

**THE ECLIPSE OF
AMERICAN
SEA POWER**

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The Eclipse of American Sea Power by Dudley W. Knox

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DUDLEY W. KNOX

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Dept. of
CALIFORNIA
THE
ECLIPSE OF AMERICAN
SEA POWER

BY
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THE AMERICAN VERSION

Mr. Wickham Steed, editor of the *London Times*, in a recent speech quoted in the *Montreal Statesman* stated the following:

"The American delegates refused to give out any news during the Conference. They left this whole matter with the British publicity agent, Lord Riddell, and I am not giving away any state secrets when I say that when Lord Riddell left Washington there was general lamentation among the American and other correspondents, who wondered where they would proceed to get the real news. That may have been Quixotic on the part of the Americans, but rather than be under any suspicion of using their press to turn public opinion against nations with whom they may have had differences, they did this, and the American delegates were absolutely and honourably silent." (From *Congressional Record*, March 22, 1922, top of page 4712.)

In this book Captain Knox presents the American version of the Conference and relates facts that ought to have been given the widest publicity at the time in order that the American people might know what the results of the Conference really would mean to them.

THE EDITOR.

FOREWORD

In this book the conclusion is reached that at the recent Washington Conference America resigned to Britain the predominance in Sea Power, and gave up also her power to defend the Philippines and to accomplish our policies towards China and Russia. The extent to which the United States is justified in voluntarily renouncing so much necessarily depends upon the degree with which her policies at large are thereby likely to be placed in jeopardy; as well as upon the value of her sacrifices in contributing to sustained international harmony.

That the letter of the treaty provisions offers no "holeproof" safeguards of American interests, has been testified to by Mr. Lodge. In announcing agreement upon the Four Power Pact he pointed out that such treaties could not be regarded as a guarantee against war, since similar agreements had failed many times in the past to prevent war. He further stated very frankly before

the Senate that the several treaties negotiated contained many defects. As in all treaties, "loopholes" may be found which leave open a way virtually to nullify the intent of important provisions if the signatory powers have a change of heart later.

In the view of Mr. Lodge and the other American delegates the only fundamental assurance of peace must lie in mutual trust and regard between peoples. They believe however that the general circumstances surrounding the discussions and deliberations of the Conference, combined with the several negotiated treaties considered as a whole, constitute sufficient proof of mutual trust and regard—of "a new state of mind"—to justify contemplating the proposed reduction and limitation of armaments "with a sense of security."

Doubtless many will be skeptical. They will point to the evidence of history that the most accurate measure of good will between nations, and of their genuine desire to abide by formal agreements, is the degree with which their material interests harmonize. They will maintain that the inherent conflict of national interests in the Orient is a sub-

stantial guarantee that the future holds in store many political clashes, which may or may not result in war; that heretofore in such cases the ability of the Powers involved to exert force has been the principal influence bearing upon the decision for or against war; that those too weak to fight, or when fighting to win, have had to sacrifice their interests; and that hereafter whether the weak will continue to suffer must depend upon the doubtful moral depth and endurance of the "new state of mind." They will contend that America is not justified in taking practically all the risks and footing the lion's share of the bills under such unstable conditions as are likely to lead to an outcome very unfavorable to her.

Mr. Lodge anticipated this view by frankly characterizing the new relationship among the Powers an an "experiment." His adherents will contend that the success of the experiment would mark an immeasurable advance in the spiritual development of humanity—an accomplishment worth great risks and costs—and that even if the experiment fails, with America the principal loser, she is great enough to lose much