

CLASH OF CLAIMS AT PEACE MEETING BURDENS WILSON

Racial Antagonisms and the Suspicion in Which Small Nations Hold Large Makes Going Hard.

JAPANESE CLAIMS PRESSING

Refused Racial Recognition, Japan Stands Pat on Shantung Claims at Critical Period.

(Continued From Page One)

There was literally no time for it. Occasionally he would take a short automobile ride in the Bois with Mrs. Wilson; sometimes a little brisk walk with Admiral Grayson. And he would stand by the open window, now and then, in such moments as he could catch, and breathe deeply. He did everything possible to get every ounce of energy out of his bodily and mental machine for his daily struggle.

I heard the assertion solemnly made the other day that the trouble with the president at Paris was that he would not see the experts of the delegation; or would not hear all sides of the case. The fault, if any, was really upon the other side. He tried too hard to get every angle, every point of view, he was tempted to wait too long to be absolutely sure of facts upon which he must base his decisions. This, throughout his whole career, has been his inclination—his fault, if you like. Thomas W. Lamont, who was one of the financial experts of the commission, met this accusation vigorously in a recent public statement.

"I hear it repeated," he said, "that he was unwilling to take counsel with his delegation. That is untrue. He constantly and earnestly sought the advice of his associates."

ALL SIDES HEARD

Indeed, it was he, beyond any other man, who wanted all the facts presented to the council. Two such cases, among many, come to my memory. Both the Italians and the Japanese, of course, had seats in the supreme council of the five great powers and could naturally keep their own claims always before their associates. Under such circumstances the Jugo-Slavs and the Chinese might have had a hard time getting a proper consideration of their cases. But the president urged the fullest hearing of the Jugo-Slavs, and they got it, even though Orlando declined to be present at the sittings. In the same way the president stood for a full hearing of the Chinese by the council of 10; and a notable presentation of the Chinese case was given by Wellington Koo. On the other hand, it was he, beyond any other, who was most anxious to have the Japanese—the silent partners of the conference—express their views upon all the difficult issues.

To the Shantung question the president gave laborious consideration. As I know from personal knowledge, he studied the maps and the reports, and he

saw, repeatedly, the experts on all sides. Consider, for a moment, the exact situation at Paris on April 29, when the Japanese-Chinese crisis reached the explosive point.

ANOTHER GRAVE CRISIS
It was on that very day that the German delegates were coming morosely into Versailles, ready for a treaty that was not yet finished. The "Big Three"—Orlando had then withdrawn from the conference—had been gradually lengthening their session; the discussions were longer and more acrimonious. They were tired out. Only six days before, on April 23, the high council had been hopelessly deadlocked on the Italian question. The president had issued his bold message to the world regarding the disposition of Fiume (as I described in another article) and the Italian delegation departed from Paris with the expectation that their withdrawal would either force the hands of the conference, or break it up.

While this crisis was at its height the Belgian delegation, which had long been restive over the non-settlement of Belgian claims for reparations, became insistent. They had no place in the supreme council and they were worried lest the French and British—neither of whom could begin to get enough money out of Germany to pay for its losses—would take the lion's share and leave Belgium unrestored. The little nations were always worried at Paris lest the big ones take everything and leave them nothing! Very little appeared in the news at the time concerning the Belgian demands, but they reached practically an ultimatum: Belgium was not satisfied she also would withdraw from the conference and refuse to sign the treaty.

CHINESE SITUATION PRESSING

It was at this critical moment that the Chinese-Japanese question had to be settled. It had to be settled because the disposition of German rights in China (unlike Italian claims in the Adriatic) had to go into the German treaty before it was presented to Brockdorff-Rantzau and his delegates at Versailles, and because the Japanese would not sign the treaty unless it was settled. The defection of Japan, added to that of Italy and the possible withdrawal of Belgium, would have made the situation desperate.

The two principal things that Japan wanted at the peace conference were, first, a recognition in the covenant of the League of Nations of the "equality of the nations and the just treatment of their nationals"; and, second, the recognition of certain rights over the former German concessions in China (Shantung).

WHAT JAPAN DEMANDED

After a struggle lasting all through the conference Japan had finally lost out, in the meeting of the League of Nations' commission on April 11, in her first great contention. She was refused the recognition of racial or even national equality which she demanded—although a majority of the nations represented on the League of Nations' commission agreed with her that her desire for such recognition was just and should find a place in the covenant. Of this Viscount Chinda said plainly: "The national aspiration of Japan depends upon its adoption. Public opinion in Japan is very much concerned over this question and certain people have even gone so far as to say that Japan will not become a member of the League of Nations unless she is satisfied on this point."

Few people realize how sharply the Japanese felt this hurt to their pride, and how few people realize the meaning of this struggle, as a forerunner of one of the great coming struggles of civilization—the race struggle. We had at Paris the representatives of several powerful race groups, all asserting a new

racial dignity, all working for the recognition of a new equality.

CONFLICTING RACIAL INTERESTS

Not only were there the powerful Japanese and Chinese, but there was a Jewish group, a negro group, an Egyptian group; and when all is said, the Irish question is largely a racial question, and no set of problems is there the need in the future, not of hasty judgment, but of patient effort to understand. So much of the distrust of one race toward another is due to what a French writer, Michael Corday, calls the primitive instinct of the beast, which "forces him to attack whatever does not resemble him."

