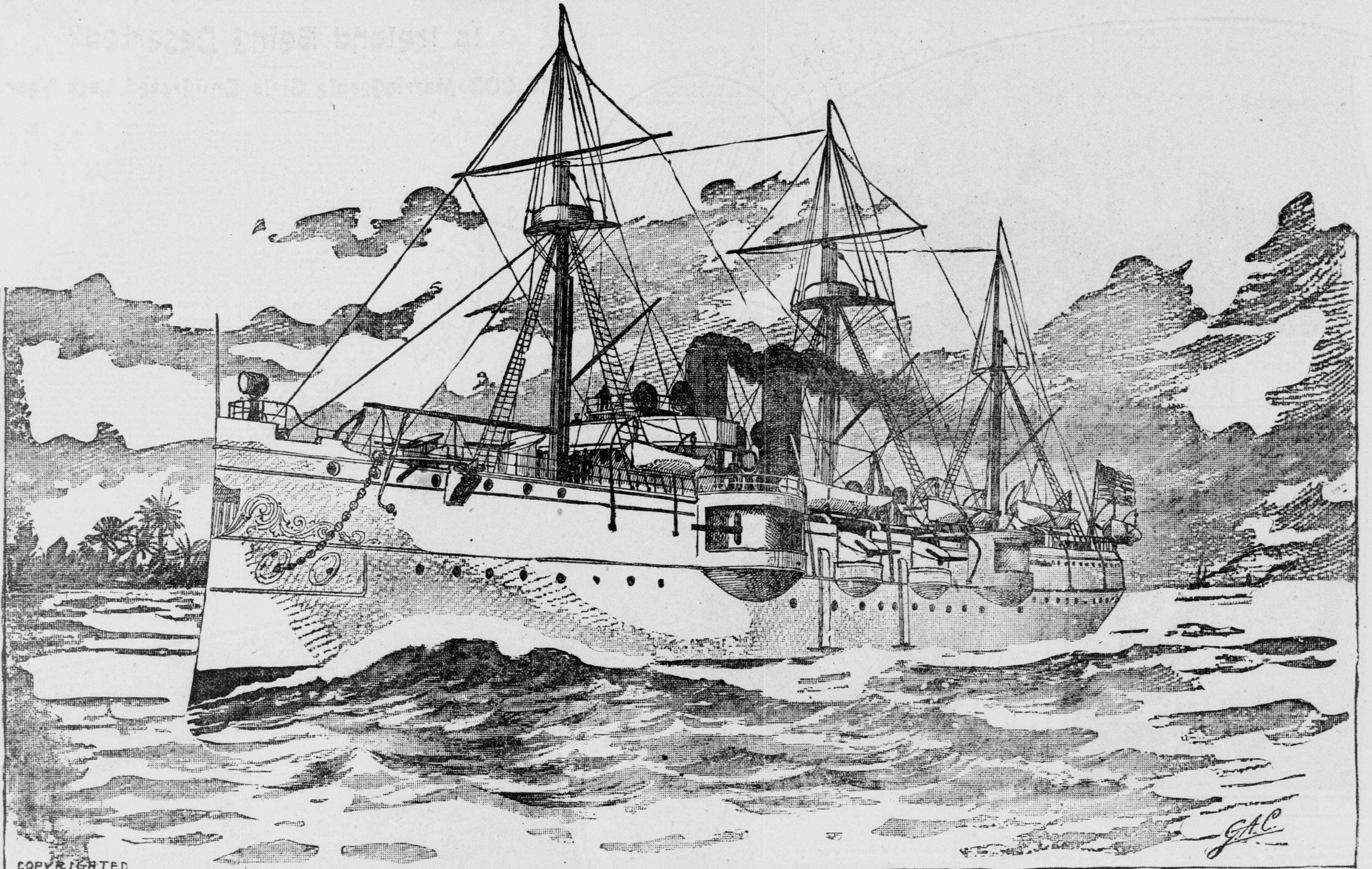


THE NEW AND IDEAL NAVY OF THE UNITED STATES



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The New Kearsarge Will Be the Next Ship Completed. It Is Ninety-Two Per Cent Finished and It Will Be the First Ship of "The New Navy."

Will Contain Forty-Eight New Vessels

If there was one lesson that was taught by the war with Spain it was the value of a navy, and the United States Government has not been slow to take advantage of the knowledge that it obtained by this experience in actual warfare. Lord Brassey in his review of the late unpleasantness emphasized the fact that all the United States needed was more good ships to have an ideal navy, for no question could be raised as to the ability of the men engaged in her sea service.

Although he was one of the first persons of note to express this opinion, the fact that our navy was not in a condition to cope with a powerful and well-drilled force had long been known to the naval authorities of this country, but the trouble had been to persuade Congress to make the appropriation necessary to carry out the plans that had been devised.

