

Two Thousand Pounds of Powder Wrecks a Turret and

Kills Crew. -Captain's Prompt Action Saves the Magazine From Being

Fired.

Pensacola, Fla., April 13.-By the explosion of 2,000 pounds of powder in the after 12-inch turret and the handing room of the battleship Missouri,

ploson of 2,000 points of powder in the after 12-inch turret and the hand-ling room of the battleship Missouri, Captain S. W. Cowles, commanding, 29 men were instantly killed and five in-jured, of whom two will die. The Mis-souri was on the target range with the Texas and Brooklyn at practice about noon, when a charge of powder in the 12-inch left hand gun ignited from gases, exploded and dropping below gitted four charges of powder in the handling room, and all exploded. Only one of the entire turret and handling crews survived. But for the prompt and efficient ac-tion of Capt. Cowles in flooding the handling room and magazine with wa-ter, one magazine would have exploded and the ship would have been destroy-ed. Capt. Cowles, completely over-come by the accident, refers all news-papermen to Lieut. Hammer, the ordn-ance officer. The latter gave out a statement of the explosion and its prob-able cause. According to him, about noon after the first pointer of the after 12-inch piece had fired his string and the string the charge ignited. The fourth shot was being loaded, and from all indications the first half of the charge had been rammed home and the second sectics was being rammed home when gases from the shot previously fired or portions of the cloth corer imited the powder. The breech was heard but flames were seen to leap from every portion of the turret. A few seconds later another explosion somewhat with more force followed. This was in the handling room below, where 1,600 pounds of powder or four charges, ready to be hoisted above, had ignited. Fire quar-ters were sounded and the warp and the second sectics was being the fire the three responded and the magazine and handling rooms were fooded with wa-ter. In less than five seconds after the fiven responded and the magazine and handling rooms were fooded with wa-ter the second was treams of water were being played in the same room, and when volunteers, were called for the unret woom and rescue the crew. Capt. Cowles gave his command and thandi

of the officers of the ship the Missuri would have gone down. The second explosion occurred near one of the magazines and so hot was the fire that the brass work of the magazines was melted. Smoke trom the fuse and powder made it impossible to enter the turret and handling room, but officers and men with handkerchiefs over their faces made efforts to rescur the men inside. Leading the rescue party was Capt. Cowles. The officers endeavored to keep him from going oe-low, as men fell unconscious as they entered and had to be pulled out by their comrades, but unheeding their ad-vice the captain rushed below, followed by Livut. Hammer, the ordnance officer, and Lieut. Clelland David. David the deck with him. The bluejacket with two others, from the handling room, had crawled partly from their place of dnty when they had been over-tione. Before the fumes of the burn-ing powder had left the turret, officers and men were laying out the dead and