

THRILLING STORIES
OF THE
Russian-Japanese War

*A Vivid Panorama of
Land and Naval Battles*

A REALISTIC DESCRIPTION OF TWENTIETH
CENTURY WARFARE

THE AWFUL STRUGGLE FOR JAPANESE FREEDOM, THE PEACE AND SAFETY OF THE ORIENT,
AND THE PROTECTION OF HELPLESS CHINA FROM THE GREED OF FOREIGN FOES.

ALSO A

*Complete History of Japan, Russia, China, Korea and Manchuria
Including Progress, National Traits and Customs, Religion, Philosophy, Personal Adventure, etc.*

BY

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the World; Etc., Etc.*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

GENERAL NELSON A. MILES

*The greatest military authority in the country, who recently made a tour of the Far East, where his
position as Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Army brought him in close touch
with the leaders of the Russian and Japanese forces*

Graphically Illustrated with Nearly 100 Superb Engravings

CONSISTING OF LAND AND NAVAL BATTLES, VIEWS OF WAR SHIPS,
PORTRAITS OF RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE COMMANDERS, PICTURES OF
FAMOUS CITIES, FORTS, TEMPLES AND SNAP-SHOTS OF EVERY-DAY LIFE

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THE JAPANESE POINT OF VIEW

BY KOGORO TAKAHIRA

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from Japan to the United States.

[*The author called upon the Mikado's diplomatic representative at Washington the day after the war broke out, when he dictated the following for this work as his view of the situation:*]

My advices from Tokio tell me that the war now going on between my country and Russia began with a Russian attack at Chemulpo, Korea, on Monday last, and not with the Japanese attack at Port Arthur.

My government broke off diplomatic relations with Russia on February 5th. Even though my government did begin the war by attacking the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, there is nothing irregular about it; the action would need no explanation or defence. I simply mention the fact in the interest of historical accuracy.

The likening of our sinking the Russian ships at Port Arthur to the Spaniards' blowing up the *Maine* in Havana Harbor, as I see the French papers have done to-day, is amusing. This, probably is the first time the French have ever charged the Spaniards with destroying the *Maine*. If I remember, at the beginning of the Spanish-American War, the French were indignant at any suggestion made in America that their friends, the Spaniards, committed such an act.

I take it for granted that the present crisis in the far East is a matter of grave concern to you and the readers of your book. I hope that I may go further and assume that, in some measure at least, the opinion you have formed is favorable to the cause which my country represents. But whatever your attitude or that of your readers may be, whether in perfect agreement with mine or not, it is not to your

sympathy but to your judgment I would appeal. Let me add, also, that I do not seek to gain from you a larger measure of good will because the interests of our countries in the far East are to some extent identical. No one speaking with knowledge in Japan's behalf has ever made that plea.

All who are familiar with the Eastern situation know that a number of the powers have interests in common in China—interests of the greatest value. Your own government has shown in the most marked manner that it was fully cognizant of the importance of these interests, and alive to the undesirable results that might follow if they were not properly safeguarded. Yet this fact, and others equally well known and equally significant, have not prevented the attempt to picture Japan as pretending that she was acting from altruistic motives, presumptuously arrogating to herself the rôle of champion of a common cause. Nothing could be farther from the truth than this cunning device to arouse prejudice and befog the actual situation. Japan took the initiative because the impending peril, while it threatened others in a measure, was to her a matter of far greater moment.

There is another matter to which I would ask your attention. It has been frequently said—so frequently that the statement may have gained some credence—that a Chauvinistic and aggressive spirit is so predominant among my countrymen as to render an equitable and honorable accommodation of the questions at issue practically impossible. So far as this charge is concerned, I am perfectly willing to let the facts speak for themselves. Undoubtedly the past few months have been a period of public disquiet and excitement in Japan. Equally without doubt, there has been a great deal of irresponsible popular clamor. But in all fairness, was this either unnatural or, reasonably regarded, a just cause for criticism? Supposing that equally vital questions were at issue in this or any other country, and supposing, also, that the negotiations dragged unaccountably or

seemed to be intentionally delayed for an unfriendly purpose, would there not be similar manifestations of discontent and unrest?

The course of the Japanese government itself under these trying circumstances, its manifest determination to neglect no means of peaceful settlement and to essay every avenue of honorable accord, is sufficient to reply to this accusation. Under the wise guidance of His Majesty the Emperor, my august master, the motto of the Empire, the sole rule of action, first and last throughout this controversy, has been peace with honor and safety. In the earnest endeavor to secure this desirable end, His Majesty has had the loyal and cordial support of the enlightened public opinion of the Empire, and I feel confident the verdict of history will be that no prompting of self-esteem, no yearning for self-glorification was permitted for an instant to interfere with the patient effort to secure an equitable and lasting agreement upon the questions at issue.

