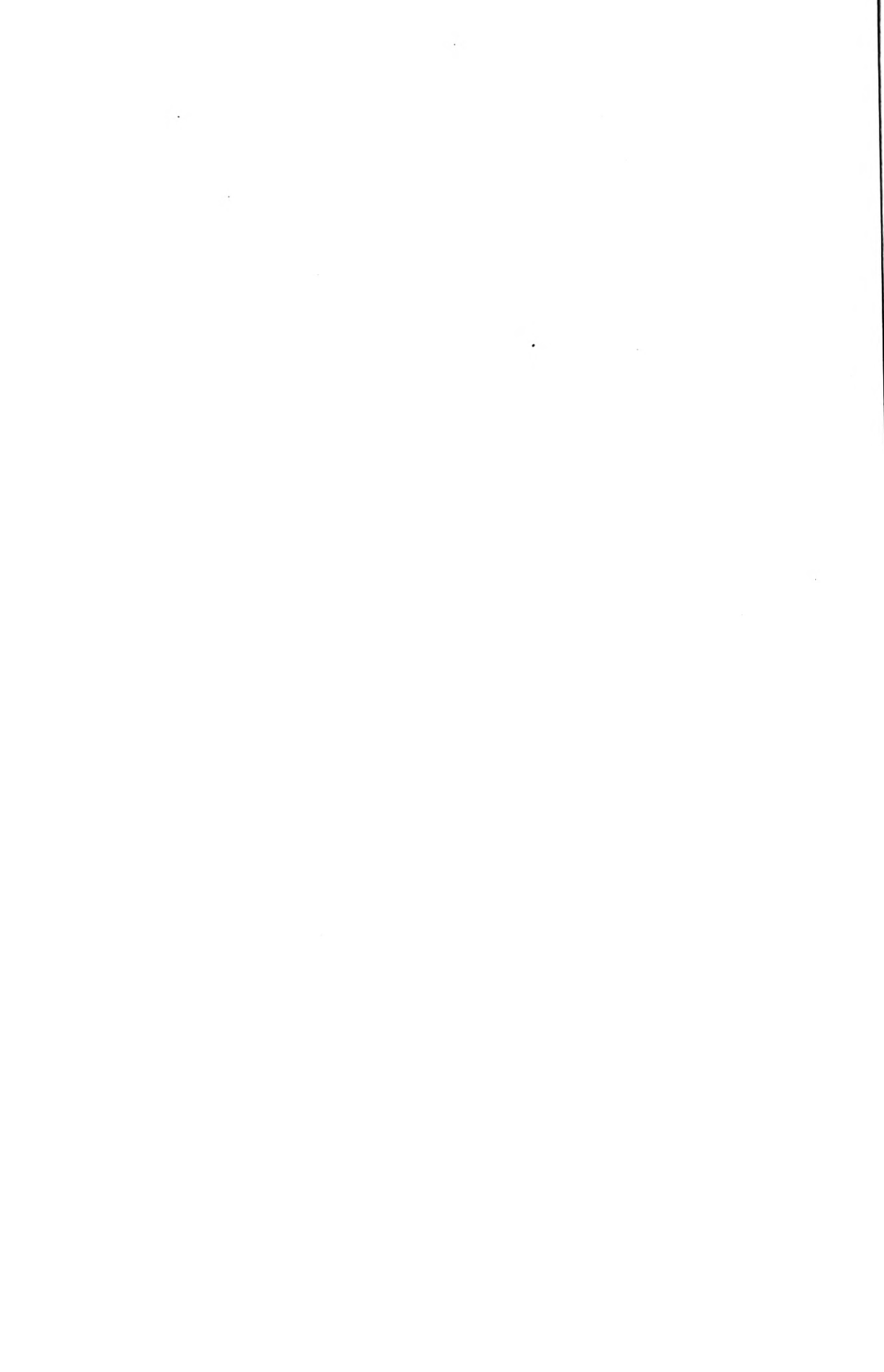






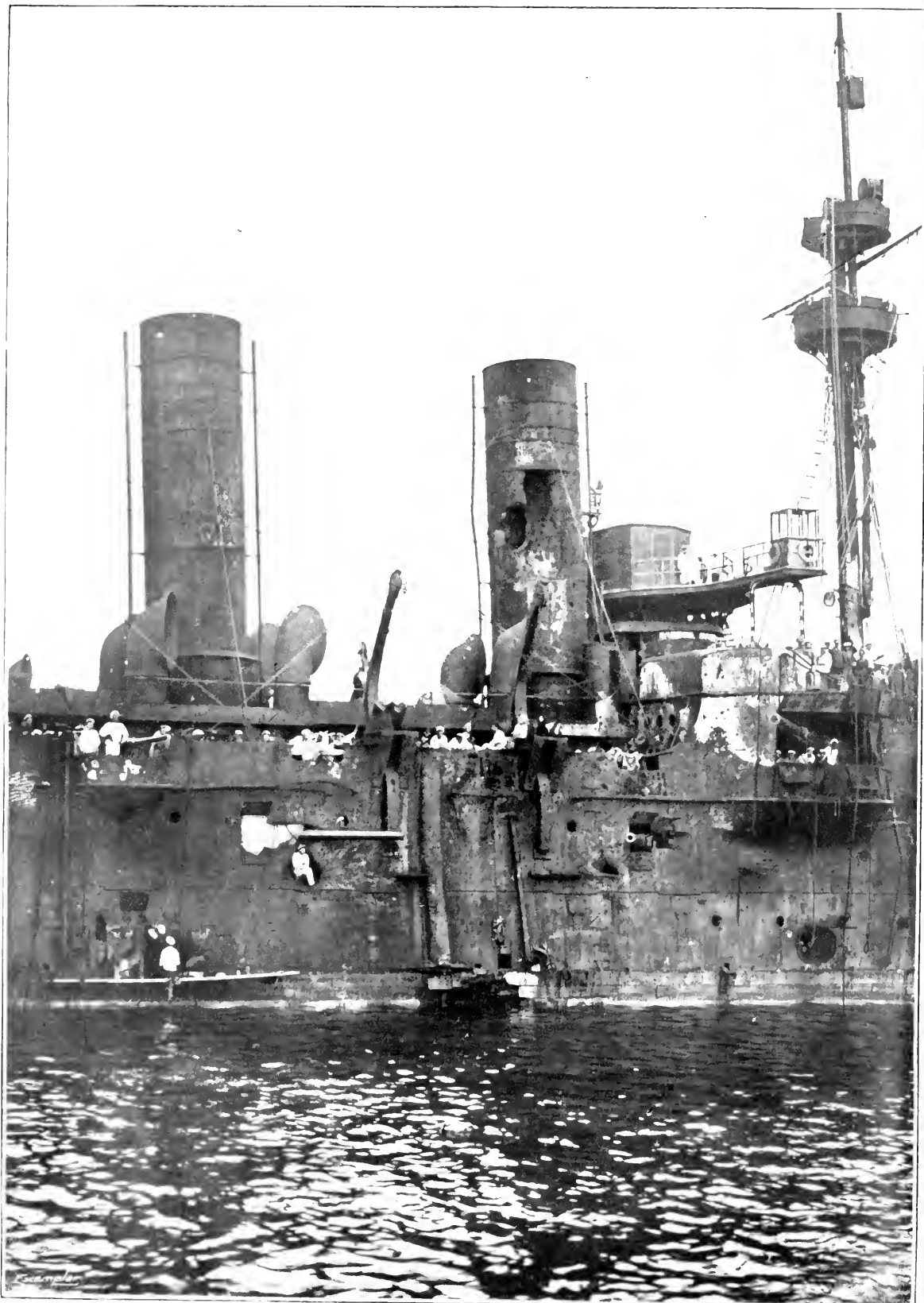


THE BATTLE OF THE SEA OF JAPAN









BETWEEN THE FOREMAST AND THIRD FUNNEL OF THE OREGON — GENERAL VIEW OF DAMAGE TO THE SIDE.

# THE BATTLE OF THE SEA OF JAPAN

BY

2265.  
CAPTAIN NICOLAS KLADO

(OF THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN NAVY)

PROFESSOR AT THE NAVAL AND MILITARY ACADEMIES OF ST. PETERSBURG  
LATE FLAG-CAPTAIN TO ADMIRAL ROZHESTVENSKEY

AND

NUMEROUS OTHER OFFICERS, EYE-WITNESSES, AND COMMANDERS OF VESSELS  
WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE BATTLES OF TSUSHIMA AND MATSUSHIMA

AN AUTHORISED TRANSLATION FROM THE RUSSIAN

BY

J. H. DICKINSON, D.LIT., AND F. P. MARCHANT

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, AND PLANS

HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
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## PREFACE

I FIRST had the honour of translating one of Captain Klado's works last year, when he entrusted me with the translation of "The Russian Navy in the Russo-Japanese War" into English. This book was so well received, both by the Press and Public of this country, and Captain Klado's position as an eminent naval critic so openly recognized, that I undertook with the greatest pleasure the translation and compilation of this volume.

From the documents sent me I have translated all that I thought would interest my countrymen. As will be seen, the whole of the first and much of the second part is written by Captain Klado. The remainder consists of reports, authentic narratives and letters from the seat of war, by officers and others who took an active part in the naval battles.

These valuable contributions were obtained by the author, without whose influential aid it would have been difficult for me to secure them. As they give the best account of the naval battles which it has been possible to obtain up to the present, I am doubly thankful that I am able to place them before the readers of this work.

I must express my thanks to Mr. F. P. Marchant, without whose valued assistance the publication of this volume would have been considerably retarded; to the manager of "The Times," with whose kind permission I reproduce extracts from some highly interesting and important articles which appeared in that paper; and lastly to my readers, whose kind indulgence I crave, and who will more than recompense me for my labour if they accord the same reception to this translation as they did to the last.

J. HARGREAVES DICKINSON.

IN regard to the maps and plans, the spelling of the names of ships and places differs here and there from that given in the accepted British authorities and naval handbooks. It is here given as in the original Russian plans and maps reproduced in the volume, which are at variance also in this regard among themselves. There does not seem to be any fixed or officially accepted system of orthography in the matter, and in the circumstances it has been thought wiser not to alter the original Russian orthography on the plans and maps given, and to reproduce the names in question as originally presented in Russian.

# CONTENTS

## PART I

### CHAPTER I

	PAGE
I. DIVIDED COUNSELS . . . . .	1
II. START OF THE SQUADRON . . . . .	6
III. RED TAPE AND REFUSAL OF RESPONSIBILITY . . . . .	7
IV. MORE DIVIDED COUNSELS: OVER-CONFIDENCE . . . . .	9
V. DUTIES OF THE PRESS . . . . .	9
VI. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MINISTRIES AND ADMIRALS: NELSON'S BLIND EYE . . . . .	11
VII. THE EFFECT OF THE FALL OF PORT ARTHUR . . . . .	13
VIII. ADMIRAL ROZHESTVENSKY'S OBJECTIVE . . . . .	15
IX. RESOURCES OF VLADIVOSTOK NEGLECTED . . . . .	20

### CHAPTER II

I. ANALYSIS AND TABLES . . . . .	24
II. SOME FALLACIES OF COMPARISON . . . . .	28
III. LARGE AND SMALL GUNS . . . . .	31
IV. RELATIVE STRENGTH . . . . .	33
V. VLADIVOSTOK SQUADRON . . . . .	37
VI. SUMMARY OF COMPARISONS . . . . .	38
VII. SOME ARTILLERY REFORMS AND TYPES OF GUN: WITH TABLE . . . . .	39
VIII. DEFECTS OF AMMUNITION AND GUNS . . . . .	43
IX. DANGERS TO ARMoured VESSELS . . . . .	47

### CHAPTER III

I. COMPARISON OF ENGAGEMENTS AT CLOSE AND LONG RANGE . . . . .	54
II. EMERGENCIES: DEATH OF THE LEADER IN ACTION . . . . .	57
III. NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE PACIFIC FLEET . . . . .	59
IV. INFORMATION FURNISHED INDISCREETLY . . . . .	60
V. THE RIVAL ADMIRALS ABOUT TO JOIN BATTLE: THEIR PLANS . . . . .	62
VI. SIGNIFICANCE OF A BATTLE IN THE STRAITS . . . . .	65

## CHAPTER IV

	PAGE
I. THE TACTICS AND STRATEGY OF THE BATTLE . . . . .	68
II. ADVANTAGES OF LINE FORMATION . . . . .	69
III. HOW THE TRANSPORTS PROVED A HINDRANCE . . . . .	73
IV. FRONTAL AND LINE FORMATIONS EXPLAINED . . . . .	75
V. THE PERSONAL ELEMENT . . . . .	77
VI. INCOMPETENT COMMANDERS REJECTED: THEIR SUBSEQUENT AP- POINTMENT . . . . .	83
VII. STRONG AND WEAK MEN . . . . .	84

## CHAPTER V

I. A RUDE AWAKENING . . . . .	86
II. IS THE SURRENDER OF A SHIP JUSTIFIED? . . . . .	89
III. WAS INFORMATION WITHHELD? . . . . .	91
IV. WHAT WERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF NIEBOGATOV'S SURRENDER?	93
V. VIEWS OF THE EMPERORS NICHOLAS I. AND NAPOLEON ON SUR- RENDER . . . . .	97
VI. THE "RURIK": LIEUTENANT IVANOV'S REPORT . . . . .	101
VII. ADMIRAL ROZHESTVENSKY'S CAPTURE: FATE OF VESSELS . . . . .	104
VIII. SURRENDER OR SELF-DESTRUCTION OF VESSELS: HISTORICAL EX- AMPLES . . . . .	105
IX. CREDIBILITY OF REPORTS OF A BATTLE . . . . .	109
X. GENERAL LINIEVITCH'S REPORT, WITH SUPPLEMENTARY DETAILS . . . . .	111
XI. GENERAL SUMMARY . . . . .	121

## CHAPTER VI

I. PROBABLE CAUSES OF DISASTER . . . . .	126
II. SPASMODIC OUTCRY: "WHO IS THE GUILTY PERSON?" . . . . .	130
III. IMPOSSIBLE FORESIGHT DEMANDED BY AMATEUR CRITICS . . . . .	131
IV. DUTIES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE MINISTRIES OF WAR AND MARINE . . . . .	134
V. LUCUS A NON LUCENDO . . . . .	139



## PART II

## CHAPTER I

	PAGE
I. TELEGRAMS OF THANKS FROM H.M. THE TSAR . . . . .	145
II. TELEGRAM FROM ADJUTANT-GENERAL ROZHESTVENSKY TO HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS . . . . .	146
III. ADMIRAL ENQUIST'S REPORT . . . . .	147
IV. A CHAPLAIN'S NARRATIVE . . . . .	149
V. TELEGRAM FROM THE COMMANDER OF THE "IZUMRUD" . . . . .	154
VI. TELEGRAM FROM GENERAL-OF-INFANTRY LINIEVITCH TO HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS THE GRAND DUKE GENERAL-ADMIRAL . . . . .	156
VII. TELEGRAM FROM THE "BRAVY" COMMANDER TO HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS THE GRAND DUKE GENERAL-ADMIRAL . . . . .	156
VIII. AN OFFICER'S LETTER . . . . .	157
IX.-XI. EXPERIENCES IN THE "ZHEMESHUG" . . . . .	159-176

## CHAPTER II

I. NARRATIVE FROM THE "OLEG" . . . . .	177
II. REPORT FROM THE COMMANDER OF THE DESTROYER "GROZNY".	183
III. EXPERIENCES ON BOARD THE TRANSPORT "KOREA." EXTRACTS FROM A PRIVATE LETTER . . . . .	186
IV. EXPERIENCES IN THE TRANSPORT "KOREA," FROM THE LETTER OF ANOTHER EYE-WITNESS . . . . .	190
V. EXPERIENCES ON BOARD THE TRANSPORT "KOREA," FROM THE LETTER OF AN EYE-WITNESS . . . . .	197
VI. A NARRATIVE FROM AN OFFICER AT VLADIVOSTOK . . . . .	202
VII. FURTHER DETAILS FROM THOSE IN THE CRUISER DIVISION . . . . .	206
VIII. ON BOARD THE "SISSOI-VELIKY" . . . . .	214
IX. DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE BY THE OFFICERS OF THE "IZUMRUD" . . . . .	215

## CHAPTER III

I. THE ACTION OF 27 MAY OFF THE ISLAND OF MATSUSHIMA . . . . .	223
II. LETTER FROM THE COMMANDER OF THE "GROZNY" . . . . .	228
III. EXAMINATION OF FACTS . . . . .	236
IV. DUTIES OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE . . . . .	244
V. COULD THE SURRENDER HAVE BEEN PREVENTED? . . . . .	251
VI. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	255

## CHAPTER IV

	PAGE
I. AUTHENTICITY AND COMPLETENESS OF INFORMATION . . . . .	260
II. THE ACCUSERS AT FAULT . . . . .	262
III. LACK OF OFFICIAL INFORMATION . . . . .	264
IV. <i>SUGGESTIO FALSI: SUPPRESSIO VERI</i> . . . . .	265
V. A NEEDED CAUTION: THE TRUTH ABOUT THE "BAYAN" . . . . .	267
VI. RESULT OF KEEPING BACK NEWS FROM THE THEATRE OF WAR . . . . .	270

## CHAPTER V

I. OUR FUTURE DUTY . . . . .	278
II. NATIONAL REPRESENTATION . . . . .	285
NAVAL STRENGTH OF RUSSIA AND JAPAN AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR . . . . .	291
COMPARATIVE TABLES OF THE RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE NAVIES AT THE END OF THE WAR . . . . .	299
INDEX . . . . .	301

# ILLUSTRATIONS

## FULL-PAGE

- No.
1. Ship's company of the battleship "Suvorov."
  2. Battleship "Imperator Alexander III."
  3.     ,,     " Sissoi Veliky."
  - ,,     " Imperator Nikolai I."
  - ,,     " Tsesarevitch."
  4.     ,,     " Navarin."
  - ,,     " Oslabya."
  - First-class cruiser "Dmitri Donskoi."
  5. Second-class cruiser "Novik."
  - First-class cruiser "Pallada."
  - ,,     ,,     " Askold."
  6.     ,,     ,,     " Gromoboi."
  - ,,     ,,     " Variag."
  - ,,     ,,     " Bogatyr."
  - Second-class cruiser "Almaz."
  7. Coast-defence battleship "Admiral Seniavin."
  8. Battleship "Orel."
  9. First-class cruiser "Rurik."
  - ,,     ,,     " Rossia."
  - ,,     ,,     " Aurora."
  10. Coast-defence battleship "Admiral Ushakov."
  11. Armoured cruiser "Pamiat Azova."
  12. "Elba," "Variag," "Koreiets."
  - The "Variag" and "Koreiets" leaving the roadstead of Chemulpo for the open sea where the Japanese Squadron awaited them. As they passed before the foreign vessels the bandsmen of the "Variag," without orders, ran for their instruments, and played the Russian National Anthem.
  13. British picket boat returning to Chemulpo after delivering to Admiral Uriu the "Protest" from the captains of the "Talbot," "Elba," and "Pascal."
  14. The Comte de Nirod on the bridge of the "Variag."
  15. The forward battery of the "Variag" commanded by Ensign Gouboniev.
  16. Bridge of the "Variag" after the bursting of a shell.
  17. The first shells fired by the Japanese fleet at a distance of nine thousand metres.
  18. At three metres from the "Koreiets" a torpedo tilted up on end and disappeared. (An incident of the fight off Chemulpo.)
  19. Firing the first shot from the "Koreiets."

- No.
20. Transferring the Russian wounded on board the "Pascal."
  21. Lieutenant Levitzky witnessing the destruction of the "Koreiets," which he had been commanded to blow up.
  22. Admiral Jessen on board the "Rossia."  
Admiral Jessen's cabin. Two shells penetrated it.
  23. First-class cruiser "Rossia."  
General view of the damaged starboard side forward and amidships, showing shell hole and injuries to hull and equipment.
  24. Bows of the first-class cruiser "Rossia."
  25. After-part of the cruiser "Rossia." General view of damage received.
  26. First-class cruiser "Rossia." Amidships on the starboard side, shattered half-ports of 8-in. gun, and traces of fire in the forecastle. Damage to foremast; the shell bursting here sent fragments into the dynamo-engines below. Other damage to hull from five large shells visible in the hull.
  27. Between the foremast and third funnel of the "Rossia." General view of damage to the side.
  28. The forward funnel of the cruiser "Rossia," showing the shattered casing and internal damage:  
To the right are seen the blistered traces of a fire that broke out in the forecastle.
  29. After (fourth) funnel of the "Rossia," showing damage caused by a shell striking on the port side and exploding inside the funnel.  
Splinter holes are seen in the ventilating cowls.
  30. Details of damage to the third funnel of the cruiser "Rossia."  
A shell struck on the port side and ripped open both the inner and outer casings of the funnel. Splinter holes are visible in the ventilating cowls.
  31. Details of damage to the forward 8-in. gun on the port side on board the "Rossia."  
The half-ports and port were shattered by two successive shells which burst in the casemate and caused a fire. The entire gun crew were killed.
  32. Inside the forward 8-in. gun casemate on board the "Rossia" (port side). Set on fire as the result of the explosion of two large Japanese shells which struck almost simultaneously.
  33. First-class cruiser "Gromoboi." General view of the damaged stern—starboard side.
  34. First-class cruiser "Gromoboi."  
Damage from shells at the stern, and aft of the 6-in. battery, where the officers' cabins are situated.
  35. First-class cruiser "Gromoboi."  
After-part of the ship from mainmast to stern, starboard side—general view of damages received; shattered sponson and carriage of 75 mm. gun, and holes through the unarmoured side, two on the level of the battery deck, in the network below the after-bridge, and on the upper deck.

- No.
36. First-class cruiser "Gromoboi."  
On the starboard side abreast of after-bridge, showing the shattered sponson of 75 mm. gun aft of the side accommodation ladder; also damage from shells to the netting below the after-bridge, and holes through the unarmoured side at the level of the upper and battery decks.
37. First-class cruiser "Gromoboi."  
Port side forward of the side accommodation ladder. One of the shell holes shows an armour plate dented and cracked from a direct blow at right angles from a heavy projectile. A shell also penetrated the bunker immediately under the 6-in. gun in the centre of the picture.
38. Starboard side of the cruiser "Gromoboi," from the fore-bridge to the main-mast, giving a general view of injuries received.
39. First-class cruiser "Gromoboi."  
Amidships on the starboard side: showing shattered sponson of 75 mm. gun abreast of the centre funnel and other damage to hull; opening in the network torn by a fragment of a shell; also hole made in the casing of an ash shoot.
40. General view of damage to the starboard side of the cruiser "Gromoboi."
41. Details of damage to the third funnel on board the cruiser "Gromoboi."  
The shell burst on striking the funnel.
42. Details of damage to the sponson of the 75 mm. gun forward of the third funnel on board the "Gromoboi."
43. Damage to the second funnel on board the cruiser "Gromoboi" (port side).
44. External effects of a burst shell striking the armour of a 6-in. gun casemate on board the "Gromoboi."
45. Port side of the conning tower on board the "Gromoboi" and adjacent portion of the bridge.  
A shell struck the edge of the bridge, smashing the teak beam at the edge, and sending fragments inside the conning tower. Some of these also struck the inside edge of the roof of the conning tower, and ricocheted inside, wounding nearly all posted there.
46. Damaged stem of the cruiser "Bogatyr."  
Holes in the keel of the "Bogatyr," exposing one of the coal bunkers.
47. The dented keel of the "Bogatyr"; starboard side.  
Hole in the keel of the "Bogatyr"; port side.
48. The "Askold" in dock at Shanghai.  
Where a shell struck the "Askold."
49. Russian wounded on board the "Askold" at Shanghai.  
The bulwarks of the cruiser "Askold" at Shanghai after the battle of August 10th.
50. Entrance to Port Arthur.  
Vladivostok.  
Port Arthur. Outer roadstead where the first engagement took place.

- No.  
51. The Russian Fleet entering the inner roadstead of Port Arthur, February 9th.  
The "Askold" in the foreground.  
Damaged side of the battleship "Tsesarevitch" at Tsing-tao.  
The breach on the left was caused by the shell which killed Admiral Withoef.
52. Attack on Port Arthur by the Japanese Fleet.  
Vladivostok.  
Roadstead of Port Arthur.
53. The surrender of Port Arthur. The sunken battleship "Retvisan."  
The surrender of Port Arthur. After-turret and quarterdeck of the battleship "Retvisan."
54. At the surrender of Port Arthur. The cruiser "Pallada."  
One of the "Pallada's" cutters struck by a shell.
55. Torpedo damage to the hull of the cruiser "Pallada."  
The surrender of Port Arthur. The "Peresviet" and "Poltava" taken from the "Retvisan."
56. The surrender of Port Arthur. The "Poltava" viewed from the shore.  
The surrender of Port Arthur. The "Poltava" and "Pallada" viewed from the shore.
57. The cruiser "Bogatyr" on the rocks off Cape Brios, May 20th.  
The deck of the battleship "Pobieda" when blown up on the surrender of Port Arthur.

## IN THE TEXT

Sketches of line formations.

Phases of the battle of Tsushima :—

First movement.	11.30 a.m.		
Second	„	Midday.	
Third	„	1.40 p.m.	
Fourth	„	2 p.m.	
Fifth	„	3 p.m.	
Sixth	„	7 p.m.	

The appearance of the Japanese at the beginning of the battle.

Second stage. Concentrated fire on the leading Russian battleships.

Sketch showing the course of the "Zhemtshug."

Relative positions of the fleets on the sinking of the "Borodino."

The position at about 1.45 p.m. on May 27th.

„	„	3 p.m.	„	„
„	„	6.30 p.m.	„	„
„	„	7 p.m.	„	„

Plan of the Tsushima battle.

Sketch illustrating the method of destroying the "Bayan."

Map of the theatre of warlike operations.

## INTRODUCTION

INTEREST was first aroused in England concerning Captain Klado when it became known how he had tormented the Russian bureaucrats by his articles and lectures, before and during the war, in which he advocated the absolute necessity of a strong navy for Russia, and urged the lazy officials to bestir themselves, and for once in their lives to do their duty to the country, whose very life and death depended upon her navy.

This interest was revived considerably by the publication in this country of the sensational articles, for the writing of which Captain Klado was thrown into prison.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, in giving a short biography of the author, I feel sure I shall add to the interest of this volume.

Nicolas Lavrentievitch Klado, late Flag-Captain to Admiral Rozhdestvensky, Captain of frigate, Professor at the Naval and Military Academies of St. Petersburg, Officier d'Académie, Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, Order of St. Vladimir, etc., was born 13 November, 1861. His father, who was an officer on the General Staff, died in 1881, whilst in command of the Vladivostok Port.

Educated at home, Captain Klado entered the Naval School at thirteen years of age, and left it in April, 1881. He then made two cruises, one on board the "Peter the Great," and the other on the "Askold."

In 1884 he proceeded to the Emperor Nicolas' Naval Academy, quitting it in 1886, when he was appointed tutor at the Naval School. When nominated to the command of the Pacific Squadron in 1889, Admiral Nakhimov made him his direct assistant and Chief of the Staff, and therefore during two years and a half Captain Klado was able to learn all about China and Japan.

He took part in the voyage undertaken by the Tsar Nicolas II, and

<sup>1</sup> "The Russian Navy in the Russo-Japanese War." Hurst & Blackett, 1905.

was with him on board the "Pamiat Azova." He thus successively visited Saigon, Singapore, Batavia, Hong Kong, Hankow, Nagasaki, Kagoshima, Kiobe, and Vladivostok, returning to Russia by way of America. He was next appointed Professor of Mathematics at the Naval School, and this was soon followed by his election as aide-de-camp to Admiral Arsieniev, Director of the Naval School.

During the summer holidays Klado embarked on board the French cruiser "Latouche Tr'eville" for a course of instruction, and shared in the manœuvres directed by Admiral Gervais.

He is the author of several books on naval history, naval tactics, naval war, the importance of naval power, etc., and in recognition of his valuable contributions to naval science was made Officier d'Académie and Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. From 1896 he uninterruptedly continued his work as Professor, and in 1900 lectured at the School of War and the Tsarskoye School, and was the tutor of the Grand Duke Cyril Vladimirovitch and the Emperor's brother, the Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovitch. As far back as 1903, when the Eastern war-cloud was a mere speck on the horizon, Captain Klado, who is one of the finest orators in Europe, commenced a series of public lectures at St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Helsingfors, etc., in which he showed the great importance of the rôle which the fleet had to play, and insisted on the necessity of creating powerful squadrons. With wonderful intuition he prophesied the downfall of Port Arthur and the destruction of the fleet.

In April, 1903, he was appointed chief of the strategical section of Admiral Skrydlov's staff, and when the latter was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Naval Forces in the Pacific, he left with him for Port Arthur; but, communications with the fort having been severed, they went on to Vladivostok.

Whilst there, Klado drew up the plans for the sorties which were so daringly executed by the swift cruiser division, and in recognition of his services in this direction he received the Order of St. Vladimir, with the sword.

At the end of August he returned to St. Petersburg, with instructions to communicate Admiral Skrydlov's plans and intentions to the authorities there.



On 14 October he again left Russia on board the "Kniaz Suvorov," in the capacity of Flag-Captain to Admiral Rozhestvensky, and as he was present during the North Sea incident, his chief sent him back to Russia in order that he could appear before the Hull Commission.

Klado had been so struck with the weakness of Rozhestvensky's squadron, that, during his short stay in St. Petersburg, he commenced to write most sensational articles to the "Novoye Vremya" under the pseudonym of "Priboi," in which he demonstrated the uselessness of sending Rozhestvensky alone against Togo, and boldly insisted on the despatch of reinforcements. He pleaded his cause so well, and his articles created so much public discontent, that the authorities incarcerated him. A subscription was then raised, and the public discontent became greater than ever, until at last the authorities, whom he thoroughly ousted, released him and gave way to his demands. Thus, the despatch of reinforcements, small and inefficient though they were, was entirely due to the initiative of Captain Klado. He was chief Russian witness before the Hull Commission in Paris, and the report of this Commission, as well as his articles, made his name familiar to the whole civilized world.

In April, 1905, he was given the command of the gunboat "Amur," and in June, 1905, was deprived of all his official positions because of the war waged against the Russian bureaucrats, and the world-wide publication of his scathing indictments. All through he has steadfastly upheld his convictions, and it has been said with truth that Klado is the only man in Russia who dare voice the opinions shared by so many of his countrymen.

J. H. D.



PART I





SHIP'S COMPANY OF THE BATTLESHIP "SUWOROV."



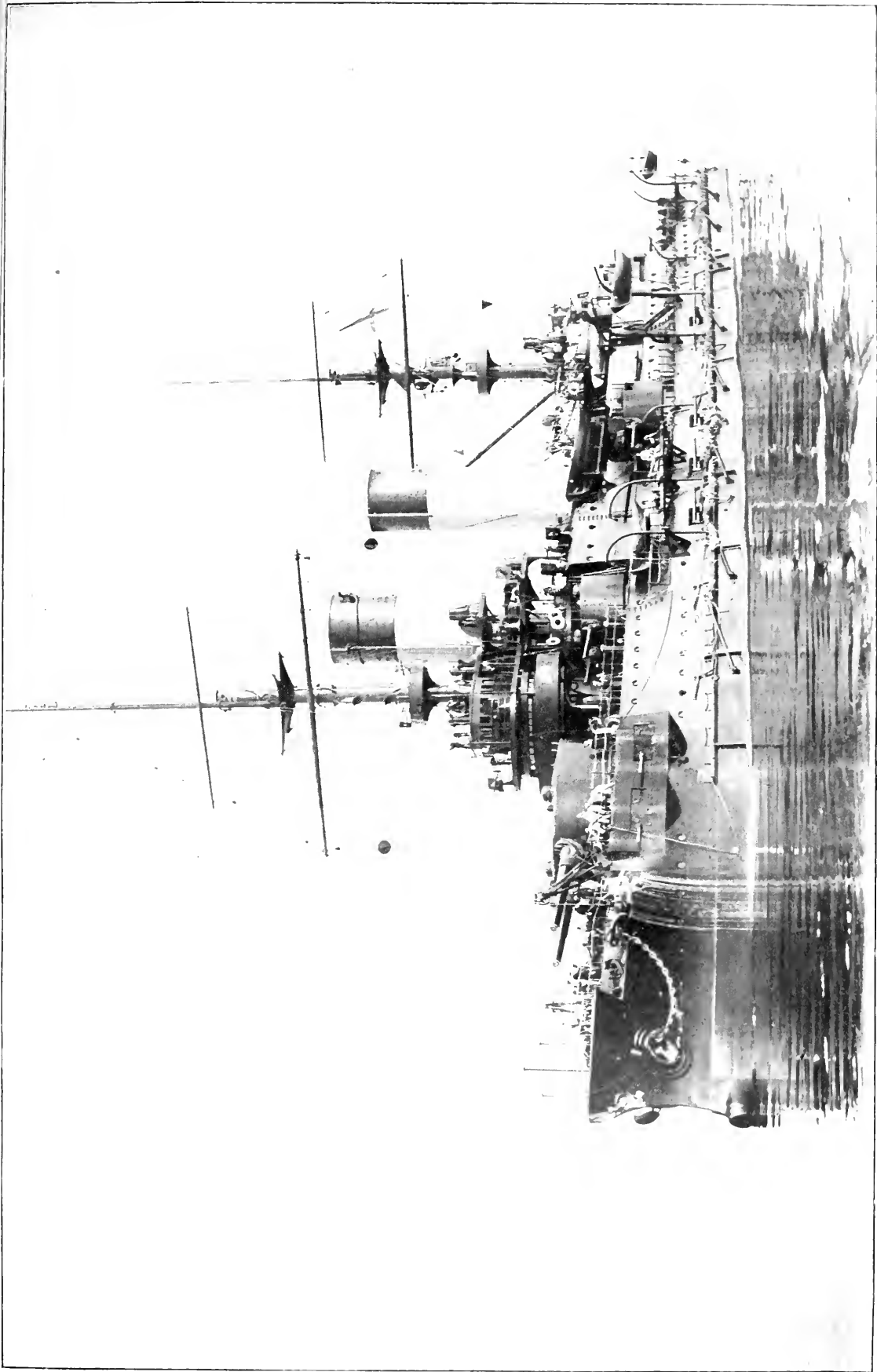
## CHAPTER I

### (I) DIVIDED COUNSELS

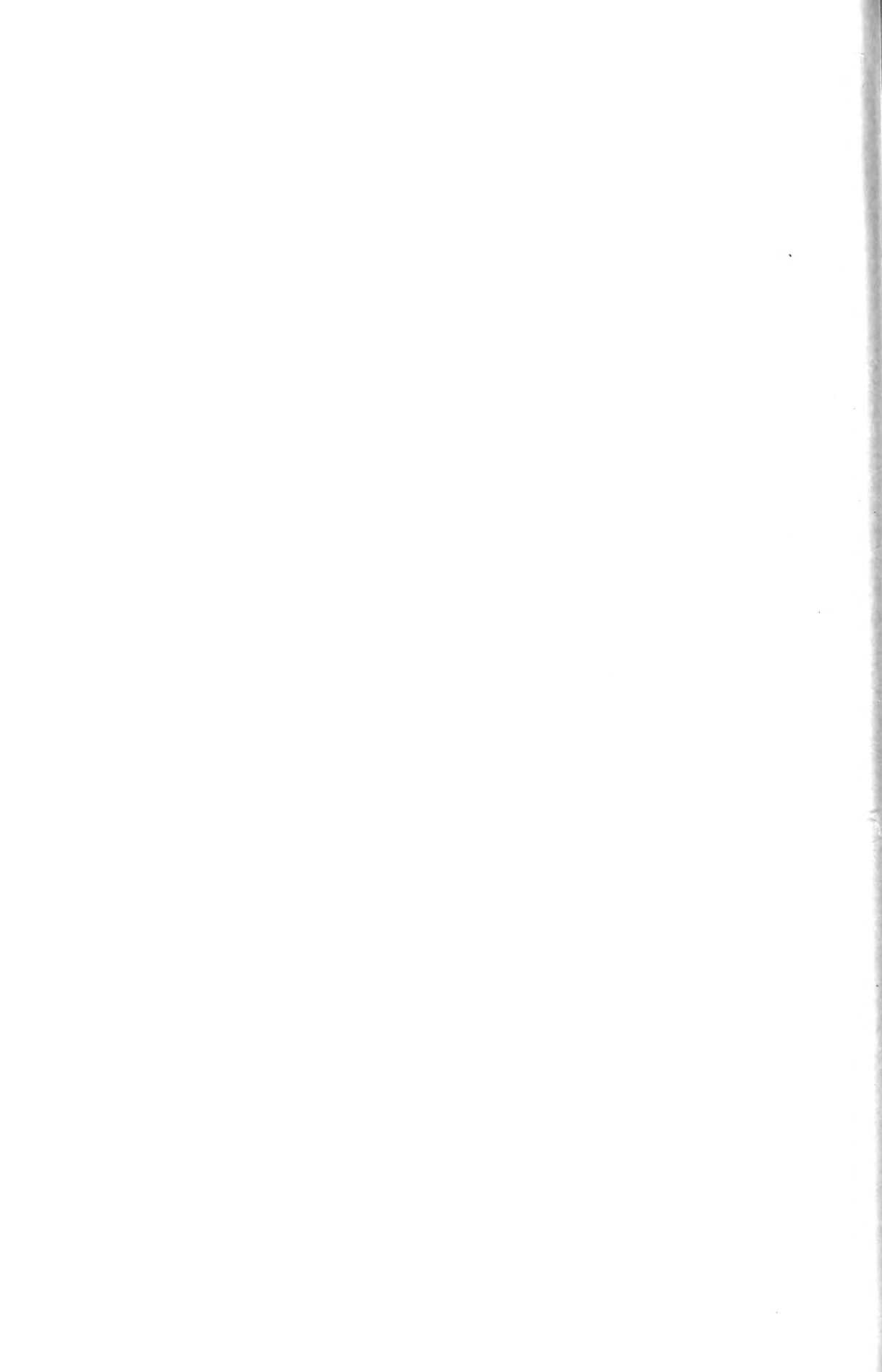
LET us first consider the circumstances under which Rozhdestvensky's fleet left Russia. It depended on the co-operation of the Government and the Ministry of Marine and the Press for the despatch of the Baltic Fleet to the Far East. As long as that despatch was not decided upon, it was still open to point out that in this war everything depended on the turn events might take at sea. It was for the benefit both of the country and the Government that that should be realized, both by the Ministries of War and Marine, in order that the question might be definitely settled one way or the other. Also, the question was whether there was any chance, and if so what chance, of obtaining the command of the sea; and as a corollary, whether the fleet should be sent out or not. To point out all the shortcomings and deficiencies of that fleet and of the vessels composing it was the duty of the Admiralty rather than of the Government, in order that the latter might not be led astray in adopting either course. This, of course, could not be done through the Press, as it would undoubtedly have revealed military secrets, to the obvious advantage of our enemies should the fleet be actually despatched. Reckoning could only be made on the basis of the information contained in naval handbooks accessible to all. But when once the Government had realized the great importance of the part before the Navy, when once a public subscription was opened at the instance of the Government in aid of the augmentation of the fleet, once the despatch of the fleet was determined on, and its composition had to be

decided on, then every one who was in a position to know the truth about the fleet—and consequently its weakness—realized that it might arouse hopes that were ill-founded. These people then who really knew were bound by all the means at their disposal—since they knew that to send the fleet was only to offer a gratuitous triumph to the enemy—to impress, both on the Admiralty and the Government, the absolute necessity of sending a still stronger force or nothing at all. If the despatch was definitely decided upon, they were bound to use their best efforts to prove that a larger force was indispensable, and that in addition to the ships told off for the purpose, such and such others must also be sent. This had necessarily to be done, not through the Press, but through “Service” channels. Otherwise there would have been too great a disclosure of our plans of war; and besides, the military censorship would never have passed such strictures. Lastly, when the composition of the fleet was finally settled and known to everybody, and more especially when the force determined on was already on its way, and all the world knew of how many ships the fleet was composed, then every one who realized that the force sent was inadequate was at liberty to demonstrate its insufficiency in the Press. It was his duty to show both the Government and the Admiralty their mistake, and to draw the attention thereto of the public, on whose opinion it was necessary to reckon. That being so, it was naturally admissible to support one’s assertions by the data to be found in the naval handbooks. If these data proved convincing, they would serve a double purpose. Either such reinforcements as the Government pronounced adequate would be sent—when the question was decided for them by the Admiralty—which would give a reasonable hope of success; or the fleet sent out would be recalled on the ground of its insufficiency and the impossibility of reinforcing it. To point out which of these courses was the right one no longer rested with the Press. That would have meant the exposure of matters which at that time were secrets of vital importance to the Empire. Only the Government could make the decision, because the Admiralty not





BATTLESHIP "EMPEROR ALEXANDER III"



only might, but was bound, to tell it everything. Moreover, the Admiralty was also in a position to obtain information direct, and ascertain the opinions of the commanders of the squadrons that might successively be sent to the Far East. There was no lack of such opinions. Admiral Rozhestvensky had reported openly on all the shortcomings of his command. It is only necessary to read extracts from his report of 1 January, 1905, since published in the "Razsviet," which he concludes with the frank avowal that he laboured under a great disadvantage owing to the direct pressure put upon him by the Technical Committee, which had ordered him to be very careful what course he steered with the more recently added units. Thus the Press was only at liberty to publish such hints as were within its reach, but could not dictate what decision should be adopted.

As to the reasons why the second Pacific Fleet was sent just as it was, and in no greater numbers, we may now say a word. The necessity of deciding whether to despatch it or not, and if it were sent, what its composition should be, became evident on the very first day of the war, which witnessed the elimination from our line of battle of five of our larger ships, including two of our best battleships and two of our newest cruisers. Meanwhile, up to 25 April (a period of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  months), no decision was arrived at, either as to what ships should compose the fleet, or even who should command it. It is true that the work on the new cruisers under construction was hastened somewhat, but the utmost efforts were by no means made. Then, though the commander-in-chief was selected, viz., Admiral Rozhestvensky, yet he continued to act as chief of the General Staff. Thus, he had still on his hands a vast and complex task, and could not give himself up to the duty of directly supervizing the equipment of his fleet. He had no one to help him in organizing it; the composition was not decided upon. As an entity it was held together solely by the force of will of its chief; and even when the squadron was already sailing to its destination it had not become a living force.

In this way  $2\frac{1}{2}$  months of precious time were lost. This,

correctly speaking, was the only period at which the war was to any extent a popular one, and when much more might have been achieved than was afterwards possible. It was only at this period also, when there had so far been no disasters, when there had been no "Petropavlovsk" catastrophe as yet, when the prestige of our army was still intact, when the block-ships of the Japanese and their bombardments of Port Arthur had proved ineffectual, that there was a chance of coming to an understanding with England with regard to the Black Sea Fleet being allowed to pass the Dardanelles. In proportion as our disasters and the victories of our enemies became more numerous, this understanding became naturally more and more difficult. England insisted more and more upon the maintenance of her alliance with Japan. So the precious opportunity was lost for ever! I cannot blame our diplomacy for this. There was nobody to give it the right direction, which might have been the outcome of a firm resolve on the part of the Government to send to the Far East the most powerful fleet possible. It was not till after Admiral Makarov's tragic death that the idea of sending a second fleet was seriously mooted. The newly appointed commander submitted a detailed statement of what its strength should be and how it should be organized. Even at that time this statement included all the vessels that eventually formed part of Niebogatov's squadron, and those meanwhile lay at Cronstadt. The number of torpedo-craft to be sent, as well as transports and repair ships, was considerable, and he proposed that balloons, war-kites, and submarines of small dimensions should also accompany the fleet. In order that all these might be forthcoming, however, that the necessary funds might be in hand, and plenary powers given to the chief to organize the various expeditionary forces on such a large scale and yet lose no time, it was essential that the decision should lie, not with the acting head of the Admiralty, or even with its *de facto* head, but directly with his Majesty the Emperor. At the same time the question was raised as to the final appointment of the commander-in-chief, for which there were already two nominated, viz.: Admirals Rozhestvensky and Tshukhnin.

On 27 April a special committee was appointed under the presidency of an august personage, so that a rapid and final decision might be hoped for.

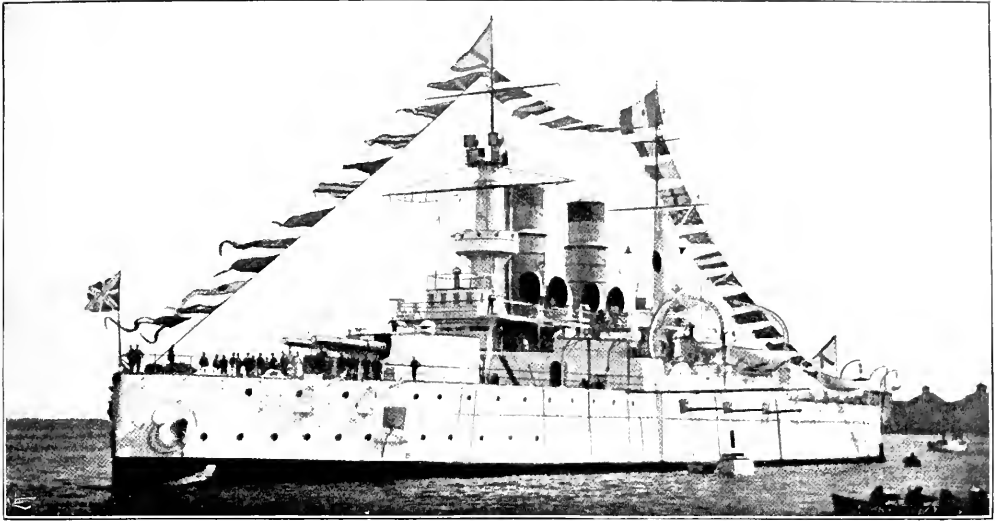
At this juncture something disastrous happened, which I myself witnessed and know well and precisely the causes that led to it. Early on the morning of 24-25 April, while looking over some urgent work for the sitting of the coming day, I was suddenly informed, at 4 a.m., that the Council, as then constituted, was postponed, and would be held later under the auspices of the head of the Admiralty. Before evening there was a fresh change in the presidency, and the acting chief of the Ministry of Marine selected. As might have been foreseen, the Committee, as thus reconstituted, arrived at no far-reaching conclusions. The matter was docketed and pigeon-holed ; there were demurs and a long correspondence, and to put the matter briefly, the affair came to nothing. The sole upshot, and that a most unsatisfactory one, of this sitting, was the counselling of the boldly conceived and carefully thought out plan of a flying squadron of cruisers to operate in Far Eastern waters, for which a special vote had already been set apart, and for which all the initial preparations and dispositions had already been made. Instead, however, nothing was done but to move two auxiliary cruisers from the Black Sea to the Red Sea, and two more from the Baltic to the Atlantic. As we all remember, this futile manœuvre merely excited the animosity of the neutral Powers against us, and subsequently stood in the way of our other ships being allowed to enter neutral ports, ending with the shameful surrender to England in the matter of the "Malacca." Thus the question of command-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet was left without result worthy the name being arrived at. After that, Admiral Rozhestvensky was definitely appointed commander of the whole expedition, a date was fixed by which the ships told off for service were to be ready for sea, and a real effort was made to have them ready in as brief a time as possible.

## (II) THE START OF THE SQUADRON

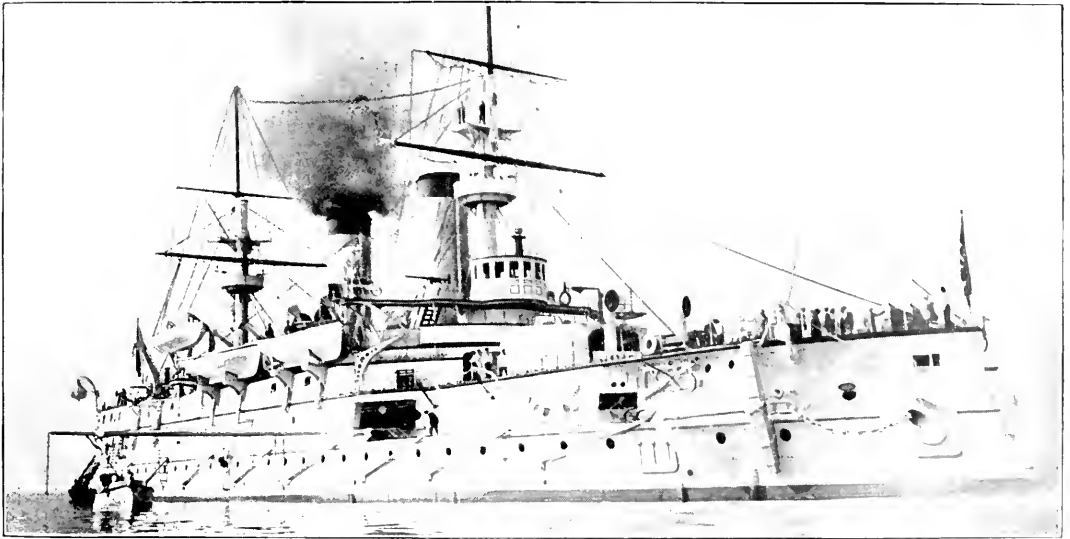
The squadron got under sail on 13 August, 1904, and in the course of that month its composition was a matter of common knowledge. It was by no means of the same strength as when it left Libau in October. It had not then been joined by the battleship "Orel," the cruisers "Oleg," "Zhemtshug," and "Izumrud," and several torpedo vessels.

At that time many people said that Admiral Rozhestvensky himself was very much against the despatch of any more ships. What this opinion of his was based upon I cannot say. I only heard from him the doubt as to whether ships that were not in a thorough state of repair would ever be able to make the long sea voyage. He said that they would have to be interned in neutral ports, where they would be disarmed, which would be a new disgrace to our navy. Apparently his opinion only applied to obsolete ships, such as the "Navarin" (which had defective boilers), the "Admiral Nakhimov," and the "Dmitri Donskoi," and to others that had been hurriedly built and were far from being complete. In this latter category was the "Oleg," one of the cylinders of which had a crack (which had been officially reported to the Admiralty) and so could only go half speed when the engine had made countless revolutions; also the cruisers "Zhemtshug" and "Izumrud." The latter had been turned out by the Nevsky works in a dirty and incomplete state. Anyhow, the Admiral set himself against the despatch of these vessels, which subsequently constituted Niebogotov's squadron.

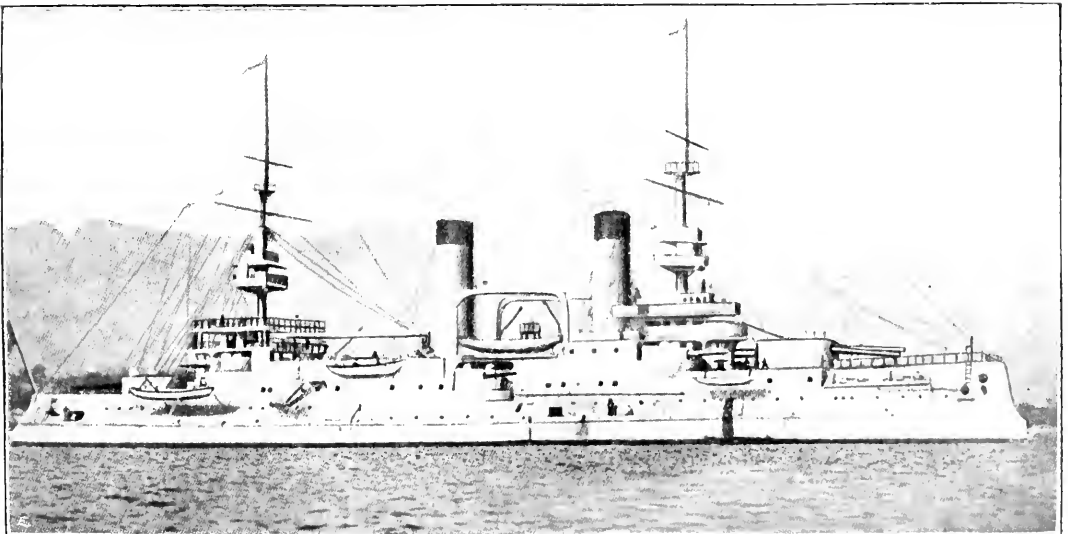
As it turned out, Rozhestvensky proved to be mistaken in his prognostications; all these ships stood the voyage admirably, and reached the scene of operations at a high rate of speed, as did also Admiral Niebogotov's squadron. Consequently he may have been mistaken about the rest of the information which caused him to decide against any addition to his own forces. To my mind that is not the question at issue. Everybody has a right to his own opinion, including Rozhestvensky; but how



BATTLESHIP "SISSOI VELIKY"



BATTLESHIP "IMPERATOR NIKOLAI I."



BATTLESHIP "TSESAREVITCH"





was it that all insisted only on the dark side of the situation, and contented themselves with that?

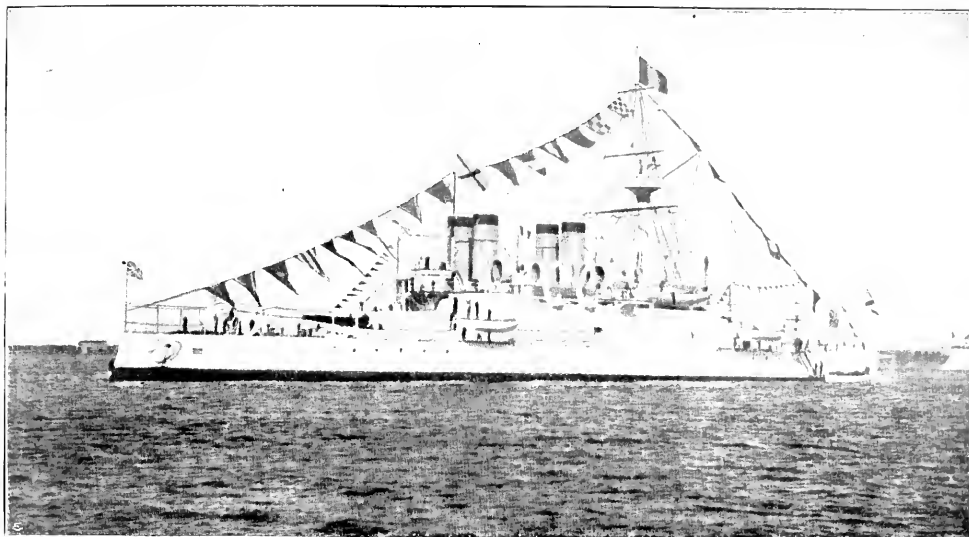
### (III) RED TAPE AND REFUSAL OF RESPONSIBILITY

As if that could be any justification, from a large number of persons in the Ministry, some of them occupying the very highest positions, I heard the same protest against the strengthening of the fleet. "Was not the Admiral himself against it?" they said. I can understand that it must be very convenient to shake off such responsibility and take refuge behind some one else, but that it could be right I seriously doubt. What I mean is that if the Admiral was to blame for an error in judgment, then no one either could, or should, have attempted to justify his mistake. That could not possibly be right. And how wretched must be the man who, working on a broad plan, can yet find no one who dare justify him, or dare point out to him his errors, and yet at the same time his name is employed as a cloak for everything. And again, why was Admiral Rozhestvensky hindered in so many ways when equipping his squadron? Why were his most reasonable requests refused, his hands tied over every trifle during a prolonged and exhaustive correspondence, and he himself insulted when he rightly desired to break certain hard and fast rules, to the benefit of the cause and the avoidance of loss of time? Why were his requests not complied with at the time? I know why! It was all owing to that ruinous and guilty dread of responsibility, the desire to shift it on to other shoulders, and an absorbing care for personal peace and quietness.

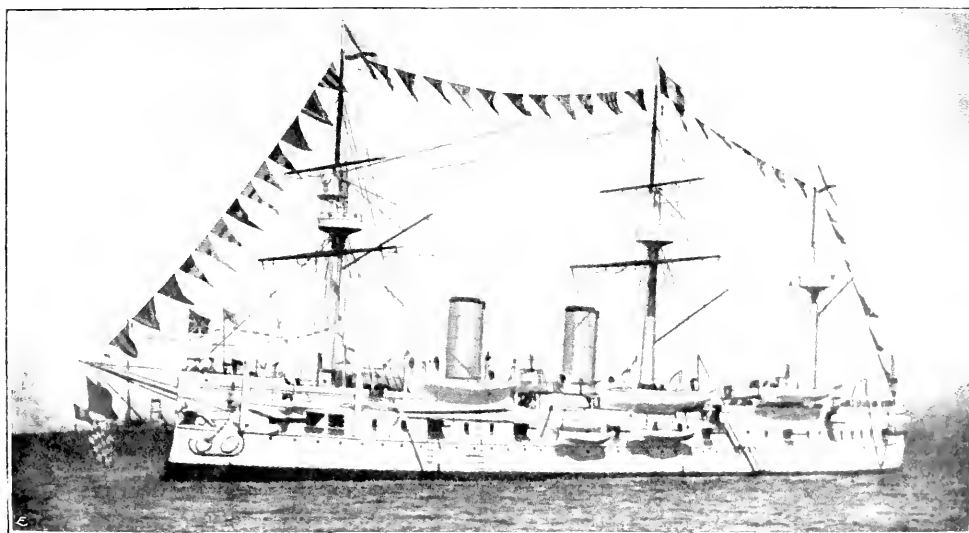
For instance, suppose Rozhestvensky required something. There was all the less anxiety and responsibility for the officials for giving him what he required: "We shall not now," they said, "have to hush up our shortcomings before such and such higher officials." For instance, if he requisitioned three sets of signal-flags and the regulations only allowed two, then, even though such flags were only a penny apiece, the word "I agree" must be affixed to his demand; and how dreadful

to sign one's name to this criminal word and take responsibility for it! Then quibbles would arise. To be convicted of irregularity wounds one's pride. Therefore, it would have been better to say, "So-and-so granted, and so-and-so refused," and by saving face in that way make the refusal easier and more palatable.

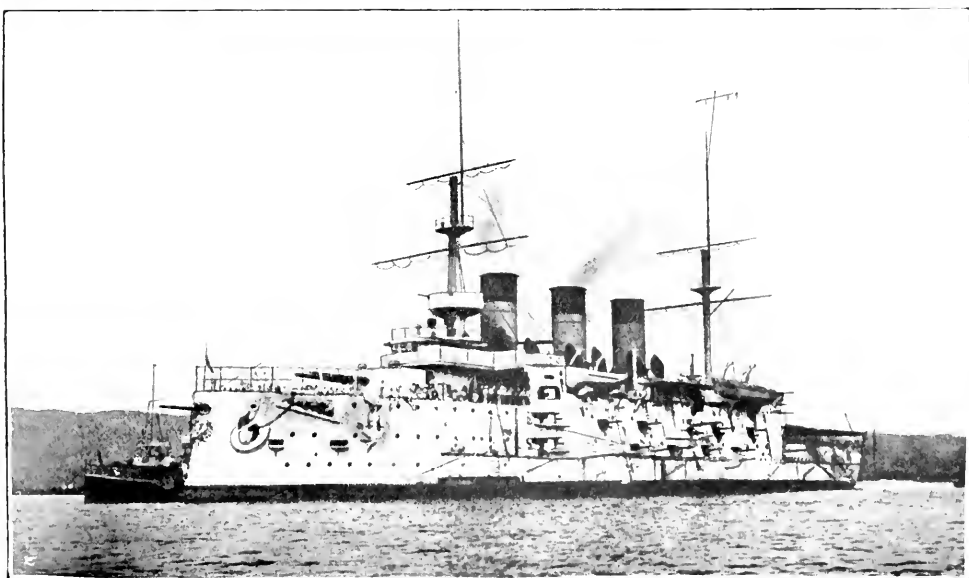
Let us return to the opinion formed by Admiral Rozhstvensky as to the proper complement of the fleet. What was the Admiral's exact position? That of Commander of the second fleet and nothing more. He was in no way responsible for the general conduct of the war, but only for his own fleet. At that time another fleet still existed at Port Arthur, under Admiral Withoeft. His opinion was not of such very great importance, and his estimate as to what further force should be sent to strengthen his fleet was not final, though, owing to his experience of war in general, it was really of high value. I merely mention this *en passant*. The burning part of the question is whether there was any admiral entitled to control both fleets as supreme Commander-in-Chief, urging them on to increased and united energy, activity and initiative; though even that would not have ensured success. As the personages to whom I have referred could not be gainsaid, as during the war these individuals were superiors for the time, they took advantage of their mischievous influence with this higher authority, which could not of itself directly settle such questions, and by so doing at once shifted the burden of responsibility from their own shoulders, and shielded themselves behind authorities against which there was no appeal. Of course if Admiral Rozhstvensky preferred that certain ships should not form part of his squadron, then it was quite right to give him *carte blanche*, so that the commander might have confidence in the ships he led. But a third squadron of all these remaining ships could have been entrusted to a separate commander, and it would have been right to invest the supreme command of these two squadrons in the Commander-in-Chief. Finally, Rozhstvensky was not the only one to be consulted, and, highly as I rate his opinion, the



BATTLESHIP "NAVARIN."



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "DMITRI DONSKOI."



BATTLESHIP "OSLABYA."



interests of the public could not be sacrificed to him in this matter, provided only that the higher authorities had realized the fact.

#### (IV) MORE DIVIDED COUNSELS—OVER-CONFIDENCE

In August the state of affairs had materially changed. The Port Arthur Squadron and the Vladivostok Cruiser Squadron had been disastrously defeated, and the former was dismantled to reinforce the fortifications. To my thinking, from that time onward there was no reasonable chance of success. The Baltic Fleet had a terrible task before it, to dispute the command of the sea *single-handed* with the Japanese. Whether we liked it or not, we had to think the matter over, and under these conditions, when the fleet was ready to sail, a council was held, on 12 September, at which the question was debated whether the fleet should be despatched or not. Some of the members protested against its being sent; others against its being sent in no stronger force. It was finally decided, however, that it should sail—though another whole month passed before it got under weigh. It is highly interesting to note that there was one voice raised in favour of its non-despatch, because “our army would soon sweep the Japs before it.” This, be it observed, was after Liao-Yang had been fought.

We could quite understand the fleet being held back on account of its inadequacy, but the reason here cited is simply too absurd. It is only by the blending of opinions that I can account for the one valid objection being set aside, viz. the weakness of the force, and in no other way can I account for the subsequent resolution to send it as it was, for then there were only two courses possible, either instant reinforcement by making the utmost efforts, or, if that was out of the question, not to send it at all.

#### (V) DUTIES OF THE PRESS

The circumstances under which the fleet at last got under weigh, receiving, instead of a send-off, an ill-omened hint from the Technical Committee as to the possibility of its best and

most modern battleships being recalled, are these. It was weak in itself, had not been reinforced, and was despatched in defiance of the opinions of a large number of the highest authorities on naval matters. That being so, what could the Press do except point out by every possible means the weakness of the fleet, and clamour for its immediate reinforcement at all costs? To point out that it should have been recalled was for the Press an imperative necessity. Then all its shortcomings would have been made public, which meant the betrayal of military secrets. In No. 165 of the "Slovo," Mr. N. A. Demtshinsky says that the defects of the *personnel* in particular were what made the fleet's despatch most perilous; but at the same time the tragedy of the situation, as it then was, lay in the fact that we could say nothing at the time. Only one thing remained to us, viz. to demonstrate the weakness in *matériel*, relying on the data at our command, which consisted of manuals accessible to all. Only the Government could recall the fleet, and only then if convinced of its weakness, and on receiving from the Ministry of Marine a full and candid admission of its defects, both in *matériel* and *personnel*. But this did not occur. The fleet continued its voyage. It became necessary, in consequence, to demand, even more urgently and definitely, the despatch of reinforcements. This ought not to have been the guiding sentiment, since the ships sent were going to their destruction. Were they not enough "to be their country's loss"? Why, then, send more to the same doom? Who would have had the courage to talk like that? If what was weak could be kept back and could be made moderately strong, the natural course was to give it support of some kind, if not in quality, then in quantity. Perhaps it was expected that Rozhestvensky would insist explicitly on the absolute necessity of turning back, and by so doing take upon himself the responsibility of a retrograde movement. If such was the expectation, it was distinctly unfair to him. To decide upon such a course was the most difficult thing that could be expected of him, for he would have been accused of cowardice. This should have been realized. When

so much was at stake, he had had the courage to take upon himself a grave responsibility.

(VI) RESPONSIBILITIES OF MINISTRIES AND ADMIRALS.  
NELSON'S BLIND EYE

But meanwhile time passed, and the fleet sailed farther and farther on its route. It was neither stopped nor reinforced. In Russia people expected Rozhstvensky to take the initiative: *he* naturally expected it to come from home. A close circle existed, which could only be broken through by a strong will and determination.

When a signal to retreat was reported to Nelson during one of his battles, he put his glass to his blind eye and said, "D—d if I see Admiral Parker's signal. Keep mine for closer action flying. If necessary, nail it to the mast. That's how I answer such orders."

"It is owing to this noble daring," says an English historian, "that the English Fleet came safely through the battle."

Both Admiral Parker and Admiral Nelson showed manliness, each in his way, in assuming responsibility for his procedure. And it was just this rivalry in high-mindedness, and that precious quality of readiness to take responsibility, which the Ministry of Marine should have given an example of. So any one will agree who has the most elementary knowledge of naval history. In this respect, though, the ignorance in our naval service baffles description. The Ministry should have understood that, as regards the despatch of a second squadron, if it was impossible to send adequate reinforcements—not owing to the wind and current, as in Parker's case, but owing to slowness and irregularity—then it had all the greater reason to follow Parker's example, and take the responsibility upon itself, even if its reputation suffered thereby. But, as things were, the future historian will hardly speak of our Ministry's conduct as Admiral Jurien de la Gravière did of Parker's.<sup>1</sup> To such a noble outburst

<sup>1</sup> Jurien de la Gravière, "Naval Wars under the Second Republic and the Empire," vol. II, p. 19.

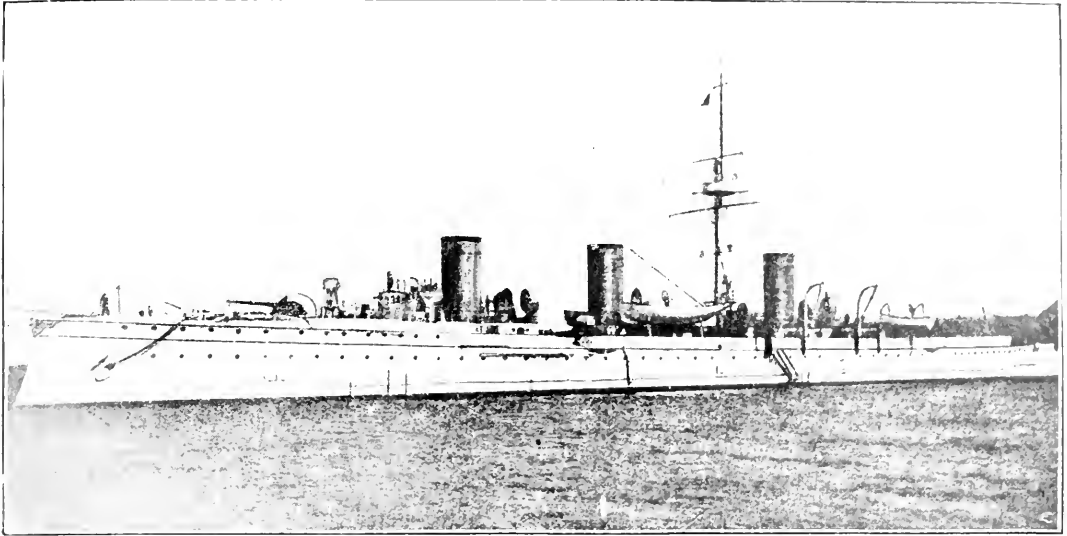
on the part of Admiral Rozhestvensky there would have been no occasion to make the same rejoinder as Nelson did to Parker's signal. In this case the obstacle was quite a different one, and he, of all persons, realized this, and allowed it to be seen in his reports, which openly set forth the squadron's deficiencies.

If, however, such had not been the case; if Rozhestvensky, though not having the same reasons as Nelson, had, nevertheless, followed his example by pretending to turn a deaf ear to instructions from St. Petersburg, then the Ministry should have taken a high-minded course, and been still more precise in its instructions. (I have alluded to Nelson's signal more in connexion with Admiral Niebogotov's signal as regards surrender. The commanders of ships should then have given him the same answer as Nelson gave.) The despatch of Rozhestvensky's squadron, and the Government's action with regard to the whole conduct of the war, showed up the impracticable method of conducting operations from the capital. So I pointed out at the time with regard to the abolition of the naval general staff, when the command of all the naval and military forces passed from Admiral Alexeiev to General Kuropatkin.<sup>1</sup>

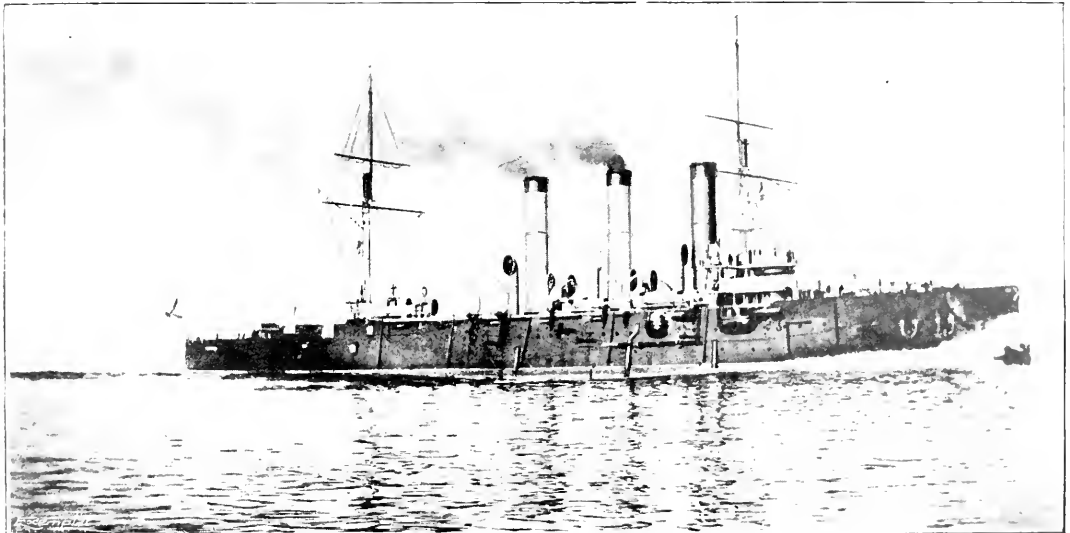
The Commander-in-Chief himself, who is immediately responsible for the general conduct of operations on land and sea, ought to have directed the general lines of the squadrons proceeding to the Far East, not St. Petersburg. Of course, for this purpose he ought to have had a naval staff of the same importance as that for military operations, and not merely a flag officer's entourage. Then the Commander-in-Chief ought, with the help of his naval staff, having before them the categorical information demanded by him from the Ministry of Marine, to have decided when and in what order the squadrons should sail. The Commander-in-Chief ought certainly to have had manhood enough in himself to undertake responsibility for his decisions, he being actually and immediately responsible for the conduct of the operations. Direction of affairs in war by different people

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 259-266 of the separate edition of my articles, "After the Departure of the Second Pacific Squadron," contained in my book, "The Russian Navy in the Russo-Japanese War," published in England by Messrs. Hurst & Blackett, and pp. 474-7 of my work, "Naval War."

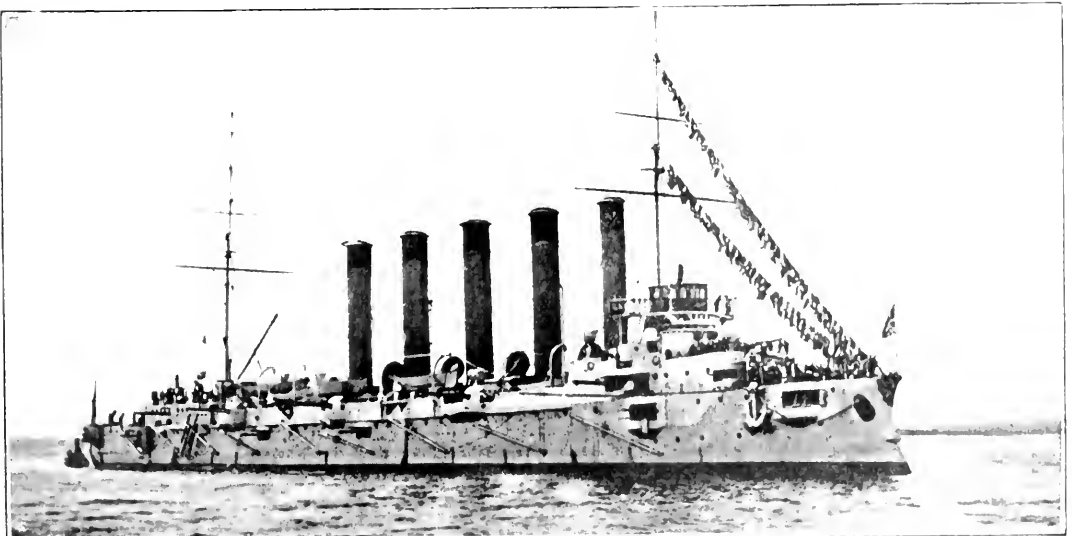




SECOND-CLASS CRUISER "NOVIK"



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "PALLADA"



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "ASKOLD"



jointly is condemned by all military history. It has never led to anything but disorder, confusion, and misfortune. And this has been fundamentally forgotten by us, and the Ministries have had excellent opportunities of vitally crippling the work of their commanders-in-chief.

#### (VII) THE EFFECT OF THE FALL OF PORT ARTHUR

When the fleet started on its cruise, in my opinion there was no further doubt that the co-operation of the ships at Port Arthur could not be counted upon; but even if anybody did not share this view all hopes ought to have been abandoned when *203 Metre Hill* was taken on 9 December. After that, the Second Squadron ought to have relied solely on its own strength. The news reached St. Petersburg on 20 December, just as Niebogotov's squadron commenced preparations for its departure. Of course, this was belated. At that moment, only the vessels in Libau could be got ready quickly. Cronstadt was ice-bound, and the time for the ships there to get out had been allowed to pass. There had been no preparation for sending out ships at short notice, and their fitting out had not yet begun.

The fall of Port Arthur coincided with the arrival of Admiral Rozhestvensky at Madagascar. At that point, therefore, the question had again to be answered: Should the squadron continue its journey? Should it wait for Niebogotov, or return home? The answer of course depended upon how much was expected of it. It was no longer necessary to hurry to the relief of Port Arthur. Rozhestvensky himself had all the data for settling the question. In the end, after remaining in the neighbourhood of Madagascar for about two months, Rozhestvensky's own squadron sailed without waiting for Niebogotov, who had himself got as far as Crete.

What was the cause? I have no exact evidence, and can therefore only make conjectures; but the facts speak for themselves. Apart from this, I know from several sources that Rozhestvensky had not intended to wait for Niebogotov's

squadron. That is conclusively proved by the fact that he sailed at a time when only two or three weeks would have been sufficient to effect a junction. I refuse to admit that a desire to interfere with the Japanese preparations was a sound reason for hurry. At the earliest, if it had not been detained near Madagascar, Rozhestvensky's squadron could only have reached the Saddle Group about the middle of March. From 14 August, when the Port Arthur ships had already been shut in and only a small force sufficed to maintain the blockade, the Japanese would have had  $7\frac{1}{2}$  months at the least in which to prepare for an engagement with Admiral Rozhestvensky. In reality they had  $9\frac{1}{2}$  months.

I think, however, that the Japanese had sufficiently proved their foresight to convince one that they would be ready for the earliest arrival of the enemy, and were not likely to count on his "possibly" being late. In  $7\frac{1}{2}$  months, with their characteristic energy, with the splendid equipment of their naval ports and liberal help from England and America, any amount of preparation could have been accomplished.

Why, then, did Admiral Rozhestvensky stay at Madagascar if he was not waiting for Niebogotov? If he was waiting, why did he leave without him? There were several reasons. After the fall of Port Arthur, which, as mentioned, coincided with the arrival of Rozhestvensky at Madagascar, the arrangements for supply of coal became disorganized, owing to various disagreements with the German colliers. The Japanese had announced their decision of sinking colliers accompanying the Russian Fleet, without regard to their nationality. It was necessary then to alter the organization, for if the coal supply was not assured to the end of the cruise it was dangerous to go farther. Then some time was spent in waiting for the division of Captain Dobrotvorsky.

Lastly, into all the plans there probably entered thought of foreign cruisers, upon which it is not now the time to dilate though it has a long and remarkable history.

I cannot admit that the continuation of our squadron on

its journey in its then condition was not influenced by the conviction that had somehow got about that it was after all not so weak, while the Japanese had been considerably weakened. With such opinions held in Russia, Admiral Rozhestvensky would have found it very hard to express a contrary view. If we suppose that he had himself fallen in with such views, the reason of his leaving Madagascar is no longer obscure. At Kamranh, as far as I know, Rozhestvensky again waited, not for Niebogotov, but for coal. If the coal had reached him sooner, he would not have waited for a junction. Again, if my information is correct, this was due to his too great confidence in his own strength. Other explanation I cannot find. With the shores of Indo-China left behind, there was an end to mere cruising. The fleet had to undertake *strategical manœuvring*.

#### (VIII) ADMIRAL ROZHESTVENSKY'S OBJECTIVE

From the moment Admiral Rozhestvensky left the shores of Indo-China his movements ought to have been primarily directed by the main object he had in view. This was in all probability either to force his way through to Vladivostok, even though in so doing he were to sacrifice part of his fleet, so as to join in the serious naval operations already taking place near that port; or else to seek a general engagement with the main force of the Japanese at once, and after the battle make for Vladivostok and form a base there.

In the first case it would have been desirable to avoid a decisive battle: in the second, it was necessary to have confidence in his own superiority. In either case, the degree of security of the fleet in the matter of coal was of immense influence on the means of executing what had been decided on. How far the squadron was secure as to this, I do not know, and can only argue conditionally. I shall suppose that this security did exist, i.e. that the supply of coal had been calculated as sufficient for the plan of action. Otherwise it would not be worth while to argue for any plan of action.

Whichever of these two tasks Admiral Rozhestvensky set himself, his direct advantage was to tempt the Japanese Fleet to fight at a distance from their bases, so far from their shores that their torpedo-craft, and especially their submarines, could not accompany them.

In these circumstances the course of the fleet straight from the Saddle Islands to the Straits of Korea can be explained only in one way : by a mistaken belief in their own superior strength, and a still more mistaken supposition that the seeming inactivity of the Japanese was due to weakness, and an intention of letting our fleet through to Vladivostok without a decisive battle. The first mistake did not exclude the disadvantages of a battle in the Straits, and the indiscretion and neglect as to the disadvantages of their environment certainly must have been the result of over-confidence in their own strength. Still, if it had decided to attempt a passage through the Straits of Korea, then the fleet ought to have anchored somewhere near, in order to have had time to find out for itself with complete certainty what hindrances there were, and choose the most favourable moment. If this were not successful, it ought to have desisted from the attempt. To hope for an unexpected appearance in the Straits was impossible, since to get there took more than forty-eight hours, and it was necessary to pass among islands belonging to Japan. Moreover, the fact that our colliers were left at Shanghai showed clearly that Rozhestvensky had neither set off on a voyage round Japan, nor to occupy some base in Korea. Otherwise he would have taken them with him. Plainly he intended to force his way through the Straits of Korea. From this point of view the leaving of our colliers in a place connected by telegraph with Japan seems very strange ; their despatch by a skilfully chosen route might have led the Japanese astray. Of course, to have occupied a temporary base in the Straits of Korea would have been by no means safe. There the squadron might have been out of the reach of torpedo attack, but there would not have been any less risk in attempting the passage of the Straits.

An advantage of such a step would have been this—that a position would have been occupied which threatened Japan's lines of communication with the theatre of war, and as long as our fleet was not forced from its position, this communication would have been either broken entirely or rendered dangerous and uncertain. This, though, could not have immediately altered the character of the operations of Marshal Oyama. A protracted struggle would have commenced for the possession of the Straits of Korea, and in this there might have been a chance of seizing a favourable moment for battle or for forcing a way through to Vladivostok. For the purpose it would have been necessary to have occupied one of the bays on the coast of Korea, but in order to secure it for a certain time on the land side, and defend approaches to it from the sea, it would have been imperative to have had with the fleet the means for creating and fortifying a temporary base in this respect. This consideration forced me to refer in my articles to the need I had many times heard mentioned by well-informed and experienced men,<sup>1</sup> of having in readiness two detachments of ships loaded with materials for formation of a temporary base. One of these detachments ought to have been stationed at Vladivostok, the other should have been with Rozhestvensky. Then a source would have been at hand whence these detachments could have been provided with prepared materials and bodies of men specially trained for the rapid organization of a temporary base, just as we have had for a long time in the Odessa Military Circuit. There has been more than sufficient time for this. Year after year at the manœuvres there has been proof that crews and materials can be got ready and embarked in a week. No more time would have been required to get it ready to go to Vladivostok by rail. And if Admiral Rozhestvensky had had ready to hand what was necessary for the formation of a temporary base, he would perhaps not have persisted in his fatal decision to go direct to the Korean Straits without ascertaining the difficulties before-

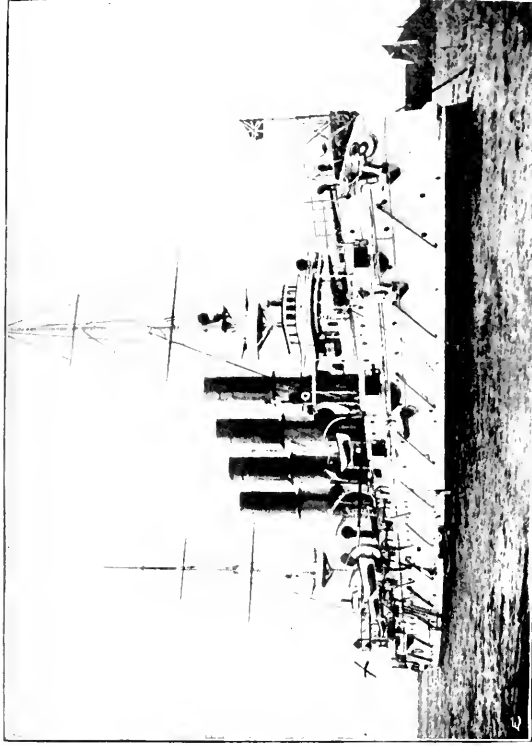
<sup>1</sup> Pp. 225-230 of the separate edition of the articles "After the Departure of the Second Pacific Squadron."

hand, and without making an attempt to dislodge Admiral Togo from the splendid position he occupied in the Straits. This could have been effected by means of operations threatening the chief line of communication between Japan and Korea through a temporary base established at the southernmost extremity of Korea.

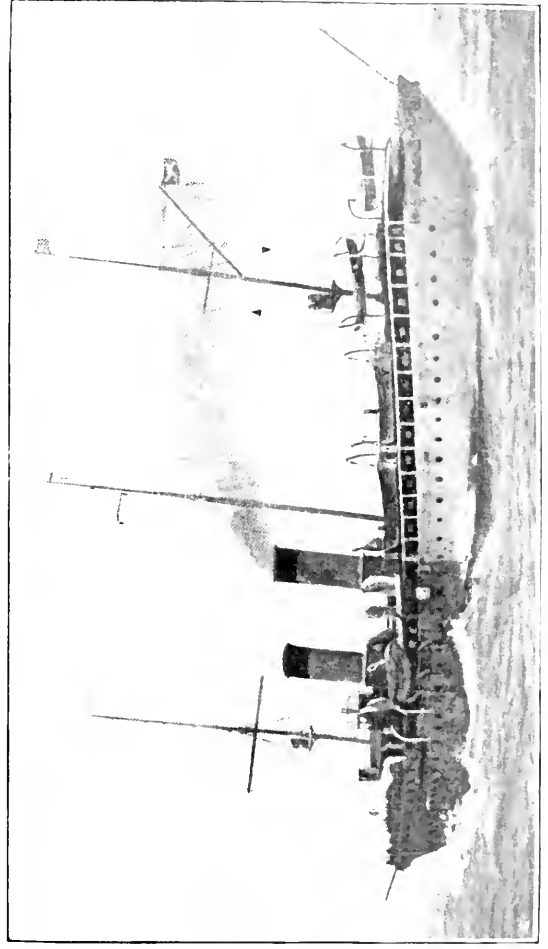
We cannot, however, deny that Admiral Rozhstvensky had other means of action far more advantageous—if only the organization of the coal supply had been in working order, viz. drawing the fleet of Togo into the open by means of a menace to the shores of Japan on the Pacific side. He could and ought to have put into the Saddle Islands, if only for the purpose of freighting his colliers with the whole supply of coal prepared for him at Shanghai. With reasonable arrangements, this coal supply might still have been loaded in vessels bought for the purpose, otherwise they could not follow the squadron. There never was any scarcity in the number of such vessels for purchase.

From here the squadrons could have sailed due east and occupied a temporary base on one of the islands off the south of Japan belonging to the Japanese. This would have done away with the inconvenience of staying in neutral waters. The Bonin Islands, situated about one thousand miles from the Saddle Islands, and the same distance from the entrance to the Tsugaru Straits and from the entrance to the Sea of Okhotsk between the Kurile Islands, and six hundred miles from Tokio, would have proved especially useful. In these islands are bays convenient for a fleet. Their occupation is very easy, since they are undefended, and the menace from there to the whole coast-line of Japan bordering on the Pacific could not fail to have drawn Togo to that side. Certainly, if Rozhstvensky had had with him the means of creating a temporary base, this would have been a great assistance in the occupation of these islands. To blockade our fleet here, to let loose against it their array of torpedo-boats and submarines, was out of the question for the Japanese. It would have meant that all the straits were left undefended, in any of which the Russian

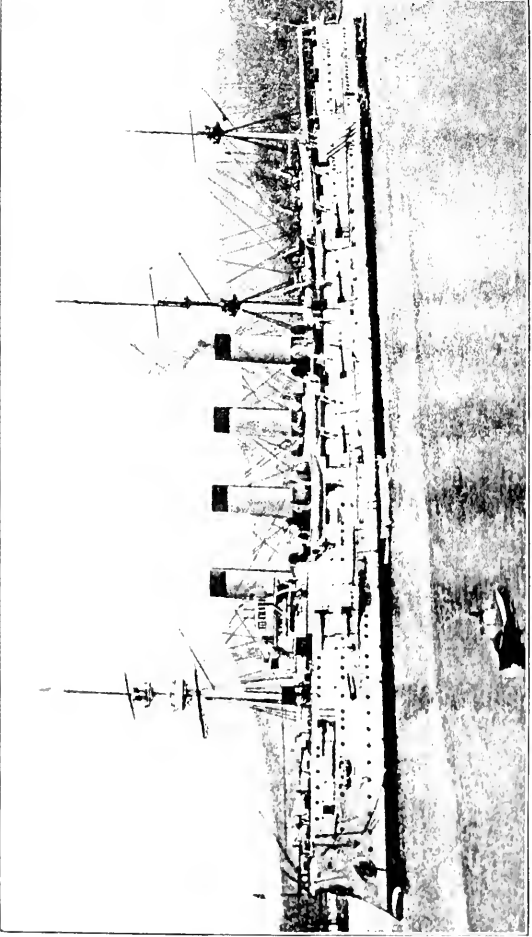




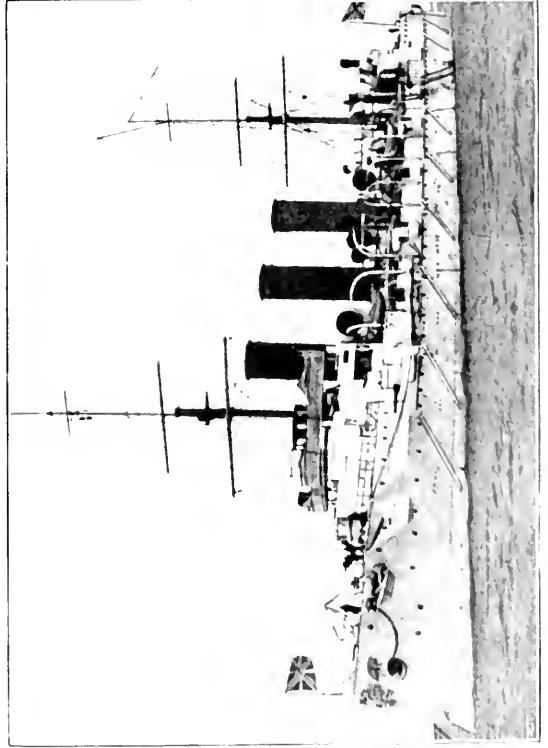
FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "VARIAG"



SECOND-CLASS CRUISER "ALMAZ"



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "GROMOBOI"



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "BOGATYK"



Fleet could have appeared at an identical interval of time after leaving the Bonin Islands.

Finally, there was still one other possible combination for our fleet, viz. a voyage to Petropavlovsk, 1500 miles distant. The harbour of Petropavlovsk is one of the best and most extensive in the world; there coal could have been taken in without interruption, the hulls of the vessels could have been cleaned, and all possible and necessary repairs carried out by floating workshops. From Petropavlovsk the squadron could have sailed south to the Sea of Okhotsk, and have appeared, quite unexpectedly, in the Straits of La Perouse. I say unexpectedly, since Petropavlovsk has no connexion whatever with the outside world, as only those ships go there which are engaged in the fur traffic; and notwithstanding the possibility of temporary delay by meeting such ships, the probability of that was very small—as for these ships to go to a telegraph-station and give information as to having met the Russian Fleet would have required an appreciable time. For one and a half to two months the Japanese would have lost sight of the Russian Fleet, and would have had to wait for it, with equal uncertainty, at the Straits of Tsugaru and La Perouse, the latter of which is by no means so favourable for defensive purposes as the Straits of Korea. Yet another thing would have been in our favour, viz. that one shore of the Straits of La Perouse is Russian territory. The whole of the Sakhalin shore is connected by telegraph, and from some chosen point by means of a despatch vessel all that was happening in the Straits of La Perouse and on our coast on the Japan Sea, from the Korean frontier to St. Olga's Bay, could have been ascertained, and information also as to the doings of the ships at Vladivostok. The main difficulty of such a voyage would have been the fogs of the northern seas. But these fogs would have hidden our movements, and a squadron might have gone in separate detachments, as long as they had definite rendezvous, e.g. Petropavlovsk and Patience Bay in Sakhalin. In general our fleet, after its seven months' voyage, was so accustomed to the sea in all circumstances, that it would, in all probability, have dealt with the fog difficulty.

## (IX) RESOURCES OF VLADIVOSTOK NEGLECTED

But whatever way our fleet had chosen, since it was to start from the Saddle Islands, and was lying there close to Shanghai, it could have communicated from there with Vladivostok two days before the battle. If it was intended, come what might, to go by way of the Straits of Korea, it was still possible to hope for a junction with the force then lying at Vladivostok before the battle. How did it happen that nothing was heard about the Vladivostok force? Besides torpedo-vessels and submarines, there were three fast first-class cruisers there. If submarines can actually travel five hundred miles from their base, as some affirm, here surely was a fine opportunity of trying this. They could have been towed three-quarters of the way by cruisers or even merchant ships, and the cruisers could always have retired to Vladivostok in the event of encountering superior forces of the enemy, while the loss of the merchant ships would not have been of special importance. The presence on the north of the Straits of Korea of a squadron of cruisers with an escort of torpedo-vessels and submarines at the time of the battle of 27 May, might have greatly influenced the result of the battle in our favour. Is it possible that the absence of all this shows that as little attention was given to the equipment of Vladivostok and supplying it with a certain number of torpedo-vessels and submarines, transported thither by rail, as in regard to the remaining requirements of the captains of the fleet and the Commander-in-Chief, represented to the Ministry of Marine a year before, the urgency of which I personally confirmed, in the names of those persons, on my return from Vladivostok to St. Petersburg? The answer I received was that to do this was impossible, as the torpedo-boats would have to be taken to pieces (they could not be taken whole by rail), that they would never receive them at Vladivostok, so we should neither have them here nor there. On my saying that this might have been entrusted to foreign workmen, who were more experienced in that, they answered that it would cost too

much, and that foreigners could not go to Vladivostok. But the point of the reply was this: "To send," they said, "supplies, torpedo-boats, workmen, and engineers to Vladivostok was senseless. At the same time, it would be a frivolous expenditure of money, since they might not even be necessary!" In vain I pointed out that all these torpedo-boats were quite useless to us here; that it would be a great advantage for us even if only part of them were successfully received at Vladivostok; that the engines and accessories could be taken out and sent, and new hulls constructed at Vladivostok, while the empty hulls here might have new engines put in them, ordered quickly even from abroad. It could not be helped; since will and energy were lacking, it was vain to argue. Such being the state of the matter, I exposed it in the Press,<sup>1</sup> when I had lost all hope of the idea being realized through official channels. Did this have any practical result? I do not know; I suppose not. Otherwise the Japanese would not have totally ignored Vladivostok and concentrated all their forces on Admiral Rozhdestvensky's squadron in the Straits of Korea, evidently in no fear of the appearance of any force from Vladivostok. No Japanese ship was seen at that time off the port. I think, however, this was not the result of carelessness, nor of overconfidence. I know the surroundings of Vladivostok very well; it is impossible to hide anything from sight at this port, even the smallest ship. The whole roadstead and port can be seen quite distinctly from many places accessible to all, and at the same time the place swarms with Chinese, who work on the fortifications, in the port workshops, and in the construction of roads. The servants are all Chinese, and up to the present it has been impossible to do without them.

I am profoundly convinced there were many Japanese spies among them, owing to the ignorance of the Russians, who have no knowledge of the Chinese language and cannot therefore detect them. Therefore, though the arrival of any ship, torpedo-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 222-225 of the separate edition of the articles "After the Departure of the Second Pacific Squadron."

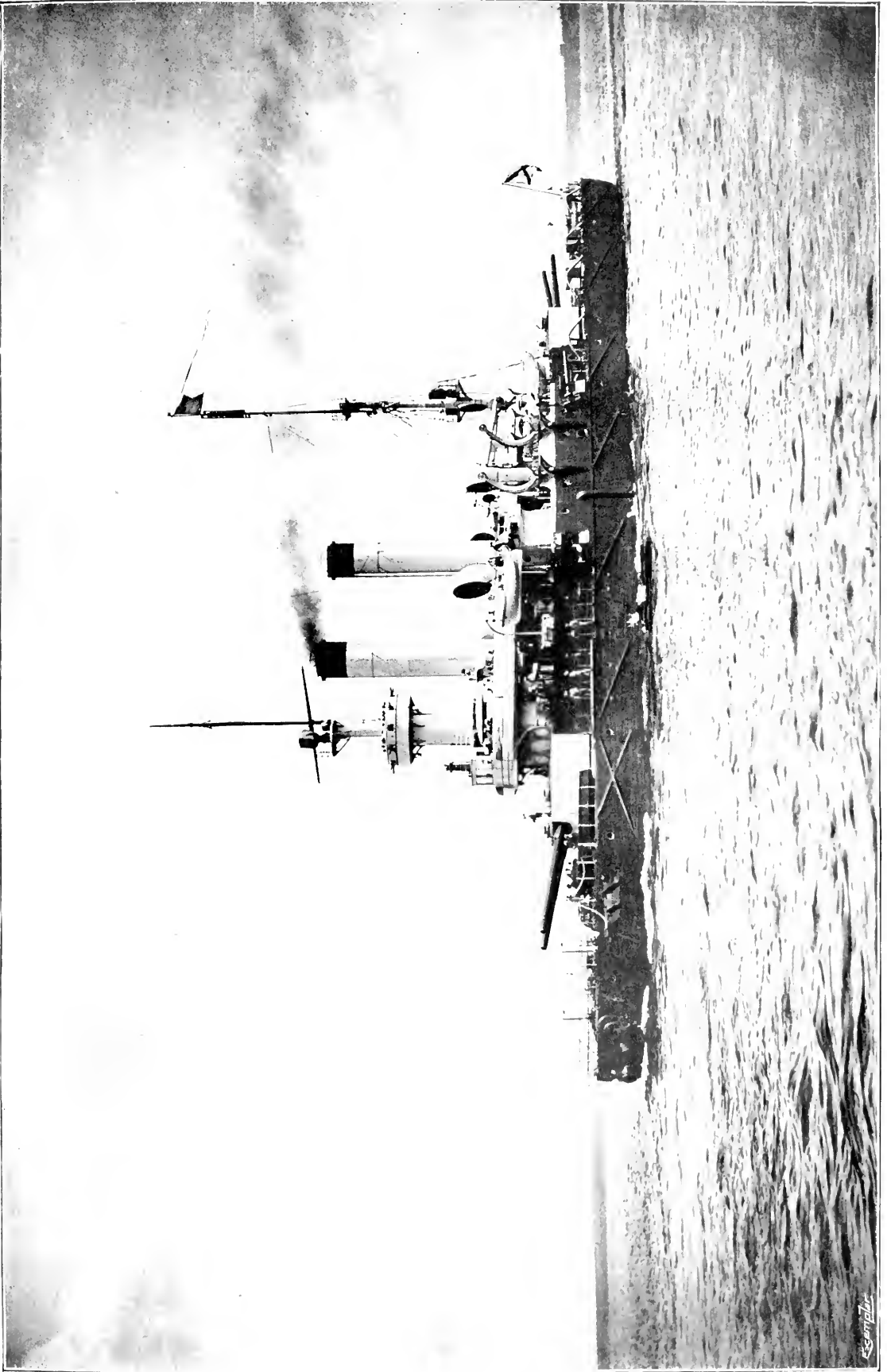
boat, or submarine, would certainly not be printed in the newspapers, yet it would undoubtedly be known to the Japanese, just as through these same Chinese they heard of all that our army did. For instance, when the "Bogatyr" was repaired after running aground, Chinese were at work on her and, consequently, saw all her damage.

When I carefully drew up a report in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief about the most energetic measures which ought to be taken for the equipment of Vladivostok, and for transporting thither a very large number of torpedo-boats and submarines, I did not know, and no one told me, that this question had been shelved some months earlier, though everything had been arranged in the very best way for its accomplishment.

It is certain again that in February one of our naval officers offered to transport to Vladivostok the machinery of all the first-class torpedo-boats in European Russia, and to make hulls for them at that port. He very enthusiastically drew up his plans and asked for an audience at the Ministry of Marine, which was granted him. "There," they said to him, "we will talk over this matter, but since you propose this you must also find such workshops as would be necessary for the work, that is, for taking to pieces the machinery here, for putting it together again at Vladivostok, and for building the hulls there."

The originator of the project did not stop even at this, and in his quest he appeared to be very fortunate. He found manufacturers, experienced men, who agreed to take to pieces, transport, and put together again at Vladivostok, not only the engines, but the hulls as well, and the expense of this would be not more than 25 per cent. of the cost of every torpedo-vessel. The time was limited to six or seven months.

After this the project was brought before the Naval Technical Committee, and this institution could not find material objection to it. But in spite of that, at the end of June—after the consideration of the project had taken four months—the matter ended in a refusal on the part of the authorities, and in spite of strong outside pressure the torpedo-vessels were not sent.



COAST DEFENSE BATTLESHIP "ADMIRAL SENTAVIN"

U.S. Navy





It certainly was of little consequence that I personally was not informed of this, as the transmitter of requests in the names of persons on whom responsibility for the conduct of the war depended, but it was of great consequence that these persons themselves were not informed, and that not one of them was consulted. That this was not done I am certain, since all access to the staff of the Commander of the Fleet was through me.

