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CAN THE FIRST COMER TAKE PANAMA?

(Continued from Page 3)

prosperity and repose the wealth of America has increased; as the crowning feat of our aspirations since the Spanish war and our emergence as a world-power, we have built the Panama Canal. By an especial appropriation of March 4, 1911, and another of August 24, 1912, we have spent \$3,000,000 and \$2,806,950 respectively for fortifying three islands at the Pacific entrance of the Canal. The Atlantic entrance, one assumes, will also be fortified. But to what end? When have fortifications availed against a sufficient fleet? One's only guide is what has happened in the past. Fortifications may have a moral effect. But the Athenians at Syracuse, Admiral Farragut at New Orleans, Admiral Dewey at Manila, the Japanese at Port Arthur, sailed by supposedly impregnable fortifications.

THE United States is now passing through what, in certain quarters, has been made to appear as a crisis in its relations with Japan. This is by no means the first time that relations between the two countries have become strained; since it can easily be recalled that very shortly after the Russo-Japanese War the people of California became alarmed at the prestige of Japan, and at the increasing immigration, thrift, and business methods of the Japanese. There were at that time, and there since have been interchanges of views between the two Governments. Within a year, also, the reported acquisition by a Japanese corporation of fishing-rights and a station at Magdalena Bay led to an explicit disclaimer by the Japanese government of any interest in or knowledge of the negotiations, though the negotiations brought about the following more precise definition of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States Senate:

"Resolved, That when any harbor or other place in the American continents is so situated that the occupation thereof for naval or military purposes might threaten the communications or safety of the United States, the Government of the United States could not see, without grave concern, the possession of such harbor or other place by any corporation or association which has such a relation to another Government, not American, as to give that Government practical power of control for naval or military purposes."

Yet what are now discovered to be the facts? Far from contemplating any extensive colonization in America, or in this hemisphere, the Japanese Government is making every effort to withdraw its colonies wherever practicable and to concentrate them in Southern Manchuria. This policy is a measure of self-preservation; since a similar policy guides Russia in the North. On every pretext Russian soldiers with their families are shipped to Manchuria as colonists, it is even said that every porter and guard on the Trans-Siberian railway is a member of the Russian reserves. As concerns the navy, despite the fact that the one-ship policy of Congress has reduced this country to the position of a poor third as a naval power, in a naval conflict with Japan we should have little to fear, should she fight alone. Our present dreadnought strength is more than double that of Japan. Before its fleet could sail from Yokohama to our coast our fleet could double Cape Horn and be there to engage them.

No one would have much respect for the man in Congress or out who would strive to engender trouble between this country and another; but he appears respectable beside the man of peace at any price. When we regard the English, who of all peoples have shown themselves the wisest colonists, and speculate as to what racial quality it is by which they so successfully govern, their chief char-

acteristic seems finally to be a constancy of purpose and policy, which, if occasionally defiant of other peoples, is none the less constancy. No irresponsible nation may repudiate an English debt, or kill a British subject, without knowing what it may expect and will inevitably get. But regarding our own government, and what has been passing for a foreign policy, it seems as if the exact reverse were true. It seems as if indifference to what has been already done, irresolution as to what shall be done next, improvising a policy as occasion arises, with no more settled purpose than a supreme desire at all times to avoid the toils and snares of responsibility abroad, were characteristic of ourselves. To the south of us are a baker's dozen of tumultuous and unstable republics, upon whom a firm, consistent policy could alone enforce respect. But what has been done?

EX-SECRETARY ROOT employed toward South America a policy of reconciliation—with his pacific journey among them, his Bureau of South American Republics, and all the rest of it. Secretary Knox followed with quite a different policy; to let well enough alone, providing, only, that South American peoples should pay their debts. Yet even this seems now too drastic for the State Department, which announces that the collection of debt shall be no longer cause for intervention. Could a peace-at-any-price policy go further? On the very day, as it happened, that the Secretary of State expressed his happy wish "to launch the battleship *Friendship* and the cruiser *Fellowship* as our only navy," (vide press dispatches of May 15) the English gunboat *Aeolus* appeared off Guatemala for the collection of debt, which was paid within twenty-four hours. We should endeavor to free our minds of cant. It is good business.