The position assumed by Japan was the logical result of her environment and of the inexorable necessities of national safety. Considerations not merely of self-interest or self-respect, but of self-protection, have led her to where she now stands. The increase of her military and naval strength has been criticised as an indication of a desire for national aggrandizement at the cost of others. Even if it were not the fact, as it unquestionably is, that her progress along more peaceful lines has been as notable as her military and naval growth, no more convincing evidence than the present crisis is needed to prove that such preparation was the dictate of wise precaution.

The burden upon the nation's resources is not a light one, but think of the infinitely heavier burden Japan would have to bear if, instead of her present neighbors, a potential enemy of uncertain purpose and overwhelming strength was firmly intrenched upon her vast threshold. It is this contingency against which we have to guard, but in attempting to do so we have never sought to impede in any manner the development of the legitimate ambitions of other nations

or the enjoyment by them of vested rights lawfully acquired. From the outset the representations made in Japan's behalf have been confined within clearly defined limits. They may be summed up in a word—respect for the territorial integrity and independence of China and Korea; faithful observance of treaty stipulations, and due recognition of the validity of the special interest created by existing conditions.

A few days ago I read an editorial in an American newspaper wherein Japan was represented as having interfered without invitation and without warrant in the affairs of China and Korea. Only ignorance of the actual situation could suggest such a criticism. Every impartial observer familiar with the facts must acknowledge, I feel convinced, that Japan's action was in pursuance of clear duty and assured right, and was fully warranted by her conventional relations with both China and Korea.

Her sole desire was to terminate a state of affairs clouded with uncertainties which threatened present loss and future danger, and to evolve from indefinite assurances and nebulous promises, regarding matters in which she was vitally interested, an understanding clearly defining the rights and the duties of all concerned. It may have been over sanguine to attempt such a task, but the attempt itself was justified by the law of nations and by an even more imperative obligation in the duty of self-protection.

In 1895 Japan gained a foothold in Manchuria by right of conquest. Russia thereupon took the initiative in intervening on the ground that Japan's occupation of the Li Liao-Tung Peninsula was a menace to the peace of the East and the integrity of China. Afterward, first through undertakings nominally peaceful and subservient to Chinese sovereignty, then on pretext based on internal disorders in China, but at no time justified by actual conditions, Russia herself took armed possession of the whole of Manchuria. She bound herself by treaty to withdraw in 1903, but subsequently made withdrawal contingent upon stipulations, an acceptance of which would not have

left a vestige of real sovereignty to China. Did not this give Japan as good a right to intervene in 1903 as Russia did in 1895? To the ordinary intelligence it would appear that the peace of the East and the integrity of China were menaced quite as much in one case as in the other.

But Japan had another and a stronger reason for intervention. Russia, once the absolute mistress of Manchuria, held Korea at her mercy. When she could, with little effort, sweep away the feeble resistance of that kingdom, it did not require extraordinary foresight to perceive that she would not permit even an independent Korea to remain as a possible embarrassment to her future control of the North Asian litoral. Indeed, the immediate past furnishes significant proofs that Russian agents, official and unofficial, pursuing the line of policy which some term astute diplomacy, but others know by a harsher name, were blazing the pathway to that very goal. Herein lay the real menace to Japan, not alone to her commercial and industrial interests, but to her national repose and security. For this reason she has intervened, not from motives of petty jealousy or hopes of territorial conquest, nor, least of all, because of rankling memories of the Liao-Tung recession. While the present crisis is in a sense the offspring of Russia's action in 1895, the Japanese people are content to deal with existing issues and to leave to impartial history the decision of who played the more honest part in that affair.

The record of all that has occurred will soon be open to every one, and I feel assured that you will find in it ample justification for what I have said. I am confident also that you will see in it good reason to believe that while this issue was not of my country's seeking, she will face it calmly and firmly, not in a spirit of over-confidence, as one underestimating a powerful adversary, but with the assured conviction that in the words of your great President, she is following the right, as God gives her to see the right, and in the end justice must prevail.



CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN

Rennenkampf's Defeat—The Advance of Kuroki and Oku—Battling Behind Piles of Corpses—The Japanese Fight like Demons—A Bloody Struggle in a Snowstorm—Nogi and His Port Arthur Veterans—The Little Islanders Throw their Lives Away—Recklessly Mad Rushes—Retreating Russians Kiss the Bloodstained Earth—Kouropatkin's Army Surrounded—The Occupation of Mukden—Headlong Retreat of the Russians to Tieling—The Spoils of War—Capture of Tieling—The Massacre at St. Petersburg—Assassination of Grand Duke Sergius.

