

The Navy in the Levant.

It is mere mockery for Minister Terrell to warn the Turkish Government that the United States will hold the Porte responsible if "even the hair upon the head of an American citizen in that country should be touched" and then for the Cleveland Administration to refuse to re-enforce the two American cruisers which are now in Mediterranean waters. Nothing seems more evident than that the Turkish Empire is on the verge of dissolution. Even the Sultan is reported to believe that the end of Turkish rule is close at hand, and the European powers make no concealment of their purpose to divide the Ottoman dominions among themselves. How would the United States hold Turkey responsible for the butchery of American teachers and missionaries with Turkey blotted from the map?

The Sultan is used to threats. He thrives on them. The Christian powers of Europe have done nothing but threaten him ever since the Crimean war. If threats would have secured protection for his Christian subjects not a single atrocity would have reddened the annals of Turkish rule for the last forty years. A fleet of American warships in the Levant is the only sort of menace from the United States which this fanatical despot will heed. There is no reason why such a fleet should not be dispatched. There is every reason why it should be dispatched. No dependence can be placed upon the ability, much less the disposition, of the Moslem soldiery to protect any Christian, be his nationality what it may, from the assaults of Moslem assassins. The American navy is intended for just such emergencies as the present, not for junketing expeditions, and unless it is to be employed to defend American citizens in their rights every vessel might as well be at the bottom of the sea.