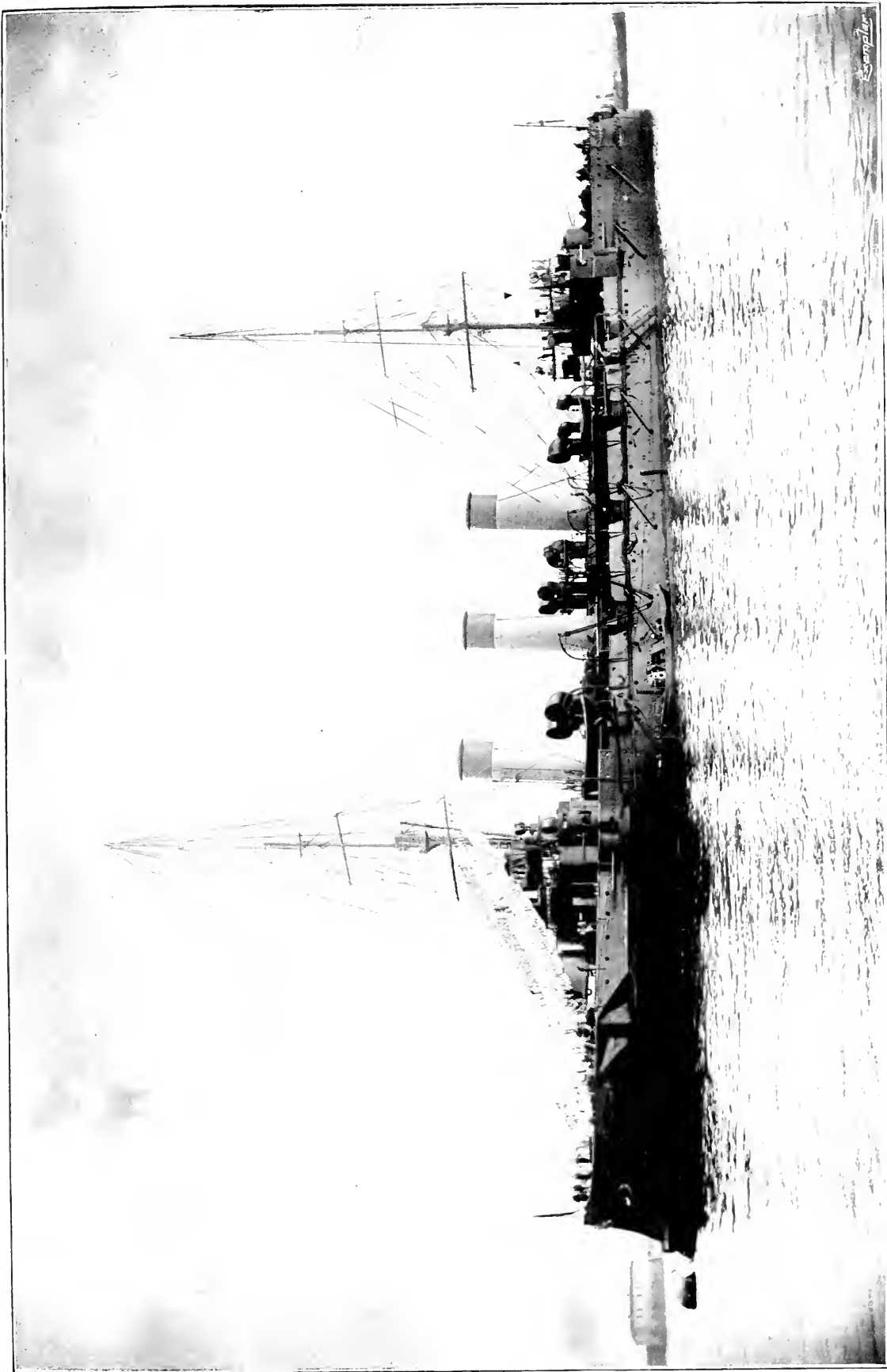
One can easily picture to oneself how all the operations of Rozhstvensky would have been rendered easier, whatever combinations he might have chosen, if at the time of his arrival at the seat of war there had been a flotilla of some half a score of destroyers and torpedo-boats at Vladivostok. This flotilla would doubtless have drawn to itself a considerable part of the Japanese forces, and have taken a most active part in the battle between the main fleets.

## CHAPTER II

### (I) ANALYSIS AND TABLES

ALL the particulars given in the following tables, pp. 26, 27, are taken from special information supplied by the Register of the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovitch for the year 1904. I merely fill up some omissions from foreign books of reference. These are marked by a star, indicating the source whence derived. As regards the speed of the different ships, I give those recorded at the actual trials, or else the contract rates, which, to distinguish them from the former, are underlined.

Concerning speed, I consider it necessary to premise that from the rates obtained at trial—and more especially the contract rates—it must not be understood that the original speed could be maintained in action. Nothing diminishes so rapidly in a ship on service as her speed. The diminution of speed is far from being uniform in all vessels. Those in which everything is sacrificed to speed—where everything else is treated as a secondary consideration in order to obtain it, whose engines and boilers are very complicated and delicate, requiring the care of watchful and experienced men—will, with selected coal and the assistance of engineers and stokers from the works, attain surprising speed on their trials; but they are liable to a great decrease on service. Speed may also be greatly minimized by the condition of the sea. Moreover, the smaller the vessel the greater the speed. Speed is likewise diminished by bad coal, even though a larger quantity of it may be consumed. Besides, it must not be thought that the contract rate, or the trial rate, even if it were preserved, would be the ordinary speed of the ship. To attain the highest speed, most strenuous efforts are



BATTLESHIP "OREGON"



required from the men in the engine-room, together with a great consumption of coal,—which increases much faster than the rate of speed. This explains the long voyages performed by ships at the so-called “economical rate,” when the greatest distances are travelled on a given amount of coal, irrespective of speed. Ships can only travel at full speed for from 12 to 24 hours, not more; often for not nearly so long. For instance, the cruiser “Novik,” whose highest speed was 25 knots, could only keep up that speed for 24 hours with her stock of coal, during which time she travelled 660 miles. At her “economical rate” (12 knots), she might do 2370 miles, but for that would require eight times 24 hours. The battleship “Poltava,” at full speed ( $15\frac{3}{4}$  knots) could cover 1750 miles in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  days, but only on the improbable supposition that the crew, boilers, and machinery generally, could keep up the effort throughout. With a speed of 10 knots she could cover 3750 miles in the course of  $15\frac{1}{2}$  days.

In my tables of speed the figures must be looked upon as denoting the original speed, from which deductions must be made in consideration of a vessel's length of service and various other circumstances, in order to be able to judge approximately between the Japanese ships and our own on the point of speed. This is, of course, loose and indefinite, but as there are no other figures these are better than none at all. As to my caution with regard to expense, I considered it my duty to put this forward. As a rough approximate, we can profit by the subjoined figures, but with certain exceptions.

# JAPANESE NAVAL POWER

## ELEMENTARY STATEMENTS

NAMES OF SHIPS.	Year when launched.	Displacement in tons: (Weight of the vessel.)	Highest speed in knots.	ARTILLERY						Torpedo-tubes.		
				12"		10"		8"			6"	
				New	Old.	New.	New.	New.	New.		New.	New.
<b>Battleship Squadron.</b>												
"Mikasa" . . . . .	1900	15,352	18'6	4	—	—	—	14	—	20	4	
"Asahi" . . . . .	1899	15,200	18'3	4	—	—	—	14	—	20	4	
"Shikishima" . . . . .	1898	14,850	18'9	4	—	—	—	14	—	20	4	
"Fudji" . . . . .	1896	12,649	18'5	4	—	—	—	10	—	16	4	
"Yashima" . . . . .	1896	12,517	19'2	4	—	—	—	10	—	16	4	
<b>Armoured Cruiser Squadron</b>												
"Nissin" . . . . .	1903	7,583	20'5	—	—	—	4	14	—	10	4	
"Kassuga" . . . . .	1902	7,583	20'0	—	—	1	2	14	—	10	4	
"Ivate" . . . . .	1900	9,800	21'8	—	—	—	4	14	—	12	4	
"Idsumo" . . . . .	1899	9,800	22'0	—	—	—	4	14	—	12	4	
"Tokiva" . . . . .	1898	9,755	22'7	—	—	—	4	14	—	12	5	
"Asama" . . . . .	1898	9,755	22'1	—	—	—	4	14	—	12	5	
"Adsuma" . . . . .	1899	9,460	21'0	—	—	—	4	12	—	12	4	
"Yakumo" . . . . .	1899	9,800	20'7	—	—	—	4	12	—	12	4	
Total of the armoured squadrons . . . . .	—	144,104	—	20	—	1	30	170	—	184	54	
<b>Old Ironclad.</b>												
"Tsen-ien" . . . . .	1882	7,335	14'5 <sup>1</sup>	—	4	—	—	4	—	—	3	
<b>Deck-protected Cruisers.</b>												
<i>Second-class.</i>												
"Tshitose" . . . . .	1898	4,700	22'9	—	—	—	2	—	10	12	4	
"Takasago" . . . . .	1897	4,300	23'5	—	—	—	2	—	10	12	5	
"Hashidate" . . . . .	1891	4,277	14'5	—	—	—	1	—	11	2	4	
"Matsushima" <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	1890	4,277	15'7	—	—	—	1	—	12	—	4	
"Idsukushima" <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	1889	4,277	15'7	—	—	—	1	—	11	2	4	
"Takatsukho" <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	1885	3,700	18'0	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	4	
"Naniva" . . . . .	1885	3,700	17'8	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	4	
<i>Third-class.</i>												
"Otova" . . . . .	1903	3,000	21'0	—	—	—	—	2	6	4	—	
"Tsushima" . . . . .	1902	3,400	20'0	—	—	—	—	6	—	10	—	
"Nitaka" . . . . .	1902	3,400	20'0	—	—	—	—	6	—	10	—	
"Akashi" . . . . .	1897	2,800	19'5	—	—	—	—	2	6	—	2	
"Suma" . . . . .	1895	2,700	20'0	—	—	—	—	2	6	—	2	
"Akitsutsu" . . . . .	1892	3,150	19'0	—	—	—	—	4	6	—	4	
"Tchiyoda" . . . . .	1890	2,439	21'0	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	3	
"Idsumi" <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	1883	2,967	17'4	—	—	—	—	2	6	—	3	
<b>Despatch Vessels.</b>												
"Tchikhaia" . . . . .	1900	1,250	20'5	—	—	—	—	—	2	4	5	
"Tatsuta" . . . . .	1894	864	21'0	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	5	
"Yaieyama" . . . . .	1889	1,609	20'0	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	2	
Total of the deck-protected cruisers . . . . .	—	56,810	—	—	—	—	7	40	101	56	55	
<b>TOTAL</b> . . . . .	—	208,249	—	20	4	1	37	214	101	240	112	

To these must be added no less than 8 auxiliary cruisers, 9 coast-defence vessels, 18 gunboats, about 70 torpedo-vessels, of which about 20 probably are t.-b. destroyers. The coast-defence vessels and gunboats are of small importance at sea, but if brought on rivers might render great assistance. At the beginning of the war there were two river-boats of the latest type of this class, launched in England in 1903. Now the number must have greatly increased.

<sup>1</sup> This speed was attained in 1902.

<sup>2</sup> Speed taken from "All the World's Fighting Ships," 1904.

<sup>3</sup> Speed attained in the years 1900 and 1902.

# RUSSIAN NAVAL POWER

## ELEMENTARY STATEMENTS

NAMES OF SHIPS.	Year when launched.	Displacement in tons. (Weight of the vessel.)	Highest speed in knots.	ARTILLERY										Torpedo-tubes.
				12"		10" 9"		8"		6"		4 7" 3"		
				New.	Old.	New.	Old.	New.	Old.	New.	Old.	New.	New.	
<b>First Battleship Division.</b>														
"Suvorov" . . . . .	1902	13,516	17.6	4	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	20	4
"Imperator Alexander III" . . . . .	1901	13,516	17.6	4	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	20	4
"Borodino" . . . . .	1901	13,516	17.6	4	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	20	4
"Orel" . . . . .	1902	13,516	17.6	4	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	20	4
<b>Second Battleship Division.</b>														
"Oslabya" . . . . .	1898	12,674	18.3	—	—	4	—	—	—	11	—	—	20	5
"Sissoi Veliky" . . . . .	1894	10,400	15.7	4	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	6
"Navarin" . . . . .	1891	10,206	15.9	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	6
Total under command of Admiral Rozhstvensky before the arrival of Admiral Niebogotov . . . . .	—	87,344	—	20	4	4	—	—	—	65	8	—	100	33
<b>Third Battleship Division.</b>														
"Imperator Nikolai I" . . . . .	1889	9,672	14.0	—	2	—	4	—	—	—	8	—	—	6
"Admiral Seniavin" . . . . .	1894	4,960	16.1	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
"Admiral Ushakov" . . . . .	1893	4,126	16.1	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
"General-Admiral Apraxin" . . . . .	1896	4,126	16.1	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
Total under Admiral Niebogotov . . . . .	—	22,884	—	—	2	11	4	—	—	—	8	12	—	18
Total of the united battleship divisions . . . . .	—	110,228	—	20	6	15	4	—	—	65	16	12	100	51
<b>Old First-class Armoured Cruiser.</b>														
"Admiral Nakhimov" . . . . .	1885	8,524	16.6	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	10	—	—	6
<b>Cruisers.</b>														
<i>First-class.</i>														
"Oleg" . . . . .	1903	6,645	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	12	6
"Aurora" . . . . .	1900	6,731	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	24	3
<i>Second-class.</i>														
"Dmitri Donskoi" <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	1883	6,200	15.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	10	5
"Vladimir Monomakh" <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	1882	5,754	15.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	6	—	3
<i>Third-class.</i>														
"Svietlana" . . . . .	1896	3,727	20.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	4 <sup>2</sup>	2 <sup>2</sup>
"Zhemtshug" . . . . .	1903	3,103	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—
"Izumrud" . . . . .	1903	3,103	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—
<b>Despatch Vessel.</b>														
"Almaz" . . . . .	1903	3,285	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—
Total of Admiral Rozhstvensky's cruisers <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	—	38,548	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	37	—	18	54	19
<b>Vladivostok Squadron.</b>														
<b>First-class Armoured Cruisers.</b>														
"Gromoboi" . . . . .	1899	13,880	20	—	—	—	4	—	—	16	—	—	24	4
"Rossia" . . . . .	1896	13,675	19.7	—	—	—	—	4	—	16	—	—	12	5
<b>First-class Armoured Cruiser.</b>														
"Bogatyr" . . . . .	1901	6,645	24.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	12	6
Total of the Vladivostok squadrons . . . . .	—	34,200	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	44	—	—	48	15
<b>TOTAL</b> <sup>4</sup> . . . . .	—	191,500	—	20	6	15	4	8	8	146	26	30	202	91

To these must be added 5 auxiliary cruisers (merchant steamers carrying guns), "Dnieper," "Rion," "Kuban," "Ural," and "Terek," 8 to 12 new squadron torpedo-boats of 240 to 350 tons, and 8 coastguard torpedo-vessels in Vladivostok, weighing from 70 to 180 tons.

<sup>1</sup> Speed at the last trial in 1896-7 (taken from "All the World's Fighting Ships" for the year 1904).

<sup>2</sup> Added at the formation of the Second Squadron ("Taschenbuch der Kriegsflotten" of 1903). For the correctness of these statements we cannot vouch.

<sup>3</sup> Without the cruiser "Admiral Nakhimov," as she can be added to the battleships.

<sup>4</sup> Together with the cruiser "Admiral Nakhimov."

Contract-built vessels undergo a speed trial at the works. Neither the contract speed nor that obtained at formal trials must be expected during war service. The greatest speed in practice, which we will call the *war speed*—which the vessel can only maintain for a short time, e.g. during battle—may be put down at 0·9, as shown in the tables. The speed at which a passage of importance may be made, without regard to expenditure of coal, and simply with a view to rapidity, we will call the *maritime speed*. It may be put down at 0·8 speed (see tables). With the ordinary consumption of coal and at the ordinary rate of travelling, a ship can go with half her boilers at work. Then the speed will be about 0·7. Finally, it appears from the preceding that on the economical system, with a less rate of speed and a greater distance to travel, the rate of speed would be about 0·6.<sup>1</sup>

Now with regard to the artillery in the tables, from 3" calibre upwards. Lighter guns than these have no importance, except for defensive purposes and in connexion with repelling torpedo-boats. Even for that purpose, however, the late war has shown that they are too weak, and that nothing lighter than 3" guns should be carried.

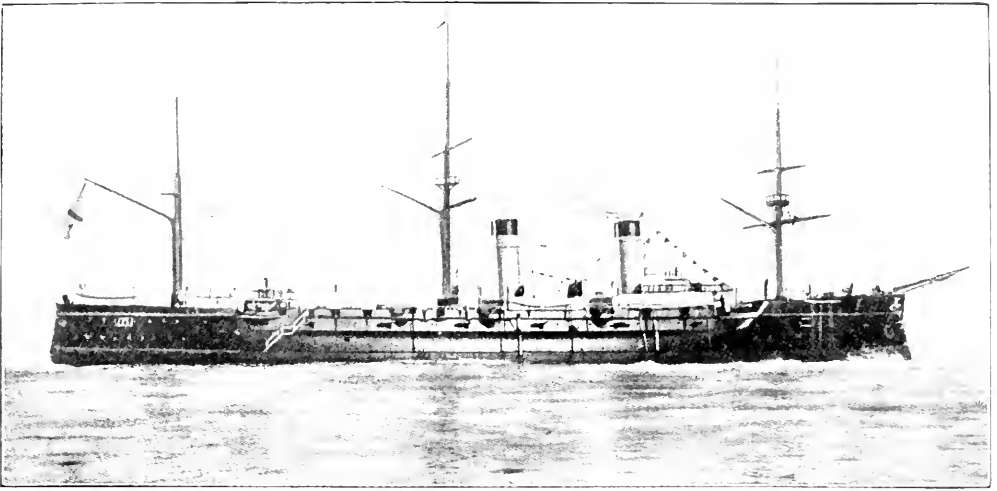
## (II) SOME FALLACIES OF COMPARISON

In the "Novoye Vremya," No. 10,475, appeared a table of our naval strength and that of the Japanese at the theatre of war, from which we may draw some interesting conclusions.

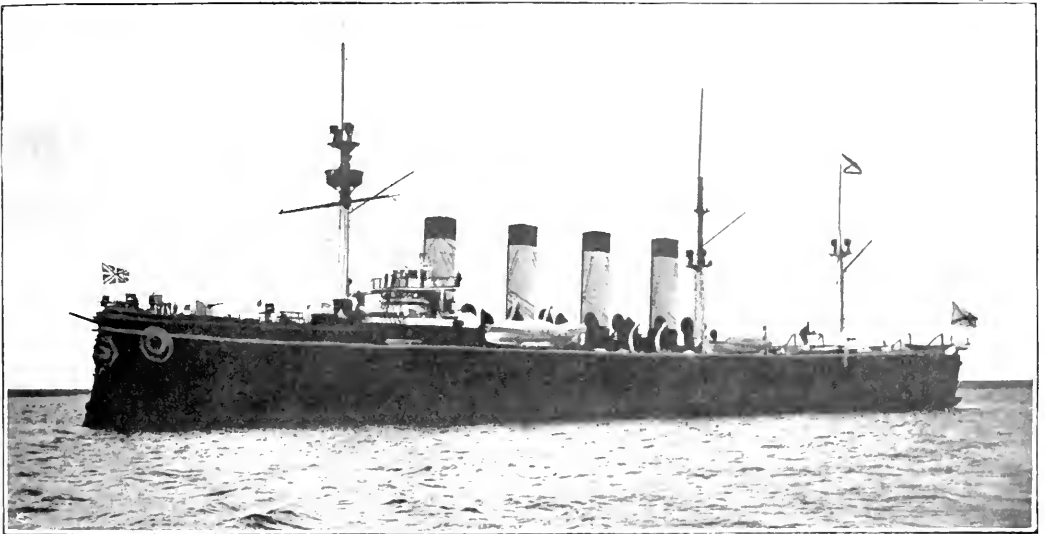
Having compared the two battleship squadrons of Admiral Rozhstvensky, before his junction with Admiral Niebogotov, with the two armoured squadrons of Admiral Togo, we see what an immense preponderance of strength there was on the side of the Japanese. The roughest mode of comparison is to compare the displacement of the ships composing the squadrons, or

<sup>1</sup> I would recommend those who desire to go into the subtleties of this question to refer to the excellent articles on the subject by the expert V. Afanasiev, inserted in the "V. K. A. M. Handbook" (ed. 1904, pp. 148-67). I would only mention that his terminology, e.g. definition of war speed, is different. His calculations are, of course, incomparably more detailed, but they require certain data which it is difficult to obtain.

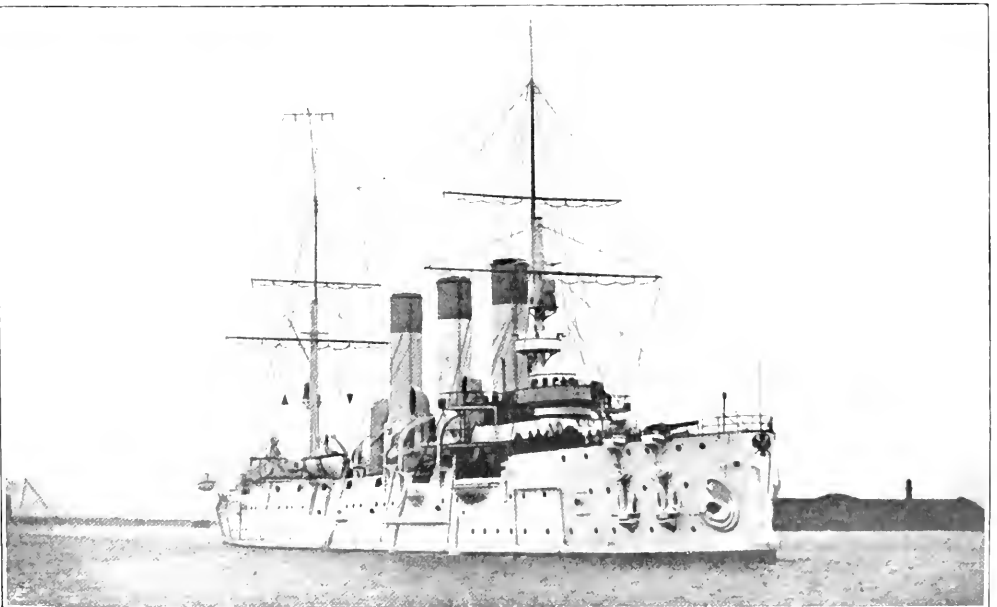




FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "RURIK."



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "ROSSIA."



FIRST CLASS CRUISER "AURORA."



simply to ascertain by addition the combined weights. Such a calculation would show the Japanese to have been 1.48 times as strong as ourselves. But here no account is taken of the particular value of individual ships, the differences in their artillery, armour protection, speed, number of torpedo-tubes, and, above all, most recent improvements. The more modern the construction, the more effective the *matériel*. For instance, the "Navarin" had ordinary steel armour, while the "Sissoi Veliky," "Oslabya," and four Japanese battleships and two of their armoured cruisers had steel armour tempered on the Harvey system. The Russian armour-clads of the type of the "Suvorov," the "Mikasa,"<sup>1</sup> and the six large Japanese armoured cruisers carried side armour steel-tempered according to the improved Krupp system. The difference is this. If any kind of shot at a given distance pierces through a plate of ordinary steel—say ten inches thick—with a plate of better material it might not break through at all. To find out what thickness of plate it could break through, perfected by the system of Harvey or

<sup>1</sup> "The Times" of 13 September, 1905, contained an account (from which we give extracts) of the destruction of this vessel by fire and explosion.

"The 'Mikasa' was at anchor off Sasebo when an explosion occurred. Admiral Togo was not on board. The fire broke out at the base of the mainmast. Flames spread with great rapidity, and caused the after magazine to blow up in less than an hour after the outbreak was first discovered. The battleship sank in shallow water, and it is consequently believed that it will be possible to raise and repair her. The battleships 'Shikishima' and 'Asahi,' the torpedo-gunboat 'Tatsuta,' the destroyers 'Murakumo' and 'Kasumi,' and the auxiliary cruisers 'Nippon Maru,' 'Taikoku Maru,' and 'Riojun Maru,' all sent parties to assist the 'Mikasa's' own crew, and there were heavy casualties among the men from these vessels as well as among the 'Mikasa's' own complement. Various conjectures are current as to the cause of the fire, the most generally accepted attributing it to the fusing of an electric wire.

"The 'Mikasa' was one of the four most powerful of the Japanese battleships, her sisters being the 'Hatsuse,' the 'Shikishima,' and the 'Asahi.' The 'Mikasa' was laid down at Barrow-in-Furness in 1899, launched in the following year, and completed for sea by the firm of Vickers, Sons, and Maxim in 1902. With a displacement of 15,200 tons, a length of 415 feet, and a beam of 75½ feet, she had a draught of 27½ feet, and carried the following armament:—four 12" guns, fourteen 6", twenty 4-pr., eight 3-pr., four 2½-pr., and eight Maxims, as well as four torpedo-tubes. Her engines, of 16,000 horse power, were supplied with steam by twenty-five Belleville boilers, and gave her a speed of 18.6 knots. The 'Mikasa' bore the flag of Admiral Togo, and was commanded by Captain Ijichi, who subsequently attempted suicide. He was off Port Arthur with the fleet on the night of 8-9 February, 1904, when the first torpedo attack on the Russian fleet was made. She subsequently took part in all the bombardments of the beleaguered fortress. In the action of 23 June and that of 10 August the 'Mikasa' led the Japanese line. In the battle of the Sea of Japan of 27 May, 1905, she was the first ship to open fire on the Russian fleet. Although the loss to the Japanese fleet will not be so serious as it would have been if peace had not been concluded, it must be necessarily severely felt, since it will cost close on a million and a half to replace her with a more modern ship, and in the meantime the homogeneity of the Japanese fleet must suffer."

Krupp, it would be necessary in the first place to multiply the ten inches by 19.22 and again by 8.13.

Indeed, the more modern the ship the more perfect the construction of her armour. But there are sometimes extraordinary deviations from this rule, as when in the building of a ship the architect is pursuing a chimera. For instance, in the "Navarin" and "Sissoi Veliky" the extremities of the ships were not protected by armour, a system that was long ago pronounced a source of danger. These extremities might certainly be pierced at the water-line by shots from medium quick-firing artillery pouring in a continuous stream of projectiles, which would render the ship water-logged and unmanageable.

In the "Sissoi Veliky," of later date than the "Navarin," there were fewer vulnerable points. The same defects, though in a smaller degree, were admitted to exist in the "Oslabya," notwithstanding her comparative modernity, and the thickest part of her armour belt was so narrow that when she had taken everything on board—with that plentifulness for which our ships are so remarkable—she sank so deeply that her armour was submerged. The armour, moreover, was comparatively thin, and did not cover the extremities of the ship. This is how it came about. The idea was to make this ship something between a battleship and an armoured cruiser; and, as was to be expected, she became neither one nor the other; only united in herself the defects of both. We may add here, by the way, that of the thirteen Japanese armoured vessels, two—the "Fudji" and the "Yashima"—launched in the year 1896, had neither of them armour extending to the extremities. The general defect of all the ships we have been considering, with the exception of four Russian ironclads of the "Suvorov" type, is that of being unprotected or only partially protected by 3" guns; and it was precisely in order to protect them that their guns were placed so little above the water-line, and consequently firing became difficult in rough weather through the gun positions getting swamped.

Moreover, the more modern the ship, the better are her

artillery arrangements. Constant progress in that direction has brought us to this point: that a vessel can develop strong fire, not only from starboard and port, delivering what are called "broad-sides"—but straight ahead and straight astern, from bows and stern. In this respect the most perfect of our battle-ships appeared to be the four of the "Suvorov" type. But all our other ships were inferior in this to those of the Japanese.

It is now seen that all these qualities, some of which are very important, are entirely lost sight of when ships are compared in the mass through their tonnage. Equally difficult would it be to arrive at any definite judgment as to the value of gun power by simply counting the pieces of this and that calibre.

### (III) LARGE AND SMALL GUNS

Of the new 12" guns, one ship with another had about twenty; Rozhstvensky enjoyed the advantage of having extra ones—four old-type 12" guns, eight (also old) 6" guns—these making up all the artillery of the "Navarin." The Japanese had no old-type guns, but three new 10" as well as the 12" guns. The Japanese had on board their battle-fleet thirty 8" guns, of which, on Rozhstvensky's side, there was not one. The preponderance of the Japanese in 6" and 3" guns was enormous. Of the former they had 105 more than Rozhstvensky had—2·6 times as many: of the latter eighty-four more—1·8 times as many.

Of course, the greater the range at which fighting takes place, the more important is the part played by guns of large calibre. Their shot, being heavier, can keep precision for a longer time, and pierce armour which shot of medium calibre cannot reach. This was clearly shown in the battles of 10 and 14 August, when the part of big guns was played by the 8" guns. The Japanese did not wish to come to close range, and this they had the choice of doing, since they had the superiority in speed. Consequently, our ships had to fight for the greater part of the time at a distance of fifty to sixty cables—five to six miles, or  $8\frac{3}{4}$  to  $10\frac{1}{2}$  versts. But, compared with guns of medium calibre, big guns present serious disadvantages. In the first place, they are comparatively

not numerous; there are usually four guns of large calibre to thirty to thirty-six of medium calibre, of which about half are 6" ones. Secondly, their fire is much slower. Therefore, though they strike with more precision, the number of their hits is insignificant. The shot of the medium artillery is discharged in such quantities—thanks to its rapid firing (e.g. while a 12" gun fires only one shot, the 8" gun fires four, the 6" gun from eight to twelve, and the 3" from sixteen to twenty) and to their greater number—that they literally send forth showers of shells, which, however, fall somewhat at random, and, on striking the armoured parts of a vessel, do not penetrate. But some ships, especially the Russian "Oslabya," "Sissoi Veliky," and "Navarin," were in many places not protected at all, and thus damage was inflicted on them. For example, it was by such firing that Admiral Withoelt was killed, an event which had a fatal influence on the issue of the August battle.

At short range the superiority of the big guns over the small ones disappears. The light guns can now reach their mark as well as the big ones; their capacity for piercing armour, however, remains of course less, but is still very considerable—i.e. increases not only absolutely but relatively, and the advantage derived from their greater numbers and greater rapidity in firing still remains. The 12" gun finds its most serious opponent in the 8" gun, with which all the Japanese cruisers were supplied, just as their battleships were supplied with big guns, in pairs, placed in two turrets on the fore-castle and quarter-deck, so that they could fire from both ends.<sup>1</sup> The following tables show that they play an important part even in battles fought at long distances :

Calibre in inches.	The highest tabulated distance in cables' lengths and versts.	Thickness in inches of the steel plates pierced at the distance of $\frac{\text{cables' lengths}}{\text{versts.}}$					
		5	20	35	48	53	60
		1	$3\frac{1}{2}$	6	8.2	9	$10\frac{1}{2}$
12	$60/10\frac{1}{2}$	21	14.9	—	—	—	8.4
10	$60/10\frac{1}{2}$	18.8	13.3	—	—	—	7.6
8	$60/10\frac{1}{2}$	17.9	10.6	—	—	—	4.2
6	53.9	11.4	5.9	—	—	3	not pierced
4.7	$48/8.2$	9	3.9	—	2.1	not pierced	not pierced
3	$35/6$	4.5	1.5	1.04	not pierced	not pierced	not pierced

<sup>1</sup> All these facts about our Russian Naval Artillery are well known.

We will see how far the 8" gun can carry, and what it is able to pierce. It represents the latest development in a class of weapon destined to play an important rôle in long-range battles. Of course, it has less penetrative power than either the 12" or 10" gun. That power, however, declines very gradually from the 12" and 10" to the 8" gun; whereas the decline, when one passes from the 8" to the 6" gun, is very considerable. Besides, as the calibre of the gun diminishes the propellant power of the charge increases. In our Russian Naval Artillery the charge of the 12" gun contains 1 per cent. of its own weight in explosive matter, i.e. about 8 lb., while a charge of the same kind for the 8" gun would contain in explosive matter 1.7 per cent. of its own weight, i.e. about 3.7 lb.; and since the 8" gun, in the same space of time, projects from three to four times as many missiles as the 12" gun, it would fire into a vessel from 11 to 15 lb. of explosives to the 8 lb. of the 12" gun. This figure, however, must be correspondingly reduced, as there would be parts of the enemy's vessel which a 12" gun could penetrate, but, at a certain distance, not the 8" gun. In any case, these guns represent great striking force, and Togo had on board his battleships thirty such guns, while Rozhstvensky had not one.

#### (IV) RELATIVE STRENGTH

It seems to me that all the foregoing considerations distinctly prove that to compare vessels by their displacement is a very crude method, and one goes astray in attempting to balance all their qualities. That is why I have tried to estimate them by what is called their "battle-strength," which again is far from being the exact measure of their strength. To sum up all its elements would be too complicated; but some of these may be indicated:—the quantity and system of armour plating, rapidity of firing, speed of vessel, and so on. As to judging fleets by their tonnage or displacement, Togo's fleet was said to be 1.48 times as great as that of Rozhstvensky; i.e. before Niebogato joined him. But on examining the matter in detail I found that the superiority of the Japanese in tonnage was far greater.

Comparing the adversaries by their military coefficients, Togo was 1·81 times stronger than Rozhestvensky. This plainly shows how terribly in need of battleships Rozhestvensky was, and the importance attached to his junction with Niebogotov.

A comparison of Togo's battleships with the united warships of Rozhestvensky and Niebogotov ought perhaps to have set our minds at rest. It certainly appeared that Togo was only 1·2 stronger, and without the "Yashima" not more than 1·1 stronger. But when the test of military coefficients was applied the strength of the Russian combined fleet became much less. Togo is shown to be 1·45 times stronger than ourselves; or 1·37 times without the "Yashima." Let us consider which of the different conclusions is the more probable.

Niebogotov brought Rozhestvensky eleven new 10" guns; a contribution of great importance. This made the heavy artillery of his fleet nearly 1·7 more powerful than that of the Japanese—admitting, of course, that the 10" guns were equal to 12" guns. Without counting the "Yashima" it made his heavy artillery twice as powerful as that of the enemy. But the rest of Niebogotov's artillery was insignificant: twelve 4·7" guns on board four vessels; and the guns of the "Imperator Nikolai I," which were all old. The principal weakness of Admiral Niebogotov's ships, however, lay in their armour. In all the battleships the armour was of ordinary steel, except the "Admiral Apraxin," which had Harveyed armour. The guns of medium calibre in all four vessels were without protection. The armour on the hull of the "Imperator Nikolai I" was satisfactory, extending from prow to stern. On board the other three the armour was more than weak. Therefore, at a long range all these three battleships might seriously suffer from the fire of medium-calibre artillery. Finally, compared to the Japanese, their speed was extremely moderate; so that, whenever the Japanese might wish to approach them, Rozhestvensky's superiority through his heavy guns would be greatly diminished. Also the "Imperator Nikolai I's" obsolete artillery would affect matters considerably. To this must be added that the three



armoured coast-defence vessels, in consequence of their small size, were unsuited to the open sea. In battle this would be evinced in a marked manner, and also in rough weather. While all the other ships would be freely using their artillery the action of these small vessels would be impeded by their gun positions getting full of water; the accuracy of their firing being affected, moreover, by the heave of the sea. Fine weather on a day of battle cannot, of course, be counted on; but in consequence of their higher speed, the Japanese could enter into or retire from battle independently of weather, just as it suited them.

The general superiority of all the Japanese armoured vessels over ours, not yet mentioned, was due to their better seaworthiness and smaller susceptibility to rolling.

Certainly, I once more repeat, all these details cannot be put forward as showing completely the sum of the military coefficients. But the most important ones stand out, and to this mode of comparison I give the preference. Those not content with my method may be recommended to try another. All facilities for this are given in the tables I have drawn up.

In addition to his squadron of armoured cruisers, Admiral Niebogotov brought one weak cruiser, the "Vladimir Monomakh." There would be no use, therefore, in comparing our cruisers individually with those of Japan, even after the junction of Niebogotov with Rozhestvensky. The influence of these squadrons on the general result of the fighting would be insignificant. But in the preliminary stages they might have played an important part as scouts; also in accompanying and aiding attacks of the torpedo vessels, upon which fell the duty of endeavouring to weaken the enemy by harassing operations before the development of the general action.

In order to repulse the Japanese squadrons and to anticipate their attacks, the Russian Admiral ought to have sent out his cruisers, which, to be successful, ought to have possessed sufficient strength to drive back the intruding enemy. Not only should they have possessed greater strength, but also greater speed, as in consequence of the superiority of their torpedo fleet

and the better information that reached them, the Japanese were sure to take the initiative. Rozhstvensky ought to have had a greater number of cruisers, since it was impossible for him to divine whence the enemy's attack would be delivered. Unfortunately, the superiority in cruisers was altogether on the side of the Japanese. Against our four cruisers of the first and second class they had seven of the second class. Against our three third-class cruisers they had eight, and three despatch-vessels against our one. To this it must be added that the work of the scouting service was much aided by torpedo craft, in which the Japanese had a crushing preponderance. On board the Japanese cruisers there were 8" guns, while we possessed none; and the difference between the 6" guns of the Russian cruisers and the 4.7" guns of the Japanese was not so great in battle between ships unprotected with armour. (See tables of extreme distance and penetrative power of guns of different calibre, page 32.)

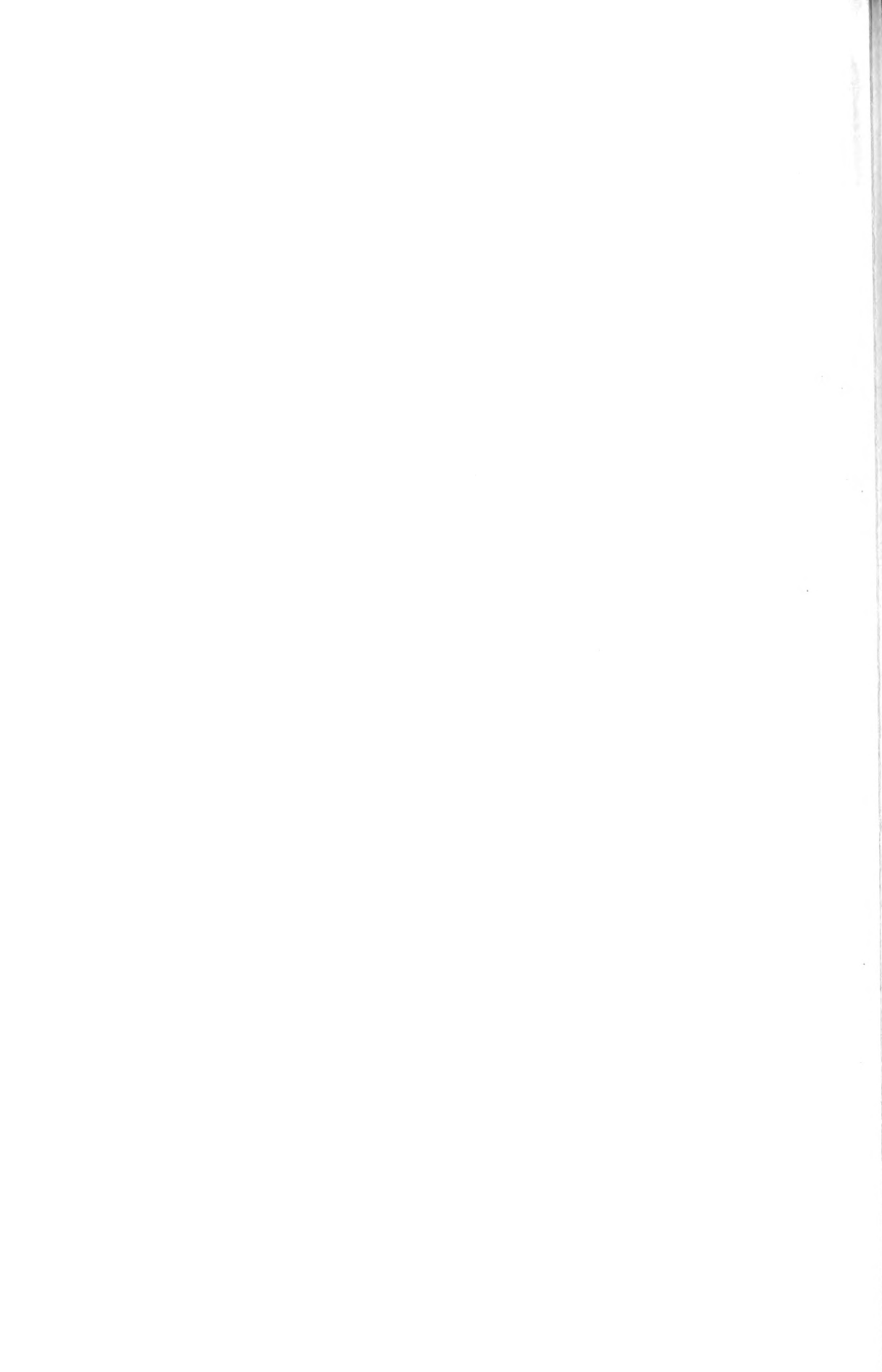
The "Oleg" was stronger than the "Tshitose" and the "Takasago," owing to part of her artillery being protected by stronger shields. But in the "Aurora" there was no such superiority, and her speed was inferior to that of the Japanese cruisers. The employment of Japanese armoured cruisers for scouting purposes was always very possible, since in approaching our main force in small numbers, and even singly, they exposed themselves to no great risk, especially in the daytime. The Russians had no such cruisers with which to drive them off; and from the battleships they could easily escape, thanks to their superior speed.

Our cruisers "Zhemtshug" and "Izumrud" had excellent speed, which might have proved of great use in pursuing the enemy's torpedo craft. But if the latter were covered by any one of their third-class cruisers, then our cruisers would have had to meet them, one against one, with much stronger artillery on the enemy's side. It was precisely in such circumstances that the "Novik" (of the same type as the "Zhemtshug" and the "Izumrud") perished, fighting against a cruiser of the type of



COAST-DEFENCE BATTLESHIP "ADMIRAL USHAKOV"

Samoylov



the "Tsushima," whose artillery armament was nearly twice as strong as hers.

In comparing our cruiser squadron with that of the Japanese (by estimating the displacement and the strength of the artillery) it is seen that in the first case the Japanese were 1·6 times stronger ; while in the number of our 6" and 3" guns we hardly yielded to them at all. But they had seven 8" guns, of which we had not one ; and as to the number of 4·7" guns they had 5·6 times as many as the Russians. In like manner they carried on board their cruisers nearly three times as many torpedo-tubes as we had in ours.

#### (V) VLADIVOSTOK SQUADRON

The chances of Admiral Rozhstvensky would have been considerably increased could he have added to his fleet the Vladivostok squadron. The "Gromoboi" and the "Rossia" would then have formed part of his armoured squadron, and the "Bogatyr" of his cruiser squadron, in which the latter would have made, with the "Oleg," a splendid pair. But we ought not to conceal from ourselves the difficulty of such a union. To effect a junction it would have been necessary to appoint a secret rendezvous beforehand, and to maintain its secrecy, which would have been rendered very difficult by the freedom with which foreign telegraphic lines were used. Moreover, as soon as the Vladivostok squadron came out, Rozhstvensky would have found it almost impossible to let Admiral Jessen know of any changes made, so that it would have been difficult for the latter to find a rendezvous for his squadron. The difficulty of forming a junction would have been increased by the fact that Admiral Jessen would have had to pass the Japanese squadron which lay between him and Admiral Rozhstvensky. He would have incurred the serious risk of falling upon an immensely strong force, being cut off from Vladivostok, and being annihilated. Nor must we exaggerate the importance of a junction of Rozhstvensky with the Vladivostok cruisers. On board the "Rossia" not a single gun was protected by armour, and she was inferior, as regards

protection, to every one of the eight Japanese cruisers. The "Gromoboi," in this, was much superior; though even in her there remained unprotected two 8" and four 6" guns. Besides, on board the "Rossia," as in the "Gromoboi," the 8" guns could only fire on the broadside, whereas on board all the Japanese armoured cruisers these guns were placed in turrets, i.e. they were protected and could fire in different directions; while only a few possessed 6" guns insufficiently protected. Finally, the protection for the hull in the Japanese cruisers was much better, and again, on board our cruisers the armour belt was much narrower and did not extend to the extremities of the ship.

#### (VI) SUMMARY OF COMPARISONS

Passing to the general comparison of the total strength of which we and the Japanese could dispose in the theatre of war, we see that as regards displacement the superiority of the Japanese was insignificant—only 6749 tons—representing one vessel of medium size; while if we regarded the "Yashima" as destroyed, then the superiority, to the same number of tons, passes over to our side. We might also have found consolation in the fact that we had a greater number of big guns (1.5 times more if we count 10" guns as equal to 12" guns). But nothing else was in our favour.

The Japanese had in 8" guns 4.6 times as many as the Russians; in 6" guns 1.5 times as many; in 4.7" guns three times as many; and in 3" guns 1.4 times as many. On their side was the advantage in speed and consequent choice of range in battle, and the possible opportunity of turning to good account their medium artillery. Their ships in general were better armoured, newer, and more numerous. They were concentrated, whereas the Vladivostok squadron was separated from Rozhstvensky by an enormous distance. To reckon on the possibility of the Japanese detaching a material portion of their force to watch the Vladivostok squadron was out of the question. From a reconnaissance by our torpedo craft it appeared that the Japanese were not troubling themselves with Vladivostok at all.

They concentrated all their forces in view of battle with Rozhestvensky. Their destroyer and torpedo flotillas had an immense superiority over ours; their positions were well protected by a line of floating mines, which Rozhestvensky did not possess at all.

(VII) SOME ARTILLERY REFORMS AND TYPES OF GUN:  
WITH TABLE

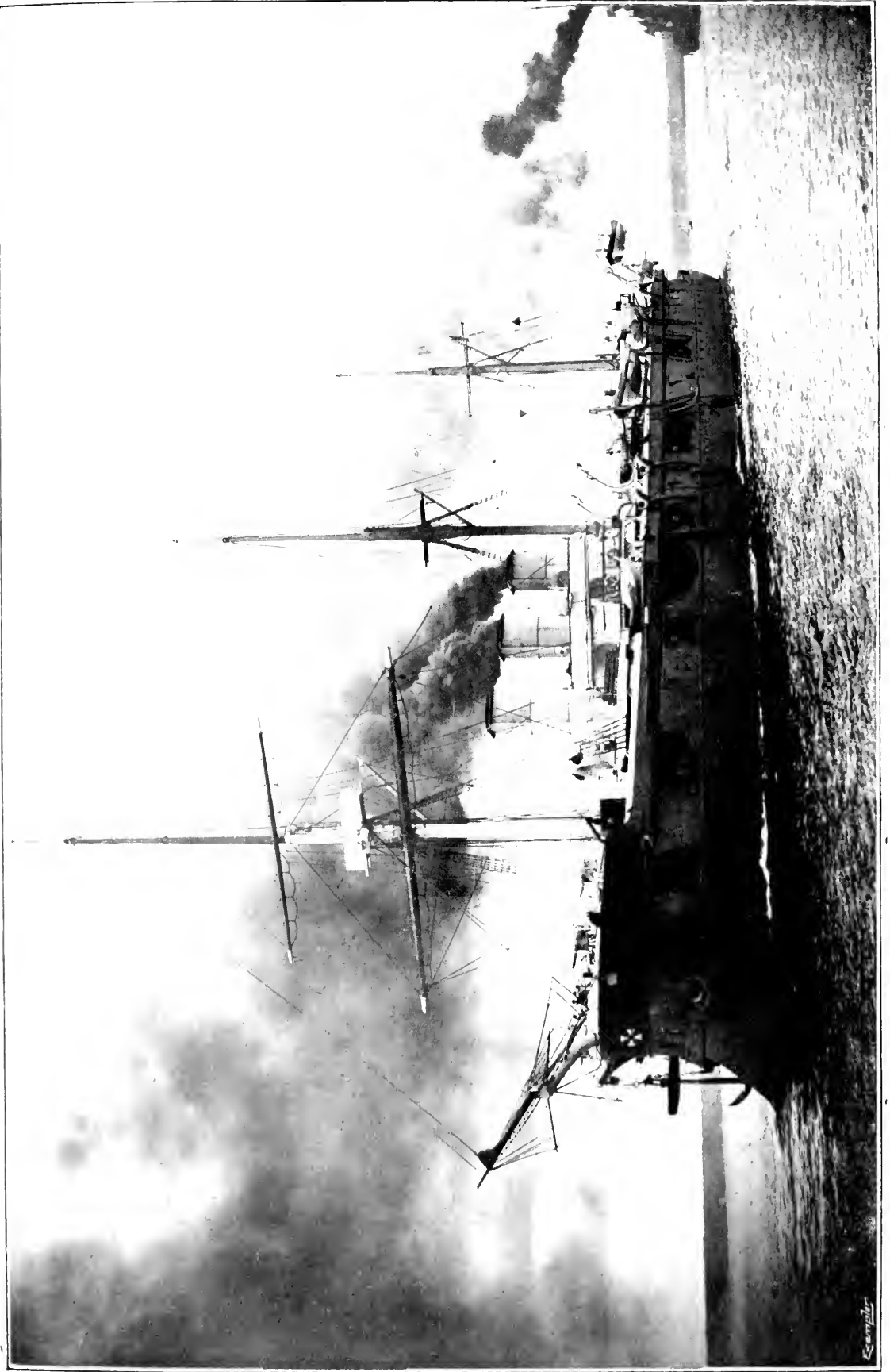
In comparing our naval artillery with that of the Japanese we have had occasion to speak of the guns as "new" and "old"; as to which, it must be understood, the latter cannot in any degree be compared with the former. Every one who is interested in this question and looks into some Year Book in order to see what these "old" and "new" guns are will find that there is no difference between them as regards calibre. They are all 12" or 6" guns. The only difference, apparently, is in the length of the gun. That is usually measured by calibres—the equivalent in inches of diameters of the tube. In the "Register" one will see the guns of the "Navarin" put down as 35 calibres long. The length of the old 12" gun on board the "Imperator Nikolai I" was only 30 calibres. In all the Japanese ships the majority of the guns were 40 calibres in length, and were called "new." In the Russian ships only the 12" guns were of 40 calibres in length, the others being of 45; while the 3" pieces were as much as 50 calibres and also described as "new"; but they were not the newest type. There was no difference between these and the Japanese guns. Meanwhile, the "new" Japanese guns differed in length from the "old" Russian ones by 5 calibres, though the majority of the new Russian guns were superior to the new Japanese guns. This apparently contradictory statement needs explanation. It is this: that from the first introduction of rifled cannon, in order to ensure higher velocity to the projectile, the length of the gun was continuously increased. On firing, while the missile was passing down the barrel to the muzzle of the gun, a larger quantity of powder had time to be ignited, the charge also

acting more slowly and less destructively upon the gun. Consequently, with the same strength of material it was found possible for the gun to be made relatively lighter. From 17 calibres at first, its length has reached 50 calibres. Meanwhile, progress was being made in other directions. Rapidity of firing had become the main object, and all kinds of experiments were made in facilitating and simplifying the firing of guns in regard to loading, aiming, and the supply of ammunition. Smokeless powder was experimented after, because thick smoke interfered with rapid firing by obscuring the target, and so on. Thus, at the beginning of 1890 in Russia (and several years earlier abroad), after the time when the heavy gun had reached 35 calibres, naval artillery suddenly made a stride forward in all the different directions spoken of. Smokeless powder was invented, the quality of gun-metal considerably improved, rendering it possible to lighten the gun considerably; and means were also discovered to increase in a great degree rapidity of firing. High explosives were used in ammunition, and the guns also were lengthened up to 40 and 45 calibres.

For instance, the 12" gun of the length of 30 calibres ("Imperator Nikolai I"), with an initial velocity of 1870 ft. per second, weighed 3140 *poods*.<sup>1</sup> With the lengthening of this gun to 35 calibres ("Navarin"), its weight increased to 3433 *poods*, and its initial velocity to 2090 feet per second. From the year 1894 our ships began to be armed with the 12" gun, 40 calibres in length, when the initial velocity increased to 2600 feet per second, the weight of the gun being diminished to 2614 *poods*. The projectiles used in all these guns were of the same weight, 810 lb. At that time the 6" guns, 35 calibres in length ("Navarin," "Imperator Nikolai I," and "Nakhimov"), firing with smoke-giving or "black" powder, weighed 390 *poods*, had an initial velocity of 2117 feet per second, and required between every shot 1½ to 2 minutes' interval. These guns were heavy and slow to handle. A similar gun of 45 calibres' length fires with smokeless powder, weighs 355 *poods*, its shot weighs

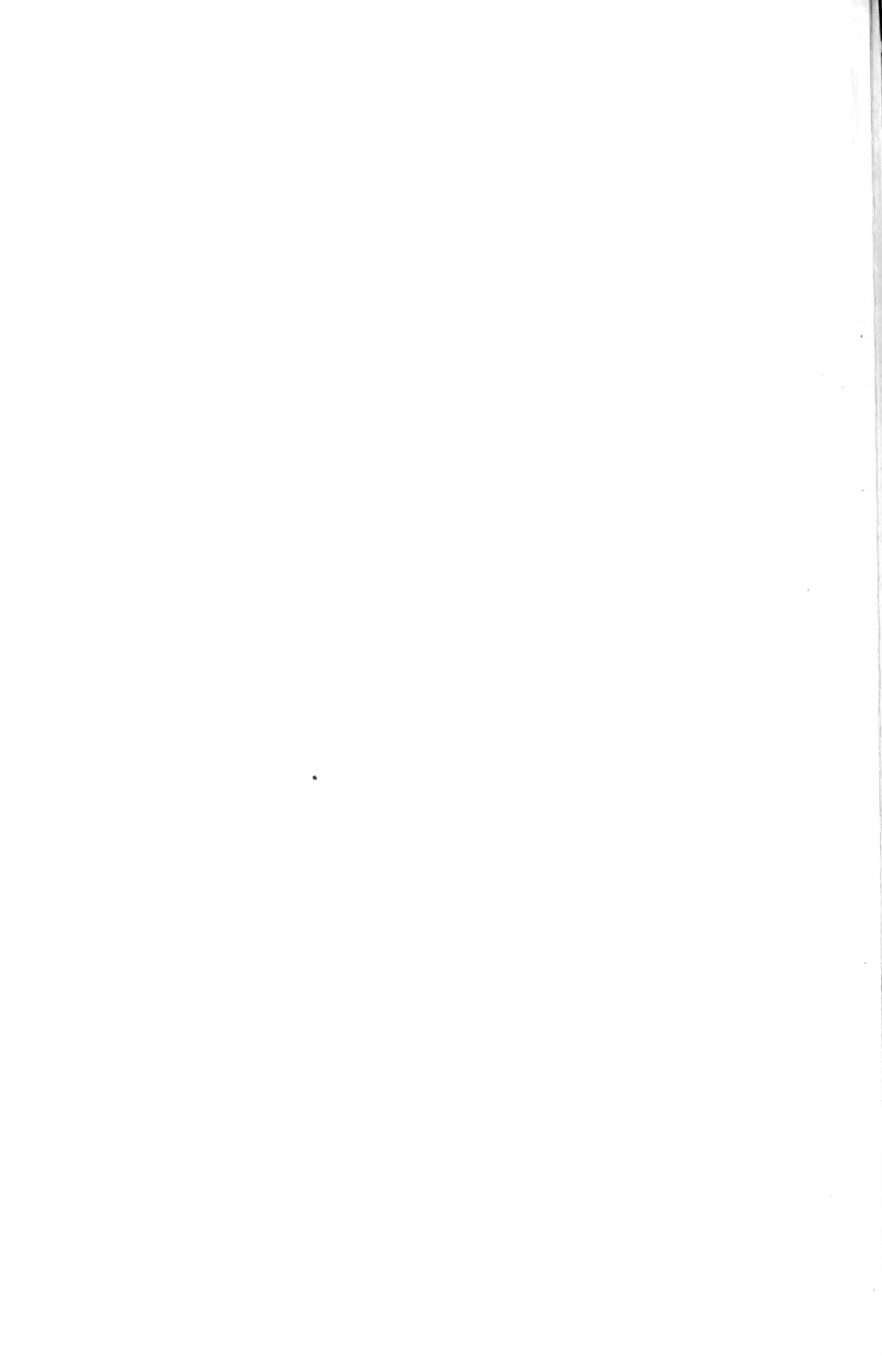
<sup>1</sup> A pood = 32 lb.





ARMOURED CRUISER "PAMIAT AZOVA"

Keppeler



101 lb. ; it has an initial velocity of 2600 feet per second, can be trained easily in all directions, and, firing with great rapidity, can discharge from two to four shots in a minute.

It was precisely at this period of great changes that the Japanese began to build their fleet, and they eagerly adopted everything that was new and perfected, so that all their ships were armed with modern quick-firing artillery. Also, in some of those built earlier, the old artillery was speedily replaced by new. This accounts for their having no old guns. We, in this respect, were much behind them. Though we began to mount new guns in our ships in 1894, at the beginning of the war (i.e. ten years afterwards) there were only two ships, and those of no special military value—the “Vladimir Monomakh” and “Dmitri Donskoi”—on board which they had begun to change the artillery, while in the whole group of armour-clads, newer than the two cruisers just mentioned, the guns were of the old type (“Imperator Nikolai I,” “Imperator Alexander II,” “Navarin,” five Black Sea battleships, “Nakhimov,” “Pamiat Azova,” and “Kornilov”). With this obsolete artillery three of the ships (“Imperator Nikolai I,” “Navarin,” and “Nakhimov”) started for the theatre of war.

All the great improvements of which I have spoken in connexion with artillery reforms had been adopted by the Japanese. Their rapidity of firing was as great as ours, and the initial velocity of their guns was dependent, not only on their length, but also on the quality of the powder and the size of the charge. The smaller length of gun carries less weight and allows more artillery to be mounted. For instance, in the German fleet they adhere in the most persistent manner to the 6" gun (with a length of 40 calibres) and to a 3½" gun (which, till quite lately, had a length of only 30 calibres, though now these guns have been a little lengthened, but only to 35 calibres, whereas our 3" guns had a length of 50 calibres). Such comparatively short 6" and 3½" guns have been placed by the Germans on board some of their newest battleships, while for those they are proposing to build they have ordered new guns of 6·7", but only 40 calibres

long. (Register of the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovitch, p. 467.) Meanwhile, in Krupp's factories guns are being constructed of 50 calibres' length.

In connexion with this, the following figures may be consulted, showing the different types of 6" guns. One of these, distinguished by length, had counterparts in the fleets of Rozhstvensky and Togo. (Register of the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovitch, pp. 118, 154-7.)

	Length in calibres.	Weight of gun in tons.	Weight of charge in pounds.	Weight of explosive material in pounds.	Initial Velocity.	Vital force at bore ; feet per ton.
Russian . . . . .	45	5·72	101·3	31·5	2600	4281
Krupp (German) . . . . .	40	4·83	124·8	29·6	2679	5183
	45	5·54	124·8	34·4	2753	5905
Canat (French) . . . . .	50	6·25	124·8	39·3	2927	6680
	40	5·40	97·7	?	3018	5569
Armstrong (English) . . . . .	45	5·90	97·7	?	3166	6128
	50	6·60	97·7	?	3314	6709
	45	7·40	111·0	22·2	2535	4453

English pounds are reduced to Russian.

The great initial velocity which some guns give when heavily charged, and also fail to give with charges of the same weight, may be explained by the different qualities of powder employed. The English use a most powerful powder, which, however, has very destructive effects on the gun; and the Japanese seem to have used similar powder. For the accuracy of the figures given in my table I cannot of course vouch, except as regards the Russian 6" guns. Still, they show that a gun of 40 calibres in length need not be inferior to a longer gun.

To this it must be added that the Japanese guns acted efficiently in the battles of 10 and 14 August at the greatest range, as chosen by the Japanese themselves; and the influence of the great initial velocity which seems to be a consequence of the lengthening of the gun points, *ceteris paribus*, to the advantage of long distances.

## (VIII) DEFECTS OF AMMUNITION AND GUNS

Among the various deficiencies in the *matériel* of our fleet pointed out in the Press, attention has been directed to the bad quality and insufficient quantity of our ammunition; and not without reason. Especially has our fleet suffered continually from want of ammunition. New ships have been constructed and armed with the latest guns, but shells for these guns were omitted—"No hurry for shells; they can wait!" Things came to such a pass that on one occasion we were straining every nerve to get ready a squadron of ships for a definite purpose which for its successful realization required a sudden onslaught. Everything had to be ready for the squadron to sail fully prepared to fight, twenty-four hours after receiving orders. Everything was ready—but for about half the necessary shells. That would be hard to beat, one would think. It was just this attitude to its work in hand, long characteristic of the Ministry of Marine, a continual unpreparedness of the fleet for battle, that led to the Second Squadron being incompletely provided with ammunition when on the point of starting. There was on board sufficient for one engagement, and about 15 to 20 per cent. in reserve. For one fight that was more than enough, especially for the heavy guns, probably there would have been enough for two engagements; but practice firing was out of the question. For practice, it is true, a very limited quantity of shells had been provided, but only for the 3" guns, so that it was impossible to practise with all the guns, and, moreover, owing to the limited range of these small guns, practice-firing at long range (just what was most necessary) could not be carried out.

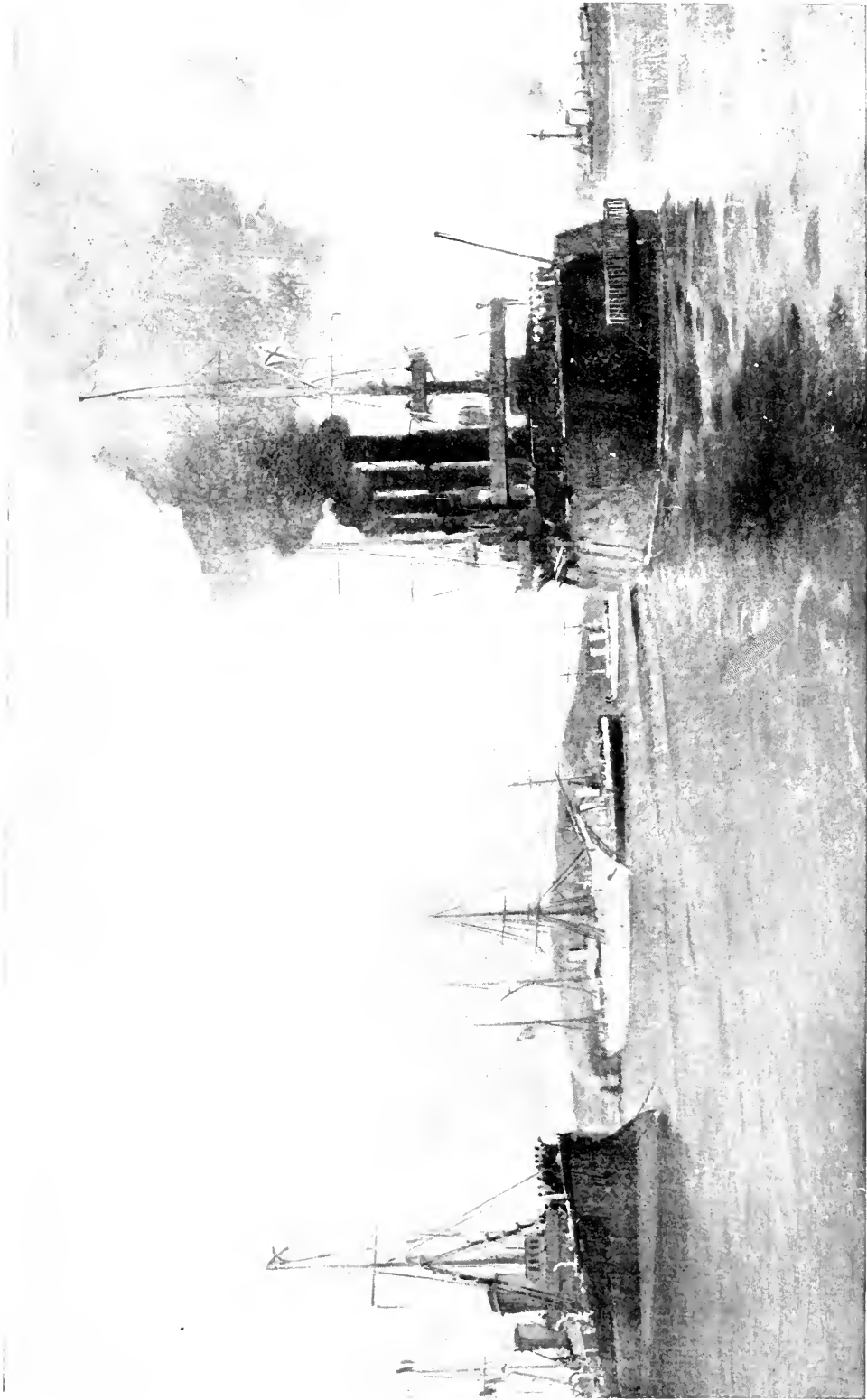
As for the quality of our ammunition, in the manufacture of shells we show a marked divergence from the practice of other countries. In our shells the quantity of explosive used is far smaller than elsewhere. Shells employed in naval warfare are of two kinds—armour-piercing and merely explosive, differ-

ing in the quantity of explosive used. The shell containing most explosive has thinner walls and explodes readily on coming in contact with armour plate. On the other hand, when such a shell strikes parts protected by thin armour or completely unprotected, it inflicts greater damage, owing to its heavier charge. Such a shell is called a "non-piercing" one. The other is called an "armour-piercing" shell.

The subjoined table shows the proportion of the quantity of explosive to the total weights of projectile in armour-piercing and non-piercing shells of our own and English artillery respectively. I take the English artillery, as I have precise official data, and the Japanese fleet, being provided with guns of English pattern, had probably been supplied with ammunition from England during the course of the war :—

Shell	12"		6"	
	Armour-piercing	Non-piercing	Armour-piercing	Non-piercing
Russian .	1 %	2 %	2 %	3·1 %
English .	5 %	9·5 %	5·5 %	9·25-13·25 %

This table clearly shows that even in our non-piercing shells there is far less explosive than in the English armour-piercing shells. As a matter of fact, we have no real non-piercing shells at all. Again, our shells are charged with pyroxylyene, while the English shells are charged with lyddite (the same as melinite), with greater explosive intensity. It may be argued as an offset that our shells are likely to be better for armour-piercing than the English ones, but this, in the case of big-calibre shells, is a disputed point. The proportion of the explosive used in the filling of the English shells is so great that, apart from the force of impact, the violence of the explosion contributes to the destruction of the armour. Moreover, English naval artillery is furnished with special shells for piercing the thickest plating. These shells have no charge, and are unknown in our country. Lastly, in our fleet, cast-iron shells are, unfortunately, still in use, though totally unsuitable for fighting; and, what is still worse, such shells are supposed to form a third of the whole stock



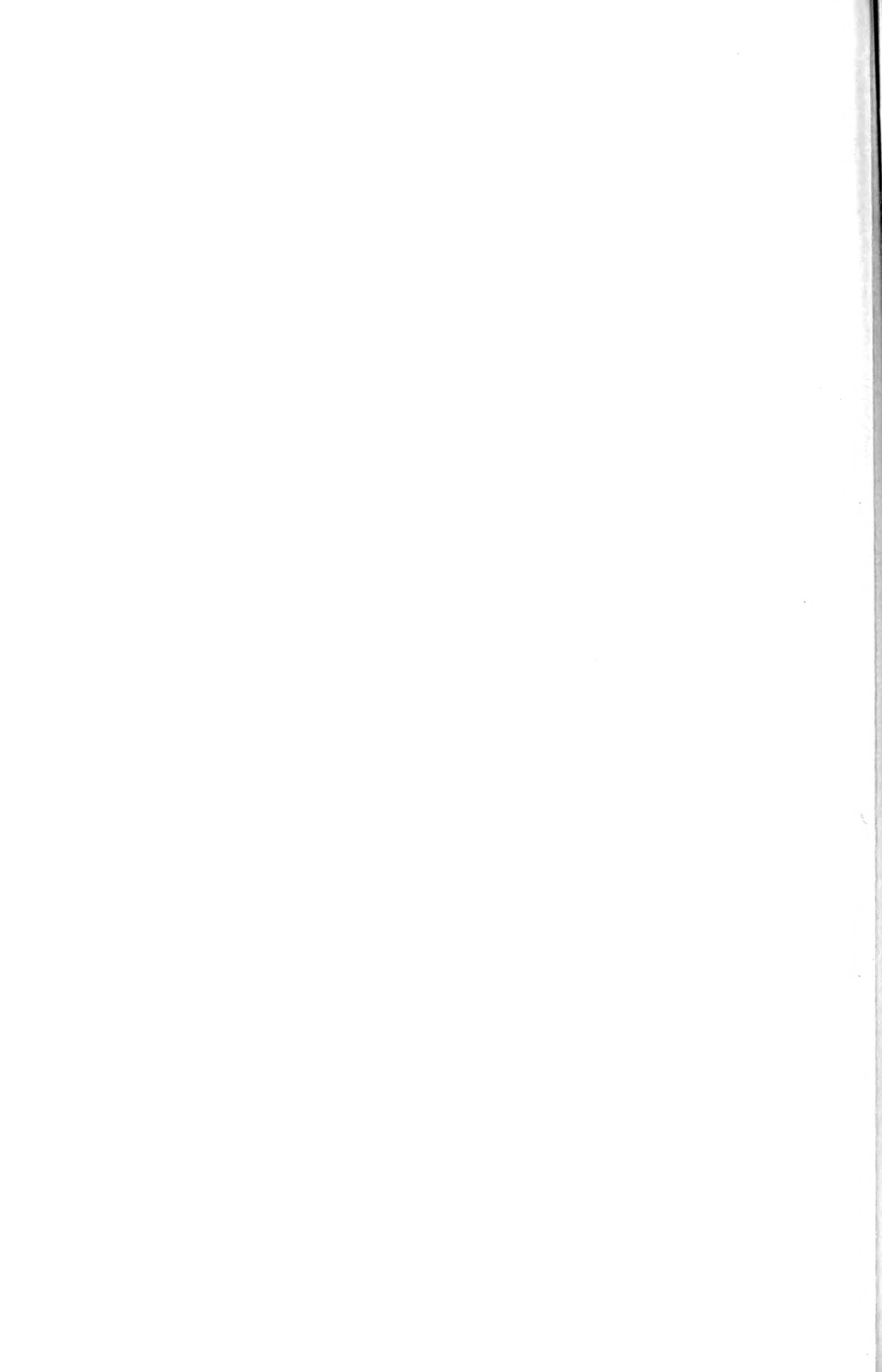
*Elha*

*Variag*

*Koreets*

THE "VARIAG" AND "KOREETS" LEAVING THE ROADSTEAD OF CHEMULO FOR THE OPEN SEA  
WHERE THE JAPANESE SQUADRON AWAITED THEM

As they passed before the foreign vessels the bandmen of the *Variag*, without orders, ran for their instruments, and played the Russian National Anthem.





carried by a ship in time of war. (See Yatsin's "Course of Naval Gunnery," p. 215.)

Admiral Rozhestvensky's squadron carried this proportion of cast-iron shells. Now, according to English official data (Handbook on Ammunition, issued by authority of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty), all shells on board English men-of-war are of steel. In general, our naval artillery suffers from many defects, and in the fleet it is believed that the blame rests entirely upon the gunnery department of the Technical Committee. This department shows a criminal negligence in not introducing into our Navy improvements in artillery which have long since been adopted in western countries.

Why this is the case I will not explain here. I desire to discuss the question of telescopic sighting. Telescopic sighting consists in using a binocular, or telescope, by which the objective can be clearly distinguished. The importance of this is evident when it is necessary to fire at a distance of 60 to 70 cables. With the naked eye absolutely nothing could be distinguished at so great a distance. This important matter was ruminated over for an unheard-of period, and in a quite objectless manner, by our unlucky Ministry, with the result that they were only just in time to supply Admiral Rozhestvensky's fleet with these sights.

Indeed, when the war broke out, not one of our ships possessed a telescopic sight. In the course of conversation with gunnery officers belonging to the ships that fought in the action of 10 August, 1904, I was informed that, owing to the want of telescopic sights on board their ships, they had to shoot very much at random. Indeed, so necessary were these sights, that they had to be improvised with the means at hand. They had been requisitioned for Port Arthur times out of number, even before the war, but the demand was as a voice crying in the wilderness. Such was the negligence displayed in this matter that the turrets of our newest ironclads, of the "Suvorov" type (which ships, by the way, had not then been launched), were not fitted to take telescopic sights, and that, too, in spite of the fact that such sights had already been invented and tested several

years previously—they were tested in 1901—and it had virtually been decided that such sights were indispensable in modern warfare.

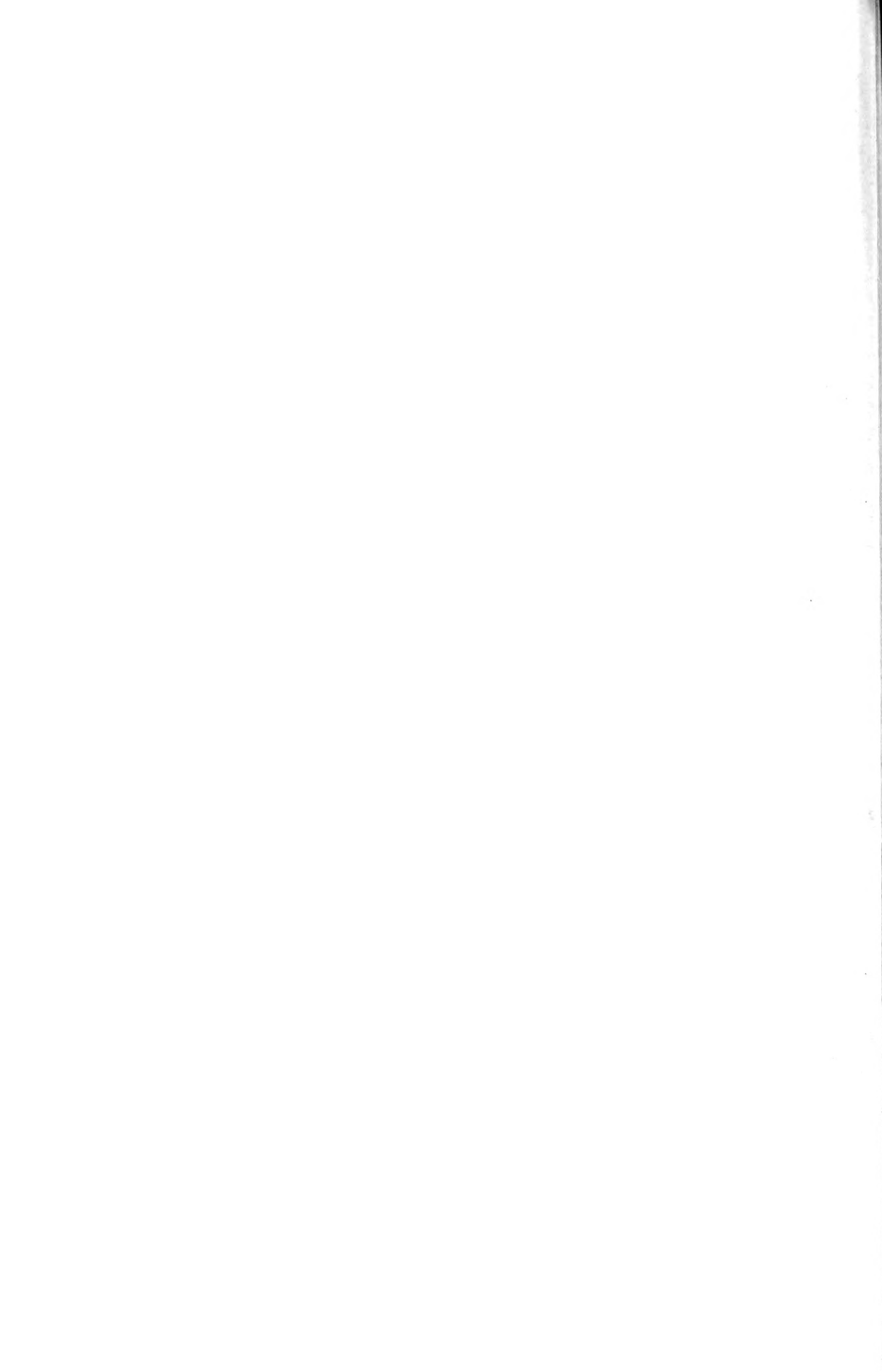
This fact had been completely forgotten, and it was not till after the fleet left Libau that efforts were made, with the aid of the ship's engineers, to construct openings in the upper part of the turrets to suit telescopic sights.

Owing to the lack of appliances on board, this labour was like making bricks without straw. When Vigo was reached, three weeks after the fleet left Russia, the work was still going on.

Again, take the method of firing guns of medium calibre; our attitude in this question has been, and still is, no less pitiable. In our Navy a gun is fired by pulling a metal lanyard, which is liable to break and is continually coming away. The result is that there is often a delay in the firing; in other words, the discharge does not take place at the moment when the gunner releases the hammer by a jerk on the lanyard, but somewhat later. The worst of it is, you never can tell just how much delay there will be. Sometimes it is less, sometimes greater; every now and then the instrument misses fire altogether. This delay in the discharge considerably impairs the accuracy of the shooting, and the greater the speed of the ship, and the greater the rolling, the greater will be the error caused by the delay, as the gun will point either too low or too high. At a distance of only forty cables an error of one-twelfth of a degree in direction means that the shell would miss a ship, and moreover, during the rolling the vessel shifts its angle of inclination at the rate of  $21^{\circ}$  in a second. In the battle of Tsushima there was just this heavy rolling to contend against. Efforts have for a long time past been made to fire by means of electricity, in order to minimize delay. In the English fleet such a means has long been in use; and we find it expressly mentioned in the official publication I have referred to above. Our own officers on board the "Rossia," who were present at the naval review held on the occasion of the Jubilee of the late Queen Victoria, made a report on this appliance. This was years ago,



BRITISH PICKET BOAT RETURNING TO CHEMULPO AFTER DELIVERING TO ADMIRAL URIC THE "PROTEST" FROM THE CAPTAINS OF THE "TALBOT," "ELBA," AND "PASCAL."



and yet we still go on using the same old lanyard, which has been condemned by gunnery officers in every report on gunnery practice. One could point out plenty more of such things, but it would take too long in the telling.

#### (IX) DANGERS TO ARMoured VESSELS

The most dangerous injury to an armoured vessel in battle is damage under water, for this involves heeling over to either side. Here is the cause of this heeling. The interior of a ship of war is divided into a number of compartments which preserve her from sinking outright, so that only part is filled with water. In consequence, however, of this part being on the side where the injury occurs, she begins to heel over. The vessel, of course, cannot continue heeling to an unlimited extent; when it reaches a certain point she turns over.

The capability or tendency of a vessel to right herself when she heels is called her *stability*, and it is plain that the greater her stability, the greater the amount of heeling a ship can sustain without capsizing. It is also evident that the stability is greater in proportion to the depth at which the greatest weights are stowed; and so much less when these weights are above. Since there are many of these on board warships, where the bulk of their armour and all their guns are necessarily *above water*, battleships are less stable for this reason than commercial craft. At the same time the stability varies according to the breadth of the vessel at the waterline. For these reasons war vessels, especially those carrying heavy armour and many guns, i.e. battleships, are made exceptionally broad. Heeling, however, is dangerous to a vessel, not only because she may turn over from it. Long before the heeling reaches a dangerous limit, the ship loses her power of firing and manœuvring, i.e. is rendered practically helpless. It is impossible to fire, because the guns on the side facing the enemy are compelled to incline downwards or upwards, according to the side on which the injury occurs. In the first place because they cannot be pointed;

secondly, all the mechanism for their handling (especially in turrets and with the heavier guns) ceases to act, being designed only for small inclinations of the vessel. Moreover, when the heeling is very great on the side opposite from the injury, the submerged part of the vessel, unprotected by armour, becomes exposed, and if the enemy happens to be on that side he can easily riddle her with shells of small calibre. Finally, a battleship heeling over deeply becomes an easy prey for torpedo-vessels, especially on the side raised out of the water. Water may flow into the interior of the vessel, not only from injuries deep down below the waterline, but from rolling, from heavy seas, and from shot-holes only slightly above the waterline. The consequent heeling permits the water to enter at still higher shot-holes, so that the heeling and the danger to the vessel increases in degree. Thus it is all important not to permit the initial cause of heeling,—shot-holes below the waterline. The danger of this has been considerably intensified by the introduction of quick-firing guns, which, discharging rapidly, may riddle every unprotected part of the vessel, i.e. at the waterline and along the portion where there is either no armour or it is inadequate. On this account, the idea has long prevailed that it is necessary, along the whole line of a vessel from stem to stern, to place a belt of armour at the waterline, and the deeper this belt is, and the higher it stands above the water, the greater the security of the vessel from shot-holes near the waterline, and consequently from heeling. This view has been strongly held by the French, and formerly was by the Russians.

All Russian armoured vessels designed up to the second half of the eighties carried armour along the waterline. The representatives of this system of armour plating, bearing the type of armour employed at that time but now held to be obsolete, in Rozhestvensky's squadron were the battleship "Imperator Nikolai I" and the cruisers "Vladimir Monomakh" and "Dmitri Donskoi." Such also were the four Black Sea vessels of the "Tshesma" type, launched in 1886. Germany quickly became an adherent of this system. England, on the

contrary, constructed armoured vessels with unprotected extremities and but slowly yielded to the necessity of plating them all over. Only in 1897 were her first vessels launched with their extremities protected—and then only by very thin armour. It would really be hard to consider this as real armour, merely two inches in all. Also, *even in their very newest vessels the English have varied very slightly from this.* Unfortunately for us, it was at that time the fashion—I do not venture to call it anything else—to imitate England in many things, and unluckily among others in her system of armour plating. In this way were armoured nearly all our battleships destroyed at Port Arthur; and in Rozhstvensky's squadron the three battleships "Oslabya," "Sissoi Veliky," "Navarin," with the three armoured vessels for coast defence, as well as our armoured cruisers at Vladivostok. The Japanese proceeded in a contrary direction. On constructing their fleet after the Chino-Japanese War, they set out on an independent course. This was clearly demonstrated in their system of armour plating. In spite of the fact that *all their armoured vessels were constructed in England, only in the two first—the "Fudji" and the "Yashima"*—(only the former took part in the battle of the Korean Straits) *did they follow the English example.* In the rest of their battleships, of which three took part in the battle, *they armoured the extremities very powerfully* with sufficiently thick armour of four inches. They introduced this system also in all their six armoured cruisers, the extremities of which were protected by  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " armour. Of this type too were the cruisers "Nishin" and "Kassuga," purchased in Italy; in these latter the armour on bows and stern was even thicker— $4\frac{1}{2}$ ".

In this manner, as regards armour plating along the waterline, the Japanese armoured squadron presented the greatest homogeneity.

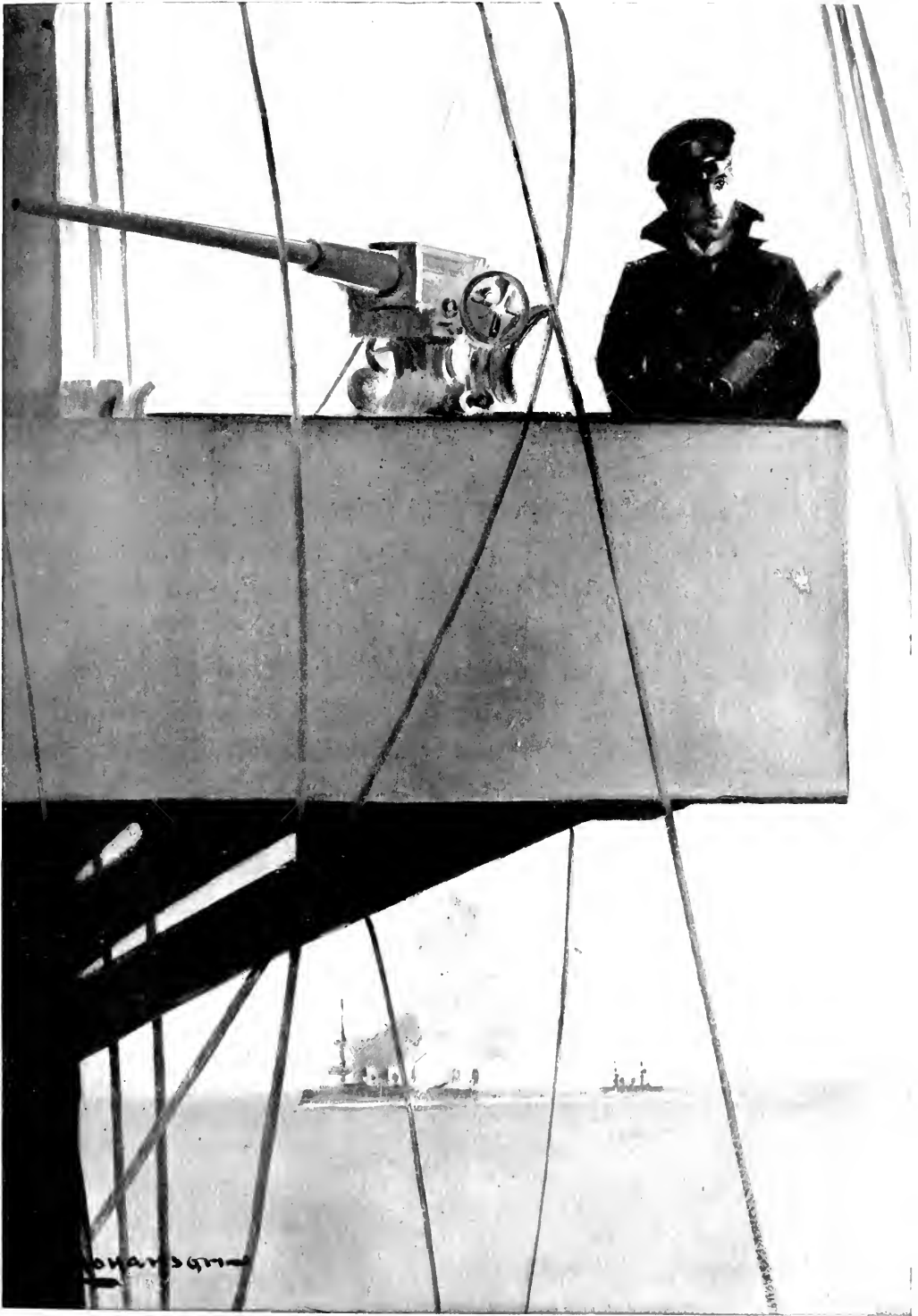
With us a complete and secure defence along the waterline was realized in the fine battleship "Tsesarevitch," constructed in France, and this type also was chosen as a model for the construction of five similar vessels, of which four, the "Suvorov,"

“Imperator Alexander III,” “Borodino,” and “Orel,” formed part of Rozhstvensky’s squadron. Two of these, however, were sunk by artillery fire, and one suffered so much therefrom that a dangerous heeling was set up.

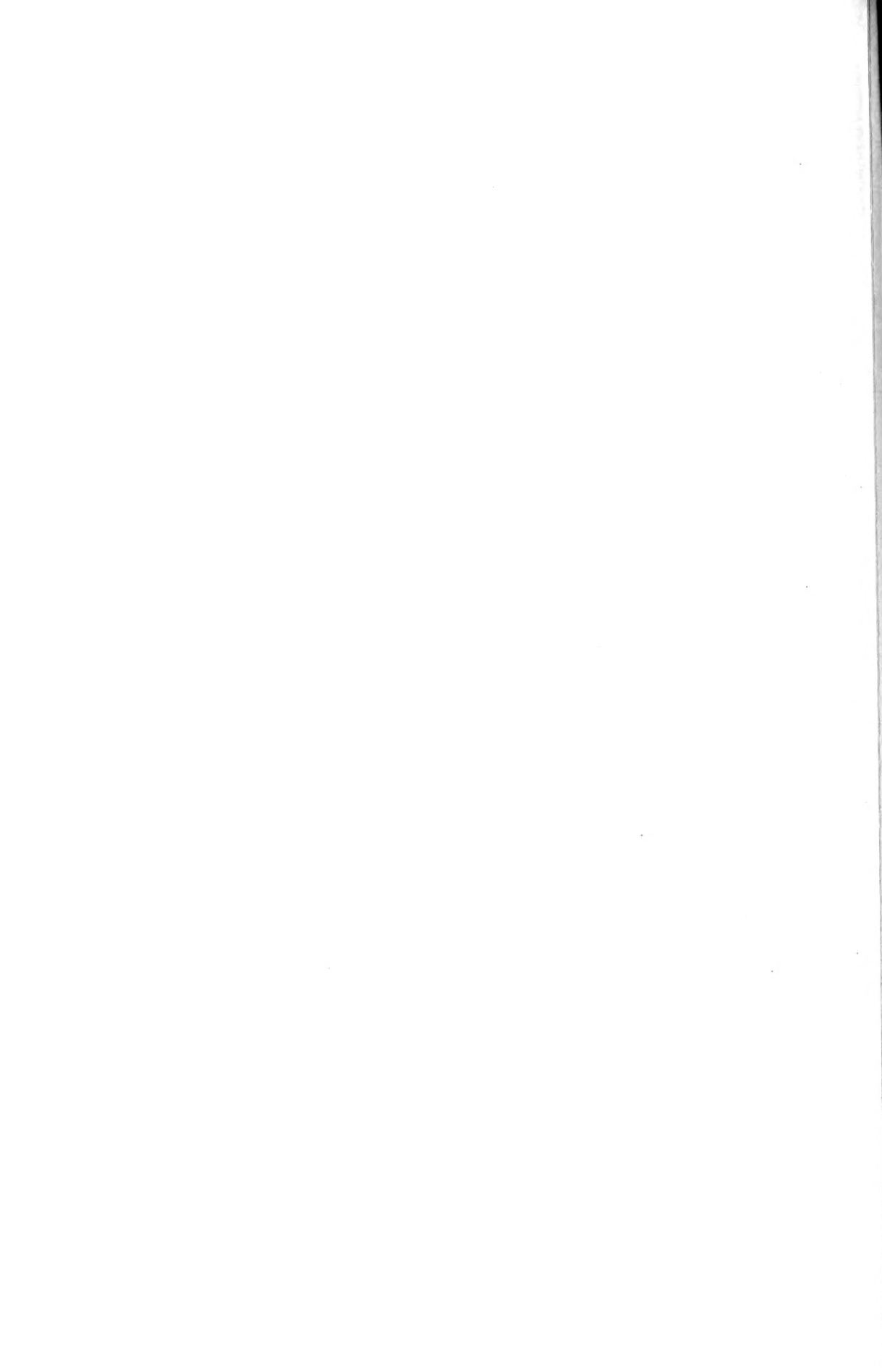
I can only advance the following opinion in explanation of this. Armoured vessels, known as of the *improved* “Tsesarevitch” type, possessed serious imperfections in comparison with their prototype. Above all, they were terribly overweighted, i.e. were submerged more deeply than was intended (almost two feet), and the belt of the thickest armour at the waterline did not rise two feet above the water. Thus the submerged armour proved useless. The overweighting (this is the scourge of Russian shipbuilding) and the cause for its existence can best be explained by our naval engineers, who, as I am aware, are often placed under impossible conditions, thanks to our regulations for ship construction. All are, however, acquainted with this fact: that this overweighting is only absent in vessels constructed abroad; that is, where we leave the initiative in construction to the yards in which they are built. The Japanese vessels were constructed exclusively abroad, and were not burdened with this overweight. Whenever the armour goes too far below water, it might quite as well be absent altogether; armour then constitutes merely a superfluous weight for the vessel. Therefore it is clear that the stability of armoured vessels of the “Suvorov” type was very uncertain.

Just on the eve of the departure of the second squadron from Libau, a paper was sent to Admiral Rozhstvensky by special courier from the Ministry, in which it was indicated that in consequence of various causes the stability of his new battleships had proved to be far less than it ought to have been, and he was recommended to take all possible precautions to diminish their rolling, particularly when, in consequence of the expenditure of coal, the weights below water would be diminished. The measures recommended proceeded to such minuteness that it was suggested, for example, to strike the signal yards, the weight of which was practically *nil*. This shows that straws were being





THE COMTE DE NIROD ON THE BRIDGE OF THE "VARIAG"



clutched at, and serves as a characteristic example of the seriousness of the danger. The contents of this paper were not of course communicated for the general information of the fleet, as it might have produced a depressing effect. But on this very account these four battleships were separated from the rest of the fleet, and when the remainder of the battleships and large cruisers were proceeding from Skagen to Tangier they ought to have remained behind at Brest in order to coal before crossing the Bay of Biscay.

But the fleet did not go there, simply on account of fog. The sea became perfectly calm, and the barometer indicating that the fine weather would last, Rozhestvensky took advantage of these favourable circumstances and made the passage to Vigo, leaving the dangerous Bay of Biscay behind. The overweight of these battleships and the insufficiency of their stability were displayed at the time of the so-called "Hull Incident." The sea was only slightly rough, yet the battleships rolled five degrees each way. Moreover, in consequence of the top-hamper, the 3" guns, especially suited for repulsing torpedo-boats, were brought so near the water that the sea entered freely through the ports, and men and guns were standing in water. On board the battleship "Orel" one of the guns took in water at its muzzle, and at a subsequent discharge burst. In some of these ships the gun ports were not opened at all. It was decided not to fire from them, merely because of the danger that these parts would be swamped.

The diminution of the stability of armoured vessels of the "Suvorov" type proved, however, not so dangerous as it appeared at the beginning, since they all sustained very rough passages, especially on the way to Madagascar; but this was not so in the battle. During the battle, in consequence of the overweighting, injuries from shot occurred very close to the water-line. At that time it was not possible to do without using the 3" guns, and, consequently, their ports had to be open. They would then be only slightly above the water, and if these ports, unprotected by armour, were struck by the enemy's shells, then, with anything of a sea on (which, judging by descriptions, was the

case during the battle in the Korean Straits), a considerable quantity of water would easily enter the ships and cause heeling to a particularly dangerous degree. If these ships righted themselves, as, for example, the battleship "Imperator Alexander III" did, there was only one means of doing so, namely, by letting in the water on the side opposite that on which the vessel heeled. Thus the quantity of water in the vessel would be doubled, adding considerably to the weight. Thus, also, a larger portion of the armour would be under water, and the probability of receiving an injury admitting water would be still greater; the waves would still more easily swamp the ports of the 3" guns, which at length would sink to the waterline. There were eight pieces on each side. But the principal cause of this was the overweight and the slight stability.

The armoured vessel "Tsesarevitch" splendidly proved her stability and endurance, both at the time of the torpedo attack on the night of 8-9 February, 1904, and during the battle of 11 July. On the former occasion she listed to 18°. The four ships of the "improved" type protected their 3" gun positions with 3" armour, of which there was none on board the "Tsesarevitch." In this way the weight of the vessels *above water*, i.e. their capacity for resisting heeling, was diminished. And besides, their length was increased by 8½ ft., while their breadth was decreased by 1" (see the Naval Pocket Book for 1904, p. 236), i.e. their stability was still further diminished. How this disadvantage was compensated is unknown, but the fact of the diminution of the stability is apparent.

For my own part, this is my opinion as to one of the causes of the destructive overweighting.

Exactly contrary to the established law in ship-building, as it seems to me, that progress consists in increased water displacement, there has, with us, always been economy in regard to displacement; striving to compress within small displacement what should really be disposed in a vessel of larger proportions.

As a result this is not successful. The displacement still proves great in consequence of the considerable overweight,

and the inconveniences and compromises necessitated by the disposal of everything in the smallest space are apparent. This is clearly proved by a comparison of our battleships of the "Suvorov" type with the Japanese vessels of the "Mikasa" and "Asahi" types. The displacement of the latter is 15,000 tons (with a length of 400 ft., breadth of 75 ft., and draught of  $27\frac{1}{2}$  ft.). That of the "Suvorov" ought to have been 13,500 tons (with a length of 393 ft., breadth of 76 ft., and draught of 26 ft.). In consequence of overweight, she was almost two feet deeper in the water, and her displacement exceeded 15,000 tons. On board the Japanese vessels everything was arranged in accordance with their larger proportions. There was not, for example, a single gun placed too low; and although the lower-deck ports were near the water, there was armour at the exact level for which it was designed; i.e., it fulfilled its intention, and so on.

The fact that our vessels perished, and not those of the Japanese, in a purely gun-fire engagement may possibly be explained in other ways. Our artillery was certainly not inferior, and our shells were better adapted for piercing armour, if we remember that the Japanese shot and shell were of the English type; but the difference in methods of firing, which undoubtedly existed, could not exert such a vast influence. That the ships of the "Suvorov" type were destroyed earliest, while the less efficiently protected "Sissoi Veliky," "Navarin," "Imperator Nikolai I," and the armoured coast-defence vessels held out longer, only proved that the Japanese concentrated upon these all their united efforts. That these armoured vessels of ours had serious imperfections is what I wished to prove, and their imperfections are so clearly in evidence during rough weather that the matter ought to lead to very careful attention in our plans for the future.

## CHAPTER III

### (I) COMPARISON OF ENGAGEMENTS AT CLOSE AND LONG RANGE

WE will now dwell on some of the questions involved in view of the naval battle. The naval reviewer of "The Temps" previously said that in consequence of Admiral Rozhestvensky's superiority in heavy guns, he ought to seek battle at close quarters. This was not at all the case; and if it had been to Rozhestvensky's advantage to get near, it would have been for different reasons. In regard to the most advantageous range in naval fighting there exists a perfectly logical and natural rule. This rule states that *any superiority over the opponent compels one to endeavour to increase the fighting range; while any inferiority makes a fight at short range more advantageous.*

I will give an example. Suppose I have only heavy long-range guns, while my opponent has guns firing more quickly, but of less calibre, and not carrying so far. It is evident that it is more to my advantage to increase the distance sufficiently to be able to hit the enemy, while remaining practically invulnerable myself. He, on the other hand, has but one resource—to try to get near. Of course, there is a limit to increasing the distance; otherwise, although the enemy's projectiles would none of them reach the mark, the probability of hitting with one's own guns would become so small that the fight would be without appreciable result, degenerating into a mere expenditure of ammunition. Theoretically, the question would be decided correctly in this case too; but practice will, of course, in each case indicate the most reasonable limit. In just the same way, a long range is more advantageous to me if—the quality of the

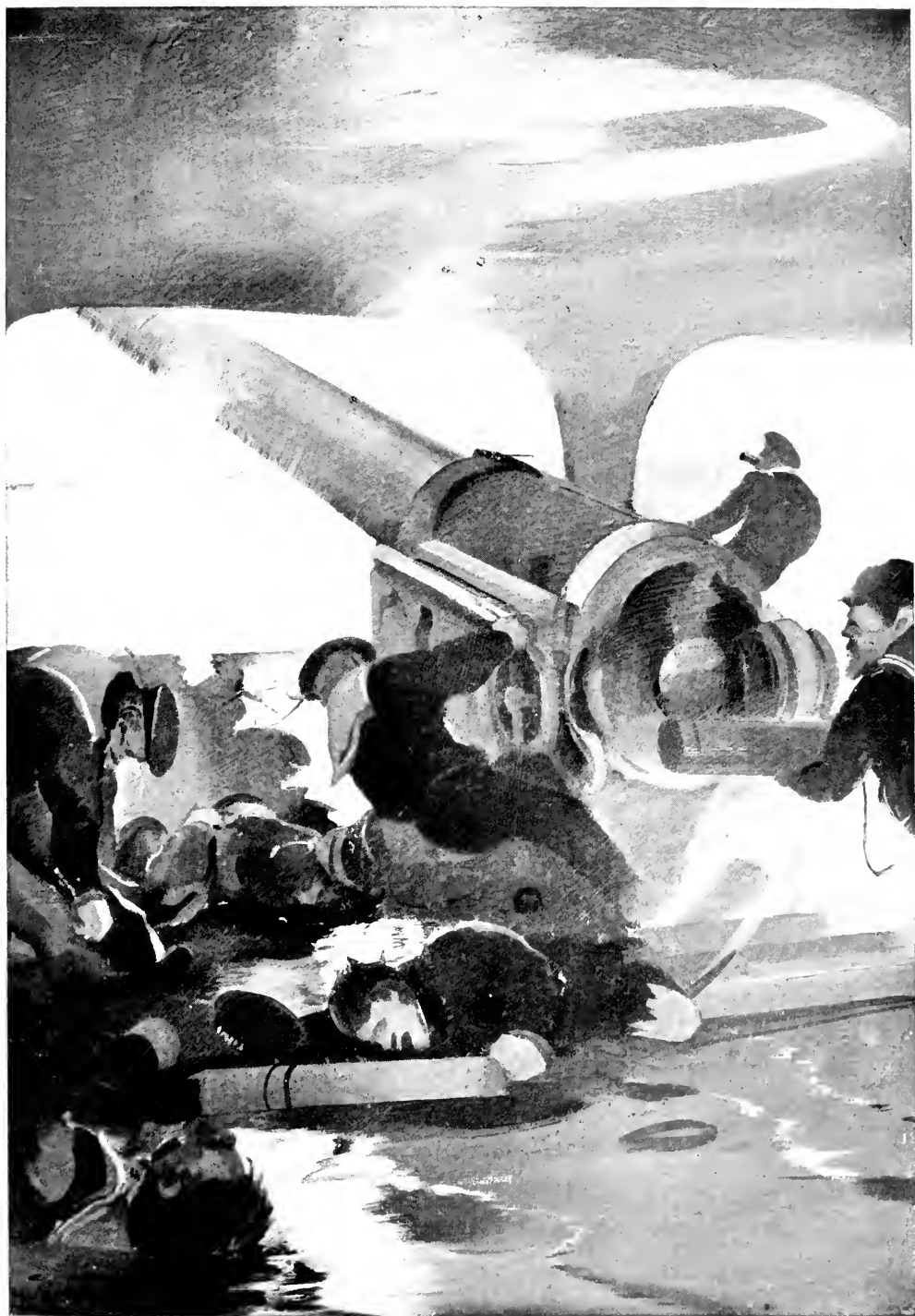
guns being the same on both sides—my gunners are the better marksmen. But if I allow the enemy to approach, the firing will be so easy that the difference between my good gunners and his bad gunners may vanish. The same influence is exercised by the quality of the ship's armour. If my ship, with artillery equal to that of the enemy, is considerably the better protected, it is to my advantage to carry on the action at such a distance that my opponent's guns are no longer able to pierce my armour, while my guns continue to riddle his weak plates. Evidently he will strive to get near so that my armour may be vulnerable for his guns.

