

"JAPAN'S DISASTROUS WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES"

Thrilling Imaginative Story of Crushing Defeat That Is Stirring Nippon to Preparedness

By K. K. KAWAKAMI.

There has recently appeared in Tokio a remarkable book entitled "The Next War." The author is anonymous, but is evidently a man well versed in naval affairs. Although in the garb of fiction, the book is in reality more of an essay than a story.

According to the "Far East," an English weekly published in Tokio, "the principal book was forbidden for some time by the Government authorities or reasons for which it was later permitted to be published with revision here and there."

Written in a forceful style, the book at once attracted the attention of the populace as well as the thinking public. Unlike ordinary fiction the book contains numerous charts and statistical tables showing the position of the Japanese navy among the navies of the Powers of the world, and especially the relative strength of the Japanese and American navies.

Of course the book should not be confounded with "The Dream Story of the War With America," which was of altogether a different character and never attracted much attention in Japan.

Ignoring this agreement, the United States obliged China to cede to her the leased harbor at Chefoo, with a view to converting it into a naval base of her own.

The sinister intentions of the American Government became obvious when the naval base at Pearl Harbor at Honolulu was completed.

When the celebration was over the President ordered a naval manoeuvre of an unprecedented scope. The fleet, consisting of eighteen dreadnoughts, with the usual number of minor vessels, was instructed to proceed to the Philippines, visiting Japanese ports on the way.

By coincidence, our navy was at the same time also holding a manoeuvre in that part of the Pacific stretching from Formosa to the Bonin Islands. When America's first squadron of eighteen dreadnoughts entered the Bay of Tokio there were no Japanese warships to greet them.

The imposing appearance of the eighteen floating castles made a profound impression upon the minds of the spectators. Even the linguistic journals of Tokio, which had been fond of scoring the humiliating foreign policy of the Government in dealing with America, were impelled to speak with moderation in the face of such an impressive display of America's naval strength.

Our courteous treatment of the visiting fleet from America was easily interpreted by American newspapers as admission of the inferiority of our navy. They were elated over what they considered the master stroke of American strategy, and urged the Government at Washington to seize upon this psychological moment to attain its long coveted end in China.

The American fleet, having completed the manoeuvre, was returning to the naval harbor of Sasebo. They had been instructed by the Naval Staff Board to take a circuitous route, so that they might not meet the American fleet, which had left Yokohama for the Philippines.

Fortunately for the empire the meeting of the two fleets was not marred by any awkward incident. The two fleets crossed each other on opposite courses.

At the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war our navy occupied the fourth place in the navies of the world. To-day it has fallen to the sixth place. Time was when Germany and the United States were behind us in naval strength.

To-day these two Powers boast of navies each twice as powerful as ours. If we permit ourselves to lag behind them as we are doing to-day we shall by 1924 have a navy of only one-third the strength of the American or German navy.

