

OUR CLAIMS FOR REOPENING STATION.

The following resolutions, and their elaboration in the succeeding article, were prepared by Mr. Peter S. Lawton for use during the present session of Congress, before which a vigorous fight is to be made for the reopening of the Naval Station at this city.

The resolutions follow: Whereas, The Secretary of the Navy, in his annual report for 1911, just submitted to the Congress, renews his recommendation made in his report of 1910, that authority be granted his department to move the Dry Dock of the New Orleans Naval Station to some other locality; and,

Whereas, The reasons advanced by the Secretary why said station should be dismantled, and which appear to be those on page 22 of the 1910 report, are stated by him as follows:

"The New Orleans yard lies about 100 miles up the Mississippi river. It has a large floating dock which can in emergency dock vessels of about 1,600 tons displacement; has modern shop buildings and some excellent machine tools in good condition. It lies behind a levee which must be relied upon in high water or flood of the river to prevent the Navy Yard and machine tools from being flooded. Its position up the river is such that in time of war, or threatened war, no large vessels should be sent there on account of the danger of the Passes being blocked;" and,

Whereas, Said Secretary himself utterly discredits the necessity for (or the danger of) this "blocking" theory almost in the very next paragraph, in the following language, which appears on page 33, where he says:

"The Gulf of Mexico has two entrances—Florida strait, commanded by Key West, and the Yucatan passage at the West end of Cuba, which is some thirty miles wide. These two entrances may easily be guarded by our cruisers to prevent forays or attacks on the Gulf coast by smaller scattered cruisers; it is inconceivable that an enemy's battleships will ever penetrate the Gulf of Mexico, unless our fleet in the Caribbean has been defeated;" and,

Whereas, Said Secretary, in this same connection, in his reference to the Pensacola Yard, in the Gulf of Mexico, again admits the possibility of an enemy getting into the Gulf and past the cruisers which he had just said could easily keep them out, when he says, on page 32, that Pensacola Bay could probably be bombarded by an enemy's vessels in spite of the fortifications at that place;" while he again quickly contradicts this statement in his prediction of big business for all the cities of the Gulf coast while they are being thus blockaded or bombarded, which latter contradiction appears on page 34, and which reads as follows:

"The Gulf coast being so entirely protected by our fleet in the Caribbean, can safely send supplies from all its cities to the Isthmus of Panama and to our fleet in the Caribbean. It may be confidently predicted that in time of war the cities of the Gulf coast will be, from their natural security, the chief sources of supplies and material and the probable points from which our troops will embark either for the Isthmus for further transit or for service in the Caribbean, as may be required;" And,

Whereas, The New Orleans Naval Station was purposely located 100 miles up the Mississippi river by two eminent Boards of Experts, after a most exhaustive and costly inquiry, and because they naturally assumed that the proper defenses in the shape of Floating Batteries, then already designated and recommended by the Endicott Board, which preceded said commissions, should be installed at the mouth of this nation's greatest river, to prevent the blocking which this seemingly erratic Secretary so lightly predicts, thus insuring the passing on to the sea of the "supplies" he nevertheless promises us will be furnished by our Gulf ports; and,

Whereas, Because the War Department has not seen fit to yet install these floating batteries, which are imperatively necessary not only to protect the great government works at this river's mouth, but also to insure the "open river" at all times and under all circumstances, which protection and facility the Secretary must realize that this river, as a national highway, is absolutely entitled to, we refuse to believe that this is a sufficient reason for abandoning this station which, in turn, is imperatively essential to the upkeep of said defense vessels; and,

Whereas, We further refuse to believe that the Congress, which authorized the building of this station and this dock, upon the advice and recommendation of the eminent experts mentioned, which plan, for the reasons stated, and because of the further reason that no forts or land batteries can be utilized at or near this river's junction with the sea, is at the present moment an absolutely essential part of the national defense, will consent to said Secretary's request, based as it is upon the unsupported assumption (which he himself discredits) that the sea gates of the great Mississippi Valley will be closed in the event of even probable war." Therefore, be it

