

VARIOUS

THE GREAT ROUND
WORLD AND WHAT IS
GOING ON IN IT, VOL. 1,
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The situation in Cuba remains much the same.

The noteworthy event of the past week has been a sad and unfortunate shipwreck which occurred on October 16th.

On that day a Spanish steamer was wrecked off the coast of Pinar del Rio, while making the trip from Havana to Bahia Honda.

The *Triton*, as the steamer was called, was carrying soldiers' ammunition, money, and mules to be used against the Cubans in Pinar del Rio.

According to all accounts the steamer was so heavily laden that when she started her decks were only a few feet above the level of the water.

It was a very black and stormy night, and many sailors on the dock expressed fears that the vessel could not weather a storm in her heavily laden condition.

The trip she had to make was merely a matter of four hours, and the captain declared himself confident of bringing his vessel safely to port.

All went well till the *Triton* was within a few miles of her destination; when off the coast of Pinar del Rio she ran aground.

Those on board who were saved from the wreck said that the vessel was so heavily loaded that she was not able to take her usual course, and, because so much deeper in the water, ran aground on a bank that in her ordinary trips she could pass over without difficulty.

As long as the vessel had been cutting her way through the water, the heavy lading had caused little inconvenience, but when she grounded the waves began to wash over her decks, and cause much alarm to the passengers.

While the vessel was in great danger, she might still have been saved if it had not been for the mules. These beasts, becoming panic-stricken as the waves swept over the deck, stampeded to one side of the vessel, causing it to list over so much that the cargo shifted.

This is one of the most terrible accidents that can happen to a vessel.

The loading of a cargo is a very important thing, and is a business of itself. The men who direct it must understand just how to distribute the weight evenly in the hold, and how to pack the boxes and bales and barrels so tightly together that they cannot move, because if a cargo should shift it is liable to throw

the ship out of her balance, and she is in danger of overturning and sinking.

This is what happened to the *Triton*. The mules and the shifted cargo together made such a heavy weight on one side that she keeled over, and within fifteen minutes of the time she first struck the bank she sank, carrying down with her one hundred and fifty of the passengers and crew.

The accident happened in the early dawn, when many of the people were asleep in their berths, and though the captain had them roused, and lowered the boats to try and take them off the sinking ship, the seas ran so high that the small boats were swamped, and it was impossible to save the unfortunate passengers.

The ship went down in one hundred and twenty fathoms of water, so it is not likely that her valuable cargo of arms and money will ever be recovered. The loss is a serious one to Spain at this moment, when she needs every penny she has to help her out of her many difficulties.

There are disquieting rumors that the Carlists are smuggling large quantities of arms into Spain from France, and it is thought that the long-deferred rising will occur very shortly.

Eleven thousand rifles are said to have been purchased in Belgium by the Carlist agents during the month of September.

There is a vague rumor that the Queen Regent and her new

Prime Minister have arrived at the conclusion that the only possible end to the Cuban war will be to let the Cubans purchase the island.

There are a good many complications in the way of this action at present, because the European financiers, about whom we have spoken to you before, have advanced a great deal of money to Spain, the sugar and tobacco being taken as security for the return of their money. These people must first be reckoned with before any agreement to free Cuba can be made, but it is hinted by people close to the Government that the Queen and Señor Sagasta are considering a plan whereby they can allow Cuba to purchase her freedom without making bad friends with the financiers, or offending the pride of Spain.

It would seem that Señor Sagasta's policy is to put an end to foreign wars, and gather the strength of the Spanish army around the throne of Spain, so that it shall be well protected against the Carlist attack that will undoubtedly be made ere long.

A report has been received that the Spanish general in the Philippine Islands is treating with the insurgents for peace.

This report is published in one of the reliable Spanish papers, and it states that General Primo de Rivera has been discussing terms of peace with Emilio Aguinaldo, the insurgent leader.

The rebels have been so successful that they are not willing to make peace unless they get very good terms, and so they ask that all who have taken part in the revolt shall be given a free pardon, that three million pesetas (a peseta is worth about twenty

cents) shall be paid to the insurgent chiefs, that the Philippine Islands shall be represented in the Spanish Cortes, and that half the government offices in the islands shall be held by natives. The insurgents also demand that the power of the priests shall be lessened, as the rebellion was really caused by the disagreements between the friars and the people.

An amusing filibustering incident has occurred during the week.

The Spaniards obtained information that the Cubans were fitting out a large expedition with arms and men for the insurgents. They had engaged a ship called the *Premier* for this purpose, and were making their preparations with all possible haste and secrecy.

The Spaniards gave information to our Government, and requested that the expedition be stopped.

But the Cubans have as many spies around as the Spaniards, and it was soon learned that the *Premier* expedition was known to the authorities. Without appearing to change their plans about the *Premier*, the Cubans made a secret arrangement with another ship called the *Silver Heels*, and prepared her to take their cargo instead of the *Premier*.

The watchful Spaniards soon found out about the new vessel, and even learned the hour and dock at which she was to receive her cargo.

Our Government was warned, and a revenue cutter got ready

to intercept the *Silver Heels* as soon as she should really have started on her voyage.

The Cubans were attempting to load and despatch their vessel from the port of New York, and so it was expected that, with all the police boats and cutters available here, it would be an easy matter to catch and convict all concerned in the expedition.

A detective was sent to watch the dock at which the *Silver Heels* was to be loaded. Sure enough, the vessel slipped up to the pier as soon as night had fallen, and the detective watched suspicious-looking cases being hastily put on board, and suspicious-looking characters taking passage in her. He became convinced that a filibustering expedition was indeed being sent out. To make quite sure, he watched until the last of her load was put on board. The last man had reached the deck, and the vessel, in tow of a river tug, had once more pulled out of the dock.

He then hurried down to the Battery and told what he had seen, and with several other officers got on board the cutter and started to intercept the *Silver Heels* as she came down the Bay on her way to sea.

To you who do not know New York Harbor, it may be as well to explain that New York, or Manhattan, Island lies between the Hudson River and the Sound, an arm of the sea which is called the East River as it flows by New York.

This East River which, as it widens, becomes Long Island Sound, separates Manhattan Island from Long Island, which, as its name suggests, is a long strip of land stretching along the coast

for miles above and below New York city, forming the beautiful New York Bay and Harbor below the city, and the equally lovely Long Island Sound above the city.

The Atlantic Ocean washes the outer shore of Long Island, and ships leaving the port of New York can reach the sea either by going above the city through Hell Gate and Long Island Sound, or below the city down the Harbor and Bay, and out through the Narrows, past Sandy Hook and Fire Island.

The route to Cuba is *down* the Bay. To attempt to make the journey by the Sound route is to go a good day's journey out of the way, so it never entered the heads of the officers on the cutter that the *Silver Heels* would start for Cuba by any such out-of-the-way route.

Putting off from the Battery, which is the extreme lower point of New York city, they steamed up and down the Bay, looking out for their prize.

The *Silver Heels* did not put in an appearance, however, and after waiting about three hours, the officers decided to go up the East River, and intercept the vessel while she was still in the river.

The night was dark, and the river full of shipping, but every craft that approached was carefully inspected, and still no *Silver Heels* was discovered.

After several tedious hours of waiting had been passed, the officers decided to steam up to the wharf and find out what had happened to the ship.

On reaching the pier it was learned, to the consternation of

the marshals, that the *Silver Heels* had cleared nearly four hours before, and had been towed up the Sound, instead of down the Bay.

With such a start as that it was felt to be useless to attempt to overtake her, and the marshals left the cutter, and returned to their homes, wiser but sadder men.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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