

## CHINA AND JAPAN.

### Foreign Opinion.

A retired officer of the French Army, living at Yokohama, has transmitted to the *France Militaire* some facts which he has gathered from a Japanese officer who was wounded at Ping-Yang. The opinion of the Mikado's officer serves to confirm the opinion as to the deplorable conduct and demoralisation of the Chinese which was given in the long letter of an educated and travelled Chinaman, published in our columns last week. The successive defeats of the Chinese, we are told, are due to their defective armament and the rudimentary state of their military organisation: "Imagine an extraordinary crowd of badly-clothed men carrying strange arms, fit for a pantomime or a museum of curiosities. At Ping-Yang, most of the Chinese could not use their rifles, and in despair threw themselves upon us with spears. But these acts of bravery were the exception. In the earlier combats I witnessed the wildest panics, the Chinese throwing down their useless weapons and flying, in spite of their chiefs, who endeavoured to keep them to their duties. In truth, the Chinese Army has long formed but an assemblage of badly-fed, never-paid, utterly demoralised troops, veritable hordes of brigands, who pillage and burn everything upon their passage. Thus it was that the natives received us everywhere as deliverers. You can have no idea of the acts of barbarism and atrocities we have seen. How many times upon entering poor villages have we seen ears and noses nailed upon doors by these bandits, who have thus avenged themselves upon their compatriots who have denied something to their creed!" The Japanese officer avers that when the rain fell heavily at Ping-Yang, the Chinese put up their umbrellas: "Gen. Yeh carried the pleasantries so far that he sent a white flag to us demanding a cessation of hostilities because of the bad weather." The Japanese officer, however, bestows high praise upon the Chinese cavalry: "At Ping-Yang the Manchu cavalry gave proof of extraordinary bravery. In order to cover the retreat they attacked the brigade of Gen. Noduz, to which I belonged, and were driven back by a murderous fire, but returning to the charge without success, 750 horsemen were slain before our eyes. It is certain that if the infantry had shown as much courage, we should not now have been upon the road to Peking."

### The Advance on Peking.

Capt. Younghusband, who has crossed Manchuria in mid-winter, has given the following expression of his views regarding a Japanese advance against Peking this winter.

He said: "If the reported arrival of a Japanese army at Newchwang be true, the troops there will probably proceed by the coast road direct to Peking by way of Shan-Hai-Kwan, which is the only point where resistance could be offered. The road is good, and when I visited the forts there some eight years ago they were all directed against the landing of a force from the sea, not taking a land party into account. There are strong lines of earthworks built under European supervision, of modern types and armed with large Krupp guns in charge of a German non-commissioned officer, who is still there. Once the Japanese have captured these forts, they will have command of the railway to Tientsin. There is every probability of the Japanese pushing on to Peking, it being very unlikely that they will allow themselves to be stopped by the winter, when the roads are in the best possible condition, and although the weather is cold, the days are crisp, dry, and usually bright. The Mikado's troops will either have to take or 'hold' Moukden in order to secure their communications before they can advance on the capital, but with Peking itself threatened it is doubtful whether the Chinese would keep any strong force in Manchuria, and the Japanese could therefore send the bulk of their army to the capital. The Great Wall is a formidable obstacle, being composed of solid blocks of granite, and being from 30ft. to 40ft. high, but a modern army like the Japanese would probably soon overcome this. The Japanese, having passed the Shan-Hai-Kwan forts, and having crossed the Great Wall would have outflanked the whole of the defences of Peking, which lie among the sea-coast, and are designed for an attack from the sea, and would meet with no natural obstacles until they reach the high strong wall of masonry surrounding the capital itself, but which is not defended by modern fortifications. After Port Arthur I can hardly imagine this would prove a serious difficulty."

### The Present Position.

It cannot be said that the intelligence that Admiral Ting was to be punished for the failure of the Chinese Fleet was received in England with surprise. China was in need of a scapegoat. It is well known that the admiral's hands have been tied throughout, and it is to the credit of the foreign officers of the Chinese Fleet that they have sent in an unanimous protest to Prince Kung against his degradation, declaring that they would resign if it were carried out. Many Chinese officers joined in this protest. The Foochow clique, which was intriguing against Admiral Ting, has thus been defeated, for an edict has been issued continuing him in command.

Much interest is now centered in China's overtures for peace, concerning which there is much doubt. She is said to have solicited President Cleveland's aid, and that Mr. John Foster, Secretary of state in a former administration, has been charged with a mission to Tokio.

Meanwhile the Japanese are making distinct progress. The division of the Second Army, under Lieut.-Gen. Baron Yamagi, entered Kai-Chou (Kai-Phing) on the 18th inst. without resistance. On the 17th and 18th inst. the scouts of Gen. Katsura's division brought word to him at Liao-Yang of the flight of Gen. Sung's army northwards after being defeated at Hai-Tcheng. On the night of the 18th the Chinese Army was ascertained to be passing within a few miles of the Japanese camp. The enemy's numbers were estimated at 10,000 men of all arms. Gen. Katsura, therefore, moved towards them with his full strength. The Chinese were overtaken on the morning of the 19th. Major-Gen. Osako's brigade was the first to be engaged. The enemy made a stand at the village of Kungwasai, about eight miles from Hai-Tcheng, and severe fighting ensued. While this was proceeding, Major-Gen. Oshima's brigade, coming from Hai-Tcheng, entered the field and joined hands with Osako. The combined force consisted of four complete regiments and five batteries of artillery, besides troops of other arms. The Japanese artillery, which was well placed, played havoc with the Chinese, who stubbornly stood their ground. The Japanese infantry charged splendidly and cut their way through the Chinese army, but the enemy rallied and fired steadily. Thrice the Japanese repeated this movement, dashing right through the enemy's lines. Desperate hand-to-hand fighting took place. After five hours' fighting the Chinese began to falter, and soon they were in full and disorderly flight, some westward, others northward in the direction of Yingkow. The Japanese occupied the village of Kungwasai. The Chinese lost probably 500 killed and wounded. The Japanese suffered severely, but the actual figures have not yet been received. As a result of this defeat Gen. Sung's army fell back upon Newchwang, and afterwards retreated to Denshodai, together with the mass of the troops stationed at Newchwang. Gen. Katsura now reports that there are no Chinese troops at the latter place. The Chinese forces at Naisanbarsi have been occupied since the 18th inst. in extending the front of the Chinese lines. They are also increasing the number of their banner cavalry. Japanese scouts sent in the direction of Po-Chi report that about 8,000 Chinese are advancing from Cilco along the sea-shore.—*Army and Navy Gazette.*