Resolved, by the Algiers Improvement Association, That we deprecate Secretary Meyer's evident lack of prudence in presuming to reverse a policy so carefully entered upon by the government, and which is even now in the course of consummation, as is seen in the large expenditures being made on Southwest Pass, presently nearing completion, and which is shown in letters from the War Department on file in this city, stating that the defenses for the mouth of this river will be forthcoming, which action of his the Secretary must know would, if carried out, discredit this whole Mississippi river project now receiving such national recognition under the head of "The Lakes to the Gulf Deep Waterway," and various other kindred measures; and, be it further

Resolved, That while also deprecating the seemingly careless manner in which the Secretary has drawn his said report—insofar at least as it refers to Gulf matters, such as giving the width of the Yucatan Channel as being "some 30 miles," when in reality said pass is some 100 miles wide, which of itself would discredit his whole argument—if argument it can be called—we desire to protest as strongly as we can to the Secretary's whole course in connection with this station, wherein he refused to send work to it and then officially reported that it was not self-sustaining.

Be it further resolved, That we call upon our Senators and Representatives from this State to demand an investigation of Secretary Meyer's conduct towards this particular New Orleans Naval Station, without reference to any other station or yard—this one being in a class entirely different from any of the others—and that our said Senators and Representatives seek the assistance of those of the entire Mississippi Valley, with a view of not only combatting the mistaken attitude of this official and his advisers, but also to endeavor to have this plant equipped with the necessary floating derrick and land cranes, and its power plant and its wharf completed, so that it may be able to handle the work for which it is otherwise capable, besides securing, if possible, a specific minimum annual appropriation for its operation on the score, as above stated, of its being more than any other Naval Station in America, a valuable and necessary part of the national defense.

THE NEW ORLEANS NAVAL STATION AS AN INDISPENSABLE PART OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE

No matter how desirable it may be, from an economic standpoint, to close some of the country's Naval Stations which have no special functions or which may, for various reasons, be considered useless or unnecessary for the purposes of the Navy, the fact remains that the New Orleans Naval Station, which, it would seem, should properly come under the jurisdiction of the War Department, should certainly not be permitted to be closed and dismantled—as is being presently attempted by the Secretary of the Navy—since said station is distinctively in a class of its own and more than any other station in the country an absolutely essential part of the national defense.

To conclusively prove this statement, it need only be pointed out that the Passes at the mouth of the Mississippi river, now nearing completion, and which have, themselves, cost, up to date, some \$15,000,000, cannot be defended from destruction, and the integrity of this great, free national ocean gateway maintained during war except by the floating battery, for the upkeep of which this local station is an absolute and imperative necessity. In verification of this condition the following is taken from the report of the Endicott Board, which made the most exhaustive study ever made of our coasts and their needed defenses, which report was filed on January 16, 1886, and of which the Taft Board said, in 1905 (page 10) that "The principles of seacoast defense, so clearly stated therein, and the necessity of having our important and strategic and commercial centers made secure against naval attack with as little delay as possible, are equally applicable today and need not be repeated." After placing New Orleans sixth among twenty-seven ports urgently needing to be fortified, said Endicott Board's report on New Orleans, which is on page 16, is as follows, in the matter of the Passes:

"As no land batteries could be built there on account of the want of a foundation, it is recommended that the defense of the Passes be confided to two floating batteries, submarine mines and other torpedoes. Twelve torpedo boats are recommended for this station."

Again, on page 308, in stating where these floating defenses must be used, it says:

"In places where, from the nature of the ground, as at the mouth of the Mississippi river, it is impracticable to mount heavy guns in forts." On the same page the report continues:

"It seems evident that New Orleans should be entirely defended by floating batteries, torpedoes and submarine mines, because of the engineering difficulties to be encountered in placing heavy guns upon such yielding foundations as exist at the mouth of the Mississippi river."

On page 309 is found this important statement: "Floating defenses should be considered as a part of the stationary defense of the country, and not as part of the Navy. As far as possible each floating defense should be adapted to the particular place of which it forms part of the defense. It should be constructed, indeed, to take advantage of the peculiarities of the location."

On page 306 it describes the floating battery as follows: "It should mount guns equal or superior to any guns that could be sent against it; it should have protective armor of greater thickness than any probable enemy; while it should be, at the same time, a smaller vessel and of lighter draught."

