PICTURES OF WAR

NO 13.

THE NIGHT OF BATTLE

An After-Dinner Tale Told in the Recess of the Struggle for a Manchu City.

J. GORDON SMITH

INDELIBLY writ on my memory are the sights and sounds of that day. To me they spell one long series of horrors. This was war, and war is horrible: inconceivably horrible. That morning General Fukushima had said to me, "We are fighting a humane war." A humane war, forsooth! Can any war be humane? These things I saw since a whisp of white smoke flicked in the far sky at dawn, followed by a cluster of bright flashes that twinkled for brief moments in the faraway grey of a murky morn, since I heard the first gun belch in the opening of the battle which was already one long series of horrors, could these things be humane?

Lieut. Akimoto was standing beside me as twilight deepened. He stood stiffly as ever, his brown face gleaming and his eyes, half shut to narrow slits, gleaming. What he said I do not know. I was watching hundreds of scintillating flashes that were like a colony of fireflies twinkling in the picric curtain that covered five hills, and I was deaf to all conversation. The deafening noise of five hundred guns, each firing seven shells a minute into that inferno of the hills, drowned other sounds.

We were with General Oshima and his staff standing precariously on the ridge-tree of a wattled roof, atop of one of the Manchu hovels we had impressed. In the muddied courtyard my fellow correspondents were broiling what food they had begged, borrowed or stolen over charcoal that glowed in little earthern braziers that were part of the furniture of villagers long since fled. Our saddles, with myriad big flies buzzing about them, lay in the baked mud of the yellow compound; our ponies, hardy native beasts that would feed from a sun-dried thatch or a jutting cluster of kowliang that was part of a composite wall of mud and millet stalks, fed handsomely from millet found in the byres of war-ruined farmers.

Meanwhile Fong, the wonderful—how I had discovered this paragon of cooks afloat in that sea of yellow humanity of the fringe of Asia was incomprehensible—was frying a scraggy chicken he had stolen for me.

"Akimoto san, you'll dine with me. I'll take no refusal," said I, and I put my hand on the shoulder of the dapper little Lieutenant. He glowed acquiescently, and we slid from the roof. He smiled as only the Japanese can smile: Lafcadia Hearn has written at length of the wonders of that smile, and as I thought of the mystery that seemed to lurk in the smile when the ivory-white teeth of Akimoto were gleaming in contrast with the deeper brown burnt by the pitiless Manchurian sun, I remembered those writings.

"I thank you," said Akimoto; "but it will not be the club we knew, will it?"

It seemed a year snce we sat and sipped cooling drinks on the shadowed verandah of that Tokio club; it was but two months ago. Those two months had been crowded with events, however, that would have filled a year, indeed, two years. The transport, one of a score; the landing, and the ride northward with its hardships and pleasures; picturesque brown cities through which we rode seeing the curious crowds packed on the city walls gibbering because of our idiocyncracies of garb as we cantered through the vaulted gate; blockades of bullock-carts near the senile castellated walls with the swearing, jabbering Chinese drivers—all these things and hundreds more had pictured their suggestive imagery on the films of memory. There had, too, been miserable days of pouring rain when one's seat in the saddle seemed as though it were an icy basin and the mud packed to the pony's withers made progress difficult; there were days when the sweltering sun overbaked the yellow land and the heat haze was sticky with humid depression, and days when the flying dust clouds swept drifting banks of parching grit across the plains blinding the eyes and filling the pores with irritating dust. And there had been battles, disillusioning horrors of blood and mud when men laughed insanely as they saw their comrades mangled by a roaring missile from unseen guns and when men fought with Berkserker rage to kill men who foamed like wild dogs as they sought to kill those they never knew to exist before they came within bayonet-thrust. But it was only two months ago since we had sat listening to cicada pierce the thin air with melody and the chorus of the Tokio street under the verdure-clad hill, so green in contrast with this yellow land. Two months: that was all. Would we ever see that club again?

I remembered how the function that marked our last night there had bored Akimoto, but he had been too polite to show his bored feeling. It had bored me and, I fear, I must have shown it. It was exceedingly kind of the Mitsui club; of course it was. But to a man who has besieged a war office week after week seeking permits to join an army he had thought to join months before a dinner invitation is scant satisfaction. There had been many of these functions. At first you went because you feared to show you were bored—and then you didn't care.

Akimoto had stood with his back to the mantel watching without expression the posings of the after-dinner geisha, and we had become friends with the giving and taking of a cigarette.

If my friend were leaving for Japan I would urge him to take these things before all else: a cigarette case and a goodly supply of socks. These things one needs before all else in Japan but one other, and that is patience: no man has sufficient patience to suffice.

