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Koreans are Fleeing Before the Slav Advance

Advancing Russians Nearing Japan's Army

Muscovites Pushing Forward Into Korea

Natives in Wild Panic

Fierce Land Battle Expected

Ping Yang, via Seoul, March 2. — The Russians are boldly and fiercely pushing forward their advance south of the Yalu River. Their Cossacks are scouting far in advance of the main body through Northern Korea.

Three hundred Russians have seized Anju, which is about ⁴⁵ miles from Wiju, the port declared open by Korea. Wiju is some 25 miles from Ping Yang, where the first great battle of the war between China and Japan was fought. There has been no attempt by the Japanese as yet to dislodge the daring advance guard of the Russians at Anju. The country between Anju [and] Ping Yang is very mountainous, and campaigning there will be conducted under the greatest difficulties. But as the Japanese are in force here a collision cannot be long deferred. How far behind the Russian advance is the main body of the invading army is not known here, but fleeing Koreans declare the invaders are in great force.

The Koreans make no effort to check the Russian advance, but regard the invaders as desperate enemies. As a consequence they are fleeing in fear and some of the scenes of suffering are equal to the horrors of De Quincey's "Flight of a Tartar Tribe."

Ping Yang is in a state of panic so far as the natives are concerned. The Koreans seem to feel that this is to be a great battleground again. Ten thousand of them already have fled the city and others are leaving hourly. From further north, in the direction of the Yalu, tens of thousands of refugees have been driven out. The fear of the Russians has become a blinding terror.

But, beyond the fear of the Russians, there is no anti-foreign feeling in Northern Korea. Tales of Russian cruelties are spreading rapidly through the native population, and these tales have inspired the mad scramble southward. The Koreans seem to have no fear of the Japanese and are seeking safety behind the Japanese lines.

Another move in the advance of the Russians is the seizing of the Korean telegraphs, thus cutting off both Wiju and Yuen San as well as Ping Yang from telegraphic communication with Northern Korea. Evidently this was to keep from the Japanese definite news of the Russian invasion.

There is almost certain to be some fierce skirmishing within a few days between the outposts of the armies.

But, with all the bloodletting, conditions in all Northern China are extremely critical. The troops and the people have been incited by the placards pasted on all the walls grossly exaggerating the Japanese successes, and calling on the Chinese to rise and wipe out the Russians. These placards are particularly numerous and sensational in the Tartar city of Yuan Shih Kai.

The Russians fear an advance of the Chinese army and the cutting of the Trans-Siberian railway by them. Fifteen thousand of China's most efficient troops are at Shan Hai Kwan, on the northern frontier. These troops are being reinforced daily. They are well drilled and armed with modern weapons. They represent the flower of the Chinese army.

In this formidable force are many turbulent leaders who are urging an advance on the Russian line of communication. But the Viceroy has issued an order that the slightest effort to incite rebellion or sedition will be punished by death. With all this, it is the general fear here that the neutrality of China cannot long be maintained. The slightest thing is apt to start an uprising, and once there is an outbreak there is sure to be an effort to attack the Russians in the rear.

Foreigners in Peking and Tientsin declare that there will be no distinction as to nationality in the massacres which would be attempted if the war agitators once get the upper hand. The cry will again be, "Kill the foreign devils."

Consequently all the nations are preparing for emergencies. There are 2,000 American and European troops at Tientsin and 1,500 more guarding the legations here at Peking. But in a general uprising these would have to look to their lives.

Minister Conger said to me that the Chinese authorities are determined to maintain neutrality and order, but in times like these they have the greatest difficulty in controlling the troops and the populace. He thinks trouble is possible, and that it will come on the slightest provocation.