MR. SARGENT'S TRIUMPH.

LONDON TAKEN BY STORM BY HIS TWO LATEST PAINTINGS.

The Feature of the Royal Academy Exhibition—Prince of Wales Seemingly Badly Dressed in His Portrait by Orchardson—Peel Heirloom Sale—Plays at the Theatres.

LONDON, May 12.—There are several noteworthy points about this year's exhibition at the Royal Academy. In the first place, it is really on the whole a collection of better pictures than have been shown for some years. Stranger still, critics admit this to be the fact. There are also rather fewer pictures than usual, which is in itself an improvement. Then again there is in the sculpture room a piece of work of real distinction, Mr. Brock's tomb for Lord Leighton, which is to be placed in St. Paul's. But, of course, the most remarkable thing about the exhibition is the way in which two of Sargent's pictures dominate the whole collection. These two pictures, the huge portrait group of Lady Elcho, Mrs. Adeane and Mrs. Tennant—"The Three Graces," as the Prince of Wales styled the picture at the Academy banquet—and the little "Venetian Interior," have taken London by storm. There is only one opinion as to their merits. The *Outlook* heads its first Academy notice, "A Sargent Show." The *Saturday Review* devotes the whole of its first notice to these two picturres. In fact, it would almost seem that they make up the exhibition themselves. As a sample of the criticism passed on the large picture, take the following from the *Times*, which is no more enthusiastic than the rest of the press, the public and the artists.

"If the subject, even independently of the painting, must give the first place in the public interest to Mr. Orchardson's picture, there cannot be any doubt that the greatest performance from the point of view of pure art is Mr. Sargent's astonishing group of portraits (213). Indeed, we should be inclined to go further and to say that, in spite of certain obvious faults, this is the greatest picture which has appeared for many years on the walls of the Royal Academy. Painting in obvious, if unavowed, rivalry with Sir Joshua and with Millais, Mr. Sargent certainly holds his own against 'The Three Ladies Waldegrave' and easily surpasses 'Hearts are Trumps.' He has had a first-rate subject, and has risen to the height of it. The three distinguished daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Wyndham, to be painted on whatever scale he might choose, and in splendid surroundings, offered the the artist a chance which falls to few, but a chance of which only one or two in a generation could take full advantage. The scene is a great green drawing room, wherein are great magnolias; on the wall is Mr. Watts's famous full-length of Mrs. Wyndham, painted there by a happy fancy of the artist, and suggesting a dim Presence of benediction. In front is a sofa draped in white brocade; on this to the left sits Mrs. Adeane, bending forward as though in act to speak; in the centre is the young Mrs. Tennant and beyond is Lady Elcho, half in profile, resting on the back of the sofa, her hands lightly clasped behind her. All the dresses are of radiant white, of richest, sheeniest satin, with occasional interludes of gauze; only a heap of soft green cushions makes a transition as the eye passes from the white to the green and shadowy walls behind."

"Such is the general scheme; but everything, of course, depends on how it is rendered, and it is in speaking of this that one is forced to hesitate, partly from fear of exaggeration and partly from fear of repeating what we have said so often before, since Mr. Sargent approached the maturity of his talent. Here, as always, his first and chief element of success is the vitality which he imparts to his portraits—a vitality comparable only to that achieved by half a dozen of the greatest men of the past and certainly by none, whether of England, France or Germany, at the present day. In this point Mr. Sargent has more than once succeeded as well as in this picture, but never better. Again, the composition is at once perfectly natural and perfectly artistic; each lady is herself, but the picture implies the most perfect contrivance. Happily, too, Mr. Sargent has at last realized that there is an artistic satisfaction in the direct and simple painting of beautiful faces, without straining after any of these secrets of expression at which he used to aim in his earlier works with the result that sometimes he came dangerously near to caricature. It is not easy to speak publicly of beautiful faces if their owners happen to be alive. Had these ladies been painted by Gainsborough or Romney we should know what to say of them; but as it is, we must pass over that detail for the more general or for the more technical aspects of the picture. We only wish, however, that the artist could see his way to altering the arms and the left hand of the central figure, which, as it is, retain in a marked degree the fault of which we have spoken, that too eager search after expression, and that he could soften the disagreeable red shadow on the palm of the right hand. As to the technique, it does not, of course, differ materially from that habitually employed by this painter; it is by broad sweeps of single touches of the brush that Mr. Sargent produces his marvellous effects, whether he is working upon face or dress or ornaments. The satin is of amazing richness and no less amazing whiteness, but the most extraordinary *tour de force* is in the pearls. Look at them from six yards off and you will be convinced of their perfect roundness and perfect symmetry; but go close to the figure and you will see that each pearl is but one little oblong dab—there is no other word for it—of the brush. That such painting should produce the absolutely true effect it does is one of the paradoxes of which art is full; but to know how to do it is the last accomplishment of a great painter, as any one may soon learn who tries to imitate it."

As for the smaller picture one can only doubt whether it is admired more than or only equally with the greater. Perhaps, as the *Times* says, artists are more enthusiastic over it than over the other.

Mr. Orchardson's picture, the subject of which the *Times*, as quoted above, thinks must give it first place in the public interest, is a vast canvas containing portraits of the Queen, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and the Duke of York's eldest boy. It is true that this picture has attracted enormous attention and will continue to do so; but hardly entirely on account of the subject. The enormous size of the picture is bound to attract attention. One wonders why Mr. Orchardson, when he was about it, did not put in the whole of the palace and a few acres of the park at Windsor instead of contenting himself with one room. Then, again, the Queen is by no means, in this picture, the bent, white-faced, sad-looking old lady we have seen so often driving through London of late; the Prince, too, looks a lay figure, quite incognizant of what is going on around him, which is the last thing that can be said with any degree of truth of him; the Duke of York, who is standing behind his little boy, apparently urging him to present a posy to his august great-grandmother, is not, of course, a good subject for an artist. The little boy is the saving point of the picture. He looks alive and natural, and his figure taken by itself would be a very charming picture. Thus as a work of art the picture is not likely to be a favorite. But its fortune was made the very first day the Academy was opened to the public. What had escaped the eyes of the critics, the artists and the private reviewers generally, was spotted at once by the keen-eyed public. In less than twenty-four hours all London had heard the startling intelligence that Mr. Orchardson, R. A., had painted the Prince of Wales and his son, both wearing brown boots and tweed trousers in conjunction with frockcoats. To paint either of them with brown boots and a frockcoat might almost amount to lese majesté, but to add to such a combination tweed trousers was worse than high treason! The boots in truth look far from black, but the joke has passed round until one might be led to suppose that their royal highnesses were represented as wearing boots of the bright reddish-brown tan dear to the heart of the seaside tripper.

