

明治四十四年十二月二日發行

THE JAPAN TIMES
STUDENT EDITION
SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

時文教材

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JAPAN AND EUROPE

(*Westminster Gazette*, Oct. 24.)

The Late Mr. Meredith Townsend

By a singular coincidence the latest edition—the fourth—of Mr. Meredith Townsend's well-known book "Asia and Europe" was only published a few days ago (Constable, 5s.). To it the author had contributed a new Preface devoted entirely to the position of Japan—the war with Russia having taken place since the former editions were issued. Here is an extract:

"It is clear that Japan is a great State, entitled to a place among the civilised communities which now claim the right to regulate the affairs of the world. There is no State which will make war on it without adequate provocation, or which, even if the provocation is severe, will not hesitate to incur the losses and the risks which any war with Japan must involve to any Power."

Japan's force is acknowledged, and the only question for Europe now is what she will ultimately do with it.

The "Yellow Peril"

Mr. Townsend was evidently no believer in the "Yellow Peril" scare:

"An attack upon Europe (he says) even if successful would hardly benefit Japan, and success in so vast an enterprise would be exceedingly improbable. Europe contains 200 millions of men, half of whom will perish rather than submit to an Asiatic domination. Her science has long since taken a military trend, and she cannot be deprived, if united for defence, of her command of the sea. The mere feeding of the

masses of men who would be required to reach, say, Vienna, which the Mongols once threatened, but never took, would strain all the resources of the Yellow Peoples, who, it must also be remarked, are no longer, as the early Mongols were, the riding tribes of the world."

No doubt, Mr. Townsend adds, Japan will gradually develop great ambitions, as all other victorious States have done; "but much of her ambition will, he thinks, be sated by the Protectorate of China, which no one can keep from her, and by the conquest and settlement of the great system of islands which stretches down from Nagasaki to Australia."

Japan and Australia

Mr. Townsend did not think there was much probability of Japan making some great effort to conquer and occupy Australia, "unless, indeed, Australia quarrels with Great Britain. The British Fleet," he points out, "is still irresistible; it would perish before Australia should be touched; and neither Japan nor China can hope to do what a coalition of the older maritime Powers shrinks from doing." But he held that the rise of Japan into a Great Power must by degrees increase the difficulty for Europe of remaining in profitable possession of great sections of Asia:

"Remember (he says) Asia contains at least eighty millions of fighting men, of whom the immense majority believe their position after death to be tolerably secure, and therefore regard death with a fearlessness which Europe has in a measure lost. The operation of the new tendency might be delayed for a century if Europe would gratify the pride of Japan by a complete and full admission into the European family; but if history proves anything, it prove

that the colour prejudice, whether well founded or not, is incurable."

Asia, strengthened by the leadership of Japan, will Mr. Townsend believed, "recover the independence which she will in all human probability once more misuse."

THE MOROCCO NEGOTIATIONS

France is meeting with more difficulty than she had expected in her wise policy of bringing the negotiations with Germany to a head. Nothing is more dangerous than delay, because it multiplies the opportunities for taking false steps and also tends to let popular opinion jockey the disputing Governments into a position from which there is no honourable escape except by war. The French Government therefore wants to know the worst at once, quite calmly and confidently reasoning with itself that the worst could not be worse than the suspense and the alarms of the past few years. When the French draft of a solution was sent to Germany in the middle of last week it was hoped that Germany would admit that there was at last no difference of opinion on vital principles. We have no precise information as to what the German reply was which reached Paris last Saturday, but it is obvious from what has happened since that it opened up a substantial new area of dispute. The commonly accepted report was that Germany demanded, not only a great tract of

French territory in Africa, but also special economic privileges in Morocco. What, then, one may ask, is France required to pay a great price for? The whole basis of the French willingness to cede a large part of her Congo colony is the advantage of being given a free hand politically in Morocco. If France is still to be subjected to intermittent challenges, reproaches, and interferences from Germany is Morocco why should she give away territory? She can have all these things, as we know, without buying them. To the general run of statements that Germany required economic privileges in Morocco—such, for instance, as a thirty per cent. share in any public works undertaken by France—there was, however, one notable exception. The *Lokalanzeiger* declared that Germany asked for no privileges whatever in Morocco; she proposed only that equal commercial opportunities should be guaranteed to all the Powers. Well, if that is all, the German policy would be the policy of us all. We all know that France, as a Protectionist country, does not find it easier, to say the least, than other Protectionist countries to refrain in her colonies from putting obstacles in the way of foreign trade; and all Powers interested in Morocco would wish to exact an assurance that if a French protectorate were established the equality of commercial opportunity should be a reality guarded by the most formal and explicit pledges.—*Spectator*.

AMERICAN AND GERMAN NAVIES COMPARED

In the *Atlantic Monthly* Sir William H. White compares the strength of the United States Navy, present and prospective, with that of the navies of Germany and Japan. He declares that, in spite of the efforts made by Germany, the United States still compares favourably with Germany in warship building capacity, and in that respect is second only to Great Britain. This reserve of productive power is undoubtedly a valuable national asset. When the vessels now building, or decided upon, in both countries are complete, Germany will have practically overtaken the United States. Germany will then possess seventeen vessels of the so-called Dreadnought type, as against ten belonging to the United States. But the latter group will be of larger average displacement, and will individually carry more powerful armaments. Sir William sums up his judgment thus:—

The United States possesses ample capability for building, arming and equipping all the warships which can possibly be required. American designers of warships and armaments have given proof that their capacity is in no respect inferior to that possessed by foreign competitors. As regards capital ships the United States Navy is well provided at present, in comparison with Germany and Japan; but the relatively small numbers of new ships laid down in the States makes it possible that Germany will have a distinctly superior force within a few years unless corresponding action is speedily taken and greater additions are made to the American fleet.

He quotes Sir Cyprian Bridge to the effect that the Panama Canal will be

a strategic benefit to the United States almost exceeding that which would be conferred by expending the money cost of the canal on an increase in the number of ships. That is to say, the canal is worth to America more than thirty-six or thirty-seven capital ships of the largest size.

JAPAN SIXTY YEARS AGO

Rather curious reading, says the *London Daily News*, is to be found in a copy of the *Illustrated London News* bearing date 11th February, 1854, which has fallen into a correspondent's hands. He quotes the following, which to-day, less than sixty years afterwards, seems fraught with a splendid innocence: "It has lately come to our knowledge that the *Illustrated London News* is regularly received at Jeddo, through Nagasaki, for the library of the Emperor of Japan. This is an interesting fact, and one that deserves particular mention as an event, though perhaps it may be considered a small one, in the history of civilization. Here is the despot of a small country, which has always disdained to have any intercourse whatever with other nations, opening his sleepy eyes to gaze out upon the wide world, and awakening to a sense of his relationship to the rest of mankind. Perhaps neither the Emperor himself, nor any man in his dominions, understands the English language; therefore an ordinary newspaper would be a dead letter to him. But the language of pictures—those beautiful hieroglyphics of modern times—that universal tongue which is intelligible even to savages and babes—this he can understand. And thus, through the medium of our pages, is the panorama of the different countries of the earth made to pass before the eyes of this hermit king, and helps to make him a wiser man, and therefore a better Sovereign."