ALFRED THAYER MAHAN, AMERICAN EXPANSIONIST

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

William Edmund Livezey, B.A., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1937

Ohio State University

Approved by:

Lawrence F. Hill
Adviser
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>MAHAN, THE MAN</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>MAHAN, THE AUTHOR</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE--ITS ORIGIN, ANALYSIS, AND IMPLICATIONS</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE--ITS GENERAL RECEPTION AND ITS FOREIGN UTILIZATION</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE--FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>MAHAN AND THE CARIBBEAN--DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>MAHAN AND THE CARIBBEAN--FULFILLMENT</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>MAHAN AND THE PACIFIC--HAWAII</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>MAHAN AND THE PACIFIC--THE FAR EAST</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>MAHAN AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>MAHAN AND MACHTPOLITIK</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>AN EVALUATION</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAHAN, THE MAN

Rear Admiral Mahan in his reminiscences written rather late in life has given his father's opinion and his own later judgment regarding his choice of a naval career. "He [my father] told me he thought me less fit for a military than a civil profession, having watched me carefully. I think myself now that he was right; for though I have no cause to complain of unsucces, I believe I should have done better elsewhere."\(^1\) This verdict of father and son is borne out to the extent that Admiral Mahan's fame today rests not upon his working for the navy from within the navy as a ship or fleet commander, but as an outstanding naval historian, philosopher, strategist, publicist and propagandist. Nevertheless it is highly problematical whether Mahan would have followed the course which led to such eminence had he chosen a civil profession. It is certain that he would not have possessed that first-hand experience of the service which proved such an invaluable background for his study of naval history and international affairs.

Alfred Thayer Mahan was born at West Point, New York, on September 27, 1840. He came of Irish, English, and French-American stock. His father, Dennis Hart Mahan, a lad in his early teens during the War of 1812 and of Irish Catholic parentage in addition, never wasted love on the English. The

\(^1\)Alfred Thayer Mahan, From Sail to Steam (published in 1907, when Mahan was sixty-seven years of age), xiv.
boy's mother was Mary Helena O'Kil of English-Huguenot blood. The English predominated in this one half Irish, one quarter English, and one quarter French-American, thought the son. "As far as I understand my personality, I think I see in the result the predominance which the English strain has usually asserted for itself over others."  

Mahan's boyhood was spent at West Point where his father was a successful professor of Civil and Military Engineering in the United States Military Academy. At twelve he was sent to a boarding school in Maryland, near Hagerstown, whose southern clientele accorded more nearly with the father's southern and union sentiments. Later two years were spent in Columbia and then in 1856 at sixteen years of age, rather against the father's preference, the lad entered the navy as acting midshipman. Due to his advanced preparation he skipped the first year, becoming one of the "'55-Date." He was graduated three years later, ranking second in a class of twenty. Among his mates, though not of his class, were Dewey, Schley, and Sampson. Samuel A'Court Ashe, later to achieve distinction as a North Carolinian historian, was his classmate. Ashe was forced to drop school; he was so afflicted with mal de mer on the practice cruises that it seemed definitely unwise for him to continue in the service. The friendship established at Annapolis

---

2Mahan, op.cit., xiii.
3Ibid., xiii-xiv.
4For some idea of these early days at the Academy see Samuel Ashe, "Memories of Annapolis," South Atlantic Quarterly, July 1919; also Mahan, op.cit., 45-102.
lasted throughout life. Though in later years their letters were infrequent, Mahan and Ashe were correspondents until the former's death.

The story of Mahan as a line officer was comparatively uneventful. He rose from the rank of midshipman to that of lieutenant, to lieutenant-commander by 1865, to commander by 1872, to captain in 1885, and with that rank he retired in 1896 after forty years of service. Later he was promoted to Rear-Admiral on the retired list. His first naval service was on the frigate Congress at the Brazil station. During the Civil War he served in various blockading flotillas or squadrons, principally off Charleston Coast and Sabine Pass. This desperately tedious duty was broken by a cruise to Europe on which Mahan was first lieutenant with Stephen B. Luce, later Admiral, in command. This chance association with Luce, as will be seen, was to play its role in Mahan's later activities.

A three year cruise on the steam sloop Iroquois to the Asiatic station via Cape of Good Hope was "the dream of years" to Mahan. He saw Japan in the days of its medievalism; Osaka

---

5By 1903 Mahan wrote Ashe, "Though I write many letters, I have no correspondent, since mine with you dropped off. An off Sunday, as today, is the only occasion on which I am fresh enough from my daily drudgery of writing to indulge in conversation letter." February 1, 1903, with a postscript, April 12, 1903, Flowers Collection.

6The Mahan to Ashe letters (c. 100) have been saved and are deposited in the Library of Duke University. Those from October 1858 to July 1859 (c. 30) have been edited by Rosa Pendleton Chiles and published as the Duke University Library Bulletin, Number 4 (July 1931). The remaining letters, the more interesting and valuable for this study, are in manuscript state and are available for general use.
and Kobe had just been opened to the outside world. Detached the following year, Mahan returned via Suez, Rome, and Paris. Forty years later he recalled the ubiquity of the English soldier:

An impression which accumulates upon the attentive traveller following the main roads of maritime commerce is the continual outcropping of the British soldier. It is not that there is so much of him, but that he is so manywhere: in our single voyage, at places so far apart as Cape Town, Aden, Bombay, Singapore, Hong Kong.

Subsequent to this Asiatic adventure Mahan served in various places at sundry tasks: on the Receiving Ship at New York, at the Navy Yards in New York and Boston, at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, and as commander of the U.S.S. Wasp at Rio de la Plata and of the U.S.S. Massachusetts of the South Pacific Squadron. Prior to much of the service noted above, in 1872 Mahan was married to Miss Ellen Lyle Evans of Philadelphia; to this union were born two daughters, Ellen (1873), Helen (1877), and one son, Lyle (1881).

The Navy Department did not escape the epidemic of graft and corruption so prevalent during these post-war years. Mahan at the Boston Navy Yard wrote Ashe fully and frequently of his reaction to conditions. Grant, he felt, was "personally upright, but [had the] unfortunate habit of shutting his

---

7 Mahan, op.cit., 230.
8 Mahan held it legitimate to coin new words "if they be congruous to standard etymology" - hence "anywhere," "nowhere," "somewhere," "everywhere" were acceptable; similarly he defended "eventless," "thitherto," and "ex-centric." Ibid., 291-2.
9 Ibid., 222.
10 May 21, 1875; Dec. 27, 1875; Jan. 27, 1876; Feb. 1, 1876; Mar. 28, 1876, Flowers Collection.
eyes to his friends' shortcomings." Mahan was not content to give vent to his views merely to Ashe. He wrote senators and others in positions of influence. 12

The comparatively uneventful routine of intermittent land and shore duty was not calculated to call forth much originality or give opportunity for distinction. The career of Mahan, however, may be said to have had its beginning with the founding of the Naval War College in 1884. The college had a very unpretentious beginning. An almshouse situated at Coast- er's Harbor in Narragansett Bay served as the only building fa-
cility for several years. Commodore Luce, then president of the college, under whom Mahan had served on his European cruise during the 'sixties, asked the latter to join the teaching staff to direct the work in strategy and tactics and also to instruct in naval history. He accepted the invitation as lecturer and in 1886 succeeded Luce as president of the college. He re-
mained in that capacity for three years and after a brief lapse of time again served as its head.

This call to the college was the turning point for Mahan. It is interesting to note that almost contemporaneously with the acceptance of his new task, he wrote, "To me the very sus-
picion of an imperial policy is hateful . . . ." 13 Later in

11Mahan to Ashe, Dec. 27, 1875, Flowers Collection.

12"I have been very busy since [last letter] writing to everyone I could think of that would be likely to feel an in-
terest, or a duty in seeing justice done in and by the navy." Jan. 27, 1876, Flowers Collection.

13Mahan to Ashe, July 26, 1884, Flowers Collection.
his reminiscences a similar view was indicated:

With little constitutional initiative, and having grown up in the atmosphere of the simple cruiser, of commerce destroying, defensive warfare and indifferent to battleships; an anti-imperialist, who for that reason looked upon Mr. Blaine as a dangerous man; at forty-five I was drifting on the lines of simple respectability as aimlessly as one well could—my environment had been too much for me; my present call changed it.14

In answer to this call to the college Mahan evolved the concept of sea power and its influence on empire. The class lectures commenced with the old Dutch navy and carried the story down to the close of the American Revolution. These proved popular with the officers in attendance.15 Various attempts were

14Mahan, op.cit., 274. Mahan's reaction to Blaine's imperialism sprang from his fear of its reaction upon the central government, "... the great issue now is between centralization and the reverse, I think; and for this reason, quite outside of the question of his honesty, I dread to see Mr. Blaine in the presidential chair. With his strong, aggressive, unscrupulous character, and his instinct for meddling, I fear the central power would prove in his hands like the papacy in the hands of Hildebrand." Mahan to Ashe, July 26, 1884, Flowers Collection. Later, even after his own conversion to aggressive national policy, his antipathy for certain aspects of Blaine's character still remained; in an article which he sent for Luce's perusal and possible suggestions he made this apology relative to his comment about Blaine and his reciprocity views, which Mahan praised. "I can't, honestly with myself, call Blaine a statesman, so I compromised on 'public man'." Mahan to Luce, Sept. 25, 1890, Luce Papers. (The article to which Mahan referred was "U.S. Looking Outward," Atlantic Monthly, (December 1890).

15"My lectures met with a degree of success which surprised me and which still seems to me exaggerated." He hinted that they might lead to a book. Mahan to Ashe, Sept. 8, 1887, Flowers Collection. And Mahan did not quite understand the reception of these lectures when they were later published—"I was quite unprepared for the success of my first book." Mahan, op.cit., 276. "His[Mahen]s] faculty for generalization and his readiness in drawing conclusions from the lessons of history gave to these lectures great value to the naval student, while his clearness of statement and a certain elegance
made to secure a publisher for them.\(^{16}\) Publication, it was urged by Luce, would relieve Mahan from the care of this large amount of manuscript material and permit a continuation of the study which, it was hoped, would result in the development of the science of modern naval warfare.\(^{17}\) It was also felt that their publication would "assist the college, which has hither-to been obliged to fight its way for bare existence."\(^{18}\) Eventually (evidently with a guarantee of $2500) Little, Brown, and Company was persuaded to undertake the venture, and in 1890 these lectures only slightly revised appeared under the title of *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783.*

of diction has not failed to interest--I might almost say charm--the four classes of naval officers--old and young--who have attended the college course during the last four years." Luce to Barnes, Aug. 5, 1889, Luce Papers.


\(^{17}\)Luce to Barnes, August 5, 1889 and Meigs to Luce, Oct. 27, 1888, Luce Papers.

\(^{18}\)Ibid.

\(^{19}\)J. P. Morgan agreed to raise $200, Roper $100, Mahan $100, etc. The Secretary of War had authorized the purchase of one hundred copies for the War Department, fifty were to be used for ship libraries, and perhaps one hundred for the War College. Mahan thought that reference copies in the library "would reduce lecture time" and "allow the willing ones to read up intervening ground." He also felt that a copy in the hands of each member "would be of immediate use, and of probable future value, for, if the book has any worth at all, it is as a critical military history of naval events, though popularly told." Mahan in his personal interview with John Brown of Little, Brown, and Company stressed the fact that his book was popular and critical. Mahan to Luce, Oct. 7, [1889?], Luce Papers; see also Mahan to Luce, Oct. 16, 1887, Luce Papers.
In the meantime, the War College, having come under departmental displeasure, was transferred to the care of the commander of the Torpedo Station, located nearby. Mahan was shifted to special duty in the Bureau of Navigation as a member of a commission to choose a site for a navy yard at Puget Sound. This task was but a relatively slight interruption. The story of sea power was not neglected. As there were no college sessions in 1890 and 1891, for two years Mahan had no cares other than writing. "The college slumbered and I worked," he said.  

20 Some preliminary general reading and a modicum of writing had been done prior to the Puget Sound trip and despite time out for a short Life of Farragut it seemed as if the next chapters in the story would soon be ready for the printer. But a "formidable enemy" came upon the scene with a change in the Bureau of Navigation, under whose direction the college lay subsequent to its merger with the Torpedo Station. The new chief felt Mahan's assistance to the college less necessary than his going to sea. To one of Mahan's advocates for an allowance of time, this Bureau Chief categorically replied, "It is not the business of a naval officer to write books."  

21 The Secretary of the Navy, Benjamin F. Tracy, came to the rescue and Mahan was given respite. The manuscript was completed, used once in lecture form in the first session of the college (which had now gained a new building and separate existence) and then published late in 1892 in two volumes as The Influence

---

20 Mahan, op. cit., 303.
21 Ibid., 311.
of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire.

Mahan was now even more reluctant to put to sea as "authorship had for me greater attractions than following up my profession and promised a fuller and more successful old age."

That his turn for sea service had come was indisputable. Mahan readily recognized this but made a plea to the Navy Department via the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation.

It is my desire to devote myself hence forward to the development of the same line of thought as in books already published; and in that view it is my purpose to retire in 1896, after forty years of service as now allowed by law. . . . As far as I know, there is no other officer who proposes to do that which I here propose. I therefore ask that, upon the understanding that I will retire as above, within term of the present Administration, the Department will rule that the contribution I may be expected to make to professional thought, by such studies as the above, out weighs the advantage that can result from the experience of two years of command, when these so shortly precede my final retirement from active service; and the Department will for these reasons excuse me from such sea service.

Roosevelt and Lodge, already disciples of Mahan, sought to lend their influence to the endeavor. Wrote Lodge:

I dislike to trouble you any further in the matter. . . . At the same time, discretion is left to the Secretary who can make exceptions if he thinks it for the best interests of the service. . . . It seems to me very clear that this is one of the exceptional cases. Captain Mahan is doing a work which

---

22 Ibid.

23 Total sea service-13 yrs., 10 mos.; shore or other duty-17 yrs., 10 mos.; unemployed-4 yrs., 7 mos.; sea service as captain-none. Register of Navy (1893).

24 Mahan to the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, Mar. 18, 1893, Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation, General File, No. 26806.

25 Mahan to Roosevelt, Mar. 26, 1893, Roosevelt Papers; Lodge to the Secretary of the Navy, Apr. 18, 1893, Lodge Papers.
reflects the greatest credit on the American Navy and America's literature, work which no one else can do... I enclose an extract from the London Times... which will show you that the opinion of the merit of his work from competent and disinterested judges does not differ from mine.26

The pleading was in vain. The new Secretary of the Navy under the Cleveland administration had not yet become, as he was later, a Mahanite convert.27

Defeated, but not downcast, attempt was now made to have Mahan given command of the Miantonomah, a vessel "which would not take the author so far away as to compel him to sever all connection with his work and with his libraries of reference."28 Even this indirect maneuver fell short of achievement and Mahan was ordered to the Chicago, which was sent to Europe as flagship of that station.

Mahan was resentful at the time—resentful toward both the Department and his youthful folly. He wrote to Ashe:

I am enduring; not living; and have the painful consciousness that I am expending much labor in doing what I have indifferently, while debarred from doing what I have shown particular capacity for. It is not a pleasant feeling—especially when accompanied

---

26 Lodge to the Secretary of the Navy, April 18, 1893, Lodge Papers.

27 Ramsay to Mahan, April 21, 1893, Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation (1893), Press Copy Book, No. 26802. Mahan thought Tracy would have granted his request. Mahan to Ashe, Nov. 24, 1893, Flowers Collections.

28 Lodge to Secretary of the Navy, April 29, 1893, Lodge Papers; see also Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation (1893), General File, No. 28811. "Last evening Lodge, Harry Davis, Admiral Luce and I held a solemn council of war with your last letter to me as text. I fear all hope for the War College (which is nothing without you) has gone... Oh what idiots we have to deal with!" Roosevelt to Mahan, May 1, 1893 (cited by C.C. Taylor, Life of Admiral Mahan, 59-60).
with the knowledge that the headstrong folly of my youth started me in a profession, which, to say the least was not the one for which I have the least endowments. . . . I have become exceedingly interested in professional literary work, and have now a fair promise of success in it.29

Yet this resentfulness was to turn into thankfulness and in retrospect he stated: "The request was probably inadmissible . . . at any rate, it was not granted, luckily for me. . . . 30"

This change of sentiment was due to the combination of unforeseen circumstances. The trip proved of value in several respects. It offered a chance for experience with one of the ships of the new fleet; it presented opportunity for the collection of first-hand information for his Life of Nelson (the ground work of which had been laid in his preparation of Sea Power in the French Revolution and Empire), to which he had turned when the orders to sea had caused him to drop the story of sea power during the War of 1812; but best of all it gave occasion for recognition and acclaim in England with repercussion in the United States extremely favorable to Mahan. Receptions by the Queen, the admiralty, the exclusive Royal Navy Club, and others of the higher nobility, as well as honorary

29 Mahan to Ashe, Nov. 24, 1893 (Genoa, U.S.S. Chicago), Flowers Collection.

30 Mahan, op. cit., 313.

31 In speaking of this to Ashe, Mahan wrote, "I am now amusing myself with a life of Nelson, which the publishers think will be a pecuniary success backed by the reputation I have acquired in England. For it is a singular fact, due probably to the broader maritime interests of Great Britain, that I have achieved much greater standing there than at home--wherever I go I am complimented on my work by their people, while at home few know it." Mahan to Ashe, Nov. 24, 1893 (Genoa, U.S.S. Chicago), Flowers Collection.
degrees from Oxford (D. C. L.) and Cambridge (L. L. D.) were among the honors accorded the author. Mahan's reaction, judged from contemporary correspondence, was neatly summed up by him in his reminiscences. "This brought my name forward in a way that could not but be flattering, and affected favorably the sale of the books."  

American recognition now ensued. Harvard, Yale, Columbia (later Dartmouth and Magill) followed suit with honorary degrees, and Mahan was elected to the presidency of the American Historical Association in 1902. Is not the irony of fate made manifest in this call of Mahan to the sea—a call which was to prove in its wider ramifications of well-nigh incalculable value? On the one hand were Mahan, Lodge, and Roosevelt, all arduously seeking escape for the author from his sea duty, and failing in that, begging for a near-by station; while on the other hand, Ramsay, Herbert, and probably others, unwilling to grant exceptions or in any way lessen the rigor of circumstances, were giving Mahan the needed boost on his way to fame.

Allusion has already been made to Mahan's growing

32 "Hay in characteristic fashion is reported to have said he was "so glad Mahan had been publicly recognized, as Theodore [Roosevelt] would now no longer feel obliged to make them all go to Annapolis to hear his lectures." Anna Roosevelt Cowles, Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, 1870-1918, 145.

33 Mahan, op. cit., 313. This popularity of Captain Mahan aroused the jealousy of Admiral Erben, whom Roosevelt characterized as "a fine old sea-dog with an unaffected contempt for books and their makers." Roosevelt and Lodge both "interfered" at the Navy Department giving "warm support" to Mahan. Anna Roosevelt Cowles, Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, 1870-1918, 144-5; see Mahan to Lodge, Feb. 25, 1894, and June 6, 1894, Lodge Papers.
restlessness and discontent with the naval profession as a career. Its routine was irksome to him; the problem of disciplining was burdensome; its duties prevented him from giving undivided attention to his heart's desire, the following of a literary profession. In addition to the two sea power books and the Life of Farragut, Mahan had been contributing a few significant articles to such magazines as the Atlantic Monthly, the Quarterly Review, the Forum, the North American Review, the Century Magazine and Harper's Monthly. The opening of a magazine field and the reception accorded his two major books at home and abroad, especially in England, and the firm belief that the United States would become more and more maritime minded, convinced him that he had a fair chance of successful livelihood in the literary world. He recognized that

like all other moves there is a risk of failure, but I think the chances are good. The pay of literature is not great—except in fiction—not at all proportionate, in my case, to the labor I put into it; but upon the whole I like it, and at present there seems a sufficiently fair prospect of demand.
Mahan applied for retirement from the active list after a little more than forty years of service. In its editorial column the New York Tribune commented in part as follows:

He [Captain Mahan] is a man of thought rather than action. . . . He has given to the United States Navy the distinction of having made the most notable contribution of the time to marine literature. All military organizations are somewhat ill prepared to make the best use of a man like Captain Mahan . . . and the United States navy is no exception to the rule. . . . It would be well if the Navy could encourage this kind of talent, give it congenial work and adequate rewards, while fully recognizing the fact that the primary work of the Navy is to sail ships and fire guns.

The Life of Nelson: The Embodiment of Sea Power of Great Britain (2 vols.) was completed by November 1896, was published the following year and immediately took a high place among the several biographies of England's great naval hero.

---

36 His application, he wrote. Ashe, was delayed due to the Venezuelan controversy for he did not wish to retire "while possible trouble from an overt source remained." Jan. 3, 1897, Flowers Collection.

37 Nov. 19, 1896.

38 "I have just finished and sent to the publishers a long and elaborate Life of Nelson. . . . although many lives have been written, there is none that 'fills the bill'. . . . Whether I have been better than my predecessors remains to be seen. . . . There is at present, mainly in England, a very great interest in naval matters. . . . My name is closely associated with it. . . . I forecast a similar interest here ere long. . . ." Mahan to Ashe, Nov. 7, 1896, Flowers Collection.

39 Mahan fell into two mistakes here as regards Nelson's course at Naples in 1799 and in his relation to Lady Nelson. These errors, minor when viewed from the larger whole, caused Mahan to revise his account in certain particulars for the second edition (1899) and resulted in some little controversial writing on the matter.
The opportunity, however, for uninterrupted research and writing failed to materialize wholly. The Spanish-American War brought orders for his return from Italy to serve as a member of the Naval War Board along with Admiral Sicard and Captain Crowshields.\footnote{See infra, Chap. VII, 141-2.} Shortly following the release from this duty, service as a member of the American delegation\footnote{Mahan asked for expenses and modest compensation for this service at The Hague. This could be arranged, thought Secretary Hay and added that "the President is greatly pleased to know you will be able to go." Hay to Mahan, Apr. 4, 1899, Hay Papers. The other American members were Seth Low, Stanford Newel, William Crozier, and Andrew White, who acted as chairman. Frederick Holls was secretary to the delegation.} at the First Hague Conference was another temporary disruptive factor in the life of the full time author. Both of these instances, however, provided him with opportunity to appear more or less on the stage; incidentally they furnished him some little ammunition for magazine articles which were shortly republished in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles.

This Conference called at the instance of Russia and later found to have been a subtle ruse to relieve her financial burdens, was in origin a farcical comedy and in results tragical in the sense that it possessed the quality which gave nobility or sublimity to the catastrophe; yet it excited in the beholder combined feelings of pity, awe, and
apprehension. For this misnomered Peace Conference showed that there was an abyss, unmeasured and perhaps unmeasurable, between individual nations and between groups of nations; and in the minds of many the wisest thing, as Bismarck once said to Count Crispi, was for statesmen and diplomats to leave such matters to the peace societies. In this instance, it might be added, not only the great Chancellor's advice but his example was followed; and the nations of the world, especially those of Europe, turned themselves with increased zeal and renewed energy toward a policy of insurance through ever increasing armaments and systems of alliances.

Mahan's reaction to the Conference and its activities was realistic in the Bismarckian sense. "The Conference itself was very well for a time," he wrote Ashe, "and interesting

---

Mahan was no nearer the truth of Russian motives than his contemporaries. In a letter to Ashe after his return from The Hague, he suggested as the immediate cause the shock of our late war [Spanish American] resulting in the rapprochement of the United States and Great Britain and our sudden appearance in Asia as a result of a successful war . . . the prospect of America and England, side by side, demanding China be kept open for trade, means either a change in her [Russian] policy or war. Hence she wishes peace--by pledge." Sept. 23, 1899, Flower Collection.

The Kaiser in marginal note was not so far off when he jotted down, "The whole lubrication seems to me to come from Russia's grim necessity of escaping from her financial mess. . . ." Bulow to Emperor William, Aug. 28, 1898. Die Grosse Politik, XV, 149. For general diplomatic reaction see ibid., 146 et seq., and G. P. Gooch and H. Temperly, British Documents on the Origins of the War, I, 216 et seq. J. B. Scott, The Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 is still standard in most respects; but some items, such as clarification as to the origin of this First Hague Conference, need to be supplemented by more recent studies. The generally accepted explanation on this point is found in E. J. Dillon, The Eclipse of Russia, 296 et seq.
in a way; but ten weeks of it was rather too much." It can be said in all fairness that Mahan was not in great sympathy with the main purposes of the conference. He had made known his views concerning arbitration, armaments, and kindred topics during the decade of the 'nineties. It would have been strange if he had now changed front—indeed it was not expected that he should. Mahan felt that though "arbitration should always be a nation's first thought . . . it should never pledge itself by treaty, or otherwise, to arbitrate before it knows what the subject of dispute is. Needless to say, I have no sympathy with those who hold that war is never imperative." It was Captain Mahan who "threw in a bomb," as Andrew White termed it, relative to the convention (article 27) regulating the peaceable settlement of international conflicts as being an infringement of the Monroe Doctrine. A resultant

43 Mahan to Ashe, Sept. 23, 1899, Flowers Collection. Munster, German ambassador to Paris, commented interestingly to Whitelaw Reid: "Beating empty straw is always a tiresome job, which may ever be dangerous if it is, like this case, Russian straw, that may conceal an apple of contention." R. Cortissoz, Life of Whitelaw Reid, II, 259. Munster was sufficiently adept in "flailing" to be awarded the rank of Prince!

44 Mahan to Ashe, Sept. 23, 1898, Flowers Collection. Mahan discussed at length his views of and reaction to the Conference in "The Peace Conference and the Moral Aspect of War," North American Review, Oct. 1899, which was reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 207-240, and also in Some Neglected Aspects of War, 23-52.

45 For this incident and its solution, see Andrew White, Autobiography, II, 358 et seq. In a letter to Roosevelt some years later Mahan intimated that an item in the Manchester Guardian had really called his thought to this possible contravention. Mahan to Roosevelt, Sept. 9, 1905; Roosevelt to Mahan, Sept. 12, 1905, Roosevelt Papers.
declaration was drawn up to meet this contention of Mahan and was incorporated in the official proceedings. 46 In the drafting of this declaration, which was viewed as of more than ordinary significance, Mahan claimed no part. 47

Mahan likewise strenuously attacked the view held by his government and the rest of his fellow delegates on the matter of immunity to private property at sea; and though willing, under instructions from the government, to join in signing a memorial to the conference on the topic, Mahan let it be known that in nowise was it a personal belief with him to grant such immunity. In the consideration of the final draft of this memorial by the American delegation "various passages were stricken out, some of them-- and indeed one of the best-- in deference to the ideas of Captain Mahan... 48"

White thought that if Mahan's ideas of doing all that one could to weaken and worry the enemy were logically carried out, one would return to the marauding and atrocities

46 Mahan felt that Secretary Holls in his story of The Peace Conference at the Hague gave the impression that he [Holls] was claiming responsibility for credit that rightfully belonged to himself [Mahan]. He took the matter seriously, though privately, and wrote not only to Mr. Holls but to some of his own friends. Mahan to John D. Long, Apr. 25, 1901, Long Papers.

47 Mahan thought it "difficult to exaggerate the actual importance" to the United States of this qualifying declaration. Mahan, "The Boer Republics and the Monroe Doctrine," Independent, LII, 1132 (May 10, 1900). Mahan sent his friend, Senator Lodge, a copy of this article, which the latter read "with the greatest interest" and approval. Lodge to Mahan, May 14, 1900, Lodge Papers. White also attached much importance to this declaration. White, op. cit., II, 338 et seq.

48 Ibid., II, 316-17.
of the Thirty Years War. 49

Mahan's objection to the outlawry of projectiles, the sole purpose of which was to spread asphyxiating or deleterious gases, resulted in the United States delegation gaining the unique distinction of casting the only negative vote to this proposal. 50 Dr. White was dissatisfied with this course but pleaded helpless—"What can a layman do when he has against him the foremost contemporary military and naval experts?" 51

The convention formulated in ten articles and passed by the Conference, which looked toward the adaptation of the Geneva Convention to Maritime War, was left unsigned by the American delegation, again due chiefly to Mahan. Upon his return twice he wrote Secretary Long of the Navy Department, suggesting close scrutiny of these articles by the legal staff of his department. "I formulated certain objections to

49 Ibid. For further comment upon Mahan's views and activities relative to immunity to private property, see infra Chap. X, 221 et seq.

50 The British, however, having qualified their vote with the proviso that there should be unanimity, remained until 1907 non-signatory to this declaration.

Mahan's reasons for opposition were briefly: (1) that too little was known of the matter to warrant intelligent action, (2) that granted the existence of such shells the mere charge of cruelty was equally used against the torpedoes and firearms, both of which now were used without scruples, (3) that being asphyxiated by gases might be no worse than being choked by water, which was the result for many, if not most, sailors when their ship was sunk by a torpedo boat. White, op. cit., II, 282-3, 319-20. Also see James Brown Scott (ed.) The Proceedings of the Hague Peace Conference, 283 et seq.

51 White, op. cit., 319-20.
them and proposed amendments, for which I could obtain no support;" he wrote Secretary Long, "but I am quite sure I was right, and, I should regret to think that our government should accept this work . . . without careful consideration of the articles themselves and of my arguments upon them." 52

From what has been said of Mahan's attitude and action during the ten weeks at The Hague, it was not surprising that Andrew White, as chairman, in writing the delegation's report for the State Department was especially embarrassed by the fact that

the wording of it must be suited to the scruples of my colleague Captain Mahan. He is a man of the highest character and of great ability, whom I respect and greatly like; but . . . he has had very little, if any sympathy with the main purpose of the Conference, and has not hesitated to declare his disbelief in some of the measures which we were especially instructed to press.

Then Dr. White added this provocative thought:

Still his views have been an excellent tonic; they have effectively prevented any lapse into sentimentality. When he speaks the millenium fades and this stern, severe, actual world appears.

Following his retirement in 1896, Mahan became less and less the historian and more and more the publicist.

52 Mahan to Long, Aug. 21, 1897; Sept. 27, 1899, Long Papers. Cf. Scott, op. cit., 391 et seq. White, though acknowledging Mahan's objection as the major reason for the delegation's action, nevertheless stated that in certain points he felt Mahan was correct. Op. cit., II, 343.

53 Ibid., II, 346. The Report of the American Commission to the First International Peace Conference at The Hague, including Mahan's special report, is on file in the State Department Archives.
This was rather a matter of degree than of kind, however, and
due more largely to the accident of circumstances than to any
sense of relief from restrictions felt while an active naval
officer. Probably the only study in this period of a relative-
ly thorough historical character was his Sea Power in Its Re-
lation to the War of 1812. It was not until 1902 that Mahan
again took up the story which he had been forced to drop by
his sea duty in 1893, and then "rather under compulsion of com-
pleting my Sea Power series, as first designed, than from any
inclination to the theme." The task occupied three years
with research in Washington, Ottawa, and London, and its value
is greatly increased by a survey of the causes which led to
the conflict. As history Mahan considered this the most thor-
ough work he did; yet he thought it lacking in interest for
it was "impossible to infuse charm where from the facts of the
case it does not exist. As a Chinese portrait-painter is said
to have remonstrated with a discontented patron, 'How can
pretty face make, when pretty face no have got?'"

The lure of magazine writing had captured Mahan. Having
achieved his niche in the hall of fame, possessing a follow-
ing and wielding an influence naturally quite pleasing to the

---

54 "I am at present at work on the War of 1812. It is a
very old story, often told, and not a brilliant episode, nor
one of which, as a whole, the United States can feel proud.
It remains to see whether I can impart any such novelty of
presentation as to justify another telling." Mahan to Ashe,
Feb. 1, 1903 (postscript Apr. 12), Flowers Collection.

55 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 317.

56 Ibid., 317. Also Sea Power in Its Relation to the
War of 1812, preface.
ego, Mahan might have rested upon his laurels. But no—with an adulatory audience and a timely thesis, the ardent, sincere, advocate Mahan, with a tinge of mysticism and a touch of dogmatism, in schoolmaster fashion and in language with a strong moral undercurrent, even often Biblical, with an air of omniscience, could not forego to pontificate. Too, financial considerations could not be ignored for Mahan was not financially independent. With articles bringing in some cases as much as $500 with right of subsequent publication in book form reserved, a right almost always capitalized, Mahan assiduously applied himself to the role of an international observer and world commentator. Over one hundred articles, subsequent to 1897, not to mention letters to the press, were published and added to the same dozen or so prior to that date. These articles were popular in treatment, usually general in interest, and propagandistic in purpose. Current fallacies in naval subjects, the wisdom of American expansion and participation in world affairs, the beneficence of force as a factor in international relations, conditions determining naval expansion and preparation,

57In fact, the early Gulf and Inland Stream, Admiral Farragut, and the first two sea power books: The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1763 and The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812, were the only books, except The Interest of America in International Conditions (1910), from a total of twenty major works, which were not wholly, or in the main, reprints of earlier magazine articles—and even the key chapter in The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire had earlier appeared in magazine form.

58See bibliography.
and allied topics were discussed.

The world thus became his province and a consideration of the external policy of nations and their mutual international relations his task—a task not self-assigned, he stated, but assumed at the request of editors. He sought to examine the extant conditions, attempting to appreciate and evaluate "their probable and proper effect upon future events and present action." His approach was essentially military with these conditions viewed as forces, contending and perhaps even conflicting, which had to be considered and handled as a government would dispose of its fleets and armies. This was not an advocacy of war, he thought, but merely the "recognition that the providential movement of the world proceeds through the pressure of circumstances; and that adverse circumstances can be controlled only by organization of means, in which armed physical power is one dominant factor."61

In 1909 Roosevelt appointed Mahan to a commission to study the reorganization of the Navy Department, and later asked him to serve as chairman of a joint commission charged with a consideration of national defense. From 1898 through to 1912 Mahan was frequently associated with the War College as summer lecturer on naval history and strategy. At the conclusion of this service, he was undecided whether to apply himself "casually to passing topics of interest, letter writing

59 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 323-4.
60 Ibid., 324.
61 Ibid.
for the press etc." or whether to devote himself to "some long work of more permanent character." As it resulted, he chose both avenues of employment. With a grant-in-aid from the Carnegie Endowment, Mahan essayed to write a history of American expansion and its bearing upon and relation to the problem of sea power. The magazine articles and letters to newspapers continued until this field of activity was largely restricted by the Navy Department in August, 1914.

With the opening of the World War Mahan was besieged by requests from both sides of the water for an analysis and interpretation of that conflict from a naval viewpoint. He was early aware of the Anglo-German rivalry. As early as 1902 in the English National Review, Mahan was drawn to call British public attention to the fact that German industrial

62 Mahan to Ashe, June 7, 1912, Flowers Collection.
63 This work was cut short by his death on Dec. 1, 1914, with only a few introductory pages written in manuscript form.
64 Mahan to Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation, General File, No. 2473-64, Aug. 15, 1914.
65 Mahan saw no folly in this German imitation of British policy which had gained for the latter her empire. "The virtues of powers of the British and German peoples may prove unequal to their ambitions--time alone can show; but it is a noble aim in their rulers to seek to extend their influence; to establish their positions, and to knit them together, in such wise that as races they may play a mighty part in the world's history." "Current Fallacies upon Naval Subjects," Harper's, June 1898, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 293-4.
and commercial growth, with its overseas ambitions and naval rivalry, was threatening England. "The danger appears to exist; and if so the watchmen of the British press should cry aloud and spare not until all classes of their community realize it [this threat] in its fundamental significance."66
This was the general refrain for the next dozen years.67

The climax came on August 3, 1914, when Mahan advised England to strike now else Germany would overcome both land powers and then turn on England. Italy should forsake Germany and Austria, he thought.68 This was too much for some of his American compatriots. Telegrams and letters came to the President and to the Secretary of the Navy inquiring whether such advocacy of "war measures upon Great Britain against Germany . . . coming from a prominent and influential officer of the


67 Mahan always granted that Germany was exercising an "indisputable right" in the creation of her naval force and that Germany's maritime and commercial ambitions gave "no just cause of offense," yet they did demand "watchfulness" and "counteraction." The Interest of America in International Conditions, 61-82; 166-7. The British did not always think Mahan fair. G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 292-300 (February 1898). (This was a book review of Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future.) Nor did they always welcome his advice which bore marks of paternalism. See "Britain and the German Navy: Admiral Mahan's Warning," London Daily Mail, July 6, 1910 and the reply by "Excubitor" (pen name), "Admiral Mahan's Warning," Fortnightly Review, LXXXVIII, 224-34, August 1910.

68 Statement to the Press, Aug. 3, 1914, prior to Britain's declaration of war.
United States is not in spirit at least a violation of true neutrality," and whether naval regulations would not permit disciplining Mahan for the advocacy of "such a treacherous attack by Italy upon her allies." Action initiated by President Wilson emanated from the Navy Department as a Special Order of August 6, 1914, prohibiting officers of the Navy and Army of the United States, whether active or retired, from public comment upon the military or political situation in Europe. Mahan sought exemption but to no avail.  

Intimate contemporaries of Mahan were acquainted with certain aspects of his personality of which no mention has yet been made. The intensity of his spiritual beliefs, his profound knowledge of the Scriptures, his charity, his ardent support of foreign missionary work, his habitual attendance at church, his certainty of God's guidance, his sense of duty and scrupulous honesty, his mild unassuming manner, his quiet conversation, his appearance "tall slender and erect with cameo-like chiseled features, with singularly blue and piercing eyes" -- here was a composite which drew from the Protestant Episcopal bishop in New York this tribute at the time of Mahan's death:

69 Brumder to the President, Aug. 6, 1914, Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation, General File, No. 2473-63; Schilling to the Secretary of the Navy, Aug. 4, 1914, ibid.

70 Mahan to Daniels, Aug. 15, 1914, Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation, General File, No. 2473-64; Daniels to Mahan, ibid.

71 Outlook, CVIII, 799 (Dec. 9, 1914).
I share with all the world the admiration for his eminent service to his chosen profession and yet, beyond and above all that, I admired him for the beauty and charm of his Christian character.  

A similar appreciation was manifested in a memorial tablet erected by friends and fellow-worshippers of his church. "Great among the nations as an expounder of Sea Power; greater in the Kingdom of God as an example of a Christian man." If the doctrines of sea power and of Christianity be considered antithetical by some, it must be added that Alfred Thayer Mahan was not one of these individuals.

72 Bishop Greer to Mrs. Mahan, Taylor, op. cit., 271.
73 At Church of Atonement, Quoque, Long Island.
II

MAHAN, THE AUTHOR

Viewed in retrospect, Mahan's West Point environment, his training at the Academy, the blockade duty during the Civil War, the long cruises to Europe, Asia, and South America, offering opportunity for leisure, reading, and observation, his professional knowledge and the handling of both sail and steam propelled vessels had, unconsciously to be sure, prepared him for his work as lecturer and writer on naval strategy and history. While postponing for subsequent discussion an analysis of Mahan's sea power doctrine, it is here proposed to inquire into his general conception of history, its philosophy, its purpose, its method of treatment, and allied topics.

Mahan's conception of the world and mankind was what Beard would call Jewish-Christian, with history as a kind of divine drama in which God's will, providence, or over-ruling purpose is revealed or illustrated by personalities and events.\(^1\) In one instance Mahan wrote of "the plan of Providence . . . in its fulfillment we call history. . . ."\(^2\) In speaking of America's responsibility in China he felt "the part offered to us is great, the urgency is immediate, and the preparation made for us, rather than by us, in the unwilling acquisition

\(^1\)Charles Beard, The Discussion of Human Affairs (1936), 103.

of the Philippines, is so obvious as to embolden even the least presumptuous to see in it the hand of Providence."  

Perhaps a still more striking illustration is that in which this Anglophile saw the hand of God behind the maritime greatness of Britain.

When one recalls that it [Jamaica] passed into the hands of Great Britain, in the days of Cromwell, by accidental conquest, the expedition having been intended primarily against Santo Domingo; ... that by all probabilities, it should have been reconquered and retained by Spain in the war of the American Revolution; and when, again, it is recalled that a like accident and a like subsequent uncertainty attended the conquest and retention of the decisive Mediterranean positions of Gibraltar and Malta, one marvels whether incidents so widely separated in time and place, all tending toward one end—the maritime predominance of Great Britain—can be accidents, or are simply the exhibition of a Personal Will, acting through all time, with purpose deliberate and consecutive, to ends not yet discerned.  

Breaking through in these lines is the devout, orthodox Christian, with a strain of mysticism!

The new history with its emphasis upon the social, intellectual, and cultural elements was beyond Mahan's purview. His particular interest or angle of approach was the significance of the control of the sea, commercial and military, in

3Mahan, "Effect of Asiatic Conditions," North American Review, November 1900, reprinted in The Problem of Asia, 175. Or similarly, he considered the Philippines as "the task to which Providence has led them [Americans] and ... if the careful effort at each successive step to do aright does not assure that the guidance in the course of events has been Providential, there is no test by which such guidance can be known." "The Philippines and the Future," Independent, LII, 698 (Mar. 22, 1900).

the formation and development of national policies. Military and political history, therefore, were inextricably linked, yet Mahan necessarily stressed the former. This type of history might be a general running narrative with an attempt at coherence and consistency; or it might be the simple chronicle, a mere annal devoid of explanation and interpretation; or the treatment might be more intellectual and philosophical in which the war as a whole was kept constantly in mind with each event or factor properly allocated and interpreted. This latter type was Mahan's ideal and from a historiographic point of view he may be regarded as the founder of a new school of historical study. In making this statement, however, it should be borne in mind that Mahan was not the first diligent student of naval history. John K. Laughton, in some respects the spiritual father of Mahan, was the most notable of the few pioneers and the first to base his studies on a thoroughly scientific method.


7 H. H. "Naval History: Mahan and his Successors," The Military Historian and Economist, III, 8 (January 1916).

Professor Laughton's most important researches were embodied in his contributions to the Navy Records Society (which, incidentally, following the arousal of interest by Mahan, took a new lease on life, printing rare or unpublished works on naval subjects) and in the Dictionary of National Biography. Ibid., 10; R. M. Stephens, "Some Living American Historians, World's Work, IV, 2322-3 (July 1902).