Of course, Mr. Orchardson has been interviewed. He explains the boots, but is reticent about the trousers. "Very funny," said he to the reporter, "but the boots are not brown, all the same. Nor do I say they are black. You don't want the boots to be solid black masses which hit you in the eye. I have made them more or less black as I thought the occasion required. You know you can paint black things without using black paint, and the moment the light or a reflection touches black there is black no longer. They are black boots when you take into consideration the surrounding conditions. If," added the artist, good humoredly, "people say I have painted brown boots, then their eye for color leaves something to be desired. You must remember that the Princes were standing on a red carpet, and that inside the house there is a warm reflection, and that one has to paint even boots to suit the surroundings."

"And what about the tweed trousers?"

Again Mr. Orchardson laughed heartily, and said: "I really do not know what the material was, nor do I think any one could discover it from the picture."

But perhaps the most keenly appreciated jest in connection with this year's exhibition was the putting up of the Archbishop of Canterbury to propose the toast of the Royal Academy at the banquet. His Grace performed his task in the most graceful fashion and lavished praise upon the painters and their works. Indeed, he was the only speaker who had much to say for art, and cerainly the only one who gave anything like hearty praise to the Royal Academy. But why, people ask, did he discount it all by adding that unfortunately he was the only man there who could not see one single picture that was hanging on the walls, for he was now practically a blind man?

Lord Salisbury also gave an amusing example of his genius for saying things better left unsaid. When he remarked that they had not a single artist in the Cabinet, it did not matter, the world in general would support the little jest, if such it were meant to be. But when he added the words "not even a sculptor," the modern workers in marble wondered where exactly among artists the Prime Minister classed them—apparently somewhere on a level with the taker of tin types.

The second day's sale of the Peel heirlooms was concluded yesterday afternoon. The lots, numbering fewer than 100, realized a total of £54,058, which, with the previous day's sale, brings the gross amount up to close on £62,500. A noteworthy feature of the sale consisted in the high prices paid for mediocre pictures, such as for several of the Lelys; while the male portraits sold at uncommonly high figures.

The chief attraction of the sale was undoubtedly the pair of full-length portraits of a Genoese Senator and his wife by Van Dyck. This pair may be said to have been discovered by the artist David Wilkie, although it is not strictly correct, as stated in the auctioneer's catalogue, to say that they were purchased by him for Sir Robert Peel. On leaving England in 1825 for a long tour on the Continent, Wilkie was requested by Peel to report if he found an example or two of Van Dyck for sale. The first mention of this pair appears in a letter which Wilkie wrote to Andrew Wilson from Genoa on June 1, 1827, referring to some pictures in a palazzo of a Spinola family, he alludes to these as "two fine whole-lengths of an old lady and gentleman, painted with less richness than usual, but with great care and truth. The old gentleman is on the margin; his head and hands are most admirable." In his his journal, under date May 29, Wilkie makes a rather long reference to these two portraits, and remarks of the man, "feebleness, gouty stiffness and dignity seem mixed in a way that I have never seen before, save in Van Dyck," and describes the hands of this, as of the companion, as beautifully painted. The negotiations for the purchase seem to have been carried out by Wilkie's friend, Andrew Wilson, and the portraits reached England in 1828. Wilkie, writing to Wilson from Kensington on March 16, 1829, says: "The two Van Dycks at Mr. Peel's appear to have given great satisfaction. I have told you that Sequier [an eminent picture dealer] thinks them a great bargain. Emmerson went so far as to say to me that he thought them worth nearly 1,000 guineas a piece." Sir Thomas Lawrence, writing to Peel on May 28, 1828, says: "I have seen the Van Dycks—very interesting portraits and in each identity itself; of his earliest time in execution, but still of great truth and force. They are entirely free from the ravages of repair." To this it may be added that they belong to the time when Van Dyck painted his pictures with his own hand, and they possess an Italian grace added to his own Flemish vigor, which accounts for his pictures of this period realizing such high prices when they occur for sale. Both pictures were exhibited at the British Gallery in 1829, and are described in Smith's "Catalogue Raisonnée," vol. 5; the canvas in each case is 80 inches by 46 inches. The man appears to be about 80 years of age, of a thin countenance, and with a scanty gray beard, a high-crowned black velvet coif covers his head, and the dress is a black silk robe; he is seated in an arm-chair, holding in his right hand a scroll of paper; the woman is much younger, apparently about 45 years of age. She is seated in an arm-chair holding a fan in the right hand, dressed in a black silk robe with figured sleeves, large scarf and a full clear muslin ruff. The male portrait is said to represent Bartolommeo Giustiniani, in whose house the painter for some time resided, and that this portrait was known at Genoa under the designation of "Il Penseroso." The bidding was started by the auctioneer at £20,000 and was taken up by Messrs. Colnaghi & Co., Mr. Charles Wertheimer and others and, after a spirited bidding, fell to Mr. McIntosh McLeod's offer of £24,250 for the two.

The first of the six or seven examples of or attributed to Lely is perhaps the signed portrait of Cowley the author, when young, in the character of a shepherd boy holding a flute. At the Strawberry Hill sale in 1842 it was purchased for 10 guineas; yesterday it started at 20 guineas, and eventually reached 670 guineas (Agnew); the portrait of Wycherley the author, at the age of about 28, realized 250 guineas (Harper); the portrait of Nell Gwynne seated on a bank with a lamb—650 guineas (Vokins); the portrait of the Countess of Kildare, holding a flower—650 guineas (Agnew); and the portrait of Anna Maria, Countess of Shrewsbury, as "Minerva," —305 guineas (M. Colnaghi).

