

With a feeble resistance, in which only two men were killed and a few wounded, a revolution had been accomplished and a government which favored Japan established. The new authorities at once declared the Chinese at Asan to be intruders instead of defenders, and requested the aid of the Japanese to drive them out. War between China and Japan was at hand.

Hostilities were precipitated by a startling event. On July 25 three Japanese men-of-war, cruising in the Yellow Sea, sighted two ships of the Chinese navy conveying a transport which had on board about twelve hundred troops. They were a portion of a large force which was being sent to Corea with the purpose of reinforcing the troops at Asan and expelling the Japanese.

The Chinese ships were cleared for action, and, though the Japanese were ignorant of the late event at Seoul, they at once accepted the wager of battle, and attacked the ships of the enemy with such effect that they were quickly crippled and put to flight. The Naniwa, the Japanese flagship, now approached the transport, a chartered British vessel named the Kowshing and flying the British flag. A boat was sent from the Japanese cruiser to the steamer, her papers were examined, and orders given that she should follow the Naniwa. This the Chinese generals refused to do, excitedly declaring that they would perish rather than be taken prisoners. Their excitement was shared by the troops, who ran wildly about the deck, threatening the officers and the Europeans on board with death if they attempted to obey the order of the enemy.