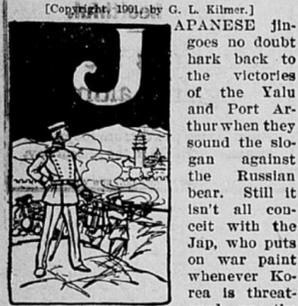


JAPS AS FIGHTERS.

HOW THE YANKEES OF THE EAST MAKE WAR.

Treats of the Japanese People—Not Really Boosters—Their Chance Against Russia—The Naval Battle of the Yalu—The Army in Action.



JAPANESE Jingoism goes no doubt back to the victories of the Yalu and Port Arthur when they sound the slogan against the Russian bear. Still it isn't all conceit with the Jap, who puts on war paint whenever Korea is threatened on the

and side. The Japanese soldiery have held their own in China side by side with the western troops and, according to some accounts, have been more martial and at the same time more humane than certain of the European forces.

There seems to be a disposition on the part of the little brown men of the Island Kingdom to think kindly of the Chinese and to look upon the war of 1894-5 as a necessary evil. They had to give China a lesson, and, having finished the job, China swallowing the pill with good grace, they are willing to let bygones be bygones. This is a noble way to look at it, and the Japs are really not crowing. They take a serious view of the Chinese question and of Russia's sullen aggressiveness. It is not a lesson they are to give Russia; they are fighting for existence.

Japan has been likened to England because she is an ambitious and progressive commercial island kingdom. A better parallel perhaps is Germany, for, as Europe must reckon with the land of doughy kaisers, so Asia and all who seek spheres of influence there must reckon with Japan. She is the pivot upon which the movements of other nations must turn.

Japan's naval and military establishments are all that money, energy and brains can make them. The army has been improving and increasing since the war with China, and her navy has developed until she counts a hundred war vessels and has the strongest fleet in the east, with the exception of England. The war with China showed real military capacity on the part of the Japs—good generalship and good fighting qualities. General Grant once said that 10,000 Japanese could march from one end of China to the other. There is no reason for thinking so except that the Japs are a superior race. China has had war and developed generals. But

the Japs are ambitious as well and have the ability to back their ambition. The Yalu naval battle was fiercer than Santiago. It was not one sided, for the Chinese shot better than the Spaniards. They fought well for Asiatics and were helped by European officers and gunners.

The battle of the Yalu was a good fight on both sides. Admiral Ito took no glory to himself or his fleet for that victory. When asked to what he attributed his great success, he said, "Largely to Providence." He considered the escape of one of his ships from Chinese torpedoes a miracle. He said that speed was what enabled his fleet to keep its wonderful battle formation. The Chinese ships were slow and could not keep in order of battle to support one another. As soon as the Japs broke the Chinese line and the Celestial ship commanders had to act independently the fight went against them. The Chinese ironclads were well handled, but the rapid fire guns of the Japs swept their crews from the guns with awful slaughter.

When Admiral Ito was asked why he did not follow the defeated Chinese ships and capture or destroy them all, he said, "I was anxious to continue the fight, but I would not chance a struggle in the dark with ironclads and torpedo boats." There spoke a true sea dog, who fights to win when he fights at all and not to make a popular sensation. Yalu was tactically a drawn battle, but strategically a victory for the Japs. The Japanese navy is called a miraculous creation. Less than 40 years ago one of our old style wooden ships went over there and sent to the bottom the best things afloat and also silenced heavy batteries on land. Then the little brown men began to read western papers and look to their ships and guns. The ships the Japs have built are not intended for long naval voyages, but for battle near home. The coal bunkers are not large, but there is plenty of room for guns and shells, the things which are handy in a fight. With an overflowing population of bright, wide awake people the Island Kingdom has no lack of healthy, nimble young fellows who seek glory on the wave. She has a splendid naval college, and even the Russians are forced to admit that the navy of Japan is a model for all the world.

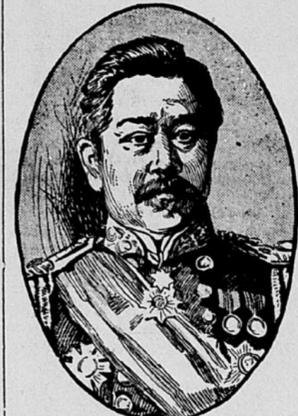
If war between Japan and Russia were to be confined to one short, sharp campaign like that of China in 1895, there can be no doubt as to the result. But the Russians are a slow and a patient race. They stand a heap of killing before giving up. Japanese resources will be taxed, the courage of her soldiers and sailors put to a test like that of the Boers. Russia can and doubtless will keep the war on land, for she has an inexhaustible peasant population to draw upon for recruits without sapping her vital industries.