The interesting portrait of W. Dobson, by himself, in blue dress, with greyhound, at one time in the celebrated G. Watson Taylor collection, realized 500 guineas (Dowdeswell). Another artist, represented here by a beautiful portrait of himself (of which another example is known), is J. Hoppner, on a canvas at the time technically termed a three-quarters (*i. e.*, 30 inches by 25 inches), but which only admits of the bust—1,500 guineas (Agnew).

The three Reynoldses comprised a portrait of Dr. Johnson, said by Mrs. Jameson to be "the same which was painted for Mrs. Thrale in 1778," by which she probably meant to imply that it was a repetition—420 guineas (Dopson); the portrait of Arthur Murphy, also a duplicate of the picture painted for Mrs. Thrale—320 guineas (Agnew); and also a portrait of Burke, like the other two, on a three-quarters canvas, engraved by Watson—200 guineas (Agnew). The single examples of Landseer and Gainsborough were respectively the engraved picture known as "The Shepherd's Prayer," which realized 750 guineas (Duveen), and a portrait of Sir William Blackstone, a three-quarters, engraved—750 guineas (Agnew).

Three of the four pictures by William Collins were exhibited at the Royal Academy, and all were purchased direct from the artist by Peel. The first in order of sale was the engraved picture "The Morning After a Storm," with figures at the end of a pier, painted in 1820, and purchased for 400 guineas—it now realized 1,500 guineas (Duveen); the second, a winter scene on the Thames at Richmond, Twickenham church in the distance, and a group of people and horses in the foreground, painted in 1827, and purchased for 500 guineas—2,000 guineas (Duveen). The unexhibited picture is a study of "Old Odell" as the cherry seller, painted in 1824 and bought for 60 guineas—220 guineas (Capt. Harrison); and the fourth, a coast scene with fishermen carrying down their nets to the boats, on panel, painted in 1825, and bought for 150 guineas—520 guineas (Duveen).

An analysis of the programmes of twenty-two West End theatres open this week shows that thirteen are devoted to amusement pure and simple, seven to more serious work, and one to a combination of both. Of the thirteen probably all are making money but two; of the seven perhaps four are successful. There is but one cause for everything in England now—the war. Every one is looking for relief and escape from gloom, so that the music halls and the hippodrome are not touched by the depression that is affecting the theatres where serious work is produced.

Among the victims of the war is Mr. Vroom, whose "Marsac of Gascony" besides belonging to a class of plays that has been worked out, contained far too much killing for the feelings of the public at present. Mr. Wyndham has achieved only a *succès d'estime* with "Cyrano de Bergerac," the battle scene in which is one of the best ever produced. At a more favorable time Mrs. Waller's "Tess" might have repeated the success of Mrs. Fiske's in America; but it was too sad, and two weeks saw the end of its run.

The most interesting event of the week, if not of the season, has been the reappearance of Signora Duse at the Lyceum. Her acting is as powerful as ever, despite her recent illness, which has left the hair on her forehead quite gray. She chose *Magda* for her opening performance, a character Mrs. Patrick Campbell has been playing for nearly one hundred nights at the Royalty. Mrs. Campbell has no need to fear comparisons in this play. Duse's performance is marked by an absence of any effort to suggest the influence of *Magda's* ten years of Bohemianism; in fact, it is hard to believe that such a *Magda* would ever have broken away from the narrow Puritanism of her father's home.

"Madame Butterfly" is one of the few tragedies the war has been unable to affect. Miss Evelyn Millard's *Cho-cho-san* and the perfect way the play is produced hold the audience spellbound. No play has ever met with a warmer and more unanimous reception. "An American Beauty" has gained rather than lost by the disfavor with which it was received the first night. The readiness and skill shown in the alterations made have excited admiration and surprise. The lines of people at the pit and gallery hours before the doors open recall the days of "The Belle of New York," and the booking is well into July.

"What do you think of 'Zaza?'" is a much-used conversational gambit. Every one is taking steps to form an independent judgment by seeing the piece. It has caused more discussion than "The Gay Lord Quex" and bids fair to be even more successful.

The new suburban theatres are undoubtedly proving dangerous rivals of the old London houses. Almost every district has one, handsome, well built, and with prices half the usual town rates. The latest successes reach them, quickly brought either by the original company or by a touring company which can hold its own with the original in acting and scenery. For example, Mr. John Hare and Miss Irene Vanbrugh appear at the Grand Theatre, Fulham, next week. The avalanche and music hall of "Hearts Are Trumps" have been successfully reproduced for weeks without leaving the radius of Greater London. In this, an American, Miss Ray Rockman, as *Lady Winifred* has made her mark by the refinement of her acting and the beauty of her diction.

PEACE COMMISSIONERS IN THE WAR.

Visit to Rebel General Price of Three Fathers Who Wanted Their Sons Released.

The visit of the Boer Peace Commissioners to this country reminded a New York man of the visit of three commissioners who called upon Gen. Sterling Price, who commanded the first Confederate army in Missouri in the beginning of the Civil War.

"It was on the eve," he said, "of Price's attack upon Col. Mulligan, who held Lexington, Mo. Price's march up the State to Lexington aroused the young Secesh in northwest Missouri and several hundred men enlisted and went south to join Price. There were three boys, each of whom was the only son of the family. The families were Southerners, but their zeal for the cause did not prompt them to make sacrifices of their sons.

"The sons, however, had the war fever. They had been made prisoners in their homes until the new recruits for Price were well on their way and then released. A few days later the boys went to the brush and by forced marches and on short rations finally reached Lexington and reported in person to Price, who put them under guard, but it was adroitly done, and the boys did not know they were prisoners.

"Within a few days three commissioners from the northwest arrived at Price's headquarters. They were business men and fathers of the three boys under guard. Price received them and asked the nature of their business. The spokesman demanded the return of the three boys to their mothers. Price was a stern man when he chose to be, and on this occasion he asked the fathers if they were favorable to secession. The fathers assured him they were.

"'How do you expect the South will win if every father demands the return of his boy from the army?' he asked.

"The fathers pleaded for the sake of the weeping mothers.

"'What do you propose doing if I don't give up your boys?' asked Price.

"'In that case,' said the speaker, 'we shall return and become Union men and help whip the South.'

"'That being the case,' said Price, 'I reckon I'll send the boys home and hold you gentlemen here, because we may want you later on.'