The Japanese are peculiarly sensitive to world opinion. No people are more self-conscious than they. I remember a Japanese I met once in crossing the Atlantic. He was reading, day after day, a large book printed in French. He told me what it was: a collection of opinions expressed by leading newspapers and public men of the world regarding the Japanese nation. It interested him profoundly. They are a proud, sensitive, insular people; and their representatives who were at Paris often impressed me with a kind of inarticulate desire to make themselves better understood, without quite knowing how to do it. In a curious way their inhibitions and shyness resemble those of another insular people—the British. They are very different from the Chinese, who are a continental people. They do not learn foreign languages as easily or perfectly. The Chinese at Paris were practically all American or British educated and more open, outright, and frank than the Japanese, and they were to a man, real gentlemen. We had one of them, Mr. Wei, who flew into our office as breezily every day or so as any American and was on familiar terms with everyone. But the Chinese as a whole lacked experience; for the scarcity of men in China educated in the West had made it necessary to pick young college graduates for highly responsible diplomatic positions; and they are not yet the equals in experience to the trained and very able Japanese.

PRESIDENT TAKES BLAME

The Japanese felt strongly regarding the defeat in their effort to obtain the racial recognition clause in the covenant, and at once, in some of their extreme newspapers, there began a sharp attack on President Wilson as the cause of their discomfort. The Osaka Mainichi Deipos, for example, referred to the president's "dangerous justice" and charged him with having a "female demon within him"—a term vividly denunciatory to the Oriental mind. What-

ever happened at the conference, the president had to take the lion's share of the blame for it. Having lost out in their first great contention the Japanese came to the settlement of their second demand with a feeling of irritation but with added determination. The Japanese delegates were the least expressive of any at the conference; they said the least; but they were the firmest of any in hewing to the line of their interests and their agreements. It must not be forgotten also, in all fairness, that the Japanese delegates, not less than the British, French and American, had their own domestic political problems, and opposition, and that there was a powerful demand in Japan that while all the other nations were securing some return for their losses and sacrifices in the war, Japan should also get some return.

JAPAN'S POSITION STRONG

At the same time Japan was in a stronger position than any other of the allies except the United States. She had been little hurt, and much strengthened by the war. She was far distant from danger, she did not need the League of Nations as much as the countries of Europe, and more than anything else, she occupied a strong legal status, for her claims were supported by treaties both with China and the allies, and she was, moreover, in a position, if she were rendered desperate, to take by force what she considered to be her rights. If the allies refused to accord them, I am not here arguing the right or wrong of the Japanese position; but trying to state it fairly, so that it can be accurately measured.

In the seventh and concluding article of this series, to be published in The Journal next Wednesday, Mr. Balmori will discuss the struggle over Shantung, the last great crisis at the peace conference, and will give his conclusions as to President Wilson's work at Paris.

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Royal Family Shot Down by Soviet Leaders and Their Bodies Cremated, Is Revealed.

SECRET LETTERS ARE FOUND

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By Isaac Don Levine

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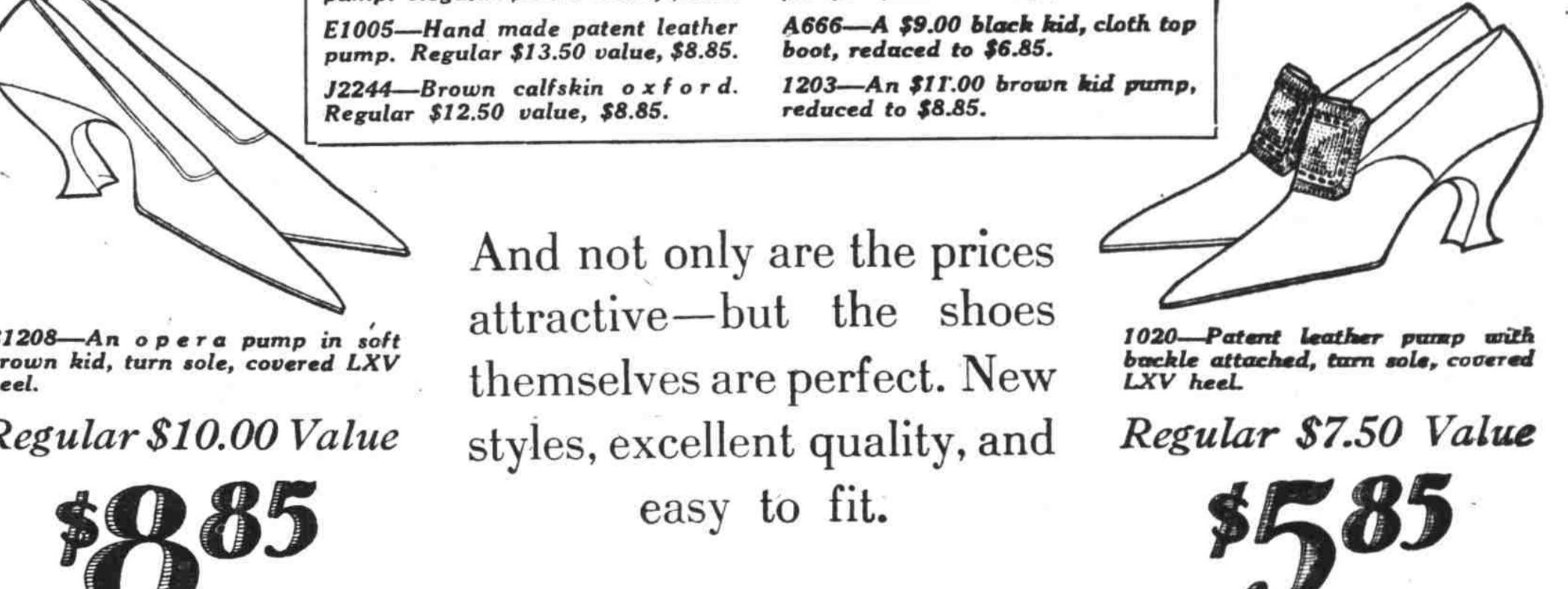


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