

# JAPANESE WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE OF THE RUSSIANS.

## First Big Battle Will be Fought at Liao Yang.

## New Chwang Evacuated and Russians Ready to Retreat.

## Landing of Japanese at Kai-Chau Was a Surprise to Russians.

A recent New Chwang cable says.—In confirmation of the recent Associated Press despatches, the Russian evacuation of this city has been completed. Nothing remains but the destruction of the gunboat Sivouch, which it is expected will take place early in the morning. The Russian troops marched out in perfect order, Gen. Kondratiev leaving with the last regiment.

The Associated Press correspondent has received exclusive information from the highest Russian authority that the Japanese advance will be resisted at Hai Cheng, whence the Russian forces will fall back upon Liao Yang, where they will make a determined stand, with a fighting strength there available of 70,000 men.

If defeated no stop will be made at Mukden, but the retirement will be continued to Thiling, a town at the head of navigation for native craft on the Liao River, 20 miles north of New Chwang. At the same time the Cossack regiments will be employed in the rear of the Japanese army of the Yalu, harassing the troops and interfering with its communications. It is not believed that the Japanese will move into the interior until they have thoroughly established their base here, repeating the movement which they made during the war with China.

The Russians admit the advance of the Japanese army to a point within fifteen miles of Hai Cheng, many of their wounded entering there. The nearest fighting expected before the Japanese reach New Chwang will be at Tashi Ichau, which is now being fortified. This city is now garrisoned by 300 Chinese police, and everything is quiet. The Japanese force at Kai Chou is reported 20,000 strong.

### RUSSIA'S FIRST LINE.

The First Great Battle Will Likely be Fought at Liao Yang.

Antung cable, via Seoul, recently says: The concentration of the Russian forces at Liao Yang, will make that place the first line of defense, and the first great battle probably will be fought there. No important aggressive action by the army is expected in the near future. Since the Russian fleet at Port Arthur has been bottled up the Japanese find it possible to safely use this port as a base, and to abandon most of the land transportation through Korea, using the regular army transport equipment for conveying munitions from Antung to the front. The Chinese do not object to the Japanese occupation, because the new comers give employment to thousands of good wages, and furnish a market for provisions at inflated prices. Many Japanese shopkeepers already are established here. The river has not yet been opened to foreign commerce.

The correspondents who remain at headquarters visited the Russian wounded, who expressed satisfaction at their treatment. Their only complaint concerning provisions was that they received no bread, the Japanese army not being provided with stores of that kind.

### WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE.

The Japanese Army is Advancing in Three Columns—Wounded at Mukden.

Mukden cable.—The fighting line is steadily nearing Mukden, while Viceroy Alexieff's headquarters still remain. Little reliable information can be obtained by the newspaper correspondents, who are forbidden to proceed to the scene of operations, and official information is withheld until advised by the Russian government. It is now known, however, that the Japanese are almost within striking distance of the Russians, and that the forces protecting Liao Yang are stretching eastward from the railroad along the Mao-Tien mountains. The Japanese are advancing in three columns, and are now north of Shu-Yen and Feng-Wang-Cheng. Two columns are reported to be working further to the northward, with the object of turning the Russian position and advancing upon Mukden. Numerous small engagements have been fought, but no decisive action has taken place. Port Arthur is now completely isolated by the Japanese expedition at Polandien.

The Japanese are now operating in a rugged country, well suited to the Russian defense; but north of the Liao Yang to Mukden the country is a flat plain, intersected by rivers. The weather recently has been hot and dry, but the rain which has fallen in the past two days has made the roads almost impassable for vehicles, and when the rainy season begins, at the end of June, this plain will be converted into a morass. This condition will probably result in the practical suspension of operations.

Mukden is now the receiving centre for the wounded from the various engagements south of the Mao-Tien mountains. A hospital has been established in the Lama temple, in the outskirts of the town, and a field hospital has been located in a room near the military camp around the station. A significant feature of the situation is the demeanor of the Chinese population.

A close observer of the expressions and general attitude of the Chinese can tell how the fighting a hundred miles away is turning. They have rapid and mysterious channels of information through which the result of a battle at

opinion prevails that this is an indication of the intention of the Japanese to make an attempt to stop Gen. Kouropatkin's retreat northward, while the main Japanese force is hurled against Liao Yang and Mukden. It is believed here that the Japanese generals must appreciate that they would lose the fruits of their achievement if Kouropatkin retired unmolested to Harbin, and there await reinforcements, leaving the invaders to hold the country, and thereby losing men by disease. The Japanese course would have grand prospects of success if they had sufficient strength, but the authorities here are convinced that the enemy is too weak to carry it out. Further showing that Kouropatkin never had any intention to attempt to stop the northward advance of the Japanese, a railroad engineer, who has just arrived here from the far east, was quoted to-day as saying that when he talked with the commander-in-chief in February, the latter wanted an additional line built in the rear of the Manchurian army, so as to enable it to fall back and subsequently advance.

