

as well drilled, as brave, and more easily handled in the commissary and quartermaster's departments. It would need alone the motive and the leadership to induce such an army to try conclusions with the Asiatic and European world.

War is the science of force against force—mind against mind. There is no reason why a Chinaman may not acquire it. In 1860 a French official reported to his government that a few regiments of French troops could conquer China. This was but a generation ago. Tonquin supervened, as Jules Ferry sadly remembered, and in Tonquin we saw the progress that China had made. That forlorn campaign was to the European powers the first glimpse of reawakened China. The world learned that China had divined the futility of matchlocks and calico forts, that she was studying, like the rest of us, the appalling litany of war. To measure the pace of Chinese progress in this sinister doctrine, we have but to compare China as seen by the French officers in 1860—an Empire that could have been ridden down by a few French regiments—and the China which checked France in Tonquin.

We have but to turn from the shuffling rabble which was wont to guard the Tartar General to the firm, steady lines at Ningpo. We have but to contrast the discipline of the troops who followed Li Hung Chang and the English General Gordon against the Taepings with the army now under Li's command in the northern provinces. As to the power of this army in battle with Western troops it would be idle to speculate. I presume that its condition is not so good as that of the Japanese army; that it suffers from lax administration; from confiding too much to foreigners, who do not show their best side to China; from an innate, inherited and pious aversion to war. This will yield to severe, consistent discipline. And remember, likewise, that the Chinese are not an "enthusiastic people." Their hearts are not "easily fired." They are not prone to outbursts of public emotion. China moves as a glacier rather than as the volcano or the cyclone.

But she moves! You may defeat her to-day, you may defeat her to-morrow, you may bombard her Taku forts, you may even land an army, and, marching over the low, alluvial fertile lands of Northern China, spring upon Peking. What then? You have no more gained the country than by the capture of Boston you would gain the United States. It is like warring upon waves. You may cut and slash and stab, the billows will serry up and roll. It is fighting an impalpable enemy—as if assailing the air or the clouds. Japan victorious, and she would have a country she could neither govern nor hold. Victories again and again repeated could exact from China no more than what China deigned to give—an indemnity, an island, or even an abandonment of Corea—which would do China no harm and Japan no good. The vendetta alone would remain.