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from a state of deterioration to a condition of efficiency and improvement.

This, while it was all the Department could do under the present authority and appropriations, is by no means all that I consider to be necessary for the safety of the great interests involved, or even for adequate defense in one of these ports. The several Departments, outside of our country, require a great increase in the number of their employés, for such is the extent of our country, and such is the nature and character of these employés, that we need the services of a certain number at all times in expenditure under the present circumstances of the country, in the hundreds, where we make but a small part of the national appropriations, and the true wealth of the country will not be increased by neglecting the means of national safety and honor, nor money saved by refusing adequate protection to commercial enterprise.

To afford necessary protection to our commerce and property in some ships in the navy of the country, we must have a navy. Our navy, during the war, assumed large proportions in point of numbers and expense, and it was effective, for the occasion against an enemy having little or no power; but it would have been almost powerless against such fleets as are going, from time to time, from England or France could bring into action, on the ocean, or on our own shores.

It is the habit of every foreign nation, making any pretensions to military power, to keep a very active one or more powerful sea-going ironclad iron-clad, in our waters, ready for any emergency, which may arise, and which, if it should occur, in the event of a war our ships would be uselessly sacrificed, or subjected to the ignominy of our abandoning the sea, and leaving our commerce to its fate, to rot on our wharves, or be captured by our monitors and forts. It is not doubted that any such a contingency would be a formidable one. The American people are accustomed to success on the ocean; and they would, if they should see a loss inclination, to forgive a policy which, at the first sign of a reverse, would, if it will not be unjustly, unanimously to our shores. These are not agreeable to the contemplation of a patriotic people, and are subjects which, if they are to be avoided, or even, I have felt it to be my duty to state the truth plainly, knowing that it is a disagreeable one to people, that they may determine how much and for present action the situation requires.

It is true our best monitors would, if brought into action, be powerful against the iron-clad fleets, but there are steam batteries, not sea-going cruisers. They would be several vessels to accompany them, and, being entirely without sail-power, must be towed as their coal is exhausted. They would be always dangerous to health in tropical seas and in the hot season, and, in cold weather, they would be subject to disaster, and, at best, would be a very inefficient auxiliary defense of our own shores, but should be *very* *prized* among our fleets.

A cruising craft, suitable for our requirements, should be able to depend on her own resources, without being dependent on coaling stations within herself. She should have ample steam power to carry her safely in a storm, and should possess at the same time, the qualities of a first-rate sailing vessel, so as to keep the sea at without consuming her coal. She should carry a broadside battery of heavy guns, and be herself impervious to the heaviest ordnance afloat. England and France have, in their iron-clad, sea-going navies, and liberality in their expenditures, have both succeeded in constructing some beautiful specimens of ironclad sailing craft, which promise to be very powerful and effective for every warlike purpose, and able to keep the sea under all weather. Some of the finest, and one of them would be a terrible foe for a squadron of wooden ships, if the enemy should have built-no ships of that kind, but we have watched with interest all the naval preparations of Europe, and, familiar with their details and results, we know their strength and their weakness.

Under these conditions, we can be sure that every step we take in the direction of iron-clad ships, will be a step in the right direction, and that we shall be beginning to see the knowledge we have been seeking, and I therefore propose, at the proper time, of commencing at once the building of seagoing iron-clad vessels, of the best and most approved class, and also to protect our commerce and vindicate our principles in an emergency. We should aim to have one or more of these ships on each foreign station, and be prepared with the necessary relicts. This will ultimately require no less than ten in all, and present indications are that they will all at once, we should (adumbrated of the urgency of the case, and of the necessity of our commerce in their construction) commence immediately on the Atlantic and Pacific, and on the Gulf of Mexico, and ever for the work requisite to accomplish the following these, as rapidly as circumstances will admit, with those necessary for our inland waters and their relicts.

