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**THE IMPRACTICABILITY OF SENDING A JAPANESE ARMY TO EUROPE**

There is a Great Possibility, However, of Raising an Army of Volunteers in Japan of Men Who, Like Myself, Love and Admire England—as I Once Wrote, the "Builder of Truth upon the Peaks of Stars and Song, the Builder of Song Amid Liberty's Pines of Echoing Heart"; They Will, I am Sure, be Glad to Fight in Europe as People Belonging to Her Ally in the Far East and to Pay Their Duty Individually

BY YONE NOGUCHI  
WHEN we heard some time ago a French voice inviting the Japanese troops to take part in the present European war, we took it as a mere suggestion; but it is becoming, as it seems, to be an interesting, even a serious, question, to be opposed or endorsed frankly, now in Japan.

An article on the subject in The Fortnightly Review of some six or seven months ago had all the language of persuasion; when the writer said: "They (Japanese) are moved by sentiment of honor and chivalry, and not by calculations of greed. Their friend, their ally, their sworn brother, England, asks them to come, and they will come at once without counting the cost or waiting to reckon whether it will be loss or gain," he departed from the so-called English common-sense of his race.

If it were fifteen or twenty years ago, when what we wanted was universal recognition as a "first-class nation," and if there were no better way to accomplish our object than by taking a "glorious part in the tremendous European struggle," such language might have been greeted enthusiastically; but the writer in The Fortnightly Review does not grasp the real condition of present Japan or the Japanese mind sadly disillusioned from her cherished dream of being a "first-class nation." What blood we spilled and what a national debt we earned merely hunting after that spectre or ghost! We are in truth like a man who has shaken off the romanticism of youth, arriving at the age of reaction where our only wisdom is seen to lie in persistence in insularity.

It is now realized that for attaining our object we should rearrange the general condition of the country (the general conditions of Japanese life, too) with the strength of consciousness and above all, with a real economy of force. We have arrived now at this wisdom in which the seeming negativism, spiritual as well as physical, turns at once to truest positivism by the magic of its intensity or its own distillation of force.

Indeed, the question of "first-class nation" is not a matter of width of domain or size of population; we solve it according to a standard more sensible and real. To hold ourselves more compact, we should declare, is the very way to contribute to the world's civilization and humanity; if we ever attain to the rank of "first-class nation," it will not be by the mere capital-lettered Militarism. Here, right before our faces we have an exact example in Germany.

Suppose we accept the Western invitation and send a fully trained army of 250,000 men, as some English writer suggested, and drive away the enemy from the fields of Flanders and across the Rhine and even demolish Berlin. What shall we gain if in the near future we may happen to be looked upon as another Germany by the whole world?

Japan has an important problem in her relation with America; the latter's suspicion always fancies in us a military monster, like Jose Maria de Heredia's Daimio, dressed in lacquer, crepon, and brass, eyeing from bearded mask Nippon's dawn smile in the roseate sky upon the fair volcano's snow-crowned mass. And on the other hand we have many chauvinists or military dreamers still left in present Japan, who might become wild and reckless if we happened to be crowned in Europe as the greatest power of swords of the whole world and put Europe under our obligation.

The Japanese militarism is past history; we hope at least it is so, and if we are still a military power, it must be in the meaning of self-protection. When we fought with Russia in Manchuria ten years ago, we said it was not merely a war between Japan and Russia, but between civilization and barbarism; I wrote then: "Is it a

reason Russia's misdeeds should be overlooked, because she is a white nation? Is it a reason why our Japanese civilization cannot be acknowledged, because we are brown people? We have been suffering under many an injury arising from such a prejudice."

Did we ever expect then we should become a co-belligerent of Russia to-day, "barbarous Russia" of ten years ago, and that "Kimagayo," our national Japanese anthem, would be sung in her capital? The brightest mind might never find it difficult to answer a question what country we have to fight against next or with what nation we are to join our hands; the recent development of the world, we confess, has made us rather pessimistic.

