

SIBERIAN RAILWAY, KEY TO FAR EAST SITUATION.

Interesting Facts About the War Conditions in the Struggle Between Japan and Russia--The Illustrations Bearing Upon the Conflict in the Orient.

The following interesting article, written for the New York World by Wolf Von Schierbrand, a well known German writer, will be found of very much interest because of the situation in the far east. He writes:—

In my humble opinion Russia is doomed to defeat in this war with Japan. My opinion is based on a number of facts, some of which seem so far to have escaped public observation in this country, and the most important of these facts, I take it, is the insufficiency of the Siberian Railroad.

It must be borne in mind that practically the Siberian Railroad is Russia's sole means of keeping up communication with the sources of her supply both of troops and provisions. That is a momentous point which will weigh heavily in the scale of the ultimate outcome of this war than any other single one.

In round figures it cost \$500,000,000 to build the Siberian Railroad, with its two branches into Manchuria, both of them leaving the main line near Stratzak and terminating, the one at Vladivostok and the other at Harbin. An immense undertaking, especially for a country like Russia, without much capital and with poor credit in the world's market.

True, but unanimous expert opinion, both foreign and Russian, is to the effect that this railroad could be duplicated for half that sum. The other half has been wasted. During the long period of its construction many millions were expended on the pockets of corrupt officials. In illustration of this I will mention that the chief contractor, in fact, the intellectual

creator of this vast enterprise—General Anzenkoff—was convicted at a trial in St. Petersburg of having purloined amounts aggregating 25,000,000 roubles, and it is fair to presume that the actual total of his stealings was much larger, perhaps double that amount. The various contractors interested in the construction of the road are said to have made illegitimate profits of at least 100,000,000 roubles. This is not all. The road at first was built so poorly that subsequently several thousand miles of it had to be reconstructed, involving an outlay of at least 150,000,000 roubles.

Even so it stands today, the Siberian Railroad is a poor, ramshackle affair. The roadbed for distances of fifty and more miles at a time is dimly, and with its exposure to frost and to all the rigors of a severe climate, varying between dry heat in summer and extreme cold and snow in winter and early spring, is liable to break down at many points at almost any season. With that the rolling stock is of a very uneven quality and wholly insufficient during times of pressure. Again, in the main the Siberian Railroad is a single

Persia, I made an extensive trip through European and Asiatic Russia. General Anzenkoff I had met before in Teheran, where he had been organizing the Shah's Cossack contingent. At that time General Anzenkoff was still at the head of the whole Siberian Railroad enterprise, and his efficiency and boldness of conception were universally deemed marvelous. He was known to have overcome the apparently insuperable difficulties which nature and climate were interposing in his task. It was, therefore, but natural that I should look him up, and his then headquarters at Stratenak. With him and some of his chief subordinates I had at the time some interesting conversation.

"This railroad is to be the main artery, in fact the only one, which is to supply Siberia and our present and future Far Eastern possessions with life-blood," said General Anzenkoff to me. "Speaking strictly from the military point of view, this railroad will be to Russia of the utmost importance. A child can see that." In the future course of conversation the general admitted, however, that to serve as Russia's main point d'appui in a future war in Far Asia, the road would be wholly insufficient, that is, as then projected and as so far carried out.

