

A BIRMIDABLE Coast-Defender

STORY OF THE BUILDING OF THE MONADNOCK

TWENTY-TWO years ago the keel of the iron, low-freeboard coast-defense monitor Monadnock was laid at Mare Island Navy-yard. Twenty-two years in the process of building is a very long time. One would imagine that in a couple of decades the Government works at the door of Vallejo ought to have turned out a dozen

breadth is 55 feet 6 inches. Her mean draft is 14 feet 6 inches, and she has a displacement of 3900 tons. She is supplied with a twin-screw horizontal triple expansion engine, and her maximum indicated horsepower is 3000. It is calculated that she will have a speed of 14.5 knots per hour. Her normal coal supply is 250 tons, and this also is the capacity of her bunk-

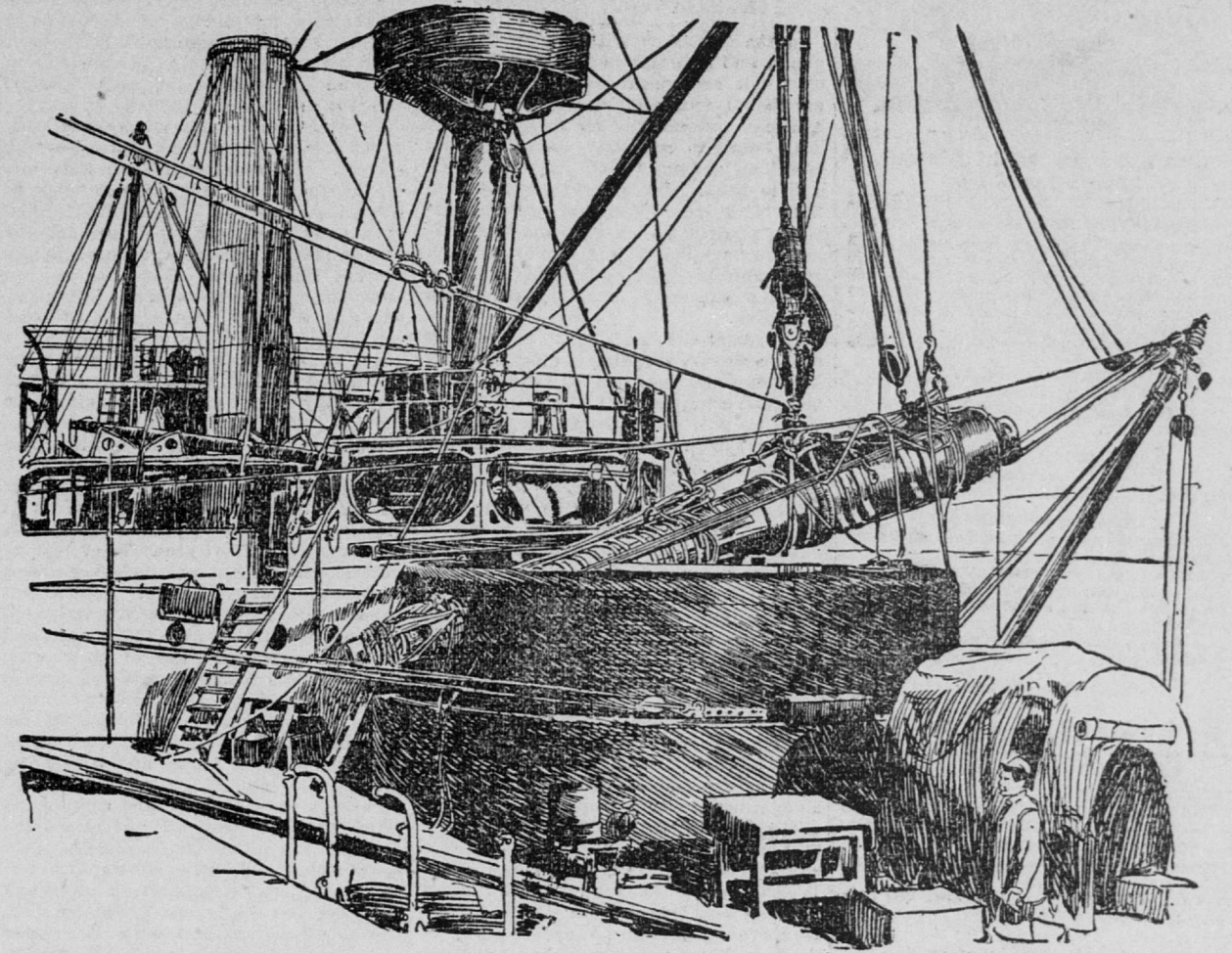
same time the last turret armor arrived at Mare Island. It was expected that the vessel would have been ready for sea last November, but transfers of men rendered the navy-yard shorthanded, and hence the continuance. Captain Sumner will have command and will arrive from the East some time in February. The newly completed Monadnock, of