"I learned patience in those days at the club, Akimoto," I said, reflectively.

"You were sorry to wait so long," he said, with a smile.

"Very," I replied, laconically.

"You were foolish to come. General staff office had made all arrangements. For ten years all was ready for war. Maps were made, every preparation completed. We had biographies of even minute headmen of villages. But no one thought of an army of foreign correspondents. Your coming was a surprise and inconvenience."

It was his Rutgers education that made Akimoto frank. Had he never left Japan he would never have known what frankness meant.

We had seen each other many times since then and discussed many things from different viewpoints; and at Ashantien we had met again on the eve of battle to renew our acquaintance. After Nanshan Lieut. Akimoto had been transferred from the general staff office to the Hiroshima division, to which I had attached myself, and we were comrades. Therefore we foregathered with Hodgson, my comrade, in the compound corner to do justice to the viands Fong had spread on a rickety ebony table looted from a Manchu house.

Meanwhile night fell and a rattling of rifles gave place to the rumbling of five hundred guns which had closed the day with such a pyrotechnical display as the world would never see again.

From the Chinese house at the back of the compound, where fellow correspondents were sprawled about a lantern smoking an after-dinner pipe, came the words of a memory-provoking song—

Oh, the moon shines bright in my old Kentucky home,
'Tis summer, the darkies are gay;
The corn field's ripe, and the meadows are in bloom,
In my old Kentucky home, far away—
F-a-ar-a-wa-y.

In the darkness echoed the drawled echo of that final "Far-a-way."

"The honorable foreign correspondents are gay," said Akimoto, as he pushed back his stool. Chairs were an unheard of luxury.

"No; rather melancholic; they're homesick, I think," said I.

"Ah, yes," mused the brown lieutenant; "nome—home."

"Don't you think of home, Akimoto san?" I querled.

"To my disgrace," he answered, quickly in the odd staccato of Tokio. "When we are here in the field our souls are the Emperor's; much more are our minds. Yet I think of home. The birds' notes are piercing the thin air at Kudan, now. The constant chirrups of the crickets, the dragon-flies that the barefoot children chase into the fields, the wisteria that droops in my garden and brushes the shrine on the grotto near my little lake with its gold-fish and bridges over the narrow necks, the flutter of geisha on the mats where we sat to listen to the old ballads of love and war which are the two great requirements of life, the mellow lights of the shojis with the flitting shadows on the rice-paper panels, the glow of the fireflies who with tiny spark try to rival the lanterns the pedestrians carry to light their way. I miss all these—and I miss my sister." This with a deep sigh.

What a different picture that Akimoto painted to that beyond the low wall of the compound. Across the plain seen beyond the mud wall paper lanterns of the sanitary corps glowed like fire flies of home in the blue-black of the Manchurian night, and a low murmur came from the darkness borne on the night winds that were so cooling in the humid air; it may have been the echo of the groaning of all those wounded who were sprawled all over that murky land while we sat, smoking contentedly, by the side of the wall. From the fret-work paneled paper fronting the hovel at the back of the compound a mellow glow refracted on the baked city, giving the yellow land an iridiscent glare and a ruddy reflection over the building from which the fugitive owner had gone when the first gun was fired at Anshantien some days ago and all and sundry camped thereabout that the thatch had been burned away because of the enemy's fire. Stray shells were still breaking occasionally—one scattered its splinters at the back of the wall a few minutes before—but there was an obvious recess in the battle for all that rattle heard from distant trenches.

Bivouac fires flared red in groups near and far, their bright flashes glinting brown faces with a Rembrandt light and glistening on the ivory teeth of laughing men. At a fire a few yards away some young subalterns were stretched on the ground holding flat on the clay many sections of the excellent maps of the intelligence department that were made with information bought with the lives of many adventurers. The distant black of the mountain spur with five irregular hills was blurred in the gloom and until the long pointers of dazzling searchlights were spread across the country revealing so many things there was nothing to show that those hills held 50,000 fighting men and over 250 guns.

The day that was gone, a nightmare day of battle, had shown the work of these hidden men with slaty-grey uniforms and the bearers coming in to the dressing stations—there was one in the sand of the rivulet not fifty yards from where we sat with its blood-smeared surgeons seen plain in the light of their lanterns—echoed the horrible tale. The bearers came in processions with groaning mortals dripping blood on the khaki trouser-legs from the sodden canvas of the bamboo-framed stretchers, only part seen in the broken glare of the paper lanterns, each with the wave-like insignia of the sanitary corps, that the bearers carried at the thills. Blood-splashed, with arms and aprons smeared, like those of workers in an abattoir, surgeons worked hurriedly with knife and scalpel, operating and bandaging the war victims as they lay in rows on oiled paper that protected them from the germ-laden earth. This was but an overflow station; the main hospitals in the village with a limp red-crossed flag drooping from a bamboo over a headman's compound were overcrowded.