"And with that the General ordered the fathers under guard and kept them so until after the fall of Lexington, when he released them and their boys and sent them home. Before doing so, however, Price called the fathers into his headquarters and said to them:

"'You gentlemen have become peace commissioners pretty soon. Every war produces them, and I have noticed that they are usually the men who do not know what fighting is. The men who make the most lasting peace are the men who do the hardest fighting.'

"I was one of the boys released and sent back, and I've heard my father tell of 'Pap' Price's tongue lashing, and that he had rather have been shot at than have it repeated.

"I do not apply the incident to the visit of the Boers, but their coming reminded me of what I have told."

RADCLIFFE GIRLS TO HELP.

Will Assist in the Care of the Cuban Women Teachers at Harvard.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., May 26.—The expected arrival of the Cuban girl teachers at Cambridge has naturally roused the patriotic zeal of Radcliffe students as well as the interest of Harvard men and of the community at large. Radcliffe will be very cordial in its overtures for the comfort of the woman contingent, and fourteen students have offered themselves and been accepted as teachers and interpreters. At present it is supposed that between eight and nine hundred Cuban women will present themselves for study, and of these only 5 per cent know English. It is necessary, therefore, that all the classes be conducted in Spanish, and Spanish is a language with which the "typical Radcliffe girl" is not, as a rule, familiar. Still, there are some dozen students who can be of decided use and they will do their best to compensate in quality for their meagre numbers.

The Radcliffe Council was requested at its last meeting to give up the houses and grounds of this college to the uses of the regular Harvard summer school, the beauty of such an arrangement being that it would leave Harvard itself entirely at the disposal of the Cuban guests. The Council has not yet given its decision in the matter, but there is a good prospect that its answer will be favorable to the Cuban cause.

Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer, formerly the President of Wellesley College and now on Radcliffe's advisory board, will give up her house to Mrs. Alice Gordon Gulick, who is to act as the dean of the woman's department of the Cuban summer school. The house is the charming old Peabody mansion which faces on Quincy street and from its back windows commands a beautiful view of the entire college yard. Mrs. Gulick is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and has become widely known because of her connection with the International Institute for Girls in San Sebastian, Spain. She is an accomplished Spanish student and a tactful woman, able, as few American women of scholarly qualifications could be, to understand and sympathize with the conventionalities which must surround the Spanish girls. One of the fourteen college girls will in every case accompany the women's afternoon excursion parties, which are to form such an important part of the whole educational scheme.

TURRET PLANS COMPARED.

THE QUESTION OF BATTERIES FOR THE NEW BATTLESHIPS.

Advantages of the Superimposed Turret Over the Single Turret Adopted by the Board of Construction—Seagoing Officers Prefer It—Comparison of the Two Systems.

It is understood that the Board of Construction of the Navy Department has determined upon the arrangement of the batteries for the new battleships, and that the arrangement proposed is, in general, similar to that of the Iowa.

The vote of the board in this matter is of very great importance, as it fixes the arrangement for three of the latest and largest ships for which Congress has made an appropriation, constituting nearly one-fifth of the battleship force now afloat, building and appropriated for. This fact should have exercised great weight with the board to give the subject the most thoughtful

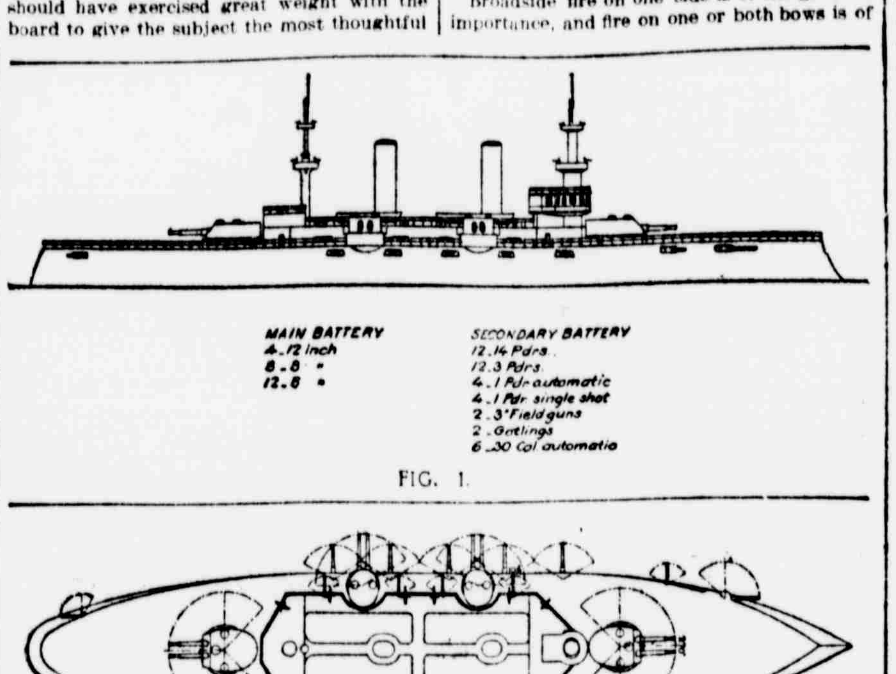


FIG. 1.

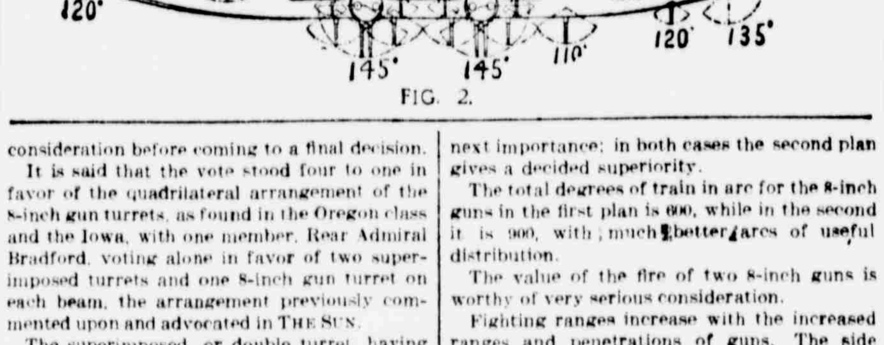


FIG. 2.

consideration before coming to a final decision.