When the war came, however, economy in this particular branch of the service was no longer possible and when the war had ended the people had learned such a lesson that they were willing to spend money in the improvement of their armored vessels. They had learned that great battles are often fought on the sea, and that to win these battles good men are not all that are needed. Good ships must be provided, and they are now working to provide these ships just as quick as possible.

Chief Constructor Hichborn, in his last report, presented a few weeks ago, gave a most encouraging account of the manner in which his work is being carried out. He explained that the Kearsarge had advanced 92 per cent toward completion, the Kentucky 90 per cent and the Illinois 68 per cent. The Alabama is 88 per cent finished and the new Maine 9 per cent. The Wisconsin stands at 73 per cent, the Ohio at 17 per cent and sheathed cruiser Albany, which is being built in England, at 80 per cent. The monitors are set down at from 9 to 12 per cent and the torpedo boats vary from 97 per cent, in the case of the Dahlgren, to almost no per cent. The training ship Chesapeake is placed at 98 per cent and the submarine boat Plunger at 85 per cent.

Except among naval men who have been watching the progress of this new navy with great interest, there are few persons who realize that there are forty-eight warships now under construction for the United States, for which the aggregate cost for hull and machinery alone is not less than \$33,336,600. When equipped and ready for service these vessels will represent an expenditure of not less and probably much more than \$50,000,000. Eight of these new vessels are first-class battleships, fully as good as any afloat in any navy in the world; sixteen are torpedo boat destroyers, with an average speed of twenty-nine knots; eighteen are torpedo boats; one is a sister cruiser to the New Orleans, and four are heavy harbor defense monitors.

The greatest indications of the advancement that has been made in the construction of fighting ships may be seen in the Maine, the Ohio and the Missouri. In these remarkably fine vessels the constructors will take advantage of the experience obtained during the late war and some of the good features that have heretofore been restricted to foreign warships will be embodied in them. These ad-

vancements will be shown in the speed and armament of the vessels. The one defect that may be found with the vessels that are about ready

for service is their low rate of speed. There are war vessels building for foreign powers that will show eighteen or more knots, whereas our new vessels

cannot exceed sixteen knots. In the Maine and her sister ships, however, that defect will be obviated and they too will be able to steam at the rate of

eighteen knots. To accomplish this it has been necessary to give them an increased length of twenty feet, in order to make room for the more powerful

machinery required. The other innovation, which practically doubles her value as a fighting ship, is the introduction of smokeless

All Now in Course of Construction

powder and other improvements in rapid-firing ordnance. The 12-inch guns that will be used will be of great length and will show the high velocity at the muzzle of 3000 feet per second, the same velocity being called for in the 6-inch rapid-fire guns. The muzzle energy of the 12-inch gun will be 48,000 foot-tons, as against 25,385 foot-tons for the 12-inch guns of the Iowa and 23,627 foot-tons for the 13-inch guns of the Alabama. The 6-inch guns will have about 6000 foot-tons energy, as against 3294 foot-tons for the old slow-fire 6-inch weapon. This, as may readily be seen, represents an increase in energy of nearly 10 per cent.

Another noticeable fact about this vast work of construction is its distribution, for this illustrates the great change that has recently occurred in the shipbuilding industry. At the organization of the new navy the first four ships were built by a single firm, but at the present time no less than fourteen American concerns are building ships for the navy of this country.

