

# With the Japanese Army

What Captain Peyton March, Uncle Sam's Military Expert, Saw in Manchuria.

(Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—I give you today a chat with one of the live workmen of the United States army, a young officer, who for the past year has been in the thickest of the fighting in Manchuria. As one of our military attaches, he was assigned by the war department to the Japanese army to report upon its operations in the field. He went to Japan, and from there joined Gen. Kuroki. This was last February, and he has been with that branch of the Japanese forces until a little more than a month ago, when he started back home.

ONE OF UNCLE SAM'S EXPERTS.

The man I refer to is Capt. Peyton Conway March, who graduated at West

the fighting to the war department. My talk with Capt. March relates to the little things rather than the big ones of the campaign. The stories of the battles have been told in the papers as far as the censorship would permit. This matter comes fresh from the field, and is, it seems to me, full of flesh and blood interest.

600,000 FIGHTING MEN.

I asked Capt. March as to the number of men now actually fighting in Manchuria. He replied:

"There are at least 600,000 soldiers in the two armies. The Japanese have 325,000 and the Russians almost as many. The forces are lined up almost facing each other. They are on the two sides of a little river known as the Sha-ho, the word meaning river. The soldiers are stretched along both sides of that river for a distance of about 35 miles. In some places they are not more than 200 yards apart, and in others as much as 2,000 yards. Each

## 600,000 Soldiers and How they Fight—The Russians and Their Pocket Testaments—The Silent Japanese—How the Armies are Fed and Clad—Battles at Night—How the Chinese Regard the Struggle—What the Fall of Port Arthur Means—Live Flesh and Blood News Straight From the Field.

"Mukden is a very important place, is it not?"

"Politically yes, strategically no," replied Capt. March. "It is important as the capital of Manchuria, and in that if it falls into the hands of the Japanese it will impress the Chinese and the Manchurians, and they may think that the Japanese are the more likely to be victorious. As to its advantages as a war base, they are comparatively little. The most important point is Harbin, at the junction of the Chinese eastern railway and the Transiberian railway, where one branch runs off to Vladivostok. Harbin has a rich country surrounding it, which raises enormous quantities of grain.

"There are flouring mills there which are supplying the Russian army and also the great warehouses of the Russians. Not far away is a rich cattle and horse country, so that altogether the place is exceedingly valuable. It is toward that point that the Japanese are working. If they could capture Harbin and disconnect the two lines of railway, shutting off eastern Siberia from the west, and at the same time, get possession of these enormous mills and supplies, they would perhaps be much nearer peace than they are now."

"But is there any possibility that they can do that?"

"In war everything is possible," said Capt. March. "I am not a prophet and I do not care to predict. You must remember, however, that the campaign toward the north, becomes more difficult, while the campaign of the Russians is to a great extent less so. The Japanese are moving away from their base. They have to carry all their provisions, ammunition and other supplies farther on, whereas the Russians are falling back to where the supplies are. It is something of an undertaking to carry the food and supplies of 300,000 men, to say nothing of their arms and munitions of war, across Siberia, day after day. You must remember that the Japanese have as many men now stationed along the Sha-ho as there are men, women and children in Washington. Every one of them has to have his three meals a day, and good ones to withstand the cold. Every one has to have warm clothing, and if possible a place to sleep at night. In the winter the thermometer gets down to or below zero in Manchuria, so you see that a war like this has other problems than those of mere fighting. The same problems confront the Russians."

WHAT THE SOLDIERS EAT.

"How do the soldiers get their food, captain?" I asked.

"The Japanese are living chiefly on rice and meat. The rice is in a raw state, just as you find it in our grocery stores, and it must be cooked before it can be eaten. The necessities of water and fire, and makes it a bad field ration. I think the Japanese are discovering this. It is not like our hard tack, which can be carried to the field and eaten at any time. In addition to this the Japanese have canned meat, put up with a kind of sauce. In Japan, the soldiers eat it out of the can, and seem to relish it, but a foreigner does not like it after two or three meals. It is not so bad when cooked as a soup."

"What is the food of the Russians?"

"They are better able than the Japanese to live off the country. They can get a deal of fresh meat in the north and their flour comes from the Harbin mills. Those mills are large enough to supply the army. The Russian commissary is well managed. Each company has a great cook stove on wheels, in which a big boiler of soup is always cooking. The men put everything they can get in the way of vegetables and other edibles into this soup, and there is a hot bowl for each soldier at regular intervals. In this respect the Russians are better off than the Japanese."

ARMIES IN FURS.

"How do the men keep warm there in midwinter? They cannot have fires, can they?"

"No, the most of them rely upon their

clothing for warmth. Both armies wear more or less furs. The Russian soldiers of Japan have long, thick overcoats of kaki, with high fur collars, which they can turn up about their faces, and the officers wear fur-lined coats. As to the Russians, some of them are clad in furs and some in sheep-skins. The Cossack uniform is almost all fur, including an enormous fur cap."

