Japan's Powerful Place Among the Allies

Takuma Kuroda, Who Represented His Government at the Panama Exposition, Scoops at Japanese Invasion of America.

By Richard Barry.

Japan has been buzzing on "The Spirit of Japan," France in charge of a general display of the Imperial Japanese exhibits at the Panama-Pacific Exposition. I had last known the great country a few years ago, when he placed in charge of its section the late Rear Admiral Sano Hiro (the War Department), and during the first few weeks of its showing, the enthusiasm of the people seemed to be challenging the extremely delicate task of restrain- ing the admiration of the determined American newspaper men.

Mr. Kuroda has always been a figure of some notoriety in international affairs. For many years he was an active diplomatist at Peck, and after the Chinese war was the means of communica- tion between the Japanese emperor and the chief diplomatist of the United States, Vincent General Tujo, one of the most influential of the men of the old Japan that pre- ceded the Russian war. He has now in a peculiar position, that of an old friend in the new world, meeting the occasion of the moment, but rather that of the little group of statesmen who held the balance of the age and of the new nations. His relations, however, with his idea of Japan and its policies in the new world, is of the utmost importance that his that of Director of the Council of Conciliators in Japan at present is exhibiting in New York his collection of Oriental antique objects. He speaks as Baron Estorfer of Con- stantin might speak of France.

"It is true," I asked Mr. Kuroda for the Sunday Times, "that Japan has lost her head over her present profitable alliance with the principal powers of Europe and its consequent prosperity, and that as is so often reported, she is indulging in vast dreams of world dominion.

He laughed heartily. "It is always amusing," he said, "to observe the wild enthusiasm with which every conceivable newspaper seems to have something better to do than imagine troubles which now have passed beyond the pale of ex- tinction. The latest, I believe, is that because Japanese abundant in the hands of a Tsingtao in Peking she is fortifying herself for an advance on the Philippines. Wal- lons, it is true, it is true that we are going ahead, after our usual fashion, to govern them as well as we know how, installing postal, telegraph, and cable service, and even fortifying them in the same form, it is in Japan's interest to conclude we are going to attack Alaska because we are properly govern- ing Sakhalin as it is in our way to prepare to enliven the Philippines. Well, I believe, you may have heard that Japan has all she can do with her own people on their territories and in consideration of that, the term of the special factor?"

"That is the true in the immediate future, but how about, for instance, fifteen years hence—or even five years hence?" I inquired.

"Not in a hundred years," replied Mr. Kuroda, "will the situation be any different. It is only natural for Japan, who are essentially that of an inland population to seek to continue the same. We arc wrongly suspected of designs on China. It is more natural to suspect that it is China that is designing. Japan has no, it is equally without founda- tion, any designs that are feasible in service that we are interested in.

We want our share of the trade of China's that is all. Otherwise we want to keep it. The same is true of Japan's relationship from the German?"

"Japan has had designs on Korea for over seventy years," Mr. Kuroda cor- rected me, "if you will to all practical and geographical internaliza- tion of our people's designs, yet even now our true intenion to Korea is to teach Korea to govern herself. It is one thing, at least, for which you must rise to the occasion, and it is one thing, I think, the understanding of the most enlightened statistiahship of the modern age. Eng-

Mr. Kuroda was fighting purely by boats, solely in the naval sense and dealing directly from the German?

"I have frequently said to Japan that in the present war we have made no change, that it is as bad, or different from the Germans. Of course that could not be thought of. I only speak of it to em- phasize that we are not an unequal people. England had been our ally when we were in Spain, and now we are here when she needs one. And now let me assure you, Japan is no less a factor in the present case of the Allies. We have our support, a con- tingency that is not likely to happen, but suppose it did. India would instant-