

Japan in China

TWO things are clear in connection with the conflict in Shantung between Chinese Nationalists and Japanese forces. One is that the fight has given a new impulse to anti-Japanese feeling in China. The other is that the affair is no business either of the United States or any other Powers or of the League of Nations, unless both the Chinese and the Japanese are willing to accept neutral mediation. An unwanted mediator only makes trouble for himself and becomes the butt of the irritation of both sides.

Just how the trouble occurred is still difficult to determine. The underlying issue was the right of Japan—which the Japanese asserted and the Chinese denied—to maintain forces in Tsinanfu, the capital of Shantung Province, and along the railway to the port of Tsingtao.

The Japanese maintain that their garrison in Tsinanfu was only for the purpose of protecting Japanese citizens and property. Japan has large investments in enterprises in Shantung, and the railway to the coast transports raw materials essential for her home industries. The city is on the line of advance from Nanking, the capital of the Chinese Nationalists, to Peking, the northern capital, which they are trying to capture. So the stage stands almost inevitably set for a clash.

The Japanese forbade the Chinese to interfere with the railway—a warning that the Chinese flouted by blowing up a bridge. According to the latest accounts, the Japanese officials at Tsinanfu attempted to maintain neutrality towards the Nationalists and their northern enemies, withdrawing Japanese residents to two barricaded zones. After the Nationalists occupied the city, their unruly soldiers swarmed around the barricades, and their commander demanded that the obstructions be removed. The Japanese complied. Nationalists entered the foreign zone, and began pasting up anti-Japanese posters. Disorders developed. When an attempt to loot a Japanese shop was resisted, shooting started. Each side claims that the other fired first. From that row the fighting spread. Evidently, a considerable number of Japanese civilians lost their lives. Chinese soldiers fired on Japanese negotiators carrying a flag of truce. The Japanese commander issued an ultimatum to the Chinese to withdraw from their positions in and around the town. The Chinese tried to storm it and drive out the Japanese. A pitched battle resulted. The Japanese rushed up reinforcements along the railway. At the end of a week of bombardment and fighting they had put the Chinese to rout and mastered the town, with losses on their side of about 60 killed and 200 wounded and on the Chinese side, it is estimated, 3,000 killed and an unknown number wounded.

Both the Chinese Nationalists and the northern militarists had protested against the despatch of Japanese forces to Tsinanfu. Japan had insisted on her duty to protect her people there. That is the real point—the insistence on holding a position in another country in the midst of a civil war. In a stronger country, even under the stress of internal strife, it would not be done. But China has been disorganized for years, and her case is considered different.

Neither the United States nor a group of neutral Powers

nor the League can do more than tender their good offices and afford the Chinese and Japanese the facilities of impartial mediation. The Chinese have sought it from the League. But the differences go far deeper than anything outsiders can touch; they concern Japanese penetration of China. The Chinese possess a power in their own public opinion which they are preparing to use. They are organizing a new boycott of Japanese goods. The struggle will have to work itself out on that plane of a matching of Chinese and Japanese wills.

The “Square Fist” in France

IN American politics we often like to speak of a political leader as “a two-fisted man.” There is more point in a term French cartoonists coined for Premier Poincaré at the time that he ordered the occupation of the Ruhr Valley to force Germany to pay reparations. They made a pun on the pronunciation of his name and dubbed him “*poing carré*”—“square fist.” Now the “square-fisted” Premier and former war President has won a victory in the French elections that makes him practically dominant in his country.

Yet the fact that the chief of the Ruhr campaign has gained this triumph does not mean that France and Germany are to be at odds—as, indeed, M. Poincaré himself has indicated in a conciliatory speech in Alsace. The European scene has greatly changed—and a party that has gained confidence by success can afford to be liberal. The Dawes Plan for reparations followed the Ruhr occupation, and after that came the Locarno arbitration and security treaties between France, Great Britain, Italy, and Germany, and then the entry of Germany into the League of Nations. France and Germany have concluded new industrial and trade agreements and are increasingly recognizing in action their common interest in stability on the Continent. The vote for Poincaré now is not a vote for an anti-German policy, but rather for the policy of economic reconstruction he has inaugurated through his National Union Cabinet. That Cabinet, composed of former Premiers and Ministers from most of the leading parties, is to stay in office without going through the usual form of resigning. Consequently, details of the losses of the radical factions and the gains of the moderates in the elections are less important than the broad fact that Poincaré’s supporters may be able to rally on critical measures a majority of toward 200 votes in Parliament.

Poincaré is expected to turn at once to the transformation of the large short-term national debt into a new long-term interior loan, and then to some reconsideration of the war debts and the reparations program—though what form this reconsideration may take is uncertain. These are steps on the road to his goal of stabilization of the depreciated currency of France. Evidence of the recovery of French economic power under his administration appears in the news that France plans to pay this year about \$40,000,000 on her war debt to Great Britain and \$11,250,000 to the United States.

