

【Material】

Hostilities Prior to War Declarations
As Reported in American and British
Newspapers

2. Russo-Japanese War (1)

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1. The Daily Illustrated Mirror

[Tuesday, January 26, 1904]

JAPAN RESENTS RUSSIAN DELAY

Japanese impatience at the long delay in Russia's reply is increasing, and the newspapers continue to write urging that time should not be lost in diplomatic trifling.

From Russia comes the news that the First reserves resident in St. Petersburg have been warned to hold themselves in readiness to be called upon. This is the first intimation to many of the possibility of war, and the common people are beginning to show some excitement.

In Siberia Russia is taking measures to get an adequate supply of horses for war purposes.

RUSSIAN REGIMENT FOR KOREA.

The "New York Herald" (Paris edition) publishes a telegram from Port Arthur saying the chief of the Diplomatic Bureau there states that Russia would only depart from her attitude of calm if Japan occupied Masampho.

The message adds that a Siberian regiment and two batteries of artillery will leave today for the Yalu River. —Reuter.

FORECAST OF THE REPLY.

In diplomatic circles it is stated that owing to Russia's conviction that Japan is determined to make the irreducible minimum of her claims a fighting issue, Russia has framed a conciliatory answer to the Japanese Note, which answer is now ready for despatch.

The reply, it is said, embodies important concessions in regard to the Japanese demands

in respect to Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria. These, it is hoped, will be sufficient to assure peace and prevent the powerful war party in Japan from obtaining the upper hand and forcing on war, an eventuality people here regard as inevitable should Russia's reply be unfavourable, —Reuter.

[Wednesday, January 27, 1904]

LATEST FROM THE FAR EAST

War Preparations Going On While Russia Plays for Time

Russia still delays her reply, and the world's suspense is likely to last days, or even weeks, longer, for the Japanese Government has been advised by its Minister at St. Petersburg that it is not intended to give an immediate response.

The question is whether Japan may not be tempted to act on her own account. Hope of concession has practically faded; and the general feeling is that Russia is only delaying in order to get her reinforcements in Eastern waters.

Meanwhile, preparations are being made for war on both sides. Japan is considering a domestic loan, and has bought £10,000 worth of medicines. Russian warships, on the other hand, are said to be watching an opportunity to swoop on the northern island of Japan, which is supposed to be poorly protected.

The situation is most critical.

RUSSIANS "DYING LIKE FLIES."

Paris, Tuesday.

The "New York Herald" publishes the following from its Berlin correspondent: "I have just had, with a personage who has great commercial interests in Russia, a conversation on the situation. "He said that the chances of peace had been increased by the unfavourable impression caused at headquarters by the condition of the Russian troops in Manchuria. He had learnt from an authoritative source that the troops in that region were dying like flies.

Water was scarce and bad, and the supplies and the medical service were insufficient." —Reuter.

All Japanese subjects in Russian employ are to be dismissed at once.

[Thursday, January 28, 1904]

JAPAN FORCING RUSSIA'S HAND.

Prospects of Trouble, and the Korean King Changes His Bedroom

Japan has tired of Russian procrastination.

The most important news this morning is that the Tokio Government has intimated to the Russian Minister that an early response is desired to the last Japanese Note, delivered over a fortnight ago.

The Note actually reached Russia on the 16th, and Japan says "sufficient time has elapsed for the consideration of the reply."

This is a proof that Japan has decided to have no more evasions and delays created by her antagonist with the object of gaining time for fresh reinforcements.

Failing a prompt reply from St. Petersburg, decisive action may be expected within the next few days.

The Japanese people would rather have war than the present suspense, which is stopping all trade. Japan's activity will probably take the form of a descent on Korea.

Russia is conducting suspicious movements in the north of that miserable country, and a Reuter Special telegram says "It is intended to concentrate on the Yalu 8,000 troops who are at present at Mukden and Port Arthur." A trainload of Cossacks has already left Port Arthur.

The Korean Emperor, anxious to guard against calamity, has "changed his bedchamber," and is consulting an astrologer.

In the Russian capital pessimism now reigns supreme, and business is disorganised, while stocks are falling. The most responsible people declare that the country is experiencing the most formidable crisis which she has ever had to face since she became an important Power.

The two new Japanese cruisers, Kasuga and Nisshin, have reached Colombo on their way out.

[Friday, January 29, 1904]

FAR EAST SUSPENSE.

Russia Preparing Her Reply — Is It pacific ?

"The situation is unchanged."

These hackneyed words represent the state of affairs in the Far East. Russia has still not given her reply to Japan's last Note, but there are indications that it will now not be long delayed.

Japan's urgent representations have had their effect, and yesterday a special council of Ministers was held at St. Petersburg, most probably to draft the fateful message.

The conclusions arrived at will be presented to the Tsar to-day, but it is not probable that the reply will be despatched to Tokio before tomorrow.

Semi-official assurances, says Reuter, are given to the effect that the points at issue have been considered in a pacific spirit, and with a determination to do everything possible to conclude the dispute.

From Port Arthur, via Paris, comes an unconfirmed report that the Japanese are creating demonstrations, and sending warships and transports to unknown destinations along the Korean coast, and there are other reports of Japanese buying great stores of tinned meat and cattle.

Millionaire financiers and bankers are in the Japanese capital, to assist in the Government's financial plans, and they were entertained to dinner last night by the Cabinet.

[Saturday, January 30, 1904]

GRAVEST FEARS OF WAR TO-DAY.