Near the surgeons was a heap of seeming inanimate forms and a group of soldiers working like the crew of a river steamer loading cordwood at a riverside fuel station were sorting the living from the dead. Bending to listen for a heart-throb or a breath-flicker, as dispassionately as though the bodies were sticks of wood, they pinned a tissue paper laden with ideographs on one to tell those that came after that the wearer still lived and rolled it aside to where equally phlegmatic men lifted it to a lumbering bullock-cart whose rocking over deep ruts would doubtless shake what little life remained from the body before it was deposited at the hospital door; other bodies they rolled aside with a red tissue paper on them, and these the bearers rolled aside after removing the little brass tag inscribed with the dead man's name from the brown neck. In the early morning many were carried to the new-won trenches so that foreign attaches could see what these trenches cost in human lives, and then they were piled on gathered branches for wholesale cremation. Whisps of smoke curling from beyond bivouac fires to our right showed where many bodies were already being charred to a few ashes, that, with a thigh bone and some hair, would be shipped to relatives in Japan.

We three, Houghton, Akimoto and I, stared into the night, all seemingly musing on the things our vision held. How different from that Japan of which he spoke, where the butterflies were flitting from flower to flower, and all was peace and quietness.

How different it was here. Rumbling from the darkness at the rear, heavy carts told with their noisy progress of the comng of the transport and of the arrival of more guns with the fatigued and mud-stained gunners wearied because of their struggles when the wheels were mixed in the ditch-like roads of China; a quick flashing searchlight from the hills showed the gunners still sitting like stone Buddhas on the limber seats waiting the order to dimount. Beyond them, the faint-heard trudge of column after column, and the jerky chant of a street song that some guild of Japan had claimed as its own, evidenced the coming of the reserves.

Obviously, Field Marshal Oyama, seated in his Chinese house with the telephone switchboard that carried his orders from end to end of the twenty-mile-long front, with his maps spread before him with the little flags stuck in them to mark the positions of his fighting men, was preparing for his great coup, the great sledge-hammer frontal attacks that were to drive the army from the hills back to the city and the redoubts that fronted it.

"And you, too, are homesick, Akimoto?" said I, and broke the reverie—also the current of Houghton's philosophy.

"Ah, yes," he replied. "In Japan I have a sister. She was married to a wrestler—yes, a wrestler, and what else could have been expected from a wrestler? He gambled his earnings, and she lived miserably. But she would not come back to me. Who can fathom the heart of a woman? At the end he sold her to a silk merchant at Kudan, and the merchant sold her; he took the money the Tea House keeper gave him for her apprenticeship and bound her with articles to serve there for five years, four of which she has still to serve. I borrowed money, but it was not enough. Then I went to the wrestler and his fellows kept me from him or I would have run my sword through him.

"Why didn't you get your sister to disavow the agreement?" said I, in my ignorance.

"Impossible," he said laconically. "I did go to her, and she vowed her love for the wrestler, still. It was because of this that I did not kill him. Instead I went to plead with him, and then we made a plan to win the money that would buy freedom for my sister"

"And you were successful?" I interrupted, impatiently.

"Alas, no," replied Akimoto, sadly. "You know the wrestlers? You have seen a wrestling match?"

"Yes, many," said I, and the silent Houghton nodded affirmatively.

"Well, there was to be wrestling in the open arena at Yasukuni shrine because of the Shokonsha festival. Many wrestlers had prepared for the matches and Gorukumon Hojo, my sister's husband, was one of the champions. There were fourteen wretlers there. The crowd was enormous, over ten thousand people being squatted in the amphitheatre like a large square basin, and they looked like a great sea of blue and white, for all had white clothes on their heads to protect them from the sun. Long streamers floated from the tops of long poles outside. On a little platform a man beat a drum to summon the contestants, and my sister's husband led them as the ponderous men marched from their quarters along the slanting aisle from one corner of the square to the wrestling platform.

It was the usual banked-up, flat-topped hummock of mud in the centre, with four pillars with the usual parti-colored swathing that reminds one of your barber's poles, and the wrestlers took their places about the sides, the rivals on either side. The umpire in the ceremonial kimonas of old with fan in hand announced the contestants and the first couple took their place in the ring. Stark, except for a breech-clout, the wrinkles of their fat bodies and the overhanging stomachs were plain. They turned their backs to each other, and each stretched out his right leg with his hand on his knee, raised it high and brought it to the ground with a stamp. Then the same exercise was repeated with the other leg. Each took a pinch of salt and sprinkled it in the ring, a concession to the superstition of wrestlers, and as the fan dropped they sprang at each other, with the agility of cats, though they were so ponderous, and squirmed and struggled, pushed and tripped until one slipped his foot beyond the circle, and consequently lost the bout."