In foreign relations, the elections will strengthen the hand of M. Briand in his policy regarding an agreement against war. One result is at once evident. M. Briand has announced that he now sees his way clear to reduce all his reservations to Mr. Kellogg's arbitration treaty to one—a provision that violation of the treaty shall free all parties to take action as they may deem necessary. The reassurance of the balloting makes it seem less important to the French Foreign Minister to play his hand so guardedly. And, since Mr. Kellogg has already accepted this principle, the outcome of the French campaign bids fair to aid the movement to outlaw war.

Stop Reckless Shooting

A LAW-ABIDING citizen was shot the other day near Niagara Falls, New York, because he failed to stop when some one out of the dark commanded him to halt. It appears from the reports that the command came from one of two Coast Guards who were on the watch for bootleggers. There was nothing to indicate that the command did not come from a highwayman. Indeed, it was on the natural assumption that he was in danger of being held up and robbed that this citizen tried to escape. This is the story as reported in the press. We have no desire to prejudge the case. All the facts may not have been made known. Neither Coast Guard should be adjudged guilty unless duly convicted. Yet the case has stirred widespread protest against the too common use of firearms in the attempt to enforce the law. Only a few days later an agent of the Prohibition Bureau was dismissed for firing a revolver at an automobile on a highway in West Virginia. A United States Senator was permanently injured in Washington a few years ago by officers attempting to capture violators of the liquor law, and because of the prominence of the victim there was an outcry against the too common American practice of attempting to enforce law by shooting. But the echoes of that outcry have died down.

It may be argued that criminals in America carry firearms and explosives and that if they are to be subdued they must be subdued with firearms. But the argument also can run the other way. The criminal is more apt to resort to firearms if officers of the law do. It is a sign of weakness and inefficiency, certainly, for the enforcers of the law, whose business it is to preserve peace and order, to employ methods which are as dangerous to the law-abiding as the methods of the criminal. In special emergencies violence must be met with violence; but the business of the authorities that exercise police power should be to prevent such emergencies, and certainly not to resort to extreme measures except for the prevention of crimes that are themselves of greater danger than the methods used to suppress them.

So accustomed have our police become to the use of force that the Association of the Bar of the City of New York has recommended the investigation of resort to force by the police for the purpose of obtaining confessions.

Police officers and others in charge of law enforcement are not the masters, but the servants of the people. Too often they act as if they were the masters. An uncorrupt and incorruptible police force guided by intelligence would not find itself confronted by conditions that have prevailed in Chicago,

for example. There is no need of turning law enforcement into something that resembles a tribal feud.

Five Women About to Die

HARDLY a convention of manufacturers or merchants or salesmen passes without the adoption of a resolution calling attention to the altruistic nature of the big-hearted American business man. He has, these gatherings for mutual admiration affirm, invariably had the welfare of his employees in his mind. He has given them workmen's compensation, shorter hours, bigger pay. He makes the world a better and sweeter place.

But the next convention orator who starts on this theme will choke on his words if he recalls the five young women awaiting death in New Jersey from radium poisoning. Fourteen other girl workers in the plant of the United States Radium Corporation at Orange, New Jersey, since closed, are already dead. The five still alive, but despairing, pointed with their lips the little brushes used to apply radium paint to luminous watch dials. Experts have said that radium poisoning is wearing away their bones. And the United States Radium Corporation sets up the defense that the women did not file suit within two years of their injury and that the statute of limitations bars legal action.

A condemned murderess facing execution after killing her husband arouses a storm of maudlin sentimentality. Her story appears on the front pages for days on end. There are "personal diaries," interviews, photographs, life histories. But here are five women, utterly innocent, who face a fearful death, and there seems to be no public outcry. The New York "World," to its eternal credit, has investigated the cases of the women, and in a recent Sunday issue it published a story which fills the reader with helpless rage.

Thus far the company has made no claim that the women were not poisoned at its plant, even that their injuries are due to carelessness. It contends, and the law seems to be so, that actions of injuries of this sort must be started within two years. The five women did not know, however, and neither did the medical profession with any certainty, that radium was the basis of their trouble. Thus they had no reason to bring suit within two years. Their attorney is attempting to make this fact an argument for permission to ignore the statute of limitations.

Here, then, is a case which for sheer horror equals anything that has gone before. The "World" states that lawyers for the defense have resorted to delay and obstruction and that the women cannot obtain a court hearing until September. By then they may well be dead. Three of them are married and one has two small children. One, a Miss Grace Fryer, has offered herself for experiment to doctors in the hope that a cure for her sisters in misfortune may be found.

Child labor, sweat-shops, company police, the use of the injunction, low wages—all these have in the past refuted the boast that business men are universally big-hearted citizens. If business is to ally itself with humanity, here is the chance for business men with heart to repudiate the theory that they can do whatever the law allows and that they can avoid moral responsibility by invoking the law's delay.