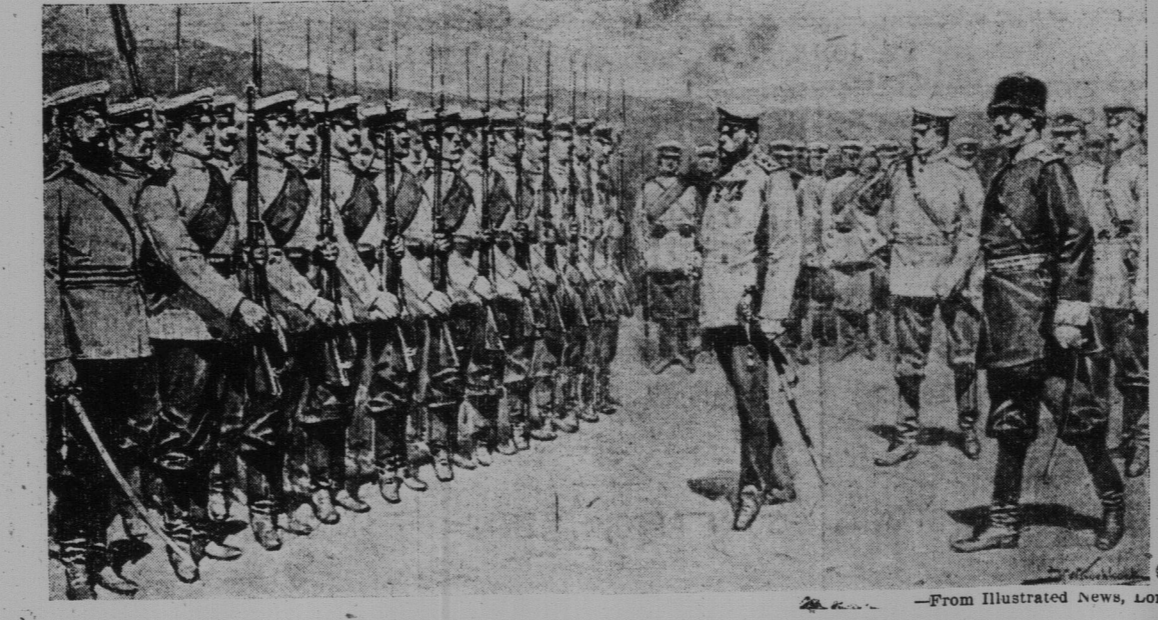
"It must not be supposed, though, that we are going to let the Siberian Railroad remain what it is now," added he. "Our object is to duplicate or triplicate it in great facilities, and then it will be a strategic asset, and we have dreamt of making it. We mean to equip this road with tracks, and rolling stock sufficient to convey, when needed, an army corps or a war footing, including tents, provisions,

ammunition, and everything else, from Moscow to Vladivostok in less than a week. As my corps, or say 200,000 men and 5,000 horses and 600 cannon, we would be able to concentrate at any point beyond the road terminals within a week. There is no hurry about it, and maybe twenty or thirty-six years will lapse before we have attained it. But, as I said, there is no hurry about it. No such war will come for a generation or so."

Never Expected War So Soon. This, it must be remembered, was before the days of Japan's marvellously rapid rise as a world power. In fact the whole Siberian Railroad had been built by Russia with a never a suspicion in her mind that the contingencies which she now has to face would ever arise. Japan was not then looked upon as her possible foe. It can be remembered that Russia had laid out upon Manchuria only since the end of the three preceding years, and that Japan's army and her formidable army are virtually creations of the last decade. Russia had all along despised Japan and Japanese ambitions, in fact, up to the last hour of her embargo culminating in Japan's sudden attack upon the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. This war, while foreseen by many broad foreign observers (and one of the heralds of this has been United States Senator Beveridge), has come unexpectedly to Russia. She has looked on it as a mere bluff. She trusted that her astute diplomacy would suffice this time, as it has on many occasions before, to delay for another month or two the actual outbreak of hostilities. This war has come ten years too early for her, and it has taken her unprepared. All evidence points that way. The emergency preparations she has made since the middle of January are entirely inadequate, and she will have to suffer the penalty of unreadiness.

With the present facilities of the Siberian Railroad it would take three months to move 100,000 additional men from Moscow to the seat of war (of course, including horses and everything needed for such an immense army), provided there was no breakdown of the road in the meanwhile. Now, all accounts differ as to the actual number of troops Russia has so far been able to mass in Manchuria and Eastern Siberia, estimates varying all the way from 80,000 to 150,000. But, assuming the last named figure to be the correct one, at least 50,000 would have to be detached for garrisoning the chief strategic points, including Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Harbin and Mukden, and to protect the Manchurian branch of the railroad itself. That would leave at most 100,000 to fight Japan with, while all accounts agree that Japan has 200,000 men to fight Russia in Korea and Manchuria. In other words, it will take three months from now to get Russia on an equal footing in number of troops with Japan, leaving entirely out of consideration the naval disproportion of the two powers. For in this last respect Japan has already demonstrated, as foreign judges predicted, her superiority, man for man and ship for ship.

Commissionariat Her Weak Point. Insufficiency of the Siberian railroad means also insufficiency of provisions for the Russian army. And that recalls to mind that in every one of the three great wars Russia has so far been engaged in, namely, the French invasion of 1812, the



Admiral Alexieff Reviewing Russian Troops at Port Arthur.