It is said that the vote stood four to one in favor of the quadrilateral arrangement of the 8-inch gun turrets, as found in the Oregon class and the Iowa, with one member, Rear Admiral Bradford, voting alone in favor of two superimposed turrets and one 8-inch gun turret on each beam, the arrangement previously commented upon and advocated in THE SUN.

The superimposed or double turret having been successfully installed in the Kearsarge and Kentucky, and the preliminary reports made so far being very favorable to it, it is difficult to understand the vote of the majority, except on the score of unalterable opposition to any double-turret system on the part of one or two members and timidity of new ideas on the part of the others.

The majority make much of a clause in the circular defining the chief characteristics of the ships to possible bidders, to the effect that the Department reserves the right to change the arrangement of the battery and turrets within

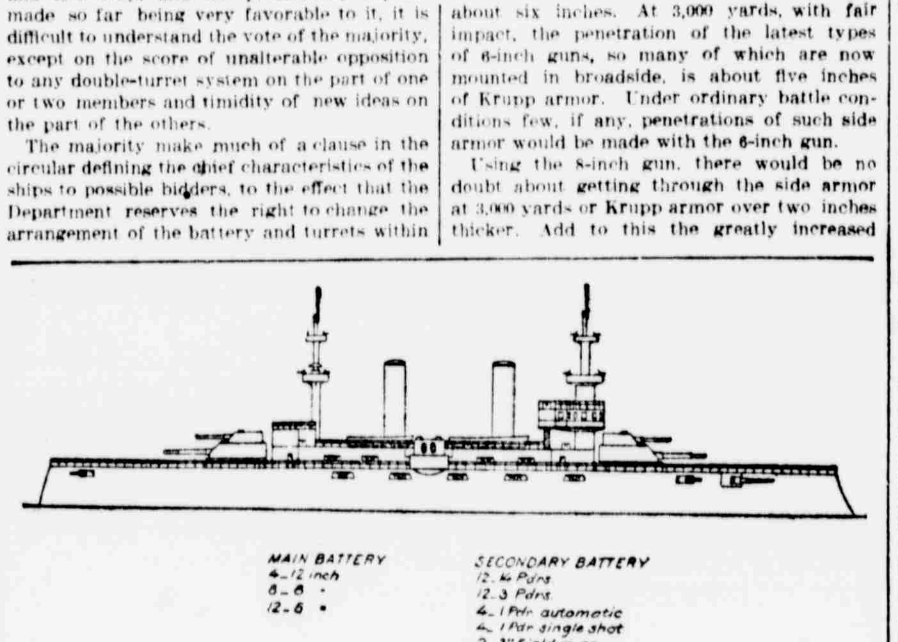


FIG. 3.

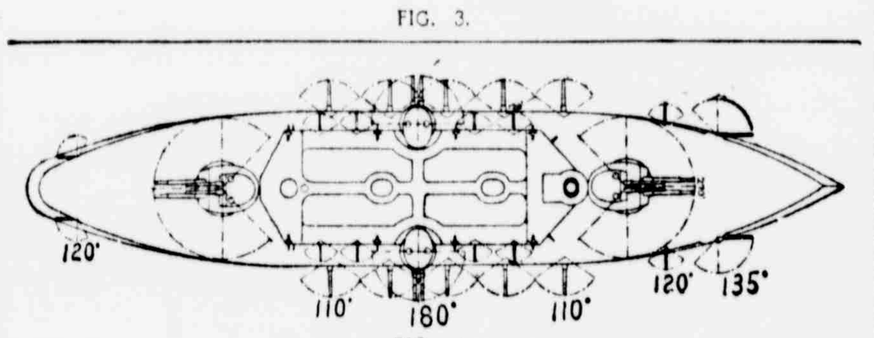


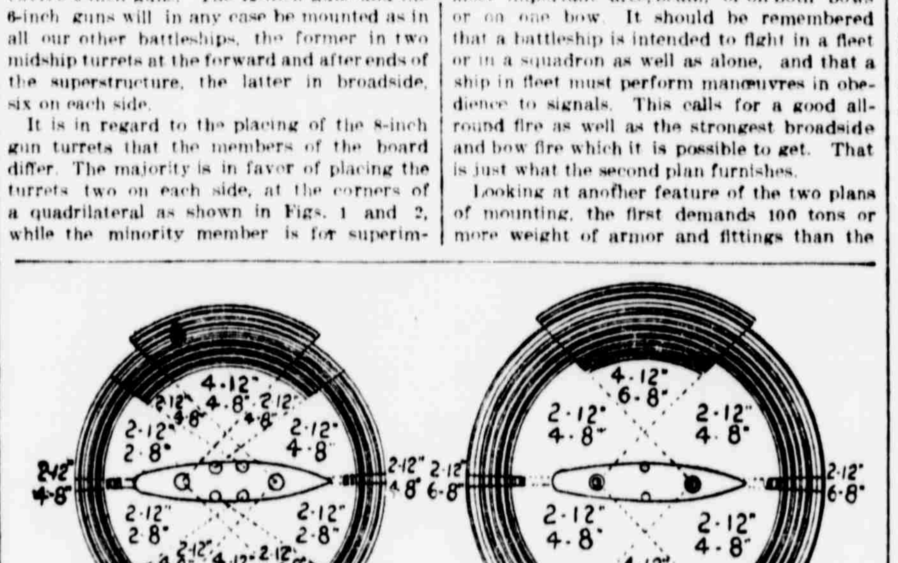
FIG. 4.

six months after date of signing the contract, but the vote of the majority shows that it is at present opposed to the double-turret system, and that it does not expect to be convinced against its opinion; otherwise the decision would have been for double turrets now, with the possibility of changing to single turrets.

The importance of the subject is so great that it is worth bringing it to attention again.

The main batteries for each of these ships is to consist of four 12-inch, eight 8-inch and twelve 6-inch guns. The 12-inch guns and the 6-inch guns will in any case be mounted as in all our other battleships, the former in two midship turrets at the forward and after ends of the superstructure, the latter in broadside, six on each side.

It is in regard to the placing of the 8-inch gun turrets that the members of the board differ. The majority is in favor of placing the turrets two on each side, at the corners of a quadrilateral as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, while the minority member is for superim-



posing two of the 8-inch turrets on the 12-inch turrets, as in the Kearsarge and Kentucky, and placing the other two pairs of 8-inch guns in independent turrets, one on each beam, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4.