Colomb's Naval Warfare: Its Ruling Principles and Practices Historically Treated appeared almost contemporaneously
Mahan marked an era of renewed interest in the study of naval history, which resulted in the further and more careful investigation of the close relationship which existed between the history of the English Empire and that of the navy. Mahan was not only the "Seeley" among this school of newer writers but men like Laughton, Oppenheim, Hannay, and Corbett, to mention the more prominent of his contemporaries, pursued their historical investigations and were "enabled to make them public largely through the stimulus of Mahan's writings." All in all, with Mahan's first sea power study, but was not considered very favorably. One reviewer termed it "a book which is little learned and perfectly unreadable." "Sea Power: Its Past and Present," Fortnightly Review, LIV, 855 (December 1893), reprinted in Living Age, 60, 454 (Feb. 24, 1894).

Mahan acknowledged indebtedness to both of these men, some of whose essays had appeared in the British Journal of United Service Institution. From Sail to Steam, 279-30; Cf. Gerard Fiennes, Sea Power and Freedom, 220.

In comparing Mahan with Colomb, Laughton, and other English naval authors, Auguste Moireau rightly stated: "Mahan leur est supérieur, parce-qu'il est a la fois plus historien que ceux de ces écrivains qui sont stratégistes, et plus stratégiste que ceux qui sont plutôt historiens. Il a surtout plus que les uns et les autres le sens philosophique." "La maîtrise de la mer," Revue des deux Mondes, XI, 688 (October 1902).

In a bibliographical article, Professor W. F. Craven mentions the important contributions of the naval historians "second only to the economists in determining the modern interpretation of colonial policy." Mahan was given prime place as their "Seeley." Dr. Craven gives a list of the more important contributors with their writings. W. F. Craven, "Historical Study of the British Empire," Journal of Modern History, VI, 60-1 (1934). A useful appraisal of some of these contributors and their writings is given by H. H. "Naval History: Mahan and Successors," Military Historian and Economist, III, 7-19 (January, 1918.)

Mahan's facts were so freshly and powerfully presented against naval history in its wider bearings and in such a popular non-professional style, that both from manner of treatment and resultant creation of interest he may be rightly called the father of modern naval historiography.

What was the object or purpose of history for Mahan? He approached history from the didactic and utilitarian point of view. "The value of history to us," he wrote, "is as a record of human experience; but experiences must be understood."^10 "Past history contains . . . lessons which, well digested, are most valuable for future guidance. . . ."^11 The historian must not be a collector of facts but an instructor of men.^12 "The function of history is not merely to accumulate facts, . . . but to present them in such wise that the wayfaring man, whom we now call 'the man in the street' shall not err therein."^13 It need scarcely be added that Mahan was the assimilator, interpreter, instructor, and moralist.

This interesting passage occurs in a letter to Luce while he was still studying prior to writing his lectures for The Influence of Sea Power upon History:

---

^10 Mahan, Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 26.
^11 Mahan, The Problem of Asia, vi.
^12 Mahan, "Subordination in Historical Treatment," reprinted in Naval Administration and Warfare, 258.
^13 Ibid., 351-2. He would have quite agreed with Seeley "that history, while it should be social in its method, should pursue a practical object. That is, it should not merely gratify the reader's curiosity about the past, but modify his view of the present and his forecast of the future." J. R. Seeley, The Expansion of England (Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1883), 1.
Of course the question thrusts itself forward; under all the changed conditions of naval warfare of what use is knowledge of these bygone days? Here I am, frankly, a little at sea how to point my moral. I have stuff enough to work up several popular lectures, but how to turn this into instructive matter for the future? 14

Mahan did not seek to conceal this very definitely didactic objective. He clearly stated that the "practical object" of his great sea power study was to "draw from the past lessons ... applicable to one's own country and service." 15 He sent a complimentary copy of this book to Henry Cabot Lodge, then a Representative and a member of the Naval Affairs Committee of the House, and an accompanying letter which stated that he had endeavored "to make the experience of the past influence the opinions and shape the policy of the future." 16

This purpose of drawing lessons from the past was equally avowed and more fully developed in some of Mahan's magazine articles. Relative to his essays on the conduct of the Spanish-American War, he wrote, "A principal object of these papers ... is to form a correct public opinion." 17 That Mahan had high regard for the role played by public opinion may be seen from the following:

14 Jan. 22, 1886, Luce Papers.


16 In this letter Mahan also alluded to his own change of view on the matter of the value of the past for the present despite changed conditions, and he apologized for an explanation of this sort to a man of Lodge's intelligence and breadth of reading. It is significant to note that Mahan stated that he was sending this copy because of Lodge's interest in history and naval matters, and also because of his membership on the Naval Affairs Committee. May 19, 1890, Lodge Papers.

17 McClure's Magazine, February 1899, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 110.
Questions connected with war—when resort to war is justifiable, preparation for war, the conduct of war—are questions of national moment, in which each voter—nay, each talker—has an influence for intelligent and adequate action, by the formation of sound public opinion; and public opinion in operation, constitutes national policy. 18

And why this need for popular understanding? "Our leaders, when a call for action comes, cannot outstrip by very much the recognized wishes of the people. . . ." 19

Mahan was not blind to at least some of the difficulties which confront the student who through study of the past would seek to point the way to the future. He recognized that contemporary conditions are so altered from those preceding them, when the attempt is made to utilize the teachings of the past, "that application becomes a matter of no slight difficulty, requiring judgment and conjecture rather than imparting certainty." Hence, this "instruction from the past must be supplemented by a particularized study of the indications of the future."


The importance of a popular understanding is twofold: "It promotes interest and induces intelligent pressure upon the representatives of the people, to provide during peace the organization of force demanded by the conditions of the nation; and it also tends to avert unintelligent pressure which, when war exists, is apt to assume the form of unreasoning and unreasonable panic. . . . It is, of course, vain to expect that a great majority of men should attain even an elementary knowledge of what constitutes the strength or weakness of a military situation; but it does not seem extravagant to hope that individuals. . . may be numerous enough, so distributed throughout the country, as to constitute rallying points for the establishment of a sound public opinion. . . ." Mahan, Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, v-vi.
Assuredness of conclusion can not be guaranteed by this process, yet nevertheless "we can still be confident that under all surface conditions, present or past, there must lie permanent facts, and factors, the detection and specification of which ascertains at least the existence and character of certain determinative features and the relations subsisting between them." 20

This conscious motive of making history didactic, naturally influenced Mahan in his treatment of historical data. His plea throughout was for the general reader. He felt that the historian was inclined to encumber his narrative with a mass of detail which the general reader had neither the time to read understandingly nor the time to work out therefrom for himself the leading features, the determinative lines. He by no means disparaged thoroughness or accuracy of knowledge critically arrived at through the mastery of sources and intimate acquaintance with facts. 21 On the other hand, the accumulation of facts at once in entirety and in accuracy, was not the real function of history. "The significance of the whole . . . must not wait too long upon unlimited scrutiny . . . fine dust of the balance rarely turns the scale," and mere "observation heaped upon observation remains useless to men at large." 22 Elaboration of research therefore (Mahan thought in Biblical language), encumbered


22 Ibid., 251-2, 261.
with over much serving, was being forgetful of the one thing needful. 23 He said:

The matter is one of utility, . . . for the onward movement of the whole body of mankind—which we call the public—is dependent upon each man's thorough, consummate knowledge of his own business, supplemented by an adequate understanding of the occupations and needs of his neighbors. . . . Adequate understanding can be had if the determining features of the particular subject are exposed clear of the complication of details which cling to them, and even in part constitute them; the knowledge of which is obligatory upon the 24 specialist, but to the outsider impedes acquirement.

With the general reader in mind, Mahan was interested in and stressed the significance of the whole and its portrayal to the public in such a manner that it might be grasped and utilized. This problem of presentation was Mahan's chief concern. It did not consist in giving every fact and omitting none. However exhaustive and laboriously acquired, they were only the "bricks and mortar of the historian; fundamental, indispensable, and most highly respectable, but in their raw state" they were the "unutilized possession of the one or at most the few." 25 Facts must be studied analytically, their broad leading features detected, their mutual relations recognized, and their respective importance assigned; 26 thus with analysis, insight, imagination, and a gift of expression these facts were to be turned into a work of art and a "picture

23 Ibid., 259-60.
24 Mahan, Naval Administration and Warfare, vii.
26 Ibid., 262.
comprehensible by the mass of men." The casual reader should always be kept in mind; emphasis was essential to comprehension and this could best be gained less by color than by the proper disposition of details with due subordination to the central idea. Unity of the whole thus became the primary requirement, but

unity is not the exclusion of all save one. The very composition of the word--unity--implies multiplicity; but a multiplicity in which all the many that enter into it are subordinated to the one dominant thought or purpose.27

Each incident of history, whether it was the tactics of a battle, the strategy of a campaign, or the policy of a war, possessed, in its own sphere, intrinsic unity. Each had to be accordingly treated as a work of art in which the details were kept subordinate. But as succeedingly larger views were taken, these incidents, though intrinsic in themselves, in turn assumed subordinate positions. Mahan possessed to an unusual degree this ability to subordinate details and present a telling and impressive view of the whole. The none too friendly Nation, in an editorial at the time of his death, paid tribute to this characteristic by saying that he had "the insight and grasp to wrest the core of truth out of the period of which he wrote."28

Mahan's literary habits were not unusual. He used the notebook rather than the loose leaf system for note taking. His

27 Ibid., 254-5.
wife typed his manuscripts for the printer. The morning hours were spent at his desk writing what he could; whether the result was ten words or ten hundred he sought to regard it with equanimity. The afternoons and evenings were given over to reading, exercise, and association with his family. It was his practice to put down his thoughts in the first words in which they occurred and later to elaborate and polish them. He says he was guided by Dr. Johnson's maxim: "Do not exact from yourself at one effort of excogitation propriety of thought and elegance of expression. Invent first and then embellish."

Mahan strove for lucidity and accuracy, though these were not the most compatible of friends. In fact his besetting anxiety for accuracy led to diffuseness and complexity, and his writings are marked at times by laborious fulness of statement and burdened with qualifications. In many instances he does not make easy reading and as time progressed he became more and more abstract and metaphysical, due in part to the nature of his thesis and in part to the nature of the man and his style.

29 Mahan's literary activities were remunerative. A few articles for the English National Review brought $500 each with right for republication in book form. American magazines paid much less though some articles returned as much as $150 each. Taylor, op. cit., 247-50. His gross estate at the time of his death was slightly more than $15,000, with an interest in books of $2,000. New York Times, June 30, 1915.

30 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 286.

31 Ibid.

32 Mahan was conscious of this tendency to diffuseness and he defended it as natural. "It is to this anxiety for full and accurate development of statements and ideas that I chiefly attribute a diffuseness with which my writing has been reproached; I have no doubt justly. I have not, however, tried to check the evil at the root. I am built that way, and think that way; all around a subject as far as I can see it. I am uneasy if a
Style, Mahan thought, had two sides. Primarily it was the expression of a man's personality and from this point of view it was "susceptible of training, of development or of pruning; but to attempt to pattern it on that of another person is a mistake." Secondarily, there was to style an artificial element which was confined more to the technique of sentence structure, and this to an even greater extent was capable of improvement.\textsuperscript{33}

Mahan took himself, his task, and his writing seriously, and the degree of success attained bears warrant of this endeavor. Critics generally agree that he had a power of expression above the average; the majority would add that his skill in this respect was inferior to that of most historians of equal presentment err by defect, by excess, or by obscurity apparent to myself. I must get the whole in, and for due emphasis am very probably redundant. I am not willing to attempt seriously modifying my natural style, the reflection of myself, lest while digging up the tares of proxility, I root up also the wheat of precision." \textit{Ibid.}, 288-9.

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Ibid.}, 287.

\textsuperscript{34} One English reviewer in commenting upon Mahan's first sea power book wrote, "The style is singularly clear, and even dignified; and sentences frequently occur which show that the author is no ordinary inquirer." \textit{Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine}, CXLVIII, 576 (October 1890).

The Nation gave a critical and careful evaluation in these words: "His style was, indeed, well fitted to the task he set himself. It was clear though not picturesque, was of accumulative weight. To get the real impact of his argument you had to have a patience and a comprehension something like his own in marshalling facts and compelling them to yield their true meaning. His conception was original and powerful, but it took time and iteration to work it out." \textit{Nation}, XCIX, 680-1 (Dec. 10, 1914).
prominence. With the study of history beginning so late in life and rather incidentally, Mahan recognized he could lay no claim to breadth and depth of historical research. He never deluded himself with the illusion that he had become an historian "after the high modern pattern," and at times one may almost read between the lines his prayer of thankfulness. Laborious monographic research he saw as necessary, though he stressed its limitations; more difficult, more essential, and more pleasing was the role of him who attempted to lay hold of and present the significance of the whole. With a bent for insight, a grasp for meaning, and an artful subordination of detail, Mahan shares with Frederick Jackson Turner the honor of being, among American historians, a creator of a new philosophy of history. To an analysis of that philosophy attention will now be given.

\[35\] G. P. Gooch, *op. cit.*, 422.


\[37\] Mahan, *From Sail to Steam*, 278.
III

THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE—ITS ORIGIN, ANALYSIS, AND IMPLICATIONS

It was the call to duty at the War College, as already noted, that set Mahan on the trail which guided him to his philosophy of sea power and placed him on the road leading directly to fame. Admiral Luce, detached from the command of the North Atlantic Fleet to assume the duties of this newly created Naval War College—where for a few brief weeks the naval officers were to study the higher art of their profession—wrote Mahan asking whether he would care to direct the work in strategy and tactics and instruct in naval history. Mahan replied enthusiastically that he would like the position very much—though doubting whether he had the special knowledge required, he felt that he possessed the capacity and perhaps the inherited aptitude for such a particular study.¹

¹Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 273. Cf. History of the United States Naval War College. This history is available only at Newport by special permission. Letter from Naval War College to writer, Sept. 19, 1936.

Mahan always acknowledged his indebtedness to Luce. At the time of the publication of his first sea power book he wrote Luce, "Whatever usefulness the book may be found to have the merit is ultimately due to yourself, but for whose initiative, it would never have been undertaken. But for the impulse you gave, I should still have been contented to drift on, smitten with indifference to the higher military considerations. . . . It is therefore in every way fitting that you should receive this acknowledgment at my hands, and I wish at the same time to thank you for the start you gave me." May 7, 1890, Luce Papers. Subsequently in preparing the story of his life, Mahan submitted certain pages to Luce and in this exchange a similar spirit is found, giving Luce credit for the movement. "Whatever my capacity or my subsequent work it was you who laid the train . . . and afterward touched it off . . . to be just all around it is essential that your part be known." Luce to Mahan, July 15, 1907, and Mahan to Luce, July 20, 1907, Luce Papers.
This call from Luce came in 1884 while Mahan was on duty off the coast of South America, but due to disturbances in some of the Central American states, coupled with a lapse of Departmental interest in the War College by the new Cleveland administration, nearly a year passed before the vessel returned to San Francisco and Mahan was detached. At the time Mahan welcomed neither the scene of delay nor the delay itself. From Panama he wrote to Luce in May 1885, "If you can, do get me ordered home, I have applied by this very mail; on my own account simply, without reference to the future." Yet this forced delay had its advantages. He could give thought to his task—and indeed it was no mean one—the task of eliciting from naval history, history made by ships and weapons of a kind wholly different from those then being employed, lessons which could be made useful for the future. On the one hand it was true, as he wrote Ashe, "To excogitate a system of my own, on wholly a priori grounds, would be comparatively simple and I believe wholly useless." On the other hand, however, with but little reading and much time for reflection, for the ship's library had but few books pertinent to his problem, Mahan's later

---

2 Thinking the War College might not open, Mahan entertained the idea of bringing forth some of his views on his own in book form. Mahan to Luce, May 16 [1885?], Luce Papers. When hopes for the college suddenly revived and Luce wanted Mahan to come, the latter stipulated the earlier request for time to study, adding an interesting bit of self analysis. "I think too in the quiet evolution of a book I am stronger than in the teacher's chair, but you must decide what is best—except the one original condition as to time." Ibid.

3 May 16 [1885?], Luce Papers.

4 Feb. 2, 1886, Flowers Collection.
lectures undoubtedly showed more originality than might otherwise have been the case. As he later commented, "Spinning cobwebs out of one's unassisted brain, without any previous absorption from external sources, was doubtless a somewhat crude process; yet it had advantages."  

Contemporary correspondence with Luce and Ashe confirms the account later given by Mahan as to the genesis of the sea power doctrine. He described his experience in these words:

While my problem was still wrestling with my brain there dawned upon me one of those concrete perceptions which turned inward darkness into light, gave substance to shadow. He who seeks finds, if he does not lose heart; and to me, continuously seeking, came from within the suggestion that control of the sea was a historic factor which had never been systematically appreciated and expounded. Once formulated consciously, this thought became the nucleus of all my writing twenty years then to come.

This general view was given special direction by his reading, in the English Club's library at Lima, Momsen's History of Rome, especially the Hanniballic episode. In his reminiscences written twenty years later he stated:

It suddenly struck me, whether by some chance phrase of the author I do not know, how different things might have been could Hannibal have invaded Italy by sea, as the Romans often had Africa, instead of by long land route; or could he, after arrival, have been in free communications with Carthage by water. This clew, once laid hold, I followed in the particular instance. It and the general theory already conceived threw on each other reciprocal illustration; and between the two my plan was formed by the time I reached home, in September, 1885.  

---

5 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 274.

6 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 276 et seq. See also Mahan to Luce, May 16 (1885); and Jan. 22, 1886, Luce Papers; Mahan to Ashe, Jan. 13, 1886, and Feb. 2, 1886, Flowers Collection.
This, then, was Mahan's proposed course: to investigate coincidentally the general and naval history with a view to demonstrating the influence of the events of the one upon the other, giving particular attention to the role played by the control of the sea or the absence thereof upon the course of history. He felt that time was not available and that necessity did not require original research for such a program.

The subject lay so much on the surface that my handling of it could scarcely suffer materially from possible future discovery. What such and such an unknown man had said or done on some backstairs, or written to some unknown correspondent, if it came to light, was not likely to affect the received story of the external course of military and political events.  

In the execution of this task, Mahan therefore relied upon the available published material which dealt with the period he first proposed to consider, 1660-1783.  

Three authors—Lapeyrouse-Bonfils, Jomini, and Martin—influenced his line of development sufficiently to merit comment. In his study of naval history, the first book upon which Mahan

Mahan further developed Hannibal's dependence on the sea in The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 15-21; modern scholarship interprets the Punic Wars with slightly different emphasis. Cambridge Ancient History (New York, Macmillan and Company, 1930), VIII, 35-6, 60-1.

7Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 284.

8The initial date was chosen largely because Mahan felt that the period following Westphalia marked the emergence of European nations in their modern positions struggling for existence and preponderance. Mahan to Luce, Jan. 22, 1886, Luce Papers. The end was dictated by "necessity to stop and take breath." Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 281. The English translation of Henri Martin's Histoire de la France, available to Mahan at the time, covered exactly this period.

9For other authors used see Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 279-80; Mahan to Luce, Apr. 24, 1886, Luce Papers.
chanced (the word is exact) was Lieutenant Lapeyrouse-Bonfils' story of the French navy, the chief merit of which was "the quiet, philosophical way of summing up causes and effects in general history, as connected with maritime affairs, which . . . corresponded closely with my own purpose. . . . Such treatment was with him only casual, but it opened to me new prospects."

Mahan's indebtedness to Jomini was considerable, especially in the realm of strategy. By him he was led to a critical study of naval campaigns; with naval conditions constantly in mind, he read and by analogy sought to develop a systematic study of naval war. Jomini's dictum that "the organized forces of the enemy are ever the chief objective" sank deep into Mahan. From this military strategist he also imbibed a fixed disbelief in the commonly accepted maxim that the general and statesman occupy unrelated fields; from his striking phrase "the sterile glory of fighting battles merely to win them," the sea power philosopher deduced the succinct pregnant sentence, "war is not fighting but business."

Mahan's close interest in the relation between the navy and commerce, i.e., the interdependence of commercial and maritime policies was awakened by a study of Colbert's manipulation of trade as given by Henri Martin in his History of France. This

10 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 278.

11 Mahan to Luce, Jan. 22, 1886, Luce Papers; Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 278, 282. Luce mentioned in a letter to Mahan that he had said in 1886, "we must find one who will do for naval science what Jomini did for military science." In the same letter he wrote that after Mahan's lectures he had added, "He is here; his name is Mahan." Luce to Mahan, July 15, 1907, Luce Papers.

12 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 283.
book served as "an introductory primer to this element of sea power. . . . New light was shed upon, and new emphasis given to the commonplace assertion of the relations between commerce and a navy; civil and military sea power."  

Arriving at home in September, 1885, the winter was spent in study and research, and it was not until near May that Mahan began to write. By September he had the whole, except the concluding chapter, on paper in lecture form. These lectures slightly revised and enlarged were published, in 1890, as The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783.

The first eighty-nine pages in this book are of a philosophical nature and contain, in more or less developed form, Mahan's conception of sea power. This conception was substantiated and given life and blood by a detailed treatment of the naval wars from Louis XIV to the fall of Napoleon, which period

13 Ibid., 281-2.

14 In From Sail to Steam (285) Mahan wrote that it was the end of May; yet one learns by an examination of Mahan-Luce correspondence that on May 1, he had sent some eighty pages for Luce's scrutiny. Mahan to Luce, May 1, 1886, Luce Papers.

Considering the period covered and the large amount of reading required, as well as the fact that Mahan was past forty-five and untrained for such work, the time consumed certainly was not great. As to the handicap of years he wrote Ashe, "I find alas that I am of an age when the brain is not in as good working order as it was." Jan. 13, 1886, Flowers Collection.

15 A combination of circumstances prevented the use of the lectures that fall. He wrote Ashe that he hoped the year's hard work would not be "resultless" and that the manuscripts would be found "tolerably interesting." Oct. 3, 1886, Flowers Collection.
marked the gradual mastery of the seas by England; it was re-
inforced by accounts of the contemporary battles of Yalu,
Santiago, Manila, and Tsu-shima; it was elaborated and devel-
oped in his voluminous magazine writing on contemporary inter-
national politics. 16 Naval history in the hands of this phil-
osopher became more than a mere chronicling of events; it be-
came an analysis of the meaning and significance of those events
with a deduction of their governing principles. Sea power in-
cluded not only military strength afloat that ruled the sea or
any part of it by force of arms, but equally "the peaceful com-
merce and shipping from which alone a military fleet naturally
and healthfully springs, and on which it securely rests." 17

The whole of history was really an epic of the sea. The
sea was a great highway, a wide common over which men might
pass in all directions with travel and traffic easier, safer,
and cheaper than by land. Domestic trade was but a part of the
business of a country bordering upon the sea; exchange of pro-
duce with foreign powers was an essential corollary. This nec-
essitated, however, a carrying medium and naturally every nation
wished that this shipping business be done by its own vessels.
Ships sailing to and from needed secure home ports, safe points

16"It is easy to say in a general way that the use and
control of the sea is and has been a great factor in the history
of the world; it is more troublesome to seek out and show its
exact bearing at a particular juncture. Yet, unless this is
done, the acknowledgment of general importance remains vague
and unsubstantial; not resting, as it should, upon a collection
of specific instances in which the precise effect has been made
clear, by an analysis of the conditions at the given moments."
Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, iii.

17Ibid., 28.
for trading, refuge, and defense, as well as potential protection enroute. As Mahan expressed it:

In these three things—production, with the necessity of exchanging products, shipping, whereby the exchange is carried on, and colonies, which facilitate and enlarge the operations of shipping and tend to protect it by multiplying points of safety—is to be found the key to much of the history, as well as of the policy of nations bordering upon the sea.\textsuperscript{18}

A broad general consideration of the sea, with its uses to mankind and the effects which its control or lack of control had had upon the peaceful developments and the military strength of nations, naturally led to a discussion of the elements or sources of sea power. Mahan enumerated the following as principal conditions which had affected sea power: (1) Geographical position, (2) Physical conformation and as connected therewith natural production and climate, (3) extent of territory, (4) number of population, (5) character of the people, (6) character of the government, including therein the national institutions.\textsuperscript{19} There was considerable scope within this framework for comments of a broad and general nature. Such comments, however, were always supported by specific examples drawn primarily from Spain, France, Holland, England and the United States. Throughout the whole discussion looms the practical problem of drawing inferences applicable to the United States. Though a more detailed examination of these references relative to the contemporary American situation will be made later, allusion to them will

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., 25-8.
\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., 28-9.
be made here to aid in giving definiteness to general statements as well as to bring attention to the practical concern with which Mahan was primarily occupied.

Geographical position was of prime importance. First of all a nation might be so located as to be neither forced to defend nor induced to seek extension of its territory via land with specific military and financial results—e.g., England as contrasted with France or Holland. Or again, position upon two large bodies of water tended to disperse rather than concentrate naval force—e.g., England as contrasted with France or the United States. Finally, a central position, with ports near major trade routes and a good base for hostile operation against probable enemies, was of great strategic advantage—e.g., emphasis was given to England’s position on the channel with its resultant control of North Sea trade; and particular stress was laid upon the weakness of the position of the United States for commerce destroying, since she possessed no ports near the great centers of trade.

The seaboard of a country was naturally one of its frontiers and the deeper and more numerous the harbors, especially if they were outlets of navigable streams, the greater would be the tendency for intercourse with the outside world. The

---

20 Ibid., 29-35.

21 The significance of an isthmian canal and the role of America in the Caribbean were also here discussed. Mahan’s views on these matters will be developed in Chapter VI.

22 For a discussion of this second element, see Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 35-42.
importance of even actual separation of a nation's territory by water, as this influenced sea power, came in for due attention—e. g., Great Britain and Ireland, Spain and Spanish Netherlands. Physical conditions, as to natural endowments of soil, climate, and the like, might draw or force a nation to the sea—e. g., England and Holland little endowed by nature took to the sea; France blessed with "extent delightfulness and richness of the land" did not;[23] the United States similarly blessed had likewise ignored those pursuits which promote a healthy sea power, and till the day should come when shipping again paid, "those who follow the limitations which lack of sea power placed upon the career of France may mourn that their own country is being led, by a like redundancy of home wealth, into the same neglect of that great instrument."[24]

The extent of territory was the last of the conditions affecting the development of a nation's sea power, which concerned the country itself as distinguished from the people who dwelt therein.[25] Mahan concentrated his attention on the military aspect, pointing out that not the total area but the proportion of the country's population to the length of its coast line and to the character of its harbors was the essential consideration—e. g., the Union's success in blockading was

---

[23] One contemporary reviewer questioned the validity of Mahan's abundance thesis for France in light of the recurring famines in that country during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; however the tone of the article as a whole was quite commendatory. J. K. Laughton, "Captain Mahan on Maritime Powers," Edinburgh Review, CLXXII, 420-53 (Oct. 1890).


[25] Ibid., 42-44.
interpreted as due solely to the weakness of an enemy scanty in number and unused to the sea.

When consideration was given to the number of inhabitants the more martial aspect was again uppermost. It was not the total population but the proportion which followed the sea, as shipbuilders or seafarers, that constituted a strong element of sea power forming a valuable reserve—e.g., the staying power of an industrial, commercial, and maritime England in contrast with an agricultural France was repeatedly proved during their long colonial wars; the deficiency of the United States in this respect Mahan thought was "patent to all the world" and could be remedied only through foundation of a large commerce under her own flag.

History affirmed "almost without exception" that aptitude for commercial pursuits had been a distinguishing feature of nations great upon the sea—e.g., the shopkeeping Dutch and English, the gold-thirsty Spanish and Portuguese, and the thrifty, hoarding French. The natural bent of a people toward trade viewed as an honorable as well as lucrative calling, involving of necessity the production of something to trade, was "the national characteristic most important in the development of sea power." National genius likewise manifested itself

26Ibid., 44-49.

27From an economic aspect the greater the territory inhabited by a numerous and productive people the greater would be the economic organization requiring oversea trading with its resultant influence upon sea power. Mahan did not specifically point out this fact under either territory or population but it is probably implied when all the "elements" are viewed compositely.

28For a discussion of this fifth element, the character of the people, see Ibid., 50-8.

29Ibid., 53.
in the capacity to plant "healthy colonies" which sprang from the felt wants and natural impulses of a whole people. The "healthy colony" rested upon more than placid satisfaction with gain alone; it contained the principle of growth accompanied by political ambitions-- e. g., the English as contrasted with the Dutch. The character of the colonist rather than the care of the home government, Mahan thought, was the basic principle upon which the growth of the colony depended. The good colonist settled down and identified himself with his new land and even though he might maintain recollections of his former home he had no restless eagerness to return-- e. g., the English as contrasted with the French. He immediately and instinctively sought to develop, in the broadest sense of the word, the resources of the new country-- e. g., the English as contrasted with the Spanish. Mahan felt that with other circumstances favoring, with legislative hindrances removed, and with the more remunerative enterprises filled, the "instinct for commerce, bold enterprise in the pursuit of gain, and a keen scent for the traces that lead to it," which Americans possessed, indicated that their national character in this most important element was admirably fitted for the development of sea power.

From a study of several specific instances drawn from the history of England, France, and Holland, Mahan concluded that the influence of government upon the sea career of its people worked in two distinct but closely related ways. In

30 Ibid., 57-8.
31 Ibid., 58-83.

Many critics of Mahan have often forgotten these general characteristics or conditions which he laid down as affecting
times of peace governmental policy could either favor or oppose the natural growth, or that wanting, seek to artificially stimulate or throttle industries and activities which would aid in the development of strong commercial power. The Colbertian policy of building sea power (through attention to production, shipping, colonies, and markets) which "withered away like Jonah's gourd when government favor was withdrawn" served as the shining example for the propagandist and publicist as illustrative of the influence of government upon both the growth and decay of sea power. From point of warlike preparation the action of the government was manifest in the attention or lack of attention given to the creation, equipment, and sound-maintenance of a naval force which included not only "a fleet but reserves and bases for operations." In the matter of foreign establishments of either a colonial or military nature, attention was called to the fact that the United States was deplorably weak. To provide such bases "would be one of the first duties of a government proposing to itself the development of the power of the nation at sea." 32

Having disposed in this general way of the six basic features affecting sea power, Mahan paused for a moment before starting his detailed analysis of naval wars of a century and a quarter, to which the rest of the volume was devoted, to

the development of sea power. Godkin, for example, in disparaging the bellicosity of Mahan, manifest in his The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, asserted that it was not ships and artillery "but the character of the people themselves and the government which owned the fleet" that rendered England supreme. Nation, LIXVII, 198-9 (Sept. 15, 1896). Could Godkin have forgotten, or possibly never have read, these pages in Mahan's magnum opus in which he dealt with the nature of the government and the character of the people? 32Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 83. Mahan also felt that the false economy of the Dutch in
state succinctly the inclusive role which the navy should play in a nation's life. "Naval strategy," he thought, "has for its end to found, support, and increase, as well in peace as in war, the sea power of a country." For the accomplishment of this objective his subsequent examination of history showed that the primary consideration was a decisive command of the sea. He declared:

It is not the taking of individual ships or convoys, be they few or many, that strikes down the money power of a nation; it is the possession of that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it, or allows it to appear only as a fugitive; and which by controlling the great common, closes the highways by which commerce moves to and from the enemy's shores. This overbearing power can only be exercised by great navies...\(^3^4\)

These navies, it might be added, had to operate according to certain general laws of strategy which had been fully established as a result of long years of naval combat.\(^3^5\) Ships of the line, not overly large but numerous, well manned with crew thoroughly trained, if adequately provided for with outlying bases, history had shown most efficacious. From a military viewpoint naval forces existed for offensive purposes; that is, the best defense was offense, with the fight carried to a definite issue. This necessitated the concentration of the fleet at decisive points—under no circumstances was the

\(^3^3\) Ibid., 89.
\(^3^4\) Ibid., 139.
\(^3^5\) Ibid., 8-9.
fleet to be divided or dispersed. The final destruction or total mastery of the enemy fleet was the primary consideration; privateering was definitely secondary. Such command of the sea permitted the maintenance of one's own lines of communication while throttling enemy trade, and, if necessary, provided means for close supervision of neutral commerce. With each of these items in mind—the ruinous consequences of inadequacy of preparation, the futility of privateering, the overwhelming importance of concentration of the fleet, and the validity of blockade—Mahan drew lessons for America.

In this general and rather philosophical manner in which Mahan interpreted the control of the sea in the story of the destiny of nations, little that was strictly new from point of view of facts was presented. The idea of sea power, if not the term itself, was as old as history and a knowledge of its determining importance was appreciated by Thucydides, Xerxes, and Themistocles. Indeed "as soon as it was found possible to use the seas as means of transport or communication the idea of sea power was born." 36 Mahan never laid claim to the right of discovery or even originality, though he was unaware, at the time, of predecessors such as Bacon and Raleigh who had epitomized his theme in a few words. He did concede himself, and none can deny him the honor though some might think it of dubious merit, a definite role in popularizing and making

effective the doctrine of sea power.

If any claim to originality be made for Mahan by his critics, it must rest upon his treatment or presentation of material. He was the Newton, living at an opportune moment, who formulated, substantiated, and expounded a doctrine inherently as old as the history of the sea. In his hands sea power received a broad basis; the military and naval, the political and commercial, were as hand and glove in his interpretation. Sea borne commerce made a nation great; security for this both in peace and war was essential. "Command of the sea" which would assure the possessor of the potential strength to win was a prerequisite. This command of the sea guaranteed, in war or peace, the continuance of maritime commerce with its exchange of finished produce for supplies and raw materials, and thus "simultaneously gave a new value to foreign commerce as a means to victory in war, and a new value to the apparatus of naval warfare as a means of promoting foreign commerce in peace time." The effectiveness of the navy, however, was dependent upon bases and distant stations. Territories, though acquired with this in view, might prove valuable from point of raw materials or markets; in this respect, strategic needs and economic ambitions neatly bolstered each other. In a somewhat similar manner, merchant marine and navy were interdependent, for as the navy rested upon the

37Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 276-325.
marine in war so did the marine rely upon the navy in peace. The sequence of industry, markets, control, navy, and bases was thus established with their interdependence forcibly brought home. Sea power was more than shore defense and commerce protection; sea power was essential to empire. National life, national trade, national prosperity, and the command of the sea were inextricably linked.

The due use and control of the sea [to quote Mahan] is but one link in the chain of exchange by which wealth accumulates; but it is the central link, which lays under contribution other nations for the benefit of the one holding it, and which history seems to assert, most surely of all gathers itself riches. 39

True and abiding national greatness rested upon sea power—this was Mahan’s thesis. The power and wealth of England were associated with her dependence upon and her command of the sea—this was his ever recurring text. Proper military mastery of the sea depended upon certain well established laws of strategy—this was his sermon derived from lessons of the past. The United States, he felt, could rise to her full stature among the nations of the world if she would only adequately appreciate the close relation of distant markets to her immense powers of production, for in the wake of such a realization would follow the establishment of a carrying link with a navy to protect it and colonies to serve as trading and military bases—this was his moral, this was his teaching, this was his central hope and abiding prayer.

Here was a philosophy of history neatly linking patriotism, politics, and economics; a philosophy of empire seemingly confirmed, moreover, by a study of the past. Fortunately or unfortunately, its formulation came in an era ready and waiting for such an exposition. The thesis by which Mahan hoped to convert his country to "go down to the sea in ships" was readily adaptable for use by other nations more anxious than his own to accept the challenge of empire and more eager to heed this call of the sea.
IV

THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE - ITS GENERAL RECEIPTION AND ITS FOREIGN UTILIZATION

The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783, released from the press in May 1890, was immediately and warmly received in both the United States and Great Britain, though the acclaim, relatively speaking, was louder and more insistent in the latter. Translations were subsequently made into German, Japanese, French, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. With certain qualifications as to the degree of praise and extent of translation, similar receptions were given his other major sea power books.¹

Only a brief résumé of this reaction, with illustrative selections, can be given here. Almost without exception a new departure was sensed and a veritable addition to naval history acknowledged.² The "philosophical aspect" of Mahan's


²For typical reactions see the following: Charles Francis Adams, "A Plea for Military History," Lee at Appomattox and Other Papers, 346; Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, CXLVIII, 576-584 (October 1890); J. K. Laughton, "Captain Mahan on Maritime Power," Edinburgh Review, CLXXII, 420-453 (October 1890); ibid., CLXXVII, 494-518 (April 1893); "Nauticus" (pen name), "Sea Power: Its Past and Its Future," Fortnightly Review, LIV, 849-868 (December, 1893), reprinted in The Living Age, CC,
explanation of maritime strength evidenced in his handling of the tangled thread of causation, and the controlling influence of naval operations over land campaigns loomed to the English Lord Sydenham as the author's chief accomplishments.\(^3\) Theodore Roosevelt, then Civil Service Commissioner, characterized the first book as "distinctively the best, the most important and also by far the most interesting book on naval history."\(^4\) To Mahan personally he wrote in a similar vein:

> During the last two days, I have spent half my time, busy as I am, in reading your book. That I found it interesting is shown by the fact that having taken it up, I have gone straight through and finished it. . . . It is a very good book--admirable; and I am greatly in error if it does not become a classic.\(^5\)

No inconsiderable number of foreign commentators saw the

\(^{3}\)G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 293 (February 1898).


\(^{5}\)Taylor, op. cit., 45.

At the time of Mahan's death Roosevelt wrote: "The book [The Influence of Sea Power upon History] could have been written only by a man steeped through and through in the peculiar knowledge and wisdom of the great naval expert who was also by instinct and training a statesman. . . . His interest was in the large side of his subject; he was more concerned with the strategy than tactics of both naval war and statesmanship." The Outlook, CIX, 85-6 (Jan. 15, 1915).
Mahanite moral, the author's desire to arouse the United States to a realization of her needs on the sea. Certain English critics wrote:

Though Captain Mahan is dominated by the philosophical spirit, and deals with his subject in a thoroughly scientific manner, a warmer motive than a love of science has led him to undertake the investigation. . . . The results of the inquiry are used didactically and for the benefit of the author's fellow citizens. . . . He has, of course, the circumstances of his own country definitely in view; and it is allowable to suppose that in publishing these lectures he has hoped to rekindle in the hearts of his fellow countrymen some desire to contest the supremacy of the sea. . . . 7

American reviewers likewise were impressed by the lessons which Mahan had sought to point out. The folly of false economy, the stupidity of non-preparedness, the impossibility of preparation on the spur of the moment, the unmanliness of submitting to wanton aggression, the too great reliance upon past records, the futility of privateering as more than a secondary factor—these were all forcibly commented upon. 8

Nor was Mahan's concern for the United States from the larger aspect of sea power as the basis for empire with its interrelationship of navy, bases, and marine passed up without notice. 9

---

6 Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine, CXLVIII, 577 (Oct. 1890).


9 The following words, which the editor of Harper's used
One lone critic raised his voice against the Mahanite preaching.\textsuperscript{10} Though granting Mahan great credit "for exploiting the main idea so ably and ... for finding a subject comparatively so fresh" and though predicting a strong influence upon future writers "one criticism of Mahan's able work we are obliged to make. In his constant tendency to point a moral for our fresh water Congressmen, and to preach the gospel of American commerce, and a new navy, he mars to a considerable degree the force of his thesis."\textsuperscript{11}

Not a few reviewers immediately sensed the probability of repercussions beyond the borders of the United States. They saw that though Mahan's moral might be intended for Americans, the thesis of sea power, as the author had presented it, could not be restricted. While an English commentator was finding in these volumes "without rival" lessons "equally valuable to the historian, the statesman, the naval strategist, and the
to characterize Mahan's philosophy, indicate that the sea power author had not written in vain and that his doctrine was being given circulation: "The lesson of this long story to the United States is not far to seek but it is deeper than appears on the surface. It is not only that without sea power a nation must take a low rank in this competing world, but that lacking this it lacks one vital element of internal prosperity. It is that it cannot properly develop itself if it permits itself to be hemmed in and shut from the markets and exchanges of the world. ..." Harper's, LXXXVII, 962-3 (November, 1893).

The New York Tribune also caught the vision, saw that here were "matters of grave importance" to the United States, and pointed to the "lesson." New York Tribune, May, 18, 1890 and Jan. 22, 1893.

\textsuperscript{10} In evaluating this statement recall that the reception of Mahan's major sea power books, and not that of his partisan republished magazine articles, is now being considered.

\textsuperscript{11} Literary World, XXI, 217-18 (July 5, 1890).
tactician," an American editor was telling his readers that here were the "most striking and suggestive volumes that have appeared in many years touching the development and strength of national power." In the highest and best sense," wrote J. K. Laughton, "Captain Mahan's book [The Influence of Sea Power upon History] is a treatise on the philosophy of history, of history teaching by examples." The significance of facts now shone forth, "projected like an electric beam on the clouds of heaven, so as to compel the notice of all who come within its comprehensive survey." Mahan's second book [The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire], addressed more to the general reader, was, in many respects, even more significant. Though it claimed the attention of naval men, it was more important to "the statesman, the administrator, the shipowner, the merchant, and the tradesman."

How is one to account for this immediate and world-wide acclaim? In the first place, Mahan had succeeded in presenting a timely and somewhat novel interpretation of national power resting upon a broad foundation. He presented it, moreover, in a straight-forward manner with a strong didactic quality which gave it a definite appeal to the practical man. In simple,

12 A. H. Johnson, The English Historical Review, VIII, 788 (October 1893); Harper's, XXXVII, 962-3 (November 1893). It was the causes and processes by which English greatness had been achieved that the powers were anxious to learn. Once these processes were thought to have been divined and interpreted, as Mahan had done, an immediate desire to imitate them would follow—so predicted the discerning reviewer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, CXLVIII, 576 (October 1890). See also American Historical Review, IV, 719-21 (July 1899).

lucid manner, with eloquence and weight, the naval theme was
the warp upon which the weft of national greatness was woven,
and with consummate skill political, economic, and general mil-
itary history had been intertwined to form a pattern which was
calculated to inspire and direct his fellow countrymen in their
creation of national greatness. In that endeavor Mahan had un-
wittingly, or wittingly, revealed the modern world to itself
and furnished it with perhaps its most systematic formulation
of its guiding philosophy of action—Welt- und Macht-Politik.