"It's wonderful how agile those big men are," I remarked.

"Wonderful," acquiesced Akimoto. "Sub-Lieutenant Harigawa, whose father was wealthy, was with me that day, and we had made a bet. His family had been the patrons of the former champion, Hatakeyama Musu. He had given me odds, even five to one, and with my winnings I was to pay off my sister's indebtedness and release her from the indenture. Gorokumon, her husband, and I had arranged it all the previous night. He told me he was certain to win, as sure as the water would run down hill. His comrade also told me Gorokumon would win. I had no doubt of it."

"And he did, I suppose," said Houghton, as he refilled his pipe.

"I'll tell you all," continued Akimoto. "Harigawa and I joined Gorokumon and Hatakeyama at a Tea House and told both wrestlers of our betting. They both said they would wrestle well; they would each do their best to win. And so it seemed. When the umpire lowered his fan they sprang at each other with a crash; it seemed they must have broken each other's bones with the thud of the impact. Then they shook free. They scratched at each other, struck, sparring for a hold. Then they closed. Each wriggled, seeking to grasp the other's loin cloth or secure other favorable clutch. As you know, it is not to throw one's opponent, not to choke, as in jiu-jitsu, but to force each other from the ring. Squirming and wriggling, with the bodies bathed in perspiration, the big men pushed and jerked, tugged and lifted, and then they shook free again. They each left the ring at the umpire's signal to get more salt, and crouched, facing each other. They were saluting as your sencer raises his foil, or your pugilist hakes hands.

"The fan dropped again, and they rushed at each other as bulls might, but their hands worked with cat-like agility. They crouched down with shoulder against shoulder, using their great strength against each other, and Gorokumon was fast pushing Hatakeyama to the side of the ring.

"I sprang up in my place, and Harigawa caught at my coat-tails, asking me to be seated.

"Nearer and nearer the ringside Gorokumon pushed his rival, and then, as with a lightning-like flash, he suddenly twisted and dropped himself outside the ring. His rival had twisted him over his shoulder while he sought to push his opponent from the ring by sheer strength, and he had lost—my borrowed money that I had bet was lost.

"That night a drunken wrestler told me, and I saw what a dupe I had been. The wrestler told me between his guffaws—he was amused at my foolishnes—that Gorokumon and Hatakeyama had arranged everything with Harigawa; and they had divided my money."

"An old bunco game, eh?" said I; "you might have learned enough to prevent you from going against a brace game, Akimoto, when you were at Rutgers."

"True," he replied, "I might, but I didn't. Now I hope to meet Harigawa. I haven't seen him since, but when I do——"

A messenger rode up alongside the mud-wall and shouted to Akimoto.

"Hai," he answered, and with a smile, the mask that hid the recurrent anger, he vaulted over the wall, with a parting "Sayonaro."

In the early morning the sixth whole line assault that had swept up the five hills carried the position, and the morning sun showed trenches of dead in tiers and the red-balled flag of Japan floating from the hill crest. A dozen books could never tell the tale of those things that befell that night. The morning showed the wounded coming out of the hills amid the lanes of dead, and a faraway roll of rifles told of how Kuroki was still pressing his way without success on the slopes of Corn-Cake hill, the Spion Kop of Manchuria, and the flashes in the blue sky to the far right showed that Nozu was pressing the circle of fire nearer. The flame and a whirling cloud of dense smoke told of burning stores in the city fast being evacuated—the battle had been decided that night.

All that day the wounded came straggling from the hills We sat by the roadside at eventide, Houghton and I watching the horrible procession. I remember most of all a Chinese cart with some corpses rolling on the floor, lurching against some almost bloodless living, who were huddled helpless against the sides with others supporting them. They were bandaged and thick with coagulated blood, and walking behind the cart was Akimoto.

"I found him," he said, tersely, as the cart passed.

"Harigawa?" I asked.

"Yes, he's badly wounded, but he may recover. Then I'll kill him. I'll earn the money for my sister's indentures when I return home."

I never saw him again. I have often wondered, though, if he ever reached home.

