

RUSSIA vs. JAPAN



Causes Leading Up to the Present Condition in the East—Characteristics of the Russians and the Japs



IN reviewing the present trouble between Japan and Russia and its probable outcome it is necessary to consider the motive actuating each of the parties to the conflict. To Russia a war with Japan—or with any other country, for that matter—would mean territorial or other aggrandizement and nothing more. To Japan war with Russia means national existence almost, for Japan, right or wrong, has constituted herself the guardian of the east and wishes to appear before the world as the oriflamme in the modernization of the orient. She has a quarrel with Russia not only because she dislikes the czar's methods with reference to herself, but also because, if she should permit him to go on as he has begun in the east, Japan will be forced for or into the background. Thus it is that the mikado today has the sympathy of practically the entire civilized world. He is standing for the rights of other nations besides his own, whereas Russia stands for the rights of but one nation—Russia.

A New Japan.

Not that Japan likes Russia. Far from it. Indeed, she has good cause to feel anything but friendly toward the "bear." She has never forgiven Russia for the contemptible part that country played in the settlement between China and Japan. When the Chino-Japanese war began, there was not one military man out of a hundred who did not think that China would project her borders into Korea and literally sweep the timorous Japs into the sea. Those who called attention to the fact that Japan had succeeded in getting together the nucleus of a very respectable navy were met with the statement that China had been doing something along that line herself, and that even on the sea she was apt to demonstrate that numbers would count over the slight additional intelligence which it was conceded that Japan possessed. The battle of the Yalu put to rout the supporters of the Chinese navy, and the fight at Port Arthur disposed of whatever consideration the Chinese army might previously have been entitled to. But, after all, it was not that China's prowess had been overestimated. Japan's simply had been underestimated. In short, it was the same old China which went to war, but a different, a very different, Japan.

Strong on Land and Sea.

When Japan, flushed with victory and anxious to emulate the example of the more liberal larger nations in her peace settlement, suggested terms

been building ships, ships, ships, unto today her navy, vessel for vessel, is the peer of any in the world. She has also paid a great deal of attention to her army, and while she does not keep under arms a very large body of men, those which she has are soldiers in every sense of the word.

Russia's Duplicity.

Russia's disinterestedness was exposed when on the pretext of "pacifying" Manchuria she poured 200,000 men into that country in 1900 and then after the war of the allied nations against China contrived by every artifice known to diplomacy to hold on to Manchuria. She had her railroad connecting the Russian and Chinese capitals, and naturally she was anxious to hold on to the territory it traversed. Since then, while the local authorities have been Chinese, they are merely underlings of the Russian representatives, to whom everything must be reported.

Pressure, however, finally became so strong and the other nations so insistent for some expression of Russia's ultimate intentions concerning Manchuria that Russia about a year ago formally declared that she would get out Oct. 8, 1903. For that reason the recent announcement that she intended to remain in Manchuria practically permanently "in the interest of outside enterprises" (to say nothing of her own railroads and the coal which they need and which is found in abundance in the mines of Manchuria) came as a thunderclap from a clear sky to the few diplomatists who occasionally seriously regard the utterances of the czar's government. It was to be expected that this should be denounced as a canard, but it is pretty well understood that the statement was inspired and was issued as a feeler. If it was designed to produce results it disappointed no one, for England, Japan and the United States immediately asked what it all meant. Now Russia says that she will get out when she considers it safe to do so, but she also declared at the close of the Chinese war that she would "soon" evacuate Manchuria.

Japan knew full well that Russia would "consider it safe" to get out of Manchuria concurrently with the blowing of the horn by the angel Gabriel, and Russia knew that Japan knew it. The mikado then realized that the czar had practically announced that it was Japan's move. He therefore notified Russia that as the time for the evacuation of Manchuria had passed it was but right, with Korea (Japan's special charge, which had already cost her one

some time, but it is certain that she sought to break down the predominant influence of Japan in the Hermit Kingdom. Indeed, she went much further than the proper regard for the rights of an ostensibly friendly nation should have permitted her to go. Naturally Japan wanted to know what she was about. Then began negotiations concerning Korea. Russia actually had the assurance to propose to Japan terms with reference to Korea, a country with which, so far as the facts are generally understood, she has as much right to interfere as the United States would have, the position of "watchdog of Korea" by common consent among the nations of the world having long since been accorded to Japan by reason of her proximity and later because of her having fairly won the distinction in her war with China. But the purpose of the Russian government had been accomplished, and Korea appeared to be the issue, while Manchuria was, at least temporarily, forgotten.