Timeliness contributed much to the acceptance and util-
ization of Mahan's sea power thesis. This carefully woven and
historically substantiated doctrine of power neatly synchro-
nized with the new colonialism which was itself a product of
the new industrialism. The last decades of the nineteenth cen-
tury were years of transition that witnessed new departures in
international affairs. Bismarck had been busily consolidating
the empire established in 1871 and had reluctantly followed
merchant adventures in their colonial enterprises, but der Neue
Kurs, following shortly the ascension of William II, exhibited
colonial expansion and world power as the ambitions of both
sovereign and nation. The German Admiralty, separate from the
War Office, was created in 1889; during the following year
Heligoland was secured, African holdings were confirmed and
enlarged, and the Kiel Canal neared completion. England, with
France and Russia still her rivals, was finally induced to pass
the Naval Defense Act of 1889, which provided for an increase
of seventy ships during the next four years. 14 The United

14 "The Truth about the Navy" series, promoted by Captain
Fisher, later Lord Fisher of Kilverstone, and published by
States was just making appropriations in 1890 for her initial battleships and Italy was laying the foundations of her navy.

The decade of the 'nineties saw increased rivalry among the nations in commercial and colonial aggrandizement, marked by the downfall of the Spanish colonial empire, by the further partitioning of Africa, by the creation of spheres in China, by the emergence of Japan as a power with which to reckon, and by the increase of importance attached to the control of the sea. As circumstances of the time gave to Seeley's philosophical study the actuality of a political pamphlet, so did Mahan's books now serve as sort of a gospel for the nations taking part in this expansion. With writings weighty, well reasoned and provocative of thought and discussion, and timely in the extreme, "the ears of statesmen and publicists were opened, and a new note began to sound in world politics." 15 "The profundity of his views and the lucidity of his reasoning attracted the attention of statesmen of all nations; and more than any American scholar of his day he has affected the course of world politics." 16

W. T. Stead in the Pall Mall Gazette, were instrumental in reawakening England to her naval needs. Gerard Fiennes, Sea Power and Freedom, 219.


16 Quotation is from a resolution drawn up by Carl Russell Fish, Guy Stanton Ford, and Charles W. Ramsdell, and adopted by the American Historical Association at its annual meeting held in Chicago on December 30, 1914. Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation Files, General File, No. 2473-75.
Mahan's influence was most immediate and direct in England, Germany, and Japan; but his most important books were translated into French, Russian, Italian, and Spanish as well as into Japanese and German. The special import of Mahan's writing for the English was well brought out by their press. The English had done great deeds of which they were not unaware, but Mahan's analysis of sea power brought them an added understanding of the significance of these deeds. In evaluating The Influence of Sea Power upon History, Blackwood's reviewer thought that "notwithstanding the more general scope indicated by its title, the book may almost be said to be a scientific inquiry into the causes which have made England great;" and though naval officers and students might find "instruction on nearly every page," the average reader could and should learn from it how his "country acquired her present position amongst the nations, and how that position may be maintained."

Mahan made no secret of his admiration for British naval achievements or of his affection for many British institutions.


"His first great work . . . may fairly be said to have achieved a greater influence upon the public mind of Europe and America than any other historical book of our generation." American Historical Review, XX, 445-6 (January 1915).

17Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, CXLVII, 576, 584 (October 1890). For other comments of a similar nature see A. H. Johnson, The English Historical Review, VIII, 784-6 (October 1893); J. K. Laughton, "Captain Mahan on Maritime Power," Edinburgh Review, CLXXII, 420-53 (October 1890); ibid., CLXXVII, 484-518 (April 1895). Professor Laughton thought Mahan's books were a "splendid apotheosis of English courage and English endurance, of English skill and English power."
He even went further, as has been noted, and from 1902 to the British declaration of War in 1914 called attention to the growing German menace urging all good Britishers to rally to the historic call of their country. To determine the extent to which the English heeded Mahan's admonitions is beyond the scope of this inquiry, though some indication of his influence can be gained from this appraisal by a competent English authority.

"Speaking as an outsider, Captain Mahan wielded a force which could not have been extended by any British writer. ... The importance of the service thus opportunely rendered by the brilliant American writer can hardly be over-rated." 19

---

18 Supra, 24-6.

At the time of Mahan's death the naval correspondent of the English Morning Post wrote: "He was the first to elaborately and comprehensively ... formulate the philosophy of Britain's sea power, and from time to time, as occasions of difficulty arose, he published an essay or an article which indicated the right course for Great Britain to follow." New York Times, Dec. 2, 1914.

19 G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XXXI, 297 (February 1898).

Allowing for exaggeration, some conception of how the English hung upon his word may be gained from this newspaper report: "The English people look upon him as a foreigner who understands the source of their power and influence in the world and ... every word falling from his lips is listened to with eagerness as the judgment of an oracle." This was written by the English correspondent of the New York Tribune, July 22, 1904. For correction of this over-emphasis upon their welcome of Mahan's every suggestion, see G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 292-300 (February 1898); "Exoubitor" (pen name), "Admiral Mahan's Warning," Fortnightly Review, XCIV, 224-24 (August 1910).

For further evaluation of Mahan's influence upon the policies of foreign countries, including Great Britain, see the following: Louis M. Hacker, "Incendiary Mahan - A Biography," Scribner's, LXV, 263 et. seq. (April, 1934); Lord Brassey, "Position of British Navy," Review of Reviews, XVII, 62-7 (January 1896); Charles De Kay, "Authors at Home: Captain A. T. Mahan in New York," The Critic, XXXII, 353-5 (May 28, 1898); Bradley A. Fiske, "Naval Power," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, XXVIII, 683-736 (1911); Paris Figaro cited by Current
Mahan has frequently been alluded to as the spiritual progenitor of the German navy. When, under pressure of its growing industries and teeming population, Germany was ready to forsake the Bismarckian ideal of a purely continental empire for dreams of extra-European expansion, she found Mahan's books available for use. As Von Tirpitz later wrote, Germany felt that without a sea power to protect her industries she would have ceased to be a European Great Power.

The German government had Mahan's sea power series, in translation, placed on all German warships and supplied to all public libraries, schools, and government institutions. The Kaiser sent Poulteny Bigelow a telegram on May 26, 1894, of which the following is an excerpt:

Opinion, LVIII, 103-4 (February 1915); U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, XLI, 1-8 (1914); Gerard Fienes, op. cit. (1918); Allan Westcott, Mahan on Naval Warfare--Selections from the Writings of Rear-Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan (with a brief biographical introduction), (1918); Sea Power, VII, 125 (September 1919); World's Work, XXXVIII, 569-71 (October 1919); Taylor, op. cit. (1919); C. S. Alden and R. Earle, Makers of Naval Tradition (1925); J. M. Kenworthy, "Alfred Thayer Mahan," Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, I; W. D. Puleston, "Mahan: Naval Philosopher," Scribner's, XCVI, 294-6 (November 1934); Mauritz A. Hallgren, The Tragic Fallacy, 92-100 (1937); see also English and American newspaper comments and editorials at the time of his death.

For Mahan's influence upon German policy, see citations above under footnote 19; also references below under footnote 21; E. L. Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy.

Von Tirpitz, My Memoirs, I, 144.

For the most scholarly and enlightening treatment of the rise of the German navy, see Eckart Kehr, Schachtflottenbau und Parteipolitik, 1894-1902 (Berlin, 1930), which deals carefully with the economic, social, and political background, and the subsequent enlistment of major forces including of course the significant work of the Flottenverein. For a short review of this book, see Charles Beard, "Making a Bigger and Better Navy," New Republic, LXVIII, 223-6 (Oct. 14, 1931).
I am just now, not reading but devouring Captain Mahan's book [The Influence of Sea Power upon History], and am trying to learn it by heart. It is a first class work and classical in all points. It is on board all my ships and constantly quoted by my Captains and officers.  

Mahan, writing in 1907, stated that so far as he knew more of his works had been translated into Japanese than into any other language. Moreover he added that he had had much pleasant correspondence with many Japanese officers and that no people had shown closer or more interested attention and none more fruitfully so.  

Here, too, the government placed translations of Mahan's more important books in all schools and the naval and military colleges adopted The Influence of Sea Power upon History as a textbook. Thus did Japan prepare for Tsu-Shima.  

The Paris Figaro in retrospect considered Captain Mahan's genius had lain not so much in his new and highly original conception of history, remarkable as that was, as in the reduction of principles of naval strategy to formulas workable by any great power affected. Continued this foreign journal:  

Germany, for instance, followed his teaching by strengthening her fleet until it involved risks, if challenged, to the supremacy of any power whatever. Japan took her cue from Mahan by making her squadrons effective against any feasible combination against her in the waters of the East. France abandoned her theory of tactical defensive afloat and made her fleet supreme in the Mediterranean waters.

---

22 Taylor, op. cit., 131-2.  
23 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 303.  
Great Britain altered her high-sea policy by adopting the plan of concentration in home waters.25

In evaluating the political influence of Mahan's works upon foreign powers we must exercise discretion lest we fall into the fallacy of having sequence prove cause and effect. It is not altogether easy to say just how far Mahan was prophet and how far herald. In light of the signs of the time—the increasing contraction of the world, the growing population, the entry of new peoples into the comity of nations, the expanding of industries with their demands for markets, raw materials, and capital outlets—one must admit that the winds were already blowing in the direction of maritime expansion and new naval rivalries ere Mahan's philosophical thesis was enunciated. Statesmen were sorely in need of pretexts for armaments and Mahan was the author of the gospel from which their texts were chosen—he became their high priest and prophet; his writing, the justification of their acts.

Professors Sloane and Hacker have shed further light upon the role played by Mahan on the European stage. The former has made a cautious appraisal:

The ears which heard alike in England and Germany were only too receptive, the grasp of national understanding only too swift and subsequent activities only too baneful.26

The latter has given a damning indictment:

It was inevitable that the English-German imperialistic rivalry should have ended in struggle: it was this American's unenviable distinction however to have armed both foes, ideologically and physically, for the contest. He had written the texts, furnished the arguments, nagged on to greater efforts the faltering; he had made possible the breaking down of dissent and the regimentations of populations; and his teachings had converted a dark contest between two capitalist groups into a holy cause. 27

By way of summary it seems safe to say that though the convincing arguments for the renewed imperial and naval rivalry were often, if not chiefly, derived, directly or indirectly, from Mahan's analysis of the influence of sea power upon history; and though it be granted that "it is very seldom . . . perhaps unique, in the history of the world, that historical writings have done so much to influence the policy of nations as have the writings of Captain Mahan," 28 it should be added that these great developments would undoubtedly have taken place for reasons of national policy aside from any Mahanite exposition or substantiation.


V

THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE-
FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR THE UNITED STATES

To view Mahan on the European stage alone, however, does neither justice to his own inmost conviction and purpose, nor to his wider influence upon his contemporary world. His primary concern was the indoctrination of his fellow-countrymen with the importance and significance of the sea power doctrine for the United States. Though foreign governments or agents, be they merchants, shipbuilders, big navy men, armament makers, naval officers, expansionists, statesmen, or publicists, might utilize his thesis for their own ends, Mahan was first and always an American naval officer seeking to arouse his own country from its lethargy and indifference—calling it to assert itself, to take its place among the powers, and to gain for itself its fair share in the good things of life.

Mahan's peculiar interpretation of history had led him to forsake his early anti-imperialism—as seen in the statement "the very suspicion of an imperial policy was hateful"—and to advocate that "no nation, certainly no great nation, should henceforth maintain the policy of isolation." Once his own outlook was broadened, once convinced of the vital truth of his sea power doctrine for his own country, Mahan

---

1Mahan to Ashe, July 26, 1884, Flowers Collection.
2Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 324. Cf. Mahan, Retrospect and Prospect, 17-8.
labored long and arduously to enlighten others. His convers-

sion was followed by a proselytism marked with moral earnest-

ness of purpose, mystical certainty of mission, evangelical

fervor and unrelenting effort in prosecution, yet tempered

withal by a fair appreciation of the difficulties to be en-

countered and the obstacles to be overcome.

In his very first lectures which dealt with the vital,

natural, and human elements or conditions affecting sea power,

and from which were deduced—supplemented by an examination of

history—certain relationships between prosperity at home, over-

sea trade and shipping, naval power and colonial bases, Mahan

continuously bore in mind the contemporary American situation.

So frequently was the picture of his own country brought to

the fore that one would have been safe in concluding, even if

Mahan had not definitely stated it himself, 3 that the whole

analysis was merely an introductory historical background on

which to sketch the real portrait. He sought to evaluate the

actual and potential advantages and disadvantages which the

United States enjoyed in sea power. Never were the conditions

of the United States lost sight of or opportunities to moralize

passed up. Indeed one of Mahan's fellow officers wrote him:

I have just finished reading your book and

cannot refrain from writing to congratulate you

upon its value and success. . . . I was at first

disposed to doubt the advisability of pointing

the moral by referring to our conditions, our

uncertain and erroneous policies, and want of

strength, but finally concluded that, in and out of season, it is advisable and even a solemn professional and patriotic duty to call attention to the lamentable state of affairs and the ostrich like conduct of those who legislate for us.  

It is now time to turn attention to a definite examination of Mahan's reactions to the task he set himself in his magnum opus of examining "just how far the conditions of the United States involve serious danger, and call for action on the part of the government in order to build again her sea power."  

Government action since the Civil War, faithfully reflecting the bent of controlling—though Mahan hoped not truly representative—elements of the country, had been concerned with production and internal development. Consequently peaceful shipping with its protecting navy and colonies, the remaining links in sea power, had suffered. The extent, delightful-ness and richness of the land had turned America's interests to internal development and Mahan saw duplicated, in the blessings of nature, those factors which had done much to turn France from a sea career. It was patent to the world that the United States did not have a sea-faring group adequate to her needs or proportionate to her coast line and population. Such a group could be developed through a national merchant

---

4Charles H. Stockton to Mahan, June 30, 1890 (cited by Taylor, OP. cit., 161-2).
6Ibid., 84.
7Ibid., 39.
shipping and its related industries. The problem of the creation of a merchant marine, in the absence of strong interests convinced of its necessity, was one calling for governmental action and one whose solution, whether by subsidy or free trade, really rested with the economist rather than with the military officer. Mahan, personally, was convinced that if legislative hindrances were removed and more remunerative fields filled up, the appearance of sea power would not long be delayed; for in national character, that most important of all conditions affecting the development of sea power, the Americans ranked high. "The instinct for commerce, bold enterprise in the pursuit of trade, and a keen scent for the trails that lead to it, all exist. . . ."

Colonies attached to the mother country afforded "the surest means of supporting sea power abroad." Mahan held no hope for his country in this respect, for "such colonies the United States has not and is not likely to have;" and if restricted to merely naval stations, the sentiment of the country was indifferent if not hostile to them. Yet without such foreign establishments, either colonial or military, our warships would be

like land birds, unable to fly far from their own shores. To provide resting places for them, where they can coal and repair, would be one of the first duties of a government proposing to itself the development of the power of the nation at sea.

---

8 Ibid., 49.  
9 Ibid., 88.  
10 Ibid., 57-8.  
11 Ibid., 83.  
12 Ibid.
Mahan felt that his country urgently needed a strong naval arm. The defense of sea ports from capture, the prevention of an effective blockade, and the assurance that "the trade and commerce of the country should remain, as far as possible, unaffected by an external war," demanded a force afloat capable of taking the offensive as the surest path to certain defense. It was necessary that the enemy be kept not only out of our ports but also far from our coasts. 13 History had warned that a navy without national shipping as a basis was an artificial creation and sooner or later bound to wither; but even granted the United States would develop a great national shipping—of which Mahan was none too hopeful—he was still skeptical, in light of her distance from other powers, whether a sufficient navy would follow. 14

Save for Alaska, the United States had no possession inaccessible by land and the weakest frontier, the Pacific, was far removed from the most dangerous of possible enemies. With internal resources boundless in comparison to present needs, Mahan said we could live by ourselves and off ourselves in "our little corner." But he continued:

Should that little corner be invaded by a new commercial route through the Isthmus, the United States in her turn may have the rude awakening of those who have abandoned their share in the common birthright of all people, the sea. 15

13 Ibid., 84-7.
14 Ibid., 88.
15 Ibid., 42.
"The motive," he concluded, "if any there be, which will give the United States a navy, is probably now quickening in the Central American Isthmus;" and he added, "let us hope it will not come to birth too late."\(^{16}\) Once a Central American canal was successfully built, the Caribbean would become one of the great highways of trade and would bring in its wake the interests of all the great commercial powers. Aloofness from international complications could no longer be tolerated. Preponderance of the United States in this geographical area would have to be secured and would involve, among other things, the acquisition of Caribbean bases and the creation of a navy capable of guaranteeing freedom of communications with the mainland.\(^{17}\)

The primacy of Mahan's concern for his own country admits of no doubt; it is self-evident in the very inception, development, and nature of his *Influence of Sea Power upon History*. Moreover, innumerable magazine articles supplemented this and other studies in the sea power series; and due to the nature of the articles and the manner of publication, they reached a wider audience in America than did his more scholarly endeavors. Of the subjects dealt with some were definitely professional, as the size, composition, and disposition of fleets, naval events in contemporary wars, and the like. Others were of broader scope and of more general interest, dealing with the whole gemut of international problems which claimed


\(^{17}\) *Ibid.*, 33-5.
the attention of his country—the Monroe Doctrine, the acquisition and then the fortification of Panama, the expansion into the Pacific, the annexation of Hawaii, the relation of the United States to her new dependencies, the Open Door, the World Cruise, naval expansion, the moral aspects of war, the scope and limitations of arbitration, and the possibility and desirability of peace. 18 In his articles Mahan developed, enlarged, further expounded, and justified his conception of the role which the United States should pursue. 19 He was distressed with the provincialism of America; she lived in her "own little corner," the Jack Horner of nations, indifferent alike to her own best interests and to the duties and responsibilities incumbent upon a great power. Mahan opposed this habitual

18 Hacker gives an illuminating sketch of Mahan, picturing him on the European stage with economic and social data and interpretation; yet he exaggerates certain aspects. To say that Mahan "thought and felt like an Englishman," that his "spiritual home was England" may need clarification; and to say that "the United States [1865-1914]. . . is distant and shadowy" certainly needs qualification; but to say that "most of his more important essays were written for English magazines and were never republished in his own country" needs definite correction, even if intended to apply to the period after his retirement. "The Incendiary Mahan: A Biography," Scribner's, XCV, 265, 312 (April 1934).

19 Horace E. Scudder, editor of the Atlantic Monthly, had been impressed by the general tone of the views which Mahan had advanced in his Influence of Sea Power upon History, and particularly so by Mahan's comment relative to "our little corner" and the exposed condition of the Pacific coast in the event of the construction of an isthmian canal. He suggested to Mahan that he further develop his views in this respect. The result was Mahan's first published magazine article, which Mr. Scudder entitled "The United States Looking Outward"—appropriately so thought Mahan who subsequently wrote, "we were looking, but we had not got beyond that point where a baby vaguely follows with its eyes something which has caught its attention but not entered its understanding." "Retrospect and Prospect," World's Work, February 1902, reprinted in Retrospect and Prospect, 12, 22.
concentration upon internal affairs and this pursuit of a commercial policy wholly defensive in outlook. Though home markets might be preserved for home industries by protection, yet such a policy was of doubtful validity in the development of those essential markets beyond the sea. He thought American temperament would make a channel, once the opportunities for gain abroad were understood and once the relation of foreign markets to our own immense powers of production were appreciated. 20

In surveying the conditions of 1890, Mahan noted the restlessness in the world as significant if not ominous. The internal state of Europe affected us only indirectly, if at all. European states, however, were more than continental rivals; "they cherish also inspiration for commercial extension, for colonies and for influence in distant regions which may

20 Mahan thought that Blaine and his reciprocify presaged a brighter future in this respect. The United States Looking Outward," Atlantic Monthly, December 1890, reprinted in The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, 5. "Joyfully," so Mahan asserted later, had he quoted Blaine in saying, "'tis not an ambitious destiny for so great a country as ours to manufacture only what we can consume or produce only what we can eat.'" Retrospect and Prospect, World's Work, February 1902, reprinted in Retrospect and Prospect, 22.

Mahan frequently returned to this matter of protection and interpreted it as an indication of undue concern with internal resources, production, and development. Reciprocit was the logical corollary of expansion which was merely an increase of power and scope to act. A Twentieth-Century Outlook," Harper's, September 1897, reprinted in The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, 237 et. seq. In the long run American inventiveness and energy saved the day, however, and "triumphed over the enervating influence of protection." Retrospect and Prospect, World's Work, February 1902, reprinted in Retrospect and Prospect, 20.
bring and, even under our present contracted policy, have
brought them into collision with ourselves. 21 The unsettled
political conditions prevalent in Haiti, Central America, and
in the Pacific Islands, especially Hawaii, when combined with
great military or commercial importance, contained dangerous
germs of international strife. The Samoan and Bering Sea con-
troversies and the aggressiveness of Germany in the Pacific,
in Africa and in South America were noted. 22 It was necessary
that the United States take cognizance of this restlessness
and aggressiveness. It was time for her to awaken and look
outward. Mahan would have agreed with Lowell that "new occa-
sions teach new duties and time makes the ancient good unsouth."
It was essential for national policy to be forward looking and
for statesmen to keep abreast of the times. Conditions at the
close of the century were fundamentally altered from those ex-
isting at the beginning;

it is not only that we are larger, stronger, have,
as it were, reached our majority, and are able to
go out into the world. That alone would be a dif-
fERENCE of degree, not of kind. The great differ-
ence between the past and the present is that we
them, as regards close contact with the power of
the chief nations of the world, were really in a
state of political isolation which no longer ex-
ists. 23

The lapse of a century had altered conditions; the face of the
world had changed, economically and politically. 24 Wrote the

---

21 Mahan, "The United States Looking Outward," Atlantic
Monthly, December 1890, reprinted in The Interest of America
In Sea Power, Present and Future, 7.

22 Ibid., 7-8, 15. See also Mahan, "The Future in Relation
to American Naval Power," Harper's, October, 1895; reprinted in
ibid., 163.
23 Ibid., 146. See also ibid., 142-3.
24 Ibid., 148.
expansionist advocate:

Whether they will or no, Americans must now begin to look outward. The growing production of the country demands it. An increasing volume of public sentiment demands it. The position of the United States, between the two Old Worlds and the two great oceans, makes the same claim, which will soon be strengthened by the creation of the new link joining the Atlantic and the Pacific. The tendency will be maintained and increased by the growth of the European colonies in the Pacific, by the advancing civilization of Japan, and by the rapid peopling of our Pacific States.25

There were other calls than the commercial, strategical, and political. Self-preservation demanded growth; a healthy nation had to look outward just as a healthy church had to have its mission posts, if stagnation and decay were to be avoided. But beyond and above all selfish interests was the welfare of Euro-American culture which was at stake. The Pacific was destined to be the scene not only of a thriving commerce but of a gigantic struggle of races, civilizations and religions. With her frontage on the Pacific the United States thus stood guard over the preservation of Western Christian civilization. For that task she must not be found wanting; for that struggle she had to be prepared. 26

Just what did this "looking outward" and this taking "a twentieth-century outlook" involve? Primarily it would demand a fundamental change in the mental attitude of Americans toward maritime affairs. It would mean a shift from

26 "A Twentieth-Century Outlook," Harper's, September 1897, reprinted in Ibid., 264 et passim.
the complete occupation with internal problems; it would mean the construction of a modern navy and adequate coast defenses; it would mean the acquisition of outlying bases with special attention to the Isthmus, Caribbean, and the Pacific; it would mean a revival of interest in American shipping—in brief, it would necessitate a recognition of the new and changed conditions of the day along with the realization of the rights, the duties, and the responsibilities of the United States as a world power. As Mahan cast his glance outward he felt that there was no sound reason to believe that the world had passed into a period of assured peace. Neither sanctions nor international law nor justice of a cause would bring fair settlement if strong political necessity be opposed by comparative weakness.27 Declared Mahan:

We are not living in a perfect world and we may not expect to deal with imperfect conditions by methods ideally perfect. Time and staying power must be secured for ourselves by that rude and imperfect, but not ignoble arbiter, force,—force potential and force organized—which so far has won, and still secures, the greatest triumphs of good in the checkered history of mankind.28

One must argue on somewhat equal terms and every danger of a military character to which the United States is exposed can be met best outside her own territory—at sea. Preparedness for naval war—preparedness against naval attack and for naval offense—is preparedness for anything that is likely to occur.29


28Mahan, "A Twentieth Century Outlook," Harper's, September 1897, reprinted in ibid., 244-5.

How did Mahan's America stand in this matter of organized force? It was a "sober, just, and reasonable cause of deep national concern" that the nation neither had nor cared to have its sea frontiers defended nor a navy of sufficient power to weigh seriously as a diplomatic or military factor. This was no light matter; issues of vital moment were at stake and the present generation as trustee for its successors must not be faithless to its charge. Mahan was fearful of the fruits of improvidence and expressed himself in these words:

"Failure to improve opportunity, where just occasion arises, may entail upon posterity problems and difficulties which, if overcome at all—it may then be too late—will be so at the cost of blood and tears that timely foresight might have spared."

This looking outward, this keeping abreast of the times, required not only organized force which would weigh seriously as a diplomatic or military factor but also demanded acquisition of such outlying positions as would confer mastery of essential water routes. The United States had reached her natural frontiers,


A cordial understanding with Great Britain should be one of the first of America's external interests, thought Mahan. Due to her great navy and strong positions near our coasts she was the most formidable of possible foes. Mahan, "The United States Looking Outward," Atlantic Monthly, December 1890, reprinted in ibid., 27.
arrested on the south by the rights of a race
wholly alien to us, and on the north by a body
of states of like traditions to our own, whose
freedom to choose their own affiliations we re-
spect, we have come to the sea. In our infancy
we bordered upon the Atlantic only, our youth
carried our boundary to the Gulf of Mexico; to-
day maturity sees us upon the Pacific. Have we
no right or no call to progress in any direc-
tion? Are there for us beyond the sea horizon
none of those essential interests, of those evi-
dent dangers, which impose a policy and confer
rights?

"This is the question," wrote Mahan in 1893, "that long has
been looming upon the brow of a future now rapidly passing
into the present." 32

To this question, for Mahan, there was but one answer.
The signs of the time bade us no longer be "bound and swathed
in the traditions of our own eighteenth century." 33 The les-
sions of history, the fruits as it were, of his sea power
studies, were called upon to bear witness:

Not all at once did England become the great
sea power which she is, but step by step, as op-
portunity offered she has moved on to the world-
wide pre-eminence now held by English speech, and
by institutions sprung from English germs 34. . . .
It then could have been said to her, as it is now
said to us, "Why go beyond your own borders? With-
in them you have what suffices your needs and those
of your population. There are manifold abuses with-
in to be corrected, manifold miseries to be relieved.
Let the outside world take care of itself. Defend
yourself, if attacked; being, however, always care-
ful to postpone preparation to the extreme limit

32 Mahan, "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power," Forum, March
1893, reprinted in ibid., 35-6.

33 Mahan, "A Twentieth-Century Outlook," Harper's, Sep-
tember 1897, reprinted in ibid., 22 et. seq.

34 Mahan, "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power," Forum, March
1893, reprinted in ibid., 50.
of imprudence. 'Sphere of influence,' 'part in the world,' 'national prestige,'--there are no such things; or if there be, they are not worth fighting for." 35

Mahan's message for his fellow Americans was: read history carefully; appraise international questions intelligently; acquire true historical perspective; appreciate the inextricable linking of national trade, national prosperity and national greatness with an adequate control of the sea; learn to realize that as world conditions alter so must also national policies alter; play a man's role and play it worthily; cultivate friendly relations with Great Britain; be not misled by false messiahs who speak of a perfect world; fear not the use of righteous force firmly and opportunely employed; be prepared to defend Christian civilization against the onslaughts of Eastern Asia; recognize as trustees of future generations that sins of omission may be more disastrous than sins of commission; be fully aware that not only national interest but the welfare of the world is advanced by expansion beneficently pursued.

This Mahanite message was translated into a definite program of action. It may be summarized as dominance in the Caribbean, equality and cooperation in the Pacific, and interested abstention from the strictly continental rivalries of the European powers. The fulfillment of this program demanded the acquisition of strategic bases and the construction of a modern navy, supplemented by adequate coast defenses and

---

a prosperous national shipping. Actual accomplishment, however, Mahan well knew would rest upon whether the arbiter, public opinion, cast a favorable or unfavorable decision. He expressed himself directly concerning the problems in hand, by writing for such magazines as the Atlantic Monthly, the Forum, Harper's New Monthly Magazine, the North American Review, McClure's Magazine, the Independent, the World's Work, Leslie's Magazine, Scribner's Magazine, the Engineering Magazine, Collier's Weekly, the Scientific American, and the Century Magazine.

In the following chapters attention will be concentrated upon the major interests of Mahan for the United States—dominance in the Caribbean, cooperation in the Pacific, naval preparedness, and the morality or justification of expansion and of war—with an attempt to indicate more fully the nature of these interests and their resultant influence. The reception given to his many books and to his numerous magazine articles, their use by Congressmen, statesmen and other expansionist publicists (especially when indebtedness was acknowledged), friendships with outstanding leaders of the day, as Henry Cabot Lodge and Theodore Roosevelt—all these will be called upon to testify. The difficulty, even the virtual impossibility, of determining with a high degree of exactitude the influence which an individual exerts upon his contemporaries is recognized. A sketch, more or less distinct, with the general role portrayed, should, nevertheless, be practicable, desirable and valuable. If in the development of the story, undue emphasis seems to rest on Mahan, it is not Carlylean hero
worship. Mahan appears rather as a child of his age, an age of budding imperialism. It was an imperialism, so far as America was concerned, which, in the beginning, was not primarily more the fruit of capitalism and contemporary economic pressures, than a recrudescence of the century old, nation old urge to expand—an urge most succinctly expressed in the wider meaning of the phrase "manifest destiny," a destiny which embodied inevitability in its very nature, beneficence in its purpose, high duty in its execution, and the approval of the Divine in its fulfillment. Destiny, duty, and religion were intertwined; Mahan in his special emphasis upon strategy and sea power did not ignore the driving power of these factors—he marshalled them in grand array to aid him in his attack upon American provincialism.

Mahan, as has been seen, was not ignorant of the forces in opposition, whether they were the economic preoccupation of the country with its own internal problems of exploitation, the political manifestations of indifference, the outright opposition to development of maritime power, or the deification of the past by worship of the traditional policy of isolation pursued in Washington's day. On the other hand Mahan was not unaware of the forces which were with him. He began his first magazine article with the significant and prophetic sentence,

36 In contradiction to the interpretation often given, Dr. Julius W. Pratt presents the thesis that the expansion policy owed little to economic influences. "The need of American business for colonial markets and fields of investment," says Dr. Pratt, "was discovered not by business men but by historians and other intellectuals, by journalists and politicians." Expansionists of 1898, 22.
"Indications are not wanting of an approaching change in the thoughts and policy of Americans as to their relation with the world outside their own borders."  

Mahan recognized that he was only one among many who had served to define and formulate the progress of national awakening. At times he indicated that he thought of himself merely as a chronicler solicited by the editorial watchers to report this progress, a dictograph, as it were, to record from "time to time the stages of the antecedent process of preparation." At other times he came nearer reality when he humbly granted that he had "to some extent helped to turn thought." Mahan, however, would definitely limit the role played by himself or others. "No man or group of men can pretend," he said, "to have guided and governed our people in the adoption of a new policy, the acceptance of which has been rather instinctive--

37 Mahan, "The United States Looking Outward," Atlantic Monthly, December 1890, reprinted in The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, 3. Relative to this statement, he wrote a dozen years later, "The presage has been fulfilled far beyond any consciousness then possible to the writer." Retrospect and Prospect, vi. Enlarging further he commented, "In writing on these themes [expansion etc.] in those days one felt that, while the chain of reasoning was eminently logical, yet there was a lack of solid foundation; that though argumentation were sound, premise was perhaps mistaken; and that when indulging in such forecasts one was in the fantastic sphere familiarized to us by Mr. Edward Bellamy and others." Retrospect and Prospect," World's Work, February 1902, reprinted in Retrospect and Prospect, 14.

38 Ibid., 24.

39 Mahan, From Sail to Steam, 325.

It should be stated, however, that nearly all his magazine articles were solicited by editors and did not appear at his own instigation. The significant and most opportune article on "The Strategic Features of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean" was an important exception. "Retrospect and Prospect," World's Work, February 1902, reprinted in Retrospect and Prospect, 24.
I would prefer to say inspired--than reasoned."  

To the English "Looker-On," immediately prior to the Spanish-American War, it seemed that the whole outlook of the United States had been recast by Mahan's writings. He called attention to

the rising spirit in American affairs, which, with its fleets building, and its enthusiasm kindling, and its hidden spark in the heart of the most orthodox citizen, is preparing as much of a change as we saw in Japan the other day, and perhaps as sudden. Even at this early time accidents are conceivable which would definitely alter the relations of the United States with the rest of the world in the small space of a week. . . . [Mahan's] teaching was as oil to the flame of colonial expansion everywhere leaping into life. Everywhere a new sprung ambition to go forth and possess, and enjoy its sanction in the philosophy of history ennobled by the glory of conquest. . . . I doubt whether this effect of Mahan's teaching has gone deeper anywhere than in the United States. 

With this rather cursory sketch of the more general implications of the sea power doctrine as related to the United States, the further and specific development of Mahan's major interests should be simpler and more intelligible.

---

40 Mahan, "Retrospect and Prospect," World's Work, February 1902, reprinted in ibid., 16.

Predominance of the United States in the Caribbean was Mahan's cardinal interest. He believed an isthmian canal under American control was essential to the welfare of the United States. Such a policy, however, would require the acquisition of the approaches on either side of the canal and a navy capable of holding its own against any likely opponent. Discretion being the better part of valor, Mahan, in light of the English fleet and English holdings in the Caribbean, urged friendly relations with the former mother country. In 1885, prior to his own conversion to the "large policy" for the United States, he wrote his friend Ashe that he thought a "fleet of swift cruisers to prey on the enemy's commerce" the surest deterrent to foreign molestation; such a view, however, rested upon the supposition that America had no interests beyond her own borders. He continued:

If we are going in for an Isthmian policy we must have nothing short of a numerous and thoroughly first-class ironclad navy--equal to either England or France. To this I would add throw over the Irish vote, (if you dare) and pursue a policy not of formal alliance but of close sympathy, based on common ideas of justice, law, freedom, and honesty, with England. . . . England is like every nation selfish but in the main honest--and the best hope of the world is in the union of the branches of that race to which she and we belong.\(^1\)

\(^1\)Mahan to Ashe, Mar. 11, 1885, Flowers Collection. Cf. Mahan to Ashe, Mar. 12, 1880, Flowers Collection.
After a few months study of history Mahan openly avowed allegiance to this heretofore dubious isthmian policy. Indeed it was in the Central American Isthmus that he saw quickening "the motive, if any there be, which will give to the United States a navy."\(^2\) A successful canal would change the Caribbean from a terminus and place of local traffic into one of the chief highways of the world with resultant international complications. "Our little corner" would be invaded and a rude awakening would be our lot for having abandoned our share "in the common birthright, the sea."\(^3\) The geographical position of the United States, if supplemented by "proper military preparation," would give her paramount influence in this region.\(^4\) "Proper military preparation" was at this time defined in the most general terms. It would demand the protection of ingress and egress of the Mississippi, the possession of secondary bases of operation and the assurance of continued communications between such outposts and home bases.\(^5\)

There was nothing startlingly new or original about this outlook. Mahan was by no means the first to stress the significance of the West Indies. The naval and commercial importance of certain of the West Indies, especially Cuba, had been perceived from the very earliest moments following the breakup of Spanish power in America resulting from the

\(^2\)Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, 88.
\(^3\)Ibid., 42.
\(^4\)Ibid., 33-5.
\(^5\)Ibid., 34-5.
Napoleonic upheaval in Europe. The greatest prize of all, Cuba, "was to be the trans-Atlantic Turkey, trembling to its fall, but sustained by the jealousies of those who were eager to share the spoils."  

The early American attitude which had looked toward maintenance of the status quo, by the prevention of the acquisition of or the establishment of a protectorate over the island by either Great Britain or France, was shortly displaced by a bolder and more aggressive policy. Various attempts were made to purchase the island from Spain or to forcibly bring it into our sphere by filibustering expeditions. Various motives existed. The extension of slave territory was one. The increased area on the Gulf as a result of annexation of Texas was another factor lending additional significance to the Caribbean. The practical problem of communication, with the definitely defined and vastly increased territorial holdings on the Pacific following the Oregon and Mexican settlements, confounded immediately by the discovery of gold in California, was another. An inter-oceanic transit route seemed the only practicable solution to this problem, and the strategic importance of Cuba in the control of such an undertaking was appreciated. Permeating all and furnishing additional driving power was the ever growing conviction of the mission and destiny of the country.

The abolition of slavery and the construction of transcontinental railroads permitting direct overland communication

6Quoted by J. H. Latané, American Foreign Policy, 284.
with the Pacific States removed the two primary factors motivating the expansion sentiment of the turbulent 'fifties. Seward in untrammelled control of the conduct of foreign affairs sought to carry forward the expansion program interrupted by the Civil War. Looking toward an increase of American influence in the Caribbean, negotiations were carried on with Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Nicaragua, and the Republic of Santo Domingo. The distant Midway Islands and the frozen "folly" of Alaska were the net results of Seward's vast vision of expansion. The people were engrossed with internal affairs; amidst the din and turmoil of a nation in the throes of political, economic, and financial reconstruction and exploitation, the call of destiny, duty, development, and defense fell on deaf ears.

So far as an isthmian canal was concerned, early American policy stressed "free and equal navigation" by all nations.

---

7S. F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States, 396-404; T. C. Smith, "Expansion after the Civil War, 1865-1871," Political Science Quarterly, XVI, 412-436 (September 1901).

The annual report of the Navy Department for 1865 stressed the necessity for more adequate protection of the fast developing commerce of the country and pointed out especially the need for naval stations, calling attention to the new and different demands (coal, etc.) of the steam vessel. "A prudent regard for our future interests and welfare would seem to dictate the expediency of securing some eligible location for the purpose indicated [coaling and supply stations]. Executive Document, No. 1, 39th Cong., 1st sess., p. xv (cited by C. G. Tansill, The Purchase of the Danish West Indies, 5-6).

The principle of neutralization under international guarantee was definitely incorporated in the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. Never without its opponents in the United States, this treaty gradually became more and more objectionable as the power, prestige, prosperity, population, and self-confidence of the country grew. The tendency on the part of the American government away from the policy of internationalism in the control of a trans-isthmian canal, and towards an American canal controlled by Americans is definitely discernible in the negotiated but unratified canal treaties with Columbia in 1869-1870. The de Lesseps concession in 1878 "filled American people with jealousy and alarm" and had direct relation to the resolutions introduced in both houses of Congress stating that control over any isthmian canal should rest with the United States. President Hayes in his message of March 8, 1880, declared, "The policy of this country is a canal under American control." The ingenious arguments put forward by Blaine and Frelinghuysen in the vain attempt to prove the invalidity of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, the negotiation of a treaty with Nicaragua in 1884 for a canal entirely under American control, its withdrawal from the Senate after Cleveland's first inauguration, the 1887 concession to and the subsequent activity of the Maritime Canal Company—all indicate the growing importance which was being attached to the

9M. W. Williams, Anglo-American Isthmian Diplomacy, 273-5.
10 Ibid., 275.
11 J. D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, VI, 4537.
canal question in the 'eighties.  

Mahan was cognizant of the growing interest in isthmian projects and was aware that a canal under American control was attracting more and more attention. He felt that enthusiasm should be tempered by reality; facts not fancy should be kept uppermost. Mahan had no time for wistful thinking. He was not unaware of the call and the appeal of destiny, development and duty. It was to the problem of defense, however, and to the field of strategy that he gave his special attention. Here he contributed telling thrusts to the American self-contented provincialism, and led the way in the formulation and carrying into effect of a strategic policy which had been gradually growing for many years in the minds of American statesmen and naval leaders. Though Mahan was leader of this policy, he was, as Professor Inman says, "enthusiastically seconded by a group of enthusiastic nationalists, which included two brilliant young statesmen who were afterward to play a large part in the life of the United States—Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge."  

Mahan was convinced that latent and generally unforeseen dangers to the peace of the Western Hemisphere would attend the piercing of the Central American Isthmus. Every position in the Caribbean, from a commercial and military viewpoint

---

12Williams, op.cit., 276-87.  
13Mahan to Ashe, Mar. 11, 1885; Flowers Collection.  
would be enhanced and the canal itself would have a strategic value of utmost importance. Each nation would inevitably seek points of support and means of influence in a region where "the United States has been jealously sensitive to the intrusion of European powers." Against this the United States could allege but one right—"that of her reasonable policy supported by her might."  

The naval strategist wrote:

Militarily speaking and having reference to European complications only, the piercing of the Isthmus is nothing but a disaster to the United States, in the present state of her military and naval preparations. . . . Despite a certain original superiority conferred by our geographical nearness and immense resources . . . the United States is woefully unready, not only in fact but in purpose, to assert in the Caribbean and Central America a weight of influence proportionate to the extent of her interests.  

With no navy and no defense of the seaboard, and no interest to provide either, without the necessary bases in or on the borders of the Caribbean, and without even the beginnings of a navy yard on the Gulf of Mexico which could serve as a base of operations, American interests in the Caribbean would be at the mercy of any strong maritime country.  