### KOUROPATKIN'S POSITION.

London Newspapers Believe it to be Precarious—Menaced by Chinese Rebels.

London cable says.—In the absence of actual news from the seat of war in the Far East, the London newspapers this morning are commenting on what is believed to be the precarious position of Gen. Kouropatkin, who is menaced by the possibility of the Chinese rebels cutting his communications, as well as by the difficulty of divining the Japanese plan of campaign. The Standard, which is rather inclined to be pro-Russian in its views, admits that Kouropatkin has at his disposal south of Mukden about 100,000 troops of inferior quality, only 75,000 of whom are available for active operations, while Gen. Kuroki certainly has 140,000 first class troops, the equal of those in European armies.

"Under such conditions," the Standard says, "the issue of battle is very seldom doubtful."

### A CHINESE OPINION.

The Constantinople correspondent of the Daily Mail sends a report to the effect that Russia has suggested to Turkey some scheme for the capitalization of the indemnity due by the latter for immediate payment to Russia as a means of increasing the revenue for war purposes.

### AN ALLIANCE WITH JAPAN WOULD BE FATAL TO CHINA—RUSSIA A NEIGHBOR.

Liao Yang cable (delayed) says.—A Chinese official asserted to-day in a speech at a dinner given in his honor and in that of the other Celestial officials by the military authorities of Liao Yang that Japan wants an alliance with China in order to use her. The official further declared that the Chinese considered it their duty to preserve good relations with Russia, whose frontier adjoins China. He added: "An alliance between China and Japan would be fatal. Japan made war on us once, and Russia's intervention caused her to leave us in peace. An alliance now would enable her to use us and then again attack us." In hunting for the Chinese bandits the Cossacks burned the village of Shontaidza. The military authorities have now organized a subscription for the relief of the villagers, who will be given employment on the railroad.

### ST. PETERSBURG TALK.

What Will Skrydloff Do?—The Japs' Double Purpose.

St. Petersburg cable says.—The probability that there will be no further communication with Port Arthur, thus preventing Vice-Admiral Skrydloff (who returned through Irkutsk, Siberia, May 14) from assuming command of the Russian squadron there, has led to the suggestion that Skrydloff return from the far east and hoist his flag as commander of the Baltic squadron, which is destined for the far east. Vice-Admiral Rojensky, who has been gazetted to command the latter, is a junior of Vice-Admiral Skrydloff, and would be ordered to report to him as commander-in-chief. Whatever Skrydloff's future plans may be, the Admiralty says he will certainly proceed to Vladivostok and inspect the squadron there.

The report that Vladivostok is blockaded is denied at the Admiralty. Telegrams received from Rear Admiral Josenko do not refer to the presence of a single Japanese ship. It is said that the Russians would not have the slightest objection to a blockade of Vladivostok, since it would tie up a Japanese squadron, without causing inconvenience, if being Admiral Skrydloff's plan to risk either the Russian squadrons until the Baltic squadron reaches the Pacific.

No official despatches were given out this morning, on account of the delay occasioned by the Emperor's journey. His Majesty arrived at Kharkoff this morning, whither all despatches have been transmitted. A special force of operators has been detailed for this purpose.

In the absence of advice, the general staff is continuing its speculation based on the latest reports of the appearance of considerable bodies of the enemy in the northwest section of Manchuria. The

### TO FALL BACK UPON HARBIN.

Almost Certain Kouropatkin Will Do This.

St. Petersburg cable.—The Journal says it is reported that Gen. Kouropatkin will abandon Liao Yang and fall back upon Harbin, with 150,000 men and their way from Kharokoff, Southern Russia, and 50,000, who are about to be despatched from Moscow district.

### LANDED AT KAI-CHAU.

Disembarkation of the Second Japanese Army Surprised the Russians.

St. Petersburg cable says.—The following telegram from Gen. Kouropatkin to the Emperor, under date of May 16, has been given out here: "Towards noon seventeen steamers approached Siung-yue-Cheng and opened fire upon the town, while five vessels approached the shore. At 1.30 p. m. three large steamers appeared off the Cape, and at 3.20 p. m. the enemy landed at Huangsiating and commenced a march in the direction of Kaiping."