That the ships of the Navy cannot be depended upon to defend these Passes in time of war is also made clear on page 307 of said Endicott Board's report, which says:

"The duties here outlined for floating batteries may be performed by the regular naval force, but the legitimate field of action of such a force is upon the high seas, in protecting our commerce, in destroying the commerce of the enemy, in making attacks upon undefended or important portions of his coast (thus forcing him to maintain a fleet at home), or in meeting or destroying his fleet."

The Taft Board, on page 15, puts this even stronger, when it says: "Since it is a naval maxim that the enemy's fleet is the primary objective, it follows that harbor defense cannot depend on the presence of any war vessel to resist naval attack. While it is possible such vessels may be in port, their presence will no part of a plan for harbor defense by naval co-operation. It follows, therefore, that the defense of such harbor must depend immediately upon guns and submarine mines, and that this defense must be sufficiently strong to repel any naval attack that may reasonably be expected."

It is also a fact known to all that physical conditions in the matter of foundations at this river's junction with the sea, in the Gulf of Mexico, have not ameliorated since the Endicott Board's survey of that locality. Therefore, if all this be true—that the Mississippi river is a national river; that the jetties at its mouth, which are being built by the government, are of national importance; that these extensive and costly works, which have taken nearly a generation to perfect, but which our Navy cannot guarantee to protect during war, and which cannot possibly be defended from attack nor be prevented from being closed up, through the instrumentality of any land forts of any description, but can only be thus defended by the floating battery, the deduction is self evident that this Naval Station, which must exist for the maintenance of these harbor defense vessels, is, as stated, a very necessary element of our national defense, and should not be destroyed. This fact being established, this station should therefore be maintained upon the same theory that the warship and the soldier is provided for, and not be subject to the machinations of certain interests who would leave this locality helpless in the event of hostilities, when the only recourse would be that boldly suggested by Secretary Meyer and which was about to be put into practice during the few months of the late Spanish war—to block the river up."

The people of the Mississippi Valley who are behind "The Lakes to the Gulf Deep Waterway" project will, of course, when they get to it, straighten this whole matter out, because the development and the defending of this river must be synonymous terms. But while the proposed deepening of the river would seem to be a corollary to the successful operating of the Panama Canal, the consummation of such a big project must of necessity be some time off. Nevertheless a big thing like this station, which has cost over \$3,000,000, should not be abandoned only to be again revived at such great cost to the people, particularly when it can also be easily shown that unlike the warship and the soldier in one respect this station, if given a chance, would be "self-supporting."

Owing to its greater proximity to the scene of operations, this New Orleans Naval Station could today take care of the gunboats habitually doing duty in the Caribbean, with far greater economy than can be possible under the present plan which compels them to steam all the way from 1,200 to 3,000 miles more, on a round trip, in going up the coast to Norfolk or to New York or Boston, as the case may be. The New Orleans station could do this class of work just as good as any other station, while the mild climate of this place, together with its coaling facilities, should also count in its favor, when it is conceded that in the matter of shore leave and all other conveniences and its ability to furnish any stores or other supplies, it is satisfactory. If, then, to this work be added the repairs to the local government craft, such as dredges and boats of the lighthouse service, the tugs and boats and barges of the River Commission, together with private work too heavy for the private yards, it can easily be seen that the New Orleans Station, under such conditions, would be a flourishing institution and not the "disadvantageous place" Secretary Meyer pretends it is. And when it is further considered that it was a quarter of a century ago when the Endicott Board recommended these two heavily-armed floating forts and their dozen auxiliaries for the protection of this river, it will be appreciated that this was at a time when the Dreadnaught of today was not even dreamt of, and long before the scientists' searchlight had penetrated the gloom of the fever-stricken Isthmus. If this protection was necessary for the "gateway of the valley" in those days, when this whole Southern country was still staggering from the shock of war and still in the grip of the yellow plague which hung like a pall over its future, how vastly more necessary must it be today, under present world conditions as to armaments, and now that Reed and Carroll and the other heroes who gave their lives that we might live and prosper, have lifted this "veil of futurity," revealing to us in all her splendor the new South, whose destiny they forever fixed among the garden spots of the world! With the lights now before us, this great continental river upon whose unruffled bosom can be brought down by gravitation to the sea and in indefinite volume the products of the world's greatest valley, must, in the very nature of things, in response to the changed conditions mentioned, and in the not distant future, become the greatest transportation medium we possess. This was ordained the very instant that the "mosquito theory" made Panama and the new South possible, and no mere Secretary of the Navy, nor even the "Boston crowd" nor the "New York crowd" can prevent its consummation, although, no doubt, they may retard it, unless they are "called" in time. Therefore, let our Congressmen and our Senators all get together on this New Orleans Naval Station question, taking it up seriously and intelligently, and with an aggressiveness commensurate with its importance not only to the Mississippi Valley, but to the nation, and, if possible, have it placed under the jurisdiction of the War Department, where, under the application of the rule laid down by the experts, it would, as suggested, seem to properly belong.