was placed in her successor, the Monadnock of to-day. Under command of Lieutenant-Commander Francis M. Bunce, at present rear-admiral, the old Monadnock sailed from Hampton Roads, Virginia, November 2, 1865, in company with the Vanderbilt and Powhatan, paddle-wheel steamers, and the Tuscarora, a screw-ship. Arrived at St. Thomas, in the West Indies, November 11, her ability to go anywhere on the sea was already established, and from that port to her Western destination only the Vanderbilt accompanied her. She stopped at Rio Janeiro and was visited and admired by Dom Pedro II, the emperor.

"The passage through the Straits of Magellan and Sarmiento Channel to the Gulf of Penar," writes her commander, "presented no difficulties which were not easily overcome. I feared, in passing through the narrow places and abrupt turnings, the length of the ship would give trouble, but in practice found none whatever."

On April 25, 1866, the Monadnock arrived at Callao, Peru, and on May 13 at Panama, and after one stop in Mexico, arrived in San Francisco on June 22.

The reports of officers with reference to the trip of the old Monadnock are valuable as showing that vessels of this type are capable of doing even cruiser service. It must be noted, too, that the Monadnock's successor and namesake is an incomparable improvement on the old craft in every particular and, therefore, whatever was said in commendation of the old monitor's



PLACING A GUN IN THE AFTER TURRET.
[From a photograph taken for "The Call."]

good old Monadnock, but I shall own some little part of whatever fame shall be achieved by the iron boat, with her matchless guns, that sits more gracefully than the monitor whose name she bears, in the waters that saw me dragged from the old Monadnock ere she gave name and place to the vessel that is destined to be the island's glory and pride."

NAMES OF OUR SHIPS.

How Christening Honors Are Scattered Among the States and Towns.

The selection of the name Kentucky by Secretary Herbert for the Kearsarge's mate is admitted to be admirable, even by those whose States were candidates for the honor of this naval christening. It has a double value, indeed, for it also secures the explanatory alliteration which is sometimes aimed at in other navies for sister ships, as for example, in the British "M" class. But its chief merit is that it awards the honor to a State that did not have any representation in the nomenclature of our new fleet.

Maine and Texas, under the happy choice of Secretary Whitney of the two outermost States on our Atlantic coast line, led off with the new battle-ships; Indiana, Massachusetts, Oregon and Iowa followed. New Hampshire, Vermont and Minnesota are still represented by receiving or naval reserve ships, and the Michigan is on the lakes, while Tennessee and Ohio were only a few years ago on the list.

Again, many States are to some extent favored by having the names of noted cities chosen for cruisers and gunboats. Thus the Empire State has the New York and the Brooklyn, California the San Francisco and the Monterey, Massachusetts the Boston, the Marblehead and the Concord, besides the old monitors Nahant and Nantucket; Vermont the Bennington, Georgia the Atlanta, Illinois the Chicago, New Jersey the Newark, Connecticut the Hartford, Maryland the Baltimore, Washington the Olympia, North Carolina the Raleigh, South Carolina the Charleston, Pennsylvania the Philadelphia, Ohio the Cincinnati, Alabama the Montgomery, Minnesota the Minneapolis, Michigan the Detroit, Virginia the Yorktown, Tennessee the Nashville, Maine the Machias and the Castine, Montana the Helena, Delaware the Wilmington. From this point of view it becomes still clearer why Kentucky, which has no town of hers thus honored, should give her name to a battleship.