Japanese Warship Fires Across a Russian Vessel's Bows

It is possible that in a week we may have to chronicle the outbreak of war in the Far East. Matters to-day look blacker than they have done since the commencement of the negotiations.

The Russian reply is to be delayed some days longer. The statement in a morning paper that it had already been presented is discredited in the light of this morning's telegrams. But it is almost certain that Russia will not yield what Japan wants.

The telegrams we give below, which have the air of truth, show that she is prepared to concede in Korea, but that she will not yield as far as Manchuria is concerned. In view of the uncompromising tone of Japan's last Note, which set forth the "irreducible minimum" of her requirements, it is difficult to see how war can be avoided.

In Tokio it is firmly expected that hostilities will break out as soon as the new cruisers reach Japanese waters—about February 20. But some unexpected incident may precipitate matters before then.

Such an incident is reported by the "Daily Mail" Chifu correspondent, telegraphing last night. He states that a foreigner who passed through there states that a Russian steamer,

on which he was a passenger from Nagasaki to Dalny, was fired at by a Japanese warship outside Chemulpho Harbour. Three shots were fired across the vessel's bows.

The captain first vowed that he would not stop the ship, but did so when implored by the passengers, who were frantic with fear. There was no further attempt to stop the vessel, which proceeded on her voyage.

If such incidents occur war may break out at any moment.

DELAY IN THE RUSSIAN REPLY

St. Petersburg, Friday.

The Russian authorities now state that the reply of Russia to the last Japanese Note will not be transmitted to Tokio before next week, owing, it is explained, to the great care with which it is necessary the document should be drafted.

The views of Admiral Alexeieff are also awaited before the submission of the draft reply to the Tsar.

A high official said in an interview to-day: "Of course we cannot prevent war. Russia will do her utmost to offer Japan a basis for durable peace; but there is a limit beyond which we cannot go."

"In Korea we grant practically everything, and in Manchuria we have already recognised all the Treaty rights both of Japan and the other Powers. "Should Japan reject our conciliatory proposals the world must place the responsibility for the consequences upon the head of Japan."

Count Lamsdorff, in an interview yesterday evening with M. Kurino, the Japanese Minister, indicated that the reply would be despatched next week. It has been ascertained that the strategic situation was discussed by the military authorities who attended the special Council yesterday. —Reuter

REPORTED JAPANESE MOBILISATION

Port Arthur, Thursday.

A telegram reported to have been sent by the Russian Military Attaché at Tokio was received here yesterday, informing the Russian authorities of the mobilisation of the Japanese Army.

Renewed preparations are being made for the despatch of the troops already ordered north; the authorities are inviting Russian ladies to join the Red Cross Society; and organisation is continuing as if war were certain. —Reuter's Special.

FEVERISH ACTIVITY AT PORT ARTHUR

Paris, Friday.

The "New York Herald" (Paris edition) publishes the following telegram from Port Arthur: —

The 9th, 10th, and 11th Siberian Fusiliers leave Port Arthur to-day for the Yalu River.

The Viceroy, Admiral Alexeieff, is holding daily conferences with the military, and municipal authorities, although he is suffering from influenza.

Work is proceeding feverishly night and day in the ports.

SIGNIFICANT COMMUNICATION

Tokio. Friday.

In a communication issued from the Ministry of Finance to-day, it is stated that, in the event of a rupture with Russia, Japan's Northern China trade would be affected, but that this is only about a fourth of the entire Chino-Japanese trade. It is added that practically the whole of Japan's trade will in all probability remain materially unaffected in the event of a war in the Far East. —Central News.

[Monday, February 1, 1904]

SUSPENSE—AND GRAVEST FEARS.

Russia Still Lingers on the Brink of War with Japan

The Far Eastern situation has not improved. The Russian reply, it seems, will be delayed four or five days longer, and it is quite evident that its terms, when delivered, will fall short of the Japanese requirements.

The telegrams which we give below, from German sources, show that Russia is not likely to consent to the recognition of Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria, which is one of the chief points in the Japanese demand.

The Japanese Ministers and the elderly statesmen had an eight hours' conference on Saturday.

MORE DELAY

St. Petersburg, Saturday.

Contrary to the rumour current here that the Russian reply has already been transmitted to Japan, it is now stated that it will not be despatched for at least four or five days. —Reuter.

RUSSIA'S "IRREDUCIBLE MAXIMUM."

Berlin, Sunday.

The "Post" publishes information from St. Petersburg to the effect that Russia, though earnestly desirous of maintaining peace, can never permit Japan to become the director in China and so assume supreme authority over that country.

Russia will never give Japan any special guarantee in the form of a treaty that she will recognise the integrity of Manchuria or the sovereignty of China over that country. The

above is somewhat significant in view of the optimistic notices systematically published by the well-informed German Press. — Reuter

St. Petersburg, Saturday.

The “Novoye Vremya” declares that it would be impossible for Russia to enter upon any undertaking with Japan with regard to Manchuria in view of the fact that Manchuria is a province of the Chinese Empire, in connection with which Japan could only negotiate with the Chinese Government. The influence over Korea should be of a purely economic character, and Japan should not be permitted to construct any fortifications whatever in her sphere. — Reuter.

[Tuesday, February 2, 1904]

ARMING WHILE SHE WAITS.

