

## THE UNITED STATES UNPREPARED FOR WAR

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FOR some time past, the technical heads of our army and navy have been trying to impress upon Congress and the public at large the utter lack of preparedness of the United States for war, and while many startling facts concerning this lamentable state of affairs have been presented to Congress by these experts, the public at large seems to give little credence to, or rather to ignore, the opinions of these military and naval men. Evidently the public feels that there is some sinister motive behind these appeals for increased military and naval protection—perhaps a desire on the part of these men to secure a larger standing army and a greater navy by scaring the public into the belief that we are in imminent danger of attack by a foreign Power, and that through our lack of preparedness reverses must befall us, at least in the initial stages of any armed conflict in which we might be engaged. The American people, as a rule, are prone to boast of the fact that in our past military undertakings we always have been successful and that, with our great national resources, success must inevitably rest upon our banner. This, however, is mere patriotic sentiment. While it is true that in all past military contingencies we have met with ultimate success, with what needless loss of life and treasure this result has been accomplished a close analysis of our past wars alone will show. The War of the Revolution lasted seven years, the War of 1812 three years, the Florida War seven years, the Mexican War two years and the Civil War four years; and it is conceded by military authorities that all of these conflicts would have been less protracted had the United States been prepared to meet the contingency. The needless loss of life, the wasteful expenditure of money consequent upon this lack of preparedness cannot be estimated—it scarcely can be imagined.

The commanding general of an army who, through lack of judgment, or the Government which, by lack of thorough preparation, needlessly sacrifices life and treasure, even though

finally succeeding in the military enterprise undertaken, cannot be said to be a good general or a wise Government.

On January 7, Major-General Leonard Wood, Chief of Staff of the Army, stated before a Congressional Committee that our army was wholly unprepared for war; that our troops were without even sufficient guns and ammunition, and that if they were sent into the field in their present condition, it would be absolute slaughter. The General made the further statement that if we were compelled to go to war at the present time, it would be at least a year before we could manufacture sufficient quantities of the munitions of war to supply our army at its present strength.

On January 28, Admiral Charles E. Vreeland, who is the first ranking officer next to Admiral Dewey, appeared before the House naval committee, and he likewise dwelt upon the unpreparedness of the United States for war from a naval viewpoint. The Admiral explained that in case of war with Japan, the Philippine Islands would be at the mercy of that country, although he believed that we could hold Hawaii and Alaska against attack by any other nation. This latter view, however, is not held by some of our military experts.

In some quarters, exception is taken to the policy of our military and naval experts in "exposing our hand" to foreign Governments by making public such statements, but these officers argue that other Governments are fully aware of these conditions, and that it only is the American people who are in ignorance of the real state of affairs; and they are of the opinion that the actual facts, humiliating as they are, should be laid before the people in order that they may be awakened to the danger of lulling ourselves into the belief that we are invincible.

One phase of this question which for the past few years has been giving our military experts grave concern is the lack of sea transportation to embark our troops in case of hostilities. It is only within the last decade that this question has been seriously considered. Prior to the Spanish-American War, and the subsequent development of the United States into a world Power, with many outlying possessions, the question of our ability or inability to transport over sea an army of any considerable

size was never seriously considered by our military authorities. Geographically isolated from the other important military nations of the world, our impregnability from attack by any European or Asiatic Power was never questioned, and the accepted policy of our Government to refrain from any entangling alliances with foreign nations precluded the thought of our ever having occasion to transport our army over sea. But the acquisition of Hawaii, Guam and the Philippine Islands, the building of the Panama Canal, and our interest in the internal affairs of Latin-America, injected a new factor into the problem of our national defence, i. e., whether in the event of war involving the protection of these possessions or the enforcement of these policies, we could embark an expeditionary force of any considerable size and to any considerable distance within a reasonable time after the opening of hostilities.

