

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## THE ARMY OF CHINA.

Written for this Paper

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HE war between China and Japan has only begun. The Japanese could if necessary, throw something like three hundred thousand trained soldiers into the field. Their army

is thoroughly organized and it has been drilled after the best methods of Europe. When I visited Japan six years ago I found German officers in charge of all its branches and my interview with the minister of war was carried on in the German language. He was a Japanese who had been educated in Germany, and who could not speak English. The Japanese are a nation of fighters. They have all the quickness and bravery of the French married by years of training to the discipline of the Germans. I have seen their cavalry and infantry in review again and again during the present summer. Their troops are splendidly equipped and they have arsenals and navy yards of the most modern methods, about which I will write in the future.

Today I want to tell you something about the army of China. It is almost impossible for one who has not been on the ground to appreciate its condition. It is a mixture of the old and new, of the weak and the strong. I have made some study of it in half a dozen different states and have some inside information which I gathered at Peking regarding it. It is the most wonderful military jumble on the face of the globe, and you have to know something of the Chinese government to understand it and the present situation.

## ROTTEN FROM SKIN TO CORE.

The Chinese government is rotten from skin to core. The people of China are one of the strongest in the world. They can do anything, and I believe in the future they will revolutionize the world. They are bound down today with as bad a government as ever pretended to rule. The officials of China are almost universally corrupt, and stealing is considered a part of their legitimate pay. This is true of the officers of the army as well as of those of civil rank. They systematically cheat the soldiers under them and present false accounts to the emperor and ministers of war. At Shanghai I saw a bar rack which was supposed to contain five hundred troops. The officer in charge of it drew rations and pay for this number, but there were really only four hundred soldiers in the garrison and he was pocketing the balance. His salary was something like a thousand or

fifteen hundred dollars a year, but he spent twenty thousand, and I was told that seventy of his understrappers and retainers sat down every day at his table. He received \$6 per month for the pay of each man, and pocketed just \$600 a month for the hundred men who had no existence, but were represented by fictitious names on the pay rolls. As to the four hundred soldiers remaining I was told that he paid them only \$5 per month each, and in this way he made \$400 per month more. In addition to this he squeezed on their rations. He blinded the eyes of the government by bribing the censors who are sent out as inspectors, or he could hire an extra hundred men to fill up his quota at the time that the inspectors arrive. This man squeezes his under officers, but they protect him because he allows them to take a percentage of the pay of the men below them, and the result is that the privates get little more than will keep them alive. Instead of having five hundred well-satisfied and, for China, well-paid men, he has four hundred who are discontented and half starved. This sort of thing is going on all over China, and one of the greatest dangers to the country comes of the discontent of the soldiers.

## \$300,000 FOR AN OFFICE.

The government itself expects the officers to squeeze and extort. It pays low salaries and the officers are expected to entertain like princes. Take the tautoi of Shanghai. His salary is not more than that of one of our government clerks, but he paid \$300,000 this summer to one of the chief eunuchs of the palace for his influence with the empress dowager in getting him a position, with the understanding that he should have it for three years, at least. There is no doubt in my mind but that the old dowager herself got a slice of the money. This office is worth about \$250,000 a year in squeezes and stealings, and as the tautoi will receive something like \$750,000 during his term he can afford to give \$300,000 for the job. The name of the eunuch who got the money was Pi Tse Seau Li. He combs the empress dowager's hair and is her confidential servant and adviser. At the Kiagnan arsenal I learned something of how orders for guns and ships are made and how these Chinese officials are making money out of the present war. They order the ships through foreign agents at Shanghai and insist that they shall have from 5 to 10 per cent of the amount of each order. Many of these orders run into the millions and you will see that their profits are large. They are very particular as to the foreigners making any money out of the business and insist that their profit shall not be more than 5 per cent on the list price of the articles. On this basis the foreigner would not make anything for his work, as he has to pay at least 5 per cent to the official who gives him the order. There is usually a collusion between the foreigner and the manufacturer by which the foreigner gets a big percentage and the Chinaman pays an extra price for the article.

## SQUEEZING EVERYWHERE.

This squeezing goes on everywhere,

both in China and Corea. The officers of the Chinese navy expect to make money out of their sailors. The officials in charge of the railroads squeeze the men under them and every Chinese servant squeezes his master. One of the greatest of the official squeezes is in salt. This is a government monopoly, and its sale is farmed out to the highest bidders. The sale of the salt for a district is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, and foreigners are not permitted to handle it. There are salt stations at which supplies are stored and the native customs officers get their percentage on the salt as it passes from one district to the other. In the collection of taxes for the government the officers take out something from every collection for themselves, and if a Chinaman has a large amount of money, blackmail is sure to be levied upon him in some way or other by the officials. Still, China, with all this, has about the lowest taxes in the world, and it is only because the taxes are low that the government can retain its hold upon the people. If they should be greatly increased by this war rebellions will spring up in many of the states, and the Chinese emperor is, in fact, in more danger from the people within the empire than from the Japanese outside of it.

## CHINESE VICEROYS AND THEIR ARMIES.

China is a strange combination of a despotic monarchy and a government of the people. It is as much a confederation of states as it is a nation, and the eighteen provinces into which it is divided each has its governor, who is appointed by the emperor, but whom the people can get rid of if they will. It is the same with other officials. The Chinese are long tolerant, but when an official squeezes too much they will oust him from his office, and instances have been known of their stoning him out of the country. The government is very much afraid of the people, and it will not dare to overtax them during the present war. It is hard to understand how these different provinces are governed.

## WHAT THE VICEROYS ARE DOING.

Each province has a governor, and in some of the biggest provinces the governor is viceroy as well. In other provinces the governor is second to the viceroy and a viceroy may rule two or three provinces. These viceroys and governors have cabinets of their own. They have the power of life and death over their subjects. They have as many clerks and subordinates almost as you will find in our government, and it is quite as difficult to fill one of these positions as it is to be President of the United States. Each of these viceroys and governors has an army of his own. Li Hung Chang's forces number about 35,000 men. These have eleven camps within the province of Chili. They are armed with foreign guns and are well drilled, and will form the chief support of the government in the present war. Li Hung Chang has also eleven camps of men in the province of Chantong, and he is, as far as this war is concerned, practically commander-in-chief of the whole. At Nanking I found a viceroy who had 28,000 men under him. He controlled the big gun factory of Kiagnan, and I visited his naval school on the outskirts of his capital and found several hundred boys studying navigation under two English professors.