A MILLION MEN in the throes of mortal combat for eighteen days and nights—a battlefield extending along a front of eighty miles through trackless mountains, across ice-bound rivers, and over mighty snow-covered plains—then the shattered remnant of a mighty army in panic stricken retreat. This in a few words is the story of Mukden, one of the greatest conflicts in the history of the world.

A Death-Dealing Storm of Lead.

The culminating struggle—last scene of all that ended this grewsome tragedy—was one of terrific grandeur. It has been compared to a vast thunderstorm of lead, bullets, and shrapnel, pelting mercilessly a strip of land twenty miles long, seven miles broad, mowing down victims by the thousands, the explosions of shimose and the scythelike work of six-inch shells razing whole villages. Through this hell of fire, Russian and Japanese charged and countercharged by regiments. In spite of the fact that many of the divisions had been hammered by batteries unceasingly for a fortnight, they fought with wonderful determination and bravery. Regiments were reduced to companies, companies to squads. But these scattered fragments in some miraculous way succeeded in uniting their forces and re-entering the fight. The soil of the valley was thickly sown with pieces of shells and bits of shrapnel and covered with the bodies of the slain. Often men dropped dead, suffocated with the fumes of melinite, lyddite and shimose, and the stifling gases of smokeless powder. Then the Russian leader began burning his stores and the retreat became a rout.

How the Battle of Mukden Began.

The battle of Mukden began on February 19th when the Japanese captured Haba Pass, fifty-two miles south of Mukden, the advance post of General Rennekampf, who had been ordered to assume the aggressive against the Japanese forces. Vanze Pass was taken the following day and the Russian advance hurled back on Tsinkhetchen, Rennekampf's base, forty-five miles southeast of Mukden. The Russian general made several counter attacks but the Japanese, coming on in constantly increasing numbers, succeeded, on February 22, in flanking the Russian position at Tsinkhetchen, and on February 24 Rennekampf began a disastrous retreat to the Hun River, twenty-six miles to the northward.

Russian Heroism of No Avail.

For two days Rennekampf endeavored to hold his ground between Tsinkhetchen and Da Pass, eight miles to the northward, but was compelled to beat a hasty retreat, thirteen miles in a blinding snowstorm, managing to save his guns but losing most of his supplies. He finally succeeded in reaching the north bank of the Hun with the shattered remnants of his army and fell back to the railroad.

Up to March 1 the fighting had been along the extreme eastern lines, the Japanese force engaged being the Fifth Army under Lieutenant General Kawimura, which had advanced from Saimatze to a position east of Kuroki's forces. March 1, Kuroki began his advance, the battle thus extending westward, crossed the Shakhe river and seized Kaotu Pass, thirty-two miles southeast of Mukden. On the same day Oku began his attack on the Russian right wing, twenty-six miles southwest of Mukden, the Japanese using the Port Arthur eleven-inch howitzers, the largest ever used in field fighting. This bombardment was probably the heaviest ever known. Hundreds of guns of all sizes rained shells on the Russian positions, destroyed the defenses and struck consternation to the hearts of the Russian troops, within the zone of fire. The Japanese infantry then advanced to the attack.

The Demonic Bravery of the Japanese.

The Mikado's troops fought like demons making attack after attack, especially on the center and westward utterly reckless of sacrifices, fearlessly advancing against infantry fire and machine guns which literally mowed down

the advancing columns, making human life so cheap that the survivors intrenched themselves behind great piles of corpses and continued the battle with unabated vigor.

During the night of March 1 the Japanese took many important Russian defenses that gave Oku's men a foothold for their subsequent attacks. The capture of the village of Chintan enabled the Japanese to turn the Russian right flank, thereby securing a pivot to swing northward to the west of the Hun river.

Reckless Night Attacks and Bayonet Charges.

These operations were conducted with great difficulty. The Russian works were strongly defended by entanglements and machine guns, and the Russians used search lights and star shells, but in spite of these the Japanese, under cover of a heavy bombardment, rushed the works at the point of the bayonet, killing many of the Russians and imprisoning others in the trenches.

On the morning of March 2 the Japanese captured the enemy's position at Huànde, after a most sensational charge. Small detachments of Japanese troops sent to reconnoiter the Russian positions succeeded by marvelous ingenuity and reckless bravery, in getting close to the Russian entrenchments under the protection of a snowstorm, when they suddenly charged and drove the vastly superior force from the trenches.

Nogi and Oku to the Fore.

In the meantime Oku's troops pressed steadily forward, fighting every foot of the way. The Russians stubbornly contested the reckless advance of the little Islanders for a time but finally gave way under repeated defeats and heavy losses, throwing away their arms and clothing and even abandoning their stores.