In the war with China the Japs showed no reluctance to fighting it out on land. They at once attacked the fortified Chinese positions in the upper

part of the Korean peninsula. At Ping-Yang, once a capital of Korea, the Chinese had a strong position, as the city stands on a slope and is surrounded by a wall. The Japs had to cross the Taikong, and there was but one bridge fit to carry troops. Between the wall and the river the slope was cut up with ricefields and very uncomfortable for soldiers to traverse under fire. The Japs went at the wall in the same spirit as they did at the gate at Tien-tsin last July. The Eleventh regiment assaulted one of the strongest points in the wall. Two ramparts at last fell, but the third seemed impregnable. Every man of the forward company was killed. Excited by the stubbornness of the Chinese on the wall, Captain Hayashi, leading the second company in line, rushed ahead of his men, shouting to them to take the rampart or die in the attempt. He leaped to the crest, but went down, the target for a score of bullets. With life enough to partly rise he waved his sword to the advancing soldiers and, mustering all his strength for one cry, called out "Charge!" then fell back dead. Three soldiers sprang upon the rampart to rescue the body of the brave Hayashi, but were instantly shot dead. The company beat a temporary retreat, but soon rallied to the charge and carried the rampart, where they found the captain's body minus the head. For this act they took speedy revenge.

In this initial battle of the war the Japs captured all the fighting blood of a Chinese army of 12,000 men. Many Celestials ran away. Four generals were taken, and all was done at a stroke by the Japanese leader, Oshima, who had just arrived in Korea. The Japanese attack upon Port Arthur was the deciding stroke of the war and one of unsurpassed boldness. On the neck of the peninsula the Chinese had erected the strongest batteries military science could plan. The works, constructed by Germans, were massive and fully equipped with up to date devices for efficiency. On the ramparts were 40 and 50 ton Krupp rifles, and the sea channels were filled with torpedo mines. The Chinese force in garrison numbered but about 3,000, yet the position was one which European observers thought they would hold indefinitely against all the troops the Japanese could muster on the peninsula.

Yamagi, the general of the advance division of Japs, brought to the attack about 17,000 soldiers, and to the eyes of western spectators the little army on the move looked like a vast



Japanese commander at the battle of the Yalu, migration of fairy men, so small did they appear in comparison with the Chinese or European fighting men. Great caution was used by the Japanese, for they expected Li to be up to his vain tricks. The Chinese kept up a steady fire at night, beat their alarms and made a great show of valor. But when the little brown men from over the sea advanced on the works the men behind the guns broke into a panic and got away.

At one point in the road the Celestials had planted torpedoes, and one daring fellow staid behind to explode them and hold up the eager Japs. Again and again he tried to explode the charges with the wires running from a keyboard where he stood. Finally the Japs opened on him, but he didn't mind the bullets and died in his tracks at the hands of a little Jap, who beheaded him with a saber. "He is the bravest Chinaman our army has met," said the gallant General Noghi, "and I'm sorry he was killed."

Even after some few of the mammoth forts had been taken—there were 26 forts in all—the Japs didn't believe that the Chinese were really giving up so easily. True, they made a show of fighting, and sometimes artillery duels lasted for hours. But the Chinese were miserable shots, their shells failed to explode, and on one side it was simply opera bouffe war.

The night before the grand collapse of the defense the Celestials abandoned several forts. Unaware of this, the Japanese formed their lines for attack. Now and then a Chinaman would come out of hiding and skulk to the rear. Monster guns off at a distance opened on the assailants, but not a shot struck the line. A tremendous cannonade lasted for hours, the Japs moving with caution. Finally, when it was seen that the forts in front were silent, the columns dashed up the hill only to find the garrisons in retreat toward the point at Port Arthur. By 9 o'clock the seven remaining forts were in the hands of the Japs, and already they were shouting, "On to Peking!"

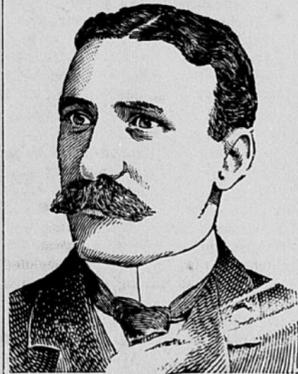
GEORGE L. KILMER.
Antiquity of the Saying.
"Black yer boots?" grinned the young anthropoid ape.
"Go on!" growled the cave man.
"Don't try any of your monkey shins on me!"
The phrase then began to thunder down the ages.—Chicago Tribune.

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