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WORLD CRUISE OF OUR BATTLE-SHIPS

A Significant History-Making Movement by the United States.

Pacific Ocean Saved to America by Robust Policy of Republican Party.

The present world cruise of American warships is one of the most interesting, important and far reaching performances of any administration since the Civil War. History rides upon the prow of the flagships of this fleet. Eighty-five millions of people have for months been attempting to interpret the movement and solve the problem our government is attempting to properly adjust by this circumnavigation of the globe. When President Roosevelt first announced that the fleet of battle-ships was to make the long journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, the Democrats turned prophets of evil and predicted many disastrous things would follow as a consequence of this unprecedented move.

Armada and World Cruise.
The armada took its departure from Hampton Roads, Dec. 16, 1907, and after a wholly successful voyage around the Horn, of about twelve thousand miles, it dropped anchor in San Francisco Harbor May 6, 1908. The ships that form the four divisions of the fleet in this record-making cruise are: The Connecticut, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, Georgia, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Virginia, Alabama, Illinois, Kearsarge, Kentucky, Ohio, Minnesota, Kansas and Vermont. To which were added the Nebraska and the Wisconsin, already in Puget Sound, thus making a fleet of eighteen first-class modern battleships in perfect condition.

There were already in the Pacific and Oriental waters the fine armored cruisers West Virginia, Colorado, Maryland and Pennsylvania. Their two sister ships, the California and South Dakota, were also on the Pacific, and the powerful Washington and Tennessee went from the Atlantic to join the armada, thus making eight armored cruisers to be added to the eighteen battleships. In addition there were in the Pacific several protected cruisers, gunboats and other lesser craft. All told there were ten hundred and fifty officers and nineteen thousand five hundred men.

In due time the main fleet of warships resumed its western course and will touch at the leading ports of China and Australia, passing on east by way of the west, and coming finally to Malta and Gibraltar, where it will coal and ultimately return to its starting point at Hampton Roads, some time early next February.

In this expedition the Republican party has a policy which projects itself far into the future, but it is an entire misunderstanding of the whole scheme to suppose that it is aimed narrowly or definitely at any single power. It is one of those robust constructive policies of the party gauged on world lines. It is more of a notification than a threat, to all existing governments.

Welcoming North and South America.

The eyes of the world have followed our fleet with absorbing interest. One of the great advantages gained by this cruise is the cordial welcome and close acquaintance which it has evoked from the governments and peoples of the chief republics of Latin America. To the Brazilians, the Argentines, the Chileans and the Peruvians, the mighty republic of the north had been merely a name or a dim figure, powerful and honored perhaps, but not actually known. For years there had been little or no visible evidence of the wealth, or authority of the United States, in the chief South American ports. But they were all visited by swift and stately liners, flying the flags of the maritime powers of Europe.

At every South American port the fleet, our navy, our government, our institutions, our people, our aims, our industries, our trade—every conceivable thing that is ours, have been discussed as they never were before, and that without suspicion of our political and diplomatic intentions. One business house in New York states that its South American correspondence has increased fourfold since the fleet visited Rio Janeiro. In this case it seems that trade may follow the battleships.

President Roosevelt Explains Movement.

In a statement in a speech he made in St. Louis, President Roosevelt took the public into his confidence to a degree when he said: "California, Oregon and Washington have a coast line which is our coast line just as emphatically as the coast line of New York and Maine, of Louisiana and Texas. Our fleet is going to its own home waters in the Pacific and after a stay there it will return to its own home waters in the Atlantic. The best place for the naval officer to learn his duties is at sea, by performing them, and only by actually putting through a voyage of this nature, a voyage longer than any one before undertaken by as large a fleet of any nation, can we find out just exactly what is necessary for us to know as to our naval needs and practice our officers and enlisted men in the highest duties of their profession."

Awakening of the Orient.

The Pacific Ocean is recognized by all far seeing statesmen as the theater of the world's coming great struggles

for military and commercial mastery. When China awakes, to the degree that Japan is now awake, events passing the power of the imagination to conceive will take place.