— — — — —
Russia's Reply Still Delayed—Mobilisation of Her Far Eastern Reserves Expected
— — — — —

Russia has not yet replied to Japan, but there is a curious consensus of opinion that she will do so “before the middle of the week.” The Japanese Minister in London thinks so, and so do Japanese officials in Washington and Berlin.

Tokio is still very gloomy as to the probability of Russia's answer proving satisfactory, and it is confidently stated that nothing but a recognition of Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria, which Russia is not likely to agree to, will satisfy Japan. The question of peace and war is still being anxiously debated in St. Petersburg, but meanwhile warlike preparations are actively going on.

IMPENDING RUSSIAN MOBILISATION

St. Petersburg, Monday.

A telegram from Harbin, Manchuria of to-day's date states that alarmed Japanese are leaving the territory of the Eastern Chinese Railway.

A telegram from Vladivostok, dated January 31, says: — “According to current reports the announcement of the mobilisation of the reserves of all territories of the Far East is shortly expected. Preparations are being made for the mobilisation of all horses liable to the Government requisition. The arrival of over 50,000 men is expected at Vladivostok in February for the strengthening of the garrison.” — Reuter.

Reuter gives the effect of an important interview with a Japanese official in London, who says if Russia does not give Japan assurance regarding the sovereignty of China in Manchuria, no matter what concessions she may make elsewhere, Japan will break off negotiations and adopt measures to safeguard her interests. Japan insists on a binding

assurance on this question. The one thing Japan stipulated for is that it shall be binding and in writing. Without this peace cannot be maintained.

In conclusion, the Japanese official said: "The delay in sending the Russian Note clearly means that there is a final struggle between the peace and war parties in Russia. I hope and I think I may add, I believe, that the peace party will triumph."

[Wednesday, February 3, 1904]

RUSSIA PREPARES FOR WAR

Vast Army Ready to Fight and Warships Stripped for Action

The news of the Far Eastern situation this morning shows that the situation is as grave as it well can be.

Russia's reply to Japan will not be sent for three or four days; some telegrams mention Saturday as the probable date. It is evidently considered quite probable in St. Petersburg that Japan will regard the reply as unsatisfactory and that war will result.

General Kuropatkin, who would have military command in case of war, has reported to the Tsar the forces that will be at his disposal in the East, amounting to nearly 400,000 men.

It is quite evident that Russia has regarded war as probable for some time past, and has made all her arrangements. Other telegrams from the East are to the effect that Russian warships have been stripped of woodwork and prepared for action.

These statements are sufficient to discount the singularly optimistic telegrams which *some correspondents this morning send from various capitals.*

There is little direct news from Japan, but war is evidently regarded there as more than possible. The question of removing the Court from Tokio to Kyoto—some hundreds of miles further west—has already been considered.

The new Japanese cruisers are nearing their destination. Both the Kasuga and the Nisshin have reached Singapore. A gale was experienced off Colombo, and both cruisers proved themselves excellent sea boats.

INCREASED TENSION IN JAPAN

Tokio, Tuesday.

The Japanese Government is still awaiting Russia's reply. The movement of reinforcements into Manchuria increases the tension, but the Japanese Government is patient.

Events would move rapidly if the Russian Note proved materially unsatisfactory, but Japan would probably not strike before presenting an ultimatum. —Reuter.

[Thursday, February 4, 1904]

WAR IF THE VICEROY THINKS FIT

The situation in the Far East has reached almost the climax of gravity.

In St. Petersburg and Tokio the question of war is being debated with the tense anxiety that the gravity of the question demands.

The Tsar, according to Reuter, has now before him the report of the Special Council held to consider Russia's reply, which has not yet been presented, and may not be for some days.

The Tsar is giving the matter his most earnest consideration, but that little hope is entertained may be judged from a telegram which states that Admiral Alexeieff the Viceroy of the Far East, has been given power to declare war and open hostilities as circumstances demand.

Something like panic seems to have at last overtaken St. Petersburg.

The Russian squadron at Port Arthur is being moved out of harbour by orders from St. Petersburg, and according to a Reuter special message, nine thousand troops have left Port Arthur to be near the Korean frontier.

On the other hand, the most intense anxiety is being felt in Tokio. Reuter, in a special message, indicates that the prolonged tension has reached its climax. A solemn council, to attend which Marquis Ito, the Emperor's most trusted adviser, was summoned from his country seat during the night, has been held, and the conference lasted seven hours. Great importance is attached to it, for even the highest officials now make no concealment of their exasperation of Russia's tardiness.

"An unofficial despatch," adds the message, "says Russia has decided on war."

The depression on the St. Petersburg bourse is becoming daily more marked. -- Reuter.

[Friday, February 5, 1904]

IS IT WAR ?

Japan Said to Have Broken Off Negotiations.

All indications point to war being very near, and the question has been raised whether diplomatic relations have not already been broken off by Japan.

It would be a quite natural step on her part, for she has waited an unreasonable time for an answer from Russia; and no sign is made. Indeed, it is now stated that even the probable date of despatch cannot be determined.

A correspondent sent the following "urgent" telegram last night from Pekin: --

"Official information has been received here that Japanese Government has decided to

refuse any further negotiations with Russian Government, and to take free action at once.”

“This is interpreted here as meaning that war has begun.”

Viscount Hayashi, the Japanese Ambassador, is inclined to look with suspicion on the reports emanating from Peking concerning news which might be equally easily cabled direct from Japan. But Peking has consistently proved extremely well-informed, and there is nothing inherently improbable in the fact.