Crimean War and the Russo-Turkish one of 1877-1878, the commissariat has been Russia's most vulnerable point. This has been due in every instance not only to lack of adequate system and organization, but in like measure to the deeply ingrained corruption that has been gnawing like a cancer at the enormous country's vitals for a century past. During the war against Turkey twenty-seven years ago the commissariat was avowedly wretched. Whole Russian army corps for weeks were at starvation point, and in after the close of the war (not only the entire body of army contractors was involved, but even persons standing very close to the commissariat) had been wholly exhausted by the war. It is already certain—that corruption and want of organization will play a great part in the Russian commissariat department in this war as they have in the past.

From present accounts it is evident that Russia has made hardly any preparation for the adequate supply and movement of her troops in Asia. In no part of her vast dominions can great stores be obtained at present. The limited supply of them that Russia is drawing on now comes exclusively from the seat of war, that is from her western frontier districts, the centre of which is Warsaw. Russia is at present forced to drain her frontiers on the Austrian and Prussian sides of all the stores of provisions and ammunition laid up in her chain of fortresses. But that means only a drop of water on a hot stone. These stores would not feed an army of 200,000 in the Far East for more than a week, and while it will require months to get them to their point of destination.

The only preparations in the way of supplies Russia has made at present, are the following: About Christmas time she ordered large quantities of provisions in this country, notably in Kansas, Kansas City and St. Louis (pork and beef) and in Minnesota and Chicago (wheat, rice and canned goods) for delivery in San Francisco between Jan. 29 and Feb. 7. The sea journey from San Francisco to Port Arthur and Vladivostok requires an average of three weeks.

May Never Reach Russia. These American supplies, at least the bulk of them, had not reached Russia when last heard from, and under present circumstances, that is, with Japan's hands on the higher officers in Russia, the sea journey from the sea approaches to these two Russian strongholds, it is more than questionable whether they will ever get into Russia's hands. But even if they should do so, the amount of these provisions is insignificant in comparison with what is needed for so large an army to keep it efficient.

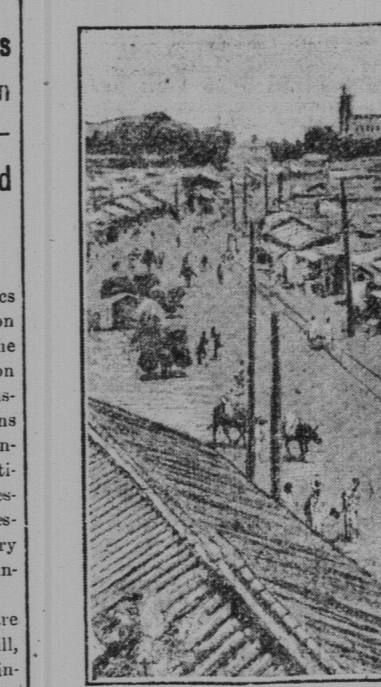
Heroic Work Which Has Established the Church in the Hermit Kingdom—Through Persecution and Martyrdom. Korea bids fair to occupy in the politics of the far east the unenviable position once held by Belgium in the west, as the cockpit of Asia. Her strategic position renders her equally indispensable to Russia and Japan. To the helpless Koreans themselves the desirability of their country in the eyes of others is an unmitigated misfortune, yet their fate is necessarily coming upon them, and the presence of foreign troops in their country signifies the danger of their national interests, a possible outbreak of anarchy.

Among those of the Koreans who are liable to feel the force of popular ill-will, though perhaps not the ill-will of the invaders, are the Korean Roman Catholics. That these Christians, numbering nearly 50,000, are persecuted is shown by the report of the viceroy apostolic, Bishop Mutel, to the Vatican, calling attention to their precarious position. He states that in consequence of the impending war, he wrote some weeks ago, there is grave danger to the missions among the native Christians, and points out that his immediate predecessor suffered fifteen years' imprisonment for want of adequate protection. Persecution and martyrdom may, indeed, be said to be almost the normal condition of the Roman Catholic church in Korea, where sanguinary edicts but a few years ago penalized the adoption of Christianity.

and in strong health. A number of large steamers belonging to the volunteer fleet of Russia have been dispatched from Odessa to Port Arthur, Vladivostok and Dally for several months past, in part containing cargoes made up of provisions, but these provisions have meanwhile been used up by the Russian troops there and in the interior of Manchuria, and are therefore no longer available. The Russian soldier is not dainty, but he is a heavy feeder. The famous Russian

Japanese Have Studied War. In facing a foe of the calibre of the Japanese army, Russia deals with a more difficult problem than France had in 1870. For while the Japanese soldier has the dash and the valor in attack of the Frenchman, he has also the German military training. German military instructors have taught Japan as a science and discipline in their profession by German military men. The present rapid mobilization of the Japanese army shows that all these names are not higher officers in Russia. The Japanese army, regiment for regiment, is more than a match for the Russian. In the last twenty years "Japan" can outwalk and outfight the big, brawny, heavy Russian any day.

