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TUESDAY - FEBRUARY 1, 1898

IS THE UNITED STATES DEFENSELESS?

Apparently in some quarters there is a notion that that the United States would be an easy prey for any great European nation in case of war. The New York Times, in referring to the Hawaiian annexation question, remarks that "it is true there has been and is now, nothing to prevent any strong naval power from taking possession of our chief seaports, and holding them to ransom, but that would partake too much of the nature of piracy to be in accordance with the spirit of the age." Then it adds that "Germany might be moved to such an enterprise, being, although in most respects a modern country, ruled by a mediæval monarch."

Now let us see how this statement looks when tested by facts. The United States has more battleships of the first class, more protected and partially protected cruisers and more gunboats than Germany, with a far greater number of guns. Germany has more battleships of the second and third classes and more torpedo boats than the United States. This is how the two countries stood relatively to each other at the end of 1897. In the aggregate, counting in the old style and unseaworthy ships and naval reserves, Germany has more vessels, guns and men than the United States.

In the number of modern fighting vessels, with their armament and men, the United States is ahead of Germany. This would give the United States an advantage over Germany at the start in a war on the ocean, which is the only place that a war between the two countries could occur. The advantage, of course, would be immensely increased if Germany were rash enough to attempt what the Times thinks she could easily do, to capture any of our seaports. Moreover, the advantage would increase with the length of the war, owing to the great superiority of the United States over Germany in wealth, inventive skill and facilities for creating, buying and manning a new navy.

Germany stands fifth among the nations of Europe in strength and efficiency of navy, England, France, Russia and Italy, in this order, being ahead of her. The only nation in the world which would have any chance to take "possession of our chief seaports" is England, and it is exceedingly unlikely that England could do it. It is entirely certain that if England could capture New York or Boston by a sudden dash she would be driven out in a few days.

In number and strength of vessels and in the quality of her seamen England is almost as far superior to Germany as Germany is to Hayti. Only one people in the world have ever shown themselves the superior or the equal of the British as fighters on the water, and these were the people who defeated her in many battles on the ocean and on the lakes in the wars of 1775-81 and 1812-15. In a war with the United States the "mediæval monarch's" vessels would take especial care to steer clear of American waters.

The United States needs a larger navy and more coast forts and men to man them than it has, and it ought to get them at the earliest possible moment, but it is not quite so defenseless in its present estate as some ignorant writers suppose.

England is making great prepara-

tions to hold her supremacy upon the seas. She has 117 war vessels now in course of construction. Fifteen are battleships, twelve first-class cruisers, nine second-class cruisers ten third-class cruisers, six twin-screw gunboats, fifty-six torpedo boats, eight light draft gunboats, and one royal yacht. Many of these are nearly completed.

An emotional Madrid editor says he can almost admire Speaker Reed in spite of the fact that he is a Yankee. That editor is doomed to be surprised when the Republicans of the house are ready to move in Cuban matters.

In a recent letter from Washington, D. C., to an old friend, Major, G. A. Studer, for twenty years United States Consul at Singapore, says: "While at Des Moines I became acquainted with a liniment known as Chamberlain's Pain Balm, which I found excellent against rheumatism as well as against soreness of the throat and chest giving me much easier breathing. I had a touch of pneumonia early this week, and two applications freely applied to the throat and chest relieved me of it at once. I would not be without it for anything." For sale by Blakeley & Houghton.

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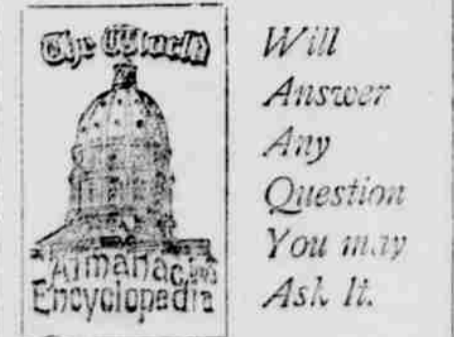
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Taken Up.

Came to my place on 3-Mile, about the 25th of November, a straw-bay roan mare, branded V P connected on the left shoulder, about 5 years old. Owner can have same by paying charges.

M. S. EVANS, The Dalles, Or. dec-22-1m