Japan must now recognise that it is useless to rely on a favourable answer from Russia, in view of the warlike preparations the latter Power is making, and as her two new cruisers are due to reach Japan in about a week, she has no great reason to delay. Further disturbances in Korea will tend to hasten the apparently inevitable struggle.

The gravest view is taken of the situation everywhere in Europe except in Germany, where the official Press still expresses confidence of a peaceful settlement.

“ALL HOPE GONE”

A conference of the Elderly Statesmen was held this afternoon in the presence of the Emperor, at which, it is believed, a decision of the utmost importance was arrived at. The general impression now is that all hope of peace is gone. —Reuter.

WOULD JAPAN WIN?

Eastern Authority Thinks Russia Would Have no Chance in War.

What are the chances in an armed conflict between Japan and Russia?

Mr. Stafford Ransome, the well-known author and traveller, yesterday expressed to a Daily Illustrated Mirror correspondent his opinion that if it came to trial of naval strength at the present time, Russia would stand no chance whatever.

“I consider the Japanese right away the most advanced nation among Asiatics.

In comparison with the Russian also the Japanese does not suffer. I was at Peking, and had you been asked which was the more civilised soldier — the Russ or the Japanese — there would have been no hesitation in declaring for the latter.”

“It is a mistake,” he continued, “to assume that the Japanese are mere copiers. They see ideas, grasp, and absorb them, and then evolve other ideas from them.”

It is probable, Mr. Ransome thinks, that twenty years from now will see less Western influence in Japanese life. The Japanese by that time will have absorbed so much of our life and so many of our ideas that we shall cease — at least, in those respects — to be of much importance to him.

[Saturday, February 6, 1904]

RUSSIAN FEINT

Squadron Returns to Harbour—Japan's Resolve to Fight.

The sailing of the Russian fleet from Port Arthur seems to have been a piece of bluff. At any rate, the latest news of the squadron is that it has returned to its anchorage outside the harbour after an absence of a day and a half.

Japan, judging from the meagre news which the censors have allowed to pass, has taken no aggressive steps, but everywhere it is considered that hope of peace is practically gone.

Russia is apparently about to send her long-delayed reply. It will make no concession as to Manchuria, but will be so worded as to throw the onus of commencing war on Japan.

It is certain the latter Power will not withdraw from the position she has taken up. Viscount Hayashi has given an interview to a representative of the "Matin" on this subject, and has apparently spoken more freely than is his wont. "Your Government," said the interviewer, "holds it necessary that Russia shall sign a treaty recognising the independence of China in Manchuria?"

"Yes, that is so."

"And if Russia refuses?"

"We shall fight."

Viscount Hayashi also said Japan would not accept mediation even on the part of England. "We desire to be left alone," he said, "in our duel with Russia.

We demand no support, no help. We wish to settle our account with her alone."

THROWING THE ONUS ON JAPAN

New York, Friday.

A dispatch from St. Petersburg to the Associated Press announces that the Russian reply to Japan was last night forwarded to Admiral Alexeieff. If he approves it, the Note will be forwarded to Tokio, and should reach there by Monday at latest.

The belief in higher circles in St. Petersburg continues to be that Russia offers substantial concessions, but will not meet Japan's wishes regarding Manchuria, nor will she agree to any fortification of Southern Korea.

One thing is pronounced to be certain, Russia will not declare war nor initiate hostile action. If the negotiations break down she will remain quiescent until attacked. — Reuter.

Berlin, Friday.

The "National Zeitung," which is often inspired from a high quarter, to-day says:

"There can be no doubt whatever that the Russian answer will be so couched as to throw the odium on commencing hostilities on Japan should war ensue." — Reuter.

[Monday, February 8, 1904]

WAR !

Japan says "No More Negotiations," and Recalls Her Minister in St. Petersburg.

FIGHTING EXPECTED ANY MOMENT

Tsar Goes to Moscow to Pray for Russian Success

The long diplomatic struggle between Japan and Russia is at an end; it remains for the questions at issue to be decided by the arbitrament of the sword.

Japan, according to an official message from St. Petersburg, has broken off negotiations, and the Legations in both countries have been ordered to withdraw.

This can only be interpreted as the precursor of war, and news that hostilities have actually broken out in the Far East may be expected at any moment; probably the hostile fleets are within a day's steam of each other.

It has been quite evident to well-informed and intelligent observers for some time past that war was the logical and inevitable ending of the negotiations, which have lasted since last October. But the continual delays led the man in the street to believe nothing serious was likely to ensue.

Russia, it will be observed, attempts, as had been expected, to throw the responsibility on to Japan; but those who have watched the weary diplomatic battle must admire the patience with which our ally has acted throughout. It is certain that this final step has not been taken rashly. It has been adopted only because Japan was convinced that her enemy meant war in the long run, and was only playing a game to give time for the completion of war preparations.

THE FIRST NEWS

Russia Declares that the Responsibility lies on Japan

The news of the rupture of negotiations came in a Reuter's telegram from St.

Petersburg, and reached the London newspaper offices at seven minutes past eleven yesterday morning. The message is given below: —

The "Official Messenger" to-day (Sunday) publishes the following circular telegram, dated February 6, sent by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Russian representatives abroad: —

"Acting on instructions from his Government the Japanese Minister at the Imperial Court has presented a Note which informs the Imperial Government of the decision of Japan to break off further negotiations and recall its Minister and the whole staff of the Legation from St. Petersburg.

