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## Viscount Takahashi's Premiership.

**VISCOUNT KOREKIYI TAKAHASHI**, minister of finance, has assumed the premier's portfolio left vacant by the assassination of Takashi Hara, said The Japanese American News in Japanese last Monday. With the appointment of the new premier, it was announced that all other members of the cabinet would retain their posts and that the government's policy, both domestic and foreign, would remain unchanged. These facts indicate that the new cabinet is also a genuine Seiyukai cabinet, having none of the different factions represented in it.

While we cannot help but admire the valor and determination of the Seiyukai members to continue the fight outlined by their great leader, we can at the same time easily guess the disappointment Prince Yamagata now experiences. It was common knowledge, indeed, that the elder statesman had expected and earnestly hoped for the organization of a new cabinet under Prince Saionji's premiership. The grand old man knew well the character and disposition of Saionji. He knew well that Saionji would soon tire of politics and throw over the cabinet. And he knew that the days of the junkers would inevitably follow the downfall of Saionji.

Prince Yamagata's idea was not a very bad one. Some anticipated that his plan would be carried out successfully, and many of his faithful followers tried their best to win the game outlined by their great political boss. But the Seiyukai was a better player, and played a wonderful inside game, by which the dead leader of the party often bewildered his opponents while he was alive. The party leaders were, from the very beginning, strongly persuaded that Saionji would never in any circumstances emerge from his comfortable retirement. In spite of this, however, they came out as the most enthusiastic supporters of Saionji's premiership, announcing time and again that they would gladly place everything concerning the destiny of their party and government at the latter's disposal. The elder statesman at Odawara was glad to hear it, and used all his influence to pave the way both for Saionji and the Seiyukai. Thus everything was ready for the formation of a Saionji cabinet, the junkers and militarists all retiring from the scene, when the final answer came from Saionji, exactly as the Seiyukai men anticipated, indicating his flat denial. In consequence, nothing was left but the formation of another genuine Seiyukai cabinet, headed by either Viscount Takahashi or anyone who would succeed the late Mr. Hara.

That many important things are to be settled by the Seiyukai is a consequence of Hara's death there can be no doubt. It may, perhaps, be advisable for the party to surrender its government to the opposition for a while, and reinforce its power in the Diet, reconstruct its functions, and win the people's sympathy as an opposition party. But one can hardly imagine the short life of the coming Takahashi cabinet simply on account of this suggestion. In fact, there are many reasons to believe otherwise. It may easily be supposed, for instance, that Takahashi may find a great chance to win popularity in his successful diplomacy at the Washington Conference. Should an enormous amount of expenditure be cut down by the reduction of naval armament, it would be easy for the new cabinet to increase expenditures on education, industry or our labor, in order to meet the desire of the greater mass of the people. On the other hand, Takahashi, a great liberal leader as he is, may try to reconstruct the nation's Chinese policy and bring about a new hopeful relationship with the neighboring republic.

Furthermore, it is also common knowledge that Takahashi is quite ambitious to cut down the army to the limit to avoid the danger of a militaristic ascendancy in Japanese politics. In fact, the new premier has a great many things to do before he goes out, and it is earnestly hoped that he will by no means give up carelessly his noble works as the leader of the new Japan, no matter whether the opposition against him becomes stronger than ever. Takahashi should fight and fight until he is proved the real successor of the late Mr. Hara, whose life-long ambition was to destroy the military clans and junkers, in order to bring about a real constitutional government in Japan.

## England and Japan Accept.

The following is a free translation of an editorial published last Wednesday in this newspaper:

**IT WAS VERY CLEAR**, even without the recommendation of military experts, that the American proposal on the limitation of naval power, made public by Secretary Hughes at the opening of the Washington Conference, would be accepted by Great Britain and Japan without opposition as to principle and spirit. The formal acceptance by Mr. Balfour and Admiral Kato, representing England and Japan, at yesterday's session, therefore, followed as naturally as day after the passing of night.