Moreover, in her present state of unpreparedness a trans-isthmian canal, aside from her Caribbean interests, would be a military disaster. The Atlantic seaboard, though no more or less exposed, would be confronted with "increased dangers of  

16 Ibid., 13.  
17 Ibid., 13-15.
foreign complications with inadequate means to meet them."
The problem of the Pacific States would be, however, funda-
mentally altered. So much as the distance between them and
Europe would be lessened by a canal which the stronger mari-
time power could control, just so much would their safety and
consequently that of the nation as a whole be imperiled.\textsuperscript{18}

Mahan did not wish to dampen the rising American spirit
of assertiveness; he merely sought to sober and rationalize
it and direct it into channels of greater usefulness. He
personally "deplored" and thought it "a sober, just, and rea-
sonable cause of deep national concern" that the country had
no navy which would "weigh seriously" when "inevitable dis-
cussions" arose, and that it neither had nor cared to have its
sea frontiers fortified and protected.\textsuperscript{19} Mahan was carefully
and forcefully tying up the growing canal sentiment and the
inadequate appreciation of its strategic implications, es-
pecially for the Pacific Coast.\textsuperscript{20} He assumed that the United
States would not readily acquiesce in a change of ownership

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., 22-3.
\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., 14-5.
\textsuperscript{20}Mahan was by no means the only writer who was noting
exporting firm, thought that the interest shown in the canal,
in foreign markets, in the navy, and in the recent Samoan af-
fair indicated an awakening of the United States. He predicted
an aggressive commercial policy in the near future and dis-
cussed American resources for such a program and the advantages
to be gained. Ulysses D. Eddy, "Our Chance for Commercial Su-
premacy," ibid., 419-28. Mr. Jordan, a leader in the 1870
Cuban revolution and later editor of a mining journal in New
York, stressed in good Mahanite fashion the strategic elements
of Cuba. Though "just and generous," "mindful and considerate"
of Spain, "all considerations urge us to this acquisition with-
out regard to European opinion or antagonism." Thomas Jordan,
"Why We Need Cuba," ibid., 559-67.
in the Caribbean. But this was not enough; it should "be an inviolable resolution of our national policy that no foreign state would acquire a coaling position within 3,000 miles of San Francisco,—a distance which includes the Hawaiian and Galapagos Islands and the coast of Central America." Adequate harbor and coast defense and a navy were necessary to meet the military needs of the states west of the Rockies. By way of conclusion to this first essay Mahan publicly advocated, as "one of the first of our external interests," a "cordial understanding" with Great Britain who, due to her navy and her positions near our shores, was our most formidable enemy. Formal alliance was definitely excluded but a "cordial recognition of the similarity of character and ideas will give birth to sympathy, which in turn will facilitate a cooperation beneficial to both; for if sentimentality is weak, sentiment is strong."

The Harrison administration was attentive to the rising expansive spirit of the country. The Maritime Canal Company

---

Carl Schurz raised his voice against giving heed to an appetite that would "grow with the eating." There will always be "more commercial advantages to be gained, the riches of more countries to be made our own, more strategical positions to be occupied to protect those already in our hands. Not only a taste for more, but interest, the logic of the situation would push us on and on." He illustrated the point: in case Cuba were acquired it would lead, he said, to the acquisition of Porto Rico, Haiti, Santo Domingo and "hardly a stopping place north of Gulf of Darien—and many reasons not to stop there." "Manifest Destiny," "Harper's, LXXXVII, 137-46 (November 1893)


22 Ibid., 26.

23 Ibid., 27.
of Nicaragua, chartered in 1889, had experienced difficulty in finances. Amendments to the company's charter, providing for the guarantee of its bonds by the United States government and in turn giving the government a controlling voice in the management of the canal, were suggested by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in its report of January 10, 1891. The committee definitely stated it could be "justly affirmed" that the convention of 1850 had "become obsolete" and therefore did not need to be considered an obstacle to the passage of the measure. 24 In his annual message of December 1891, Harrison gave this scheme his sanction and stated that the completion of the canal was "a matter of the highest concern to the United States," and a year later he recommended that Congress give the Maritime Canal Company "prompt and adequate support." 25

The administration was definitely in sympathy with the Mahanite concern as to the vital importance to the United States of the control of the canal approaches. Desirous of capitalizing upon certain supposed obligations to the United States, upon chaotic political conditions, and upon the greed for gold, the government sought to secure leases for naval bases at Môle St. Nicholas in Haiti and Samaná Bay in Santo Domingo. Both endeavors were abortive. The Haitian president openly repulsed the advances while the Dominican executive was forced to forego

24 Senate Report, No. 1944, 51st Cong., 2d sess.
further negotiations, once rumors of what was in the air were circulating. 26

The sale of St. Thomas and St. John to the United States, revived in the summer of 1891, likewise failed of consummation. In this instance the Danes had made the approach through the United States minister at Copenhagen, Clark E. Carr, but Secretary Blaine was opposed to their acquisition until the United States had possession of the larger West Indies. He thought the isles were too small, of too little commercial and strategic importance, and that they would be too difficult to defend. "They are destined to become ours, but among the last of the West Indies that should be taken." 27 Secretary Foster, who succeeded Blaine, was much more favorably disposed toward the project. "The question of the acquisition of the Islands is one of far-reaching and national importance, the extent of which is appreciated by no one more than the President," he wrote the United States minister at Copenhagen. "As his administration is, however, drawing to its close, he considers it inadvisable to express any views or indicate any policy, the consummation of which he could not effect." 28

26 Sumner Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, I, 468-95; Alice F. Tyler, Foreign Policy of James G. Blaine, 91-8; Julius Pratt, Expansionists of 1898, 29-31.


On December 31, Foster cabled Carr to postpone action on the above instruction. It was not until February 4, that he was again authorized to convey American reaction to the Danish Islands. No reason is known for the delay. By February 4, the Hawaiian revolution with its problem of annexation undoubtedly seemed more important. Tansill, op.cit., 195-6.
The overthrow of the royal government in the Hawaiian Islands and the desire on the part of the new government for annexation to the United States brought the whole matter of an "outward view" to the fore with attention to the Pacific. This was to Mahan's liking. It has already been pointed out how closely related and interdependent he felt the whole problem of the canal and the Pacific to be. "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power" served to crystallize his views on the problem of the Pacific, to urge expansion and sea power upon a hesitant nation, and to again emphasize this broader aspect of the isthmian problem. Hear him:

The demands of our three great seaboard, the Atlantic, the Gulf, and the Pacific,—each for itself, and all for the strength that comes from drawing closer the ties between them—are calling for the extension through the Isthmian Canal of that broad sea common along which, and along which alone, in all ages, prosperity has moved. . . . So the Isthmian Canal is an inevitable part in the future of the United States; yet one that cannot be separated from other necessary incidents of a policy dependent upon it. . . .

In the September, 1893, Atlantic Monthly, Mahan discussed at length the canal problem in "The Isthmus and Sea Power." A sketch of the Caribbean and the Spanish Main from the time of Columbus through the heyday of Spanish greatness and onward through the era of colonial wars, resulting in the disruption of the Spanish colonial empire, made a colorful

background, and afforded ample opportunity for an exposition of the sea power thesis in practice, for a fulsome eulogy of British far-sightedness, and for a few subtle, poignant thrusts at American provincialism. He also embarked for the first time upon certain international aspects of the isthmian problem. Due to her position upon two seas, the United States held predominant interest in the Isthmus and therefore in the Caribbean. This was a "reasonable, natural—it might almost be called a moral—claim...." Other countries might have definite commercial interests at stake but the United States had political as well as commercial interests to be safeguarded. Though her own interests were predominant, Mahan recognized they were by no means exclusive; any settlement worthy of the name must effect "our preponderating influence, and at the same time insure the natural rights of other peoples."

Her wide-flung empire and her position as a great sea carrier naturally made Great Britain "the exponent of foreign opposition to our own asserted interest in the Isthmus." But Mahan argued that only a small fraction of Britain's existing trade would be unfavorably affected by competition introduced by a canal; and that the problem of integrity of the Empire would not seriously be involved, for "nowhere has Great Britain

30 It was in this article that Mahan wrote those choice cutting sentences earlier noted, supra, 84-5.


32 Ibid., 83.

33 Ibid.
so little territory at stake. . . ."

"Concessions of principle over-eagerly made in 1850, in order to gain compensating advantages which our weakness could not extort otherwise," now caused regret and resentment. Not until the United States had taken "steps to formulate a policy or develop a strength" that could give "shape and force to her pretensions" would British preeminence be displaced. 

In a democratic country such as the United States, national policy was largely dependent, Mahan thought, upon public opinion. Consistent and well proportioned action could not be a matter of party politics; it should rest upon a well settled conviction, manifested in a sound and continuous national policy. Here was the point for attack; now was an opportunity to wield influence. For a country "to which the control of the strait is a necessity, if not of existence, at least of its full development and of its national security, who can deny," asked Mahan, "the right to predominate in influence over a region so vital to it?" And the answer: "None can deny save its own people . . . ." and they, Iscariot-like, not in words but in acts--"indolent drifting, in wilful blindness to

34 Ibid., 86.

35 Ibid., 93-4. For British reaction to such comments, see G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 292-300 (February 1898). This is a review of Mahan's book The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future.

36 For the full appreciation and correct interpretation of this and some of the following remarks, it should be pointed out that the change of administrations in March had resulted in Cleveland's immediate withdrawal (March 9) from the Senate of the Hawaiian annexation treaty, submitted the middle of the preceding month.
the approaching moment when action must be taken..."

Mahan reiterated his belief in the certainty of the construction of a canal. Since the birth of the Republic, save for the midcentury flurry of interest due to special causes--suggestive but inadequate, resulting in the "paralyzing Clayton-Bulwer Treaty"--the importance of the Isthmus had been merely "potential and dormant." But the century had wrought changes. The peopling of the Far West, the increasing political and commercial importance of the Pacific Ocean, the rapid growth of the productive forces of the nation calling for outlets to regions beyond, were all indicative of the approaching change. Both interest and dignity, therefore, demanded that the United States no longer let her rights depend upon another state. Her predominance in the Caribbean was now essential.

Believing that the control of any maritime region rested upon a navy and suitably chosen bases, it was not strange to find Mahan writing:

> At present the positions of the Caribbean are occupied by foreign powers, nor may we, however disposed to acquisition, obtain them by means other than righteous; but a distinct advance will have been made when public opinion is convinced that we need them, and should not exert our utmost ingenuity to dodge them when flung at our head.

In the interim, no moral obligations stood in the way of the development of the navy.

---


38 Ibid., 99-100.

39 Ibid., 103.
Mahan's punches were not drawn in this attack on indecision, drifting, and lack of consciously chosen and vigorously followed national foreign policy. As is well known and as has been stated, Mahan was not the only advocate of a larger and aggressive policy. The Hawaiian problem, in its various phases covering in all over half a decade, released a torrent of expansion sentiment. The Venezuelan dispute with England, naval appropriations, the plight of the Maritime Canal Company of Nicaragua, the fear of foreign acquisitions in the Caribbean, the insurrection in Cuba—all these items gave oft and repeated opportunities to twist the lion's tail and to spread the eagle; to worship at the altar of duty and to pay homage to manifest destiny. In the first year of the discussion which followed the Hawaiian revolution, Professor Pratt has found broached "the entire program (with the exception of the acquisition of the Philippines) which was realized in the Spanish War and the years following. In fact, by no means all of the program of 1893 is realized even yet[ September 1932]." 40

Among the most ardent and influential of the expansionists was the young Henry Cabot Lodge, to whom, as has been noted, Mahan had sent a complimentary copy of his Influence of Sea Power upon History, and who had ardously endeavored to gain further land stay for Mahan in 1893 so that the sea power author could pursue his important studies. Now a Senator, Lodge was most eloquent in his plea for commercial progress and for the

assumption of an "intelligent" foreign policy. He had not pursued Mahan's books for naught. "The sea power has been one of the controlling forces in history," he told his fellow Senators,

without sea power no nation has been really great. Sea power consists in the first place, of a proper navy and a proper fleet; but in order to sustain a navy we must have suitable posts for naval stations, strong places where a navy can be protected and refurnished.42

In "Our Blundering Foreign Policy" he contrasted Cleveland's policy of "retreat and surrender" with his own forward looking policy of naval and territorial expansion. National honor, dignity, pride of country and of race urged America to look beyond her borders. "In the interests of our commerce and of our fullest development" the Nicaragua Canal should be American built and supplemented by the acquisition or control of the approaches in both oceans. Among the West Indies "we should have . . . at least one strong naval station, and when the Nicaraguan Canal is built, the island of Cuba . . . will become to us a necessity."43

41 Wrote Lodge in the opening chapter on foreign affairs in his life of George Washington: "Our relations with foreign nations today [1889] fill but a slight place in American politics and excite generally only a languid interest. We have separated ourselves so completely from the affairs of other people that it is difficult to realize how large a place they occupied when the government was founded." Lodge probably did not sense the change that was to come in his own lifetime. Bemis, op. cit., 432.


43 Lodge, "Our Blundering Foreign Policy," Forum, XIX, 17 (March 1895).
Neither Cleveland nor his Secretaries of State, Gresham and Olney, displayed interest in the purchase of islands or in the acquisition of naval bases in the Caribbean. Their sole interest was to maintain the status quo—the enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine. Secretary Olney discredited predecessor Frelinghuysen's attempts to escape from the paralyzing Clayton-Bulwer Treaty as "ingenious rather than sound." Olney held that if changed conditions now make stipulations which were once deemed advantageous, either inapplicable or injurious, the true remedy is not ingenious attempts to deny the existence of the treaty or to explain away its provisions, but in direct and straightforward application to Great Britain for a reconsideration of the whole matter.

Cleveland's "small policy" obviously failed to please those dedicated to the "outward view." However, his firm and dogged handling of the Venezuelan episode generally evoked favorable comments, even from his political opponents. The Republican police commissioner of New York City could not

---

44 See Tansill, op. cit., 197-207; Welles op. cit., II, 505-6.

The attitude shown in the case of the Danish Islands is illustrative of the policy under Cleveland. Senator Lodge, fearing foreign acquisition of the Danish West Indies, introduced (January 3, 1896) the following resolution: "Resolved, That the Committee on Foreign Affairs be directed to inquire and report to the Senate whether the islands of St. Croix, St. John, and St. Thomas, in the West Indies, can be now purchased from the Danish Government, as provided by the treaty signed at Copenhagen in October 1867, and whether if these islands are not purchased by the United States it is probable that they will be sold by the Danish Government to some other power." Cong. Rec., 54th Cong., 1st sess., p. 762. Secretary Olney, on learning that there was no validity to the rumor of a sale of the islands to a European power, let the matter drop, despite frequent nudgings from Lodge. See Tansill, op. cit., 203-8.

45 J. B. Moore, Digest of International Law, III, 208-9.
forego a word of congratulation to Secretary Olney who, upon the death of Gresham, had fallen heir to this South American imbroglio. Wrote Roosevelt, "I must write you a line to say how heartily I rejoiced at the Venezuela message. I earnestly hope our people wont back down in any way." 46 Mahan, however, feared that the position taken by the United States in this instance might entail upon her "greater responsibilities, more serious action" than she had heretofore assumed or was now able to fulfill. In military metaphor, the United States had occupied "an advanced position, the logical result very likely of other steps in the past" but which nevertheless implied necessarily such organization of strength as would enable her to


The assertive spirit of Congress, evoked by the Venezuelan episode, may be seen in the following excerpt from the concurrent resolution, passed in January 1896, upholding the Monroe Doctrine: "The United States of America reaffirms and confirms the doctrine and principles promulgated by President Monroe in his message . . . and declares that it will assert and maintain that doctrine and principles, and will regard any infringement thereof, and particularly any attempt by any European power to take or acquire any new or additional territory on the American continents, or any island adjacent thereto, or any right or sovereignty or dominion in the same in any case or instance as to which the United States shall deem such an attempt to be dangerous to its peace or safety by or through force, purchase, cession, occupation, pledge, colonization, protectorate, or by control of the easement in any canal or any other means of transit across the American Isthmus . . . as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States and as an interposition which it would be impossible in any form for the United States to regard with indifference." Cong. Rec., 54th Cong., 1st sess., p. 783.

For a thorough handling of the Venezuelan subject, see A. L. P. Dennis, Adventures in American Diplomacy, 1896-1906, 17-62; a briefer and quite recent account is in Bemis, op. cit., 415-21.
hold it. With the atmosphere just clearing from a highly charged condition, opportunity was afforded to again discuss the degree and nature of preparedness demanded. A strong navy and a sufficient coast defense to permit the former its rightful role of offense, supplemented by an adequate force of trained men, would be "preparedness for anything likely to occur." 48

The Cuban insurrection starting in February 1895, was a continual source of trouble to Cleveland during his last two years in the White House. Cautious conservatism characterized his treatment of this perplexing problem. A man of profound conviction and of downright sincerity, with unalterable faith in the might of justice, this President who had not minced words with powerful Britain now used infinite patience and persuasion with decadent Spain. Cleveland hoped that this new Cuban insurrection might be handled by pacific means as had the even more sanguinary struggle of a quarter of a century earlier. In the meantime, however, a marked change in American temperament had taken place. The earlier insurrection had come at a period "of repulsion in the United States to further territorial expansion or further projection of national influence, when the American people had turned their


faces inland;" the latter had come at a time when the American people had become fed up with stay-at-home activities, when shrewd young expansionists were demanding a larger national policy, when the energies and imagination of the nation conscious of its strength were expectant for new and adventurous activities, emotions, and experiences, when the people had come to turn their faces outward from the continent. . . . The railways were built, the continent settled, the frontier gone, the home market seemed approaching satiation, the now popular Pacific Coast was indicated for future naval protection and communications.\textsuperscript{49}

Cleveland failed to sense the strength or declined to follow the lead of the expansionists who were urging a "looking outward." His view was that "the mission of our nation is to build up and make a greater country out of what we have, instead of annexing islands."\textsuperscript{50} The administration refused to heed the rising tide of sentiment in Congress and in the country as a whole favoring the Cuban insurrectionists. Many resolutions were introduced and eventually a concurrent resolution was passed by the two houses (the Senate in February and the House in April, 1896) which favored recognition of belligerency and urged the President to offer Spain the good offices of the United States for a peace with Cuban independence. But in none of these resolutions or in the debates upon them can one "discover evidence of any clear plan to annex Cuba to the United States" though there was "some plain talk of actual

\textsuperscript{49}Bemis, \textit{op. cit.}, 434, 433.

\textsuperscript{50}Allan Nevins (ed.) \textit{Letters of Grover Cleveland}, 492. This is an excerpt from a statement given to the press on January 24, 1896, in refutation of Senator Morgan's assertion that Cleveland was not really opposed to the idea of Hawaiian annexation itself.
annexation, or some relationship closely akin thereto."

_Cuba libre_ had slightly modified Lodge's earlier view of Cuba as a necessity to the United States. "Cuba in our hands or in friendly hands, in hands of its own people, attached to us by ties of interest and gratitude, is a bulwark to the commerce, to the safety, and to the peace of the United States." This youthful warhawk urged recognition of Cuban belligerency. Danger to American property, ruin of American commerce, the opening of an immense field to American capital, the securing of a vast market for American products, and the geographic and political importance of the island were "all weighty reasons for decisive action on our part." But these reasons were "pecuniary, material, and interested." But ah, the magnificence of fate, how kind and fortunate! "That which makes action imperative on the part of the United States in regard to Cuba, rests upon a higher ground than any of these. . . . The interests of humanity are the controlling reasons. . . ." The underlying selfishness of this plea for our intervention in Cuba could not be hidden, as is indicated in the following:

If one Administration declines to meet our national responsibilities as they should be met, there will be put in power another administration

---

51 Pratt, _Expansionists of 1898_, 210.

52 Cong. Rec., 54th Cong., 1st sess., p. 1972. Senator Morgan of the Foreign Relations Committee spoke forcefully of the close political and commercial interest of the United States in Cuba. "If Cuba had occupied the geographical relation to Great Britain, France, or Germany that she occupies to the United States, long ago she would have disappeared from the list of Spanish colonies. . . ." _Ibid._, p. 1065, 1975.
which will neither neglect nor shun its plain duty to the United States and to the cause of freedom and humanity.

Cleveland, as was his privilege, paid no attention to the concurrent resolution. He earnestly sought to avoid the necessity of intervention or of war with Spain. But his offer to cooperate with Spain in the restoration of peace in the war torn island on the basis of home-rule was politely refused, with the suggestion that the United States could better aid in more effectively preventing the departure of the unlawful filibustering expeditions. In his last annual message, after his party and program had been repudiated at the national elections in favor of the Republicans who had openly declared for the "outward view" in their platform, Cleveland stated that the "United States is not a nation to which peace is a necessity" and that a situation could conceivably arise "in which our obligations to the sovereignty of Spain will be superseded by higher obligations, which we can hardly hesitate to recognize and discharge."

The aggressive spirit of the foreign policy planks in the Republican platform of 1896, expressed the Mahanite

53 Lodge, "Our Duty to Cuba," Forum, XXI, 286-7 (1896), (underlining by the writer). Benis and Griffin (Guide to the Diplomatic History of the United States, 1775-1921) comment upon this article in discerning language: "Apparently the author thought our duty was to take it [Cuba], on grounds of humanity, from Spain because of its usefulness to the United States."

54 H. D. Money has an article by the same title, "Our Duty to Cuba," in which he called attention to opportunities for American investments and activities whether Cuba be free or annexed. Forum, XXV, 17-24 (1898).

54 Richardson, op. cit., VIII, 6151.
philosophy showing the hand of Lodge. The Monroe Doctrine was reaffirmed in its "fullest extent" and among other things advocated were a navy commensurate with our new "position and responsibility," the independence of Cuba, a Nicaragua Canal "built, owned, and operated by the United States," and the purchase of the Danish Islands which would furnish "a proper and much needed naval station in the West Indies." Indeed the platform looked "forward to the eventual withdrawal of the European powers from this hemisphere."

The Hanna-managed campaign between "the Eastern bondholder and the Western plowman" largely ignored matters of foreign policy. McKinley in his Canton front porch speeches scarcely touched such themes and it will be recalled that shortly after his inauguration he assured Carl Schurz "that there will be no jingo nonsense under my administration." The party imperialists viewed matters differently. Just two weeks after the inauguration Senator Lodge reintroduced his resolution of the preceding year (January 3, 1896) which called upon the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to investigate possible purchase of the three major Danish Islands as provided for in the treaty of 1867. Desirous of "testing public opinion," McKinley sent a slightly altered Hawaiian annexation treaty to the Senate on

   The Democrats merely endorsed the Monroe Doctrine and expressed "sympathy" for the Cubans.
56C. M. Fuess, Carl Schurz, Reformer, 349.
58Fuess, op.cit., 350.
June 16, 1897. Neither of these measures obtained favorable action but they served to keep the issues before the public.

In the meantime the ardent expansionist, erstwhile civil service advocate and colorful New York police commissioner Roosevelt, having gained preferment largely through assistance marshalled by Lodge, had been called to Washington by McKinley as Assistant-Secretary of the Navy. At this time Roosevelt was still the junior member of the firm of "Lodge and Roosevelt." He had expressed himself less upon foreign matters than either his senior partner or their mutual mentor, the expositor of the sea power doctrine; yet Roosevelt was no stranger to the "outward view" and the "large policy." To Lodge in October 1894, he had signified his hope that the Republicans would annex Hawaii and "build an oceanic canal with the money of Uncle Sam." When this aggressive spirit had gained incorporation in the Republican platform and McKinley had been elected, he wrote Lodge, "I do hope he [McKinley] will take a strong stand about both Hawaii and Cuba."

---

59 Senate Report, No. 681, 55th Cong., 2d sess.
60 McKinley was hesitant about Roosevelt. In an interview on December 2 with Lodge at Canton when the latter was urging Roosevelt's appointment, the President-elect commented, "I hope he has no preconceived plans which he would wish to drive through the moment he got in." Lodge, Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918, I, 241. Further indications of strings pulled for this appointment are given in ibid., I, 240-46, 252-55.
61 A. W. Dunn, Harrison to Harding, I, 261.
62 Lodge, op. cit., I, 139.
63 Ibid., I, 243.
Roosevelt had first met Mahan in 1888, while the latter was struggling with the establishment and preservation of the War College at Newport. 64 Roosevelt was deeply interested in and profoundly impressed by Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power upon History*; in a friendly and personal note he offered him congratulations and predicted for the book a place among the classics. 65 He frequently reviewed Mahan's books and always in laudatory terms. 66 He characterized some of his magazine contributions as "really noble articles." 67 Their extant correspondence is considerable and indicates a close relationship and frequent exchange of visits. 68 Roosevelt had the highest respect for Mahan and often publicly commented upon the value of his service to the nation. In speaking of the era when our national policy was one of "peace with insult," when "we wished to enjoy the incompatible luxuries of an unbridled tongue and an unready hand," Roosevelt added, "gradually a slight change for the better occurred, the writings of Captain Mahan playing


65 *Supra*, 60.

It will be recalled that Roosevelt as well as Lodge had sought to have the Navy Department, in 1893, grant Mahan special permission to escape sea duty so as to continue his writing. *Supra*, 9-10.

66 *Atlantic Monthly*, LXVI, 563-7 (October 1890); *ibid.*, LXXI, 555-9 (April 1893); *Political Science Quarterly*, IX, 171-3 (March 1894); *Bookman*, June 1897.

67 Lodge, *op. cit.* I, 274 (Roosevelt to Lodge, Aug. 26, 1897); Roosevelt to Mahan, Aug. 30, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.

no small part therein."

More succinctly in an article in the Outlook at the time of Mahan's death did he acknowledge his own indebtedness as well as that of the nation to this quiet, unassuming man who spoke in philosophic tone with mystical certainty in language couched in moral and religious terms. He wrote:

In dealing with our naval officers, in working for the navy from within the navy, Mahan was merely one among a number of first-class men; and many of these other first-class men were better than he was in the practical handling of the huge and complicated instruments of modern war. But in the vitally important task of convincing the masters of us all—the people as a whole—of the importance of a true understanding of naval needs, Mahan stood alone. There was no one else in his class, or anywhere near it."

In Roosevelt Mahan had a friend and a sympathizer in the civil branch of the navy—one who "wanted action and wanted it without delay." Wrote the sea power philosopher and propagandist to the new Assistant-Secretary of the Navy very shortly after Roosevelt's assumption of office: "You will, I hope, allow me at times to write to you on service matters, without thinking that I am doing more than throw out ideas for consideration." The aspects of the canal in relation to the Pacific were brought to Roosevelt's attention, indeed throughout the letter Mahan stressed the vital significance of American preparedness in the Pacific. The following is an illustrative sentence:

---


71 Dunn, op. cit., 261.
I would suggest as bearing upon the general policy of the Administration, that the real significance of the Nicaragua Canal now is that it advances our Atlantic frontier by so much to the Pacific, and that in Asia, not in Europe, is now the greatest danger to our proximate interests.\textsuperscript{72}

In reply to his letter Roosevelt assured Mahan that the Department was aware of the significance of the canal as a military measure but that Secretary Long was not so "decided as you and I are." Without minimizing the "immense importance of the Pacific Coast," Roosevelt felt forced to remind Mahan of "big problems" in the West Indies. "Until we definitely turn Spain out of those islands (and if I had my way that would be done tomorrow), we will always be menaced by trouble there." The expulsion of Spain, accompanied by the purchase of the Danish Islands, would serve notice of the real position of the United States in Caribbean affairs. Something of the intimacy of the Mahan-Roosevelt friendship may be gained from an excerpt of the same letter:

I need not say that this letter must be strictly private. I speak to you with the greatest freedom, for I sympathize with your views, and I have precisely the same idea of patriotism, and of belief in and love for our country. But to no one else excepting Lodge do I talk like this. . . . I earnestly hope we can make the President look at things our way. Last Saturday night Lodge pressed his views upon him with all his strength.\textsuperscript{73}

Mahan answered immediately and assured Roosevelt that he should fear no leakage because of him. "Your letter has been

\textsuperscript{72}Mahan to Roosevelt, May 1, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.
\textsuperscript{73}Roosevelt to Mahan, May 3, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.
read and destroyed." He reasserted the view formerly expressed as to the nature of their correspondence. "You will believe that when I write to you it is only to suggest thoughts, or give information, not with any wish otherwise to influence action or to ask information." He added this telling self-analysis:

I have known myself too long not to know that I am the man of thought, not the man of action. Such a one may beneficially throw out ideas, the practical effect of which can rest only, and be duly shaped only, by practical men. The comparison may seem vain, but it may be questioned whether Adam Smith could have realized upon his own ideas as Pitt did. 74

That Roosevelt correctly interpreted Mahan's inner desires is seen in his reply: "All I can do toward pressing our ideas into effect will be done. ... Do write me from time to time, because there are many, many points which you will see that I should miss." 75 That Roosevelt was sincere in his respect for Mahan's judgment and in the desire to profit thereby is clearly expressed in the following:

I have shown that very remarkable letter to the Secretary 76. ... I wish very much I could get a chance to see you. There are a number of things about which I want to get your advice, and a number of other things I would like to talk over with you. 77

74 Mahan to Roosevelt, May 6, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.
75 Roosevelt to Mahan, May 17, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.
76 Roosevelt to Mahan, June 9, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.
77 Roosevelt to Mahan, Aug. 30, 1897, Roosevelt Papers. James Bryce writing by request in the Forum on the wisdom of an annexation policy for the United States answered quite in the negative. It is significant that this British
An ardent and loyal co-worker with Mahan, Lodge, and Roosevelt was the young Albert Shaw, editor of the newly created *Review of Reviews*. The pages of this magazine, in editorial, news comment, and article reviews, frequently bore witness of indebtedness to Mahan. Dr. Shaw's personal contacts with Mahan were not frequent or intimate and such correspondence as he may have possessed was, through accident, unfortunately destroyed.

How like Mahan's "The United States Looking Outward" are these lines:

The American nation for twenty-five years has turned its gaze inward, intent upon the development of a continent. . . . The times have changed somewhat; and there are unmistakable marks of a strong disposition to return to the sea.

Or again,

It is a great mistake to assume that our country has no more history to make, and that acquisitions, developments, and bold projects belong wholly to the past, while henceforth we must fossilize. We need a broad and masculine quality of statesmanship at Washington, which will disregard the timid plaints of those critics who are forever opposed to anything that involves a decisive attitude on the part of our government.

For Shaw as for Mahan, Hawaii was but the beginning; the United States should also construct and own the Nicaragua Canal and


Letter to writer, Mar. 24, 1937. Dr. Shaw added, "Mahan was influential chiefly through his writings."

Editorial in *Review of Reviews*, IV, 125 et. seq. (September 1891).

obtain "advantageous ports and coaling stations in the West Indies."

The frontispiece of the Review of Reviews in July, 1894, was a large portrait of Captain Mahan and this subscript appeared: "His enthusiastic reception in England has constituted an international event of agreeable character and considerable significance." Another picture and a short article of "this interpreter of naval history" appeared at the time of his appointment as a Hague delegate; and the readers were informed that "American publishers alone have sold more than 50,000 copies of his book The Influence of Sea Power upon History -- an extraordinary number for works of that class." Mahan's articles and books were quite often reviewed in Shaw's magazine and in most commendatory terms. The Review of Reviews

---

81 Editorial in ibid., XVI, 135 (1897). Editor Shaw commented with much satisfaction that the Trans-Mississippi Congress meeting in Salt Lake City in July 1897, under the presidency of William J. Bryan, concerned primarily with western domestic problems, had passed resolutions favoring the independence of Cuba, the annexation of Hawaii and American construction and operation of the Nicaragua Canal. Ibid. See ibid., IX, 515-8 (1894); XVII, 13, 143 (1898).

82 Ibid., I, 2 (July 1894). An editorial in the preceding number paid tribute to the Captain's reception in Europe and to the credit which his Influence of Sea Power upon History brought to the American navy. Ibid., IX, 544 (June 1894). Another editorial in November of the same year--this time on the lessons of Yalu--stated that Mahan's views had again received confirmation. Ibid., X, 48 (November 1894).

83 Ibid., XIX, 555-4 (1899).

84 Ibid., VII, 324-7 (April 1893); XV, 331-2 (March 1897); XVII, 712 (January 1898); XVII, 719-21 (June 1898); XXVI, 613-4 (November 1902); XXX, 470-2 (October 1904).
was certainly doing its part to fulfill its statement, noted earlier, that "Captain A. T. Mahan, U.S.N. is as much in evidence these days, through his discussion of naval matters, as was ever Perry or John Paul Jones through naval victories."  

Mahan realized that he was a man of thought whose opportunity for influence lay in the power of ideas masterfully expressed. He appreciated the value of men like Lodge and Roosevelt who were in a position where action was possible; yet he likewise appreciated the power of public opinion in the formation and execution of policy. Lodge and Roosevelt were so situated that they could urge the President to "look at things our way" and in other respects do all that could be done "toward pressing our ideas into effect;" yet Mahan was uniquely qualified in aptitude, position, and prestige to call public attention to the demands of the hour as these expansionists saw the needs.

The scant attention paid to Lodge's resolutions relative to the Danish Islands and the failure of the Hawaiian annexation treaty to come up for vote were indicative of the task ahead. Mahan, therefore, renewed his attack upon the "small Americans." Duty called for and destiny pointed toward the assumption of a greater role by the United States. While the "large policy" was being accorded an adverse decision in the "test of public opinion," Mahan was replenishing the arsenal for his fellow-expansionists and seeking to enlighten the American public by two significant articles which urged anew the "outward view."

---

85 Ibid., XV, 331-2 (March 1897).
The first of these articles, "A Twentieth-Century Outlook," was written in May (1897) and carried the same trend of thought that he was contemporaneously expressing by letter to Roosevelt. An early victim of the "yellow peril," Mahan by now, with the vigor and energy displayed by the Japanese in their war with China, was predicting a stupendous struggle between the East and the West. "It is essential to our own good, it is yet more essential as part of our duty to the commonwealth of peoples to which we racially belong," that we dispassionately yet resolutely recognize that there is a rapid closing together of vastly different civilizations. 86 While the European armies safeguarded the land frontiers, the United States, occupying one of the front lines of Western culture, must be prepared—with a navy and with a canal whose approaches were firmly secured in both the Pacific and the Caribbean—to

86 Mahan, "A Twentieth-Century Outlook," Harper's, September 1897, reprinted in The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, 263. It was this essay which Roosevelt termed "a really noble article." The Literary Digest contained three columns of excerpts from this "noble article," XV, 571-2 Sept. 11, 1897.

In the same month, in Forum, Murat Halstead urged expansion in grandiloquent terms, "Shall we not go where the honors and the glories await us as the Power that is competent, if we will, to speak for half a globe? . . . We need to formulate a colonial system . . . the American islands are ours for the hereafter." "American Annexation and Armament," Forum, XXIV, 55-66 (September 1897). J. R. Procter also dealt with expansion as a world phenomenon, especially emphasizing the relation of the United States to the Pacific. "Hawaii and the Changing Front of the World," ibid., 34-45.

The Overland Monthly, edited by Horatio Bridge, frequently supported the expansionist program in its editorials and contributed articles. It unhesitatingly identified itself as an advocate "of the new doctrine of America's interest in external affairs, whether in the Caribbean Sea, the Pacific Islands, or the Orient." XXXI, 177-8 (1898); see ibid., XXIII, 489-97 (1894); XXV, 56-61, 684 (1895); XXXI, 472 (1898); (cited by Pratt, "The 'Large Policy' of 1898," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 232n and 238n (1932).
battle on the side of the Lord in the day of Armageddon. This political fact, rather than any mere commercial advantage, was the truly significant aspect of a future canal. 87

In the Caribbean archipelago with its cluster of island fortresses—"the very domain of sea power if ever region could be called so"—existed the influence by which such a maritime canal could be controlled. It was, however, "to be regretted that so serious a portion of them now is in hands which not only never have given, but to all appearance never can give, the development which is required by the general interest." Toward this region which was "one of the greatest nerve centers of the whole body of European civilization," to the preservation of which civilization Mahan dedicated the twentieth century, the United States had evinced a particular and peculiar sensitiveness. "Where we thus exclude others, we accept for ourselves responsibility for that which is due to the general family of our civilization. . . . " 89

Here was subtle subordination of self-interest; here was the challenge of high duty in defense of what was great and good; here was the crusader's lure of glory in the service of Western Christianity. How fortunate that this call should come to a knight who was growing ever more anxious to don the shining armour; how appropriate that it should embrace a region


88 Ibid., 260-1.

89 Ibid., 265.
at once incapable of self-government and self-development, one in which the United States had long asserted her definite right of special interest and privilege. In majestic tones one seemed to hear, as at Clermont in days long past, Deus vult. Is it any wonder that Roosevelt thought this "a really noble article!"

From his first sea power lectures on through the various magazine articles, Mahan had commented upon the interest in and the right of American dominance in the Caribbean and he had intimated in a general way the prerequisites of that control. But nowhere had he carefully, scientifically, and in detail analyzed the highly important problem of military or naval positions in that region. This obvious need was now filled by "Strategic Features of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea," written in June of 1897 though not published until the October issue of Harper's—an article extremely timely in light of Cuban affairs.  

90 It may be significant that this article alone of those which Mahan had been writing in the 'nineties relative to American national and foreign policy was unsolicited by an editor. Mahan, Retrospect and Prospect, 24. This series, beginning with "The United States Looking Outward," and closing with this essay, "The Strategic Features of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea," was now (1897) published under the title The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future. Excerpts from a few reviews of this book, The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, will give some idea of its reception. An English reviewer wrote: "No great nation ever needed guidance more than does the United States today. . . . No one is so well qualified as Captain Mahan to render this service to his country"—but this reviewer thought the needed guidance was not found in these articles. "Their readers will gather that expansion of some kind is necessary; that Great Britain is, in some unexplained way, seeking to oppose the annexation of Hawaii and to create difficulties in relation to the trans-isthmian canal; that the Atlantic seaboard is in grave peril; and that the existence of coal within
In each of these bodies of water Mahan found one position of pre-eminent importance; in the Gulf it was the mouth of the Mississippi and in the Caribbean, the indeterminate Isthmus. Four principal water routes eastward which connected these points with others were specified: first, the Yucatan Channel between the Isthmus and the Mississippi; second, the Strait of Florida connecting the Gulf of Mexico to the North American Coast; third, the Windward Passage joining the Isthmus to the North American Coast; and fourth, the Anegada Passage linking the Isthmus to Europe. Mahan next proceeded to analyze the relative strategic importance of the principal naval strongholds, actual or potential, in the Gulf and the Caribbean. In this evaluation the strategic significance of any position was

3,000 miles of San Francisco would be a national danger." Despite the disparaging tone of these words, the review has by no means completely missed Mahan's counsels! G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 293, 296 (February 1898). The Nation which was not always hostile in its reviews of Mahan's books (LXXXII, 39-41 (1906) commented: "The spirit of the book is so plain that he who runs may read. Military glory and far reaching domination are the great ends of man's aspiration. To give opportunity for these, the United States must have numerous distant, outlying possessions, each sticking out like a sore thumb to be hurt by whatever passes, each wanting its impregnable fortifications and its great garrison to defend it, each demanding its fleet to scour the adjacent seas, and great reserve armies and navies at home, besides, to overpower every possible antagonist." The reviewer then added a pious, but what proved to be a misplaced, hope: "When the people's 'sober second thought' is spoken, we do not believe it will be the adoption of such a policy for our twentieth century programme." LCVII, 34-6 (July 14, 1898).

Reviewing this book in 1902, along with other books by Mahan, a Frenchman wrote: "The author would not have to write them today; for the majority of the questions which are there put are actually resolved, and have received exactly the solutions which he held desirable." Auguste Moireau, "La Maîtrese de la Mer," Revue des deux Mondes, XI, 681-708 (Oct. 1, 1902). See Review of Reviews, XXVI, 613-14 (November 1902).
considered: first, from point of situation (with reference chiefly to lines of communication); second, upon its strength (inherent or acquired); and finally, upon its resources (natural or stored). As strength and resources were capable of alteration, primary attention naturally rested upon situation.

Thinking in these terms, with emphasis upon entrance to and transit across the Caribbean to the Isthmus—the two prime essentials to the enjoyment of the advantages of the latter—and viewing in a similar manner the Gulf and the Mississippi, Mahan one by one indicated the individual and relative importance of the various military positions in these regions. Cuba was accorded first place for she was without a "possible rival in her command of the Yucatan Passage" and had "no competitor . . . for the control of the Florida Strait." Though she shared with Jamaica the control of the Windward Passage and though the latter was blessed with a singularly central position within the Caribbean proper, yet all in all "the advantages of situation, strength, and resources are greatly and decisively in favor of Cuba." Cuba was "not so much an island as a continent," virtually susceptible of self-sufficingness; "the extent of coast-line, the numerous harbors, and the many directions from which approach can be made," minimized the

91 Mahan, "The Strategic Features of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea," Harper's, October 1897, reprinted in The Interest of America In Sea Power, Present and Future, 283.

92 The written word was effectively reinforced by a map which gave graphic reality to an otherwise elusive topic.

93 Ibid., 305-13.
dangers of total blockade, to which all islands were more or
less subject. 94 Samaná Bay and the Island of St. Thomas were
likewise given paramount consideration, for they represented
"efficiently and better than other positions, the control of
two principal passages into the Caribbean Sea from the Atlantic."
Neither could boast of much natural strength nor of resources,
yet their potential importance in the hands of a progressive
government was great. 95

That Mahan had the United States definitely, even central-
ly in mind, in writing this article, cannot be gainsaid; yet
nowhere did he suggest that the United States should seize Cuba
or acquire Samaná Bay or the island of St. Thomas. He may well
have thought it unnecessary to point the moral so openly, for
both he and his reading public were aware that he had been re-
peating for nearly a decade the necessity of American acquisi-
tions in that area, and he had just struck off his "Twentieth-
Century Outlook" which saw the preservation of Western civiliz-
ation tied with American control of the Caribbean. He might
also have thought such advice both unwise and unnecessary in
light of the highly charged nature of the Cuban question.