Japan. Perry's mission was to over-awe the Japanese into extending to American ships the privileges then enjoyed by the Dutch only. History does not say to what lengths he was prepared to go should his show of force prove insufficient, the fact being that the mere sight of the warships was enough to convince the shogun of the expediency of acceding to Perry's wishes. Accordingly, much against the desires of the mighty daimios, American trade was granted access to two ports. As might have been expected, the European powers were not slow to profit by the example, forcing similar concessions until, little by little, the shogun had surrendered the domestic trade of the country to the control of the treaty powers. Out of this state of affairs ultimately grew the revolution of 1868, in which several of the most influential among the daimios took charge of the person of the young mikado, Mutsuhito, declared their intention of restoring him to full power as the real ruler of

Their strength, as may be imagined, was time and again tested during that trying march in the summer of 1900. Their agility was at all times in evidence, but perhaps never more so than during the storming of Tientsin.

Quiet, orderly, polite, earnest—such are some more of the qualities of these same tiny warriors who never fail to salute the officers of every nation, endure without murmur all that military life entails, accept thankfully their stipend of \$1.50 a month and can live and thrive on a diet in which rice is the prevailing staple, and little enough of that. Yet the Japanese soldier does not retrograde into a mere fighting machine. He knows how to think, he knows how to act on occasion demands. In the individual, as in the race, is found that faculty which works so largely for the greatness of a nation—the faculty of mental initiative.

The Russian Army.

And now for a glance at the other side of the picture. It would be futile to contend that the Russian army is not one of the most powerful war engines the world has ever seen. Equally absurd would it be to hesitate to admit that the Russian soldier, from the old world hypertechical standpoint, is not one of the best that military science is capable of producing.

Russia has the greatest army on earth. It consists of over 1,600,000 men in times of peace, which may easily be increased to 4,000,000 in the event of war. The magnitude of the czar's military establishment may be realized if one considers the fact that the Russian army even on a peace footing contains more officers alone than the American army has of both officers and men.

On a peace footing, as at present constituted, the armies of the czar are made up of about 62 per cent infantry, 12 per cent cavalry, 14 per cent artillery, 3 per cent engineers, 3 per cent commissariat and departmental troops and 6 per cent Cossacks. These proportions give but little idea, however, of the relative importance of the various arms of the service. While by no means the largest numerically, the most conspicuous and effective portion of the army is the cavalry, together with the kindred though irregular body of troops known as the Cossacks.

In fact, Russia places chief reliance on her war horses. Of these there are 4,000,000 in the empire that have had actual training in the army and that can be requisitioned in case of emergency for cavalry duty.

A Mighty War Engine.

And the horsemen! They have no equal in the world, these wild riders of Russia. It is probably due to the great plains and the vast distances to be traversed that the Muscovites are veritably reared in the saddle. Certainly there are no other people who so love the horse, who so cultivate him and who have such mastery over him. As a result the Slavic empire has almost half of the horses of the world. As another result the men ride like cowboys.

Every year a million men become eligible to enter the Russian army. As only about 300,000 are required, over

composed of the peasant or former serf class, the members of which are illiterate, unassuming, stolid, slavish, but without hardy, courageous and singularly devoted. In fact, no nation on earth has the solidarity that marks Russia. With all its divergent elements, it is still the most completely knit together of any empire now in existence. The Muscovite is taught the submergence of self. Obedience is the prime virtue. It is drilled into the citizen that he exists only for the czar.

Muscovite Peculiarities.

The Russian is gregarious in a marked degree. The communal life has existed in his villages from time immemorial. This sort of rough, elemental altruism is carried into the army and is in fact its distinctive spirit. It marks the Muscovite soldier as peculiar. It gives him a certain stolid bravery which was recognized in the famous remark of Napoleon that "it is not enough to kill a Russian soldier; you must also push him over."

This habit of personal effacement, of blind obedience, of almost slavishness, is shown nowhere more plainly than in the manner of the private soldier in addressing an officer. He stands rigidly at "attention" with his hand at his cap throughout the entire conversation. He never presumes to answer a question with a direct "yes" or "no," but with a qualified "quite so" or "not exactly so." He invariably uses the title of "your excellency" or "your illustriousness" or "your nobility" or even "your high nobility."

