

JAPAN FIGHTS RUSSIA

Muscovites Startled by the Sudden and Successful Movements of the Mikado's War Vessels Against Their Fleet.

RUSSIAN SQUADRON CRIPPLED IN FIRST ENGAGEMENTS

RUSSIAN TRANSPORT BLOWN UP, WANTON DELAYS ARE CLAIMED.

Mine Accidentally Struck by Ship, Captain, Three Officers and Ninety Men Killed.

BRITISH STEAMER FIRED UPON.

A report has been received at St. Petersburg from Viceroy Alexieff, saying that the Russian torpedo transport Yenisei has been blown up as the result of accidentally striking a mine in the harbor at Port Arthur. The Yenisei sank and Capt. Stepanoff, three officers and 91 men were lost.

The British steamer Fu Ping, when leaving Port Arthur, was fired upon by Russians. Three Chinese members of the crew were wounded. The Russians afterward apologized for firing on the vessel. The Fu Ping, upon its arrival at Wei Hai Wei filed a protest with the British commissioner.

The American consul has reported to United States Minister Conger that the Russian authorities have refused to allow the American steamer Pleiades to leave Port Arthur. The Pleiades sailed from Seattle on February 2, with a cargo of flour.

Baron Hayashi, the Japanese minister at London, has received a dispatch from Tokyo announcing that on February 11 two Japanese merchant steamers, the Nakanoura Maru and Zensho Maru while on their way from Sakahata to Otau, on the island of Hokkaido, were surrounded and shelled by four Russian warships, presumably the Vladivostok squadron, off the coast of Herushki (Ookushiri).

The Nakanoura Maru was sunk, but the Zensho Maru escaped and arrived safely at Fukuyama island of Hokkaido.

The British government has information which leads it to believe that Japan is likely to take possession of Port Arthur a week from now. In the best informed Japanese circles here it is privately thought that the war will be over by July. Those British officials who are cognizant of the extraordinary thoroughness with which Japan prepared for war are inclined to share the Japanese view regarding the duration of the struggle.

The Associated Press understands that the Japanese troops are advancing rapidly toward the Yalu river. There, it is expected, they will meet and engage the Russian forces. The Japanese declare that the numbers of the Russian troops are greatly exaggerated.

The following is the text of the imperial rescript declaring war against Russia, which was issued in Japan yesterday:

We, by the grace of heaven, emperor of Japan, seated on the throne occupied by the same dynasty since time immemorial, hereby make proclamation to all our loyal and brave subjects as follows:

We hereby declare war against Russia, and we command our army and navy to carry on hostilities against her, in obedience to their duty, with all their strength, and we also command all our competent authorities to make every effort, in pursuance of their duties, to attain the national aim with all the means within the limits of the law of nations.

We have always deemed it essential in international relations, and have made it our constant aim, to promote the pacific progress of our empire in civilization, to strengthen our friendly ties with other states and to establish a state of things which would maintain enduring peace in the far east, and assure the future security of our dominion without injury to the rights or interests of other powers. Our competent authorities have also performed their duties in obedience to our will, so that our relations with all the powers had been steadily growing in cordiality.

It was thus entirely against our expectation that we have unhappily come to open hostilities against Russia. The integrity of Korea is a matter of the gravest concern to this empire, not only because of our traditional relations with that country, but because the separate existence of Korea is essential to the safety of our realm. Nevertheless Russia, in disregard of her solemn treaty pledges to China and her repeated assurances to other powers, is still in occupation of Manchuria and is bent on final annexation.

And, since the absorption of Manchuria by Russia would render impossible to maintain the integrity of China and would, in addition, compel the abandonment of all hope of peace in the far east, we were determined in those circumstances to settle the question by negotiations and to secure thereby permanent peace. With that object in view, our competent authorities by our order made proposals to Russia, and frequent conferences were held during the last six months.

Russia, however, never made such proposals in a spirit of conciliation, but by wanton delays put off a settlement of the serious questions, and by ostensibly advocating peace on one hand, while on the other extending her naval and military preparations, sought to accomplish her own selfish designs. We cannot in the least admit that Russia had from the first any serious or genuine desire for peace. She rejected the proposals of our government. The safety of Korea was in danger and the interests of our empire were menaced. The guarantees for the future which we failed to secure by peaceful negotiations can now only be obtained by an appeal to arms.

It is our earnest wish that by the loyalty and valor of our faithful subjects peace may soon be permanently restored and the glory of our empire preserved.

Formal Declaration of Hostilities at Tokyo Gives Japan's Reason for the Clash.

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JAPANESE REPULSED, MASAMPHO SEIZED.

Reports to St. Petersburg Announce Arrival of Big Japanese Force in Korea.

The London Daily Mail's Port Arthur correspondent, under date of February 12, says: "Official advices state that the Japanese landed 600 soldiers near Taieu-Wan with disastrous results, 410 being captured by the Russians. The remainder escaped to their ships. It is further stated that the Japanese landed at Dove bay, where 30 of them were killed and the remainder retreated."

The Daily Mail's Nuchwang correspondent, under date of February 11, cables: "According to official Port Arthur telegrams, the Japanese landed a force yesterday at Dove bay, West Port Arthur. They were then attacked by troops and by the batteries, and were defeated with heavy losses."

It is reported that the Siberian railroad has been wrecked in six places covering a distance of 70 miles.

It is reported in Chefoo that 12,000 Japanese troops were landed at Dove bay, last Wednesday morning, and that they were met by the Russians, who engaged them in a hand-to-hand fight. It is also reported that Japanese troops have been landed 40 miles farther west.

Big Japanese Army Landed. A communication from Viceroy Alexieff, received in St. Petersburg, confirms the report of the landing of 19,000 Japanese troops at Chemulpo. The viceroy adds that reports have been received of attempts to cut the telegraph wires along the Chinese Eastern railway and also to destroy one of the abutments of the Sungari bridge. These attempts, he adds, were immediately detected and decisive measures taken to guard the railway.

Supreme Manifest Commanding an Armed Response to Japanese Challenge at Port Arthur.

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JAPAN'S FIRST VICTORIES.

Holder of Common Stock Claims That Dividend Could Have Been Paid.

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