

Armed Peace on the Pacific

By SEN KATAYAMA

Peace reigns over the Pacific. For Japan and the United States are allies, now that they have a common enemy: Germany, autocratic, militaristic Germany.

But there is a difference between Japan and the United States in the present world war. Japan has never declared that she is fighting to make the world safe for democracy, while the United States has. Japan is on the side of the allies because of the treaty of alliance with England.

The Japanese form of government is autocratic. The tyranny within, is combined with a cringing foreign policy giving rise to much dissatisfaction among the intelligent classes. The Okuma and Terauchi ministries have been influenced directly or indirectly by England.

This servility led Japan to enter the war not on her own account, but in the interest of England and her colonies, while these same colonies treat the Japanese as a backward race and practically exclude them; I mean to say that Japanese workers are excluded from Australia, New Zealand, Transvaal and other colonies in Africa, and are even treated in Canada as undesirable compared with Chinamen.

The foreign policy of Japan is also illustrated by the "Gentlemen's Agreement" with the United States, which is in reality a Japanese Exclusion Act on the part of the United States. But Japan promised of her own free will not to send any workers to this country, and begged the United States not to enact an exclusion act.

Yet, in spite of the fact that no Japanese workers have been permitted to come here for the past ten years, there has grown

up an anti-Japanese movement along the Pacific coast, carrying on an agitation as if the Japanese were swarming at the very door of America. In reality Japan has not sent any workers to this country for twenty years. The Japanese workers in the west are almost all from the Hawaiian Islands, where they were originally imported by American Sugar kings, as contract labor, under the most enslaving conditions. And when Hawaii was then annexed to the United States, the poor contract laborers left for the Pacific coast because they were now free from the slavery of the former contract arrangement. This migration to the coast continued until it was prohibited by the President under the new immigration law in completion or extension of the Gentlemen's Agreement.

The complement of this weak foreign policy is drastic reaction and brutal suppression at home, for it is always the case that the worst tyrants are the ones who debase themselves before those whom they regard as their superiors, and then compensate themselves by taking it out on those lower down.

The government is powerless before the possessors of wealth, and sacrifices the interests of the people as a whole. The workers are enslaved for the benefit of the rich, and every attempt at organization and emancipation is suppressed with increasing severity by the police.

At the same time nothing was left undone to build up a powerful militarism, and a well organized bureaucracy, as soon as the big interests felt that they were firm in the saddle.

At first, when the old regime was overthrown, fifty-one years ago, the new government was really revolutionary. The tenants took over the land which they had formerly rented from the feudal lords, and the government assessed a tax of 3 per cent. on the land after fixing the valuation on the basis of the productivity of the soil. Castes were abolished, time-honored privileges and licenses such as the right to brew rice wines, were confiscated. Buddhist monks were permitted to marry and to eat fish and animal flesh. The hereditary salary of the old military classes together with their privileges were