

Japan Guesses Wrong

By Winston Churchill

THE Japanese government has refused to contradict the allegation that it is building battleships of over 35,000 tons. In consequence, the British and the United States admiralities have invoked the Escalator Clause, and are free to build capital ships of whatever tonnage and of whatever cannon they may desire. This decision has been taken with pious regrets but with a strong underlying alacrity by the two English-speaking naval powers. They have absolutely nothing to do with each other, but their minds were moving on parallel lines and they both came simultaneously to the conclusion that they should agree to free themselves from their mutually imposed treaty restrictions about the size of battleships.

Some people say, loud and often, that we are launched upon another naval race. Certainly it is not a naval race between our two countries. We have for many years abandoned all rivalry. But there was a foolish epoch in which Americans were trying to cut down British warship building and the British were arguing with the United States delegation about the exact interpretation of "parity." That crazy time is over. Nothing resulted from it except that the two peace-keeping powers nagged each other as far as possible, and the pirate powers took the fullest advantage of their stupidity. Now these follies have been discarded. The only question asked in England about the American Navy is whether it is strong enough; and the United States government has, for some time, ceased to be at all distressed by



any British building, which is evidently warranted by conditions in Europe or in the Pacific Ocean. The two English-speaking peoples are not building against each other but only against "third-party risks."

Much nonsense is talked about a new naval race. With whom is the race to be? There is no race between Great Britain and the United States except a certain feeling that each country should do its part in securing adequate sea power for its own parliamentary democracy. There cannot be any possibility of a naval race with Japan.

I was shown the other day some figures of the consuming power of various countries in steel. The "consuming power of steel" means all that capacity to convert steel, whether home-produced or imported, into instrumentalities of peace or war. The steel-consuming power of Great Britain is in the neighborhood of 16 million tons per annum, that of Japan is between 3 and 4 millions and the steel-consuming power of the United States is 54 millions! From this last of course a great deduction must be made, because a continent has to be supplied with all its requirements. But these figures tend to show the scale of the various "resources," and also how very absurd it is to talk of a naval race between the United States and Japan.

Japan was very fortunate in the Washington Naval Agreement. She was then accorded by both the great sea powers the ratio of five-five-three. This was very much better than she could possibly do for herself in open competition. The Washington Treaty was an enormous concession to Japan. It was, in fact, a promise, on behalf of two very powerful countries, to slow down their

naval construction to limits that gave Japan a chance to walk along with them. When the Japanese government talks about the humiliating status of being an inferior naval power prescribed by the Washington Naval Treaty for their country, they overlook the fact that in no other way but by the strict observance of this treaty could they obtain so satisfactory a basis for their home defense. Yet they are the people who have now quitted the sheltered area that the treaty accorded them, and plunged out upon competition with organisms of vastly more potential strength.

Japan Looks at Democracies

The reason why the Japanese have abandoned the artificial favor and protection of the Washington Treaty is because they believe that neither the British nor the United States has the manhood and national resolve to make the necessary financial and other sacrifices. They admire the mental virility and ruthless airs of Germany and Italy. They thought, quite sincerely, that neither of the English-speaking states would take the trouble and spend the money necessary to outbuild them. They looked upon us as fat, rich, talkative, effete nations, sliding down the slope to Bolshevism and devoid of the moral and mental strength to arm ourselves properly. They were very deeply convinced of this; but perhaps they may be wrong.

It is not altogether surprising that they should have been misled by the prominence of pacifist doctrines in the United States and Britain since the war, and have attributed to them a depth that they did not possess. There is, it must be admitted, a certain air of humbug about the verbiage in which we are accustomed to wrap our decisions. If either the United States or Great Britain wishes to build a warship it begins by setting up a most melancholy howl about the great horrors of war. Then follow fervid protestations about their unquenchable love of peace. After this has gone on for some time they vote the money and start driving the rivets. All the while they keep assuring themselves, and explaining to others, that the vessel

they are building is not really a warship but a peace ship. True, as it develops, it looks like a warship: it has cannons that fire projectiles with high explosives inside them, which to the unregenerate eye might seem capable of doing harm. But the English-speaking peoples know that this would be a mistaken impression. These particular projectiles, if viewed aright, do only good when they burst and their only purpose is to spread as widely as possible peace and good will among men. It is, moreover, an undoubted truth that strong British and American navies are immense guaranties of world peace. The Japanese mind tends to lose itself in this almost metaphysical labyrinth.