It is admitted by naval officers that the double turrets of the Kearsarge and Kentucky are successful from a mechanical point of view, but, curiously enough, while the majority of the officers of the line, the seagoing officers of the service, are impressed with the tactical advantages of the double turret, it is the strictly technical officers who declare that the double turret is not, or will not be a tactical success.

Comparing the two plans—the first, the majority's (Fig. 2), with the second, the minority's (Fig. 4)—the main battery fires are:

Fig. 2.—Fighting on one side—four 12-inch, four 8-inch and six 6-inch guns.

Fig. 4.—Fighting on one side—four 12-inch, six 8-inch and six 6-inch guns.

Fig. 2.—On both bows, as in approaching enemy's fleet—two 12-inch, four 8-inch and two 6-inch guns.

Fig. 4.—On both bows, as in approaching enemy's fleet—two 12-inch, six 8-inch and two 6-inch guns.

Fig. 2.—Fighting both sides at same time, on each side—two 12-inch, four 8-inch and six 6-inch guns.

Fig. 4.—Fighting both sides at same time, on each side—two 12-inch, four 8-inch and six 6-inch guns.

Fig. 2.—Fire on both quarters at same time—two 12-inch and four 8-inch guns.

Fig. 4.—Fire on both quarters at same time—two 12-inch and six 8-inch guns.

Fig. 2.—Fire directly ahead—two 12-inch, four 8-inch and two 6-inch guns.

Fig. 4.—Fire directly ahead—two 12-inch, six 8-inch and two 6-inch guns.

Fig. 2.—Fire directly astern—two 12-inch and four 8-inch guns.

Fig. 4.—Fire directly astern—two 12-inch and six 8-inch guns.

The above six cases cover every possible arc of fire, and it will be seen that in no case does the first plan give more fire in any arc, and in five cases the second plan is superior always by two 8-inch guns.

Broadside fire on one side is of the greatest importance, and fire on one or both bows is of next importance; in both cases the second plan gives a decided superiority.

The total degrees of train in arc for the 8-inch guns in the first plan is 600, while in the second it is 900, with much better arcs of useful distribution.

The value of the fire of two 8-inch guns is worthy of very serious consideration.

Fighting ranges increase with the increased ranges and penetrations of guns. The side or casemate armor of the latest ships which will be met in the line or order of battle is about six inches. At 3,000 yards, with fair impact, the penetration of the latest types of 6-inch guns, so many of which are now mounted in broadside, is about five inches of Krupp armor. Under ordinary battle conditions few, if any, penetrations of such side armor would be made with the 6-inch gun.

Using the 8-inch gun, there would be no doubt about getting through the side armor at 3,000 yards or Krupp armor over two inches thicker. Add to this the greatly increased rapidity of fire which has been obtained with the 8-inch gun, and there is no reason to doubt the necessity of mounting more of these guns in our ships, placing them where the greatest number can be used.

The two diagrams below illustrate graphically the relative volumes of fire for the 12-inch and 8-inch guns of the two forms of mounting. They show at a glance the superiority given by the double-turret system, bringing in the fire of two more powerful 8-inch guns in the most important arcs, beam, or on both bows or on one bow. It should be remembered that a battleship is intended to fight in a fleet or in a squadron as well as alone, and that a ship in fleet must perform manœuvres in obedience to signals. This calls for a good all-round fire as well as the strongest broadside and bow fire which it is possible to get. That is just what the second plan furnishes.

Looking at another feature of the two plans of mounting, the first demands 100 tons or more weight of armor and fittings than the latter. With the constantly increasing penetration of armor made with the latest types of guns, the board deemed it advisable to increase the thickness of the main part of the water-line belt from nine to eleven inches, making an increase in weight of armor of a little over 100 tons. To carry this weight it became necessary to reduce other weights, and the original coal capacity of 2,000 tons determined upon was encroached upon for this, lowering it to 1,900 tons. Had the minority plan of mounting the 8-inch battery been decided upon, the armor could have been increased to eleven inches without reducing the maximum coal-carrying capacity.

Viewing the decision of the board from two of the most important points, it does not seem that the best disposition has been provided for the batteries in the new battleships.

An Unforeseen Contingency.

From Brooklyn Life.

Capt. Staysail—Yes, Madam, the needle of the compass always points to the north.

Miss Sweetthing—How interesting! But suppose you wanted to go south?

GUNS OF MANY COUNTRIES.

Queer Criticisms of the Great Guns of All Nations by a Frenchman.

Great interest is being taken in French political as well as military circles in the relative merits of the English and French guns, more particularly those composing the heavy armament of the newest battleships in the English Navy. Some very startling facts regarding the English guns were given in the French Chamber recently by M. Claudinon in a speech intended to reassure the French people as to the value both of the ships and guns of the French Navy.

In a comparison which he instituted between the 305-millimetre or approximately the 12-inch gun in use in the American, German, English and Russian navies and the French gun, he showed that the French 305-millimetre gun is superior to the others, the Russian and English by 15 per cent.; the German by 27 per cent. and the American by 50 per cent. At 6,000 metres the projectile from the French gun preserved a velocity of 563 metres, the English only 505 metres; and with 20 degrees elevation the French projectile attained a range of 17,000 metres, with a velocity of 310 metres, sufficient to penetrate the protective armor of all the cruisers in the English Navy.

In 1898 the English 12-inch gun had an initial velocity of only 583 metres, while the new steel wire-wound gun had attained in the experiments the high velocity of 731 metres. Experience, however, has been very unsatisfactory, the trials on board the ships armed with them giving bad results. For example, on board the Mars, on account of the shaking of the guns the cordite charge had to be reduced so low that the initial velocity fell from the 731 metres to 455, or only 1,495 feet. On the Resolution two of the stern guns and one broadside gun burst, and the maximum velocity fell to 442 metres or only 1,450 feet. On the Hannibal all the guns showed bad tendencies, the maximum velocity within the limit of safety being reduced to 457 metres or only 1,500 feet. On the Jupiter, three out of four guns displayed bad signs, the maximum velocity being brought down to 502 metres or 1,649 feet. Thus out of sixteen wire-wound guns three burst and ten were so shaken that their cordite charges had to be reduced, with consequent loss of power, to preserve the guns from destruction. In actual working the English gun has proved inferior to the American. In rapidity of fire the French guns are superior to the English, the French 305-millimetre guns firing twenty shots in fifteen minutes; the 164.7 millimetre gun giving four shots in one minute; and the smaller semi-automatic guns firing from twenty to thirty shots per minute.