The sole means for preserving the most advantageous distance is superiority in speed. Therefore, when an armoured vessel meets one that is unarmoured, the latter, if for some reason (e.g. inferior speed) she cannot escape fighting, must strive to get as near as possible, otherwise she will be destroyed without inflicting any damage on her opponent. But as short range does not suit the latter, she will go about and keep off. From the accepted point of view of land fighting, such behaviour of the stronger party seems rather strange, as it looks like "*retreat.*" This misapprehension is quite intelligible: on land, by moving in the direction *away from the opponent*, a piece of ground is surrendered to him having more or less value in many respects. But the area of sea over which ships move during an action is without value for either of them, and the seeming retreat is nothing more than a profitable manœuvre in order to inflict more damage on the opponent. In this way, a huge battleship will retreat before a tiny torpedo boat. The latter, of course, must come to close quarters, firstly in order to fire its torpedo, and secondly in order to hit the objective. The battleship, on the other hand, which must either sink or seriously damage the torpedo-boat before the latter succeeds in firing its torpedo, has no advantage in going to meet it, as she will thus diminish the time her opponent is under fire, and also reduce the accuracy of her own fire; the gunners will lose their coolness at the approach of the torpedo-boat, and from the rapid

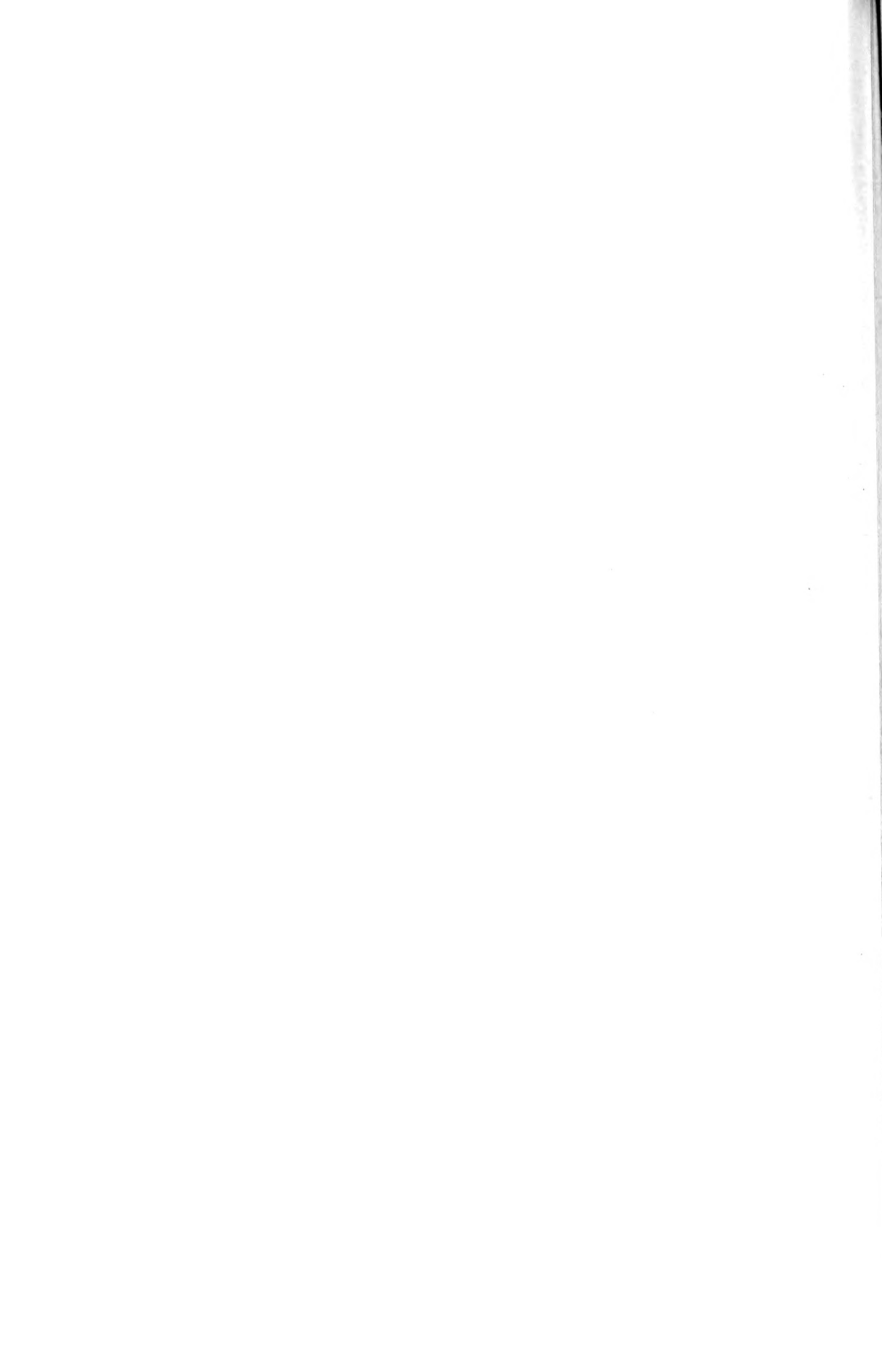
change of distance will constantly make errors in the range. All these circumstances will evidently be changed for the benefit of the battleship, if she shows her stern to the torpedo-boat.

If we apply this rule of naval fighting to the meeting of our fleet with the Japanese, we find that for Admiral Rozhdestvensky's first battleship division—consisting of four excellently protected and heavily armed ships of the "Suvorov" type—it was more advantageous to keep at a great distance. The same thing applies in the case of the three coast-defence armour-clads under Admiral Niebogotov. Their chief and, indeed, only strength was in their eleven 10" guns; as their medium artillery (six 4.7" guns on one side) was absolutely insignificant. Moreover, on account of their small size and low freeboard, they offered a very small target. This is, of course, an advantage, and makes it advisable to keep at a great distance; as at short range it is almost equally easy to hit a large or a small mark. Finally, at long range the weak armour of the three vessels would suffice. To a less degree the same applies to the "Sissoi Veliky." The opponents of these four ships, just named, were Japanese armoured cruisers, having no 12" or 10" guns. All their battleships directed their efforts against our four ships of the "Suvorov" type. On the other hand, the battleships "Imperator Nikolai I" and "Navarin," and the cruiser "Nakhimov," if placed in line of battle, required a short range on account of their obsolete heavy ordnance and of the necessity of having with their weak guns to penetrate the armour of the well-protected Japanese armoured cruisers. It was for this reason, possibly, that Rozhdestvensky had to seek battle at close range. He may also have been attracted by the desire to make the action as decisive as possible. The advantage or disadvantage of such procedure is, however, not a subject for discussion. It could only be seen on the spot and could only be the result of a proper appreciation by him of the whole of the circumstances. The real misfortune was that the choice of range did not rest with him. Not only had his ships less speed, but he was ham-





THE FORWARD BATTERY OF THE "VARIAG" COMMANDED BY  
ENSIGN GOUBONIEV.



pered by a fleet of transports, of which some were far slower than the slowest of his battleships. The Japanese fleet was more homogeneous, and would gain at short ranges; but it may have been restrained from fighting in that way, by its reluctance to engage in a decisive general action. Admiral Rozhestvensky would have to submit to this course, though after all it was not without advantages for him. In such case he would get all possible advantage from his superiority in the number of heavy guns.

## (II) EMERGENCIES: DEATH OF THE LEADER IN ACTION

One of the peculiarities of a naval action is the great probability of the officer in supreme command being killed or wounded. At the same time it usually happens that many of his assistants also may be placed *hors de combat*. On land this probability is incomparably less. The commander of an army is not immediately under fire; if he exposes himself he is justly blamed for so doing. Even the commander of a *corps d'armée*—the late Count Keller—was found fault with for having gone into a place of danger quite uselessly. A German military writer, too, blamed Kuropatkin, not for being under fire, but for being too near the front; and held up Marshal Oyama as an example, for remaining far in the rear and receiving information by telegraph of all that was taking place in the fighting zone, directing the battle like a game of chess. This is how it should be; and therefore the putting out of action of superior officers on land is very rare—happening only by chance. Lastly, even if some accident should happen, there is always a capable substitute at hand among a numerous staff. At sea it is quite the reverse. The chief of a fleet or squadron must be on board one of the ships, in company with the whole of his staff. It is enough for this ship to go down, as for example was the case with the “Petropavlovsk,” for the Commander-in-Chief to be lost with the whole of his staff. On board, the admiral is subject to the same risk as any sailor, and even more so than

some ; as, for example, the engine-room complement, and those in the magazines and shell-rooms. In general, all below the armoured deck and consequently below the water-line, are out of reach of direct hits, and incur considerably less immediate danger than those above. This is why the officer in command has so often been put out of action, e.g. in this war, Admirals Makarov and Withoeft. It was so in former times. The famous Nelson, and the no less famous De Ruyter, both perished in action. The chief officers of the staff are usually grouped round the admiral in a small space, either in the conning-tower or on the bridge, and there also is the captain of the ship. All these persons were put out of action on board the "Tsesarevitch" on 3 July, by a single shot. To transfer the command to another admiral in another ship is very difficult. It must be done by signal ; but it often turns out that the signalling gear, which of necessity is quite exposed, is destroyed or damaged, as was the case with Admiral Ukhtomsky. This is also nothing new. In the Sinope action, when Nakhimov, delighted with the manœuvres of his subordinate, Admiral Novosilsky, wished to express his gratitude by signal, it proved impossible, as all the signal halliards were destroyed. Finally, an admiral who has just taken over the command, although he has seen what has occurred in the action, yet, not having been in constant communication with his chief, cannot know all his intentions and plans, developed as these have been in the course of the battle. There is no possibility whatever of transmitting all this, on account of the difficulty of signalling in action. Further, he cannot learn it from any one of the staff of the late admiral ; all of them, even if not killed, are at any rate on board another ship.

It is quite impossible to place the chief of the squadron in a position of absolute safety. He must see everything, and as in a naval action events develop quickly, he must without delay give the necessary orders. As it may happen that it is impossible to do this by signals, he must be able to show his intentions by the movements of his own ship, for which purpose he must be ahead of his squadron. In order to

diminish as far as possible the risk of being put out of action, the chief of the squadron must be on board the largest and best-protected ship. Hence it was that Togo hoisted his flag on the "Mikasa" and Rozhestvensky on the "Suvorov." Admiral Ukhtomsky, in conversation with some correspondents and also in his report, said that his squadron got scattered because no one saw his signal "Follow me," which was hoisted on the rail of the bridge. It was impossible to hoist it on the masts as they had been carried away. This, though, is more than strange. The difficulty of signalling in action, I repeat, is not new, and the rule, always existing in naval actions, is to follow the motions of the admiral. If Admiral Ukhtomsky had remembered this and made for Vladivostok, the whole squadron would have done so too. When he turned back to Port Arthur, even without being able to make out his signal all followed suit. From what we have said, it is evident that in future naval actions every possible effort is likely to be made at the outset to damage the Commander-in-Chief's flagship.

### (III) NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE PACIFIC FLEET

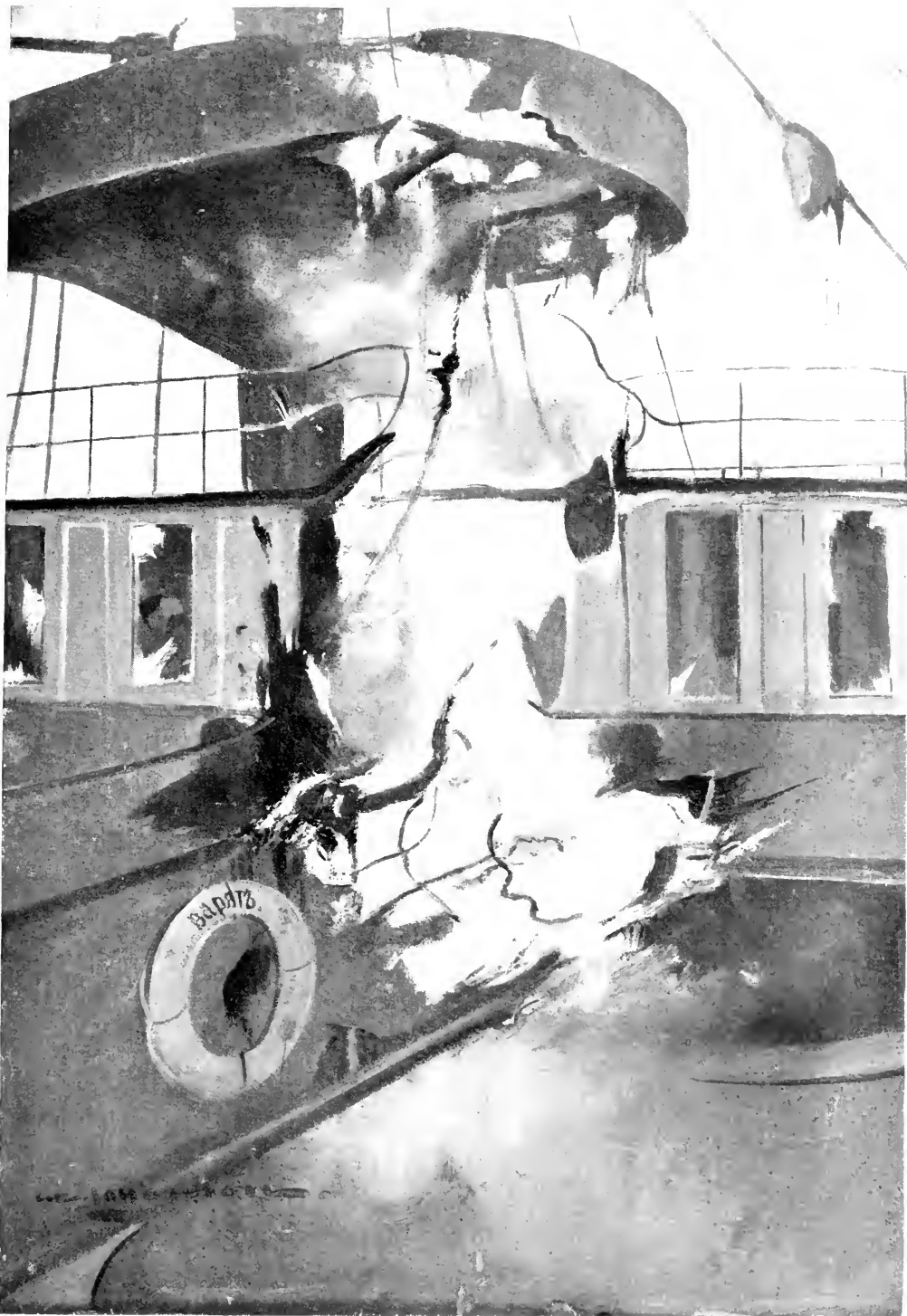
Until Vice-Admiral Birilev was appointed commander of the fleet in the Pacific, this post had remained vacant for almost five months after the appointment of Vice-Admiral Skrydlov as member of the Admiralty Council. Then the necessity was again recognized for the post at the seat of war, and it is only to be regretted that there should have been such hesitation with regard to the organization of the highest command in our naval forces. The position of "Commander of the Fleet" is of the utmost importance as uniting in the hands of one man all the operations of the different parts of the fleet, often separated by enormous distances. To do this is not within the power of a local squadron commander, as he is often away at sea. Besides this, the activities of the naval departments ashore must be so directed as to assist the active fleet in the

best manner. This is also attained by all being subordinated to a commander-in-chief. Unfortunately, their relation to the chiefs of squadrons and separate detachments is not precisely defined in our naval organization, and there is a possibility therefore of various disputes, or even opposition; and as a result injury to the enterprise in hand. Finally, a like indefiniteness attaches to the relations of a squadron commander with the land authorities of coast fortresses. On the other hand, within the regions assigned to him, all the commandants of coast fortresses are subordinated to the "Commander of the Fleet."

The appointment of Admiral Birilev to this distinguished post could only be welcomed. He was one of our best admirals, and had spent his whole career on active service, in uninterrupted sea work, having commanded vessels since 1880. From 1897 he occupied the posts first of chief of the gunnery-squadron, and then of Commander of the Mediterranean squadron. In the first capacity he made his mark by the fact that, having found it in an archaic state, with great skill and energy he formed it on quite new bases, in harmony with the present conditions of gunnery science. It must not be forgotten that it was he who directed attention to the eminent talents of Rozhestvensky, who was then his subordinate and a captain of the senior grade. The latter was also far from being in favour, but Birilev did all he could to advance a talented officer. As Commander-in-Chief at Cronstadt, Admiral Birilev exhibited splendid qualities as an organizer—every one knows what energy he devoted to the fitting out of the second and third squadrons for the Far East. In Europe he was in charge of the defences of the Baltic, and consequently was thoroughly prepared for similar duty on our coasts in the Pacific Ocean.

#### (IV) INFORMATION FURNISHED INDISCREETLY

We noticed with a feeling of satisfaction that our Press after a time ceased to publish information which might be useful to the Japanese, especially what was apparently confidential. We may recall the publication by the Admiralty, four days before the first



BRIDGE OF THE "VARIAG" AFTER THE BURSTING OF A SHELL





sortie by Admiral Withoef from Port Arthur (on 23 June), of a detailed communication on the completion of the repairs to our ships, the consequence of which was the concentration of the whole Japanese fleet off Port Arthur by the date of the sortie of our fleet. Take again the reports of General Gripenberg, and many items of information extracted from the reports of various senior officers at the seat of war which our military censorship allowed to appear in the Press. This also happened : in No. 142 of the "Rus," I read a conversation with the Chief of the Ministry of Marine, for which no doubt the paper was not to blame. From it I learnt that Admiral Rozhestvensky felt "worn out," as the inevitable effect of the "constant tension of nerves and fatiguing work." Further, "this fatigue was particularly trying on account of his having suffered from kidney disease before his departure." It was later added that the state of Admiral Rozhestvensky's health had nevertheless not deteriorated a whit since he started on his voyage. This was in evident contradiction to the first statement, but it would not remove its impression on the Japanese.

It was next given out that Rozhestvensky's second in command, Rear-Admiral Felkersham—the commander of half the battleships—was ill. This was also not a bad "tip" for our opponents. It was also asserted that the "long stay of the squadron in the latitude of Madagascar, with its tropical heat, had affected the health of Admiral Felkersham more than the rest," i.e. that on the whole the health of the squadron was not very grand. Finally, we learned that the main task of Admiral Rozhestvensky was "to conduct the fleet to Vladivostok," and it was hinted also in no ambiguous manner that herewith his task might end, as "he was still chief of the General Naval Staff."

Afterwards, we were wondering what course Rozhestvensky would take, and what the Japanese would really do ; we were glad that the Japanese had at last set themselves a riddle which we ourselves were not helping them to read—when all of a sudden there appeared statements as to Rozhestvensky's main

task ; what he was to do when he reached Vladivostok, by what means he would compel Admiral Togo to accept battle if the latter tried to avoid it, how we sent our steamers with coal to Vladivostok, etc., etc.—all useful facts for the enemy.

In conclusion, I will briefly criticize Admiral Ukhtomsky's action in the fight of 10 August. In the statement made referring to that action, the view was expressed that the return to Port Arthur was justified by, among other things, the circumstances that two of his ships turned back for that point on their own initiative, as they did not see his signals, and that he found them already in Port Arthur when he himself arrived. This assertion is very strange. I know from credible sources that during the action, one of the ships was a long way ahead of the whole fleet, and all expected that she would be supported. As a matter of fact, she only turned back when she saw that all the rest, the Admiral included, had done the same. Darkness then came on, and she lost sight of the other ships, but being a fast vessel arrived in Port Arthur before the others. It appears, then, that she went there, not on her own initiative, but through following the course of the Admiral's ship. Perhaps the other ship also reached Port Arthur before the Admiral for the same reason.

#### (V) THE RIVAL ADMIRALS ABOUT TO JOIN BATTLE: THEIR PLANS

A whole series of despatches showed that Admiral Rozhdestvensky loaded coal at the Saddle Islands (lying off the mouth of the Yang-tse-Kiang), and on the evening of 27 May or on the morning of 28 May sailed to the north-east, i.e. in the direction of the Gulf of Korea. In the gulf lies the island of Tsushima, news of the appearance of the Russian squadron off which, was given in communications from Tokio of 28 May. We must reckon the great advantage Rozhdestvensky had in its being possible to take in coal so near the most probable locality of a battle with the Japanese. Although from the Saddle Islands to Vladivostok is about a thousand miles, all the large ships of the

Russian squadron had coal supplies for a run of about two thousand miles. The battleships had not on an average so much, because it was much easier for them than for others to coal *en route* at sea. When awaiting battle it is necessary to have steam up in all boilers, in order, in case of need, to get up full speed; also, through the unavoidable damage in battle to funnels, the expenditure of coal is sure to be much augmented.

I do not know exactly what were the considerations which induced Admiral Togo to allow our fleet to go so far without opposition, and permit it to coal peacefully. It is clear, however, that Togo reserved to himself the advantage of giving battle in the immediate neighbourhood of his own ports.

Togo's plan was thus defined: that he with his whole fleet should bar Rozhestvensky's passage in the Tsushima Straits. According to one of our latest reports he kept himself during the whole time at Masampo, a fine bay on the Korean side of the Straits. The bay was at one time intended as the base of the Russian fleet, and one of our most distinguished admirals strongly advised the occupation of this place in preference to Port Arthur. To return to Togo's plan. He could not definitely foresee the route that Admiral Rozhestvensky would take, and could not decide whether it would really be in the Straits of Tsushima that he would meet him in battle; but he clearly resolved not to go and seek for his antagonist on the wide ocean. He would await him, instead, in such a place where he would assuredly have to pass close by. Of such places there were only three—Tsushima, Tsugaru, and La Perouse Straits. The last two were unsuited to the Russian fleet, because in order to reach them a great expenditure of coal was necessary. For the Japanese the difficulty lay in the distance of these straits from their bases. Stationing several scouting vessels, fitted with wireless telegraphy, at some 200 to 250 miles off the Straits of Tsugaru, to observe any ships coming in this direction round the eastern side of the island of Yezo, and with the help of the coast look-out stations on the Kurile Islands, Togo would from time to time have received news of the approaching Russian

fleet, and could therefore hasten with his fleet to any point in these waters, since his course would lie off the west coast of Japan, e.g. off the island of Sado. He would certainly have arrived there from Masampo in the same time which should have brought Admiral Rozhstvensky past Formosa, off the eastern coast of Japan. I have previously discussed the immense difficulty of searching for a foe in the open sea, where he may select his own route, leaving behind no trace whatever. Togo's decision was considerably affected by this. This resolve certainly goes to show that on no account did Togo desire to let Admiral Rozhstvensky's squadron enter Vladivostok, about which so much was written at the time, so as to secure for its destruction the means which succeeded so well for the Japanese at Port Arthur. Neither did he evidently wish to run the risk of the Russian fleet's escape—a risk that was undoubted had he gone in search off the coasts of Japan. The second reason which led Togo to his decision was, as I mentioned above, a desire to give battle in proximity to his own ports. In that respect the Tsushima Straits offered the greatest advantages.

These straits are divided by the island of Tsushima into two channels; the eastern, which is the wider, bears the name of the Strait of Korea; the western is known as Broughton's Gulf. Near the entrance to the former, on the Japanese coast, is situated one of the chief naval arsenals of Japan, Sasebo; and not far south of that is Nagasaki, where are also docks and extensive means for the repair of ships. In the centre of the gulf is a narrow passage, leading to the Sea of Japan. It is defended by powerful fortifications, and not far distant is a second first-class arsenal, Kure. At a distance of about twenty-four hours' steaming from the opening of the strait, there is yet another naval arsenal—Maytzuru. In Broughton's Gulf there are no places suitable for naval bases; but at the commencement of the war, Fusan and Masampo were equipped by the Japanese, who, as usual, spared no pains to make their work perfect. Of large docks there are none; but there may have been floating docks for ships of moderate dimensions, and,

likewise, all necessaries for repairing vessels which might call here instead of making the journey to Sasebo or Kure.

Finally, an arsenal of the second rank, Tagesaki, is situated on the island of Tsushima. To this must be added, that all these ports are situated at the head of excellent and wide bays, which admit of easy defence by mines, fortifications, and artillery. Besides these, along the coast of Japan—and also along this part of the coast of Korea—there are good and convenient harbours in which a damaged fleet may find temporary refuge, and which would serve as suitable places for the numerous Japanese torpedo flotillas and the submarines.

The inaction of the Japanese torpedo flotillas seems strange. By operating from Formosa and the Pescadores Islands, these flotillas would have caused not a little embarrassment to the Russian squadron on its arrival off the coast of Cochin China and the Saddle Islands. The only logical explanation of such inaction was that Togo desired to preserve all his strength and all his torpedo vessels in complete readiness for the supreme blow in the Straits.

#### (VI) SIGNIFICANCE OF A BATTLE IN THE STRAITS

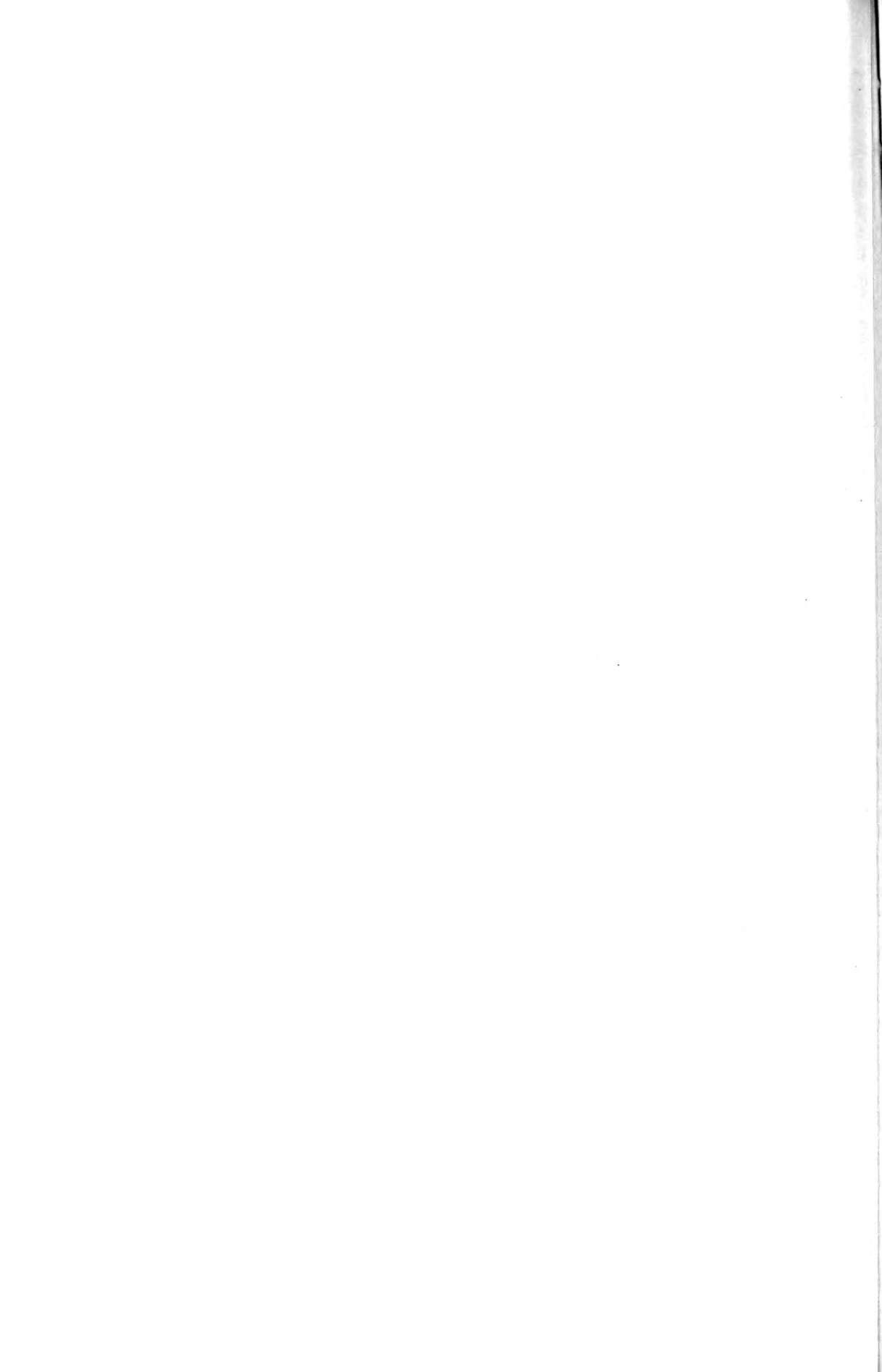
The desire to give battle in the Straits might also enter into Togo's plans, and the meaning of this is only too clear, as I hope to show. I have already said that in a naval engagement it is convenient to possess the possibility of movement in any required direction, and above all to be able to engage at the most convenient range for oneself. If your antagonist desires to draw near and it is more advantageous for you to give battle at a long range, the only way of preventing him is to draw off in the direction opposite to that from which your antagonist is approaching. Should the enemy have the superiority in speed, it is at least necessary to adopt such tactics as will, so far as possible, prevent his approach to the range most favourable for him. I have previously discussed in detail the most advantageous ranges. In passing through a strait, however, both of whose coasts were in the hands of the enemy, and studded

with bays in which his torpedo flotilla and submarines might be concealed; one also, as in this case, which offered the best chances of reaching Vladivostok with any damaged ships, Admiral Rozhstvensky was seriously hampered in manœuvring. He could only steam ahead along the Strait, while Togo might manœuvre therein as he pleased. The Strait was also more convenient for the operations of the many Japanese torpedo craft and submarines. In a naval battle it is desirable to take up a definite position in relation to the enemy, having regard to the position of the sun, the direction of the wind, and the trend of the coasts, if the battle be fought in their neighbourhood.

It is most convenient to have the sun astern, especially in the morning or evening, when it is not high above the horizon, for then it shines directly into the eyes of the enemy's gunners and greatly hinders their aim, while for us, on the contrary, the target is excellently lit up. In a naval battle, which, properly speaking, is an artillery duel, this is a very valuable consideration. Indeed, during the battle of 14 August, 1904, Admiral Jessen was guilty of a gross error in manœuvring when he allowed Admiral Kamimura to take up a position between himself and the sun. It is true that to escape the harmful effect caused by the sun's rays shining straight into the eyes of the gunners the latter put on yellow-coloured glasses (and there was an ample supply of such glasses on board Admiral Rozhstvensky's fleet), but these only partly minimized the trouble. It is, in any circumstances, more difficult to sink an approaching ship when there is a brilliantly shining sun astern of her. It is also very important to take advantage of the direction of the wind, since the advantages are particularly great when the breeze is so strong as to cause a fairly rough sea. In this case it would be more convenient to steer one's fleet in line abreast against the wind, and allow the enemy to follow astern. In so doing the enemy's bow-chase guns will be exposed to a head sea and the spray, and their action consequently hindered, whilst our stern-chase guns would fire in perfect freedom. The enemy



THE FIRST SHELLS FIRED BY THE JAPANESE FLEET AT A DISTANCE OF NINE THOUSAND METRES.





would also suffer from leaks in the bows of their vessels from shot-holes readily admitting water; whereas our leaks in the stern would be far less dangerous, and it would be much easier to repair them as opportunity offered.

Finally, if an engagement takes place near the shore, it is best to take up a position between land and the enemy, so that vessels' outlines may be concealed against the loom of the land. Otherwise a ship stands clearly out on the line of the horizon, and this has a distinct influence on the *coup d'œil* of the gunners. Moreover, the greatest errors in "placing" shots arise from an erroneous estimate of the foe's range. When there is a clear horizon astern of the enemy, it is very easy to judge this distance correctly; when the shore is at his back this cannot be done.

It is evident that in order to get the full benefit of these advantages in position of sun and shore, and the direction of the wind, it is necessary to be able to manœuvre freely in any desired directions, and in the Tsushima Straits (the same, of course, holds good for the Straits of Tsugaru and La Perouse) this would have been impossible for Rozhestvensky, but much easier for Admiral Togo. This all appears perfectly logical. The outlet from Takesiki port towards the island of Tsushima is in the direction of Broughton's Gulf, so that in this channel, submarines and torpedo-boats threatened our squadron from two sides, but in the Korean Gulf only from one side. Arriving off the island of Tsushima unobserved—this, it would appear, was the acknowledged fact, judging by telegrams—Rozhestvensky would leave all the Japanese ports and the part of the Japanese coast indented with bays behind him. In Broughton's Gulf, on the other hand, there was none of this. Finally, he might receive news to the effect that Togo was still at Masampo, and, in addition, starting from the island of Tsushima (i.e. from the opposite point which he was already unable to pass unperceived), where the Korean Gulf widens and Broughton's Gulf contracts. Consequently the liberty of manœuvring at war speed became more and more limited in the latter instance, while in the former it was possible to more readily conceal oneself from shore.

## CHAPTER IV

### (I) THE TACTICS AND STRATEGY OF THE BATTLE

**I** NOW turn to the analysis of the battle itself from the point of view of naval tactics. One is immediately struck with the idea that our fleet was taken quite unawares by the Japanese, as if it were not expecting to meet the whole fleet of the enemy. If this was indeed so, it means that the reconnoitring was very badly managed.

Although the force of cruisers with Admiral Rozhstvensky was much weaker than that of the Japanese, yet when our fleet left the Saddle Islands and was at no great distance from the Straits of Korea, while it still had the chance to retreat, this force might have gone forward to reconnoitre on both sides of Tsushima island, and have satisfied itself as to the presence here of a considerable force of the enemy. Certainly in this case there would have been a risk of losing part of the cruisers, but this would have been a reasonable loss—and at least the situation would have become clear.

From the description of the battle, it is evident that our fleet entered the Straits with the cruisers drawn up on the flank, i.e. the battleships and cruisers entered at the same time. This means that the cruisers—the eyes of the fleet—were not made use of. They might have gone far ahead, and communicated with the battle fleet by wireless telegraphy. By means of a chain, formed of groups of cruisers, the situation might have been reconnoitred two hundred miles ahead. There would not have been any special difficulty in guarding against a torpedo-attack. Such attacks, on ships unharmed by gun fire and having room to manœuvre, have little chance of success. This was proved in the battle. The ships which perished in the torpedo attack on

the night of 27–28 May were either those which had been badly damaged by the enemy's fire, or those surrounded by other ships and deprived of room to manœuvre. The great majority of cruisers did not receive the heaviest fire of the enemy and were not much damaged. These appeared unhurt on the morning of 28 May, although one of them, according to the report of her commander, had a narrow escape from the Japanese torpedo-boats, which launched seventeen torpedoes at a short distance.

The appearance of our cruisers in the Straits, twenty-four hours before the main force, would probably have drawn thither a considerable detachment of the Japanese, and from this it might have been guessed that the main body of the enemy was not far off. The only possible explanation of the fact that cruisers were not sent ahead to reconnoitre, is that there was a hope that our fleet would reach the Straits unobserved and pass quickly through before the Japanese were prepared to bar the way. In that case, sending ahead a cruiser detachment would have betrayed our intentions. However, it is hard to believe in this explanation, when one considers how much superior the enemy's fleet was in scouting vessels. Meanwhile, if the presence of the main body of the Japanese in the Straits had been discovered, our squadron could have turned back and waited for more favourable weather—sailed round to the east of Japan, or tried to baffle the enemy by false moves. Even if the presence of the enemy's principal force had not been discovered, and it had been decided for some good reason to advance to the Korean Straits, an elementary knowledge of tactics ought to have shown Rozhestvensky that, granted a meeting with the enemy's main force was unavoidable, it was most likely to take place in the most unfavourable situation for us—in a strait, under circumstances the very worst for us and best for the enemy. If this was so, the formation adopted by our fleet in passing through the Straits is inexplicable.

## (II) ADVANTAGES OF LINE-FORMATION

It is a fundamental rule in naval tactics, that in battle a fleet must be drawn up in line. Many years' experience in naval

warfare, the results of manœuvres, the opinions of all prominent naval writers, all agree that a fleet in two or more lines is not in good order for battle. The reason for this is clear. In the appended sketch are shown different formations of the enemy (black) with regard to our ships (white) in one and two lines. If the enemy, equal to us in number and strength of ships, is drawn up entirely on one side of our single line (Fig. 1) the chances of both in the artillery battle are equal, since the number of firing guns are identical. We can fire with the guns on the port side whilst the enemy will use those to starboard. On board a ship the majority of quick-firing guns fire on one broadside (Fig. 5). In the turrets placed fore and aft are the large guns (in battleships 12" and 10", and in the Japanese armoured cruisers 8"). These, as can be seen, fire on both sides of the ship. If the enemy were to divide and place our line between two fires (Fig. 2) it would be to his disadvantage. In the first place the number of our guns in action would be nearly double his, since he could only use the turret guns firing fore and aft, and half his smaller guns; while we should not have a single gun idle. Moreover, the enemy's shots which went over our ships would probably strike his own vessels. One advantage to the enemy would be that the ships at the extremities of our line would be firing at long range; but for this advantage to be material our line would have to be very long. Figs. 3 and 4 show that the result would be quite different if our fleet were drawn up in two lines. In the first case (Fig. 3) the number of our guns in action would be half those of the enemy, and his shot which passed over our line on the port side would fall on our starboard line. In the second case the number of our guns in action would be the same as his; but the chances of victory would be greater for the enemy. It does not do to reckon that the ships of one line can fire through the intervals between the ships of another line. Such firing would be only casual, irregular, and, in the thick of battle, dangerous to a degree.

A vital disadvantage of formation in two columns consists in the difficulty of manœuvring. A naval battle is a continuous

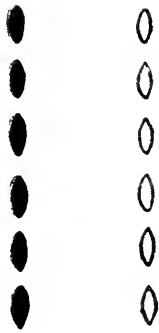


FIG. 1.

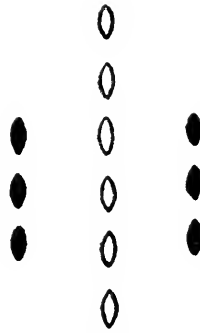


FIG. 2.

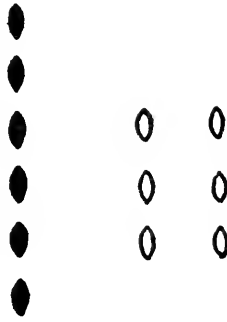


FIG. 3.

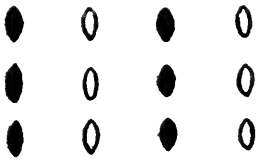


FIG. 4.

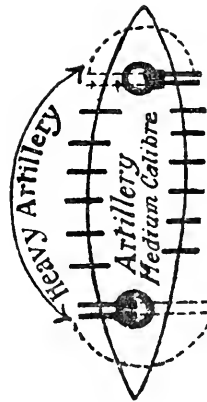
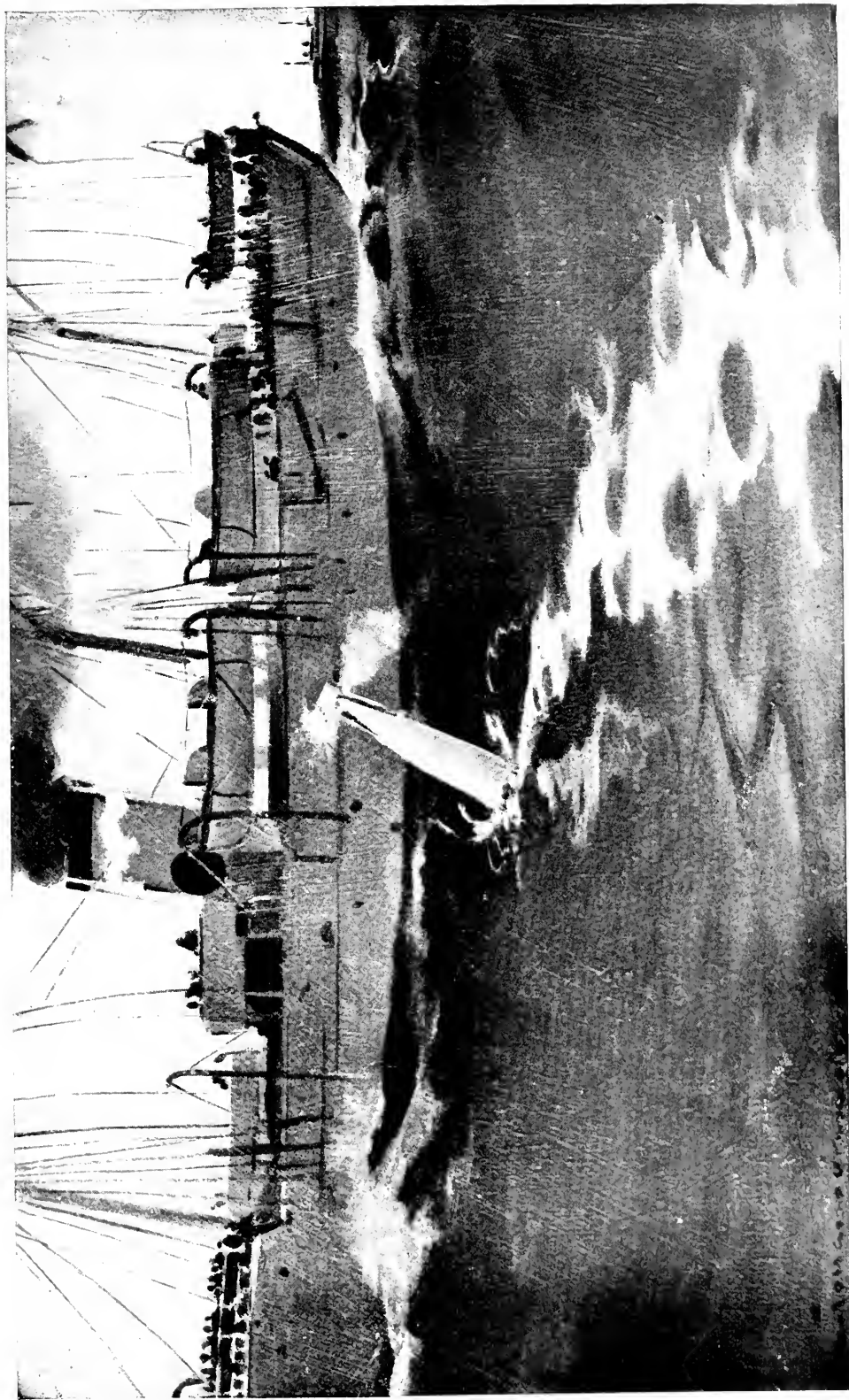


FIG. 5.

movement. A single column can wriggle like a snake, and change direction again and again. If there are two columns, when such movements are suddenly made, and in the heat of battle, collisions must result. For instance, if the chief of the fleet is with the starboard column and is obliged to turn to port, then to avoid confusion he must go ahead of the port column in order that it may lose way; if he moves to starboard, not losing way, then the port column is considerably behind. . . .

One can picture to oneself how all these inconveniences which I have mentioned are increased when there are not two columns merely but several. Then, indeed, chaos must be the result. Again, formation in several columns is specially inconvenient on passing through a strait, where a torpedo-attack is expected, or where there may be floating mines scattered about. When there is a single column, if the first ship does not strike a mine then the way is safe for the others; but when there are several columns the probability of striking mines is greatly increased. And so too there is a greater possibility of striking on a series of mines scattered about or thrown across a strait. Success in the repulse of a torpedo attack depends to a large extent on freedom of manœuvring, but this freedom is wanting when the fleet is in several columns. Lastly, the danger of such a formation is infinitely greater in a fog, for this is the most favourable opportunity for the enemy's torpedo attack. These are reasons why, when expecting to meet the enemy, a fleet always forms in one line.

In pointing out the advantages of a single column, I had in view battleships and armoured cruisers, which, according to their strength, are capable of fighting in a so-called *line*. This expression has been in use from time immemorial and indicates what ought to be the battle formation, whence the phrase, "ship of the line." With regard to light cruisers, some of these are selected to form separate divisions—one or several, according to their number—to be kept entirely out of the battle formation, at a sufficient distance so as not to interfere with manœuvres.



AT THREE METRES FROM THE "KOREETS" A TORPEDO TILTED UP ON END AND DISAPPEARED  
(An incident of the fight off Chemulpo).





Their task, by taking advantage of the different combinations of the battle, is to render help according to their ability where it is required, to attack the weak points in the hostile formation, and to prevent the execution of similar attacks by similar light cruisers of the enemy. In a like separate division the torpedo vessels are formed. This division endeavours to so dispose itself as to avoid the fire of the enemy, and must observe precautions up to the end of the battle, so as to be fit to assail the enemy's damaged ships.

### (III) HOW THE TRANSPORTS PROVED A HINDRANCE

As regards the transports, which in the battle itself proved a hindrance, it is usually considered wise to keep these as far as possible from the fleet, and out of sight, on the side opposite from where the enemy may be expected. In the present case the proper place for these transports would have been about twenty to thirty miles behind the battle fleet. After the battle had opened in the eastern passage, of which they would have been aware by the sound of the firing or learnt by wireless telegraphy, they might have made directly for the western passage and thence to Vladivostok. During the general engagement in the eastern passage, pushing the transports through the western passage would have offered the best chances of success. It would have been quite reasonable to have kept the transports with the fleet and protected them if the encounter with the Japanese had taken place in the vicinity of Formosa, or farther south; but in that event the best defence would have been to have sent them, during the hours of battle, as far from the fleet as possible. Here, when from the scene of action it was, at most, only forty-eight hours' cruise from Vladivostok, there was no special need to keep the transports with the fleet, and they might easily have been either left behind at the Saddle Islands or taken round the east of Japan, or, as mentioned above, sent through the western part of the Straits of Korea.

At all events, in view of the proximity of Vladivostok, it might have been possible to risk them, and send them (along with the

colliers and auxiliary cruisers left at Shanghai) through the western passage during the night preceding the appearance of the fleet in the eastern passage. They would have attracted to themselves a considerable number of torpedo-vessels and small craft. To keep them about the fleet during the battle, and guard them from firing and the attack of small cruisers, was a senseless proceeding, and the worst way to protect them. They terribly impeded the squadron in manœuvres, and all the cruisers, and even larger vessels like the "Oleg," "Aurora," "Dmitri Donskoi," and "Monomakh," were specially occupied in their defence; the torpedo-vessels also crowded round them, being thereby rendered of practically no advantage. If the torpedo-craft had kept to one side of the area of the battle, as the Japanese arranged theirs (they only moved them out after sunset), ours might have had chances at night of attacking the Japanese fleet and doing their work as destroyers, protecting the vessels at the extremity of our squadron, against which the full force of the Japanese torpedo-vessels was concentrated. Among the latter were very many small torpedo-vessels for coast defence, and here would have been sufficient work for our destroyers. However, being scattered among the columns, under a cross fire, part were withdrawn from the line for no reason at all; others confined themselves to saving men from sinking vessels; part left the scene of action with the cruisers as night came on—at the very moment when they might have been of advantage to the fleet. It may possibly be that, in defending these unfortunate transports, our cruisers were rendered useless. At the time the Japanese cruiser division appeared in sight of our squadron,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours before the battle of the main fleet, and, having observed its disposition, reported it to Admiral Togo, enabling him to arrange his plan of operations accordingly; at that time the cruiser division, during the battle, passed from one wing to the other of our fleet, and produced complete confusion among the transports. Our cruisers kept close to the fleet and the transports, and made no attempt to prevent the Japanese cruisers giving their admiral a complete

report of the strength and disposition of our fleet. Meanwhile, in view of our squadron, there appeared to port (see the report of General Linievitch, p. 111) a particularly weak scouting division—two second and two third-class cruisers—and to starboard only one third-class cruiser. The division to port approached so near our squadron that the second division of battleships opened fire on it (see Linievitch's report). After having inspected everything, it withdrew. As night drew on, all our cruisers, whose task should have been to attract to themselves the torpedo-attacks against the battleships and destroy the Japanese torpedo-boats, quitted the armoured ship division, near which, in the morning, there was only one cruiser, the "Izumrud."

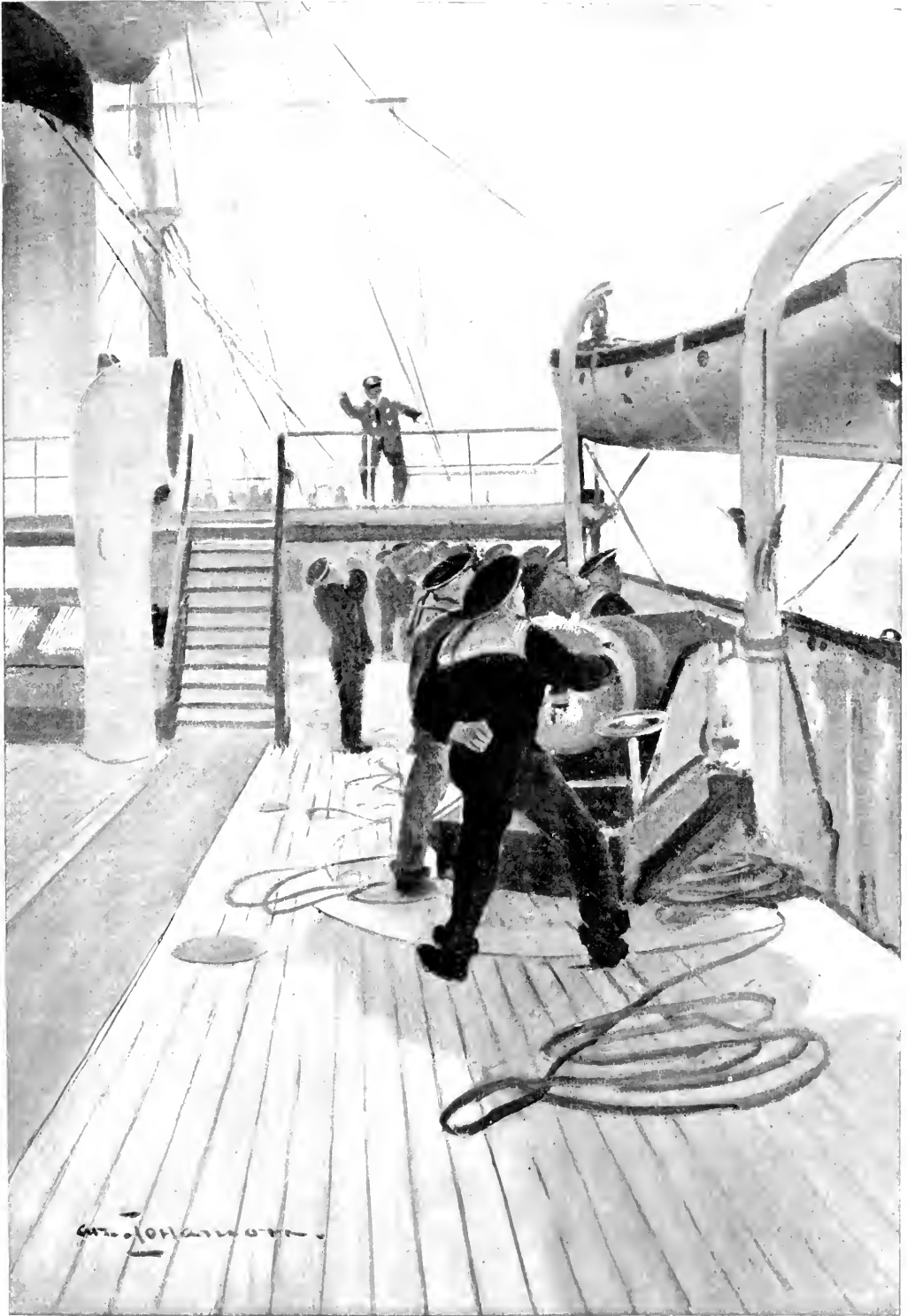
I return now to the three divisions of armoured vessels, of four ships in each. At first they were in one column (see Linievitch's report), extended along the strait, one division astern of the other. About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours before the appearance of the enemy, however, they were formed into two columns, with an interval between them of three cables (three hundred *sazhens* of six feet). The starboard column consisted in all of four battleships of the "Suvorov" type, and astern of the port column was attached Admiral Enquist's division of cruisers.

#### (IV) FRONTAL AND LINE FORMATIONS EXPLAINED

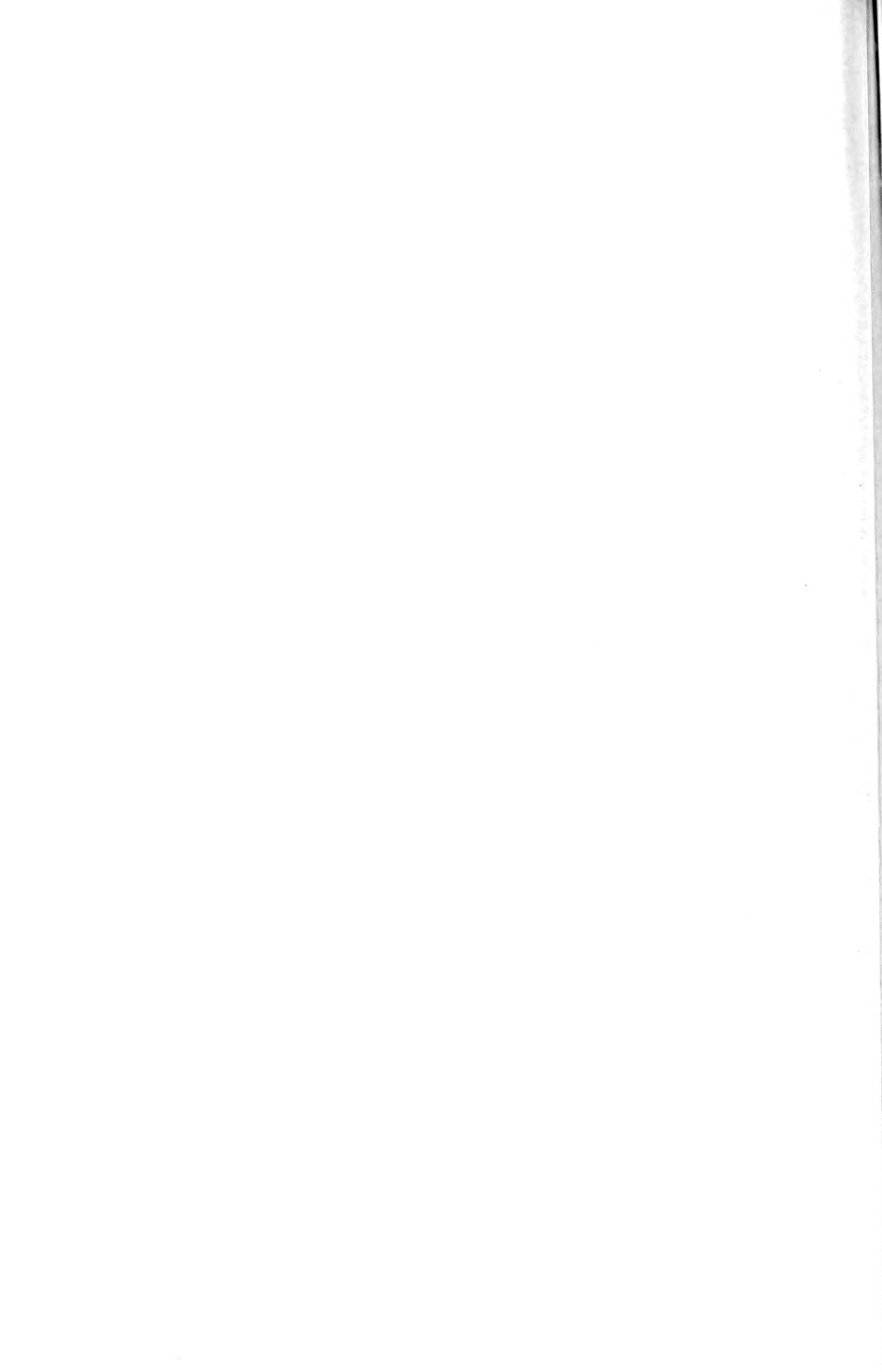
In speaking of the necessity of ships being in one line for battle, I did not point out that this might be done by two methods. What is known as a "line ahead" is where vessels follow one another in file. If they are extended in one line, abreast of one another, i.e. from side to side, then such formation is known as "line abreast." Each formation has its advantages and its defects, but both are necessary, and each forms the complement of the other.

I have already mentioned one of the advantages of the line ahead formation, the flexibility and facility of turning it affords, and in this respect the line abreast formation is the direct opposite. In order to change direction while in this

latter formation, it is necessary that the end vessel at the side on which the turn is to be made should remain stationary, while the vessel at the other extremity should describe an arc whose radius is the length of the whole line. Meanwhile, the intervening vessels describe arcs of correspondingly less radius. All this is executed according to definite rules requiring great attention, besides signalling; therefore it is evidently very difficult to perform in time of battle. It is also generally difficult to retain this formation in order if first one vessel moves ahead and then another. But if we imagine two fleets advancing directly towards one another, one in line abreast and the other in line ahead, the advantage to the former will be enormous. The vessels of the former fleet can concentrate the fire of all their bow guns on the foremost vessel of the latter, but the vessels forming the second fleet screen the enemy from one another, and the rearmost vessels have to fire at too great a distance. The foremost vessel of the second fleet will probably be overpowered; and as the flagship usually leads, there is the greatest probability of the admiral being put out of action. For this reason, once the enemy approaches us in line abreast formation, it is necessary to adopt this formation also, or, if this is undesirable, to extend the line ahead formation until it becomes parallel to the enemy's formation. Then our position would be even more advantageous, as we can bring all our guns on the port side to bear, while he can only reply with his bow guns. Moreover, we can, thanks to the flexibility of our formation, begin to outflank the port side of the enemy. To hinder us from doing that, he will have to re-form out from line abreast to line ahead, for which purpose his ships will have to turn simultaneously to port at right angles. If he were late in beginning this manœuvre, and we were already on his flank, this move would be very dangerous for him, as his foremost vessel (formerly on the left flank) would be exposed to the concentrated fire of all our fleet, and then all his vessels would have to turn at right angles to starboard and begin to turn our rear, while we



FIRING THE FIRST SHOT FROM THE OREGON



should carry out the same relation to his rear vessels. Then the chances would be even. For these reasons I am of opinion that it is evident that in a naval battle the line ahead formation and the line abreast formation ought to alternate, and either antagonist should be able at any moment to pass from one formation to the other. To effect this there must be freedom to manœuvre, which was lacking from our fleet at Tsushima owing to its formation in parallel columns, and also to the presence of the transports, which created panic, hampered the whole formation, and introduced disorder.

#### (V) THE PERSONAL ELEMENT

To complete our examination of the causes which led our fleet to disaster at Tsushima we must now discuss the chief cause—the personal element. Indeed, upon this factor fall all the strategic errors in the fleet's movements; tactical mistakes in battle; the surrender of some vessels, and the departure of others from the scene of action; wrong firing; and finally, bad equipment and faulty construction of vessels. For all these, *men* are clearly to blame. It has often been declared in the Press, and publicly, that the chief cause of these defects in the personal element may be found in the fact that, generally speaking, we are not a maritime nation, that on this account good sailors cannot be raised among us. (How is it possible to fight at sea without good sailors?) Again, it is said that because the Japanese are a sea-going nation they built an excellent fleet in some ten to fifteen years. It is also said that after all a fleet is of no use to us whatever, and sea warfare is so unnatural to us that it should be put a stop to once for all.

I cannot agree with this in any way. It was of course difficult to discuss the matter when the impression produced by the annihilation of nearly all the Russian fleet was so vivid, and when many wanted to explain the disaster by purely elemental causes. Now, however, it is different. I do not consider it right to keep silence.

Most of all I am struck by the supposed desperate condition of our land forces. But in the faces of those who talk like this, cannot the fact be thrown that this war has clearly shown that our army is bad, our diplomacy bad, and many other things bad? Are we therefore not to have an army because it has shown itself bad and displayed, through lack of development and culture, its incapability of adopting the methods of modern military art? Has the Japanese army proved worse than the Japanese fleet? Has it once lost a battle? Has it not taken Port Arthur from us, and captured thousands of our men, not only at Port Arthur, but after Mukden? Has not artillery fallen into its hands on land, with large stores of provisions and military stores, our plans, and even secret ciphers? All that has been the case. This means that the Japanese have constructed very rapidly, not only an excellent fleet, but an excellent army, and that no less rapidly than the fleet. It means that Japan is not only more of a naval nation than we are, but more of a land power as well. In Japan there are scarcely any horses, for they are neither employed for locomotion nor agricultural purposes; yet for all that it appears that their cavalry did better than ours. What does all this mean? In my opinion it means that the causes by which the Japanese have excelled in their diplomacy, in their army and navy, are as general as those by which everything has turned out badly for us. It is possible to create everything, and to teach every one under sound conditions, with broad culture and development of the people, conscious of patriotism and love of country, and participating in affairs, according to the ability of each, by means of a system of popular representation. When I am told that our fleet was destroyed in the Straits of Korea simply because we are in general bad sailors, I cannot agree with this at all. Were those bad sailors who completed a voyage unheard of in the history of fleets, under exceptionally difficult conditions, on miserable, unstable, and partly worn-out vessels, and succeeded besides in taking such vessels safely to the seat of war? Were those bad naval engineers who in such an exceptionally difficult voyage knew how to preserve the



boilers and engines from serious defects? No, a thousand times no; and I think every one devoid of bias will agree with me. Every one who knows our fleet will also agree that bad sailors and bad naval engineers sailed from Libau, because our *personnel* had never been obliged to learn sea duties—such was the pernicious system of senseless economy favoured by the Ministry of Marine! And yet these bad seamen, sons of a nation of hopeless landsmen, became good sailors, because in the course of a seven months' voyage, under most trying conditions, they practised incessantly and learned how to cope with every difficulty. They endured terrible storms, tropical heat, fogs, privations and, indeed, surmounted all things, because they had practised and learned. Not only did bad seamen sail from Libau, but also bad fighting seamen, including admirals, commanders, and officers who had never studied the science of naval history, nor naval strategy, nor modern naval tactics. They had all grown up in an atmosphere of prejudice as to the unnecessary character of all this, and even contempt for naval history and any science whatever. Many remained in this frame of mind, while those who felt that there was something wrong and strove to improve their knowledge had no possibility of doing so. No opportunities existed, and the service did not furnish them. In our navy, for instance, it is ages since there were any manœuvres. That is why the tactical movements of the fleet proved bad, why there was no scouting service, and why no battle formation was adopted. To the same want of practical knowledge may be attributed the fact that our vessels went into action painted black, with their funnels brightly picked out in yellow; that is why no one was told off to work out the chief's plans beforehand, although history deals with the urgent necessity of this. All this could not be learnt during a voyage, especially by men under the conviction that such things were not necessary to be troubled about. Weather, heat, and fogs did not teach that. The battle did—when it was too late. Exactly the same thing happened with the army. In No. 149 of the "Rus," Mr. N. Kirilov—who published the opinions of a soldier just returned

from Manchuria—replying to the question, Why were we beaten? answers, and decisively, “Because from the very first step taken in this war we cast away all that we had so long and diligently studied at the Academy, and, refusing the instruction of science and her truths, commenced to devise our own tactics and strategy, imagining that we possessed more genius than great military leaders. It was a sort of bacchanalia of improvizations!”

The only difference was this, that our land forces had studied and despised science, while our sailors had previously despised it and not studied it. Which course is the more culpable or contemptible is a question to be argued. This contempt for science, however, is a general characteristic among us. I do not desire to blame either our admirals or our officers—for they could not help themselves in this universal ignorance of tactical matters in which the *personnel* of our fleet has stagnated. I know many who made tremendous efforts to free themselves of this ignorant spirit; but the whole system was against them, and it was all but impossible to contend with it. It is easier to study tactical matters than to become a good sailor, and if our officers had only studied these as diligently—this I know for a fact—as the Japanese studied, then our fleet would have been no worse than theirs in this respect. Finally, not only did inefficient seamen and officers leave with the fleet from Libau, but men whose instruction in gunnery had ceased two or three years before; and some of them, too, had learnt much that was incorrect. This might, no doubt, have been rectified on the journey—our seamen learn remarkably quickly when they are well instructed—but they did not receive any instruction, so that during the battle our firing was much worse than that of the Japanese, and this was added to by the rolling of the ships. We turned out excellent sailors and expert gunners, even in the old days of sailing ships, when natural aptitude for the sea played an incomparably greater rôle than it does now. This was at periods when our men were well and earnestly trained, when the personal element was regarded as the chief considera-

tion, and money was not spared over their instruction. Now, in an age of all kinds of mechanisms which help to simplify the struggle with the sea—especially with the element itself—this is more possible than ever. It is possible for us; and only in this way can the causes be removed which have made our army deteriorate, and we be able to possess a good fleet.

But the surrender of four armoured vessels and the “Biedovy,” with the unconscious Commander-in-Chief on board, the abandonment of the “Biedovy” by the destroyer “Grozny,” and the departure from the scene of action of some of the cruisers—what do all these mean? They are, indeed, practically the most painful and distressing events connected with the disaster. These ignominious facts—in particular, where the ships yielded without a struggle—are a result of the undoubted depression of spirits, but no word of mine shall be used to lay all the blame, without reservation, upon those who surrendered. That they acted shamefully, directly *against the Regulations, and against the naval gospel at the reading of which all on board uncover*,—all this is true. But besides this, they were under the influence of their imagination as to how this would be received by others, as to what the fleet, the authorities, the nation, would say. This does not influence the strong and energetic; but in every *personnel* there is a number of weak, wavering, and unfaithful souls! How necessary it is to direct these, and rigidly to place an ideal before their eyes—how they should act, and what must be regarded as a disgrace by all! Such matters greatly assist in raising men’s spirits and in their depression, and as the spirits of all in the fleet had long been much depressed, they served more readily to depress than to raise. It began with the very commencement of the war. No one appears to be responsible for the criminal abandonment of our squadron in the outer roadstead of Port Arthur on the night of 8–9 February, and for the inadequate look-out, when all knew that war was immediately ahead—and the idea went abroad also that such neglect might not result even in censure, still less in punishment. After that there is the story of the

“Variag.” All are agreed that this was a matter exalted far beyond measure; that it demanded investigation as well as rewards. I think that the participants in this affair were astounded when they learned the credit assigned to their act. How pitiful it all appears in comparison with, for example, the exploit of the “Rurik”!—I do not speak of the “Stereagushtshy.” But did this exploit receive a thousandth part of commendation in comparison with that accorded over the affair of the “Variag”? No one scarcely said a word about it, and for those who took part there only remained the consolation derived from the consciousness of duty actually, and not only visibly, fulfilled.

An incident, indeed, which has remained entirely uninvestigated is the abandonment of the “Rurik” by her two big cruiser consorts. Perhaps there was no other course to adopt, but many did not believe this. I well remember how the report of the action was kept back for nearly forty-eight hours. Why? Another affair has likewise not been investigated,—how our division of cruisers on 14 August were cut off from Vladivostok; although there were reasons for this which also contributed to the defeat. Finally, this has remained entirely uninvestigated: how was it that on board the cruiser which had by far the best armour on her sides, the losses in men were incomparably greater than in another, almost unprotected by armour? This was in consequence of lack of order and skill, but no one has drawn attention thereto. And why was no punishment awarded in the case of two of our three cruisers at Vladivostok being run on the rocks? As all who are acquainted with the matter know, it was in circumstances which could in no way be justified. Due appreciation was not awarded in regard to the departure of the “Askold” for Shanghai, the “Diana” for Saigon, and the “Lena” for San Francisco.

These affairs could not but exert a depressing influence upon our *personnel*, and principally of course upon its weakest members. They could not help making the deduction that all this was in the order of things, all this might safely be done. Therefore, what grounds are there for surprise that

three cruisers left the scene of a battle and went to a neutral port until it had finished? That the "Grozny" abandoned the "Biedovy"? That at length the farthest possible step was taken in this direction—i.e. vessels began to surrender almost unscathed and without making any attempt to sink themselves?

#### (VI) INCOMPETENT COMMANDERS REJECTED: THEIR SUBSEQUENT APPOINTMENT

In concluding with this surrender, on which it is so difficult to stay my pen as it affects us all so painfully, I will mention one more fact.

When Admiral Rozhestvensky was equipping his squadron and selecting his commanders, he found that two of those presented did not possess the required qualifications. I do not wish to say that these were bad officers, but their reputation in the fleet, as incapable of commanding a ship of war, was notorious. I leave aside how they attained this rank; that would lead me too far in regard to where lurks the chief cause of all our disorders and defeats. I will simply note that it was from this fact that these commanders were refused by Rozhestvensky. Yet both these men were appointed captains in Niebogotov's division; i.e. the Ministry sent to Rozhestvensky's help the very commanders whom he himself had refused to receive a few months earlier. Of course, as was bound to happen, both these captains surrendered their ships, with all their officers alive and well. This fact needs no comment, and is characteristic. Everybody in the fleet was stirred by it, though no one possessing authority found it necessary to protest against it; though there had been ample time to change these commanders. I know of many similar occurrences during this war. Men known to be utterly incompetent have been appointed and maintained in responsible positions, and for the most part out of what is supposed to be good feeling, *from no desire to offend*. It has been forgotten how much Russia suffers thereby.

## (VII) STRONG AND WEAK MEN

The destructive influence upon the *personnel* of the reception accorded the different events of this war, has shown itself in the clearest manner among the *weaker* men of the officers of our fleet. I have, however, said nothing of the *strong*, and in showing respect to these I wish to conclude my preliminary notes on the battle in the Straits of Korea. May the greatest glory, honour, and gratitude be accorded to them because they did not give way under the most trying conditions; and that they, without receiving direction from outside, found these powers in themselves! There were many more of these strong men than of the weak. On board the battleships destroyed on 28 May, firing never ceased until the moment they sank, when every moment it was expected on board that they would capsize. They went down with the captains and their staff on the bridges, officers in the turrets, engineers and stokers below, whence there was no possibility of escape. Down below the waterline, probably in semi-darkness, they saw the water enter, pouring out of one compartment into another, and contended with it to the last moment. Honour and glory to them! They all perished because they did not desert their posts. This was the spectacle on board the ships destroyed by the torpedo-attack at night, ships already utterly enfeebled, their men having beheld the awful fate of their comrades who perished by day. Very few were rescued from these vessels.

But yet all these vessels fought and perished without losing hope of success, or of at least inflicting damage on the enemy. They had not yet seen all the terrors: knew nothing of the shameful surrenders. They still remained side by side with their own comrades, did not recognize their complete isolation, and were never deprived of hope. Under such terrible conditions strong men were found on board the little "Admiral Ushakov" and in the cruiser "Svietlana," still more insignificant in point of strength.

The "Admiral Ushakov" paid no attention to the warning of



TRANSFERRING THE RUSSIAN WOUNDED ON BOARD THE "PASCAL."





the Japanese that she was isolated, and that all her companions were annihilated or had surrendered. She entered upon a desperate struggle and fearlessly and proudly sank beneath the fire of an enemy excelling her in strength many times over.

The little "Svietlana" (that half cruiser, half yacht, a caprice of our luckless naval constructors) on that same 28 May, received a hole in the bows below water, and consequently was deprived of the power of moving. What happened to her during the night is unknown. Next day she was found *alone*, forced against a hostile shore by two Japanese cruisers, and perished in a desperate struggle, neither lowering her flag nor yielding to the enemy her mutilated body, deprived of the means of resistance.

Once more, glory and honour to all for this proud and strong spirit! I do not believe that out of a *personnel* which has such distinguished men among its great mass one cannot form, not only excellent sailors, but *fighting* sailors. The assertion is false that we cannot possess a fleet because we cannot form a good *personnel*. We *can* have one, but for this it must be recognized that the chief factor for a fleet to be formidable is the *personnel*. Also, that this must be diligently trained, educated, and cared for more than anything else. With us for a long time the *personnel* has been cared for least of all. It has not been educated, but allowed to remain ignorant. Generally speaking, it has been terribly neglected, and its spirit overborne by soulless formalism and the futilities of etiquette. The result has been—the annihilation of our fleet in the Sea of Japan!

## CHAPTER V

### (I) A RUDE AWAKENING

WE all anticipated a miracle and so passionately desired one, that many of us closed our eyes to the extremely doubtful character of our chances, and created for ourselves some sort of assurance that this miracle was inevitably being effected; that, indeed, it could not be otherwise. With this ardent longing at heart, people anxiously hunted through the tabulated calculations. Thus only could they get an idea of the endless variations in the different proofs that the fleet of Admiral Rozhestvensky was more powerful than the Japanese fleet. In reckoning the number of vessels, their displacement, and the number of guns, they compared what was really incomparable—and were comforted.

But, alas, in the end the miracle did not come off. Hard facts in their most pitiless aspect demolished all the calculations; and how mournful do they seem to us Russians now! We did not like to look the terrible spectre of the future full in the face; and now, when this spectre has changed to reality, it is doubly grievous for us to lift our eyes and see it. Of course, the chances always were that preponderance in numbers, power, warlike experience, preparedness of the fleet, suitability of the theatre of war, and the equipment of the armament of the fleet, would gain the day. So, indeed, it has happened. There may, of course, be occasions when much may be equalized by the talent and energy of the commander, and we trusted to that more than all; but on this special occasion really little could be expected, as proved to be the case. To grumble at what has happened we have no right. No one could be dissatisfied as

matters have turned out. Hardly any one has the heart to blame Rozhestvensky.

It might be asked: Why did he not make for the Straits of Tsugaru or La Perouse? But if he were to answer, "I had too little coal for that," what could be said in reply? Nothing. And if this were so and the further supply of coal was an impossibility, it was still imperative to pass by the Straits of Korea, in spite of whatever dangers threatened in that quarter. What then? Still less was there a chance by the two other straits. There the situation was the worse for the Japanese only in this respect—that their military ports were farther away. Ports, however, are necessary *after* a battle. *At the time* of battle a convenient field of action is quite as necessary. I have already spoken of the advantages which a battle in the Straits would offer to the Japanese, and how such a battle would be unpropitious for the Russian squadron. The chief of these disadvantages was the possibility of the Japanese utilizing their immense preponderance in torpedo-boats and submarines, and their opportunities for placing floating mines in the very course of the squadron. I do not think that they did lay, or ever intended to lay, fixed mines in these Straits, such as they laid before Port Arthur. The depth of water is too great to allow of this; the current is a serious hindrance also, and above all a large number of Japanese and neutral ships constantly pass the Straits of Korea and Tsugaru.

They probably laid floating mines in the course of the Russian fleet, but of such construction that after remaining *in situ* for an hour or two they would sink and no longer present danger.

A particular circumstance favouring the action of torpedo craft is fog, and in this respect the Straits of Korea would appear to be the least dangerous, seeing that the probability of fog is vastly greater in the two northern straits. In addition, the Tsugaru Strait is much narrower than the Straits of Korea, and more tortuous. As to La Perouse, although it is both broad and direct, yet to enter there it is necessary in the first instance to traverse the narrow straits between the Kurile Islands—i.e. one

must cut through two straits lying at a distance of 230 miles from one another, and not through one, and there is greatest probability of encountering fog.

Torpedo-vessels, submarine-boats, and fixed torpedo defence form the best means of coast protection, and the protection of a narrow strait reduces itself to defence of the shores. This is why these agents played a prominent part here which they never could have played in the open sea. On this account battleships must never approach shore or face obstacles which favour the use of such means. They should never come near batteries under cover of which mines have been laid, and never move forward in that direction by night or in fog. The only occasion on which a fleet cannot escape these obstacles is when it has to cross a strait occupied by the enemy. To encounter a fog at that moment, or be surprised by night, at once renders the position of the approaching fleet in the highest degree risky. To fight torpedo-vessels it is indispensable to be able to manœuvre freely. In passing through straits one must sail in one definite direction and thus give opportunities to torpedo-vessels which are rendered doubly favourable in a fog or during the night.

The first official Russian intelligence carried to Vladivostok by the cruiser "Almaz" announced the loss in a day engagement of our three best battleships, the "Suvorov," "Borodino," and "Oslabya," and of severe damage to the battleship "Imperator Alexander III."

Once again fate showed herself unkindly to us. At the commencement of the engagement Admiral Rozhestvensky was wounded, and though successfully transferred to another vessel he was not in a condition to direct the battle. The next senior to him, Admiral Felkersham, as is known from a report at the Ministry of Marine, had lately been ill; indeed, according to private rumours he really died before the battle. Consequently the command was transferred to Admirals Niebogotov and Enquist.

The official despatch of Admiral Togo confirmed the worst that could be imagined in reporting that Admiral Niebogotov



LIEUTENANT LEVITZKY WITNESSING THE DESTRUCTION OF THE "KORELETS"  
WHICH HE HAD BEEN COMMANDED TO BLOW UP



with four battleships and one torpedo-boat-destroyer had been taken prisoner. This was the most cruel blow of all, following as it did on the catastrophe to the fleet. The names of the vessels which surrendered were: the warships "Orel," "Imperator Nikolai I," and the coast-defence ships "Admiral Seniavin" and "General-Admiral Apraxin." From the number of prisoners received at Sasebo (2223 men) this would appear to have been a reliable report. A telegram from Tokio mentioned that the commander of the "Admiral Nakhimov" was also taken prisoner: this cruiser, perhaps, was captured, instead of one of the coast-defence battleships. There was also another telegram from Tokio, to the effect that according to reports from prisoners the Vladivostok squadron received orders to put to sea, but returned to port after a short cruise.

The Russian official despatches only announced the result of the day battle; the Japanese despatches evidently embraced the night engagement, in which their many torpedo-boats played a most important rôle.

## (II) IS THE SURRENDER OF A SHIP JUSTIFIED?

These are the words of section 354 of the Naval Regulations: "In time of battle the commander must set an example of manliness, and continue the struggle to the very end. For the avoidance of useless bloodshed he may decide, with the general consent of all the officers, how to surrender the ship, if under the following circumstances: firstly, if the ship shall be so struck that it is impossible to keep down the leaks, and she is plainly about to sink; secondly, if all ammunition and shot are spent, guns put out of action, and means of defence generally exhausted, or if the losses in men are so considerable that opposition appears impossible; thirdly, if there shall be fire on board the ship which it is impossible to extinguish with one's own resources; also if, besides the occasions indicated, there should be no possibility of destroying the vessel and seeking safety for the crew on shore or the boats." The meaning of

this clause is plain—an officer may decide to give up, not only the ship, but also the *personnel*, so as to avoid useless bloodshed. He might surrender the ship to the enemy in the presence of a whole series of conditions set forth in this clause ; at least on an occasion when there were no means for blowing up the ship. Formerly, when vessels were built of wood, it was difficult to destroy them. To blow up a ship it was necessary to have in hand a sufficient quantity of gunpowder, which might not be the case at the end of a battle, when all ammunition is usually exhausted. Finally, no regulation could demand more than this, which involves the destruction of all hands, while the shrift is short and the exploit agonizing. To sink a wooden vessel was in a high degree difficult, and demanded a considerable time. But as soon as battleships began to be constructed of iron and steel, the sinking of ships was much simplified: it was only necessary to open the Kingston valves (which are openings below the water-line, for the admission of water to all parts of the vessel) and it would only remain for the victor to take the people from the sinking ship. To prevent a ship in such a case from sinking is almost impossible, as it would be necessary to search for the whole series of Kingston valves in the lower section of the vessel, for which again one would have to know the interior construction. Besides that, the lower portion, of course, is the first to fill with water. To close the Kingston valves under those conditions would be practically an impossibility.

Means for opening and closing some of the Kingston valves are at hand in the upper part of the ship, but the enemy would have the greatest difficulty in discovering these ; and moreover these means may easily be destroyed. Thus it happened with Lieutenant Ivanov, who after the death of the commander and senior officer remained on board the "Rurik," on the 27th, and was drowned when the ship foundered. She did so without having her flag hauled down, and there only remained for the Japanese to rescue the crew, about half of whom were saved. So also did two unknown "Ivans" on board the destroyer "Stere-



gushtshy." Owing to the simple structure of that destroyer and the possibility of quickly reaching its interior so as to close the Kingston valves, it was obvious that the Japanese would easily succeed in closing them soon after boarding. These unknown "Ivans" decided to prevent this by enclosing themselves in the part where the Kingston valves were. These parts were flooded before anything else, and at the cost of their heroic lives they prevented the Japanese from saving the sinking vessel. She was not surrendered; not a single Russian raised his hand to strike the flag, even though all on board were *hors de combat*.

### (III) WAS INFORMATION WITHHELD?

Was nothing similar to this done? This must not be asked for in reference to large vessels, since there is no necessity for the question,—why was not what was done in the "Rurik" performed in our four battleships taken by the Japanese? But, how did this capture happen? This question was insupportably distressing for every Russian, especially coming as it did after a terrible stroke of misfortune—a general naval action thrown away and all hope of regaining command of the sea with it.

Was what we read in the Japanese despatches concerning the number of undamaged weapons found on board these ships trustworthy, as was the case after the surrender of Port Arthur, when it was reported that a large quantity of unused war stores had been left behind? Was it also true that by way of a set-off there was no official explanation offered regarding the abandoned supplies after the fall of Port Arthur? Yet such knowledge was unquestionably in the possession of the Ministry of War.

With what distressing impatience did the Russian people await news concerning the surrender of the four ships! What indignant rumours and foul accusations did not their suspense engender! The Ministry of Marine should have recognized that the Russian public was overcome with the most painful doubt. They should

have taken steps at once to learn from Admiral Niebogatov the circumstances under which he was captured with four battleships; how it was that these vessels were not sunk, but were towed into the enemy's ports, as the Japanese announced, with their own victorious flag waving above the disgraced Russian standard. We needed to know all this at once, not after the Japanese had already circulated their own fantastic accounts. The public had the right to know the whole truth and nothing less. During the course of this ill-fated year, indeed, we had become so used to disasters that no verity could present terrors: we wanted the truth without concealment; rumours, doubts, and indefiniteness are harmful and always tormenting. Reports long continued to be meagre, especially regarding the losses of the Japanese. Togo said his losses were insignificant; but those on board the Russian transports "Korea" and "Svir" declared that they witnessed the sinking of three Japanese ships, and that five were damaged. According to telegrams from Tsin-dao the Japanese admitted that they lost two battleships, one cruiser, and nine torpedo-boats. There was also an interesting report in a telegram from the officers of the "Almaz," sent by the special correspondent of the "Rus." These officers stated that, although their ship sailed away at the beginning of the engagement, they were able with their glasses to make out that two Japanese warships foundered, and two sustained heavy damage. The wounded commander of the "Grozny" confirmed this in a conversation with a correspondent of the "Rus," who visited him in the hospital at Vladivostok. Why was nothing said of all this in our official communications—nothing, indeed, concerning the arrival of the "Grozny" at Vladivostok? There is still one very weighty detail in the report of the officers of the "Almaz." They stated that when they steamed from the scene of battle, thick mists settled down. If this was so, the colossal success of the Japanese is more intelligible. It was a bad sign that there were no official tidings from the Russian side about Admiral Rozhestvensky's fate. Similarly, there was no news concerning Admiral Enquist and the warships "Sissoi Veliky,"

“Navarin,” “Admiral Ushakov,” and all our cruisers. How was it that we had to take the Japanese reports for our sole guide? Togo stated officially that already, on 27 May, the Japanese torpedo-vessel “Sazanami” had cleared for action and captured the Russian vessel “Biedovy,” on board which were Admiral Rozhestvensky and his staff; in addition to another admiral, both of whom were seen to be severely wounded.

From the further despatches of Admiral Togo it appeared that there were also sunk the armoured vessels “Imperator Alexander III,” “Sissoi Veliky,” “Navarin,” and the coast-defence vessel “Admiral Ushakov,” the cruisers “Admiral Nakhimov,” “Vladimir Monomakh,” and “Zhemtshug,” the transports “Kamtchatka,” “Irtish,” and three destroyers. The cruiser “Dmitri Donskoi” grounded on a sand-bank. So far nothing was known of the “Oleg,” “Aurora,” “Svietlana,” “Izumrud,” and two or three destroyers. It was rumoured that the cruiser “Izumrud” had reached Vladivostok. Thus the reasons why the Vladivostok cruisers did not take part in the battle are made evident. From Tokio it was announced that the cruiser “Gromoboi” struck a mine on its exit from Vladivostok, and that Admiral Jessen returned.

Thus, almost the whole of Rozhestvensky’s squadron was destroyed or captured by the Japanese, all three admirals made prisoners, and even if the four cruisers had succeeded in getting to Vladivostok, the rôle of the Russian fleet in the war was at an end.

#### (IV) WHAT WERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF NIEBOGATOV'S SURRENDER?

The surrender of Admiral Niebogotov was a disgrace such as had never been heard of before, both to the Russian fleet and to the country. I fancy that it was the Admiral himself who was the prime mover in that surrender, and very much doubt whether the officers in general assented to it, as the Naval Regulations require. It is evident that these regulations were not carried out in this respect; nor were the means of resistance exhausted.

The chief and most direct proof of this may be found in the fact that very slight loss of men was incurred by the ships which surrendered, with the possible exception of the "Orel." What surprises me is that the Admiral's staff, and the officers of the flagship, allowed the signal for surrender to be hoisted ; also that the officers of the other ships consented to carry out the Admiral's order to lower the Russian flag. Lastly, I am firmly convinced that there was no mutiny among the crew. I am so sure of this, because as far as I know our sailors, they are incapable of such conduct in action. It is a slander ; and all the more vile because they cannot defend themselves against it.<sup>1</sup>

One of the Commander-in-Chief's latest reports on the battle comprised nothing new, but simply reduced to some sort of order the whole of the preceding ones, which were most incomplete and disjointed. Among the causes that may have contributed to the loss of the battle, as the report affirms, was that the squadron entered the straits in three columns, line ahead (the third column being transports), and that when the engagement commenced even the battleships were still in double column. It was this

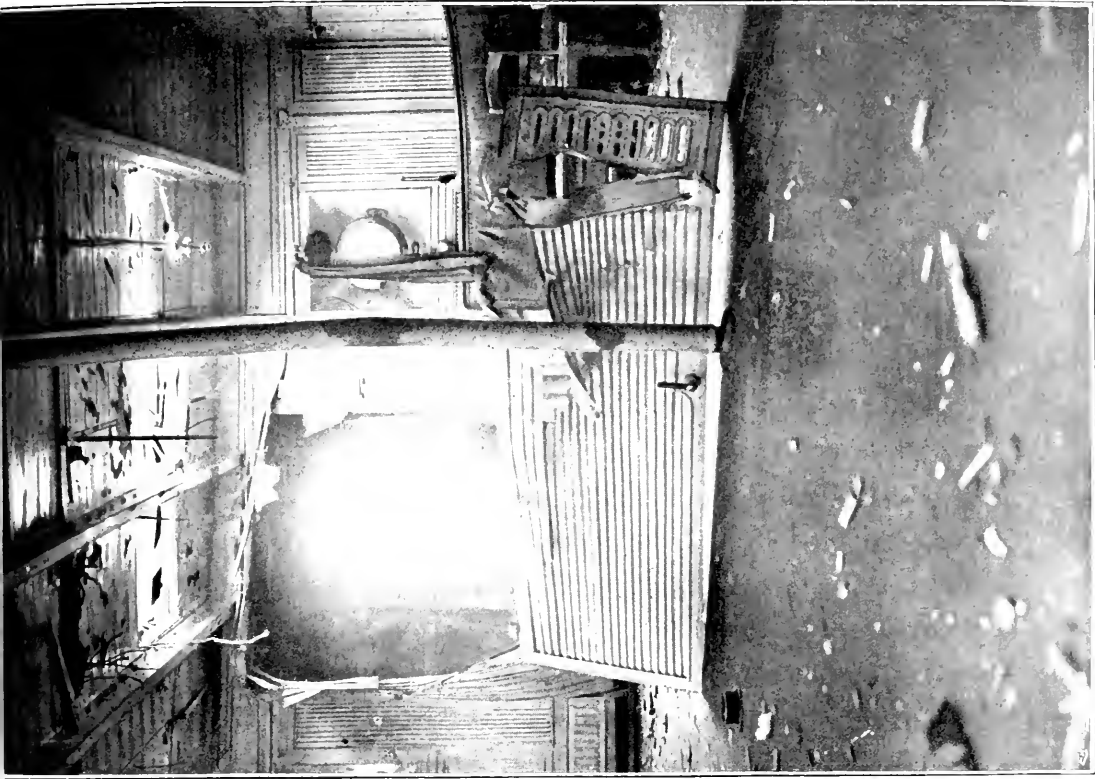
<sup>1</sup> In an important article on the "Battle of the Sea of Japan" in "The Times" of 22 August, compiled by the Tokio correspondent from Japanese sources and illustrated by plans, the following appears with regard to Niebogotov's surrender.

"This incident of the battle naturally excited much comment. Admiral Niebogotov's explanation was that, resistance being futile, he felt constrained to save the lives of the officers and men under his command, numbering more than 2000. But his critics affirm that even had he opened the Kingston valves and sent his ships to the bottom, only a very small fraction of his men would have perished with them. Such seems to have been the view taken by the Tsar, also, for His Majesty refused to sanction the release of Niebogotov and his officers on parole, though the Japanese were willing to release them. To conceive a Japanese Admiral surrendering in similar circumstances is scarcely possible, yet it is interesting to know what a prominent Japanese naval officer has said on the subject :—

"Folks looking with everyday eyes condemn this surrender as cowardly and disloyal. But the changes that a soldier's sentiments undergo on such occasions are not a simple matter like the movements of chessmen at a desk. Admiral Niebogotov is an officer of reputation and common sense. He suffered from no lack of resolution to blow up his four ships and thus prevent them from falling into the enemy's hands. But the feat would have been hard to accomplish. Sympathising with the pain the Russian Admiral must have felt, I think that those who condemn him for surrendering really underrate the skill shown by Togo and the efforts made by all under his command to render this surrender inevitable. Consider the reasons of the capitulation. Not only had the Russian vessels been deprived of a large part of their fighting power during the battle of the previous day, but thereafter they had been subjected to a terrible torpedo onslaught throughout the night. They were so weary as to be almost incapable of movement. They did not know what had become of their comrades. At this hour of anguish and danger, Togo's flagship suddenly appeared at the head of a fleet of twenty-seven warships, strong and fresh. What was to be expected but surrender in such conditions? The Russian officers are just as brave as ours. No one should fall into the error of imagining that any ordinary considerations would induce them to surrender."



ADMIRAL JENSEN ON BOARD THE "ROSSA"



ADMIRAL JENSEN'S CABIN - TWO SHEETS PUT IN FRIDGE



that prevented our fleet from developing the full fire of the ships composing it; because this formation is one from which ships cannot be readily deployed into line, and it was also owing to this formation that the Japanese were enabled to concentrate their full fire on our two leading flagships. It is also clear that the transports greatly hindered the manœuvring of the battleships, while supreme efforts had to be made to protect them until it was decided to sacrifice them, so that instead of endeavouring to protect our transports against the Japanese cruisers we had finally to concentrate all our force against the main body of the enemy.

It is perfectly evident how the three cruisers under Admiral Enquist succeeded in escaping to the south. In the first place we learn that it was not then dark, as Admiral Enquist afterwards reported, and that while the battleships steered north-east the cruisers, with the "Oleg" leading, stopped their engines and turned southwards. The battleships then turned to port to try and form a junction with them—though the cruisers should have kept in the wake of the battleships and not *vice versa*. Many other cruisers steered northwards at the same hour. Admiral Enquist, however, obstinately kept his course to the south. It was not till after this that darkness fell. I again repeat that this flight of the three cruisers to the south was an exceedingly "shady" business. It is to be regretted, too, that in the Commander-in-Chief's report no explanation was given of the inexplicable behaviour of the "Grozny."

I return to the question of the capture of Admiral Niebogatov with four battleships. The sole reasons I had for previously introducing the paragraph of the Regulations—which might have been adopted to justify the ship's surrender without everything having been done to destroy her—was the impossibility of seeking safety by running ashore or getting off in the boats. Although these conditions are set down in the Regulations, it is nevertheless difficult, and in the majority of cases likely to be quite impossible, to carry them out. In battle the boats would be damaged sooner than anything else. This is obvious, since they are suspended from the sides of the ship, or stand on

the bridges or upper works, and are entirely in the open. They specially suffer in modern battles, where each shot that hits carries hundreds, nay thousands, of splinters, and a hail of missiles is scattered, owing to the quick firing of modern artillery. In the battles of the past there were occasions when all the boats were damaged ; e.g. at the battle of Trafalgar, when Admiral Villeneuve was not able to escape from his flagship (which was damaged with shot) to another vessel, and thus was taken prisoner on board his own ship. At the present day it is barely possible for even one boat to remain serviceable on board ship ; especially would that be unlikely when all the ship's guns had been silenced at the close of a battle. Equally futile is the point as to "the safety of the crew on shore." There again it is also necessary to take to the boats, even if the ship is "run on shore." The vessel may run on to a shallow bottom, but the shore itself may be still far distant. Grounding on a sand-bank is only one of the expedients by which a ship is destroyed, and is much less dangerous for the *personnel*, though in other respects not half so certain as the opening of the Kingston valves. After grounding, it is necessary to complete a ship's destruction by explosions in her different vital parts, by spiking the guns, and so on ; or, at all events, to force her aground in such a manner as to render it impossible for the enemy to refloat her and carry the vessel a prize into his own ports. How can we explain the fact that all the four battleships captured by the Japanese were brought into their ports within two or three days (30 May) after the battle ? That implies that these ships, when surrendered, could have kept the sea for some days at least.

These ships were captured at the island of Okinoshima. From there to Maysuru, where the more seriously damaged warship "Orel" was brought, is about 165 miles, and from these islands to Sasebo, where the remaining battleships were towed, is about 235 miles. I was myself no less ill at ease concerning the number of prisoners, which were said to be about 2300. On board battleships of the "Orel" type there are about 800 men, including the officers, on the warship "Imperator Nikolai I" about 600, and on



the coast-defence ships up to 400 men. Therefore, on board all the four vessels this makes a total of about 2200 men. Apparently the Japanese were not able to reckon the number of prisoners and killed, which led to the conjecture that the killed among the crews could not have been numerous. These questions needed to be answered, and without delay ; and after them many more such queries remained.

#### (V) VIEWS OF THE EMPERORS NICHOLAS I. AND NAPOLEON ON SURRENDER

The Emperor Nicholas knew what he was doing when he cashiered all the officers of the frigate "Raphael" for surrendering without striking a blow. In this way he read a lesson to the *personnel* of the fleet. They learned it, and no more of these "incidents" happened after that. How thoroughly this lesson has been forgotten is shown by the fact that the admiral who surrendered flew his flag on board an armoured vessel bearing the name of the very Emperor who so decidedly expressed his views about surrender, who is responsible for the dictum : "Where once the Russian flag has been hoisted, it can never be lowered."

It is of no avail that Admiral Togo wrote in his report that Niebogotov acted well in surrendering his vessels. This was no doubt a good thing for the Japanese—such a glory, such an unheard-of triumph, four practically sound vessels as prizes. But here is the question—was it of any advantage to Russia ?

Napoleon condemned surrenders very sharply and mercilessly. "In leaving to officers or generals the right to surrender on capitulation," he says ("Rules, Thoughts, and Opinions of Napoleon on the Art of War," Military Library, vol. IV), "we inevitably expose the troops to very great danger : martial spirit in the people is extinguished, and the sense of honour is weakened. If military statutes condemned all generals, officers, and soldiers who surrendered on capitulation to humiliating corporal punishment, it would not enter the head of any one to

save himself from danger by this means, and all would find their sole salvation in manliness and steadfastness. . . . The question can be settled in no other way, if we do not want to weaken martial spirit and subject ourselves to very great dangers. . . . It is most costly if a general saves himself from disgrace in this way—surrendering arms and flags by a treaty which, though securing some advantages for those under him, is unprofitable for the army and the country . . . such procedure must be prohibited, and punished by deprivation of honour and life : a tenth of the generals and officers, a fiftieth of the junior officers, and a thousandth part of the men. He who orders the laying down of arms is a criminal, and worthy of death.”

This side of the question is really of vital importance.

The existing naval laws apply as relentlessly to departure from the scene of battle and to surrender. Here is what is laid down in Articles 274 and 279 of our present military and naval standing orders as to punishments :—

“ Article 274.—He who during battle or in view of the enemy turns to flight, and by his example excites disorder in the ranks, or gives occasion to others to retreat, is subject to deprivation of all rights of his rank, and to the penalty of death.”

“ Article 279.—He who, commanding a fleet, squadron, or division of ships or vessels, lowers his flag before the enemy, or lays down arms, or concludes a capitulation with him, without fulfilling his obligations of duty under oath, and not in accordance with the requirements of military honour and the rules of naval law, shall be subject to dismissal from the service, with deprivation of rank : if such proceedings are carried out without fighting or in disregard of the possibility of self-defence, to the penalty of death.”

On reading the pleasant declarations of Admiral Togo, one involuntarily asks oneself ; What would *he* have said if battleships of *his* squadron had surrendered ? It is believed that General Nogi, near Port Arthur, shot officers and soldiers who did not surrender, but *merely withdrew* without sufficient reason. Why

did a whole Japanese regiment, on board the "Khitatchi-Maru," a transport, and consequently utterly helpless against our powerful cruisers (15 June, 1904, in the Straits of Korea), sink without surrender? Probably plain warning had been given to those Japanese officers who surrendered a month before on board the steamer "Kintchio-Maru," and those in the "Khitatchi-Maru" knew well what to expect on returning to their country from captivity.