DAILY REVIEW OF THE LOCAL MARKETS

Strawberries were a little scarce yesterday. On account of the weather they are not ripening as well as could be wished, and want two or three days of good sunshine to bring them on. The retail price yesterday was two boxes for 25c., and at this price it is difficult to cope with the demand. Local cherries are now plentiful and are in good condition, both in size and quality. Their price to dealers is 12½c. Steamer Umatilla arrived yesterday with a good consignment of fruit and vegetables, which included a large quantity of cherries, California new potatoes, onions, peas, beans, cauliflower and cabbage. It also brought up this season's first lot of plums. They are of good quality, but the price at present is high.

In the retail fish market the scarcity of salmon is being felt, but the season has only just opened.

WHOLESALE MARKETS.

VEGETABLES.

Asparagus, per lb.	15
Beets, per sack	$1.25
Cabbage, per lb.	3
Carrots, per sack	$1.50
Cauliflower, per doz.	$1.50
Cucumbers, per doz.	$1.80
Lettuce, per crate	$1.75
Parsnips, per sack	$1.25
Potatoes (Mainland)	16.00
Potatoes (Island)	$20.00
Potatoes (California), per sack	$3.00
Silverskin onions, per lb	4½
Tomatoes, local	20
Tomatoes (California)	$2.50
Turnips, per sack	85
Peas (California), per sack	$6.50

FRUIT.

Grapefruit, per box	$4.25
Apples (imported)	$3.25
Bananas, per bunch	$3.00 to $3.50
Lemons (fancy), per box	$6.50
Lemons (choice), per box	$6.00
Cocoanuts, each	6
Oranges, fancy navels, box	$3.85 to $4.25
Oranges (Med. sweets), per box	$4.25
Pears (local), per box	
Oranges, fancy navels, box	$3.85 to $4.25
Rhubarb	3
Apples, per lb.	15
Strawberries	12½ to 15

PRODUCE.

Eggs (local), per doz.	25
Butter (local), creamery	25
Comb honey	18

MEATS

Tongues, per lb	20
Beef, per lb.	8 to 18
Mutton, per lb.	8 to 18
American hams, per lb.	22
American bacon, per lb.	27
Bacon, rolled	16
Pork, per lb.	10 to 15
Veal, per lb.	10 to 18
Lamb, per quarter	$1.25 to $1.75

FOODSTUFFS.

American wheat, per ton	$32.00
Manitoba feed wheat, per ton	$30.00
Oats, Manitoba, per ton	$27.00
Oats, Island, per ton	$28.00
Barley, Manitoba, per ton	$25.00
Barley, Island, per ton	$28.00

FLOUR.

Flour, Hungarian, Ogilvie's, Royal Household, per bbl.	$5.60
Flour, Hungarian, Lake of the Woods, Five Roses, per bbl.	$5.60
Flour, Hungarian, Moffet's Best	$5.35
Flour, pastry flour, Moffet's Drifted Snow, per bbl.	$4.35
Calgary Hungarian	$5.60
Bran, per ton	$23.00
Shorts, per ton	$24.00
Middlings, per ton	$28.00
Hay, Fraser river, per ton	$12.00
Hay, Island, per ton	$14 to $16
Feed, cornmeal, per ton	$32.00
Chop feed, best, per ton	$25.00
Whole corn, best, per ton	$30.00
Cracked corn, per ton	$32.00

RETAIL MARKETS.

MEAT AND POULTRY.

Hams, per lb.	20
Bacon, per lb.	22
Pork, live weight	8
Pork, dressed	16
Veal, live weight	7
Veal, dressed	9 to 10
Chickens, spring, per lb. live wgt	14
Chickens, old, per lb.	12½
Turkeys, per lb.	20
Turkeys, live weight	20
Turkeys (local), per lb	20
Turkeys (imported), per lb.	25
Geese, dressed, per lb.	25
Ducks, dressed, per lb.	25
Spring chicken, dressed, per lb	25
Chicken, broilers, per lb.	30
Pigeons, dressed, per pair	50
Rabbits, dressed, each	60 to 75
Hare, dressed, each	75
Fish—	
Oolachan (salted), per kit	$2.25
Cod, salt, per lb	12½
Halibut (fresh), per lb.	10
Cod, fresh, per lb.	8
Flounders, fresh, per lb.	6
Salmon, salt, per lb.	12½
Salmon, fresh, per lb.	12½
Clams, per lb	5
Oysters, Olympia, pint	50
Oysters, Toke Point, doz.	40
Shrimps, per lb.	25 to 35
Oolachans (salted), per kit	$2.25

DAIRY PRODUCE.