There is no doubt that the statute, dating back many years, which prescribed that first rates in the navy should be named after States and smaller ones after rivers, cities and towns and so on, was sound in principle. It originated as far back as 1819, and when it was amended in 1858 its essential basis was maintained. Only a few weeks ago an English service paper, noting the interest shown by American cities in vessels named after them, suggested that the practice might well be adopted in that country in order to stimulate naval interest in the great inland towns.

The fidelity with which our rule has been followed in respect to the States throws into the broadest relief the special honor done to the famous old Kearsarge by perpetuating her name on a battleship through the special action of Congress. Probably this is the only exception, too, that will be made, since the only other vessels that would be likely to share such honors, the Harford and the Constitution, are still in existence, and the sad fate of the Kearsarge will probably cause the greatest care to be taken that any practical use of them may be subordinated to safety. For this reason the project of fitting up the Constitution for sea service, with a modern battery, at an expense which would furnish a first-class new steel gunboat, may never be carried out.

Very soon other States and towns will be candidates again for naming vessels. There are six gunboats now building, and Congress is likely to authorize two, if not three or four, new battle-ships at the present session. The battle-ships, at least, are

likely enough to have their names selected, as in the case of the Kearsarge and the Kentucky, not long after the contracts for them are awarded.—New York Sun.

IMPORTANCE OF BOAT DRILL.

Bad Results of Neglecting an Old Naval Exercise.

The disaster to H. M. S. Acorn on the southeast coast of America, following so soon after the still more distressing accident to the boat of the Edgar off the coast of Korea, induces us to call attention to the comparative absence of boat drills in the navy nowadays. In harbors and roadsteads steam launches and pinnaces do so much of the work that it is seldom one hears the boatswain's call, "Away first cutter," "Away second cutter."

The captain's gig is the one rowing or sailing boat that is kept pretty frequently going. So, after the "young gentlemen" leave the Britannia they have little enough opportunity of handling boats under sail, and there is so much to be done in mechanical work aboard that boat that drill for the crews are, though not a thing of the past by any means, but far less usual than it was ere steam superseded sails. This is a pity, for more reasons than one.

The command of a boat was a fine way of bringing out any smartness a budding officer has. As Lord Charles Bessborough used to say, it accustoms the youngster to command and to take responsibility, for when his boat is once clear of the ship he is as much her captain as the officer whose permanent flag from the truck is his captain. Then again boat exercise tends to keep up in the crews that peculiar handiness which used to give bluejackets their unequalled versatility.

In floating batteries or factories such as are most of our ships at the present day there is little opportunity of becoming a handy-man. Indeed, a sailor may need not know very much more than a marine, and the reason for keeping sailors and marines as classes apart seems to be diminishing yearly. We hope the Admiralty, spurred by the two sad accidents we have referred to, will insist on more attention being given to boat drill, especially under sail.—London Chronicle.

FEW GENERALS LEFT.

The Next War Must Come Soon for Them to Be Available.

The action of the Senate in removing the disabilities of ex-Confederates to serve in the army of the United States was right and not too hasty. The time, however, is passing when the action of Congress can add to the strength of the army to anything like the extent that it would have done had there been occasion for the services of ex-Confederates years ago.

The man who was 21 at the outbreak of the war is now 56 years of age. The rank and file are generally made up of young men or those of earlier middle age. With officers the case is different, and especially so with those of high rank. Many of the best officers are well advanced in life, and the policy of retiring our generals at 64 years of age is far from commanding general assent.

At present there are eight years of activity between 58 and 64, and in the event of war the law could easily be modified if necessary. The passage of the bill to remove disabilities, therefore, might restore to the service some of the generals who were the gray during the rebellion. But alas! how depleted are their ranks!