Take, for example, the Italian and British defense programs of the present year. Signor Mussolini revels in his warlike strength: the greatest submarine fleet in the world; an air force incomparable for its quality and almost superhuman daring; 9,000,000 soldiers (including the children) all burning to fall upon their foes, held back only by their magnanimity and some shortage of cash and groceries. Whereas in England people go about wagging their heads dolefully: "Is not our position indeed forlorn? We are able this year to spend on our defenses only four times what a country like Italy can: we have got the money, but the contractors simply cannot earn more. Isn't it awful? Give peace in our time, O Lord!" All this is very confusing to the Japanese.

We must make allowance for this and endeavor to explain to them in a gentle and kindly manner that our day is not yet done.

Are we building the right kind of vessels? Are battleships obsolete? Are mammoth ships useless encumbrances, kept in fashion only because admirals all over the world like broad quarter-decks to walk upon? Can they not be easily sunk by a torpedo released from a motor launch, or by a bomb dropped down their funnels by a single airplane? Anyhow, when they are built would not governments and admiralities be afraid to send such enormous, costly structures to sea? Will they not remain penned up, eating their heads off, in their forti-

fied harbors, while the sovereignty of the seas is settled by the small fry? All these questions have been vigorously debated in recent years, and the fact remains that all important naval powers are building, or trying to build, great battleships. Of course, they may all be wrong, but anyhow they will all be wrong together.

How far have the dangers of battleships worsened since the Great War? The size of torpedoes and their bursting charges have largely increased. The effect of underwater explosions must be more formidable. Submarines that fire these larger torpedoes have improved in speed and other qualities. Lastly, there is the air. On the other hand, the methods of hunting down submarines have advanced to a most remarkable degree. There is far more confidence that they can be dealt with today than there was during the World War, although even then they were decisively beaten. Hardly any ships of war were destroyed by submarines. A few old battleships were sunk at anchor during the Dardanelles operations. Three old cruisers patrolling off the Dutch coast were their victims, but I cannot recall any instance of large warships cruising under proper escort of destroyers having suffered damage from a submarine. There is nothing that should lead us to believe that submarines will be a more serious menace to the big ships now than in the World War. On the contrary, everything tends to show they will be less.

The Weakness of Aircraft

During the last two years elaborate arrangements have been made in all modern navies to deal with bombs from aircraft, and to beat off aircraft by gunfire. The two or three square miles above a British or American fleet would be the most dangerous space in the world into which aircraft could venture. They would be exposed to the concentrated fire of hundreds of guns, manned by the highest class of professional artillerymen. Even if a proportion of bombs strike the vessels, these will certainly not be as damaging as the heavy shells they are expected to endure. It is confidently claimed by naval authorities that, however serious air bombing may be to unprotected and unescorted merchantmen, it will not in any serious manner affect the life and power of warships.

If any guidance can be obtained from the Spanish civil war it would seem to show that warships, even isolated, are practically immune from aircraft attack. So far as the larger torpedoes are concerned, and indeed as regards all classes of explosives, far greater resisting power can be obtained in large vessels than in small. The greater the tonnage of the battleship, the greater should be her power to beat off air attack or to endure underwater damage.