Eggs—	
Fresh Island, per doz.	30
Fresh cream, per pint	30
Cheese—	
California cheese, per lb.	25
Canadian cheese, per lb.	20
Cream cheese (local), apiece	10
Butter—	
Manitoba, per lb.	30
Best dairy, per lb.	25
Victoria creamery, per lb.	25
Cowichan creamery, per lb.	25
Delta creamery, per lb.	25
Cefmox creamery, per lb.	25
Chilliwack creamery, per lb.	30

VEGETABLES.

Peas (California), 3 lbs.	25
Cabbage, per lb.	6
Tomatoes, per lb.	25
Onions, 6 lbs. for	25
Island potatoes, 4 lbs. for	25
Potatoes, per 100 lbs.	$1.00 to $1.25
Potatoes, new Island, per lb	5
Cauliflower, per head	10 to 12½
Carrots, per lb.	3
Asparagus, per bunch	20
Artichokes, per lb.	12½
Lettuce, per head	5
Celery, 2 heads	25
Cucumbers, each	20
Pineapples, each	50

FRUIT.

Cooking figs	8 to 10
Figs, Smyrna, per lb.	15 to 25
Cherries (California), per lb.	35
Gooseberries, per lb.	15
Grapefruit, per doz.	75
Grapefruit, Island, per doz.	50
Lemons, California, per doz.	30 to 85
Cocoanuts, each	10
New cleaned currants	10
Best Sultanas	15
Best Sultanas, Smyrna	20
California Sultanas	15
Table raisins	25, 35, 50
Oranges, per doz.	35 to 75
Bananas, per lb.	30
Bananas, per dozen	35
Apples, 2 lbs. for	25
Strawberries	15 to 20

FOODSTUFFS.

Oats, per ton	$30.00
Wheat, per ton	$35.00
Barley, per ton	$30.00
Hay (Island), per ton	$16.00
Hay (Fraser), per ton	$12.00
Straw, per bale	65
Potatoes (Island	$20.00
Corn, whole, per ton	$32.00
Corn, cracked, per ton	$35.00
Feed cornmeal, per ton	$35.00
Oatmeal, per 10-lb. sack	45
Rolled oats, per 7-lb. sack	35
Calgary Hungarian pat. bbl., sk.	$1.50
Hungarian, per bbl.	$6.00
Royal Household, per sack	$1.55
Pastry Flour—	
Snow Flake, per sack	$1.40
Feed—	
Middlings, per bag, 90 lbs	$1.15
Bran, per 70 lbs.	90

OIL.

Coal oil (Pratt's) per can	$1.50 to $1.60

35 Per Cent. Die From Indigestion

From insurance records it has been found that about thirty-five per cent of the deaths of policy-holders was attributed to diseases of the digestive system.

To persons who have been accustomed to think lightly of indigestion, biliousness, and liver derangements this statement will be rather startling, but it cannot be refuted.

To a large extent the liver controls the digestive system by supplying the bile to insure the prompt passage of the food along the intestines, where the difficult part of digestion takes place.

Because of their immediate and direct influence on the liver, Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills insure a good flow of bile, and by so doing positively overcome constipation and intestinal indigestion.

Wind on the stomach, rising of sour taste in the mouth, smothering sensations in the chest, pains about the heart, headaches and dizziness, drowsiness and discomfort after meals, and sluggish action of the liver, kidneys, and bowels are the symptoms of this serious and dangerous form of indigestion.

Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills will promptly overcome these symptoms. One pill a dose, 25 cents a box, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates and Co., Toronto.

STEEL ORDERED FOR MIDWAY AND VERNON

Cape Breton Mills Will Supply Fourteen Tons of Rails on Rush Order.

Montreal, June 9.—Fourteen thousand tons of steel rails for the Midway & Vernon Railway have just been ordered, and the continuation of construction of this railway is to be started within a very short time, according to information secured in this city and New York, where the capital behind the road comes from.

The rails have been ordered from the Dominion Iron & Steel Company of Sydney, Cape Breton, and the order will be rushed out as soon as the works can commence on it.

It is understood that the rails will be shipped across the continent over the C. P. R. in preference to transportation around the Horn, because of the desirability of saving time.

Since the decision in favor of the Midway & Vernon as against the province of British Columbia on a reference as to the disputed subsidy claimed by the former, the backers of the railway company have been busy arranging to go ahead with the building of the road. Some ten or twelve miles of it has already been graded and made ready for the steel. This work was performed out of Midway.

Grading will probably be pushed ahead this summer and tracklaying will be commenced just as soon as the rails are on the ground, if present plans are carried out.

There is considerable speculation in railway circles as to where the control of the Midway & Vernon will go when it is completed, and as to what roads it will make connections with. The Midway terminal of the railway will be accessible by both the V. V. & E. and the C. P. R. lines, while at Vernon there is possible connection with the main line of the C. P. R. by a provincial government-owned road running from Okanagan to Sicamous. This short government line is now operated by the C. P. R.