As to the palliative and beneficent effect this cruise may have on China and Japan, there can be but one opinion. While Uncle Sam was little concerned about the rumors to the effect that Japan was about to descend upon the Philippines, or possibly to make a demonstration off our Pacific coast, yet he did desire, and perhaps is in a position to insist, that the Open Door policy be maintained in China. Japan has apparently never been quite reconciled to this policy, and is said to have worked to establish in China the policy of "spheres of influence." To this America, with European nations, strenuously objected—and does still object. This Open Door policy stands as a world monument in diplomacy to the constructive genius of the Republican party. William Howard Taft is in full sympathy with this constructive policy.

Mr. Taft on his last trip to the Orient was given such an enthusiastic reception at Shanghai, China, as was never before accorded to any visiting statesman by officials of the Celestial Kingdom. On that occasion Mr. Taft made a speech which, in spite of its genial tone and cautious phrasing, was at once recognized as of the highest international importance. Said he:

"WE WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTEST AT BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE TRADE OF CHINA BY REASON OF OUR INSISTENCE UPON THE POLICY OF THE OPEN DOOR. The acquiescence in this policy of all the nations interested has been so unhesitating and emphatic that it is hardly worth while to speculate as to how far the United States would go in the protection of its Chinese trade. . . . This feeling is likely to find expression in the action of the American government. The United States and the other powers favor the Open Door, and if they are wise they will encourage the empire to take long steps in administrative and governmental reform."

So we have not far to seek for another very powerful reason for this world cruise of our fleet. Mr. Taft simply announced in diplomatic language that this cruise is intended to say that the Open Door policy will be maintained at any price. He is in thorough sympathy with the alert constructive policy of the Republican party. He is one of its chief exponents.

Perfection of Discipline.

This world cruise of the mighty armada of sixteen ships of the line has been, and is being, conducted with a precision worthy of the fine traditions of American seamanship—which speaks the highest praise. Every man, from officer to common sailor, has felt that the eyes of the nation at home were following him, and that however modest his situation, he must bear himself worthily as an American sailor. In the stoutest squadron that ever flew the Stars and Stripes.

There is no question but that this cruise will be noted by all commentators of the future as one of the most remarkable happenings of any age. Even though the American people have not fully understood the significance, when all the facts are known, it will be found to have been one of the distinctive acts of statesmanship of the present Republican administration. Mr. Taft is the man to continue this history-making policy of the Republican party.

COCKRAN ON TAFT.

There is a remarkable unanimity of opinion of Judge Taft in all parties and in all sections. Men pay tribute to his remarkable ability even where party politics may exert such an influence as to demand the espousing of the rival presidential candidate's cause. As an illustration W. Bourke Cockran in an interview at Boston the other day said:

"Yes, I shall support Bryan; he is the best candidate the Democrats could put up. Taft, however, is the greatest and best qualified nominee ever offered in any republic in the world. He is a greater man than Roosevelt, and when surrounded by the same environments that made Roosevelt great will prove a bigger man. Taft is a wonderful administrator, the greatest the country has ever seen, and is a wonderful worker."

Democratic Inconsistency.

The Democratic leaders have been for years making loud declarations against corporations and trusts and railroads and have, nevertheless, instituted no legislative steps in all this time for the purpose of restraining abuses. They are now indignant that the Republican party, in carrying out the promises of its own platform, is putting into practice the principles which they, with a superb self-complacency, claim are really covered by a Democratic patent.—Hon. Wm. H. Taft, at Greensboro, North Carolina.

Society is Sound.

In spite of the general comfort, there have been made manifest by signs not to be misunderstood, a quickening of the public conscience and a demand for the remedy of abuses, the outgrowth of this prosperity, and for a higher standard of business integrity. Every lover of his country should have a feeling of pride and exaltation in this evidence that our society is still sound at the core.—Hon. Wm. H. Taft, at Columbus, Ohio.

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