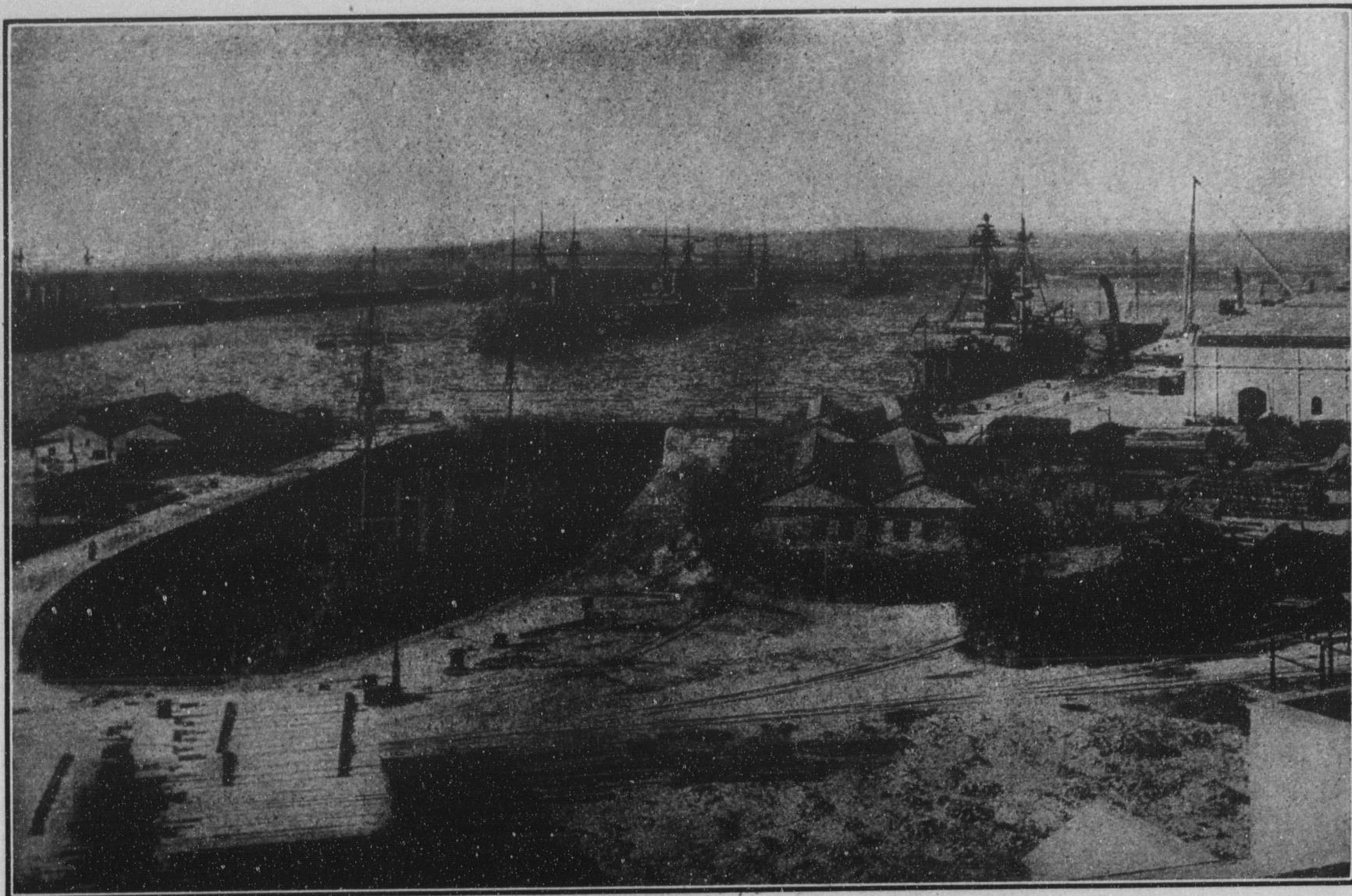


# Around the World with the Fleet

## IN THE HARBOR AT GIBRALTAR



THE NEW DOCKS, CONSIDERED AS IDEAL BY MANY NAVAL AUTHORITIES.

## THE FLEET'S TOUR OF THE WORLD

**GEN. BENJAMIN F. TRACY, FORMER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, COMMENTS ON THE WONDERFUL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE AMERICAN NAVY**

"THE round-the-world trip of our fleet of battleships is likely to be a lifelong epoch in the history of our nation," said Gen. Tracy, former secretary of the navy. "It was a great thing to do, a wonderful performance in fact, particularly as the ships have reached our shores in as good condition as when they went away. The trip is sure to attach a great reputation to our navy. There is no doubt at all that the experience and competency to our officers and men gained through the cruise will be invaluable to the service.

"If we were to meet the enemy today, these men and officers who have been on the cruise would be infinitely superior to men who have not an intimate knowledge of sea experience and of battleship maneuvers. This experience they could not have got in any other way. They have acquired practical knowledge of how to handle ships of war to the best advantage.

"The cruise has awakened the public mind to a realization of the fact that it is unwise to have a battleship fleet on one side of our coast and not on the other. In a word, that we should go on increasing the number and size of our ships. Nearly twenty years ago I said of the Panama canal that with it we should support two separate and distinct navies—one on each coast. But it would not be advantageous to divide even a large navy into two smaller ones on each coast, because the division would make the whole worth nothing practically. With the completion of the canal it will be absolutely incumbent upon us to not only defend that waterway but also to have

a formidable fleet in each ocean. It is not a question of cost. It is a matter of defense, a protection to our commerce and our homes.

"A navy that is largely inferior to another is of no use, because a larger navy will destroy it at the first onslaught. If I were in congress I should vote for four battleships of 26,000 tons each and equipped with the most approved armor and armament for defense and offense. We need them. I believe in ships that are able to put those of any other nation at hors de combat whenever occasion demanded us so to do.

"What is to be the limit of the size of battleships I do not know. I thought when I was secretary of the navy that in the construction of the Massachusetts and the Oregon, each of 10,000 tons, the largest and most powerful article of war had been reached. They were larger than anything that England, France and Germany had. But the moment that the Oregon and Massachusetts were completed England set to work to build larger battleships. So it goes on.

"England builds larger ships than a rival nation. The other nation then builds larger ships than England. Once again England sets the pace for size and aggressiveness of construction, only to have the honor wrested from her as time goes by.

"We have 4000 miles of sea coast to protect, and along this enormous territory there are many large cities. Besides we shall have to guard the Panama canal. We have got to maintain a large navy, and this cruise has tended to show the public the importance of our navy. It has taught the public the necessity of a large and powerful fleet. If no other end was served, this wonderful cruise has been invaluable to the American nation in that way."