WITH ROD AND GUN

Written for the Sunday Colonist.

The Ontario game commission, which was established in 1892, each year sends in a report to the provincial legislature. During the past year the commission undertook a special investigation of the conditions prevailing throughout Ontario with regard to game of all kinds. The conclusions which it arrives at makes woeful reading. It says:

"No species of game is increasing, and many are in danger of extinction. The supply is nowhere nearly as great as the capacity of the land to support it without danger to crops or other interests. The question of the permanent preservation of game, both as an object of interest and sport, and as an extremely valuable asset of the province, is one, therefore, of grave concern, and requires immediate consideration."

Might not the same be said of the game of British Columbia? From all sides we hear the same complaint of moose and deer of all kinds being slaughtered for their hides, feathered game shot during the breeding season and rivers netted night and day with impunity. This week again letters have been received at this office stating the lower Cowichan river is being netted by Indians and the fish offered for sale all over the district. There is a fishery officer stationed in the Cowichan district. What is he doing in return for his salary? How many convictions has he been the means of securing during the past twelve months? Every fisherman who visits the river sees nets set in the stream in broad daylight. It is full time that this state of affairs should be stopped and a man appointed as fishery commissioner for the district who is not a mere figurehead. With netting on the Cowichan river in full blast, is it any wonder that the fishing on this once famous stream is yearly becoming poorer?

Several men who have spent their Saturdays and Sundays for the last fifteen or more years on this river have declared that unless some protection is given to the fish they will have to give up visiting it, as it is a waste of time and money. The C. P. R. have represented these things to the Dominion and provincial governments, both by letters and interview. They have offered to appoint and pay for fish and game wardens if the government will organize the districts in which their land grant lies, but so far their efforts have been in vain, and in the meantime one of the finest rivers on the continent is being destroyed for want of proper protection.

A correspondent from Shawnigan Lake writes as follows:

"The Colonist's paragraph in last Sunday's "Rod and Gun" column advocating the clearing of the outlet of the lake and stream below so that larger fish could get up from the sea, should be applauded by all true fishermen, and it is to be hoped that some such improvement will be effected. At present there is no chance of any fish getting up to the lake from the sea, and such fish as the four-pound steelhead which was caught last week, must have got up before the stream became blocked up with driftwood and lumber. It is a subject which the Rod and Gun club might with success take in hand, for no matter how good the fishing at Shawnigan may be at present, it could be made much better and at very small cost."

Trolling at this lake has been very good during the past week. On Friday last Mrs. Wark, of the Strathcona, caught sixteen fine fish, the best one tipping the scales at a little over two pounds, the rest ranging from a pound and a quarter down to half a pound. On the following Sunday the same lady had a nice basket of thirteen good even sized fish to her credit, all killed with a small brass Stewart spoon.

Now that Skawnigan Lake is visited by so many pleasure-seekers on Saturdays and Sundays, it would undoubtedly pay the C. P. R. to carry out the suggestion made in last week's Colonist and expend the small amount of money necessary towards blasting out the falls and removing the logs and driftwood which at present prevent the passage of fish from the sea to the lake. It would increase their passenger receipts to and from Shawnigan to a very large extent, and this would be even more largely the case when the tourists with whom they hope to fill their new hotel in Victoria begin to arrive, as many of them would make the trip up the line to Shawnigan, were they assured of good fishing on the lake.

Several people from Victoria visited Cowichan lake on Empire day, amongst the number being Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Oliver and Miss Kathrine Oliver, Miss Brady, Miss Williams, Miss Robinson, Major Bland, Capt. Blandy and Messrs. J. P. Mann, W. Williams, C. B. Staismidt, F. W. Thomas and F. R. Sargison. The fishing was very poor on the river, but some good fish were taken on the lake with the spoon bait. On Sunday Messrs. Mann and Williams and the Misses Robinson and Williams came down the river from the lake by canoe, leaving the lake at 8 a. m. and arriving at Duncan at 5 p. m. The river is now looking its best, the vivid green of the alders and maples along the bank making a beautiful contrast with the darker shades of the fir trees. Anyone who contemplates making the trip down the river by canoe should do so as soon as possible; the water is fairly high, which makes it unnecessary to make many portages, and the mosquitoes and sand flies have not yet put in an appearance.

A correspondent from Cowichan Bay hotel writes that the trout fishing in the tide water at the mouth of the Cowichan has been better during the past week. Messrs. Patterson and Forrest secured seventeen nice fish on Thursday, and on Sunday Messrs. Skrimshire and Grant had very good sport, their largest fish weighing two and a half pounds. Spring salmon are also beginning to run in the bay, though those caught so far have been small ones.

