

FUTURE OF THE EMPIRE OF JAPAN



Y an exhibition of valor and courage that will leave an indelible mark on the pages of history, the Empire of Japan has acquired a leading place in the council of the world. In a comparatively short period following the institution of responsible government she attained this position among Powers that only reached their present position through long centuries of strenuous struggle. The fame achieved by Japan by self-sacrifice during the awful carnage of war, may also be attained in the commercial world through the paths of peace. No country in modern times has had a more favorable opportunity for occupying the highest point in national greatness as speedily as is now open to Japan, who appears to command all the elements of success. As the world judges greatness, a nation can only become powerful and influential (1) through success in war, and (2) by the development of its natural resources and the individual capabilities of its people. Japan has secured the first of these prizes, what of her prospect of gaining the second, without which she could not hope to retain her influence in the Far East?

It is extremely difficult to institute a suitable basis of statistical comparison between Japan and Western nations, with the object of reaching a clear conclusion as to their respective situation on moral questions. The same may be said of any effort to institute such comparisons among Western nations. The moral condition of a community can hardly be gauged by the average number of crimes it commits, as such comparisons produce astonishing inconsistencies. In suicide, for instance, the delightful city of Dresden, distinguished among the cities of Europe for culture, education, science and art, almost holds the record, while Lisbon, in so many ways inferior to Dresden, is almost exempt from this crime. If the proportion of convicted criminals in a population be taken as the standard, then Western civilization, as represented by several European nations, must be pronounced a failure. Japan presents a most favorable record in all such respects as compared with other Powers, although the writer does not admit the soundness of argument based on such premises.

Individuals and nations must be judged by the larger good in their composition rather than by the lesser evil. It may be possible to agree upon a national standard of recognition on other lines than its prowess in war. Thus, has a nation an opportunity of expressing a healthy public opinion are its statesmen high-minded and honorable; is legislation and the general administration of public affairs calculated to improve the conditions of the great masses of the people; are the public ideals as represented by the Press and the educational system, calculated to awaken the better natures of the people? In these respects Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France, and Canada, are not found lacking. And one can say, without fear of contradiction, that in every one of them Japan is equal to any of these countries. The Japanese authorities are determined to crush out any laxity of commercial morality in mercantile circles, and they are receiving the unanimous co-operation of the Chambers of Commerce and the manufacturers' associations. In an infringement of a well-known trade mark, although the plaintiff failed on a legal technicality to establish his claim for protection, the Patent Office administration stepped in and protected the rights of the foreigner. This act of good faith on the part of the Government should be accepted as evidence of a desire to "do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you."

It is unnecessary to make further reference to Japan's magnificent educational system, extending from the primary schools, which contain a larger percentage of children than those of any other country in the world, nor to the technical grammar schools, colleges, and Imperial University, which are crowded. The statistics of crime bear most favorable comparison with any Western nation, from the freedom of insult, even of unattended women, in any part of Japan by day or night, to the absence of offensive or objectionable conduct, drunkenness or quarrelling upon the public streets, from the uniform respect with which foreigners are treated everywhere, to the recognition of Civil Law as the paramount authority. This condition of public affairs exists notwithstanding the irritation created by the insulting references to Japan which have appeared in so many Western papers, and are cable to the Japanese Press from time to time.

I may be asked whether there is not an increasing anti-foreign sentiment in the empire. There are marked differences of opinion on this question. The Japanese themselves will not acknowledge the existence of any such feeling, and, as a matter of fact, there is no evidence of anything of the kind in ordinary social, commercial, or official life. Persistent inquiries amongst the Japanese meet with the studiously polite suggestion that perhaps the foreigner has mistaken the national self-assertiveness for an anti-foreign feeling.

A national self-assertiveness is undoubtedly evident. There is a general desire to transact the business of the empire, and to manage all local and domestic affairs without the control of foreigners. No reasonable critic will presume to say that this is not commendable. Foreign firms have been established in Japan

for half a century, and enormous fortunes have been accumulated by foreigners in the transaction of business between Japan and the outside world. Yet it can hardly be argued that an uninterrupted monopoly for a time shall extend to perpetuity. The Japanese are learning to manage their own business. If they were not doing so, there would probably be less anti-Japanese spirit among certain foreigners. It is not unlikely, however, that the expression, "Japan for the Japanese," is finding a place in the thought of all classes in the empire. This is perfectly natural in view of the fact that a similar shibboleth has been uttered in many other countries, more especially during the discussion of the Japanese question. Thoughtless demagogues who have appealed to national prejudice in their own country must be prepared to accept the consequences that may overtake their fellow countrymen elsewhere.

