

PROBLEMS OF THE PACIFIC.*

The event which we celebrate today was only an incident in the life of the distinguished man whose name this monument will bear through future ages, but looked at in the perspective of history it assumes a significance worthy of the consideration of every thoughtful American. When in 1841 Captain Wilkes with his fleet was exploring the Pacific ocean and this coast of North America, the ocean upon which he sailed was almost an unknown sea. It was an ocean of mystery, of unfathomed vastness, of a peace which was the peace of stagnation. Its value to the world was undiscovered, and its meaning lay wholly in the future. Since that first celebration of the Fourth of July upon the Pacific coast this ocean has acquired a meaning and a value scarcely dreamed of at that time. That it is destined to play an ever greater part in the drama of human life I firmly believe, and instead of discussing the topic which I learned only yesterday had been assigned me, "The Patriotism of the Washington Pioneers," I propose to discuss what seemed to me most significant of the day when first the brief invitation of your committee came to me by telegraph, namely the "World Problems of the Pacific"—its place in the future and the relations of the United States to it.

In the life of the nations since Captain Wilkes' voyage, three great developments stand out conspicuously; the first was the birth of the new Japan so-called, the emergence of the Empire of Nippon into a world power. Not until fifteen years after Wilkes' voyage did another great representative of the American navy, Commodore Perry, open the gates of Japan to the world's civilization. Trained for 5,000 years into an isolation such as the world has never known, Japan had shut herself in against contact with foreign powers, and by law visited with death the Japanese subject who left her shores and the foreigner who landed upon them. You are all familiar with the marvel of the new Japan. They say that grains of wheat buried in mummy cases of Rameses II. and lying dormant for 4,000 years will, when brought to the light of today and properly nourished, germinate and bring forth their destined harvest. So Japan,

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buried in an equal aloofness from the world, has come forth as from the tomb and blossomed into an unexpected life of power and promise to the world. As at the beginning of the last century the United States, making its steady way westward, reached at last the Pacific on its eastern shore through Lewis and Clark, and brought the light of Christian civilization across the mountains to the misty sea, so at the end of the century the western shores of the great Pacific were illuminated with the light of the new Japan, and a century of progress showed that the portentous and gloom-enshrouded sea had light upon its eastern and its western coasts. An empire of forty million had won the respect and fear of the western world by its swift progress in the arts and sciences, and by its successful grapple with one of the great world powers of the west.

And now at the beginning of another century another and still greater Oriental nation is waking from its sleep. The Chinese empire, whose antiquity is even greater than that of Japan, is fast arousing from its age-long lethargy, and 400,000,000 of people are threatening the world with their potential power and potential needs. I think that we must pause for thought when we reflect how this great sea is being opened to a new world life. The war between China and Japan in 1898 was the galvanic touch of a living hand upon an apparent corpse, and since then China has been stretching itself with signs of real strength. To be sure, it was in 1842, the year after Captain Wilkes' visit to this spot, that Great Britain first battered at the door of China by the opium war, and secured permission by imperial edict that thereafter foreigners might reside in Shanghai, but though year after year more foreigners on business bent have invaded the Chinese empire, and more treaty ports have been opened to them, yet it is true that still China is largely a closed land and its life remote from Western thought. Such at any rate it has been until within the last few years, but now her great walls are crumbling into eternal uselessness and the nation is stretching out its hands for the gifts of the West. Foreign armies have marched upon its soil, foreign cannon have battered at its portals, foreign railroads and telegraphs and telephones have penetrated its domain. Christianity with the open Bible in one hand and the merciful ministrations of the medical physician has softened Chinese hostility to Western learning, and has brought the dawn of a new day into the gloom of a world-old empire.