In the event of war, that nation which is prepared to and does strike the first blow has a distinct advantage. While the general impression prevails that it is customary for a nation to declare war before entering upon actual hostilities, yet history teaches us that this is the exception and not the rule. In a book dealing with this subject, Lieutenant-Colonel Maurice, of the British Royal Artillery, stated (at the time of its publication in 1883) that out of 117 wars during the past two hundred years, in only ten instances has a formal declaration of war been made. It is well to note also that there is a tacit understanding between nations that, even during a protracted diplomatic dispute which has every prospect of ultimately terminating in a resort to arms for settlement, war-like preparations on the part of one nation may be considered a *casus belli* by the other party, and the latter may take advantage of the fact to strike the quick first blow, so very important in war. Therefore, if preparations for our national defence are to be made at all, with any hope of initial success in the event of war, these preparations must be made during times of absolute peace. To adhere to a policy of waiting until the anticipated enemy has declared war or committed an overt act, before doing all in our power to strengthen our national defence, must undoubtedly lead to disastrous results.

In the matter of these preparations, the United States has

been lamentably lax. While, as stated before, it undoubtedly is true that with our vast national resources and our great wealth, the chances of ultimate success in war are preponderantly in favor of the United States, it also is true that the meeting of reverses during the initial period of war has a direct effect upon the general morale of the military forces and of the nation at large, and may tend to prolong what might have been a short and decisive campaign into a protracted and sanguinary war.

That nation which aspires to the position of a world Power, or has the honor thrust upon it, as may be said of the United States, must, from a strategic point of view, establish permanent naval bases, especially in those parts of the world where its possessions lie and its interests are most important. The question of the establishment and protection of these bases rests primarily with the navy, but inasmuch as the principal asset of the navy is its mobility, it should be free to perform its legitimate function of seeking the enemy's fleet and if possible destroying it. To compel it to remain in passive defence of our insular possessions would deprive it of its most valuable asset and principal function. Therefore, in order that the navy, in the event of war, may have a safe harbor in which to coal, make necessary repairs, or to flee for refuge in case of partial defeat, these bases must be held in absolute possession by our forces, and the army is called upon to aid in the performance of this function.

We have established such bases in the Philippine Islands, Guam, Hawaii, Guantanamo and, for all practical purposes, on the Canal Zone. In the event of a war between the United States and a foreign Power, especially in a war involving the Pacific Ocean as a theatre of operations, the first blow struck by our enemy would undoubtedly be at our insular possessions and naval bases in that ocean. With our comparatively small standing army and the slight prospect of its being increased in the near future, it is practically impossible to station a sufficient number of troops in these possessions to insure their successful defence against a prolonged and formidable attack. Speaking generally, therefore, in the event of war we must accept one of two courses—to attempt at the outbreak of hostilities to reinforce these garrisons quickly, or be content with their loss until we have

secured control of the sea on the Pacific and are able to embark an expeditionary force of sufficient strength to recapture them.

It has been stated above that in the event of war with an Oriental Power, under existing conditions, this nation could do little more than passively to accept defeat in certain quarters while concentrating and mobilizing its military and naval resources. Our military and naval officers agree, generally, that the United States could not hold the Philippines against attack by such a Power, and, as mentioned before, there is a possibility, at least, of our losing the Hawaiian Islands and our naval base in Alaska. It is not to be thought for a moment, however, that our Government would be content to allow possession of these bases to pass permanently out of their hands without a strenuous effort to recapture them. But even if we subsequently secured control of the sea, it would be a difficult if not impossible task to recapture them by naval attack alone, for in modern warfare it is considered impracticable to attempt to capture strong sea-coast defences by sea attack without a simultaneous attack in rear by land forces. The futility of sea attack alone has been demonstrated many times in the past, noticeably in the attack upon the fortifications of Santiago and later in the attack of the Japanese navy upon Port Arthur. In both these cases, the successful attacking in reverse of the sea-coast fortifications by the army, with the use of high-power, long-range guns in the latter case, not only caused the surrender of the forts but resulted in the annihilation of the fleets anchored in the harbors.

In the recapturing of these bases, then, it will be seen that the army will play a most important part. The question naturally arises, Have we sufficient sea transportation to embark an expeditionary force of sufficient size to accomplish this purpose? The casual observer probably will say that if we have not sufficient Government transports for this purpose, we can impress into the service sufficient merchant marine to embark all the troops necessary. But let us see if this is true. The size of this expeditionary force and the amount of transportation necessary for its embarkation would depend upon circumstances and cannot be foreseen, but with very little calculation we may arrive at an

estimate of the number of transports and auxiliary vessels needed by the army, and our present situation in this respect.