In view of the prejudices which for various reasons are running riot just now against Japan, it will be matter for thankfulness if a strong anti-foreign sentiment is not called into existence as a serious factor in the national life of the empire. The unjust criticisms, the offensive sneers and innuendoes, the absolute unfounded statements, the determined efforts to place a stigma of inferiority on the race—such conduct, if continued, is not unlikely sooner or later to have a serious influence on the minds of the Japanese masses. Those responsible for provoking such retaliation are incurring a serious responsibility. It

terprise, and serious financial difficulties might have ensued. Such a result must obviously have seriously affected the general interests of the empire.

This was particularly the case with those who had embarked upon the somewhat treacherous enterprises connected with shipping, whose competition was resented by those already in the field, and a combination of foreign influences might easily have crushed the Japanese out of existence. This would have been a national misfortune, which the government could not tolerate, and it therefore came to the assistance of various domestic steamship companies by means of subventions and subsidies on the basis of tonnage, general accommodation, and distance journeyed. The result has been eminently satisfactory, inasmuch as Japanese steamship lines to Europe, America, Australia and Asiatic ports have become established upon a permanent and satisfactory basis. Not unnaturally the Japanese lines have a special attraction for their own people who desire to see their own companies succeed, and consequently patronize them, other things being fairly equal. But the Japanese will not prefer the local lines unless they are equal to the foreign steamships in every particular. In that their patriotism is no stronger than our own. They are quite as human as the peoples of the West. If the foreign companies keep up the standard, and offer as favorable rates, they will find there is an ample share of the traffic yet within their reach, no matter which flag may be carried. Foreign

nection with government assistance to private enterprises in Japan. There the maximum advantage has been with the public, and not with those to whom government assistance has been rendered.

Upon the question of steamship subsidies, which form a special subject of anti-Japanese criticism, it may be said that France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia do likewise—all their shipping policies being based on an admirable system of subsidies to their own national lines. This is not done so much in providing fast mail services, as with a view to meet the more necessary commercial requirements and encouraging the expansion of foreign business. That which European governments have done for years, and which has had not a little to do with the expansion of European trade in the East, may surely be done by the government of Japan. For the most obvious reasons, it is imperative that Japan shall possess an adequate commercial fleet. Circumstances may arise under which her fate might depend upon the control of great maritime interests being centered in the government of the day. Over foreign shipping the necessary authority—necessary to the life of the nation—could not be exercised. Thus, outside the purely commercial aspect of the case, public interests demand an early expansion of Japanese steamship services.

Why should Japan not assist her own people to the fullest possible extent that may be necessary to promote their own commercial and mercantile interests? Is she under any

This quest was made necessary by the tariff enacted at Washington by Mr. McKinley's administration, designed as it was to protect the people of the Western United States against the competition of Canada, which practically closed avenues for the sale of Canadian commodities that had been open from time immemorial. This action of Congress forced the Canadian government to seek markets elsewhere in order to avoid a severe financial crisis which would have carried disaster in all directions. Since then the Dominion Parliament has voted appropriations freely for the purpose of sending representatives to every continent in order to find openings for Canadian products. And the result, taken in connection with the active emigration policy, is the enormous addition to the trade and commerce of the Dominion of the last few years. No one will contend that Canada was not justified in adopting this policy in the interests of the agricultural and industrial life of the country. And if we are justified in directly promoting the individual interests of Canadians, surely Japan cannot reasonably be blamed for adopting a similar policy, only varying in detail, to promote the interests of her own people. We can surely afford to acknowledge that those of a man's household have the first claim on his consideration, and if this is true as applied to individuals, it is equally applicable to nations.

