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OUR CITIES BY THE SEA.

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WASHINGTON, January 2, 1896.



A MAN WHO HAS sold tens of millions of dollars' worth of arms and munitions of war to the great countries of Europe, and who has been all his life dealing with war depart-

ments, ought to have opinions of value as to our defenses in the possibility of a war with England. Such a man is Senator Watson C. Squire, who has recently introduced a bill appropriating \$87,000,000 for the protection of our cities by the sea. Senator Squire was chairman of the coast defense committee some years ago, and since he was elected to the Senate he has been devoting himself largely to matters connected with the army and navy. He was for many years connected with the Remington Manufacturing company and he has made a large fortune in dealing in firearms and munitions of war. He was for a long time the agent of the Remington company in Europe, and was at one time its president. At the time of the Franco-Prussian war he sold more than \$14,000,000 worth of small arms to the French. He tells me that the French thought they were well prepared for this struggle, but that after it had begun they found they could nowhere get enough arms for their soldiers. Among those which they bought of Senator Squire were a large number of the rifles and guns left over from our late civil war. The Senator purchased nearly \$10,000,000 worth of such guns from Uncle Sam and sold them to the French. He has also furnished guns to others of the great European nations. He sold over \$8,000,000 worth of guns to the Spanish and he aided in supplying the Danes with firearms. For years his business was in connection with the war offices of all the great European nations, and he could today draw maps of the streets of St. Petersburg and Constantinople from memory. A great part of the guns now in use in South America were sold by him. This is the case with Cuba and to a large extent with the Argentine Republic and Venezuela. I do not think that the Senator has at present any active connection with the Remington company. His long experience, however, has given him a good opportunity to learn much as to the inside workings of war matters in

Europe, and especially as to the plans of other nations relating to this country.

During a chat with him last night I asked Senator Squire whether he supposed that the English had an accurate knowledge of our seaports.

He replied: "Certainly they have. The British legation has a man connected with it whose business it is to look into and report to the British war office upon such matters. The English probably have had men traveling through the United States getting the last and best information upon all matters connected with our army and navy and defenses. You cannot imagine the amount of money that foreign nations spend upon such things. A new gun or a new invention in any kind of arms is worth a fortune if it is of real value, and governments sometimes buy such inventions and keep them secret until the time comes for their use. Our war department probably has much secret information as to arms and ammunition which will not be developed until a war occurs. We send men abroad to report upon such matters. The results of their investigations never get into the newspapers, and you cannot tell what new things have been invented for warfare until war actually occurs. In the war of 1866, in which Austria was conquered by Prussia, the Prussians succeeded largely on account of the German "needle gun," which up to that time had been kept secret. It was a poor thing at best, and it allowed the gas rising from the powder to escape in such a way that it had to be fired from the thigh instead of the shoulder. Still it was a great improvement over the old Austrian gun and over anything Europe then had. It was first used in that war and at the battle of Sadowa it gave the Prussians a victory. After this battle all Europe rushed to get new guns, and the wonderful small arms which we have today are the result. It was the same during our civil war. The fight of the Monitor and the Merrimac changed the naval construction of the world. Before that wooden ships were used nearly everywhere. After it gun-boats had to be made of iron and steel, and the big men-of-war which now cost from three to five million dollars apiece, and the costly armor plate with which they are sheathed are the result.

"Speaking of the English knowledge of our seaports," Senator Squire went on. "I have no doubt but that a plan of every harbor and city on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts is in the British war office. These are revised from time to time in accordance with every new item of information which they get concerning our defenses. I venture to say that the British war office has a better knowledge of the real condition of our sea-

coast cities than the Congress of the United States. In all probability the English have their plans made out in detail as to where they will attack each of our cities in case of a war, and it may be that the letters and telegrams are already written giving directions to the commanders in the different branches of the army and navy as to just what they are to do in such a case. This is so in nearly every big war office in Europe. Every possibility is provided for. You remember the story of Von Moltke, the commander-in-chief of the German army at the time that the Franco-Prussian war occurred. The announcement that war had been declared by Napoleon was received at night, and the messenger bringing the news found Von Moltke sound asleep. He was awakened and advised of the fact. He did not rise, but merely sent for his aid and told him to go to a certain case and take the papers out of a certain pigeon hole and telegraph the instructions therein inclosed. These instructions gave directions as to the disposition of every part of the German army. After giving this order, so the story goes, Von Moltke turned over and went to sleep, knowing that when he awoke in the morning the whole German army would be preparing to move. The English probably have similar plans for the action of their forces and fleets."

"What is the condition of the English fortifications on this side of the water, Senator Squire?" I asked.

"I don't think any one knows," replied Senator Squire. "They are probably in a very good condition. The English have been steadily increasing their fortifications about the United States for years. They have, I have seen it stated, so dredged the St. Lawrence river that war ships drawing twenty-six feet can now sail right up to Montreal, which, in the case of a war with us, would be one of their bases of supplies. They do not allow Americans to go through their forts. Not long ago my secretary, Col. Hilder, who was formerly connected with the English army in India, was visiting some offices near Equimault on Vancouver's Island. He asked to be taken through the fort there, but was told that it would be impossible, as orders had been given that no one outside of those immediately connected with the fort were to be allowed within it. This great English fortification practically controls the straits of Fuca and the entrance to Puget Sound. It is within a few miles of our coast. Port Townsend is just across the way, so near, indeed, that the morning and evening guns from the fort may be heard there. Gen. Miles, who has examined closely into the subject, says that in twenty-four hours the British