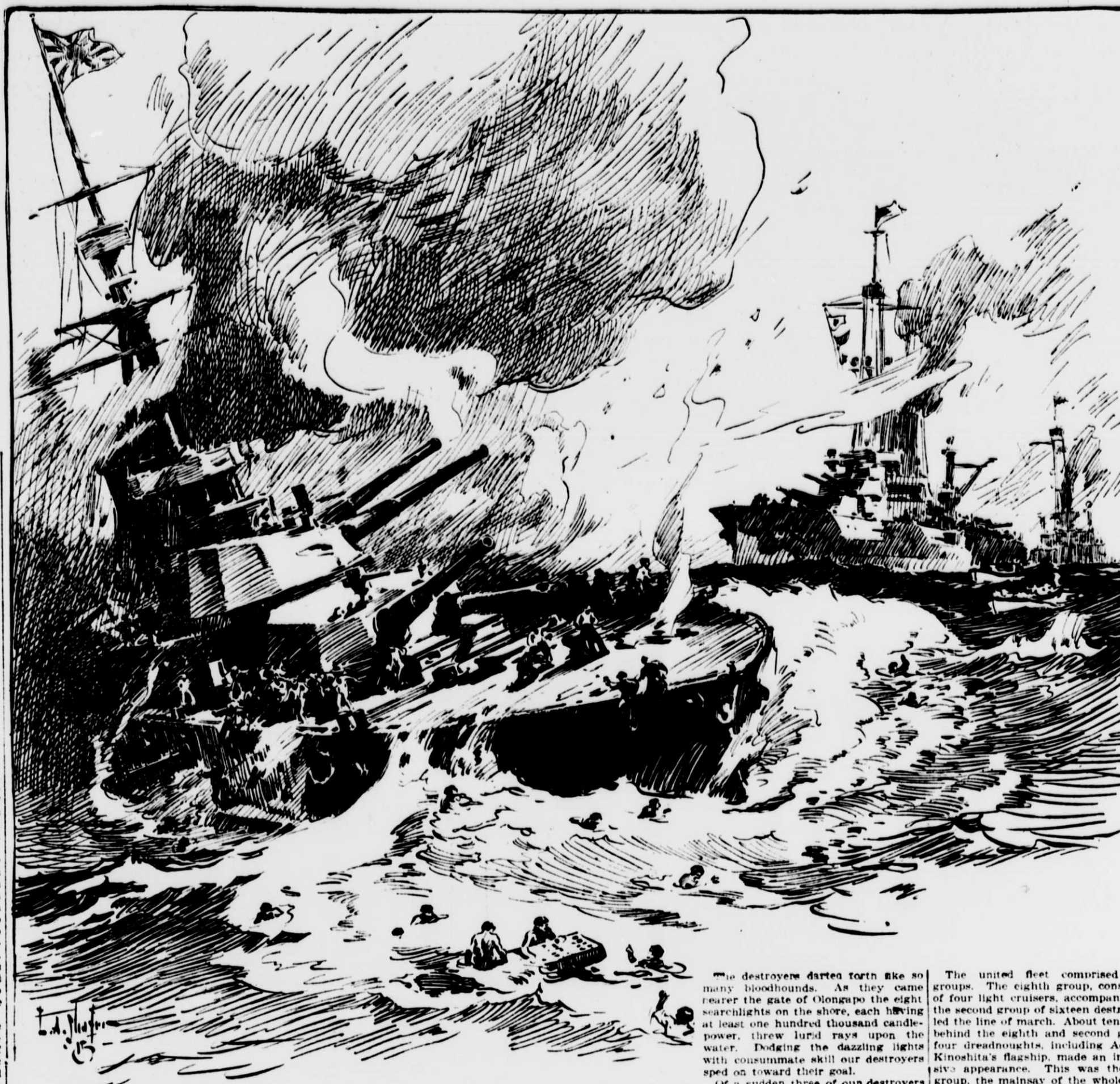
While Germany and the United States are fully awake to the advantage offered by the newness of their navies and are bending their energies to the construction of the most up to date warships, we ask ourselves: "Have we not shown ourselves utterly incapable of availing ourselves of the same advantage, and are we not permitting our navy to drift without any preconceived programme?"

The Minister's speech was as forceful as it was illuminating. He wished it understood that the adoption of the new naval programme could no longer be delayed if the empire were to uphold its dignity and prestige in the eyes of the Powers.

The Anglo-Japanese alliance had just been revised. In its new form the treaty was no longer a safeguard to our interests in our rivalry with the United States.

Toward sundown that day the weather became threatening. When night fell rain poured down in torrents, and the wind roared with a menacing fury from the west.

The searchlights of the American ships were instantly focused upon the scene of the explosion. It was now obvious that the flagship Manila was the victim of a fatal accident. In the dazzling rays of searchlights the magnificent dreadnought of 35,000 tons



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was seen already half swallowed in a whirling vortex of the heaving ocean. Tossed in billows and rolled by kale, the surviving vessels were utterly helpless and found it impossible to hold back the populace clamoring for war.

The die was cast. There was nothing for the Mikado to do but send an ultimatum to the American President. The Mikado ordered the mobilization of five divisions of his army and issued a rescript declaring that the existence of the empire depended upon the outcome of the war.

The American people were now resolved to take vengeance upon the Japanese for the sinking of the Manila. They went mad and refused to listen to reason.

Not a few urged the wholesale massacre of the Japanese in the same way as they were wont to lynch negroes in the South. It was a fearful hour for the Japanese in America. They dared not leave their homes and knew not when their end might come.

The Mikado's army and navy made their plans. Especially was the navy, knowing that it had nothing whatever to do with the sinking of the Manila, determined to chastise the arrogance of the Americans.

While our Government was foolishly parleying with the Administration at Washington an untoward event happened at the hands of the riffler. They hauled down the Rising Sun that was flying over the embassy and tore it into tatters.

The first fleet of America, which on its way to the Philippines encountered a terrific storm, resulting in the loss of the Manila, duly arrived in Manila Bay. In the meantime the second division, which had been ordered to Sanos, returned to Pearl Harbor at Honolulu.

Simultaneously with the despatch of the ultimatum to the American Government the Naval Staff Board at Washington wired the commander in chief of the united squadron at Sasebo.