Russian military history does not show a single instance of reckless daring. Such a case as that of the little "Japan," who at the taking of Peking blew up one of the gates by exploding several sacks of powder, deliberately sacrificing his own life in the doing without brag, with no heroic pose, simply as a matter of plain duty.



A Picture of Seoul, Korea—Roman Catholic Church Shown in the Distance.

wilderness, 10,000 square miles in extent, serving its title of the Hermit Kingdom, down to a comparatively recent date. He lived and taught for six years, but in 1901 suffered martyrdom with 200 of his disciples. His fate did not deter others from following in his footsteps and many other missionaries shared his crown. The first vicar-apostolic, with two priests, fell a victim to a persecution in 1839 and with them died 127 natives for the Catholic faith. (Continued on page 7, fifth column.)

FACTS ABOUT THE SIBERIAN RAILROAD. St. Petersburg to Vladivostok—5,760 miles. Harbin to Port Arthur—550 miles. Cost, \$500,000,000. Built by the Russian government. Present Czar, Nicholas II, turned first earth at Vladivostok May 19, 1901. Gauge—5 feet. Rails, 54 pounds to the yard. Standard in America, 60 pounds. Single track throughout. Route: Moscow to Vladivostok—4,400 miles. The road around the Amur River, and follow that stream to the point where it turns suddenly northeast, at Khabarovsk; from this point the railroad runs to Vladivostok. The first barrowful of earth was dug and trundled at Vladivostok by the then Czar, now the Czar, on May 19, 1891. The division to Khabarovsk was completed first. The lines from Moscow to Irkutsk and from the eastern shore of Lake Baikal to Stratenak have made the rail-road-water route complete to the Pacific. The railroad from Stratenak to Khabarovsk never has been built. The road around the end of Lake Baikal is building. It is the hardest section of all. The mountains there are almost Alpine and the engineering difficulties are great, even to engineers more competent than those in whose hands the task is. At present Lake Baikal is crossed by ferries in the summer and fall, but it is frozen tight from mid-December until well along into May. For some time at the beginning and end of the winter a ferry track is kept open by means of the huge ice-breakers that Russians have made so effective in the winter-bound harbors of Constantinople, the Baltic and Vladivostok on the Pacific, but when this is impossible the journey is made in sledges. Bear Gets Paw on Manchuria. After Russia, with the aid of Germany and France, crowded Japan away from her spoil of war, Port Arthur and Manchuria, Russia obtained from China a concession for the Eastern Chinese Railway. Beginning at a point two-thirds of the way from Lake Baikal to Stratenak, it runs southward to Harbin, where it divides into two branches. One continues southeastward to Vladivostok, the other runs south and considerably westward to Port Arthur and Dally; the latter a city built by order of the Czar to carry on a commerce which does not yet exist—a city as yet without a people. The journey from Moscow to Irkutsk is made under conditions of comfort not much different from those prevailing on other railroads in Russia. It is an old, however, to find one's self near Irkutsk, 3,400 miles east of St. Petersburg, that the train is still running on St. Petersburg time. The train is due at Irkutsk at 5 p. m. for instance, when the sun says 9 p. m. It would be an hour worse than running New York Central trains on San Francisco time. The traveler sees many other things that make him smile at the Russian as a "railroader." One is that on great stretches of the line no water tanks have been provided. The locomotive takes on an extra tender of flat-car with huge tubes filled with water. As some tanks the water has to be pumped from a source half a mile distant. The locomotives are wood-burners, built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia.