Speaking generally, the quantity of transportation which should be available or procurable is that which will permit the United States to put forth its entire strength at any distance and in any direction that circumstances may require. Sufficient ships should be in readiness to transport troops as fast as they can be raised, equipped and made ready for service. No force which is organized and ready to sail should ever be required to wait for ships in which to embark.

The suitability of ships for military purposes relates to their size, arrangement and fittings. The most important principle affecting size is that of unit loading; that is, capacity for carrying on one ship an entire regiment, battalion, battery, and so forth, with all of its supplies and equipment. This is considered indispensable to the best results. While it is not always practicable, in preparing for the transportation of a military expedition over sea, it is well to base our calculations with this idea in view. The principal units to be considered in the preparation of a campaign involving the use of marine transportation are the infantry regiment, the squadron of cavalry, the battery of field artillery, the battalion of engineers, the divisional field hospital, the signal corps company, the ammunition column and the supply column. These units, with their proper multiples, headquarters, etc., comprise what is known as an infantry division, which is the accepted fighting unit of modern warfare. Speaking approximately, such a division would consist of about 20,000 men and 8,400 animals.

To arrive at the amount of sea transportation necessary to embark an over-sea expedition, it is customary to base estimates on the gross tonnage of the vessels, allowing a certain number of tons per man and animal. Basing our estimates on the size and character of the merchant ships which we probably would be able to procure, five gross tons per man and eight gross tons per animal would about suit our needs. These figures would include all impedimenta, with two months' supplies for the army. Upon this basis an infantry division of 20,000 men and 8,400 animals would require sea transportation to the amount of about 167,000 gross tons, preferably in large ships of over 5,000 tons each.

In calculating the size of an expeditionary force which probably would be needed to conduct operations over sea, in the event of a war with an Oriental Power, it is considered a most conservative estimate to say that at least two infantry divisions, or approximately 40,000 troops and 16,800 animals, would be needed in the first instance. In case our outlying bases in the Pacific were still in our possession, these two divisions should be ready to embark immediately, or should these bases have been lost to us, they should be ready to embark immediately upon our gaining control of the sea. In the first instance, then, it will be seen that it would be necessary to have immediately available on the Pacific Coast at least 334,000 gross tons of shipping. On the principle of unit loading, it would require about 100 vessels of the size which would probably be procurable on the Pacific to transport such a force. According to the best available data, there are on that ocean about 50 vessels of United States register suitable for transports which could probably be procured for our use, but what percentage of these vessels would be in our own ports and immediately available is problematical. Even if all should be immediately available for our use, it will be seen from the above figures that we could not hope to move more than one infantry division, or one-half the number of troops necessary. It is true that merchant ships from the Atlantic could and probably would be brought around through the Panama Canal, but it must be remembered that the navy would require a great many merchant vessels for its use as fast cruisers, scouts, and other auxiliary ships, and these would have to be provided for at the very outset, while the navy was fighting for control of the sea. Our regular transport service comprises about 50,000 gross tons, half of which probably would be on the Pacific and would reduce our deficit in sea transportation by that amount; but in figuring on the use of merchant marine engaged in general commercial trade, it is necessary to consider the changes required in refitting the vessels before they would be suitable for use in transporting troops. The changes are mainly involved in the fitting of berths for men and stalls for animals, in the lighting and ventilation, extra water supply and provision storage, and additional messing and sanitary arrangements. It would require considerable



time to complete these changes, and even if the fifty ships available on the Pacific could be procured at once, it would be months before they could be refitted for the transportation of troops.

As an example of our lack of marine transportation facilities, it may not be amiss to state what was accomplished by our military authorities in the transportation of the Santiago expedition of 1898. The Quartermaster's Department chartered every American vessel that could be obtained in the Atlantic ports during the twenty days following the declaration of war and succeeded in obtaining a fleet of 36 vessels, averaging 2,500 gross tons each. The ships had an aggregate capacity of 90,000 gross tons, a little over one-half of the quantity required to embark an infantry division. The expedition was fitted out for a definite voyage of thirty hours to Havana, but circumstances finally determined that the voyage should be one of eight days to Santiago. The ships were poorly fitted, very little land transportation or mounts could be taken, the cooking and sanitary arrangements were crude, of ventilation there was practically none, and it is stated that this fleet of ships could not have embarked, under reasonable over-sea transportation conditions, a force of more than 8,000 to 10,000 men, and even then not without great jeopardy to the welfare of the men and the success of the enterprise. This is no reflection on the Quartermaster's Department of our army. That department performed the suddenly increased and multitudinous duties imposed upon it with its characteristic ability. But it was a physical condition which confronted it. The number of suitable ships which could be immediately obtained was greatly inadequate to our needs, and those vessels which were obtained lacked so many of the prerequisites of a military transport that it was impossible within the short time available to refit them for the proper accommodation of the troops.

