

THE FIGHT AT CATUBIG.

A Graphic Tale of American Pluck from the Philippines.

Thirty-one Hold Six Hundred at Bay—
"An Example of the Courage of
the American Soldier."

WASHINGTON, June 8.—The War Department has received reports from Capt. H. M. Day of the Forty-third Volunteer Infantry, and First Lieut. J. T. Sweeney of the same regiment, giving a graphic description of one of the most thrilling and picturesque incidents of the entire Philippine war. The occurrence took place at Catubig, on the Island of Samar, where a party of thirty-one enlisted men of Company H, Forty-third Infantry Volunteers, held at bay a force of some six hundred insurgents during four days of the fiercest fighting, reinforcements arriving just in the nick of time.

According to the reports of Capt. Day and Lieut. Sweeney, who led the relief party, the attack on the garrison at Catubig began without warning on Sunday morning, April 15. From the hills on all sides, from every point of vantage in the town, and from a deserted church directly adjoining came a rifle and cannon fire of terrible intensity. On Tuesday morning handfuls of burning hemp were thrown into the barracks by the insurgents in the church, and soon the soldiers' refuge was on fire. All efforts to subdue the fire failed, and finally the little band made a dash for the river bank.

Some were killed before the bank was reached, others fell dead in a boat in which they were attempting to make the opposite shore, and when a trench was finally dug with bayonets, there were but sixteen of the thirty-one left to man it. Here for two more days Corp. Carson, handling his men with the judgment of a veteran, held out under a terrible fire, until Lieut. Sweeney's command, which had been ordered to supplement the garrison at Catubig and was on its way up the river on the steamer Lao Aug, arrived.

Not until they were within a quarter of a mile of Catubig, says Lieut. Sweeney in his report, did they hear the noise of the engagement. Then he realized that he and his men were sorely needed, and ordered the Captain of the steamer to run his boat at top speed. The Lao Aug steamed up to Catubig under a rain of Mauser bullets from both shores. The small boats were lowered, a landing effected, and the rescuers fought their way through the open to their besieged comrades in the trenches, buried the dead within reach, brought back to the boat the besieged party, numbering now only thirteen men, and then steamed down the river.

Capt. Day bestows the highest commendation upon Corp. Carson as "displaying extraordinary good judgment in the handling of his men, thereby saving the lives of the survivors, and protecting the wounded until relief came."

To each of the little command and their rescuers he gives the highest praise. "Their zeal and ability," he says, "were a fitting example of the worth and courage of the American soldier."