would be unthinkable in the Russian army. And this difference is the difference between the morale of the Russian and that of the Japanese army. It is the difference between the vessel and the big rooster. The Siberian Railroad. As planned originally the Trans-Siberian railroad was to run capital, and Lake Baikal, just east of it. Then the track was to skirt the southern end of Lake Baikal, thence to the eastern shore of the Amur River, and follow that stream to the point where it turns suddenly northeast, at Khabarovsk; from this point the railroad runs to Vladivostok. The first barrowful of earth was dug and trundled at Vladivostok by the then Czar, now the Czar, on May 19, 1891. The division to Khabarovsk was completed first. The lines from Moscow to Irkutsk and from the eastern shore of Lake Baikal to Stratenak have made the rail-road-water route complete to the Pacific. The railroad from Stratenak to Khabarovsk never has been built. The road around the end of Lake Baikal is building. It is the hardest section of all. The mountains there are almost Alpine and the engineering difficulties are great, even to engineers more competent than those in whose hands the task is. At present Lake Baikal is crossed by ferries in the summer and fall, but it is frozen tight from mid-December until well along into May. For some time at the beginning and end of the winter a ferry track is kept open by means of the huge ice-breakers that Russians have made so effective in the winter-bound harbors of Constantinople, the Baltic and Vladivostok on the Pacific, but when this is impossible the journey is made in sledges. Bear Gets Paw on Manchuria. After Russia, with the aid of Germany and France, crowded Japan away from her spoil of war, Port Arthur and Manchuria, Russia obtained from China a concession for the Eastern Chinese Railway. Beginning at a point two-thirds of the way from Lake Baikal to Stratenak, it runs southward to Harbin, where it divides into two branches. One continues southeastward to Vladivostok, the other runs south and considerably westward to Port Arthur and Dally; the latter a city built by order of the Czar to carry on a commerce which does not yet exist—a city as yet without a people. The journey from Moscow to Irkutsk is made under conditions of comfort not much different from those prevailing on other railroads in Russia. It is an old, however, to find one's self near Irkutsk, 3,400 miles east of St. Petersburg, that the train is still running on St. Petersburg time. The train is due at Irkutsk at 5 p. m. for instance, when the sun says 9 p. m. It would be an hour worse than running New York Central trains on San Francisco time. The traveler sees many other things that make him smile at the Russian as a "railroader." One is that on great stretches of the line no water tanks have been provided. The locomotive takes on an extra tender of flat-car with huge tubes filled with water. As some tanks the water has to be pumped from a source half a mile distant. The locomotives are wood-burners, built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia.

within 300 yards or less of the nearest outlying defenses of the main works. Again, scarcely half the forts are completed or have any guns in position to check an attack, delivered from the land side. It is different towards the sea front, but even there the harbor may be reached, though there is a boom nightly across the entrance to the inner basin, and the mouth of the haven can be blocked by the big old Chinese boom, with its "chevrons de fer" of projecting spars, studd with iron. And, of course, the Russians have laid down torpedoes and mines to protect the channel and entrance. Should the forts fail to check the button and blow any too daring enemy's craft into fragments. It is intended, once the harbor has been deepened over a greater area, to open a new channel, cutting this silted sand in a direction opposite the existing basin upon the far side of the waterway. By that means the commercial marine would have its own part of the harbor and direct access to the traders' wharves and the new railway sidings. There will be a rise of feet to 12 feet of tide at Port Arthur. Two late battleships out from Europe found no difficulty in getting into the harbor, although they were said to draw over 28 feet of water. They were at once taken into the basin, where they were touched up and painted in black within two days, like the other warships in port. For some reason the Russians have divided their fleet, keeping the best part of

GENERAL KOUROPATKIN, Appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Land Forces.