"As to fire, one of the most serious questions is that of fuel. The march of Kuroki's army, with which I was, has been largely through a wooded country, and we have cut down the trees for wood. At times charcoal has been sent in from Japan for the use of the soldiers, and just now they are doing all they can to pump out the Tental coal mines. These mines are not very far from Mukden. They were used by the Russians, but they flooded them before they left, and they are still full of water. The Japanese are trying all they can to get pumps and empty the mines."

RAILROADS AND THE WAR.

"Those mines are reached by the railroad, are they not?"

"Yes. The Japanese now have the southern end of the Chinese Eastern railroad. They have changed it to a narrow gauge, in order that they may be able to use Japanese engines and rolling stock. You may remember that at that point where the Japanese are working, the Transiberian road works well."

"Very well, indeed, I understand," said Capt. March. "The government has taken charge of it and they are pouring soldiers into Manchuria over the road. They have changed it to a narrow gauge, in order that they may be able to use Japanese engines and rolling stock. You may remember that at that point where the Japanese are working, the Transiberian road works well."

THE RUSSIANS AS SOLDIERS.

"What kind of soldiers are the Russians?"

"They are brave and will fight until they drop. They know nothing else. We captured many of them and there were thousands dead on the battlefield. Many of the privates are fine-looking. They are big-boned, lusty fellows with fair complexions and light hair. This surprised me as I had expected to find dark-haired men. I had heard many stories of the vicious and savagery of the Russian peasant. The faces I saw had no such characteristics, and the papers found upon the men conveyed the opposite impression. Every soldier had a pocket full of the little details of camp life and carrying messages to dear ones, large and small, in Russia. It seemed to me that men who could write such letters must be more than ordinarily decent. Speaking about the testaments, it was a curious fact that the names of the company and regiments of the men were scratched out. This was to keep the Japanese from estimating the character of the Russian army."

"From what you say, captain, the Russians must be religious?"

"They have all forms of religion, and I do not see why they should not give them credit for honesty," said Capt. March. "Every set of troops has its

every man esteems it an honor to die for his emperor."

THE OFFICERS ARE ABLE.

"What do you think of the officers of the two armies?"

"They are able men and men of experience. This is so of both Japanese and Russians. General Kuropatkin evidently understands his business, and where will you find a braver and more gallant character than General Slesseff? General Cvians has shown his ability as a commander, and the same is true of General Kuroki. As to General Kodama, the chief of staff, he is to a large extent the brains of the Japanese army. None of these men is young. All have been connected with the great developments going on in Japan, and have risen from rank to rank until they attained their present position."

"There is one thing I would say about such officers in contrast with the general opinion held as to their position. The popular idea is that the general of an army goes dashing along at the head of his men swinging his sword and calling them to come on. In the fighting of today the commanders are well to the rear, connected by telephone and messengers with different parts of the field. They play the game of war after a fixed plan and the breaking away of a regiment or a company is not noticed. All the working is toward general results."

MANY NIGHT BATTLES.

"It will seem odd to the old soldier of the United States," Capt. March went on, "to know that most of the fighting between the Russians and the Japanese is done at night. This is caused by the destructive nature of modern guns. The artillery moves down daylight to help them. The guns are longranged and the destruction is awful. In the later battles the Japanese have used the darkness to make their way closer to their enemy. Today they might perhaps be a mile away, firing at the Russians behind their intrenchments. Tonight they would make a rush and get perhaps 2,000 feet nearer, and there they would throw up fresh earthworks and dig trenches. The artillery would keep firing upon them, but in the darkness not one-tenth as many would be shot as in the daytime. All the next day they would lie in those intrenchments, and when night came would make another rush under fire."

PORT ARTHUR.

"How do you regard the fall of Port Arthur, captain? Does that indicate that the war is nearing an end?"

"Not at all," was the reply. "I don't think the Japanese look upon it in that way, and the Russians certainly do not. Port Arthur has been a very profitable investment for the Russians. It has kept 100,000 Japanese busy and away from the fight with the troops farther north. It has paid for itself 15 times over for all it has cost in both men and money. The Japanese estimate that it contained 40,000 men. I think the number has been overrated."

HOW THE CHINESE REGARD IT.

"What do the Chinese in Manchuria think about the situation?"

"They seem to regard it entirely outside their business," said Capt. March. "If the Japanese and Russians choose to kill each other, why should they care, as long as each army pays them well for what it takes. This is the case at present. Both Russians and Japanese want to be friends with the Chinese, for in case either should secure possession of Manchuria it would have the Chinese to deal with. For this reason, perhaps, the Chinese are well paid for their services and supplies. Nearly all the transportation is done by them. The vehicles used are heavy Chinese carts, which will carry a ton or more on the level. The price for a cart is 15 yen per day, equal to \$7.50 of our money. This is a fortune in China."

"Are the Chinese afraid?"