Page 68 of Book 16 of the Naval Regulations declares: A subordinate is made responsible for his own actions where, "in obeying orders, he cannot help seeing that his chief enjoins violation of oath and loyalty to the service, or the performance of some action clearly criminal." However amazing at first glance may be the fact that commanders and officers found it possible to submit to Niebogotov's order to surrender, in reality they no doubt showed that regard for discipline which has for so many years been undeviatingly inculcated among the *personnel* in our fleet. That is, "not to dare to reason about what the authorities may command. When once they give orders, the responsibility is off my shoulders, and whatever may result is not my business." All personal initiative, all resolve to assume personal responsibility, although for the advantage of the situation, is destroyed among us when once such resolve is taken, irrespective of the orders of the authorities. It was possible to be culpably inactive and lazy, it was possible to be entangled in the most dubious transactions; all this was pardoned and overlooked. But to point out, even on most important occasions, that the authorities were acting criminally, making arrangements tending to the evident injury of the country—that was never pardoned. Here has been reaped what was sown. All are afraid of responsibility, all hide behind one another; all consider themselves right if they execute the orders of the authorities, even if these are clearly harmful. Napoleon, adverting to an occasion when a certain general obeyed an order to surrender from another already a prisoner, says: "He was palpably in error touching the meaning of military

subordination. A general in the hands of the enemy has no longer any right to issue orders, and he who obeys them is guilty." And is not a chief, possessed by the power of his own self-love and the desire to preserve his prestige, even to the injury of the business in hand, in a similar position to the chief made prisoner by the enemy? Napoleon makes it clear: "Not a single sovereign, not a single republic, not a single military ordinance, authorizes military chiefs to surrender; the sovereign or country orders subalterns and the rank and file to obey the chiefs in all that may serve to the profit or glory of arms. Arms are entrusted to a soldier *under oath* to defend himself to the last drop of his blood. A commander receives orders and directions to employ the army for the defence of the country. . . . Whence does he derive a right to order those under him to lay down arms and accept chains in exchange?"

The rank and file, therefore, on board the surrendered vessels ought to have remembered not only their right but their obligation to refuse to execute the orders of Admiral Niebogotov. Perhaps it was impossible to oppose them—I do not undertake to judge of that; but to follow the example of the "Rurik" was certainly possible. Only one commissioned officer was left uninjured on board the "Rurik"; half the crew were *hors de combat*; yet all the same he succeeded in sinking his ship. On the contrary, in the coast-defence ships "Seniavin" and "Apraxin" *all were alive and well*, as the chief of the naval staff reported. If the combatant officers seemed irresolute in the matter, the engineers and artificers ought to have opened the Kingston valves on their own initiative. They were just as guilty as the rest for the shameful surrender. They had not for nought recently received officers' rank. In other events of this war the engineers and combatant officers rivalled each other in self-denial and courage. Of all the officers involved in the surrender, only those were innocent who were so seriously wounded as to be *hors de combat*. There was, I have said, not a single one of these in the "Seniavin" and the "Apraxin." I cannot in any way blame the rank and file. It would be asking

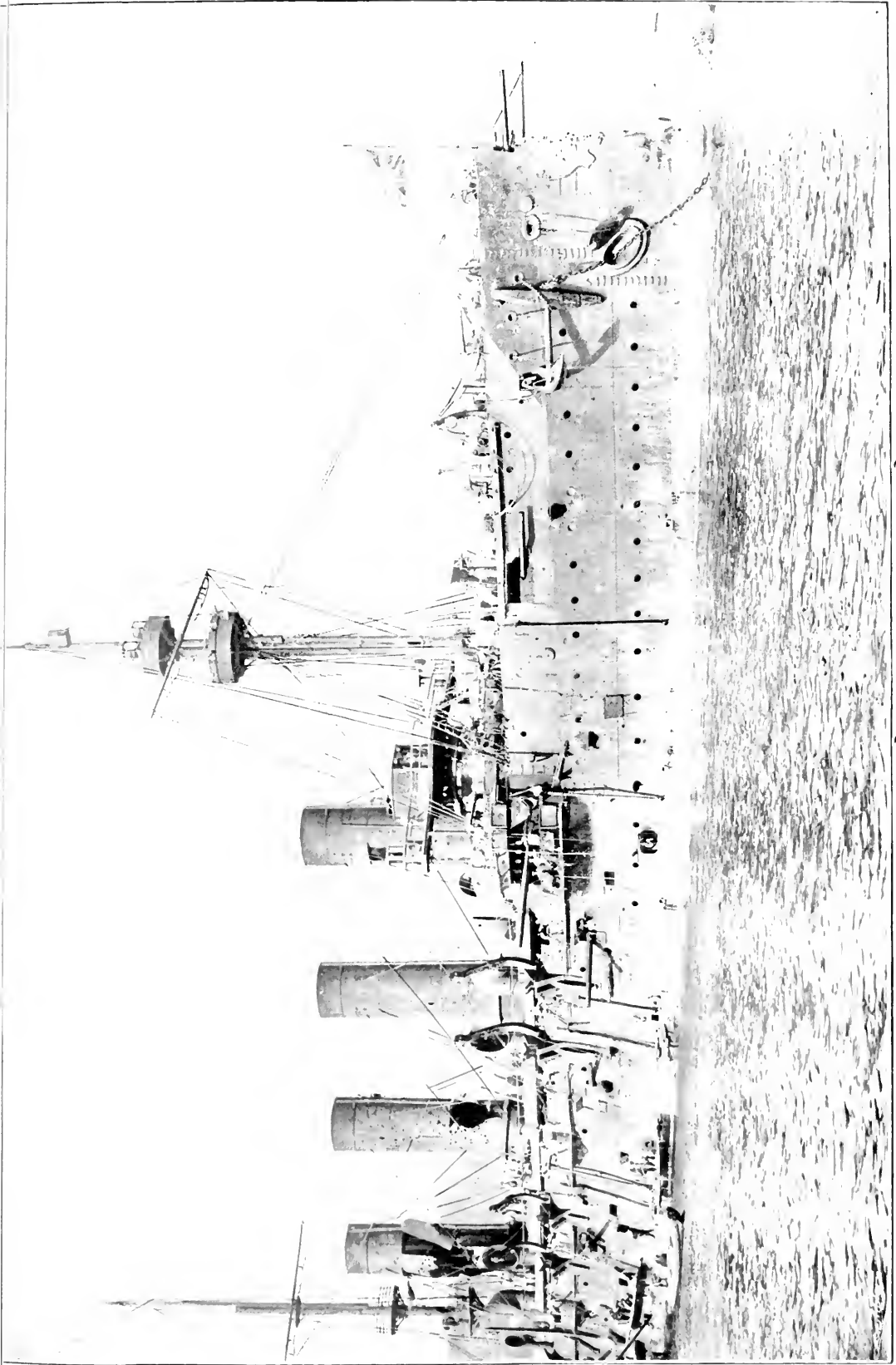
too much. They obeyed their officers, and did not fulfil their duty to the country behind their backs. I protested when the surrender was ascribed to the mutiny of the lower-deck hands, and still protest if they are blamed on such an occasion for obeying their officers. However, I should certainly have admired them if they had acted as the Japanese rank and file acted on board the "Kintchio-Maru," after their officers had surrendered. According to the report of Admiral Jessen, they opened fire on our cruisers, and he was obliged to sink the "Kintchio-Maru" by a torpedo; but, after that, as long as she was above water, the Japanese soldiers continued firing, and none were saved. With regard to mutiny among the rank and file, I have received a letter containing an instance of expressed collective discontent among the crew of one of the cruisers, in consequence of not receiving their allowance of bread. I do not hesitate to believe this, knowing of similar instances; but I was not speaking of such events as these. However long-suffering our peasant is—and the soldier or sailor is himself a peasant—when he sees that he is openly robbed (and unfortunately such instances are not rare), he is capable of contriving something like a mutiny, abated, however, in a moment when his lawful demands are satisfied. I do not know of any such revolts in which the rank and file were not substantially right in their demands. I am perfectly convinced, though, that, should the enemy appear during such a mutiny, in a moment there would be an end of it. All would be at their posts, and would fight with complete self-denial to the last man.

#### (VI) THE "RURIK": LIEUTENANT IVANOV'S REPORT

A comparison with the case of the "Rurik" again involuntarily presents itself, and it is worth while recalling certain passages in the despatch of Lieutenant Ivanov on the 26th, about the "Rurik's" last hours. These are they: "At 8 a.m., the rudder was damaged by a projectile (the protection by the armoured deck was very incomplete on board the 'Rurik') and remained fixed on the port side (so that on steaming ahead the cruiser would

turn abruptly off to starboard and thus keep turning round and round on the spot where she was). She sank from a hole below the waterline; the tiller and the entire steering gear were shot away, and the consequent steering of the ship with the engines was difficult in the extreme. The ship could not obey the Admiral's signal to follow at full speed after the 'Rossia' and 'Gromoboi,' which were carrying on a battle with four Japanese cruisers. She therefore remained and resumed her fight with the two cruisers 'Takatsikhko' and 'Naniva,' who took advantage of the damaged state of the 'Rurik's' steering gear; maintaining a prolonged fire upon her on the starboard side and causing her great damage with their quick-firing guns of heavy calibre. Attempts to ram them were detected by the enemy, who without difficulty maintained their advantageous position. Our fire gradually weakened in consequence of the great number of guns put out of action, and at twelve o'clock it completely ceased. All our guns had been silenced and we had many dead and wounded among the officers and men. At this moment a torpedo was discharged from one of our tubes, but it did not hit, and then the torpedo-firing gear was destroyed. The commander and next senior officer were mortally wounded at the very commencement of the battle, and out of twenty-two officers six were killed and nine wounded. There remained unhurt one midshipman, one ensign, two artificers, two warrant officers and a chaplain. Out of eight hundred men, close upon two hundred were killed and 278 wounded.

“As there was no possibility of steering the ship, owing to the loss of the rudder, and as some of the principal steam pipes had been shot through (the engines therefore ceasing to work), I could not get away from the enemy. In consequence of the annihilation of all means of defence, in face of the approach of four armoured cruisers returning from pursuit of our own, and also of the reappearance of three second-class cruisers (in addition to the two which had been engaging the 'Rurik') and five torpedo-boats, I resolved to blow up the ship. I entrusted the carrying out of this to Midshipman Baron Schilling (the only



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "ROSSIA."

General view of the damaged starboard side forward and amidships, showing shell-holes and injuries to hull and equipment





naval officer remaining uninjured), but the attempt did not succeed. A portion of the supply of Bickford fuse (this fuse burns slowly, so that after igniting it one may get clear) had been destroyed by the bursting of a gun, and the remainder was stored in a compartment that had been flooded; I therefore gave orders to sink the vessel by opening the Kingston valves, which the artificers effected. The interval before the ship foundered was devoted to saving the wounded and the crew, by the aid of the mattresses (sailors' mattresses are stuffed with cork), life-belts, pieces of wood, etc., because all the boats were shot away. At noon the cruiser went to the bottom, and the survivors were taken up while swimming, by the enemy's ships, which conveyed us to Sasebo with every care."

Thus the "Rurik" actually acted according to the Regulations. She did not lower her flag, even though deprived of all means of defence, and having in front of her nine hostile ships and five torpedo-boats. Likewise, the small "Admiral Ushakov" refused to surrender, though having for antagonists two large armoured cruisers, excelling her  $4\frac{1}{2}$  times in displacement, and incomparably more powerful in guns and armour. Our ship heroically ended her career by sinking beneath a hail of the enemy's projectiles. The miserably weak "Dmitri Donskoi" did not strike her flag to the fourth Japanese division and second torpedo-boat flotilla, but ran herself aground, hopelessly injured.

After all this, the thought is still more tormenting that Admiral Niebogotov surrendered with four battleships. The most cruel and offensive rumours were circulated regarding the causes of this surrender. But this was not all. I expressed astonishment at the time that in the official intelligence nothing was mentioned about the "Grozny's" arrival at Vladivostok. Apparently, she arrived there about 10 a.m. on 30 May, when special correspondents telegraphed the tenor of their conversations with her commander.

(VII) ADMIRAL ROZHESTVENSKY'S CAPTURE :  
FATE OF VESSELS

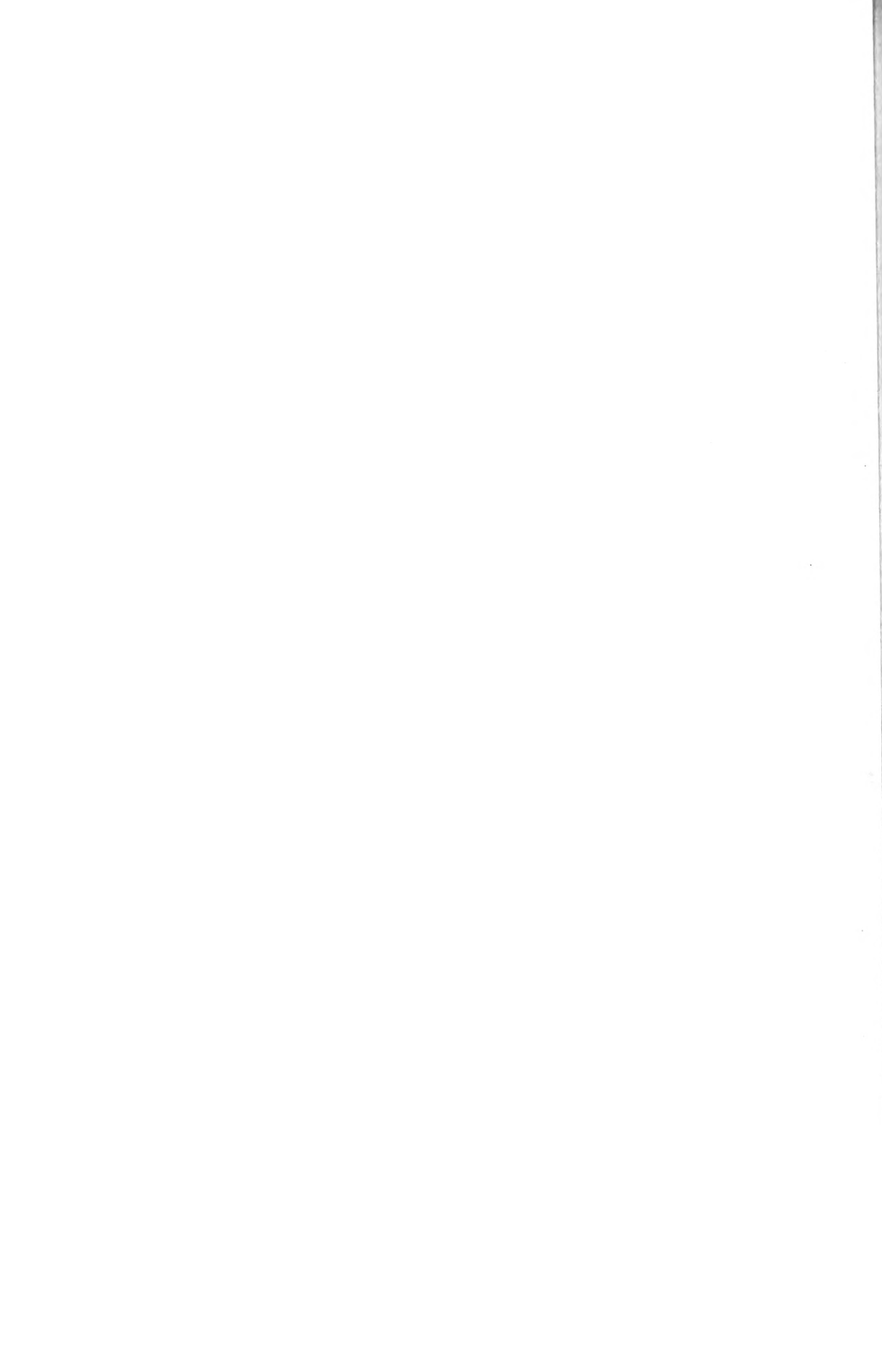
On reading the official intelligence, my surprise gave way to indignation, for the following reasons. It appeared that the destroyer "Grozny" sailed in company with the "Biedovy," on board which was Admiral Rozhestvensky and his staff. They were pursued by two Japanese vessels, and a battle ensued, in which the torpedo-destroyer "Biedovy" was sunk by an explosion. One of the Japanese vessels, however, was destroyed by the "Grozny," which then sailed for Vladivostok without ascertaining what had become of the Admiral. I leave for a while the question of the commander's curious behaviour in abandoning his admiral, and not mentioning him in his despatch. For us this point was clear—the "Biedovy" did not surrender to one Japanese torpedo-vessel without a battle, and, as she perished, the Japanese rescued Admiral Rozhestvensky from the water. How was it that, in sending his despatch of these events to the Press, Togo did not communicate this, and left out what, hours before, was already known to the Ministry of Marine from the "Grozny's" despatch? Or, was it necessary to pass this despatch through some form of "procedure"? Here is an extract from the "St. Petersburg Gazette": "The Russian admirals of the fleet which has perished did not possess manhood enough to prefer death to ignominy, and they, with *Admiral Rozhestvensky at their head, surrendered themselves as captives*. This clinging to life throws a partial light on the cause of the disaster to the fleet. Apparently those alone are victorious who do not fear death. The surrender of the 'Biedovy' to the Japanese in particular produces an angry impression," etc.

This insult to Admiral Rozhestvensky was revolting and unjust. May the responsibility for such tactless injustice in regard to the absent and wounded Admiral recoil on those who did not publish the truth so anxiously awaited by the public!

From Togo's latest despatches it appeared that the cruiser "Svietlana" was sunk by two Japanese cruisers, and probably



BOWS OF THE FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "ROSSIA."



the same fate befell the cruiser "Aurora." As the "Svietlana" was sunk in proximity to the shore, and during the day, the greater part of the crew was probably saved by the Japanese. The report of the sinking of the "Zhemtshug" appeared premature.

According to Togo the losses of the Japanese were strikingly small. They had only three torpedo-boats sunk and the damage to the other vessels was insignificant. He also confirmed the news that the battle was fought in a fog; which gave a vast significance to the preponderant superiority of the Japanese in torpedo-craft; but from the meagre descriptions of the battle it appeared that it was mainly an artillery duel, the torpedo-craft attacking the Russian ships only when already severely damaged by gun fire, which decided the fate of the battle.

#### (VIII) SURRENDER OR SELF-DESTRUCTION OF VESSELS: HISTORICAL EXAMPLES

One cannot refrain from turning to certain historical researches on the subject of this frightful catastrophe in the Straits of Tsushima. From those days when the transformation of the war fleet to an armoured one commenced, and wooden ships, which were in the highest degree difficult to sink, began to disappear, two occasions only are recorded of the surrender of ships in such a state that the enemy were able to profit thereby: the cases of the Southern cruiser "Tennessee," 7 July, 1864, and the Peruvian monitor "Huascar," 9 October, 1879.

The former was attacked by the Northern squadron under the command of the renowned Admiral Farragut, after his dash into the Bay of Mobile. In this battle, three armoured and fourteen wooden ships took part on the Northern side, with an immense quantity of guns—in all, 176 Northern guns against 6 Southern. The "Tennessee" was surrounded, corvettes butted her with their stems (there were no rams on them); they fired on the ship from every quarter, and the Southerners struck their flag  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours after the battle began, after the commandant had had his foot

torn away by a cannon-ball, and the only funnel had been shot away, so that smoke, filling the interior of the vessel, suffocated the crew. Besides this, the ship, although not pierced by shot, was completely shaken to pieces by the thumps of the stems and projectiles from the heaviest guns of that time (11" and 15" guns), and she began to fill with water.

In the second case, the Peruvian monitor "Huascar," a vessel of 2000 tons (carrying two large and three small guns), fought the two Chilean ironclads of 3500 tons each ("Admiral Cochrane" and "Blanco-Encalada"), carrying 12 large and 4 small guns in both. The fight commenced at a range of 400 yards, which continually diminished. The Chilean warships were on each side of their antagonist. At the commencement of the battle, the "Huascar's" rudder gear was damaged and the commander, with his senior lieutenant, was killed. Then the next senior officer was killed and one of the two large guns silenced. After this, all the officers except one were either killed or wounded; fire broke out in several places; all the guns were silenced; and it was impossible to work the helm. The crew, which, besides Peruvians, contained many foreigners (some Europeans), lost courage and demanded the surrender of the ship. The only uninjured officer, Lieutenant Pedro Garison, declared, in reply, that he would sooner sink the ship than surrender, and standing, revolver in hand, by the flag, threatened to shoot the first man who attempted to haul it down. But as he had to go below to supervise the opening of the Kingston valves, the crew in his absence seized their opportunity and struck the flag of their own accord. The Chileans immediately sent boats to the "Huascar," but when they reached her the hold had already four feet of water in it, and she began to sink by the stern. In a few minutes she would have gone to the bottom. The Chilean officers boarded, ran to the Kingston valves, and compelled the artificers to close them. Owing to the fine weather, they succeeded in towing the "Huascar" to the nearest port, and to this very day she is numbered among the units of the Chilean navy.

No other such occurrence is known. In the battle of Santiago, 1898, during the Hispano-American war, the Spaniards surrendered to the Americans, but before doing so they ran their cruisers on the rocks, so that the Americans did not gain possession of a single one.

I mention these occasions to point out that something quite exceptional, and till then incomprehensible, occurred on board our battleships which were towed into Japanese ports.

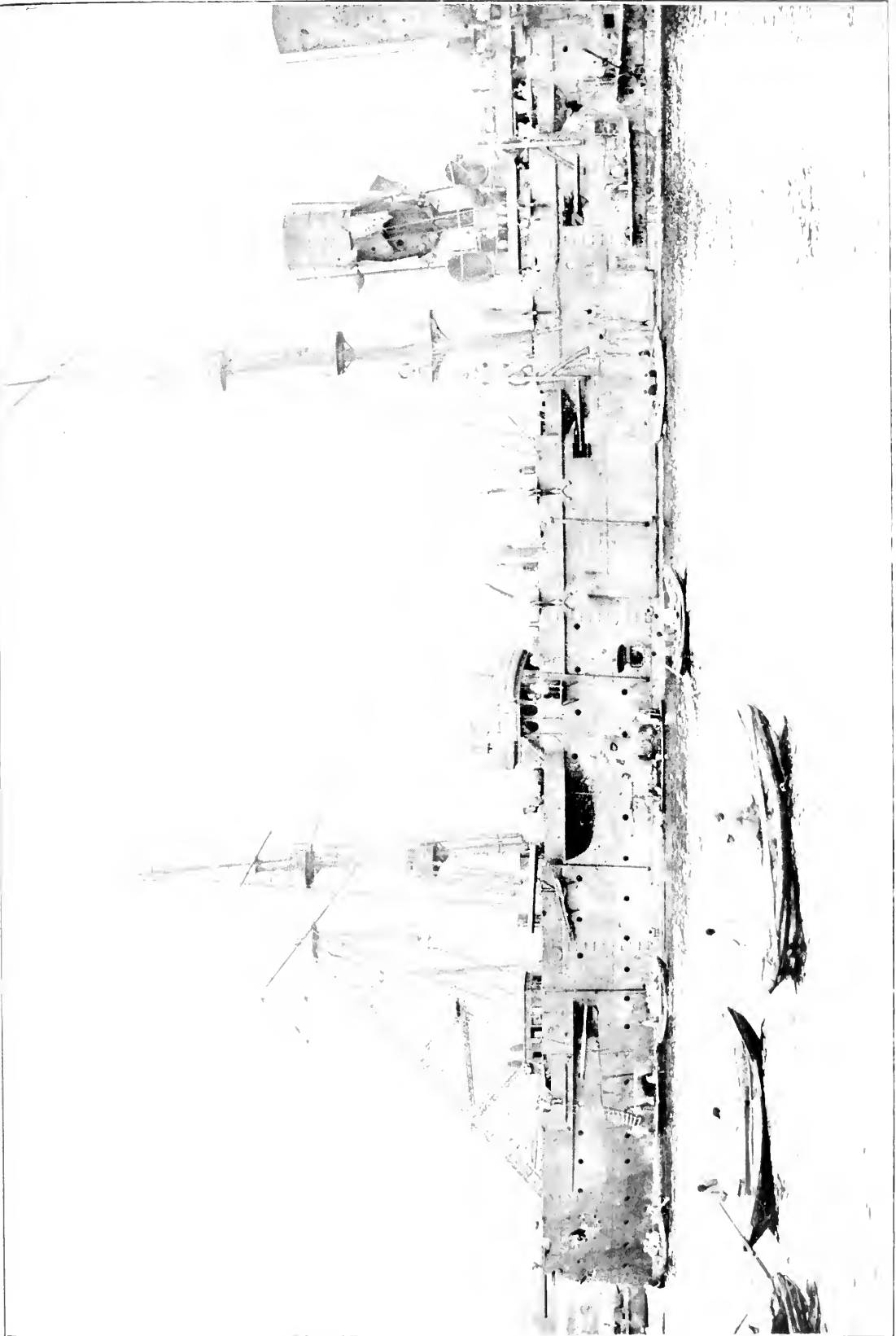
If Niebogotov and the commanders of these vessels were actually guilty we should have known this from a source which would not awaken any doubts.

In the days of sailing fleets, the surrender of vessels—and I have already indicated why—happened more frequently, but always after obstinate battle and in desperate and inextricable situations. There appears to be but one exception, that of the Russian frigate “Raphael,” which on 11 May, 1829, encountered a Turkish squadron of fifteen ships between Sizopol and the entry to the Bosphorus, and surrendered without firing a shot. The Turks renamed her “Fazli-Allah,” which signified “Gift of God.” Notwithstanding the enemy’s immense superiority, leaving as it appeared no chance of escape, the commander and all the officers were degraded, and the following decree was issued by the Emperor Nicholas I concerning the frigate herself: “If she falls into our hands, fire must be opened upon her as being unworthy to fly the Russian flag.” This actually happened. The frigate was with the Turkish squadron at the battle of Sinope, and was set on fire by our artillery. The necessity of defending herself to the very last, and having no regard whatever to the enemy’s preponderance in strength, was brilliantly demonstrated by the brig “Mercury,” which, three days after the “Raphael” incident, encountered the same Turkish squadron. At first she seemed likely to escape, but two of the larger Turkish warships overtook her and an unequal engagement was unavoidable. On board the “Mercury” were 18 small guns; on board the two Turkish ships 184 guns of large calibre. The commander called a council of war, in which

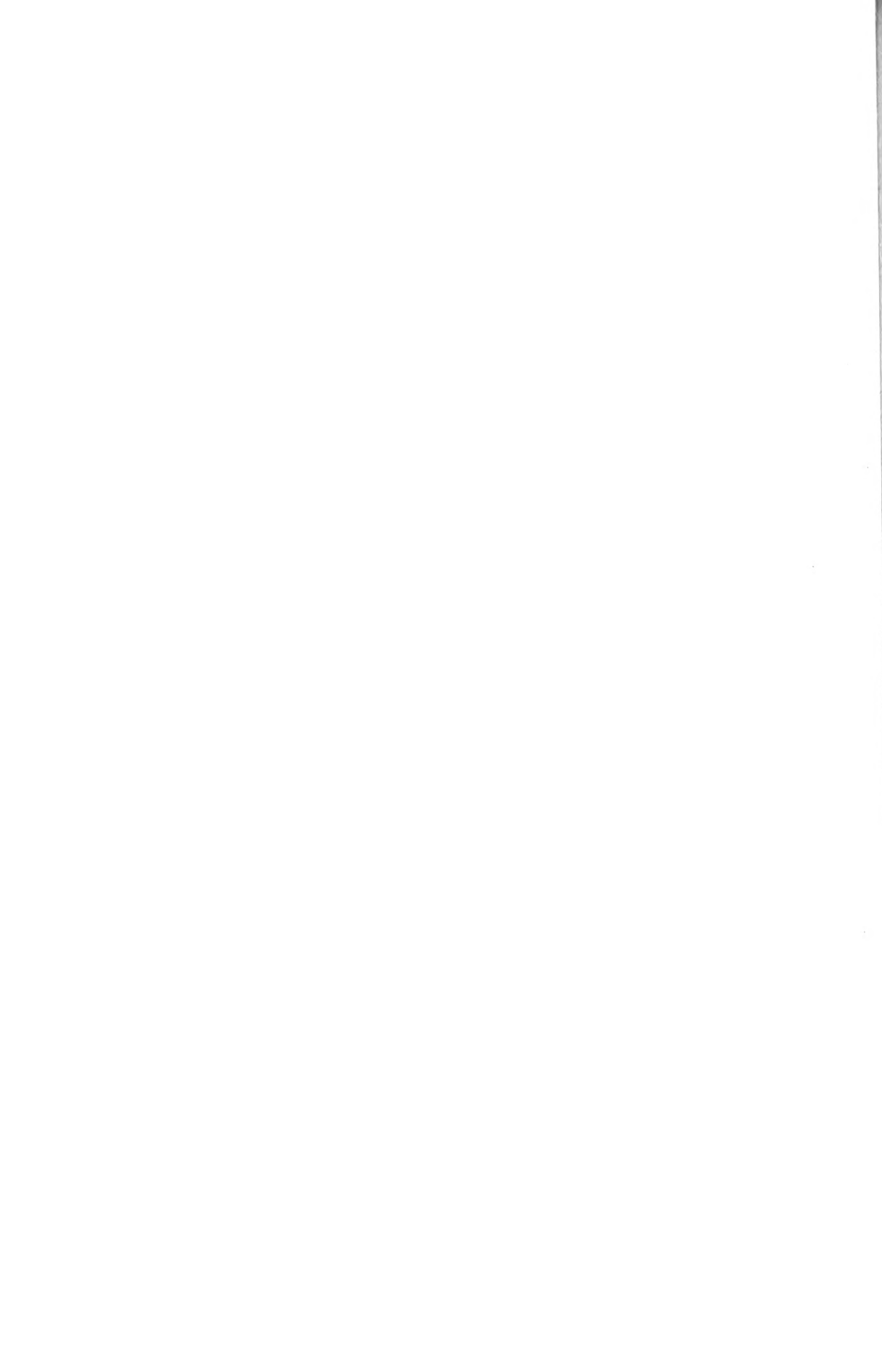
Lieutenant Prokofiev, as junior officer, first gave his opinion. It was universally accepted. It was decided to "blow up the brig when further resistance was impossible." This decision was communicated to the crew, who accepted it with a full knowledge of the consequences. The battle lasted for three hours, and the Turks manœuvred so unsuccessfully that, in addition to the damage caused them by the "Mercury's" small guns, had to be added that caused to one another in the thick smoke, during which the brig escaped. In addition to other rewards, the Emperor Nicholas I ordered each officer to have a pistol added to his crest, the weapon chosen by the officers for blowing up the brig when it should be impossible to continue the defence. The name of the brig is preserved in the Russian navy in the name of one of its ships "Pamyat Mercurii" (memory of the "Mercury"), which also flies the Georgian flag conferred on the brig. We have also named one of our torpedo-boats the "Captain Kazarsky," after the name of her commander.

However, we have dwelt enough upon the past and must continue to sum up events of the present. In Captain Fersen's despatch it remained undecided why he left Niebogotov's squadron. The only logical explanation in my opinion is that this excellent officer did not desire to take part in the surrender. From his despatches it is plain that there were nine destroyers with the fleet, and we had news of only four (the "Biedovy," the "Grozny," the "Bravy," and the "Buiny"). Indeed, we had only reliable news of three, since the rumour of the "Buiny's" destruction had passed through several channels—from the crew of the "Dmitri Donskoi," through the commander of the "Kassuga," Admiral Togo, and the Japanese Embassy in London. The second report, received through similar channels, to the effect that Admiral Felkersham was killed on deck in the battleship "Oslabya," was refuted by the official confirmation of his death some days before the battle. It is clear that the "Oslabya" foundered in consequence of gun fire. The "Sissoi Veliky" and the "Vladimir Monomakh" apparently sank of themselves, when on the morning of 28 or 29 May four Japanese





AFTER-PART OF THE CRUISER "ROSSIA" — GENERAL VIEW OF DAMAGE RECEIVED



auxiliary cruisers appeared in sight to capture them. Thus those ships, although disabled, continued to keep the sea after an artillery battle and a whole series of torpedo attacks. According to her commander, the cruiser "Admiral Nakhimov" foundered on 27 May,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours after the commencement of the battle. The cruiser "Dmitri Donskoi" was also sunk by her own crew, who opened the Kingston valves on the morning of 29 May.

#### (IX) CREDIBILITY OF REPORTS OF A BATTLE

The picture of the battle remained to my mind very confused. After such an event we hear the narratives of a few participants and eye-witnesses; but these narratives of what is uncertain and vague do not make matters certain and clear—indeed, only involved. The main point is,—what led to such utter destruction of our squadron? It is a fact, sufficiently well known, that the narratives of different participants in a battle form unfavourable materials for the construction of a general picture. All turns upon the following facts: Did things go successfully or otherwise in the vicinity of the participant? was he wounded or unhurt? did he take part in the affair to the very end, or only up to a certain moment? His story of the whole battle will usually reflect the impression derived from what occurred immediately round him. It must be observed also that this peculiarity of separate narratives chiefly applies in the case of a land battle, and by no means to the same extent at sea. On land a general estimate of a battle is powerfully affected by locality, even if the battle does not take place upon a specially large area. Though as a matter of fact a general engagement usually occupies a large sphere, incidents happening almost side by side may be concealed by rising ground, a wood, buildings, and so on. What the enemy is doing, his numbers and effective force, are still less visible, all through this influence of locality. The senior officers, and the commander-in-chief in particular, are also invisible, and only make their presence felt by signals received through the telegraph or telephone, or by means of orderlies. At sea this is

not the case. There is a single smooth surface, and consequently all that happens on every side may be perceived over a very considerable area. Formerly, especially in calm weather, smoke from powder seriously interfered with a wide view, but now there is smokeless powder. Only on a few of the Russian vessels taking part in this engagement did the powder create smoke. The coal used in the Russian fleet was also understood to be smokeless, and, although it may be supposed that there was none of the best quality of coal on board the Russian vessels, the smoke from the funnels would not impede the view. Hostile ships, and their numbers and movements, were all more or less visible. Their admirals could also be made out, and the general scope of their intentions was grasped. True, signals very often refuse to act, but the course of the admiral's flagship is always visible, and to understand his designs it is only necessary to follow that ship. By doing this no great error could be committed. In discussing the comparative facility of observing the general course of events in a naval battle, however, I must explain that it is strictly necessary to distinguish who the narrator is. For instance, an artificer in the lower part of the vessel near the engines or boilers would see practically nothing; he would only hear the report of firing and feel the vibration of the vessel when a heavy shot struck her armour; and could only speak to the damage to the engines, and report what orders for speed he received from the captain through speaking-tubes, or if the ship sprang a leak; but the cause of this, whether a shell or torpedo from a torpedo-vessel, would be quite unknown to him. The vast majority of men on board are in a similar position, since all are doing their definite duties in little compartments—the casemate, conning-tower, magazines, stokehold, engine-rooms, etc.—whence nothing is visible, or, at most, only part of the horizon. On the other hand, there is a group of men on board who can and have to see a great deal—the commander, the navigating officers (who assist the commander in steering the vessel and her general safety), the officer directing the gun fire, and some few others. To these I referred in speaking of the

difference between the dispositions of a land and a naval battle. In the former case the locality impedes the view of *all*, and in the latter *a few* can see, thanks to the absence of the obscuring influences of locality.

Thus a special value attaches to the testimony of commanding officers. But here we encounter utterly unintelligible transmission of this testimony by correspondents. I could give instances where a correspondent did not utter a word of truth. Many of such stories get about, and in a large number of these it is not easy to detect the falsehood. There is much tendency to falsehood, without any possibility of distinguishing and refuting these countless stories. I mention this to assign their proper value to fabrications, and to warn all, so far as lies in my power, from placing too much faith in them. The greatest value, therefore, attaches to the direct reports of commanding officers, and, in consequence, words fail to explain the perplexity and astonishment over the brevity and indefiniteness of the reports sent off at that time, or, if the reports were not abbreviated, then at their delay and mutilation.

These reports of the commanding officers should have been asked for and published without delay, as we lived on foreign intelligence in the style, for instance, of a certain announcement received from London, to the effect that the Japanese had gained a victory over the Russian squadron, "which neither knew how to fire nor to manœuvre, and *joined battle as if they did not want to fight.*"

#### (X) GENERAL LINIEVITCH'S REPORT, WITH SUPPLEMENTARY DETAILS

After some time it was possible to attempt to draw a picture of the battle in accordance with the detailed report of General Linievitch. Details lacking in that report have been taken from earlier reports by the commanders of squadrons and individual ships. The sketches attached to this section must be considered as approximate. This is especially the case in relation to the squadron's position at three o'clock on the day of

battle. As early as 25 May the enemy's wireless messages were taken in on board the cruiser "Ural," and if such messages were received in our fleet, the enemy must have received them. On the early morning of 27 May our squadron approached the eastern Straits of Korea in two columns, line ahead, the transports being between them. The column to port consisted of three divisions of battleships.

The leading division consisted of four battleships of the "Suvorov" type, which ship headed its column and carried Admiral Rozhestvensky's flag. She was followed by a division of three battleships (the "Oslabya," "Sissoi Veliky," and "Navarin"), and by the protected cruiser, "Admiral Nakhimov." On board the "Oslabya" the late Admiral Felkersham's flag was flying. Four battleships of Admiral Niebogotov's division completed the column. Reckoning about three cable-lengths for each ship in battle formation, the length of that column was about six versts, or four miles. If at the time of the fleet's entry into the Straits the weather was foggy, the interval between the ships for fear of collision was probably greater, but at the time of meeting the Japanese fleet the fog had cleared up and the interval was very likely normal. To starboard of the battleships was ranged a column of eight transports:—"Kamtchatka," "Anadyr," "Irtish," "Korea," "Rus," "Svir," "Orel," and "Kostroma." Considering the great length of some of these ships, their captains being unused to battle formations, and their heterogeneity, the transports probably extended over a greater distance than the battleships. It is probable that the "Orel" and "Kostroma," as hospital ships, were somewhere outside the battle zone; but the fact was not mentioned in any of the reports. Near the transports were the torpedo-boats, but nothing was said afterwards about their being grouped into divisions, and this leads me to believe that they were scattered. Two cruiser divisions were to starboard of the transports: ahead a division of four large cruisers ("Oleg," "Aurora," "Dmitri Donskoi," and "Vladimir Monomakh"). Admiral Enquist, the commander of the cruiser

division, was in the "Oleg." In the rear was a division of light cruisers under Captain Schein, of the "Svietlana," consisting of the auxiliary cruiser "Ural," and the third-class cruisers "Izumrud," "Zhemtshug," and "Almaz." The fleet remained in this formation until 11.30 a.m. (see p. 116).

At 7 a.m. the Japanese cruiser "Idsumi" had already appeared to starboard of our columns, but not until eleven o'clock did the "Vladimir Monomakh" leave the line of battle, at a given signal, to drive off the enemy's cruiser. Thus for four hours a hostile cruiser was allowed to remain in view of our fleet, to count its ships, observe its position, and continuously communicate, unseen by us, to other Japanese cruisers or coast stations. Therefore Admiral Togo, from 7 a.m., could follow the movements of the Russian fleet as chess-players can follow by telegraph on their chess-table (the map in this case) all the moves of their rival, and study them at leisure. As the weather was misty, the cruiser approached close to our line. This is also corroborated by the fact that she was recognized by our fleet, whereas at a great distance she could easily have been mistaken for the cruisers "Suma," "Akashi," or "Akitsu-shima." She evidently tried to come as near as possible as long as we did not interfere with her, in order to make a close observation. Being able to keep on a parallel route with our fleet, she could easily ascertain the latter's speed because, in order to keep level, she had to go at even speed. To drive off the cruiser at its first appearance was the direct duty of Admiral Enquist, under whose command were several cruisers of greater speed than the old "Idsumi," which was built in 1883 and had a speed of only 17.5 knots, according to her 1902 trials. He could have attempted to capture or destroy her. This might have failed, of course, had there been behind her a superior force to cover her withdrawal; but even then the value of such a pursuit would have been great. Scouting might have been effected to some advantage by our cruiser detachment. As a fact, our slowest cruiser, "Vladimir Monomakh," which was a still older vessel (commissioned first in 1882), was despatched

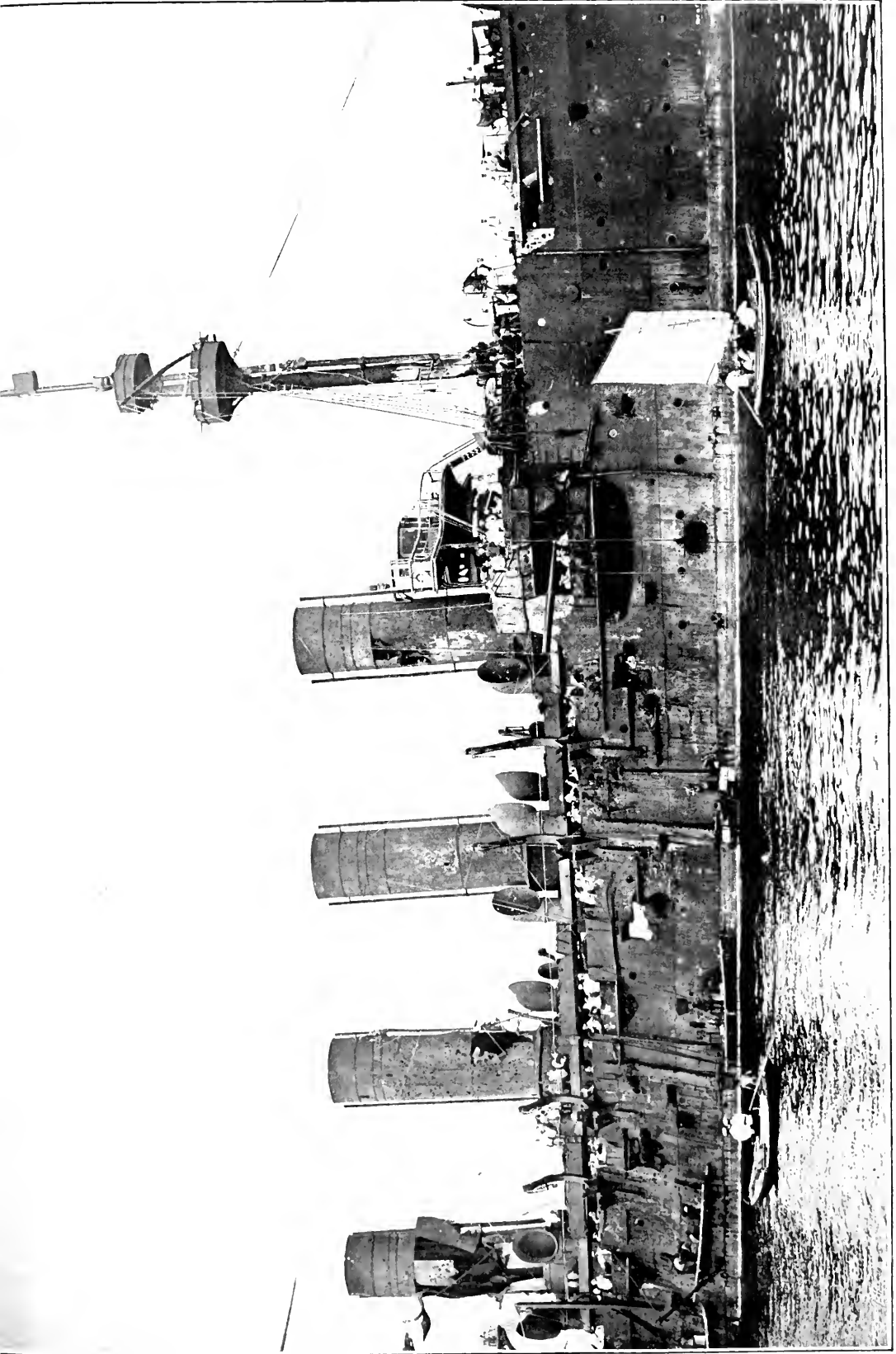
against her, but only after a lapse of four hours. Perhaps such a signal was given by Admiral Rozhestvensky himself, who could not observe the Japanese cruiser, hidden by the transport and cruiser columns, but only espied her after some time. All this is still unexplained, but *inertia*, absence of initiative, and misunderstanding of the situation on the part of the commander of the cruisers, were palpable in the highest degree. He ought to have assumed from the Commander-in-Chief the responsibility of protecting the squadron against the enemy's scouts. This was the plain duty of the commander of a cruiser detachment.

In consequence of the same strange arrangement and the immobility of the cruiser detachment, at eleven o'clock, to port of the squadron, a Japanese scouting detachment of two second-class and two third-class cruisers made its appearance. Again, for a whole hour they were allowed to observe the formation of our fleet, until as late as 12.20, when (once more at a signal, and not through anybody's personal initiative), fire was opened upon them by the second group of battleships. This detachment, indeed, ought to have been immediately driven off by our large cruisers, and should not have been allowed to approach within gunshot of our principal ships.

As it was, the Japanese detachment did not consist of armoured cruisers which could not have been opposed, but of vessels no stronger than Admiral Enquist's four cruisers. Thus it is clearly demonstrated that it was necessary to have had the cruiser detachment in advance of the squadron prior to the appearance of the Japanese in force.

Such might have been the case; and there should not have been present the unfortunate detachment of transports, for the protection of which it was said our cruisers were so foolishly arranged, although they could not effect such protection. The "Idsumi," as well as the Japanese cruisers which appeared on the port side, could then have been not only immediately driven off, but would have been in danger of being cut off from their main forces to the north. The mere presence of our cruiser detachment in advance would have compelled them to avoid approach-





FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "ROSSIA."

Amidships on the starboard side, shattered half-ports of 8 in. gun and traces of fire in the fore-castle. Damage to foremast, the shell bursting here sent fragments into the dynamo engines below. Other damage from five large shells visible in the hull.



ing our main force. As it was, they coolly disappeared as soon as fire was opened upon them, i.e. after they had completed their mission of scouting. The appearance of the main Japanese force would not have been a surprise to our fleet, as the latter would have received early information from the cruisers posted in front, and could have properly effected its battle formation.

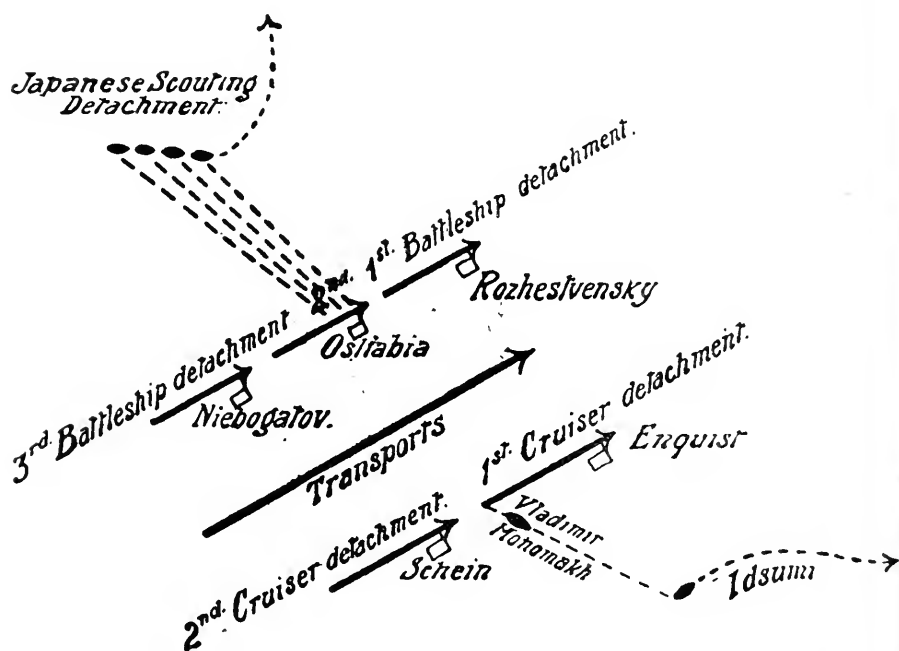
At any rate, the appearance of the Japanese scouts showed that the enemy's main force might be expected from the north. The time ought to have been utilized in sending back the transports, pushing the cruisers ahead, and, under cover of these fast craft, which would be able to notify in good time where the enemy's appearance should be looked for, forming the battleships in line abreast, in which formation the advance through the Straits would be made. This should have been done, more especially after the disappearance of the Japanese scouts. Their reports as to our formation and the presence of transports with our fleet would then have been erroneous, and Admiral Togo's calculations would have been upset to a certain extent.

Then, if Admiral Togo had also appeared in line abreast our position would not have been worse than his; and in the event of his appearance in line ahead formation, the advantage would yet have been on our side. It is necessary to add that for our battleships of the "Suvorov" type a line abreast formation had special advantages; because, in comparison with the Japanese battleships, these vessels have considerable advantage in bow fire. Lastly, against the enemy's line abreast formation the principal part would have been played by the heavy guns of the forward turrets. The medium artillery, borne on the broadsides, can only take a very limited part in such circumstances. Our advantage consisted in a greater number of heavy guns.

What was really done was this. Immediately after the disappearance of the Japanese scouts a detachment of Admiral Enquist's large cruisers was placed astern of the battleship column, i.e. was again tied down to the fleet and deprived of independent action. For the protection of the transports on the right wing a detachment of light cruisers was told off,

under Captain Schein's command. At midday, when the fleet assumed the course along Tsushima Island, the first division of battleships drew off more to starboard and occupied a position at three cable-lengths to starboard of the second battleship division. Our fleet continued its voyage in such formation up to the moment of the appearance of the enemy's principal force. Thus, at this moment, our fleet was sailing in the formation of

*1st Movement — 11:30 A.M.*



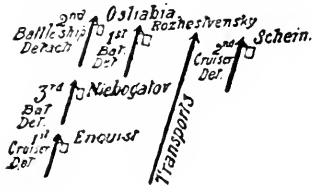
four columns, line ahead, leading one of which, viz. the second to port, was Admiral Rozhestvensky. At the head of the port column was the "Oslabya," flying Admiral Felkersham's flag; the repairing ship "Kamtchatka" was at the head of the transport column; and the "Svietlana" headed the starboard column of cruisers. At the head of the columns should have been the most experienced and responsible men—the senior admirals—as manœuvring in battle is not based on signals, which, as a matter of fact, often cannot be made, but on the rule, "Follow the Admiral," who shows his intentions by the

movements of the flagship. In this battle, however, Admirals Niebogotov and Enquist were placed in the rear. Moreover, the Commander-in-Chief was at the head of one of the centre columns ; that is to say, his manœuvring was limited to starboard as well as to port.

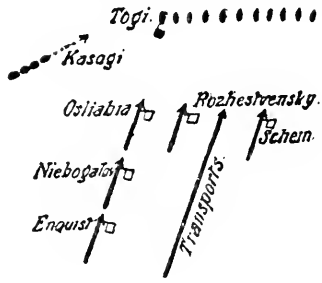
And now, in view of such formation, there appeared from the north at 1.40 the Japanese main force, consisting of eighteen ships, according to some descriptions in line abreast. It is possible, and confirmed by many indications among the many descriptions of the battle, that these eighteen ships consisted, in addition to the twelve modern armoured vessels (four battleships and eight armoured cruisers) of the following : the battleship "Tsen-yen," with four old-type 12" guns, arranged for bows-on fire ; three cruisers of the "Hashidate" type, two of which had one heavy gun each capable of firing over the bow ; and two cruisers of the "Naniva" type. To these eighteen ships only three of our force could reply—"Oslabya," "Suvorov," and "Svietlana." These latter, especially the first two, on which the Japanese concentrated their fire, were the first to be put out of action. At this moment our fleet commenced firing ; but what firing !

The transports made off to starboard, and were followed by Admiral Enquist to protect them on the port side ; the first battleship detachment turned to port, in order to be at the head of the second and third divisions, i.e. to again form one column to meet the enemy's line abreast formation ; in other words, to occupy the most disadvantageous position possible. The natural course for the first battleship detachment would have been to turn to starboard, and form in line ahead of the remaining two divisions ; such a manœuvre would have required less time than the first. The first and second battleship detachments might have turned almost simultaneously. Then our battleship column would have been drawn up parallel to the enemy in line abreast, i.e. would have been placed in such an advantageous position that the Japanese would only do one thing—turn all their ships simultaneously either to starboard or port at right

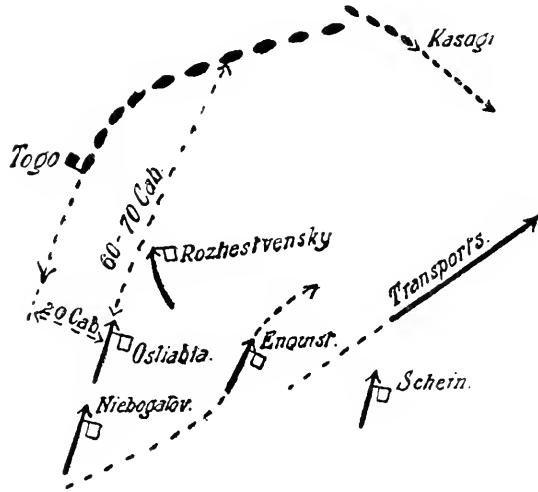
2<sup>nd</sup> Movement Midday.



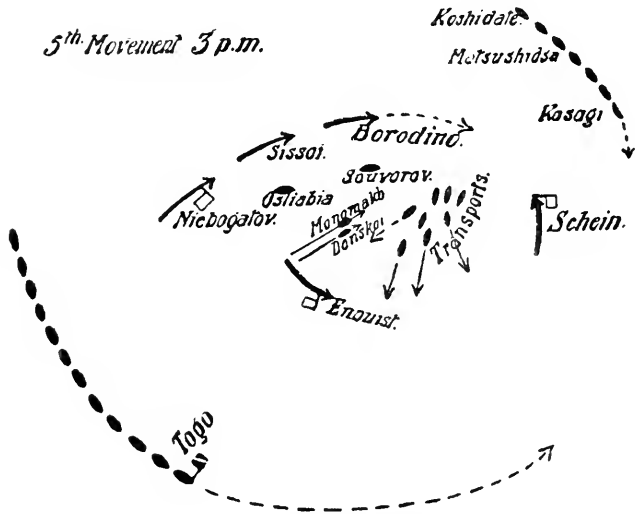
3<sup>rd</sup> Movement 1:40 p.m.



4<sup>th</sup> Movement 2 o'clock.



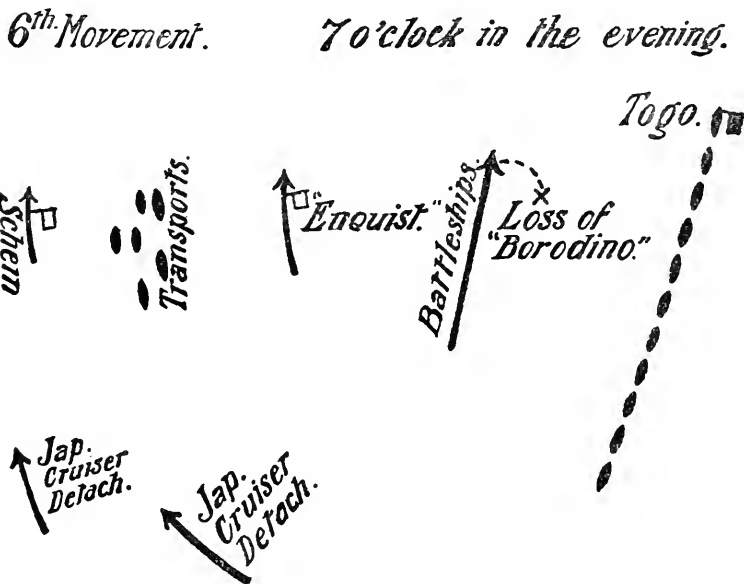
5<sup>th</sup> Movement 3 p.m.



COURSE OF ACTION BETWEEN NOON AND 3 P.M.

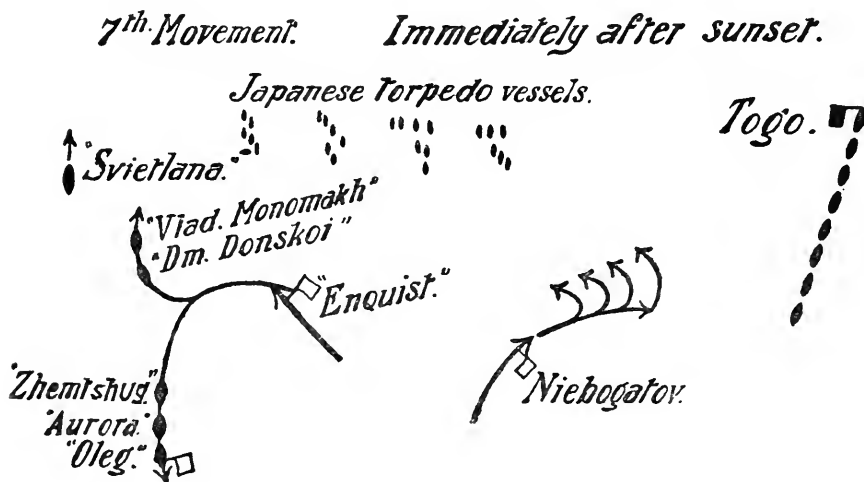
angles, and form a similar column. It was too late for us to arrange a line abreast formation. Such formation requires time, and could not be made under fire. It was necessary to remain in such formation, as we were on the point of encountering the enemy.

The Japanese utilized our disorder and formed column in line ahead. It was necessary for that only to turn their ships to starboard. The re-formed column then turned bodily to port and commenced to outflank the wing of our battleship divisions.



They concentrated all their fire against the first battleship division (which included our most powerful battleships) and against the "Oslabya." As it defiled at a distance of only twenty cable-lengths, the Japanese column was able to develop the full strength of its quick-firing artillery and to make the most of its enormous numerical superiority in this regard. As a result, the "Suvorov" and "Oslabya" were put *hors de combat* and the "Alexander III" and "Sissoi Veliky" temporarily disabled. To protect them our remaining battleships had to form line ahead to starboard. But it was now too late for this manœuvre on our part. The Japanese main force had already succeeded in turning our rear, and the three cruisers of the

"Hashidate" type, which separated themselves from the main body, together with their scouting division had successfully turned our transports from another side. These had gone off to the opposite wing and become mixed up with the cruisers. At 7 p.m. the principal Japanese force had already appeared to starboard of our battleship column, which up to this moment was led by the "Borodino." All the transports and cruisers were in two groups, led by Admiral Enquist and Captain Schein, and were to port of our battleships. The detachment of Japanese cruisers pursued them from the left rear. Having again concentrated their fire upon our leading ship, the Japanese



battleship division sank the "Borodino." The lead was then taken by the battleship "Imperator Nikolai I," flying Admiral Niebogator's flag, and the fleet again took the course leading to the Straits. The sun was now setting and the Japanese torpedo-flotilla (see above) appeared on the horizon. The Japanese battleship division had moved away, as if they intended to leave free action to the torpedo-boats. At first our battleships and cruisers separated before the approaching torpedo-boats, but the battleships, fearing to remain alone during the torpedo-attacks, and seeing that the cruisers did not intend to follow them, turned for the purpose of joining them. The cruisers should have sacrificed themselves and destroyed the torpedo-boats. The battleships,



however, failed to make a junction with the cruisers, for Admiral Enquist, with three of his best and least-damaged vessels, continued his route towards the south and quitted the scene of action. Of the number of cruisers which went to the North the "Izumrud" certainly effected a junction with the battleships, and this was probably also the case with the "Vladimir Monomakh." As the result of the night torpedo-attacks the "Imperator Alexander III," which had been so badly damaged by artillery fire that in any case she would soon have foundered, the battleships "Sissoi Veliky" and "Navarin," the armoured cruiser "Nakhimov," and probably also the "Vladimir Monomakh," were destroyed.

#### (XI) GENERAL SUMMARY

In summing up this battle it is not necessary to say anything specially new—nothing but what, before this war, would have been considered as an established fact. The importance of the scouting service had already been defined by Nelson as follows: "If a fleet is deprived of cruisers and is in pursuit of the enemy I consider it to be in error; if a fleet is trying to avoid the enemy I consider it to be in a dangerous position." Our fleet was in a dangerous position. Though not without cruisers, the latter were numerically fewer than those possessed by the enemy, and since the fleet did not utilize them they might as well have been absent. The advantages in certain circumstances of being in line abreast formation is also not new. In the literature of naval warfare of all countries this question was energetically discussed a few years before the war. Is it not the irony of fate that the best and fullest investigation came from the pen of a Russian naval writer, Captain Khlodovsky, an exceptionally talented officer, who met an untimely death on board the cruiser "Rurik," where he had been longer in command than his seniority warranted? We ought to have taken care of such an officer, to have utilized his conspicuous abilities and wide knowledge in the sphere of

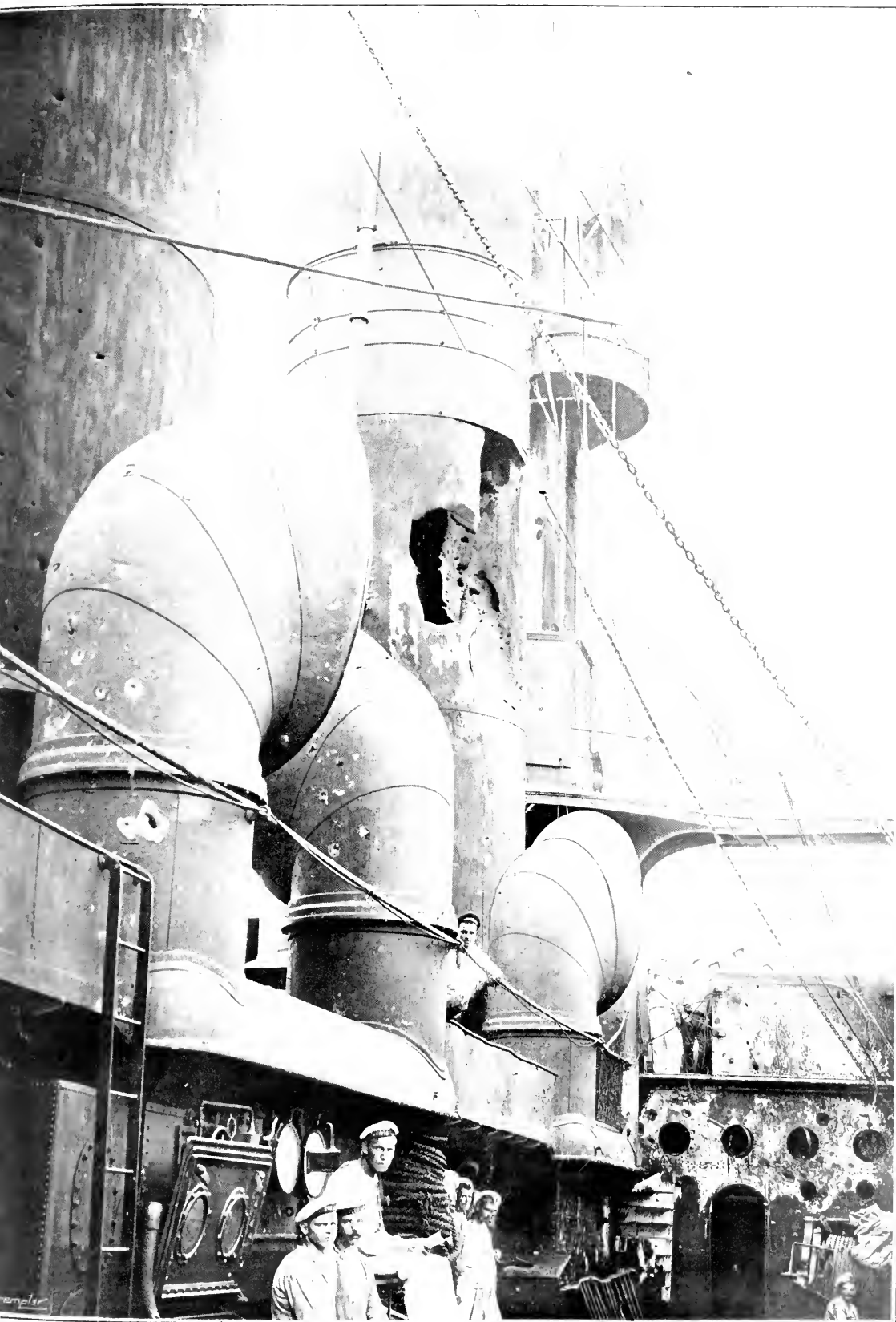
leading and directing naval affairs ; instead, he was relegated to a position which any officer of ordinary talent could have filled. We do not select officers according to their abilities, but class them all alike, thus spoiling many careers and the hope of ever having efficient naval officers ! The battle was decided by gun fire ; not exclusively of heavy guns, but also with medium quick-firing guns, which literally riddled our ships. The effect of that artillery told as soon as the rival fleets came within short range. This is inevitable in every *decisive* battle. In the artillery duel which decided the fate of the battle, only those ships which had been specially constructed for fleet actions participated in it—battleships and armoured cruisers. Unarmoured cruisers of various sizes attacked the transports, without participating in the battle of the main forces. In the first phase of the battle the body of the Japanese main column contained a few protected cruisers with heavy guns, but they were afterwards separated for combined action with the remaining unprotected cruisers. Once more the great value of armour, its proper distribution, and good shipbuilding generally, was confirmed. All the Japanese battleships and armoured cruisers remained undamaged, while our three best battleships—the “Suvorov,” “Borodino,” and “Oslabya,” were sunk by artillery fire, a very rare occurrence in modern battles, but which was entirely due to the following causes : excessive overweight and top hamper on board all three ; absence of stability ; the low position of the ports in the first two, and the obsolete arrangement of the armour on the last. In calm weather it might not have happened, but in a rough sea the waves could freely enter shot-holes and ports situated so near to the waterline. Consequently, the defects which had been so criminally permitted were fatal to them. The torpedo-craft of the enemy played the rôle assigned to them—to attack and sink ships already damaged by artillery. This they effected, and under most favourable circumstances. At night, when the sea became calm, they sank four or five ships among those which were the worst battered by gun fire during the day. To be crippled by gun fire means to

be rendered defenceless against torpedo-attacks and quick-firing guns, and to be deprived of the search-light apparatus, which is generally destroyed during an artillery duel. It happened so in this battle, and consequently our vessels could neither see the approaching torpedo-vessels nor fire upon them; and in addition to this unenviable state, they were already half full of water through the damage caused by the enemy's guns. Finally, our damaged battleships were deprived of the assistance of the cruisers and destroyers at the moment when they most needed them and had every right to rely upon them, i.e. during the torpedo-attacks. In my opinion, if the Japanese really had from seventy to a hundred torpedo-boats they should have destroyed more ships—the situation was so favourable for them. This, though, did not happen, and the difficulty of attacking a ship which has preserved its power of repelling attack was fully demonstrated by the fact that those of our ships which were saved from destruction were the ones least damaged by gun fire during the day—the battleship "Orel," all the battleships of Niebogotov's detachment, and almost all the cruisers. This was not a mere accident. Meanwhile, how many people repeated the old story that big ships are useless and that naval wars may be settled by torpedo-flotillas?

For the first few days after the battle, when the news was of such an incomplete and erroneous nature as could only be expected under the circumstances, it was impossible to reason with such people—they did not even want to listen. What appears very strange to me is that if a battle were to take place on land and a defeated army suffered great loss at the hands of cavalry during its flight, nobody would advise doing away with infantry and heavy artillery and introducing cavalry instead. When, however, naval war is spoken of, everybody allows his imagination full play. The necessity of torpedo-craft as an auxiliary arm for fleets has always been recognized, and it was considered impossible to have less than one torpedo-vessel for every battleship and cruiser. During 1901 I was Secretary of a Commission composed of the highest members of our navy,

whose object was to define the composition of a modern squadron; how many battleships, armoured and protected cruisers, torpedo-vessels, and auxiliary vessels, ought to constitute a fleet. The inferences of this Commission were highly commendable, but, . . . they have never been adopted; and, what is more curious, the existence of the Commission itself was hardly known to anybody in the navy. The results of the Commission came to nothing, simply because one of the members who formed it was regarded with suspicion by another; and although these two members did not quarrel, the second one simply placed the whole thing "under the red cloth." So the Russian navy was the sufferer. I know of a good many Commissions which have attained similar results.

Though the Japanese assured us that their submarines did not participate in the battle owing to rough weather, I do not believe it. The waves certainly interfere with submarines, neutralizing the periscopes (observing or sighting apparatus), but it is impossible that the Japanese should not have made an effort to employ theirs. Better surroundings for attacking moving vessels could not have been imagined. The conditions most favourable for submarine boats are when the enemy's ships are stationary. I fully believe that practice has shown the great difficulty of manœuvring submarines, and firing torpedoes, against a moving enemy. It is a fact that a floating Whitehead torpedo was sighted from one of our cruisers, and it is more than probable that this torpedo came from a submarine. The Japanese will naturally keep strictly secret all the actions of their submarines, whether they were successful or not, because it is to their interest not to allow any one to utilize their fighting experience. If it be accepted that submarines have played a minor part in the battle, even though they may not have actually sunk any ship, the fact is highly important and it is necessary to pay full attention to this new instrument of modern warfare. The perfection of submarines has of recent date been rapidly pushed forward, and they will certainly become a very dangerous weapon, though only an auxiliary one. I make this assertion



THE FORWARD FUNNEL OF THE CRUISER "ROSSIA," SHOWING THE SHATTERED CASING AND INTERNAL DAMAGE:

To the right are seen the blistered traces of a fire that broke out in the forecabin



because as yet the floating navy has not exhausted all means of coping with torpedoes. This question has been ably solved by the Russian naval engineer, Mr. Guliaev, and as long as such means are not exhausted the navy at sea cannot and must not consider itself vanquished. The advantages on its side, in comparison with those of submarines, are far greater. I merely desire to express my opinion that submarines will have to act as an auxiliary weapon for a long time to come, and to play a rôle similar to that now filled by torpedo-boats. In my opinion this does not in any way lessen their importance. It certainly fails to justify the criminal indifference which we have paid to them up to the present.

## CHAPTER VI

### (I) PROBABLE CAUSES OF DISASTER

I NOW turn to those causes which may have led to the annihilation of our fleet in the Straits of Korea, and will endeavour as far as is within my comprehension to explain which of these causes lay within the operations and control of Admiral Rozhstvensky, and with what influences he had to reckon which were not under his control.

I do not of course conceal the difficulty of such an examination, on account of the meagre and obscure data collected about this battle; and I trust that every one will regard this analysis as preliminary and conditional, errors in which are not only possible but inherently inevitable.

I particularly desire that no one should fancy an intention on my part to criticize the operations of Admiral Rozhstvensky. I simply wish to help the public, astounded by this terrible occurrence, to gain some idea of the causes of the event and so to dispel unjust reflections and opinions, which may readily be formed from contradictory and often fantastic news.

These causes may be set out in the following order :—

1. The weakness of the armoured section of Admiral Rozhstvensky's fleet in comparison with the armoured section of that of Admiral Togo, which gave the Japanese preponderance in a purely artillery combat.

2. The weakness and paucity of numbers of his cruiser division, which seriously affected completeness of knowledge and accuracy as to the enemy's movements, derived by means of reconnaissances.

3. The overwhelming superiority of the Japanese in the number of torpedo-craft—more than that, indeed, in the probable presence among them of submarines.



4. The necessity, if such existed, for Admiral Rozhestvensky, independently of weather and other circumstances, to pass without delay into the Korean Straits, in spite of all disadvantages for him in the event of a battle in these straits.

5. The formations and evolutions of the Russian squadron at the time of battle.

I will proceed to explain these points in order.

As to the weakness of Admiral Rozhestvensky's squadron in respect of armoured vessels, cruisers, and torpedo-boats, I need scarcely dwell upon this here. I was always profoundly convinced of this weakness and have consistently striven to make this apparent on every opportunity; at first in the sphere of my former position in the service, and since that time in the Press, beginning in November, 1904, with the articles "After the departure of the Second Pacific Squadron."<sup>1</sup>

Here I should make a reservation. When I refer to these articles I may always expect the reproach that I do this out of more than a little personal feeling: viz. a desire to indicate that I had already spoken of this, that I gave warning of it but was not listened to, and so on. This is not so at all. It would be an unworthy falsehood on my part. What I wrote in those articles had long previously been submitted to many officers in the fleet, and I summed up in them only what I knew from many documents, what I had heard around me, being placed in a sphere where such opinions had special value. I only carefully rejected from the materials in my possession what might have borne the character of communicating useful information to the enemy. I refer to my articles and notes simply because therein everything is brought together in one place. As Admiral Rozhestvensky's fleet proceeded, the opinion began to be formed, first in the foreign Press, and afterwards among ourselves, that this fleet was not so weak after all; that it possessed the advantage in number of heavy guns; that our artillery generally was better; and the notion began also to

<sup>1</sup> Contained in "The Russian Navy in the Russo-Japanese War," by Captain N. Klado, translated by J. H. Dickinson. Hurst & Blackett, 1905.

spread afresh—in spite of the danger pointed out by me with special insistence—that the Japanese had lost many ships ; that the remainder were damaged and worn out ; that they had few torpedo-boats left ; and so on.

When it was shown that Admiral Rozhestvensky had conducted his entire fleet to the scene of actual operations, and had been joined by the division of Admiral Niebogotov, people began to say openly that the Russian fleet was the stronger ; that if Rozhestvensky could carry out his battle plans with as much talent as he had displayed in conducting his fleet, victory was beyond question, and the inactivity of the Japanese was a sign of their weakness, and so on. The Japanese, on their side, did not of course dispel these opinions. Probably they aided by propagating them, i.e. continued the same kind of operations as before our fleet left Libau.

Apparently this frame of mind was reflected in our fleet as well, and even in letters from responsible and highly placed persons. To what extent confidence, not only in their equality in strength with the Japanese, but in a certain superiority, was prevalent in our fleet, I cannot of course undertake to say, but merely observe that if this confidence existed, sustained by the apparent inactivity of the Japanese, it may have possibly induced less careful attention to the theatre of action, i.e. the conditions for battle in the Straits.

When this confidence was suddenly brought into contact with the reality which overthrew all the suppositions upon which it was based, the sudden awakening may well have contributed to the confusion and uncertainty in our manœuvres that undoubtedly aggravated the disaster sustained by the Russian fleet. I write this, of course, entirely as a hypothesis. Whether anything like it really existed or not is a matter of history. I have spoken of the extravagant estimates of our strength, and their influence upon the people in general, among whom a certain anticipation of success, instead of a trembling hope, had begun to form. When failure follows such unfounded anticipations, it is much harder to bear, and accusations become more

acute and passionate, with the greater probability that in the end they will not be directed against the right persons.

This very danger compelled me to repeat my attempt to persuade the public that our fleet, even after the junction with Niebogotov's division, continued to be considerably weaker than the Japanese. This, moreover, was not my personal opinion only : it was that of many very competent naval authorities.

Beginning with 12 May, I inserted a complete series of articles in the "Novoye Vremya," based upon a whole array of data, in which I once more attempted to demonstrate this. Reckoning the strength in each case exactly, I came to the conclusion ("Novoye Vremya" of 19 May) that even with the absence from the Japanese of the battleship "Yashima"—which actually occurred—our fleet was still approximately 1·4 times weaker than Togo's.<sup>1</sup> To balance the increase of our superiority in number of large ships I endeavoured to demonstrate the excellent character of the weapons which the Japanese possessed for battle and the long range of their 8" guns, of which we had none at all. I also adduced all the facts that refuted the opinion that the Japanese artillery was in general far worse than ours. Concerning the torpedo-craft, I expressed the conviction that in spite of losses sustained their torpedo flotilla had not decreased, but had, on the contrary, increased after the commencement of the war. Finally, in order to explain why our ships were less powerful in spite of the apparent equality in displacement and in gunnery, I had to touch on a most important and delicate question, that of the capabilities of our vessels in comparison with those of the Japanese, derived from the systems and merits of their construction. In order to approach this question I have reverted to my former notes. In discussing the system of construction of our vessels in these, I could only refer to sources common to all—the naval text-books—which sufficed to enable me to point out that in the vast majority of our battleships the extremities were unprotected by armour—i.e. the bows and stern; that "*this has long been considered dangerous*";

<sup>1</sup> See page 34 *ante*.

that this was admitted even in the case of such modern vessels as the "Oslabya." As to the merits of the construction of our vessels, independently of the types adopted, it was still more difficult to speak. These did not appear in the text-books, and it was compulsory not to communicate anything which ought to remain unknown to the Japanese. For this reason I merely quoted from the text-books the rates of speed of our ships and those of the Japanese, from which it could be seen how far ours were behind. I also mentioned the top-hampering of our vessels and their defective seaworthiness in comparison with those of the Japanese. Now that all our ships in question have either ceased to exist or are in the hands of the Japanese, who have the opportunity of finding out all about their capabilities, I consider that I may speak out on matters that I could not refer to then, which do not appear in the text-books. There can be no question now of revealing military secrets. At the same time it must be shown what vessels Admiral Rozhstvensky possessed, and his effective force of men, in order to clear them from the responsibility for failure which it would be cruelly unjust to cast upon them. Besides, it will be necessary for us in future to construct vessels quite as good as those of possible adversaries, and one of the best means of securing this is control by the public and the representatives of the public—the Press. This will be the subject of a later section.

(II) SPASMODIC OUTCRY,  
 "WHO IS THE GUILTY PERSON?"

Before continuing this examination of the probable causes of the disaster to our fleet in the Straits of Korea, one cannot help pausing to consider some consequences of the impression it produced. So bitter was the defeat, so painful and shameful for all, so many hopes were dashed to the ground thereby, at this turning-point in the course of an unfortunate war, that the natural outburst of many was: "Find and point out the guilty person! It cannot be that no one is guilty!" To blame the bureaucratic *régime*, our general unpreparedness, was im-

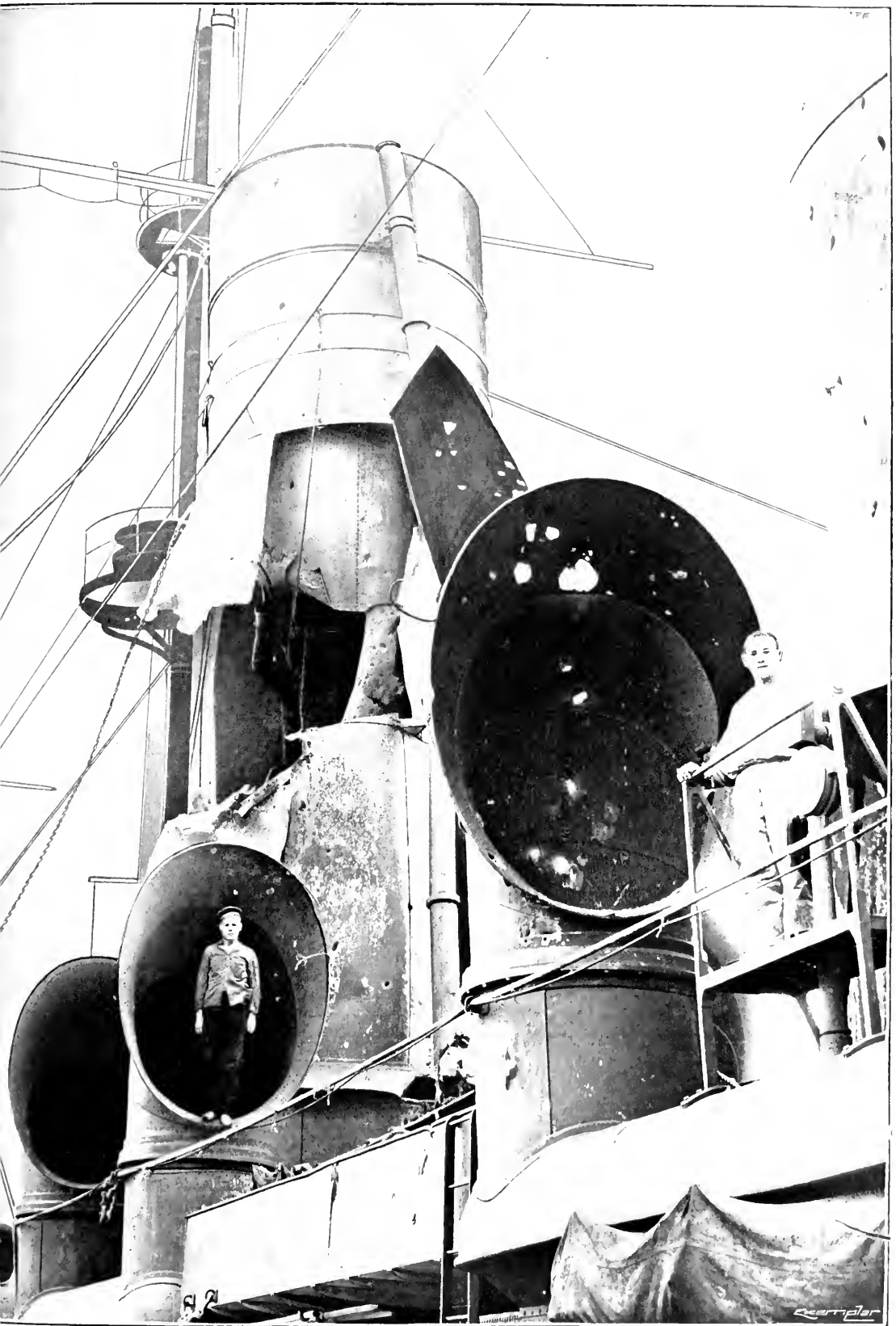
personal and too general. That, indeed, could satisfy no one. And in these passionate, spasmodic searches for guilty parties some were said to have been discovered, i.e. those who spoke of the absolute necessity of despatching a fleet to the Far East from the Baltic; and very properly those who pointed out the absolute necessity of sending reinforcements after the departure of the second squadron. Of course, after a certain time, anger becomes somewhat assuaged, for temper soon cools, and then such opinions fall to the ground of themselves, being entirely baseless and evoked by the sorrowful aspect of the moment; but they are yet in existence. As I myself was among those who maintained the necessity for strengthening the Second Squadron, I cannot refrain from adverting to these opinions; the more so as certain circumstances connected with the despatch of our Baltic Fleet to the Far East are well known to me.

### (III) IMPOSSIBLE FORESIGHT DEMANDED BY AMATEUR CRITICS

Now that the matter is of the past, the utmost foresight is exacted from us. "You ought to have known," we are told, "that the fleet was proceeding to certain disaster; why did you not point out that only a naval victory would bring the campaign to a successful issue?" This foresight, according to some, should have been shown even with respect to the circumstances of Admiral Niebogotov's surrender. When rumours began to spread, I know not whence derived and entirely unconfirmed, that the cause of this surrender was a mutiny, then it was said to me—not in jest, but in earnest—"You ought to have foreseen this; you must have known that Niebogotov's ships left Libau in the middle of labour disorders, and you ought to have been aware that this could not but be re-echoed among the crews of these ships! You ought to have foreseen that they would refuse to fight, and would exercise an evil influence on the crews of other vessels when they joined them; and that therefore it was particularly needful not to despatch this division. Moreover, this

division only hindered Admiral Rozhestvensky in the battle—which you must also have been able to foresee.” Although it is vexing to have to answer such random assertions, once they are uttered it is impossible to keep silence.

“Let it be as you say,” I retorted at the time. “Let us suppose the cause of the surrender was really a mutiny—although I do not see who could know it, nor how it could be known; still, let us suppose this. You appear to have forgotten that I wrote about the necessity for despatching reinforcements in November, and that the strikes broke out more than a month later. According to you, once they had broken out and might influence the crews, I ought to have begun to write: ‘*Do not despatch Admiral Niebogotov’s division, as they will surrender through a mutiny of the crews!*’” Are not these previsions after the event the source of the rumours about the circumstances of the surrender of Admiral Niebogotov? With regard to the point that his division would only be a hindrance in the battle, such a supposition has no foundation whatever. If it were conceivable that at the commencement of the battle the ships of this division would begin to sink, thus causing depression of spirits among the crews of the other vessels, and that from this cause confusion arose among them, I could have understood that one might *hypothetically* argue in this way. But as a fact the contrary happened. How could he hinder vessels from perishing? He could only help them by remaining above water and drawing on himself part of the enemy’s force. On the morning of 28 May only the one division of Admiral Niebogotov and the battleship “Orel” faced the enemy. Admiral Rozhestvensky, wounded, was already at that time outside the sphere of the battle—on board the destroyer “Biedovy.” Admiral Enquist, with three cruisers, at that time entered Manila, far to the south. Was it necessary to foresee that, and not despatch Admiral Enquist and the cruisers accompanying him? One may travel very far with this sort of reasoning. Some folks lose their heads to such an extent as to hurl reproaches at Admiral Rozhestvensky; did he not foresee that he was going to certain



R (FOURTH) FUNNEL OF THE "ROSSIA," CAUSED BY A SHELL STRIKING ON THE PORT SIDE AND EXPLODING INSIDE THE FUNNEL.

Splinter holes are seen in the ventilating cowls.





destruction? And foreseeing that, why did not he, and all his fleet, enter a neutral port and disarm? Those who talk thus do not understand that in Russia at that time many people would have accused Admiral Rozhestvensky of faintheartedness, cowardice, or even of treachery. And then those who talked in this way and made random accusations: would they not have been among the first to blame the Admiral for a disgraceful disarmament of the whole fleet on the eve of an encounter with the enemy? Would this have involved less disgrace and loss of prestige to Russia, with less influence on the course of military operations, than even such a terrible disaster in battle? How would it be if every military captain, recognizing his weakness, were to lay down arms beforehand? And who has any right to demand such a thing?

News received from Vladivostok from the special correspondent of the "Novoye Vremya" threw sufficient light on some of the causes of the disaster. It is apparently true that Admiral Rozhestvensky allowed himself to be encountered unexpectedly, not being in battle array at the moment of encounter. Two columns in line ahead formation are a very unsuitable array for battle. A fleet is deprived of the necessary flexibility to reply rapidly by corresponding manœuvres to each move of the enemy. Through this, apparently, our two leading battleships—the "Suvorov" and the "Oslabya"—succumbed to the concentrated fire of the main force of the Japanese fleet, and their destruction could not of course but produce a depressing effect upon the rest. Probably, indeed, it brought about dangerous confusion among them. It is confirmed that the "Oslabya" perished from shot-holes forward, which—thanks to the method of our naval construction—was without armour, as I have already written. It is proved that our vessels were literally strewn with a hail of 6" shells, which weapons some people, for their own reasons, made light of previously, being interested only in heavy guns. The superiority in this class of ordnance among the Japanese was enormous. It is also a fact that the weather was very stormy. Hence much is comprehensible as

regards the destruction of the battleships of the "Suvorov" type; and in particular as regards the influence on the battle of the evident pre-eminence of the Japanese ships in seaworthiness, thanks again to the imperfections of our system of naval construction.

#### (IV) DUTIES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE MINISTRIES OF WAR AND MARINE

The question of the despatch of the Baltic Fleet to the Far East was inseparably bound up with the view taken by those with whom the conduct of the war rested. What bearing a success gained by such a fleet would be likely to have on the issue of the struggle rested with the decision of those leaders at the various stages of the war. It was for them to say whether the offensive should be assumed at all hazards, and to what results such action might lead; or whether they should stand on the defensive, and if so, what should be the farthest point to which they ought to recede. It was for them to decide finally whether the war should be continued or dropped, and its hopelessness and their own impotence accepted;—dropped, I repeat, and peace accepted on any terms whatever, however shameful and oppressive they might be. Everybody hoped that God would grant a speedy assembly of the representatives of Russia, that they might take the responsibility attached to the deciding of these harassing questions; but meanwhile the decision rested with the Government. It really mattered little who settled these questions: the Ministry, or an assembly of the nation's representatives. The part to be played by the military authorities throughout would remain the same—to supply a trustworthy estimate of the warlike forces and *matériel* at our command, and afterwards, when those conducting the war (whoever they might be) had adopted one or other course, to point out the best means of applying those forces and resources to attain the desired result.

That the issue in this case depended entirely upon the command of the sea there is no need for me to point out. All are

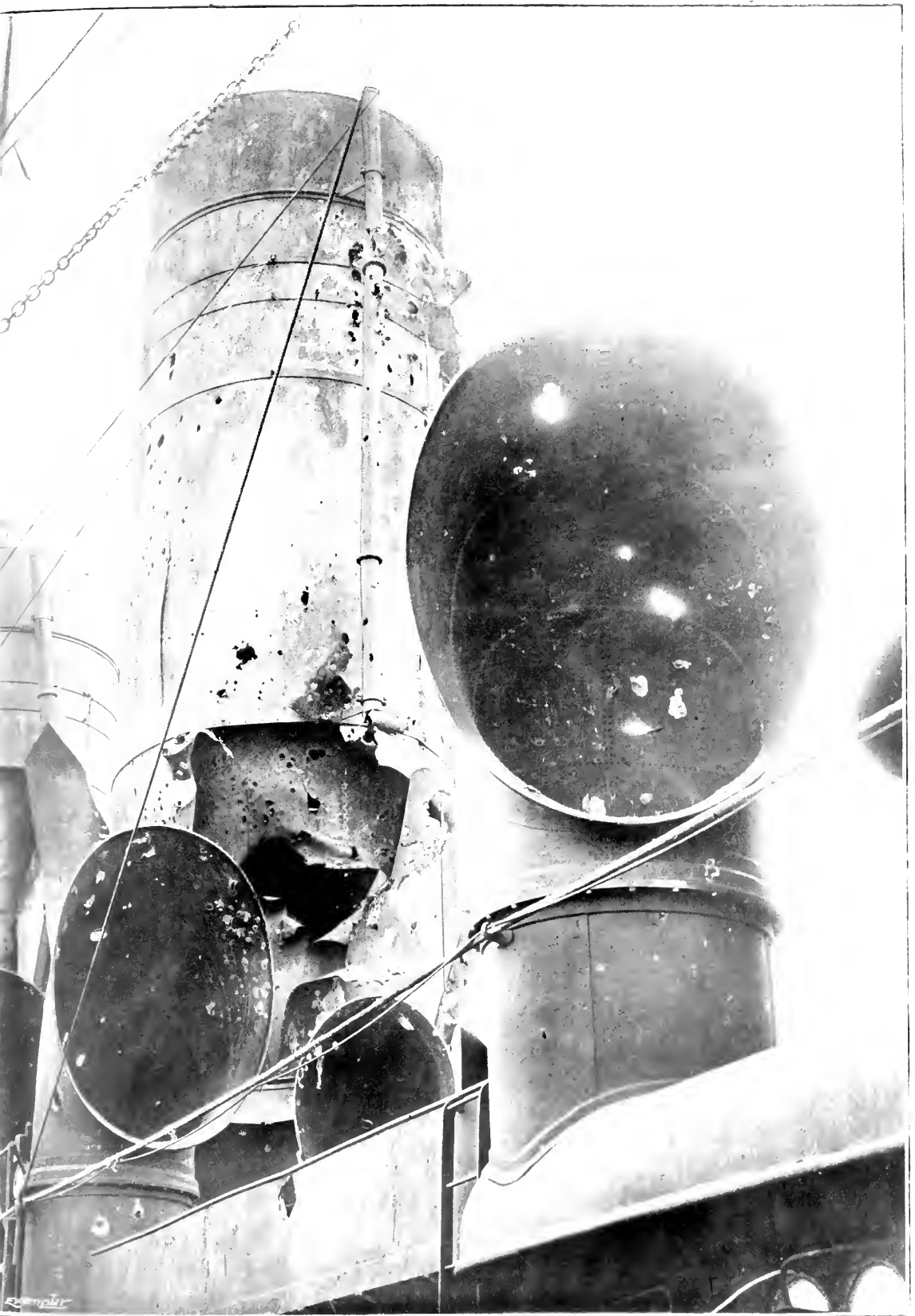
now fully convinced of it. Before the declaration of war, however, even when the *pourparlers* with Japan had begun to take an alarming turn, neither the Ministry nor the Admiralty were so convinced. Besides that, the latter had not fulfilled the primary duty incumbent upon them,—to make clear to the Government the weakness of our fleet in Far Eastern waters, its unpreparedness, and the defenceless state of our naval bases there. If that had been done, and if the Ministry of Marine had been in a position to show that success was out of the question without command of the sea, concessions would have been made to Japan and war thus averted. Once war had broken out, both these questions became of secondary importance. Then the task of the Ministry was confined to concentrating at the seat of war as large a naval force as possible, and pushing on the necessary preparations with the utmost speed. Every naval officer who was given the opportunity of expressing his opinion at the time, either within the limits of his professional capacity or through correspondence in the Press, could only call for the adoption of one course. That was, the immediate despatch to the Far East of as many battleships as possible. The question whether or not they could get there, whether they were sufficient, or in good condition, and so forth, could only affect in a minor degree the urgency of these details. Only the Government could put a stop to the war once it had commenced ; and, as it did not take this course, the authorities had to operate as best they could with the means at their command, though, realizing the indifferent quality of those means, they were bound to do their utmost to put them on as good a footing as possible. Here, again, reasonable limitations should have been regarded. For instance, when our squadron in the Far East no longer existed ; when no more than two battleships were left in the Baltic—of which one, though re-armed and remodelled, could only be classed as obsolete, besides one armoured cruiser and a certain number of smaller vessels, which could not affect the issue of modern warfare—for the Tsushima battle was decided by gun fire—when it was known for a certainty that the Japanese fleet had really suffered no appreciable loss, I say that in these circum-

stances it would undoubtedly have been rank folly to despatch the proposed Fourth Squadron.

But matters were by no means in that state at the outbreak of hostilities. The squadron at Port Arthur, considerably inferior to the Japanese fleet though it was, constituted a considerable force, not to be sent rashly to certain destruction as long as the possibility remained of its being reinforced with such a large body of ships as, in addition, would secure a good chance of success. Only such a victory could turn the scale in our favour. It was, however, just the knowledge of the weak points in our fleet, both as regards ships and men (and they were very well known to our Admiralty), that should have spurred them on to fresh and titanic displays of energy in fitting out and despatching such a force as, not only on paper, but in number of guns and tonnage of ships, should be equal to the Japanese fleet, and even surpass it. Then, not content with resting on their laurels, they should have sent more—everything that could float and was capable of reaching the seat of hostilities. In this way they ought to have tried to crush our opponents by sheer weight of numbers. It would certainly have been more expedient to send all this force at once, and not in detachments ; of that, at least, there can be no question.

How could it be foreseen, though, that even all this would not save the situation ; that our squadron would twice put out from, and twice return to, Port Arthur ; that it would be sunk in its own harbour without effecting anything ; and that the fortress itself would be involved in its ruin ? To sit calmly by and reserve the fleet in home waters for some future occasion, and not only to foresee all this, but to be also so firmly convinced of it as to be determined to do nothing, surpasses all human power and capacity.

If such a gift of prevision and determination were granted to humanity, then it would certainly be the greatest boon that could fall to us, since wars would cease *ipso facto*. Who would go to war, knowing beforehand that he would be disastrously defeated and subjected to far greater and more humiliating



DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO THE THIRD FUNNEL OF THE CRUISER "ROSSIA"

A shell struck on the port side and ripped open both the inner and outer casings of the funnel. Splinter holes are visible in the ventilating cowls.



conditions after that war than before? What naval or military commander, in possession of such a power of foresight, could make up his mind to accept battle? In all quarrels the weaker would submit to the stronger, and accept his demands without offering resistance. But for the present this all-embracing prevision, which may well grow to be "foreknowledge absolute" (as Milton says), is only a dream; it has never been known as yet, and in all past wars the vanquished cause has been that which was palpably over-confident. There was as much reason to foresee that our armies would be defeated, or, rather, it ought to have been easier to foresee it. Land warfare had already taught us the rate at which success must be purchased. Any manual of strategy would have informed us that it would be impossible to feed and provide by a *single line* of railway, at a distance of some 4,700 miles, an army of more than a certain strength, however great might be the resources at the other end of that line; and that the shortness, convenience, and safety of the line of communications forms a most important factor in the problem of campaigning. With no less difficulty the fall of Port Arthur might have been foreseen, and the futility of defending it, as also the issue of the battle of Liao-yang, apart from that of Mukden, and the folly of sending fresh troops to certain destruction after such a warning.

A consciousness of the natural difficulties presented by the scene of operations, and a clear perception of the unpreparedness and shortcomings of our navy and army, should have impelled the Ministries of War and Marine to do all that lay in their power to convince the Government that there was no chance of this war being successfully conducted. If the Government failed to listen to them, or had unfortunately taken the false step of declaring war, it was incumbent upon them to display the utmost energy in turning to the best possible account the means at their command.

More especially was it the duty of the Ministry of Marine to make clear the fact that the success of the war depended on a victory at sea, and once hostilities had commenced to insist on

the employment of all our available naval forces. Of course this could not be expected of the Ministry of War, considering how little of naval warfare is known in Russia, even among professional sailors. On several occasions I had the good fortune to hear General Kuropatkin express the opinion that navies in general, and not only the Russian navy, were of very little utility. This opinion continued to receive support at the War Office, even after our disasters on land, which were solely ascribed to the mistakes of the late Commander-in-Chief, though really due to the much-derided "command of the sea," and the line of communication it afforded the Japanese. That was really ruinous. The Ministry of Marine could not understand it, because, if true, there was no way out except a candid and definite admission to the Government of their impotence ; or to let the further events of the war demonstrate their incapability ; or else to make an end of the whole matter and commence preparations for the despatch of such a force as would at least be numerically superior to that of the enemy. But they vacillated, postponed a definite decision, and all the time secretly hoped that, God willing, neither army nor fleet would be required.

Meanwhile, they carefully hid their wounds, as also did the War Office, and still cherished the hope that our army would not fail to be victorious over such an insignificant enemy as the Japanese. This game of bluff, while saving the face of things—a course prompted by failure to understand the relative conditions of the combatants—might have been exposed in a fatal way. It is the habit of Departments to conceal the truth from the Government ; not to have the manliness to open their eyes even during the most critical juncture in the life of the Empire, and to forget that they are responsible to the whole nation. I am firmly convinced that if they had only acted differently the Government would certainly have listened to them and war would most likely have been averted, or if it had once been declared it would have had a different and more successful issue. This was admitted by all, even by the Government, although, alas ! too late ; but it is the bounden duty of a Government not only to adopt a decided



course, but also to put the Ministries in question face to face with the country and turn their activity into the right channel whatever the issue, whether to continue the war or to conclude peace. It should have made them tell the grave truth and act on that truth.