A gentleman who owns a farm near Victoria writes asking if it is the intention of the various fish and game clubs of Vancouver Island to ask the government to place wild pigeons on the protected list. He states that many men and boys make a practice at the present time of going out from town on Sunday for the purpose of shooting these birds, and that they are not above adding a pheasant or grouse to their bag if they happen to come across them. We should like to hear from the farming districts on this point, as we understand that it was solely in deference to the wishes of the farmers that pigeons were not long ago afforded protection, owing to the amount of newly sown grain they are supposed to consume.

Communications for this column should be addressed "Rod and Gun," care of the Colonist, and should reach this office not later than Thursday for insertion in the following Sunday issue.

BRITAIN'S NAVY AT HUGE MIMIC WAR

Greatest Aggregation of Fighting Ships Ever Assembled.

LONDON, June 9.—Although "war" has not yet been declared, the mobilization of the British fleet was practically completed today. It is ready to meet all eventualities and repel the expected attack of an imaginary enemy now assembled off the west coast of Ireland and threatening to make a descent on the coast of England. The greatest aggregation of fighting ships ever assembled, totalling 325 warships of various types and sixty-three thousand men, is participating in the mimic warfare which is designed to show the efficiency of the new admiralty system for the defence of the British coasts and commerce on the high seas. One of the most interesting features is to be the collecting of British merchantmen at certain ports and convoying them to home points. The force is

Divided Into Two Fleets

the red (British), consisting of 235 vessels, including sixty-six torpedo boats and submarines, and the blue (the enemy), consisting of ninety warships without torpedo boats or submarines.

Admirals Sir Arthur Wilson and Lord Charles Beresford command the red fleet, while Vice Admiral Sir William May commands the "enemy." The manoeuvres are divided into two sections: First, the attack and defence of the coasts, on which torpedo craft and submarines will play an important part; second, the defence of the seaboard commerce and food supplies, and at the same time maintaining the inviolability of the English coasts.

Admiral May is now concentrating the Atlantic fleet and the first cruiser squadron, the latter in command of Vice Admiral Prince Louis of Battenberg, at Berhaven, the enemy's territory, consisting of Ireland, Scotland and the Channel islands, while Admiral Wilson, with the Channel fleet, together with the reserve vessels, has taken up

Strategic Positions

along the coast of England. Lord Beresford's Mediterranean squadron, with which constant wireless communication is kept up, is centred at Gibraltar in readiness to operate in the protection of merchantmen against raids of the enemy on their routes. Great activity prevails at Portsmouth, Portland, Milford, Cardiff and other ports which will be placed on a war footing June 12th. The defences will be kept constantly manned in anticipation of a sudden descent of the blue fleet.

For the first time army officers are being embarked on the warships so as to enable them to become familiar with naval problems in their bearing on military operations. The area of the manoeuvres is between sixty and thirty degrees north latitude and ten degrees east and twenty degrees west longitude. They will continue until noon July 2nd.

B. and K. Development.—The Brackman-Ker Milling company is developing its business in Alberta considerably this year. It has a new 40,000-bushel elevator completed at Stony Plain, other elevators will be built this season at Bittern Lake on the Wetaskiwin branch at St. Albert and at Lamont on the C. N. R. The new mill at Calgary will be in operation next month. A handling elevator will be erected at Calgary with a capacity of 50,000 bushels. Strathcona will continue to be headquarters for the company's business in Northern Alberta.

VOL. XLVIII.,

WARM WORDS

LICENSE B

Rev. Mr. Gladstone Alleg
bling at Wilson Hotel--
Langley Resents

NO PROOF IS AD

London Hotel License Su
for Six Weeks---War
for Elk Saloon.

THERE were exciting t
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meetings were more or
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holders of liquor licenses. Th
hotel license was suspended,
saloon was reprimanded, and
many changes granted, with
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Wilson hotel was being consid
Rev. Mr. Gladstone, now fa
those who attend meetings
commissioners rose to object,
charges of gambling being
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prietor and his counsel, the inc
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Mr. Moresby said: "Well,
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out bringing proof."

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hotel, not for a saloon. It w
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Mr. Moresby, for J. W.
who applied for transfer fro
McCabe, said the application
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said the lessee of the rooms
had no right to object to
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her business.

The mayor pointed out that
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saloon.

Mr. Moresby said this made
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premises.

The mayor said that the n
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and tenant and not for the bo

Rev. Mr. Gladstone said he
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"I am informed that there is
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ing. There is every evide
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going on there. While I can't