History teaches us that many serious wars have arisen from exceedingly trifling circumstances. Individuals or communities, who assist in fanning the smouldering embers of national hatred into a lurid flame, might better pray for the mountains and rocks to fall on them, than that they should continue their dangerous agitation. Fortunately, in these times, no matter how loud popular clamor may be, or how intense national anger, responsible statesmen shrink from adopting any course likely to lead to the appalling arbitration of the sword. It may suit the sensational newsmongers of the world to allege that Japan is inclined to a bellicose policy, but no one can enjoy an intimate acquaintance with her statesmen without being convinced that nothing but extreme necessity will ever prompt a departure from the policy to exhaust all the resources of civilization before engaging in another war.

Yet one can never tell when war clouds may appear on the horizon. The surest preventative in any case is to get ready for the storm in times of peace. Japan is doing this, like every other Great Power. She dare not be any exception in this respect. There is not the least danger of war between Japan and any Western nation on the question of racial equality. Statesmen and diplomatists will prevent that. But there are ebullitions of national sentiment, which neither statesmanship nor diplomacy can control. When one nation endeavors to place a stigma of inequality on another in an offensive way, a most unpleasant international situation is likely to arise. In some ways this is even more disturbing than actual warfare. War lets loose rival passions, but the explosion is followed by less national bitterness than if the feelings had not been allowed expression. A circumscribed antipathy that festers like a cancer in the public mind, only finding expression in commercial warfare and national boycotting, may be of such far-reaching magnitude in its indirect results, as to be almost as deplorable as war. Such a situation is not subject to the control of statesmanship or diplomacy. It is a possibility which commercial interests everywhere demand should be avoided at all costs.

The defensive alliance between Great Britain and Japan is more likely than almost any other incident of modern times to preserve the peace of the world. Neither of the great contracting parties could have entered into an alliance with any other nation with such certainty of result assured, and it is an alliance of which every loyal subject of King Edward has reason to be proud. Japan possesses an army of renowned veterans, and it is safe to say that no people will wilfully seek an occasion to force these soldiers on the field of battle again. On the other hand, the British navy remains supreme among the Western navies. It would be impossible to effect any other combination of national strength having a force and power equal to the united naval and military forces of Great Britain and Japan. For that reason there is justification in the statement that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is essentially calculated to preserve the world's peace.

From every standpoint, it seems to me, the paramount duty of the West lies in cultivating a spirit of generosity and appreciation towards Japan. As a race we shall then justify the claim that our Christian civilization is founded on the principles of kindness, justice and honor. In doing so we may hope that the influence of this ancient nation, under its new conditions, shall not decline, but rather widen and increase, and believe that the empire in its progress to the highest form of national life, may prove a brilliant example which Eastern Asia shall accept.—W. T. R. Preston, in the National Review.

New York City hesitates about being too violently against Taft lest he should be elected without its aid and thereby should feel under no obligations at all to cater to its weaknesses.



THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION IN DUBLIN

This is a picture of a group of the members of the British Association at the Dublin meeting, including some of the most distinguished scientists in the world. Some of the deliberations of the Association are given on another page. The names from left to right are: Mr. D. G. Hogarth, Professor Wynham Dunstan, Mr. Vernon Harcourt, Mr. Sidney Hartland, Dr. Tempest Anderson, Dr. R. T. Glasbrook, F.R.S., Mr. Charles Hawkesley, Sir George Darwin, K.C.B., Dr. A. Smith Woodward, Sir James Dewar, Dr. Carey Foster, Mr. Francis Darwin (President of the British Association), Professor W. A. Herdman, Sir Archibald Geikie, Dr. A. C. Haddon, Professor Swale Vincent, Sir Edward Brabrook, Sir Oliver Lodge.

is charitable to hope that they do not realize the force or effect of their agitation. Japan has done nothing to deserve such denunciation at the hands of any community in the world. The empire has repudiated none of its international obligations. The government of the country has committed no political crime. The only change in the conditions existing when the first Japanese loan was issued, in the beginning of hostilities with Russia, is that the empire has abundantly proved its ability to carry its war-debt. Japanese statesmen, public representatives, and the press have all preserved a dignified attitude in the face of the campaign which has been so assiduously organized against the nation. They have pursued the even tenor of their way, unmindful of the efforts to destroy confidence in the national honor.

