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BATTLESHIP DESIGN.

From the particulars which "Engineering" supplies in regard to two new war vessels for which England has just let contracts, it is evident that the battleship is not going out of fashion at present. The first naval power of the world sees no reason to abandon it, although it looks as though she had discovered a way to improve it. The evolution of that type of craft is apparently still in progress, says the New York Tribune.

The next preceding group of British battleships, to which the King Edward VII belongs, has a displacement of 16,500 tons and engines developing 18,000 horsepower. The latter are expected to develop a speed of eighteen and one-half knots. It is probable that the ships of the new class, named after Lord Nelson, will be a little slower, because their engines will be required to generate only 16,750 horsepower, and their hulls will be shorter and broader. Several feet are taken from the length and eighteen inches have been added to the beam. The net result of this and other changes is to make the new battleships a trifle lighter than the King Edward VII, their displacement being 16,350 tons, but there is said to be a marked saving in cost and a distinct gain in fighting capacity.

It is in their armament that the two classes differ most. In each there are four 12-inch breechloaders in barbets, two being mounted forward and two aft. A few years ago the next smaller pieces were 6-inch rifles. The substitution of larger guns by Great Britain was begun under the administration of Sir William White. He put into the King Edward VII four having a calibre of 9.2 inches, and supplemented them with ten 6-inch rifles. His successor, Philip Watts, goes a step further. In the battleships of the Lord Nelson class the 6-inch guns are discarded altogether, and those vessels will each mount ten of the larger size. The muzzle energy of one of the latter guns is about 19,500 foot tons, whereas that of the 6-inch rifle is only 6240 foot tons. The projectiles which they discharge weigh respectively 380 and 100 pounds. However, there is less metal in the new secondary battery than in the old, yet an increase of at least 33 per cent has been secured in power, because, owing to the greater hardness of the armor plate now in service, it is coming to be believed that the 6-inch rifle is practically useless!

The United States was one of the first nations to act on that theory. In both of the quintets of which the Connecticut and the Virginia are types there will be no less than eight 8-inch guns, and in the former class a dozen 7-inch rifles will form a part of the secondary battery. The Virginia and her sisters will retain the old sizes. The new battleships of this country will unquestionably prove formidable fighters, but when an American compares them with those of the Lord Nelson class he will see that England has worked out the principle a little more fully. What the effect of this example will be on the men who design the warships of the United States it is impossible to say, but it is possible that they will not ignore it. The precedent will certainly help the movement for vessels carrying no less than ten 12-inch guns, with a secondary battery composed of threes—a proposition which receives commendation from a "retired chief engineer" in the latest "Casier's Magazine."

Some innovations have also been made by Mr. Watts in the armor of the ships which he has designed. Their more vital parts will be protected with plate 12 inches thick. This weight is without precedent since the latest process of carburizing came into vogue. However, in order to avoid abnormally burdening these vessels he thins out the armor elsewhere. Whether this new distribution will prove more effective than the old is a question which experts will consider carefully. It cannot be determined until further details are received. The chances, however, like the originality displayed by Sir Edward Reed in the Argentine battleships bought by Great Britain a few months ago, suggest the possibility that perfection may not yet have been attained on either side of the Atlantic.

PROPOSED PEACE CONFERENCE.

It is a misnomer to call Secretary Hay's note an "invitation" to a peace conference. It distinctly

states that those American representatives abroad to whom it is addressed are merely directed by the president to bring the matter of calling another peace conference to the attention of the minister of foreign affairs of the government to which each is respectively accredited and "in discreet conference with him, to ascertain to what extent that government is disposed to act in the matter." In other words, these representatives are to "sound" the powers that took part in The Hague conference of 1899, says the New York Commercial.