While Oku was thus alternately hammering and charging the Russian right wing, he formed a screen from behind which General Nogi, the hero of the Port Arthur siege, led his veteran divisions northward by forced marches twenty-six miles. Kouropatkin knew nothing of the sensational flanking march until, without warning, the roar of Nogi's guns, five miles west of Mukden, told him that he had been outgeneraled, and that his whole position had been turned.

The Hero of Port Arthur Takes a Daring Chance.

Nogi took as daring a chance as did Kuroki at the battle of Liaoyang. West of Mukden there was only a frozen plain, on which not even a temporary fortification could be raised, but the Port Arthur veterans advanced to the attack, shouting in Russian:

"Out of the way for us; we are from Port Arthur."

They offered their lives with the same fanatical bravery and were as unshaken by heavy losses as at the siege of Port Arthur.

While Nogi was marching around to the west of Mukden and Kuroki was driving in the Russian army on the east, Nodzu was holding the Russian center on the south, preventing it from going to the assistance of either the right or left wings.

Human Lives of No Value.

On March 3, the northward advance of the Japanese had approached so near Mukden that the bursting of the shrapnel could be seen from the city, which was consequently thrown into dire confusion. The carnage on this day at the center and on both flanks was frightful. The Japanese simply threw away their lives, hurling themselves against the seemingly impregnable fortifications of the Russians. These awful sacrifices held the center in check and covered General Nogi's attack on the west, which resulted in the complete turning of the Russian right and made sure the overwhelming defeat of the Russian army.

The Russians Retire in Confusion.

In the meantime the left Japanese army after a series of recklessly mad charges, had succeeded in fighting their way to a point on the main road five miles north of Mukden. The Russians doggedly endeavored to check the onward rush of the Japanese in vain, finally retreating in disorder before their foes. It is believed that some of the Russian soldiers were disheartened by the fall of Port Arthur, and were almost in open revolt. A number of strong positions were given up without a show of resistance and the battlefield showed evidence of hasty retreat, being covered with clothing, heavy felt boots, and thousands of whips thrown away probably because they impeded the Russians' hasty flight. Many rifles and thousands of clips of rifle cartridges were also thrown away, the Russians retiring east and

north in confusion. It was evident that all their plans for retreat were disconcerted by the rapid rushes of the Japanese.

Preferred Death to Retreat.

To others, so cruelly, so bitterly disappointing was the order to abandon the positions on which so many of their comrades had fallen that many of the soldiers, sobbing, knelt and kissed the blood-stained earth and then gloomily and unwillingly carried out the order to retire. On every hand privates were asking their leaders why and getting no explanation.

In the depth of the night lines of troops moved out of the intrenchments, leaving the bodies of their fellows, buried and unburied, behind, and then burned the stores and provisions which were abandoned by the unexpected retreat, enormous fires illuminating the road afar. The retreat was executed in perfect order, and the troopers, leaving Madyadany to the eastward, fell back to the appointed positions on the Hun River. Officers and men alike felt the blow keenly. "Why, oh why," sobbed one, "did not they let us die in our positions?"

"War is Hell!"

The territory in front of the Russians' positions was a plain of death. Bodies strewed the debatable ground, from which neither side could remove its dead. No quarter had been asked for or given by either side; the enmity ceased only in death. The wounded, with breasts torn open by shrapnel or bayonet, roused their flagging energies for one more shot. Here, a Japanese sitting upon a stone, a moment's pause for rest, and then eternity—there, a Russian, his face dogged even in death, horribly mutilated by a shimose shell—and just beyond, two foes with bayonets sheathed in each other's breasts. Everywhere, corpses—corpses—corpses.

The road northward was crowded so far as the eye could reach by a continuous file of two-wheeled Chinese carts full of Russian wounded, the best testimony of the valor with which the army of the East, fighting continuously for a fortnight, had defended every inch of the ground over which it was compelled by superior numbers to retire.

The Pitiful Condition of the Wounded.

Each cart bore from three to five wounded men whose exhaustion was almost too utter for them to feel pain. Scarcely a groan or cry was heard—not even the moans of the dying; only the dismal creak of the rude wheels

and the thud of the ponies' hoofs. Most of the wounded had their heads covered with Chinese blankets or dirty coats stiff with coagulated blood hiding wan and dirty faces distorted with pain, sunken eyes and expanded nostrils. Here and there was seen a cart with two wounded men, between whom was a corpse which every jolt pounded against the helpless living comrades of the man on whose face death had sealed the distortion of unbearable agony.

The Retreat to Tieling.