Lee has been dead for a quarter of a century, and if living would be a very old man. Joe Johnston is also gone, though not until recently. Kirby Smith also has recently gone over to the majority, and the same may be said of Beauregard and others, who at one time held important commands.

There are still half a dozen or more lieutenant-generals of the Confederacy left, including General Buckner of Kentucky, General Gordon and General Wheeler of Alabama, and the number of major-generals and brigadier-generals left is very considerable. Undoubtedly there are among these many whose learning and experience would be of great service to the country and there are some who are yet within the age of 64 years.

It is to be noted that all of the most conspicuous figures on the Union side are also gone. Grant and Sherman, Sheridan, Thomas, Hancock, Meade, Logan and many more are gone. There are left of course many generals that rendered valuable and even distinguished service, but the great leaders on either side are no longer with us. Most of the best-known survivors are old and unlikely to hold any important commands—at least for any length of time after the outbreak of hostilities.

What, then, should we do for generals in the event of the outbreak of war? The probability is that the men for the occasion would speedily be developed. There are scores of obscure men throughout the country that a war would render famous, and some of them illustrious. In 1861, who supposed that the hero of the war was idling away his time at Galena, Ill.? Who could imagine that one of the foremost champions of that which proved the losing side was teaching a military school in Virginia? In point of fact, the generals of the war for the most part served in a subordinate capacity during the war with Mexico, entered the army after that war, or came from civil life. Only thirteen years elapsed between the peace of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Civil War, and yet our general officers in the latter were nearly all new to that rank. Thirty years and more have elapsed since the close of the civil war, and nearly thirty-one classes have been graduated at West Point. It is hard to estimate the possibilities among these men, but it is quite possible that some military genius among them might be found. Few people will doubt that among our

population we have men enough who are capable of leading armies and winning victories. But it does not follow that we shall discover at once the proper men for the chief command or for the most responsible subordinate positions. It not infrequently happens in war that the discovery of the proper men to lead armies is only made by the disagreeable process of passing through a series of disastrous defeats. This was particularly noticeable in the East during the Civil War, three-fourths of which was over before a commander was found that could lead the Union forces to victory. General after general had previously been put in command of that army, had entered upon the task assigned amid the acclamations of the press and people and had disastrously failed. It does not follow that this unpleasant experience would be repeated in the event of another war, but, of course, it might be. There is at least comfort in the reflection that England is more nearly destitute of skillful generals than we are.

The Vikings were Northmen, who infested the European seas in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries. They were generally the sons of Northern Kings, who betook themselves to piracy as a means of becoming distinguished and of obtaining an independent command.

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- CAPEs Reduced to... \$6.50
- CAPEs Reduced to... \$8.50
- CAPEs Reduced to... \$9.00
- CAPEs Reduced to... \$10.00

These garments were sold previous to sale \$12 to \$30.