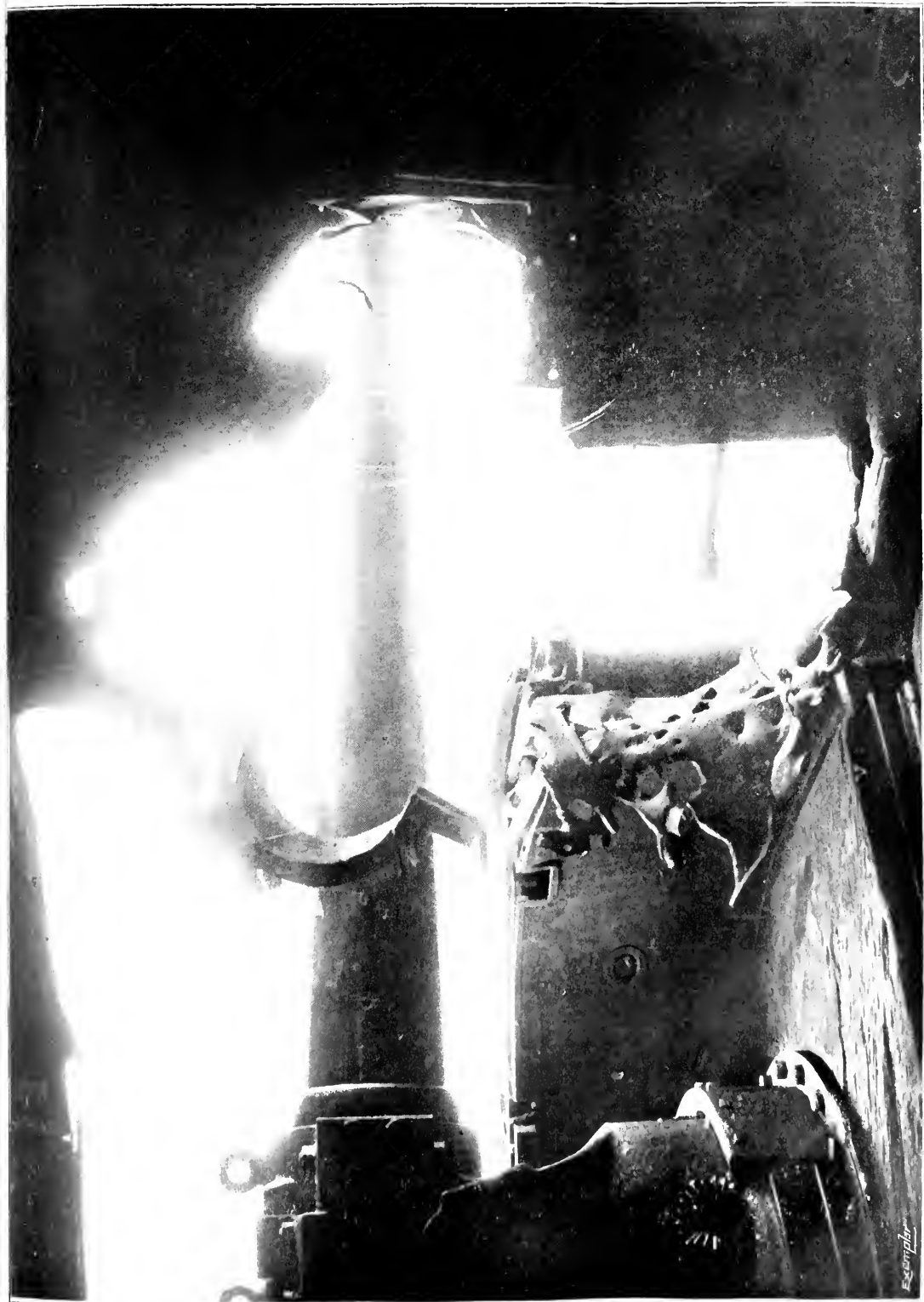
#### (V) LUCUS A NON LUCENDO

Official news received later gave some particulars, but did not elucidate the facts about Rozhestvensky ; but nevertheless it was impossible to pass over them in silence. In particular, the matter was further complicated by the inexplicable fact of the destroyer "Grozny" parting company with the "Biedovy," on board which the wounded Admiral was at the time. According to an account by the commander of the "Grozny" and taken down by the correspondent of the "Rus," what happened was that the "Biedovy" hailed him and inquired what speed he could go at. As soon as he replied he was ordered to make for Vladivostok. But who could have given him such an order? From the Admiral's report, it is clear that he was insensible all the time and did not hear of the "Biedovy's" surrender until the evening of 28 May. That signifies that the order can only have been given by Rozhestvensky's flag-captain, Klanier-de-Kolon. Commander Baranov, of the "Biedovy," was junior to Commander Andreiev of the "Grozny." Therefore it may be inferred that the order for the "Biedovy's" surrender must also have been given by Rozhestvensky's flag-captain. Why did the commander of the "Grozny," which had already sunk one of the Japanese boats by a lucky shot, not try to improve his success and rescue the captured Commander of the Fleet? Surely for such a prize it would have been worth while to fight to the very last. All these questions should have received an official reply long ago, so that only those who were guilty might have been held responsible, and not those who were innocent; on them alone public reprobation should fall, the proper outcome of official demands and representations. But how could these representa-

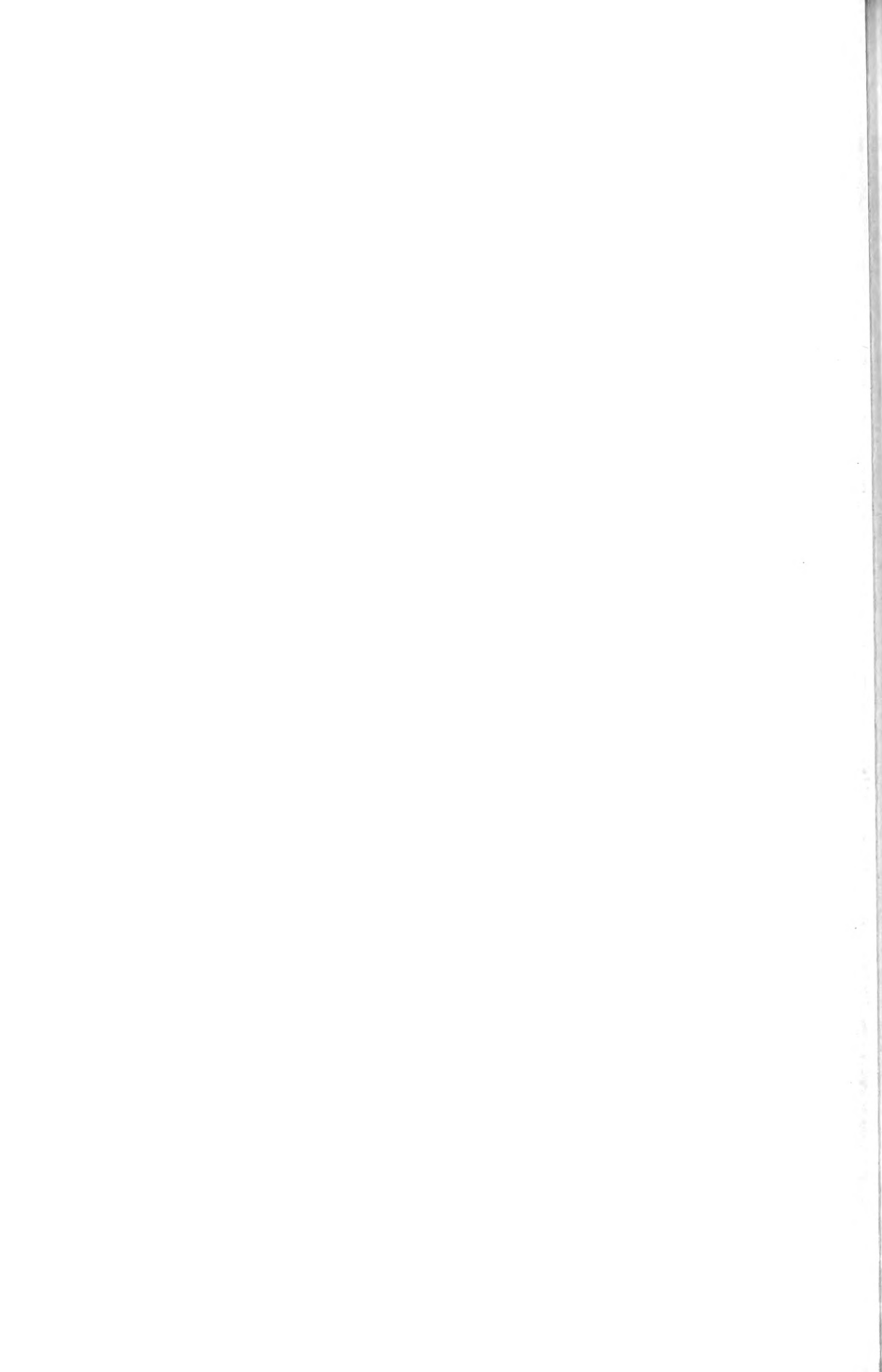
tions be made, when no precise information was vouchsafed to us?

In precisely the same way it long remained an open question why the four battleships surrendered at the same time as Admiral Niebogotov—the most vital and burning part of this great national question. On the strength of accounts of doctors and chaplains who made their way to Shanghai, after release from capture, we were told that Niebogotov, without asking the consent of his captains, hoisted the signal, “I am surrounded, so shall surrender.” I should have taken this for one of the most elaborate fictions of war correspondents as to the conduct of Russian officers, but I could not do so in the face of these reports from Shanghai. The fact is that they distinctly say that the first report of the commander of the “Izumrud,” dated 3 June, concluded with just such an assertion respecting Niebogotov’s signal, and that this signal precisely accounted for the “Izumrud’s” flight to Vladivostok. The proof that something wrong really did happen is to be found in the fact that in the message of thanks and approval from the Throne (even to the ships that fled from the scene of action) Niebogotov was expressly excluded. But what part should his captains have played, and ought they to have obeyed the signal? All this needed explanation, since everybody blamed the crews. In the reports of Admirals Enquist and Rheinstein, based on the representations of the commander of the “Bodry,” there was also some discrepancy. It is plain from the report of the former that some of the cruisers under his command, for example, the “Oleg,” “Aurora,” and “Zhemtshug,” turned south quite late at night, after several attempts to get through to northward, and finding himself deserted on the morning of 28 May the Admiral waited for the rest of the squadron, hoping that it would come heading to the south. It might have needed to take that course in order to coal from the transports left in that direction.

The last clause in Admiral Enquist’s report somehow or other did not ring sound. It is true that he witnessed the loss of some of our best battleships; and that when he saw that the rest were



DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO THE FORWARD 8 IN GUN ON THE PORT SIDE ON BOARD THE "ROSSIA"  
The hull ports and port were shattered by two successive shells which burst in the casemate and caused a fire. The entire gun crew were killed.



seriously damaged he undoubtedly felt that the day was already lost. What then remained for the surviving ships to do, pursued as they were by a superior force of the enemy, except steer in search of the transports, so that they might re-coal? Their only chance of safety was to break through in the direction of Vladivostok. As a fact, this is just what they should have done, judging from other accounts of the battle.

And, moreover, as I have pointed out above, the report of the commander of the "Bodry" also contradicted this. According to him, all the cruisers and some of the torpedo-boats turned southward about 7.30 p.m., and he evidently saw this. It was not quite dark, for he informed us that somewhat later the "Dmitri Donskoi," "Vladimir Monomakh," "Izumrud," "Almaz," and "Svietlana," steered to the north, and only the three cruisers named pursued their course to the south in company with Rear-Admiral Enquist, the commander of the cruiser division. Consequently the major part of the cruisers endeavoured to follow their admiral, but thought better of it afterwards and steered to the north. They probably did so because they saw that all the undamaged battleships had taken that course.

Admiral Enquist had seen nothing on the morning of 28 May, i.e. if he had gone at full speed all night (say 15 knots), which, as he knew, battleships cannot make, especially when they are injured. The commander of the "Bodry" in his report seemed to point to the same conclusion, when he said that while he was engaged in rendering aid to the "Blestiastshy" the cruisers under Admiral Enquist made off, and that he could not overtake them. Having expended all his coal, no other course was left to him than to act as he did. Altogether the conduct of this portion of the fleet, and in particular its flight under Admiral Enquist to Manila, was far from being clear, as was also Niebogotov's surrender and that of the destroyer "Biedovy." I cannot help pointing out that, both in the case of the ships that made for Manila, and those that tried to get through to Vladivostok, the loss in men was trifling. This was especially

the case on board the battleships "Imperator Nikolai I," "Admiral Seniavin," and "Admiral Apraxin," while the "Biedovy" had no men either killed or wounded. Nor must it be forgotten that these further reports made no mention of mines. It is really not easy to admit that there were any in the neighbourhood, especially as the Japanese were under way and circling round our squadron, as is markedly clear from later reports. There can also be no reasonable doubt that the action was purely an artillery duel, and that even battleships of the "Suvorov" and of the "Oslabya" types deliberately went out of range of gun fire.

PART II  
NARRATIVES OF THE PARTICIPANTS





## CHAPTER I

(1) TELEGRAMS OF THANKS FROM HIS MAJESTY THE TSAR.

TOKIO.            *To Adjutant-General Rozhestvensky.*

“From my soul I thank you and all ranks of the squadron who honourably discharged their duties in battle, for their self-sacrificing services to Russia and to me. By the will of the Most High your exploit was not destined to be crowned with success, but the Fatherland will ever be proud of your unbounded manhood. I wish you speedy recovery, and may God comfort you all !  
NICHOLAS.”

MANILA.            *To Rear-Admiral Enquist.*

“I sincerely thank you, the commanders, officers, and crews of the cruisers ‘Oleg,’ ‘Aurora,’ and ‘Zhemtshug,’ for the unbounded honourable service in a hard battle. May you all be consoled by the consciousness of duty fulfilled in a sacred manner !  
NICHOLAS.”

VLADIVOSTOK.

*To the Commander of the ‘Almaz,’ Aide-de-camp Tshagin.*

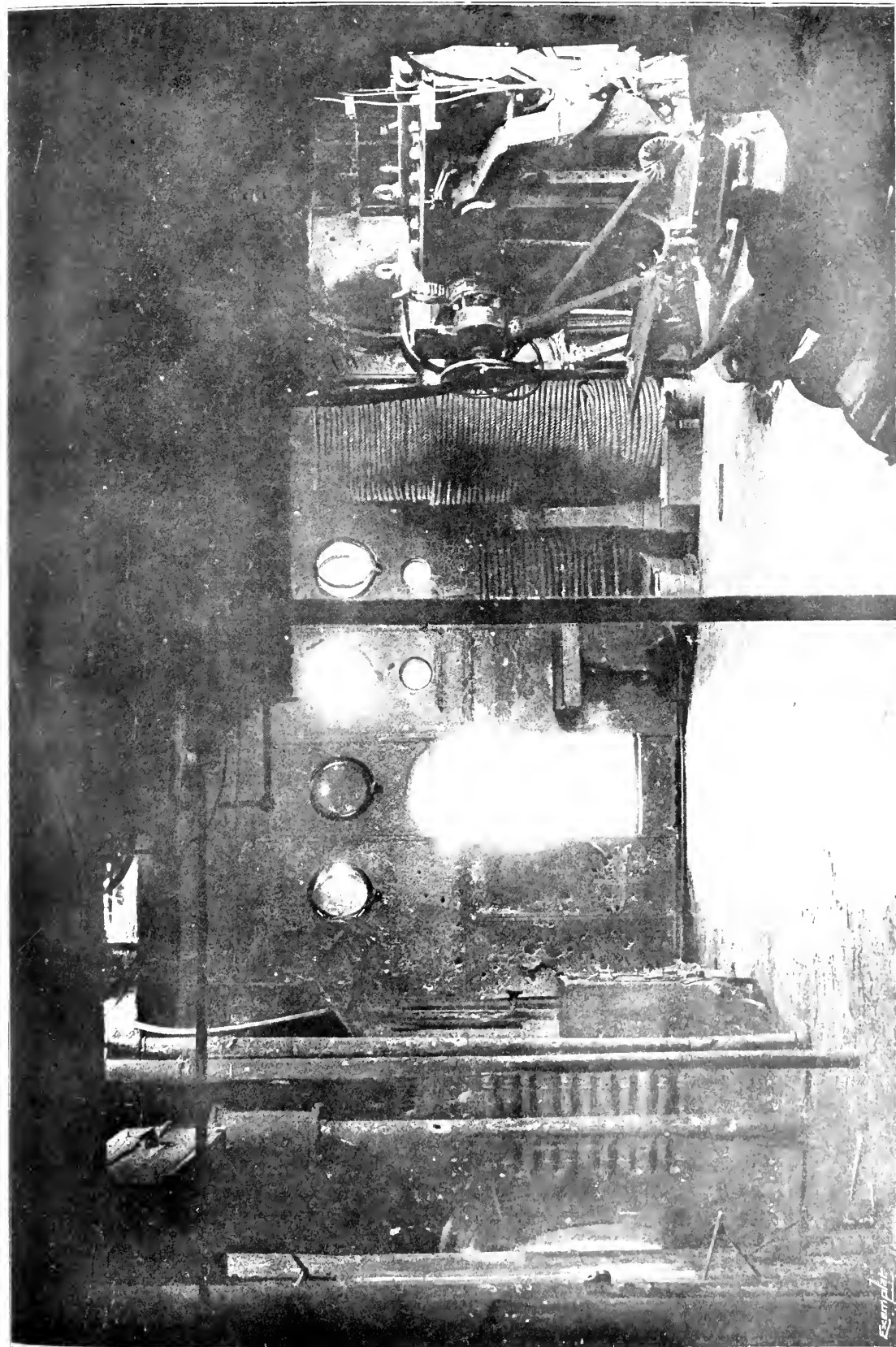
“I thank you from my soul, and charge you to convey my gratitude to the commanders, officers, and crews of the ‘Izumrud,’ ‘Almaz,’ ‘Grozny,’ and ‘Bravy’ for their self-sacrificing, trying exploits in the battle so unfortunate for us. May you all be consoled by the consciousness of duty fulfilled in a sacred manner under the hard trial through which our Fatherland is passing !  
NICHOLAS.”

(II) TELEGRAM FROM ADJUTANT-GENERAL ROZHESTVENSKY, DESPATCHED FROM TOKIO ON 8 JUNE, 1905, AT 11.30 A.M., ADDRESSED TO HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS.

“On May twenty-eighth at one-thirty p.m., between the southern extremity of the island of Tsushima and Japan began a battle with the main force of the Japanese to the number of twelve vessels and with Japanese cruisers to the number of no fewer than twelve. At two-thirty on board the ‘Suvorov’ the steering of the ship had to be transferred to the ‘centre post,’ but at three-thirty part of the staff and myself, having lost consciousness, were placed on board the ‘Buiny,’ where were already part of the crew of the foundered ‘Oslabya.’ The command was transferred to Niebogotov. At night the ‘Buiny’ missed the fleet. In the morning we saw the ‘Donskoi’ with two torpedo-vessels. The crew of the ‘Oslabya’ were transferred to the ‘Donskoi,’ I was taken on board the ‘Biedovy,’ which sailed on farther with the ‘Gromky.’ On the evening of the fifteenth I learned that the ‘Biedovy’ had surrendered to two Japanese torpedo-vessels. The ‘Biedovy’ was brought into Sasebo on the eighteenth. I am informed that Niebogotov is at Sasebo.”

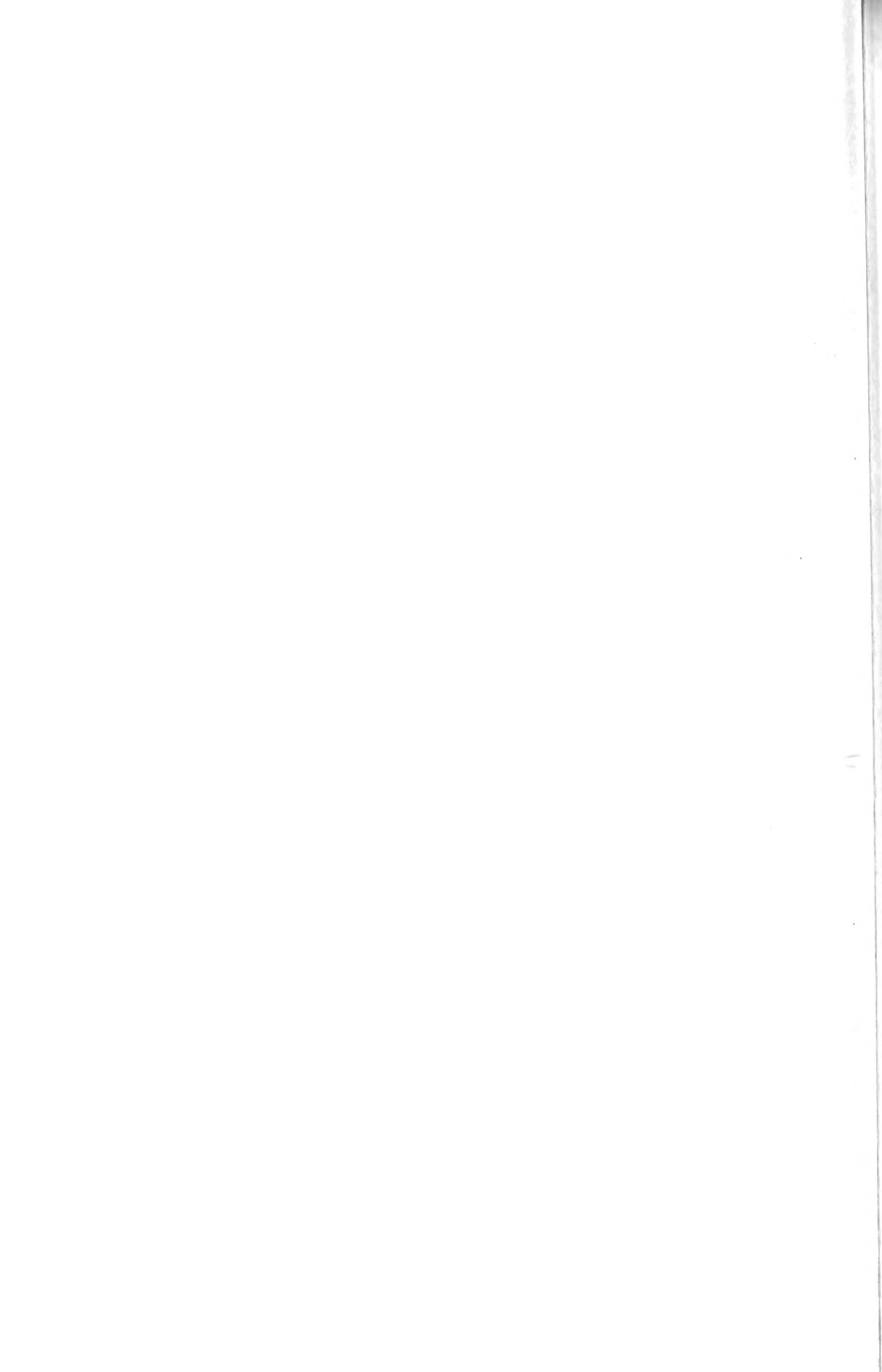
*Explanatory Note.*—Probably instead of “Gromky” should be read “Grozny,” since it is known from the report of the commander of this destroyer that he accompanied the destroyer “Biedovy,” on board of which was Admiral Rozhestvensky.

The “central post,” mentioned by the Admiral in his telegram, is a special cabin in the interior of the vessel below the armoured deck, where are all the means of communication (speaking-tubes, telephones, etc.) with all parts of the vessel. While the “military cabin” (conning-tower) remains sound, the commander inside transmits orders immediately to the different parts of the vessel, but if the “military cabin” is damaged, which probably happened on board the “Suvorov,” there only remains for the commander one other place from which to establish communication: the “central post.”



INSIDE THE FORWARD COMPARTMENT ON BOARD THE "KOSHY" PORT SHELL  
The shells are the result of the explosion of two large Japanese shells, which struck almost simultaneously.

Example



(III) COPY OF A TELEGRAM ADDRESSED TO HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS FROM REAR-ADMIRAL ENQUIST, DESPATCHED FROM MANILA, 5 JUNE, AT 11.55 P.M.

“I most humbly report that the battle of May twenty-eighth took place between the islands of Tsushima and Kotsushima under a clear sky, a fresh south wind and an unusually foggy horizon. The Japanese squadron appeared at one forty-five p.m. from the north and battle joined immediately. The tactics of the Japanese were designed to prevent us getting through to Vladivostok. For this reason each time that our fleet turned northwards they took advantage of their superiority in speed to get across the head of our battleship column and put the leading vessel out of action. The enemy's protected cruisers, nine in number, with the battleship 'Tshitshien,' operated separately from their main force, endeavouring to get our battleships between two fires. During the whole time of the battle also our cruisers operated against them. The transports hampered this manœuvre. Within fifty minutes of the beginning of the battle the 'Oslabya' turned over and perished. The 'Borodino' went out of action. Soon the flagship 'Kniaz Suvorov,' on fire and without funnels or masts, was taken out of action. The fleet turned in order to shelter the 'Suvorov,' which our torpedo-vessels approached under a heavy fire. The 'Borodino' righted herself and resumed her place. The 'Alexander III' was then leading. The 'Ural' perished in the second phase of the action. To her proceeded the tug 'Svir' (on her own initiative) and the transport 'Anadyr,' ordered by me to take off men from the 'Ural.' The tactics of the Japanese, indicated above, resulted in one of their squadrons moving in a circle, by which the transports and torpedo-vessels were enclosed, while the Japanese themselves formed an outer circle. Such a position was extremely awkward; and it was very difficult to escape from it, owing to the low speed of our vessels. Before sunset, however, our squadron lay towards the north, and at that time on

board one of the torpedo-vessels of the battleship 'Kniaz Suvorov' (flagship) the signal was hoisted: 'The Admiral entrusts the command to Admiral Niebogatov.' The 'Imperator Alexander III,' listing over deeply, left the line, and the 'Borodino' remained at the head. Upon her the fire of the enemy was then concentrated. As the sun set the 'Borodino,' having fired her last shot, rapidly turned on her side and capsized. As the squadron proceeded through the fog, a number of Japanese torpedo-vessels were noticed, whereupon the fleet turned southwards. At that time we could no longer make out the flagship 'Kniaz Suvorov,' nor the battleships 'Borodino' and 'Oslabya,' nor the transports 'Kamtchatka,' 'Ural,' and the tug 'Rus.' In the course of the engagement most of our vessels were on fire, but nothing could induce them to bring to in order to put the fire out. The battleships capsized as they fired their last shot. The cruisers engaging the enemy's cruisers and, at times, the 'Nissin' and 'Kassuga,' succumbed to cross-fire, being hard hit by shells of large calibre. At the very commencement of the battle a Whitehead torpedo was seen from the cruiser 'Oleg' cutting across her course; but they succeeded in avoiding it. At that time there were no Japanese torpedo-vessels in sight, and the large ships were too far off to launch torpedoes. The darkness of night did not terminate the battle. Torpedo-attacks and firing began to be directed upon our ships, search-lights being employed. I cannot report on the results, as in the darkness it was impossible to distinguish our vessels from those of the enemy. Considering it possible with the cruisers 'Oleg,' 'Aurora,' and 'Zhemtshug' to push northwards I several times attempted to break through the line of hostile battleships and cruisers barring the way, but had to desist, owing to persistent attacks. At one time four torpedo-vessels were at half a cable's length from the cruisers 'Oleg' and 'Aurora.' They launched without result more than seventeen Whitehead torpedoes. Turning southwards, I could not distinguish our ships which had put out their lights, owing to the darkness, so continued to steam ahead with the cruisers 'Oleg,'

'Aurora,' and 'Zhemtshug,' hoping to see the fleet at dawn, as it would require the stores of coal on board steamers left by Adjutant-General Rozhestvensky in the south. On the morning of the twenty-ninth, not seeing the fleet, I stopped engines to ascertain the condition of the cruisers. Not knowing whither the fleet had gone, I considered it impossible to go northwards, from the very great risk of encountering the whole Japanese fleet with my seriously damaged vessels. The lack of coal and serious damage below water did not permit of my passing through La Perouse Straits. I decided therefore to make for Manila. The conduct in battle of all ranks on board was beyond all praise."

MOST HUMBLE TELEGRAM FROM ADMIRAL ENQUIST FROM  
MANILA, 9 JUNE

"The kind words of your Imperial Majesty have found a joyful echo in the hearts of all ranks of the division, and will enable us to bear the heavy fate which has overtaken us."

#### (IV) A CHAPLAIN'S NARRATIVE

Peter Nikititch Dobrovolsky, chaplain of the cruiser "Dmitri Donskoi," and formerly with Rozhestvensky's Second Squadron, returned to St. Petersburg from Japan. While omitting a general description of the battle of Tsushima, we will here give an account in the words of Father Dobrovolsky of that which particularly concerns the "Dmitri Donskoi," about which there appeared in the Press but scrappy and often contradictory information :—

"Towards the evening of 27 May, when our battleships had been destroyed one after another, the Japanese, as is well known, opened an attack with torpedoes. As soon as it began, the 'Oleg' and 'Aurora' began to make headway at full speed, and the 'Donskoi,' which could only make thirteen knots, soon lost sight of them. Astern of the 'Donskoi' followed the 'Vladimir Monomakh,' but as the latter had a speed of

fifteen knots, she, too, soon out-distanced the 'Donskoi.' Not hearing any signals from the 'Oleg,' on board which Admiral Enquist was, and on the strength of former orders from Rozhestvensky, the commander of our cruiser, Captain Lebedev, steered for Vladivostok. The cruiser successfully made her way through a whole chain of the enemy's torpedo-craft that were scattered along the route from Tsushima to Japan, and came out into the open sea. At about midnight three torpedo-vessels, which turned out to be ours, were seen astern; one of these came up to the 'Donskoi' to make inquiries as to the course. At daybreak we espied from on board our cruiser two more torpedo-vessels, and after a little while a third signalling for us to stop. This was the 'Buiny,' on board of which was the wounded Admiral Rozhestvensky. On coming up to the 'Donskoi,' he gave orders for the boats to be lowered, so as to take up those that had been saved by the destroyer from the 'Oslabya,' and also for supplies of coal to be furnished. The first order was carried out, but not the second. There was no possibility of bringing up coal, as the smoke from the enemy's torpedo-vessels now appeared on the horizon. After demanding a surgeon, the 'Buiny,' with two other destroyers, took her course for Vladivostok. In about two hours, however, it was again noticed from the cruiser that the 'Buiny' was advancing towards us, and already signalling that she was 'in distress.' Her engine was damaged. It was found necessary to transfer the Admiral to the 'Biedovy.' The 'Buiny,' for her part, received orders to go to the 'Donskoi,' transfer the crew, and then sink the vessel.

"All this was accomplished, but meanwhile our cruiser lost about two or three hours of precious time. Then she proceeded again at her former speed. The horizon was clear and open for a vast distance. At two in the afternoon the rocky island of Dazhelet appeared in the distance. Anxious to mask his movements, the commander of the 'Donskoi' took a course between Dazhelet and a small island near the Japanese coast. Another two hours passed by, and then there appeared four Japanese



cruisers belonging to the third squadron ; the 'Matsushima,' the 'Idsukushima,' the 'Hashidate,' and the 'San-yen.' They advanced at the slow rate of fourteen knots.

"Then, at six o'clock, just as we were opposite Dazhelet, appeared two more cruisers of the 'Otova' or 'Nitaka' type, accompanied by two torpedo-vessels. About the same time, three torpedo-vessels advanced from the direction of Korea. The 'Donskoi' was now surrounded on all sides. She shaped her course for Dazhelet, from which place she was separated by a distance of thirty to thirty-five miles. The Japanese cruisers advanced rapidly, and about 6.30 action began. The 'Donskoi' was at first attacked by two cruisers, but after half an hour four more cruisers advanced from the other side, and opened fire at once. The 'Donskoi' replied by firing from both sides, concentrating her fire upon the headmost vessels. The continuous crash of shells was heard all round, and the cruiser was quivering continuously. On board, the glassware, crockery, pictures, lamps, were all shattered to atoms, and fragments were flying about. The din was so great that many were literally deafened. Several times the ship caught fire, but, thanks to the activity of the officers and the brave determination of the crew, the flames were immediately extinguished. Without being interrupted for a moment, the battle continued for two hours. Already there were 60 killed and 120 wounded on board the ship.

"At the beginning of the battle I went about with the cross and sprinkled holy water round the decks; but when the number of wounded increased, I was obliged to go down into the sick bay to administer the last sacrament to the dying. On the upper decks, where those picked up from the 'Oslabya' and 'Buiny' had been placed, moaning and sobbing could be heard, and as I passed along they surrounded me and kissed the cross with tears in their eyes. The captain enjoined me to reassure the wounded by telling them we would proceed to Dazhelet. Towards the end of the battle, the air resounded with the joyous shouts of 'Hurrah!' From the top, it was

communicated that the 'Donskoi' had sunk the cruiser 'Nitaka,' which had been leading, and upon which an admiral's flag had been hoisted. On the other side, two more of the enemy's cruisers had been thrown out of line, and the 'Donskoi' was soon left alone. Having slackened her course, she was already getting near to Dazhelet, when another torpedo-attack was made on us. It resulted once more in a defeat for the Japanese. Out of five torpedo-boats, the 'Donskoi' succeeded in sinking two, while a third went off heeling over.

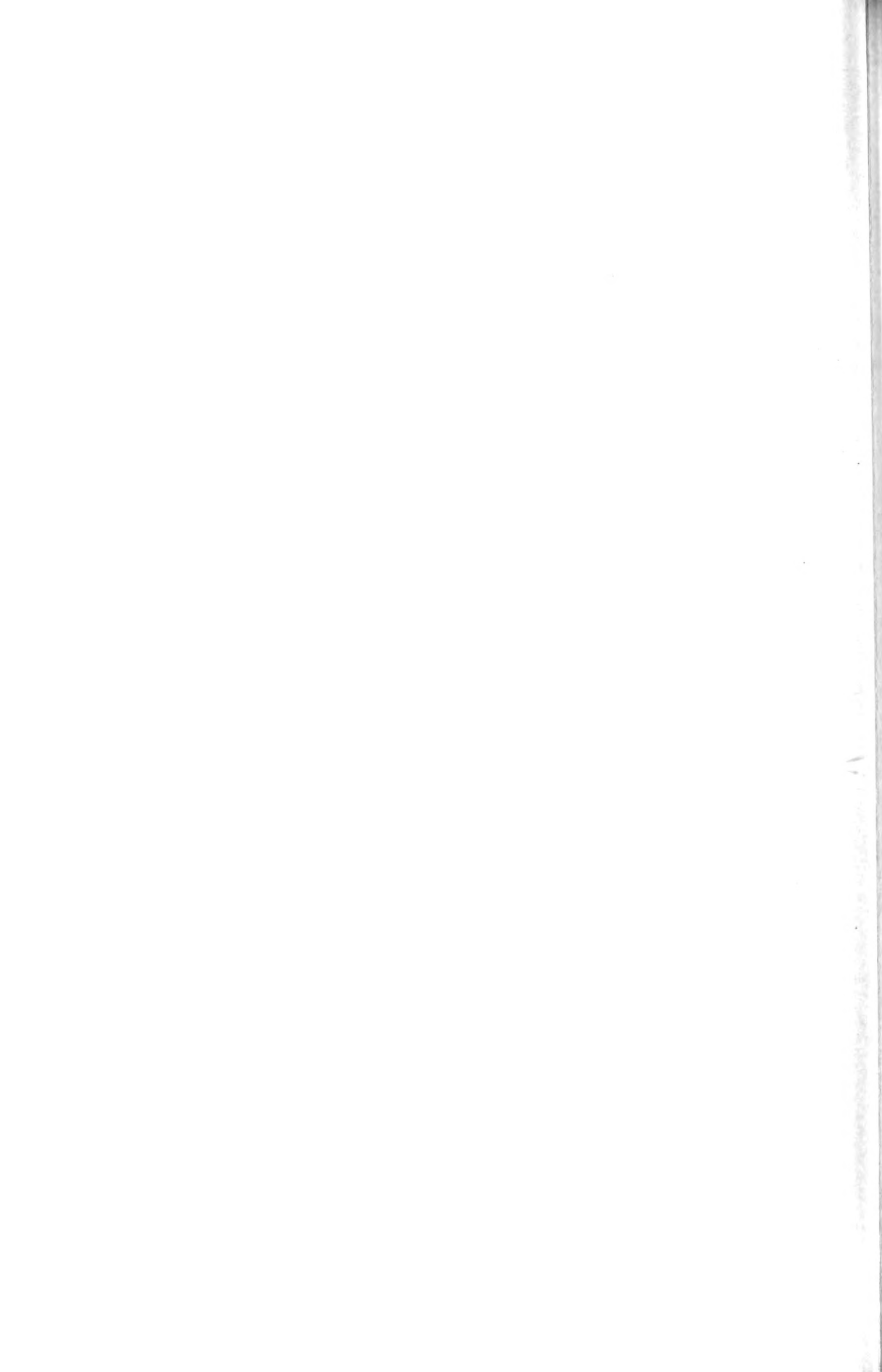
"The attack having ceased, the 'Donskoi' slackened her course. I then came up on deck. All the lights were extinguished, the gangway ladders were broken down everywhere; corpses were lying about on all sides. With great difficulty I managed to make my way to the upper bridge. There too all had been killed: the senior quartermaster Scholtz, his assistant Lieutenant Giers, the senior gunnery officer Durnovo, also the helmsman and two of the captain's orderlies. The captain had at one time stood at the wheel himself, but towards the end of the battle he was wounded in the leg and was now lying on the bridge. I offered to call the surgeon, but he said that he had already tied up his wound with his handkerchief. He added, 'The doctor had better attend to the others. There are, no doubt, plenty of wounded besides me.'

"Everywhere on board the cruiser were to be seen the marks of destruction, although no holes had been made under water. Above the waterline we could count about six. A shell had fallen into one of the boilers, and it was only due to the fact that this boiler had previously been put out of use that an explosion was prevented. On board the 'Donskoi' there remained only just enough shells to have lasted for a quarter of an hour's fighting. In view of all this it was resolved to land the crew. In the course of an hour one of the cutters was repaired, and, having chosen a convenient spot, we began to transfer the wounded. The work of landing continued till daybreak. From a distance could be seen signal-flares on board the enemy's vessels. Early in the morning the



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "GROMOBOI"

General view of the damaged stern--starboard side.



enemy's torpedo-craft appeared. Thereupon the crew that had still remained on board the cruiser threw themselves into the water to swim ashore, by order of the senior officer. The 'Donskoi' herself was taken by the senior officers, together with the assistant engineers, to a depth of 100 fathoms, where they opened the Kingston valves, and in twenty-five minutes she sank to the bottom, while the officers reached the island amid a hail of the enemy's bullets.

"The wounded were placed on shore, and, lest the Japanese should open fire, we showed the Red Cross and a flag of truce. The Japanese stood on and off for a long time near the coast, after which an officer came off in a boat. On landing, he took our senior officer with him, and after about two hours the 'Kasuga' appeared, accompanied by a torpedo-vessel which remained out at sea. They then proceeded to transfer our wounded, taking them first to the torpedo-vessel and afterwards to the cruiser. At midnight, the work of transferring us ceased. It was resumed on the following day, and towards ten o'clock in the morning we had all been removed. In a day we arrived at Sasebo. On entering the port, all the prisoners were shut in below, not being allowed to come on deck. At Sasebo, the wounded were removed to the hospital, while we were taken to one of the transports, where we remained for fully twenty-four hours. On the following day I and Doctor Hertzog, with the chaplains and doctors of the other vessels, were sent to Nagasaki, and installed at the hospital there.

"After two days had elapsed, the body of our commander, Captain Lebedev, was brought in, and I buried him in the Russian cemetery at Nagasaki."

Father Dobrovolsky had nothing but high praise for the dead commander of the "Dmitri Donskoi," as also for the senior gunnery officer Durnovo, who had both of them been thorough sailors, experienced, well-informed, and energetic. As to Lebedev, even the Japanese spoke of him as one of the bravest of Russian seamen.

"I am telling you all this," the Father concluded, "because

it seems to me that so little has hitherto been written about the 'Dmitri Donskoi.' Hardly any one would have anticipated that the vessel, which had been counted among our feeblest, would have succeeded in causing so much damage to the Japanese. Who knows, had Admiral Enquist not retreated with the rest of the cruisers, but that we might have succeeded in effecting a passage to Vladivostok? It is, of course, difficult to speak with certainty about this: undoubtedly there were good reasons for doing so."

"Have you not heard anything, Father, about Admiral Niebogotov?" he was asked.

"At first the Admiral was praised a great deal," replied Father Dobrovolsky, "for had he not accomplished so successfully a long and difficult passage? But as regards the surrender, everybody is absolutely at a loss how to explain it. I can only say this much, that the Japanese have treated us as well as the other prisoners; very differently from the way they treated Niebogotov's crew."

(V) MOST HUMBLE TELEGRAM FROM THE COMMANDER OF THE SECOND-CLASS CRUISER "IZUMRUD," SECOND-CLASS CAPTAIN BARON FERSEN, DESPATCHED FROM ST. OLGA'S STATION, 2 JUNE, AT 9-55 P.M.

"I most humbly beg to report to your Highness that the fleet of Adjutant-General Rozhestvensky, consisting of the battle-ships 'Kniaz Suvorov' (Vice-Admiral Rozhestvensky's flagship), 'Imperator Alexander III,' 'Borodino,' 'Orel,' 'Oslabya,' (Rear-Admiral Felkersham's flagship), 'Sissoi Veliky,' 'Navarin,' 'Imperator Nikolai I' (Rear-Admiral Niebogotov's flagship), 'General-Admiral Apraxin,' 'Admiral Seniavin,' 'Admiral Ushakov,' the cruiser 'Oleg' (Rear-Admiral Enquist's flagship), 'Nakhimov,' 'Aurora,' 'Monomakh,' 'Dmitri Donskoi,' 'Svietlana' (commodore's pennant of first-class Captain Schein), 'Almaz,' 'Ural,' 'Zhemtshug,' 'Izumrud'; torpedo-boat destroyers 'Bodry,' 'Buiny,' 'Bravy,' 'Blestiastshy,' 'Bezu-pretshny,' 'Buistry,' 'Biedovy,' 'Grozny,' 'Gromky'; transports

'Kamtchatka,' 'Anadyr,' 'Irtish,' 'Korea'; towing-steamers 'Rus,' 'Svir'; hospital vessels 'Orel' and 'Kostroma'—arrived on May twenty-eighth at Tsushima Island, where a hostile fleet in full formation was encountered. The battle began at one-twenty p.m. From the beginning of the battle the enemy concentrated fire upon the 'Suvorov' and 'Oslabya.' To the time when darkness set in, of the battleships were sunk the 'Oslabya,' 'Imperator Alexander III,' and the 'Borodino,' while the 'Suvorov,' 'Kamtchatka,' and 'Ural,' were seriously damaged, and out of sight of the squadron. The command passed to Rear-Admiral Niebogotov. As it grew dark the battleships 'Imperator Nikolai I,' 'Orel,' 'Seniavin,' 'Apraxin,' 'Ushakov,' 'Sissoi Veliky,' 'Navarin,' 'Nakhimov,' and the cruiser 'Izumrud' (entrusted to me and attached to the armoured vessels as a repeating ship), following the Admiral, lay to N.E. 23 in the following order: 'Imperator Nikolai I,' 'Orel,' 'Apraxin,' 'Seniavin,' 'Ushakov,' 'Sissoi Veliky,' 'Navarin,' 'Nakhimov.' The remaining cruisers cut off from the squadron were soon lost to view. The division of battleships, going at fourteen knots, was exposed to repeated torpedo-attacks upon its rear vessels. At dawn it was seen that the division consisted of the battleships 'Imperator Nikolai I,' 'Orel,' 'Apraxin,' and 'Seniavin.' At sunrise on the twenty-ninth, smoke from the enemy's fleet was once more observed on the horizon, which I reported to the Admiral by signal. The Admiral increased speed. The 'Seniavin' and 'Apraxin' began to flag perceptibly. At about ten o'clock, ahead, to port and astern appeared the Japanese fleet, and a division of cruisers began to make a circuit from astern to starboard. Being at that time cut off from the fleet and without the possibility of rejoining it, I decided to break through to Vladivostok, and went off at full speed, so as to escape the hostile cruisers already in pursuit. Expecting to meet the enemy's cruisers on changing course for Vladivostok, and being without coal at the time, I made for Vladimir Bay, where I arrived on the night of the 30-31st. On entering at one-thirty a.m., in consequence

of the fog, the cruiser ran bodily on the rocks. Having only ten tons of coal, and not finding it possible to get the ship off, I sent the crew on shore, and, so that the 'Izumrud' should not fall into the hands of the enemy, blew her up. Six sailors were wounded in the battle; the officers and the rest of the crew are well.

"CAPTAIN FERSEN,  
"Commander of the 'Izumrud.'"

(VI) COPY OF A TELEGRAM FROM GENERAL-OF-INFANTRY LINIEVITCH FROM GODSAIDAN, DATED 31 MAY, 1905, ADDRESSED TO HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS THE GRAND DUKE GENERAL ADMIRAL

"General Kasbek telegraphs that on May thirty-first, at ten a.m., the destroyer 'Grozny' arrived at Vladivostok, having been separated from the fleet during the night battle. According to the commander of the 'Grozny' the torpedo-boat-destroyer 'Biedovy' also proceeded northwards, Admiral Rozhestvensky, with his staff, being on board the latter. North of the island of Dazhelet our torpedo-vessels encountered two large Japanese destroyers, which began a battle. During the encounter it was seen that the 'Biedovy' sank from an explosion. The fate of the admiral is unknown. In the course of the fight the 'Grozny' sank one destroyer. The destroyer 'Bravy' is on her way to the island of Askold, about which I will report to your Imperial Highness."

(VII) COPY OF A TELEGRAM FROM THE COMMANDER OF THE SQUADRON TORPEDO-VESSEL "BRAVY," LIEUTENANT DURNOVO, FROM VLADIVOSTOK, 2 JUNE, ADDRESSED TO HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS THE GRAND DUKE GENERAL ADMIRAL

"On May thirty-first I happily arrived at Vladivostok, having left the fleet on May twenty-eight, at nine p.m. At that time I saw in line all the battleships except the 'Oslabya' and one of the 'Kniaz Suvorov' type. All were going well in line ahead. During the battle, about four-thirty p.m., I rescued from the



capsized 'Oslabya' one hundred and seventy-five men of the crew, with the officers—Lieutenants Sablin and Kolokoltsev, and Midshipmen Ivanov and Batchmanov. About four o'clock, as we were under a hot cross-fire, a six-inch shell pierced the deck and boiler casing, and, in exploding, carried away both of the forward boilers and pierced the main steam-pipes, bringing down the foremast. Nine of the crew were killed and four others injured, including Lieutenant Nerike, slightly. In consequence of this I could not make more than eleven knots, and, therefore, could not follow the fleet in its course for Vladivostok. I proceeded independently, hugging the shores of Japan, so as to keep out of the sphere of operations of Japanese torpedo-vessels. Meanwhile, I met more than fifteen of them returning after the attack. The better to avoid being seen, I cut away the mast, and had the funnels coloured white. During the night of the thirtieth a pipe burst in the third boiler, after which I could only make five knots an hour. I burned up all the wood for lack of coal. On the morning of the thirty-first I set the mainmast, and entered into telegraphic communication with Vladivostok. I will report to your Imperial Highness about this.

“LIEUTENANT DURNOVO,

“Commander of the 'Bravy.'”

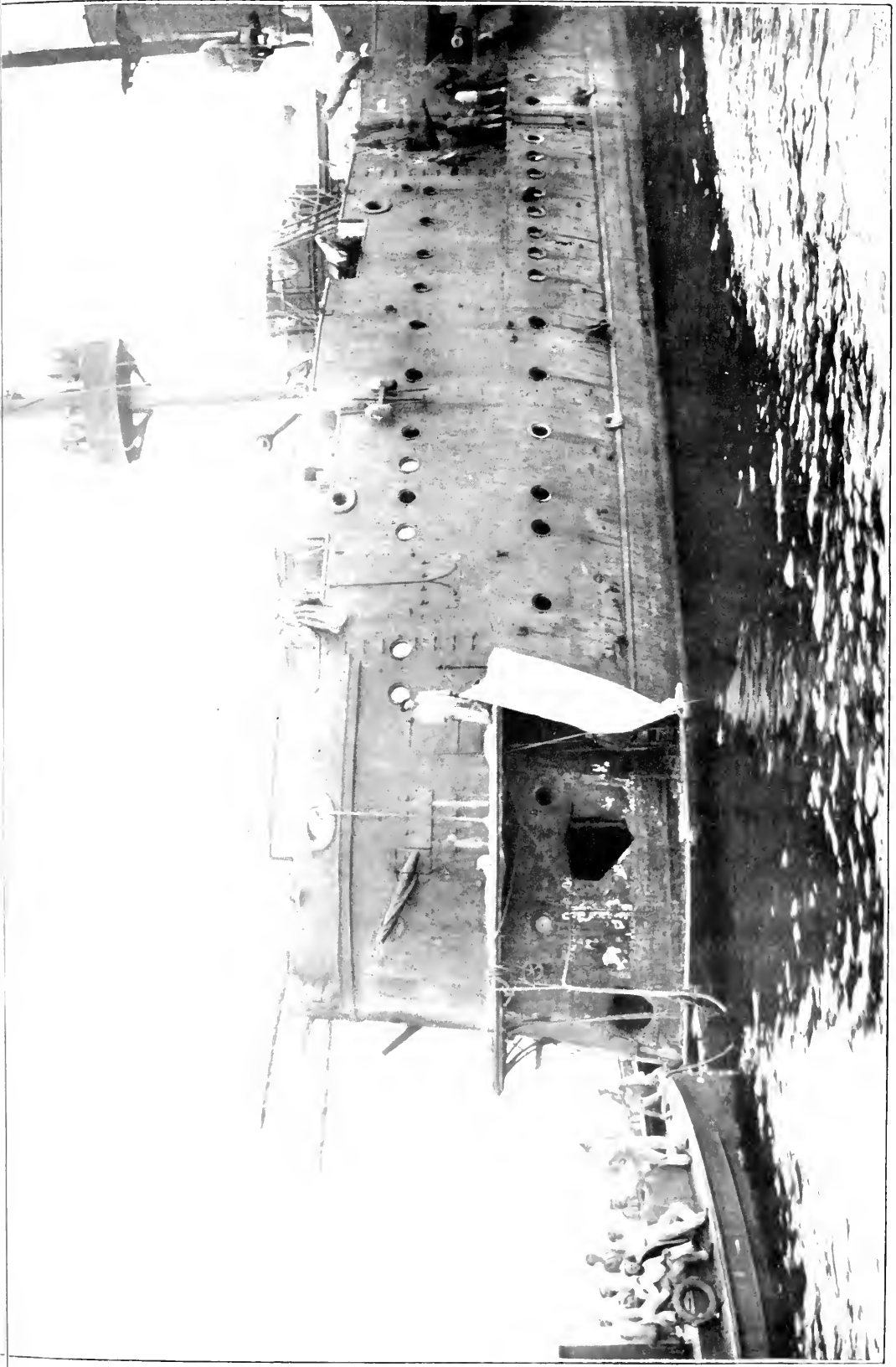
(VIII) AN OFFICER'S LETTER

The following letter from one of the officers at St. Olga's station, formerly on board the "Izumrud," throws some further light on the events of the day.

“All the terrible sorrow and misfortune which we were destined to witness remains before our eyes. Comparatively little fell to our personal share. We are all fairly well; but how we survived the destruction of our vessel I will not dare to describe. I fear they will welcome us with mud at St. Petersburg, saying it was quite simple to go to Vladivostok. Perhaps this was possible, though it is certain that at Cape Povorotny we were pursued. They seized a lighter, with an officer, which put

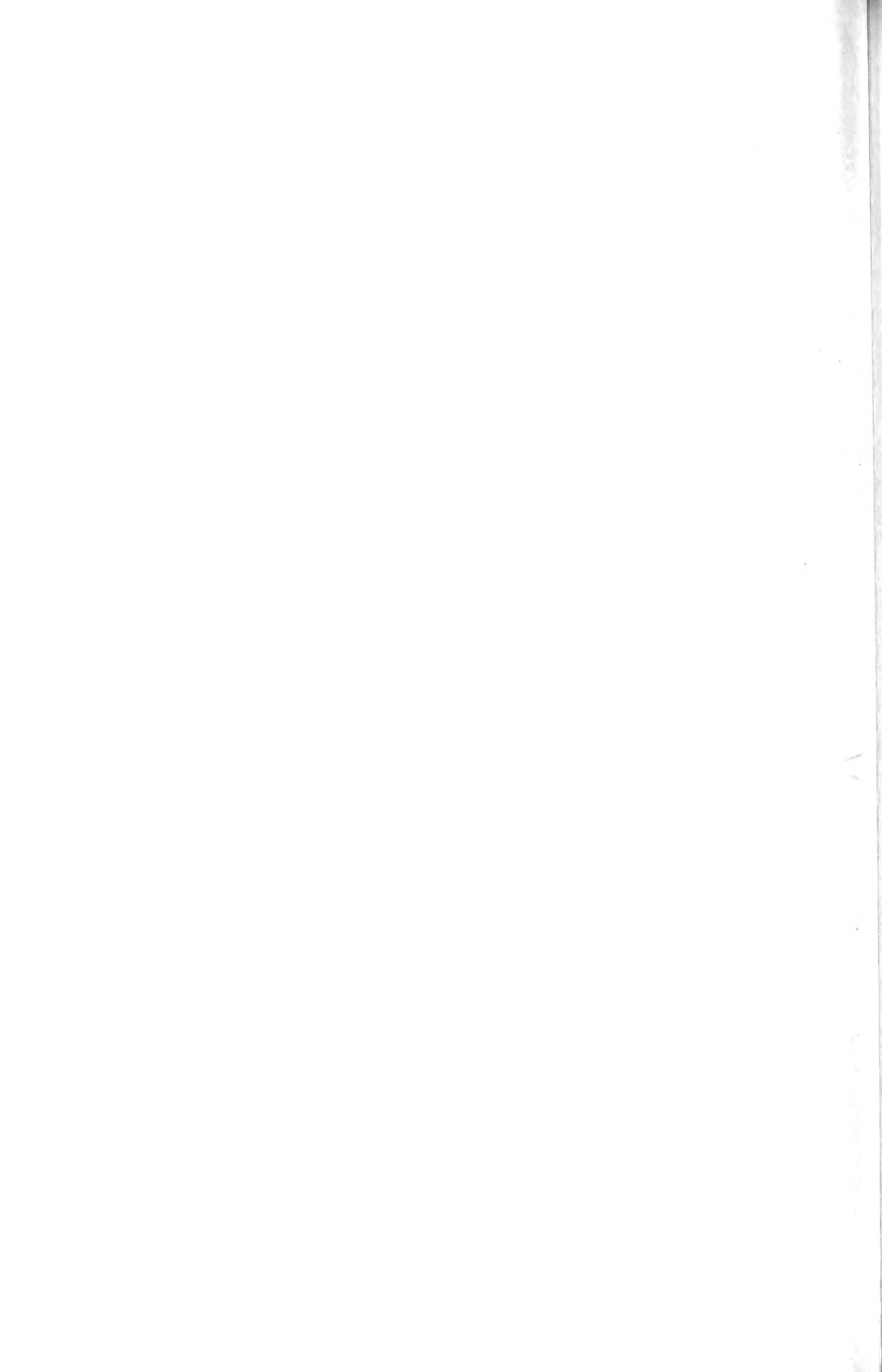
to sea on 30 May ; but I would rather undergo almost anything than have seen four Russian vessels surrendered to the enemy by Niebogotov ! Had any one made such a suggestion the day before, he would have been called a lunatic. We were not cut off from him, and at that moment were keeping in line with him. When he lowered his flag we broke away and sailed off, eluding pursuit, although making straight for the Japanese shore. We were convinced that it was our turn to die when the Japanese surrounded us with all their fleet. If we had left Niebogotov half an hour sooner we should have reached Vladivostok. I am not clear in what respect the censor mutilated the report of our captain, but from the published telegram it might be concluded that we fled from the squadron. It might also conceal the fact that our vessels surrendered. . . . We have spent a few days uselessly here, detained on some commissions. To-morrow we shall begin our journey to Vladivostok, the whole band of us taking more or less time, but not less than a month. The journey is four hundred versts, with little rivers to ford, and no bridges. At another time it would be exceedingly interesting. It is a wonderful country. Maybe Vladivostok will be besieged, or the matter will have reached the peace stage when you receive this letter. If we do not arrive there, we shall go into the country inland. . . .

“You have no doubt heard a great deal about the horrors of 28 May. These pictures of sinking vessels and men haunt one like a nightmare—the ‘Alexander III’ turning upside down and still continuing to float ; people in the bottom of her ; people drowning on all sides, with no possibility of helping them. Our small boats were shattered. For a few minutes after we approached we became the target for seven cruisers which drew near ; some of them were armoured. How it happened that not a shot struck us I cannot conceive. They began to take up positions within a few fathoms of us, splashing us all over, while fragments of shells exploding in the water wounded some of the men. One successful shot would have been enough to deprive us of the power of getting to our



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "GROMOBOI"

Damage from shells at the stern, and aft of the 6 in. battery, where the officers' cabins are situated.



vessels (battleships), of which there were then nine out of twelve. We were two miles from the rearmost vessel (the 'Nakhimov'), and before we succeeded in reaching her the 'Borodino' was destroyed. In a twinkling all was over; a fire, a cloud of smoke, and then—nothing!

"Night came on. Torpedo-attacks for some hours in succession—the penetrating beams of the search-lights—the boom of cannon—the distant shouts of the Japanese when the illumination revealed some one to them!—here was an inferno in panorama! The 'Nakhimov,' 'Navarin,' and 'Sissoi' were no more. We did not see their destruction; but the dawn told us thereof—that dreadful morning of 29 May.

"When we reach Vladivostok, perhaps peace will be already concluded—shameful, dreadful peace. But where can we go now, with this sense of disgrace at beholding, with our own eyes, four flags lowered?

"AN OFFICER OF THE 'IZUMRUD.'"

#### (IX) EXPERIENCES IN THE "ZHEMTSHUG"

A special correspondent furnishes a stirring narrative from Manila, 29 May :—

"The recollections of the battle in their disordered sequence rise up before me like some horrible nightmare. It is beyond my power to give a full and coherent account of these terrible events. No human being is able to grasp and co-ordinate such complex impressions. Our fleet was smashed to pieces, and when darkness fell and the battle—which lasted for seven hours—ended, our vessels had been scattered to the four winds by the enemy. Therefore, I can only try to describe the things that I myself witnessed; flashing as they did one after the other before my eyes as in some portentous and swiftly moving dream.

"By morning we arrived at the narrowest portion of the Korean Straits between Tsushima and Kiu Shiu. My servant woke me with the words 'The Japanese ships are in sight.' The day was bright, but a thick mist enveloped the horizon all round.

The wind was from S.W., with a strength of between 4 and 5, and there was a swell on the sea. At nine o'clock, at a distance of from fifty-five to sixty-four cables, we could make out the dim silhouette of a grey Japanese cruiser. They told me that earlier (at 6.30 a.m.) three ships had been sighted, and that the 'Oslabya' had by signal asked for permission to engage them, but that our Admiral had refused and the fleet had continued on its course. The cruiser meantime had been following us, always at the same distance, sending off frequent messages by wireless telegraphy, which we of course could not decipher. We were advancing in two columns. The starboard column consisted of the battleships 'Kniaz Suvorov' (flying Rozhestvensky's flag), 'Imperator Alexander III,' 'Borodino,' 'Orel,' 'Oslabya' (flying Felkersham's flag), 'Sissoi Veliky,' 'Navarin,' and 'Nakhimov.' The port column was composed of the battleships of Admiral Niebogotov's squadron. Four transports, the 'Irtish,' 'Anadyr,' 'Kamtchatka,' and 'Korea,' with the auxiliary river tugs 'Rus' and 'Svir,' followed astern of the battleships, and were protected by our cruisers and scouting vessels. The cruisers 'Zhemtshug' and 'Izumrud' were in advance of the leading vessels four points to starboard and port respectively, and at a distance of about ten cables. Our duty was to warn off any steamers or junks we might meet. We fell in with some coasters and a small Japanese steamer, the latter on a course at right angles to our own. We fired a shot across her bows, and she thereupon turned away from us and stopped. The poor Japanese on board her were dreadfully frightened, being convinced that we were about to sink them. They had already begun to lower a boat to save themselves, but it was dashed against the side, owing to the heavy swell, and swamped. We passed on, leaving the peaceable little steamer unmolested. During the dinner hour, as a measure of precaution, our transports were ordered to steam between the two columns of battleships. During the morning several alarms of battle, as when the Japanese cruiser appeared and the steamer was met with, served to heighten one's tension of mind. Dinner

*The appearance of the Japanese at the beginning of the Battle.*

Jap Battleships.  
"Mikasa"

"Souvorov."  
} 1<sup>st</sup>. Section of Battleships.  
"Zhemtchoug".

"Osliabia".  
"Izumroud".

} 2<sup>nd</sup>. Section of Battleships.

"Nikolai I"

} 3<sup>rd</sup>. Section of Battleships.

Cruisers and Transports.

itself was at the very beginning interrupted by a fresh alarm. At 11.20 two Japanese cruisers were observed ahead, and three more on our port beam. On our right, the Japanese ship previously sighted continued her course, parallel with us as before. A milky fog hung over the horizon, so that we could only with difficulty make out, by the aid of the range-finder, that their distance from us was some fifty to sixty cables. They must have been fast third-class cruisers of the 'Nitaka' type, forming part of the enemy's light scouting division. We gave them one shot from our forward gun, but could not well see where the shot fell. Our battleships also fired a few shots, until the Admiral signalled 'Cease fire.' The strong swell and the mist on the horizon made such long-range shooting quite useless.

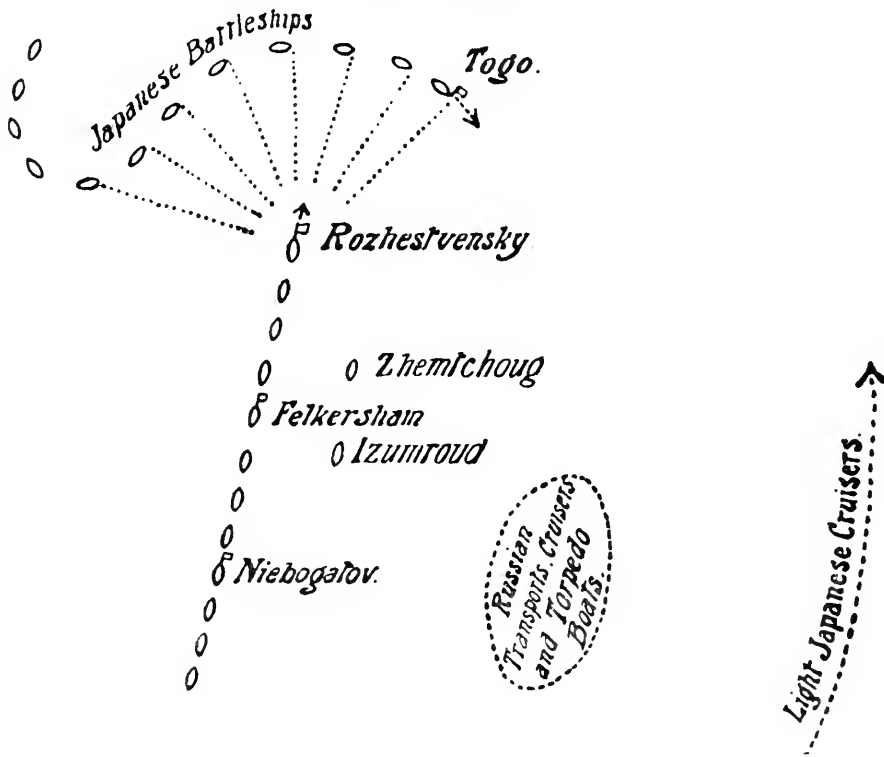
"And now the outlines of these cruisers were swallowed up in the fog, and we went below to continue our interrupted dinner. The mess-table, on account of the alarms, had already been taken and adapted for our prospective wounded, so we had to finish our meal as best we could. For a while there was no further disturbance, and we rested. At 12.50 the Admiral ordered the 'Zhemtshug' to fall into line with the 'Orel.' At 1.20 p.m. the alarm for battle was sounded, and my man rushed to his quarters. When I got to the forecastle, by our forward gun, our battleships had changed their two-column formation and were now steaming in single column. The transports had taken up a position of shelter under the cover of our cruisers, to starboard of their former course and on the starboard beam of our battleships. Ahead of the 'Suvorov' and a little to port of her course, the Japanese battleships were emerging from the fog in one single column; steaming at great speed to meet us. The 'Suvorov' was moving very slowly, in order to give time to our sternmost battleships to take up their stations, and our line had become pretty well extended. The appearance of the Japanese at the commencement of the battle is shown on page 161.

"What happened subsequently does not admit of systematically detailed description. The booming, roaring, hissing of the big



shells, their shrill screaming as they struck the water, causing great splashing clouds of spray, the peculiar noise made by the ricochets, like that of a steamship going at full speed—all these sounds in one inextricable confusion now began. All the shells which struck the water ahead of us and ricocheted, were clearly visible to the naked eye. Spinning round and round, they gave me the impression of the flight of birds overhead. When-

*2<sup>nd</sup> Stage: Concentrated fire on the leading Battleships of the Russians.*

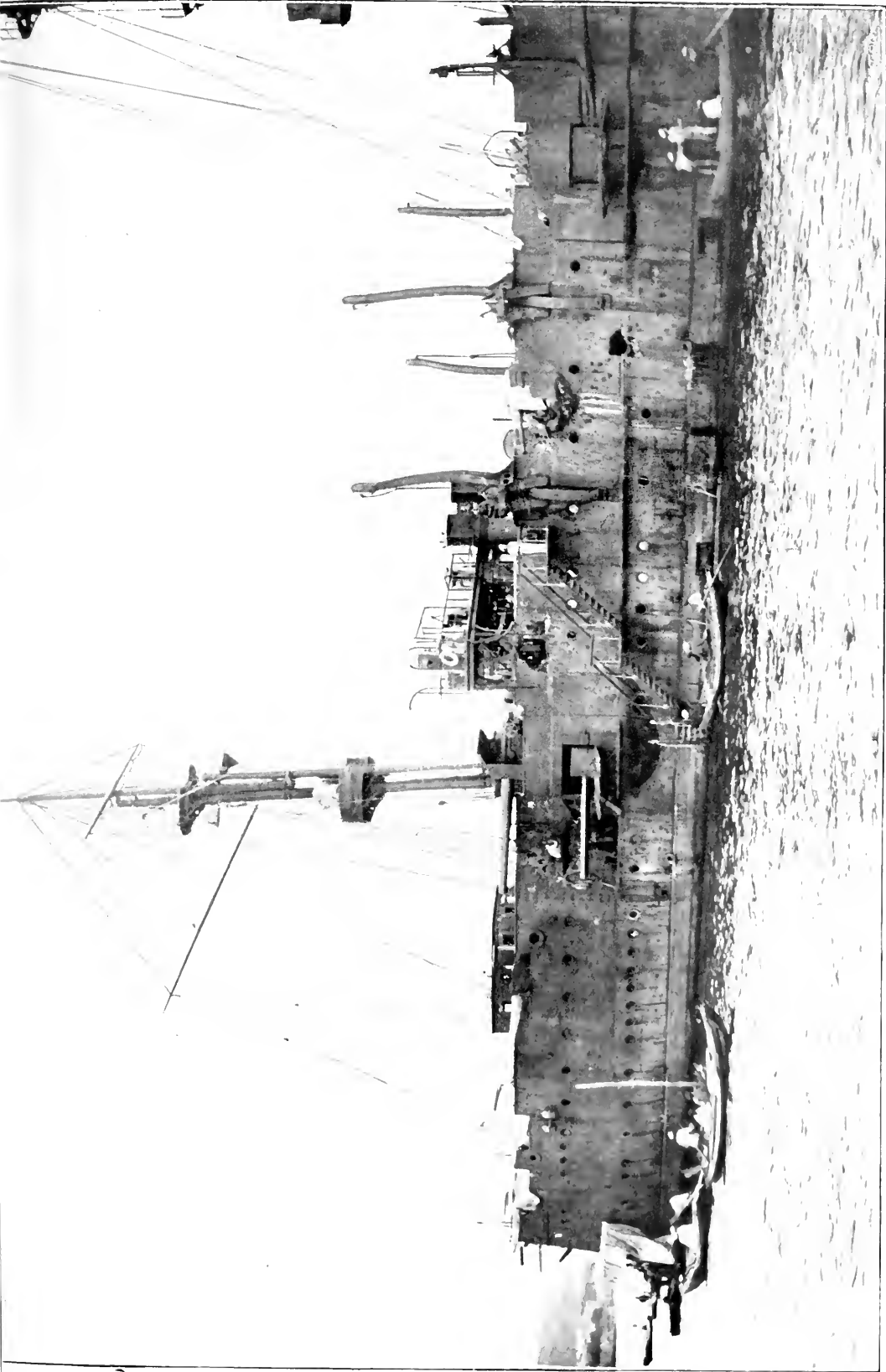


ever they struck the water a second time, a high column of water and black smoke was thrown up by the shock. I perfectly appreciated the object of Togo's first manœuvre. He did not bring his fleet along on a cross tack, but when abreast of the leading battleships in our column he put on full steam and went by them. He then described a looped course on their port beam, and, cutting across their bows, went right on until he was on the other side of them, to starboard.

“This brilliant manœuvre of the Japanese, which they could not have carried out if their vessels had not been superior in speed, allowed them to concentrate the fire of all their guns on whichever of the leading ships of our column they pleased. And this is exactly what they did. It was at once evident that nearly all their shots were directed at the ‘Suvorov’ and the ‘Oslabya.’ They made targets of them, as it were. And this position of affairs is shown in the sketch on page 163.

“It is difficult to say at what particular time each stage of the fight occurred. It was not as though I could just look at my watch and write down what was happening, for I had my own duties to attend to.

“We on board the ‘Zhemtshug’ also kept on firing haphazard on every Japanese vessel that we saw. The uniform grey colour of the Japanese ships made them nearly invisible in the mist on the horizon. Their distance from us at the commencement of the battle was about forty-three cables. Their shells literally fell in showers about us, and how our vessel remained unscathed was simply inexplicable. After a few minutes, as it seemed to me, but in reality after an hour, the ‘Oslabya’ went out of line with a big list to port. By this time the enemy had already crossed to starboard of our column in continuation of their manœuvre; so the ‘Zhemtshug’ had to move away on the port beam of our battleships so as not to be between them and the Japanese, and I lost sight of the ‘Oslabya’ as I was looking after the Admiral’s flagship. I was afterwards told that within a few minutes of this she turned turtle. Some torpedo-vessels also succeeded in reaching the spot where the battleship sank. At the same time as the ‘Zhemtshug’ crossed over to the port beam of our ships, fires broke out on board the ‘Suvorov.’ Suddenly a huge column of flame and smoke shot from her after turret and its cover was blown up as high as the tops. These moments were, I think, the decisive ones. The ‘Borodino’ now left the line, and a fire on board the ‘Alexander III’ broke out by her forward funnel. The ‘Suvorov,’ however, shattered and wrecked as she was, mastless, and with both her



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "GROMOBOI"

After-part of the ship from mainmast to stern, starboard side - general view of damages received: shattered sponson and carriage of 75 mm. gun, and holes through the unarmoured side, two on the level of the battery deck, in the network below the after-bridge, and on the upper deck



fore and aft bridges on fire, still maintained her place as leading ship and kept on firing from her undamaged turrets. This was about three o'clock in the afternoon. The Japanese fire was still concentrated on our four leading vessels. Now fires began to break out on our other ships, and the 'Borodino's' forward bridge was ablaze. The nervous qualms to which the flight of the first few shells had given rise had vanished altogether; one could evidently get used even to this. Every minute shells were flying over our heads, and often burst quite close to the side. It was after the destruction of the 'Oslabya' and the explosion on board the 'Suvorov' that we were hit for the first time. The firing from our own ships and from those of the enemy, and the flight and bursting of the shells, made such a din that the noise the shell made as it crashed into us was indistinguishable from the general uproar. I heard a shout of 'stretchers' from the poop. The shell was from a 6" gun, and must have passed through the entering hatch to the commander's cabin and burst. The hatch was riddled with splinters like a sieve, and Lieutenant Baron Vrangél and three others were killed."

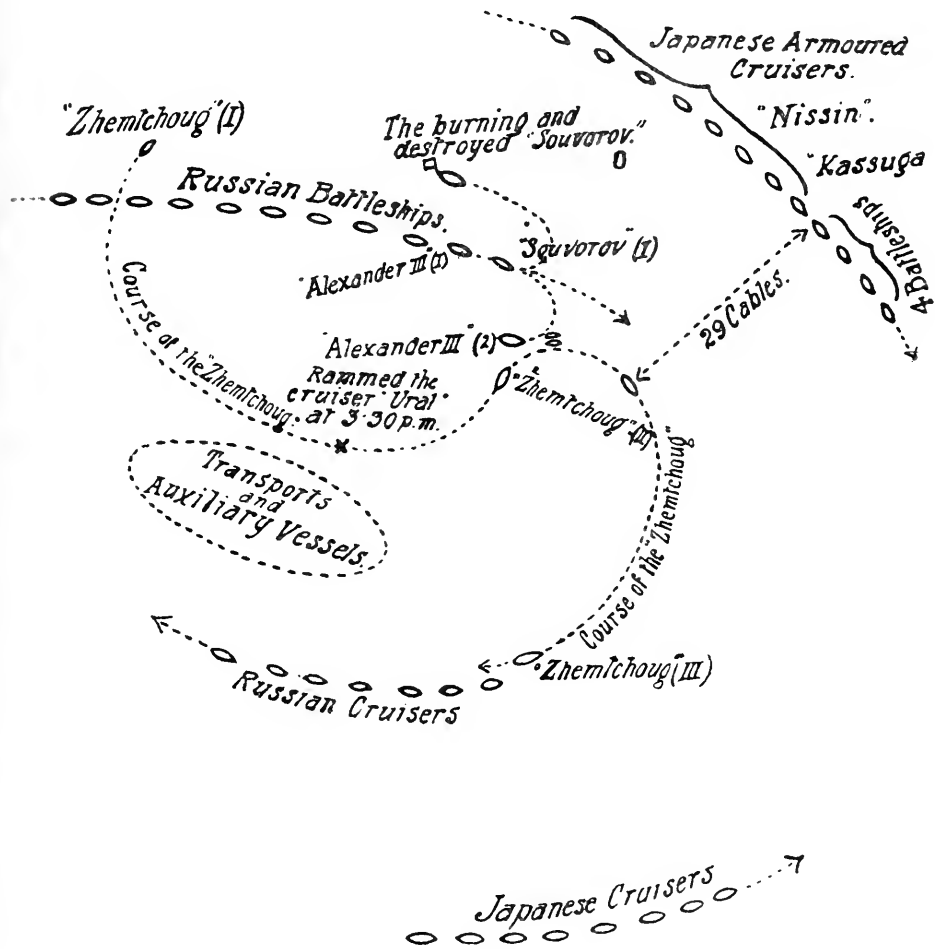
(X) EXPERIENCES ON BOARD THE "ZHEMTSHUG"

"The days of the 'Suvorov' were numbered; both her funnels were down, and a thick smoke was trailing over her. I saw her bearing away to port, trying to get beyond the range of fire, whilst the squadron continued the battle away to port.

"I recollect why the 'Zhemtshug' approached the battleship 'Imperator Alexander III,' on board which flames had broken out both from the bows and the stern. There were two destroyers by her, and we thought that Admiral Rozhestvensky, who had been taken off the 'Suvorov,' was on board one of them. We had begun even to lower a boat, but at that moment shells began to fall thick and fast about us, and one of them struck us on the stern. Those on board the destroyers signalled us to go back, and the 'Zhemtshug' steamed away from the 'Alexander III.' We were then struck a second time. The

shot came from the port side and from astern, and hit our fore funnel. When we got so close to the 'Alexander III,' we were within 29 cable-lengths of the Japanese battleships. The 'Nissin' and 'Kassuga' were plainly visible from stem to stern. Judging by the hole made in our fore-funnel, the shot must have come from a 6" gun. The havoc it made was terrible. The whole right side of the funnel was split open; the plates were torn asunder, pierced with splinters, and bent outwards; the splinters smashed the shot-lockers in the starboard-sponson gun, and set fire to the smokeless powder in the four cases inside the lockers, as well as in some others lying on deck. What followed was indescribable. Running, after the shock, from the fore-castle to the gangway ladder, I looked upon a seething mass of fire. The flames reached the cutter, which was hanging in the davits, and filled the whole space from amidships to the side. This was the ignition of the smokeless powder in the cartridge-cases. By the light of the flames I could see our wounded writhing in convulsions of pain. By the time the hoses were turned on this spot the fire was already out, but they succeeded at once in extinguishing the woodwork that had caught fire. The powder was alight for only a few seconds. I went down to the deck. Seven dead bodies lay there in strange postures; they had gaping wounds, and the hands and faces were burnt. Amongst them was the chief of a platoon, Midshipman Tavaststern, who had only just been promoted to officer's rank. One unfortunate man had had the whole of his groin torn away by a splinter, and his left leg was bent backwards in an unnatural position. Another had half his face gone, and an arm and part of his neck wrenched off. The crew stood panic-stricken at this ghastly spectacle. The bodies had to be removed and the spot cleaned. One must wait for fresh men, and then treat the enemy to the same slaughter and destruction as he had dealt to us. The spot was soon sanded over and the guns freshly manned, but we did not so easily get rid of our impressions. It was useless for us to expose ourselves to the fire of the enemy without being able to do them harm in return. The

120 mm. guns of the 'Zhemtshug' could scarcely carry 48 cable-lengths, but the fight was continued nearly all the time at just about this distance. The position of the ships when the 'Zhemtshug' approached the 'Alexander III' was as follows:—



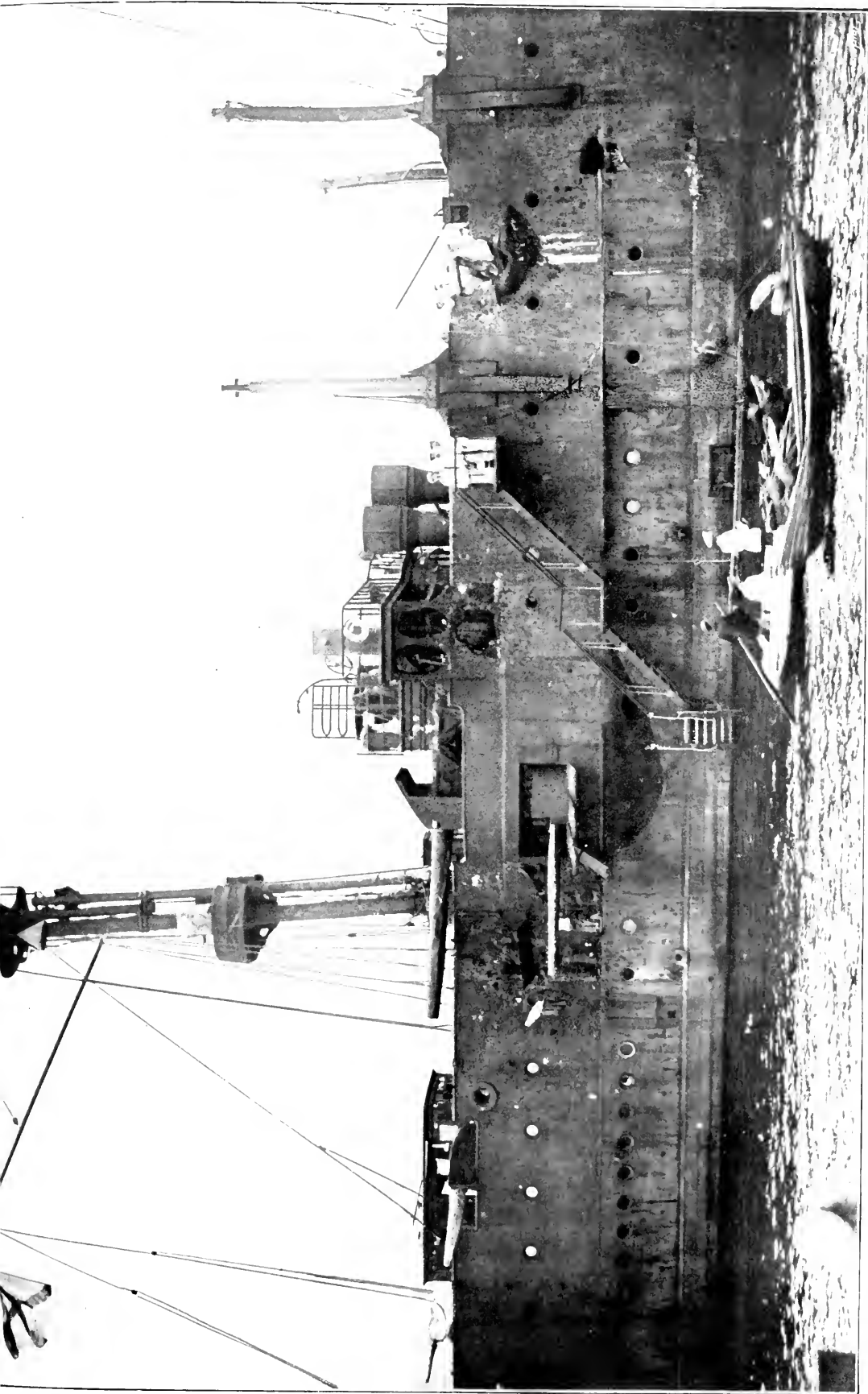
"On the way to the battleship 'Alexander III,' when the 'Zhemtshug' steamed past, the transports collected together in a cluster. The auxiliary cruiser 'Ural' struck against our stern, wrenched a torpedo-tube loose, damaged her stern gear, grazed and bent our starboard screw, and smashed in our starboard side. The shock forced our screw through the side of the 'Ural' and stopped her engines suddenly, which were going at full speed. A torpedo lay on deck exposed, and ready to explode at any moment. Had the stem of the 'Ural' touched its head, the

results would have been disastrous both for her as well as for ourselves. Following in wake of the 'Vladimir Monomakh,' in rear of our cruiser column, the 'Zhemtshug' and she opened fire together on the enemy's cruisers. They were moving to port on a cross tack, and our cruisers, screening the transports, maintained the battle against them at a distance of thirty to forty cables. Our fire evidently told, for I could clearly see how the enemy altered their course and increased their distance from us. During this time our battleships had drawn ahead and had re-formed, having the Japanese to starboard. I counted the ships in the column, and assured myself that there were ten, and all sailing in perfect order. This spectacle had a pacifying effect on our overwrought nerves. It meant that only the 'Kniaz Suvorov' and the 'Oslabya' had gone; that all the others had got under the fires which had broken out on board, and, notwithstanding their damage, were continuing the battle. In front were the 'Borodino' and 'Orel'; behind them came Niebogotov's flagship, 'Nicholas I,' three battleships of the 'Admiral Ushakov' type, then the 'Alexander III,' 'Sissoi Veliky,' 'Navarin,' and 'Nakhimov.' The battleships were sailing approximately N. to N.W., and the enemy, holding the same course, and being to starboard of our column, were overtaking it as the battle continued.

"It was about six o'clock in the evening. The cruiser 'Svietlana' had become separated from the other cruisers and transports, which by this time were crowded together on the port beam of our battleships and out of range of the enemy's fire, and held a course parallel to the battleships. We followed in her wake. The sun sank lower and lower, and it began to get dark. The flames of the fires on board some of the battleships stood out in clear bright patches.

"Suddenly we noticed that the leading ship began to heel over on her starboard side, and in a few seconds the red painted part, normally below the waterline, was visible; the battleship still floated for a few moments on her side, and then disappeared beneath the waves. The end of the 'Borodino' was heroic.





FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "GROMOBRÓJ"

On the starboard side abreast of after bridge, showing the shattered sponson of 75 mm gun aft of the side accommodation ladder; also damage from shells to the netting below the after-bridge, and holes through the marmoured side at the level of the upper and battery decks.

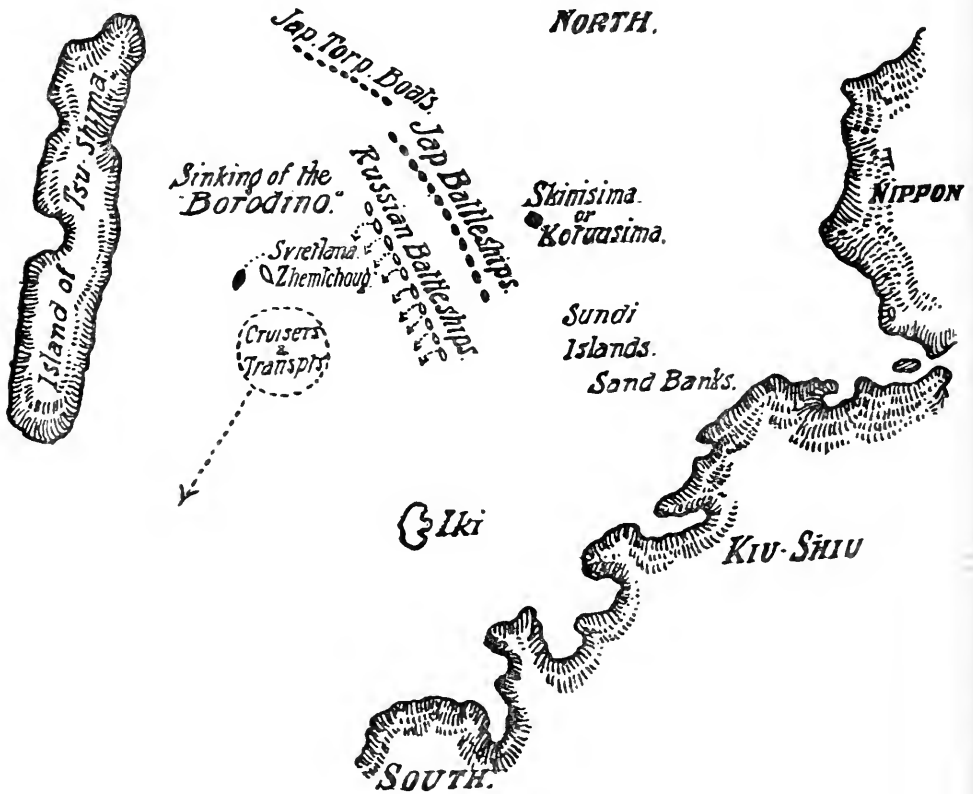


Never leaving the line, notwithstanding all the damage she had suffered and the fires which had broken out on board, she still struck back at the enemy's vessels. Already heeling over to starboard, she kept on firing, and at the very moment of turning over on her side, she got away a shot from her after-turret. The red disc of the sun had sunk to the verge of the horizon. The atmosphere had now become clearer, and we could plainly see that well away forward to the N.W., and astern of the enemy's battleships, stretched a line of nine Japanese torpedo-boats, approaching to cut across our course. It was at this moment, I remember, that the signal was hoisted,—I do not know on board which ship first, for it was repeated by all—'The Admiral transfers the command to Niebogatov,' and 'Bear N.E. (to Vladivostok).' The battleships continued the fight. Darkness had fallen. The 'Svietlana' then signalled, 'I see torpedo-boats across my course,' evidently the same that we had noticed earlier, and turned S.W. to avoid them. Complete disorder now reigned amongst our cruisers, transports, and torpedo-boats. The 'Svietlana' was evidently disabled, for she was down by the bows, and began to circle round on the same spot. The 'Zhemtshug' tried to keep in her wake, but afterwards abandoned the attempt. The transports and torpedo-boats were driven together, passing us at full speed. We noticed the 'Oleg' (flying Admiral Enquist's flag), the 'Aurora,' and after her the 'Dmitri Donskoi,' and the 'Monomakh.' The position of the vessels at this period is shown on page 170.

It is very difficult to describe in detail what occurred in the dark. The 'Zemtshug' followed in the wake of the 'Oleg' and the 'Aurora,' and lost them, owing to the fact that these vessels were steaming in pitch-darkness, without lights. We turned towards the N.W., got within range of our retreating battleships, and finally picked up the 'Oleg' and 'Aurora' once more. They had been following in each other's tracks all the time. The last ships I was able to make out near us in the darkness were the transport 'Irtish,' the cruiser 'Vladimir Monomakh,' which had outstripped us, and a few torpedo-boats. All our

men, while maintaining outward calm, were fearfully shaken and fatigued, both physically and morally, by the events of the battle and its impressions. The sight of the burning and sinking battleships could not but have its effect on their minds.

“We continued our course in complete darkness, at first at full speed of 140 revolutions (17 to 18 knots), and afterwards at 16 knots, behind the black silhouetted outlines of the ‘Oleg’ and



‘Aurora.’ There were some other vessels still following us. A few shots were fired somewhere to starboard; some one showed a lantern, and then all was again plunged in darkness. Suddenly, abaft our port beam, we noticed a whole row of white lights, which rapidly approached us, and the flare of a green rocket which some one sent up. This was the Japanese torpedo-attack.

“At 8.15 p.m. a curious three-masted steamer, with a thin funnel and showing no lights whatever, appeared on our port beam, cutting athwart our course. Fate alone preserved us from

colliding with her. From six o'clock in the evening until midnight I had been standing on watch on the bridge ; at last I was relieved, and, throwing myself without undressing into my hammock, I fell into the soundest sleep."

(XI) EXPERIENCES ON BOARD THE "ZHEMTSHUG"

"All that I wrote previously was penned as my feelings dictated. Perhaps my account erred in respect of the strict order in which these events happened, and was only fragmentary ; but in any case, all that I have told you is what actually flashed before my eyes. And now, basing my remarks on direct personal observation before any official descriptions of the fight or telegrams or reflections upon it, etc., etc., appeared, I will try to draw some conclusions and discover the causes of our defeat. On the day of battle the weather favoured the Japanese and was to our disadvantage ; their grey-coloured vessels were scarcely perceptible and were often completely enveloped in mist. It was very difficult to fix the target in the optical prisms. Our great black ships were naturally much more easy to distinguish, and formed a much better mark at which to fire. The weather precluded our being able to see the enemy, who appeared suddenly and at once opened fire. Therefore we did not know from which side his main column would come, and were unable to make the best possible dispositions beforehand. The battleships were ranged in one column under the enemy's fire, and the 'Suvorov' could not steam at full speed, as she had to wait for the rear vessels of the line to take up their positions. We were all steaming ahead together, without any line of scouts, whilst the enemy had received minute information as to our proximity and formation by wireless telegraphy from a cruiser which had met us in the morning and had been steaming along with us on our starboard beam before the battle. The rolling of our ships also hindered us, but the same thing likewise interfered with the Japanese firing. The advantage of speed was with the Japanese, and this gave them the privilege of being the attacking party. They were always able to steam ahead of our division of battle-

ships and interrupt their course N.E. towards Vladivostok. Besides this, they could so dispose their column that they kept cutting across the head of ours, and could thus concentrate all their fire on our leading battleships. Every attempt to break through brought us nearer the enemy; their fire became more accurate; and it kept forcing the leading ships to fall out of line. If we look at the plans of the different phases of the battle, we shall notice that our vessels and the Japanese kept on revolving as it were round a common centre; the Japanese at a greater radius, we at a smaller. We will suppose that we revolved round our transports, which formed the centre, at a radius of 60 cables, and had the enemy always outside us, they in their turn steaming round at a distance of approximately 40 cable-lengths from us. We thus arrive at the following relative speed of the two fleets:—

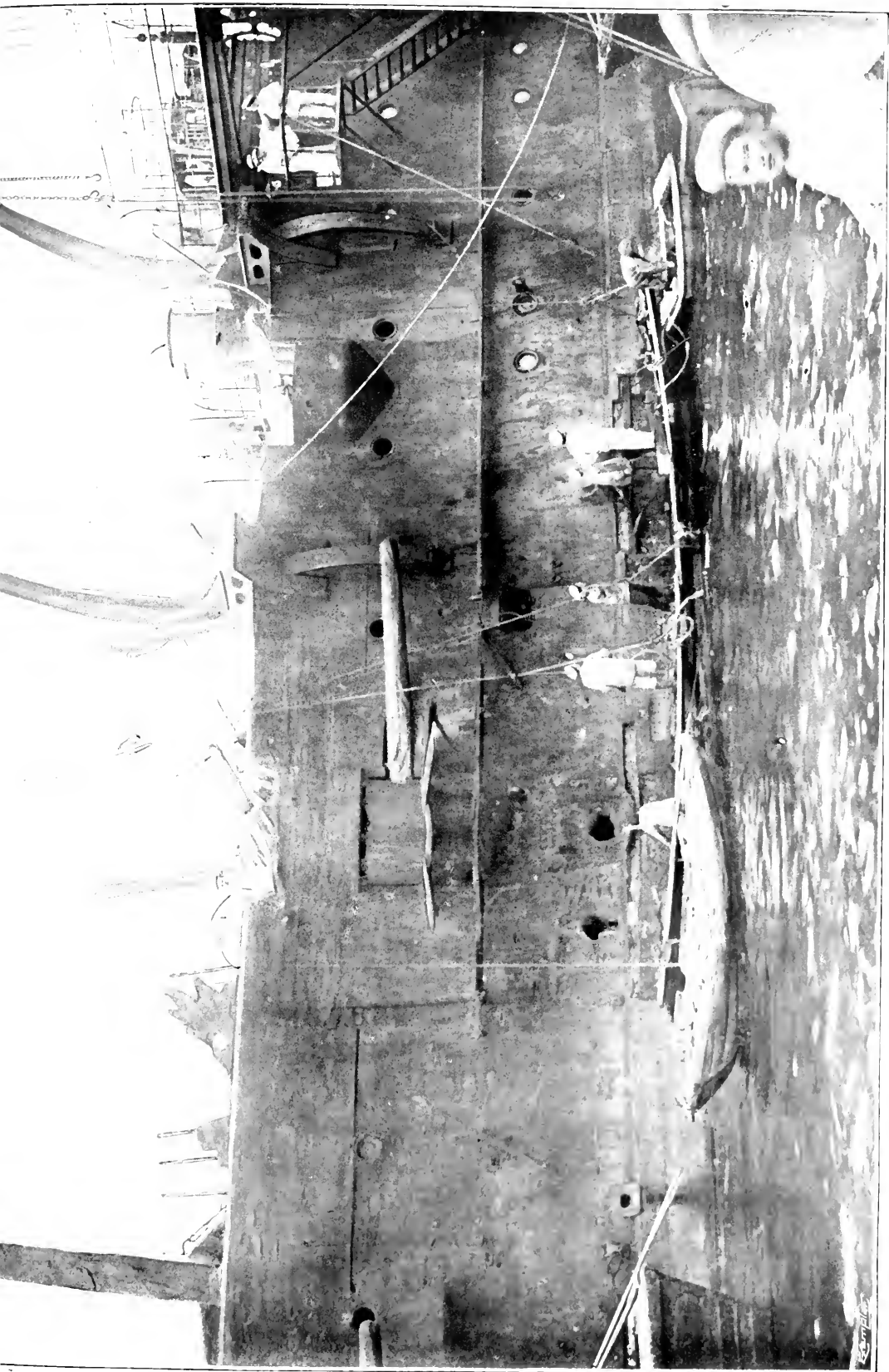
$2 \times r' = 2 \times 3 \cdot 14 \times 100$  represents the Japanese.

$2 \times r'' = 2 \times 3 \cdot 14 \times 60$  represents the Russians.

Taking  $x$  as equal to 3, for the sake of simplicity, we get the simplified relation as  $\frac{360}{15}$  or  $\frac{9}{15}$ . That is, if the speed of our battleships was on the average of 9 to 10 knots, that of the Japanese must have been 15 or 16 in order to be able to force us out of the circle. And this corresponds to the facts.

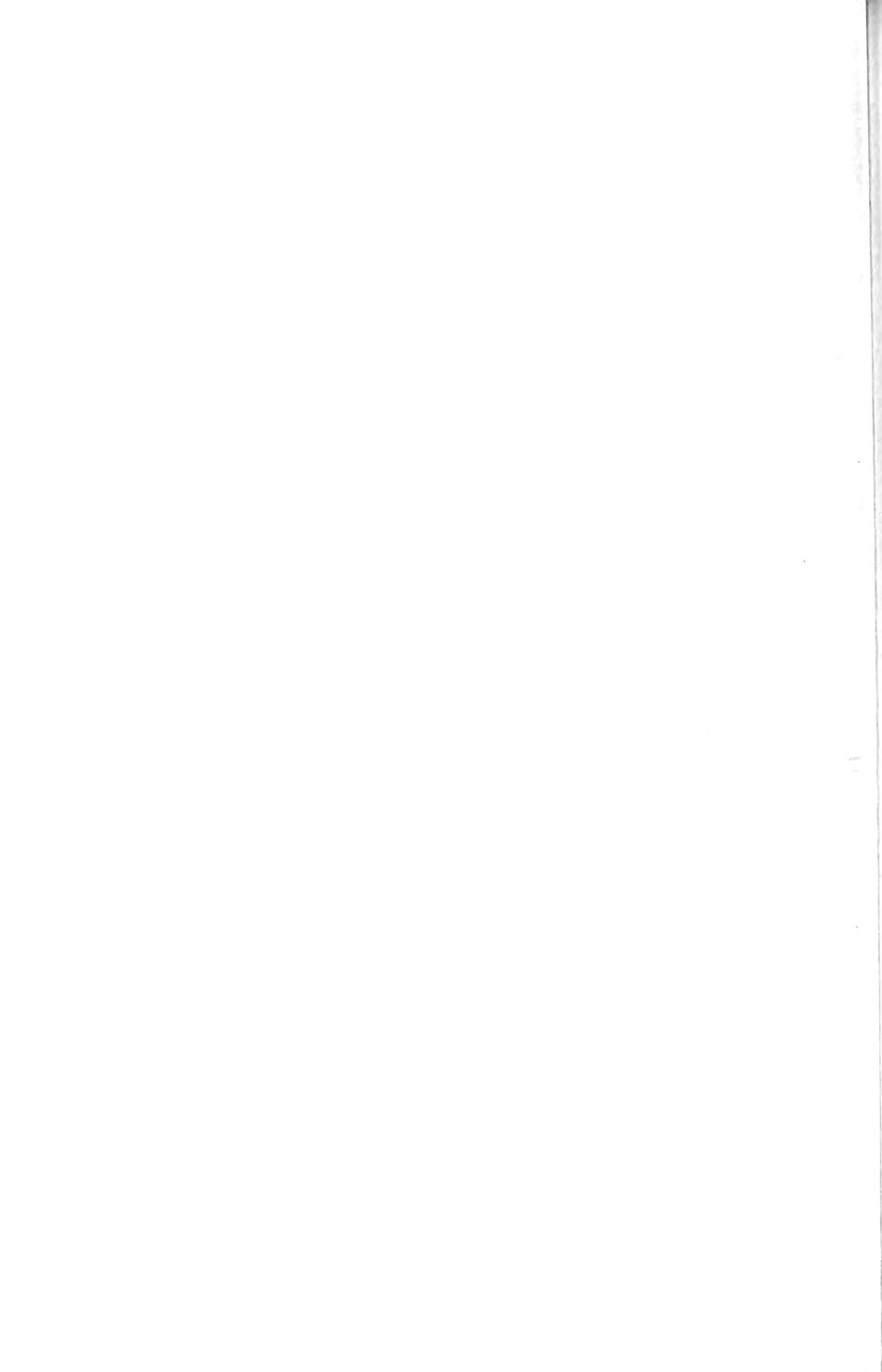
“It is true that our cruisers (though not all of them) ought not to have been inferior in speed to the Japanese, but one must not forget that the latter had been recently overhauled and cleaned, whilst our vessels had made the long voyage from Cronstadt to the Korean Straits without undergoing any sort of repairs. They were thickly overgrown with weeds below the waterline, and their boilers wanted cleaning. They could not therefore develop their proper speed.

“The formation of the Japanese fleet was entirely different from our own. They had twelve first-class battleships and armoured cruisers, which together formed one column, with a uniform speed of seventeen knots. These vessels were quite independent and unfettered in their manœuvres, and did the fighting. The other ships were grouped into different sections



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "GROMOBOI"

Port side forward of the side-accumulation ladder. One of the shell holes shows an armour-plate dented and cracked from a direct blow at right angles from a heavy projectile. A shell also penetrated the bunker immediately under the 6 in. gun in the centre of the picture





of fast cruisers and torpedo-boats. As for old vessels and transports, the Japanese had of course none at all. We saw how all their sections manœuvred, each according to its own discretion, and at considerable distances one from another. This must have been done without any system of signalling whatever; each was guided simply by the objective of the others, and all followed the general plan. No flags were visible, whilst the wireless telegraph would not work on account of the vibrations in the air caused by the heavy firing. With us, on the other hand, one section was bound up with another, and all the warships generally were mixed up with the transports. Our anxiety on their account hampered us dreadfully. We kept circling round them, so as to screen them from the enemy's fire. Two of our fast cruisers, the 'Zhemtshug' and the 'Izumrud,' were attached to the column of battleships, but only succeeded in hindering their movements. Long-range firing from our 120 mm. guns was useless: you cannot very well fire straight through your own battleships. We had therefore to remain a passive target for the enemy, and risk being sent to the bottom at any moment by being struck full or by a ricochet shot from one of their 8" or 12" guns. At the rear end of our column of battleships was the flagship 'Imperator Nikolai I,' a battleship with a speed of only twelve to thirteen knots. This altogether discounted the chief fighting advantage which the ships at the head of the column possessed, viz. a speed of eighteen knots. Our cruisers were also of different types. The 'Dmitri Donskoi' and 'Vladimir Monomakh,' both of slow speed, hampered the swifter vessels, the 'Oleg' and 'Aurora.' The transports were a sore hindrance to all of our ships. They were continually hit by chance shots, and were of course unable to take any active part in the battle. Whilst the Japanese were always in single line, each vessel separated by a long distance from another, so that shots that were short or went wide did no harm to anything, our columns were one behind the other; with the result that some of the shots aimed at the battleships that missed them yet hit the transports.