In the comparison of the muzzle energy of the guns (12-inch) of the different countries he mentioned, M. Claudinon gave them as follows:

American	8,100 metre tons
English	10,700 " "
Russian	10,700 " "
French	12,200 " "
German	9,500 " "

The English guns, however, owing to their defective construction, he found to be unreliable, and in practice hardly equal to the American gun. But a discovery has just been made on an English warship that raises the question whether cordite in the form used for large guns is a safe explosive. Under the heading of "Cordite in a hurry," a statement appeared recently in the *London Times* which has attracted a good deal of attention and caused much anxiety. It said:

"Some consternation has been caused in official circles by an unpleasant occurrence on board one of her Majesty's ships. It appears that fire was discovered in the magazine and that it could not be ascribed to anything except the spontaneous combustion of cordite. It is hardly possible to overestimate the gravity of such an accident or the importance of why it happened."

In the present state of feeling toward England on the continent of Europe, such statements as those of M. Claudinon in the French Chamber regarding the English guns and that in the *London Times* concerning the cordite ammunition become matters of political as much as of military importance.

Great Improvements in the Lebel Rifle.

From the Courrier des Etats Unis.

PARIS, May 10.—When in 1886 France cast aside the *fusil* Gras of eleven millimetres, and adopted the rifle of eight millimetres now in use, the French Army possessed the best rifle in Europe. The bullet was fired by smokeless powder, which was lighter than the common black powder, but possessed far greater power, with a speed of 330 metres a second. This speed gave it the advantages of tension or reduction of the trajectory with an increase in range and penetration. Moreover, the recoil, or "kick" as it is sometimes called, was comparatively trifling, and, in consequence of the reduced weight of the ammunition, the soldier was able to carry more cartridges than he could carry with the old material.

But when smokeless powder was adopted by other nations, and when rifles were made that possessed the same ballistic qualities as the Lebel, the advantage which France possessed was lost. Soon a superior weapon was produced. Italy, Roumania and Holland adopted a rifle of six millimetres, with a longer range, a trajectory still flatter than that of the Lebel, a more extended firing or danger zone and greater penetration.

It was time for France to do something. The Lebel was inferior to the more modern weapons, and of course it was proposed to shelve it. It was not shelved, however; it was improved, and the improvement, which, for the present at least, remains a "military secret," brings it to the front once more. It preserves its caliber of eight millimetres, possesses the same range and the same low trajectory that constitute the advantages of the extremely small-bore rifles whose bullets, as is now pretty generally known, do not inflict very serious wounds, unless they happen to reach vital organs. In a word, it has all the good qualities of the small bores without their defects. In accuracy of firing and penetrating power it is on a level with the others. The ball perforates a plate of chrome steel ten millimetres in thickness, which, in the matter of resistance, is equivalent to a thickness of twenty millimetres of wrought iron, and its wounds are by no means so merciful as those of the Mauser and the other small bore rifles.

New Italian Automatic Rifle.

From the London Times.

An Italian military journal, *L'Ufficiale in Congedo*, gives an account of a perfected automatic rifle invented by Capt. Cei-Rigotti of the Italian Army, and recently exhibited by him to the officers and garrison of Brescia. The chief feature of the weapon is the employment of a part of the gas generated by the discharge of each cartridge in working a rotatory cylinder which extracts the empty cartridge case and automatically recharges the weapon from the magazine. The mechanism is said to be extremely simple. A tiny hole is bored in the barrel of the rifle near the muzzle. Through this hole part of the gas escapes into a chamber placed below. At the end of the chamber lies the rotatory cylinder which, turning upon itself under the pressure of the gas, opens the breech and allows the gas to eject the empty cartridge case, the place of which is then taken by a fresh cartridge from the magazine. Apparently, the breech is closed by some spring action, though this is not expressly stated in the description. The closing of the breech seems to move a detonator, which fires the new cartridge, a small part of the gas from the new explosion being used to eject the discharged cartridge and fire a third. This automatic operation is repeated as many times as there are cartridges in the magazine.

Capt. Cei has arranged his ammunition in clips containing from six to twenty-five cartridges, to be used according to the kind of firing desired, that is, according to the conditions of naval or offensive or defensive land warfare. At Brescia Capt. Cei fired as many as fifteen shots per second, each having a muzzle velocity of 700 metres per second, without altering his aim or taking the rifle from his shoulder. An advantage of the Cei rifle seems, indeed, to be that the action of the ejector is such as to obviate the necessity of lowering the weapon and taking fresh aim after each discharge. This applies also to slow and deliberate firing, which can be obtained by means of an interrupting lever. When automatic fire of the most rapid description is desired the interrupting lever is lowered, the trigger pressed once, and all the cartridges in the magazine, say twenty-five, are discharged in less than two seconds, the detonations following so rapidly upon each other as practically to constitute one continuous report and the bullets leaving the muzzle fifty yards behind each other.

The employment of gas to increase the rapidity of fire has already been introduced by Capt. Cei into Italian naval quick-firers. As far as can be ascertained this use of a part of the gas for automatic purposes in no way affects the efficacy of the fire or the range of the rifle. The mechanism for rifles consists of four parts, which are stated to be easily applicable to existing magazine weapons such as the Mauser, without greatly increasing their weight. The invention has been patented, and the patent bought by an Italian company.

PARIS SEASON OF DUELS.

A BUSINESS SIDE TO THE SETTLING OF AFFAIRS OF HONOR.

Good Profit in a Well-Kept Duelling Ground—Society Present at Some Encounters—Reporters Also View the Meetings—Duels and Breakfasts at Aurelian Scholl's.

