

# "Hornets of the Navy" In the Russo-Japanese War; The Increase In the Popularity of Torpedo Craft

FOR several years previous to the Russo-Japanese conflict the status of torpedo craft had been rather undervalued. While the naval authorities were not inclined to promote them as a class, it is a fact that both torpedoes and torpedo boats had ceased to occupy the position they once held in the naval armament of all great powers. Interest had for some time been shown in the construction of the modern battleship as the premier fighting agent at sea, and the vast treasures expended in the construction of these monsters were believed to have been put to a good use. However, the recent performance of the miniature annihilators along the northeast Asian littoral have answered completely any question concerning the effectiveness of this species of attack.

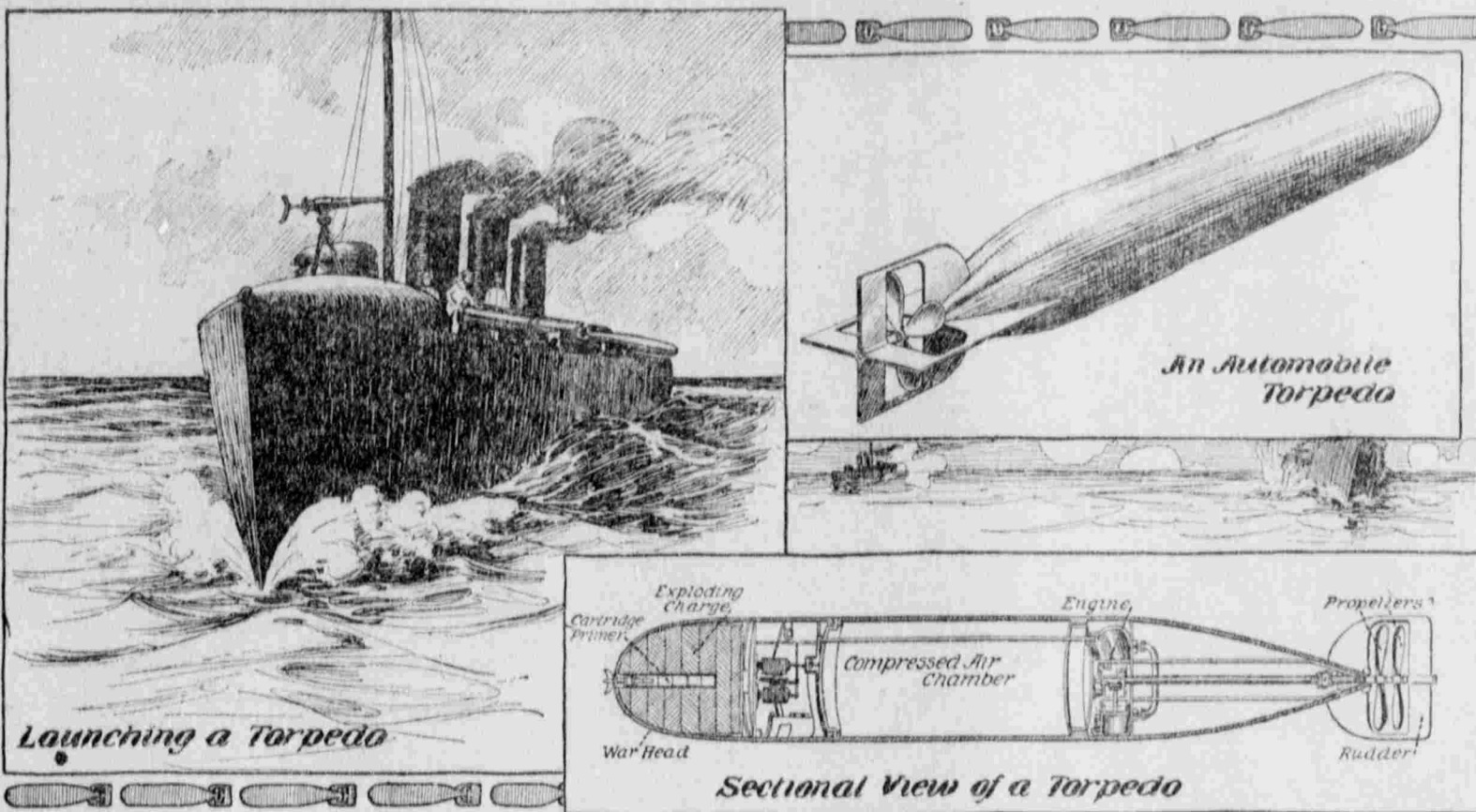
Not is this all that the Japanese activity off Port Arthur has demonstrated. It has left unsettled whether or not a similar result could have been reached by the navy of any other nation. If one is persuaded that such is the case—that the wonderful little brown sailor who is capable of doing with this craft what was intended to be done—there is still, of course, much to be said for the apparent desuetude which threatened torpedo boats. But such a conclusion would be humiliating and will not be accepted.

