

though doing little for the improvement of its army, had bought itself a modern fleet, two of its ships, the *Ting-yuen* and *Chen-yuen*, having fourteen inches of iron armor, and surpassing in size and strength anything that Japan had to show. These vessels were all armed with the most effective of modern weapons, were handled by men trained in the theories of European war, and seemed capable of the most destructive results.

On the 17th of September, 1894, an epoch-making battle of these iron-clads took place. It was a remarkably different event from the first engagement of this sort, that between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* in Hampton Roads, for the guns now brought into play would have pierced the armor of those vessels as if it had been made of tin. The Japanese squadron had just convoyed a fleet of transports, bearing ten thousand troops and thirty-five hundred horses, to Chemulpo, near the Korean capital. The Chinese squadron had similarly convoyed four thousand troops to the Yalu River. These were landed on the 16th, and on the morning of the 17th the fleet started on its return. On the same morning the Japanese fleet reached the island of Hai-yang, leaving their torpedo-boats behind, as there was no thought of fighting a battle. About nine o'clock smoke was seen in the distance, and at eleven-forty the Chinese fleet came into sight.

The Japanese fleet consisted of ten vessels, the First Flying Squadron, consisting of four fine cruisers of high speed, and the Main Squadron, composed of six vessels of lower speed. There were two smaller