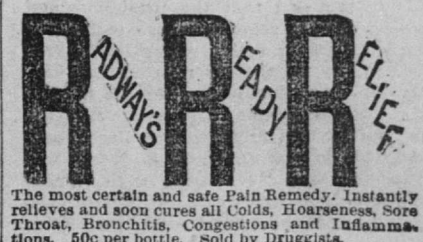
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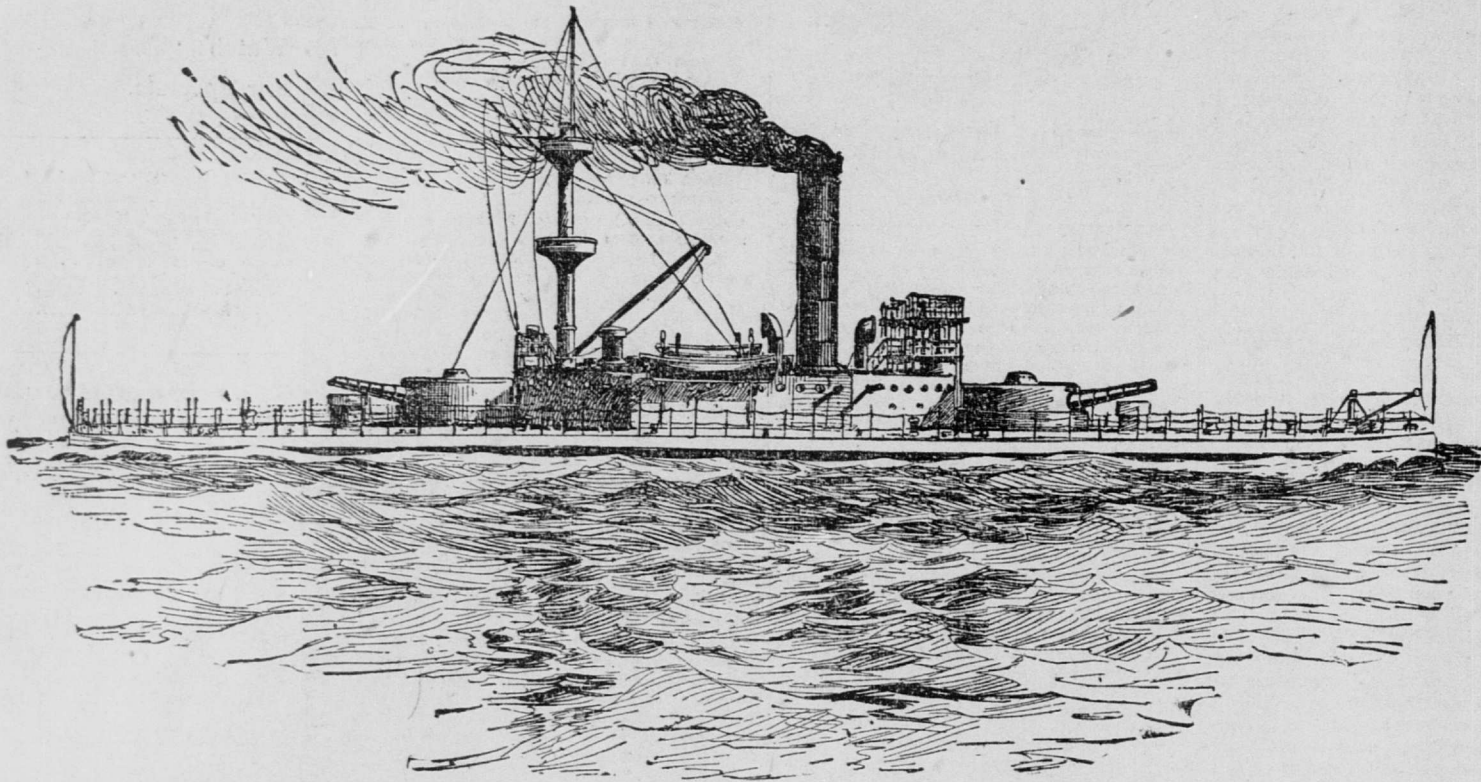
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THE COAST DEFENSE MONITOR MONADNOCK READY FOR SERVICE.

[From a sketch made by a "Call" artist.]

monitors complete. But the cause of the delay was not local, and if the controversy over the Venezuelan question had not assumed a portentous aspect it is quite possible that the new Monadnock would be receiving its finishing touches toward the tail end of the year, instead of being made ready to go into commission during the early part of March.

If the appearance of a war cloud on the Nation's usually clear and peaceful sky shall result in the extension or material strengthening of our coast defenses and the speedy upbuilding of our navy, it will be a blessing that the ominous shadow arose. Thus the safeguards of the future will be in a measure the offspring of the grim warnings of to-day.