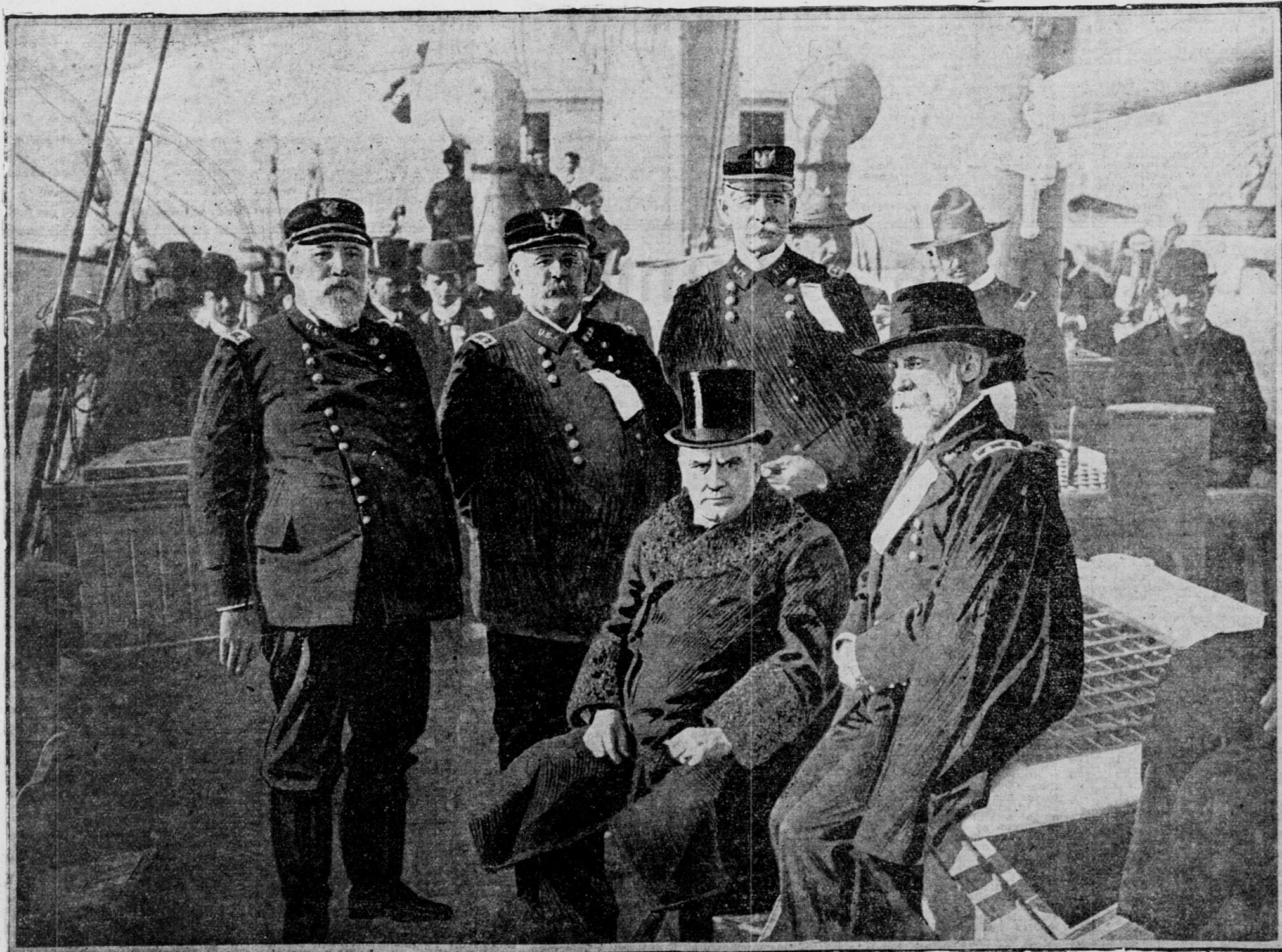
Of all our new vessels the sheathed cruiser Albany is alone of foreign build and this is due to the fact that she was purchased on the stocks from Brazil just prior to the breaking out of the war. At that time it was quite necessary that we should have the Amazonas, to prevent Spain from getting her if for no other reason. Brazil, however, refused to sell one ship without disposing of others at the same time, and the Navy Department agreed to the terms.

The Nietheroy was made a part of the deal and she became the useful Buffalo, fully worth every dollar of the \$75,000 that was paid for her. The Amazonas, which had just been completed, cost us \$1,429,215, but as the New Orleans she was of great value, being the only American warship provided with smokeless powder for all batteries.

Her sister ship, the Almirante Albu, now known as the Albany, was then nothing more than a few ribs at New-castle-on-Tyne, but we took the contract for her construction out of the hands of the Brazilian Government, cheerfully paying the \$250,000 to boot, and there is no reason to believe that the craft, which was recently launched, will ever make us regret our bargain.

With these forty-eight vessels and the dozen or so more that are soon to be contracted for, the United States will have become a power upon the seas instead of being relegated to the secondary position that she has occupied for so long. With the present naval programme completed we shall be close behind Russia in total displacement and fighting efficiency, and will have jumped ahead of Germany, notwithstanding the activity in maritime affairs recently developed by the Kaiser, who in one year has doubled the personnel of his service, raising the number of officers and men from 12,000 to 25,000.

When the fact is considered that it was but a few years ago that this country was actually inferior to China in its strength on the seas, the wonderful progress that we have made can be better appreciated, and the fact that our navy is so new means that it is practically quite up to date, and this alone is a great advantage in time of conflict. There is no reason, therefore, why we should not feel encouraged to believe that with our great sea-fighting service of men and ships we would be able to hold our own with any power in the world.



Just after the close of the Peace Jubilee at Atlanta last winter President McKinley and his party, consisting of Major Generals Wheeler, Shafter, Keefer and Lawton, left for Savannah. The entire route was ablaze with national colors and they arrived amid the roar of cannon, while the air of "Dixie" was as frequent as that of "Yankee Doodle." It was one of the most enthusiastic receptions that the President received on his Southern trip, and among other enjoyable features of Savannah's entertainment was the tugboat ride. Tremendous crowds lined the wharf as far as eye could reach, and to please the committee of entertainment the distinguished guests posed for this photograph, published exclusively in the Sunday Call.