"In consequence of this his Imperial Majesty has been pleased to order that the Russian Minister at Tokio, with the whole staff of the Imperial Mission, shall leave the capital of Japan without delay.

"Such a procedure on the part of the Tokio Government, which has not yet even awaited the arrival of the answer of the Imperial Government which was sent off during the last few days, throws the whole responsibility for the consequences which may arise from the rupture of diplomatic negotiations between the two Empires on Japan.

TSAR LEAVES FOR MOSKOW.

A St. Petersburg telegram yesterday afternoon stated: —

"The Tsar is leaving here to-day for Moskow in order to attend a religious service at the cathedral there. This is in accordance with custom on the outbreak of war.

MINISTERS LEAVING

Baron Rosen, the Russian Minister in Tokio, is expected to leave in a few days, and preparations are already in progress at the Legation.

It is believed that M. Kurino, Japan's representative at St. Petersburg, and the Legation staff will leave for Berlin to-day. The British Embassy at St. Petersburg will take charge of Japanese interests.

Up to late last night no official notification had been received at the Japanese Embassy in London. A Daily Illustrated Mirror representative who called there was given a reply to that effect. One of the secretaries added: "The news of the actual declaration of war is perhaps a little premature, for we should certainly be informed immediately."

The officials expect an intimation hourly.

To another representative Viscount Hayashi said: —

"I have not been officially informed of the fact but I think it very probable."

"Very probable," he repeated, sadly.

"That is tantamount to the existence of a state of war?" was the next question asked, and the Minister despondently nodded assent. His Excellency seemed deeply affected.

At the Russian Embassy there was nothing to communicate, but news of the rupture had reached the British Government, although not through an official source.

TO-DAY'S REFLECTIONS.

— — — — —
The Sword Unsheathed

At last! That will be the exclamation of nine people out of ten when they read that a state of war now exists between Japan and Russia. The news has been discounted so many times, and we hear it with scarcely a thrill; and the full meaning of its dread import will not come home to us until a battle has been fought. Then, indeed, if it should be a naval battle, the horror of a modern war at sea will be realised as they never have been before.

We can only guess at them as yet. Neither from the Chino-Japanese war nor from the engagements between Spanish and American ships could an exact opinion be formed as to what would happen when two powerful fleets meet in mid-ocean to fight to the death. Manoeuvres give us even less guidance. All that seems certain is that the carnage will be appalling, and that victory can only rest with the fleet which practically puts the other side out of existence.

The progress of hostilities will be watched with the keenest interest in this country, both on account of the light they will throw on the qualities of the battle-fleet, and also because the Japanese are our allies and a nation which has done much to win our sympathy and admiration. Russia can make out a very fair case for herself, as will be seen from our story of the events which have led up to war; but it is indisputable that Russian aims in the Far East are purely selfish, whereas Japan is fighting not only for her own hand, but in defence of the interests of other Powers as well—notably those of Great Britain and the United States.

So much is this the case that even if the war should result in a victory for Russia (which is not considered likely) the two Anglo-Saxon nations would in all probability combine to prevent Japan being crushed by harsh conditions of peace. In doing this they would merely be following the example which Russia herself set after the defeat of China, when she interfered, with the assistance of France and Germany, in order to prevent Japan from securing the natural fruits of victory. Ever since that interference it has been regarded as a sure thing that Japan would sooner or later seek to get her own back by attacking Russia, and attempting to punish her for her cynical seizure in 1899 of the very port (Port Arthur) from which she had got Japan turned out in 1895.

All Britain can do for the present is to look on. Our treaty with Japan only obliges us to go to the Mikado's assistance if he is attacked by two Powers, and France's engagement with Russia is, it is believed, to the same effect. So we may reasonably hope that the two Powers will be left to fight it out between themselves, and that no general Armageddon will follow.

[Tuesday, February 9, 1904]

THE WAR.

— — — — —
Formal Declaration Not Expected, but Hostile Movements are Rumoured.
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RUSSIAN MINISTER'S FAREWELL.

Europe is discussing the rupture between Russia and Japan with something resembling panic.

It is recognised everywhere that the spark of war lighted in the East may easily lead to a conflagration in Europe, and may even be the signal for an explosion in the Balkans. More than usually threatening has been the situation in Southeastern Europe lately, and the preoccupations of Russia in the East may be the means of encouraging the Porte to attack Bulgaria.

Apart from any such aggravation, however, the actual situation is sufficiently appalling, and it is not surprising that the Continent still clings to a belief in the chance of mediation. It is a fallacious hope, for Japan has positively declared that she will accept no intervention, not even that of England:

France, however, is said still to have determined on one supreme effort to save her ally from war. It is satisfactory to notice that all indications are that France will do her best to localise the war when it becomes an accomplished fact.

It is stated that the Russian reply, declared to have been forwarded on Saturday, has not been received in Tokio.

WILL WAR BE FORMALLY DECLARED ?

Reuter was informed by Viscount Hayashi yesterday afternoon that no fresh developments had taken place, and that probably there would be none for some days.

He had received no news of military or naval movements, nor did he expect any, although it was quite possible that such had already commenced. The Japanese mobilisation began some days ago.

His Excellency added that no declaration of war was necessary, and that very likely none would be made. —Reuter.

THE RECALLED MINISTERS.

Tokio, Monday.