Cleveland, it will be recalled, had conceded in his an-
nual message of December 1896, that open hostility to Spain
was not inconceivable. The Republican President-elect and
many of his party leaders hoped that the situation would break

94 Ibid., 289.
95 Ibid., 297-9.
one way or another under Cleveland. In this they were doomed to disappointment and the developing situation was turned over to new hands to be shaped and guided. There was little immediate visible shift in policy toward Cuban affairs; yet the change in administration was significant. It brought as President a man content to follow public opinion rather than one bent on directing it. It called to Washington a new Assistant-Secretary of the Navy anxious for action and imbued with the sea power doctrine. It gave additional opportunity for the eager Lodge to press for the fulfillment of those demands of expansion, based upon commercial and patriotic grounds, which had weighed so heavily with him. During the month in which the subscribers of Harper's were reading Mahan's "really noble article," McKinley was offering Spain the good services of the United States as mediator, and Roosevelt was talking with the President, sketching what he thought ought to be done in case of possible war with Spain over the Cuban question. The plan embraced action in the Caribbean, against the Spanish Coast, and in the Philippines. He also suggested to his superior, Secretary Long, the advisability of this latter scheme. Mahan had been urging Roosevelt to see that the "best admiral" be in the Pacific for "much more initiative may be thrown on him than can be on the Atlantic man." Dewey was the man found

---

96 Lodge, op.cit., I, 240. Even Roosevelt hoped "the matter could be settled" during the winter." Ibid., I, 243.
97 Lodge, op.cit., I, 278 (Roosevelt to Lodge, Sept. 21, 1897).
98 J. B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Times, I, 83.
99 Mahan to Roosevelt, May 1, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.
and Roosevelt engineered his appointment to the Asiatic squadron, persuading the commodore to use the necessary political influence.

Ere Dewey was to reach Hongkong, not only had Lodge written Henry White that "there may be an explosion any day in Cuba which would settle a great many things," but the "explosion" itself, probably of a more catastrophic nature than the Massachusetts Senator had been predicting, was greatly complicating an already intricate and highly charged situation. Ten days after the Maine disaster, Roosevelt as acting Secretary of the Navy for a half day (relieving Secretary Long who naturally sought a respite after the rigors of the past few days), came "very near causing more of an explosion than happened to the Maine." "The very devil seemed to possess him" and he went at the issuance of orders "like a bull in a china shop." Just the species of the demon which possessed Roosevelt that fateful afternoon has never been determined, but it is known that friend Lodge was his guest and co-laborer. One telegram, important in its implications and results, was the subsequently famous cable to Dewey, to "keep full of coal [and] in event of declaration of war . . . to see that the Spanish squadron does not leave the Asiatic Coast and then [to begin]


101 Lodge to White, Jan. 31, 1898 (cited by Allan Nevins, Henry White, Thirty Years of Diplomacy, 130).


103 Lodge, op. cit., I, 349.
offensive operations in Philippine Islands." This much has been ascertained as to how Roosevelt, Lodge, and Dewey prepared for Manila.

The time seemed propitious, thought Lodge, to try once more for the Danish Islands. This time success nearly crowned his effort. On March 31, 1898, on behalf of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he presented a bill which authorized the President to negotiate the purchase of these islands and provided him with five million dollars, or as much as necessary thereof, for that purpose. In an accompanying report Lodge traced briefly the story of the islands and placed emphasis upon the advantages of American ownership. As long as they remained in the market, there would be danger of their purchase by some European Power—thus an infraction of the Monroe Doctrine with resultant foreign complications. Moreover, due to their position they were of "incalculable value to the United States." He buttressed his argument by reference to Captain Mahan who had pointed out that St. Thomas was "one of

104 Dewey, op. cit., 179.


The virtual consent of the Danish government had been gained, a price of five million dollars agreed upon, and the approval of the naval officials and McKinley's cabinet assured, prior to this action by Lodge. It would appear that the matter was now being viewed by the United States as a war measure. The Danish government ultimately refused, due to the Spanish-American tension, to conclude negotiations on the ground that it might be "a diplomatic discourtesy to Spain." Tansill, op. cit., 212-17.
the greatest strategic points in the West Indies." 106

Though the imminency of the war between Spain and the United States foiled this attempt of Lodge, it must have been a defeat easy to accept, for that conflict quickly brought consummation to a considerable part of the "large policy" or the "outward view."

106 Senate Exec. Report, 57th Cong., 1st sess., Appendix A; Senate Doc., No. 284, 57th Cong., 2d sess.
VII

MAHAN AND THE CARIBBEAN--FULFILMENT

It seemed well-nigh inevitable that many of the aspirations to which Mahan had given such eloquent voice in his essays should sooner or later take active form. Economic and political factors were at work which were slowly yet surely shaping American policy along the lines which Mahan and other intellectuals were indicating.\(^1\) Though America was still overwhelmingly a debtor nation in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and though her capital was still sunk in the development of domestic industries and in the organization of gigantic trusts, changes were in the making.\(^2\) "The movement of the 

\(^1\) In addition to those individuals to whom allusion has already been made, mention should be given to John Fiske, Josiah Strong, and John W. Burgess—disciples and popularizers of the Darwinian hypothesis of evolution through natural selection. Fiske in his essay on "Manifest Destiny" in Harper's in 1885, Strong in a chapter in his small volume, published in the same year, entitled Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis, Burgess in His Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law, published the year of Mahan's magnum opus, all asserted the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon (Burgess used the more inclusive term Teutonic), advocating and predicting the virtual dominance of the world by members of this God-favored and God-chosen group. See Pratt, Expansionists of 1898, 4 et seq. It is interesting to find that in the Roosevelt-Mahan correspondence there is a note from the former to Mahan stating that he has given the Reverend Josiah Strong a letter of introduction to him. Roosevelt to Mahan, Aug. 2, 1900. Roosevelt Papers.

\(^2\) In 1900 the United States had approximately $500,000,000 abroad and owed over $3,000,000,000. Scott Nearing and Joseph Freeman, Dollar Diplomacy, 247. John Carter thinks that the full force of commercial imperialism never motivated American policy in the nineteenth century but that it was the instinctive imitation of European methods. Conquest: America's Painless Imperialism, 88. For somewhat similar views as to the nature of American imperialism, see Louis M. Hacker, "The Holy War of 1898," American Mercury, XXI, 316-26 (1930).
country from an undeveloped agricultural, debtor nation, exporting raw materials and borrowing capital for improvements, to a developed, manufacturing, creditor nation, exporting manufactured goods and capital, and importing raw materials" was a movement gathering momentum as the nation became more and more exploited, and was in full swing as the century drew to a close. The strategic economic position of the United States with its large area of unrivaled fertility and its relatively inexhaustible natural resources made such a shift a matter of time. By the 'nineties the old frontier was gone, the continent largely settled, the most lucrative fields for exploitation seemed to be closing, and capital was casting its glance outward for avenues of investment. The home market was approaching satiation and foreign exports had more than doubled between 1880 and 1898.

Psychological factors cannot be ignored in any survey of this increasing tendency of America to look outward. The United States was no stranger to the aggressive spirit; behind her lay a history of conquest--half by war, half by negotiation--

In calling the home market saturated Professor Beard well suggests that it was in the "extensive sense" and "at a price"--two qualifications which should always be borne in mind, he adds, when speaking of capitalist economics. Dr. Beard closely ties up commercial and political expansion. The Idea of National Interest, 101.

American foreign commerce in 1880 totaled about $93,000,000 and in 1898 about $225,000,000. Ibid. A comparative study of the exports of the principal countries indicates even more forcibly the rapid development of the United States in this respect.
of the richest portions of a major and virgin continent. During the 'nineties there was a general quickening of the American pulse, a resurgence, as it were, of that militant aggressiveness of the mid-century. From the preceding pages it has become evident that a strong feeling was arising in many quarters that the United States had reached her majority, politically speaking, and was ready to imitate the European countries in taking on new responsibilities. Few expressed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880-4</td>
<td>206.4</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-4</td>
<td>224.7</td>
<td>154.2</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron and Steel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-4</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-4</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5 "In the United States a spirit of imperialism—a demand to expand at the expense of other nations, a disregard for the rights of backward peoples—had existed since the beginning of the nineteenth century." Tansill, *op. cit.*, 386.

6 A leading American editor trenchantly commented upon this expansive tendency of mankind in the following words: "The scramble has never ceased, except when treaties are arranged to give the combatants breathing-spells, and it goes on today wherever there is any possession or trade that is coveted by anybody. To a supernatural being looking down upon the earth the sight must be pathetically humorous. Wherever there is a fishing station, or a coffee ranch, or a palm tree island, or an elephant jungle, or a desert roamed by nomads, or a peaceful community unable to defend itself, or a Naboth's vineyard (on the Rhine or elsewhere) contiguous to a great man's estate, there is somebody advancing on it and planting
this spirit in more eloquent or more stirring language, bent on arousing enthusiasm for answering the call of self-interest and duty, than did the sea power expansionist. "In our infancy we bordered upon the Atlantic only, our youth carried our boundary to the Gulf of Mexico; today maturity sees us upon the Pacific." Then came the lesson in the form of a rhetorical appeal.

Have we no right or no call to progress in any direction? Are there for us beyond the sea horizon none of those essential interests, of those evident dangers, which impose a policy or confer rights?  

The sense of destiny, both in respect to territory and peculiar function, had been an attribute of the United States from her inception as an independent nation. Throughout her history there had been an assertion and a conviction that her form of government was superior and that her people enjoyed happiness to a peculiar degree. At times, coupled with this belief was the desire for new territory contiguously or strategically located and the responsibility, if need be, of "bestowing" upon others the benefits which had been vouchsafed her. In this sense of manifest destiny, which has rightfully been interpreted as primarily an emotion, "there was a golden ideal . . . but there was also an alloy of baser metals."  

---

a flag in the name of civilization and the Great Jehovah." Editorial in Harper's, LXXXVII, 962-63 (November 1893).


As the nineteenth century drew to a close the United States had ceased to be "bound and swathed in the tradition of the eighteenth century;" she was "looking outward;" indeed she was ready and waiting to take a "twentieth-century outlook." The affairs in the Caribbean, fatefully, kindly, offered the nation an unusual opportunity by which more quickly to achieve and more dramatically to proclaim the assumption of a place among world powers. The Cuban situation, with its concentration camps, the de Lôme letter, and the Maine, raised the fever in the body politic which was to be alayed by the drawing of blood.

Playing upon humanitarian sympathies, an irresponsible, self-interested and sensational journalism fed the flames of hatred, bigotry, and irrationality.⁹ The unfavorable elements of Spanish tradition—the barbarous Inquisition, the bloody Alva, the avaricious Pizarro, the cunning Cortez, the proverbial procrastinating "tomorrow"—for the benefit of the impressionable mind, were called afresh, in their traditional garb, as testimony of age-long Spanish cruelty, vindictiveness, duplicity,

⁹Walter Millis offers the best lengthy analysis of the national psychology of the war in The Martial Spirit; a Study of Our War With Spain. Cf. Mark Sullivan, Our Times, I, 302 et. seq. For the role of the press in greater detail, see M. M. Wilkerson, Public Opinion and the Spanish-American War, a Study in War Propaganda; J. E. Wisan, The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press, 1895-1898. There was congressional expression as to press sensationalism. Senator Cullom realized that it perverted the truth and "makes a mole hill of fact a mountain of falsehood." Cong. Rec., 55th Cong., Ed sess., p. 3877. Lodge thought it not chance glamorous politicians or yellow journals but the natural fulfillment of Spanish traditional policy that had created the problem in Cuba and thence in the United States. Ibid., p. 3782.
and colonial unfitness. Popular reaction, whipped to a frenzy by the yellow journalism, was supported by eager politicians who sought personal prominence or party security through advocacy of new adventurous issues of foreign policy.\(^{10}\)

The appeal to defense on the ground of strategy, to which Mahan and Lodge had already given voice, was now brought again to Congressional attention. The inalienable right of self-preservation—the highest of all rights—gives to us the moral right to possess . . . or to control . . . possession by others\(^{10}\) of Cuba, which (in language strangely like Mahan's) stood

\(^{10}\)Louis M. Hacker, in explaining the war, discards economic and imperialistic motives as well as those of honor and humanity. He maintains that our so-called imperialists had no real conception of imperialism but were Anglophiles seeking to ape England. In Professor Hacker's mind the war was a political maneuver engineered by a few "Republican hacks" in an attempt to maintain power, and it was agreed to by McKinley when he was convinced the country was actually wanting war. "The Holy War of 1898," American Mercury, XXI, 316–26 (1930).

An interpretation restricted to political factors alone cannot be accepted as a full explanation of the war. An analysis of the vote on the joint resolutions which broke relations with Spain will not permit the view of the war as a definite party measure. Nineteen Republicans and two Democrats opposed the measure in the Senate with the vote standing 68 to 21. Moreover, the Democrats had been egging on the lagging Republicans for some time; that they did not wish the Republicans to be given credit for the war declaration may be seen by reference to the Congressional Record. Bailey, of Texas, said: "I am gratified to know, Mr. Speaker, that after fifteen months of delay and suspense, it has at last dawned upon the Republican majority of this House that the time has arrived for action." Cited by S. H. Acheson, Joe Bailey, The Last Democrat, 105–6. Clark, of Missouri, similarly stated, "It is our war. We had to take you Republicans by the scruff of the neck and draw you into it." Cited by Dunn, op. cit., 270. Cf. H. Croly, Marcus Alonzo Hanna, 274 et seq. Professor Hacker's interpretation is suggestive and within limits is a valuable contribution, but a more careful analysis will be demanded for complete acceptance.
"sentinel over the Gulf of Mexico, the entrance to the Mississippi River," and lay in "the direct course of our commerce via the Isthmus of Panama."¹¹

Duty made its strong appeal to religion. The organized church (except the Quakers and Unitarians) intrigued by humanitarian issues, offered less opposition than encouragement to intervention, and once war was declared found no difficulty in justifying and supporting it.¹²

Business, however, was in general reluctant to engage in hostility, fearing a cessation of the rising tide of returning prosperity. Once in the fray and with Manila so quickly proffered as a possible base for Eastern trade, business no longer feared but welcomed the colonial responsibilities which the war might bring.¹³

President McKinley on April 11, having "exhausted every effort to relieve the intolerable condition of affairs which is at our door," placed the issue arising from the Cuban


¹³See Chapter VII, "The Business Point of View," in ibid. Not all supposed spokesmen for commercial interests were reluctant as to intervention. "We cannot go on indefinitely with this [Cuban] strain, this suspense and this uncertainty, this tottering upon the verge of war," said Senator Lodge in April 1898. And he added, "It is killing to business. . . . We can no longer permit those people [the Cubans] to starve to death, brought to that hideous torture by a war measure of Spain. We can no longer suffer our commerce to be ruined, our property destroyed, our business to be darkened and depressed." Cong. Rec., 55th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 3781-3. An examination, however, of the Lodge Papers casts doubt as to just how far he was representing the voice of his business constituency when he spoke in this manner.
situation in the hands of Congress. Within a fortnight diplomatic relations were severed. The war marked the emergence of America as a world power; but to view it as an isolated and sudden phenomenon is to ignore the fact that the American outlook had altered in the decade which had just closed. Though a turning point for the United States, it was less a revolution than a revelation. It revealed those ideals and made manifest those forces which had been at work in the preceding years. An important contemporary state official saw the war as synchronous with America's abandonment of isolation. The struggle was not the cause and at most only hastened the process by an inconsiderable period; the change was inevitable, had been long preparing and could not have been long delayed.  

While the tension between Spain and the United States had been growing after the untoward events of February, which led directly to the opening of hostilities, the Assistant-Secretary of the Navy had been in very close touch with Mahan. The details of strategy, then interesting them, are now

---

14 Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1898, p. 760.

15 Richard Olney, "Growth of Our Foreign Policy," Atlantic Monthly, LXXXV, 290 (March 1900). Professor F. H. Giddings similarly thought that at our stage in development territorial expansion was "as certain as the advent of spring after winter" and that to oppose it would be as futile as to offer "opposition to the trade winds or the storms." He likewise saw that "the warlike spirit existed long before the destruction of the Maine; and the demand for new outlets for both commercial enterprise and political ingenuity was already insistent many years before the battle of Manila Bay." "Imperialism?" Political Science Quarterly, XIII, 586, 593 (December 1898).
subordinate in importance to the close friendship, to the
high esteem of Roosevelt for Mahan, and to the acknowledged
obligation of this influential man of action to the quiet
expositor of the sea power thesis, manifested in their cor-
respondence. "I earnestly wish that my chief would get you
on here to consult in the present crisis," Roosevelt wrote
him the day after the House had passed (311 to 0) for national
defense the famous "Fifty Million Bill" which McKinley had per-
sonally requested "Uncle Joe" to introduce. Mahan advised
Roosevelt as to procedure in case of war and the word was
carried to Secretary Long and certain naval officers. The
plan of campaign shortly drawn up by the Department was sub-
mitted to Mahan for his comments, which were accordingly
given. They elicited from Roosevelt this eulogistic letter:

There is no question that you stand head and
shoulders above the rest of us! You have given us
just the suggestions we want. I am going to show
your letter to the Secretary first, and then get
some members of the Board to go over it.

Personally, I can hardly see how we can avoid
intervening in Cuba if we are to retain our self-
respect as a nation.

You probably don't know how much your letter
has really helped me clearly to formulate certain
things which I had only vaguely in mind. I think
I have studied your books to pretty good purpose.

---

16 Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 10, 1898, Roosevelt Papers.
17 L. W. Busbey, Uncle Joe Cannon, 186 et. seq.
18 Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 14, 1898, Roosevelt Papers.
19 Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 16, 1898, Roosevelt Papers.
20 Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 21, 1898, Roosevelt Papers.
From Mahan came still more suggestions which the Assistant-
Secretary thought "very valuable," and he promised to send
all Mahan's letters to Captain Sampson for him to go over and
return. Roosevelt once more expressed his indebtedness to
Mahan for "what I learned from your books long before I had
any practical experience." 21

Leaving his address with the Department, which assured
him that he would be notified in event of need, Mahan departed
for Europe the latter part of March. 22 In view of the high
esteem in which Roosevelt held Mahan, it is not surprising
that the outbreak of the war brought orders for his return
from Italy to serve as a member of the Naval War Board along
with Admiral Sicard and Captain Crowinshield. 23 An examina-
tion of the general activities of this Board during the period
of Mahan's association with it need not detain us. 24 Secretary

21 Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 24, 1898, Roosevelt Papers.

22 Ibid.

23 That Secretary Long may not have been so anxious as
his assistant for Mahan to be in Washington may easily be read
into these lines which he wrote in his diary at the time: "He
[Mahan] has achieved great distinction as a writer of naval
history, and has made a very thorough study of naval strategy,
no naval officer stands higher today. Yet I doubt very much
whether he will be of much value practically. He may be or he
may not. That remains to be seen." Lawrence S. Mayo (ed.),
op. cit., 191.

24 Mahan seems to have been the individual who proposed
the solution accepted by McKinley in the evacuation of Santiago.
The majority of professional opinion in a special meeting of
cabinet members, army men and the Naval Board, considering the
surrender of the Spanish at Santiago, favored, as did Generals
Shafer and Miles, the acceptance of the Spanish army's offer
to surrender if permitted to march out and go anywhere it chose.
The President was "vehemently" opposed to it, so the Spanish
offer was rejected. Mahan suggested that they might surrender
Long was subsequently to write that "the Board possessed high intelligence and excellent judgment, and its service was invaluable in connection with the successful conduct of the war." 25

Despite gross sins of omission and glaring sins of commission on the part of the United States, hostilities were over by mid-summer. Advocates of the "large policy" and the "outward view" were at no loss on how to capitalize on their war-given opportunity. The sense of destiny, territorially and governmentally, the urge for defense, strategically

and return to Spain, a plan which met with the approval of all and was accordingly followed. Mahan did not care to have his role made public but did "object to credit, if such there be, being attributed to another by the public and in history," especially to one [Secretary Alger] who "was a monument of incapacity." Mahan to Long, Aug. 21, 1899; April 25, 1901; June 17, 1901, Long Papers.

Relative to the calling of an armistice as connected with the sailing of the United States fleet for the Spanish Coast, Mahan made suggestions which drew from McKinley favorable comment. Mahan to Long, July 28 [1898] (with McKinley's note at the end); July 29 [1898], Aug. 5, 1898; Aug. 7, 1898, Long Papers. Mahan wrote Hay also with suggestions as to course of action if negotiations at Paris broke down. Hay to Mahan, Nov. 9, 1898, Hay Papers.

Mahan due to his position as a naval officer and writer, aside from any official connection with the war, took sides in the famous Schley-Sampson controversy. He favored the latter and opposed any official recognition to Schley. Mahan to Lodge, July 29, 1898; Feb. 19 [1901?]; Lodge to Mahan, Feb. 21, 1901, Lodge Papers; Mahan to Long, Nov. 16, 1898; Dec. 12, 1899, Long Papers; Mahan to Luce, Oct. 17, 1911, Luce Papers.


Mahan was strongly of the belief that official responsibility in ways of professional advice to the Secretary should be individual, that some one officer should be Chief of Staff to advise with others but in whose own hands should rest the final determination of advice. He wrote the Secretary accordingly and discussed the matter with the Board. Secretary Long was not especially pleased and he recorded in his diary: "Captain Mahan is on the rampage again. He is very frank and manly; does not go around Robin Hood's barn, but blurs out his entire dissatisfaction with the entire Naval War Board." Mayo, op.cit., 194.
for our own bulwarks as well as for the possible Armageddon of the future, the requirements of development, politically and commercially, were now given fulfillment when the call of duty to ourselves and the Cubans was answered. 26 Some of the expansionists "deeply regretted" the self-denying Teller Amendment, but none considered it applicable to territory other than Cuba. 27

Roosevelt, motivated by adolescence rather than shrewdness, 28 had left the Navy Department to become lieutenant-colonel of the cowboy regiment. Less than a month after the war had begun he was writing from his camp in Texas to Lodge at Washington, urging that peace not be made until Porto Rico was

26 Writing in 1900, Mahan left no doubt as to the motivating force, as he saw it, behind the expansion sentiment. "So far as came under the observation of the writer—and his interest in the matter dated back several years—the expansionists themselves, up to the war with Spain, were dominated by the purely defensive ideas inherited from the earlier days of our national existence. The Antilles, Cuba, the Isthmus, and Hawaii were up to that time simply outposts—positions—where it was increasingly evident that influences might be established dangerous to the United States as she then was. Such influences must be forestalled; if not by immediate action, at least by a definite policy." Mahan, "The Problem of Asia," Harper's, March 1900, reprinted in The Problem of Asia, 8.

27 Whitelaw Reid to President McKinley, April 19, 1898 (cited by R. Cortissoz, op. cit., II, 222-3). Reid went so far as to openly state American responsibility would continue in Cuba unless the insurgents demonstrated ability for self-government. Ibid., II, 224.

Senator Hoar felt differently and maintained that "it was idle to say that we meant the Teller resolution to apply only to Cuba." F. H. Gillett, George Frisbie Hoar, 206; George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years, II, 310-11.

28 Pringle, op. cit., 182.
ours and Cuba was independent. Lodge in reply assured him that

Porto Rico is not forgotten and we mean to have it. Unless I am utterly and profoundly mistaken the Administration is now fully committed to the large policy that we both desire.

By the middle of June, Lodge wrote his restless, eager, soldier friend that the Secretary of State, Judge Day, had told him there was no longer any question about the United States getting and keeping Porto Rico—though over a month was to elapse before the expeditionary force was to begin its conquest. Lodge frequently talked with McKinley and toward the end of July was able to write that the President seemed "very clear and strong about both Cuba and Porto Rico." With the signing of the protocol guaranteeing relinquishment of all Spanish claims in the Caribbean, it was no wonder that our expansionist Senator felt that "so far as the West Indies is concerned all is right."

Before the drafting of the treaty of peace with Spain the Naval War Board, at the request of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee, recommended that:

29 Lodge, op. cit., I, 299 (Roosevelt to Lodge, May 19, 1898).

The Pacific elements of the "large policy"—Hawaii and the Philippines—will be handled in Chapters VIII and IX.

30 Lodge, op. cit., I, 299-300 (Lodge to Roosevelt, May 24, 1898). Similar views occur subsequently. Ibid., I, 301, 302, 309.

31 Ibid., I, 311 (Lodge to Roosevelt, June 15, 1898).

32 Ibid., 330 (Lodge to Roosevelt, July 23, 1898); see also Ibid., 323 (Lodge to Roosevelt, July 12?). 1898.


34 Lodge, op. cit., I, 337 (Lodge to Roosevelt, Aug. 15, 1898). Lodge would have been willing for more in the West Indies. In exchange for the Philippines, excepting Luzon, he
Committee, submitted a report to the Navy Department as to "what coaling stations should be acquired by the United States outside their own territorial limits." Judging from its broad strategic reasoning and unmistakable literary style, the report was written by Captain Mahan. This report urgently called attention to the importance of the Windward Passage between Cuba and Haiti as

the great direct commercial route between the whole North Atlantic Coast and the Isthmus. No solution of the problem of coaling and naval stations can be considered satisfactory which does not provide for military safety upon that route. The most available ports for that purpose are Santiago and Guantanamo, on the south shore of Cuba. To those may be added the Bay of Nipe on the north . . . . Santiago or Guantanamo is preferable in strategic position to Nipe. . . .

The general provision as incorporated in the Platt Amendment of 1901 for the sale or lease to the United States of coaling or naval stations in Cuba at specified points, to be determined later by the President of the United States, was given more definite form by an agreement of 1903. By this agreement the United States received Guantanamo in eastern Cuba and Bahia Honda in the northwestern part of the island.

thought the British might give us Bahamas and Jamaica and buy us the Danish West Indies for good measure. Lodge to Day, Aug. 11, 1898, Lodge Papers.

35 Hearings Before the House Committee on Naval Affairs, 58th Cong., 3d sess., pp. 504-5. This is in a testimony cited by Secretary Morton in behalf of continuance of the development of the United States naval station at Guantanamo.

36 Ibid., 504n.

37 Ibid., 505.

38 W. M. Malloy, Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols, and Agreements between the United States of America and Other Powers, 1706-1909, I, 358 et. seq.
Mahan, discussing the strategic features of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea in his timely article in 1897, had not placed emphasis upon the significance of Porto Rico; the control of the Mona and the Anegada passages better handled by Samaná Bay and St. Thomas. The professed motives of the war prevented preeminence being given to Porto Rico in the campaign strategy; but once the possibility of its acquisition loomed on the horizon it may be certain Mahan favored it, especially when taken in its wider setting. In the report of the Naval War Board, to which reference has already been made, Porto Rico was viewed as being advantageously situated on the circumference or entrance to the Caribbean, and the mutually supporting relation of Porto Rico and Culebra was pointed out. "Porto Rico," Mahan wrote subsequently, "considered militarily is to Cuba, to the future Isthmian canal, and to our Pacific Coast, what Malta is, or may be, to Egypt and the beyond. . . ."

By a subsequent agreement in 1912 the United States gave up her right at Bahia Honda in return for an enlargement of area at Guantanamo. D. G. Munro, The United States and the Caribbean Area, 18.

39This view is openly stated in the first of a series of articles appearing in McClure's Magazine, December 1898--April 1899, on the general topic of "Lessons of the War with Spain." This series and other essays were reprinted in Lessons in the War with Spain and Other Articles. The general purpose of these articles evidently was to point out that our immediate naval requirements were greater than before the war and to call attention to the fact that in spite of our victories it would have been necessary to tell a different story had our antagonist been more formidable. As to Porto Rico in campaign strategy, see Mahan, Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 26-8; also Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 14, 1898, Roosevelt Papers. The need of coaling stations and a canal were lessons of the war as seen by R. E. Bradford in an article which shows definite similarity to Mahan in his appraisal of strategic points in the Caribbean. R.E. Bradford, "Coaling Stations for the Navy." Forum, XXVI, 732-47 (February 1899).

40Hearings before the House Naval Affairs Committee, 58th Cong., 3d sess., p. 505.
The necessity to hold and strengthen it "in its entirety and in its immediate surroundings" was urged. "It would be very difficult for a transatlantic state to maintain operations in the western Caribbean with a United States fleet based upon Porto Rico and the adjacent islands." 41

In light of what Mahan had earlier written there can be comparatively little doubt what he had in mind when speaking of "Porto Rico and the adjacent islands" or of Porto Rico "in its entirety and in its immediate surroundings." More than a week prior to the signing of the protocol which brought cessation to the hostilities, Mahan had written Lodge about matters in the Caribbean. "Assuming, as seems pretty certain, that the United States is to acquire Porto Rico, may I suggest the advisability as a corollary to this step, after peace is signed, the purchase of St. Thomas." Porto Rico and these small Danish Islands "form a compact strategic entity, yielding mutual support. St. Cruz is immaterial ... the harbor of St. Maria is very fine ... the port of St. Thomas, reasonably fortified, [would be] a distinct addition to the military strength of Porto Rico, considered as a naval base." 42

Negotiations looking toward the acquisition of these islands were shortly initiated by Secretary Hay, but quarrels between the American consul and the Minister at Copenhagen,

41Mahan, Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 29.

42Mahan to Lodge, Aug. 4, 1898, Lodge Papers. Mahan stated to Lodge in this letter that he had never favored the acquisition of St. Thomas as an isolated possession, believing it too small and too distant, but that as a part of the larger whole it was desirable.
a change in the Danish ministry, price dickering and modifications of one sort or another in Hay's first rough draft, impeded rapid progress. It was not until January 24, 1902, three years after the inception of official negotiations, that the American Secretary of State signed the treaty. The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations reported favorably upon the treaty, commenting that "these islands, together with Porto Rico, are of great importance in a strategic way, whether the strategy be military or commercial." Appended thereto was the report which Senator Lodge had submitted with his bill of 1898, and this, as already noted, had called Mahan to witness that St. Thomas was "one of the greatest strategic points in the West Indies." The treaty was easily ratified by the United States Senate after only an hour's consideration but failed in the Danish Landsting.44

The attempt to buy the Danish West Indies was but an

43 Senate Exec. Report, No. 1, 57th Cong., 1st sess; or Senate Document, No. 284, 57th Cong., 2d sess.

44 For a general account of this attempt to purchase the Danish Islands, see Tyler Dennett, John Hay, 270-3. A much longer account is given by Tansill, op. cit., 285-372. Contemporary statesmen, including Hay, Lodge, White, and Roosevelt, believed German intrigues had defeated the treaty. Some historians (Nevins, op. cit., 203-5; A. P. L. Dennis, op. cit., 271-5) have given credence to this supposition. Charles Tansill in a long chapter devoted to German interests in the Caribbean completely repudiates German influence in this matter of the rejection of the Danish West Indies treaty, concluding that "in face of the proofs that I have adduced from the foreign office archives of both Denmark and Germany, it will be difficult for any future historian to conjure up again the old bogey of 'perfidious Allemagne.'" Op. cit., 373-455. Alfred Vogts substantiates Tansill in his large two volume study, Deutschland und die Vereinigten Staaten in der Weltpolitik, II, 1410 et. seq.
incidental factor in American policy as regarded Latin America at this time. As Mahan had well expressed it, the Danish West Indies were but a "corollary" to the acquisition of Porto Rico and both they and Porto Rico in their entirety were subsidiary to the larger problem which he and others had in mind. The central proposition upon which all else rested was American dominance in the Caribbean Sea. This dominance was essential, it will be recalled, for strategic and defensive purposes, not only for the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the United States but for her Pacific frontier as well. The central link in this defensive chain was the projected Isthmian canal. In fact one authority has stated that the underlying motive of the expansionists of 1898 was to clear the way for the control of such a canal.

This Mahan-Lodge-Roosevelt conception was largely shared by those in power from the Spanish-American War to the World War, and the dominant fact affecting the diplomacy of the United States as regards Latin America in this period was the desire and the determination to dig, own, and control this inter-oceanic canal. Much of Roosevelt's "high type of opportunism"—the taking of Panama, intercession for Venezuela, preservation of order in Cuba, mediation in Central America,

45Senator Lodge shortly suggested reopening negotiations with Denmark, this time including Greenland in the deal, but Roosevelt thought it wiser to let the Santo Domingo difficulty clear up first. Lodge, op. cit., 119-20 (Lodge to Roosevelt, May 12, 1905); ibid., 125 (Roosevelt to Lodge, May 24, 1905). The Danish Islands never became a major issue for Roosevelt. Nevins, op. cit., 205.

46Samis, op. cit., 509.
intervention in Santo Domingo—"was guided or dominated by his devotion to the cause of national defense."\textsuperscript{47} Nor did the successors of Roosevelt prior to the World War vitally depart from the pursuance of this benevolent imperialism and tutelage. As Professor Bemis has said, "What generally is referred to as the Caribbean policy of the United States more appropriately might be called the Panama Policy."

The nature and degree of support which Mahan gave these various manifestations of the "Panama Policy" cannot be fully determined. Allusion has been made to his desire for St. Thomas, his eagerness for and approval of Porto Rico, and his insistence upon bases in Cuba. As for other naval positions in the Caribbean, Mahan had written favorably, prior to the war, of Samaná Bay in Santo Domingo; but in the report made by the Naval War Board it received no mention, St. Thomas evidently having received preference. Môle St. Nicholas in Haiti, having been given only a passing comment in 1897, now received no mention. The report even specifically cautioned against too many bases; except in the immediate neighborhood of the Isthmus, the positions in Cuba, Porto Rico, and St. Thomas were deemed sufficient. Every naval station "while

\textsuperscript{47}H. C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, 200. Hill discusses "Rooseveltian Imperialism" in Chapter VIII and concludes that the economic motives were subsidiary in Roosevelt's Caribbean policy.

affording facilities for naval operations, on the other hand imposes upon the fleet a burden of support and communication. The just balance between too few and too many should therefore be carefully struck.\(^{49}\)

In light of these facts and in view of Mahan's general naval policy, it would seem quite doubtful whether the desire for additional bases in Santo Domingo and Haiti was shared by him. On the other hand, with his unqualified opposition to the encroachment by European powers in the Caribbean, there is no doubt that Mahan shared the anxiety lest the financial difficulties of Venezuela and Santo Domingo might lead to the European control of outposts of the canal. From this angle he was glad to see, as the basis of American policy in the Caribbean, the displacement of "watchful vigilance" by the doctrine of "international police power" with its emphasis upon preventive action.\(^{50}\)

Mahan did not favor the extension of American responsibility, which an enlarged version of the Monroe Doctrine necessitated, until confronted with an actual case in which the previous interpretation seemed potentially dangerous. Writing in an English magazine shortly after the 1902 Venezuela episode

\(^{49}\)Hearings before the House Committee on Naval Affairs, 58th Cong., 3d sess., p. 505.

\(^{50}\)In an address at Chicago in 1903, Roosevelt termed his attitude on the Venezuela crisis of the preceding year as "watchful vigilance." The interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine as one requiring the United States to play the role of "international police power" came in his annual message of December 6, 1904. The division of power and responsibility, inherent in the generally accepted view of the Monroe Doctrine, Roosevelt contended was "incompatible with international equity." Hill, op. cit., 148-9.
had passed the crisis, Mahan said:

Not to invade the rights of an American state is to the United States an obligation with the force of law; to permit no European State to infringe them is a matter of policy; but as she will not acquiesce in any assault upon their independence or territorial integrity, so she will not countenance by her support any shirking of their international responsibility.

Mahan was evidently not yet ready to involve the United States further, for he added:

Neither will she undertake to compel them to observe international obligations to others than herself. To do so, which has been by some argued a necessary corollary of the Monroe Doctrine, would encroach on the very independence which that political dogma defends. . . .

During the Santo Domingo affair Mahan altered his views and despite his previous unmistakable statement to the contrary, now favored the incorporation of the "international police power" idea. He stated that this "species of development" was inherent from the beginning—"evident, logical, and irresistible." Conditions which tended towards European intervention, justifiable morally and internationally, "must by American nations be remedied; if not by the state responsible, then by others"—though not necessarily by the United States, Mahan thought.

---


52 Mahan, Naval Administration and Warfare, 406, 409. This is from a subscript to "The Monroe Doctrine" essay, written at the time of its reprint (1908) in book form.
He welcomed this change not only because of its safeguarding feature but also because it gave indication that the Doctrine was a vital principle—a living and growing policy. This aspect accorded with his previously expressed views on the matter. Almost immediately after the Treaty of Peace in 1898, which definitely strengthened the position of the United States in the Caribbean and gave her possessions in the farther Pacific, Mahan had advocated a re-examination of the Monroe Doctrine. During a lifetime of several generations this serviceable working theory had acquired the added force of tradition which tended to invest an accepted policy with the attribute of permanency. He wrote:

The principles upon which an idea rests may conform to essential, and therefore permanent, truth; but application continually varies, and maxims, rules, doctrines, not being the living breath of principles, but only their embodiment— the temporary application of them to conditions not necessarily permanent— can claim no exemption from the ebb and flow of mundane things. We should not make of even this revered doctrine a fetish, nor persuade ourselves that a modification is under no circumstances admissible.

Now, as a decade earlier when he had been urging the United States to take the "outward view," Mahan was suggesting that time might make "the ancient good uncouth." He appreciated the shift of interest to the Pacific which was taking place and thought an alteration or political retrenchment

---

of responsibility under the Monroe Doctrine ought to follow. Primarily this should involve a limitation of area covered, yet under no circumstances should the Caribbean Sea be neglected for it contained the outworks of the Central American Isthmus. In this region, more than ever before,

all indications of political change affecting it even remotely must be sedulously watched; but, on the American continent, south of points where influence can be effectually exerted upon the isthmus the Monroe Doctrine loses much of its primacy . . . [and] for the American communities beyond that range [Amazon] our professed political concern is to use a waste of strength, as it is to them distasteful. 56

Such a withdrawal of a pledge of political and military protection to "states that bear us no love," Mahan argued, would leave us at much greater liberty to engage in the rich, large,

55 Mahan felt that whatever our outward adherence to the Doctrine might be we would now have to readjust our views as to "our apartness" from European complications. "It is not, indeed, likely . . . that we should find reason for intervention in a dispute localized in Europe; but it is nevertheless most probable that we can never again see with indifference, and with the sense of security which characterized our past, a substantial, and still less a radical, change in the balance of power there . . . . From this follows the obvious necessity of appreciating the relations to ourselves of the power inherent in the various countries, due to their available strength and to their position; what also their attitude toward us resultant from the temper of the people, and the intelligent control of the latter by the government—two very different things, even in democratic communities." Mahan, "The Problem of Asia," Harper's, March 1900, reprinted in The Problem of Asia, 17-8. Cf. Mahan, The Interest of America in International Conditions, 81, 118, 149-51, 163-4, 178-9 et passim.

and imminent opportunities then opening in Asia. 57

In this idea of retrenchment of responsibility under the Monroe Doctrine via the limitation of area, Mahan met with no success. Even Lodge and presumably Roosevelt, his close political and personal friends, did not follow him at this point. 58 In the larger and more important matter of the construction, purpose, and utilization of a canal there was no vital disagreement between these men of action and their intellectual mentor. The wave of sentiment (which had been rising in the years prior to the war) for an American dug, American owned, and American controlled canal, became an irresistible flood which coursed onward through the labyrinth of diplomacy through the maze of dissension and intrigue over the choice of routes, and did not subside until it had spent itself in violating the sovereignty of one nation and in destroying much of the good will which another nation had heretofore enjoyed among its southern neighbors in the Western Hemisphere.

The embarrassments to American naval strategy and defense resultant from the possession of coast lines so remote from one another (brought forcibly home by the Oregon), the growth of trade with China and western South America, the new acquisitions in the Pacific, the advance into the Caribbean—all of these called for an early building of an inter-oceanic

57Mahan, "The Problem of Asia," Harper's, April 1900, reprinted in The Problem of Asia, 86.
58Lodge, op. cit., I, 487 (Lodge to Roosevelt, Mar. 30, 1901).
canal. Negotiations for the modification of the canal fell largely to Secretary Hay. He had behind him an uncompromising Senate, an aroused nationalism, and better than ordinary good luck in the conjunction of events beyond his control. Hay's first treaty, delayed by the Alaskan boundary difficulty, was not submitted to the Senate until February 1900. It contained the general principle of neutralization which prevented the right of the United States to fortify a canal, and also a provision stating that after ratification the United States and Great Britain would invite other states to adhere to it.

A storm of unfavorable criticism immediately greeted the above features of the treaty. The failure to permit fortification by the United States "strengthens against us every nation whose fleet is larger than ours" and any provision inviting a joint guarantee was a contravention of the Monroe Doctrine.

59 Dr. Shaw, an ardent advocate of the "outward view," trenchantly wrote shortly after the war, "Perhaps we were rash in buying the wagon, and perhaps we ought not to have bought the horse; but having made these investments for better or for worse, let us not now hesitate about buying a set of harness. The way to justify expansion is to make the most effective possible use of what we have acquired. . . . Viewed from the material standpoint [commercial] and tested as a business proposition [by doubling the efficiency of the navy], the Nicaragua Canal is as necessary to the completion of our new territorial, commercial, and strategical policies as the harness is necessary to the utilization of the horse and wagon." Review of Reviews, XXI, 134 (February 1900).

60 Dennett, op. cit., 212.

wrote New York's "war governor" to Secretary Hay. Hay did not welcome hostility to the treaty; it is almost certain he wrote Roosevelt to that effect, informing him that "as to 'Sea Power' and the Monroe Doctrine, we did not act without consulting the best living authorities on those matters." Mahan certainly merited inclusion in such a list, at least so far as sea power was concerned. No evidence has been found to indicate that Hay consulted him nor is it certain what Mahan's reaction to the treaty. His previous outlook on the


63 Hay to ?, Feb. 12, 1900 (cited by ibid., II, 225). Roosevelt had made a declaration in opposition to the treaty prior to the explanatory letter to Hay, just noted. Professor Dennett thinks that the Hay letter of February 12, though without salutation, was written to Roosevelt after his declaration of opposition and evoked his letter of February 18 to Hay. Dennett, op. cit., 339. The Hay letter in full is as follows:

"Et tu! Cannot you leave a few things to the President and the Senate who are charged with them by the constitution? "As to 'Sea Power' and the Monroe Doctrine, we did not act without consulting the best living authorities on those subjects.

"Do you really think the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty preferable to the one now before the Senate? There is no third, except dishonor. Elkins and Pettigrew say, 'Dishonor be damned!' I hardly think you will.