PETER S. LAWTON.

TERRIBLE TOLL OF THE SEA

Steam Vessels Totally Lost in 1908 Numbered 96—Fifty Ships Missing That Year.

Careful French statisticians compile each year for the "Bureau Veritas" a record of the accidents and losses suffered for a twelve-month by the merchant marine of all nations from which data are obtainable, says a writer in Harper's Magazine. The yearly summary put forth by the "Bureau Veritas" is counted authoritative by all maritime men—owners, agents, underwriters. Few who loiter in the palm gardens or loiter on the roadways of the swift cities of ease that cross the Atlantic know the "Bureau Veritas," its record of the tolls gathered by that complacent sea down—far down—below the rails.

Nine hundred and eighty-six vessels of the world's merchant marine—steam and sail—totally lost in the year 1908, says these careful French statisticians; and this tally recognizes only steam vessels of over 100 tons' burden. Such the record of complete destruction, and the following the count of damage not irreparable: 4,273 steamers injured by fire, collision, stranding, stress of weather, and other causes. The destruction varies from year to year; in 1907 there were 1,104 total losses among merchant ships; in 1905 1,038 steamships and sailing vessels were gripped by the sea.

No count is kept of the men who go down in the ships that are lost. The statisticians deal only with commercial values. No bureau in the world finds profit or incentive in keeping count of the thousands of sea-workers who are claimed as toll by the sea we reckon tamed. Only this is taken in

count; that every day in the year somewhere on the restless wastes of the seven seas two—in some years three—ships are snatched in greed by the power that tolerates the many. So the average has it.

The sea takes most of its tithe by stealth. A bandage of fog about the navigator's eyes, a racing current moving unseen beneath the masked innocence of flat water, a knife-edge reef, or sand that yields until a keel is fairly trapped—then destruction. Not quite 400 of the 886 vessels lost in the year 1908 were wrecked through stranding; 158 of these were steamships, superior as they were over the barks and schooners subject to the whims of the wind. Collisions sent ninety crafts to the bottom. Fire destroyed thirty-eight. Ninety-three filled and foundered. Under the head "missing," which means that not even careful French statisticians can divine the secrets of the deep, fifty ships were registered in the 1908 record of disaster.

Consumption in Ireland. One of the most interesting facts brought out in the report of the registrar general for Ireland, just issued as a blue book, is the maintenance of the decrease in the mortality from tuberculosis, which has now been continuous since 1908. The death rate from this disease fell from 2.7 per 1,000 in 1907 to 2.6 in 1908; in the following year the rate declined to 2.4 per 1,000, and in the year under review to 2.3 per 1,000. All who are taking part in the campaign against tuberculosis, says the registrar general, are to be congratulated on the results of their exertions. Special mention must be again made of the Women's National Health association, founded and presided over by the

Countess of Aberdeen. The simple health principles propaganda of this association have tended toward this result. Special attention should also be given to the excellent work done by the medical officers of health, who have exceptional opportunities of understanding the home life and needs of the poorer classes. The county, urban and rural district councils are working in various ways for the betterment of the public health of the country, notably in the provision of improved dwellings for the people.—Dundee Advertiser.

WET SHOES

Prestley's belongings were scattered between his Chicago home, which was closed, the cottage in Florida, where the family was passing the winter, and his trunk, which he had brought with him on a hurried business trip to Chicago. He had left the trunk reposing in the temporary room given him at the hotel and had dashed around town throughout the day.