Gen. Samsonoff reports to the general staff under to-day's date, as follows: "Gen. Samsonoff reports at 11.30 last night that the Japanese confined their efforts to feints at landing in the neighborhood of Siung-yue-Cheng and Kai-Chau. Their vessels opened fire on the town of Siung-yue-Cheng, on our scouts and on the coast."

"The Japanese squadron left after 5.30 o'clock, proceeding southwest, and several of its vessels remained visible on the horizon until dusk."

### TERRIFIC BOMBARDMENT.

The Shore Defences Silenced by Japanese Warships.

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### NEW-CHWANG EVACUATED.

The Last Russian Regiment Left the Place on Monday.

New-Chwang cable says.—The evacuation of the city by the Russians has been completed. The evacuation was completed at 10 o'clock last night, with the exception of the destruction of the gunboat Sivouch, which is expected to take place to-day. Gen. Kondratiev, the general who has been in command of the place, left with the last regiment.

### INVESTMENT COMPLETE.

Port Arthur is Shut Off Both by Land and Sea.

London cable says.—There is hardly a line of news respecting Port Arthur. A correspondent at Tien-Tsin claims to have official Japanese authority for stating that its investment by land and sea is considered complete. Communications of every kind with the fortress have been entirely cut.

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carry out the plans of operations which had been previously determined upon, he had displayed a stubborn resistance, which showed to the enemy and the Russian that the Russian had not lost the courageous spirit of past generations.

What will become of Zassalitch, whether he will remain in the Far East or be assigned to a less important position, cannot be ascertained to-night, but it is emphatically stated that there is no intention to disgrace him, and that if he returns from the Far East it will be on sick leave and at his own request. It is generally believed that he will find it convenient to make such an application.

Lieut.-Gen. Count Keller recently resigned the governorship of Ekaterinoslav in order to go to the front. He is far and is younger than Gen. Zassalitch, being only 54. He participated in three campaigns during the Turkish war. In 1887 he commanded the Imperial Rifle Regiment, and later was director of the corps of imperial pages, by which he was known to frequent contacts with the members of the imperial family, with whom he is popular. He is considered to be a distinguished strategist, and the possessor of cool judgment.

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### FIGHT OR RUN.

London Papers Wonder Whether Kouropatkin Will Fight or Retreat.

London cable says.—No further news has reached London, throwing light upon the appearance of Japanese troops northeast of Mukden, or indicating by what route they reached that point, as unexpectedly. The Japanese are so successfully in hiding their movements that it is only possible to guess at them from the vague indications in Russian official despatches.

According to the Standard's Tien-Tsin correspondent, Gen. Kouropatkin has left for Harbin, Viceroy Alexieff still being at Liao Yang, with 20,000 troops.

It is noticeable that Russian despatches seldom name the place whence they are sent.

A question greatly discussed in the London papers this morning is whether Gen. Kouropatkin has succeeded in ascertaining that the Japanese are threatening his rear so near the Mukden line, and has been enabled to begin a retreat, or whether he has elected to fight.

In any case, it is considered that any day may bring news of a great battle in this district, as the transport difficulties are believed to be so great as to make it almost impossible for General Kouropatkin to direct a rapid retirement. Indefinite reports continue to reach London of Japanese bombardments of Port Arthur and Dalny.

The Standard's Odessa correspondent confirms the report that Gen. Kouropatkin's retreat from Harbin is expected to do not exceed 100,000 men.

Shanghai despatches report that the Chinese are greatly gratified with the Japanese invitation to re-establish the administration of Antung and induce Chinese traders to return and resume business.

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"On May 15 the Japanese vanguard occupied Hahhambantsa, in the valley of the Pao-tou River, Tsiangtau, in the valley of the left branch of the same river; Shitsafutsu and Hitouchen, in the valley of the Ai River, and Kiandian Sian."

There were no Japanese at Siuyen on May 15.

"On May 14 the Japanese occupied Polandien with a detachment of two battalions of infantry and two squadrons of cavalry."

"On May 14 and 15 the Japanese reconnoitered the coast, pushing beyond 45 miles from the station of Wafandian."

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Chinese who recently arrived here from New Chwang, while confirming the above, also say that the Japanese are skirmishing on either side of the railroad north and south of Kin Chou.

Circulars have been posted at New Chwang and in its vicinity, signed by the chief of staff of the Japanese army, advising the Chinese to maintain order and secure stocks of provisions and transport wagons, for which the Japanese will pay full value.

The small Russian guard remaining at New Chwang is ready to leave on the near approach of the enemy.

Quantities of wood and oil have been placed on board the Russian gunboat Sivouch, in New Chwang waters, to be used in destroying her by fire when the Russians evacuate New Chwang.

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