On the 30th of June, 1868, when our ships of war in commission numbered fifty-seven (57), mounting one hundred and fifty-four (154) guns, with a range of fifty-five thousand four hundred and fifty-one (55,451) miles, and a tonnage of one hundred (1-00) per cent, and a tonnage of two hundred and fifty-three (253) vessels, and had a tonnage of three hundred and ninety-one thousand and sixty-six (391,066) tons, or one-eighth (1-8) of their measurement, and those in Ordinary in commission numbered one hundred and fifty (150) vessels, mounting one hundred and fifty (150) guns and (259,000) tons, or one-eighth (1-8) of their measurement, and those in Ordinary in commission numbered one hundred and ninety-one (191) vessels, mounting one hundred and fifty (150) guns (2,566) guns, and had a tonnage of three hundred and ninety-one thousand and sixty (391,066) tons (259,000), or one-seventeenth (1-17) of their measurement.

HOME DEFENSE.

But the subject of protection to our commerce and influence on foreign seas, by no means comprehends all that is embraced in what is called upon to represent in connection with the question of the defense of our country. The idea of our national defense is still more extensive, and it is proper home as closely to the interest and the pride of the whole people, as the maintenance of a naval establishment must include some practical provision for the defense of the numerous cities and towns along our coast, and the great rivers and bays, on whose shores are concentrated, not much of the national and individual wealth. Our monitors have been already alluded to as a ready and effective means of harbor defense, and this they will doubtless be, to the extent of their number and capacity. But, unless completely and certainly invulnerable, they are not adapted to the purpose of a long contest, for, keep one well the late improvements in ordnance. Most of them are capable of receiving additional armor if the occasion should require the guard, but this will of course require a new and considerable outlay of money.

TORPEDO CORPS.

Another comparatively inexpensive but most effective means of defense, has not escaped the attention of the Department, I refer to the subject of marine torpedo. The terrible destructive power of this instrument was shown during our late war. Since that time considerable attention has been given to the subject in Europe, and it has been similarly by the Government of the Navy Department.

Shortly after my appointment, I had a report, prepared by the Chief of Bureau of Ordnance to make experiments, take charge of the apparatus, and report on the subject, the application of this means of defense to our harbors and inlets.

OCEAN STEAMERS.

There is another description of defense against the time of danger, perhaps as effective as any other available to the Government, I allude to steamships, like men, hesitate to attack those who are prepared to receive them, and, I think, in the case of a warlike aggression is often found the best defense. Our country has a long line of coast. Such steamships, if properly located, in the hands of ocean-going steamers established, running out of our ports in the peaceful pursuit of commerce and surprise, but carrying our flag, and available to our government in time of need, it will not be amiss to discuss in this report the many arguments or national prosperity and pride which are brought upon us, but I may be permitted to urge it as an important element in support of the views I advocate of this view, I call attention to the fact that there are now running from our ports, to Europe, Asia and Africa, and, for those of Europe, over the Atlantic, and Asia and Africa, over the Pacific, only three American steamships. These steamers, carrying the English and French and German flags, are, and of late years, the results of wise liberality on the part of their respective governments, and they are, which every large proportion of the carrying trade across the Atlantic. Their arrival, at any time in every port, in all weathers, is not more than eleven days. Any one of them could be quickly converted into an efficient and powerful ship of war, capable of carrying a battery of guns, of a number and weight of length of them, from Boston to Europe, in the possible war vessels, larger than that of our navy on the lot, or the Atlantic. Inducements should be held out to those who are willing to undertake it, to build steamships, on models approved by the Navy Department, subject, in case of necessity, to be taken by government, at a fair and reasonable value.

These on the route between California and Japan should be able at all times to protect themselves against pirates and robbers, and, it should be of a class available in time of war.

NAVY-YARDS.

Among the most important elements of a naval establishment are the yards where its material is collected, and fitted for service and equipped. When those are not out of a character to enable this work to be done well and rapidly, the establishment is weak in an important point. The great maritime powers of Europe have their yards, well located, built and maintained at great expense, and furnished with every means for the prompt and efficient fitting out of their fleets.