But it is due to American diplomacy that this grave problem of naval limitation was solved with such facility, with so little difficulty. Not only ourselves but millions of people the world over owe the American government a debt of thanks and gratitude.

It was meet that such a problem should be proposed when the representatives of the great nations were foregathered in friendly discussion. The success of the move could not otherwise have been expected.

Secretary Hughes' proposal is in itself a master stroke in that he seized the most opportune time to make it. He is a master diplomat of a new school. Since the most important problem to be discussed by the nations at the conference has been disposed of so easily, the remaining problems can be taken care of as smoothly and quickly.

To speak the plain truth, there were some Japanese who, before the opening of the conference, were very skeptical as to the sincerity of the American government regarding actual limitation of armament. They were aware that there are many capitalists in America who strongly support strong armaments and have as followers or tools many statesmen and news writers.

Those who understand the inner workings of American politics doubted whether President Harding and Secretary Hughes could disregard these powers. That for reason, some pessimistic observers feared for the outcome if America should plunge into a discussion of the Far Eastern question and other diplomatic issues equally delicate. They foresaw that the atmosphere of the conference would become very thick and that in the resultant confusion the main issue might be sidetracked and the conference brought to a close without the desired result having been obtained.

The sincerity of America is plainly shown by the fact that she grasped the most opportune time—the very first day of the conference—a time best suited for the taking up of the problem. This one act dispelled at once all the doubts as to the intentions and plans of America.

On learning of the American proposal, most of the Japanese and English newspapers indorsed the plan. In that very act we read their surprise at the unexpected sincerity shown by the American government, a sincerity which up to the day previous they hardly had expected to see.

At this time Arthur Balfour, chief delegate of England, and Admiral Kato of Japan made public the acceptance by their governments of the proposal, with a few modifications. We anticipate that England and Japan will propose a slight modification of the replacement clause. Japan especially, in view of her shipbuilding facilities, will seek to obtain a certain advantage. The so-called eight-eight fleet of Japan requires a much longer time for completion than it would have been constructed in the United States or in England. When this fact is considered by England and America, careful consideration should be given to the proposal to be made by the Japanese delegates, for it is inconsistent with the spirit of the agreement to place one nation in an especially disadvantageous position after a lapse of ten years.

The comparative strength of the naval power of the three nations should be placed in the hands of experts for study. It is improper for statesmen and novices to attempt to draw conclusions. We expect to hear from Japanese naval officers soon whether 60 per cent of naval power allowed Japan, compared with the power allotted to the navies of Britain and the United States, would be sufficient.

After all, however, the question of relative strength or such minor difference will not affect the main point—limitation of armament. To arrive at a complete understanding now means the conferring of untold benefits later. It were better to thresh out even minor differences at this time than to let them go until later on. It will make for a firmer understanding between the powers.

Let us respect the opinions of experts. When they offer suggestions for some modification of the American proposal, we must refrain from criticizing too freely. That might work an unfavorable change in the atmosphere surrounding the conference.

We hope that the American people will feel a little more respect for the sincerity of other nations, will trust them more. Careful reading and study of the opinions made public by the papers of California celebrities showed that almost to a man they doubted the sincerity of England and Japan in carrying out Secretary Hughes' proposal for the limitation of armaments.

## The Japanese American News

WILL IT BE WAR?  
By MOTOSADA ZUMOTO.

(Continued from last Saturday.)

**I**N CONNECTION with Japan's modern efforts to arm herself, it is interesting to observe that the original impetus was supplied by the militaristic menace coming from the West. A brief reference to this phase of the subject will not be out of place in order to enable you to understand in its proper background Japan's position in regard to armament.