On March 5, the Japanese made a series of desperate attacks on the Russian divisions west and south of Mukden. All of these attacks were repulsed with enormous losses of life on both sides. On the morning of the 7th the Japanese made a general assault convinced that victory was at hand. The night before they had seen the sky illuminated with the fires of burning stores, and knew that Kouropatkin had commenced his retreat to the north. Then came the flight of the Russian left wing, against which Kuroki had been hurling his soldiers. This was the beginning of a series of desperate attacks against the retreating Russians, intended to break up the army of Kouropatkin and compel the surrender of the detached divisions. The first result was the destruction of the Russian center and the occupation of Mukden by Oyama, followed by the headlong retreat of the Russians to Tieling.

Part of the Army Saved from Destruction.

The bravery of Generals Kaulbars and Bilderling by their masterly rear-guard actions saved a part of the Russian army from immediate annihilation and enabled it to reach Tieling in safety. Kaulbars with a comparatively small force held a solid front against 80,000 Japanese troops, commanded by General Nogi, and although he left thousands of his dead behind him in his slow retiring movement, he prevented Nogi from outflanking Kouropatkin or cutting through to the center of his retreat. Bilderling was forced to stand against the formidable armies of Oku and Nodzu at the center. And although his lines were broken many times he hurled his divisions into the gaps and held the enemy in check.

Fearful Losses in Killed, Captured and Wounded.

The Russian losses at the battle of Mukden were approximately 200,000 killed, wounded and prisoners. The total casualties on the Japanese side

were about 50,000. The spoils of war included 100,000 rifles, 300,000 shells, 25,000,000 rounds of ammunition, 10,000 bushels of wheat, 300,000 bushels of fodder, 100 large guns, 1,000,000 loaves of bread, besides clothing and accoutrements, tents, railway outfit, telegraph wire and poles, beds, stoves, and other property.

Kouropatkin Burns His Stores.

On the night of March 9 the retreat of the Russian army commenced, and hundreds of ammunition and hospital trains were despatched to Tieling. At this time an unceasing battle was in progress, north of Mukden, therefore the trains traveled unlighted and without whistling. Meanwhile, the city of Mukden presented a remarkable scene. All about rose the flames of burning stores. Occasionally boxes of cartridges exploded, and rockets rose and burst into clusters of stars. The fitful light of the fires revealed the dead lying in heaps, hundreds of wounded left behind to die or be captured and the nameless horrors of a besieged city. And beyond the glare was a surging, disorganized mass of soldiers fleeing to their last refuge at Tieling, with the victory-flushed foe in hot pursuit.

On March 16 came the report that the forces of Japan, relentlessly pursuing the retreating enemy, had surrounded and captured Tieling, thus putting the finishing touches to a victory as welcome to Japan as it must have been humiliating to Russia. From the moment that the news of the disastrous defeat at Mukden reached St. Petersburg the downfall of General Kouropatkin was certain. The Czar at once issued an order dismissing and recalling the Russian commander. Kouropatkin's discomfiture was further increased by the appointment of General Linevitch, his personal enemy, to the command of the army of Manchuria.

A Reign of Terror in Russia.

Meanwhile, in the land of the Czar, the agitation for constitutional reform had assumed formidable proportions. The temper of the people rose to fever heat. An attempt was made on the life of the Emperor while he was attending the religious ceremony of blessing the waters of the Neva. The artillery, stationed opposite the pavilion in which stood the Czar and his suite, was firing a salute, when a charge of shot came crashing through the crowd. Someone had placed a loaded cartridge in one of the guns.

The Czar escaped death by a miracle. Then occurred a terrible catastrophe that marked a new chapter in Russian history. On January 22, the workmen of St. Petersburg marched in a body to the Winter Palace with the intention of presenting a petition to the Czar, setting forth their wrongs and asking for redress. Upon arriving at the palace they found troops drawn up to receive them, but anticipating no danger, the leader of the procession, Father Gopon, said in a loud voice: "We are going to present a petition to the Emperor." The commander of the troops replied: "The road is barred." Unheeding the almost certain death in the leveled rifles, the brave priest gave the order to march on. Instantly there came the order to fire and a hail of lead poured into the people's ranks. Hundreds were killed and wounded. Other massacres followed in different parts of the city, but late in the afternoon came the crowning horror, when a regiment of bloodthirsty Cossacks charged upon a crowd of people gathered in front of the palace and mercilessly cut down scores of men, women, and children.

The massacre at St. Petersburg was followed by riots and strikes in other Russian cities. Petitions were presented to the Czar; he received delegations of workmen, but the "little father," promising much and doing nothing, failed to grasp the opportunity to become the benefactor of his people. Then came the horrible assassination of Grand Duke Sergius, the Czar's evil genius, and the most hated man in Russia. Sergius was blown to pieces by a bomb, hurled beneath the wheels of his carriage as he was driving through Moscow. The act was committed by an agent of the revolutionary party which had, through a public decree imposed a sentence of death upon the Czar and all his advisers who were inimical to the cause of the people. No wonder that the Emperor exclaimed at the time: "When will all this end?"



