

Convention Between Russia and Japan

To call the new convention an alliance is, perhaps, not quite correct. A treaty of alliance must provide mutual obligations on the part of the high contracting parties to render armed resistance to each other in case their respective interests are in danger.

The new Russo-Japanese convention contains no such provision. Let the convention tell its own tale.

First—Japan will not become party to any arrangement or political combination directed against Russia. Russia will not become party to any arrangement or political combination directed against Japan.

Second—in case the territorial rights or special interests in the Far East of one of the High Contracting Parties recognized by the other are menaced, Japan and Russia will act in concert on the measure to be taken in view of the support or co-operation necessary for the protection and defence of these rights and interests.

This is the text of the laconic instrument. We have yet to see what Russia and Japan really mean by "support or co-operation." Does it simply mean a moral support, or is it another phrase for armed assistance? If the purpose of diplomacy be, as it has too often been in the past, to make a treaty capable of two constructions, the convention may be an entente cordiale or a downright alliance, according to the convenience or inconvenience of the high contracting parties.

The most significant part of the convention lies in the wide application which it apparently permits. While it is obvious that the covenant aims chiefly to secure the respective interests of the contracting parties in Manchuria and Mongolia, its scope is not restricted to these two countries, but covers the entire Far East. Where are we to seek for *raison d'être* of such a comprehensive convention? Against what particular

power or powers do Russia and Japan propose to protect their interests after the present war?

In spite of the fatuous efforts of certain American publicists and newspapers to create the impression that the convention is directed against the United States, its real objective is Germany. Japan fears that Germany, smarting under the surrender of Kiau-chow, will let no opportunity pass unutilized to challenge Japan's political and commercial influence in China. At the peace conference that is to follow the war, Germany will employ every means to regain Kiau-chow which Japan promises to restore to China with the consent of the Powers.

Should she fail to regain Kiau-chow, she would by all means try to restore the Shantung railways now held by the Japanese. To forestall such eventualities it is of the foremost importance that Japan should enjoy the support not only of England but of Russia. As for the United States, neither Japan nor Russia fears her, though the Japanese advocate of "preparedness" may endeavor to conjure up the bogey of an "American peril."

When the new Russo-Japanese convention was made public both at Tokyo and at Petrograd, it was rumored that the convention had attached to it a set of secret agreements. As a matter of fact there is nothing secret about these agreements, which will be made public at the proper moment.

Their substance may be summarized as follows:

(1) Russia cedes to Japan the Changchun-Pailiao section (about seven-hundred miles) of the Changchun-Harbin branch of the Manchurian railway. For this Japan pays Russia about \$7,000,000 in war supplies.

(2) Russia, with the consent of China, extends to Japan the privilege of navigating the Second Sungari River.

Of the two terms, the first is the more

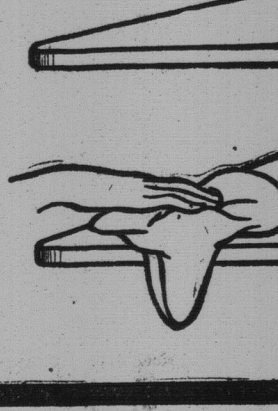
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Important. It will be recalled that at the peace conference at Portsmouth, Japan insisted upon securing the Russian railway from Port Arthur to Harbin, measuring some 576 miles. Russia, however, strenuously opposed the Japanese demand, and agreed to cede only 486 miles between Port Arthur and Changchun. Japan has ever since been coveting the remaining 140 miles from Changchun to Harbin, for that section of the line traverses the heart of a rich agricultural country producing enormous quantities of beans, Manchuria's premier product.

No less important is the newly acquired privilege of navigating the Second Sungari River. In virtue of the Aigun treaty of 1858, Russia has hitherto enjoyed the exclusive right to navigate the Amur, the Sungari and the Ussuri rivers. Now, the Second Sungari River, which is the largest tributary of the main Sungari, traverses the Japanese sphere of influence, and yet the Japanese have been denied the privilege of sharing with the Russians and Chinese in the benefits offered by that great artery of trade. The Second Sungari originates in the Chang-Pai-Shan, the Eternal White Mountains, on the Korean border, and becomes navigable for vessels of shallow draught at the city of Kirin, the capital of Kirin province, about three hundred miles from the point of its confluence with the main Sungari. Kirin is fitly termed by the natives the "Inland Dockyard" of Manchuria, as it is the centre of the ship-building industry, producing numerous junks to be used on the Sungari River.

