

Scientific American.

ESTABLISHED 1845

MUNN & CO., EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT

No. 361 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

TERMS FOR THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.

(Established 1845.)

One copy, one year, for the U. S., Canada or Mexico. \$3.00
One copy, six months, for the U. S., Canada or Mexico. 1.50
One copy, one year, to any foreign country, postage prepaid. 4.00

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(Established 1876)

is a distinct paper from the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. THE SUPPLEMENT is issued weekly. Every number contains 16 octavo pages, uniform in size with SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1898.

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THE NEED FOR MORE ARMORED CRUISERS IN OUR NAVY.

We feel constrained to urge again the necessity for the addition of more armored cruisers to our navy. The naval appropriation bill this year is, we believe, not yet past the stage where it is possible for changes to be made, and we are firmly convinced that the interests of the country will be served by the reconsideration of this very important question.

The fact that Spain has a fleet of 20-knot, heavily armed and armored cruisers at sea, threatening to strike at one of half a dozen important points, and capable, after striking a blow, of escaping by virtue of its superior speed from our powerful battleships and monitors, emphasizes the value of this type of vessel both for offense and defense.

Beyond all doubt the most pressing need of the navy is the addition of more "Brooklyns" and "New Yorks" to its fighting line. In the United States navy there are now built, building or authorized thirteen battleships and ten monitors, making a total of twenty-three heavily armored vessels.

It should be borne in mind that unless provision is made in the present bill for additional armored cruisers, it will probably be four years before we shall have any more of this class afloat.

We cannot but feel that should the changes suggested above not be made, our navy of the year 1901 will be very ill balanced in its composition.

THE CAPE VERDE FLEET AND THE "OREGON."

What is the probable destination of the fleet of armored cruisers and torpedo boat destroyers which recently set sail from the Cape Verde Islands? Has it gone north to effect a junction with the second division of Spanish ships now about to sail from the mainland?

There has been much fear expressed that the last is the move which has been undertaken, and that, before any reinforcements can reach her, the "Oregon," with her little consort the "Marietta" and the unprotected "Buffalo" ("Nietheroy"), will find herself confronted by an overwhelmingly superior force.

The Spanish fleet consists of four cruisers: the "Cris-

tobal Colon," "Oquendo," "Maria Teresa" and "Vizcaya." The first ship is, we think, the best of the four, and, taken all round, is perhaps the most formidable, though by no means the largest, in the Spanish navy. She is an Italian built ship of 6,840 tons and 20 knots speed, and carries a complete belt from stem to stern of 6-inch Harveyized steel, while above this is a continuous armored redoubt of 6-inch Harveyized steel which protects a battery of ten 6-inch rapid-fire guns.

Now, what has the "Oregon" to oppose to the four cruisers (we will suppose that the "Buffalo" and the "Marietta" can take care of the destroyers) in a battle upon the high seas? To the two 10-inch and six 11-inch armor-piercing guns, whose total energy is 132,000 foot-tons, she could reply with four 13-inch armor-piercing guns, with a total energy of 134,500 foot-tons.

It is safe to say that in a stand-up fight of any duration the "Oregon" would disable every heavy gun of the enemy and place her 13-inch shells in the vitals of every cruiser.

There are other elements of strength and weakness, however, which must be considered. In the matter of heavy rapid-fire guns, the advantage would be the other way, the cruisers being able to open fire from one broadside with five 6-inch, fifteen 5½-inch and three 47-inch rapid-firers.

The greatest danger, however, to the "Oregon" would be from the ram, and it is probable that the swift cruisers would close in from opposite sides in the effort to deliver the fatal blow before they had themselves received a mortal blow from her powerful guns.

Unless the Spanish naval authorities are criminally