DESTRUCTION OF THE RUSSIAN WARSHIP 'BORODINO' IN THE STRAITS OF KOREA.

The 'Borodino,' a first class battleship of 16,000 horse power, carrying 740 men, with armor belt 11 inches thick, equipped with 4 twelve-inch, 12 six-inch and 46 rapid fire guns and valued at \$5,200,000, was the first vessel sunk in the battle of the Korean Straits. According to the testimony of one of the rescued officers, the boat was a veritable slaughter pen. Entire gun crews were cut to pieces by the merciless Japanese fire. The decks were rivers of blood. Enveloped in a hail of bursting shells, with steering-gear disabled, the brave Russian sailors kept up a gallant resistance to the last. Suddenly a swarm of torpedo boats surrounded the warship, there was a terrific explosion and the gallant craft disappeared beneath the waves.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE BATTLE IN THE STRAITS OF KOREA

The Second Pacific Squadron a Formidable Armada—The Dash for Vladivostok—Rojestvensky's Ruse—Togo's Battle Signal—A Demoralized Fleet—A Superbly Terrible Scene—Caught in a Trap—The "Hornets" of the Sea Finish the Work of Destruction—Every Russian Boat a Slaughter Pen—Fire Adds to the Horror—The Borodino's Gallant Fight—Blown to Fragments and Sunk—Appalling Results of the Battle.

AFTER the death of Makaroff in the Petropavlovsk and Witsoeft in the Czarvitch, the Czar in desperation ordered Admiral Rojestvensky to organize a fleet, take it to the Far East, and endeavor to wrest the supremacy of the seas from Japan. The result was the Second Pacific Squadron consisting of fifty or more war ships, colliers and transports.

A Victory without Parallel.

Two incidents marked the voyage of the Russian squadron to the seat of war. One was the wanton attack made upon a fleet of fishing boats off the coast of England, as already related, the other was the alleged violation of neutrality on the part of France, who, it was claimed, rendered great aid to Rojestvensky at Madagascar and various Indo-China ports. After effecting a junction with the division under Vice Admiral Nebogatoff, who had been sent to his aid, the Russian commander averted an international crisis by leaving French waters and sailing for Vladivostok. On Saturday, May 27, the Russian squadron arrived in the Straits of Korea, where Togo was lying in wait with practically the entire navy of Japan. Two days later, when it became known that the Czar's magnificent armada, the most formidable fleet ever gathered together, had been completely annihilated, the world stood aghast at the immensity of the disaster to the Russian Empire.

The Japanese victory in the Korean Straits is not only without parallel in naval history, but will rank among the decisive battles of the world. Togo's marvelous achievement in wiping out the Russian fleet practically ended the war, settled the command of the eastern seas and the future of the Orient. To quote from a well-known authority, "The east is to be Mongol, not slave; yellow, not white. It is to be free, not bond. It is to work out its salvation

under the sympathetic leadership of the intelligent and progressive Japanese, not under the dictation of the despotic Russian autocracy. The Japanese victory will have important effects in Russia as well as in the East. It cannot fail to hasten the downfall of the bureaucracy and the rise of free institutions."

Rojestvensky Attempts to Deceive His Enemy.

When Admiral Rojestvensky was at Saddle Islands, his last coaling station before the dash for Vladivostok, he completed his plan of campaign. He sent five of his colliers and supply ships to Shanghai, hoping to draw Togo's fleet away from the Korean Straits. He then ordered the rest of his colliers and supply ships to pass out between the Liuchiu Islands and Formosa, east of Japan and to make Vladivostok through the Tsugaru Straits. In the meantime Rojestvensky had divided his fleet for the purpose of further deceiving the Japanese commander, with instructions to reassemble near the Korean Straits, which Rojestvensky had decided to force. He approached the narrow passage through which he hoped to gain the Sea of Japan with his fleet well filled with coal, every gun loaded, and his men on duty beside their weapons.

It seems, however, that Admiral Togo was not to be decoyed away from his position for the reason that his fast sailing scout ships had kept him constantly informed of Rojestvensky's movements. That is the reason why the combined Japanese fleet with every vessel ready for action, were in a position to oppose the passage of the Russian squadron.

"The Destiny of Our Empire Depends Upon This Action."

The warships of the Czar were sighted about 6 o'clock Saturday morning, May 27. The Japanese ships hoisted the flag of action, the Mikasa, Togo's flagship, signaling:

"The destiny of our empire depends upon this action. You are all expected to do your utmost."