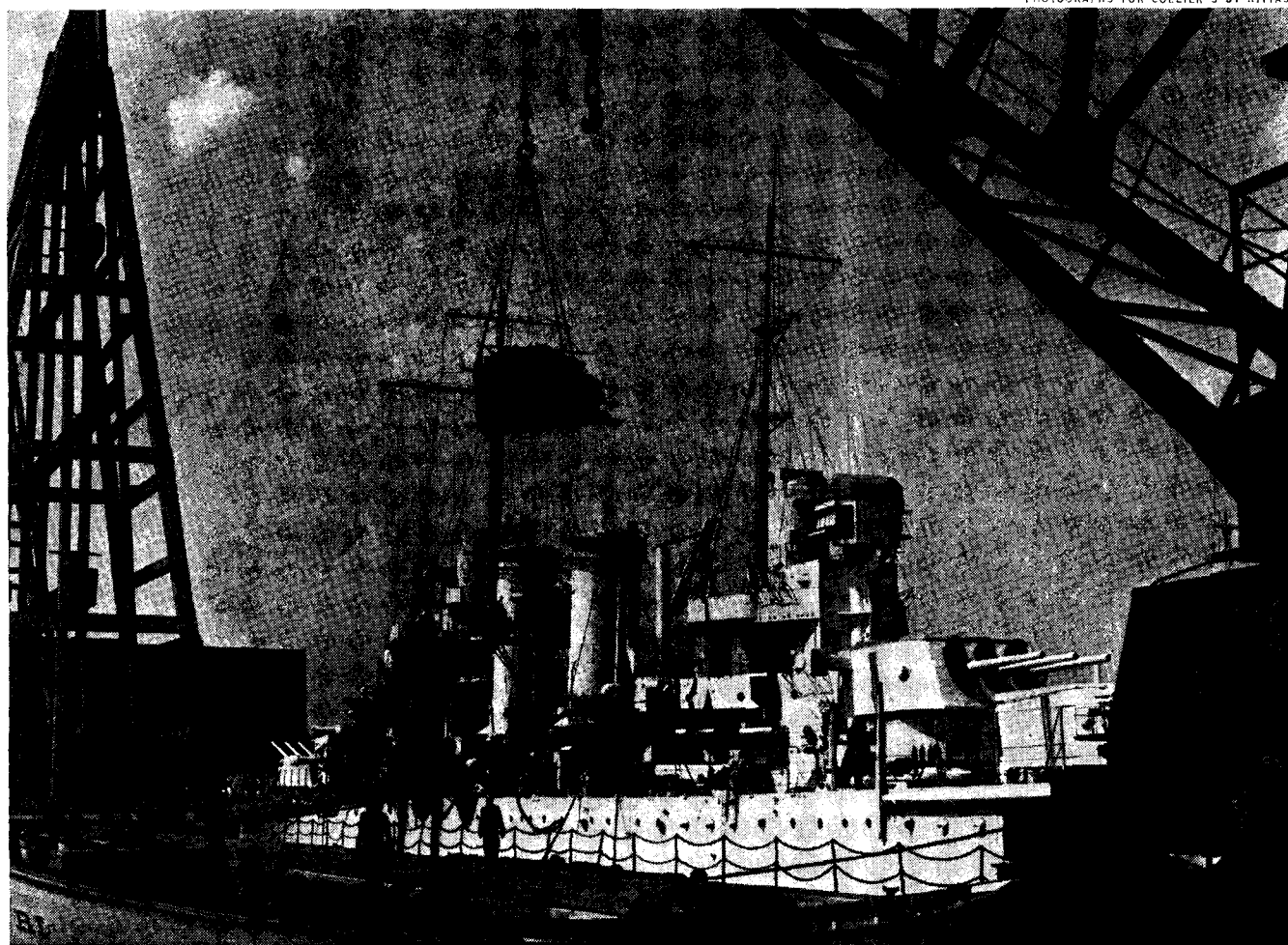
These reasons seem to justify the almost universal opinion of naval authorities in all leading countries.

It may be worth while following up the train of strategic thought that is held to justify these enormous vessels.