Russia, the Undeclared.

The diet of the Muscovite when in the field is simplicity itself. It is largely vegetarian. Cabbage soup, potatoes, peas, beans, macaroni and various kinds of porridges are the staple foods. These, with the black rye bread and occasionally a small amount of meat, make up the army fare. Yet, like the Roman soldier, who also lived on a vegetable diet, these men can endure hardships such as the ordinary civilian can scarcely conceive. The "moving kitchen" is one feature of the Russian camp that is unique and that is being copied by other European armies. It is what its name implies, a veritable kitchen on wheels that accompanies the army on all its marches, as indispensable as its camp equipage, its artillery and its ammunition—in fact, it supplies the ammunition for the human war machines, furnishing dynamic force that when released in time of battle is hurled against the enemy with terrific effect.

Russia has never been defeated, if the rather inconclusive Crimean war be excepted. Steadily, resistlessly, she has spread her dominion over Finland, over Poland, over Turkey, over Manchuria. Even the matchless genius of a Napoleon was unequal to the task of penetrating this human mass. No nation of either ancient or modern times has ever been so unified, so organic.

In the matter of navies there is little to choose between Russia and Japan. Russia has more ships, but many of them are locked up in the Black sea, and many more of them dare not leave the Baltic. Then, too, while a fair pro-



MAP OF KOREA AND VICINITY.

Korea strait, between Korea and Japan, is only 100 miles wide, and midway between the two countries are the well fortified Tsu islands, owned by Japan. This narrow strait, dominated by the forts and fleet of Japan, is Russia's avenue of communication between Vladivostok, on the north, and Port Arthur, the southern terminus of her Chinese Eastern railroad, which connects with the Transsiberian line in Fusan, a Japanese colony in Korea, is rapidly being connected by rail with Seoul through the efforts of the Japanese government. There is also a short line between Seoul and its seaport, Chemulpo. On the map the dotted lines represent the boundary between Korea and Manchuria and between Manchuria and Russia, the parallel lines uncompleted railroads and the checked lines railroads already built.

But, shrewd as are the czar's diplomats, the mikado has about him a few men, like Ito and Komura, who know a bit about diplomacy themselves. They had permitted the Russians to go on and on and on assuming that the Japs had forgotten that Manchuria is still on the map. They were merely biding their time. Therefore when the Russian statesmen, in response to one of their notes dealing with Korea and the "issue" there, received a communication from Tokyo boldly shifting the whole discussion back to Manchuria, whence it had originally begun and where it really belonged, there was but one thing to do—assume to ignore it. This they did, and this Japan refused to accept as being a warrantable position on the part of Russia. As Russia could not well afford to back down after having been checkmated in what she had regarded as a very clever bit of land grabbing, a clash then became inevitable.

When two nations spring at each other's throat, figuratively speaking, there are more things to be considered in speculating upon the probable outcome than mere numbers of men or ships. After all, it is the individual who brings success. American soldiers are regarded as being of more value in the field than the soldiers of any nation, and yet from the strictly technical standpoint they are probably the poorest soldiers in the world. Except for the handful of men who constitute the regular army, the United States has no troops ready to do field duty as it is understood in Germany and Russia and even in France. The conditions render that unnecessary. But, as has been demonstrated on several occasions, the American in six months is converted into the most valuable military man the world has ever seen. That is because he is a thinking individual. Your well drilled man is all right so long as he has officers to lead him, but the moment the head disappears the army becomes a disorganized mob, not knowing what to do or how to do it. With the American the officer's principal duty is to let his men know what he wishes them to do. That is all that is necessary. The men find a way to do it, and the officers don't bother to inquire too closely into the methods which brought about the desired result.

Japan's Transformation.

But even the American soldier is in a measure put in the shade by the Jap, for the latter is full of bursting enthusiasm born of his self assumed leadership of civilization in the east. Regarded as a nation, Japan is new; regarded as soldiers, the Japanese are so new that the paint hasn't yet worn off. But they have the right spirit, and they have demonstrated to the world that they are in earnest. A brief retrospect just here may serve to show the really wonderful strides made by the Japanese.