"Please do not answer this--but think about it awhile."

64 Probable consultation, at least with Admiral Dewey, President of the General Board, may have given validity to this statement of Secretary Hay. Appended to the report of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations accompanying this first Hay-Pauncefote Treaty was a statement of Dewey's to the effect that fortification of the canal would be undesirable as it would make the Isthmus a battleground in case of war. Senate Document, No. 474, 63d Cong., 2d sess., A Diplomatic History of the Panama Canal.

65 Roosevelt expressed his views to Mahan by letter, but there is no indication in this of the latter's reaction to the treaty. Roosevelt to Mahan, Feb. 14, 1900, Roosevelt Papers. If Mahan had been in favor, Hay and other friends of the treaty would surely have sought his support. Mahan's firm conviction
matter of the exclusion of European powers from the Caribbean and the Isthmus, his earlier attitude about the value of fortifications in relation to the fleet, and his subsequent definitely expressed views on these specific topics in relation to the Canal, lead one to think that Mahan did not give his approval to this first Hay canal treaty.

The Senate ratified the treaty only after three amendments which so seriously altered it that the British refused to accept it. The second Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, signed in

of the closeness of English and American policies may have had something to do with his absence of opposition. In an article written in August 1900, though not published until November, Mahan noted that Great Britain had manifested a disposition to acquiesce in our naval predominance in the Caribbean. Mahan predicted that this disposition would increase since Great Britain's interests elsewhere were so great that she needed to unload herself of responsibility in the Caribbean, and too, there was a decided similarity between the major interests of the two powers, which would consequently necessitate the same general line of policy. It was to "her [Britain's] interest that we remain strong and since an essential element of our strength is in the Caribbean, we may prudently reckon upon the moral support of Great Britain in any political clash with other nations there, unless we take a stand morally indefensible." Mahan, "Effect of Asiatic Conditions on World Policies," North American Review, November 1900, reprinted in The Problem of Asia, 180-5. For a much later comment relative to the first Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, see Mahan, "The Deficiencies of Law as an Instrument of International Adjustments," North American Review, November 1911, reprinted in Armaments and Arbitration, 93-4.

66W. S. Holt, Treaties Defeated by the Senate, 184-94.

Final action was not taken by the Senate until December 1900. But even by March the trend of opinion against the treaty had been of such a nature that Hay had sought to resign. His annoyance and disgust also took the form of petulant and witty comments to friends. "It is as if you should offer Yale College a million dollars and the trustees should refuse the gift on the ground that they wanted a million and a half." Hay to Whitelaw Reid, Feb. 7, 1900 (cited by Thayer, op. cit., II, 224). "When I sent in the Canal Convention I felt sure that no one out of a mad house could fail to see that the advantages were all on our side. But I underrated the power of ignorance
November of 1901, and ratified the following February, met
the objections which an assertive sensitive nationalism had
found in the first. The way was now technically cleared for
negotiations with an isthmian country for an American owned and
American controlled canal. Even before the ratification of the
treaty with Great Britain, the American government had taken
steps toward the construction of a canal. 67 Mahan did not
take sides in the Nicaragua-Panama controversy; consequently
neither a consideration of the dissension over the choice of
routes nor a discussion of the diplomatic negotiations concern-
ing the acquisition of a right-of-way is within the purview of
this study. 69

and spite, acting upon cowardice." Hay to J. J. McCook, April
22, 1900 (cited by Dennis, op. cit., 168).
Professor Dennett offers the suggestion that Hay's haste
in the Danish West Indies negotiations was partially due to the
desire that the possession of, or prospect for the possession
of, the Virgin Islands, along with the contemplated bases in
Cuba, would tend to offset, in the minds of some Senators, the
disadvantages of the non-fortification features in the canal

67 Williams, op. cit., 304, 310-1; Dennis, op. cit., 309
et. seq.

68 In his analysis of "The Strategic Features of the Gulf
of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea" in 1897, Mahan discussed the
positions of strength controlling each. The Interest of Amer-
ica in Sea Power, Present and Future, 293-4. In dealing with
the strategic implications of the canal, Mahan had earlier
written: "Whether the canal of the Central Isthmus be eventu-
ally at Panama or at Nicaragua matters little to the question
now in hand, although, in common with most Americans who have
thought upon the subject, I believe it surely will be at the
latter point." "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power," Forum, March
1893, reprinted in ibid., 44.

69 It is certain that Mahan was pleased with the manner
and nature of Hay's conduct of diplomatic matters. In reply
to a letter of Nov. 20, 1904, from Mahan, Hay said in part:
"I am greatly obliged to you for your kind references to our
work in the State Department. I receive so many compliments
After the war, as before, Mahan consistently pursued the line of attack which stressed the naval and strategical significance of the canal rather than its economic and commercial importance. He again spoke of the "community of interests and duty to the world's future, centering about China," as obligations incumbent upon the United States, obligations which could be cared for only by a strong grip upon the canal --"the essential link" in our line of communications. To safeguard this line, and especially this link, the United States must have available for immediate action in the Caribbean a fleet "of power great enough . . . to make it evidently inexpedient, politically, for the greatest navy to contest our predominance" in that region.70

which I know I do not deserve, from people who have no capacity for judging, that when I occasionally get a generous word of support from the highest possible authority, like yourself, I am extremely grateful for it, and begin to doubt my own distrust." Nov. 23, 1904, Hay Papers.

It may be most appropriate here to insert that Mahan did not consider Roosevelt's policy toward Columbia censurable either from the point of international law or natural equity. Man was not made for law but law for man; law should be viewed as an instrument or means and not as a principle or end. Yet no advantage to the United States, to Panama, or to general welfare would justify the 1903 action if it had been done in certain contravention of treaty rights. Mahan argued that the 1846 treaty was inapplicable in the 1903 uprising and hence the right of forcible intervention remained. Mahan, "Was Panama 'A Chapter of Dishonor'?" North American Review, October 1912, reprinted in Armaments and Arbitration, 218-50. This article was a reply to Dr. Leander Chamberlain, "A Chapter in National Dishonor," North American Review, February, 1912.


With definite indebtedness to Mahan, W. V. Judson likewise called attention to the reciprocal influence of the navy and canal-plus-bases, the former being dependent upon the latter yet the latter useless without the former. "Strategic
As the construction of the Panama Canal neared completion, it was necessary that Congress pass measures for its regulation and control. Mahan anticipated one phase of this problem, and in several forceful articles he pleaded for adequate fortification of the canal by the United States. In the first of these he appealed to pride, tradition, and necessity. As the Canal Zone (save definite limitations in Colon and Panama) was definitely American soil, Mahan claimed the United States would be constituting over herself a kind of protectorate if she sought from foreign states a guarantee of the Zone's neutrality. Moreover, an invitation to non-American states to assume American responsibility would contravene the traditional American policy. Surely memory of the difficulties experienced under the copartnership of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty would suffice to prevent a similar but worse recurrence. The canal was so fundamentally different from the Philippines that it was not in the same category. From a material point of view the loss of the Philippines "would be to us like the loss of a little finger, perhaps a single joint of it"—but not so with the canal for our very life

---


was at stake there.  

From a naval point of view Mahan left no doubt as to the necessity of fortifications, once granted that the United States intended to make use of the canal in time of war. Fortifications would assure such a use not only more cheaply than warships but also more certainly, as fortifications could not be moved in moments of real or panicky pressure. Moreover, if duly fortified the canal would not only be a defensive provision, serving to liberate the offensive arm by permitting the American fleet to leave for a measurable period of time, unconcerned about the safety of this "most important link in the line of our communications," but also it would enable the fleet to issue upon either ocean in effective order. Fortifications would limit the number of battleships needed. The strategist stated his reasoning in these words:

It is precisely in order that a constant guard of battleships may not be necessary that fortifications are requisite. Fortifications liberate a

---


73 Ibid., 186-9. Defenses should exist, however, for the canal and not vice-versa, for the value of the canal was not its impregnability of position but "its usefulness to the navy as the offensive defender of the whole national coast-line--Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific." Ibid., 189.

74 Ibid., 190. An additional argument for a properly fortified canal was the greater degree of success which an inferior navy possessed in an attempt to defend the canal, if operating at the strategic point of Guantanamo rather than at the Isthmus. But this thought, thrown out for argumentative purposes, was dangerous in its implications and was followed by a word more in keeping with the concern of the author. "If the United States desires peace with security, it must have a navy second to none but that of Great Britain. . . ." Ibid., 193-5.
fleet for action, whenever elsewhere required; and by preserving the canal for use as a bridge between the two oceans, render unnecessary the maintenance of a big fleet in both. 75

In the last major article which Mahan published, only three months prior to his death, he discussed the relation of the canal to the navy. The canal was again spoken of as the "decisive link in a most important line of communications" giving advantages by fewer ships and in less time; yet now, as often before, a word of warning was added:

that the Canal may so serve, it must be fortified, and able to stand by itself without battleship help against attack. . . . In the matter of defense, regarded as a question of mere fighting, the fleet and canal have no essential connection with each other. 76

To the very last Mahan was found laboring to make more certain the fulfillment of his first and foremost concern--predominance of the United States in the Caribbean Sea.


Whereas Mahan's desire for dominance of the United States in the Caribbean was marked by a high degree of fulfillment at his death, his solution for American interests in the Pacific was marked neither by the same degree of simplicity nor of success. The vastness of area involved, the multiplicity of interests at stake, the rapidity of change on the international horizon, the extent and suddenness of territorial involvements by the United States in the Far East, prevented any single or easy solution. From Mahan's point of view the American objective in the Pacific was usually stated as one of influence and not of supremacy; his policy for the United States in that region may be said to have been one primarily of cooperation. Nevertheless the possessions of the United States and the approaches to them demanded assured supremacy and at times he felt our duties in the Pacific were of such a nature that in case of disputes "the presence of a naval force adequate to command" was essential. Varying aspects of his thought may be seen in the eager determination with which he sought Hawaii, in the dutiful and reluctant willingness with which he accepted the Philippines as a manifestation of providential design, and in his conviction of the righteousness and efficacy of insistence on the free exchange of thought and trade in the rich, lucrative, and politically unstable region on either side of the Yangtze.
The Hawaiian, or Sandwich Islands, had long been an emporium, successively for fur-traders, sandalwood-buyers, whalers, and trans-Pacific navigators. As far back as 1842, the United States had formally recognized the independence of the Republic of Hawaii and had declared that because of "the volume of trade and its special interest in the islands, it would consider as an unfriendly act the attempt on the part of any European power to interfere with this independence. . . ." This position was repeatedly reiterated in the years which followed. Attempts were made to bring the islands more closely within the American orbit. Several American statesmen, from Marcy onward, planned annexation, but failing in that sought reciprocity treaties. By 1875 the Senate finally ratified a reciprocity treaty with Hawaii which contained a political article placing the lands virtually within the American sphere of influence. The development and growing importance of the Pacific Coast, the increase in trans-Pacific commerce, and the improvement of steam navigation tended to focus attention on the islands as significant from point of coast defense. When the reciprocity treaty was renewed a decade later, this aspect was given consideration by the incorporation of a clause giving the United States the


2In 1873 General J. M. Schofield and Lieutenant-Colonel B. S. Alexander had investigated and favorably reported upon Pearl Harbor as a naval base. Their report may be conveniently found (where first published in full) in the American Historical Review, XXX, 561-5 (1925).
exclusive right to Pearl Harbor, near Honolulu, as a naval base.

The domestic political situation became acute in 1891 upon the ascension of Queen Liliuokalani, who favored a policy of Hawaii for Hawaiians and sought to limit foreign influence, primarily American interests, concentrated in the legislature. Knowledge of the peaceful revolution of January 17, 1893, of the abdication of the Queen under protest, of her appeal to the President of the United States, and of the establishment of a Provisional Government reached the United States on January 28, along with the diplomatic commission of "white Hawaiians"—four Americans and one Englishman—sent by the new government to negotiate a treaty of annexation. Such a treaty was quickly arranged by Secretary Foster and signed on February 14. On the following day the Senate received the treaty with a report by Foster and a message from the President urging prompt and favorable action.

Charles and Mary Beard give a brief readable account of American interests in the Hawaiian Islands throughout the nineteenth century in The Rise of American Civilization, II, 355 et. seq.

The most recent and exhaustive treatment of the whole Hawaiian problem subsequent to the 1893 revolution is Julius Pratt, The Expansionists of 1893. Dr. Pratt finds the "cause" of the revolution in a widespread desire for a stable white government, rather than in the economic repercussions of the sugar bounties in the McKinley tariff act of 1890. Cf. Pratt, op. cit., 159-60, and Beard and Beard, op. cit., 359-60.

Mahan had noted in 1890 the political instability of the Hawaiian Islands as well as their military and commercial importance to the United States, and had advocated that

it should be an inviolable resolution of our national policy, that no foreign state should henceforth acquire a coaling station within three thousand miles of San Francisco—a distance which includes the Hawaiian and Galapagos Islands and the coast of Central America.6

News of the revolution brought immediate public utterance from Mahan. In a letter to the New York Times, appearing on January 31, he called attention to the relatively great number of Chinese now living in Hawaii and to the consequent close relation of the islands to China as well as to American and European countries. This was a vital aspect of the Hawaiian problem which he thought others had neglected and one to which he frequently returned. Fear that the vast mass of now inert China might "yield to one of those impulses which have in past ages buried civilization under a wave of barbaric invasion"—a movement which might break eastward across the Pacific as well as westward toward Europe—led Mahan to think that "it would be impossible to exaggerate the momentous issues dependent upon a firm hold of the Sandwich Islands by a great, civilized, maritime power." The United States with its nearness to the scene was


When this essay appeared in book form, an English reviewer commented: "A nation whose vital interests are imperilled because a foreign power owns territory at a distance from one of its ports considerably exceeding that of Brest from New York, must indeed be in a parlous state." G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 295 (February 1898).
naturally the proper guardian or custodian. 7

At the request of the editor of the Forum (Walter H. Page), who happened to read this letter, Mahan wrote for the March (1893) issue of that magazine that which proved to be probably his most influential article. In this essay, entitled "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power," he discussed the general military or naval value of these islands in their control of the North Pacific, appraised the relative claims upon them, and placed their annexation as an incident in a larger whole. The central position of the Hawaiian Islands, the absence of alternatives for a wide area, and their singular location upon the more important trade routes of the Pacific gave them outstanding advantages, whether viewed from point of commercial security or naval control. The defense of the whole Pacific Coast and of the future isthmian canal was vitally and intimately tied up with these islands. Mahan disposed of the rights of other nations to Hawaii (British Canada was specifically mentioned) on the ground that the United States, being "by far the greatest, in numbers, interests, and power, of the communities bordering upon the north Pacific," would have and actually did have relations with Hawaii "more numerous and more important" than any other power could have. 8

---


For British Reaction see G. S. Clarke, "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States," Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 294-5 (February 1898) and P. H. Colomb, "The United States Navy
The need of the United States for the islands was great and urgent; her claims upon them were preëminent; she could in no wise see them in the possession of another nation; the problem of annexation was at hand and the issue could not be dodged; now was the time for the decision, a decision "not unlike and not less momentous than that required of the Roman Senate, when the Mamertine garrison invited it to occupy Messina, and so to abandon the hitherto traditional policy which had confined the expansion of Rome to the Italian peninsula." Mahan sought thus to place the Hawaiian annexation in its wider setting; it was not so much a matter of a "particular action as a question of principle pregnant of great consequences in one direction or in the other." The real question was one of growth and development—was the United States to advance or recede? Noting the expansion of the United States from a small beginning upon the Atlantic to a continental power bordering upon the Pacific, Mahan queried whether we had no demands, no interests, no dangers, no call beyond the sea horizon "which impose a policy and confer rights."  

The annexation of Hawaii was to be


but a first fruit and a token that the nation in its evolution has aroused itself to the necessity of carrying its life ... beyond the borders which heretofore have sufficed for its activities .... It is rarely that so important a factor in the attack or defense of a coastline--of a sea frontier--is concentrated on a single position; and the circumstance renders doubly imperative upon us to secure it, if we righteously can. It is to be hoped ... that the opportunity thus thrust upon us may not be viewed narrowly. ... 11

Mahan, however anxious for the "first fruit," did not leave his plea for expansion without a word of warning, a word designed to further implement the sea power of the United States. Too often did people speak as if a given island or harbor rendered control of a given body of water. This was "an utter, deplorable, ruinous mistake," thought Mahan, and he cautioned that "the confidence of our nation in its native strength, and its indifference to the defense of its ports and the sufficiency of its fleet, give reason to fear that the full consequences of a forward step may not be weighed soberly." 12

10 There is no certainty that Mahan had seen the cartoon carried on the first page of the San Francisco Call of Jan. 29, 1893, entitled "Uncle Sam catches the ripe fruit." This pictured Uncle Sam seated under an apple tree and Hawaii in the form of an apple dropping into his hat, while Canada, Mexico, Haiti, Cuba, and Samoa were still on the tree, evidently not ripe but ripening. Secretary Bayard, during Cleveland's first administration, had suggested that "It was simply a matter of waiting until the apple should fall." Beard and Beard, op. cit., II, 359; Pratt, "The Large Policy of 1898," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 228 (1932). Minister Stevens varied the fruit but kept the figure when he cabled his government on Feb. 1, 1893, "The Hawaiian pear is now fully ripe, and this is the golden hour for the United States to pluck it." Montgomery Schuyler, "Walter Q. Gresham," in Bemis (ed.), The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, IX, 245.


12 Ibid., 53.
the case of the canal, Mahan was not wishing to dampen but to direct and challenge the spirit of aggressiveness.

Time was too short under the Harrison administration for the consummation of the Foster treaty of annexation. Cleveland withdrew the treaty, sent Commissioner Blount to investigate, sought to restore the deposed Queen, and dismissing the ethical questions that formerly had troubled him, eventually ended by recognition of the independence of the Hawaiian Republic—which the revolutionists, despairing of immediate annexation, had set up. These various phases of the Hawaiian problem took place almost simultaneously with other matters which also elicited an expression of attitude relative to our foreign policy, to the general tone of which attention has already been given. Though a picture of the whole should be kept in mind, comments here will be limited to the Hawaiian imbroglio. Whether in press or in Congress, similar opinions were repeatedly presented by expansionists, writers, and speakers. Though more specific as to details, these views were essentially those which Mahan had presented, viz., first, the primacy of American right to the islands; second, their urgent necessity to the United States from point of naval strategy in the defense of the Pacific Coast and the future canal; third, their prime importance as giving commercial control over a region which seemed to offer the greatest promise for the future of American trade; and finally, their annexation was but a

13 Supra, 105 et seq.
turning point in American policy, the initial manifestation that the "outward view" was being taken. 14

In thus summarizing the voluminous expansionist material on this subject, no subtle pretense is being made that it stemmed wholly or even largely from Mahan. That he had a role, however, and an important one, in influencing public opinion of the United States on the matter of American policy toward Hawaii seems certain. 15 His article on "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power," was incorporated in the report of the Committee on Foreign Relations, to whom had been given the task of "seeing what if any irregularities there had been relative to the Hawaiian revolution." 16 Nor are indications wanting to show that Mahan had followers in Congress. Senator Lodge called attention to the strategical importance of the Hawaiian Islands viewed from both military and commercial aspects; and he sought to emphasize and reinforce his remarks with a little patriotic tail twisting of the British lion by exhibiting a map of the world upon which were marked the naval stations of Great Britain, showing the relative naval strength of Great Britain and the United States in the Atlantic and the Pacific. "In the heart of the Pacific where I am now pointing, lie the Sandwich Islands. They are the key of the Pacific...."

14 For further development of these views, see Pratt, Expansionists of 1898, 146 et seq.

15 A contemporary writer in 1900 said that it was "upon Captain Mahan more than any other single person that the nation relied in its annexation of Hawaii." Wallace Rice, "Some Current Fallacies of Captain Mahan," The Dial, XXVIII, 198-200 (Mar. 16, 1900).

Opportunity was now offered the United States to strengthen herself in that region against her old rival. Lodge further expounded the Mahanian doctrine in these words:

The sea power has been one of the controlling forces in history. Without sea power no nation has been really great. Sea power consists, in the first place of a proper navy and a proper fleet; but in order to sustain a navy we must have suitable posts for naval stations, strong places where a navy can be protected and refurnished.\textsuperscript{17}

The \textit{Review of Reviews}, by a careful résumé of Mahan's \textit{Forum} essay on Hawaii, carried to a still wider audience the views of that article which this magazine termed "a broad and comprehensive discussion" of our future sea power. Its editor, Dr. Shaw, frequently urged annexation, usually linking it in the approved sea power fashion with the canal, Caribbean bases, and a navy.\textsuperscript{18}

Other expansion publicists came to Mahan for ideas or support. The former Minister to Hawaii, John L Stevens, wrote:

It should not be forgotten that contiguity of water is sometimes more important than contiguity of land. It would be well if some of our public men would carefully study the remarkable work of Captain Mahan on "Sea Power". . . . To say that we do not need the Hawaiian Islands as a security

\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Cong. Rec.}, 53d Cong., 3d sess., p. 3082. See also Lodge in \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 622, 1211. Mention has already been made that Lodge presented his views on Hawaii, as well as on expansion in general, to a different and wider audience in the article in the \textit{Forum} entitled "Our Blundering Foreign Policy." \textit{Forum}, XIX, 8-17 (March 1895).

Representative Draper (Massachusetts) was also a most ardent enthusiast for the extension of our sea frontier and for a strong navy. \textit{Cong. Rec.}, 53d. Cong., 2d sess., pp. 1844-9.

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Review of Reviews}, VII, 325, 131-6, 731-6 (1893); \textit{Ibid.}, IX, 515-18 (1894).
to our immense future interests... is blindly and recklessly to ignore the logic of irresistible circumstances and to scoff at the plainest teachings of history. 19

The "first fruit," unplucked, had fallen to the ground where it lay sedulously watched until it might be picked up after the hostility of the "little Americans" epitomized in Cleveland was withdrawn. McKinley's assurance to Schurz that there would be no "jingo nonsense" under his administration gave way, before the double attack of annexation lobbyists and yellow perilists, to a "desire to test public opinion," 20 and the President sent a new treaty of annexation to the Senate on June 16, 1897. This time the "peril" was Japan who, having emerged from a victorious war with China, felt she was now a power to be reckoned with in any Pacific question. The Hawaiian government, in an attempt to curtail oriental immigration, had run into difficulty with Japan; and as the tension increased between the two governments, the United States became somewhat apprehensive lest Japan had ulterior designs on Hawaii. This fear seemed partially justified when the signing of the new Hawaiian annexation treaty brought a protest to the United States from the Island Empire--no objection had been made against the Harrison treaty in 1893--on the ground that the consummation of such a project would disturb the international balance in the Pacific and would further jeopardize the


20 Fuess, op. cit., 349-50.
treaty rights of Japanese subjects in Hawaii. Though a cordial settlement of the matter of immigration was shortly arranged and the protest withdrawn, Japan had unwittingly provided additional incentive for action on the part of the United States. 21

The expansionists, who had merely been waiting for the exit of Cleveland, were now aided by this additional international element. In the December interview with the President-elect at Canton, in which he urged Roosevelt's appointment to the Navy Department, Lodge "first talked with him about Hawaii." 22

Mahan was keenly aware of the Japanese-Hawaiian dispute and he sent his friend and admirer, the Assistant-Secretary of the Navy, information relative to the Japanese naval program, urging that appropriate consideration be given it; for the immediate present, he advised the strengthening of the Pacific squadron and the appointment of a man of initiative and ability to be in charge. He was fearful that Roosevelt's chief would view the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands by the United States as a difficult political problem. "To this, in my mind," he wrote, "the only reply is: Do nothing unrighteous; but as regards

---

21T. A. Bailey gives a good account of this episode in his article on "Japan's Protest against the Annexation of Hawaii," Journal of Modern History, III, 46-61 (1931).

22Lodge added in his account of the interview to Roosevelt, "I did not go into our policy in that respect, but simply obtained his permission to have Cooper, their Secretary of State who is here, stop and see him on his way to Chicago." Lodge, op. cit., I, 240 (Lodge to Roosevelt, Dec. 2, 1896). There can be no doubt as to the meaning of "our policy" as concerned Hawaii. Lodge's attitude toward Hawaii, both in press and Congress, has just been noted. Roosevelt had long been anxious for the Republicans to "go in avowedly to annex Hawaii." Ibid., I, 139 (Roosevelt to Lodge, Oct. 27, 1894).
the problem, take the islands first and solve afterwards."  

Roosevelt replied in language which must have been pleasing to Mahan. Observe these excerpts:

As regards Hawaii I take your views absolutely, as indeed I do in foreign policy generally. If I had my way we would annex those islands tomorrow. . . . I believe we should build the Nicaragua Canal at once and . . . should build a dozen new battleships, half of them on the Pacific Coast. . . . I am fully alive to the danger from Japan. . . . I have been getting matters in shape on the Pacific Coast just as fast as I have been allowed. . . . My own belief is that we should act instantly before the two new Japanese warships leave England. . . . and hoist our flag over the island, leaving all details for after action. I shall press these views upon my chief just so far as he will let me; more I cannot do. . . . I earnestly hope we can make the President look at things our way. Last Saturday night Lodge pressed his views upon him with all his strength.  

Mahan did not rest content with these words of caution, encouragement, and advice to Roosevelt. It was during May of 1897-contemporaneous with this correspondence and shortly after the inauguration of a government committed by its platform to

23 Mahan to Roosevelt, May 1, 1897, Roosevelt Papers. Alluding to his letter to the New York Times in which he had pointed out that the question of the future of Hawaii was Mongolian rather than European, Mahan now bewailed the "crass blindness" of the Cleveland administration to which was due the "very real present danger of war, easily foreseen then." Mahan to Roosevelt, May 6, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.

24 Roosevelt to Mahan, May 3, 1897, Roosevelt Papers. Mahan was impressed by Roosevelt's desire to act prior to the sailing of the Japanese warships from England and recalled for Roosevelt the similarity to the late Chilean episode, adding, "The recurrence of the situation to which I call your attention may reinforce your argument." Mahan also told Roosevelt that in a recent lecture he had said, "The decision not to bring under the authority of one's own government some external position, when just occasion offers, may by future generations be bewailed in tears of blood." Mahan to Roosevelt, May 6, 1897, Roosevelt Papers.
a more aggressive foreign policy—that Mahan, coupling the increasing seriousness of the Japanese danger with the destructive Cuban insurrection entering its third year, wrote "A Twentieth-Century Outlook." This article developed in a much wider setting and at greater length the neglected aspect of the Hawaiian question, to which Mahan had called attention in his open letter in the New York Times of January 30, 1893. Looking forward into the twentieth century, Mahan foresaw a gigantic struggle between the East and the West. While the European armies, perhaps providentially intended for this noble mission, were holding safe the citadel of Christian civilization in Europe, the United States by her power on the sea should be ready to protect the western outposts of Euro-American culture. This self-appointed task necessitated by way of preparation the construction of a canal, the creation of a navy, and the acquisition of bases in the Caribbean and of outposts in the Pacific—among the latter, none comparable to Hawaii.  

The McKinley treaty for annexation, having been submitted to the Senate the middle of June, was reported back from the

---

25 This article written in May appeared in Harper's September 1897, and was reprinted in The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, 217-63.

The only safeguard against "the teeming multitudes of central and northern Asia" which might break eastward as well as westward, Mahan had written in 1894, was "the warlike spirit of the representatives of civilization. What'er betide, Sea Power will play in those days the leading part which it has in all history, and the United States by her position must be one of the frontiers from which, as from a base of operations, the Sea Power, of the civilized world will energize." Mahan, "Possibilities of an Anglo-American Reunion," North American Review, November 1894, reprinted in ibid., 123-4.
committee of foreign relations a month later but received no further attention before the adjournment of congress. early in the new session roosevelt informed mahan that there was "serious danger of congress not backing up the president" in the hawaiian matter and informed him that senator hoar was one of the doubtful members. shortly afterward roosevelt, first by letter and then, "after consultation with lodge and one or two others of the friends of hawaii," by telegram, urged mahan to write hoar personally and at once about annexation. mahan did as he was advised. 26 roosevelt thought "the hawaiian matter touch-and-go" with fair certainty of solid republican support and some prospect of scattering democratic assistance. in this prediction he was mistaken—not even the tireless efforts of the annexationists, aided by the japanese menace, were able to win sufficient support from hesitant democrats, anti-expansionist republicans, and sugar interested senators of either party, 28 to gain the necessary two-thirds vote.

while the treaty thus lagged, the president, resorting to the texan precedent, urged annexation by joint resolution of congress. though this required only a majority vote in the senate, it ran into the powerful opposition of speaker thomas

26. roosevelt to mahan, dec. 9, 1897; dec. 11, 1897; telegram of same date; dec. 13, 1897, roosevelt papers.

27. roosevelt to mahan, jan. 3, 1898, roosevelt papers.

28. for the influence of sugar interests, see pratt, expansionists of 1898, 225n.
B. Reed in the House, 29 and gave the anti-expansionists the new and effective weapon of "unconstitutionality." The Committee on Foreign Relations, taking the cue from the President, forthwith (March 16, 1898) introduced into the Senate a joint resolution accompanied by a favorable report of annexation; but here the measure languished due to lack of interest and preoccupation with more urgent matters in the Caribbean. It was not until May 4, three days after Dewey's victory at Manila, that a similar resolution was introduced in the House, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and shortly (May 17) given a majority endorsement by that committee. 31

The reports of both the Senate and House Committees played up the Japanese menace, urging that, in light of the rapidly increasing Japanese population in the islands, any delay was an unwarranted risk and would eventuate in the assimilation, incorporation, and domination of the islands by a foreign power. Mahan could no longer feel, as he had in 1893, that the Mongolian aspect was being neglected. In words echoing Mahan, the Senate Committee said:

The present Hawaiian-Japanese controversy is the preliminary skirmish in the great coming struggle between the civilization of the awakening forces

29 Reed held out for three weeks after the resolution was introduced into the House before permitting a rule for its consideration, but eventually he yielded to the inevitable. William A. Robinson, Thomas B. Reed, Parliamentarian, 366-7.

30 Senate Report, No. 681; 55th Cong., 2d sess.

in the East and the civilization of the West. The issue is whether, in that inevitable struggle, Asia or America shall have the vantage ground of the control of the naval "Key of the Pacific," the commercial "Crossroads of the Pacific."  

In both these reports, the strategical significance of the islands was thoroughly discussed and received the most emphasis. The testimony of military and naval experts was cited, and none so frequently as Mahan's. In these comparatively short reports, covering with appended material only a trifle over a hundred pages, Mahan was cited at least five times.  

---


33 Among others was Chief Engineer of the Navy, George Melville. In a separate memorandum on the Pacific and its defense, Melville brought Mahan into the picture. Senate Document, No. 188, 55th Cong., 2d sess.

34 Senate Report, No. 681, 55th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 39, 51, 53, 56-7, 95-9; House Report, No. 1355, 55th Cong., 2d sess., same pages. The Forum article (March 1893), "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power," was quoted in part with reference to its former incorporation in Senate reports as well as to the location of its original appearance. In the meantime, the arsenal of the Hawaiian annexationists had been refurnished by the publication of an exchange of letters between Mahan and Senator James H. Kyle of South Dakota. This senatorial friend of Hawaii, writing on Feb. 3, 1898, first informed Mahan that "many quotations have been made from your valuable and highly interesting contribution to literature in regard to these islands," and then proceeded to ask him four specific questions of a military nature relative to the Hawaiian Islands, viz., whether their possession would strengthen or weaken the United States from a military point of view, whether in case of war a larger navy would be required to defend the Pacific Coast with or without the possession of Hawaii, whether it would be practicable for any trans-Pacific country to attack our western coast without Hawaii as a base, and whether such an attack relying upon colliers and sea transference of coal would be feasible. That the general tone of Mahan's reply was favorable toward annexation scarcely need be stated. This correspondence was utilized by Senator Teller in an executive session of the Senate, published in the New York Journal (Feb. 10, 1898), and reprinted (95-9) in the House and Senate reports mentioned above.
The debates in both the Senate and the House brought repeated, almost continuous, reference to him. Congressmen from Kentucky to Oregon, from California to New York, called upon "the great naval expert and author," "the most distinguished writer and authority of our time on the history of sea power," "the greatest of our naval authorities" to testify that the Hawaiian Islands were essential to the United States on the ground of naval strategy. The added impetus necessary Mahan discussed, among other things, the relation of a navy and outlying bases, using Hawaii as an example, in an article written in January but not appearing until June 1898—"Current Fallacies upon Naval Subjects," Harper's, June 1898, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 277–320. This article, so far as has been found out, attracted no special mention.

35 Cong. Rec. 55th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 2868, 2872, 2896, 5771, 5834, 5835, 5846–7, 5876–7, 5895, 5905, 5908, 5916, 5918, 5927–8, 5931, 6003, 6191; and also in Appendix, pp. 499, 531, 583, 649, 659.

An interesting comment was made by Representative Doliver of Iowa: "There is one thing about Captain Mahan's reasoning that I like, and that is that, notwithstanding my meagre technical knowledge, I can understand this man." Cong. Rec., 55th Cong., 2d sess., p. 6003.

It is instructive, and undoubtedly indicative of the weight Mahan carried, that opponents of annexation who made allusion to the strategical argument of the expansionists almost invariably singled out Mahan and attached his name thereto. Ibid., p. 5897, also Appendix, pp. 570, 603, 618.

Advocates of expansion from elsewhere than the halls of Congress went to Mahan as a high witness who was not "smitten with the microbe of incompetence" or "sordidly seeking his own selfish aggrandizement." References to two such instances are noted in Cong. Rec., 55th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 5847, 5876. See also John R. Procter, "Hawaii and the Changing Front of the World," Forum, XXIV, 34–45 (September 1897); John W. Foster, The Annexation of Hawaii; Public Opinion, XXIV, 707 (June 9, 1898). Though no mention is made of Mahan by name, see Review of Reviews, XVII, 3–22, 68, 142–3; Overland Monthly, XXXI, 177–8, 472 (1898).

36 The Forum article (March 1893) and the Kyle–Mahan correspondence (Feb. 3, 4, 1898) served as the source from which verbatim arguments were cited.
to shove the joint resolution of annexation through Congress
War
was furnished by the Spanish-American, especially by Dewey's
gift of Manila, 37 and it was passed by the House on June 15
(209 to 91), 38 by the Senate on July 7 (42 to 21), 39 and signed
by the President the following day. On August 12, the islands
were formally transferred to the United States. 40 This naval
position of the Pacific which Mahan saw standing alone, "hav-
ing no rival, and admitting of no rival," had been secured;
the "first fruit" had been gathered.

37 Professor T. A. Bailey after a careful analysis of
this era of the Hawaiian episode concludes that "if the war
had not come when it did and if Dewey had not fought suc-
cessfully at Manila, Hawaii would not have been annexed for
some years to come, if ever." "The United States and Hawaii
during the Spanish-American War," American Historical Review,
XXXVI, 560.


39 Ibid., p. 6712.

40 On the matter of subsequent fortification of Pearl
Harbor, Mahan was again called to testify of the commanding
importance of the "Key to the Pacific." Hearings before the
House Committee on Naval Affairs, 60th Cong., 1st sess., p.
495; and in that committee's report to the House, House Re-
port, No. 1132, 60th Cong., 1st sess.
IX

MAHAN AND THE PACIFIC--THE FAR EAST

If the annexation of Hawaii was a by-product of the war with Spain, it is equally true that it was the stepping stone to the Philippines. The "first fruit" once tasted was as wine to the expansionists, already growing giddy with visions of world power. Prior to the war there had been no demand for this archipelago on the other side of the globe. Relatively few Americans knew of the existence of the Philippines, or at least of their exact location;\(^1\) fewer were aware that an incipient or open revolution had been going on in the islands for more than a decade;\(^2\) still fewer were cognizant of the plans being made for and by Commodore George Dewey, in command of the Far Eastern Squadron;\(^3\) very few indeed were

---

\(^1\)President McKinley, after Dewey's victory, had to look them up on a map. "I could not have told," Kohlsaat remembered his saying, "where those darned islands were within 2,000 miles!" H. H. Kohlsaat, From McKinley to Harding, 68.

\(^2\)European speculation as to the disposition of these islands in case Spain was defeated was naturally greater than American. Some word of the conditions in the Philippines reached Americans through magazines such as the Literary Digest, XIV, 22, 342, 407, 681, 743 (1896); XV, 759 (1897), but rarely in articles such as John Barrett, "The Cuba of the Far East," North American Review, CLXIV, 173-80 (1897), (references cited by Pratt, "The Large Policy of 1898," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 232n).

\(^3\)The American consul for some time had been sending data to Dewey at Hongkong as to the general status of affairs in Luzon as well as to the nature and extent of defenses at Manila. Senate Document, No. 62, 55th Cong., 3d sess., p. 329 et seq.
those who knew of the orders which Dewey had received ten
days after the destruction of the U.S.S. Maine; nor has evi-
dence yet been disclosed which proves that even these direct-
ing few had more in mind than an effective means of waging
war against Spain and a bold stroke to remove the menace of
the Spanish fleet in the Pacific.  

Dewey's victory on the first of May brought the Philip-
pines into the fore, fired the Fourth of July spirit, and fanned
the flame of imperialist sentiment. Ere long "the press, at
first only speculative, became fascinated by the precipitate
intrusion of American arms into the Far East and began to con-
jure the possibilities of American dominion over the Philippines."
A Literary Digest poll covering nearly two hundred newspaper
editors revealed the growing sentiment toward retention. The
great preponderance of vocal religious sentiment in the summer
and fall of 1898 likewise favored American possession. Business
leaders who had been hostile to war with Spain now saw
the Philippines as a gateway to the markets of Eastern Asia,

4Dr. Pratt finds that even as early as March 6, the New
York Sun had predicted the attack on Manila Bay—to predict and
to know are of course quite different matters. Pratt, Expansionists of 1898, 228n.

5See supra, 128-9; also Pratt, Expansionists of 1898,
222n; Hacker, "The Holy War of 1898," American Mercury, XXXI,
320 (1930); Pringle, op. cit., 178; Lodge, op. cit., I, 278;
J. B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Times, I, 85; Dennett,
Americans in Eastern Asia, 616.

6Bemis, op. cit., 469-70.

7Literary Digest, XVII, 307-8 (Sept. 10, 1898).

8Pratt, Expansionists of 1898, 314.
just recently seriously jeopardized by the threatened partition of China.\(^9\)

As to the disposition of Dewey's gift, complicated by the sending of an army to invest Manila, McKinley, as usual, followed rather than directed public opinion. Sometime during May he and his advisers became convinced that at least Manila would be desirable as a commercial and naval base.\(^{10}\) As late as June 3, the President personally was expecting to permit Spain to keep the Philippines except "a port and necessary appurtenances." By the middle of June, he was less certain and felt that the disposition of the islands could not then be determined.\(^{11}\) The postponement of the ultimate "control, disposition, and government of the Philippines" to the treaty of peace, as provided for in the peace stipulations of July 30 and approved in the protocol signed August 12, was a manifestation of the President's continued indecision and was due, in part, to a difference of opinion among the President's advisers.\(^{12}\) Nor was there certainty or unanimity by the middle of September when instructions were given the peace commissioners: the call of humanity

---

\(^{9}\)Ibid., 273; Dennett, op. cit., 603-5.

\(^{10}\)Ibid., 627.

\(^{11}\)Day to Hay, June 3, 1898, Hay Papers (cited by Dennett, John Hay, 19C).

\(^{12}\)Day to Hay, June 14, 1898, Hay Papers (cited in ibid., 191).

\(^{13}\)For an account of the views of McKinley's cabinet, see C. S. O'lcott, The Life of William McKinley, II, 61-3. During these discussions about the stipulations in response to the Spanish peace offer, Hay had sent word that the British government was favorably inclined toward American retention of the Philippines. Dennett, John Hay, 191.
and duty and the dictates of commercial opportunity demanded that "the United States accept no less than the cession of the full right and sovereignty of the island of Luzon." \(^{14}\) By October 26 the Secretary of State cabled the commissioners that information which the President had received since their departure had convinced him that it would be a political and commercial mistake to divide the islands, and that they should therefore demand the cession of the whole archipelago. \(^{15}\) Thus slowly did the President follow the lead of expansion sentiment.

McKinley's own well-known explanation of how the decision came to him through a religious experience, though raising interesting speculation as to the validity of his interpretation of the source of the answer, clearly depicted the possible alternatives with their pros and cons. Democratic and Republican counsels had helped but little, he said; so he turned to Almighty God and prayed.


\(^{15}\) Ibid., p. 35. Professor Dennett thinks the President's additional information "would appear to have been gathered from reports of American military and naval authorities and from diplomatic correspondence from the various foreign capitals in both the East and the West." Americans in Eastern Asia, 623. This view should be supplemented by that offered by A. W. Dunn who suggests that McKinley's western trip, which he had just completed prior to the demand for the whole archipelago, convinced him that the West was in favor of such a course. Op. cit., II, 279. L. W. Busbey combines both aspects. Op. cit., 194.
for light and guidance more than one night. And one night late, it came to me this way—I don't know how it was, but it came: (1) That we could not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable; (2) that we could not turn them over to France or Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable; (3) that we could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit of self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was; and (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellowmen for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed and to sleep and slept soundly. . . .

The treaty met opposition both in the country at large and in the Senate.17 On the grounds of legality, morality and general expediency it was argued that territorial expansion in the Far East, resulting in inevitable involvement in world affairs and in dominion over alien peoples whose consent had not been gained, was at once unwise and un-American.18

---

16 McKinley's account to a missionary committee of the Episcopal church (Nov. 21, 1899), as recorded by them and published in the Christian Advocate of Jan. 22, 1903 (cited by Olcott, op. cit., II, 110-1).

17 The Anti-Imperialist League, with Hoar, Carnegie, Schurz, Storey, and others, was organized. For a good account of its activities, see F. H. Harrington, "The Anti-Imperialist in the United States, 1896-1900," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXII, 211-30 (September 1935).