"No. They come and watch the fighting until they get tired, and then go back to their farms. They are ready to be hired for all sorts of work, and as they are lusty fellows, many of them more than six feet in height, they make excellent laborers. Indeed, I don't see why they would not make good soldiers. What they need is organization and good leadership."



PEYTON C. MARCH.  
(From a Photograph Secured for the "News" by Mr. Carpenter.)

Point in 1898, who commanded the Astor battery during the Cuban war until it was muzzled out, and who then went to Luzon and led the American forces in the famous "Battle in the Clouds." In that battle Gen. Gregorio del Pilar was killed, and at about the same time Gen. Concepcion Aguinaldo's chief of staff, and Aguinaldo's wife were captured. In another engagement Capt. March was commended by the president for his gallantry, and for other services he was made colonel of the United States volunteers. At the beginning of the Japanese war he was one of four officers chosen to report upon

army has dug entrenchments and put up fortifications, and is waiting for the other to charge. Now and then there is a sally at different places along the line, but when I left there Oct. 16 they were still waiting to fight. They were waiting Dec. 16, and are waiting still."

MUKDEN AND THE JAPANESE.

"Are they near Mukden?"

"One end of the line, I should say, is not more than 15 miles from Mukden. The other is perhaps 50 miles away. They are, you know, pretty far up in Manchuria. They are so near Mukden that we could take our glasses and examine the towers over the gates leading through the walls. They are about as far away from Mukden as Rockville is distant from Washington. Fifteen or sixteen miles is not much."

### HOW THEY LOST THEIR HOME.

Through the gambling instinct. They let their insurance run out. They bought things they did not need because they were cheap. They did not use good judgment or right portion in their expenditures. They subscribed for everything they could pay for on the installment plan. Money enough went down in drink and up in smoke to have saved the home. The father always intended to get his life insured, but died without doing so. They did not realize how easy it is to get into debt and how hard it is to get out. They tried to do what others expected of them rather than what they could afford. They thought it small to insist on having an agreement or understanding put in writing. They could not say "No," and could not afford to tell their friends, "I cannot afford it." The sons thought they must "show their wild oats" as well as their "fellowship of their set." The daughters thought it beneath them to work for a living, but were bound to dress well. They drew their money out of the savings bank to put it into some "wild-cat" scheme, and lost it. They did not do business in a business way because they were dealing with relatives or friends. They never formed the habit of putting in the savings bank money which they did not immediately need. They did not know that giving full power of attorney to an agent of lawyer put their property at his mercy. They put off payments on everything possible because it would be so much easier to pay tomorrow than today. They signed important papers, without reading them or knowing their contents, just because they were asked to do so. The mania to make an appearance beyond their means caused them to mortgage their property and ended in bankruptcy. They feared that the people with whom they had dealings would think them suspicious if they asked them for a receipt for money. They ran accounts at the stores instead of paying cash, did not realize

how rapidly bills were running up, and never knew how they stood. They entertained too expensively and a great deal more than they could afford because they wanted people to think they were in good circumstances. Orison Sweet Marden in the January Success.

CIRCUMLOCUTION.

The late Bishop Elder of Cincinnati was born in Baltimore, and a Baltimorean said of him recently:

"From his childhood Bishop Elder had the gift of direct and forcible speech. I once congratulated him on the possession of this gift, praising direct diction and condemning circumlocution, whereupon he said:

"Circumlocution, though you condemn it, has its use. It is a fine instrument wherewith to soften harsh, unpleasant facts. There are many cases where circumlocution is valuable.

"For instance, I once had a young man for a servant who was inclined to take too many liberties.

"On a certain evening, for the entertainment of a guest of distinction, I procured a very excellent game pie. All of it was not eaten; quite half, I should say, was left when the servant removed it from the table.

"For luncheon, the next day, I thought I would have the pate again. I told my man to fetch it. He, with a confused air, said he didn't know where it was. I told him to go, then, and ask the cook.

"He departed, and in a little while returned without the pate.

"Well," said I. "Well? Where is the pate, John?"

"His reply was circumlocutionary enough to save him a reprimand.

"Please, sir," he said, "the cook told me to tell you she told me to eat it."

TITLES OF NAVAL OFFICERS.

Civil Engineer Peter C. Asserson, U. S. N., was retired from active service with the rank of rear admiral and the corresponding pay, but when he used the title of "rear admiral" upon his visiting card a line officer of similar grade protested to the navy department that Mr. Asserson, being a staff officer, was authorized to use a title that "belonged only to officers of the navy empowered to actually command ships and squadrons." The secretary of the navy, by directing

Mr. Asserson not to use the title of rear admiral, either in official or personal correspondence, particularly supports the contention of the line officer. It is said that an effort is to be made in congress to correct this anomaly by authorizing the staff officer to assume the corresponding line title. Could not the problem be solved by some appropriate affix to the more familiar and more generally honored

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