“We had got so accustomed to looking to Admiral Rozhdestvensky as the supreme chief of all our division, and as the one single source from which all orders were to come, that when he was incapacitated we were left without any leader at all, and there was no individual who could take on himself the responsibility of conducting the fight. Admiral Felkersham was dead. The leading battleships honourably sustained the fight, but their course was compulsorily determined for them by the more speedy vessels of the enemy, who poured in a constant fire upon them. The place where the battle occurred was very suitable for the Japanese. The Korean Straits are so narrow (twenty-five miles) that all the enemy had to think of was how to block our passage towards the north-east.

“The coasts on each side are of such a character as of themselves to make the passage difficult; whilst the knowledge that their own ports were only twenty to twenty-five miles away, i.e. at a distance of not more than one to two hours' steam, made the Japanese confident as to the issue of the battle. As for us, Vladivostok was a long way ahead, and there was no place of refuge astern. The opinion so often expressed that the Japanese would not go out in search of us was abundantly justified here. We might have got right up to the Korean Straits without taking any precautions at all, for the Japanese were awaiting us at home and gave us battle on their own threshold. Why should they go all the way to Madagascar or to the Sundi Islands, when we ourselves could not help coming to them? It is so much better and more convenient to fight at home. They had stripped their decks of everything that was superfluous, including their ships' boats, leaving all such things on shore; and owing to this they suffered less than we did from splinters during the battle. Their fire was much heavier and more accurate than ours. Its accuracy can be illustrated by what I am about to relate. We were struck by the fact that their shots, at the commencement of the action, went too far. Then all at once several hit the 'Suvorov,' and then again shots fell short. What the Japanese did was this. They trained

and aimed all their guns for a fixed range. Let us suppose it to be forty cable-lengths. Having done this, they did not alter it, but opened a heavy fire with all their guns on our leading ship, their vessels all the time coming nearer. It is then evident that at the moment when the distance that separated them from us was actually forty cables, a vast number of their shots told.

"In this way they secured for themselves a good interval of time, during which the fire from each of their vessels in turn was sure to have effect. But if the aim is constantly being changed, and still more if the ship is rolling and the target scarcely visible, it is very difficult, as it seems to me, to ascertain from the tops the real distance of the aim at the moment of discharge.

"Summing up all the foregoing facts, we can draw the following conclusions:—

"1. Vessels ought to be painted a uniform grey all over.

"2. Vessels which belong to the same column ought to be swift and of the same type. Speed, which is one of the most important elements in war, gives to its possessor the opportunity of compelling the enemy to move in such a way as shall be favourable to him, i.e. the possessor of speed.

"3. Columns are composed of vessels of different types. These should be well separated from one another, each should have her own independent commander, and they should not be bound up in any way together, except as touching the general scheme and ultimate goal of the operations.

"4. Under no conditions whatever should slow-going transports have any place in a war fleet.

"5. Torpedo-craft should also comprise an independent section, and should not get into close proximity with their own battle-ships so as to be entangled with them, and thus risk being hit by chance shots from them. Besides, the period of their activity should only begin when darkness falls.

"6. Our system of firing should be completely altered.

“Firing at very long range is not effective, since it is impossible to see where the shots fall, and the range-finders do not give satisfactory results.

“It is possible to die like heroes in any battle, whether on 28 May or at any other time ; but this is not the object of fighting. It is indeed a sorrowful thing that our country’s fleet has perished owing to causes which are intelligible and might have been removed. The issue of the war is decided, and so many human lives have been sacrificed. It is indeed a wretched humiliation for all these things to have taken place to no purpose.”

## CHAPTER II

### (I) NARRATIVE FROM THE "OLEG"

“THE cruiser ‘Oleg,’ flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Enquist, who commanded the cruisers, on the morning of 27 May arrived in the Straits of Korea on the east of the island of Tsushima, forming a part of the Second Pacific Squadron.

“About 9 a.m., on the port side appeared five columns of smoke, and at 9.50 the outlines of five Japanese vessels were seen through the fog. The alarm was given on board the cruiser, and the crew, having put on white, clean things for the morning, cheerfully dispersed to their places.

“The Japanese, having approached to 48 cables at 10.10, turned to starboard, began to withdraw, and were speedily lost in the fog. On the starboard side of our fleet was then seen a large Japanese cruiser, which the whole time kept at a distance of 40 cables on a parallel course. At 11 o'clock a Japanese division again appeared to port, consisting of four light vessels. Two were of two and two of three funnels; evidently the cruisers ‘Tshitose,’ ‘Kassuga,’ ‘Nitaka,’ and ‘Tsushima’ under the command of an admiral. The Japanese kept a course approaching our own, and the distance between us decreased. At 11.15 the first shot was fired from the coast-defence battleship ‘Admiral Ushakov,’ and the whole port column, including the ‘Oleg,’ opened fire on the enemy. Our squadron was in two columns line ahead, with the transports between the columns. The forward turret-gun of the cruiser, and the forward casemate on the port side, began a deadly fire. Chief gunner Ivan Kirik sent a shell from the turret-gun at the stern of the rearmost

hostile vessel, after which the Japanese began to withdraw. The distance was 27 to 38 cables.

“The senior captain of the guns, Ivan Samoilov, from the case-mate mentioned placed a shell on the stern of the third Japanese cruiser, on board of which a fire was seen. The enemy turned 8 rhumbs (90°) to the left, and retired. The Japanese hoisted signals on board this cruiser.

“The locality of the battle was latitude 34° 2' N. and longitude 129° 41' 7" E. As soon as our first shot was fired the ship's chaplain, Father Porfirii, went round the ship, cross in hand and sprinkling holy water, and blessed us all before the battle.

“At 11.20 the drum was beaten, and, taking advantage of the withdrawal of the enemy, the crew were permitted to dine.

“About 12.30, on the port bow, the outlines of the Japanese battle squadron began to appear on the horizon. Our battleships formed in order, and soon battle was joined. Our cruiser division on signal proceeded to the starboard side of the battleships.

“About 2 o'clock the Japanese cruiser division was seen from our starboard quarter galley, moving with the evident intention of surrounding us from the starboard. The Japanese overtook us. We turned to port, the opposite course, and went to meet them.

“About 2.30 fire opened on the port side, and within a few minutes we were in the thick of the battle. As in the engagements with the battleships, the Japanese concentrated their fire on the leading vessel, viz. the 'Oleg.' The Japanese shells fell heavily on the side or went over us, spinning in the air, and whistling and humming. All their shells which fell in the water exploded, raising huge columns of water and clouds of black smoke. About 3 o'clock a sharp report was heard in the engine-room. Some one cried: 'A hit! Fire in the flag captain's cabin!' They hastened to open the door. A picture of complete destruction was displayed to view—furniture, papers, and other objects, all formed a mass of débris, wreathed in clouds of smoke. Having found access to where the shell hit, the men

of the division at fore-quarters, with Lieutenant Melnitzky, Lieutenant Politovsky, and Naval Engineer Lokhvitsky at their head, went right into the hole made in the side; and, showing the rest an example of self-sacrifice, speedily closed it up with a mattress and sail material. The exploded shell had pierced the side a little above the waterline. In consequence of the great speed and heavy swell, the water rushed in torrents into the cabin and on deck, while water trickled through the cracks round the shot-hole, below the deck, into the sail-room, and almost filled it. On closing the hole they proceeded to pump out the water, which work continued all night until the morning.

"After the shot damage mentioned, a shell of large calibre pierced both sides of the after-cabin, but, passing right through, did not explode. Both shot-holes this time being above the waterline, water did not enter. They were immediately closed by hammocks, backed by boarding. A little later another shell of large calibre pierced the side on the starboard, at the men's bathroom, and almost at the waterline. A large fragment of the steel outer skin of the ship was bent inwards, and water rushed into the bath and rigging storeroom below the bath. With the zealous aid of the officers mentioned above, and the sailors, this hole was rapidly closed.

"Not more than from ten to fifteen minutes had passed when there was a smash in the officers' bathroom to port. A small shell, or fragment of a shell, exploding against the side, pierced the door, and settled in the armoured covering to the motor of the electric capstan. At the same time, fragments pierced the port side, at the height of the searchlight, in several places, and the cabin and state-room of the Admiral.

"When the fragments were scattered among the company in the cabin, our junior surgeon, Von Den, with the assistant surgeon, Kozhevnikov, and the sanitary officers, Zhestkov and Tomilov, bandaged up the wounded. Fortunately, the fragments struck no one, although at this time, among those in the cabins, there were already many wounded. All the medical

staff meanwhile displayed surprising fortitude and presence of mind, continuing their work as if nothing special had occurred.

“At the same time also a shell, exploding near the mainmast, pierced the mast, swept away a ventilator, shattered the chart-house, and scattered fragments over ‘flag-sentry’ Zakhvatov, wounding him in the left temple. Zakhvatov, however, would not go to be bound up, remaining at his post until late at night. Much of the rigging was also torn by fragments, and the flag aft was carried away. Zakhvatov, however, immediately replaced it, hoisting another flag which had been kept in readiness.

“By one of the fragments from the same shell, or perhaps of another, exploding in the air, one of our 6" shells was exploded near the officers' galley. From pressure of gases caused by the explosion, the bolt of the shot-locker was forced down, and the shells in the locker fell out on deck.

“Voronin, a sailor, who was standing with his back to the locker with a rocket-case in his hand, fell on deck, mortally wounded. The bottom of the exploded shell rolled to the foot of chief gunner Kostrikin. He, with great presence of mind, seized it in his hands and threw it overboard. Meanwhile, the rest of the crew bravely dealt with the damage caused by the shell. While the sailors dragged the hammocks to one side, and poured water on them, a second-captain of a gun, Olenitshenko, threw overboard some burning rags and tow from damaged rocket-cases, first drenching the latter with water, which prevented the powder in the cases from igniting. He also threw overboard shells which rolled on deck and were dangerous. After two or three minutes gun no. 12 was again loaded and prepared for firing. Midshipman Domenshtshikov (junior gunnery officer) himself aimed and fired it. A well-directed shell struck a single-funnelled Japanese cruiser, and smoke was seen on board her.

“At that time we approached the island of Kotsushima, from behind which appeared a single-funnelled, one-masted hostile cruiser, at a distance of fifty cables. The Japanese armoured



cruisers and battleships at the same time opened fire on us from the starboard.

"We were already engaged on both sides. Japanese shells fell ever nearer. One of them, to port side, exploding above the deck, caused a small fire. The commander of the next platoon, Midshipman Soldatenkov, observing the fire, rapidly extinguished it, with the help of Quartermaster Prikhodko. From the fragments of this shell the crew of gun no. 11 suffered severely. Its first gun-captain, Barishnikov, was mortally wounded. The second gun-captain, Melnikov, also wounded in the groin, did not go at once to be bound up. A sailor, Zuikin, was badly wounded in the hand and foot. Of six men of the crew, only three remained, and they, in spite of the decrease in their numbers, continued at work. After some more firing from this gun, a shell became jammed, and did not clear the barrel.

"Under the direction, and with the personal exertions of Midshipman Domenshtshikov, and the help of conductor Bassanin and gun-captain Samoilov, they set to work to clear the gun under the fire of the Japanese. They decided to shorten the cartridge-case. To saw it with a handsaw was a long task, but Midshipman Domenshtshikov cut away the case, and, throwing the superfluous powder overboard, placed the shortened case in the gun and fired, thus setting the gun in working order again. This labour lasted five or six minutes. Gun-captain Tshetkov also took an active part in this work, after which he offered to remain by the gun instead of gun-captain Khvorov, since his own gun would not fire, on account of the range of the enemy being beyond it.

"Not long previously this same gun-captain Tshetkov, passing along the starboard gangway, threw overboard a shell, which, falling unspent on the deck, had lain there without exploding.

"Among the enemy were distinguishable the armoured cruisers 'Nissin' and 'Kassuga,' the former of which was seen without her fore-funnel and with a fire on the bridge.

"Then soon followed a series of shot-holes in succession,

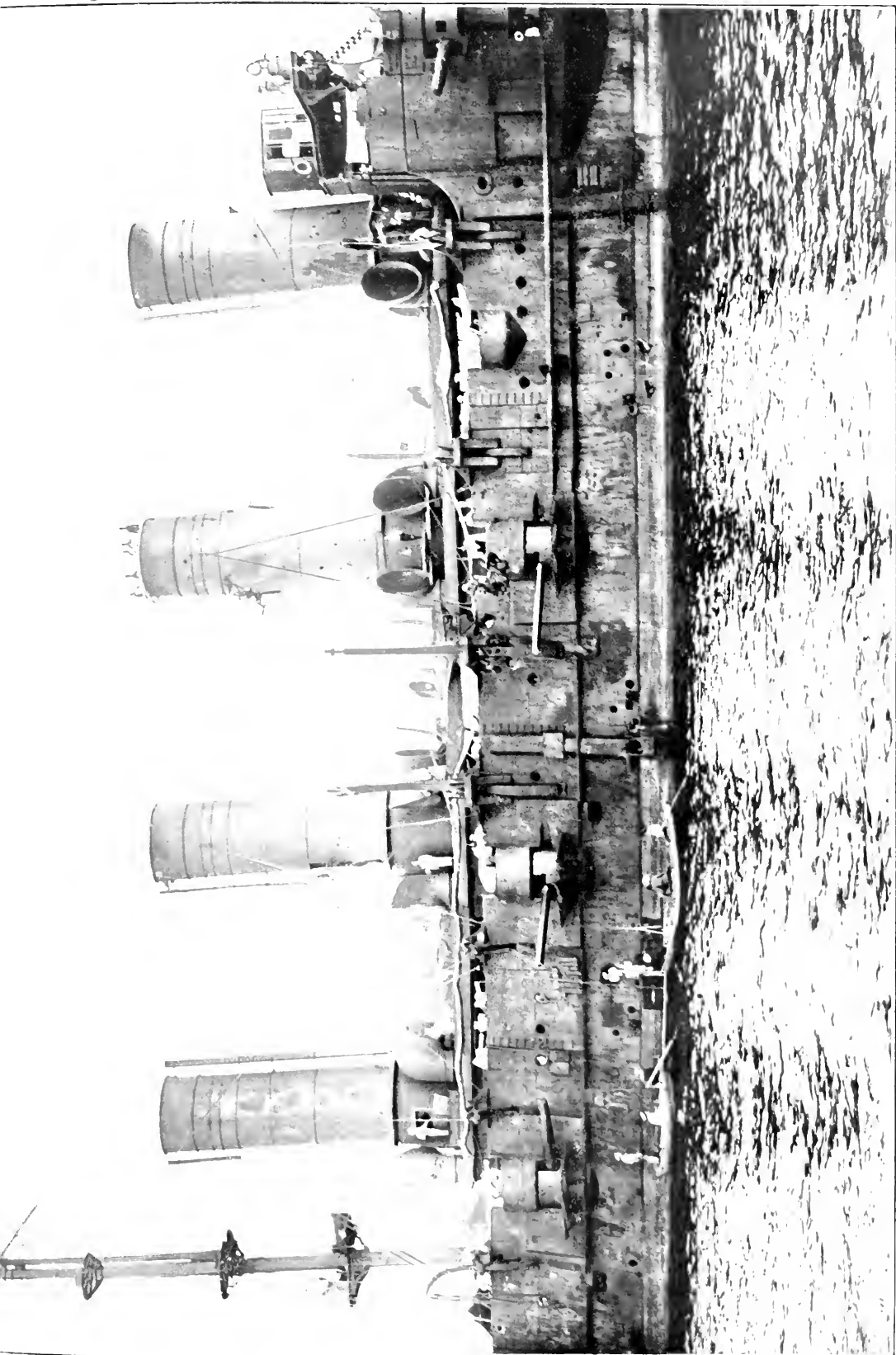
while clouds of black, stifling smoke, filled the whole vessel. Signal-rockets and cartridges began to burst. Fragments of shells flew on all sides, wrecking everything in their way.

“The 75 mm. cartridges stored with the cartridge-cases, struck by fragments, rolled out on deck, and powder from them took fire. Through the action of the gases the nearest carriage to the elevator (or hoist from the magazine to the decks), full of burning cartridges, was thrown off the rail, and, falling backwards down the elevator-shaft, caused a fire there.

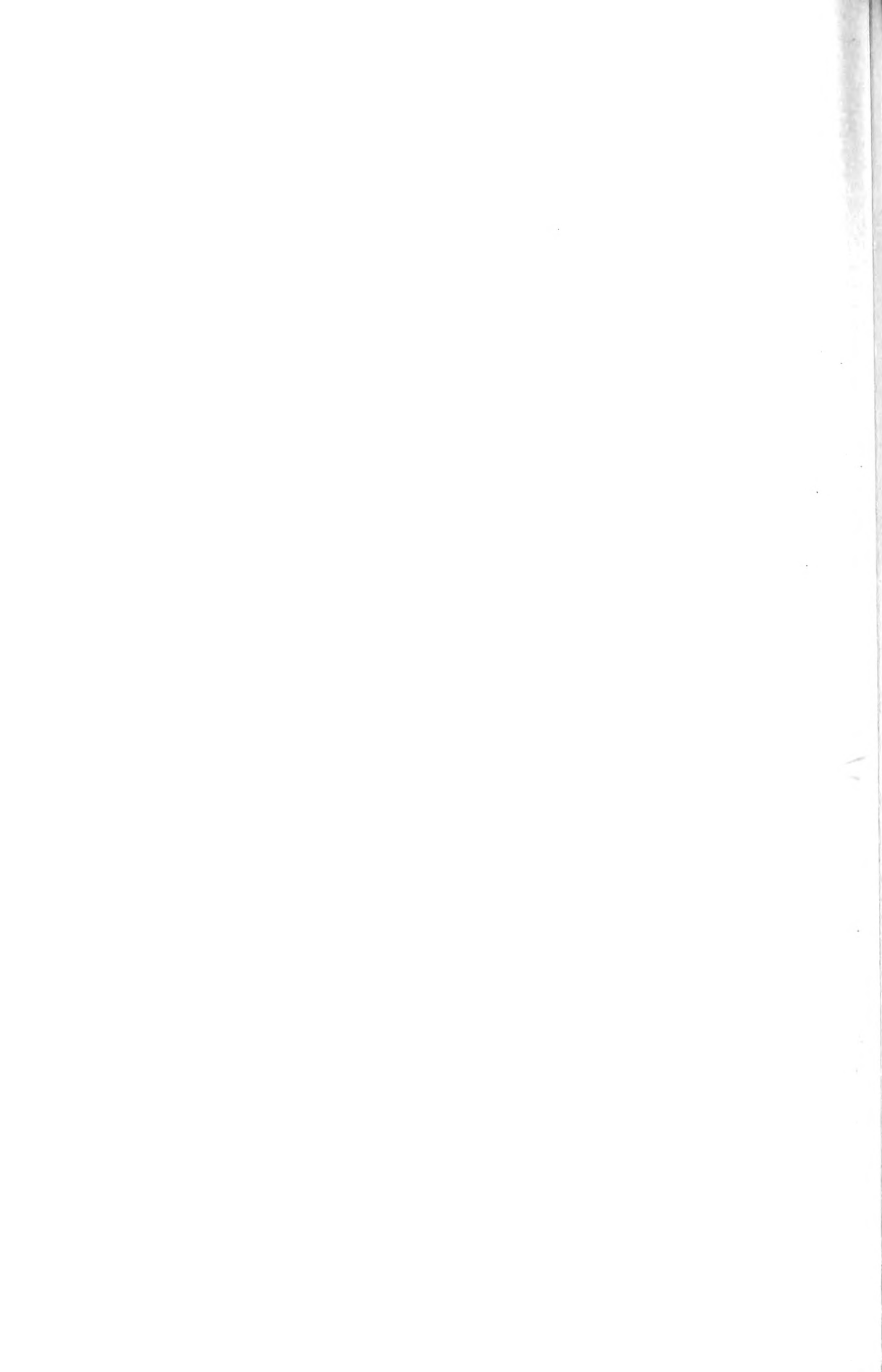
“Before the explosion the signal was given, ‘Disperse to the starboard side,’ and the crew of the quick-firing guns, hitherto sheltered by the casemates, hurried to their places. The captain of no. 21 gun, Aksenov, directing the gun, succeeded in firing it. The crew hastened up a ladder at a run, the crew of the neighbouring no. 47 gun did not go to shelter, but remained where they were to see the course of the battle. Loading his gun afresh, Aksenov began to point it; an explosion followed, which wounded him in the face and hands, hurling him from his gun. All in flames (his clothes were ablaze) he ran along the gangway, where they drenched him with water, and he lost consciousness. The mere sight of his burnt face, hands, and head, was frightful.

“A sailor, Krutshok, was badly wounded in the hand, and was hurled aside. Vdovia and Kustovsky were killed on the spot. Parshin was thrown on one side and struck in the shoulder; Maximov was flung from the gangway ladder and wounded by a fragment. Volkov remained unhurt. A sailor, Kirienko, attached to gun 29, was also badly wounded, he having come for cartridges. In falling he dropped a cartridge, which exploded.

“The fire was soon extinguished by the crew who were in the magazine when the cartridges with burning powder fell there. When they saw the falling cartridges and flames, the men below did not lose their heads. Moving the nearest ammunition-trolley aside, they sprang on deck, and, seizing the fire-engine, rapidly put out the fire, after which the heroic fellows went anew into the magazine and continued serving out cartridges.”



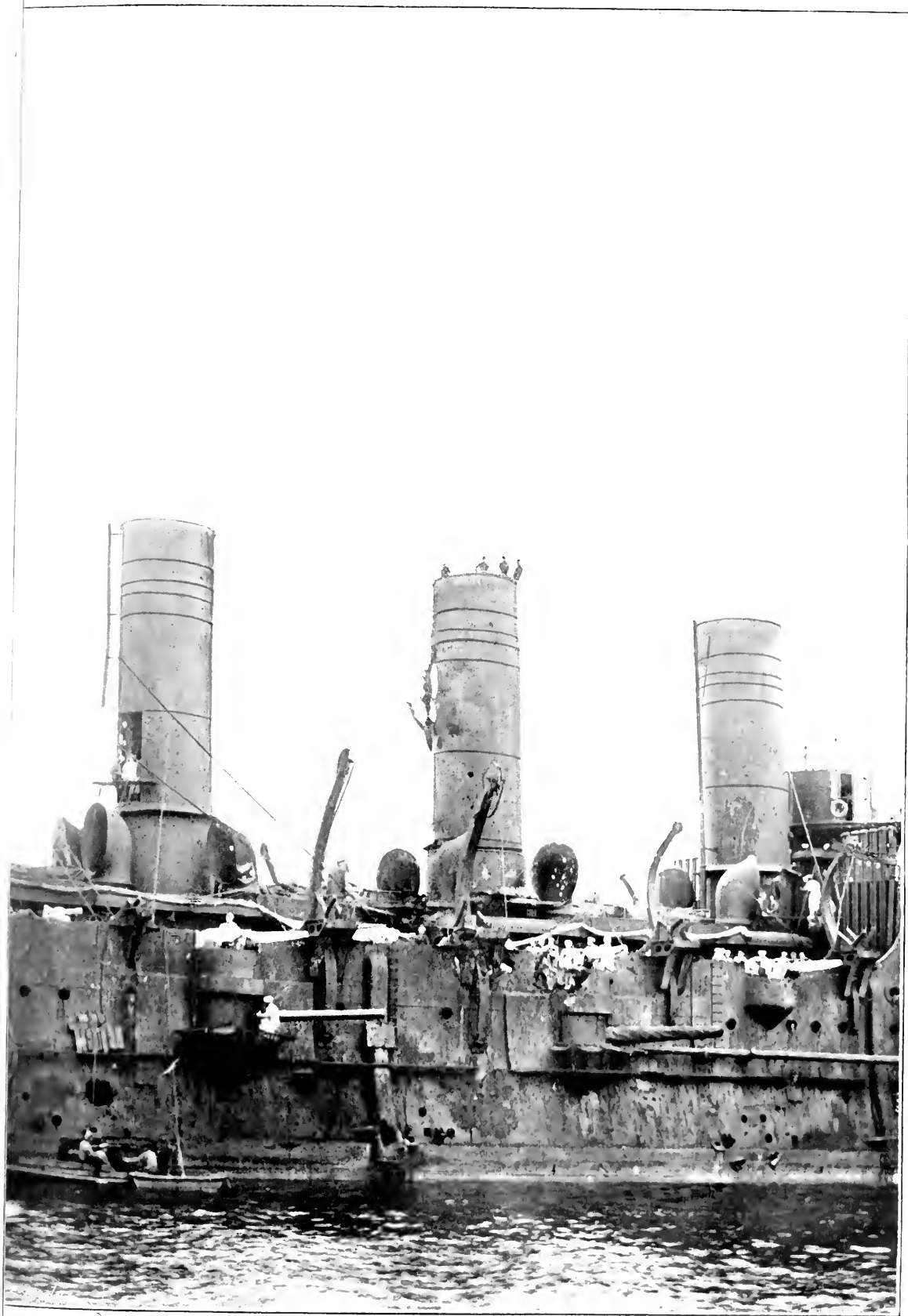
STARBOARD SIDE OF THE CRUISER "GROMBOL," FROM THE FORE-BRIDGE TO THE MAIN-MAST, GIVING A GENERAL VIEW OF INJURIES RECEIVED.



(II) REPORT FROM THE COMMANDER OF THE  
DESTROYER "GROZNY"

"On 27 May the vessels forming the Second Pacific Squadron entered the eastern Korean Strait, and about two o'clock a battle began with a Japanese squadron appearing from the north-west. This torpedo-vessel was attached to the scouting division enclosing the squadron, and did not take an immediate part in the battle, rather endeavouring to keep near the division, so as to render necessary help if required. The cruiser 'Ural' very soon hoisted the signal, 'I have a shot below water.' I, with the torpedo-vessel entrusted to my charge, approached her so as to render help if required. As I drew near, I saw that the crew were sitting in boats and crossing to the transport 'Anadyr' and the steamer 'Svir,' near at hand. The cruiser 'Svietlana' approached for the same purpose, but was compelled to retire, in consequence of the heavy fire concentrated upon her by the Japanese. Seeing that the 'Svietlana' had a shot-hole in her, I followed, so as to be in readiness to render help; but the cruiser 'Svietlana' resumed her place in the line, and continued the fight. I then turned to the 'Ural' and began to pick up men swimming in the water. The senior engineer officer, Speransky, and torpedo-lieutenant Tshoglokov, with eight of the men, were saved. At this time we were in the thick of a terribly telling fire from the Japanese battleship and cruiser division, directed on the cruiser, which, however, continued undamaged. The battle continued with the same severity. At 7 p.m. the signal was hoisted on board the cruiser 'Oleg,' 'Course N. E. 23°,' and the cruiser division, transports, and torpedo-vessels (destroyers) began to make in that direction. At that time the torpedo-vessel 'Buiny' approached, bearing the signal, 'Admiral on board the torpedo-vessel, transfers the command to Admiral Niebogatov.' It was not practicable to go north-east, as the whole Japanese fleet was concentrated in that direction, and a number of their torpedo-vessels appeared, in consequence of which we turned south, and then

south-west. The rapidly falling darkness and uninterrupted torpedo-attacks that followed, compelled us to think only of keeping with the cruiser division, and not coming under the fire of our own larger vessels. The battleship division continued action in the darkness. At dawn the 'Grozny' appeared near the 'Dmitri Donskoi' and the torpedo-vessels 'Biedovy' and 'Buiny,' at the entrance to the Sea of Japan from the Straits of Korea. The torpedo-vessel 'Buiny' approached the 'Dmitri Donskoi,' after which the latter increased her speed, and sent a cutter to the 'Buiny.' The torpedo-vessel 'Biedovy' then came up. After a short space the 'Biedovy' went off, and hoisted the signal, "'Grozny," follow me.' Approaching her, I asked by semaphore what orders, and from whom, receiving the reply, 'Admiral Rozhestvensky on board the torpedo-vessel, wounded in the head and other parts; the majority of the staff also here wounded. We are going to Vladivostok; if coal does not hold out, then to Possiet.' So we travelled in company. The torpedo-vessel 'Buiny,' having taken coal from the 'Dmitri Donskoi,' followed us; but the former began to slacken a good deal, and a short time later the 'Donskoi' turned back, after which we saw her no more. At a little after three o'clock, near the island of Dazhelet, we saw two vessels coming from the Straits of Korea, evidently torpedo-vessels (destroyers), which rapidly overtook us. At close distance, the vessels were seen to be Japanese; one a two-funnelled destroyer, and the other a four-funnelled one. Approaching the 'Biedovy,' I asked by semaphore what we should do, and received for reply, 'How much speed can you make?' I replied, 'Twenty-two knots.' In reply to the order to go to Vladivostok, I asked, 'Why go away and not join battle?' To that I received no reply; but seeing that the 'Biedovy' did not increase speed, and not desiring to leave her by herself, I decreased speed, and kept near her until I saw the 'Biedovy' display the flags for parley and hoist the Red Cross. Then I gave orders for full speed ahead. In spite of the flags raised, the Japanese torpedo-vessels opened fire on the 'Biedovy'; but after some cross-fire, one



FIRST-CLASS CRUISER "GROMOBOL"

Amidships on the starboard side: showing shattered sponson of 75 mm. gun abreast of the centre funnel and other damage to hull; opening in the network torn by a fragment of a shell; also hole made in the casing of an ash shoot.





destroyer approached her and the other pursued me. At a distance of twenty-six cables we opened intermittent fire, in order to stop her. The engagement was carried on at a distance of from fourteen to twenty-six cables. One of the first shots that struck us pierced the side at the waterline on the lower deck, broke the steam-pipe leading to the dynamo engines and the conductors to the turbines [*sic*]. I immediately ordered steam to be shut off and water to be pumped on deck, so as to prevent fire and stop the steam escaping. The 75 mm. gun was out of action. Midshipman Dofeld was sent to examine the hole and take measures for dealing with it. No sooner had he returned and reported to me the measures taken by him, when the search-light was broken by a 75 mm. shell. The fragments killed Midshipman Dofeld, Junior-Captain Riabov, Zhizhin of the hold, and wounded me and Quartermaster Afanasiev. Having arranged for the removal of the dead, I summoned the assistant surgeon to the bridge to bandage me, and directed Lieutenant Koptev to supervise the firing. I could scarcely see anything owing to blood flowing over my face. I had my left thumb and the right middle finger torn away, and a few slight wounds and scratches on the head and face. Before the bandaging was over, the enemy's torpedo-vessel evidently received some serious damage, losing her funnel and listing to the right. She then retreated and lowered her topmast flag. As it was not possible, however, to follow her, owing to the extremely limited quantity of coal, I ordered them to continue firing at her until I heard the shouts of the crew, 'She sinks; she has sunk!' The order to desist was then given, and I went below, leaving Lieutenant Koptev to direct repair of damage, closing shot-holes, and putting the vessel in order. Besides the rank and file killed already mentioned, Quartermaster Fedorov was scalded by steam from the broken pipe and died, and a sailor, Vassiliev, was wounded through the thigh, the bone being shattered. Six shot-holes in all were received, five above the water and one at the waterline, half-submerged. When the battle was over we made for Vladivostok, deciding

to go at our most economic rate of speed ; but as sufficient coal was not to be had, I ordered all wooden articles—decks and coamings, hatches and scuttles, to be burnt. About 7 p.m. on 30 May we reached Askold Island, almost entirely out of coal, and at the southern extremity met Admiral Jessen, and anchored by his order. On the morning of the 31st, having taken coal from a torpedo-vessel which arrived, we reached Vladivostok.

“I cannot give due justice to the officers who, in the course of three days and nights, of which two were under almost continuous fire, entirely without sleep, and almost without food, manfully and coolly coped with the fire and repair of damages, not losing self-possession for a minute. The engines did not require to be stopped for a moment nor to slacken speed. The heroic behaviour of the crew is beyond all praise for their complete devotion, self-sacrifice, endurance and courage. I consider it my duty to declare that I find all equally deserving of the highest praise and encouragement.”

*(Written from the dictation of the Commander of the destroyer “Grozny.”)*

(III) EXPERIENCES ON BOARD THE TRANSPORT “KOREA.”  
EXTRACTS FROM A PRIVATE LETTER

“Being uninitiated in matters naval I will not venture to indicate the true causes of our enormous losses, but as a simple eye-witness of what has taken place I will merely permit myself to give expression to some thoughts which suggested themselves to me on that account. First of all it must be stated that we did not expect so huge a force on the Japanese side. We reckoned that their main forces consisted of at most four battleships (it was even said that they only had three), and seven large cruisers. During our advance we were assured herein by foreigners also. Suddenly we had before us nine battleships, fitted out with 12” guns, twelve large cruisers, provided with 10” guns (whereas we had only 10” guns on board some of our battleships), four (according to other accounts more) smaller

cruisers, and a great number of torpedo-boats (as against nine of ours). It turned out, then, that they had a very considerable advantage over us, both as regards the number of their ships as well as in gun power. Their vessels were all fast, which was indispensable here. The Japanese battleships are of the type of our ironclad 'Sissoi Veliky,' but much longer and altogether bigger; they certainly proved of far greater stability in battle than our huge battleships of the 'Suvorov' type, which, in spite of their size and other qualities, soon turned turtle. Moreover, the Japanese were at their own base. At this place they probably carried out all their manœuvres, being well aware that we should be obliged to pass by it. We were on the defensive, while they were attacking; they had every opportunity for encircling us, while it was impossible for us to escape from that ring unless we succeeded in completely routing their forces. We had no place whither to remove those of our vessels which, even though slightly damaged, it was impossible to keep in the line of battle, such ships being obliged either to destroy themselves or wait until the enemy would either riddle them with shells or capture them. The Japanese vessels were clean, with little extra weights. Ours had become overgrown with seaweed during the long voyage, and were much too top-heavy for fighting. Our battleships, headed by the 'Suvorov,' fought desperately and manœuvred in an excellent manner. The 'Suvorov,' even while perishing, continued firing.

"I do not know whether it was in accordance with the tactics laid down by Rear-Admiral Enquist, that his division of cruisers should not be formed into a regular column directed against the Japanese cruisers, but instead should crowd around the transports, whence they should repel the cruisers by firing. It seemed to us that this was disadvantageous, both to themselves as also to the transports and the battleships. As regards the quality of the firing of this and that side, it must be owned that, to judge by the injuries sustained by our squadron, which we were well able to see, the Japanese firing was excellent. It is difficult to form an exact opinion of the shooting of our ships, since we are

unable to obtain a true estimate of the Japanese losses. This fact, too, must not be overlooked, viz. that we had to deal with a foe already experienced in naval warfare, whereas our sailors were all novices in this respect. Personally I should have liked to say a great deal more concerning this, but will refrain.

“This battle has proved how very insignificant is the rôle of torpedo-boats as a fighting force in a fleet engagement. The submarines were absolutely unable to participate here. There still arises this question : how was it that the Japanese came to possess so many armour-clad warships ?

“But to return to my narrative. Having escaped from the danger of being pursued by the Japanese torpedo-boats we successfully passed through the Korean Straits, after which we began to keep closer to the Japanese isles, so as to avoid meeting any Japanese vessel that may have been coming from Port Arthur or Shanghai.

“On the following day we noticed the ‘Anadyr’ on our left, at a distance of about five miles, while on the right and in front was the steamer ‘Svir.’ From here we intended to proceed to Vladivostok round Japan, but it appeared to us somewhat risky to venture into the Pacific Ocean with shot-holes in our ship. As the rolling was rather severe, we were in constant fear of the temporary stoppage of the leaks not being able to hold out. Thereupon we decided to go to Shanghai, where our transports and their administrator were already. We took the middle course between the usual route to Shanghai and Hong Kong. On the morning of the third day we saw at a distance a Japanese passenger steamer. The ‘Anadyr’ and ‘Svir’ were no longer visible. At night we of course proceeded without firing. On the evening of that day, at half-past eight, we approached Shanghai, but from S.E. Towards evening we illuminated the whole steamer, intending to enforce thereby the recognition of the neutrality of our vessel. We could not call out a pilot, and therefore were again obliged to keep out at sea until morning. We went another twenty miles farther S.E. Here the rolling was worse, and the wind still increased. About

midnight the captain spied in the distance a cruiser which, as he afterwards found, turned out to be a Japanese. We sailed round her three times, having nowhere to go, and the Japanese cruiser evidently took us for some vessel, not Russian, that was awaiting the morning in order to enter Shanghai. About three o'clock we took a course for Shanghai, steering with the utmost speed. At 6 a.m. on 30 May a pilot came on board and took us into the river Yang-tse-kiang, where our transport ships, the 'Yaroslavl,' 'Voronezh,' 'Vladimir,' 'Livonia,' 'Curonia,' and 'Meteor' were lying. No news of the battle had as yet been received, as the cable from Japan to Shanghai had been cut. After our arrival a Chinese naval officer appeared on board our ship, to see where we came from and with what freight. The captain answered all these questions very shrewdly. The shot-holes, however, were noticed. On this and the following day many small steamers and barges filled with people kept hanging around us to take a glance at 'the merchant ship which had gone through such a battle.' Only our representative Russian authorities seemed to take but little interest in the newly-arrived Russian vessel. The commander of the transports, Captain Radlov, was not to be found, and we were obliged to seek him out. It appeared that the staff of the transports had removed their quarters to the town and were living merrily at the 'Hôtel des Colonies,' only from time to time visiting the vessels. Three days passed, and still we did not know what would become of us. The Chinese authorities advised us to go higher up the river, as our presence here was not devoid of danger from the Japanese. Notwithstanding this, however, we stayed where we were, being refused entry into the dock. The 'Svir' had arrived before us; on that very morning she went up to the 'Yaroslavl,' where the commander of the transports was supposed to be, but to the question as to whether he was on board, received a reply in the negative. From the 'Svir' we also learned that Rear-Admiral Enquist was in Chinese waters, and had now gone on board the 'Aurora.' The Admiral questioned the 'Svir' as to whether she had any information as to the whereabouts of the fleet. The

'Oleg' asked her for fifty tons of coal, but where they went to is not known.

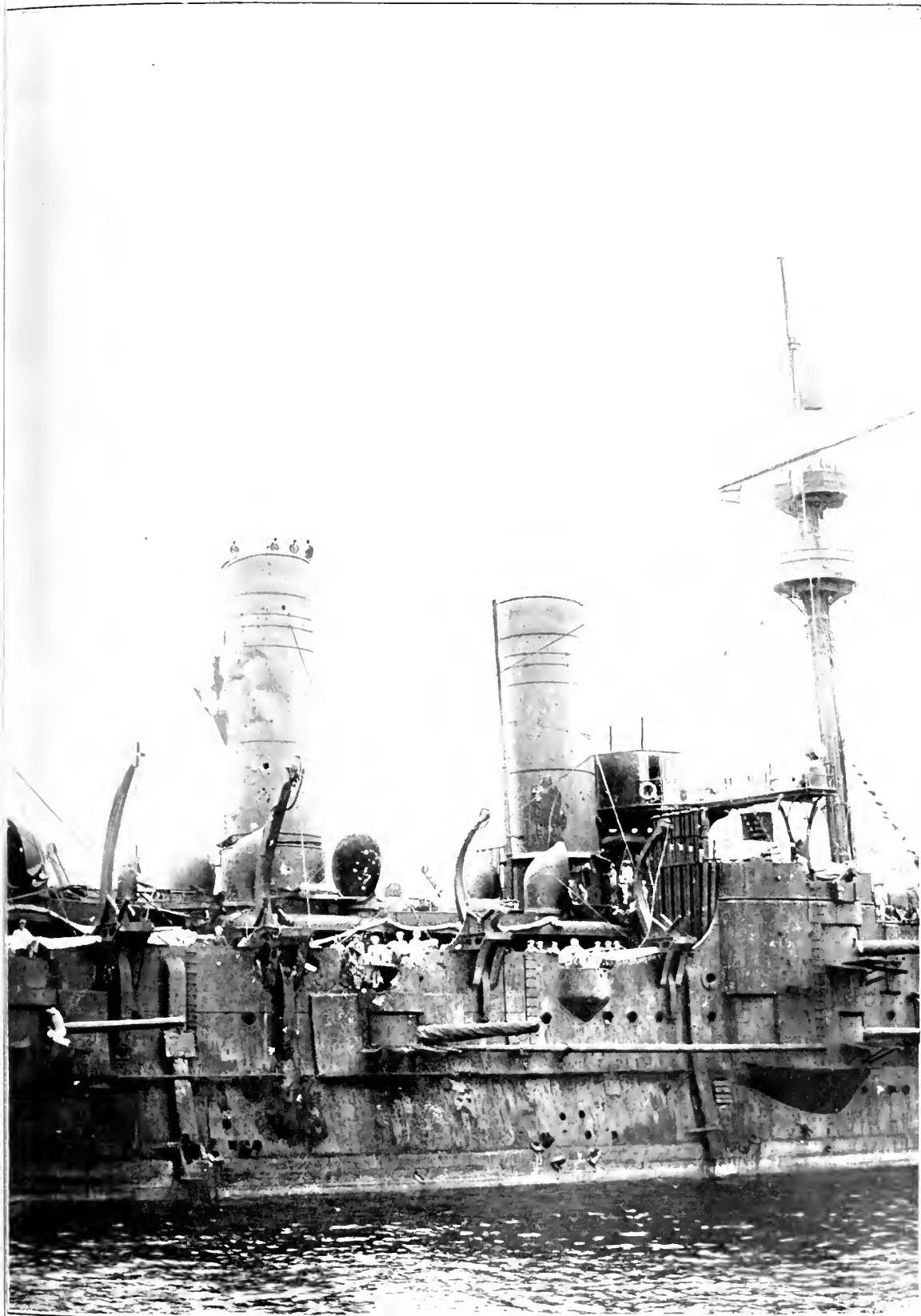
"The 'Askold' with Admiral Reitzenstein is also at Shanghai. The crew are evidently enjoying themselves excellently under this arrest; balls, picnics, and boat parties, afford distractions in their home-sickness! They also receive especially high salaries in their capacity of naval officers, and so what occupation could please them more? When we were at Kamranh we heard that the crew of the 'Diana' held under arrest there had also established themselves happily.

"Here, dear friend, you have the final act of our epic expedition."

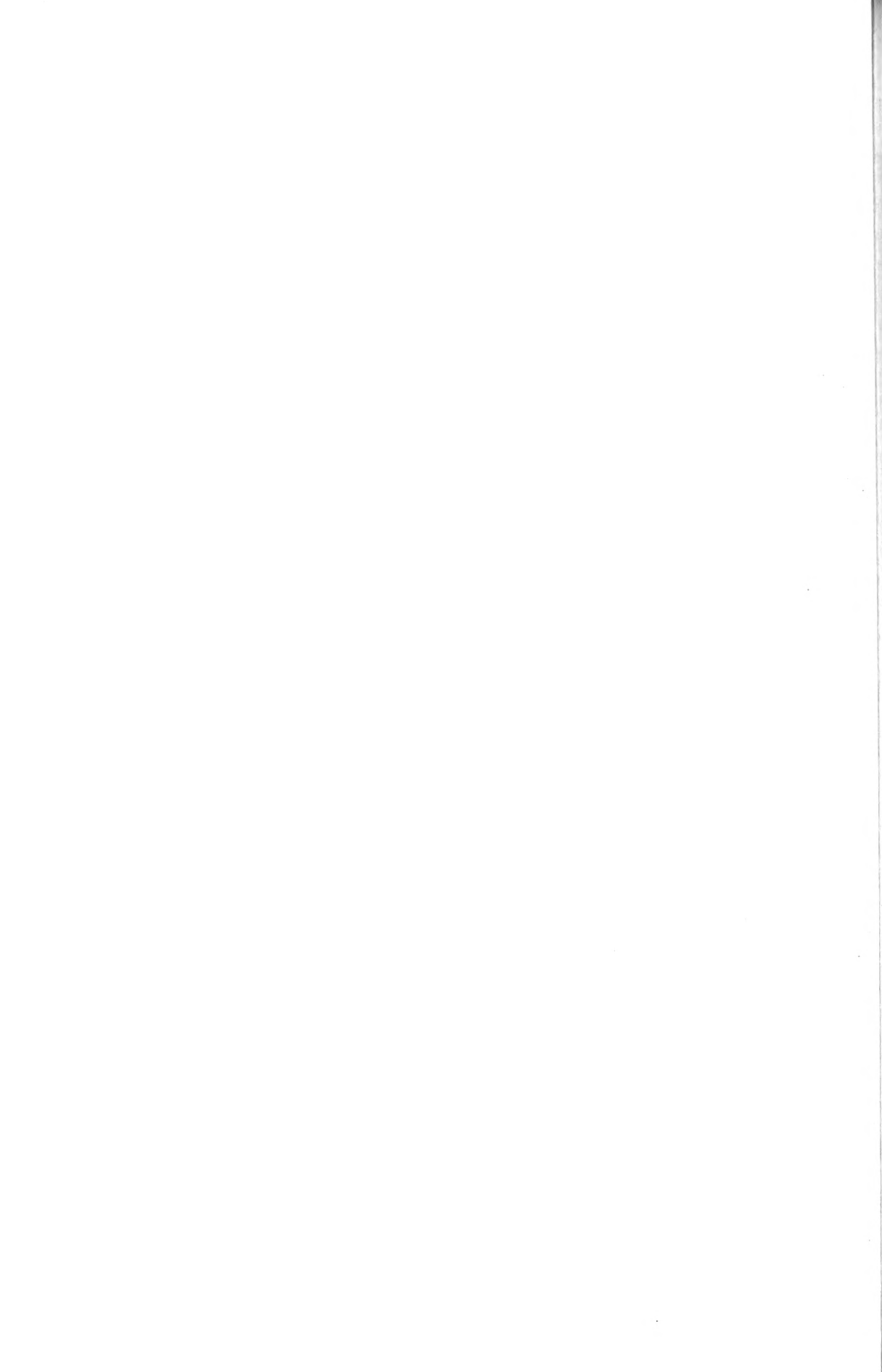
#### (IV) EXPERIENCES IN THE TRANSPORT "KOREA," FROM THE LETTER OF ANOTHER EYE-WITNESS

"Five days have elapsed since the battle of Tsushima, and the impression made by it still presses on my consciousness with the weight of a heavy nightmare. Several times I have seized my pen in order to describe the battle to you, but each attempt brought with it an agonizing heartache. Every thought, however irrelevant to it, seems to lead me back to that fearful day. Would that it could be buried in oblivion! I know that you, in our dear native land, are profoundly anxious, and I should not have been able to overcome the oppressive feeling evoked by the remembrance of that fatal day, if I did not know how you are pining in the absence of information,—information more or less detailed and trustworthy. Although you will only receive my letter in six weeks' time, yet my communication will not, I think, be superfluous, and will probably supplement the accounts in the newspapers.

"Having left the transports at Shanghai, escorted by two auxiliary cruisers, our fleet consisted of three divisions of battle-ships (in which was included the first-class armoured cruiser 'Admiral Nakhimov') in all, twelve vessels: the cruisers 'Oleg,' 'Aurora,' 'Dmitri Donskoi,' 'Vladimir Monomakh,' 'Zhemtshug,' 'Izumrud'; the scouts 'Svietlana' and 'Ural'; nine



GENERAL VIEW OF DAMAGE TO THE STARBOARD SIDE OF THE CRUISER "GROMOBOL"





torpedo-boat destroyers; the military transports 'Anadyr,' 'Irtish,' 'Kamtchatka,' and the merchant transport 'Korea'; two tugs, the 'Rus' and 'Svir'; two hospital ships, the 'Orel' and 'Kostroma.' So we directed our course towards the Korean Straits.

"On the evening of the 26th the commander of the squadron signalled 'Prepare for battle.' Early on the morning of the 27th we arrived in the Straits. About five or six miles off on our starboard beam appeared a Japanese warship, which was sailing parallel with our course. Towards eight o'clock, we saw to port six Japanese cruisers; of which, shortly afterwards, only four remained in view. The other two disappeared. Two double-funnelled cruisers were in front, followed by two with three funnels, of the type of the 'Aurora.' The day broke clear, but later on the horizon became cloudy, so that the shores of the island of Tsushima were invisible. About half-past nine we entered the narrowest part of the Straits; and then the signal was hoisted, 'Take the course N.E. 23°.' The Japanese cruisers followed the same direction. At eleven o'clock they began to approach nearer to our fleet. Then our Commander-in-Chief altered the disposition of our squadron. At the head was the 'Suvorov' with the armour-clads (first division), and the second and third divisions (under Admiral Niebogotov); in their wake followed the cruisers. In the second line were the transports, and, keeping at a considerable distance astern of them, the hospital ships 'Orel' and 'Kostroma.' The 'Vladimir Monomakh' was placed to starboard of the transports.

"At half-past eleven, or thereabouts, the armour-clad division, under Admiral Niebogotov, and the cruisers, opened fire on the four Japanese cruisers, which had been accompanying us. After the first discharge, the latter drew off eight points, and then they also opened fire. The first two battleship divisions did not, it seems, fire at all. On our side there were fired about twenty shots. The Japanese, after from four to five rounds, turned about and withdrew towards the island. We continued to move

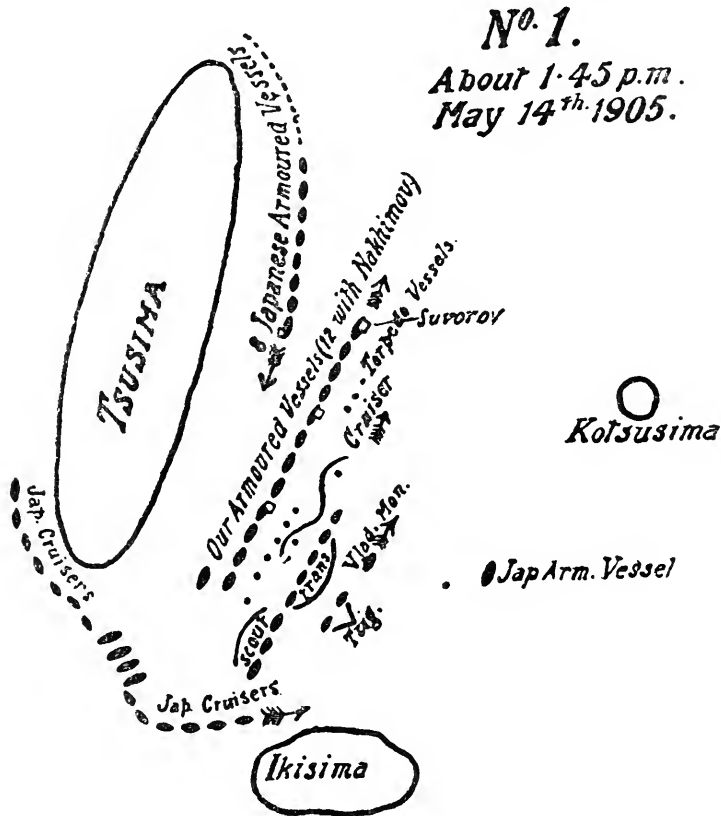
forward. When the Japanese ships drew off, we perceived that one of them remained behind, and precisely that one which, as I saw, had been struck by our projectiles. The fire of the others sometimes hit and sometimes missed ; one or two of the shells burst on board their own vessels. What was the object of the Japanese in this case ? By approaching closer to us they probably wished to examine the disposition of our ships, and reckoned on enticing us nearer to the island, where, maybe, some kind of trap was prepared for us—a mine, submarine, or shore battery.

“After twelve o'clock the battleship divisions changed their position by an evolution, at first to starboard of us, and subsequently to port. They were proceeding towards the little island of Kotsushima, when, about 1.45 p.m., there appeared on our port side Togo's fleet, at first numbering eight battleships. Admiral Rozhestvensky began a battle which, for intensity and duration, can certainly not be compared with anything in the annals of naval warfare. It is very difficult to give a detailed and trustworthy account of the battle ; but, as far as possible, I shall describe to you all that we were able to see from the bridge, standing among the zealous and experienced signalmen. It is possible that I may make some mistakes, but I shall give the essential truth of the matter.

“It is necessary to remark that during the continuance of the whole battle there was a considerable swell on the sea. The cannonade began at a distance of about 60 cables, but in the evening it had decreased to 10 cables. In order to give you as clear an idea as I can regarding the manœuvres of the forces on both sides, I add some sketches. Plan No. 1 shows the first moment, so to speak, of the battle. Eight Japanese armour-clad ships advanced straight to meet ours.<sup>1</sup> The cross-fire began terribly. The Japanese projectiles fell like hail. Ours did not reply so quickly. The Japanese fire struck the cruisers and the transports, which did not reply. The ‘Oslabya’ (flagship of Admiral Felkersham) in particular was strewn with shells. At

<sup>1</sup> This frontal attack was a constant manœuvre of Togo's.

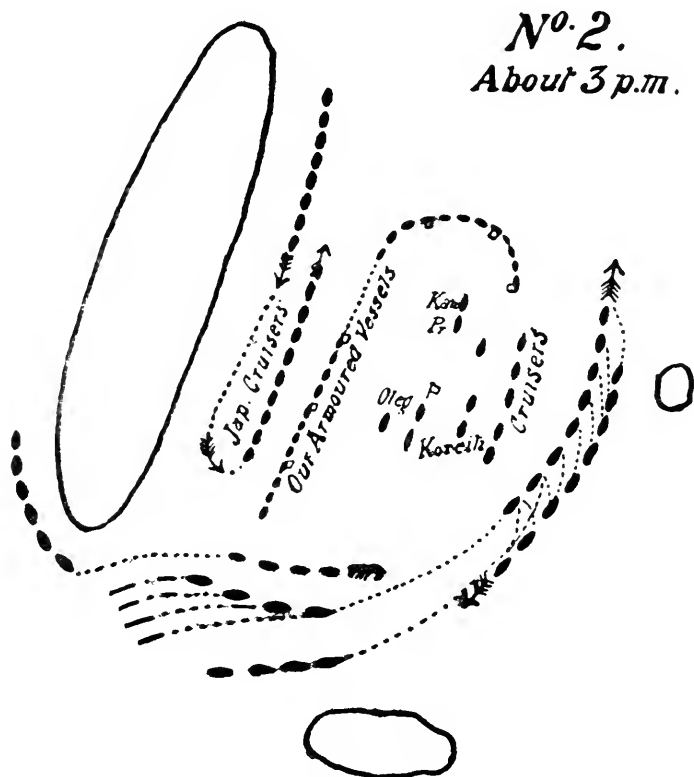
first they fell on the body of the hull, the bows, and finally burst all over the ship. She took fire. In half an hour nothing remained of her. She was submerged. On board the ironclad 'Orel' the masts and funnels were shot away, and she ceased to answer her helm. A Japanese torpedo-boat endeavoured to launch a torpedo against her, but a shot from the 'Orel' caused



the torpedo-boat to sheer off to some distance. The 'Orel' remained afloat.

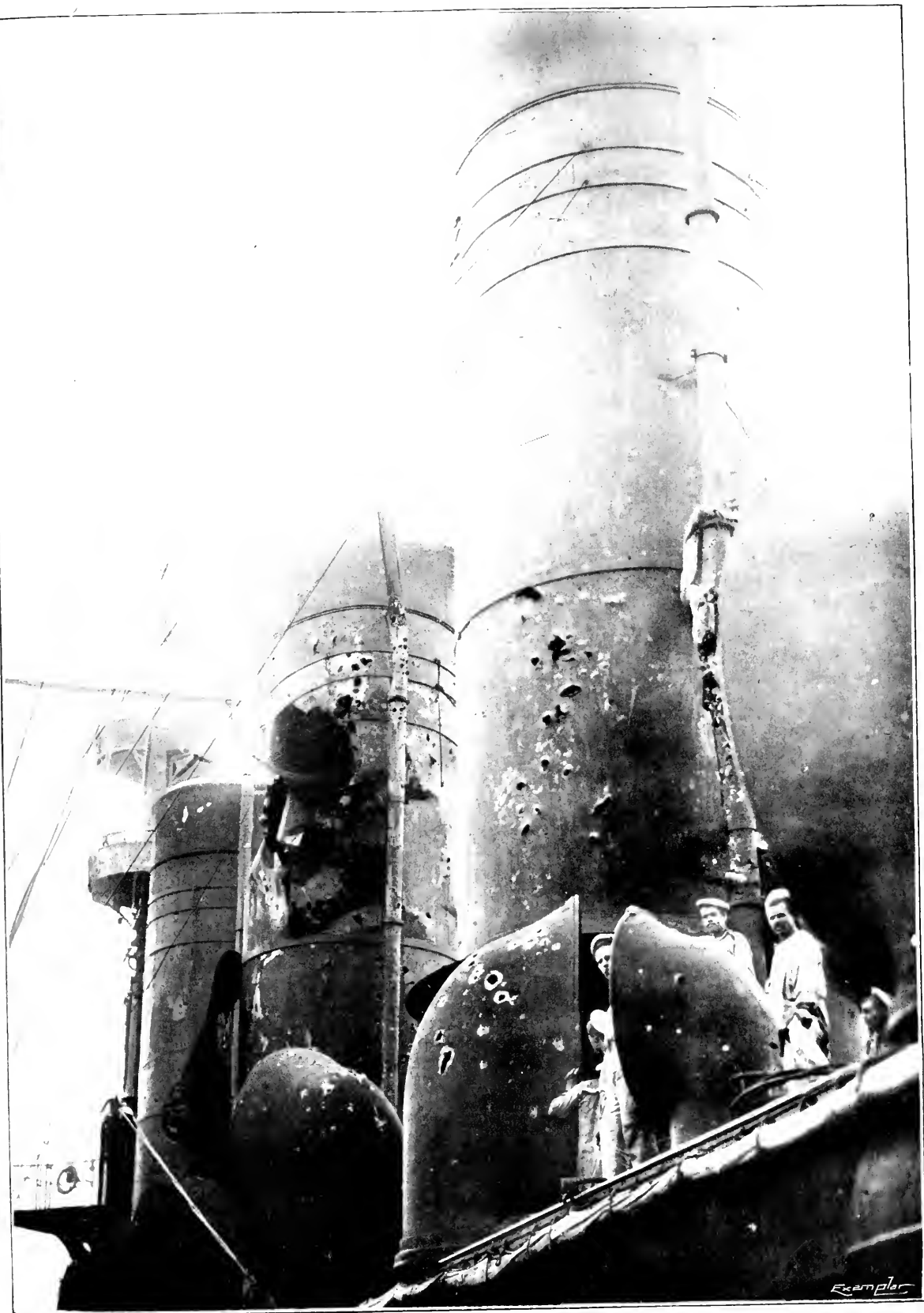
"During this time the cruiser 'Vladimir Monomakh' had opened fire on our flank against the vessel which we had seen on our starboard beam in the morning. Some extremely lucky shots soon compelled the Japanese to retire. They also fired, but with no damage to our cruiser. Some ten or fifteen minutes had passed since the beginning of the battle, when there appeared in our rear some Japanese cruisers coming from the island. These cruisers numbered not fewer than sixteen, of

which twelve were first-class vessels.<sup>1</sup> They opened a cannonade on our cruisers and transports, and turned our flank on the island side. (Plan No. 2.) Here was presented a frightful scene. The transports and the cruisers were in a heap together. The Japanese shells burst, and found a target all round this heap. We were in the centre of a concentrated fire. Our



cruisers, under the command of Rear-Admiral Enquist, also opened fire. They did not free themselves from the transports, but fired from the midst of the crowd, and these tactics of the cruisers were continued during almost the whole of the battle. Some of them fired from behind the 'Korea.' The 'Vladimir Monomakh' comported herself the most valiantly of all. She alone extricated herself from the mass of cruisers and transports, and, with the utmost sang-froid, opened fire. Our best cruiser, the 'Oleg' (flagship of Rear-Admiral Enquist), and the 'Aurora,' behaved with more coolness than the others. Thanks

<sup>1</sup> All these Japanese ships had been newly painted, and shone in the sunlight.



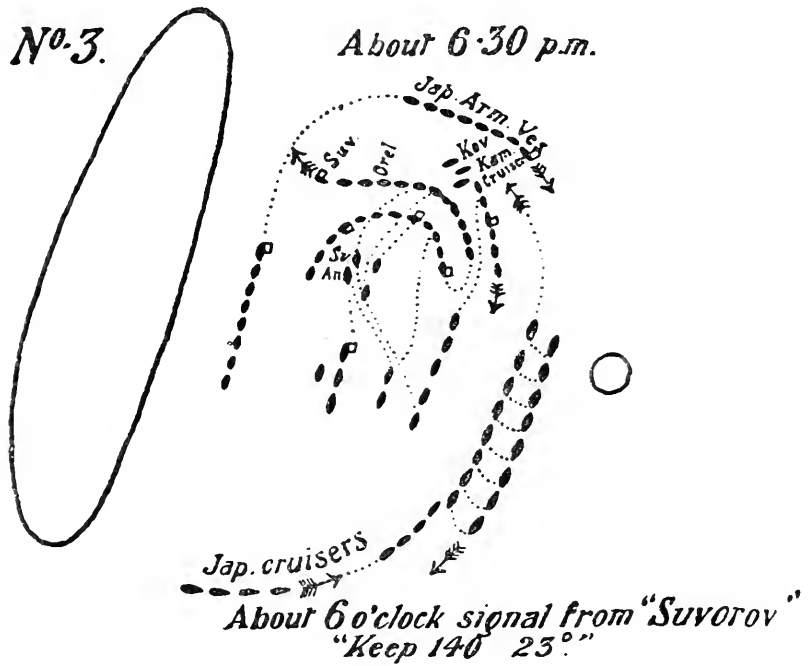
DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO THE THIRD FUNNEL ON BOARD THE CRUISER "GROMOBOL"  
The shell burst on striking the funnel.



to this wretched position of affairs, we were almost unable to move, and remained a target for the Japanese gunners. In the course of a whole hour, columns of water, thrown up by the explosion of shells, kept rising close alongside the 'Korea,' and it remains incomprehensible how a ship of her size, and so big a target, should have escaped destruction. The shells kept bursting on the side of the ship itself, on the bows and stern, or, with a fearful whistling sound, they flew over us as we stood on the bridge. Then, circling round our heads, as it were, they would fall and burst near the vessel's side. Later on we found some possibility of moving, and strove to get out of the zone of exploding projectiles. Nevertheless, throughout the battle the shells continued to fall all around. The splinters of a shell, bursting close to the ship, made a huge hole in her starboard side just at the waterline, and the water began to pour into the coal-bunkers. It was only by the greatest skill and energy on the part of the ship's officers that we were able to keep the water out by temporary stopping, and artificially making the ship list to port. The lifeboats on the starboard side were riddled with holes by the splinters. The bridge itself was struck by them. The Japanese shells were, for the most part, charged with lyddite. In bursting they gave out first a yellow, and then a greenish smoke. We all felt a certain bitter taste in the mouth from this smoke. It seemed as if there was no salvation for us. One shell would have been enough for the transport. We should either have had to go to the bottom, or be burned, in about ten minutes. The ship lay there before the eyes of the pitying spectators of what had happened—helpless, without the possibility of firing one shot in self-defence. The transport 'Korea' was entirely unarmed. Whether it is easier to look on at this hell, or to take an active part in it oneself, I know not. But men who were occupied during this time in strenuous labour, have said that while you are at work, you do not experience those horrible impressions which are felt by those who merely look on at a battle. Here may lie the psychological cause of that panic which seized on some portion of the crews of the

fighting and volunteer fleets. Taking off their shirts, and donning life-belts, these distracted men stood on the deck hiding behind the cabin companion, as though that could protect them.

“When they began to cry out that a torpedo was coming at us, close to our side, I went into the crowd of men, and almost drove three or four of them into the forecabin to watch the course of the torpedo and give warning to those on the bridge.



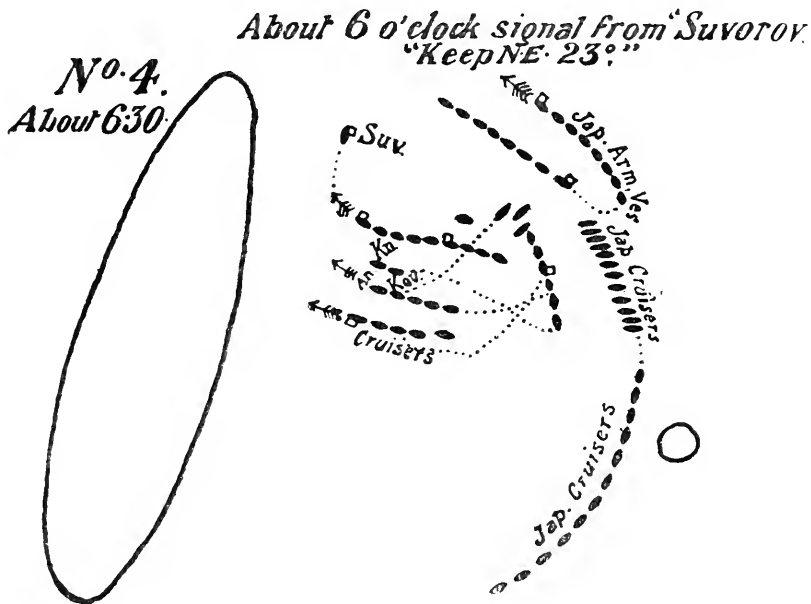
The men, however, remained there only a short time, and then hid themselves. Soon a second torpedo came to within five fathoms' length of us to starboard. Our situation was made worse by the fact that the signals from the flagship 'Oleg' were given by the military code, which we had not got. On board the other ships around us, things were not going better. The bows of the 'Ural' were settling down, her rudder was knocked to pieces, and the crew were about to take refuge in the boats. The 'Ural,' however, continued to float for some time, until the 'Vladimir Monomakh' shot her down. The tug 'Rus,' having had a hole in her, and received other injuries, also withdrew. Her crew were saved. She was afterwards sunk by another



shot. The 'Kamtchatka' was just getting away behind the 'Korea,' when she was struck below the waterline, and soon ceased to answer the helm. The 'Zhemtshug' had lost one of her masts."

(V) EXPERIENCES ON BOARD THE TRANSPORT "KOREA,"  
FROM THE LETTER OF AN EYE-WITNESS

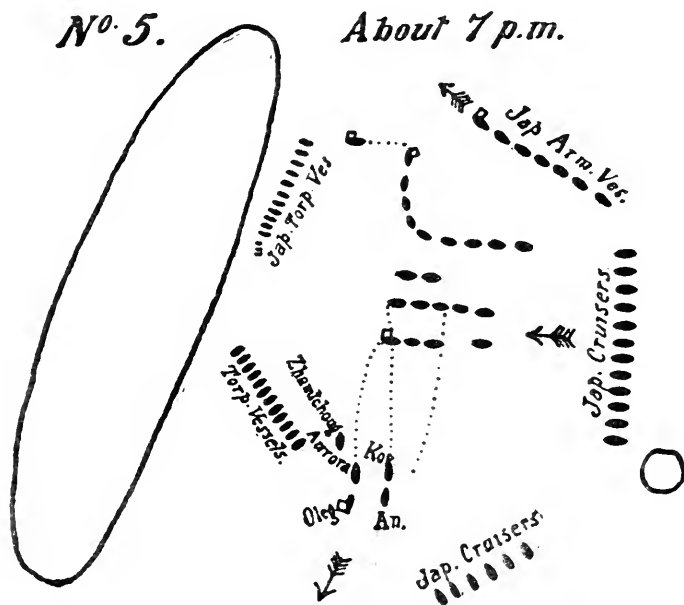
"About three o'clock the battleships turned to starboard, probably wishing to protect us from the Japanese cruisers. The



latter then turned back. Our battleships advanced to meet the Japanese battleships (Plan No. 3). The Japanese cruisers, seeing that the battleships were approaching, turned back again and joined the new force of their own cruisers. Our cruisers advanced to meet them for the first time, in regular order. We found ourselves between the Japanese battleships and our own. Nevertheless, we managed to extricate ourselves from this position before the beginning of the cannonade between the battleships. The 'Irtish' received some damage, but it was still possible to steer her. The 'Kamtchatka' remained in the same place. About six o'clock the signal was given from the 'Suvorov,' 'Steer course N.E. 23°; speed, 8 knots.' Our battleships obeyed (Plan No. 4). Approximately at the same

time the 'Alexander III,' which was burning, turned turtle. For a while she floated keel uppermost. The 'Navarin' approached her. A fire broke out on board the 'Suvorov.' From the 'Oleg' the signal was given, 'Steer more to starboard.' Meanwhile the Japanese battleships had turned back, with the object of obstructing the 'Suvorov's' course. The latter was thus obliged to turn westward (Plan No. 5).

"The sun was setting. The 'Suvorov' steered towards it. The sun's rays were reflected from our battleships. A concen-



trated fire was now directed against the 'Suvorov.' About seven o'clock a shell exploded on the after bridge and a fresh tremendous fire broke out; but she continued to fire. She was attacked by a torpedo-boat, but the boat was sunk by a well-placed shot. All of a sudden the battleship began to heel over. There came a discharge from all her big guns, and in an instant she was lost to view. The 'Suvorov' was no more. It is impossible to tell you what we felt. At first we believed that all on board the 'Suvorov' had perished, together with the Commander-in-Chief, and to lose him seemed to us an immense misfortune, an unjust decree of fate, after all the terrible trials

he had undergone. But later on, it began to be rumoured that just before she sank one of our torpedo-boats had got alongside the 'Suvorov,' and we hoped—how fervently we hoped—that the Admiral had been saved!

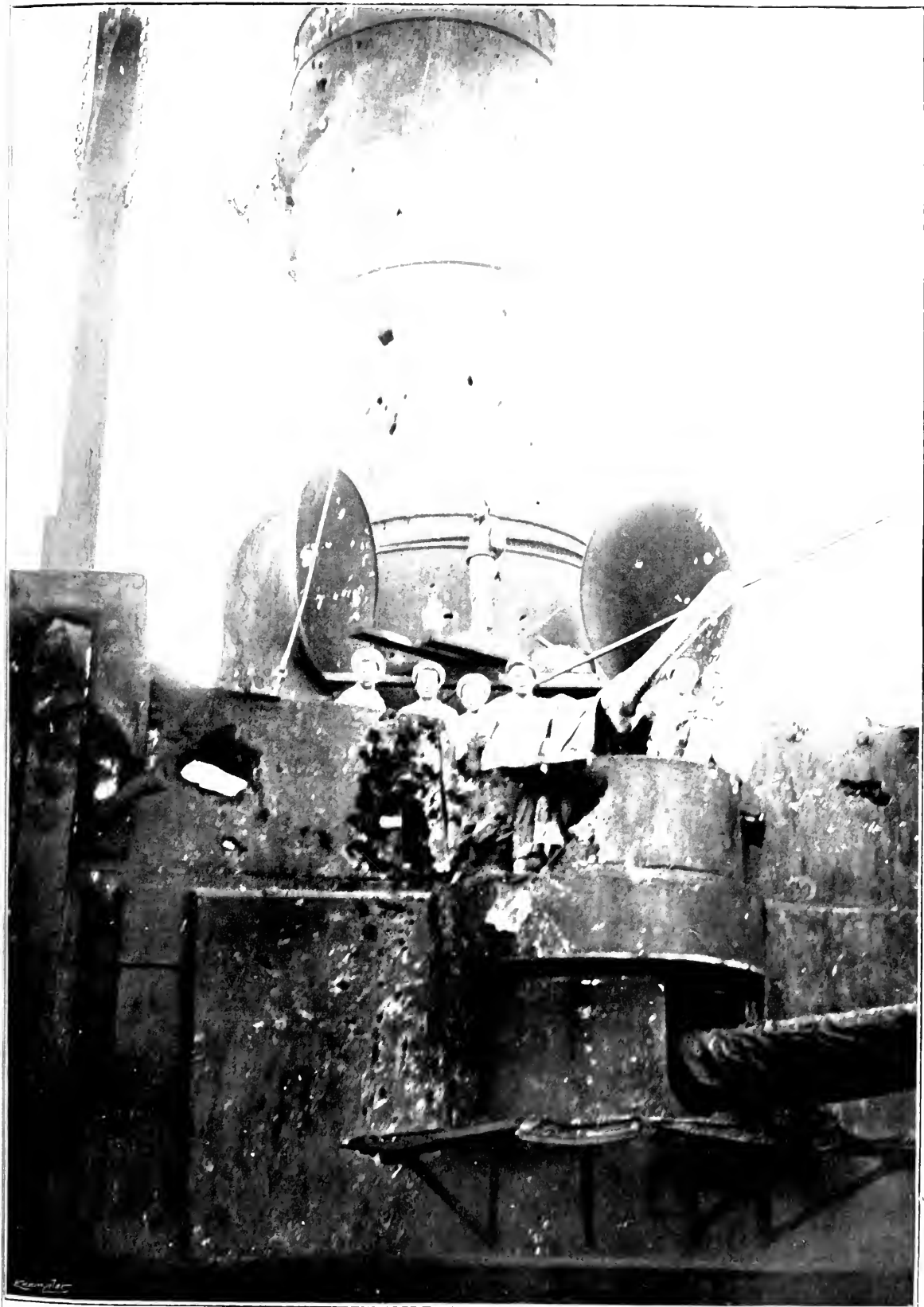
"During the whole of this nearly year-long cruise we had seen what manner of man he was. Possessed of an iron character and a deep love for his native land, he laboured ceaselessly, giving no rest to body or mind. Almost the whole night through he would be on deck, on duty on the bridge, and keeping an eye on the fleet. It may be said that the Admiral kept the watch. He entered into every minute detail, excited himself, suffered. He wrote severe, but at the same time, clear and intelligible orders, energetically stimulating all to devote themselves lovingly to their duty; and he made them work. Every one worked as they did nowhere else. He took care of the most insignificant little craft as if it had been the apple of his eye; in fact, he led the whole squadron into battle complete and perfect, notwithstanding all the heavy burdens of the cruise. The sailors loved the Admiral, because they saw his labours and his difficulties. We were convinced that Admiral Rozhestvensky, for his part, had done all that could be done by a man of uncommon powers. In our fleet an eminent commander is recognized by all; and therefore all fully understood why the loss of Rozhestvensky must be reckoned as a great misfortune.

"Had this fleet not been led by Admiral Rozhestvensky, but by an admiral like those of the naval wars of former times (I do not include among them the late Admiral Makarov), then very probably, although of course one cannot speak with certainty, our ships would never have arrived in the Korean Straits, and Admiral Togo would not have prepared so enormous and strong a squadron.

"The loss of the 'Suvorov,' and with her the supposed death of our chief, had, of course, a fatal influence. Probably this circumstance was the real cause why the cruiser 'Oleg,' with Rear-Admiral Enquist, suddenly turned to port and bore S.W. She was followed by the 'Aurora,' 'Zhemtshug,' 'Anadyr,'

'Svir,' and 'Korea.' To the 'Svir' and 'Korea' nothing remained but to endeavour to extricate themselves from their critical position. Unless they could do so they would have been immediately destroyed by the Japanese torpedo-craft which were bearing to starboard and ahead of us. On the other hand, by remaining they would have only hindered the battleships and hampered the speed of the squadron. After a little time the cruisers turned to starboard. The 'Oleg' opened fire on the torpedo-vessels and they all speedily disappeared from our sight. We decided that Admiral Enquist had gone to join the main fleet. It had become fairly dark. Not wishing to fall in with the torpedo-boats bearing S.W., we turned southward and wanted subsequently to steer to S.E., towards the coast of Japan, in order to reach Vladivostok; but there loomed the Japanese cruisers. There remained only one way out, viz. to go to S., and as quickly as we could ( $11\frac{1}{2}$  knots) we steered straight southward. From the Japanese torpedo-vessels, which had been bearing to S.W., there suddenly glimmered signal lights, and in a short time we perceived that we were being chased. They tried to locate us by means of the search-light, whose rays approached ever nearer and nearer. At this time the armed transport 'Anadyr' showed on our starboard beam, and the search-light nearly reached her first. The 'Anadyr,' however, manœuvred on to our port beam, but the rays of the search-light followed her. Then she repeated the manœuvre, crossing over to our starboard beam, and the search-light once or twice lay along our course. At last, the light reached to within one or two cables of the 'Korea.' We thought that they would immediately discover us, but finally the light went out, and we continued our voyage on the same course. A few hours of suspense passed, and then we satisfied ourselves that the danger was over.

"Astern the cannonade was still going on; but the shots were heard more and more rarely. Some were audible up to twelve o'clock at night. It was clear that our remaining ships had sailed off; but how would it be in the morning? we wondered; would there be any ammunition left after the pro-



DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO THE SPONSON OF THE 75 mm GUN FORWARD OF THE THIRD FUNNEL ON BOARD THE "GROMOBOI"



longed battle? Our torpedo-vessels took no part in the battle, but kept near the cruisers.

"Thus ended this terrible day. What were the results of it? For our squadron they were lamentable. We lost the battleships 'Suvorov,' 'Alexander III,' 'Orel,' 'Oslabya,' the auxiliary cruiser 'Ural,' the 'Kamtchatka,' the transport 'Irtish,' and the tug 'Rus.' Our cruisers, and perhaps the remaining battleships also, were damaged, although they continued to answer the helm and to keep their course very well. Our torpedo-boats were all safe. The number of the killed, wounded, and drowned must of course have been enormous. On board the 'Korea' only one had a slight injury. We had no killed. It was impossible for us to discern the losses of the Japanese. Almost all our attention was absorbed by our own ships. Moreover, a fearful smoke hid the enemy's vessels, and finally those Japanese ships which withdrew from the battle were able to get off unperceived, thanks to the favourable position of their fleet. We saw that out of eight Japanese battleships seven remained, and that three of their cruisers were on fire. The battleship which had been engaged by the 'Vladimir Monomakh' did not reappear. Evidently she had suffered damage. A few of the Japanese torpedo-vessels were sunk.

"We still possessed a comparatively strong force. But most unfortunately this was weakened, as we afterwards learned, by the arrival at Shanghai of three cruisers, the 'Oleg,' 'Aurora,' and 'Zhemtshug,' which, contrary to the order of Admiral Rozhestvensky, 'Remember that only by keeping our forces together can we force our way to Vladivostok,' had not remained with the fleet, but appeared on the third day off Shanghai. How can this proceeding of Rear-Admiral Enquist be explained?

"Of course, this remaining force could not have made head against the Japanese forces, but it might nevertheless have done great damage to the enemy's fleet; especially if Admiral Rozhestvensky were still alive and unwounded."

*(An eye-witness on board the "Korea.")*

## (VI) A NARRATIVE FROM AN OFFICER AT VLADIVOSTOK

“It is difficult here at Vladivostok to obtain any particulars, shedding even a feeble light on the terrible disaster to our squadron. No one knows anything, and all possible kinds of reports and rumours are afloat, and reach an absurd pitch. As to the first stage of the battle, i.e. details of the day battle of 28 May, the few participants here present can furnish some information. Some of this information is within my knowledge. On leaving Kamranh Bay our united squadrons made towards Formosa, and on the 22nd were nearing it. They made for Shanghai, which they approached on the 25th. The fleet kept about thirty miles from the shore, but under cover of the fog part of the transports (‘Ekaterina,’ ‘Vladimir,’ ‘Urania,’ ‘Livonia,’ ‘Meteor’) convoyed by the ‘Rion’ and ‘Dnieper,’ took a course midway between the Japanese islands and Quelpart. It is necessary to explain that the fleet was divided into different divisions. They were these. First division of battleships (Rozhestvensky’s flag): ‘Suvorov,’ ‘Alexander III,’ ‘Borodino,’ ‘Orel.’ Second (Felkersham’s flag): ‘Oslabya,’ ‘Sissoi,’ ‘Navarin.’ Third (Niebogotov’s flag): ‘Nikolai I,’ ‘Ushakov,’ ‘Seniavin,’ ‘Apraxin.’ Cruiser division: (Enquist’s flag) ‘Oleg,’ ‘Donskoi,’ ‘Aurora,’ ‘Monomakh.’ Scouts: ‘Ural,’ ‘Svietlana,’ ‘Zhemtshug,’ ‘Izumrud.’ On approaching the Japanese shores on 26 May, the squadron proceeded in three line ahead columns. To port: Divisions of Niebogotov and Enquist. To starboard: Rozhestvensky and Felkersham. Centre: transports ‘Anadyr,’ ‘Irtish,’ ‘Kamtchatka,’ and ‘Korea.’ Scouts in front: to port the ‘Izumrud,’ to starboard the ‘Zhemtshug.’ The ‘Donskoi’ closed in the fleet, beyond which on each side appeared the hospital vessels ‘Kostroma’ and ‘Orel.’

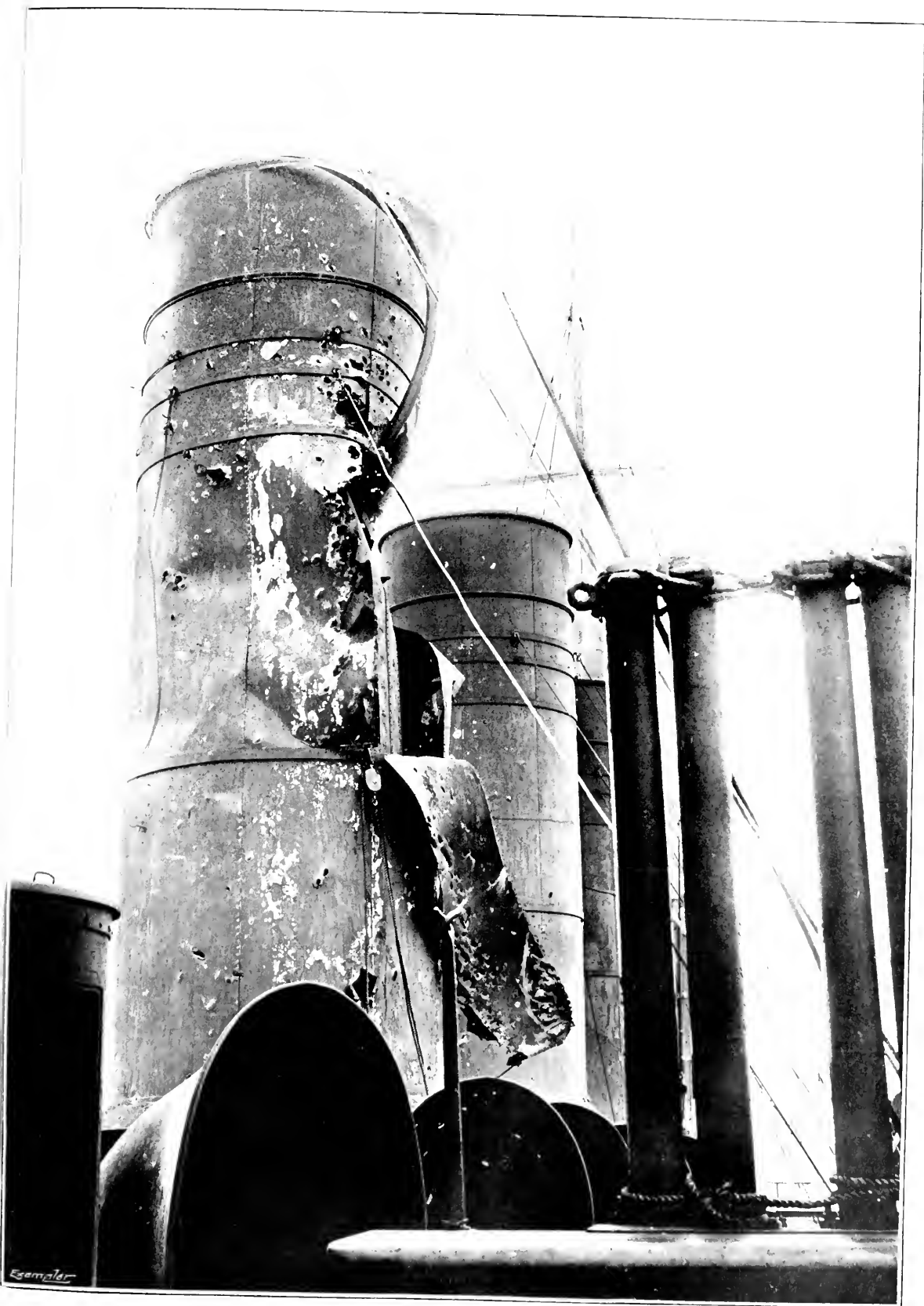
“There was no trace of the enemy, but about noon next day mysterious signals began to be received by wireless telegraphy.

“The ‘Oslabya’ succeeded in receiving and deciphering them fairly exactly, and the Admiral hoisted the signal, ‘I clearly



see the enemy.' In view of this, seven warships continued the telegraphy, expecting to receive fresh information. Night came on quietly, also the dawn of 27 May. The Admiral made incessant signals for changes of formation, and the whole day was spent in manœuvres and evolutions. The general impression was that Rozhstvensky was purposely delaying. On the 28th the fleet, sailing eastward of Tsushima Island, observed at about 7 a.m., to eastward, a hostile scout, a third-class cruiser. The 'Izumrud' took a parallel course, but out of range. The signal was hoisted, 'Prepare for battle.' The squadron now assumed single line ahead: first, second, and third divisions and cruisers. On the starboard beam of the last sailed the transports, covered on the east by the scouting division. The enemy, however, not appearing, the fleet again proceeded into three lines ahead, with the first and third divisions leading. About 9.30 a.m. four columns of smoke were visible, after which five vessels were seen heading to the south-west. The old battleship 'Tshitshien' and some small cruisers were made out. The fleet gradually approached to within thirty cables, and formed once more in battle order. Then our fleet opened fire at intervals, the 'Orel' first. The Japanese replied, but after ten minutes' firing they began to withdraw, and Rozhstvensky hoisted the signal 'Do not waste ammunition.' The fleet continued its forward movement. The report that we met a French gunboat, followed by the Japanese fleet, is utterly untrue. A little after twelve o'clock seventeen powerful ships of the enemy were sighted, in line abreast, holding a course from north-east to south-west, and at an angle of approximately 45° to us. Rozhstvensky made the signal again, 'Prepare for battle.' The fleet rapidly approached, and at 1.40 p.m. action began, although, owing to the transports, our ships did not succeed in forming up quickly, and the first division was not at the head, but on the starboard beam of the second. Owing to the second and third divisions also not being able to form in line ahead with the first, they appeared closer to the enemy, who were headed by the 'Asahi.' The 'Oslabya,' our leading ship, first opened fire.

After ten minutes' fight a fire broke out on board the 'Asahi,' whereupon the Japanese concentrated fire on the 'Oslabya.' At that time, having circled from left to right, the Japanese fleet turned northwards, and took a parallel course. About five large vessels, however, separated, and proceeded at full speed south-west, heading half right the whole time, with the object of turning the rear of our fleet. They kept up a hot fire at first on the van of our fleet, and then on the scouting division, which covered the transports. When this occurred our fleet was in the following order: In the port line all three battleship divisions; to starboard, the cruisers; then the transports and scouts. During the progress of this movement a second division of the enemy began to approach the transports from the starboard side. Our cruisers joined battle with them. It was now a little after three. The sea had a heavy swell on, and the fire on the part of the Japanese waxed stronger and stronger. Both squadrons, proceeding northwards, gradually found themselves to the east of the island of Kiu Shiu. It went hardest of all with the 'Oslabya.' The Japanese incessantly raked her with a heavy shell-fire, at a range of from twenty-five to twenty-nine cables. To the surprise of us all, she left the line, circled to the south, listed, and then righted herself. After that she suddenly dipped at the bows and began to turn over slowly, being incessantly struck by shells. The impression produced by the capsizing of a vessel of such a gigantic size was awful. We saw how the men thrown off the deck clutched and clung to the sides, or crawled and fell, or were crushed by falling top-hamper, or swept away by a hail of shells. This opening catastrophe produced a depressing effect on the crews of all the other vessels. The torpedo-vessels hastened to the spot, and succeeded in saving 172 men floating on wreckage. The battle then waged hotter. The cabins of the 'Sissoi' were now ablaze, fires broke out on board the 'Suvorov' and the 'Alexander III.' The 'Ural' sank from a shot below water. Soon the 'Alexander III' turned out of action, with her bridges, funnels, and masts shot away. Only her hull remained, but she maintained



DAMAGE TO THE SECOND FUNNEL ON BOARD THE CRUISER "GROMOBOI" (PORT SIDE)



a vigorous fire the whole time. The losses in men and officers were enormous on all sides. A tremendous quantity of Japanese 6" shot and shell literally swept men and wreckage in heaps. The firing seemed to abate somewhat after this. The fleet was heading on a course of N.E. 23°, but at that time the Japanese cruiser division began to divide the port flank from the main body, and their battleships took a counter course. On the starboard beam the battle raged anew. Twilight then drew on. On the horizon appeared a flotilla of more than eighty of the enemy's torpedo-vessels. The signal 'N.E. 23°' was hoisted for the second time. The enemy now commenced to withdraw. Our ships proceeded in two columns: to starboard, cruisers and transports; to port, the battleships, with, apparently, the 'Borodino' in front. Darkness fell. About this time the torpedo-boat-destroyer 'Buiny' hoisted the signal 'Admiral aboard here, wounded.' Disregarding the course indicated, for what reason is unknown, both columns turned southwards, and were then fiercely attacked by torpedo-vessels on all sides. It is supposed that the 'Borodino,' 'Nakhimov,' and 'Navarin' were blown up by torpedoes. Throughout the night furious attacks of the enemy's torpedo-vessels were kept up, with incessant firing. This completed our discomfiture. A fleet in organized formation no longer existed. Each unit fought by itself, independently. Thus ended the battle of 28 May. Details of the further action are unknown here. What does this defeat prove? Much. In the first place, insufficiency of ammunition (none was left on the second day of the battle, but the Japanese succeeded in renewing theirs at night). In the next it shows incredible laziness and incompetency. The transports, too, hampered the squadron, hindered manœuvres, and constituted an encumbrance. In the fourth place, Rozhdestvensky, so they say, did not confide to his fellow-admirals his plans, or his intentions and objects. A great deal may be said to have been the cause of what happened."

(VII) FURTHER DETAILS FROM THOSE IN THE  
CRUISER DIVISION

Based upon evidence of participants in the Tsushima battle who returned to St. Petersburg from the cruiser division of Admiral Enquist, we give here a detailed description of the successive events of this engagement, as observed from the cruiser division up to the night of 28 May. As is known, this division parted from the Russian fleet and appeared at the American port of Manila.

“At dawn on 27 May the fleet formed into two columns line ahead, of which that to starboard consisted of the first and second battleship divisions (‘Suvorov,’ ‘Alexander III,’ ‘Borodino,’ ‘Orel,’ and ‘Oslabya,’ ‘Sissoi Veliky,’ ‘Navarin,’ ‘Nakhimov.’) That to port comprised the third battleship division and the cruiser division (‘Nikolai I,’ ‘Apraxin,’ ‘Seniavin,’ ‘Ushakov,’ and ‘Oleg,’ ‘Aurora,’ ‘Dmitri Donskoi,’ ‘Vladimir Monomakh’’). Ahead of the fleet in wedge formation was the scouting division (‘Svietlana,’ ‘Almaz,’ and ‘Ural’). The cruiser ‘Zhemtshug’ was on the starboard beam of the ‘Suvorov,’ and the ‘Izumrud’ on the port beam of the ‘Nikolai I.’ The torpedo-craft were distributed as follows: ‘Biedovy’ and ‘Buistry’ near the ‘Zhemtshug,’ the ‘Buiny’ and ‘Bravy’ near the ‘Izumrud,’ the ‘Blestiastshy’ and ‘Bezupretshny’ near the ‘Oleg,’ and the ‘Bodry,’ ‘Grozny,’ and ‘Gromky’ near the transports. Behind the columns of war-vessels proceeded the column of transports in line ahead (‘Anadyr,’ ‘Irtish,’ ‘Kamtchatka,’ ‘Korea,’ ‘Rus,’ and ‘Svir’). Astern of the fleet, at the distance of three or four miles to starboard and port, were the hospital vessels ‘Orel’ and ‘Kostroma.’

“On 26 May, and on the night of 26–27 May, telegraphic signals, which appeared to be Japanese cipher telegrams, were taken in. On the morning of the 27th the scouting division passed astern of the fleet and formed into line ahead astern of the transports. The ‘Dmitri Donskoi’ and ‘Vladimir Monomakh’ had orders to protect the transports in battle: the former to port

and the latter to starboard. With a very foggy horizon, the squadron proceeded at nine knots N.E., between the islands of Tsushima and Iki. At 6.30 a.m. on the starboard side of the fleet appeared a Japanese cruiser of the 'Idsumo' type, heading on a parallel course. She kept pace with the fleet at a distance of about 60 cables. At 7.10 signals were made from the 'Suvorov' to the 'Zhemtshug' and 'Izumrud' to go ahead and get on her beam. At 8.45, on the port beam of the cruiser division, were seen in outline five vessels proceeding in line ahead, parallel with the course of our fleet: the 'Matsushima,' 'Idsukushima,' 'Hashidate,' 'Naniva,' and 'Takatshikho.'

"At 9 a.m. the following orders were given from the 'Suvorov' by signal: 'In the event of the appearance of the enemy astern, the battleships are ordered to form front starboard to port and the cruisers and transports to go ahead.' The enemy's cruisers seen to port kept away from the fleet at a distance of about 60 cables, and went ahead on a parallel course. Half an hour later the Japanese cruisers, having outdistanced our ships, were hidden by the fog. At that time our first and second battleship division on signal increased speed to eleven knots, and on board the 'Suvorov' the signal 'To arms' was hoisted. From the 'Suvorov' the signal was given 'At midday course N.E 23°.' At 10.20, when the crews were ordered by signal from the 'Suvorov' to dine, there were seen from the 'Oleg,' to port and abaft the beam, the outlines of the Japanese cruisers 'Tshitose,' 'Kassuga,' 'Nitaka,' and 'Tsushima,' overtaking the fleet. At 10.50 our first and second battleship divisions by signal from the 'Suvorov' increased speed to eleven knots and all turned suddenly to port. In five minutes they again formed in line ahead, as the Japanese cruisers, overtaking the squadron, drew near. At 11.10, when they were at a distance of about 40 cables, fire was opened upon them from the coast-defence ship 'Admiral Ushakov,' which was speedily taken up by the third battleship and cruiser divisions. At 11.15 the signal was given from the 'Suvorov'—'Waste no ammunition.' The Japanese cruisers soon turned to port, and, ceasing firing, drew off rapidly. At a dis-

tance of from 70 to 80 cables from the fleet they again kept on a parallel course. They were soon invisible, and at 11.30 firing ceased. The Japanese cruiser on the starboard of our fleet was also hidden in the fog. At midday, by signal, all the battleships formed into one column line ahead, and then began to lie upon a course N.E. 23°. From the 'Suvorov' the signal was given for nine knots and the 'Svietlana' was ordered to guard the transports. At 12.30, when the line of armoured vessels had formed for the new course, the first battleship division went ahead and to starboard. The fleet continued in this formation up to 1.30, when the enemy was seen from the 'Suvorov.' The first battleship division, turning to port, joined the second and third battleship divisions. On board the 'Suvorov' the signal was hoisted, 'Cruisers and transports keep more to starboard.' Then at 1.45 appeared the Japanese battleships, evidently taking a counter course. The cruisers, following instructions to keep on the side of the battleships opposite from the enemy at the time of battle, out of range of hostile shot, inclined their course to starboard, and increased speed so as to get clear of the middle of the line of armoured vessels on their right. To starboard, and astern of the 'Oleg' and 'Aurora,' were the transports, having beside them the 'Dmitri Donskoi' and 'Vladimir Monomakh,' and the scouting division in line ahead.

"At 1.50 firing began on our side and from the enemy. The first battleship division at that time had not formed ahead of the second and third divisions, and at the head of the port column was the battleship 'Oslabya,' upon which the Japanese concentrated their fire. In five minutes the leading Japanese armoured vessel 'Mikasa,' on a line with the 'Oslabya,' took a course parallel to that of our fleet, and the following vessels turned and followed her: the 'Shikishima,' 'Asahi,' 'Fudji,' 'Nissin,' 'Kassuga,' and the other six armoured cruisers. The Japanese fleet outstripped ours, and headed, with the clear intention of barring our way to the north, maintaining a raking fire along the line of our vessels. The fire of the leading battleships of the enemy was directed on the 'Suvorov,'



which, with the first battleship division, took the lead of our column, while the rear Japanese vessels continued to fire on the 'Oslabya.' Both flagships were literally riddled with shells. At 2.15 a fire broke out on board the 'Suvorov' at the stern; and at 2.30 the 'Oslabya' heeled over to port (towards the enemy). There was also a fire on board her, near the captain's cabin. To avoid being surrounded, our battleships began to incline to starboard, towards E., and during this movement the 'Borodino' left the line to starboard. After repairing damages, however, she soon retook station. Our cruisers and transports to starboard of the battleships also bore away to starboard. At that time, to south of the island of Kotsushima, the 'Idsumo,' seen in the morning, appeared again, and began to cannonade our transports, which were a little astern and to starboard of our cruisers. The 'Oleg' and 'Aurora' increased speed, so as to approach the 'Idsumo,' and opened fire upon her, which was also taken up by the 'Vladimir Monomakh,' moving towards her from her place on the starboard side of the transports. She followed in the track of the cruisers and inclined northwards, and the scouting division ahead also opened fire. The 'Idsumo' began to withdraw, and ceased firing. A fire was soon noticed on board of her, and she was lost in the fog. At 2.25, from southwards appeared two divisions of Japanese protected cruisers of four and five vessels. They followed one another in line ahead, with an interval between divisions. The number of the enemy's vessels was now ten. The 'Oleg' and 'Aurora' turned on the enemy and joined battle with them on opposite tacks. The enemy kept at a distance of about fifty cables off, and our cruisers did not suffer greatly from their fire.

"The Japanese battleships continued to keep parallel with our vessels, and shelled the 'Suvorov' and 'Oslabya,' which suffered severely from their extraordinarily accurate and rapid fire. The 'Suvorov' had already lost her masts, and the 'Oslabya' had evidently had her after turret rendered useless. Our ships replied energetically, but their fire was far less rapid and accurate than that of the Japanese. At 2.40 the 'Oslabya,'

heeling over more and more, left the line to starboard, and lay heading almost on the contrary tack. In a few minutes she turned over and sank, her bows dipping first. Fifty minutes had passed since the opening of the engagement. The line of our battleships had considerably extended by this, and the ships of the third division were astern, in spite of the fact that the speed of the squadron did not exceed ten knots. Later on, about 3 p.m., our battleships turned S. and then W. In consequence, the Japanese battle-squadron also turned to starboard and the battle proceeded on parallel courses. At 3 p.m. the Japanese repeated their manœuvre and attempted to outflank our battleships, in consequence of which our fleet turned N. and went on the opposite tack to the enemy, whose fire, as before, was concentrated on the 'Suvorov.' At 3.35 the 'Suvorov,' without masts or funnels, and all on fire, but still continuing to use her guns, was compelled to leave the line to port, i.e. the side of the enemy. The rest of our battleships continued the battle, drawing away to the north.