And if the resurrection of Japan has brought into the arena

of the nations a great world power whose prowess and capacity are already honored, how much greater the future honor and influence of the far greater empire, China, now coming to the front. I remind you not only of her 400,000,000 of people as compared with Japan's 40,000,000, but of her vast area of fertile lands and treasure-laden mountains. We pride ourselves upon the fertility of the Mississippi valley and the wheat lands of the West, but China has a greater productive area whose fertility is not less, and has besides in coal and iron, in gold and silver and all the precious metals incalculable resources which European experts say are unequaled elsewhere in the world. If you are of those who believe that resources and commercial shrewdness make a nation great, and that the progress of the United States is to be explained in terms like these, then you will herald as greatest of the nations the future China, with its illimitable resources and its long-trained business ability. It seems to me that the awakening of these two Oriental powers, Japan and China, is to change the fate of the world, and to alter the complexion of human history. Heretofore the Mediterranean and Atlantic have been the sites of the world's conflicts and the world's trade; hereafter the Pacific will wrest supremacy from the Atlantic, and the ocean which has been peaceful in its loneliness will become busy with the commerce of the world.

It is significant that the three great wars of the past ten years have been fought in the main upon the Pacific, and Admiral Dewey's victory at Manila, Japan's victory over China on the Yellow sea, and the overwhelming victory of Japan over Russia within recent years have stained with blood the waters of this peaceful ocean in prediction of future conflicts which shall mar its surface, conflicts, let us hope, of peace and not war. These two Oriental nations stand side by side on the western shore of the Pacific, animated with a common life, common religion or lack of it, and a blood relationship which manifests itself in the deeper psychological resemblances which make Japan and China one at heart. If the past forty years have given Japan an apparent leadership and impressed her people with a quickness and versatility which justify their being called the "French of the Orient," nevertheless China has no less capacity, and as the best observers think, a deeper moral earnestness, a stronger fiber of character, an indomitableness which will make her influence upon the world's life greater, perhaps, than that of Japan. In these two awakened nations we see the spirit of the Orient first claim-

ing a part in the world's life and demanding a share of the world's responsibilities. A new era in human history has begun. Heretofore Asia has been a passive continent, self-sufficient, isolated, remote; now Asia is meeting Europe and America with a youthfulness of energy to be explained perhaps by her sleep of centuries, and hereafter the world forces which must be reckoned with will be not England, France, Germany, Russia and the United States, but Japan and China as well. One in spirit as in blood, greedy for new life, but insistent upon new justice and no longer content to sit passive under the contempt of the Western world. The Orient has taken its place as a world power, and it seems to me that the twentieth century is teeming with portent when in its first decade the giant powers of China and Japan launch their fleets upon the western shores of the Pacific and invade the domain of the world's commerce and the world's life.

But I had said that there were three developments since 1841 in the world's life as affecting the Pacific. The third is no less momentous. It is the birth of a national consciousness in the United States, with the assumption of national responsibilities. The West has had much to do with this. The conquest of the Pacific coast has enlarged the national horizon and the problems of the Pacific have penetrated the nation's mind. When at Manila Commodore Dewey raised the flag of the United States upon the Philippine islands, America unwittingly and unwillingly entered upon a new epoch, the epoch of international relations and a part in the world's life. The first century of our national existence had been one of isolation; our aim had been self-development; our problems were the problems of the interior. Despite the glorious achievements of our navy, the United States had not claimed to be a world power, but thought that she could live her life alone, untroubled by European politics, unfettered by alliances with other nations. We had developed a national self-consciousness, which was self-satisfied and self-admiring, and now, against our will, in large degree, and by a sudden change of events, which makes it look as though it were a matter of destiny, of divine over-ordering, we are brought into sudden relations with the nations of the world and compelled to take our place in the lists with them. Our enlarging manufactures have made us seek for foreign markets. Our industrial supremacy developed by a hundred years of isolation has itself compelled us to abandon our national policy of exclusion, and at the beginning of the twentieth century we are standing facing

the Pacific ocean, no longer with the mere sense of national self-sufficiency and our national bigness, but with the troubled conviction that a new age has come and that we must struggle with the nations of the world for the supremacy which we have been idly hoping was to be ours by divine decree.