The Japanese, however, did not advance to meet them, because Togo had planned to drive them upon mines, which he had placed southeast of Tsushima Islands. Sailing unsuspectedly on his course, Rojestvensky suddenly came upon the Japanese fleet, which opened fire upon him. The Russian commander naturally deviated slightly from his course and in so doing ran upon the mines. The Borodino, a first-class battleship, built at a cost of

over five million dollars, went to the bottom and several others were badly damaged. Togo then directed a terrific fire against the Russians, his object being to destroy the rapid fire guns and as many of the enemy's searchlights as possible, in order to enable his torpedo boats and submarines to get close to the enemy's ships and complete the work of destruction at night. The battle lasted until nightfall with the odds decidedly in favor of the Japanese. After the sun had set, Togo ordered his torpedo craft to close in upon the Russian ships, and on Sunday morning Rojestvensky found to his horror and amazement that two battleships, three cruisers and several torpedo boats had been sunk and two battleships rendered absolutely useless.

A Terrific Hail of Fire.

Then commenced an all-day battle. The Russians appeared to be powerless to resist the fierce onset of their enemies. Demoralized by the incessant pounding they had received the afternoon before, nearly every ship damaged more or less, distracted by the terrible strain of meeting torpedo attacks all night, in the words of an eye-witness, "They were no longer a fleet; they were a mass of frightened vessels like so many scare-stricken sheep, which could not hold together." They scattered, although they continued on their way to that haven of refuge, Vladivostok, six hundred miles away, but they made poor speed. The Japanese battleships and armored cruisers, fresh out of the dock, kept after them, giving them no rest and making them exhaust every bit of ammunition in fruitless efforts to answer the terrific hail of fire to which they were subjected.

A Remnant Weak and Small.

All day the Russians ran, and when night came still they had no rest. The torpedo boats had given way to the destroyers, it is believed because of the greater radius of action of the latter, and the third stage of the engagement began.

Before the latter and the armor-clads got through their awful work during Sunday night Rojestvensky's fleet had dwindled down to five fleeing men-of-war, nine torpedo boat destroyers, and some auxiliary cruisers and repair ships.

The scene during Saturday's battle, as described by an eye-witness, must have been superbly terrible. The guns of nearly fifty warships were being fired, and now and again a crash was heard as the reports coincided.

For a time the belligerents gave shot for shot. All through the conflict both fleets were on the move, but the Russians were compelled to deviate from their original course.

Surrounded by Death-dealing Squadrons.

With a hostile squadron each side and another ahead, Rojestvensky practically was defeated within a few hours. There was no possible direction for him to turn. He had fallen into a trap which had been awaiting him ever since he left Madagascar. Hesitation was displayed in the tactics of his fleet and this proved the forerunner of utter confusion.

The Japanese knew instantly that the Russians were beaten, and the concentration of fire now became absolutely infernal. Every gun was trained. The Russians were caught in a cul de sac. Long lines of smoke, like sea clouds, floated across the water, interspersed with flashes of artillery.

At 2:10 p. m. the bombardment reached its zenith. Between 3 o'clock and 5 o'clock in the afternoon a Russian cruiser of the Admiral Nakhimoff class and the converted cruiser Kamtschatka foundered. Previously their upper works had been shattered into splinters of wood, iron and steel.

Then the Russian fleet broke into utter disorder and the vessels no longer preserved their formation. They went along in a zigzag course, some pointed east and others west. At that moment it became evident that Rojestvensky was completely defeated.

The Unerring Judgment of the Japanese.

The Japanese with that judgment which in supreme moments amounts to inspiration now advanced to close quarters. The Russian ships under a fire which rendered them all the more terribly helpless by the shortened range at which the Japanese were shooting, no longer existed as a fleet. The detached squadrons co-ordinated in no direction and were utterly demoralized. Gradually they passed towards their enemy's coast of Nagata province.

The fighting continued until sunset. The wind had gone down and it was a glorious night. The Korean sea, usually so rough, was now smooth, transparent, and blue under the darkness of night. The ships stood out something more than specters, something less than citadels.

When the darkness set in the Russians were still edging towards the north, but the Japanese in horizontal lines lay across the enemy's bows, an effective barrier linked with guns.

Under Cover of Darkness the Destruction is Completed.

At 8 p. m. the Japanese destroyers and torpedo boats went forward like a great cloud of locusts. The sea was swept by pale tracks of innumerable searchlights. The work of the day was over, the work of the night had begun. The large Japanese warships, which had found the range of the Russian ship so well by light of day, covered the torpedo attack. Beneath the shells from the great guns the little vessels darted forth to sting and sink the enemy. There were scores and scores of them. Rojestvensky never could have dreamed that Japan had such a flotilla.

Under the fire of the Russian ships, all of whose guns were trained upon them, the little craft dashed on. One moment a shot would strike the water, but not before the boat had darted towards the sides of the heavy warships.

The night's work resulted in the sinking of the battleships Emperor Alexander III., Oslabya, and Navarin, and three cruisers.