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The destroyer dashed forth like so many bloodhounds. As they came nearer the gate of Olongapo the eight searchlights on the shore, each shining at least one hundred thousand candle power, threw lurid rays upon the water.

Of a sudden three of our destroyers boldly attacked one of the scout cruisers of the enemy. It was a deadly struggle, which the scout cruiser instantly went down to the bottom of the sea.

While the enemy's forts were fighting their own cruises three of our destroyers slipped into the harbor and block which they dealt, for the cruiser instantly went down to the bottom of the sea.

By this time, however, the sea was covered with dazzling illumination from which our destroyers found it no longer possible to conceal themselves.

When the curtain of darkness was lifted over the harrowing scene of battle of the night preceding the main strength of the American fleet, consisting at least of twenty dreadnoughts and cruisers and ten destroyers, was seen in a magnificent array outside the Olongapo harbor.

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fleet within the harbor. Now and then fierce duels took place between our aeroplanes and the enemy's. At one time twenty-five fighting craft of the air, fifteen of the enemy's and ten of ours, while engaged in a deadly combat, were swept by a powerful gale so common in that region and dashed upon the sea.

It was, however, when the battleship Nagato succumbed to the attack of an American submarine that our fleet suffered the first serious loss. The sinking of the Nagato created consternation at the General Staff Office and at the Naval Staff Board.

The nation intuitively felt that something was the matter with our fleet at Olongapo, and at this moment of despondency a fearful report came from London like a thunderbolt out from the blue—the second squadron of America, assisted by the vessels from the Atlantic, had left Honolulu for an unknown destination.

From Hawaii to Manila the distance is 4,600 kfloats. At twelve knots an hour the second squadron of America would appear in Philippine waters within sixteen days. Unless we reduced the stronghold of Olongapo and placed our warships securely in the harbor, both our squadron and our land forces were doomed.

For ten days after its departure from Honolulu the whereabouts of the enemy's second squadron were utterly unknown. On the eleventh day it suddenly appeared in the neighborhood of the Bonin group, our outpost in the Pacific, 530 miles from Tokio.

Some of the capitalists and business men had already begun to urge the conclusion of a peace treaty. Newspapers began to throw the blame of responsibility upon the army and navy, ignoring that they were the first to advocate war.

At this critical moment a certain European Power, knowing that the utter humiliation of Japan at the hands of the American nation would disturb the balance of power in the Pacific, approached the Government at Washington with the idea of ending the war then and there.

The day of doom of the empire had come. Our extraordinary forces must lose no more time in reaching Olongapo. Driven to desperation, Admiral Kinoshita ordered a number of destroyers to dash into the harbor and attack the enemy's dreadnoughts with torpedoes.

The destroyers, by dint of sheer audacity and intrepidity, succeeded in breaking through the obstacles that sealed the mouth of the harbor, but the bombardment from the enemy's forts and ships was so terrific that none of the destroyers managed to escape.

On the land side our attack was more successful. After a slaughter and sacrifice without parallel in the whole history of warfare our army at last planted the Rising Sun upon the walls of the stronghold which was thought impregnable.

With the Americans occupied by our squadron the enemy boldly made his way into the open sea and speeded southwardly. Admiral Kinoshita, who once followed the fleeing vessels, and after a chase of several hours succeeded in overtaking them.

At this time our squadron consisted of five dreadnoughts, four battle cruisers, four second class destroyers, two first class destroyers, four second class destroyers and six third class destroyers.

In the number of ships our strength appeared superior to the enemy's fleet. But the American fleet had twelve more dreadnoughts as ours and was equipped with guns greatly more powerful than ours.

The Herulean struggle ended in Admiral Kinoshita's first squadron of America was totally destroyed. But while our victorious crews were shouting "Banzai!" the wireless station at Lamon, which had fallen into the hands of our land force, flashed to our flagship the news of the approach of the enemy's second squadron!

That was the end of all hopes for our squadron, our land forces, our empire. With ammunition gone, with half the ships sent to the bottom of the sea in the great naval encounter that had just ended, how could the surviving ships, all seriously damaged, meet the onslaught of the fresh enemy?

The second squadron of America consisted of twelve battleships, four battle cruisers, three first class cruisers, four first class destroyers and fourteen second class destroyers. Confronted by such a powerful enemy our officers and men proved themselves dauntless. They fought valiantly, but the star of fortune had already forsaken them.

The rest of the story is better guessed than told. Suffice it to say that the Mikado's squadron was completely annihilated. Not because our fighters of the sea were not as gallant or efficient as the American but because our people had shown a deplorable lack of foresight in refusing to establish a stronger navy. What calamity the war had befallen us, what can we blame but our own folly!