The interest that the authorities are accused of taking in the efforts of the Japanese engaged in extending the trade of the empire, is a subject of considerable criticism, and is regarded as an unpardonable affront by Westerners. Whatever else the administration might be justified in doing, it is argued that the line should be drawn at the point of active participation in the special interests of their own people. Foreign critics, by inference at least, propound the general principle that the Japanese government has no right to encourage and assist the individual efforts of Japanese, who should be left to the tender mercies of foreign companies or traders who have monopolized Eastern trade for so many years.

It would be interesting to meet a single substantial argument why the Tokio government should not do all in their power to assist their own people in establishing their business connections, either domestic or foreign, upon a profitable basis. Until a comparatively recent period, capital was confined to a very limited circle in Japan. With the start which these few secured in the early history of the empire under the new conditions, it was not improbable that their wealth would increase beyond all reasonable comparison with that of the general community. Unless the government had come to the rescue of those outside this limited plutocracy, whose capital was insufficient to meet the enormously increasing demands of trade extension, foreign competition would have swamped every new national en-

shipowners have a remedy in their own hands against any assistance afforded by the Japanese government to Japanese lines. All they have to do is to keep pace with the demands of the times.

There is no reason why this question should not be dealt with in perfect frankness. Various reasons are advanced why the Japanese government should not assist their own people, even when the question means so much in the general progress of the empire. The suggestion that governments should refrain from rendering assistance in legitimate expansion is naturally a wide question. Parliament enacts high customs duties in the interest of manufactures; or, perhaps, subsidises the construction of a public mode of conveyance, or advances a loan with the same object in view. The general policy that Parliament should not be a medium for the creation of private fortunes should be accepted without question. Yet one country may go farther than another in the application of the principle of government parentalism. How far Japan should go it is not necessary to say. The Japanese must settle that question themselves. The government has sent young men of promise to Europe and America to be initiated into every phase of industrial life. When they have returned and commenced operations in Japan, the government has patronized them for requirements that may hitherto have had to be purchased in foreign countries. For a new country this can scarcely be said to be unjustifiable. Government everywhere is carried on in the general interests of the subjects of each particular state, more especially when by any possibility the direct interests of the subject conflict with those of the foreigner. With that principle it is difficult to quarrel. All contending political parties in every country have the same object—the special protection of the individual interests of their own countrymen—although there may be differences of opinion as to how that particular end is to be reached. It sometimes happens, under these circumstances, that shrewd manipulators take advantage of the times, and use the occasion to advance their personal interests under the guise of promoting public necessities. Parliament then becomes a medium of public robbery. Fortunately for the honor of all concerned, however, there is no suggestion that anything of the kind has taken place in con-

obligation to allow all domestic enterprises to be subservient to the interests of foreigners? There can be no question but that she has exhibited rare judgment in taking advantage of the accumulated experience of other countries. There is also no doubt that foreign nations appreciated the compliment that Japan was paying Western nations in the adoption of so many of their customs. If, however, she had assumed no responsibilities toward the outside world, it might have been quite in order for the government to allow foreign nations to continue to exploit the business of the empire; but Japan has assumed tremendous financial obligations in the money markets of the world. The prospect of meeting them depends on the development of all the available resources of the empire at the earliest possible period. And this can be accomplished much sooner by the government rendering assistance, in some form or another, to their own people. The practical side of the question must be left to the wisdom and judgment of Japanese statesmen. So far, they have greatly minimized the commercial crises which frequently follow in the train of enormous war expenditure. In this, also, Japan has learned a very useful lesson from Europe. But unfair criticism might conceivably destroy public confidence in her financial stability; and bring about the very evils so far happily avoided. It is extremely difficult to be patient towards the concerted effort to weaken the commercial and monetary institutions of Japan.

As already explained, her future depends upon the expansion of her industrial life. With the utilization of domestic products, the importation of raw material, and the discovery of markets for her manufactures, Japan's financial stability is unquestionably involved. The government, among other things, is assisting to find these markets, in both East and West. Other countries are doing likewise, notably the United States and Canada. I have met representatives of the former, actively engaged in the prosecution of their official duties, throughout Europe, Africa, Australia, and Asia, whose reports keep the mercantile life of the republic in touch with commercial possibilities everywhere.

My own country, the Dominion of Canada, has long been profitably engaged in searching for favorable markets for Canadian products.

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