Baron von Rosen, the Russian Minister, together with his family and the attachés and priests belonging to the Legation, numbering altogether twenty-five, will leave Yokohama

on Friday on the French steamer Yarra, of the Messageries Maritimes, via Suez. Baron von Rosen is reported to be disappointed at the result of the negotiations.

The Austro-Hungarian Minister will assume charge of Russian interests during his absence. The foreign Ministers have bidden farewell to Baron von Rosen. The Russian merchants here are preparing to transfer their affairs from Japan.

It is estimated that the war bonds will bring in £50,000,000. —Reuter.

St. Petersburg, Monday.

The Japanese Legation was so taken by surprise at the decision of the Japanese Government to break off relations with Russia that, having made no preparations for departure, M. Kurino and his staff had to hasten them feverishly yesterday in order to be able to leave on Wednesday for Berlin. The care of the property of the Legation has been entrusted to the Chinese Minister, M. Hu Wei-teh. —Reuter

TO-DAY'S REFLECTIONS.

— — — — —

Haughty Russia's Way

— — — — —

All the world is straining its ears, listening to catch the boom of the first gun that will set free the dogs of war in the far East. It may have been fired by the time these lines are read. And a good deal may depend upon which side gets in its shot first — that is to say, which side is first in a position to take the offensive, either on sea or land. The general feeling is that the advantages, both naval and military, lie on the side of Japan. But there is not so much between the strength of the two Powers for either of them to be able to waste any time at the outset.

That Japan was justified in breaking off the negotiations is concerned everywhere save in Russia and in France. Europe knows Russian methods so intimately by this time that her intention to refuse a definite reply until she had had time to strengthen her position was thoroughly well understood. The only way to deal with Russian diplomats is to take a high line. Then they either back down, as they did in the matter of our expedition into Tibet; or else their hand is forced, as Japan will have forced it, unless some, at present inconceivable, way of avoiding war should be found at the very last moment.

The action of Russia with regard to this Tibetan business supplies a good example of the Muscovite's little way. Having done all they could to "noble" the Tibet authorities, and persuaded them to insult Great Britain's representatives, the Russian Foreign Office began to threaten us with terrible consequences if we took any steps to bring the Lamas to a more reasonable frame of mind. For once Lord Lansdowne showed admirable firmness. He told Russia (in polite language) to mind her own business, and for a time she did.

But only for a time. Last autumn, as soon as our expectation had started, Russia

entered a protest against it, nor in such a hectoring tone as before, it is true, but still in terms which caused Lord Lansdowne to reply as follows: —

I felt bound to add that it seemed to me beyond measure strange that these protests should be made by the Government of a Power which had, all over the world, never hesitated to encroach upon its neighbours when the circumstances seemed to require it. If the Russian Government had a right to complain of us for taking steps in order to obtain reparation from the Tibetans by advancing into Tibetan territory, what kind of language should we not be entitled to use in regard to Russian encroachments in Manchuria, Turkestan, and Persia?

That was the proper line to take. Bluster can always be stopped by plain speaking from a man in earnest, and so it proved in this case. Russia may be carrying on underground intrigues against us in Lhasa, but she has stopped sending protests to London. She sees that they have no effect.

Russia's fate as a world's-power is just now in the balance. She stands at such a parting of the ways as Spain did in the year of the Great Armada. If she gets from Japan such a beating as England inflicted on Spain, then she will go down the hill just as Spain did, and the dreams of Peter the Great will never be realised.

[Wednesday, February 10, 1904]

FIRST BLOW

— — — —

Struck Hard by Japanese, Who Torpedo Three Russian Warships.

— — — —

FIGHTING CONTINUES

The War has begun dramatically.

Patient and impassive as long as hope of peace remained, Japan has struck a vigorous and crushing blow at the very outset of the campaign. Whatever may be the result of the terrible struggle which has now to be fought out the Japanese officers have shown the world that their daring and resource are unbounded.

Port Arthur, the Russian stronghold, wrested from the Chinese in 1898, was the scene of the attack; the time was midnight on Monday.

The Russian fleet lay before the harbour, not in it. They had moved from the inner harbour last week. For Port Arthur is within the region of intense winter cold, and at this time of the year the sheltered waters of the inner port are glazed with a thick sheet of ice. Grey and ghostly lay the great leviathans in the freezing midnight gloom. The watch kept seems to have been none of the keenest. Otherwise the Japanese attack could hardly have

been so successful.

INFERNO BREAKS FORTH

Ploughing through the waters of the Gulf of Pechili came the slim, lithe Japanese torpedo boats. Little notice, either from the eye or the ear, do these deadly little boats attract. But little of them shows above the waves, and even that small surface is not easily visible under the dirty grey paint which is Japan's war color. At a few hundred yards at night the torpedo boat is a mere speck of mist; at a far distance even the searchlight might fail to reveal its sinister presence.

Streaming with little noise through the frozen night, the flotilla arrived within striking distance. Suddenly there was a roar as if pandemonium had broken loose. To the quiet of night the crash of battle succeeded. The deadly torpedoes, after winding their sinous way into midst of the Russian ships, had been fired, with startling effect. The great battleship Tsarewitch, only launched in 1901, heavily armed and with a displacement of 12,700 tons, was one of the victims. She was one of the ships hurried out to the East during the long-protracted negotiations. Probably it was not by design that she was specially selected for attack; but it is a piece of grim irony that this latest recruit should be the first injured.

Another damaged battleships was the Retvisan, a sister ship to the Tsarewitch, and the cruiser Pallada was also more or less disabled.