In striking contrast to this expedition, it is well to note what Japan was able to accomplish in the way of transporting troops during the Russo-Japanese War. She had, subject to call at the beginning of that war, a merchant fleet of nearly 200 steamers, aggregating over 500,000 gross tonnage. As a simple illustration of her ability to embark quickly an over-sea expedition, it



may be stated that at Ujina, her principal port of embarkation in that war, she was able, practically at the outbreak of hostilities, to transport General Oku's army of 100,000 men in the short space of four days. Japan relies entirely upon her merchant marine for the transportation of her armies in war, and the wonderful results accomplished by her in this respect during the Russo-Japanese War were due largely to the fact that since the Chino-Japanese War she has been paying immense subsidies to almost all of her steamship companies. She learned a valuable lesson during the conflict with China, and realizing the absolute necessity of having available a large merchant marine at the very outset of war, she has been paying about \$5,000,000 yearly in subsidies, over \$2,000,000 of this amount going to one company. The contrast between the preparedness for war on the part of Japan and of the United States needs no comment. We are confronted with the fact that we have outlying possessions at the very door of a nation which could transport almost immediately upon the outbreak of hostilities 100,000 men to invest these possessions, or even to attack our continental frontier, while we would be compelled passively to accept defeat during the early stages of war, until we could collect sufficient ships to transport less than one-half the number of men which Japan could embark during the first few days.

What doth it profit us to boast of our Monroe Doctrine, of our declared intention of protecting our Filipino wards from outside interference until they are able to maintain a self-sustaining republic, of our policy to protect our southern sister republics from foreign interference, and yet, when these policies are seriously assailed by a foreign enemy, be compelled to rely for their enforcement almost solely upon our great wealth and unlimited resources, with a consequent needless loss of life and treasure, when a wise course of military preparedness might prevent war at all? We boast of being a non-military nation, and of advocating a peaceful solution of all international questions, which is laudable; but it must be conceded to be the height of folly to "beat our swords into ploughshares" while those of our neighbors are being sharpened on both edges.

# THE PARAMOUNT PROBLEM OF THE EAST

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**T**HE paramount problem of the East is how best to promote a more mutual approach of East and West. It is not too much to say that in the estimation of every thoughtful mind in the Orient to-day this is the supreme international question.

The problem was created and set on foot by the Occident, but the Orient is now left to deal with it alone, and try to push it to a satisfactory solution. After stirring the greater half of mankind out of the lethargy and seclusion of ages, the masters of the world have shrunk in despair and cowardice from the duty of appeasing the commotion thus created. The hands extended for sympathy and the voices that cry aloud for intercourse are now only on the eastern horizon.

The Orient has long evinced a sincere desire for closer communion with western ways and western civilization generally. On every side is found to-day among eastern people a frank admission that the Orient has learned, and has still to learn, much from the West, and already owes to that half of the earth an endless debt of gratitude. And the West, too, concedes, if in a half-hearted way, that it is indebted to the East for much, and has yet something to learn from oriental life and thought. But, in spite of these admissions, the difficulty has been that, while the East has been putting its theory into practice, the West has for the most part been content to treat its indebtedness to, and its dependence upon, the East as a mere theory to be neglected and relegated to the region of the impracticable.

Among those that have sincerely labored to promote a closer mutual approach between East and West, Japan stands out as unapproached by any other nation. For more than fifty years, through her sons and daughters sent abroad to study in western institutions, through world-wide travel and through the literature of all nations, Japan has been imbibing all that is of permanent worth in occidental civilization; and through the welcome of foreigners, both as residents and tourists, as well as the publica-