The desirability of a further agreement between the great nations for the maintenance of the world's peace and the settlement of international disputes by arbitration is not for a moment open to question. But with Japan and Russia now engaged in trying to settle a quarrel by the "arbitration of the sword," and with Great Britain and Russia only recently involved in a controversy that led them almost to the brink of war, it is highly improbable that Secretary Hay's note will meet with an immediate and favorable response at this time—at least from the powers that participated in the first Hague conference. To render another peace conference a success it is essential that all of the great powers should be in a pacific frame of mind, ready to conciliate and to be conciliated, to give and to take; but, with two of these powers now engaged in a life-and-death struggle, with the possibility that other great powers may become involved before peace is finally declared, it is apparently futile to hope for any practical good from a second peace conference until the animosities aroused by the present war in the far east shall have had a chance to cool and other nations no longer have to fear that they may be dragged into that conflict.

The cause of international peace, however, would not be likely to suffer by the deferment of the proposed conference until conditions are more favorable to its success. Civilized sentiment in favor of that cause is steadily growing and probably nothing is contributing more powerfully to its growth than the very horror and stupendous waste of human life and treasure that attend the present Russo-Japanese conflict. Evidence of the increase in this sentiment has just been furnished by the action of Great Britain and Russia in agreeing to the appointment of an international commission to ascertain the facts in the North sea incident; and the example thus set is certain to make strongly for peace among the nations in the future.

Secretary Hay's letter, however, will have the effect of proclaiming to the world that this republic is the friend of universal peace and that whenever conditions shall be ripe for further concerted efforts in the direction of that object, the United States can be counted on to join unreservedly in the movement.

THE TREASURY SITUATION.

About the only encouraging feature of the treasury statement for the month of October is the increase of \$1,400,000 in customs receipts as compared with October of last year. This increase is apparently a reflection of improved business conditions—for when business falls off the fact is almost invariably manifest in a decline in the volume of dutiable im-

The rest of the October statement is not of the same cheering character. It shows that for the first four months of the current fiscal year the government's total receipts amounted to \$187,000,000, a decline of \$2,400,000 as contrasted with the corresponding months of 1903, while the expenditures amounting to \$208,800,000, or \$19,100,000 more than they did in the corresponding period of last year. As a result, the treasury's operations for the present fiscal year up to date reveal a deficit of \$21,800,000 against a small surplus for the four months ended October 31, 1903. The treasury deficit is now about \$4,000,000 larger than it was a month ago.

The government's available cash balance now in the treasury or in national bank depositories aggregates \$146,850,000. This is a loss of substantially \$23,000,000 since the beginning of the new fiscal year or nearly \$5,000,000 since September 30. The available cash in the treasury itself is now about \$42,000,000 or practically \$8,000,000 less than the minimum amount of free cash that treasury officials have heretofore deemed it desirable to be kept on hand.

If business conditions continue to improve as they have of late, it is altogether probable that the government receipts will increase also. It will require a decided increase in these receipts, however, or a material falling off in expenditures, to keep the treasury deficit for the current fiscal year down to \$23,000,000, the amount predicted last winter by Secretary Shaw.

In case the government's expenditures go on outstripping its income, it may happen that congress, even though it be republican, will be compelled to overhaul the existing tariff in order to make federal ends meet—for the government would simply be face to face again with "a condition, not a theory."

Russia should keep out of Spanish waters. It would be a shame to draw Spain into another naval controversy.

P. A. Stokes

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Notice.

Notice is hereby given that the registration books of the city of Astoria for the election to be held in this city on Wednesday, the 14th day of December, 1904, will be opened at the auditor's office in the A. O. U. W. building on Tuesday, the 8th day of November, and will close on Saturday, the 10th day of December, 1904, at 4 o'clock p. m. All persons must register in order to be entitled to vote.
OLOF ANDERSON,
Auditor and Police Judge of Astoria, Oregon.
Dated October 28, 1904.

Notice

As I am leaving Astoria I have left all my negatives and views on hand with Henry Wedekin, 529 Bond street. Pictures ordered and not delivered can be obtained from Mr. Wedekin, who will also fill orders for any pictures desired.

The lot contains many proof pictures at ridiculously low prices. I take pleasure in commending Mr. Wedekin as a good photographer and as a gentleman.

Thanking my patrons for past favors I am, respectfully,
T. E. Peiser.

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