TO-DAY'S REFLECTION

He Who Strikes Quickly Strikes Twice

We said yesterday that Japan would probably lose no time in striking the first blow.

Before the words were printed she had struck it, and struck hard. At midnight the Russian ships in the outer harbour of Port Arthur (the inner harbour, it appears, is full of ice) were attacked by a flotilla of gunboats. Two battleships and one armoured cruisers were struck by torpedoes, discharged as the gunboats steamed past the harbour entrance, and in all probability they are now "out of action" — that is, either sunk or so much injured as to be useless until they have undergone heavy repairs.

The official telegram admits that they were "damaged," and the damage done by torpedoes, if they hit fair, is usually the same kind of damage as a man suffers when a house falls on him. When the Chilian battleship Blanco Encelada was torpedoed during the civil war of 1891 a survivor thus described the shock of the impact: —

Every light in the ship was extinguished, one of the 8in. guns was thrown off its trunnions, and a large number of men were killed. Portions of iron and machinery flew about the engine room, and killed or wounded six engineers. The Blanco began to heel heavily to starboard, exposing her decks to the pitiless hail from the quick-firers of the torpedo gunboats, which mowed the men down as they poured up from below.

For "damaged" in Admiral Alexeieff's telegram to the Tsar we may very likely have to read "destroyed." If so, the loss to Russia will be very severe indeed.

The story that in a subsequent attack on Port Arthur eleven Japanese ships were sunk does not rest as yet upon authority good enough to vouch for it. It comes from St. Petersburg, where they are anxious to believe that Japan suffered, by way of New York, which is always ready to accept any rumour that will provide an hour's sensation. The fortifications of Port Arthur are not very strong, and it is most unlikely that the guns on shore could do so much harm to ships at sea. It is possible, of course, that the Russian fleet engaged the Japs, but in that case the telegram would surely have spoken of the engagement as a naval battle, and not merely as an attack upon the port.

It is enterprise and dash that count for more than anything else in naval warfare, and Japan has certainly shown both these qualities. If she is equally active on land, it is quite possible that the war may be a short affair. Time is what Russia wants, but it is clear that Japan does not mean to let her have it.

"He strikes twice who strikes quickly" is the motto of our allies, and it would not be surprising if their careful preparations for taking the offensive should reduce Russia within a little time to the position of a defeated combatant suing for peace.

[Thursday, February 11, 1904]

DAY OF VICTORY

Japan Sinks Two Russian Warships and disables Seven Others

Such is the extraordinary record which our energetic ally has compiled within two days of actual hostilities. And she appears to have done all this with small damage to herself, though it is possible that later information may show that she, as well as Russia, has suffered.

It is a wonderful achievement, and even those who know Japan as the home of miracles are struck with astonishment.

That they would show absolute insensibility to fear and a courage equal to that of any maritime race everyone who knew them believed. That their naval preparations were extremely efficient was known to experts.

But such resource of strategy, such dash and daring in execution, have astonished the whole world, and especially those Continental critics who claimed that the conduct of the war against China was no test.

Japan has now a decided prepondance of strength; the Russian naval force at Port Arthur is decidedly inferior, and four of the best Russian cruisers are isolated at

Vladivostok.

“GOD AND OUR RIGHT”

St. Petersburg, Wednesday

The “Official Messenger” to-day publishes the following manifesto by the Tsar: —

“We proclaim to all our faithful subjects. In our solicitude for the preservation of that peace so dear to our heart we have put forth every effort to assure tranquility in the Far East. Japan, not even awaiting the arrival of our last reply, and the proposals of our Government, informed us of the rupture of the negotiations and of diplomatic relations with Russia.

“Without previously notifying that the rupture of such relations implied the beginning of warlike action, the Japanese Government ordered its torpedo-boats to make a sudden attack on our squadron in the outer harbour of the fortress of Port Arthur.

“After receiving the report of our Viceroy on the subject, we at once commanded Japan’s challenge to be replied to by arms.

“While proclaiming this our resolve, we, in unshakeable confidence in the help of the Almighty, and firmly trusting in the unanimous readiness of all our faithful subjects to defend the fatherland, together with ourselves, we invoke God’s blessing on our glorious forces of the Army and Navy.” — Reuter.

TO-DAY’S REFLECTIONS.

— — — — —
What Thou does, Do Quickly
— — — — —

One thing that makes this war in the Far East different from most other wars is that neither Russia nor Japan is fighting in its own country. As a rule, a nation which declares war against another has either to advance at once into the enemy’s territory, as Germany did in 1870, or to be prepared to defend its own territory against invasion, as the Boers were in 1899. But in this case there is no fear of a Japanese invasion of Russia, and very little probability, whatever may happen, that Russia will be at all inclined to attempt an armed occupation of Japan, although Russian ships may try to bombard some Japanese coast towns. The land fighting will be done, for some time at any rate, either upon Korea or Chinese territory.

This will make it more difficult for either side to put an early end to the war. If Japan could send an army to invest St. Petersburg, or Russia could hope to capture Tokio, the matter would be reduced to much greater simplicity, for as soon as the capital of one power was in the hands of the other the latter would be able to dictate terms of peace, after the fashion of the Germany in 1871. But as things stand, it is quite possible for the war to drag on a

very long time, each side bringing up constant reinforcements and playing a game of military chess upon an illimitable board.

We do not think it probable that this will happen, for, as we said yesterday, Japan seems to be determined to get the job over quickly, if dash and efficient leadership can do it.