18 The factors of duty, humanity, and morality figured prominently. The following selections give some idea of the wit and cynicism found: Secretary Hay professed to be unable to understand the viewpoint of the anti-imperialists who wished America to give the Philippines to some other nation. This point of view seemed to him much like that of the old maid who having come to the belief that "her jewels were dragging her down to Hell, . . . immediately gave them to her sister." J. B. Bishop, Notes and Anecdotes of Many Years (New York, 1925), 64-5 (cited by Tansill, op. cit., 388). Senator Mason (Illinois) begged his fellow legislators, "Will you tell me, please, how grand larceny and criminal aggression [expressions used by McKinley previous to the war in
imperialists emerged victorious as the Senate ratified the treaty, on February 6, 1899, by the narrow margin of one vote (57 to 27).\textsuperscript{19}

What was Mahan's attitude and role in the American acquisition of the Philippines? No categorical answer can be given to that question, but from such evidence as is available it seems safe to conclude that the sea power expositor was more a follower than a leader; at first viewing with doubt the acceptance of even Luzon when considered from a strictly selfish basis, ultimately he rose to the defense of the policy pursued.

By the middle of June, Lodge wrote Roosevelt, who from Cuba had been urging an imperial policy,\textsuperscript{20} that progress had

\textsuperscript{19} The presence of some 15,000 Americans in the islands and the Aguinaldo insurrection were additional motives of a patriotic sort which influenced votes. Senator Lodge said that to reject the treaty would be to repudiate the President and humiliate the country in the eyes of the whole world. Professor Bemis indicts the American policy followed in the acquisition of the Philippines, calling it "a great national aberration," (op. cit., 463-75); Professor Dennett is more defensive (op. cit., 620-32).

\textsuperscript{20} Roosevelt's first advice (May 19, 1898) was "do not make peace until we get Porto Rico, while Cuba is made independent and the Philippines at any rate taken from Spain." Similar word followed on the 25th but by June 12, the demands had increased: "You must get Manila and Hawaii; you must prevent any talk of peace until we get Porto Rico and the Philippines as well as secure the independence of Cuba." Lodge, op. cit., I, 299, 301, 309. Lodge, only three days after Dewey's victory at Manila, wrote Henry White that the Philippines were now ours and were of inestimable value to the country; he continued, "they must be ours under the treaty of peace." Allan Nevins, op. cit., 146.
been made—the Hawaiian business was "practically settled" and Secretary Day had told him there was "no question about Porto Rico, everyone is agreed on that, the only question for us to consider is how much we should do in the Philippines." Mahan and Day were now asked to dinner and Roosevelt was subsequently informed, "Mahan and I talked the Philippines with him [Day] for two hours. He said at the end that he thought we could not escape our destiny there." It would be interesting and informative to know the nature of this conversation. Either Secretary Day's interpretation of "our destiny there" must have been quite different from the probable Lodge-Roosevelt view or his conversion was of short duration.

The part which Mahan took in the conversation is problematical, for it is highly unlikely that he himself was within

---

21 Lodge, op. cit., I, 311 (June 15, 1898).

22 Mahan to Mrs. Lodge, June 23 [1898?], Lodge Papers. Extant correspondence, some undated, indicates that Mahan was a frequent guest at the Lodge home during his stay in Washington while serving on the Naval War Board. In one letter he expressed appreciation of "the privilege of calling in the evenings;" in another thanks were extended for "the kind attention shown me while in town." Lodge replied, "You conferred very great pleasure on Mrs. Lodge and myself by coming to our house during those hot and anxious days." Ibid.; Mahan to Lodge, July 12, 1898; Lodge to Mahan, July 23, 1898, Lodge Papers.

23 Lodge, op. cit., I, 313 (June 24, 1898).

24 Day's draft of a reply to the Spanish note asking for peace terms, called only for a port as a naval base, and at the time of his appointment as one of the peace commissioners he had some doubts even as to a coaling station. To the last he opposed more than Luzon and one or two other islands. Clcott, op. cit., II, 61; Cortissoz, op. cit., II, 247-8; Senate Document, No. 148, 56th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 33-5.
the fold at this time, if the faith of the true convert called for more than the occupation of Luzon. Over a month later he wrote Lodge relative to suggestions for peace and alluded to the President as one "more disposed to follow public opinion than to lead, or even guide, it." Mahan continued:

Public opinion I assume will insist that Spain quit America forever. But feeling as to the Philippines is much more doubtful. I myself, though rather an expansionist, have not fully adjusted myself to the idea of taking them, from our own standpoint of advantage. It does seem to me, however, that the heavy force, army and navy, we have put in Luzon, has encouraged the revolutionists to an extent for which we are responsible. Can we ignore the responsibility and give them back to Spain? I think not. Spain cannot observe a pledge to govern justly, because she neither knows what good government is, nor could she practice it if she knew. As to an agreement with other Powers, I hope no entangling alliances for us. But we have done nothing in the other islands of the group. Might it not be a wise compromise to take only the Ladrone and Luzon; yielding to the "honor" and exigencies of Spain the Carolines and the rest of the Philippines.25

In reply Lodge cautiously omitted his own probable larger view. The Philippines, he admitted, were a difficult question and much would depend upon the character of the peace commission. The President was inclined, he thought, to hold Manila in any event and probably Luzon, but was doubtful about more.26

25Mahan to Lodge, July 27, 1898, Lodge Papers (underlining by writer).

26Lodge to Mahan, Aug. 8, 1898, Lodge Papers. Just what was the "large policy" for the Far East in Lodge's mind is none too certain. In addition to what has been said two statements may be made. To Secretary Day three days after this letter to Mahan, Lodge urged the acquisition of all the Ladrones. Though professing to "see very plainly the enormous difficulties of dealing with the Philippines," he stated that he was "by no means anxious to assume the burden of possession outside of Luzon." He continued that there was "a strong reluctance on
So far as is known, Mahan was not called upon for his opinion and he did not seek to impress his views of limited acquisition upon others. That Mahan favored the whole archipelago to none may be inferred from two or three factors. First, he "permitted" the publication of a letter which he had received from his English friend G. S. Clarke (Lord Sydenham) in the documents accompanying the treaty of peace. Appreciating the hesitancy of the Americans to assume the responsibility for the future of the alien Filipinos but feeling certain of "anarchy first, with considerable annexation following," as the only alternative, this "earnest well-wisher" of the United States (realizing the gravity of the decision for Great Britain as well as for America) urged Mahan to call the President's attention to the British success in the Malay States—a close parallel to the Philippines. "Have your naval stations and try this political experiment," he suggested. "The results will surprise you, and they will be beneficial to the world." 27

The only magazine contribution prior to the ratification of the treaty which can be construed as apropos to the Philippine question was one appearing in the Engineering Magazine (January 1899) entitled "The Relations of the United States to Their New Dependencies." 28 In this short article, probably written after the terms of the treaty were fairly if not certainly fixed, no mention was made of particular possessions. That Mahan was advocating more than the retention of Luzon cannot be affirmed from the following words, but that he had the Philippines in mind there can be little doubt.

Enlightened self-interest demands us to recognize not merely, and in general, the imminence of the great question of the farther East, which is rising so rapidly before us, but also, specifically the importance to us of a strong and beneficent occupation of adjacent territory. . . . Sea power, as a national interest, commercial and military, rests not upon fleets only but also upon local territorial bases in distant commercial regions. It rests upon them most securely when they are extensive, and when they have a numerous population bound to the sovereign country by those ties of interest which rest upon the beneficence of the ruler. . . . 29

Subsequent to the ratification of the treaty 30 Mahan expressed himself more explicitly in regard to the Philippines. He opposed withdrawal of troops or even any suspension of hostilities during the insurrection. 31 Now he definitely asserted

---

28 Reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 241-53.
29 Ibid., 245-6, 249.
30 Mahan congratulated Lodge upon the ratification of the treaty. Mahan to Lodge, Feb. 7, 1898, Lodge Papers. Lodge was most heroic in his efforts in this task. See his account to Roosevelt, Lodge, op.cit., I, 391 (Feb. 9, 1898).
31 Mahan to Long, June 7, 1899, Long Papers.
the superiority, from a naval point of view, of the treaty provisions, which gave considerable supporting territory in comparison with a mere navy yard as advocated by some. 32 Mahan saw the islands both from the angle of self-interest and of responsibility, but the former was subjugated to the latter.

The great question before us is one of responsibility and duty. We have received a charge; something has to be done with it. . . . The task is troublesome, the issue perhaps doubtful; but the charge of a great opportunity having been committed to us, are we by our action to say, practically to Him who gave it, "Lord, I know thee, thou art an austere man; so I have buried thy talent in the earth. Lo! there thou hast that is thine!" 33

This view of the Philippines as a charge, Mahan held throughout his life; from point of material interest he asserted in 1911, that they might be missed by the United States no more than a "joint of a little finger." 34

Mahan deprecated giving self-interest precedence over beneficence, whether by advocates or by opponents of expansion; he did not, however, ignore self-interest. He shared with his contemporaries the belief that the future lay in the Pacific Ocean; he would have agreed with Albert Shaw in holding that

32 Again there is no assurance that Luzon alone would have met this requirement. Mahan, "Conditions Determining the Naval Expansion of the United States," Leslie's Weekly, Oct. 2, 1902, reprinted in Retrospect and Prospect, 44-5.


34 Mahan, "Why Fortify the Panama Canal?" North American Review, March 1911, reprinted in Armaments and Arbitration, 162.
ocean to be "the theatre of the great events of the coming century." 35 This aspect, as has been seen, frequently cropped out in the discussions about Hawaii and the canal. It must not be assumed, however, that the advocates of the "large policy" and the "outward view" at first sought territorial acquisition in the Far East. The pre-war expansionists, at least Mahan, though aware of "the beginning of momentous issues in China and Japan," foresaw no "room for advance beyond the Pacific; their vision reached not past Hawaii, which also, as touching the United States, they regarded from the point of view of defence rather than as a stepping stone to any farther influence in the world." 36 With China on the brink of partition, the Philippines offered a well-nigh miraculous opportunity for the United States to prevent her own exclusion from the spoils of the rich man's estate. The Philippines were thus the gift of Providence, 37 as well as a charge—a gift more valuable for what it might lead to than for its own intrinsic worth. This view is openly asserted in the following passage:


37 Mahan viewed the Philippines as a task given by Providence to America—"if the careful effort at each successive step to do aright does not assure that the guidance in the course of events has been Providential, there is no test by which such guidance can be known." Mahan, "The Philippines and the Future," Independent, LII, 698 (Mar. 22, 1900).
In the problem of Eastern Asia, still in an early stage of its solution and of doubtful issue, they [not only the Philippines but also the canal and Hawaii] are important as facilitating our access to the seas of China and the valley of the Yangtse, and as furnishing territorial support to our action there. 38

It was in this light of serving as points d'appui that Mahan, in good accordance with his sea power doctrine, viewed the external bases acquired in 1898-99. An enlarged navy had been essential and still was; these acquisitions "lessened the burden of purely naval increase . . . for by tenure of them, and due development of their resources, the navy itself receives an accession of strength, an augmented facility of movement," making it ready to defend the manifold interests which the nation had had abroad even prior to its possession of "a square foot of territory without its borders." 39

Though not strictly within the scope of expansion rigidly interpreted, Mahan's views upon American policy in China were so intimately connected with his outlook upon the Philippines that some attention should be given to this aspect of his Far Eastern thought. He was cognizant of the politico-commercial rivalry centering in China. 40 American interposition

38 Mahan, "Retrospect and Prospect," The World's Work, February 1902, reprinted in Retrospect and Prospect, 34.


40 In conversation with certain of the British delegation at the Hague Conference, Mahan had said American interests now lay in the East and the West, and that America proposed to look after her Chinese markets. Gooch and Temperley, op. cit., I, 230-1.
near the scene of action, as a result of the war, was but
one of several events, nearly simultaneous, which now demanded
a "readjustment of ideas, as well as of national policies and
affiliations."

Mahan accordingly analyzed the problem of Asia in a
series of magazine articles—three of which were written in
the fall and winter of 1899, after his return from The Hague
via London, and a fourth in the following August. 41 The sig-
nificance of the articles is increased if one bears in mind
that they were written during a period crowded with happen-
ings important to China—the Hay "open door" notes of Septem-
ber 1899 and of July 1900, the Boxer Rebellion, and the siege
and relief of the Legations at Peking. 42

The Problem of Asia was both a diagnosis and a remedy.
To Mahan, at the time, it was his "swan-song" on contemporary

41 The first three articles appeared as "The Problem of
Asia" in the March, April, and May (1900) issues of Harper's,
and the fourth as "Effect of Asiatic Conditions upon World
Policies" in the November (1900) issue of the North American
Review. All were reprinted in The Problem of Asia (1900),
1-202.

42 Tyler Dennett states, "Though there is little docu-
mentary evidence to support the assertion, it seems probable
that Mahan was seeing Secretary of State John Hay rather fre-
quently during the period in which these essays were in course
of preparation. . . . Many paragraphs recall sentiments which
Hay was contemporaneously writing to Henry Adams, Joseph
Choate, Henry White, Alvery A. Adee, and others. Indeed we
probably do no one an injustice in regarding The Problem of
Asia as a summary of the views regarding the Far East current
in the best-informed official circles in Washington during
the first part of the year 1900." "The Future in Retrospect,
Mahan's The Problem of Asia," Foreign Affairs, XIII, 464
(April 1935).
politics; to Professor Dennett thirty-five years later "it takes on the attributes of an intellectual landmark." Mahan essayed to select and expose the permanent facts and factors implicit in the problem of Asia and then to note the influence exerted by these features upon political events. The important portion of Asia, politically and geographically, was the middle belt roughly between the thirtieth and fortieth degrees of north latitude and extending from the Mediterranean to China. With Australia and Africa partitioned, this was the only large region politically unstable and therefore open to serious change by foreign influences. Key positions were held on either side of this area by Great Britain and Russia; between them was "debated and debatable ground," a no man's land destined to be the battle ground between two essentially differing civilizations--English and Russian.

The struggle was enlarged, however, to include nations with interests similar to those of these major contestants. The picture then took the form of a contest between land power and sea power and left Russia in opposition to Great Britain, Germany, the United States, and Japan. Mahan thought it safe to assume that these four sea powers--none able alone to exert predominance in China and none able alone to prevent the extension

---

43 Mahan to Roosevelt, May 12, 1900, Roosevelt Papers.


45 Mahan, The Problem of Asia, viii.

of Russian progress from the north, all anxious as trading na-
tions to preserve peace and all dependent upon naval force—
"would be found following a common line of action" should neces-
sity arise. Each sea power was strategically placed: Japan was
protected by her insular position, Germany had Kiaochau, England
had Hongkong, the United States now had in the Philippines, "we
may almost say forced upon her, a base similarly secure." 47

Mahan saw in this sea power versus land power contest
a race struggle. The Asiatic was culturally static and as a
regenerative force the Slavonic was inferior to the Teutonic.
Strange as it may seem, Japan was classed not among the Asiatic
but among the Teutonic; though racially Asiatic, adoptively she
had become European. 48 Japan was passing through her first
phase of westernization and Mahan was pleased to note that she,
the only "willing convert" in the Far East, not only had adopt-
ed the more obvious material improvements but had shown her-
sel open as well to the influence of intellectual and moral
ideals. He added:

It is well worthy of consideration whether we
may not see in Japan the prepared soil, whence the

47 Mahan, "The Problem of Asia," Harper's, April 1900, re-
printed in ibid., 62-4; and "The Problem of Asia," Harper's,
May 1900, reprinted in ibid., 133-4; "Effect of Asiatic Condi-
tions upon World Policies," North American Review, November
1900, reprinted in ibid., 154.

48 Japan, due to her restricted area and limited popula-
tion and wealth, despite propinquity, was unable to contribute
weight to the Asiatic; therefore she was forced to choose be-
tween the other two contending races as to which was by "char-
acter and ambitions most favorable, both to her immediate in-
terests and the free ultimate development of Asia in the line
of its natural capacities. . . ." Mahan, "The Problem of Asia,"
Harper's, May 1900, reprinted in ibid., 106, 114.
grain of mustard seed, having taken root may spring up and grow to the great tree, the view of which may move the continental communities of Asia to seek the same regenerating force for their own renewal. 49

The inhabitants of this middle zone of so-called debatable ground were not to be viewed as sheep to be bought and sold but as sheep without a shepherd. The Western Christian nations, bringing the spiritual as well as the material aspects of their culture, were to be the good shepherds leading the lambs (not to slaughter) but to the fold of regenerated Christian souls. 50

Mahan's solution to the problem of Asia as a whole was the establishment of a political equilibrium. Russia would be allowed to advance into Manchuria, 51 while the Teutonic powers claimed China proper, especially the Yangtze valley. 52 For this restricted area Mahan advocated cooperation among the powers and uplift of the natives. Two requirements were


50 Mahan, "The Problem of Asia," Harper's, April 1900, reprinted in ibid., 87, 92-3.

51 Mahan was considering the larger aspects of this "middle zone;" and feeling that Russian advance into the Near East (Persia etc.) could not be permitted, he granted this concession in the Far East by way of compensation.

52 Within this relatively little known and slightly exploited field lay, purportedly at least, lucrative, even fabulous opportunities for trade. Seed sown in the Yangtze--whether considered from a commercial, political, or missionary viewpoint--would yield one hundred fold as compared with thirty fold elsewhere. Mahan, "Effect of Asiatic Conditions upon World Policies," North American Review, November 1900, reprinted in ibid, 164-5.

China as a whole was seen as possessing limitless fields for exploitation. The American export trade with China was not yet great but showed increase; though less than $12,000,000 in
necessary for the accomplishment of this program: first, "The prevention of preponderant political control by any external state, or group of states; and, second, insistence upon the open door. . . . open not only for commerce, but also for the entrance of European thought. . . ." 53

Mahan was here giving an endorsement to the Hay Open Door policy. An appeal for popular support followed. Political movements in China were at a turning point determinative of great future issues; it was "essential to the United States that her individual citizens should seriously consider, and within themselves settle, the part the country ought to play and the preparation necessary to that part." 54 Mahan based his case not only upon commercial opportunities, small yet promising, but also upon Christian duty which inescapably fell upon the United States. He wrote:

The part offered us is great, the urgency is immediate, and the preparation made for us, rather than by us, in the unwilling acquisition of the Philippines, is so obvious as to embolden even the least presumptuous to see in it the hand of Providence. 55

Policy and power were interrelated; it was necessary

1897 it was four times as large as in 1890. Dennett, Americans in Eastern Asia, 581; Nearing and Freeman, op. cit., 254. To critics, however, who thought this amount insignificant the reply was that the increase was indicative and also that being yet small there were still greater possibilities ahead. John Barrett, "Our Interests in China--A Question of the Hour," Review of Reviews, XXI, 42-5 (January 1900).

54 Ibid., 169.
55 Ibid., 175.
that the United States be prepared, with "physical weight" as well as with "moral influence" to do her share in warding off Russia and in controlling China. Physical weight capable of use at a distance naturally took the form of naval power; hence a larger navy and an isthmian canal thoroughly secured were required. 56

This naval preparation, though essential, was yet subordinate to the central contention of a policy of coöperation. America could no longer escape recognition of her irrevocable entry into world politics. Of all the nations which the United States would meet in the Far East, Great Britain was the one with whom she had by far the most in common. Similarity, though not identity, of interests in China, basic likeness in standards of law and justice, community of language and of political standards—all these pointed toward Anglo-American coöperation. Britain's attitude toward the United States during the war with Spain and her willingness to concede to American desires in the Caribbean indicated that she was ready to do her share. What was the attitude of mind in the United States? Mahan made a powerful plea to his fellow Americans, urging them to dismiss all pre-possessions, to cast aside old animosities, to sink racial prejudices, and to forego ancient grudges in whole-hearted support of a program which seemed to him pregnant with great good for all concerned. 57

56 Ibid., 179 et passim.

57 Ibid., 177-8, 186-91. Mahan repeatedly stated his belief in the desirability of a cordial understanding between the two branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. He favored no alliance but argued that with education both nations would gradually realize their identity of interests. He discussed his views
This definite appeal soliciting general support for a united front of the sea powers (especially of the United States and Great Britain) against the relentless Russian onslaughts, Mahan supplemented by letters to men of marked influence. "Filled with consternation" upon hearing of America’s withdrawal from the hitherto joint enterprise against the Boxers, Mahan wrote President McKinley warning him of Russian motives: "She is not only playing her own game—all states do that—but playing it with the unscrupulous craft of the Asiatic." 58 He sent Lodge a copy of The Problem of Asia, which the latter read "with the utmost care," found "profoundly interesting," and reported he had been "much instructed by it." 59 Mahan predicted for Lodge, in light of the "distinguished public service" he had already rendered, that he was to be "one of the determining factors" in the country's future. "I am rejoiced, consequently, to know that your opinion coincides in general outline with my own concerning the community of interest between ourselves and ________________________


58 Mahan to McKinley, Sept. 2, 1900, McKinley Papers.
59 Lodge to Mahan, Dec. 6, 1900, Lodge Papers.
Great Britain in some of the great questions of the future." Mahan also wrote Whitelaw Reid thanking him for having shown the public, through the Tribune, that there was a British as well as a Boer side to the Transvaal controversy. "A temperate and full presentment of the whole truth [of this matter] by a paper of the Tribune's influence" was most desirable and helpful, in order that the Transvaal issue might not serve to breed discord between the nations in pursuit of the vitally essential policy of "cordial understanding" between Great Britain and the United States in "the very great impending Eastern question."

To Roosevelt, temporarily "shelved" as Vice-President, Mahan expressed his belief that neither the United States nor Great Britain, singly or jointly, could "check Russia by main force in northern China." The only "true counter check" was the establishment of naval power in the Yangtze valley—"the very heart of China in every sense of the word"—which would render the necessary physical and moral support to the Chinese. And if in addition, "the Sea Powers . . . will require of China . . . liberty of entrance for European thought as well as European commerce, China will . . . be saved. . . . Such," added the sea power advocate, who had been for a decade the frequent and timely counselor of Roosevelt and now was fearing (as he neared three score years) that he would lag behind,

---

60 Mahan to Lodge, Dec. 8, 1900, Lodge Papers.

"is my swan-song. . . . I cannot but hope that this idea may enter, for whatever it is worth, into the grasp of one who . . . has still much activity and growth before him. . . ." 62

In reply Roosevelt told Mahan that he was in essential agreement with him as to China and that he felt his views were "eminently sound;" but he added that public officials could go somewhat, though not very much, farther than public opinion had prepared the way and as yet American public opinion was "dull on the question of China." 63

In 1900 Mahan was not certain about the policy of upholding the integrity of China which Hay had enunciated in July of that year. Nor is it clear that he (or Hay) appreciated that the European spheres of influence in China were not carved out for trading purposes primarily but to furnish outlets for capitalistic exploitation. A decade later Mahan was positive on both points. Integrity was essential to the open door, a doctrine which opposed "territorial control, however exerted or disguised." Leases almost always resulted in "closing the open door in part or wholly" and not infrequently resulted in annexation, as seemed near at hand in Korea.

62 Mahan to Roosevelt, Mar. 12, 1901, Roosevelt Papers.

63 Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 18, 1901, Roosevelt Papers.

As for Mahan's ceasing his activities, Roosevelt begged him not to talk even of such a course, "We must rely upon you as one of our foremost educators of public thought, and I trust for many years to come. . . . I greatly wish to see you and have a long talk with you." Ibid.

A recent biographer of Roosevelt commented that "as the friction between Russia and Japan grew more acute and war seemed possible, Mahan's advice must have lingered in his [Roosevelt's] mind." Fringle, op. cit., 374.
The open door applied not only to commerce per se but equally to the development of China. Mahan noted with pleasure that the United States had firmly and successfully met the recent attempt to exclude her from developmental projects. 64 "Very many railroads will have to be built in China, within the next generation," averred Mahan, and why should American capital not profit thereby. 65

The open door policy was merely another expression for balance of power in Eastern Asia. Mahan felt that as the United States was an adherent to this policy and had to deal with other powers, mostly European, she should no longer be indifferent to the variations of the relative strength of the interested European countries. Despite the Monroe Doctrine with its statement of American abstention from the affairs of Europe, the United States could not escape the repercussions of events on that continent. Mahan considered it probable that the "exigencies of the balance of power" in Europe would neutralize or greatly reduce European influence in world politics as regards the Far East. The result, he thought, would be that

64 Mahan evidently had in mind the 1910 consortium and allied negotiations.

65 Mahan, The Interest of America in International Conditions, 84, 144-7, 182-4. Mahan had no faith in the temporary truce between Russia and Japan. He likened them to a quarreling couple who had for the moment joined hands against outsiders but whose causes of variance still remained. Ibid., 211. Manchuria was not only a common point of contact for China, Japan, and Russia but was also the center of intersecting and clashing interests. "For some time to come," Mahan predicted, it would be "to the Farther East what Belgium in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was to western Europe." Ibid., 135.
the balance of power in China, if it were maintained, would
rest upon the two chief Pacific nations, the United States and
Japan. Japan, however, presented a problem. She had success-
fully engaged in war with Russia and could no longer be viewed,
as in 1900, "unable to contribute weight;" in fact her very
nearness, her low transportation costs, her cheap labor when
coupled with "the mingled weakness and perverseness" of Chinese
negotiators, "breed that sense of proprietorship which, in
dealing with ill-organized states easily glides into the at-
tempt at political control that ultimately means control by
force."

66The Japanese-American relations, despite the brief Ha-
waiian episode, had been most friendly and cordial up to 1905.
The blame for Japan's failure to secure in the treaty of Ports-
mouth all that was hoped for was placed upon the United States.
Several factors accentuated this bitterness. Japan resented the
Open Door policy as a hindrance for fullest exploitation of the
fruits of the war with Russia. She felt obliged to extend her
naval policy hitherto confined to the Yellow Sea and the Sea of
Japan, so as to bring the Pacific Ocean into her field of stra-
egy. The feeling was further sharpened by the immigration policy
of the United States. The "1897 peril" of Mahan and Roosevelt
flared into the "war scare of 1907" and the World Cruise of the
American fleet. Thomas A. Bailey, Theodore Roosevelt and the
Japanese-American Crisis. See also Millis, The Future of Sea
Power in the Pacific, 12.

Mahan was in frequent correspondence with Roosevelt dur-
ing the World Cruise; he wrote an apology and defense for it
prior to the departure of the fleet as well as after its re-
turn to San Francisco. Mahan rejected the element of threat as
a motive, the need for practice was sufficient. He viewed the
Asiatic as unassimilable—though not on ground of inferiority—
and favored exclusion to immigration without citizenship.
Roosevelt to Mahan, June 8, July 10, Oct. 1, 1908, Roosevelt
Papers. Mahan, "The Value of the Pacific Cruise of the United
States Fleet, 1908, Prospect," Scientific American, Dec. 7,
1907; "The Value of the Pacific Cruise of the United States
Fleet, 1908, Retrospect," Collier's Weekly, Aug. 29, 1908, re-
printed together in Naval Administration and Warfare, 309-53.

67Mahan, The Interest of America in International Con-
ditions, 149-51, 198-201.
Confronted with this problem of possible European preoccupation and of positive Japanese advantages, Mahan was less inclined to push for American rights in the Far East. His whole tone of thought, he said, rejected the idea of any claim to supremacy in the Pacific on the part of the United States; it was "not to the interest of the United States to propose to herself the object of supremacy in the Pacific. . . . An assured supremacy over her own possessions, and over the approaches to them" was a legitimate aim menacing none. 68

In the course of a decade, though still claiming the beneficence, wisdom, and value of the open door, Mahan had as definitely altered his view to the ultimate disposition of the eastern middle belt and its surrounding waters. The "unregenerative" Asiatic was now accorded the Western Pacific while European and American elements were granted the Eastern Pacific. "The question awaiting and approaching solution is the line of demarcation between the Asiatic and European elements in the Pacific." Mahan predicted this division would follow a line running through Hawaii and Samoa joining Pacific America to Australia. There would be European and American positions


In speaking of the right of assured supremacy over her possessions, Mahan probably did not have in mind the Philippines; these islands he always regarded as primarily a responsibility or obligation rather than as a possession. "America in the Philippines has in the Pacific that which she may not call her own possession but has recognized as her special charge." Ibid. At times, however, Mahan came dangerously near advocating the supremacy which he professed to disclaim. The United States did have duties in the Pacific which, in case of disputes, would require "the presence of naval force adequate to command." Mahan, "The Importance of the Command of the Sea," Scientific American, CV, 512 (Dec. 9, 1911).
north and west of that line just as European possessions still existed in the Caribbean as remnants of past conditions. A period of adjustment was ahead; naval power, the military representative of sea power, was to be determinative; because of this, "the American navy should be second to none but the British." 69 It was thus that Mahan in 1911 was reading the future of the Pacific—a future probably less distant than he thought.

X

MAHAN AND OTHER ASPECTS OF
THE SEA POWER DOCTRINE

The sea power doctrine viewed naval and commercial
development as concomitant with over-sea territorial expan-
sion. In the preceding discussion of the emergence of the
United States as a world power with her claim to predominance
in the Caribbean vindicated, and her right to a position of
influence (on a basis of co-operation) in the Pacific estab-
lished, repeated reference has been made to Mahan's emphasis
upon the urgency for the United States of naval development.

History, at least for Mahan, abounded with words of
admonition and advice, and the sea power exponent passed
these on with the fervent hope that they would be heeded by
his fellow-countrymen. History bore abundant evidence as to
the stupidity of non-preparedness, the impossibility of prepa-
rating on the spur of the moment, the futility of privateering
as more than a secondary factor, the ruinous consequences
of nonconcentration of the fleet, the values as well as the
limitations of blockade, the importance of a thoroughly trained
personnel, the absurdity of granting immunity to "private prop-
erty," the necessity of adequate coast defenses, the prime im-
portance of numerous ships of the line, the inadequacies of
other vessels (torpedo, submarine, etc.), the deplorable con-
sequences of a "navy for defence only."

An analysis of the United States, its present development
and future welfare, when viewed upon the world stage, called for the creation of a force adequate to insure her opportunity for commercial expansion and to safeguard her against the dangers of commercial competitors. Other interests and obligations existed. Writing in 1890, Mahan felt the United States would not willingly acquiesce in an infringement of her rights as she saw them, whether in Samoa, Bering Sea, Hawaii or in Central and South America; yet obviously she did not have the power which could "weigh seriously when inevitable discussions" arose.¹

For nearly a quarter of a century the same refrain was sounded: the United States had "neither the tradition nor the design to act aggressively beyond the seas;" yet she did have very important trans-marine interests which needed protection, two widely separated coasts to be defended, and openly asserted policies in the Caribbean which demanded force that could make itself felt politically as well as militarily. Was the country willing, queried Mahan, to concede on points such as these "because unready to maintain them by organized force?"²

Mahan sought to link national policy and national defense; he did not advise a contraction of obligations, except in the application of the Monroe Doctrine in southern South America, rather he advocated the creation of force which would


be sufficient to meet these obligations. The solution was naval preparedness.

Every danger of a military character to which the United States is exposed can be met best outside her own territory—at sea. Preparedness for naval war—preparedness against naval attack and for naval offence—is preparedness for anything that is likely to occur. 3

What was the nature and degree of preparedness which the United States required? Mahan's answer to this question hinged on both military and political factors. From a military point of view it turned on his interpretation of the word "defence." Mere coast defense with a navy that could "only await attack and defend its own, leaving the enemy at ease as regards his interests, and at liberty to choose his own time and manner of fighting" was absurd when viewed from logic and ruinous when put to the test. 4 If the United States had interests, rights, and obligations beyond the sea "which a navy may have to protect, it plainly follows that the navy has more to do, even in war, than to defend the coast;" for however defensive in moral character a war may be, "it must be waged aggressively if it is to hope for success." 5

In the matter of preparation for war, one clear idea should be absorbed first by every one who, recognizing that war is still a possibility, desires to see


4 Mahan, "Current Fallacies upon Naval Subjects," Harper's, June 1898, reprinted in ibid., 286.

his country ready. This idea is that, however de-
Fensive in origin or in political character a war
may be, the assumption of simple defensive in war
is ruin. War once declared, must be waged offen-
sively, aggressively. The enemy must not be fended
off, but smitten down. You may then spare him every
exaction, relinquish every gain; but till down he
must be struck incessantly and remorselessly.6

Simple defense was not enough; a "navy for defence" was
"a wholly misleading phrase," Mahan told his readers,

unless defence be construed to include all national
interests, and not only the national territory; and
further unless it be understood that the best de-
fense of one's own interests is power to injure
those of his enemy.7

The least that could be done was to keep the enemy not only
"out of our ports but far away from our coasts."8 What was
really needed was to be strong enough to "go out and assail
the enemy and hurt him in his vital interests"—to crush him
"by depriving him of the use of the sea."9

This interpretation or conception of "defence" neces-
sitated coast defenses so that the navy might be permitted of-
fensive action; it demanded "ships of the line," not too large,
but numerous and well-manned, operating as a fleet and not in
single units. Privateering was ineffectual; it was

6Mahan, "Preparedness for Naval War," Harper's, March
1897, reprinted in ibid., 192-3.

7Mahan, "Current Fallacies upon Naval Subjects," Har-
per's, June 1898, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain
and Other Articles, 299-300.

8Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 87.

9Mahan, "Current Fallacies upon Naval Subjects," Har-
per's, June 1898, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain
and Other Articles, 286, 301.
not the taking of individual ships or convoys, be they few or many, that strikes down the money power of a nation; it is the possession of that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it, or allows it to appear only as a fugitive; and which by controlling the great common, closes the highways by which commerce moves to and from the enemy's shore.

"This overbearing power," wrote Mahan, after an analysis of a century and a quarter crowded with naval wars, "can only be exercised by great navies...."\(^{10}\)

Political considerations supplemented, even altered, this view of preparedness which a military approach alone seemed to dictate. Mahan did not advocate a navy for any possible enemy or any combination of possible enemies. He wrote:

Preparation, like most things, is a question both of kind and degree.... The measure of degree is the estimated force which the strongest probable enemy can bring against you,\(^{11}\) allowance being made for clear drawbacks upon his total force, imposed by his own embarrassments and responsibilities in other parts of the world. The calculation is partly military, partly political, the latter, however, being the dominant factor

---


\(^{11}\)The underlining is Mahan's but attention should be called to the other qualifying word, "strongest." Earlier in the article Mahan had written, "It is not the most probable of dangers, but the most formidable, that must be selected as measuring the degree of military precaution to be embodied in the military preparations henceforth to be maintained." "Preparedness for Naval War," *Harper's*, March 1897, reprinted in *Ibid.*, 180.
in the premises.\textsuperscript{12}

Mahan cautioned that advantages of a political nature accruing to the United States due to her position and status among the nations, however "undeniable and just" as elements in the calculation of the statesman, were after all "mere defensive factors and partial at that," and much more needed "to be cast into the scale that it may incline in favor of our strength."\textsuperscript{13}

It was in such tones and along these lines that Mahan considered the degree and nature of naval preparedness required for the United States; it was part and parcel of his "outward view," implicit in the sea power doctrine. Sometimes openly and sometimes subtly by insinuation, in season and out of season, for a quarter of a century he preached it to an audience well-nigh incalculable in numbers.

Mahan's activities in behalf of a program for adequate

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., 193. Mahan, as might well be expected, had written of the American naval situation in his first magazine article in 1890. The political considerations were there discussed. It was "perfectly reasonable and legitimate in estimating our needs of military preparation to take into account the remoteness of the chief naval and military nations from our shores and the subsequent difficulty of maintaining operations at such a distance." It was also proper to keep in mind "the jealousies of the European family of states," their unwillingness to incur the enmity of the United States with fear of revenge in the future, and their inability to detach more than a portion of their forces to American shores without losing weight in European councils. Mahan, "The United States Looking Outward," Atlantic Monthly, December 1890, reprinted in ibid., 16-7.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., 17-8. See also Mahan, "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power," Forum, March 1893, reprinted in ibid., 54-5.
national defense were not limited to this repeated exposition of and plea for naval preparedness. Sometimes by private letter, more frequently in an official or semi-official capacity, he seized the opportunity to bring his views or his services to others upon such widely scattered topics as the relation of the merchant marine to the navy, the organization and administration of the Navy Department, the concentration of the fleet, the problem of exemption from capture of private property at sea, and the correlation of navy, army, and diplomacy in an adequate scheme for national defense.

In 1890 the virtual non-existence of "peaceful shipping" under the American flag greatly perturbed Mahan. His study of sea power had convinced him of the close relation between the navy and the merchant marine; the latter not only supplied in times of crisis the needed reserves, but offered the surest means of constant support to a program of naval development--Mahan was aware that "in a representative government any military expenditure must have a strongly represented interest behind it, convinced of its necessity."\(^{14}\) Mahan did not recur to this theme so frequently as to territorial expansion and naval development--perhaps the reason was his realization of the lack of value of merchant seamen for the modern steam navy,\(^{15}\)

\(^{14}\) Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, 87-8.

\(^{15}\) In 1900 Mahan pointed out that the merchant seamen were of doubtful value in the handling of a modern warship; they could supply not over a third, at most, of the personnel needed by such a vessel. Mahan, "Effect of Asiatic Conditions upon World Policies," reprinted in *The Problem of Asia*, 199-201.
or perhaps it was a continuation of his belief, already expressed in his magnum opus, that even granted the United States would develop a great national shipping, she was so well protected by her distance from other great powers that it was "doubtful whether a sufficient navy would follow." The only hope Mahan saw for the creation of a navy was then "quickening in the Central American Isthmus." Whatever the explanation, Mahan followed the line of attack which he felt would be most likely to accomplish his primary objective.

It must not be assumed, however, from what has been said that Mahan ceased to desire a strong merchant marine. He was called to testify in 1904 before the specially created Merchant Marine Commission. There he reiterated the "obvious view," as he called it, that the greater the sea-faring group the larger the naval reserve. He then told the commission as regarded carrying trade that England in 1650 had been in exactly the same plight as the United States now found herself; that the Navigation Acts were adopted; that "the effect was to develop the carrying trade of the nation, to largely develop their resources of seamen, and that to that, largely--chiefly--" was due the British supremacy of the seas which followed. Mahan added "a bit of warning," "an important qualification": do not over-exaggerate the reserves which will be available; "we must

16Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 88.
17Secretary of the Navy to Mahan, Nov. 23, 1904, Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation, General File, No. 2473-50.
be on our guard not to expect too much."  

In the discussion of Mahan's connection with the navy during the Spanish-American War, allusion was made to his belief that responsibility in way of professional advice to the civilian Secretary of the Navy should be individual rather than corporate as was the case in the Naval War Board. This problem of the reorganization of the Navy Department elicited Roosevelt's attention when he became President. There was urgent need, Mahan wrote Roosevelt, for an organized body which could "impart accuracy, clearness and fixity, lasting from administration to administration." In 1903 the Naval War Board, which had been created during the war to serve as a board of strategy, was reconstituted and designated as the General Board. An

18Hearings before the Merchant Marine Commission, 56th Cong., 3d sess., pp. 1745-1746. Mahan's views, as expressed in The Influence of Sea Power upon History (39), were incorporated in the commission's report, which accompanied S.6291, 58th Cong., 3d sess.

The close interdependence of navy and merchant marine which Mahan had developed in The Influence of Sea Power upon History was utilized in the prize winning essay of T. G. Roberts, "The Merchant Marine and the Navy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, March 1910. This was republished in Senate Document, No. 466, 61st Cong., 2d sess. A similar use of the same book was made in hearings before a special sub-committee of the House Naval Affairs Committee. Hearings before the House Naval Affairs Committee, 63d Cong., 2d sess., vol. II, p. 114.

19Mahan made this suggestion to Secretary Long at once upon his appointment to the Board before any difference with his colleagues had arisen, or could arise. He added, "Resting, as my opinion does, upon a wide study of military history, it is not liable to change, and at present it has the advantage of absolute impersonality." Mahan to Long, May 10, 1898, Long Papers.

20Mahan to Roosevelt, Sept. 7, 1903, Roosevelt Papers.
attempt to cloak this board with legality and extend its functions failed. The subject of revamping the Navy Department so as to insure greater efficiency was again taken up by Roosevelt early in 1909 and Mahan was one of a committee appointed to study the problem. Acting upon the recommendation of this committee on reorganization, the President appointed a joint commission of naval and military men charged with the task of giving consideration to matters vital to national defense; he made Mahan chairman of this commission.

Roosevelt turned to Mahan for support and advice in other matters. It was the Assistant-Secrecy of the Navy

---


Mahan's approval of a continuous staff and of single responsibility in war was brought out in the hearings before the House Naval Affairs Committee. See Hearings before the House Naval Affairs Committee, 58th Cong., 2d sess., No. 146, p. 843. See also the reference to Mahan's report on the Naval War Board which emphasized the necessity for a continuous body concerned with preparation of war plans and naval policy. Dewey to Secretary of Navy, Nov. 28, 1906, Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation, General File, No. 2473-14.

22 Roosevelt to Mahan, Jan. 8, 1909; Mahan to Roosevelt, Jan. 13, 1909 (gives a full account of Mahan's views about the General Staff, etc.); Roosevelt to Mahan, Jan. 29, 1909, Roosevelt Papers.

23 Roosevelt to Mahan, Feb. 25, 1909, Roosevelt Papers.

24 Roosevelt consulted Mahan about his ideas on technical matters, such as size of ships, types of battery, etc. Roosevelt to Mahan, Oct. 25, 1903; Sept. 2, 1906; Mahan to Roosevelt, Oct. 3, 1906; Oct. 22, 1906, Roosevelt Papers. Mahan advocated gunpower rather than speed, numbers rather than size, and he opposed all-big-gun ships. Admiral Sims disagreed with Mahan on these points. The opinions of both were incorporated in Senate Document, No. 213, 59th Cong., 2d sess.
who had written Mahan in 1898, "I think I have studied your books to pretty good purpose," and who had expressed indebtedness for "what I learned from your books long before I had any practical experience." It was now the President of the United States who was telling Mahan that he was rereading his books and was writing, "I wish you could get on here. There are so many things I should like to speak to you about." On one occasion Roosevelt wrote the sea power mentor, "I believe you will like what I said of the Navy in my [first] message." On another occasion, this time in October of 1906, he wrote:

In my message to Congress my present intention is to take the rather unusual course of commending your "War of 1812" for general reading. In any event I want to use several sentences that are contained in your book, weaving them in with my own in such a way that would make it advisable to try to give credit for them to you. Do you object?