The one thing which has been shattered beyond all hope of rehabilitation is the invulnerability of the modern battleship. That idea is as effectively demolished as are the czar's battleships at the bottom of the sea. From the time of their launching until the moment when their collapse was such a thing as the Cascaresch claim impossible both the Cascaresch and the Russian would have reckoned on a torpedo as a feeble enemy. Both of these costly machines were provided with so much extra armor and so many additional bulkheads that it was not believed that any known form of torpedo warfare was likely to prove especially troublesome. Although the terrible effectiveness of the torpedo as a naval expedient in the American civil war was by no means forgotten, the failure of the agent to score in the Spanish-American war did much to discredit this form of attack. For this reason the presence of an unusual number of these little vessels in Japan's fleet was at the beginning of the war a subject of criticism. Russia also had a fleet of about 200 of these boats, but torpedo warfare was so lightly esteemed by the Russian naval authorities that most of them were unseaworthy and of no avail.

Rearrangement of what have been known as minor types must be undertaken, and speedily. In this process the first item which demands consideration will be the torpedo boat destroyer. If the various craft devoted to torpedo warfare are still to be denominated as auxiliaries, it is evident that the primary place among them must be given to the destroyers. As the matter stands, without torpedo craft the battleship line may be weakened, but only in degree. Without the battleship base, support and guidance torpedo attack is almost certain to be impotent. The reason for this dependence is to be found in the fact that the destroyer is a weapon of opportunity and surprise, fragile in construction, poorly armed except against its fellows and most destructive in the strain it puts on the physical and mental stamina of its crew. It is capable of acting alone only under very exceptional circumstances, and if attacked it must either run or be sunk.

Formerly the principal requirements of a torpedo boat were high speed, efficient means of launching torpedoes, handiness and some seaworthiness. These essentials have been modified to embrace increased seaworthiness and diminished speed. To attain these requirements the boats are long, slender, as lightly built as possible and low in the water. On small torpedo boats the tubes are pivoted on deck on the fore and aft midship line, while on the larger boats they are placed as near as possible to the edge.

Modern torpedo boats are still of four classes—torpedo boat destroyers, sea-going boats, harbor boats and portable



boats carried by men-of-war. Torpedo boat destroyers are similar to ordinary torpedo boats, the difference being in their larger size and heavier armament. They vary in size from 250 to 600 tons. The torpedo boat proper carries very few and very small guns. Seagoing boats are from 100 to 250 tons. Harbor boats, capable of going to sea in good weather, are from thirty to 100 tons. Portable boats are from five to fifteen tons. The speeds are in somewhat similar ratio, the destroyer being fastest.

The defense against these stealthily moving dangers consists of picket boats, torpedo nets, rapid firing guns and searchlights. Although it was known that it was possible for a torpedo craft to sink a modern battleship, until the demonstrations in the harbor of Port Arthur it was not accounted probable. The accurate knowledge furnished by the repeated performances of Admiral Togo's fleet has resulted in a tremendous moral effect on the nations of the world. Up to 1903 the torpedo fleet of the United States was fully abreast with modern requirement. With one or two exceptions, the boats were new and averaged much larger than those of the same class in most foreign navies. The American destroyers were also much more heavily armed than those of other nations. It is a fact, however, that several of the Japanese destroyers, built at the Elswick works in England, are larger than any completed destroyer in our service. Much progress has been made in Japan toward the perfection of the details which contribute so powerfully to the success of torpedo warfare. Under the clever touch of the foreign taught Japanese workmen many improvements have been developed which will not be made public until the close of the war.

It is a fact also that many improvements have been made during the last few years in the torpedo and its launching apparatus, although every effort is made to keep all such matters a profound secret. One of the most ingenious devices is that which enables the commanding officer of a vessel carrying torpedoes to point his ship at the spot he wishes to hit and then by an

electric firing gear to discharge the torpedoes from all the tubes simultaneously and in such a way that they will after striking the water turn and run parallel to the course of the ship. Thus with a three tube boat, for example, he could discharge three torpedoes, running into a danger zone about 100 yards wide, one on each side of the zone and the third down the middle of it. As may be inferred, the possibilities of a hit under such circumstances are enormous. Another proposed apparatus superheats the compressed air before it enters the engine. This is most necessary, because when the compressed air is freed it expands, producing a low temperature that reduces its energy. Still another scheme substitutes turbine machinery for the present reciprocating engines. This would probably make it possible to make an 800 yard run at the rate of forty knots an hour. That also would be a great achievement.