The Battle Rages with Unabated Fierceness.

No rest was allowed the enemy. When Sunday dawned the Japanese fleet came to still closer range, pressing the Russians on to the northern coast of Nagata. All day long the battle raged with unabated fierceness, but the Russians had no strategical position from which they could offer an effective resistance.

The Japanese ships always kept ahead of the Russians. The battle was resumed at 9 o'clock Sunday morning, twelve miles east of Chiyupoy bay, and lasted all day. Here the Russians suffered their heaviest losses. They seemed unprepared to repel night attacks. During the first night attack the Russians showed nine searchlights and frustrated the attack, but clearly indicated the location of the fleet, which brought success later.

An officer of the battleship Borodino, in describing his experiences during the battle, says:

"I was in the forward barbette, in charge of one of the twelve-inch guns, when the signal to begin firing was given. The ship nearest to us was the Japanese battleship Shikishima, whose projectiles began to reach us within a few moments after the beginning of the fight. I fired the first gun at 1:30 p. m., and was overjoyed to see that it had reached its mark, for the Japanese vessel was struck in its upper works, and did not return our fire for at least ten minutes.

The Decks Raining with Projectiles.

"At this early stage of the battle Admiral Rojestvensky came aboard the Borodino and directed the fighting from the bridge.

"Almost immediately afterwards a projectile struck my barbette and rendered every one inside insensible. The barbette was filled with smoke, and I groped my way out. The decks were raining with projectiles. Dozens of men lying dead or wounded at every turn.

"When the barbette was cleared I re-entered with my crew, but only had time to fire two more rounds when two projectiles struck simultaneously and disabled both of the twelve-inch guns, wrecking the barbette and killing eighteen officers and men.

An Awful Spectacle.

"I crawled on deck, near one of the six-inch guns, which was surrounded with dead and wounded. Here I remained for an hour, during which time the Borodino became a shambles. The wardroom and steerage were crowded with the wounded. Nearly every ammunition hoist had been wrecked and shells had to be passed by hand. A shell struck the port screw and another disabled the steering gear and the signal mast was carried away.

"Presently when everything seemed worse than confusion the quartermaster told me that Admiral Rojestvensky had been wounded and was being taken to another ship, a destroyer. I saw the destroyer leave amid a hail of small arm ammunition, but fortunately none struck it.

"At 4 o'clock the Borodino began to sink down by the head. It had been hulled several times. There was no hope of saving it.

"The Japanese ships, having succeeded in breaking our battle formation, came closer and brought every available gun to bear. Our fighting tops were particular targets. Not one of the men stationed there apparently is alive. I volunteered to go up with a few men. The sight there, even in the midst of the desperate battle, was so terrible that it haunted me and has robbed me of sleep ever since. The men in the tops had been hacked to pieces by the fire of the Japanese. The machine guns were hopelessly ruined.

"Fire broke out in several places, and this added to the horrors of our already sorely tried vessel. The fire call was sounded, but there were so many dead or wounded, and the projectiles were falling so fast, that there was no chance to subdue the flames. It was, therefore, resolved to withdraw

from the line of fighting. Our steering apparatus had been repaired, but eight Japanese ships closed around us and bombarded us from every side. Our forward guns were useless, but we did good work with the after twelve-inch guns and those of the six-inch guns which were not out of action, though they were worked with only half their complement of men.

Fighting Desperately to the Last.

"The Borodino sank lower and lower, a fine target to the overwhelming superiority of the enemy, but we fought desperately, although hopelessly.

"Towards evening, after a long afternoon of terrible exhaustion, during which there was neither time to eat nor drink, and after we had lost fully 400 killed or wounded, we noticed two Japanese destroyers bearing down. One of them we sunk with a shell from a six-inch gun, but the other came on safely and launched a torpedo, which swept past our bow. We were unharmed, for the torpedo missed us. The chief engineer now came and informed us the fire had gained such headway it was impossible to keep the men below. A moment later the engine room crew were driven out by the flames. We expected every moment to be blown up and were preparing for the inevitable, when a whole flotilla of torpedo boats came down on us.

"In five minutes the end had come. The explosion caused the ship to turn turtle. I was drawn down deep and struck by pieces of wreckage, but a boat from a destroyer picked me up, with others from the Borodino, and took us to the Kasuga, from which we were transferred to shore."

Appalling Results of the Battle.

The results of the historic naval battle in the straits of Korea were appalling. Over a score of Russian warships, valued at \$100,000,000 were sunk or captured; the casualties totaled nearly 15,000 men killed or taken prisoners. The Japanese losses were slight. The fleet was practically undamaged and only about 400 men were killed or wounded. Togo's achievement stamped him as the world's greatest sea fighter.