

## A PAGE OF SECRET HISTORY

There has always been a good deal of mystery attached to the events which took place in Manila Bay immediately after the Spanish fleet had been destroyed, and before the city surrendered to Admiral Dewey (states *Stead's Review*). Reviewing *A Soldier's Memories*, by Major-General Sir George Younghusband, the reviewer continues: This is finally cleared up by these Memories of the distinguished soldier who was present at the time, and got his information first hand from Admiral Dewey and Sir Edward Chichester, the principal actors in the drama, who are both now dead. General Younghusband must not be confused with his brother, Sir Francis, the famous explorer and British Commissioner to Tibet. He was appointed military attaché by the British Government to watch the Spanish-American war in the Philippines, but in order to see what was really going on, he went unofficially, keeping his papers in reserve to "avoid being hanged or shot by some hasty or impetuous person." He considers that, without firing a shot, Germany was the chief beneficiary of the Spanish-American war. Her statesmen contrived to impress the Spaniards with a feeling of gratitude for their actions during the struggle, and induced them, after the war, to cede the Carolines and other islands to Germany for a considerable consideration, by the way, which the gallant General appears to have forgotten! Arrived in the Philippines, he managed to secure a small coastal steamer, and in it followed the American fleet into Manila Bay.

"The entrance to the bay is quite narrow, and a large island, named Corregidor, divides even that restricted channel. Both on Corregidor and on the nearby land were forts heavily armed. There was a half moon, and as the fleet crept slowly through in single file there must have been many an anxious moment on the leading ship. But not a gun stirred, and the fleet passed through safely. As day broke, though, the Spanish Fleet was to be seen at anchor near to the south-east toward Cavite. Evidently in all. How they went to the bottom, at their anchorage, and with only a feeble show of resistance, is a matter of history."

It was about this time that the various nations began to send questions to Manila to uphold their "vital interests," whatever those might be. Embark, however, was represented, save by the little second-class cruiser, *Bonaventure*, under the command of bluff, burly Sir Edward Chichester. Yet Admiral Dewey told Younghusband "That little cruiser saved a European war in this bay." The most cordial relations existed between the American Admiral and the British Captain. It is said, although Younghusband does not mention the matter, that Dewey had received word from Chichester before he attempted to enter the bay that the channel was not mined. General Younghusband then describes the arrival of the German fleet:

"The first international incident occurred when the German Fleet came sailing in with neither a 'with-your-leave' nor 'by your leave.' This did not seem to Admiral Dewey a very correct procedure in a blockaded port, but, as he said, he was not very well up in the etiquette of the ocean, so he signalled across to his friend, Sir Edward Chichester, for advice. Sir Edward, a stout old sailor of the best old stock, immediately replied that undoubtedly the German Fleet had no right to be there, except by courtesy of the blockading fleet. The Germans had no sea manners, he added.

"What ought I to do?" asked Admiral Dewey.

"Fire across his bows," replied Sir Edward Chichester, with great bluntness.

"In the course of two minutes whiz-z-z-z, bang! went a shot across the German's bows, and in an incredibly short space of time her fleet anchored hastily. Next was seen a steam pinnace, evidently in a great hurry, pushing off from the German Admiral's flag-

ship, and scurrying toward the Olympia. In the pinnace were seated some very angry Germans. They were escorted courteously on board the Olympia, simply bursting with wrath and with their feathers flying anyhow.

"Do you know, sir," exclaimed the infuriated German emissary, "that this action of yours might entail war with the great German Empire?"

"I am perfectly aware of the fact," replied Admiral Dewey with great coolness and courtesy. Then he hospitably invited his guests to assuage their wrath with a cocktail or a mint julep.

But the German was not to be pacified with a cocktail, or even with a mint julep, and flounced himself off to report the matter to Wilhelm II.

"And do you know," said Admiral Dewey to us, "I'd never have risked it if it hadn't been for that little British cruiser representing the British fleet at my back?"

Another critical incident quickly arose, and again Chichester gave bold advice:—

"A few Spaniards remained on a small island, just off the town of Manila; and their surrender being only a matter of time and terms, the Americans did not trouble much about them. One morning, however, it was noticed that a German cruiser, the *Irene*, had shifted her berth, and was now anchored down alongside this island, as a sort of moral support to the Spaniards and menace to the Americans.

"What ought I to do?" asked Admiral Dewey of his friend the English captain.

"Do?" replied Sir Edward. "Why, just clear two of your battleships for action, and bear down on the *Irene* and tell her that if she isn't out of that in five minutes you'll sink her."

"And I acted like that," Admiral Dewey remarked with great relish.

"I cleared the *Boston* and the *Raleigh* for action and bore down on the *Irene*; and would you believe it, she was in such an all-fired hurry to clear away that she slipped her cable! He is a fine fellow, that Captain Chichester of yours."

But it was by his action when Dewey had summoned the City of Manila to surrender that the English captain averted war. The Americans had given the Spaniards notice that if they did not surrender by 11 o'clock on a certain morning the city would be bombarded.

A lot of busy neutrals, led by the Germans, thereupon began fussing and fanning around, trying to formulate language to express his baseness. This makes curious reading nowadays! Finally these neutrals had a meeting, and headed by the German Admiral went to interview Sir Edward Chichester with a view to ascertaining his views on the subject, and further to inquire what the British intended to do. Sir Edward listened to them with great patience and affability, and heard unmoved the blood-curdling story of the atrocities which the Americans were about to commit. With the help of his steward he even soothed them with his national drinks. But when pressed as to his views and intention, he blandly replied:

"Those, sirs, are known only to Admiral Dewey and myself. Good morning, gentlemen; good morning."

The final touch came when the fatal morning had arrived. All foreign fleets were ordered to weigh and clear to the northward, out of the line of fire, before 10 a.m. Each in its turn up-anchored and cleared away, till last of all, and alone, was left H.M.S. *Bonaventure*. Very slowly, and with great deliberation, the *Bonaventure*, every glass in every fleet on her, hauled up her anchor. Dead slow she followed the foreign fleets for a short and calculated distance, then slowly turned, and making a wide, deliberate sweep, came back and anchored alongside the American fleet. Could the highest diplomacy do more? The Americans evidently thought not, for as the little *Bonaventure* passed along one huge cheer went up from every American ship."

General Younghusband saw service in many wars,