When I went to the Admiralty in October, 1911, charged with the duty of preparing the navy against a great approaching peril, I found that the war plan still contemplated a close blockade of the German coasts and river mouths in the North Sea. My expert advisers represented to me that it was time to change this plan and adopt instead a distant blockade. This meant placing the battle fleet at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, hundreds of miles away from the center of German naval power in the Helgoland Bight. It meant apparently exposing the whole length of the British east coast, and consequently opening

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Newest additions to America's sea power are these 10,000-ton cruisers, of which nine are built or building. On the opposite page are two views of the U.S.S. Nashville and, below, the U.S.S. Philadelphia. These ships conform to 5-5-3 naval treaty limitations and cost \$17,000,000 each



The Honor of the Dixie Belle

By Frederick Hazlitt Brennan

ILLUSTRATED BY EARL OLIVER HURST

The Story Thus Far:

BOBBY LACEY'S adventures begin when his mother—wife of the wealthy Robert Emmet Lacey, Sr., of St. Louis, and a distant relative of Mark Twain's—takes another country house, where, surrounded by servants, she can observe the "dear old Mississippi River."

Adventure No. 1 comes when Paw Merrihew, a kindly old riverman, introduces him to the best fishing place for miles about—an old steamboat, the Dixie Belle, in which (by angling through a hole in the boat's bottom) they have wonderful luck getting catfish!

Living on that boat stuck deep in the mud for many years are several interesting persons: "Cap'n Dan," owner of the vessel who is obsessed with the idea that a railroad, the "Q," owes him enormous damages; the pretty Lucy Hough; Mrs. J. E. B. Drumwright, a lady with a "past" and a strongly belligerent attitude toward those she does not like; and Buttinhead Adams, the Negro cook. Like Paw Merrihew, all of them are poverty-stricken; but, possessed of indomitable pride, they hold their heads high.

Mrs. Lacey disapproves of them. Likewise, Mr. Gollomb, Bobby's prissy tutor, who regards them as "simple, elemental folk" utterly devoid of "culture." In time, however, Mr. Gollomb succumbs to Lucy's charms and intimates to her that he may, possibly, make her his wife, someday. In love with Adrian Reed, a young towboat man, Lucy adopts a policy of watchful waiting, in the hope that Adrian, jealous of Mr. Gollomb, will come across with a proposal.

While Mr. Reed considers the situation, Mrs. Lacey has a housewarming week-end party. Shortly before her guests arrive, her servants desert, in a body. Whereupon, the good folk on the Dixie Belle come to the rescue and save the day by taking the vacant posts. (Subsequent events, featured by Buttinhead's butting, prove exciting; but the week end begins auspiciously.)

Under the impetus of a sudden inspiration, Mrs. Lacey rents the Dixie Belle from Cap'n Dan, and prepares to throw a party in the old wreck. Hiring a corps of decorators, she presently has the boat resembling (to use Paw Merrihew's words) a "circus merry-go-round." Paw is shocked, indignant; and so is Bobby. For that swell fishing hole (in the boat's grand saloon) has been boarded up and transformed into an orchestra stand!

"Kafaoey on the whole world," Bobby thinks sadly. "I hope nothing but trouble happens!" And trouble does "happen"—with a bang!

III

MY MOTHER said I could go to the party only to look on until nine o'clock. At first I thought I would be like Paw and not go near the place but then I thought maybe I should go and try to keep them from ruining the Dixie Belle worse. My mother's guests acted up exactly as I knew they would. They were all giggly and silly from drinking so much at our house and when they got to the Dixie Belle they were in no condition to go aboard a decent steamboat. They started making fun of the Dixie Belle, not seeing her keen, swift lines but all plastered up with my mother's decorations.

Mr. Higbee, the big tank that is always acting up funny, said: "There never was no sech boat as dis, honey." And Ruthie Malcolmsen that is a disgrace to society, even my mother says, acted up cute and wisecracked: "It's just a garbage scow drawn by pink elephants." And all of them razzed the Dixie Belle, criticizing where the promenade deck rail was kind of rickety and because a small rat not belonging to the Dixie Belle but just attracted by the lights ran across the floor. In my sober judgment they deserved just what happened after I went home.

Lucy came into my room to tell me about it, first thing the next morning. She did not have her maid's uniform on. She was dressed with her hat and sweater on and she had been crying.

"Your mother will not talk to any of



Adrian heard Mr. Taney tell the dirty story in Lucy's presence. So Adrian said Mr. Taney would have to apologize. He wouldn't and Adrian knocked him flat