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EDITORIAL

FROM FAR JAPAN.

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JAPAN'S welfare is threatened, or, which amounts to the same, its Government thinks it is threatened by Russia. Without export markets, Japan would suffer. Russia's conduct in Manchuria, Corea and the Far East generally is considered by the Japanese Government as worse than a menace. In view of this, preparations for war are going on. There are many things needed for war. But all these many rank themselves under two main heads—men and money. Without men no armies can be set in the field, or fleets afloat; without money, as society is now arranged, no men can be kept in the field or afloat, equipped within or without so as to be able to perform their task. Under these circumstances, what is the course of the Japanese Government?



KATSURA TARO (1847-1913)

On the head of “men,” the despatches tell us that all the measures have been taken for a draft of men the minute war is certain. On the head of “money,” do these despatches keep the symmetry with these on the head of “men”? As to the “men,” we see they are to be DRAFTED, will they nil they; is “money” also to be drafted? No, sir! The despatches tell us that Premier Katsura and the other members of the Japanese Cabinet were to entertain at dinner on January 28 a number of prominent bankers of the empire, looking to the raising of loans!

Japan is under the capitalist system of production. As such her people are divided, just the same as with us, into capitalists and workingmen.

The workingman's share of the wealth produced depends upon his exchange value in the labor-market, just as any other article of merchandise. He gets that, and nothing more, rather less. Improved markets in Manchuria and Corea are in

the nature of improved machinery—a stimulus to the production of more wealth. But seeing the share of the wealth that the workingman produces depends, not on the quantity of wealth which he produces but upon his market value, it follows that increased volumes of wealth, brought about either through improved machinery or through improved markets, will raise his share by not one copper, or fraction of a copper. In other words, the danger that “threatens Japan” threatens only her capitalist class, and the advantage that could be derived from enlarged markets in Manchuria and Corea will flow, not into the pockets of the Japanese workingmen, but into the pockets of the Japanese capitalists. To put the matter more plastically, the advantages that are looked for from the war are to accrue, not to the class that is DRAFTED to fight and lose its life, but to the class that is WINED AND DINED so as to induce it to place its usurious claws upon the land as a mortgagee!

It often happens that what happens at a distance is seen through more easily and clearly than what happens nearby. The American working class should take a good peep at these happenings just reported from far Japan.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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