There is, however, a further result from our unstable policy which overshadows every other, namely, that among Isthmian and Central American peoples the United States enjoys the unenviable distinction of being, as well as the most despised, the most hated nation on earth. I believe this to be no exaggeration of fact, and a fact the importance of which it is hard to exaggerate. In the almost daily accounts, for a while, of Americans murdered in Mexico City and elsewhere throughout Mexico, and of the expulsion of Americans from the country, one never read of the deaths of Germans or English, or of similar methods employed against them. Alone among the navies of the world, by direct order from Washington, American blue-jackets are not allowed liberty in Cuban or Caribbean ports for fear of trouble, as indeed the toll of sailors and marines killed there is heavy enough, with no indemnity exacted or received. Only the other day two chief petty officers of the navy, ashore in the line of duty, were set upon in a populous thoroughfare of Guaymas, and left dead in their tracks, shot by a Mexican Government police official. Who remembers the incident? It seems hardly credible, but it is a fact that one can hear Americans of substance in Cuba, Panama, or Vera Cruz assert that they would welcome the smashing of pieces of the Monroe Doctrine, and the armed interposition of any European power. This, one admits, is scarcely pleasant reading, but still another fact must be set down.

I have been assured by an official of the United Fruit Company, which has nearly a monopoly of the American fruit trade in the Caribbean, and has invested upward of \$20,000,000 in the development of Central America, that it was their intention immediately to list the tonnage of their entire fleet under the flag of Germany or England, by which action the

American flag will disappear from those seas.

Thus we arrive at an understanding of the facts. Across a strip ten miles wide, through a hostile country, the United States has dug a Canal at a gross cost to date of \$330,000,000. An entire continent of inimical States lies to the south, and a thousand miles of openly hostile States extend to the north. Between the Rio Grande and the Canal substantial men of every country, including our own citizens, disgusted and discouraged at the futilities of American diplomacy, desire the advent of any European power which shall do for Central America what England has accomplished for Egypt, or France for Algiers.

AS long ago as 1898, addressing the War College at Newport, Rear-Admiral Mahan gave solemn warning: "The successive development of much of the Caribbean region—of nearly all of it which is not in possession or control of the United States, or of some European State—has been in the past, and still continues so precarious as to introduce a very disturbing element into international relations. The dispute between Venezuela and Great Britain, with the strong interposition of the United States; the demonstration by Great Britain, Germany, and Italy in Venezuela; the difficulty between the United States and Colombia (as yet unsettled—Editor.) which led to the independent existence of the Republic of Panama; also the contentions between the United States and Venezuela. . . . These recent instances leave little doubt that the Monroe Doctrine alone has stood in the way of the appropriation by foreign states of much of the Caribbean countries, in the same manner as the countries of Northern Africa, Algiers and Tunis, have been annexed by France, and Egypt effectually controlled by Great Britain."

Since 1898 much water has run under the bridges. Then, no definite, tangible objective made it profitable for a European power to defy the Monroe Doctrine and run the risk of conflict with this country. That such objective does exist today, in the Panama Canal, and that Germany's whole colonial policy renders it both logical and, from her point of view inevitable, that she should control the Canal, is a fact growing daily more evident.

The extent of German immigration to South America—the only country still available for colonization by an overcrowded and a vigorous people—is hardly known in the United States. One learns with amazement of enormously productive plantations of coffee and fruits throughout the valley of the Amazon, against the thrift of whose German owners the native Brazilians contend in vain. We have been informed that the German landowners already aggregate three-quarters of a million, with a total area under cultivation equal to Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. From sources easily available, the extent of German tonnage plying through the Caribbean can be seen to have exceeded, Great Britain alone excepted, the combined tonnage of the world; and as we have seen, to this total the tonnage of the United Fruit lines is likely to be added.

Crossing, now, the Canal to the north, the single already developed resource of Mexico is found to be the railroads, largely financed and controlled by powerful German bankers in New York. In Vera Cruz the considerable steamship line, a large brewery, the two large hardware and supply stores, several shops and hotels, are owned outright by Germans. Where English will not serve, the German language will. Perhaps the conditions now existing in Mex-