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PARIS, May 16.—This is the duelling season in Paris. Whatever the reason may be, it is always in the spring and early summer that the Gallic propensity for finding deliberate insult in a chance word of disagreement and avenging it with sword or pistol brings most custom to the field of honor. The word "custom" may seem a little strange. But it is the right word all the same. The maintenance and letting out of duelling grounds is a regular trade in Paris, or rather in the near neighborhood of the great city. Beyond the fortifications, in the green suburbs, where the bourgeoisie goes to amuse itself on sunday, there are many cafes and pleasure gardens, whose proprietors look upon their share of the year's duelling bouts as an important element in their prosperity.

At the more famous of these places, where really fashionable people meet to go through the pretence of trying to kill each other, the hire of the field of honor is rather expensive, according to French views of money's worth.

About $50 is usually given to the proprietor for the use of his grounds, and it is understood that the incidental *consommations*—in American, drinks with incidentals—cost about three times the usual price. The waiters get $5 to divide among themselves. Not infrequently also, when no accident more grave than the usual wrist scratch has marred the joy of the proceedings, the whole crowd—combatants, seconds, doctors and invited guests—take breakfast on the ground, and the popping of champagne corks celebrates the reconciliation of the high contending parties. Then the proprietor is content; he repays himself in one morning's takings for all the expenditure of time and labor and thought which his ground has cost him.

The due maintenance of a duelling ground is not so easy as it might seem at first view. The inclosure of turf is laid out and kept in order with the same minute care that an English cricketing club expends upon its crease. The greatest case is taken to insure an absolute level. The surface is watered and rolled regularly all the year round, the grass kept thick, but short, so that the surface shall be perfectly firm all the way along to give a secure footing and enable each of the combatants in a sword duel to lunge and retreat with perfect ease and without danger of slipping. Generally the ground is sheltered from prying eyes by dense foliage and the trees are an endless source of trouble and thought. Their growth has to be kept in due bounds so that the shade is not too heavy; neither must they stand in such a way that either end of the fighting line offers an undue advantage in point of light and shade.

The more favored duelling resorts, such as Moulin Tour, the Moulin of La Grande Jatte and the Tour de Villebore, are laid out like pleasure gardens. There are little wooden summer houses of rustic aspect where the doctors store their medicine cases, where the combatants strip for the fray, where the seconds make the final arrangements, examining the weapons, tapping the combatants' chests—to see that there is no protective armor under the soft shirts, and where lots are drawn for position. Under the trees which surround to arena there are little tables where spectators who may be invited smoke their cigarettes and sip their coffee or bock while they watch the fighting.

As everyone knows the duel to the death of the old days is almost unknown to the modern, and every season the duelling party becomes more and more a mere early morning picnic with just the faintest spice of danger thrown in to give it interest. There is scarcely ever a duel in these days which does not collect round the little tables under the trees at least some two score spectators chosen from among the intimate friends of both parties. Cards of invitation are not infrequently issued just as to afternoon receptions or evening musicales. Even women appear in fresh morning toilette to make the scene still more festive. At a recent affaire d'honneur at Levallois Perret there were 300 people of the best society present, and the return home to the city in carriages, cabs, automobiles and bicycles made a long and joyous procession, which caused windows to be thrown up and wondering faces to project from them in all the villages en route.

Of course, the general public is as a rule rigorously excluded from these amusements. Only the invited guests, be they a dozen or 300, know where the encounter will take place. If an invited guest should give away the rendezvous he would almost certainly be called out by one of the seconds chosen by lot from among the four. Not long ago a well-known society woman, invited to attend an encounter, blabbed to some friends. Her husband was immediately called to account for her indiscretion, and within a week had to make the central figure on the turf.

At the duel which took place in the second week of April between the Marquis de Lubersac and the Comte de Dion, even the reporters of the society journals, after tracking the seconds day and night like detectives so as to discover the meeting place, found themselves barred from the arena. They had to hire ladders at preposterous prices from enterprising peasants and mount a wall topped with broken glass. Sitting straddlewise on this sad eminence with their field glasses and note books and cameras about them, they got, through the trees, a precarious view of the encounter. Their articles the next day were pitifully comic. Sometimes, on the other hand, the combatants desire nothing more than notoriety. The journals announce the meeting place a week before the event, and all the world may go and see the fun from whatever point of vantage may be available. Even in these cases, though the general public is not admitted to the actual arena, where an applauding or derisive crowd would certainly embarrass the gladiators, the curious take potluck, so to speak, going in vehicles of any and every description which they moor against the outer walls or fences wherever they can find a good view.

At Saint Ouen the other day a cinematograph was brought into play and the duel was reproduced nightly at a music hall for the delectation of the populace.

Occasionally encounters take place in private properties even within the fortifications. Thus, for example, there is the garden of Aurelien Scholl, the writer and wit, who, in his green old age, does his best to keep up the tradition of the Parisian journalist of Balzac's days. In Scholl's garden, in the Rue de Clichy, half the writers of Paris have at one time or another stripped off their coats and lunged at their man. And, better than anybody else, Scholl knows how to reconcile his quarrelling friends once the swords have played. The invariable end to an encounter at Scholl's is a slight scratch, a jovial breakfast and the arm-in-arm departure of the belligerents for the boulevard and the offices of their respective journals. The only kind of duel which is barred in the gardens of the Rue de Clichy is a duel to the death, as a duel with pistols might turn out to be. Pistols are forbidden, because the master of the house was once threatened with expulsion if ever again the sound of shots were heard from his garden. And Scholl is fond of his house, which, through the reunions of politicians, journalists, artists, poets and foreign celebrities which have taken place there, has become, as it were, a part of the history of Paris.

There are one or two cafés in the very heart of the city whose proprietors, for a consideration, allow an encounter in a long, bare, upper room on an emergency. But such impromptu affairs are not looked upon favorably.

Mexicans to Watch the Eclipse.

AUSTIN, Tex., May 21.—A despatch from Saltillo, Mexico, says that the Mexican Government has sent the National Astronomical Observers to Santa Elena, near Saltillo, to record the eclipse of the sun on May 28. Santa Elena is in the exact centre of the path of the shadow. Santa Elena is one of the most deserted, arid and inhospitable spots in the Republic. There is not even water. Hundreds of officials will go to the spot by special trains.

Frankly Answered.

From Brooklyn Life.

The Senior—What are your prospects, young man?

The Suitor—I have not had time to look you up in *Dun's* or *Bradstreet's*.

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