Fearing there would be too few ships, Mahan had written Secretary Long in 1900, warning him against the danger of too large and too expensive vessels. Mahan to Long, Jan. 31, 1900; Feb. 5, 1900, Long Papers. Mahan thought the best size for battleships was between ten and twelve thousand tons. Mahan, "Distinguishing Qualities of Ships of War," Scripps-Mac Rae Newspaper League, November 1898, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 266.

25 Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 21, 1898; Mar. 24, 1898, Roosevelt Papers.

26 Roosevelt to Mahan, Sept. 1, 1903; Nov. 21, 1904, Roosevelt Papers.

27 Roosevelt to Mahan, Dec. 11, 1901, Roosevelt Papers. For the portions of Roosevelt's message which pertain to the navy, see Richardson, op. cit., IX, 6663-7.

Mahan replied that he would be "only too glad" for the President to use any of his writings "in any manner that may be serviceable to you or that you may think serviceable to the country. The question of credit in such connection is to me quite immaterial."  

The "unusual course" was followed and in his message of December 3 Roosevelt called attention to the navy as "the surest guarantee of peace" which the country possessed. The teachings of history should be heeded:

a strong and a wise people will study its own failures no less than its triumphs, for there is wisdom to be learned from the study of both, of the mistake as well as of the success. For this purpose nothing could be more instructive than a rational study of the war of 1812, as it is told, for instance, by Captain Mahan.

Then followed a sermon on unpreparedness, in true Mahanite style, and the "selections" which Roosevelt had hoped to weave into his message were included.  

Concentration of the fleet was one of the lessons which a study of the past had taught Mahan. Noting in the press, during the 1907 difficulty with Japan, that four battleships were to be sent to the Pacific, Mahan was "filled . . . with dismay" and immediately wrote Roosevelt. This obvious lack of trust was too much for Roosevelt's equanimity. He replied:

---

30 Richardson, op. cit., X, 7445-7.  
31 Mahan to Roosevelt, Jan. 10, 1907, Roosevelt Papers.
don't you know me well enough to believe that I am quite incapable of such an act of utter folly as dividing our fighting fleet? I have no more thought of sending four battleships to the Pacific while there is the least possible friction with Japan than I have of going thither in a rowboat myself. 32

Another lesson which history had taught Mahan was the absurdity of granting immunity to private property. The "freedom of the seas" was in violation of his "command of the seas" and he repeatedly ridiculed the folly of America's official position upon this subject. The object of war was to smite the enemy "incessantly and remorselessly" and crush him by "depriving him of the use of the sea;" this meant strangling him into submission by cutting off his trade, including of course the neutral's right to trade with him. Property in transit, by land or sea, in neutral or belligerent vessel, privately or publicly owned, was the life blood of national prosperity, on which war depended, and as such was national in its employment, and only in ownership private. It sustained the well-being and endurance of a nation at war and "two contending armies might as well agree to respect each other's communications as two belligerent states to guarantee immunity to hostile commerce." 33

32 Roosevelt to Mahan, Jan. 12, 1907, Roosevelt Papers. In the very closing days of his administration, Roosevelt was asked by Mahan to give a "last earnest recommendation" to Taft, requesting that he on no account divide the fleet between the two coasts. Roosevelt replied he had already warned Taft, but he agreed to send him "in writing one final protest" and enclosed a copy of the same with his reply to Mahan. Mahan to Roosevelt, Mar. 2, 1909; Roosevelt to Mahan, Mar. 3, 1909, Roosevelt Papers.

Mahan's attitude on this matter as one of the United States delegates to the First Hague Conference has been noted. In 1904 Roosevelt suggested the meeting of a second conference and in the foreground of the subjects for consideration he placed the exemption of private property from capture at sea. This drew from Mahan a long letter of "concern" with a seven-page enclosure from his forthcoming "War of 1812," which portion dealt with immunity to private property. The very fact that the American view was "traditional" demanded consideration as to whether it may not have lost the fitness it possibly once had to national conditions. . . . There is no more moral wrong in taking "private" property than in taking "private" lives; and I think my point incontestable, that property employed in commerce is no more private, in uses, than lives employed on the firing lines are private. . . . The question of limiting armaments is a very thorny one; it will not be helped, by allaying fears that commerce, men's pockets, will suffer in war.35

Roosevelt expressed interest in Mahan's letter and enclosure and agreed to take the matter up with Hay. "You open a big subject for discussion," he wrote Mahan, "I shall have to think over the matter before I could answer you at all definitely on this proposition."36

The Russo-Japanese war intervened and the second gathering at The Hague was postponed. Sometime prior to the actual opening of this conference, Mahan renewed his attempt to gain

34 Supra, 18.
35 Mahan to Roosevelt, Dec. 27, 1904, Roosevelt Papers.
36 Roosevelt to Mahan, Dec. 29, 1904, Roosevelt Papers.
official reconsideration of America's position on the subject of immunity to private property at sea. This time he approached the Secretary of State, Elihu Root. He apologized for writing and added that he "ought perhaps to accept as final the adverse reply of the President" but that the matter was too vitally important for an irrevocable stand to be taken until given careful consideration in light of present conditions. Why should not the General Board be consulted as to the military aspects? Three enclosures and references to the appropriate discussions in his "War of 1812" accompanied this lengthy appeal to the Secretary of State. Root replied that he personally "had already entertained and in private expressed, serious doubts" as to the wisdom of continuing to grant immunity to private property at sea; he continued,

the subject is no longer an open one for us. The United States has advocated the immunity of private property at sea so long and so positively that I cannot see how it is possible to make a volte face at The Hague. . . .

In a personal interview with Roosevelt at Oyster Bay in 1906, Mahan discussed the question of exemption of private property from maritime capture, and especially the possibility of his being excused from the naval regulation which forbade

---

37 Mahan to Root, Apr. 20, 1906, Department of State, Miscellaneous Letters, Part III, 1906.

38 Root to Mahan, May 21, 1906, Department of State, Domestic Letters, vol. cccx, pp. 628-9. The lapse of a month before Root's reply is explicable on the ground that Mahan was in Europe when he wrote. Root did, however, ask the Secretary of the Navy to call upon the General Board for its views on the matter and enclosed Mahan's letter.
officers to discuss publicly matters of policy on which the
government was embarked. This plea was renewed by letter. 39

Roosevelt granted Mahan's request in these words:

Your position is a peculiar one. . . . You
have a deserved reputation as a publicist which
makes this proper from the public stand-point.
Indeed I think it important for you to write just
what you think of the matter. 40

Mahan's services of a public nature continued after
Roosevelt's retirement from office. He was consulted by the
Secretary of the Navy in 1911 as to his views upon the pro-
posed Council of National Defense. The Secretary found the

Mahan pointed out the close correlation of British and Amer-
ican interests and added, "Exempt it [maritime commerce] and
you remove the strongest hook in the jaw of Germany that the
English-speaking people have--a principal gage for peace....
When to Germany are added the unsolved questions of the Pacific,
it may be said truly that the political future is without form
and void. Darkness is upon the face of the deep. We will have
to walk very warily in matters affecting future ability to em-
ploy national force." Ibid.

40 Roosevelt to Mahan, Aug. 16, 1906, Roosevelt Papers.
Mahan wrote two articles: "The Hague Conference; the Question
of Immunity of Belligerent Merchant Shipping," National Review,
June 1907 (and in Living Age, July 6, 1907), reprinted in Some
Neglected Aspects of War, 157-93; "The Hague Conference and the
Practical Aspect of War," National Review, July 1907 (and in
Living Age, July 27, 1907), reprinted in ibid., 57-93. That
Mahan had a definite reason for having these articles appear
in English journals may be seen in these words which he had
written to Roosevelt: "A special element of danger in this
direction [prepossession of the public mind in most countries
toward precipitate action in outlawing war, etc.] is the pre-
sent British Government, with its huge heterogeneous majority
to keep placated. With a Conservative Government there we
might afford to be persistent in our old national policy, feel-
ing safe that it would not be accepted, but would go over to
another conference; with the present you will on military
questions be playing with fire." Mahan to Roosevelt, Aug. 14,
1906, Roosevelt Papers.
reply "very interesting" with "some valuable suggestions" and sent it to a member of the House Naval Affairs Committee, with the thought that it might be "useful" in argument before the committee. 41 Mahan was later ordered by the Navy Department to appear before the committee when hearings were being held upon the matter. 42 The phase of the proposed measure that appealed most to Mahan was the close correlation of the navy, army, and diplomacy which would result. Mahan reiterated his view that "after all, our military and naval policy depends substantially upon what we conceive our relations to be with foreign countries, a forecast of the future, and what the probabilities of the future are." 43

Acting under instructions from the Navy Department, Mahan was a frequent lecturer at the Naval War College. He was detached from all official duty in June 1912, after having spent fifty-six years either on the active or retired list of the navy. During the major portion of this more than a half-century of association with the navy, he labored diligently, first

41 Meyer to Foss, Jan. 27, 1911; Mahan to Meyer, Feb. 1, 1911; Meyer to Hobson, Feb. 2, 1911 in Hearings before the House Naval Affairs Committee, 61st Cong., 3d sess., No. 51, pp. 669-70.


A statement of Mahan's appearance before the committee and selections from his letter were incorporated in the reports of the committee to Congress. House Report, No. 2078, 61st Cong., 3d sess.; House Report, No. 584, 62d Cong., 2d sess.
for eradication of corruption and improvement of the service, then for its enlargement and increased efficiency. His activity bore witness to a passion, a sincerity, an abiding conviction, an unfailing certainty of the validity and urgency of his message.

Mahan entered the navy in time to serve inconspicuously during its heydey of the Civil War; he was a living witness of the depths to which it sank in the years which followed; he saw it rise slowly, steadily from the nadir of the early 'eighties until by 1894 it ranked sixth among the powers; he served on the board of strategy in the brief and glorious war which brought new possessions to defend and which gave release to the growing desire to cut a figure on the world stage; he observed with satisfaction in 1904 that the fleet of the United States (built or projected) was surpassed only by Great Britain; he was a member of the General Board and saw incorporated as the official naval policy one that looked beyond simple coastal protection to the defense of American interests wherever they might be found; he was heart and soul behind the Rooseveltian big-navyism and witnessed the birth of the Navy League in 1903; he lived to see his cry for a "navy second to England only" defeated by the combined forces of an indifferent Congress and a renewed naval rivalry in Europe; he saw the opening of the European holocaust which was to spread to all parts of the earth; he did not live to see the repercussions of that event upon the naval policy of his own country; he did not live to see his "second to Britain" policy discarded for a "second
to none;" nor did he live to read what his friend and admirer, Roosevelt--than whom few, if any, were better qualified to speak--wrote:

In the vitally important task of convincing the masters of us all--the people as a whole--of the importance of a true understanding of naval needs, Mahan stood alone. There was no one else in his class, or anywhere near it.
XI

MAHAN AND MACHTPOLITIK

It would not be an exaggeration to say that in no single one of his twenty odd volumes from *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* in 1890 to *Arms and Arbitration* in 1912, and in but few of his hundred odd magazine articles from "The United States Looking Outward" in 1890 to "The Panama Canal and the Distribution of the Fleet" in 1914, did Mahan fail to deal in one way or another with Machtpolitik. Sometimes it was the need for organized force that was developed, at other times it was the most profitable manner of its utilization that was considered, while at still other times its justification claimed attention.

There is obvious danger in generalization and oversimplification when dealing with matters of a philosophical nature; the paraphrased thought is less accurate, at times less interesting and often less powerful. In the following analysis of Mahan's philosophy of war, of force, and of expansion, verbatim selections have accordingly been freely and intentionally utilized. Though perhaps the most thoroughgoing systematist on war that America has yet produced, one cannot claim for Mahan any marked degree of consistency—sometimes so-called realism loomed uppermost, at other times moral sentiment, even bordering on sentimentality, was considered primary. Nor can the reader be directed to any single treatise for a full statement of his philosophy of force, for it is scattered here and there.
through his voluminous writings.¹

Nations operated, Mahan thought, according to national interests and moral sentiments. Economic and material elements were frequently regarded as primary yet quite often moral and ideal factors displaced them as the motivating forces of national action.

Mahan stated the view of national interest as the prime consideration of foreign policy in the following manner:

Self-interest is not only a legitimate but a fundamental cause for national policy; one which

¹Some conception of the hostile criticism to which Mahan was subjected during his lifetime may be gathered from the following: Norman Angell, The Great Illusion (1911); Mahan, "The Great Illusion," North American Review, March 1912, reprinted in Armaments and Arbitration, 121-54; Angell, "The Great Illusion," (a reply to Admiral Mahan), North American Review, CXCV, 754-72 (June 1912); George W. Nasmuth, Organized Insanity; or, The Hague, a Reply to Admiral Mahan (1914); Lucia Ames Lead, "Some Fallacies of Captain Mahan," Arena, XL, 163-70 (September 1908). See also the following book reviews: Nation, LXVII, 34-36 (July 14, 1898), (a review of The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future); ibid, LXX, 55-6 (Jan. 18, 1900), (a review of Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles); Wallace Rice, "Some Current Fallacies of Captain Mahan," The Dial, XXVIII, 198-200 (March 16, 1900), (a review of Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles).

needs no cloak of hypocrisy. Governments are corporations, and as corporations have not souls. Governments moreover are trustees, not principals; and as such must put first the lawful interests of their wards, their own people. it is vain to expect governments to act continuously on any other ground than national interest. They have no right to do so, being agents and not principals.

The "command of the sea" practically epitomized Mahan's conception of national interest. He declared: "Control of the sea, by maritime commerce and naval supremacy means predominant influence in the world. and is the chief among the merely material elements in the power and prosperity of nations." He recognized that the wealth and strength resulting from such control would cause competition, even war. After a survey of the story of sea power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Mahan wrote in 1890:

To secure one's own people a disproportionate share of such benefits [wealth and strength], every effort was made to exclude others, either by peaceful legislative methods of monopoly or prohibitory regulations, or, when these failed by direct violence.

---


3Mahan, The Interest of America in International Conditions, 42.


7Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1.
A similar view was expressed in 1912 when war clouds were gathering in Europe:

The armaments of European states are not so much for protection against conquest as to secure to themselves the utmost possible share of the unexploited or imperfectly exploited regions of the world—the outlying markets, or storehouses of raw material, which under national control shall minister to national emolument.8

The formulator of the sea power doctrine thought that to the possession of political power based upon force, there belonged commercial advantages so great that inevitably as the world grew more crowded nations would be pushed into war for their very existence. These advantages or interests were not attached to any territorial area of fixed boundaries; they were subject to change and development dependent upon the necessity of the state. Mahan wrote:

The first law of states, as of men, is self-preservation—a term which cannot be narrowed to the bare tenure of a stationary round of existence. Growth is a property of healthful life, which does not . . . necessarily imply increase in size of nations . . . but it does imply the right to insure by just means whatsoever contributes to national progress. . . .9

This transference of the biological law of natural growth to national life served neatly as a basis for imperialism, whether territorial acquisition or merely financial penetration.


With "national progress" interpreted in terms of "control of the sea," it necessarily followed that, "as subsidiary to such control, it is imperative to take possession, when it can righteously be done, of such maritime positions as contribute to secure command."\(^{10}\)

Defensive expansion was easily justified on the basis of self-preservation. Acquisition of "natural outposts" was essential not only for American naval and commercial purposes but also as a preventive measure against their hostile use by other countries. In interpreting self-defense it must be pointed out that Mahan included therein not merely national territory but all national interests; the word defense had applications "at points far away from our own coast."\(^{11}\)

Paramount interest, both commercial and political, upon the basis of propinquity justified the contentions of the United States for preference in Hawaii and for the right to construct and defend an isthmian canal.\(^{12}\)

National interests, based upon self-preservation, self-development, self-defense, natural growth, and paramount interest, manifested themselves in the claim to predominance in

---


the Caribbean and to equality in the Far East, in the right to acquire strategic bases and to promote as well as protect American commerce, and in the duty to maintain the Monroe Doctrine and to defend national territory.\textsuperscript{13}

Mahan reinforced the case for national interests by calling upon moral sentiments and moral obligations. He stated his case in these words:

To understand in the best sense it is necessary not only to recognize the interests of a nation, but to enter as well into its feelings; tracing them where possible to the historic origin which once occasioned and may still account for them. Such

\textsuperscript{13}At no time, as will be seen, did Mahan emphasize national interests as the sole motivating factor in national policy to the exclusion of moral sentiments. The primacy given to national interests, as depicted in the preceding pages, was in certain respects definitely contradicted by him in 1911 when confronted with Norman Angell's contention \textit{[The Great Illusion]} that modern war was ruinous and futile to victor as well as to vanquished. For example: "Nations are under no illusion as to the unprofitableness of war. . . . A mature consideration of the wars of the past sixty years . . . will show that the motives to war have not often been 'aggression for the sake of increasing power and consequent-ly prosperity and financial well-being.' The impulses . . . have risen above mere self-interest to feelings of convictions which the argument of \textit{The Great Illusion} does not so much as touch. . . . To regard the world as governed by self-interest alone is to live in a non-existent world, an ideal world, a world possessed by an idea much less worthy than those which mankind, to do it bare justice, persistent-ly entertains. . . . The inciting causes of war in our day are moral. . . . Even where material self-interest is at the bottom of the trouble, as possibly in the present state of feeling between Germany and Great Britain, it is less the loss endured than sense of injustice done, or apprehended, that keeps alive the flame." Mahan, "The Great Illusion," \textit{North American Review}, March 1912, reprinted in \textit{Armaments and Arbitration}, 126, 153-4.
understanding is essential to just appreciation. The sentiment of a people is the most energetic element in national action. Even when material interests are the original exciting cause, it is the sentiment to which they give rise, the moral tone which emotion takes, that constitutes the greater force. Whatever individual rulers may do, masses of men are aroused to effective action—other than spasmodic—only by the sense of wrong done, or of right to be vindicated. For this reason governments are careful to obtain for their contentions an aspect of right which will keep their people at their backs.¹⁴

It is indeed strange the devious paths along which "conscience" has led its followers! As Dr. Weinberg has said, the view that "moral sentiment profoundly influences national behavior may at first thought seem ironical to those who hold that certain national policies tend to be morally questionable if not unquestionably immoral;" yet it can scarcely be denied that "governments are careful to obtain for their contentions an aspect of right." Mahan bolstered his plea for national interest with appeals to conscience, to right and to duty.

The welfare of the world outweighed individual, or even national well-being. Possession was no longer nine points in the law of nations as Mahan enunciated it. That proper utilization and not mere technical possession of territory was the criterion by which right of ownership was determined is indicated in the following:

¹⁴Mahan, The Interest of America in International Conditions, 167-8.

¹⁵Weinberg, op. cit., 3.
The claim of an indigenous population to retain indefinitely control of territory depends not upon a natural right, but upon political fitness, shown in the political work of governing, administering, and developing, in such manner as to insure the natural right of the world at large that resources should not be left idle, but be utilized for the general good. . . .\textsuperscript{16} There is no inalienable right in any community to control the use of a region when it does so to the detriment of the world at large, of its neighbors in particular, or even at times of its own subjects. . . . the right is inalienable only until its misuse brings ruin or a stronger force appears to dispossess it . . . .\textsuperscript{17} In questions of great import to nations or to the world, the wishes, or interests, or technical rights, of minorities must yield, and there is no more injustice in this than in their yielding to a majority at the polls.\textsuperscript{18}

It is no wonder that the imperialists acclaimed Mahan their champion. Such a philosophy was "as threatening to the backward peoples logically" as was the "imperialist's weapon of force physically."\textsuperscript{19} World interest, or the interest of a large section of mankind, urged the United States to secure Hawaii, gain bases in the Caribbean, build a canal, construct a navy, and be prepared for the arduous role of defending Western civilization against the hordes of Asia. World interest became the vehicle in which national interest rode to victory.

It was a short step from this philosophical imperialism to the humanitarian imperialism involved in the concept of the "white man's burden." Mahan placed first beneficence to the

\begin{itemize}
  \item\textsuperscript{16}Mahan, "The Problem of Asia," Harper's, May 1900, reprinted in The Problem of Asia, 98.
  \item\textsuperscript{17}Mahan, "The Future in Relation to American Naval Power," Harper's, October 1895, reprinted in The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future, 167-8.
  \item\textsuperscript{18}Ibid.
  \item\textsuperscript{19}Weinberg, op.cit., 98.
\end{itemize}
subject people. "Materially," he said, "the interest of the nation is one with its beneficence; but if the ideas get inverted, and the nation sees in its new responsibilities, first of all, markets and profits, with incidental resultant benefit to the natives, it will go wrong." 20 Likewise this Christian expansionist saw involved in the nation's answer to the call to assume the burden of beneficent imperialism, its possible growth or decadence.

To right what is amiss, to convert, to improve, to develop, is of the very essence of the Christian ideal; 21 . . . comparative religion teaches that creeds which reject missionary enterprise are foredoomed to decay. May it not be so with nations? [queried Mahan]

Closely allied in thought with the philosophical and humanitarian rationalizations of imperialism was that which saw Providence leading and guiding the nation in its path of beneficence. To Mahan the Philippines were an example of such divine overruling:

We have received a charge . . . the task is troublesome, the issue doubtful; but the charge of a great opportunity having been committed to us, are we by our action to say, practically, to Him who gave it, "Lord, I know thee, thou art an austere man; so I have buried thy talent in the


earth. Lo! there thou hast that is thine!"

Though indeed the recipients may not appreciate the benefits so graciously bestowed upon them by the followers of Christ in the employment of their "talents," yet the "sense of duty achieved, and the security of tenure, are the rewards of the ruler." 24

Given the call of world interest, the duty to the brown brethren, and the mandate of God, it would seem that more was not needed; but Mahan added a strain of determinism, a certain fatalism. "Whether they will or no, Americans must now begin to look outward." American expansion was "natural, necessary, irrepressible." 25

In light of these various motivating forces it would not be strange, either in theory or in practice, to find divine destiny and manifest destiny, world interest and national interest, self-sacrifice and self-aggrandizement becoming confused and losing their respective identities. Observe this intertwining of motives to which appeal was made relative to American acquisition and retention of the Philippines:

Upon us has devolved, by an inevitable sequence of causes, responsibility to our conscience for an assemblage of peoples in moral and political childhood; and responsibility further to the world at large, and to history,—the supreme earthly judge of men's action,—for our course in the emergency thrust upon

us. As such the United States has accepted the burden. Its duties are not to be discharged by throwing them overboard, or by wrapping our political talent in a napkin for our own national security and ease. 26

The national interests and moral sentiments, according to which nations operated, demanded organized force for their fulfillment. Mahan argued, as most militarists have always done, that military preparedness was in no wise a threat to peace; indeed

the most beneficial use of a military force is not to wage war, however successfully, but to prevent war... 27 That the organization of military strength involves provocation to war is a fallacy, which the experience of each succeeding year [writing in 1893] now refutes. The immense armaments of Europe are onerous; but nevertheless, by the mutual respect and caution they enforce they represent a cheap alternative, certainly in misery, probably in money, to the frequent devastating wars which preceded the era of general military preparation. 28


27 Mahan, "Current Fallacies upon Naval Subjects," Harper's, June 1898, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 286.


Had Mahan lived to witness the aftermath of the World War it is certain he would not have subscribed to these lines penned in 1897: "Is it nothing that wars are less frequent, peace better secured, by the mutual respect of nations for each other's strength; and that, when a convulsion does come, it passes rapidly, leaving the ordinary course of events to resume sooner, and therefore more easily? War now not only occurs more rarely, but has rather the character of an occasional excess, from which recovery is easy." Mahan, "A Twentieth-Century Outlook," Harper's, September 1897, reprinted in ibid., 233.
On the eve of the World War Mahan still saw the immense armaments "as institutions maintaining peace, which they have done effectually for forty years in Europe itself. . . ."

It was inevitable that the glorifier of sea power should be led to a reasoned defense of militarism, not as a necessary evil but as a moral system. To attain national interests and to preserve peace were not the only functions of force; organized force manifesting itself in war became an ethical and moral necessity. It served not only as a means to suppress objective evil and to thwart subversive natural impulses, but also as the advance agent of morality to clear the way for Christian progress and make possible the attainment of moral ends not otherwise attainable.

Not only did war gain for a nation the fulfillment of its interests but it satisfied the righteous dictates of its conscience. Mahan rationalized this view as follows:

A state when it goes to war, should do so not to test the rightfulness of its claims, but because being convinced in its conscience of that rightfulness, no other means of overpowering evil remains . . . . It is not accuracy of the decision, but faithfulness to conviction, that constitutes the moral worth of the action, national or individual . . . . Even if mistaken, the moral wrong of acting against conviction works a deeper injury . . . than can merely material disasters that may follow upon obedience. Even the material evils of war are less than the moral evils of compliance with wrong. 30

29Mahan, Armaments and Arbitration, 13.


Mahan recognized that in public disputes, as in private, there was "not uncommonly on both sides, an element of right,
War, Mahan declared, was "the regulator and adjuster" of human actions. By war man could "measurably control, guide, delay, otherwise beneficially modify results which threaten to be disastrous in their extent, tendency or suddenness." To hold that war was wicked and unchristian amounted to saying that it was "wicked for society to organize and utilize force for the control of evil." War also served as the "true antidote to what is bad in socialism." The elimination of armament races would result in "a socialistic community of states in which the powers of individual initiative, of nations and of men, the greatest achievements of our civilization so far will be atrophied." Demoralization of the nations would follow if the sums now spent on armaments were released to a strictly "beneficiary system" of social organization. Force was thus justified as remedial and preventive; it was at once a cleansing agent by means of which objective evil was suppressed and an immunizing agent by which nations were saved from their baser passions.

32Ibid., viii.
Peace was not adequate to all progress; therefore war became, for Mahan, more than negative (remedial or preventive) in its action, it was positive, productive, of great good.

Time and staying power [he maintained] must be secured for ourselves by that rude and imperfect, but not ignoble arbiter, force,--force potential and force organized--which so far has won, and still secures, the greatest triumphs of good in the checkered story of mankind . . . . 35 Force has been the instrument by which ideas have lifted the European world to the plane on which it now is, and it supports our political systems, national and international, as well as our social organization. 36

Mahan turned to a consideration of the use of force in the past to show that its employment had been motivated by high purpose and had eventuated in great good. He felt that "what the sword, and it supremely tempered only by the stern demands of justice and of conscience, and the loving voice of charity," had done for India and for Egypt was "at once a tale too long and too well known" to need repetition. 37


37 Mahan, "The Peace Conference and the Moral Aspect of War," North American Review, October 1899, reprinted in Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 231. Said Mahan on another occasion, "Whether the original enterprise or the continued presence of Great Britain in Egypt is entirely clear of technical wrongs, open to the criticism of the pure moralist, is as little to the point as the morality of an earth- quake; the general action was justified by broad considerations
In 1912, as he surveyed the wars of the past half-century, this protagonist of organized force found moral purpose and moral good in all. The southern slaves were freed from their masters in the American War of Secession; the Prussian wars against Denmark, Austria, and France "embraced a conception of German racial unity consolidated into political unity" and were "followed by great industrial and economic advance;" the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 was primarily motivated by "popular sentiment inflamed by sympathy with the oppression of near-by peoples;" the call of humanity demanded the end of Spanish rule in the Caribbean and Philippines; the establishment of "fair treatment," "union and equality," justified British action in South Africa; Japan "not without reason" had been forced to fight Russia to Guarantee her "national self-preservation." 38

Force, therefore, was justified by what it had accomplished and was accomplishing. Wrote Mahan:

Step by step in the past, man has ascended by means of the sword, and his more recent gains, as well as present conditions, show that the time has not yet come to kick down the ladder which has so far served him. ... 39 Ease unbroken, trade


uninterrupted, hardship done away with, all roughness removed from life—these are our modern gods; but can they deliver us, should we succeed in setting them up to worship? Fortunately, as yet we cannot do so. We may, if we will, shut our eyes to the vast outside masses of aliens to our civilization, now powerless because we still, with a higher material development, retain the masculine combative virtues which are their chief possession; but, even if we disregard them, the ground already shakes beneath our feet with physical menace of destruction from within, against which the only security is in constant readiness to contend.  

It was "not in universal harmony, nor in fond dreams of unbroken peace" that rested "the best hopes of the world;" it was "in the rivalries of nations, in the accentuation of differences, in the conflict of ambitions" that lay the preservation of the martial spirit which alone was "capable of coping finally with the destructive forces that from outside and from within threaten to submerge all the centuries have gained."

Power or force was Christian; Mahan considered it "one of the talents committed to nations by God" that could not be "carelessly or lightly abjured, without incurring the responsibility of one who buries in the earth that which was intrusted to him for use." Continuing in Biblical language he maintained:

Much is required of those to whom much is given. So viewed, the ability speedily to put forth the nation's power, ... is one of the clear duties involved in the Christian word


41Ibid.
"watchfulness,"—readiness for the call that may come, whether expectedly or not...42 Without man's responsive effort, God himself is not powerless but deprived of the instrument through which he wills to work.43

Peace, however, was the professed goal of this pious, devout Christian but it was hedged by numerous qualifications. For example:

Let us worship peace, indeed, as the goal at which humanity must hope to arrive; but let us not fancy that peace is to be had as a boy wrenches an unripe fruit from a tree. Nor will peace be reached by ignoring the conditions that confront us, or by exaggerating the charms of quiet, of prosperity, of ease, and by contrasting these exclusively with the alarms and horrors of war. Merely utilitarian arguments have never convinced nor converted mankind, and they never will; for mankind knows that there is something better.44

Peace, "that alluring, albeit somewhat ignoble, ideal," felt Mahan, was "not to be attained by the representatives of civilization dropping their arms, relaxing the tension of their moral muscle, and from fighting animals becoming fattened cattle


fit only for slaughter." 45 The goal was peace but the means, "during a future far beyond our present foresight," depended upon the due organization of force. 46 After the outbreak of the European War, which occurred only a few weeks before his death, Mahan wrote that which may well be considered an epitomy of his views upon war: "The human heart, acting upon sentiments and interests, is the cause of war; no methods can avail except as they deal with the inner man." 47

It was only natural and logical that this philosopher of war should look askance at all measures which might tend to limit the effectiveness of war (i.e., immunity to private property at sea), lessen its rigors (i.e., abolition of asphyxiating gases), or decrease its frequency (i.e., arbitration). Mahan's attitude on the subjects of asphyxiating gases and immunity to private property has already been presented. 48 Arbitration he considered was limited both in scope and effectiveness, and as a basis for justice was faulty and dangerous. Law was "artificial and often of long date," and frequently "inapplicable to a present dispute." The settlement, therefore, was insecure for its foundations were not solid; "in the long run the play of natural forces" reached "an adjustment


48 Supra, 19 and 221, et seq.
corresponding to the fundamental facts of the case." 49 "Na-
tional honor" and "vital interests" represented sentiments and
determinations which defied "every argument but force," and
"equity which cannot be had by law must be had by force." 50

This apostle of war also put the question of arbitration
upon a high level of morality. He wrote:

The great danger of undiscriminating advocacy
of arbitration, which threatens even the cause it
seeks to maintain, is that it may lead men to tamper
with equity, to compromise with unrighteousness,
soothing their conscience with the belief that war
is so entirely wrong that beside it no other toler-
ated evil is wrong . . . 51 In these days of glori-
ified arbitration it cannot be affirmed too distinct-
ly that bodies of men--nations--have convictions
binding on their consciences, as well as interests
which are vital in character; and that nations, no
more than individuals may surrender conscience to
another's keeping. Still less may they rightfully
preengage so to do. Nor is this conclusion invalu-
dated by a triumph of the unjust war. Subjugation to
wrong is not acquiescence in wrong. A beaten nation
is not necessarily a disgraced nation; but the nation
or man is disgraced who shirks an obligation to de-
 fend right. 52

It was along such lines as have been indicated that this
most sanguine exponent of war evolved his concept of and built

49 Mahan, Armaments and Arbitration, 12.

50 Mahan, "The Panama Canal and Sea Power," Century, June
1911, reprinted in ibid., 171; Mahan, "A Twentieth-Century Out-
look," Harper's, September 1897, reprinted in The Interest of
America in Sea Power, Present and Future, 228.

51 Mahan, "The Peace Conference and the Moral Aspect of
War," North American Review, October 1899, reprinted in Les-
sons of the War with Spain and Other Articles, 236-7.

52 Mahan, Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812,
vii. From this quotation Roosevelt drew, both verbatim and in
context, material for his 1906 annual message to Congress.
Richardson, op. cit., X, 7445-6.
his defense for Machtpolitik. In logic not especially lucid nor overly consistent, yet definitely moralistic and highly inflammable in character, Mahan glorified expansion, deified force, and made war moral and beneficent.
As historian, from point of treatment and resultant creation of interest, Mahan may rightfully be called the father of modern naval historiography; from content and interpretation, he presented a new philosophy of history. As strategist, his lessons relative to the overwhelming importance of ships of the line, to the tremendous value of the blockade, and to the utmost significance of the concentration of the fleet, were not without their influence upon the practice and procedure of the naval policies of the chief countries of the world. As philosopher, he was a formulator and expositor of a Machtpolitik by which force was justified on high and mystic grounds. As publicist and propagandist, Mahan was a student of affairs, past and present, who looked at events in their wider relations, and it is in this role of propagandist-publicist that Mahan's chief significance lay—at least for the United States.

Preoccupation with Mahan's influence upon the European naval and imperial rivalry, an influence not to be minimized (for as deft moralist, with thesis timely in the extreme, Mahan did interpret his age to itself and that age of imperialism, expansion, and organized force acclaimed him as champion), has resulted in the failure to appreciate adequately his role in his own country. His peculiar interpretation of history convinced him of the vital truth of the sea power doctrine.
for his own country, and he labored heroically for a quarter of a century to convert his fellow-countrymen to a similar belief. His conviction of the urgency for and necessity of development of American sea power pointed toward American dominance in the Caribbean with an American controlled canal and bases on either side of the Isthmus, equality in the Far East, and a navy adequate to defend all national interests.

No claim can be made that Mahan was the central figure upon the American public stage during the quarter of a century following his rise to fame in 1890 to his death in 1914. Rather he must be viewed as one of many people who played a part in shaping the policies of the United States as it came of age. In the Caribbean, his contribution lay in his consideration of the canal from a strategic point of view. He assisted materially in the final formulation and carrying into effect of a policy that had been gradually growing for years in the minds of American statesmen and naval leaders. He was an ardent and influential advocate of Hawaiian annexation. In the acquisition of the Philippines, Mahan was more a follower than a leader; and though ultimately rising to a defense of the policy pursued, it was only with reluctance and from a sense of duty in which he saw divine overruling, that he personally "accepted" more than Luzon. As to the problem of Asia, Mahan felt more strongly and sought to influence public opinion to accept Hay's Open Door policy. Mahan saw naval preparedness as the solution to all external dangers of the United States and urged such preparation as would be sufficient to defend
aggressively all national interests everywhere as well as merely to protect the national territory. To justify his advocacy of expansion and organized force he evolved an elaborate, but not overly consistent, philosophy of governmental action which rested upon national interests and moral obligations.

According to his own analysis, Mahan was a man of ideas and not of action, but he saw to it that his ideas were made known to the public. By spoken word, by direct appeal to Presidents, Senators, Representatives, state officials, and other men of influence, by letters to the press, by numerous magazine articles, and by publication of many books, he gained a hearing before the arbiter, public opinion. Nor was public opinion, as a whole, adverse to such activity. Presidents, in messages to Congress, alluded to him by name and made verbatim extracts from his writings; various Congressional committees in their hearings received his personal testimony; Senators and Representatives repeatedly buttressed their arguments by citation of or quotations from his articles; Senate and House reports and documents likewise cited or quoted the sea power advocate; expansionist publicists outside the halls of Congress went to him for ideas and support; men of marked influence were his intimate friends and were periodically in correspondence with him; his magazine articles and books were widely received.

In light of this evidence Mahan can no longer be considered a prophet without honor in his own country. He gave
impetus to the movement for American expansion and as an intellectual furnished it with a rational basis. Though Mahan was only one of several who urged "looking outward" to a "large policy," it must be acknowledged that his influence was perhaps as great as that of any other person.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

(With the exception of a few of Mahan's books, the following bibliography has been limited to material to which reference has been made.)

Manuscript Sources

The Flowers Collection -- Mahan to Ashe Letters, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

The Hay Papers -- c/o Tyler Dennett, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts.

The Lodge Papers -- Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

The Long Papers -- Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

The Luce Papers -- Navy Department Archives.

The McKinley Papers -- Library of Congress.

The Navy Department -- Bureau of Navigation Files and Commanders' Letters.

The Roosevelt Papers (to March 1909) -- Library of Congress.

The State Department -- Domestic Letters and Miscellaneous Letters.

Albert Shaw to writer, March 24, 1937.

Official Publications


Hearings before Merchant Marine Commission, 58th Cong., 3d sess.
Hearings before Committee on Naval Affairs, House of Representa-
tives,
58th Cong., 2d sess.
58th Cong., 3d sess.
60th Cong., 1st sess.
61st Cong., 3d sess.
62d Cong., 2d sess.
63d Cong., 2d sess.

House Report No. 1355, 55th Cong., 2d sess. Report of Com-
mittee on Foreign Affairs on joint resolution for an-
nexation of Hawaii, May 17, 1898.

House Report No. 1132, 60th Cong., 1st sess. Report of Com-
mittee on Naval Affairs on establishment of a naval base
at Pearl Harbor, Mar. 2, 1908.

mittee on Naval Affairs relative to the Council of
National Defense.

same topic as the immediately preceding item.

Malloy, W. M., Treaties, Conventions, International Proto-
cols, and Agreements, between the United States of
America and Other Powers, 1776-1909. 2 vols. Wash-

Moore, John B., Digest of International Law. 8 vols. Wash-

Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United
States, 1862- . Washington, Government Printing
Office, 1864-

Register of the Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the
United States, and of the Marine Corps. Washington,

Report of the Merchant Marine Commission No. 2755, 58th
Cong., 3d sess.

Richardson, James D., A Compilation of the Messages and
Papers of the Presidents. 10 vols. Washington,
Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1910.

Scott, J. B. (ed.), The Reports to the Hague Conferences

, The Proceedings of the Hague Peace Confer-

Senate Document No. 62, 55th Cong., 3d sess. Material relevant to the treaty of peace with Spain, consular reports on the Philippines, etc.


Senate Document No. 284, 57th Cong., 2d sess. Data relative to the cession of the Danish West Indies.

Senate Document No. 213, 59th Cong., 2d sess. The views of Mahan and Simms as to the size of battleships.


Senate Document No. 474, 63d Cong., 2d sess. "A Diplomatic History of the Panama Canal."

Senate Executive Report No. 1, 57th Cong., 1st sess. Report by Committee on Foreign Relations relative to the 1902 treaty for the purchase of the Danish Islands.


The Statutes at Large of the United States, 1873- .

Senate Report No. 1944, 51st Cong., 2d sess.
Published Writings of Mahan

Books


The Gulf and Inland Waters. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883.


Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1899.


The War in South Africa. New York, P. F. Collier and Son, 1900.

Magazine articles which have not been republished in books and to which reference has been made.


"The Importance of the Command of the Sea." Scientific American, CV, 512 (1911).


Periodical Literature

Abel, Anna Héloïse, "Sea Power and the War of 1812." The Dial, XL, 45-47 (1906).

American Historical Review.


Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.


Clarke, G. S., "Captain Mahan's Counsels to the United States." Nineteenth Century, XLIII, 292-300 (1898).


Current Opinion.


Giddings, F. H., "Imperialism?" Political Science Quarterly, XIII, 585-605 (1898).


Harper's New Monthly Magazine.


---


The Literary Digest.

The Literary World.

Littel's Living Age.

Lodge, H. C., "Our Blundering Foreign Policy." The Forum, XIX, 8-17 (1895).

---


Melville, Commodore G. W., "Our Future in the Pacific--What We Have There to Hold and Win." North American Review, CLXVI, 281-296 (1898).


The Nation.


The Overland Monthly.


Pratt, Julius W., "The 'Large Policy' of 1898." Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 219-242 (1932).

American Mercury, XXXI, 269-278 (1934).


Public Opinion.


The Review of Reviews.


"A Great Public Servant." Outlook, CLX, 85-86 (1915).


Sea Power.


Smith, T. C., "Expansion after the Civil War, 1865-1871." Political Science Quarterly, XVI, 412-436 (1901).


U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings.

The World's Work.

Newspapers

Portland Oregonian
New York Times
Boston Evening Transcript
New York Tribune

Biographies, Letters and Memoirs

Acheson, Sam Hanna, Joe Bailey, the Last Democrat. New York, Macmillan Company, 1932.


Castle, William R., "John W. Foster," in Bemis (ed.), The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, IX.


Dennett, Tyler, John Hay. New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1933.


Schuyler, Montgomery, "Walter Q. Gresham," in Bemis (ed.), The American Secretaries and Their Diplomacy, IX.


Other Special and General Works


Foster, John W., The Annexation of Hawaii. Washington, Gibson Brothers, 1897.


Hill, H. C., Roosevelt and the Caribbean. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1927.


Autobiography

I, William E. Livezey, was born in 1903, at Barnesville, Ohio, and received both my elementary and secondary education there. I obtained my Bachelor of Arts from Earlham College in 1927 and my Master of Arts, in philosophy, from Haverford College the following year. During the years 1928-30 and 1931-34, I was a teacher in the Friends Boarding School at Barnesville, Ohio. The year 1930-31 was spent in Europe as a Biddle Traveling Fellow with special study at L'Institut Universitare de Hautes Etudes Internationales in Geneva, Switzerland.

Since 1934 I have been in resident attendance at The Ohio State University; the first two years I was a University Scholar, and the past year I have been a graduate assistant in history.