Of the commercial and industrial greatness of America I need not speak. We lead the world in manufactures, in railroads, in the application of science to the needs of human life, in the productivity of our fields and the richness of our forests. In wealth, which is potential greatness, we stand unrivaled. The per capita riches of our inhabitants exceed those of any other nation upon earth. And yet here is where I would bid you pause to consider whether America is ready to take her part in the world's life. In the developments of the future not wealth alone will count, though there will be a long struggle for industrial supremacy and our merchants will need to set their wits and skill against the skill and wits of Germany and England and Japan, yet in the long run other features will enter into the contest, and it is of these which I would remind you. Who shall be entitled to the leadership of the West against the growing power of the Orient? Who shall be worthy of the hegemony of the nations facing the imminent peril of a militant orientalism? Shall the conflict between the West and the East, which is to be waged, I believe, upon the Pacific, brought 10,000 miles closer to Europe by the opening of the Panama canal, be a conflict of antagonism or a conflict of peace? It seems to be that the question must be settled in large measure by the attitude of the United States toward China and Japan.

If, in the recklessness of selfish power, with the advantage of position which possession of the Hawaiian islands and the Philippine islands now gives us, we rush at the East in the lust of new riches and careless of our nation's honor and our Christian name, then the Pacific ocean will cease to bear that name worthily, but will be stained, if not with the blood of battle, yet with the blackness of dishonor. In her new-found sense of international responsibility, I would charge America that she remember first of all that justice and judgment are the foundations of an unending existence, and that in the spirit of fairness, of open-heartedness, of brotherly kindness, she must meet the new nations, China and Japan. We of the Pacific coast have not hidden our intolerance and contempt of these yellow-skinned Asiatics. If Japan has compelled our admiration, we have all the more dis-

played our narrow and unphilosophical contempt for the patient and unresisting China.

We are confronted by the problems of the Pacific, and the powers of the Pacific, China and Japan, are met before us face to face. If we wish to enter worthily into the world's life, if we wish to be worthy of leadership in the new relations between the Occident and Orient then we shall be obliged to abandon the self-conceited and intolerant contempt, unjust, disdainful, cruel, with which we have regarded heretofore the oldest of the nations of the world. And if as merchant princes we wish to win the riches which China has for the world, if we desire our share in the commerce of the future, which in scarce imagined measure is to fill the coffers of the world as China's four hundred millions demand their part of the world's produce, and open an unimagined market for the world's manufactures, if American ships under the American flag are to carry American lumber and manufactures to the great markets of the new China, then we must disavow the mental attitude of the past, we must recognize the Chinaman as of the same blood as ourselves. The spirit of the Declaration of Independence, which we say that we celebrate today, must enter more deeply into our national conscience, and we as a nation come to believe that in reality and not in pretense all men are created free and equal.

But if the United States thinks that it can meet England and Germany in the markets of China and win Chinese friendship and Chinese trade while still our heart is bitter with contempt, and our shores are barred in manifest hostility to every Chinaman, merchant, or traveler or student, then we might as well recognize the fact that the new markets, which are our present great commercial need, will be closed to us forever, and the Panama canal will be a pathway not for American ships sailing from New York, and Philadelphia and Baltimore for Shanghai and Hongkong, but rather a pathway for ships of other European nations, which by justness and fairness and brotherly kindness shall win the friendship and open the markets of that proud and ill-understood people.

We commemorate today the first celebration of the Fourth of July upon the Pacific coast. How rapidly in these sixty-five years since then has the Pacific ocean developed in its relation to the world's life! How portentous these new nations loom upon the earth's horizon! How weighty the problems of international responsibility which burden our national consciousness

as we look westward across the Pacific, and feel the impending duty. And yet the spirit of the Declaration is what we need; nay, more, back of the spirit of the Declaration that spirit which was in the minds of the founders of our nation, the spirit not only of freedom for all but of justice to all. And back of that, the Christian spirit of brotherhood for all mankind, without which no nation shall forever endure. The moral character of the United States is then the chief consideration which I would leave with you at this time. If in the spirit of justice and tolerance, in the spirit of the "square deal" and the brotherly right hand, we go forward to our new tasks, this celebration in 1841 will not have been in vain, and the great ocean which it ennobled will continue to bear fittingly the name Pacific.

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