While not taking any exception to the old proverb about the dangers of delay, there is something interesting in the observation that delays have been decidedly beneficial to the Monadnock. In fact delays have invited improvement; delays have given opportunities for more numerous inspections of even the minutest details; delays have been the means of bringing about action on new and valuable suggestions; delays have permitted more thorough tests to be made, important changes to be introduced and desirable alterations to be effected. The notable benefit is that the sleeping compartments are better arranged and more comfortable (the ventilation being more nearly perfect) than in any other naval craft that afloat. Besides airshafts she will have six steam boilers and one electrical blower.

When the Monadnock goes into commission and steams out to pay her compliments to the great white squadron, the men who walk her decks may proudly boast that she is the neatest and completest vessel of her size and kind that ever cleared the water.

On Friday the last of her big guns was placed in position in the after turret. Inside of a month, if the weather permits, she will be in readiness for her captain and crew. She is now being painted and polished and will shortly be furnished.

The Monadnock is, in every way, a model boat of the monitor type. She has two barbette turrets and one military mast. The drawings presented in THE CALL to-day are the first to be published and afford an excellent idea of the general dimensions and appointments of the new boat.

The length of the Monadnock's waterline is 259 feet 6 inches and her extreme

ers. Her maximum draft aft at the lowest point of the keel, when the ship is ready for sea and her bunkers full, is 14 feet 7 1/2 inches.

The batteries of the Monadnock are very formidable. Complete, she has four of the very latest and most approved 10-inch guns. Each of these guns is 28 feet long and each of them weighs 28 tons, a ton of steel to every linear foot. Two of these guns are placed in each of the revolving turrets, and these guns can hurl missiles of destruction nine miles.

course, is not the first of her name, but the successor of the ironclad of that name, which was the first vessel of her class to make the passage from the Atlantic into the Pacific.

Monitors were never designed for cruising purposes, but for harbor defense and operations upon the coast of the United States. Owing to the fondering of the original Monitor off Cape Hatteras and another of these vessels in the blockade off Charleston, an impression prevailed that they could not be sent with safety outside



ONE OF THE 28-TON GUNS READY TO BE PUT ON BOARD.

[From a photograph made for "The Call."]

The auxiliary guns consist of two 6-pounder rim-fires, two 3-pounder rim-fires, two 37-millimetre Hotchkiss revolving cannon and two Gatling guns.

As to the armor, the side plates of the vessel vary from 9 to 5 inches, turrets 7 1/2 inches, barbets 11 1/2 inches, and her protective deck has a layer of 1 1/2 inches of steel.

Her complement will consist of twenty-six officers and 145 men.

The last closing plate of the side armor was received in May, 1895, and about the

the harbors in which they were constructed. To dispel this false impression the Secretary of the Navy decided, among other things, to send the Monadnock, via the Straits of Magellan, to California.

The Monadnock, after navigating the Atlantic and Pacific, reached this port in safety, and was then placed in ordinary at Mare Island. Her wooden hull decayed and hardly ten years had passed from the time she left the East when she was stripped, and the best of her machinery

qualities may be averred with manifold meaning of the new vessel.

The following appears in the report of Commodore Rodgers of June 28, 1896:

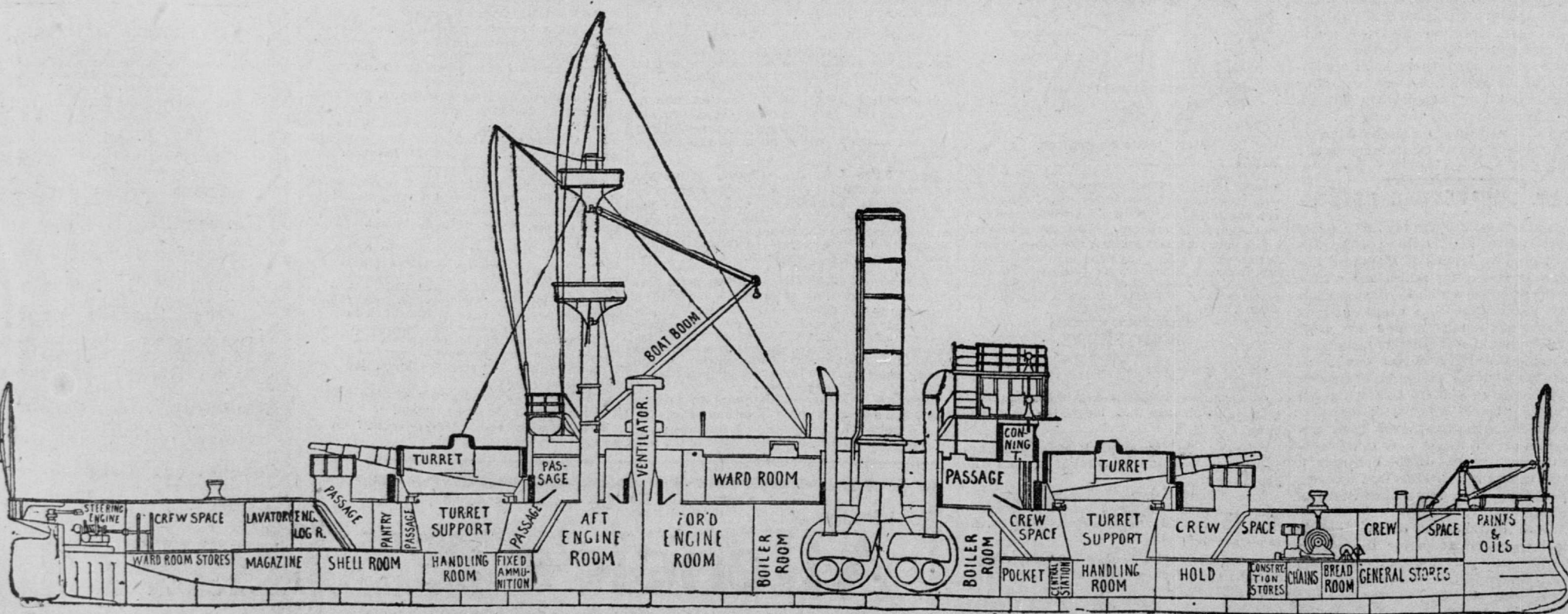
"I have the honor to announce the safe arrival of the Vanderbilt and the Monadnock at the navy-yard, Mare Island. The Monadnock found no weather on her voyage from Philadelphia to San Francisco which seemed to touch the limit of her sea-going qualities. The engines have performed as satisfactorily as the hull and have arrived in complete order. The success of the voyage amply vindicated the judgment of the department in undertaking it, and the hopes of the most sanguine of monitor people are fulfilled in this crucial experiment."

Captain Bunce, in his report, said: "During the passage of this ship from Philadelphia to San Francisco the Monadnock has run by log 15,385 knots. Her average speed has been 6.32 knots. The engines have run about sixty revolutions per minute, that being the point judged to be the most economical in fuel and in wear and tear of machinery. Not a single piece of the spare machinery has been used, and the engines are all now in good working order. They have been able to perform all the work demanded of them."

"In her present condition she is as perfectly safe and trustworthy for cruising in any part of the world as a vessel can be relying on steam alone for its motive power, and twice as safe as most steamers, for she has two independent pairs of steam engines, either of which is sufficient to keep the ship under control in any weather, and to propel her in ordinary conditions of wind and sea five knots an hour. At sea she has never needed or received assistance of any kind whatever from other vessels, and therefore I regard her or any vessel of her class as a thoroughly competent, independent cruiser."

And such was the successful voyage of the first turreted vessel from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast.

To-day in one of the machine-shops at the Mare Island Navy-yard there is hung up as a memento of the original Monadnock a catamaran that was kept when the old vessel was torn to pieces. The sailors have quite a veneration for the old raft. It speaks to them of times that are growing dim to the memories of the old tars who carry under their caps some history of experience in the war that shook the foundations of the Republic. It seems to say to them: "I am all that is left of the



LONGITUDINAL SECTION OF THE MONADNOCK.

[From the Plan of the Chief of Construction.]