We have, at the close of my immediate predecessor was the appointment of a commission and report the condition of our yards; and I have myself visited and inspected most of those on the Atlantic coast. They are generally of small capacity, and in adapted to the requirements of modern naval construction. Some were established at a comparatively early date, and, anticipating the wants of the future, and are not, in their present position, accessible to the large ironclads and others, though of larger capacity, are at present poorly suited for the work required of them.

We have several regular navy-yards (8-00). Not more than four of these are capable of fitting out more than two or three vessels at one time. In all, we feel the want of more docks. In our seven Navy-yards we have but three dry docks. This want would be severely felt in time of war, as the floating docks used by the monitors are not suitable for taking a heavy armored ship out of the water, and nothing is available safe for a vessel war but a regular dry dock, into which she can enter with assurance and shore in health without straining or danger. While I mention the *navy-yards* as a proper subject for report, I do not, at this time, propose any large expenditure for the improvement, because, particularly, of the state to the local operation on the Atlantic coast. They are generally available for the present, and the more pressing need is elsewhere.

The Pacific coast, and, in the necessity for some place of refuge, and repair, between the Gulf of Mexico. The yard at Pensacola was so far destroyed during the war as to be now almost valueless for use, and we are without a depot on the gulf where vessels can be refitted.

Mare Island.—The navy-yard at Mare Island is our only one on the Pacific coast, and on the shore is able to depend for the maintenance of our whole naval force in those seas, and, if need be, in the *Large Island.*—The third point, pressing on the country, is the necessity for a navy-yard, to be prepared for the Pacific Ocean, and, I have, in my report, the Philadelphia station known as Lesque Island. This is not only desirable in view of the present condition of the yard at Philadelphia, but is considered necessary by the present character and future necessities of the navy. Ships are, of course, now constructed and equipped at large establishments, possessing complete accommodations and facilities for the general arrangement and application of material. The project is to have a place where we can use our yards in their want of local ships and available to attract the attention of the Department, and to attract the attention of the naval station at Philadelphia, and the work is now done. The water front of the present working ground is so small that four ships can hardly be moved without being in the way of each other. Buildings and machinery of every description are crowded together, and, in interfering with their proper use, causing great expense and loss of time and money, from the close proximity of workshops and inflammable material, and, in case of fire, the loss of one ship would be nothing but the most favorable circumstance in the yard; and, in addition to the risk of fire, the expense incurred to guard against a general conflagration is very considerable.

Moreover, this portion of the station is situated in the midst of a populous city, surrounded in one direction, and interfering with its improvement, and its extension, and is considered by the Department to its position as an independent establishment in the midst of a populous city, and, in its interests and under different government.

The Department has, for years, had the Brooklyn yard, but those at Philadelphia are much greater in these necessary instances in its application of such absolute importance to the Government, and, in the interest of the service, greater at all times, and, in the interest of the service, greater at all times, as must now be the case, to be more generally used by the Navy Department, and, in view of the necessity of fresh water for their preservation, and, in the interest of the service, for the repair and ordinary or iron ships of every class, far the best, if not the only practical one on the Atlantic coast. Situated on a great fresh river, one hundred and twenty miles by its course from the sea, in the heart of a populous country, at the great centre of the iron industry, and with water sufficient for the draught of the largest ships, it presents at once, a combination of convenience, economy, and security.

The only difficulty for the present and for the future, is the want of a proper station, and that part of the station which we are now, for want of legislation, obliged to use as the working yard. I should not feel authorized to speak so strongly on this subject were it not that one station, and, as a part of the same general station, this island, of which I have been in charge for three years, and, in lieu of mean low tide, cut off by navigable water from the main land, with a bridge, the Delaware alone of two and a half (2½) statute miles, and, in the interest of the public, I feel it my duty to present actual facilities for basins and docks, equipment, and, in the interest of economy, I feel it my duty to bring the Department, and, in the interest of the public, I feel authorized, to present the actual facilities for the present condition of the yard at Philadelphia, and nothing can be more expensive than