The Japanese, leaving a few vessels, among them the 'Nissin' and 'Kassuga,' to deal with the 'Suvorov,' turned to port, in consequence of this, and assumed a parallel course to our battleships, again beginning to turn their flank. Then the leading battleship, 'Imperator Alexander III,' began to bear away to the right, but soon, having received serious damage, left the line to starboard. The 'Oleg' and 'Aurora,' while contending with the Japanese cruisers, noticed the position of the 'Suvorov' and that our battleships were proceeding northwards. They hastened at full speed to the 'Suvorov's' assistance. On the way they passed the 'Ural,' and saw signals of distress from her, also that her bows were sinking and boats were being launched. The 'Anadyr,' close by, was ordered by the 'Oleg' to pick up men from the 'Ural.' At the same time the 'Svir' hastened to assist, under the enemy's fire. The 'Zhemtshug' and our torpedo-vessels approached the 'Suvorov' and 'Alexander III,' which had left the line. The Japanese protected cruisers which approached from astern, in consequence of the

'Oleg' and 'Aurora' turning, also began to turn N.E. Soon after the 'Suvorov' left the line our battleships took an opposite course, going to the assistance of her and the 'Alexander III.' This movement forced the 'Nissin' and 'Kassuga' to withdraw and vanish in the fog.

"About four o'clock the 'Oleg' and 'Aurora,' seeing the approach of the main fleet to the help of the 'Suvorov,' and noticing the perilous position of the transports, which were now lying in the direction of the enemy's protected cruisers, with the 'Vladimir Monomakh' and 'Dmitri Donskoi'—these had joined on signal from the 'Oleg'—went to assist the transports—the enemy having turned to starboard. The 'Zhemtshug' and 'Izumrud' also joined the cruiser division. Later, our cruisers began to bear away to the left. Through these changes the cruiser division came under a cross-fire from the Japanese protected cruisers on one side, and from the 'Nissin' and 'Kassuga' on the other. The 'Oleg' and 'Aurora,' on which the chief fire of the enemy was concentrated, suffered more than during the whole of the battle. In the wake of the 'Oleg,' quartermaster Bielousov and signallers Tshernev and Iskritch observed a Whitehead torpedo with a bronze war-head making towards them. The impact of this they avoided by putting the rudder over. The 'Aurora,' which was falling into line, was warned by semaphore, and was thus enabled to avoid it also. The 'Vladimir Monomakh,' following the 'Aurora,' struck the middle of the torpedo with her stem, cutting it in half, so that the torpedo did not explode. The Japanese battle-squadron now formed a loop on our starboard side, and again appeared on a parallel course to our fleet. About five o'clock our fleet began to turn northwards. The 'Alexander III,' listing deeply, and the 'Suvorov,' joined it afresh, the latter wrapped in flame and thick black smoke, with the after turret shattered. Our cruiser division, comparatively distant from the battleships, then increased speed and joined them, continuing to engage the enemy's cruisers, which kept a parallel course.

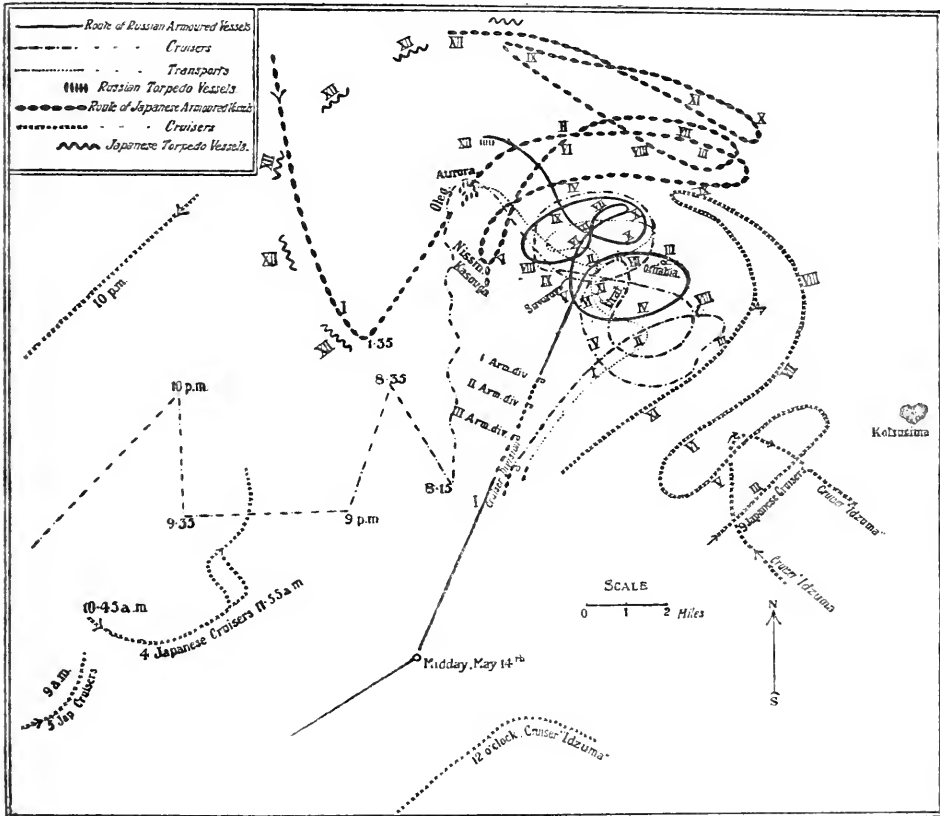
"Noticing that our battleships had altered their course, the

Japanese proceeded northwards, in consequence of which our ships, with the 'Borodino' at their head, turned to starboard and pointed E. The enemy's cruisers, travelling on a parallel course with ours, then appeared across the bows of our squadron, and were compelled to turn to port. Our cruiser division, overtaking the battleships, followed them in line for some time. The transports, torpedo-vessels, scouting division, 'Dmitri Donskoi' and 'Vladimir Monomakh' (which had rejoined the transports), 'Zhemtshug,' and 'Izumrud' were at this time within a circle formed by our squadron. When the Japanese again began to outflank our armoured vessels, the latter, bearing off to the right, took a contrary course, W., and the Japanese again appeared astern, and began to turn once more. About 5.30 our transports were again near the enemy's protected cruisers, which opened fire on them. Observing this, the 'Oleg' and 'Aurora' left the line, and opened fire on the enemy. To reinforce them, signal was made by the 'Oleg' to the 'Dmitri Donskoi' and 'Vladimir Monomakh' to form line. The transports were ordered to bear more to starboard. At that time the battleship 'Sissoi Veliky' left the line on account of a serious fire, with which, however, she was successful in coping, and again retook her station in the line. About 6 p.m., the Japanese cruisers were lost below the horizon; their battleships began to overtake our fleet, and the firing in the rear was renewed with the same vigour as before.

"At the same time one of our torpedo-vessels passed along the line of vessels of our squadron, flying the signal, 'The Admiral entrusts the command to Admiral Niebogotov.' Our battleships, with the 'Borodino' at their head, having the cruisers, transports, and torpedo-vessels to port, began to draw into line and steer N.W., gradually changing course for north, so as to head N.E. 23°, a course leading to the exit from the Straits of Korea. The 'Orel' followed the 'Borodino' closely; then, at some distance behind, came the 'Nikolai I,' 'Apraxin,' 'Seniavin,' 'Alexander III,' 'Ushakov,' 'Sissoi Veliky,' 'Navarin,' and 'Nakhimov.' From the battleships, the 'Suvorov' and

'Oslabya' were missing; the 'Ural' from the cruisers; the 'Kamtchatka' and 'Rus' from the transports. The torpedo-vessels were all present, except the 'Buiny,' seen in the rear of our squadron. The sun had set when, about seven o'clock, the Japanese battle squadron, in a line with ours, and wishing to bar our way northwards, concentrated their whole fire on our then leading ships. Soon a fire on board the 'Borodino'

PLAN OF THE TSUSHIMA BATTLE (*prepared by an eye-witness*)



was observed, and increased in intensity. The Japanese still cannonaded her, and within a few minutes the hapless battleship, having fired her last shot from the 12" turret gun, all wrapped in flame, lay on her starboard side, and turned over.

"As this occurred, the torpedo-vessel (destroyer) 'Buiny' came up from astern, flying the signal, 'The Admiral is on board the torpedo-vessel.' The 'Buiny' joined other torpedo-vessels and soon turned to the south.

"Immediately after the destruction of the 'Borodino,' all

our battleships turned almost simultaneously to port, and, no longer keeping line, headed south. After the fleet turned, surrounding the transports and torpedo-vessels, the cruisers turned also, and headed S.W. At that time the 'Oleg' was followed by the 'Aurora,' 'Vladimir Monomakh,' with the 'Dmitri Donskoi,' some distance behind. The 'Zhemtshug' kept to port of the cruisers, where were all the other units of the squadron. Before darkness fell, on the horizon, from S.W. through W. to N., numerous divisions of the enemy's torpedo-vessels were seen, barring the progress of our fleet northwards. After seven o'clock it grew dark, and incessant torpedo-attacks astern and to port began. Up till 11 p.m. firing was continued, our ships using their search-lights, so as to show up the attacking torpedo-craft.

(VIII) ON BOARD THE "SISSOI VELIKY"

The Marine General Staff communicated the following despatch received from Japan and sent by Captain Ozerov, the commander of the battleship "Sissoi Veliky":—

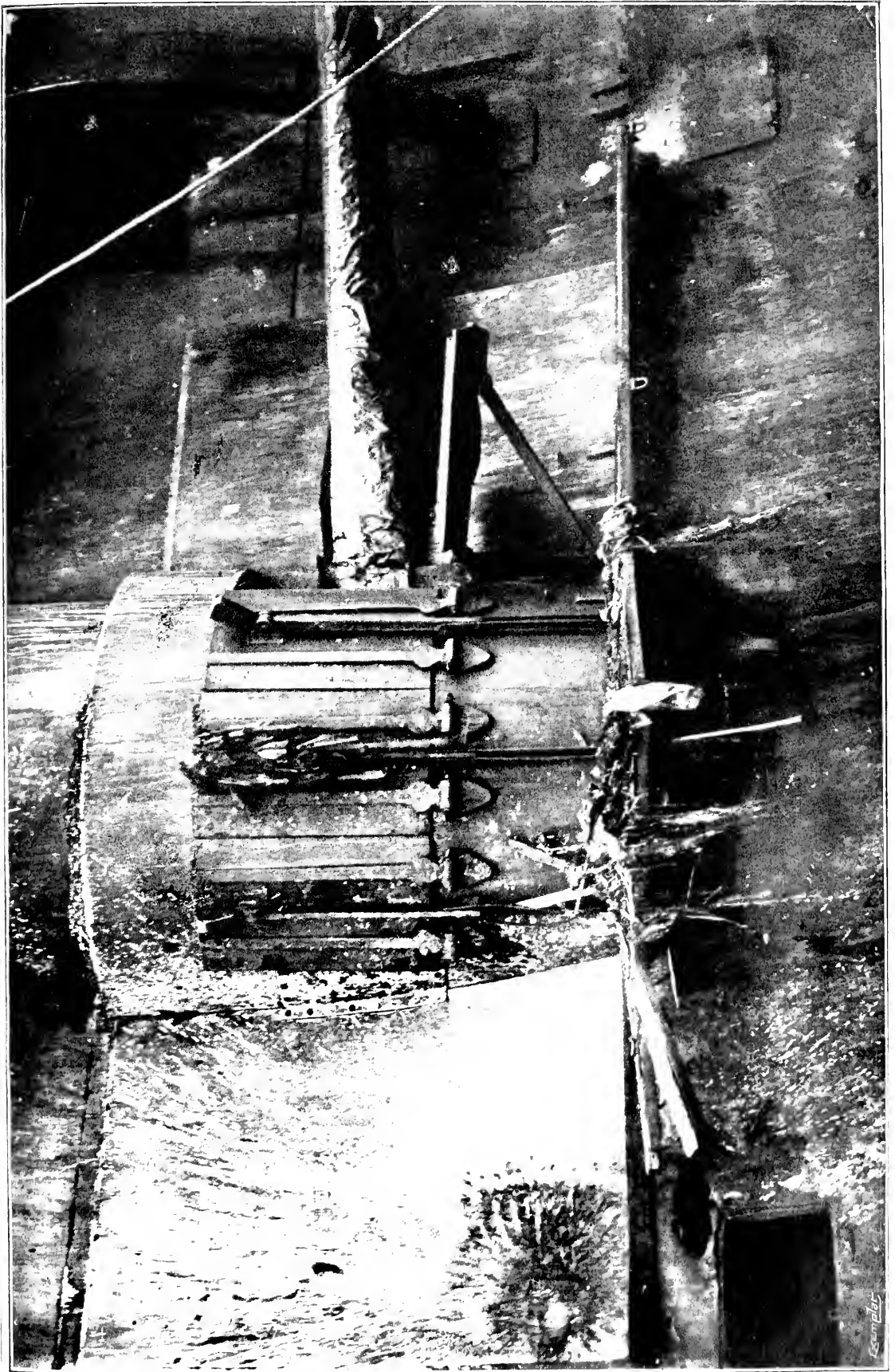
"On 27 May a violent artillery duel continued for six consecutive hours; in the course of this battle a large fire broke out on board my vessel; a dozen holes were caused by projectiles of large calibre, and the vessel heeled slightly to starboard.

"During the evening and night there were three repeated attacks by torpedo-vessels; I sank three of these small craft, but my ship was struck by torpedoes which caused a hole in her hull and damaged the rudder.

"On 28 May, at 10 a.m., my vessel, listing to starboard, began to sink.

"I had twenty-eight killed and twenty-nine wounded; the two doctors on board were suffocated; ensigns Buck and Vsevolozhsky were seriously wounded and are in hospital; Lieutenant Ovander and the artificer mechanic Olenovsky were slightly wounded, and the conductor Demidov was drowned. The remainder of the officers and crew were picked up by three Japanese cruisers.

"CAPTAIN OZEROV."



EXTERNAL EFFECTS OF A BURST SHELL STRIKING THE ARMOR OF A 6-in. GUN CASE-MATE ON BOARD THE "GROMOREL"

Asanlat





(IX) DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE BY THE OFFICERS  
OF THE "IZUMRUD"

"On 27 May, at 8 a.m., at 33° 40' north latitude and 129° 0' east longitude, the fleet took the direction N. 60 E. It was then formed in sailing order and advanced at a speed of eight knots in a north-easterly direction. At 8.50 from the cruiser 'Izumrud' smoke was perceived at 15°, of which signal was immediately given to the Admiral. At 9 a.m., at N. 15 E. appeared a division of Japanese cruisers, including the 'Matsushima,' 'Akitsushima,' 'Hashidate,' 'Idsukushima,' as well as a despatch-vessel of the 'Suma' type. Signals were made of the appearance of this naval force to the Admiral, who ordered the first and second divisions of battleships by signal to increase speed and proceed at eleven knots, while the transports, third division of battleships, and the cruisers, maintained their original speed. At 9.40 the Russian Admiral hoisted the signal: 'Direction N. 23° E.' The first and second battleship divisions, proceeding in front, formed in line before the third division. At this moment the hostile cruisers manœuvred in such a manner as to place themselves on the beam of the 'Suvorov' on the port side, and they took a direction parallel to that of our fleet, having their leading vessel of the line to port on the beam of the 'Oslabya,' at a distance of about fifty cables, and preceded by four torpedo-vessels. The despatch-vessel parted from the division and, taking a north-westerly direction, disappeared on the horizon, which was signalled to the Admiral.

"At 10.15 four Japanese vessels appeared to starboard, which then passed to port and were recognized as the cruisers 'Tshitose,' 'Kassagi,' 'Nitaka,' and 'Tsushima.' The torpedo-vessels proceeding in front disappeared; three cruisers joined the division led by the 'Akitsushima.' At 11.15 the 'Nicholas' and the battleships of the third division behind her opened fire on the detachment, at the head of which advanced the cruiser 'Tshitose,' at a distance of about forty-five cables. The cruisers

'Matsushima,' 'Akitsushima,' 'Hashidate,' and 'Idsukushima' replied by opening fire on the 'Suvorov'; after which our first battleship division opened fire on them. The cruiser 'Izumrud,' cleared for action, was on the beam of the 'Oslabya' to starboard. The enemy's vessels then began to pass to port and were soon out of sight. The cannonade ceased at 11.30. At 11.35 to south-east appeared a Japanese cruiser, which did not approach our fleet, and kept at a sufficient distance away. At midday we were at  $93^{\circ} 58'$  north latitude and  $129^{\circ} 37'$  east longitude, twenty-two miles off the Kozaka lighthouse; we took the direction N.  $23^{\circ}$  E. The Admiral hoisted the signal: 'The crew has time to dine.' At 12.20 the Admiral ordered the 'Svietlana' by signals to protect the transports to starboard; then he ordered the first and second divisions of battleships to come to eight points to starboard and proceed at a speed of eleven knots. At 12.30, as the second division of battleships had not yet succeeded in tacking, the order to take direction N.  $23^{\circ}$  E. was cancelled.

"At 1.30 there appeared to starboard, at the moment we were forming in line ahead, the principal Japanese division, consisting of eleven battleships: the 'Asahi,' 'Shikishima,' 'Mikasa,' 'Fudji,' 'Kassuga,' 'Nissin,' 'Iwate,' 'Idzumo,' 'Adzumo,' 'Yakumo,' and 'Tokiwa.' The Admiral ordered the first battleship division by signals to come at once to eight points to port; he signalled the cruisers and transports to come to starboard; the 'Zhemtshug' to pass abeam of the 'Orel' to starboard; and the 'Oslabya' to proceed at eight knots.

"The first battleship division, seeing that the enemy were taking an opposite direction and passing to port, turned abruptly eight points to starboard, without reaching the line of battle formed by the second and third battleship divisions. The Admiral then signalled to the second and third divisions: 'Form in file.'

"At 1.50 the 'Suvorov' opened fire. The enemy replied, concentrating fire on the 'Suvorov' and 'Oslabya.'

"This was the commencement of the battle.



PORT SIDE OF THE CONNING TOWER ON BOARD THE "GROMOBOI" AND ADJACENT PORTION OF THE BRIDGE.

A shell struck the bridge, smashing the teak beam at the edge and sending fragments inside the conning tower. Some of these also struck the inside edge of the roof of the conning tower, and ricocheted inside, wounding nearly all posted there.



"At 2 p.m. the 'Suvorov,' followed by the whole fleet, took the direction N. 60° E. At 2.25 fire broke out on board the 'Suvorov,' which remained for ten minutes to starboard of the line, after which she resumed her original course.

"At 2.45 the 'Oslabya,' heeling heavily to port, left the line, took the opposite course from that of the fleet, and stopped; her bow continued to dip, and she sank rapidly. Seeing that the 'Oslabya' required help, we approached her, preparing the boats for rescue and accompanied by the destroyers 'Buiny' and 'Bravy,' as well as two other destroyers. The 'Oslabya' sank before we had time to draw near her; the torpedo-vessels picked up the men of the crew. While remaining for a few moments at the spot where the 'Oslabya' had just sunk, we suddenly perceived that we were embarrassing the battleships, which advanced upon us; those of the third division were leading; they were followed by three vessels of the second division; as to those of the first, they were engaged in sheltering the 'Suvorov,' mastless and without funnels, and on board which a fierce conflagration had just broken out. We did not notice the manœuvring of the battleships, as we were busy in aiding the 'Oslabya.'

"We thereupon moved away rapidly, so as not to hamper the evolutions of the second and third battleship divisions. The cruiser division, which was on the side opposite that of the 'Suvorov,' described a segment of a circle, protecting the transports entrusted to them against the enemy's fire; at that moment the 'Kamtchatka' signalled, 'I can steer no longer,' and the 'Ural,' 'I have a shot-hole below the waterline.' During this time the battleships of the second and third divisions, as well as the cruisers, formed in battle array. The 'Izumrud' was then outside the line, opposite the space which separated the 'Nakhimov' (in front) and the 'Oleg'; she sustained the fire of the Japanese cruisers. In front of us, likewise outside the line, and opposite the interval separating the two vessels preceding the 'Nakhimov,' was the 'Almaz.' The portion of the fleet to which we belonged at this moment sustained

the fire of the Japanese battleships and armoured cruisers to starboard, and that of the protected cruisers to port.

“It was then very difficult to follow the different phases of the battle, as we were solely occupied in avoiding collision with the transports, which moved about confusedly, and we were constantly watching the course taken by those of the cruisers preceding us. We fired incessantly upon the enemy’s vessels which passed within our range.

“At 5.15 the battle slackened a little, the fleet formed in two lines ahead. The battleships had at their head the ‘Borodino,’ astern of which proceeded the ‘Orel,’ ‘Sissoi,’ ‘Navarin,’ ‘Nicholas,’ ‘Apraxin,’ ‘Seniavin,’ and ‘Ushakov.’ Outside the column, on the beam of the ‘Nicholas,’ to starboard, was the ‘Alexander III,’ inclining about 12° to starboard. She remained, however, about level with the ‘Nicholas,’ and dipped no more. The ‘Izumrud’ was on the port beam of the ‘Nicholas.’ The cruisers, formed in line ahead, advanced to port, at a distance of about twelve cables from the battleships. At their head was the ‘Oleg,’ on the beam of the ‘Nicholas.’ The ‘Zhemtshug’ was also in the cruiser column, as well as the ‘Svietlana’ and ‘Almaz.’ The transports were between the battleships and the cruisers, but nearer the latter. At a distance, outside the line, was the ‘Suvorov,’ badly damaged, the ‘Ural,’ whose bows dipped, and the ‘Kamtchatka’; as for the ‘Rus,’ we did not see her. The destroyers proceeded alongside of us to port. The fleet took the direction north 45° at a speed of eight knots. The Japanese armoured cruisers passed to starboard; our cruisers opened fire on the enemy’s protected cruisers; with regard to the Japanese battleships, they were not to be seen.

“At 5.30 the ‘Borodino’ hoisted the signal, ‘Take the direction north-east 23°, speed eleven knots.’

“At six o’clock a torpedo-vessel near the ‘Borodino’ hoisted the signal, bearing inversely to the fleet so as to be observed by the battleships, ‘The Admiral entrusts the command to Admiral Niebogatov.’ At this moment the ‘Ushakov’ sig-

nalled that the 'Alexander' required help; this signal was immediately repeated by the 'Nicholas.' We were then unable to try to succour the 'Alexander III' since we were separated from her by the battleship line, which directed a vigorous fire on the enemy from their starboard guns.

"The battleships continued to follow the 'Borodino,' fighting to starboard; the 'Alexander III' also took part in this artillery duel, and did not leave the rest of the squadron. At 6.35 flames were visible between the funnels of the 'Alexander III'; the latter turned off to port, heeled over, and came to a stop between the two rearmost battleships.

"We made at full speed for the foundering vessel, so as to pick up the men of the crew. Our battleships continued to manoeuvre so as to keep distance from seven approaching cruisers of the enemy, of which four were armoured.

"While advancing towards the 'Alexander III,' we attempted to launch our boat.

"At this moment, the rapidly advancing armoured cruisers of the enemy opened fire on us. As they continued to advance, we were soon no farther separated from them than a distance of twenty-six to twenty-three cables; we then opened an extremely vigorous fire on them.

"As soon as the last of our battleships was twenty cables off, we put on maximum speed, and, heading to starboard, we rejoined the squadron. We did not succeed in launching the boat.

"While on the beam of the third battleship from the rear, to port, we saw the 'Borodino' struck by a projectile of large calibre. Almost immediately a fierce fire broke out on board her. She left the line and turned off to starboard, and rapidly disappeared.

"The 'Nicholas,' increasing speed, passed the 'Orel' and took the leading position.

"The battleships abruptly turned to port, endeavouring to approach the cruisers. The cruisers, for their part, turned to port, towards the transports. The direction was then nearly west; to the north-east appeared the enemy's torpedo-vessels.

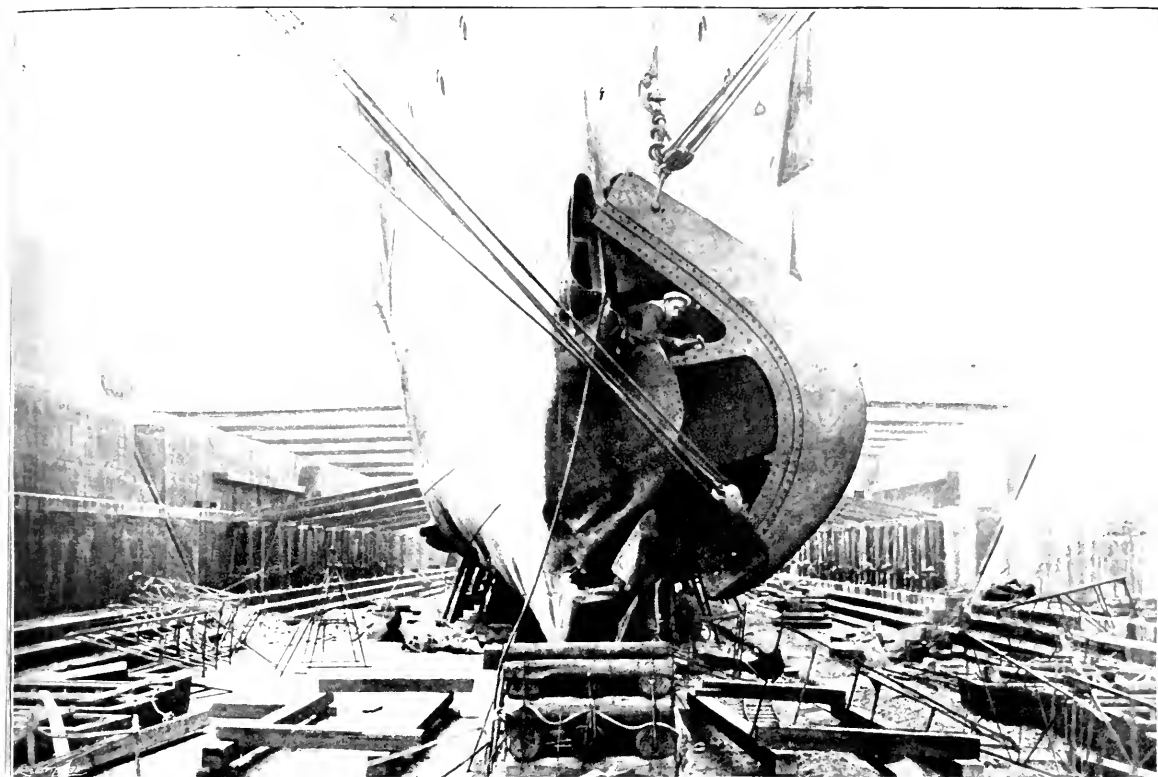
At 7.30 the 'Nicholas' hoisted the signal, 'Follow me,' and gradually she took the direction south-west. The cruisers then bore away more to port, separating from the battleships, and engaging with the enemy's armoured cruisers, which were ahead of them. The 'Nicholas,' next, after proceeding for some time towards the south-west, modified her course at night-fall, and put her head north-east 30°. On account of the darkness we soon lost sight of the cruisers and destroyers, and continued to keep station on the port beam of the 'Nicholas,' which was followed in line by the 'Orel,' 'Seniavin,' 'Apraxin,' 'Sissoi,' 'Ushakov,' 'Navarin,' and 'Nakhimov.' It seemed to us as if our cruisers continued fighting. From this moment began attacks of the hostile torpedo-vessels, which persisted all night, but without much result, as we heard no torpedo explosions. The attacks were principally directed against our battleships proceeding in rear; every time these latter turned on their search-lights the enemy to starboard opened fire on them with their heavy guns. Those of our battleships proceeding ahead did not turn on their search-lights. The whole night we intercepted despatches transmitted by wireless telegraphy by the Japanese vessels, but could not decipher them.

"On 28 May, at daybreak, we made out that our division was composed of the battleships 'Orel,' 'Nicholas,' 'Apraxin,' 'Seniavin,' and the cruiser 'Izumrud.'

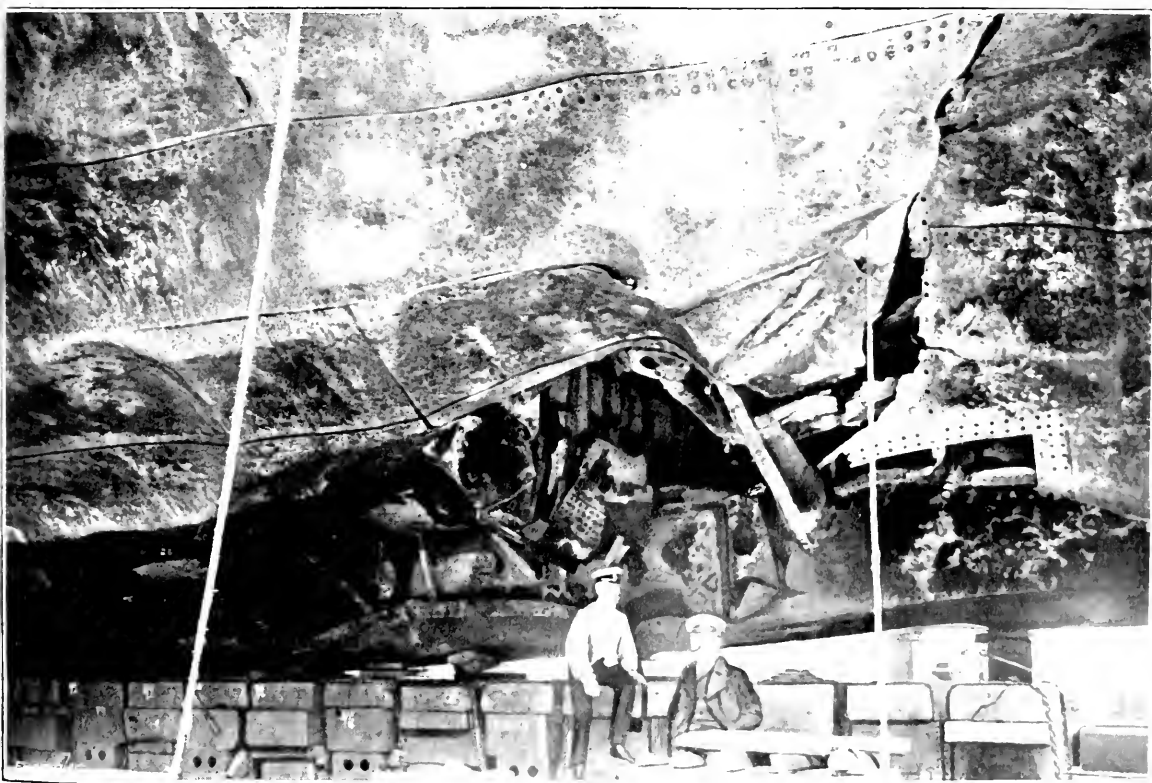
"While on the beam of the 'Nicholas,' to port, we noticed smoke, which was immediately reported to the Admiral. The 'Nicholas' could not answer our signal. At this moment we saw four funnels on the horizon, which was announced to the Admiral by a fresh signal. While the telegraph was operating, the number of funnels increased to seven; and one of the Japanese vessels of the 'Suma' type left the rest in order to reconnoitre our forces. She was clearly visible on the horizon. The 'Nicholas' and 'Orel' increased speed. At this moment we observed that the 'Nicholas' was being left behind by the 'Orel.'

"Understanding this manœuvre as the expression of the





DAMAGED STEM OF THE CRUISER "BOGATYR"



HOLES IN THE KEEL OF THE "BOGATYR," EXPOSING ONE OF THE COAL BUNKERS



Admiral's desire to avoid battle, not to leave the enemy time to concentrate, and to permit those of our vessels in suitable condition to reach Vladivostok, we signalled that we had sufficient coal, and asked permission to proceed to Vladivostok, and increased our speed. The 'Nicholas' reduced speed, and answered, 'Keep your place.' We then took up a position on the beam, to port of the 'Nicholas.' The 'Orel' took up position in the line formed by our battleships, and the two vessels leading left the 'Apraxin' and 'Seniavin' to the rear.

"The Admiral asked these two battleships by signal the condition of their guns. The 'Seniavin' replied: 'I have only slight injuries, which will be speedily repaired.' Then the Admiral hoisted the signal: 'Prepare for battle'; he then turned in the direction of the enemy who, perceiving this manœuvre, turned to port in order to avoid battle. The Admiral resumed his original course, but soon smoke was perceived on the horizon. The Admiral gave orders to reconnoitre the hostile vessels. We asked: 'On which side shall we make our principal reconnaissances?' The Admiral replied: 'On the port beam.' We then put on our maximum speed; we tacked about, passing to the rear of the sternmost of our battleships in the line, and, putting the head to port, approached the hostile ships, which we recognized as the cruisers 'Matsushima,' 'Akitsushima,' 'Hashidate,' 'Idsukushima.' They were accompanied by three small cruisers, and formed a single division, apart from which advanced, coming to meet us to port, the armoured cruiser 'Yakumo.' Returning and lying on the port beam of the 'Nicholas,' we reported the result of our mission. Our battleships proceeded at thirteen knots. Smoke was then seen astern; and we received the order to proceed and make a fresh reconnaissance. Sailing to meet the enemy's vessels advancing in our rear, we recognized two armoured cruisers and two protected cruisers. We could not approach nearer them so as to recognize the types to which they belonged, as the armoured cruiser 'Yakumo' kept manœuvring thirty cable-lengths from us. Our sternmost battleship in the line was equally distant from us at about thirty cables.

“We returned to report our mission afresh to the Admiral. The Admiral asked if any Russian vessels were visible. We replied in the negative. We then perceived that the cruisers ‘Naniva’ and ‘Takatshikho,’ manœuvring to port, were trying to cut us off, while four battleships and cruisers, and among them the armoured cruisers ‘Nissin’ and ‘Kassuga,’ likewise appeared to port.

“The cruisers ‘Naniva’ and ‘Takatshikho,’ seeing that we had not the advantage of speed, manœuvred so as to cut into our line of ships, while six small, fast cruisers approached us at full speed. At this moment, before us to starboard, appeared the cruisers ‘Nitaka,’ ‘Kassagi,’ and ‘Tshitose.’

“The enemy, at a distance of fifty to sixty cable-lengths, did not open fire as yet.

“When the Japanese battle squadron manœuvred so as to pass between the armoured cruisers and the division led by the ‘Matsushima,’ all the Japanese vessels began to approach us.

“At 10.30 the Admiral hoisted the signal, ‘I am surrounded.’ Then, lowering his flag, he signalled, ‘Surrender.’ As we did not want to yield, we put on best speed, determined if we could not reach Vladivostok to land at some point of the Japanese coast and blow up our vessel.

“The enemy, who had not understood the Admiral’s signal, opened fire. The ‘Nicholas,’ without replying, moved towards the Japanese. If certain officers and men of the crew are to be trusted, the ‘Orel’ alone replied to the Japanese fire, while the other battleships advanced towards them without firing.

“The surrender of our battleships distracted the attention of the Japanese from us for a moment, which enabled us to make some headway.

“We first took the direction south-east, so as to avoid the Japanese cruisers manœuvring to port and starboard. The cruisers ‘Nitaka,’ ‘Kassagi,’ and ‘Tshitose,’ which were to starboard, pursued us; but as we perceived that we had a slight superiority of speed over them, we decided to proceed north-east 43°.”

## CHAPTER III

### (I) THE ACTION OF 27 MAY OFF THE ISLAND OF MATSUSHIMA

THE battle and its details for some time were quite enigmatical. The very short official communications clearly contradicted one another, and the headquarters Naval Staff did not find it necessary to explain these contradictions. At the same time, the event of the Tsushima battle was a very great blow to our prestige, as was also the capture of one of the chiefs of our fleet without a fight, in the presence of a force which was equal to that of the Japanese. The first Russian official news, indeed, published on 2 June, was from the commandant at Vladivostok, General Kazbek. This is what he said :—

“According to the captain of the ‘Grozny,’ he went north with the torpedo-boat-destroyer ‘Biedovy,’ on board which were Admiral Rozhestvensky and his staff. North of the island of Dazhelet (Matsushima) our destroyers met two larger Japanese destroyers, which offered battle. At the time of the encounter we saw that the ‘Biedovy’ was destroyed by an explosion. The fate of the Admiral is unknown. In the course of the action the ‘Grozny’ sank one destroyer.”

On the other hand, on the eve of the date given, i.e. 1 June, according to the report of Admiral Togo, published by the Japanese Embassy in London, the destroyer “Biedovy,” with Admiral Rozhestvensky, was captured. It was a surprise for us that the chief of the fleet should be taken prisoner. We can, however, console ourselves with the thought that the Japanese captured Rozhestvensky after a hard fight, and after the torpedo-boat-destroyer in which he was had been shattered by an

explosion, i.e. that they picked him up out of the water ; and the battle continued, even after this: while the Japanese, on their side, lost one torpedo-boat. That the Japanese could only have picked the Admiral up out of the water is evident from the report of General Kazbek—in the words of the commander of the “Grozny”—that “the fate of the Admiral is unknown.” To be sure, how was he to trace the fate of the Admiral when, after the blowing up of the “Biedovy,” the battle was prolonged? Besides, up to the time when the “Grozny” sank one of the Japanese torpedo-boats, she had to deal with two enemies. So, at least, every one had a right to think who had read the telegram from General Kazbek.

Meanwhile, on 4 June, Reuter sent a telegram from Tokio, which was as follows :—

“The ‘Sadanashi’ and ‘Kadzhero’ kept up the search all night. In the morning they noticed two torpedo-boats, one of which steamed away ; the other was evidently badly damaged. The vessel proved to be the Russian torpedo-boat ‘Biedovy,’ on which were Admiral Rozhestvensky and his staff. The ‘Biedovy’ gave the signal that her engines were damaged, and that she had neither coal nor water. The Japanese then sent an armed detachment to take possession of the torpedo-boat. The Russians asked that Admiral Rozhestvensky and the other sailors might not be removed from the ‘Biedovy,’ on account of the wounds they had received. The ‘Sadanashi’ took the ‘Biedovy’ in tow.”

After two days further details appeared from Sasebo, in the words of officers of the torpedo-boat-destroyer “Sadanashi.”

“Drawing near to the Russian torpedo-boats, the Japanese opened a terrible fire from all their guns. They failed to overtake one torpedo-vessel, which succeeded in escaping. The other did not change its course, neither did it reply to the cannonade. But after a short time the white flag was hoisted at her mast-head, and the Red Cross astern. On the Japanese giving the signal, ‘What is your condition?’ the Russians

answered, 'The vessel has been damaged by shells striking the engines ; we have with us Admiral Rozhestvensky and his staff.'

"While the Japanese made preparations for receiving the wounded, the Russian officers encircled Rozhestvensky, and, holding up their hands, entreated, 'Spare the wounded Rozhestvensky, whose wounds are so serious that, if he is moved into the Japanese vessel, they may open, and his condition will then be dangerous.' The Japanese took the Russian vessel in tow, and made for the nearest island off the Korean coast. In the words of the Japanese, they determined to speed away, 'lest they should meet the remainder of the Russian fleet, and be overcome by it.'"

All this seemed so absurd, after the report of the "Grozny" commander, sent by General Kazbek, that, on reading these telegrams, we were only righteously indignant at the unfair boastfulness of the Japanese. According to their account, there was no battle ; they alone opened fire : one of the torpedo-vessels, the "Grozny," escaped, while the other surrendered because her engines had been damaged by the Japanese shells. There was no word about the sinking of a Japanese torpedo-vessel. Then suddenly, on 8 June, there appeared the report of Admiral Rozhestvensky from captivity, where it was mentioned that "Part of my staff and myself, who had swooned away, were placed on board the 'Buiny.' I was transferred to the 'Biedovy,' which went ahead with the 'Grozny.' On the evening of the 28th we knew that the 'Biedovy' had surrendered to two torpedo-boat-destroyers. The 'Biedovy' was taken to Sasebo."

This telegram produced a stunning effect. It meant that the surrender actually took place without a fight, or rather that Rozhestvensky was given up without one, for he himself was in an unconscious condition. What, then, did the telegram from General Kazbek signify, which was founded on the report of the commander of the "Grozny"? He said that the "Biedovy" was destroyed by an explosion at the time of the battle, while

Rozhestvensky himself declared that she surrendered. About the battle, and the sinking of the Japanese torpedo-boat, Rozhestvensky did not say a word. If we suppose, which is more than probable, that the Japanese did not mention the loss of their own torpedo-vessel, would not some member of his staff have told him about it? All the same, his report bore more resemblance to that of Togo and of the commander of the "Grozny" than to that of the commander of the "Sadanashi." Was it possible that the commander of the "Grozny" could have allowed such a material mistake to appear in his report; or that General Kazbek could have sent erroneous information? If this were possible, it might be that the whole report was untrue, and that what the Japanese declared was the truth. What was the truth?

Rozhestvensky's telegram was published two days after it had been sent, or, taking into consideration the difference in time, rather more than two days. The telegrams from Tokio were published in London the day they were sent. Perhaps, however, this was done and the unfavourable results and the supplementary report of the commander of the "Grozny" kept back—all that was quite possible when one considers what happened earlier. That meant that we should not know the truth, since the authorities would continue to hide it. Such were the thoughts, doubts, and questions which occupied the minds of Russian society and the Press. People were suspicious of everything, ready to listen to every tale, accused every one, and even of the most terrible things.

It was surely the duty of the headquarters Naval Staff, from a sense of justice to those who have been subjected to absolutely unjust and unmerited recriminations, to dispel these doubts; a duty which was easy to fulfil. But they well knew that General Kazbek had erroneously reported the information received from the commander of the "Grozny," that the detailed report of the latter had a whole week before been transmitted by telegraph. Finally they knew that Admiral Rozhestvensky might have been inquired of at Sasebo, and that if he had been unable, on



account of his wounds, to draw up his own report, his staff could have done so. But, indeed, instead of alleviating the excited state of the public by a clear and true explanation, they paid no attention to any one, and only added fuel to the flame. For instance, the partial conversations between the commander of the "Grozny," and the correspondence which appeared in print, received no answer in the later official reports.

On 12 June a long telegram appeared in the papers from the Commander-in-Chief about the Tsushima battle, based on written reports, among which we may reckon that of the commander of the "Grozny," but at the same time there was no word about the circumstances under which Rozhestvensky was taken prisoner. This tended to increase the conviction that there was something improper in the affair which they found it necessary to conceal. It meant that they did not believe the report of the commander of the "Grozny," or that there was something in it of a compromising nature, which would not look well in print. It is not possible to imagine any other reason, for the Japanese were not silent about the circumstance of Rozhestvensky's surrender. On the contrary, it would seem that this communication should have been published, in order to disprove the boastful assertions of our enemies, and show that there was a fight, in which one of the Japanese torpedo-vessels was sunk. Thus people would know of the "Biedovy's" surrender from Russian sources, and not only from Japanese, which clearly asserted that the "Grozny" sailed away and did not take part in the encounter. As this report was not published, we had to suppose that it did not prove all this. When at last it did appear—on 23 July—we saw that there had been no reason for concealing it. Still, during all the time it was kept back we were supposing the most dreadful things. What were we to do? The Japanese speak the truth, and we cannot refute them. Is it possible the authorities did not understand what reproaches were being heaped on the commander of the "Grozny," who, being wounded and far off, could not even suspect that he was being placed in such a false position by his own superiors?

The consequences of this were not long in making themselves felt. The Press could not keep silent on such a matter as the surrender of Admiral Rozhstvensky, a matter which troubled the whole community. The untrue reports of General Kazbek and the Japanese were unrefuted when each understood that the means for refuting them were at hand. Recriminations were scattered broadcast, and very serious ones too, although they were unjust, especially against the commander of the "Grozny." This probably was because he could easily have communicated the truth about his action, as he was at Vladivostok. If he had been so seriously wounded as not to be able to write a detailed report, which he did on 30 May in spite of his wounds, the report might yet have been made by his assistant, Lieutenant Koptevy. From personal assurance which has been given me, I have no hesitation in stating that this was withheld, and this has led to the blame being laid on the "Grozny" instead of on the "Biedovy." According to the Japanese report, even the "Biedovy" may have been to a certain extent justified in her action. She only lowered her flag after the Japanese shells had damaged her engines. The "Grozny" was by this time out of sight. No one knew of the report of the commander of the "Grozny," in which it was clearly stated that the "Biedovy" lowered her flag as soon as the Japanese opened fire. This report was kept back for some unknown reason, while every one thought it was being withheld because it did not contradict the report of the Japanese.

(II) LETTER FROM THE COMMANDER OF THE "GROZNY"

On these grounds we shall see the most serious accusations based—accusations of want of personal courage. I several times noted in my articles that the "Grozny" deserted the "Biedovy," and that this action could be compared with the surrender of the "Biedovy" and of Niebogotov's division. I was quite wrong in saying this, and am very sorry I committed such injustice. My article was printed on 1 July, more than a month after the

battle, while the more detailed report of the commander of the "Grozny" was held back till much later. I did not go so far as to accuse him of want of courage. I believe such a want to be excessively rare among our officers. Also, I know personally first-class Flag-Captain Klanier de Kolon, commander of the "Biedovy," and Captain Andrzhievsky, commanding the "Grozny." From what I know of them I cannot admit that they had any lack of courage. Yet their means of action, admitting at the time I wrote the complete authenticity of the Japanese report, revealed to me a far greater danger for our fleet than the very rare and accidental absence of courage among some of our officers. It showed that utterly false ideas as to naval duty were rife among our officers. These ideas were so powerful as even to take hold of officers whom we looked upon as the best. They also seemed to be surrounded by men who had been wrongly trained for their work, who had adopted what I consider to be utterly wrong ideas of their duty. In this respect, the action off Matsushima Island is quite characteristic. This matter is of special interest for me, and I think is also of interest for the general public. It is from this point of view that I regard not only the action off Matsushima Island, but also the separation of the cruisers of Admiral Enquist from the fleet, and the surrender of Admiral Niebogotov. If we admit that in a few cases personal courage was lacking, we cannot think that such a deficiency was epidemic, that all the officers were bad. This was certainly not the case. I know that there were many excellent officers with the fleet, but they did not know how to act; if not in battle, at any rate when their ships were sinking. I shall therefore not take into consideration the question of personal courage, but shall only examine the question as to conviction.

From this point of view, the opinions of those who participated in the battle offer great interest. These opinions are spoken in conformity with conviction—as will be seen in the letter from the commander of the "Grozny" I have inserted below.

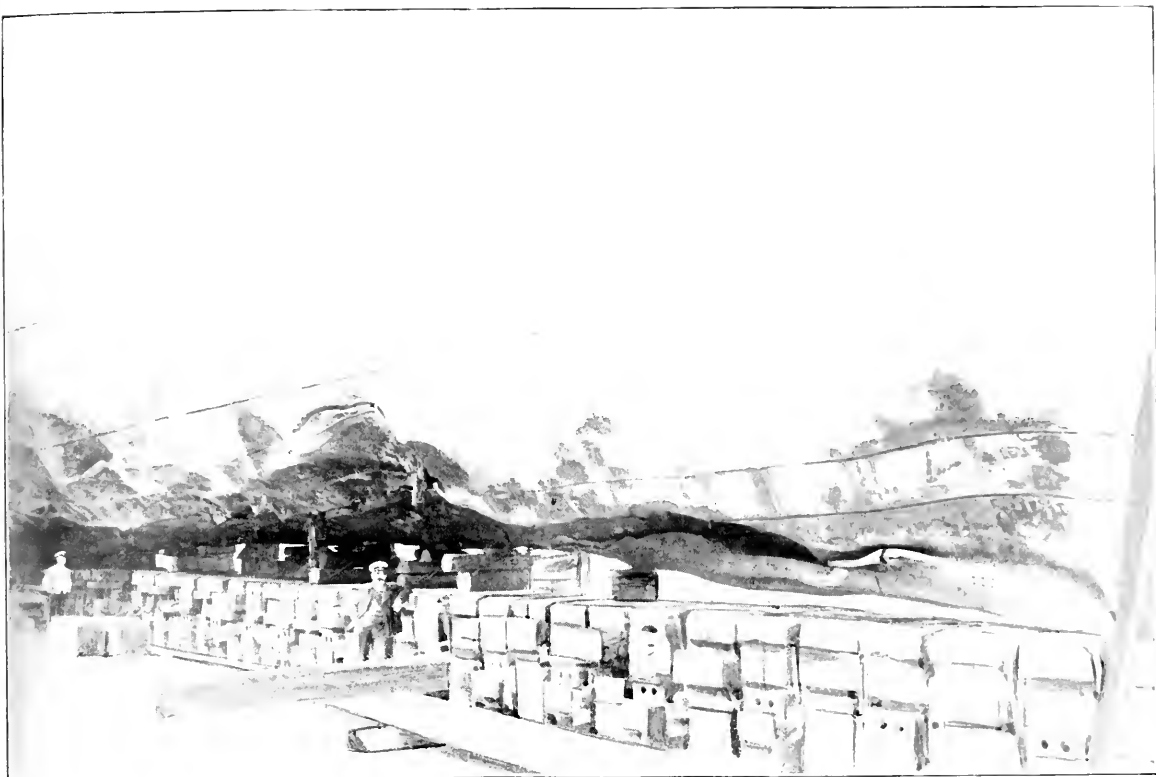
The history of the letter is as follows. The commander of

the "Grozny," on returning to Russia, wrote me a letter, in which he pointed out the inaccuracy and haste of my conclusions about the rôle which the "Grozny" played in the action off Matsushima Island, which he considered arose from the fact that I had not sufficiently complete information. He proposed to communicate all the details of the action to me, in order that I might reveal it in its real light. I was certainly very glad to receive information at first hand, the more so as the report of the commander of the "Grozny," published on 23 July, presented several obscure points. The result was that I was convinced that in comparing the action of the "Grozny" to the surrender of Niebogotov, I acted unjustly. I am very sorry I did so, but Captain K. Andrzhievsky has not convinced me even now that the course he took was the only possible one, or indeed the best one. I hold by the opinion that it was possible and desirable to act otherwise. In view of such difference of opinion between us, I shall first print the letter I have received from Captain Andrzhievsky, in which he explains his views about this action, and then I shall explain the action off Matsushima Island as it strikes me now, both from the published report of the commander of the "Grozny," and from supplementary details he has communicated to me. In his letter to me he objects, not only to my article, but also to that of J. G. T——, which was printed in the "Rus" of 21 June. Though I consider that the objection to this article should not come through me, yet I print this letter on the responsibility of Captain Andrzhievsky, who specially wishes that the passage in his letter referring to J. G. T—— should remain intact. Here is the letter :—

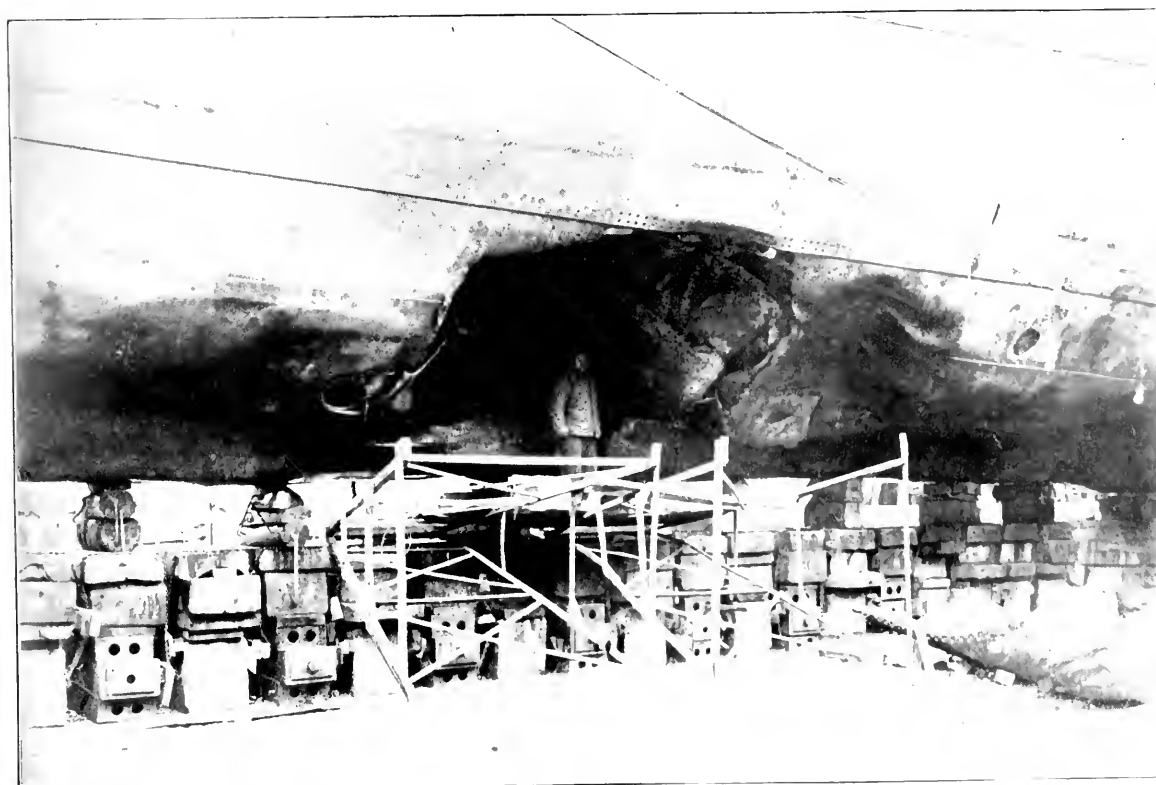
"MUCH HONOURED NICHOLAS LAVRENTIEVITCH,<sup>1</sup>

"Many thanks for your detailed and prompt answer to my letter, in which I offered to explain all the obscure and enigmatical details of the action of the 'Grozny' on 28 May off Matsushima Island, and for the flattering opinion you have

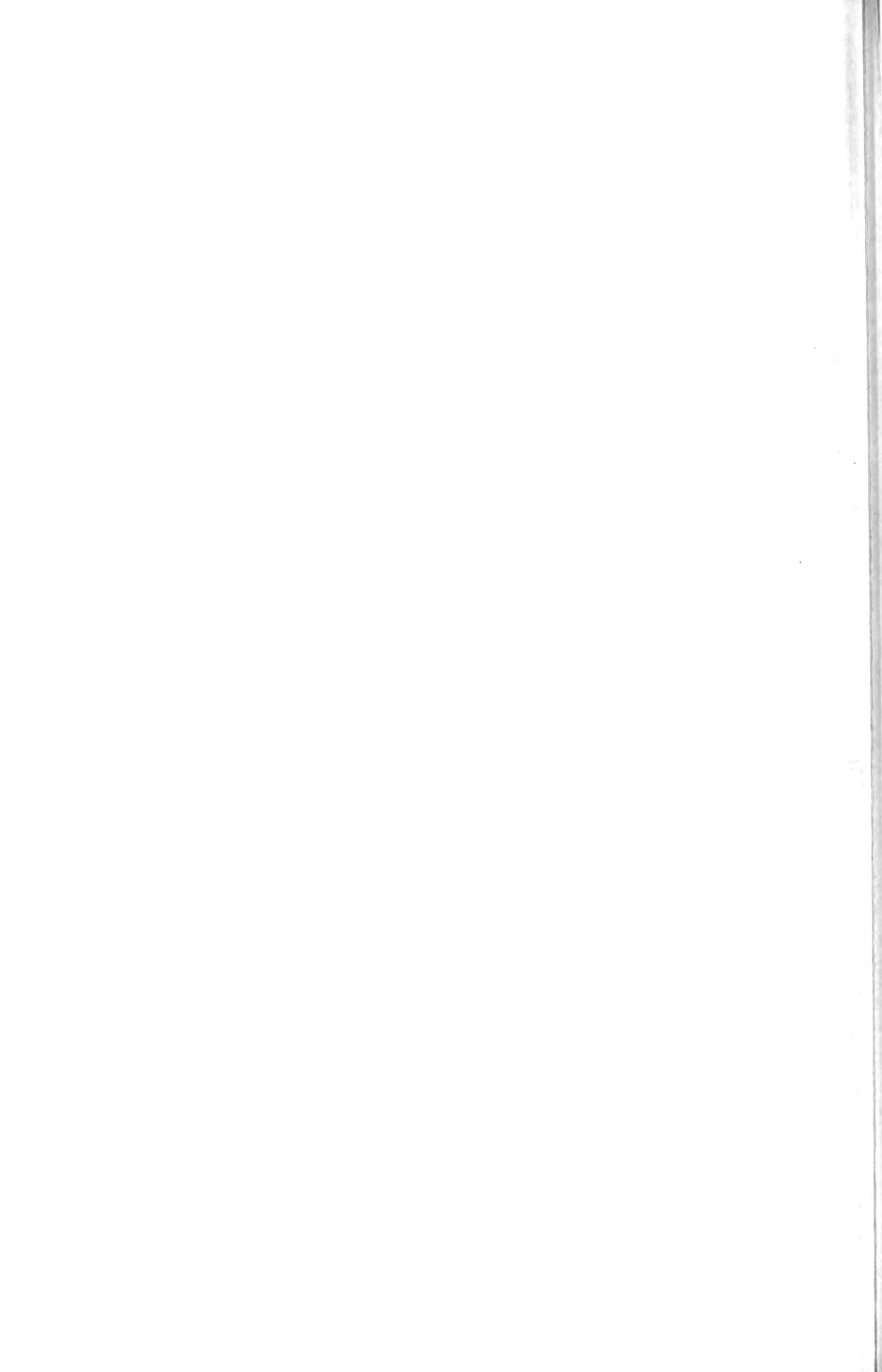
<sup>1</sup> Captain Klado's Christian names.



THE DENTED KEEL OF THE "BOGATYR"; STARBOARD SIDE



HOLE IN THE KEEL OF THE "BOGATYR"; PORT SIDE



expressed about me." [This last phrase is called forth by my saying that I wondered very much at even the best officers considering such means of action to be the only ones, when they seem to me to be quite incorrect.]

"You are doubtless astonished that I did not duly notice the article in the 'Rus' of 21 June, headed 'Silence is impossible,' in which my name was covered with mud; I turn to you, who have not used such bitter terms about me. But I do not know who wrote that article in the 'Rus.' Who is this Mr. J. G. T——?

"I now pass to your chief accusation against me, that in your opinion I was disconcerted at a difficult moment, and did not make the ideal decision. That I acted blindly, and committed a breach of discipline in that I sailed away to Vladivostok. Is this true? It is, in fact, quite false. When I was ordered to sail away to Vladivostok I did not carry out the order, but remained with the 'Biedovy' up to the moment that she hoisted the white flag, which took me quite by surprise. Accordingly there is no reason to speak of 'blind soldier-like obedience,' as the author of the article in the 'Rus' does, or of 'weakness' (see 'Naval Notes,' 1 July), or of 'fear of censure' from the chief, or of 'the want of habit of criticizing my own actions.'

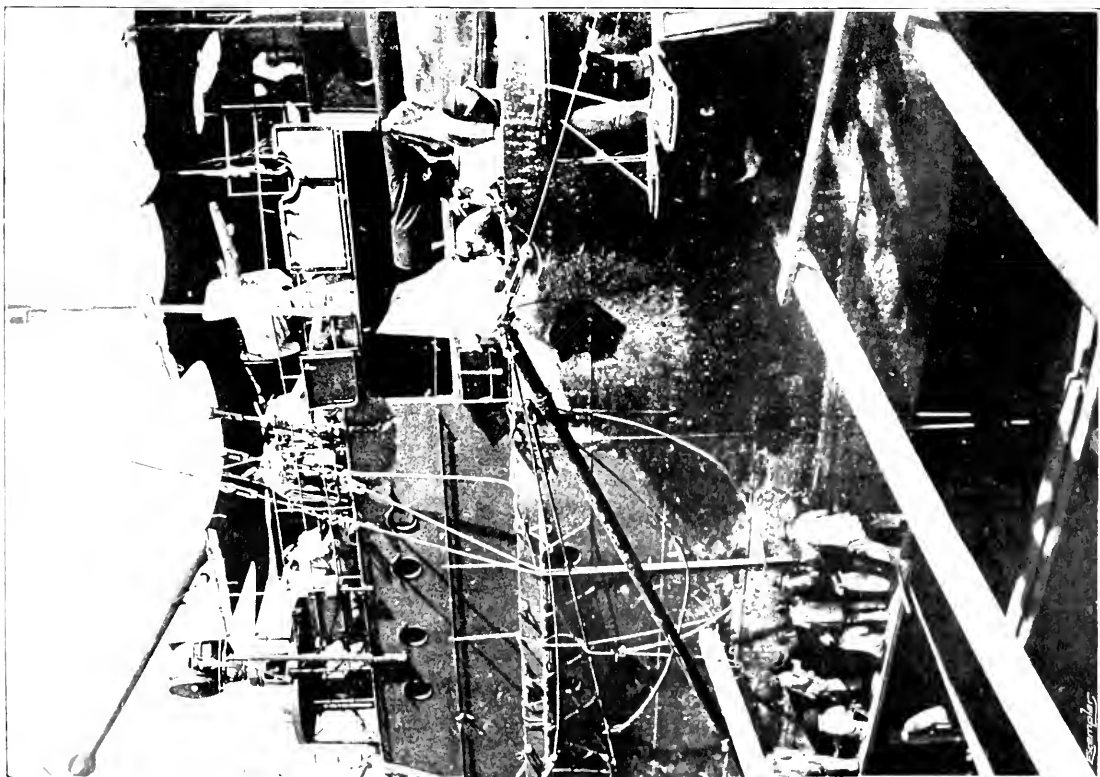
"You ask why I, as the senior, when I knew the Admiral was wounded, did not take over the command of both torpedo-vessels. But in the first place, the fact that the Admiral was wounded did not necessarily prevent him from commanding the vessel. I continued to command my torpedo-vessel the whole time of the battle, in spite of the fact that almost at the beginning of the battle I was wounded in the head, both arms, both eyes, and in one leg. I continued to give orders, and only the blood flowing over my eyes and face forced me to summon on to the bridge, to help me, Lieutenant Koptevy, who reported everything to me and asked my orders. I did not know that at this time the Admiral was unconscious, or that the flag-captain was on board the 'Biedovy.' Later on we saw him walking about the deck of the torpedo-vessel. Could I, under these

circumstances, have taken on myself the rôle of chief of the detachment? Do you suppose it possible that the commander of the 'Biedovy' would have obeyed my orders, and begun to fight on receiving them—probably at the time when he had decided to surrender? Finally, take into account the time in which all these events took place. When the 'Biedovy' hoisted the white flag, and I saw that she was about to surrender, the Japanese were only three or four miles away, so that with a speed of thirty knots they could have come up with us in six or eight minutes. What could have been done in such a short space of time? How could I protest against the action of the commander of the 'Biedovy' and force him to obey me? No one but a man without understanding—such as the author of the article in the 'Rus'—could blame me for not transferring the Admiral to my vessel. The only thing I could have done under the circumstances would have been to fire on the 'Biedovy' and sink her, so as to prevent the Admiral falling into the hands of the Japanese. This idea did enter my head. Why did not I go to meet the Japanese? Well, I did not suspect that the 'Biedovy' would surrender till the very moment that she did so. I thought to fight abreast of her. When she stopped her engines and fell out of action, then of course I had to move farther off, so as to be more free in my action, and fight with one enemy and not with two. The 'Biedovy,' I repeat, had stopped her engines and was not taking part in the battle. As I was in want of coal, it was my duty to conduct the battle in such a way that during it I was all the time drawing nearer to Vladivostok; and this is exactly what I did. But what is the meaning of the term that 'the "Grozny" forsook the "Biedovy," in your opinion a most scandalous action'? What ought I to have done? Ought I to have stopped my engines and fought, remaining in the same place? Would not this have amounted to the suicide of the 'Grozny,' a suicide, moreover, quite useless? Do you imagine that, had the 'Biedovy' made even the slightest attempt at resistance, even though her engines were stopped, that I would not have

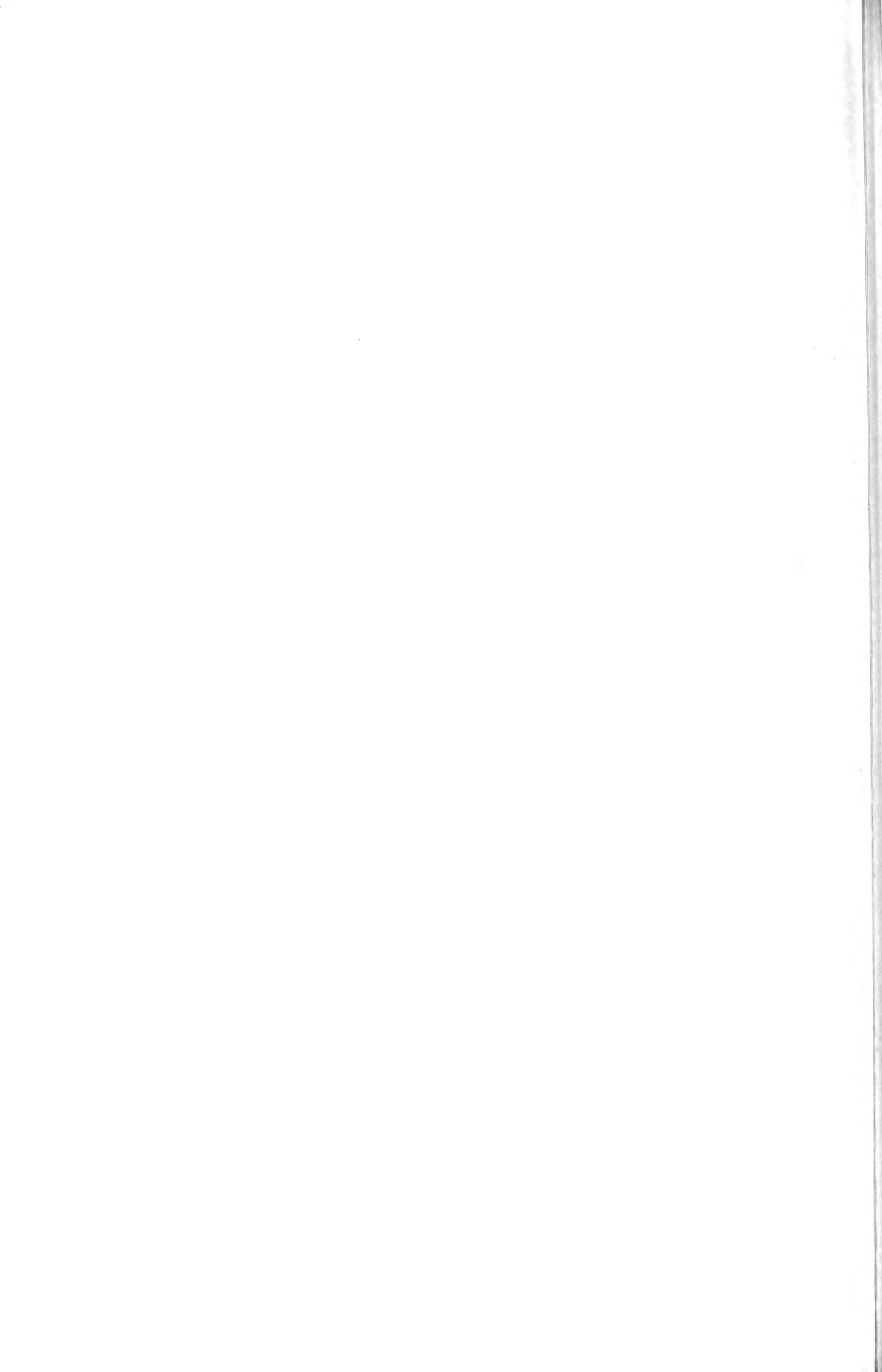




WHERE A SHEET STRUCK THE "ASKOLD."



THE "ASKOLD" IN DOCK AT SHANGHAI.



defended her and the Admiral with the last drop of my blood? As things were, this would have been pure madness, and a needless triumph for the Japanese. In acting as I did, I not only saved my vessel and her crew, but I also sank a Japanese destroyer. Then you do not understand why I, when I had sunk one torpedo-vessel, did not follow up my success by trying to rescue the Admiral. Well, in the course of the battle—three hours—I had been steaming away with a speed of twenty-two knots, so that when the battle was over, I was more than sixty miles from the place where I met the Japanese, and where the 'Biedovy' was left—and she certainly did not stay in the same place. Judge for yourself where and when I should have found her in the darkness, and without coal. Where could I have gone after having used up the remains of my coal on a fruitless search? Perhaps to Sasebo or Kure? No; whatever you think, it seems to me that I took the only possible course. I should very much like to know if even you do not agree with me after this explanation?

"Again, you have already compared the 'abandonment,' as you call it, of the 'Biedovy' by the 'Grozny' with the surrender of Niebogotov. What! I fought the enemy for three hours, destroyed and sank him; my vessel was damaged in six places, I had one officer and three men killed, and was myself covered with wounds—yet, you compare this with the surrender of a ship hardly damaged! It seems to me that if you take upon yourself the rôle of critic, you must, first of all, be rigidly impartial, and not try only to find out facts (and those mistaken ones) capable of serving as a basis for censure, while you make no mention of facts which might serve as a basis for praise and approbation. Why do you quote articles of the regulations to censure the commander of the 'Grozny' for abandoning the 'Biedovy,' and keep silent about those according to which the whole crew of the 'Grozny' have twice proved themselves deserving of the 'Order of St. George'; in the first place for having forced their way through the enemy's fleet to their own port, and in the second place for having sunk an enemy's ship of greater or equal strength?

“About this neither you nor the ‘Rus’ have a word to say. How is one to explain this? On one side I am, so to speak, pulled by the hair and blamed for not taking a certain course. I am accused by the ‘Rus’ of cowardice, and by you of want of sagacity. On the other side there is the battle and the sinking of the enemy’s ship, indubitable facts, which cannot be passed over in silence.

“From the testimony of the Japanese torpedo-vessels (telegram from Tokio) it is not clear that the ‘Grozny’ fought at all, but it seems that she simply sailed away. But it is easy to see the falsehood of this telegram, with the usual desire on the part of the Japanese to hide their loss. In the beginning the commander of the torpedo-boat (apparently the ‘Sadanashi’) says that the two boats were together when they met us. Thereupon the ‘Biedovy’ surrendered, while the ‘Grozny’ sailed away.

“What can I do to rehabilitate my honour and that of the ‘Grozny,’ from which I cannot separate myself? Shall I answer the article in the ‘Rus,’ ‘Silence is impossible’? I do not know who wrote this article; it is of no importance, and so I do not think it necessary to answer it. Shall I ask for a fair inquiry into the action of the ‘Grozny’? I do not consider that I have the right to claim such an inquiry unless I am censured by my own chief; moreover, such a trial would not answer my purpose, since Society incited your articles and those of others, and would be inclined to regard my acquittal with suspicion. So for my complete and certain rehabilitation only one course remains for me, viz. to ask you to print this letter, with your answer to it. So shall my action be inquired into. It will not be a regular trial, furbished with red tape, but a broad and impartial one, a trial at the bar of the very Society which has already censured me, because it has, up to the present, listened only to you, my severe procurator, to whom I, because of my wounds and my absence, could not give an earlier answer.

“Picture me to yourself, toilworn after such a severe voyage, the battle and my wounds, worn out in body and mind, dream-

ing about returning home to rest, if not with glory, at least with honour, and with a sense of having done my utmost for my native country, at the very outset running against this unjust reproach and recrimination, and finally being vilely abused by that country, for whose sake I have been covered with wounds ; picture all this, I say, and you may imagine my feelings. I think that I have a right, in the name of justice and truth, to ask for a rapid restoration of my good name ; and I hope that you, who hold truth dearest of all, will completely co-operate with me in this.

"I remain your respectful and obedient servant,

"K. ANDRZHEIEVSKY."

I shall readily use my utmost endeavours to answer such a sincere, open, and honourable appeal in the most exact manner possible. It is just in this way that the true explanation of the action, for which we are both striving, will be brought about. It would have given me great pleasure to have been able to answer this letter thus : "I can make no objection whatever to your action ; you were quite right in everything." But as you rightly and truly put the question, "Do I now consider that you took the only possible course?" I must, in the name of the same truth and justice, answer, "No ; I still hold by my opinion that there was another and a better course open to you." It is certainly much easier to define what this course was when one is at leisure, so as to be able to carefully weigh all the circumstances in complete quiet. In battle a decision had to be made instantaneously. This, however, only makes your decision clear and free from blame, but not the only one nor the best one. No one can require from men, in the heat of battle, the very best decision, but it is all the same necessary to find out what these best decisions are, for the benefit of the future. From this point of view I consider it my duty to explain, in the most detailed manner, my views of the action of 28 May off Matsushima Island.

## (III) EXAMINATION OF THE FACTS

In examining this battle I shall follow the report of the commander of the "Grozny," as well as some additional information he has communicated to me.

At the dawn of day on 28 May, the "Grozny" found herself at the opening of the Korean Straits into the Sea of Japan, in proximity to the "Dmitri Donskoi" and the torpedo-vessels "Biedovy" and "Buiny." The Admiral had then been removed from the latter torpedo-boat to the "Biedovy," from which immediately afterwards there came to the "Grozny" the order to follow her. To the question by whom this order was given, the commander of the "Grozny" received the reply, "Admiral Rozhestvensky is on board the torpedo-vessel, wounded in the head and other places. The majority of the staff are also wounded. We are going to Vladivostok. If coal will not hold out, then we go to Possiet." Soon after this the "Dmitri Donskoi" turned back and disappeared, together with the "Buiny," and only the "Biedovy," in company with the "Grozny," proceeded on the way to Vladivostok.

At a little after 3 p.m., near the island of Matsushima, there appeared two ships, rapidly overtaking them. "On a nearer view," so says the report, "the vessels proved to be Japanese; one was a two-funnelled destroyer, and the other a torpedo-boat-destroyer with four funnels." I entirely fail to understand by what marks a "destroyer" can be distinguished from a "torpedo-boat-destroyer." So far as I know, these words are absolutely synonymous. And this same type is called by us "squadron torpedo-boat." Thus, when they were in presence of each other, it was apparent that on both sides—on ours as on the enemy's—the forces were equal, each consisting of two squadron torpedo-boats, which, for the sake of brevity, I shall simply call torpedo-boats or destroyers. In dimensions, in type and class, in numbers of the crew, and in the supply of torpedoes, the advantage was on our side; in guns and in speed, on the side

of the Japanese. The following data are from an official source. Both our destroyers were built at the Neva yard. The "Biedovy" was launched in 1902 and the "Grozny" in 1904. The latter made her first voyage with Rozhestvensky's squadron. The constituent elements of both torpedo-boats were identical; displacement, 350 tons; highest (contract) speed, 26 knots; ship's company, 62 men; torpedo tubes, 3; one gun of 75 mm. and five guns of 47 mm. One of the Japanese destroyers, viz. that with four funnels, proved to be the "Sadanami," the other (two-funnelled) the "Kadgero." Both were built in England, the first at Yarrow's works, the second at Thornycroft's. The first was launched in 1898, the second between 1898 and 1900. The "Sadanami's" displacement was 311 tons; speed, 31 knots. The other's displacement was 279 tons, and speed about 30 knots. Both carried a crew of 54 men, one gun of 75 mm., five guns of 57 mm., and two torpedo tubes. It must be noted that the superiority in speed of the Japanese torpedo-boats, highly important as it was for coming up with the enemy and seizing on the most favourable position and distance, was yet accompanied by certain defects. The fact is, that during the period when these destroyers were being built in England, there was an almost frantic craze for high speed, and to this all the other qualities of torpedo-craft were sacrificed, especially strength of the hull.

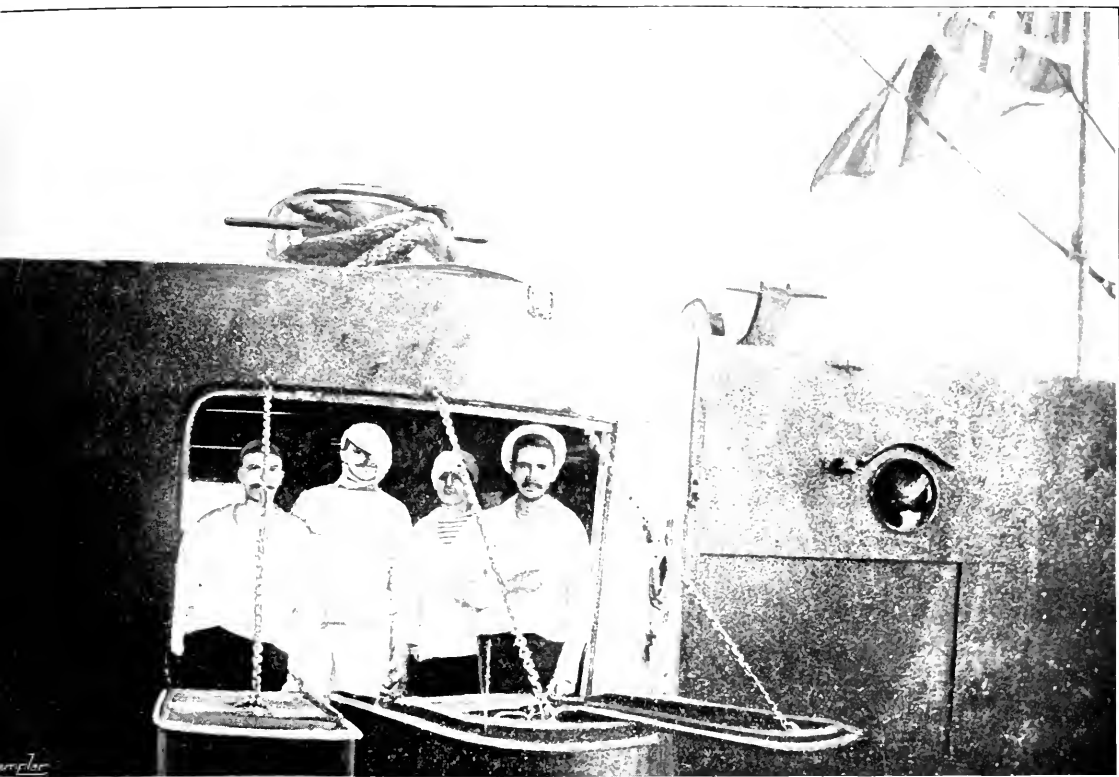
Here is what is said on this matter in the "Register" by the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovitch for the year 1904, pages 350, 351: "The Admiralty, by bitter experience, arrived at the conclusion that in the pursuit of great speed they had lost sight of the necessity of strength of hull. Besides, latterly, not one of the destroyers has reached the speed contracted for. For instance, a whole series of destroyers, bound by contract to give 33 knots, were accepted, after protracted trials, at from  $30\frac{1}{2}$  to  $31\frac{1}{2}$  knots. At the same time, continual breakdowns became an ordinary phenomenon. Then the Admiralty decided (1) not to build destroyers of a speed exceeding 25 knots; and (2) to strengthen the frames of the stringers and the skirting (i.e. to

strengthen the hull)." And in fact, on the roll of the English destroyers, all the eighteen built in the year 1903 (p. 425) have a speed of about  $25\frac{1}{2}$  knots, while of those constructed in the preceding years not one gave less than 30 knots. Some years before this decision, the well-known French torpedo-boat builder, Norman, gave us very energetic warnings on this point ; but up to that point they had not been followed.

I have deemed it necessary to set forth all this in order to explain why our most modern torpedo-boats—to which category the "Biedovy" and "Grozny" belonged—were bound by contract to develop a speed of 26 knots at the outside. Consequently, their hulls were stronger, and their sea-going qualities (for example, the stability of the platforms, which facilitates the action of the guns) were better than those of the Japanese torpedo-boats which overtook them. As regards the guns, the Japanese had in each of their vessels two 75-mm. guns. In the smaller pieces there was some superiority on the side of our adversaries, inasmuch as they had ten 57-mm. guns as against our ten 47-mm. guns. This circumstance made the conflict more favourable for our vessels in proportion to the nearness of the range ; since, the larger the calibre of the gun the greater the distance at which it strikes, and the better its aim. Superior accuracy of aim is much more sharply manifested at long range than at short.

On the Russian torpedo-boats the 75-mm. gun is placed at the bows, on the Japanese at the stern. This means that it was more advantageous for our torpedo-boats to fight with their bows towards the enemy, but for the Japanese it was better to attack from the stern. During the time the Japanese fleet was before Port Arthur, it leaked out that they had strengthened the artillery of their torpedo-craft, by the addition of a second 75-mm. gun ; and even by the substitution of guns having a range of 120 metres for those with a range of 75 metres. This, however, could scarcely have been done for those Japanese torpedo-vessels, which are said to have been very old and with an extremely small displacement (306 and 279 tons). It





RUSSIAN WOUNDED ON BOARD THE "ASKOLD" AT SHANGHAI.



THE BULWARKS OF THE CRUISER "ASKOLD," AT SHANGHAI, AFTER THE BATTLE OF AUGUST 10TH



probably refers to the newest destroyers of 381 tons constructed in Japan during the year 1902-3. In either case, however, the advantage on the side of our destroyers at short range remained in full force; and the absolute necessity of fighting in such a position so as to fully utilize the 75-mm. gun in the bows was evident. Otherwise the enemy's superiority in artillery would have been simply crushing. Finally, at short range it would have been possible to bring the torpedoes into action, as to which the superiority was on our side. I hasten to say, however, that this superiority is no great matter; since to hit a torpedo-boat with a torpedo when the boat is in motion is excessively difficult. But although in other respects our vessels may have the advantage of short range, yet we need not altogether neglect this extreme measure (i.e. launching torpedoes). In what condition the Japanese torpedo-vessels found themselves after the battle of 27 May, or what part they took in it, I am ignorant. In the report of the commander of the "Grozny" no mention is made of his having suffered any damage or lost any of his men on the preceding day. That everybody on board the "Biedovy" was alive and well after the surrender was officially announced. As regards her hull and machinery, we must suppose that these were all right; otherwise the Admiral and his staff would not have removed from the "Buiny" (probably in a precarious state) to the "Biedovy" while the "Grozny" was there quite uninjured.

Thus our torpedo-boats could not be reckoned inferior to those of the Japanese as regards material. And their chances in battle were better in proportion to the shortness of the range. Consequently, the choice lay between two alternatives; either making off in order to run away from the battle, or else going to meet it, so as to take up a favourable position as soon as possible. The question is plainly this: Which resolution ought to have been followed, only having regard to material strength? The second, it would seem. Especially considering the superiority of the Japanese in point of speed, which gave the decision "to fight or not to fight" into the hands of our enemies; and

considering also that in retreating we must turn our stern towards our adversary, and thus deprive ourselves of the advantage of coming to close quarters. But over and above the material strength, we must take into consideration the bearing of the moral forces on the question.

The crews of our destroyers could not but be under the painful impression of a defeat, although they were not yet acquainted with the whole frightful extent of the disaster; while the Japanese were full of enthusiasm over their recent brilliant victory, and were reckoning on pursuing the miserable remnants of our squadron, which were seeking safety in flight towards Vladivostok. Our men had every ground for expecting the appearance of more of the enemy's ships behind these two Japanese torpedo-boats, and that the Japanese would advance impetuously to seize on their prize. In these circumstances it would not have been surprising, nor could any one have blamed them, if our vessels had first of all made the attempt to get away, and, to this end, had pursued their course towards Vladivostok. The Japanese torpedo-vessels would certainly have pursued them, and in that case the result would have directly depended on the difference in speed. Had this difference been so considerable that there could be no hope of getting away, and the Japanese were able to give battle in the position most favourable for themselves and most unfavourable for the Russians, i.e. at a range too great for the 47-mm. guns, then the only thing for the Russians to do would have been to turn, to get into shorter range as quickly as possible, and to plunge desperately into the conflict, on the chance that the Japanese, carried away by their pursuit, might not all at once change their course, and might be forced to accept a position favourable to the Russians.

Here arises the question: Might not this design have been changed by the fact of the presence on board the "Biedovy" of the Admiral, wounded and deprived of consciousness? I cannot, of course, answer for it that I have examined all the possible considerations in this connexion; but I have not been able to find any reason for answering that question in the affirma-

tive. The presence of the wounded Admiral would all the more have justified the avoidance of action and the attempt to reach Vladivostok intact. But had this proved to be impossible by reason of the enemy's superior speed, all the more energetically, all the more obdurately, ought we to have fought. It is true that, to the outside world, this is merely a surrender without resistance. But such a surrender is categorically forbidden by the Regulations of the Navy.

Who was it, then, who ordered the action of the destroyers in question? From the report of Admiral Rozhestvensky, he was in an unconscious state. From the letter of Captain Andrzhievsky, the flag-captain was on the upper deck. That means that he gave the orders. Further on I shall show that his right to give orders was contested. Meanwhile, I shall examine the matter as it was. The flag-captain, by his rank, was the senior of the commanders of both torpedo-boats. Consequently, next to him in seniority came the commander of the "Grozny," and after the latter the commander of the "Biedovy."

The Russians were only able to partially estimate the strength of the Japanese torpedo-vessels. The "Sadanami" of course they could recognize as one of the most powerful torpedo-boats, which have four funnels. But the two-funnelled boat might be one of the type of 279 tons, very much weaker in the construction of the hull, and inferior in sea-going qualities. From the Japanese reports, it is evident that she was the "Kadgero," precisely of the above-mentioned type.

I am persuaded that our officers, during the course of their seven months' voyage to the theatre of war, studied with the greatest assiduity all particulars as to the quality and armaments of the enemy's ships, so far as these could be gleaned from trustworthy sources. Of course the members of the staff and the commanders of the cruisers and torpedo-boats specially occupied themselves with these studies; for on them rests the duty of keeping a watchful look-out.

The flag-captain, however, took neither of the above-

mentioned resolutions, which it would seem would have been the best possible. This is how he acted: in the first place he did not increase the speed of the "Biedovy"; thus giving the Japanese the opportunity of swiftly gaining the range which best suited them for attack, and at the same time depriving himself of the means of estimating the position. It is evident that he quickly took the resolve to surrender without fighting; and therefore, having informed himself what speed could be got out of the "Grozny," he ordered her to proceed to Vladivostok. He paid no attention to the inquiry of the commander of the "Grozny" why he was not to give battle instead of making off. He gave orders to hoist a flag of truce and the Red Cross flag, and ordered the commander of the "Biedovy" to stop the engines. He ought, if prevented by a wound from giving orders himself, to have handed over the command to the captain of the "Grozny" as the senior of the commanders. But how was it possible to decide on surrendering without fighting, when this is categorically forbidden by the Navy Regulations, and to bring on oneself the heavy penalties of so doing?

The precise answer to this question can be given only by the flag-captain himself. Not to go far afield for examples, I will merely refer to the explanation given to the Press by General Hannefield as to certain episodes of the retreat from Mukden, inserted in the "Novoye Vremya" (No. 10,573). From his letter it is evident that Russian newspapers reached the prisoners, and, in consequence of some correspondence on the subject of the war, the General gives these elucidations. Precisely in the same way, if my memory does not deceive me, correspondence appeared in the Press from other officers who were prisoners of war. Be this as it may, no explanation has been forthcoming from Captain Klanier de Kolon, and therefore we are obliged to have recourse to conjectures. I consider that I, rather than another, have the means for attempting this, since whosoever is not personally acquainted with this officer may easily fall into mistakes—and mistakes of an injurious nature

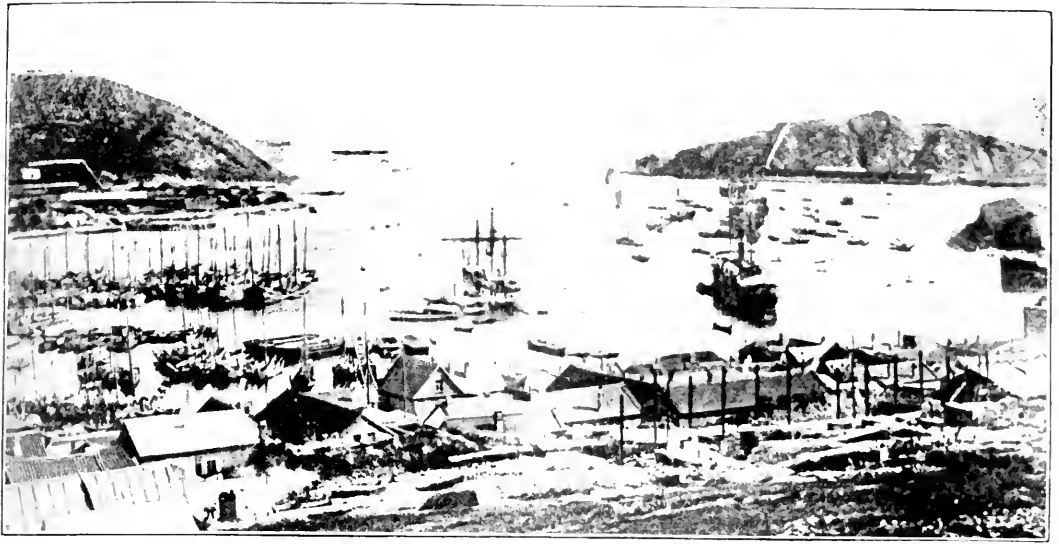
—in judging his actions. I have long known Constantine Constantinovitch Klanier de Kolon, both as a man and an officer. Not long ago I was serving under his immediate command, and I deem it my duty to say that he is in the highest degree an honourable and excellent man, with the best heart in the world ; somewhat too soft-hearted perhaps, and lacking in resolution ; but highly conscientious, and devoted to the service, and positively incapable of consciously doing any unworthy action. To Admiral Rozhestvensky he was bound by the duties of the service and by a profound esteem, and officially as his flag-captain. His devotion to him knew no bounds. His whole soul was set upon lightening the Admiral's heavy duties, and assiduously sparing him all annoyance. Suddenly he sees his beloved commander lying seriously wounded and unconscious in a little vessel which was never designed for artillery warfare, in which there was no spot impenetrable to even the lightest shot, and on him, on the flag-captain, it depends whether to inflict on the wounded Admiral fresh moral and material suffering by continuing the struggle, or, by surrendering to the victorious enemy, to save his life. Such, I imagine, were the thoughts which whirled through the brain of the flag-captain on the appearance of the Japanese torpedo-boats. These thoughts overcame all the rest—the rules of the service, and the affliction which must befall the Russian navy and the Russian people when they learned that a Russian ship and the Commander-in-Chief of a Russian fleet had surrendered without a struggle. He was not aware that Niebogotov, with a whole division, had already surrendered ; and therefore he may have thought that he was giving up one sole and unique prize into the hands of the enemy, a consideration, however, which ought to have militated against the surrender. He forgot everything ; his whole being was possessed with one idea—that of saving his beloved Admiral. This was an erroneous and illegitimate motive, but nevertheless a lofty and noble one. In looking at this act of Captain Klanier de Kolon I perceive (knowing him as I do) the cruel error of judgment,

but at the same time the self-sacrifice with which he staked his honour and reputation. He ought not to have done so. He had no right to take such a step, and by taking it he has inscribed in the history of the Russian navy one of its blackest pages. To understand why he acted as he did is only possible for one who knows him. But, I repeat, to hold him justified is impossible. And for the truth of history, for the instruction of future generations, we must speak thus: "This man sincerely deluded himself; he wished to act honourably; but in the terrible dilemma in which he found himself he was not able to understand that he had a reputation to maintain, and sacrificed everything to his Admiral. I am profoundly convinced that it would have been incomparably easier for him to perish in battle than to order the hoisting of a flag of truce. He must have had to put a terrible force upon himself in order to do that. It had to be done in face of a foe not of superior numbers, but having a force only equal with his own; but there was his much-loved Admiral lying helpless, speechless, unconscious,—and he decided. Nevertheless, he had no right to decide as he did."

#### (IV) DUTIES OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE

If it so happened that the flag-captain formed an incorrect estimate of the situation and made a false step, it was clearly contrary to the regulations and public interests for the rest to consider that they had no other course than blindly to carry out the order to surrender. One cannot help thinking that if Admiral Rozhestvensky had been conscious he would have understood the motives which swayed the flag-captain, and would not have allowed him to surrender under any circumstances. If, however, the Admiral was unconscious, and no others of high rank could influence the flag-captain, the commander of the "Biedovy" and the officers of the vessel could yet have prevented him from carrying out his intentions. When the flag of truce had been displayed—when the fact of the surrender had come to pass, the





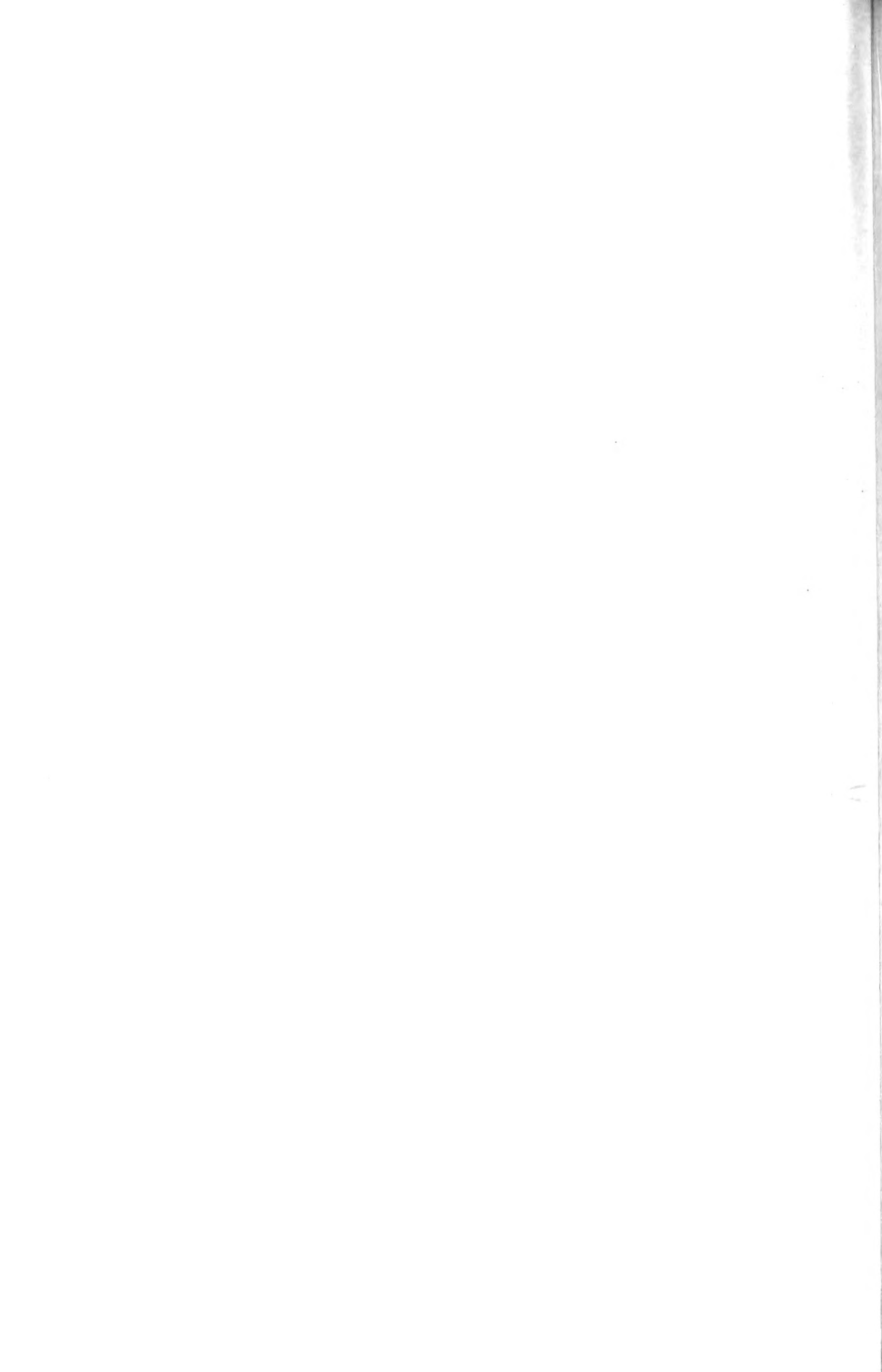
ENTRANCE TO PORT ARTHUR



VLADIVOSTOK



PORT ARTHUR. OUTER ROADSTEAD WHERE THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT TOOK PLACE.



commander of the "Grozny" could also have hindered it. What happened on board the "Biedovy," and why none there hindered the flag-captain (who, moreover, was wounded), I do not know. Several details of the actions of the commander of the "Grozny" appear in his report, and it is possible to examine them.

No one can object to the primary action of the commander of the "Grozny." When he made out that ships were approaching—which turned out to be destroyers of the enemy—one with four funnels, the other with two, i.e. when he estimated the strength of the enemy, he overtook the "Biedovy" (for he had been behind) and asked "What action must we take?" Evidently the possibility of a surrender had not entered his head, and his question had reference to what action was to be taken in the battle, since some plan of action had to be agreed upon. The fact that, instead of receiving an answer, he was asked "How fast can you steam?" could not from its nature tell him anything—since the plan of action in a very great degree depends on the speed. With a sufficient speed—since the Commander-in-Chief was wounded—an attempt to escape might have been made—while if this were not obtainable the only alternative was a stubborn engagement. And when, in answer to the information as to his speed, he received the order to sail away for Vladivostok, without reckoning that this might betoken the surrender of the "Biedovy" (though he might perhaps have suspected something), he was still in a position to think that the flag-captain—satisfied as to his speed—considered it possible for both vessels to try to escape. Then he stopped and asked, "Why sail away? Why not stay to fight?" but received no answer. After this, the conduct of the "Biedovy" began to be more than suspicious. She did not quicken her speed; and certainly the "Grozny" did not do so either, not wishing, rightly, to leave the "Biedovy" alone. Though astonished at her action, he did not guess the whole truth. And then suddenly on board the "Biedovy" the parley and Red Cross flags were hoisted and her engines stopped. It was clear that she intended to surrender, and this terrible fact staggered the commander of

the "Grozny." It was necessary to decide instantly what to do, for the Japanese were already getting close. And, moreover, the decision was one of the utmost importance. Was the commander of the "Grozny" to obey the orders of the flag-captain and, leaving the Admiral to his fate, to set sail for Vladivostok? Or was he to consider such orders unlawful and contrary to the interests of the service and—taking this for such an occasion when not only the chief, but also the subordinate carrying out an order, is responsible for the consequences of that order—to hinder by all means in his power the fulfilment of what the flag-captain had decided upon? The commander of the "Grozny" determined on the first course of action, but in my opinion he was wrong and ought to have taken the latter course. Still, no one can and no one has the right to accuse him of having erred in his own decision, or to require that he should have taken the right course. There was too little time for deliberation, since the surrender of the "Biedovy" took him quite by surprise. Moreover, it is extremely easy to recognize the right course when one is sitting quietly at home. In battle this is so difficult that, though one may wish that the right course had been taken, and be vexed that it was not, one cannot be taxed with having taken the wrong one. In speaking thus I have only one aim, viz. to find out what view history will take of this circumstance, and what lessons there are in it for officers similarly situated in the future. It seems to me that if the commander of the "Grozny" had had some historical precedent which had stood the test of criticism, he would have found it far easier to take the right course than he did in the absence of such. To our shame be it said, there is no history of the Russian fleet, still less one with a critical analysis of events.

