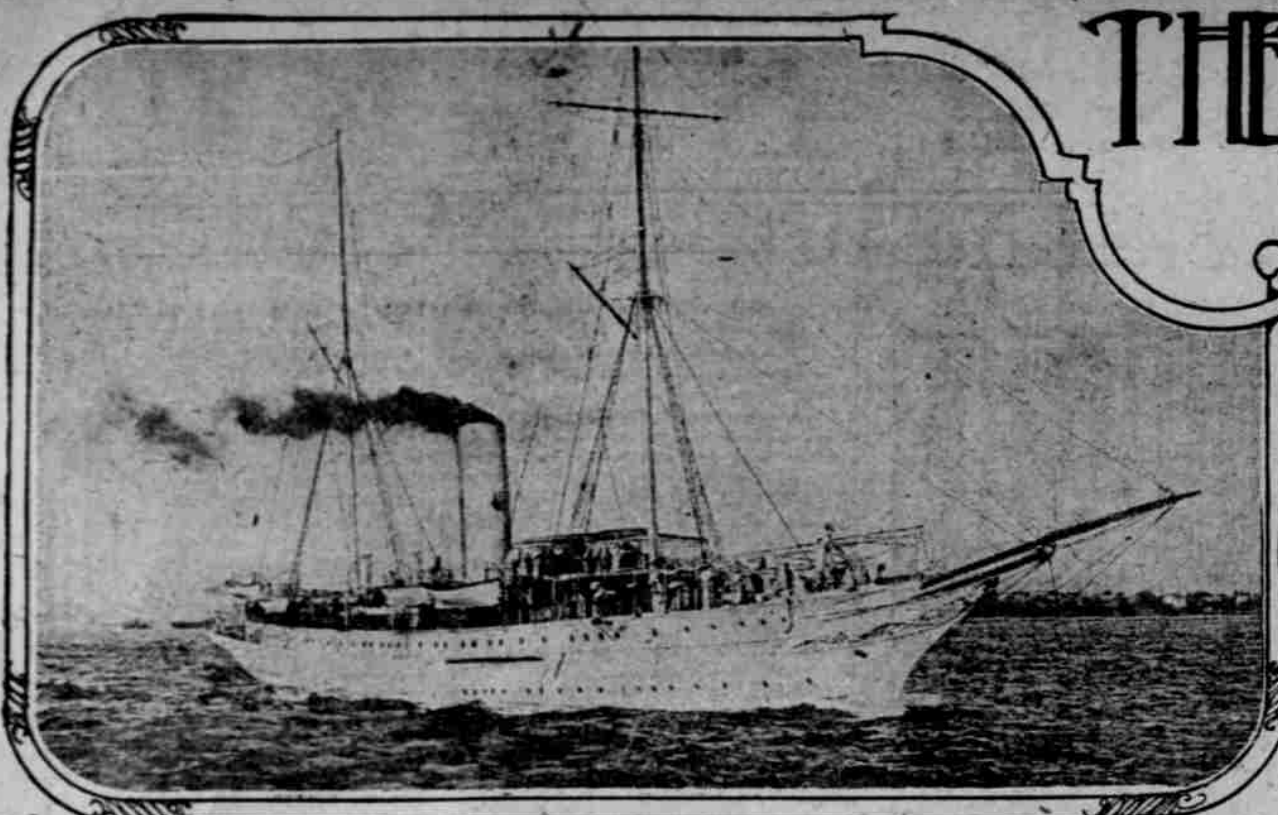


THE PRESIDENT AS A WAR LORD

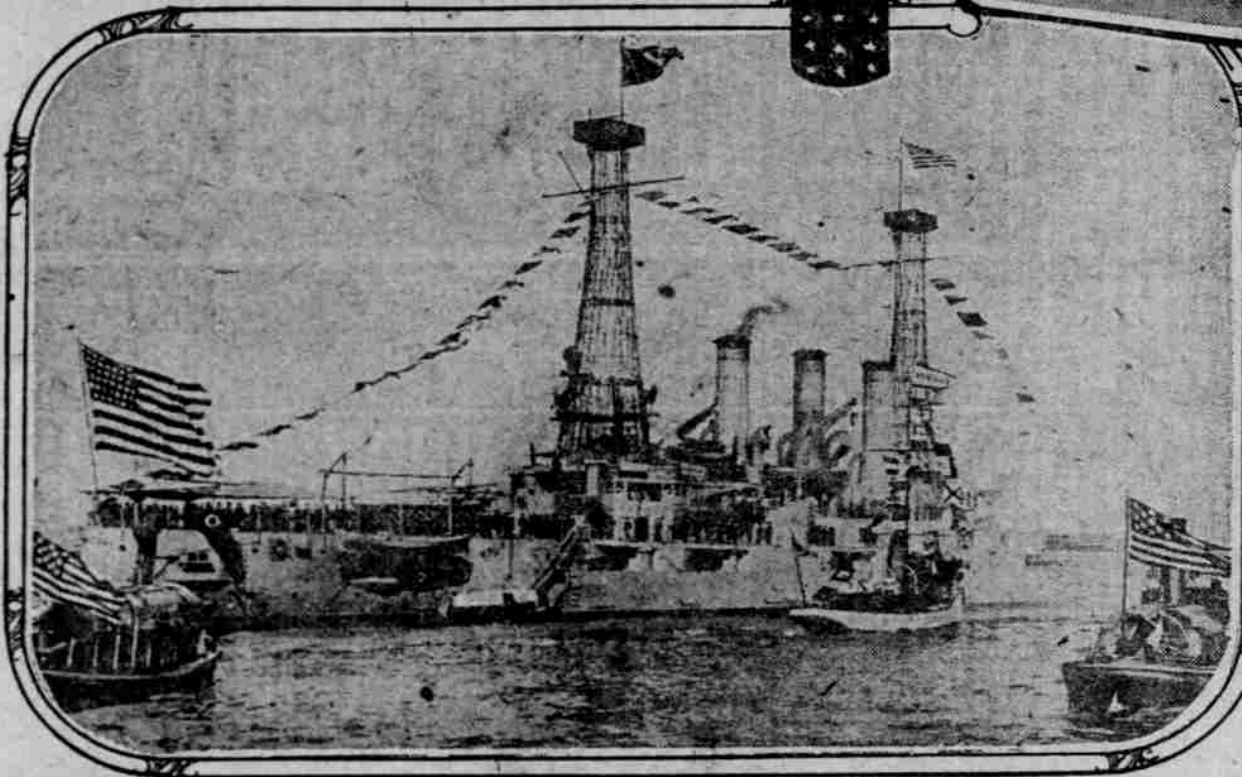
Mr. Wilson's Power Would Be Absolute If Peace Should End.



President's Armored Yacht, Mayflower.



President's Standard.



Presidential Inspection of a Battleship.



Business Annex of the White House. From the Bow Window the President's Office Looks Out.

BY HENA BACH.

CONGRESS alone, under the Constitution, has the power to declare war. But the President can make war any time he pleases.

President Wilson could start a fight between this country and Germany tomorrow if he chose. And, when once war was begun, the powers he could wield would be well-nigh absolute. It is doubtful if the authority of the German Emperor is more all-compelling than his would be, so long as hostilities endured.

Mr. Wilson is the Commander-in-Chief of all the forces of the United States, both on land and sea. He is the Rear Admiral of the Navy; George Dewey, who holds that title, must take his orders from the President. He is also the General of the Army—the only military officer who has a right to wear four stars on his epaulettes, if he chose to do so.

When, early in the year 1898, a war with Spain was imminent, Congress made an emergency appropriation of \$50,000,000. Not only that; it placed this enormous sum of money in Mr. McKinley's hands, to spend exactly as he might happen to see fit. It was not even required of him that he should make any accounting for the cash.

The reason for this extraordinary step lay in the fact that the country had made no preparations for war. Nearly everything had to be improvised with utmost possible haste. There was no leisure for discussion or

deliberation as to what should be done; prompt action was an inexorable necessity.

