fighting, is preparatory to a declaration from Saldanha. In the early part of these communications, Saldanha was spoken of as being "admittedly" the ablest naval officer of the day. Previous to this it was said of Mello that he was "undoubtedly" the ablest. Both are able and capable men, and while Mello is a man of great energy and undoubted courage, Saldanha's personality seems to be of a higher calibre, and at any rate he has the confidence of the best and largest portion of his class and of the people generally.

To-day, a huge shell from the *Javary* is being shown in a tobacco shop in the Ouvidor. It fell in Nictheroy on the 18th of November; it stands 35 inches and weighs 235 kilos. It is what is known as a "Whitworth," and is hexagonal in cross sections. The *Tamandare* is now moving about under her own steam. She has only one engine able to work so far. Unusual stir is going on amongst the insurgent launches, the *Aquidaban* being completely surrounded by the mosquito fleet. The *Aquidaban's* boats and some of the merchant steamers, armed *en guerra*, have been painted lead color. Since the 27th, a report has been in circulation that the *Aquidaban* is about to force the bar and go to sea. The *Paiz* has been bragging very loudly that the Admiral is caught in a trap, and can't get out. We will see. There are those who are willing to bet that Mello will take out the *Aquidaban* just when he pleases.

We are absolutely without authentic news from either north or south, or the *Republica*. A lot of lies are flying around, about the powerful fleet which is coming from the U.S., Germany and England for the Government. We would like to have certain information on this subject. Officially, Brazil is at peace.

Nov. 29th.

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The 30th was quiet enough, only the usual duel between the Government forts and Villegaignon. The night, though, was one of great excitement. The *Aquidaban* and the S.S. *Esperanca* passed the forts and got to sea!

At about midnight the sound of heavy cannonading was heard, but this being so common of late, your correspondent did not get out of bed, but turned over and went to sleep again. Scarcely a minute had passed, apparently, before I was awakened by a tremendous crash of artillery, and jumping out of bed I shouted to my room mate "that must be the *Aquidaban* going out; let's go down to the beach." I soon got out on the praia. Just as we reached the shore the Sao Joao search-light flashed on some object in front of the Bay of Jurujuba, and turning my glass on it I saw that it was the *Aquidaban* steaming rapidly towards the bar. Hardly had I caught sight of her, when she let go at Santa Cruz from her bow turret, and at the same time Lage and Santa Cruz opened

from their guns. Sao Joao was busy replying to a heavy fire from Villegaignon.

As the big ship neared the forts she became a blaze of light from the fire of her guns. Everything was going at once—quick firing and machine, 5 and 6 inch guns, and every now and then her heavy turret guns would awake the echoes in tremendous fashion. But the forts were not idle. Every instant shells could be seen bursting on the sides of the great iron-clad. As she got between Lage and Santa Cruz she almost stopped, and while her starboard battery was dosing Lage her port one was no less busy with Santa Cruz. In this position the forts hardly fired at all for fear of hitting each other. The noise was awful, but it was a grand sight. People along the shore could hardly contain themselves. I heard many men groan to themselves, "Ah, my God! she won't get out." But she did. Bravo, gallant Mello, and your no less gallant men! It was a plucky act, and no navy need be ashamed of it or of such men as those who manned the *Aquidaban*. When she had passed the bar she sent up rockets to say she was safe.

A thing which seemed strange was that as the ship crossed the harbor line well in reach of Santa Cruz hardly a shot was fired. The only way to account for this is by supposing either that the fellows in the fort had enough, or that the guns pointing seaward were changed to bear on Villegaignon. Perhaps the *Paiz* will explain. During the fight several of the shells passed over towards Botafogo. They were probably ricocheted from Santa Cruz or Villegaignon. After the *Aquidaban* had got safely out she sent several big shells against Santa Cruz. Fort Pico entered into the fray with cannon and rifles. When the rocket went up, I knew that all was over for the time, and so returned to bed.

While Villegaignon was engaging Sao Joao a heavy fusillade was going on down by the Gloria.

The *Esperanca*, the steamer which went out ahead of the *Aquidaban*, was reported to have gone out once before. Refer to letter of 19th October.

Late in the day following the alleged "flight" of the *Aquidaban*, I obtained some further information on the subject.

This is how the trick was done.

As soon as it was dark on the evening of the 30th, preparations were begun for the going out. So well were things arranged that all was ready at 11 o'clock. To render the *Esperanca* in some degree safe, great numbers of sand bags were placed all about her boilers, and at the same time others, secured with ropes leading on deck, were suspended all around the sides and in such quantity that the vessel sunk some five feet below her usual water line. In case of her getting hit, the lines which held the sand bags could be cut and the vessel would at once gain five feet of freeboard.

All being ready, Villegaignon opened fire on the forts of the bar, and they, thinking perhaps that Villegaignon wanted a night engagement, at once replied. The *Gloria* search-light was turned on Villegaignon, which fort promptly fired at it and cut one of the wires, putting the light out. The wire was spliced with commendable promptness, but the light did not come into play again until the *Aquidaban* had passed the bar. Well, the guns on the Government forts being all discharged, the *Esperanca* made a dash and got safely out before the guns, which are mostly muzzle loaders (*ante carga*), and some smooth bore