The British navy has the honor of being the first possessor of a torpedo destroyer. This boat was completed and tested in 1893. Its trials were so convincing that all naval powers made haste to provide themselves with as many as could be obtained, and both American and European builders have had no lack of orders.

In the light of recent observation it is plain that the value of torpedo vessels as schools of practice and training cannot be overestimated. That the United States possesses a seaworthy flotilla of torpedo destroyers has been demonstrated by the recent voyage to the Philippines of several of these craft. The trip was made in about four months. The low speed was maintained to husband the coal supply and also to make the voyage less rigorous for the men. It is indeed a severe school, the last place in the world for laggards.

In the matter of provision for torpedo boat instruction the United States government is somewhat deficient, but this is shortly to be remedied, and the lessons to be taught by the torpedo service will hereafter form an essential part of the Jackie's education.

THOMAS W. BROWN.

## The Interesting Family of Senator Fairbanks, Consisting of Wife, Four Sons and One Daughter

When sufficient returns are in to indicate the general result of the quadrennial national election, Mrs. Charles W. Fairbanks should not be able to add the title of vice president's wife to the other honors which have come to her through her husband. She will still have much to console her. She has long ago demonstrated the fact that she is possessed of an individuality far too distinctive to be content to shine merely by reflected light.

Judge Phillander B. Cole of Marysville, the pretty county seat of Union county, O., her father, was one of the most eminent jurists of central Ohio, and her childhood was passed in an atmosphere of great intellectual activity. Marysville is within the radius of the most learned center of Methodism in the land. At Delaware, but seventeen miles distant, is the great co-educational institution which has sent forth more eminent Methodists than any other similar seat of learning in the country. Toward this Ohio Wesleyan university the aspirations of young Cora Cole, bred and nurtured in the distinctive principles of Methodism, were longingly. At an age when most girls are under the thrall of the fashions and the trappings of the preparatory department.

Among her youthful classmates was a boy from her native county. That geographical circumstance was sufficient to enlist the interest of Miss Cora Cole. He was Charles F. Fairbanks, and she knew him by reputation—the reputation, it must be admitted,



FIVE INTERESTING MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY OF VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE CHARLES W. FAIRBANKS.

of being an exceedingly bashful, though studious, young man. In the course of time they became warm friends, and in the beginning of their junior year they were appointed co-editors of the college paper, which is the supreme good fortune that can befall an undergraduate. It was in this trying position that the individuality and capacity of Miss Cole were made apparent. It is a tradition still at Delaware that the university periodical had never before been so ably conducted and that Miss Cole was chiefly responsible for its literary excellence.

Before the close of their senior year the youthful coeditors were engaged, and soon after graduation they were married and went to Indianapolis to make a home. Mr. Fairbanks began the practice of law and prospered from the first. His bright young wife soon obtained a strong foothold in the rather exclusive society of the Indiana capital and proved herself an admirable coadjutor in the process of building the family fortunes. At the time of her husband's election to the United States senate Mrs. Fairbanks was already the most popular woman in the state. She had made herself mistress of the happy faculty of converting political animosities into genuine friendships, and the charm of her domestic environment was so potent that the Fairbanks' home at 1523 North Meridian street became a veritable political hospital, where the wounds of all the disaffected were treated with the tenderest care.

Notwithstanding her social and domestic engagements, which in Mrs. Fairbanks' case must have been unusually insistent, she has found time to identify herself with most of the intellectual and social reforms of the day. As an illustration of her popularity with her sex may be cited her election to the presidency of the Daughters of the American Revolution, her vice presidency of the Junior Republic and her prominence in many other similar organizations. Mrs. Fairbanks has been the presiding officer of so many bodies requiring administrative ability that she has become one of the clearest parliamentarians in the country.

There are five children in the Fairbanks household, and they have contributed their part toward the charm of the domestic ensemble. In the order of their ages they are as follows: Adelaide, wife of John Wesley Simmons, ensign in the United States navy; Warren C., who recently married Miss Cassidy of Pittsburg and is secretary and treasurer of a typewriter company; Frederick C., who is a graduate of Princeton and a student at the Columbian University Law school; Richard, now at Yale, and Robert, a pupil at Phillips academy, Andover, preparing for Princeton. Both the daughter and oldest son are alumni of the Ohio Wesleyan university, and all of the members of the family take great interest in the welfare of that institution. They attend the alumni gatherings regularly, and Mr. Fairbanks is one of the university's trustees.

The Fairbankses and McKineys were close friends. Natives of the same state, members of the same religious body and having a large number of mutual acquaintances, it is not difficult to understand how they were drawn together.

CHARLES N. LUTHER.

