

The SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE SECTION

A Magazine for your Reading Table

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS' PAGE



Admiral George Dewey

NEEDED—A POWERFUL NAVY

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Admiral of the Navy

ADMIRAL MAHAN has stated that the size of the Navy must be determined not so much by what a nation is willing to accomplish as by what it is willing or unwilling to concede in respect to national policies. The United States must therefore measure its strength with the nations that are most likely to oppose our policies, and this strength must be judged by comparative and not by absolute strength.

The United States Navy at present ranks third, with Great Britain and Germany first and second respectively, and France fourth. With the definite building programs possessed by Great Britain, Germany, France and Japan, the United States will soon drop to fourth place. The General Board of the Navy (of which I am president) recommended as early as 1903 that the ultimate strength of the United States Navy should be forty-eight battleships with the necessary auxiliaries, and this policy has been consistently advocated from year to year.

Dreadnoughts must constitute the basis of our building program. At the present time, the United States and Germany are nearly equal in capital ships now built or building; but we will soon be third. At the rate of two battleships each year, the United States in 1920 will have thirty-five Dreadnoughts and pre-Dreadnoughts, Germany, according to her 1911 program fifty-five, and Japan, as nearly as can be determined, thirty-six. Situated as we are with such an extensive coast line and interests in the Atlantic and Pacific, our Navy must be prepared for an enemy in either ocean.

Panama the New Naval Key

THE Panama Canal, however, will be of immense military advantage to us, because it will enable the concentration of the fleet on either coast in a much shorter time. Without the canal, to insure naval supremacy we should possess a fleet in each ocean superior to that of our most probable enemy in that ocean. With the completion of the canal, the United States, due to its ownership, assumes new responsibilities and obligations. It must exercise military control of and maintain peace in the Canal Zone and its vicinity. Our traditional Monroe Doctrine and the Open Door policy must be supported. We must be prepared to defend these policies and be ready to defeat any antagonist likely to challenge them. This can only be done by having a Navy adequate to meet any

CONTENTS

COVER DESIGN	STUART TRAVIS	Page
NEEDED—A POWERFUL NAVY—Editorial	ADMIRAL GEORGE DEWEY	2
THE NEGRO AND THE LAW	HARRIS DICKSON	3
<i>Illustrations by J. N. Marchand</i>		
FRESH FINDINGS FROM MARK TWAIN	ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE	4
<i>Illustrations by Horace Taylor</i>		
KEEPING UP WITH WATTVILLE—Part II	OWEN JOHNSON	5
<i>Illustrations by Oscar Cesare</i>		
THE SOLE SURVIVOR	BRUCE FARSON	6
<i>Illustrations by Percy E. Cowen</i>		
HER WAYS	MADELINE BRIDGES	8
FLOWERS THAT ANYBODY CAN GROW		13
BULBS FOR SPRING PLANTING		14
GARDEN WRINKLES		14
LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT NUMBER		15

sudden emergency. By adequate is meant a Navy powerful enough to seek and destroy that of the enemy.

Wars are certain to come and the nation must be prepared. The history of all ages has shown that the proper provision for peace is preparedness for war. A large Navy makes for peace and is an essential asset to the nation possessing it. National supineness has cost us much in the past and we can not afford to have it repeated.

Weak Navies Have Spelled Defeat

CORNWALLIS was not properly supported by the Navy. Consequently, England lost her colonies. Napoleon fell because Villeneuve was no match for Nelson. The Confederacy lost because the Federal Navy blockaded all its ports, shutting off supplies and revenues. After Spain's navy was destroyed, her colonies were no longer tenable. The defeat of the Russian Navy by the Japanese decided the Russo-Japanese War. Italy in its recent war had command of the sea and Turkey had to make peace. The Greek Navy at the present time has been a powerful factor in the success of the Balkan States against Turkey.

To have a weak Navy courts attack, disaster and defeat. Diplomatic demands in international affairs will be heeded only if a nation has the necessary force to back them up. The Navy is an important factor in international settlements. This nation can not afford to be content to have its Navy relegated to fourth or fifth place.

The Spanish-American War, which lasted about one hundred days, cost us approximately five hundred million dollars, or about four times the total annual expenditure for the Navy, and this does not include the yearly pensions resulting therefrom, to say nothing of the lives sacrificed. Fifty million dollars properly spent on battleships preceding 1898, would have made this war a hopeless undertaking for Spain.

Our Standing Before the World

THE United States in recent years has become a world power, necessitating the assuming of corresponding responsibilities. These obligations our representative citizens are willing to accept, but turn to our military experts for guidance; and their studies, and not political or economic conditions, must decide.

We must have a Navy not to wage, but to prevent war. It must be a well-balanced Navy; that is, battleships with the proper proportion of auxiliaries, such as destroyers, scouts, supply and repair ships, etc.; but battleships are paramount, and the building of them must continue. It requires three years to build a battleship, and they can not be bought or improvised. Battleships deteriorate and become obsolete in time, so that provision must be made to replace those in service. Carefully studied and scientific preparation for war must be made in times of peace by our naval officers; but Congress must provide them with the necessary ships. If they fail in this, when war comes, as it surely will, the nation will not be entitled to win success, but only humiliation and defeat.



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