Today the situation is pretty much the same. But there is this difference, that the conflict which has not yet ceased to threaten is with a first-class power, and not with a weakling antagonist. It is not \$50,000,000, but at least ten times that sum, that might be required for immediate and exigent purposes. Congress would have to provide it in a hurry, and Mr. Wilson would control its expenditure.

Further requirements of money would soon run up into the billions. Contracts would have to be made without an hour's unnecessary delay for thousands of field guns, howitzers and machine guns, millions of shrapnel and other shells, immense quantities of smokeless powder and high explosives, and other war munitions by wholesale. Flying machines in flocks would be ordered; and, for the Navy, a variety of emergency demands would have to be met.

Congress could not attend to such matters; all it could do would be to furnish the money. The President would spend it as he thought best—taking advantage, of course, of such expert advice as he could obtain from the War and Navy Departments. Every dollar of it would be paid out in the shape of warrants on the Treasury, signed by Mr. Wilson himself.

Congress would have nothing to do with managing the war; Mr. Wilson

would attend to that. Seated at his office desk in the business annex of the Whitehouse—a semi-detached building of one story, 100 feet square, and painted white—he would direct all the movements of our military and naval forces, as well as a multitude of other matters, including the purchase of munitions and other supplies.

The routine business, necessarily, would be assigned to subordinates, but the responsible authority in all affairs relating to naval and military operations would be the President. He would have no time to attend to anything else; all civil matters would be of necessity referred to the Executive Department—barring, of course, the occasional item of extraordinary importance that might compel his personal attention.