their fast armored cruisers at Vladivostok. It is stated that the powerful steam-torpedo ice-breakers can keep that fortified port open harbor throughout the severe winter. I know not if the Russians have raiding designs in the event of war upon the northern Japanese ports, such as Hakodate, or around rushing through the channels and putting in an appearance off Yokohama. But if so it would make little, and would not sensibly affect the main struggle, which will take place, if fancy, elsewhere. In Port Arthur there are all fourteen warships, not counting torpedo boats or torpedo destroyers, new or old or acquired from the Chinese. Of the fourteen craft seven are battleships, three or four are of a type like the Sevastopol, which was still in the basin the other day. The other three are anchored in three lines ahead, behind the jutting point known as the "Tiger's Tail." In the outer lines are the heavier cruisers. Besides these, but also included in the fourteen, there are two battleships and a cruiser anchored between the hills at the outside of the harbor entrance. All of them, like the Japanese ships, have their three eight day and night, ready to open steam at short notice. Meanwhile they keep the furnace going, the local coal—Siberian, Chinese and Japanese. From what I saw of their fuel stocks, I should say that the Russians could scrape together in briquettes or otherwise, about 200,000 tons of Cardiff coal or its equivalent. The Russians rarely go out either for target practice or for evening gunnery. From such information as I could gather, as well as what I saw for myself, they are slack in their sailor duties, for the officers even much of their time ashore, and the ideal of Russian life seems to be finding enjoyment and solace in such amusements as a very "tarry" town afforded—a circus, a wretched play, parties, and dissipation of the Cossack or Tartar kind. And the army men are quite as "sloppy" as their brethren of the line. But it is no worse, nor better than Portsmouth was a cycle or so ago, when prize money was plentiful, and many—many—men took life as Hogarth had painted for us. Yes, and the British sailors fought well enough in those times. Again, it may be that the Russian ships are not taken either out or into the harbor under their own steam, but are hauled by tugs, and directed by local pilots, there is an excuse for their not being out and about at sea every day. It takes much time to get them all towed out and in, but the fact that the officers do not handle their own ships under the vessel's own steam indicates either a want of confidence or a want of experience upon the part of their naval commanders. The pilots are tug captains, by no means all Russian, are now to be set a new trial, for the fleet is to be tested by being towed out and into the harbor during the night. As the entrance is straight, wide and clear, though but of modern uniform depth, and the rocky hills stand out boldly, there should be no serious difficulty of getting the fleet out and in. From a frequent inspection of the fleet's targets after practice, it is evident the shooting is of a very mediocre quality. The targets were never towed at any great speed, nor was the range a long one, but it was rarely over his or put in danger. Of course, I am told it is different with the artillerymen—the garrison gunners in the big shore batteries that frown from every hill—they can shoot well, and many of the cannon are of great size.—Correspondence London Telegraph.

Commander of Japanese Land Forces—On Him Will Fall the Brunt of the Land Fighting.

track one, and at critical points, such as the one just reached, the road as a whole is wholly inadequate for the severe demands made upon it.

Read Has Already Collapsed. There are just a few points that can be urged against the sufficiency of the Siberian Railroad as a means of supply for a large Russian army operating beyond its terminal points, as is the case at present. Now, late cables from the seat of war already begin to show these insurmountable difficulties under which Russia is laboring. It is not even necessary to assume that Japan, working through Chinese sympathizers or patriotic "Japs" Far Eastern section of the road, has had a hand in the reported blockade of the Siberian Railroad. For even without such warlike ruses—and the proverb that "everything is fair in war as in love" must be remembered—the difficulties above listed are quite sufficient to explain the collapse of the Siberian Railroad.

Some years ago, on my return from

PORT ARTHUR'S FORTIFICATIONS.

Ports of no mean kind, and of great magnitude, are counted, not in units, but by tens, between Dally and Port Arthur. The industry displayed upon every hand in railroad construction, house building, the erection of fortifications, the making of docks, roads and the improvement of the harbor, was admirable and commendable. Nor do I, nor can I easily enumerate all the works that were being pushed forward with perhaps ruthless but unflagging zeal, and much precedence. A day in Port Arthur, apart from the conviction of the Russian, is enough to convince any one that the Czar's people have a grip upon Manchuria they intend never to shake. Day and night operations go forward, designed to make Port Arthur a commercial emporium and a great naval arsenal. A newspaper printed in English, which will be issued from the Novi Krai office at the beginning of the New Year, traces the growth of the city, electric lighting, and much else—these are all upon the card, and are being got ready. At the same time, the Russian government, as represented by Admiral Alexieff, is feverishly busy laying mines, preparing the fleet for war, and searching for contractors who will deliver Cardiff coal in lots of 70,000 tons, less or more, up to 200,000 tons, early in 1904. Some day it may occur to the British official mind that it is advisable to see whether a section of the Welsh coalfields should be set aside for the exclusive use of the home fleet. Wisdom in such a matter, for it concerns the policy of national insurance—a serious matter. I have said elsewhere, and I still hold, that Port Arthur is over-fortified, and that the Russian government, and bastions of granite rock, its glacis and its trenches, circling and crowning some score of more often remote and disconnected hills that can be dominated from other heights, render them open to attack and capture in detail. And to such a form of assault they are further peculiarly exposed, for the scorings of the sea are numerous and deep. Gallies traverse the hills in all directions, and there is magnificent cover for riflemen, often up to