From the appearance of Perry and his fleet in Yeddo bay, July 8, 1853, may be said to date the awakening of

Japan, made war on the shogun's troops and signally worsted them. Thus did the young emperor find himself placed on the throne of which his ancestors had been deprived centuries before.

Birth of a Nation.

The ultimate result of the rebellion was anything but pleasant even for those daimios who had participated in the restoration of the mikado. Gradually falling under the sway of cultivated and liberal minded statesmen, the youthful Mutsuhito began to exercise his titular prerogatives in a way that was contrary to all Japanese traditions. For this change two men, who have since been prominently identified with Japanese politics, were largely responsible, these two being the Marquis Hirobumi Ito and Count Inouye, the former's lifelong friend and political coadjutor. Chiefly as a result of their efforts the policy of cultivating the foreigner sprang into being, and it was also in no small measure owing to them that the mikado announced his intention of providing the country with an up to date western parliament. Then it was that the daimios surprised themselves and the world by taking a step which insured the solidarity of the empire and its future high position among the nations of the world. Voluntarily they agreed to surrender all the privileges hallowed in their eyes by centuries of custom and at the same time promised to do their utmost to further the interests of a united Japan.

A Factor in the Far East.

In this act can be discerned what has since been widely recognized as one of the most distinguishing traits of this most remarkable people—the readiness to yield life itself if by the death of the individual good will accrue to the commonwealth. But self sacrifice alone cannot account for the progress Japan has made, nor, for that matter, can the faculty for imitation which the Japanese possess to so great a degree. Their adaptability to western civilization, their willingness to accept the novel in the place of the customary, their amenability to discipline, all of which have become proverbial in speaking of Japan—in a word, their liberality is due to their innate quickness in the direction of mental initiative.

It was the Chino-Japanese war of 1894-95 that first aroused the civilized world to a lively interest in the doings of the Land of the Rising Sun. Nearly everybody predicted when the war began that the aggressive little bantam would speedily be crushed by the sheer weight of the unwieldy old rooster, but few took into account the fact that a nation that has just come into its own is much more likely to be able to take care of itself than are a people decaying under the obsolete rule of an effete dynasty.

Not only are the Japanese soldiers brave and well disciplined, but they are also blessed with great agility and a physical strength that one would not expect in such mites of humanity



MUTSUHITO, EMPEROR OF JAPAN.

two-thirds of the availables must be exempted or excused. Every district has its recruiting board and makes up its quota for the various arms of the service. The soldier in the ranks receives only about \$4 per year, is sometimes whipped to death, must give unquestioning obedience and is inured to a life of privations and hardships such as are known in scarcely any other army in the world. This, however, is not felt so much by the Slav as it would be by other races, for he has been used to these things from his youth up. The mass of the soldiery is

portion of Russia's warships are strictly modern constructions, practically all of Japan's are as up to date as it is possible to make them. Russia has had no fighting experience with her new navy; Japan has had both men and ships tested under fire. And, most important of all, the theater of the present conflict is half around the world from Russia proper, while Japan is operating against Russia's fleets in the east will be at the same time patrolling her own coast and menacing the Asiatic ports owned or controlled by her foe.



NICHOLAS II., CZAR OF RUSSIA.

which were so generous that China naturally would have been delighted to accept them, Russia coolly stepped in and practically told Japan that she should have nothing for her trouble. If she cared to take Formosa, all well and good, but the smallest piece of the Chinese mainland—never. Russia professed to be acting in the interest of the integrity of the Chinese empire, but she deceived no one.

Japan was mad. She was ready to fight and would have fought right there and then had it not been that at the head of her government there were men thoroughly equipped to hold their own in diplomacy with the best European masters of the "art of concealing facts." These men decided to bide their time, and ever since Japan has

war) right at the door of Manchuria, that the czar should let the world know his intentions with regard to the great Chinese province. Russia's only reply to this was to rush extra troops to her ports in the east and incidentally to foment small disturbances in Manchuria in order to demonstrate that it was not yet safe for her to leave. Meanwhile the mikado became insistent—so insistent, in fact, that the powers that be at St. Petersburg deemed it necessary to create a diversion. This "diversion" was characteristically Russian. Affecting to regard the Manchurian matter as a "res adjudicata," Russia began to encroach upon Korean territory. Just what steps she took in that direction the methods of diplomacy will not permit of our knowing for