I have already spoken of the forcible opening of our doors by a formidable display of American naval force at the middle of the last century. This was a rude shock to a people who had enjoyed profound peace for two centuries and a half and who were ill prepared for armed struggle with the virile nations of the West. This was quickly followed by the use of force by Western nations on two occasions, once by the United States in 1868, and again by a group of four powers, including the United States at Shimonoseki in 1864. These humiliating episodes in the early period of Japan's intercourse with the Western world produced a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of her proud and patriotic sons. You will thus see that the first lesson which Japan learned from her contact with the West was the supreme importance of being ready to defend herself if she was to maintain her national dignity and self-respect.

## UNHAPPY EXPERIENCES.

The subsequent history of our experience with Western powers has unfortunately been of a nature only to strengthen our faith in the power of armed preparedness on land and sea. Our faith in this respect was certainly not weakened by the sequel of our successful war with China, when our lawful prize of victory was wrested from us by the combined intervention of Russia, Germany and France. Nor was our confidence in American power of peaceful arbitration increased by the sight of the American armada in the Bay of Tokyo fifteen years ago, for we suspected then and we now know that the spectacular cruise of that colossal fleet was undertaken with a view to producing a certain kind of impression upon the upstart nation of Japan.

I am not unaware that emphasis is laid by most American writers upon the lack of any aggressive intentions on the part of their country, and know that they are sincere in making this assertion. But if you put yourself in our position, you will easily understand how our people have drawn their own conclusions from the fact that America's sway has recently extended through Hawaii to the Philippine group, right up to our very door. Then again, the possibility of American interference with Japan's vested rights in the Far East is minimized by American writers.

But attempts at such interference are not entirely lacking. Look, for instance, at the proposal which Senator Knox, then secretary of state, made in 1900 for the neutralization of

a national loss made in 1895 for the neutralization of the railways in Manchuria. Suppose America had fought a war for her very existence on Mexican soil with a hereditary foe of colossal proportions and held a system of railways in that country as the price of the valuable blood that had profusely shed. Now what would the Americans have thought of us if in the supposed circumstances we had the effrontery to coolly propose to them to hand over those railways to an international concern?

Such has always been the nature of the experience Japan has gone through in her intercourse with the enlightened powers of the West. Is it any wonder, then, that she has developed a peculiar state of mind compelling her to attach an importance to the armed power of self-defense, which may possibly seem to foreign observers inexplicably extravagant? If this simple historical fact about the origin and motive of Japan's modern armament is firmly grasped, it will be easy to account for the existence of our present armament and, notwithstanding any theory of sinister designs upon the territory of any other power or upon the time-honored principle of the open door and equal opportunity in the Far East.

A JAPANESE SHIPBUILDER feared shipyard unemployment. But the labors of peace will provide employment.

JUNKED BATTLESHIPS would make the best Christmas toys for 1921.

WELLINGTON KOO seems to believe in pacifism.

WE HAVE NO EARS to listen to hues and cries over the Hughes plan.

EVEN CHINESE can't solve the Chinese puzzle at the Washington Conference.

WHEN THE NAVAL expansion race is ended we will have a toy trade war. And surely the prepared German will win.

NEVER TOO LATE. Let Ireland join the disarmament conference.

WHO SAYS JAPAN is a backward country? A get-rich-quick Japanese gentleman has stolen American films valued at \$1,000,000.

THE INDIANS of Humboldt County planned a big Armistice Day celebration. They will do the nose paint and make it a war dance, reports San Francisco paper. Pretty fine disarmament feast.

A ANTI-TAX PAYING and pro-spooning can didate was elected at Youngstown, Ohio. You never can foretell the future of jazz and the shimmy dance.

This argument looks interesting and plausible, but it is vitiated by assumptions which I believe are not warranted by actual facts. To begin with, the distinguished author attributes to our militarists an error which I believe to be a misconception of the situation. He says that the rapidly advancing tide of liberalism will sweep away all traces of the horrors of war on the part of the intelligent public in the near future. He says that the world may have been deadened to the extent of not caring the romance of warfare to something like its former popularity. In this way Mr. Pitkin thinks that conditions will be favorable for an armed clash between Japan and America by 1930 or thereabouts.

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