When he came in at evening the clerk gave him another key. "We've moved you to 613," he told Prestley. "Your trunk is up there."

Prestley was tired. Also he yearned for a bath and fresh clothes. Reaching the room designated by the clerk, he filled the bathtub with water and got into his bathrobe. Then he started to unlock his trunk.

It was his trunk, he knew, for there were the hotel stickers in their familiar places and there was the marred corner, as well as his initials in white paint on the end. Yet his key would not unlock it.

Prestley did all the foolish things people do under such circumstances. He inserted the key upside down and right side up and crosswise, he wriggled and jammed it and pounded the trunk and muttered incoherently under his breath.

Finally after a half hour's struggle he was forced to give it up and ring for the porter. It seemed that there was a broken piece inside the lock, but finally the porter managed to open it.

When the porter departed, clutching Prestley's quarter, Prestley between rage and hunger and weariness was sizzling like a bomb as he pulled out clean linen and laid it on the bed.

Then he cast off his bathrobe and jumped into the tub. There seemed something wrong with his feet, and as Prestley gazed down at them through the depths of the water he came to with a start—he had got into the tub with his shoes on!

The temperature of the water went up ten degrees from the fervor of his remarks. The shoes naturally were soaking wet by the time he had rescued them.

Investigating his trunk a little later Prestley dragged to light only a pair of patent leather pumps. He turned them over in his hands with the resignation one uses in situations of utter despair. Still, he had to put them on.

After Prestley had dressed in his business suit, which looked baggy and dusty after his trip, he saw to his horror that it was an impossibility to combine it with the pumps. The effect was too comic. Since he had to wear the pumps he decided with a sigh that he must dress up to them.

So he took some time changing his shirt studs into another shirt and getting into his dress suit.

His hunger was increasing by leaps and bounds. Fully attired, he took a look at himself and decided he was too glorious to burst in upon the crowd in the downstairs cafe. He would be obliged to seek the exclusive upstairs dining room. Living up to those pumps seemed to be a strenuous affair.

Prestley got into the elevator at the sixth floor and at the next a young woman entered in evening garb. She, too, got off at the dining room floor. At this point Prestley thought hard.

If two persons in evening dress entered the cafe simultaneously, the head waiter naturally would suppose they were together and would seat them accordingly, so he lagged behind, ten yards or more.

The big room was only slightly filled and at his entrance the head waiter took him hospitably in charge, led him the length of the room and with a flourish seated him at a small table.

Raising his eyes he saw that the worst had happened—the strange and good looking young woman in evening garb sat across from him at the same small table!

Prestley is rather shy, so in spite of his uncomfortableness he felt helpless. Maybe they had seated them so as to enable one waiter to serve both, and anyhow he was there and couldn't help it.

He gave his order wildly.

The waiter deposited before him a soup tureen and two plates.

As Prestley swallowed hard and gazed despairingly at his companion, he saw that she, too, was confused. Then a man stood beside him, likewise in evening clothes, gazing at Prestley with an expression of interrogation that was positively rude in its surprise. Without doubt he belonged to the young woman, and she belonged to him, and there was Prestley in the man's seat with two soup plates before him!

Prestley struggled to his feet. He made strange noises which he thought were an apology. Then he fled.

He got to his room and locked the door and bolted it, and as he kicked off first one of the pumps and then the other he yanked the telephone to him. "Say," Prestley bellowed in a strangled voice. "I'll have my dinner sent to my room!"

In Other Days. Belshazzar looked up and saw the writing on the wall.

"Who let that wireless message in here?" he asked, facetiously. Thereupon his guests laughed heartily, the consensus of opinion being: "That's a good one on Marconi."

FIREWORKS
Certainly you are going to celebrate the Holidays.
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DON'T FORGET THE YOUNG LADY WHO WILL APPRECIATE A BOTTLE OF
High Class Cologne
OR OTHER FANCY TOILET ARTICLES. WE HAVE A LARGE SUPPLY IN THIS LINE AND OUR PRICES ARE LOWER THAN IS ASKED IN THE HIGH RENT DISTRICT OF THE CITY.
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