For one thing, he would be called upon to appoint thousands of civilians as officers in the huge volunteer army that would have to be raised. The War Department would be expected to pick

them out, largely from the militia of the states, but the President would have to sign their commissions. All manner of social and political influence would be exerted to obtain such commissions (as was the case during the war with Spain), and this in itself would be a cause of infinite annoyance.

The President could himself take the field as Generalissimo, if he chose. But it is not to be imagined that Mr. Wilson would be guilty of any such absurdity. James Madison attempted it, when British troops were approaching Washington, and the fiasco he made of it marks one of the most inglorious incidents in the history of our country.

It will be remembered that, a few hours later, he hid in the woods of Virginia to escape capture by the enemy. Methods of telegraphic and other communication have been so far perfected within recent years that the management of a war from the White House is rendered comparatively easy. Thus, during the conflict with Spain, the President had all the fighting machinery, both on land and afloat, under his direct control. From his office desk he could move armies and fleets, as on

a chessboard, with the help of maps and the electric spark.

Means for gathering information and dispatching orders are now available which during the Spanish War were not at the President's command—most importantly, the aerial telegraph, called "wireless." From the windows of his office Mr. Wilson can see the tall towers of the great naval plant across the Potomac, from which messages can be sent to England or France, to San Francisco and to the Isthmus of Panama. Through this agency he can communicate directly with any of our warships at sea.

The wireless system controlled by the Government, indeed, may be said to cover all of the United States. All along our coasts its stations are scattered at intervals not exceeding 200 miles. Every American warship, of course, has its "wireless." The Army has its installations of the kind at every post and seacoast fort. And all of these lines of communication center at the White House in Washington.

If there should be a fight, the center of all our military and naval activities would be represented (as during the

conflict with Spain) by a "war room" in the business annex of the White House. In this room there would be telegraphers, many maps and boards on the walls, with a multitude of pairs of different colors showing the disposition of troops. Mr. Wilson would have frequent occasion to survey these maps and boards while formulating his war plans.

During the Spanish War there was in the War Department, on the second floor, a completely equipped telegraphic central station, with 17 operators. The instruments, handled by men chosen for their expertness, were of a peculiar pattern, so that nobody might overhear the messages transmitted. A conduit was at that time constructed to carry wires from this station beneath the intervening street to the war room of the White House.

If there should be war with Germany, cipher experts picked for their exceptional skill would be employed in the Navy and War departments to convert all messages into the secret language used by the Government. There are, in fact, two such languages, one for the Army and the other for the Navy. Each commanding General in the field would have his "code book," with which to translate orders conveyed to him, and likewise each captain of a warship. The code book carried by a fighting craft is kept in a copper box, and, in case of her capture or destruction, the last thing to be done is to throw it overboard, lest it fall into the enemy's hands.

If Mr. Wilson were to choose to act the part of generalissimo in the field, he would doubtless wear a uniform. The German Emperor appears in such a capacity, and as everybody knows, his military costumes are as varied as they are picturesque. On the other hand, no dress has even been prescribed for the President of the United States, in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the forces. He is lawfully entitled to design a uniform to suit his own taste.

Suppose that he wanted to appear in

regimentals. In all likelihood he would wear on each shoulder four silver stars, with the coat of arms of the United States. Such would be the insignia of a full General in our Army. If such a rank existed. The Admiral of the Navy wears four silver stars, two of them superposed upon "foul anchors" of gold; but the President, as head of the Navy, would be likely to substitute the National coat of arms for the anchors. In either case the uniform would be dark blue, with a cocked hat and considerably more gold braid than is allowed for anybody else.

The President, as everybody knows, has his own distinctive flag, even in time of peace—though he uses it only when on the water. Over the White House the Stars and Stripes float, as a sign that he is in residence there; at other times it is hauled down. His sea flag is of blue bunting, bearing the coat of arms of the Union, the chief feature of which is an eagle. It is 14 feet long and 10½ feet wide.

Such is the description of the insignia hoisted at the masthead of the President's personal and private warship when he goes voyaging. It is a real warship of 2000 tons, and carries a fairly formidable armament of rapid-fire and machine guns. Originally a yacht, owned by Mrs. Ogden Goelet, of New York, it is called the Mayflower, and cost \$800,000 to build. It was purchased by the Government when the Spanish war broke out, and four years later was refitted at an expense of \$500,000.

The Mayflower today is one of the most luxuriously appointed vessels afloat. The President's suite occupies the main deck aft, and comprises six staterooms, a dining-room, a reception-room, a library and two baths—the bathroom adjoining Mr. Wilson's bedroom having a tub cut from a solid block of fine marble, big enough to splash around in, with fittings heavily plated with silver. The dining-room, decorated in white and gold, extends the width of the ship, and the passage connecting it with the reception-room is paneled with valenciennes lace painted over with silver to give the effect of metal. The walls of the staterooms are covered with flowered silk, and the library is finished in Flemish

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Sketches From Life, by Temple.



His Check



Its The Way Ma Does Me.



The Interpreter