I am not ready to proclaim Japan's honesty as a nation; but we beg to say that each country has her own right to think herself first in a sensible proportion from the point of view of her own existence. And at such a time as to-day, when we cannot help suspecting international friendship, my mind recalls an old Chinese poem saying:

There is a cloud when one turns his hand;  
At another turn, lo, it becomes rain.  
Oh, humanity is so thin, thin like paper.

There is no country that admires and respects England more than Japan, even making a student's obeisance to her; and there is no Japanese in Japan who loves England like myself, who saluted her in the following lines:

There is no other land likely thy home,  
Where, like mountains, leaves thy soul divine,  
Up to the Heavens of blue-deep rest;  
Like the river boundless and fresh,  
thy heart overflows  
In search of Truth toward the sea unfathomable, free.  
O England vast as are the suns vast,  
O England with the widest breath of widest love!



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Let the friendship between our countries (between myself and my English friends, too) stand on candid ground. I sang once: "Thou scornest luxury, thou scornest sham and cheat, thou art the true friend of humanity deathless and plain."

From my candid mind I should say that for Japan to send her army of considerable merit (perhaps 250,000) to Europe is impossible practically; a certain English writer dwelt on the matter, saying: "Japan by the Pacific-Canadian route is only a few days further away from the English Channel than India. Within a month of the Emperor of Japan issuing his orders, the Japanese army would be in Flanders or Normandy." But to carry some 250,000 men across the Pacific Ocean there should be some few hundred transports; from our experiences in the last two wars we learn that our power of transportation for one time is not adequate for more than forty or fifty thousand men.

For argument's sake, let us say that, since one soldier needs some six tons (the measure of capacity) for his transportation, you must have 1,200,000 tons for 200,000 men and 1,800,000 tons for 300,000 men. And the ships should be, each of them, of more than three of four thousand tonnage. Where shall we get such a number of available ships? Suppose we succeed in crossing the Pacific Ocean, and also Canada by train. You must consider first of all the matter of communication (etapes), depots, which, as I am assured by an army expert, is more important than a non-professional ever thinks of; and it will be seen that the completion of the journey would not be a matter of "only a few days farther away from the English Channel than India."

If we send the army to France by sea, we shall need some one year and a half before completing the transportation of two or three hundred thousand soldiers (supposing we send forty or fifty thousand at one time); and to make the army effective we must have these 200,000 or 300,000 men all at once.

Then there is a serious question of food; and we must be prepared to see many soldiers die from the difference of climate and water, or from their own pride of bravery as Japanese soldiers; my friend in the Japanese General Staff Office said that we should prepare another two or three thousand soldiers to put these 200,000 or 300,000 in perfect working order. After all, this sending of the Japanese army to Europe is a mere talk on the table or a dream.

There might be some one who suggests the Siberian route; but we are told that nearly all the locomotive engines of Russia are absorbed in the fields, and Siberia is suffering as a consequence. Even if we reached Moscow or its vicinity after several months, it is quite doubtful if we could get the communication railways in our hands to make the Japanese operation free and positive.

Although some writer wrote that the possibility of military action in Europe had been carefully studied by the Headquarters Staff at Tokio, and that doubtless all was ready for the execution of a clear and well-conceived plan, we Japanese people think about the matter otherwise. How many Japanese officers have ever travelled in the places where the present conflict is going on? And besides, we must take the question of language into account; only a few officers speak any foreign language.

And suppose some one wishes to discuss the question of "armies for hire"; I hate to think even a moment of bartering the living human blood for money or rewards in any shape. It should be understood that, by the decree of the Emperor, our Japanese soldiers are in military service for defending the country and her honor, but not as merchandise or fighters for sale.

There is a great possibility, however, of raising an army of volunteers in Japan of men who, like myself, love and admire England—as I once wrote, the "builder of Truth upon the peaks of stars and song, the builder of song amid liberty's pines of echoing heart"; they will, I am sure, be glad to fight in Europe as people belonging to her ally in the Far East and to pay their duty individually.

But when some English writer assures us of the German East Africa for our colonial vent as a scene of activity far removed from Australian and American susceptibilities, we have at present to thank him for his kind suggestion.—The Nation.

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