## Recent Changes In the Cabinet of President Roosevelt; The Personalities of Secretaries Morton and Metcalf

THE recent changes in President Roosevelt's cabinet bring into additional prominence two men who had already won distinction in their respective callings. Paul Morton, the new secretary of the navy, vice attorney Henry Moody, transferred to the family which has already furnished one cabinet member. His father, the late J. Sterling Morton, was intrusted with the portfolio of agriculture at the behest of Grover Cleveland's second administration. The younger Morton was born in Detroit in 1857. At the age of fifteen he went into the land office of the Burlington and Missouri River railroad at Burlington, Ia., as a clerk, and he rose rapidly, filling the positions of assistant general freight agent, general passenger agent and general freight agent of the road in quick succession. At the time of retiring from the service of the Burlington he was general freight agent of the entire system.

About this time Mr. Morton enjoyed his first taste of political life. He made acquaintance of Dr. Zeballos, former secretary of state of the Argentine Republic, and through his influence was appointed consul for that country at Chicago. In 1898 he was made third vice president of the Santa Fe railroad system, with headquarters at Chicago, and railroad men in the country brought him numerous offers from various lines, but he remained with the Santa Fe until the time of his appointment to

the cabinet. He was then filling the office of second vice president.

Mr. Morton was a Gold Democrat in 1896, and since then he has affiliated with the Republicans. He was an alternate delegate to the recent Republican national convention, and in that gathering of eminent political entities he was a conspicuous figure. This prominence was due in part to his commanding personality, but the fact of the president's well known partiality for his society had its influence. So decided is Mr. Roosevelt's liking for the big new secretary that he gave him the choice of the honors then within the presidential gift. Mr. Morton did not accept at once. To be confronted by an invitation to exchange a highly lucrative railroad position for an office yielding only \$8,000 a year is not a perfectly agreeable situation, nor does it unravel the intricacy of the proposition to have the initiative come from the chief magistrate of the nation. Mr. Morton asked for time. After he had made up his mind to enter the cabinet he was inclined to assume the duties of chief of the new department of labor and commerce, but afterward decided to accept the secretaryship of the navy. The new secretary is a prime social favorite, a well informed and most agreeable talker, and he is in great demand as an after dinner orator.

Victor Howard Metcalf at the time of his appointment as chief of the department of commerce and labor was congressman from the Third California district. He is a native of the Empire State, having been born in Utica, Oct. 10, 1853. After leaving the public school he attended the Utica Free academy and was graduated from that institution. He afterward finished his preparatory studies at a military academy at New Haven. He abandoned his



classical course in the junior year to become a member of the Yale law school. He received the diploma of that institution in 1876 and was admitted to the Connecticut bar. The following year he was admitted to the New York bar. For two years thereafter he practiced in Onondaga county, obtaining a reputation as a careful and promising young lawyer. In these days he enjoyed the friendship and prodding by the counsel of such veterans as Senator Francis Kernan and ex-Governor Horatio Seymour. Both of these eminent statesmen were interested in his development and prophesied a notable future for him. In 1889 Mr. Metcalf moved to Oakland, Cal., and formed a partnership with a fellow student and graduate at Yale. This was George D. Metcalf, who is not a relative. This partnership has continued up to the present time, and the firm of Metcalf & Metcalf is one of the most prominent

legal combinations on the Pacific coast. Mr. Metcalf first began to take an active part in politics in 1898. In that year he received the Republican nomination for congressman from his district and was elected to the Fifty-sixth congress. He has been twice re-elected. Mr. Metcalf is very popular at the White House and is a close personal friend of ex-Secretary Moody. Mr. Metcalf at the time of his appointment was a member of the ways and means committee.

William Henry Moody, late secretary of the navy and now attorney general, vice Phillander C. Knox, who will enter the senate as the late Matthew Stanley Quay's successor in December, has announced his intention of retiring from public life at an early date.

Mr. Moody was born at Newbury, Mass., Dec. 28, 1852. He was prepared for college at Phillips academy, Andover, and was graduated from Harvard in 1876. He is a lawyer by profession and was district attorney for the eastern district of Massachusetts for five years. He was sent to the Fifty-fourth congress to fill a vacancy from the Sixth district and also served as a member of the Fifty-fifth, Fifty-sixth and Fifty-seventh congresses. In 1902 he was called to the secretaryship of the navy.

Mr. Moody's acquaintance with the president is of many years' standing, and the vigorous ex-secretary is a man after Mr. Roosevelt's own heart. He has been a sharer of many of the president's active recreations and is always persona grata at the White House. It may be taken for granted that Mr. Moody will remain in Washington as long as the president can persuade him to postpone his retirement to private life.

LEE BRANDRETH.