From "America and the Russo-Japanese Alliance," by K. K. Kawakami, in the American Review of Reviews for September, 1916.

WHISTLING HABIT.

Those Who Do Whistle Cannot Be stopped and Those Who Do Not Would Sometimes Kill Those Who Do.

Some poet, real or alleged, once said, "give me the boy who whistles at his work," or something of that sort; and remarks "Yes, give him to me and I'll whistle him so he'll never want to whistle again!"—all of which shows there are differences of opinion about almost everything in this world, important or trivial.

But whistling isn't to be dismissed in any such cursory manner. It simply can't be. It is one of the many things that make themselves felt in the world. It either causes a glow of satisfaction or a fair fire of indignation. There is nothing neutral about whistling, it and there are no neutral feelings about it; every one is very strongly pro or exceedingly and bitterly anti-whistling.

It is likely to be the first thing one hears in the morning—executed by the merry paper boy on his rounds; it is most common to have it the last sound that comes over one's consciousness at night, as some belated passer-by gruffly whistles a tune—usually very much off the key—as he winds his sometimes devious way homeward. There is the legend that a really drunken man cannot whistle; but if the whistling that goes by the house in the still night at times ever drew a sober breath it doesn't sound so.

In the good old days the faithful policeman whistled for assistance if he needed it; but nowadays, we are told, the rapping of the night stick on the sidewalk is more de rigueur. Times change. There is enough whistling without paying the police to do it. There are lots of estimable citizens—otherwise estimable, that is to say—who whistle their way through life. Some people aver that they whistle tunes, but this is doubted by a large and powerful minority of sufferers. They are good-natured men, these whistlers, and doubtless they mean to be cheerful as they pass along the streets, but do they sound cheerful? The answer, must be in the negative.

But do the good men who whistle realize how badly they bungle their art? Again the only answer to the rhetorical question is nay, not so. If any one of them was to be examined on the subject the chances are that he would cheerfully announce that he thought he

whistled pretty well; that he always knew what he was whistling about, and that it sounded good to him. Any whistler might be made to admit that the work of a fellow whistler was crude such is the jealousy that exists among artists—but each would defend his own work to the last gasp, that word being used advisedly.

As to the office boys, messenger boys, grocery boys and boys of many other merchandises that are delivered at our houses every day—well, of course, they all whistle. The man who never whistles is not unknown, but no possible reward could bring to light a specimen of the genus boy who doesn't. It's an inalienable right of boyhood to whistle; it is handed down to him with his disposition, his freckles, his pugnacity and all those other things that so remind unkind people, on occasions of his father. When father was a boy he whistled; and now that the boy has taken the old man's place, why, the boy whistles. It's perfectly logical that the boy should whistle—and, of course, a boy never is anything but perfectly logical.

So let us all figure the same way the poet did when he requested the boy who whistled at his work. For otherwise no boy would be there to do the work. And let's spread the mantle of charity along the years so as to take in the men who whistle, too. Don't meet at them; don't strangle the soul of music as it strives to attain expression from their puckered lips. Don't—but what's the use of saying "don't try to stop them?" It can't be done, anyway.—Hartford Courant.

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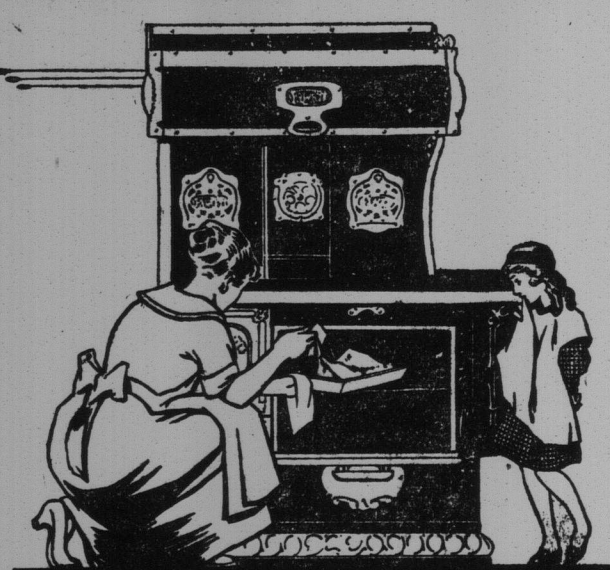
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