

moderate thickness as through so much paper. With these came the quick-fire guns, from whose gaping mouths cannon-balls could be rained like the drops of a rapid shower, and the torpedoes, capable of tearing ruinous holes in the sides and bottoms of the mightiest ships.

Such was the work that was doing in the West while the East slept calmly on. But no occasion had arisen for putting to the proof these great floating engines of war. Theories in abundance were offered of the probable effect upon one another of two modern fleets, but the dread of terrible results had a potent influence, and fear of the destructive powers of modern ships and armies had proved the strongest of arguments in keeping the nations of the world at peace.

The astounding event spoken of is the fact that the iron-clad battle-ship of the present day was first put to proof in the waters of the Yellow Sea, in a war between two nations which half a century before were hardly beyond the bow-and-arrow stage of warfare, and were still novices in the modern art of war. The naval inventions made in Europe and America had their first trial in a conflict between China and Japan, and the interest with which maritime nations read of the doings of these powerful engines of war in those far-off waters was intense.

Japan had been alert in availing itself of all the world knew about war, providing its army with the best modern weapons and organizing them in the most effective European method, while purchased iron-clads replaced its old fleet of junks. China,