But, considering that the Russians, although they are slow, are obstinate fighters, it is within the bounds of possibility that they may keep their end up for a great many months.

Japan's best chance of gaining a speedy victory is to get rid of the Russian fleet. If she can do that, and, at the same time, prevent the Russians from adding largely to their land forces, the game will be hers. Now, the only way to check the flow of Russian reinforcements is for Japan to cut the line from Europe across Siberia to Vladivostok and Port Arthur, which Russia built at such enormous expense, with her eye upon the probability of such a war as this. There are several points at which the wrecking of a bridge or a viaduct would stop through traffic altogether, and make it exceedingly difficult for Russia to continue pouring men into Manchuria, and we must be prepared to hear any day of explosions at these points arranged by Japanese agents in disguise.

At all events, Japan's object on land will be to clear Manchuria of Russian troops, keeping at the same time a firm hold upon Korea. Supposing she succeeded in this, and that Russia even then would not admit defeat, her advance would continue into Russian territory until she found and defeated the remaining Russian armies. And that might, as we have indicated, prolong the war indefinitely, which would be a grave misfortune for the world.

[Friday, February 12, 1904]

THE WAR.

— — — — —
Japan Now Lord of Southern Korea, but Fails to Land at Port Arthur
— — — — —

The chief news this morning is: —

A bridge on the Manchurian railway has been blown up, probably by Japanese agents. War was formally declared at Tokio yesterday.

The Japanese are fortifying Masampho, which they occupied on Sunday. They thus command the Korean Channel, which must be used on a voyage between Port Arthur and Vladivostok, the two Russian bases.

An confirmed report says that the Japanese have made unsuccessful attempts to land near Port Arthur. The Russian gunboat Manjur is imprisoned at Shanghai King Edward yesterday proclaimed British neutrality.

The anti-British "Novoe Vremya" accuses us of allowing the Japanese the use of Wei-hai-Wei as a base for the torpedo attack on Port Arthur.

Half Russia's Port Arthur fleet has now been put out of action.

Russia has now only four effective battleships, two armoured cruisers, and four protected cruisers.

Russia's Vladivostok fleet is still there. The Japanese will be on the alert if an attempt is made to reach Port Arthur.



DIARY OF THE WAR

Feb. 5. — Japan sends her Note breaking off negotiations.

Feb. 7. — News published in St. Petersburg and London.

Feb. 8. — Russia has the first shot, the Koriets firing on Japanese warships off Chemulpho.

At midnight the Japanese make a torpedo attack at Port Arthur, disabling three Russian warships.

Feb. 9. — Naval battle off Port Arthur; four Russian ships disabled.

Combat between Japanese squadron and Russian ships Variag and Koriets off Chemulpho; both Russians sunk.

Tsar prays for success to Russian arms.

Feb. 10. — Tsar issues formal proclamation of war. M. Kurino, the Japanese Ambassador, leaves St. Petersburg.

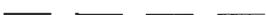
Feb. 11. — Bridge on Manchurian Railway reported blown up.
Japan formally proclaims war.

[February 13, 1904]

BLOWING UP THE LINE



Trans-Siberian Railway Cut by Japanese Agents—Where Are the Japanese Ships?



A telegraph from our correspondent at Tokio states that a bridge on the Manchurian railway has been blown up by the Japanese.

The Japanese fleet has mysteriously disappeared, and has not been seen by the Russians since Tuesday. It may reappear and deliver an attack at any moment.

A reconnaissance made by the Russian cruisers on Wednesday was fruitless.

Admiral Alexeieff has sent a report to the Tsar, in which he states that the damaged Russian warships can be repaired in a fortnight.

The survivors of the Chemulpho fight are to be released on parole that they will take no

further action during the war.

The cables from Seoul have been cut, and consequently the movements of the Japanese troops in Korea are not known.

TO-DAY'S REFLECTIONS

In One Short Week

The first week of the war ends to-day. Last Saturday we were still speculating as to whether little Japan could stand up against the Power which has dominated Eastern Asia for so many years. This Saturday we are wondering how long Russia will be able to hold out against the dash and determination of her ingenious and enterprising foe. How is it that the situation has altered so completely in the course of a few days? What are the lessons to be learnt from the vastly improved position of Japan and vastly worsened chances of Russian victory?

There is only one lesson, and that is the old, old lesson which Britons need to learn very badly. The moral of the first week of war is "Be Prepared." The Japanese have been for years preparing for this past week, and for the weeks, and possibly months, that are to follow. They knew exactly what they were going to do when war broke out. Every step in their campaign had been carefully planned after much thought, long before war was in sight.

Just as Moltke and his General Staff had settled what the German armies must do whenever they went to war with France, so did the Japs settle clearly in their minds the line they must take as soon as they came to blows with Russia. They put no trust in the possibility of "muddling through." They did not assume that there would be time to make plans when war broke out. They imitated the Germans, in short, and not their allies in Great Britain.

And, furthermore, their diplomatic action and their naval and military preparations went hand in hand. That is where they scored most heavily over Russia, which went on negotiating without at the same time preparing to fight, and gave Japan the opportunity of choosing her own time to begin. We made just the same mistake in 1899. Our politicians acted as if there were no chance of war, and therefore when war broke out, we were unprepared for it. It is true we were able to live down the ill-fortune which we met with at the outset, but should we have been able to do so if we had been fighting the Japanese instead of the Boers?

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