

see China again mistress of her own territory, and all that they would ask of her is the maintenance of the open door in Manchuria. In no sense, however, is her notice to the belligerents a menace to the open-door policy. It is simply a declaration that she is the proper party to approach and "do business with" as regards Manchuria and Manchurian trade and resources.

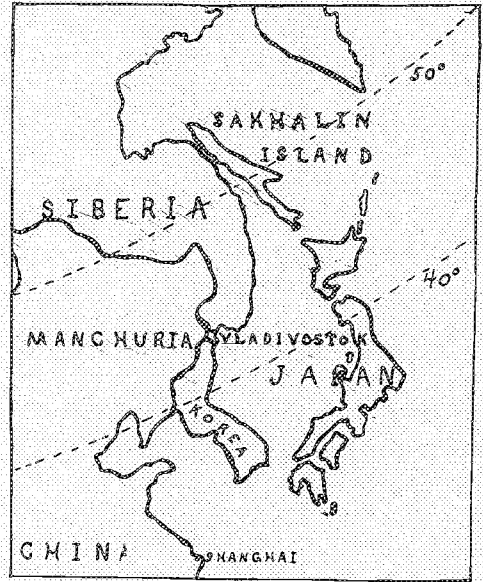


The Transfer of Sakhalin

It is generally accepted as certain that one of the conditions of the peace treaty between Japan and Russia will be the cession of the island of Sakhalin by the latter power to the former. That will simply ratify an accomplished fact, but the negotiation will not be without importance, for it will mean the abandonment for all time of a Russian possession in the Orient, a possession she has been unable or unwilling to utilize or develop but one which has great commercial possibilities.

The history of Sakhalin is interesting. Originally in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was under the sovereignty of China. Japanese settled in the southern section toward the end of the eighteenth century, and the Russians began to settle on the island several decades later. Subsequently Russia asserted a claim to the whole of the island, and while Japan opposed the claim her government was too weak and inefficient to defend her interests properly. In 1875 Japan (thanks largely to the diplomacy of the present Baron Rosen, peace plenipotentiary and ambassador, who was then a modest and minor member of the Russian legation at Tokio) formally ceded the island to Russia, obtaining an alleged equivalent that was really worth nothing. While the Russians used no force or fraud in acquiring Sakhalin, the Japanese have for years felt that they had permitted themselves to be humbugged.

Russia has used the island chiefly as a convict settlement. There are now about 6,000 Russian convicts on the island, many of them "political" offenders. The natives are known as the "hairy Ainos," the aborigines of the Japanese archipelago. The fisheries of the island are of considerable value, and it is believed that it has coal deposits of good quality. One Russian paper that protests against the



MAP SHOWING POSITION OF SAKHALIN ISLAND IN RELATION TO RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE TERRITORY.

proposed cession to Japan of the island says that the island is worth billions of rubles—a discovery that the St. Petersburg government should have made earlier.

To Japan there is more than sentimental and commercial value in the reacquisition of the island of Sakhalin. Geographically it is regarded as belonging to the Japanese archipelago, and in view of the prospective changes in the Far East, and the readjustment of the relations between the yellow and the white races, the transfer of the island is necessary to the completeness and symmetry of the rearrangements.