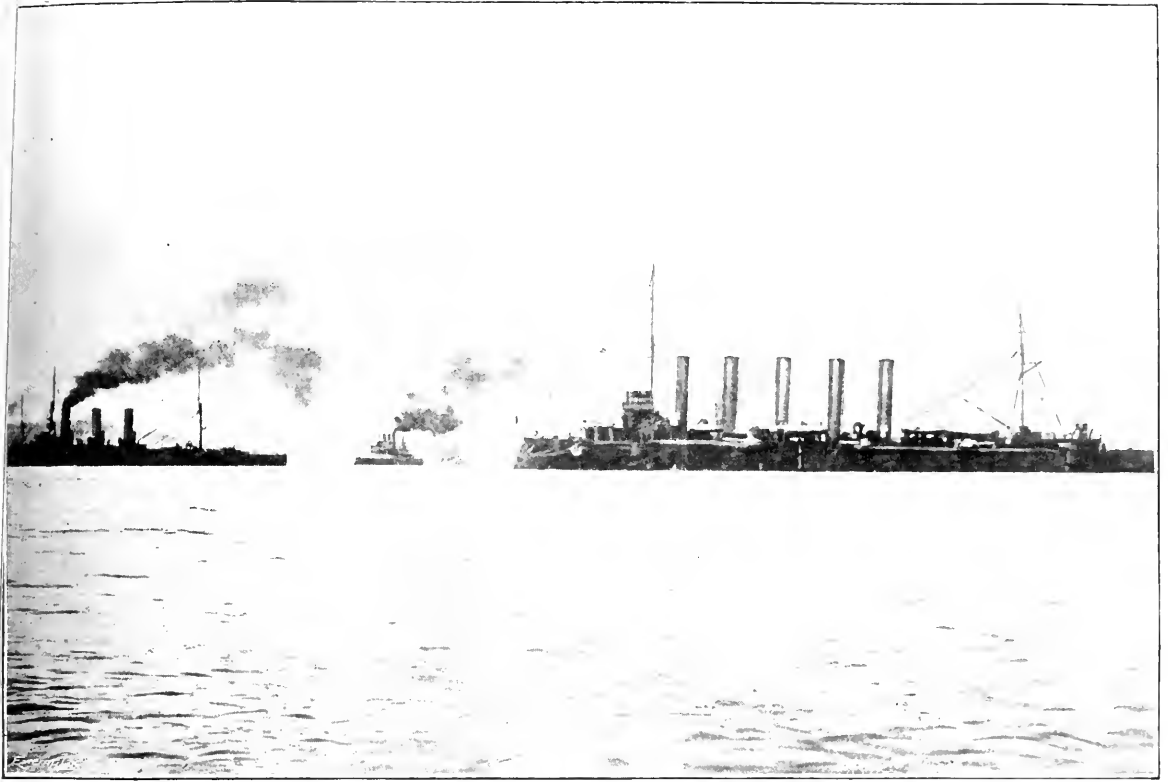
In order to make perfectly clear my view of Captain Andrzeievsky's action, it is necessary to answer two questions. Had he the right to refuse to submit to the orders of the flag-captain? And, had he the means at hand to prevent these orders from being carried out? In my opinion, both questions may be answered in the affirmative.

He had the right, and he had the means.

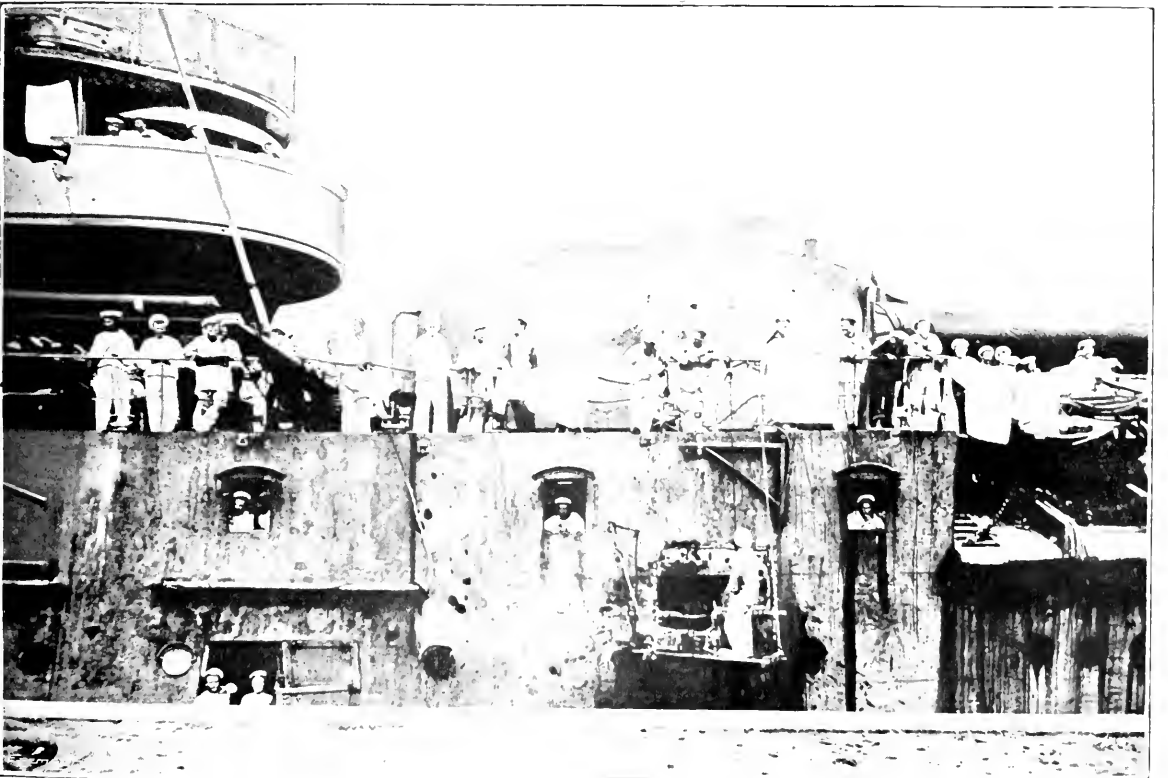
Captain Andrzhievsky says that he could not know that Admiral Rozhestvensky was unconscious, and that he supposed it was he who had arranged all. But apart from the fact that this would have made little difference—since a decision to surrender coming from Admiral Rozhestvensky (though apparently more imposing) would have been just as unlawful and contrary to the interests of the service—the commander of the “Grozny,” by supposing such a thing, shows that he did not know his Admiral. It is doubtful, however, whether he would wish to repeat the statement that Admiral Rozhestvensky could have given the order to surrender. After he knew that Admiral Rozhestvensky had been wounded in the head and other places, he ought to have known that if these wounds were so slight as not to make it impossible for the Admiral to continue to command, he would not have resigned his command to Admiral Niebogotov; nor would he have left the fleet in the thick of the battle and steamed off on board a torpedo-vessel to Vladivostok. Moreover, the statement of the commander of the “Grozny” that he himself, though wounded, continued to command his torpedo-boat, ought to have made him confident that the Admiral, unless he had been rendered actually incapable by his wounds, would have acted in exactly the same manner; nor had he any right to suppose anything different. Then, the very fact of the surrender of the “Biedovy” without fighting ought to have shown him that, in the first place, Admiral Rozhestvensky was not in command; and, in the second place, that the people round the Admiral had lost their heads, and, accordingly, that it was necessary to bring them to their senses by energetic means. I will go further, and say that the commander of the “Grozny” had the right to suppose that the flag-captain was also in an unconscious condition. He should never have left the fleet in the midst of a battle, unless he had been so seriously wounded as to be incapable of carrying out his duty.

In paragraph 107 of the Navy Regulations we read that “the

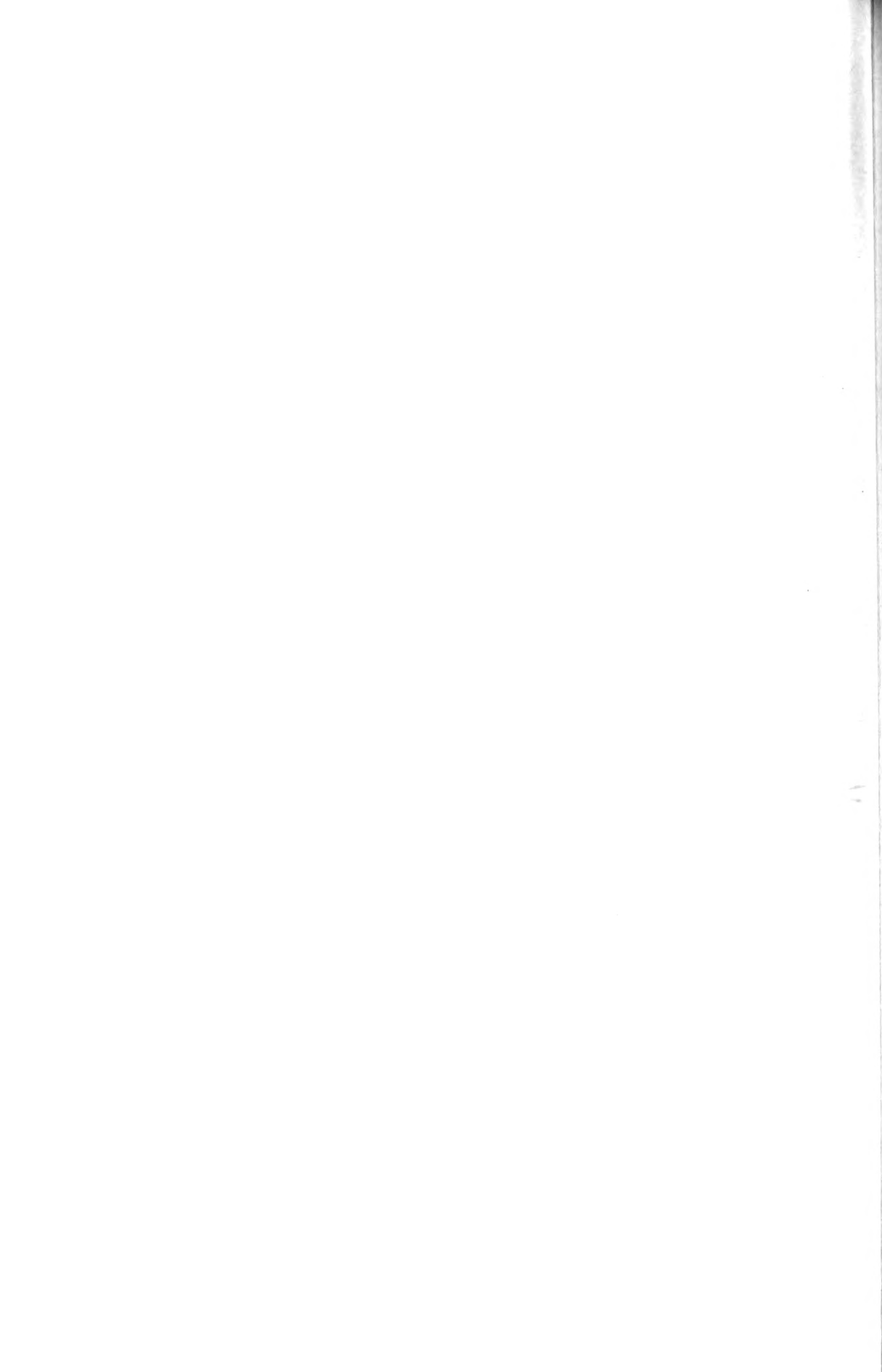
Admiral shall, in battle, be in continual communication with the chief of his staff as to his intentions and the orders he gives, in order that, in the event of his death or disablement, the chief of the staff may be able to carry on the battle on the same plan." This regulation is obligatory also for a flag-captain, who is thus permitted to direct the battle independently. After Admiral Rozhestvensky had fallen into an unconscious condition, however, he was the only man who could carry out his chief's intentions, and consequently, unless he considered he had lost the power of fulfilling his orders, he ought on no account to have accompanied Admiral Rozhestvensky when he was transferred to the torpedo-vessel. He could have appointed one of his numerous subordinates to do this, and he himself should have made every endeavour to reach Admiral Niebogotov, to whom the command of the squadron had been handed over. We can hope, at least, that Admiral Rozhestvensky had disclosed in entirety his plans to his staff officer, in order to help him to continue the battle. Or he should have tried to reach Admiral Enquist, or any of the battleships or cruisers. Lastly, he might have remained on board the "Suvorov," which continued fighting long after the Admiral had left her. The fact that he was leaving the scene of the battle on board a torpedo-boat can only be explained by supposing that, for some reason or other, he was no longer capable of carrying out his orders, since he appeared there as a helpless passenger, just as was Admiral Rozhestvensky, who was unconscious. The commander of the "Grozny" had time for all these considerations, and they ought to have occurred to him the moment he knew that Admiral Rozhestvensky was on board the "Biedovy," wounded in the head and in other places, and that his staff were all more or less wounded, i.e. for this purpose he had at his disposal eight to ten hours. Did it not occur to the commander of the "Grozny" that he might meet with the enemy? And did he not consider what rôle he ought to play then? Even if he did not consider that Admiral Rozhestvensky was incapable of directing the battle (though, I repeat, he ought not to have imagined himself



THE RUSSIAN FLEET ENTERING THE INNER ROADSTEAD OF PORT ARTHUR FEB 6TH  
The "Askold" in the foreground.



DAMAGED SIDE OF THE BATTLESHIP "TSESAREVITCH" AT TSIN DAO  
The breach on the left was caused by the shell which killed Admiral Witheft





in a position to know how far the Admiral's wounds were serious, nor what members of his staff accompanied him, nor how serious their wounds were), since he was senior to the commander of the "Biedovy" he certainly ought to have considered it possible that he might have to decide both questions himself.

Already the fact that in these eight to ten hours no indication had been given from the "Biedovy" as to what was to be done in the case of a possible meeting with the enemy, ought to have shown that something irregular was proceeding, and should have induced the commander of the "Grozny" to clear up the matter. A detailed parley might easily have been held, for the torpedo-boats were not going at a very great speed—twelve to fourteen knots—and the sea was calm. Under these circumstances, they could have approached near enough to one another to converse without speaking-trumpets. Even the commander of the cruiser "Idsumi," a ship ten times larger, approached so close to his flagship that he could make his report by word of mouth. (See the excellent description of the battle by an officer of the "Idsumi," which appeared in the supplement to the "Rus" of 1 September.) But besides this, he could have communicated by means of the semaphore (where each position of the hands corresponds to a separate letter of the alphabet), which is very quick and convenient. By means of these communications the actual condition of Admiral Rozhdestvensky could have been ascertained without fail, and the commander of the "Grozny" could have made a free and detailed communication as to his intentions. I think his protest would have been sufficient to bring the flag-captain to his senses.

I have only mentioned this by the way, for it was not done, and so is only a subject for regret. It is a fact that the decision of the "Biedovy" to surrender took the commander by surprise, just as, in my opinion, he ought to have been surprised at finding the flag-captain in command the moment he recognized him walking about the deck at a time he considered him either absent, or in such a condition that he was no longer capable of commanding. Had the commander of the "Grozny" the right,

in such circumstances, to prevent the surrender? In my opinion he had. Section 854 of the Naval Regulations, foreseeing the possibility of the surrender of a ship, says that "it is allowable only with the general consent of the officers," when it is absolutely impossible to make a further stand to destroy the ship. If this regulation be taken literally, it may possibly be taken to refer only to a single ship. Arguing thus, once all the officers on board the "Biedovy" had generally consented to surrender, the agreement by the officers of the "Grozny" was not required by the regulations, and accordingly these officers had not the right to interfere with what had been decided on board the "Biedovy."

It is my personal opinion ; I force it on no one, yet I consider it my duty to speak out, that such an interpretation of the regulation is quite wrong, and even dangerous. From these two articles it is quite clear to me that the regulations do not allow the surrender of a Russian ship, except when further fighting is absolutely impossible, and means do not remain whereby the ship can be destroyed. The regulation does not give the sole right of surrender to the Commander-in-Chief, but requires that all his subordinates should consent to it. Moreover, the regulation gives to each subordinate who does not agree with the decision of his superiors to surrender the power of giving orders in all subsequent actions, and his superiors are bound to yield him this right, otherwise the requirements of the regulations would be mere empty sound.

If such is the meaning of these two clauses of the regulations, they apply in spirit, if not in letter, to several ships acting together, i.e. to a squadron.

If the regulation does not speak directly about this, but only mentions a separate ship, it is simply because its meaning does not allow of the thought that a whole squadron could surrender, or that one ship of it could do so either—though absolutely beaten, and having the right to surrender if it had been alone—when there are two ships with it, still able to fight on. So much the more does this clause apply to the case under consideration,

where there was not a squadron of ships, where there were not even two ships, but only two small vessels with an aggregate displacement of 700 tons and crews of about 150 men; far less than any gunboat, not to mention a cruiser or battleship. Moreover, here were two small boats which could communicate directly by word of mouth, and this was not hindered by conditions of weather. Then, too, there was the presence of the Commander-in-Chief on board one of these vessels and the potentiality of fighting, for both our destroyers had on board their full complement of crew, guns, and torpedoes, supply of ammunition, etc., and hulls and engines undamaged, while the enemy, too, was of no more than equal strength. All this made the decision to surrender the "Biedovy" far more irregular, and, at the same time, made it the more necessary for the commander of the "Grozny" to disagree with the decision and oppose it in every possible way. On such arguments I base my assertion that the commander of the "Grozny" would have acted rightly in refusing to carry out the orders he received from the "Biedovy," and in assuming command of both boats.

(V) COULD THE SURRENDER HAVE BEEN PREVENTED?

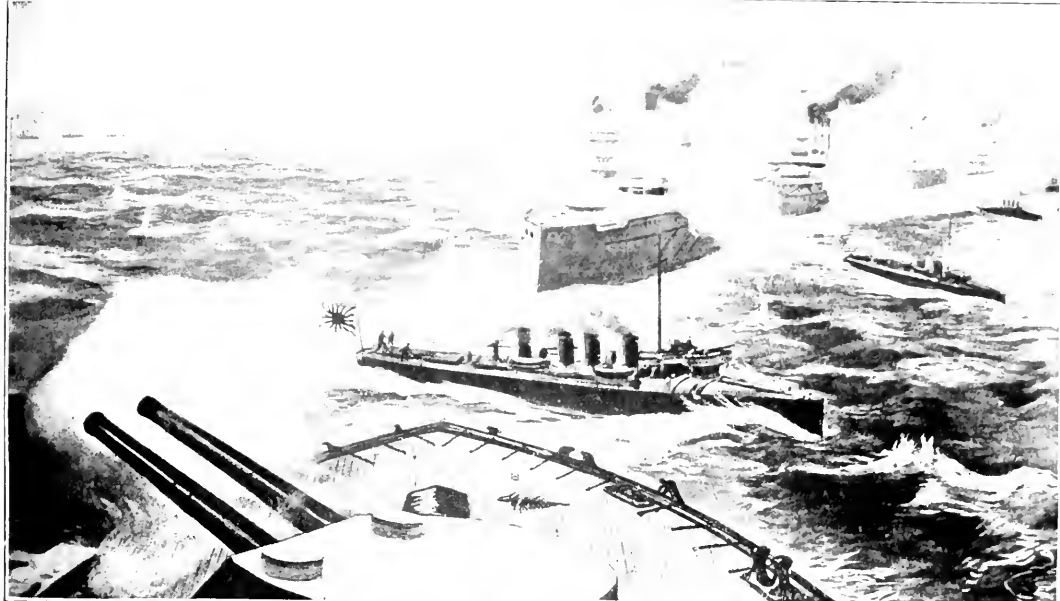
I shall now consider whether he had the means of preventing the surrender of the "Biedovy."

"In my opinion," writes Captain Andrzhievsky, "the only thing I could have done would have been to fire on the 'Biedovy' and sink her, so as to prevent the Admiral falling into the hands of the Japanese. And this idea did enter my head."

I can by no means agree with this opinion. The course which the commander of the "Grozny" considers to have been the only one open to him, seems to me to be such as only to be taken in the very last extremity; I even hesitate to raise the question, "Had the commander of the 'Grozny' the right, even in the last extremity, to sink a Russian ship and destroy her crew?" It seems to me that he might have fired on the

Japanese torpedo-vessels, in the hope that one of his shells might prevent them from capturing the "Biedovy," and oblige the latter to come to her senses and join in the battle. Moreover, the Japanese themselves would have forced the "Biedovy" to do this, since if the "Grozny" had begun to interfere with their capture of the "Biedovy," they would have opened fire on her, without paying attention to the flag of truce. They had a right to ignore the Red Cross flag from the very first, since it had been hoisted irregularly, after the appearance of the enemy. Strictly speaking, the flag of truce did not denote an unconditional surrender, the special sign of which is the lowering of the ensign. It is not clear to me whether this had been done or not. When Niebogotov surrendered, according to evidence from the "Idsumi," he lowered his ensign, and made by the international code the signal "I surrender." The flag of truce merely signifies the wish to parley, and the Japanese had a perfect right not to agree to this.

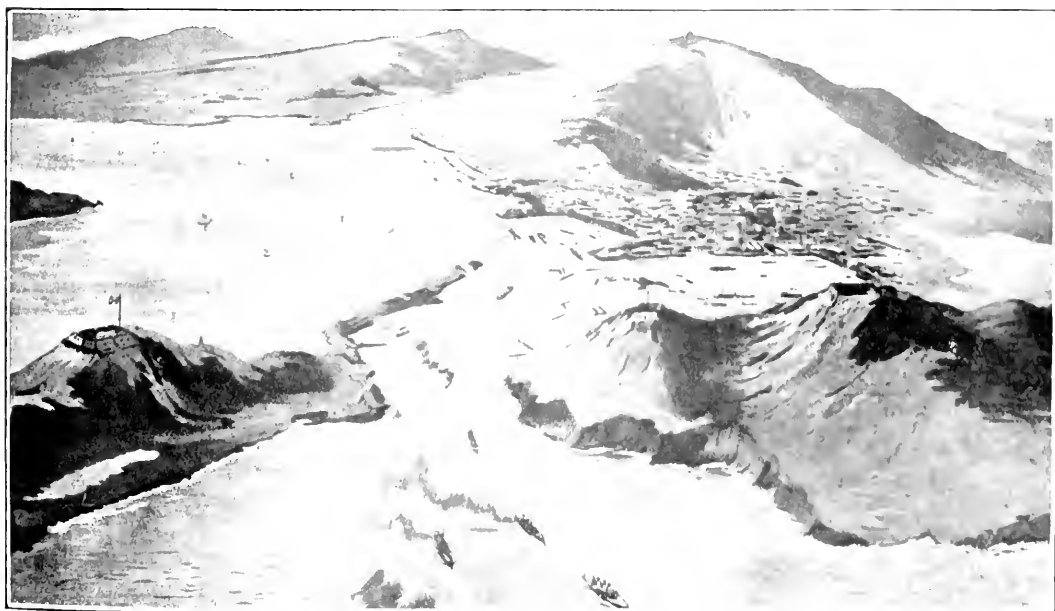
In my opinion the action of the "Grozny" might have been as follows. On receiving no answer to her question, "Why sail away? Why not stay and fight?" on seeing that the "Biedovy" did not quicken her speed, the "Grozny" might have approached near enough to hail her with a speaking-trumpet, in order to find out what the "Biedovy" was going to do, and to protest against surrender, if there had been time, before the hoisting of the flag of truce. The commander of the "Grozny" could not but have suspected that something irregular was being planned on board the "Biedovy" the moment he received orders to make for Vladivostok. This suspicion ought to have been increased when he received no answer to his question, and the "Biedovy" did not quicken speed. Even at the moment when it became certain that she was about to surrender—and in his opinion the flying of the flags on board indicated this—he might have signalled to her, "I don't consent to a surrender: I request the 'Biedovy' to fight; I shall not go to Vladivostok, but shall fight, though alone. I shall not allow you to surrender while I have a gun to fire, but take on myself the responsibility



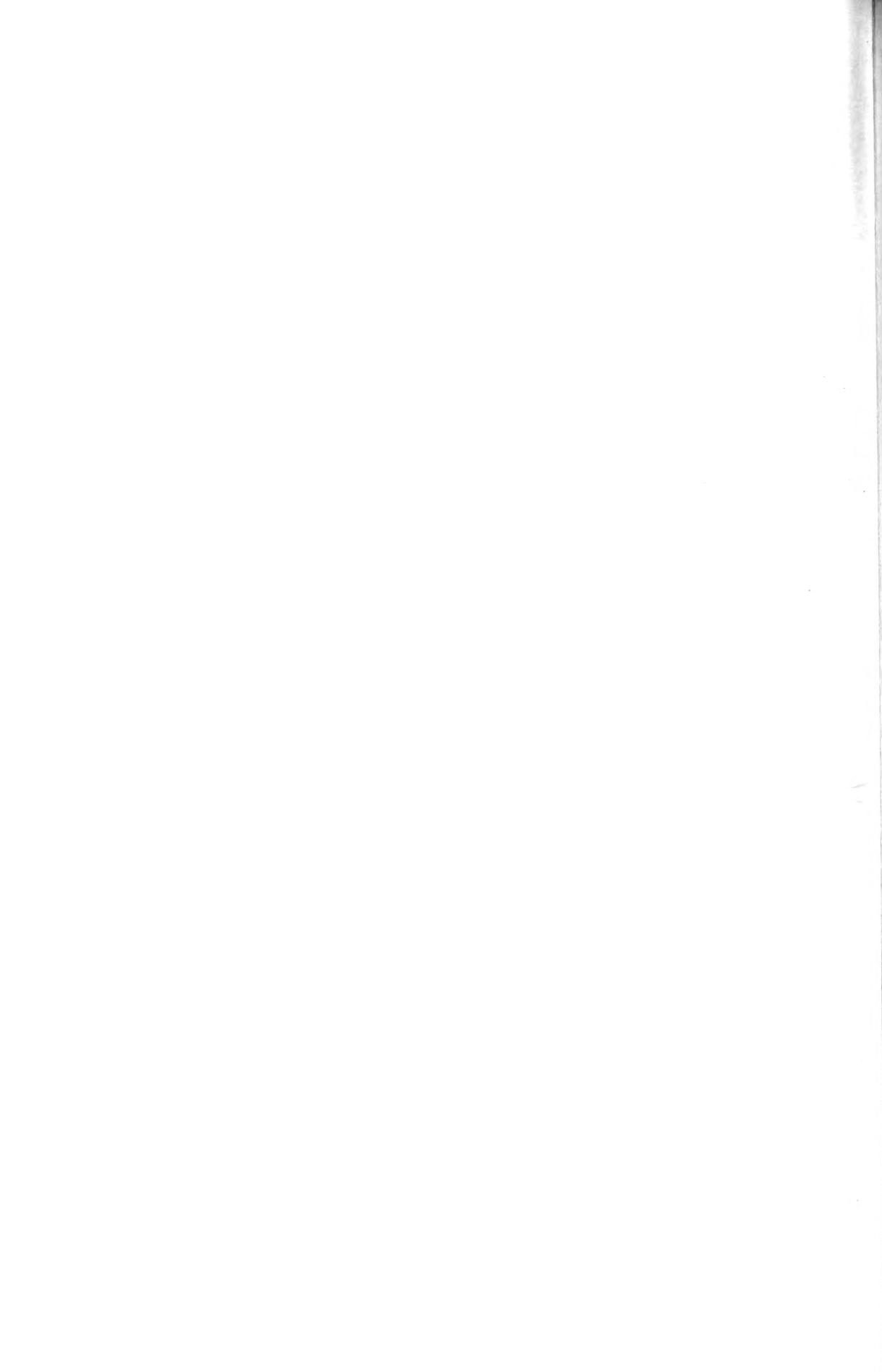
ATTACK ON PORT ARTHUR BY THE JAPANESE FLEET



VLADIVOSTOK



ROADSTEAD OF PORT ARTHUR



of both boats and their fate." Had he time to do this? A plan exists which shows the relative positions of the torpedo-boats according to information received from the commander of the "Grozny." From this it would seem that up to the time when the enemy appeared, the "Grozny" was following astern of the "Biedovy" at a distance of about two cables (400 yards), but when the "Grozny" overtook the "Biedovy" in order to ask what she was to do, the two vessels were in line, about a cable's length apart. The speed of the two destroyers was from 12 to 14 knots, but the "Grozny" might have steamed much faster in a calm sea. It takes half a minute to steam one cable with a speed of only 12 knots. Therefore the "Grozny" might have approached the "Biedovy" the instant the latter stopped her engines, especially as to meet the Japanese the "Grozny" had to pass the "Biedovy." I do not imagine that those on board the "Biedovy" would have refused to obey the orders of the commander of the "Grozny." Yet it seems to me that it was not necessary for him to give orders, but only to bring them to their senses by energetic words. If they had not obeyed his orders at once, or had not obeyed them at all—and I admit it would have been difficult to do so—yet the sight of their comrades fighting alone against two Japanese vessels must have forced the "Biedovy" to open fire. What would have happened if the "Biedovy" had persisted in her intention to surrender? In this case it would have been the honourable duty of the "Grozny" to fight alone against the two vessels of the enemy, and to have perished rather than have allowed the "Biedovy" to be captured with the Admiral on board. Certainly in this case the overwhelming chances of victory would have been in favour of the Japanese, yet even they would not have come out of the battle unscathed. It would have been sufficient had the shells of the "Grozny" damaged the Japanese engines, and one successful shot at each boat might have done this. Then the "Biedovy" could have gone off, even if she had not fought. The "Grozny" could only have attained such a result in a battle at close range, when the probability of hitting

would have been greatest. In general, the shorter the range the more advantageous would have been the battle for our vessels.

The "Grozny" certainly could not have "stopped her engines and commenced a battle with two torpedo-vessels while keeping in the same place," as her commander writes. I quite agree with him that this would have been nothing less than a deliberate sacrifice. In general it is not possible to keep stationary and fight. In this case it would have allowed the Japanese to manœuvre beyond the range of the 75 mm. gun of the "Grozny," and to fire torpedoes. Captain Andrzhievsky further writes that he could have defended the "Biedovy" with the last drop of his blood, if only she had not stopped her engines. I take the liberty of pointing out that in the first place there was no necessity for this, and in the second it was not correct from a tactical point of view. It was quite possible for the "Grozny" to keep up speed and manœuvre in sight of the "Biedovy." How she ought to have manœuvred is impossible to point out here. It depended on the action of the Japanese; but the object of this manœuvring would have been to avoid being in a line between the enemy and the "Biedovy," to avoid the shells from the Japanese torpedo-vessels, and to give the "Biedovy" a free field of fire, so that she might take part in the battle. No one can be certain that those on board the "Biedovy" would not in any case have come to their senses and taken part in the battle, or that in a battle at short range both the Japanese torpedo-boats might not have been damaged and prevented from capturing the "Biedovy," or that the "Grozny" would have, for no purpose, run the risk of being sunk in a few minutes. No one, I repeat, can be certain of these things, and the battle ought therefore to have been begun in sight of the "Biedovy," and not out of her sight, as was the case, since the commander of the "Grozny" sailed away at the speed of twenty-two knots an hour.



## (VI) SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The commander of the "Grozny" did not even try to make use of the means I have indicated above. According to his report, he sailed ahead directly he saw the flag of truce hoisted on board the "Biedovy," which in his opinion meant surrender without battle. In his letter to me he explains such action by saying that he was obliged to sail farther off in order to be more free and to fight with one enemy instead of two; and secondly, being in want of coal, so as to be at the same time drawing nearer to Vladivostok.

No one can deny that it was necessary for him to draw clear from the "Biedovy" in order to be more free in his action. I have already pointed out that to remain in one place with his engines stopped was out of the question. It is also true that it was right to move farther away from the "Biedovy" in order to separate the Japanese boats. But this distance should have had a limit. It did not make it impossible to remain in sight of the "Biedovy," since acting thus constituted one means of bringing her crew to their senses. As to the want of coal, this ought to have been the very last consideration when compared with the chance of saving a whole vessel and her crew. The first object ought to have been to prevent the capture of the Admiral, and every consideration opposed to this ought to have taken a second place. Again, these considerations would have had greater importance in a battle where a whole fleet, or even a division of it, was concerned. There it would have been necessary to think of what was to happen after the battle, and to consider whether fresh supplies of coal and ammunition could be obtained, and whether the damaged ships could be conveyed to port. In that case the absence of such considerations might lessen the importance of even the most glorious victory, influence the destiny of the war, and the success of the later actions of the fleet. What applies to the whole fleet certainly does not apply to the smallest unit of a fleet, one torpedo-vessel.

If the vessel had been left without coal, and if on account of this it had been cast somewhere on the Korean coast, this would not have had any influence on the ultimate fate of the fleet. Still less would it have changed the course of the war.

I cannot, moreover, help observing that in my opinion the danger of being left without coal was not very great. The battle lasted three hours, simply because the "Grozny" sailed away at once in the direction of Vladivostok at a speed of nearly twenty-three miles an hour. It took the Japanese some time to overtake her. Such a speed rendered accurate firing difficult for both sides. All this prolonged the battle. If the "Grozny" had fought without steaming out of sight of the "Biedovy," the battle would not have lasted more than half an hour, and half an hour would have meant the loss of ten miles, while the difference in the distance from Vladivostok and Possiet was more than twenty-eight miles. The commander of the "Grozny" had received orders to make for Vladivostok, but in the event of his not having sufficient coal to reach the latter place he was ordered to make for Possiet. In consideration of the question of coal it was still more advantageous to finish the battle quickly, because if the vessel was not going at full speed during the battle, she was prepared to do so at any moment. After the battle she could have steamed at an economical speed—as the commander of the "Grozny" did. This speed for a torpedo-boat-destroyer is from twelve to fifteen miles an hour. It is called "economical" because if the speed is increased  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times, the expenditure of coal is increased twice or even more. And so the less time they were going at full speed the greater distance they could have covered with the same supply of coal. Therefore the commander of the "Grozny," in going at full speed during a battle which lasted three hours, was less economical with respect to coal than he would have been had he spent half an hour on the battle and then, if successful, gone the rest of the way at economical speed. Certainly he might not have been successful, his engines might have been damaged, boiler-tubes might have been pierced, and this would have caused a considerable increase in the

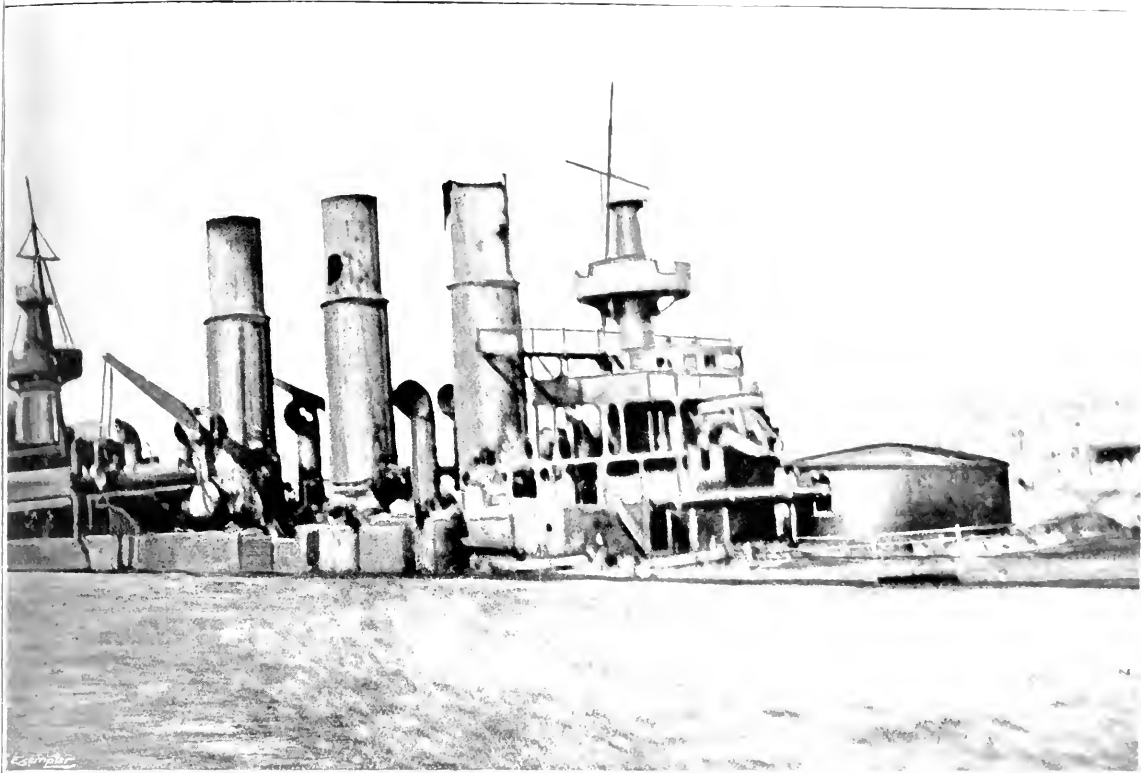
expenditure of coal. But then the "Grozny" risked her very existence in the battle which she did wage, and so the difference in risk would have only been one of degree. She might have perished, just as the boat which pursued her perished. Great honour is due to the crew of the "Grozny" for sinking the enemy at the beginning of the battle, where the force was the same on both sides, and both sides ran the same risks. None could foresee the result of the battle.

I repeat that the commander of the "Grozny," in sailing away at full speed and fighting for three hours, did not solve the question of coal in the only way, or even in the best way.

The instant those on board the "Grozny" saw that the enemy's torpedo-craft had separated, and that only one was pursuing them, they should have slackened speed in order that they might fight at a closer range, without losing sight of the "Biedovy." So they might settle one enemy before the other came up. The fact that the torpedo-vessel pursuing them was the less powerful one—with two funnels—and that she was not steaming so fast as they were (though going at a good speed), and that the larger and swifter four-funnelled boat remained with the "Biedovy"—which the Japanese had a right to consider helpless—ought to have made them think that the enemy's larger boat, for some reason or other, was incapable of steaming at full speed. Otherwise she would have pursued the "Grozny." It is impossible, though, to point out all the combinations which might have been made. I have only indicated a few of them in order to show that the course taken was not the only one, nor the best, and that it would have been quite possible to have prevented the capture of Admiral Rozhestvensky. How weak the arguments were about the coal, and the absolute necessity of manœuvring so as to fight with only one antagonist—even if there was no hope that the "Biedovy" would help in battle—I hope to prove very simply. Let us suppose that both Japanese vessels had remained with the "Biedovy" and that neither of them had pursued the "Grozny," or that one had pursued and not overtaken her and then turned back. How, in

this case, could the "Grozny" have possibly continued her course to Vladivostok, and not have turned back in order to try and rescue Admiral Rozhestvensky, even from an enemy twice the "Biedovy's" own strength? I am confident that if such a thing had happened, the "Grozny" would have turned back, and, without either considering coal, or possible danger to the crew and vessel, would have aimed solely at preventing the capture of the Admiral. That is why I consider the mistake on the part of her commander to be quite accidental, and a mistake very easy to make in battle, where there is little time for thought. It is from this point of view that I look into the question, and not with the desire to censure or praise any person. I consider it my duty, as far as I can, to take my part in the great task of gaining experience for future use from present events. If I am not right in my deductions, let him who writes the history of this war cast them aside; but from the knowledge in my possession I steadfastly believe in them and am unable to think otherwise.

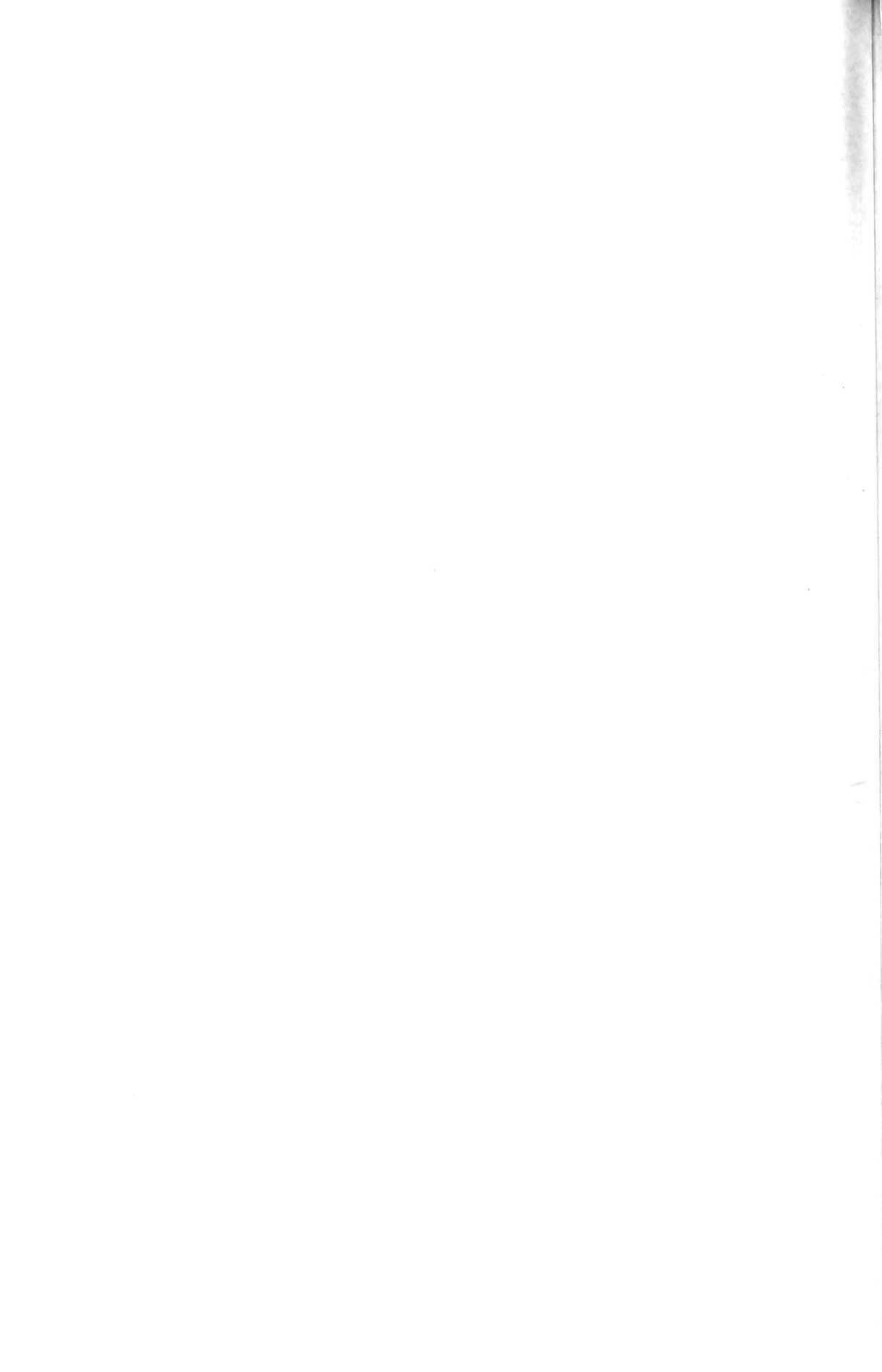
As to the statement of Captain Andrzhievsky, that I have said nothing of the battle itself with the Japanese torpedo-boats and of the sinking of one torpedo-boat, I admit that I did not speak about it, and shall say nothing about it now. The place where it happened is many miles from where Admiral Rozhestvensky was taken prisoner. The commander of the "Grozny" has himself divided this event into two parts, quite separate from one another—the circumstances under which the Russian Admiral was captured: and the battle between the "Grozny" and the Japanese torpedo-boat. Notwithstanding the fact that the second event was signaled by the sinking of the Japanese torpedo-vessel, it offers little interest now, and will offer still less in history. Neither will the course I pursue influence the importance of the results of these two events in the future. But one must not infer that the speed (22 knots) was necessary in order that the "Grozny" might sink a boat her own size. This could have happened just the same had the "Grozny" been going at another speed and with all other circumstances



THE SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR: THE SUNKEN BATTLESHIP "RETVISAN"



THE SURRENDER OF PORT  
AFTER-TURRET AND QUARTERDECK OF THE BATTLESHIP "RETVISAN"



altered. One may, in general, say that good shooting was necessary; but though we know how many of the Japanese shells struck our vessel, we do not know how many of ours struck the enemy. They may have been more or fewer; but they were certainly more successful. I say again that credit is due to the crew and commander of the "Grozny" for sinking their enemy, instead of being themselves sunk, when the chances of both were the same. Also, I am quite ready to compliment them on what they have done; but I repeat that this battle had no direct relation to those circumstances under which Admiral Rozhstvensky was taken prisoner, and therefore I do not enlarge upon it.

## CHAPTER IV

### (I) AUTHENTICITY AND COMPLETENESS OF INFORMATION

THE staff of the commander of the cruisers, which formed the Second Pacific Squadron, warned the public that my inferences about the Tsushima battle ought to be read with extreme caution, since I wrote my articles without sufficient knowledge of the battle, and, therefore, the majority of my conclusions did not correspond with the facts. From the documents sent by the assistant of the chief of the headquarters Naval Staff (Rear-Admiral Virenus), it seems that this warning was a copy of the telegram from Manila which Rear-Admiral Enquist sent to be published in the "Novoye Vremya." The sending of this telegram ought to have meant that accurate information as to the points in my articles which did not correspond with the facts was to follow immediately. With respect to the inaccuracy of my conclusions—since as yet I do not know in what this inaccuracy consists—I can say nothing. I shall be patient, and only be very grateful for this to the staff of Admiral Enquist. I am not so self-confident as to suppose that I could avoid making mistakes in describing events about which I then had only very scanty and confused data. Observe what I said in my analysis of the Tsushima battle in a previous chapter.

Warnings from the staff of Admiral Enquist that Russian people should accept my conclusions with great caution were very much behindhand. I had warned them about the same thing more than two months before the staff did so ; and I might on my part have advised the staff, if it honoured my articles with its attention, to read them more carefully. I waited for competent information from Admiral Enquist, to know of what they



accused me. I understand that there was some allegation that I had exposed myself to accusation by writing articles, and that it referred chiefly to myself personally. The question of information about the Tsushima battle is quite another matter. For this not only I, but the whole of Russia, waited with impatience. Russia, perhaps, did not fall into the same mistakes as I did, but she ardently desired more complete information, and was tormented by the absence of it. She was justly indignant at the scantiness of the information given by those who could, with little trouble, have given complete reports. For some incomprehensible reason they did not give them, and if my articles, thanks to the fact that they were full of mistakes, induced the communication of more complete information to the public, then the bitterness of having to acknowledge errors will be a hundredfold removed by the knowledge that even these articles, preliminary, conditional, and full of mistakes though they were, have, all the same, been of some use ; and I do not regret having written them.

This warning remained an unfounded and clumsy attempt to compromise me in public opinion, and I refer this mean attempt to the judgment of the people. I certainly should not have given such a warning without sufficient reason. The Russian people had the right to expect from Admiral Enquist and his staff, more than from any other source, a detailed description of the Tsushima catastrophe, and a complete explanation of those immediate causes of it which did not form a secret of war. He was the only one of the chiefs of the division of the Second Squadron who had complete freedom in communicating with St. Petersburg ; Rozhestvensky and Niebogotov were prisoners ; Schein had perished. Enquist, more than any one else, ought to have known the plans of Admiral Rozhestvensky, and he, therefore, more than any one else, could have prevented false conceptions by giving the due explanation of the actions of the fleet, which would be inexplicable to others. To give their observations of the course of the battle, and forward a description of it, was the plain duty of the staff, and especially of those

who were on board the cruiser "Oleg," his flagship, which suffered comparatively little loss and damage, and, one cannot help thinking, did not come under very heavy fire.

If sufficient information had arrived from Manila (which the staff of Admiral Enquist possessed), when it was found that the information on which I based my articles was insufficient, even I could not then have drawn conclusions which did not correspond with facts. It was not for the staff of Admiral Enquist to reproach me, since they most of all were to blame if my conclusions were incorrect.

## (II) THE ACCUSERS AT FAULT

Let us now see what Admiral Enquist and his staff did on their side to keep their country informed about the battle over which she has been grieved at heart, and has blushed for shame.

On his arrival at Manila, on 5 June, Admiral Enquist sent his first report,<sup>1</sup> which appeared in print on 10 June. This was very brief. It did not give a clear picture of the battle, and that part of it which explains the departure of three cruisers to the south is not intelligible. The perplexity as to this report was still more increased by the fact that on the same day the report of the commander of the destroyer "Bodry" was published. That clearly contradicted the information from Admiral Enquist, that because of the darkness he was separated from the squadron and other cruisers of the line. The commander of the "Bodry" saw this separation. The report of the Commander-in-Chief, published on 12 June, based on the evidence of those who had taken part in the battle, confirms the fact that Admiral Enquist was separated from the rest of the fleet and went south, while the rest of the fleet went north. In this report it is pointed out that the attempt of the battleships to unite with the cruisers entirely failed, owing to the fact that Admiral Enquist continued to go south, while only part of the cruisers turned north and accompanied the battleships. It would seem, then,

<sup>1</sup> See page 147.

that Admiral Enquist and his staff were quite capable of explaining these serious contradictions, and need not have left Russia in doubt on such a poignant question. But the reports to which I have referred are Russian and official, and as such were transmitted to all quarters of the globe, and were in all probability published in the local American newspapers at Manila on the day after their publication in St. Petersburg. It seems that Admiral Enquist and his staff did not think it necessary to do this.

Subsequently, on 11 June, in the newspapers of the whole world, there appeared the unfortunate telegram of Reuter sent from Manila, purporting to be based on the accounts of Russian officers who were there. In this telegram it was stated that the appearance of the Japanese took the fleet of Rozhstvensky quite by surprise; that the Russian ships were not even prepared for battle; that the gunners were not at their posts; and that the guns, which they did not succeed in loading, remained silent. It was the duty of Admiral Enquist and his staff to deny this with as little delay as possible; but they either did not consider this necessary, or had read these telegrams, both the official Russian ones and the foreign, as carelessly as they read my articles when they passed over my warning. They were too ungrateful to observe that I had done this on their account. In two of my articles (Nos. 10,494 and 10,495, "Novoye Vremya") I explained in detail to the Russian people that it was hardly possible to believe that the communications of the correspondents were *based on information from Russian officers*. As a clear specimen of this, I indicated this telegram of Reuter on the very day when it appeared. It seemed to me that the anger the Russian people felt was not caused by the terrible events described in the telegram, but by the uncertainty as to the truth about these events. I think all will agree with me when I say: Give us the most terrible truth, but nothing beyond the truth. Do not torment us with omissions or concealments, or by leaving us only foreign or Japanese accounts to read, which certainly contain lies, in which we do not know the extent of the truth.

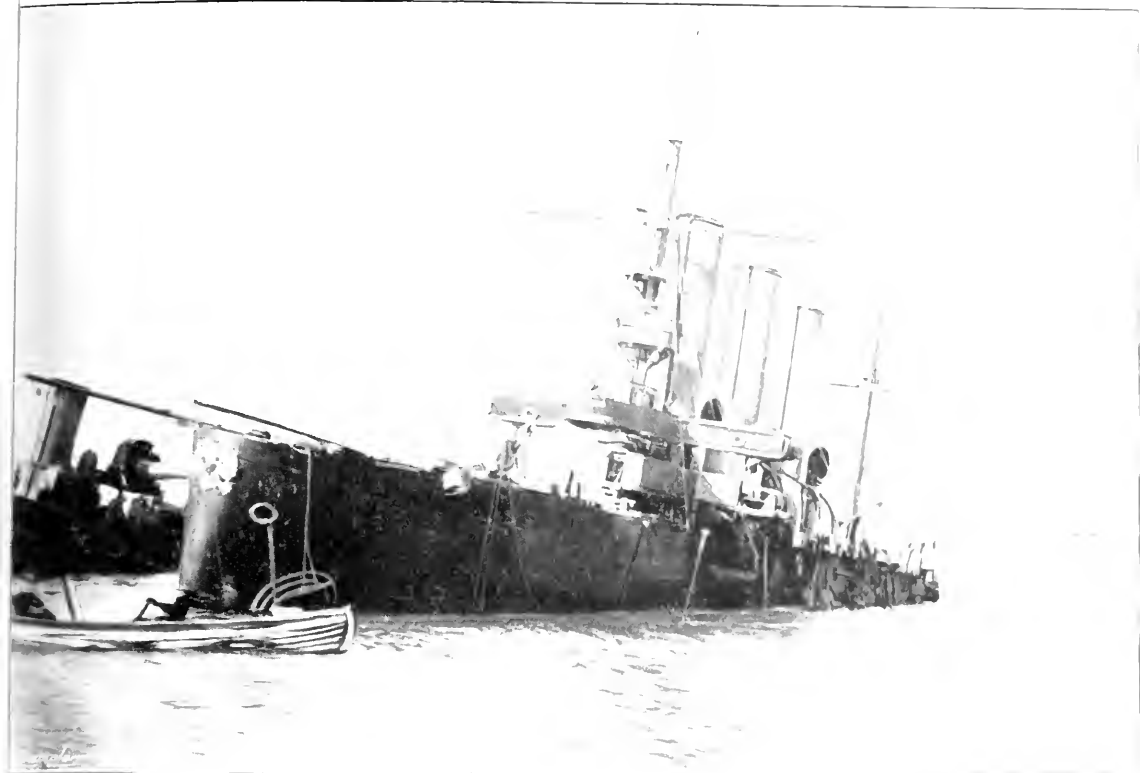
These omissions and concealments, besides showing contempt for us, lead us to suppose that the events were still more terrible than the foreign and Japanese accounts declared !

### (III) LACK OF OFFICIAL INFORMATION

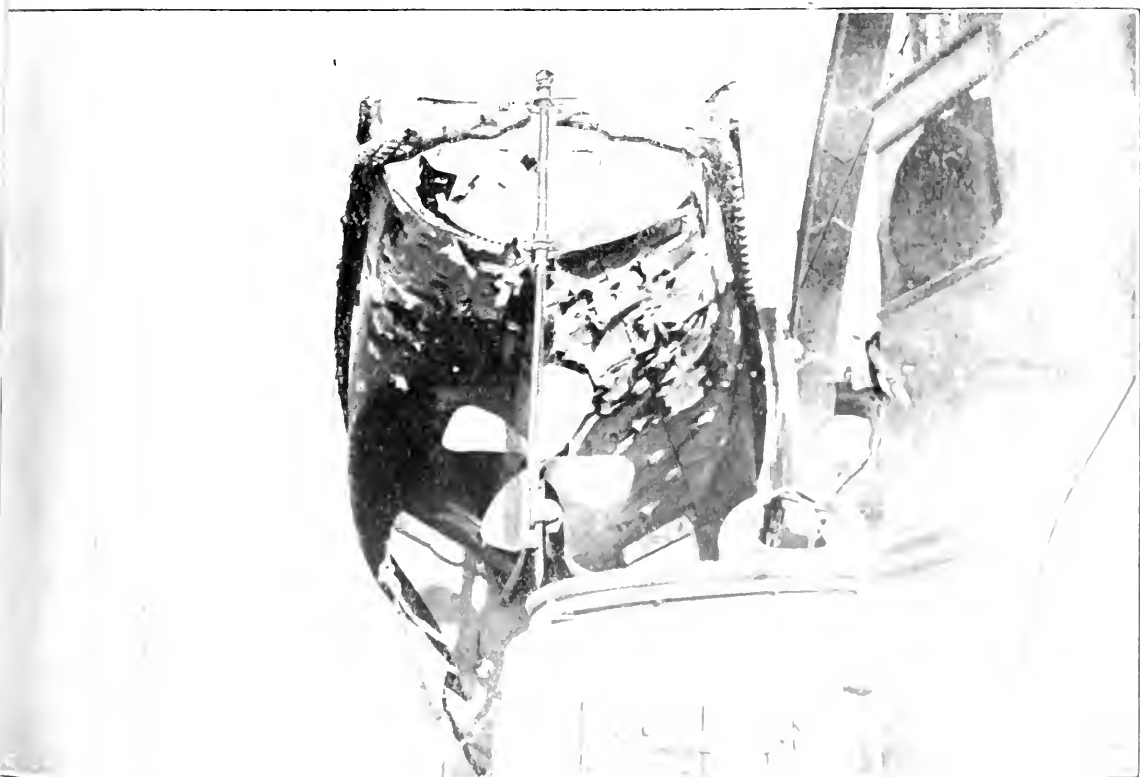
When I wrote my articles I endeavoured with all my power to get at the truth. I frequently pointed out the evil consequences which might follow the want of exact information, the necessity for an official explanation of many questions. When I lost hope of getting an official explanation, when I drew attention to those events which so agitated every one, I always pointed out the source of my information, and, moreover, I always showed my estimation of that source. I pointed out in each case its degree of completeness, its authenticity, and noted the contradictions in other reports, which had a right to be considered as equally authentic.

That I was right in giving up hope of official detailed information is shown by the fact that such information never did appear. The absence of this was especially striking in the case of Manila, whence it might easily have been sent. Yet an officer of the "Zhemtshug" afterwards sent an excellent and detailed description of the battle, with some very good explanatory maps, from Manila. This description has appeared in print (see *ante*, pp. 159-176). It was more difficult to follow the course of the battle on board the "Zhemtshug" than on board the "Oleg," and therefore the officer of the "Zhemtshug" was quite ignorant of much that was known to Admiral Enquist and his staff. Descriptions of the battle by officers of other vessels and eye-witnesses who were on board the transport "Korea" and the cruiser "Dmitri Donskoi" have also appeared (see *ante*), but there are many passages in these which would have been more clearly understood with the report of Admiral Enquist before us. What were his staff about ?

I cannot undertake to answer this exactly. Perhaps they had been hard at work ; perhaps excellent and more detailed reports



AT THE SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR: THE CRUISER "PALLADA"



ONE OF THE "PALLADA'S" CUTTERS STRUCK BY A SHELL



had long ago been written and sent to St. Petersburg, and, for some quite inexplicable reason, the headquarters Naval Staff kept them back. The truth we did not know, though the staff of Admiral Enquist, which sent a telegram with a warning as to the caution to be observed in reading my articles, could have explained what the more exact information, for the want of which it blames me, really was. The headquarters Naval Staff, also, in sending the telegram of Admiral Enquist to the Press, could have explained that more detailed reports had been received from Manila. They might have done so and added that, to avoid the diffusion among the Russian people of my incorrect ideas, these detailed reports, or suitable extracts from them, would soon be published. But no! These gentlemen did not condescend to pay such attention to the needs of the Russian people. Thus there were no visible signs of the work of Admiral Enquist's staff. One, however, of the actions of the staff is known to me.

#### (IV) SUGGESTIO FALSI: SUPPRESSIO VERI

On 12 June two telegrams were sent from Manila to the following effect. One ran: "The Japanese manœuvred and shot very badly; their shells had a range up to two miles; they fired chiefly in order to cover the action of their submarines; the Japanese ships ran foul of one another; we had 45 large guns, but the Japanese had only 20, including those in the cruisers; without submarines the Japanese could not have gained the victory; every other fleet would have suffered a like defeat had it been in the place of the Russian fleet. Address for correspondence 'Oleg,' 'Aurora,' or 'Zhemtshug,' Manila."

The second telegram said: "The Japanese fleet in the Tsushima battle manœuvred and shot very badly; their shells went over the Russian ships and fell some two miles beyond; the purpose of their fire was rather to cover the action of their submarines; their ships hindered one another's fire; we had 45 heavy guns, while they, on board battleships and cruisers, had only 20 altogether; without submarines they would in no case

have won the engagement, and because of their submarines any other fleet would have suffered the same defeat as ours did."

The first telegram was printed in the "Rus," the second in the "Novoye Vremya." The sender of the first telegram was unknown to me, but I have seen the second in the original. I simply could not believe my own eyes. Under it was the signature of a person on the staff of Admiral Enquist, who, moreover, occupied a very high position on that staff. But if we compare both telegrams, it is easy to recognize the author of the first, for it is evident that they were both written by one and the same person. And this is precisely the person who took, certainly, a most active part in composing the report of Admiral Enquist of 7 June, who could not have failed to notice the contradiction of this report and the report of the commander of the "Bodry," which, as I pointed out above, probably appeared in the American newspapers at Manila on 11 June. The telegram I have quoted strikes every one with its absurdity and absolutely untrue statement of the facts. Its untruth is so blatant that it is no longer worth our attention. When it appeared in print I noticed its absurdity, and if I did not then point out its author, it was simply because I was ashamed that an experienced naval officer of his rank and position—an eye-witness, moreover, of the battle—could send such a communication to the Russian people.

It is asked, What was the object of such a telegram, and of publishing it in two newspapers, just when Russians were greatly perturbed, and devoured every piece of news which could justify the defeat? This, one must think, was done in order to direct public opinion.

According to his nearness in station to Admiral Enquist, the author of this telegram had no legitimate or moral right to send it without the permission of his chief; but I am unwilling even to think that Admiral Enquist, who (though I do not agree with his action in the battle) I know is an honourable gentleman, took any part in such a "direction of public opinion." The author of this telegram rendered bad service to his chief by sending it.



I have pointed out the absurdity of the telegram from Manila of 12 June. Although deeply pained that an officer of Admiral Enquist's staff was the author, I have not mentioned his name. I have pointed out the contradictions of the reports from Manila and the official reports of the commander of the "Bodry" and of General Linievitch. Then the author of the telegram of 12 June, screened by the collective signature, "Staff of the Commander of the cruisers of the Second Pacific Squadron," charges me on his own account.

I waited for his further detailed explanation of my mistake, but at the same time I asked the staff to explain how it was that its apparent representative, having sufficiently complete information at hand, and having himself taken part in the battle, could give to the Russian public conclusions actually in direct opposition to the facts.

I thus had on my side every reason to warn the Russian people that the conclusions of the staff of the commander of the cruisers of the Second Pacific Squadron were to be accepted with great caution.

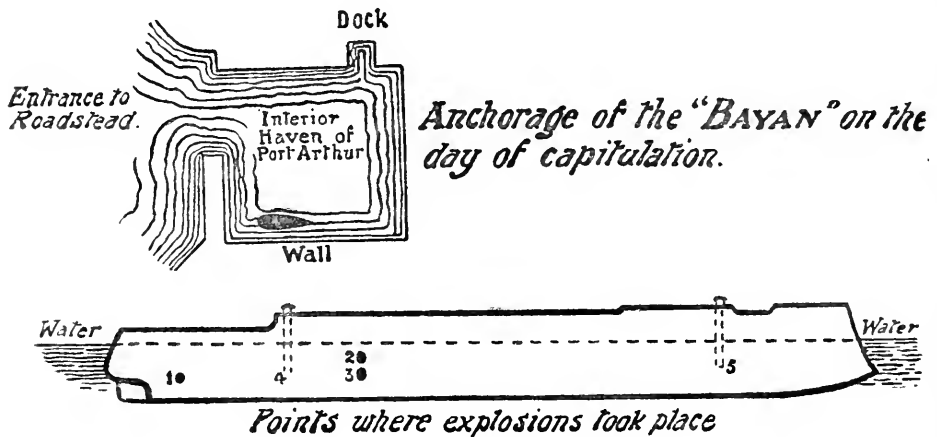
(V) A NEEDED CAUTION: THE TRUTH ABOUT THE "BAYAN"

"In a telegram from Guntshzhulin, Mr. Olginsky communicated the sad impression produced by a telegram from Tokio, announcing that the 'Bayan,' 'Peresviet,' and 'Poltava,'<sup>1</sup> sunk at Port Arthur, were raised and put into such condition as to proceed to Japan; the 'Bayan' in tow, and the 'Peresviet' and 'Poltava' under steam. The circumstances in which the 'Bayan' was sunk show how much reliance is to be placed on the Tokio telegram.

"The 'Bayan' was sunk by Japanese shells soon after the capture of 203 Metre Hill, i.e. in November, 1904. The cruiser was sunk in the harbour, near the dockyard wall itself, at such

<sup>1</sup> The Japanese actually succeeded in refloating the "Bayan," "Peresviet," "Poltava," and "Variag," and renamed them "Aso," "Sagami," "Tsugani," and "Soya," respectively. This article seems to prove conclusively that the "Aso" ("Bayan") will be of no fighting value to the Japanese.

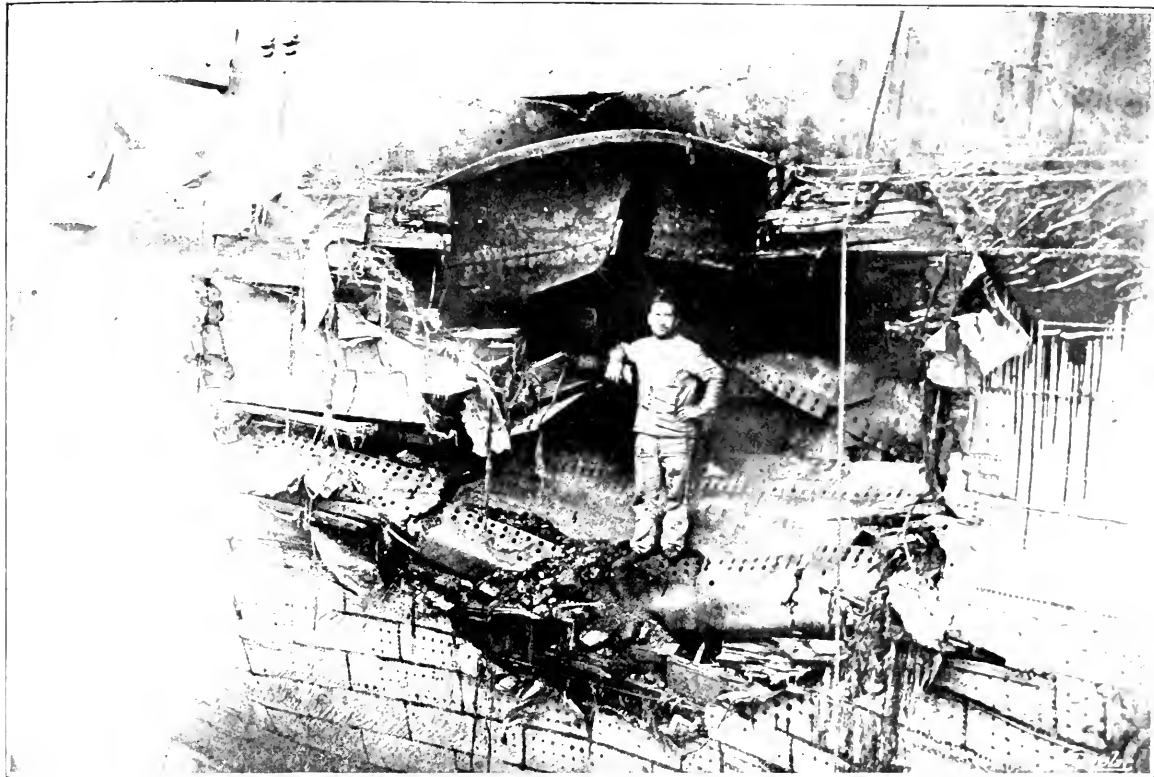
a shallow spot that, at low water, it was possible to work easily on the battery deck. On the night of the capitulation, order was given to blow up the vessels by 6 a.m. After that time all work on the destruction of vessels had to cease. The first explosions, at 9 p.m., were unsuccessful. The Bickford fuse, at a depth of about twenty-five feet, did not sustain the pressure, and broke away. This was not to be expected, as a well-prepared Bickford fuse ought to operate at great depths; but here it refused to act at an insignificant depth. Unfortunately, the torpedo-compartment and port, where another fuse or conductors and batteries might be found, had been destroyed. The vessel's



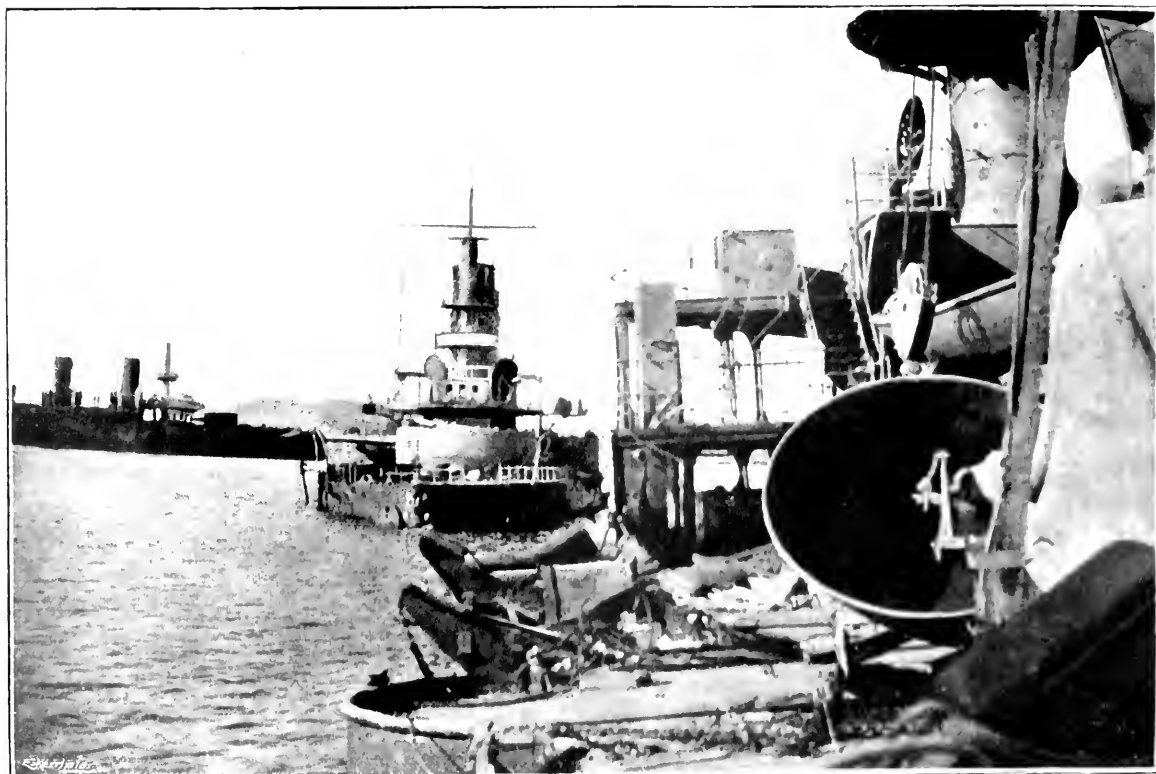
conductors and batteries were in the torpedo-magazine, then under water. It was necessary to increase the insulation of the fuse, wrapping it round with insulating ribbon. This work lasted until 1.30 a.m.

“At two o’clock, explosions began afresh. They were carried out in the following order. The charged sections of Whitehead torpedoes (each section contains four *poods* of pyroxylene) were fastened to long poles, and let down from the shore beneath the hull of the vessel. It was impossible to reach the keel. In spite of ample insulation, the Bickford fuses still refused to sustain a great pressure of water.

“At that time it was half tide. The difference between high and low water at Port Arthur is eleven feet. Not counting upon the Bickford, even with ample insulation, the rods were let down



TORPEDO DAMAGE TO THE HULL OF THE CRUISER "PALLADA"



THE SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR THE "PERESVIET" AND "POLTAVA" TAKEN FROM THE "RETVISAN"



five or six feet under water, and one section of the charge exploded near the stern (see sketch, page 268, 1). Then two charged sections (2 and 3) were exploded in front of the star-board engine. The result of the explosion was that the armour of the right side burst inwards, damaging the engine and forming a tremendous hole of from fifteen to twenty feet wide.

"After this, a charge of pyroxylene was exploded, of the same quantity as before, against the aftermost part of the ship. From this explosion, not only the whole rudder section was damaged with the bulkhead, but all the decks (including the upper) within the area of the explosion. The next charged section was exploded in the central part of the ship (5), passed there through the funnel from the conning tower. This explosion was so powerful that the gases shifted the armoured roof of the conning tower to the left. All the guns remaining at that time on board the 'Bayan' and the turrets were damaged; sulphuric acid was poured on the guns which could not be burst; this would corrode the metal, and render the gun useless. It is necessary to add that the 'Bayan' had six or seven holes under water from 11" shells, which sank her. The boilers, having been under water seven months, were hardly any good.

"We had hardly completed the work of explosion at 6 a.m. In the morning, the commander, senior officer, marine engineer, artificer, and I, inspected our exploded 'Bayan,' and came to the conclusion that it would be very difficult to raise her; and to make use of her for war, after repairs, was impossible. Perhaps we shall build a new cruiser in honour of the name of 'Bayan.'

"The marine engineer, very competent in these questions, expressed the opinion that 'it was possible, with present technical knowledge, to raise the cruiser, the more so as she was by the wall and at a shallow place. It was impossible to make use of her.'

"If the Japanese think of converting Port Arthur into their own fortress, they will of course have to clear the harbour, i.e. remove the vessels. Moreover, in whatever form the vessels are,

they will form trophies, which they will want to preserve. But from this there is a vast difference from what is said in the Tokio telegram. The 'Bayan' will not add to the strength of the Japanese fleet.

"LIEUTENANT N. PODGURSKY,  
"Senior torpedo-officer of the 'Bayan.'"

(VI) RESULT OF KEEPING BACK NEWS FROM THE  
THEATRE OF WAR

As long ago as March, 1905, in an article entitled "Inquiry," I called attention to the strange action of the Naval and Military departments regarding the charges which appeared in print against one or other of those officers who shared throughout in events at the theatre of this war, so disastrous for us. I pointed out the difficulty for the accused of personally refuting the charges against them. It is difficult to require of them indifference and imperturbability, for they are only men; and their failure, together with the accusations against them, have made it doubly painful for them. Had they refuted the charges it might have seemed that they were trying to cast the blame on others—on the authorities, for example. Moreover, it was quite impossible for some of them to answer, for some never received the papers in which their actions were criticized, while others are wounded or dead! Why do not the Naval and Military departments defend those who have acted unsuccessfully, if the public wrongly interprets their method of action? And to do this there is no need to enter into any newspaper dispute, still less to have recourse to personal accusations. All that is required is the publication of circumstantial reports from the theatre of war, in a few cases supplemented by competent criticism. As it is, all these departments are doing is to keep an obstinate silence, as though they washed their hands of the accused and left them to public criticism as scapegoats.

In history, the aim of which is to transmit to future generations the experiences of those who have gone before, every action

should be compared with the ideal, otherwise history loses its educational value. If we consider that everything is going on in the best possible way, and criticize nothing, then any progress we may make will only be accidental. And in my opinion the very first criticism and the very first estimation of events should appear in the columns of the daily Press, for here every one can take part in the criticism, and if the critics judge unfairly the public can at once see and point out this unfairness. Meanwhile, if we are going to postpone all criticism of the facts till the time when the history of the war is written, it may be that the man who writes this history may be unable to get together sufficient material for proper criticism, and so may criticize unfairly. Unfortunately we have always undertaken to write history when all those who took part in the events have one foot in the grave, or, perhaps, have been long dead. For example, to the present time we have no history of the naval campaign in the Crimean war, and even the battle of Sinope has not been critically analysed. Where are the officers of the future fleet to draw their historical experience from, if we treat the late war in the same way?

But the aimless slackness in publishing detailed reports from the theatre of war, and the absence of official criticism of the actions of those who took part in the events, besides forming a great obstacle in the way of preparing at the proper time materials for a history which may be of practical use in the future, shows a great want of gratitude to the officers who took part in the war. I repeat once more, such slackness, besides showing unmerited contempt for the public—who are tormented by doubts owing to want of news—worst of all, is a great slight on those who took part in the events.

Not to make assertions without proving them, I shall quote a few examples, respecting those who took part in the Tsushima battle. First of all I shall mention the case of the commander of the "Izumrud." As far as we know at present—and we have only very scanty information to go on—this cruiser was the only one which succeeded in keeping with the remainder of the

division of ironclads, and was only separated from the squadron of Niebogotov when that officer gave the order to surrender. The commander of the "Izumrud" quite rightly refused to obey this order, and accordingly forced his way through the ring of Japanese battleships which surrounded Niebogotov on all sides. This was certainly a brave action, and the fact that he refused to obey the order to surrender shows in the commander of the "Izumrud" a rare and precious quality—alertness in taking on himself a heavy responsibility on such an important and exceptional occasion, and coolness at the time when every one else lost their heads.

Now let us see what we can gather from the part of his report published on 2 June, which he sent from "St. Olga's" on 1 June.

"On 28 May, smoke from the enemy's ships was seen on the horizon and reported to the Admiral. The Admiral quickened his speed. The 'Seniavin' and the 'Apraxin' began to lag visibly behind. At about ten o'clock the Japanese appeared on the left behind us, while a detachment of cruisers began a circuit to the right. Being now cut off from the squadron, and not being able to unite with it again, we decided to force our way to Vladivostok, and accordingly steamed away at full speed in order to avoid pursuit by the enemy's cruisers."

Consider that for three days before this telegram was received, ominous reports were circulated about the surrender of Niebogotov's detachment. Then on 31 May a telegram was printed in all the papers to the effect that, according to a Japanese telegram from Tokio, received by the Japanese Embassy in London, four Russian ships had been captured and taken on 30 May to a Japanese port. This telegram proved to be true. I can quite understand that this was not believed at first—the news was too terrible; but on the next day, 31 May, it was confirmed from all quarters, and meanwhile all awaited with sinking hearts some information from Russian sources. Many, even then, continued to hope. At last, on 1 June, the report of the commander of the "Izumrud" appeared, showing how the Japanese surrounded those Russian ships, which it was affirmed at Tokio had



surrendered. There was no mention of the surrender in his report.

What were we to think? How could we explain the conduct of the commander of the "Izumrud," as it should have been explained? As a matter of fact he was severely blamed, for clearly, from the part of his report which was published, we could only gather that in the first place he had allowed himself to be separated from the squadron, of which his ship formed part, and in the second that he had, of his own will, deserted the squadron before the beginning of the battle, and, therefore, could tell nothing of its fate. For all we could tell, his flight might have been one of the chief causes of this terrible surrender. . . . I have personally received several letters—among them some from naval officers—containing indignant and most offensive expressions respecting the commander of the "Izumrud."

I, however, was unwilling to accept this interpretation. I knew Captain Fersen as a fine and cool-headed officer, and I was unable to admit that he had acted as that article in the "Novoye Vremya" said. In the report of Captain Fersen it remains obscure why he left the ranks of Admiral Niebogotov; but it seems to me that the most logical explanation is that this excellent officer did not wish to share in the enigmatical surrender.

And so it is asked, "Whose fault was it that innocent officers were subjected to offensive and insulting reproaches?" I will tell you whose fault it was. It was the fault of the powers that be in naval matters—the Ministry of Marine—or, rather, the Naval War Science Department of the Chief Naval Staff; or, still more truly, it was the fault of those hardened *tchinovniks*, who wear white and yellow shoulder-straps, who have made for themselves a comfortable nest in the most important organ of the Ministry—its brain, and who, to the shame of the chiefs, owing to their want of character and weakness, have taken everything into their own hands. And however strange it may appear, all of us who are in the fleet know that it is these very *tchinovniks*, these spiders, as it were, who have been directing, and probably now

direct, all the affairs of the Ministry. I am not at all certain whether the new Minister of Marine will succeed in putting them in their place, or whether they will entangle him too in their web. At any rate, the recent changes in the staff rather incline one to the latter view.

It seems that the commander of the "Izumrud" mentioned in his telegram that Admiral Niebogotov gave the signal to surrender, but these gentlemen—the *tchinovniks*—decided that it would be harmful for the public to know this, and so printed the report of the commander of the "Izumrud" in a mutilated form. They could not understand that Russia was writhing with pain, and thirsting for true information from Russian sources; neither did they realize that they were causing blame to fall on the innocent. They were only governed by one purpose, to conceal the truth somehow, and direct public opinion according to their own ideas.

Now that the results of their action have come to light, let these gentlemen for once inform the public why they acted thus; let them either refute my words or acknowledge their fault. But no; they prefer to hold their tongues, to hide in their webs, where they are in comfort; they do not wish to disturb themselves, while they leave the porridge they have cooked to be eaten by others who have been insulted, wrongly accused through their fault. They themselves will not budge an inch.

This is what, among others, an officer from the "Izumrud" writes:—

"I am afraid that our names are being covered with mud by you in your drawing-rooms in St. Petersburg, but I should like you to have been in our place, and to have seen how the four ships of Niebogotov's division surrendered to the enemy. We were not separated from them, but at the moment when the order to surrender was given we were going side by side with them, and then when the signal to surrender was hoisted, we left them and forced our way through, and escaped from pursuit by sailing straight for the coast of Japan. Why the censors *mutilated the report* of our commander I cannot understand, but from the

printed telegram it might easily be concluded that we deserted the squadron."

See, gentlemen, what those who took part in the events think of the telegram bearing their signature, but cooked by you. I shall leave you to decide what is the name given to such "cooking" in the courts of law, and just ask you to be good enough to explain why, and by what right, you did this. And I turn to you, and not to the censors, whom the author of the letter I have quoted suspects of this illegal and aimless alteration of the truth,—or shall we call it by another name? For I know you and I know the censors. I have had dealings with you both, and I know that you do not give the censors power of independent action. I know that they receive much from you in a finished state, and that they have to ask you about everything of any importance; for you have entangled them as well as others.

This is not the only occasion on which you have acted thus; it is your system, and I shall prove it. Besides the question, "Why was Enquist at Manila?" how will you explain the fact that, except his short telegram of 5 June, not a line of his longer report, if there was one, has been published? It was very bitter for the Russian public to know that the best and strongest of our cruisers, with comparatively little damage and loss, were separated from the squadron at the beginning of the battle, and found their way to a neutral port. And the public has a right to know the exact details, and why this happened. And suddenly the chief cause of this sad occurrence, which Admiral Enquist, in his report, says was the darkness, is denied by the two following official reports, those of the commander of the torpedo-boat "Bodry" and the Commander-in-Chief of the Naval and Military Forces, General Linievitch, who composed his report on the information obtained from officers. But why these cruisers were going at such a great speed, through which, in the darkness, they could not fail to be separated from the battleships, has not at present been explained. And if you do not consider it your duty to explain these sad discrepancies in the official reports which have been published, then by not doing so

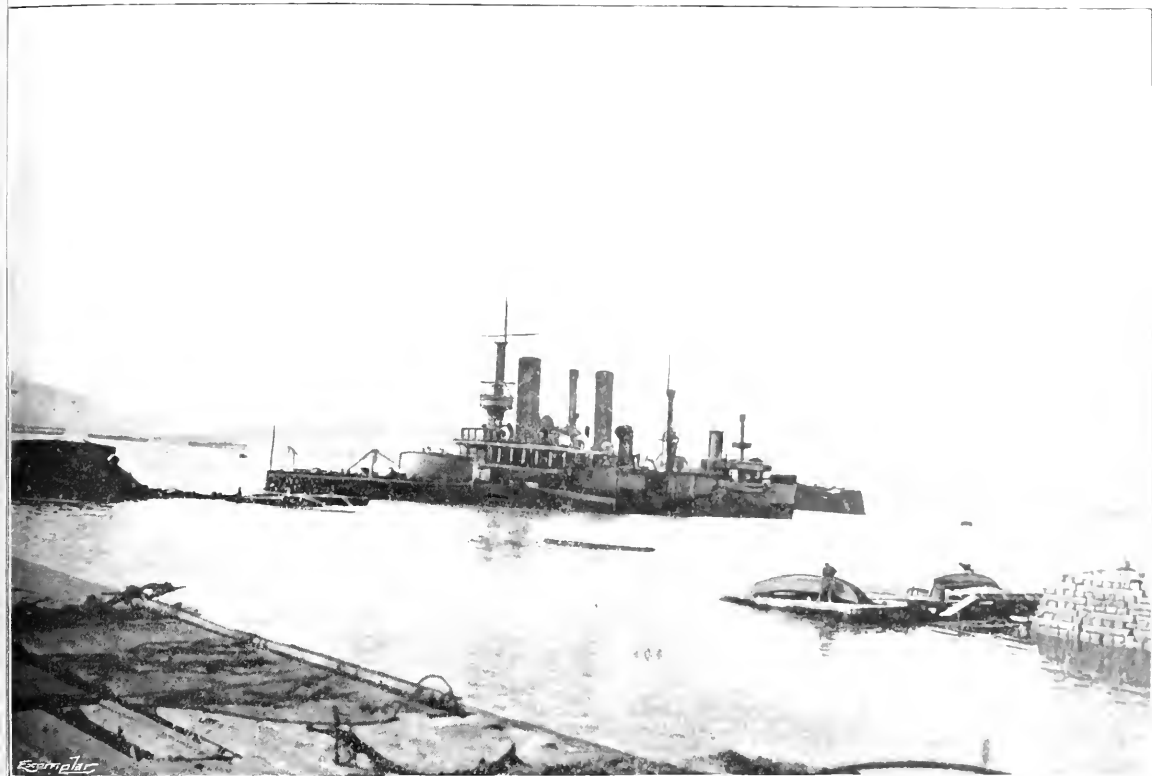
you will create ground for reproaching Admiral Enquist; while your explanation will defend him if he was right. If you say that you have received no further news from Admiral Enquist or the commander of the "Bodry," this is very strange; but then it is your duty to demand further news, and to explain the matter, if not for your own sakes at least for those of the people you serve, and who pay you handsomely for your services. And why, up to the present, has not the report been published of the commander of the transport "Anadyr," who led that column of transports which the cruisers were commissioned to defend?

Then explain, if you can, why you have not published the telegram from Admiral Niebogotov, where he, though very briefly, states his reasons for surrendering? There was such a telegram, and it passed through the hands of the Japanese censors. Why had the Japanese the right to know its contents, while in your opinion the Russian public had not that right?

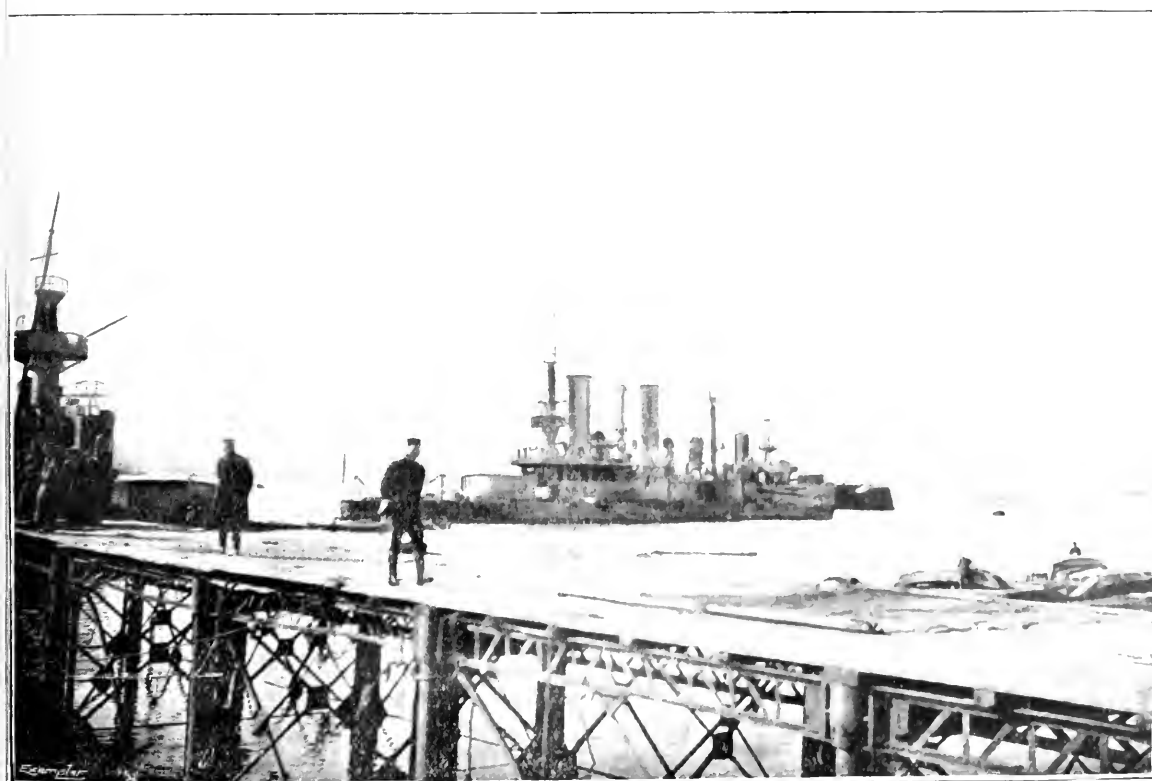
It is rumoured that Admiral Niebogotov and the commanders of the surrendered ships have been dismissed the service. But why they have been treated thus, and what were the circumstances under which they surrendered, we know only partly. Is this a proper way to treat the public? If these officers have been dismissed the service without a court-martial, which is contrary to law, since law says that an officer can only be dismissed the service after trial, while the rest of the officers are to be court-martialled, it means that their actions were different, and that much is already known about the surrender.

If the admirals, staff, and senior officers came to such a decision, they must necessarily have known about the facts. If there was no secret in the facts, why were they not communicated to the public, among whom are many relations of those officers who surrendered?

Speaking generally, the only circumstantial description of the battle reached us from private sources. Such, for instance, are the excellent accounts by officers of the "Zhemtshug" and the "Izumrud," besides a whole series of valuable articles from the detachment of Admiral Enquist, and several others. Could



THE SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR THE "POLTAVA" VIEWED FROM THE SHORE



THE SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR THE "POLTAVA" AND "PALLADA" VIEWED FROM THE SHORE



not the Chief Naval Staff have also published such detailed reports?

In conclusion I will mention the mass of contradictory information the Chief Naval Staff gave about the surrender of Admiral Rozhestvensky, and the rôle which the torpedo-boat "Grozny" played in this affair, in that it published the report of the commander of the "Grozny" only on 23 July, having received it on 30 May, and knowing that the preceding reports about this matter were faulty and showed the action of our officers in a false light. What shall we call an action of this kind? The contents of this report were given to the public on 3 June in a letter from the commander of the "Grozny" at Vladivostok, which letter was probably written owing to the fact that the report had been withheld from publication. Well, for three weeks, 1 July to 23 July, the staff continued to think about the matter, and finally, I suppose, realized what had been several times pointed out to them already, the results which would follow this aimless keeping back of news.

Just as things were very wrong in the Naval War Science Department of the staff during the war, causing much additional distress to the much-suffering Russian fleet, so things continue to remain wrong, and threaten the Russian fleet with no small misfortune in the future.

Again I say, this division is the brain of the fleet, and it is more dangerous to neglect it than any other department; yet little is heard about its reform, and what is heard is far from satisfactory, and the recent appointments only confirm these sorrowful rumours.

## CHAPTER V

### (I) OUR FUTURE DUTY

THE vitality and welfare of every institution depend, in an enormous degree, on the stability and soundness of its foundations. It is precisely the absence of such a basis which has always constituted the weak side of the Russian navy. And this I hold to be also one of the causes of its inefficiency in the late war. During more than two centuries of the history of our much-suffering fleet we have not shown ourselves capable of firmly deciding, not only what kind of fleet we need, but absolutely whether we need one at all. Peter the Great categorically declared that a fleet was necessary to us, and he immediately demonstrated how, and for what reason, it was indispensable. By means of the fleet he took possession of the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea, and so opened our first window towards Europe. However clear this demonstration may have been, it was not duly taken to heart, and up to the time of Catherine the Great the navy was merely tolerated, and consequently fell into complete decay.

Catherine the Great, in devoting her whole attention to the navy, understood very well what she was doing. By means of her sea power she seized on the shore of the Black Sea, thus opening a second window towards Europe ; and during her reign the Russian fleet made its first appearance in the eastern portion of the Mediterranean, which, from time immemorial, has served as an arena for the decision of questions of war between East and West. But after Catherine, the Russian navy remained but a short time at this level. A merely casual interest was taken in it by Paul the First, who, as successor to the throne,



received the title of General-Admiral. This was one of Catherine's devices for increasing the importance of the fleet. After this the navy was set aside; and the war of 1854-5 demonstrated the impossibility of taking it into action, inasmuch as it proved to be not only weak, but altogether behind (sailing vessels against steamers!) the fleets of England and France.

Only in the last reign were serious measures taken for the creation of a strong navy. But the previous neglect made itself felt. No individuals capable of wisely availing themselves of the enormous sums assigned for the fleet were forthcoming, and professional men (even naval officers), from having lived all their lives in the persuasion that the navy was a matter of secondary importance to Russia, possibly even of no importance at all, slowly and surely prepared for it that catastrophe which, alas! was the only possible means of demonstrating the old truth, that only well-trained and instructed crews can make a good navy, and that herein lies the sole guarantee of its trustworthiness in time of war. The chief mistake of the men to whom, in the course of the last twenty years, have been entrusted immense sums for the establishment of the navy, has consisted in their neglect of the *personnel*. This arose doubtless from no evil intention, but from their failure to understand that good *personnel* is essential in order to enable the fighting navy to carry on its duties.

All attention was concentrated on the number of our ships. To one of the former promoters of the navy is ascribed the following utterance: "Wars are now improbable; and political aims are attained merely by the menace implied in the existence of great war forces. To this end, the principal thing is to have on the navy list a number of new up-to-date ships." It was supposed that the weak points of the fleet, such as the inefficiency of the older ships, the bad arrangements of the gun-ports, the insufficient supply of projectiles, and so forth, could hardly come to the knowledge of our foes; that it would be enough to lay a prohibition on the diffusion of such facts, and

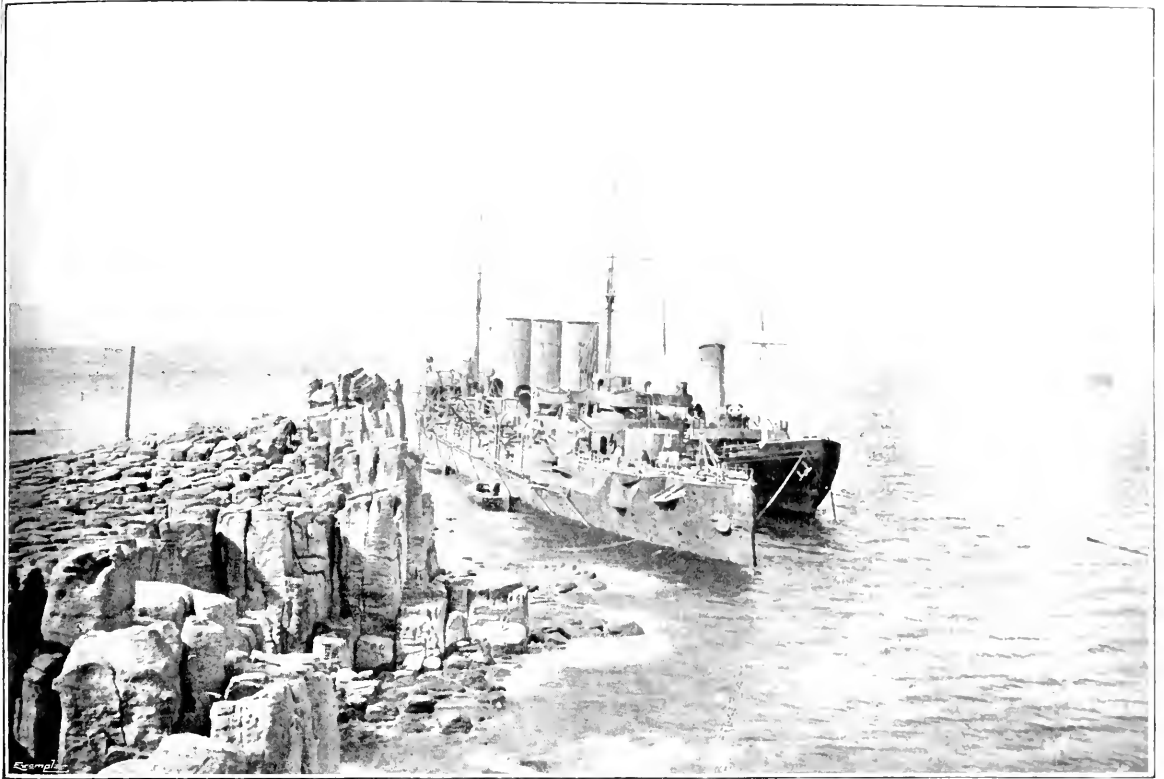
forbid their discussion by the Press, in order to prevent the enemy from obtaining authentic knowledge of the facts.

To make things easy and pleasant in their calculations as to the new ships, they economized upon everything, but above all in the constitution of the crews. They cut short the duration of cruises, thus preventing all possibility of rearing trained sailors in our navy. They diminished the number of ships at sea, and at one time the amount of coal for long voyages, the manœuvres (which latterly in our navy have been reduced nearly to none at all), and thereby destroyed the possibility of learning how to handle a squadron, and, generally speaking, of practically studying naval warfare.

To all this must be added the entire neglect of any instruction for officers in the art of war; that is to say, the officers had no opportunity of studying and practically applying the precious lessons of experience given by former naval battles, nor the intellectual labours of the writers of all countries who have treated of naval warfare.

This is how we formed our admirals and officers. And which of them, in these circumstances, could be expected to understand and decide what was needful to be done in order to have a good fleet, or, having a good fleet prepared for war, how to train the lower ranks, and to avail ourselves of the means at our disposal in case of a sudden breakdown?

Also, our professional sailors have been unable to accomplish another important duty, namely to explain to the country what sea-power means to her, why it is necessary to her, and what sort of sea-power it should be, in order to repay the country for all the sacrifices in men and money which she makes for the establishment and maintenance of the navy. In Russia especially, as being a non-maritime country, and in face of the absolute ignorance which prevails as to the nature and purposes of a navy, the task of explaining these problems should devolve on the nautical profession. But how are we to explain when the profession is itself equally ignorant and uninstructed? Here it is not enough to be sailors; we should be sailors instructed



THE CRUISER "BOGATYR" ON THE ROCKS OFF CAPE BRIOS MAY 2011



THE DECK OF THE BATTLESHIP "POBEDA" WHEN BLOWN UP ON THE SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR



in our military and political duties. Such men are found among us only by chance. In the Navy Department there exists no institution for imparting that kind of instruction.

To place before the country a clear and trustworthy account of our sea-power, whatever that account may reveal—is vitally important. First of all, it is a necessary condition for establishing the fleet on a sound basis. Without this it will be a house built on sand, liable to be shaken from its balance. Shocks of this kind act ruinously on a navy. Such, however, will be unavoidable so long as the solution of the questions, “Shall there, or shall there not, be a navy?” and, if there is to be one, “What sort of a navy?” rests with separate individual personages, especially in a country where no trustworthy information on these points is to be gleaned, either from the naval profession, or the public, or from the Press. Evidently under such conditions no confidence can be placed on a stability depending on hereditary succession.<sup>1</sup> A sovereign, whatever his own convictions, may not be able to instil them into his successor, who will follow his individual tendency and be influenced by various circumstances. I have already brought forward examples of how all these changes reacted on the Russian navy; and it is therefore unnecessary to emphasize the fact that the sovereigns who laboured the most for the development of the navy were precisely those who were distinguished from the rest by their skill in foreign politics, and in whose reigns Russia obtained authority and consideration among the other kingdoms of the world. With the merits of their internal policy I do not concern myself, since war, power, and, consequently, the navy, are the implements for carrying out foreign policy. I will merely observe that the statesmen of the highest ability in this said foreign policy have shown the greatest zeal for the maintenance and increase of the fleet.

The most practical means for getting rid of the uncertainties we have alluded to would be a ruling authority with thorough

<sup>1</sup> The author evidently means a government carried on by one irresponsible autocrat after another.

knowledge of the relations between the whole country and the fleet, and explaining these relations through the national representatives or, failing them, by means of public opinion and the Press.

The mischievous consequences of a lack of thorough understanding as to the relations between the country and the fleet have been seen not only in Russia but in other countries, including many which were by no means badly off as regards their navy. This was pre-eminently the case in France during her five-century-long (fourteenth to nineteenth century) and almost unbroken struggle with England on the sea ; and as the struggle frequently brought the fleet to the most serious test—that of war—the ruinous results were especially clearly seen.

Thanks to a few distinguished statesmen (Richelieu, Colbert, Choiseul) the French navy attained important dimensions, and even achieved noteworthy results in warfare. But on the whole it suffered almost uninterrupted defeat ; and finally, France lost all her colonies, and was compelled definitively to relinquish to England the dominion of the sea.

The wonderful thing in this struggle was that, taken separately, the French ships were superior to the English in equipment, in speed, and in construction. Their crews (except during the period of the French Revolution) received better military training than those of the English navy. Almost all the improvements in naval warfare were devised and practically applied first by the French. Every means for making a flourishing navy was in the hands of the French, every means save the chief, viz. a stable, clear and firm consciousness of the fleet's significance to France. This was lacking, because the country took no part in considering what political aims France ought to follow, what armed forces were needed to enable her to attain them. All depended on chance, on whatever might be the abilities of the men placed in power. For example, in the reign of Louis XIV Colbert raised a wonderful fleet, and especially a model Naval Institute. At the close of the same reign the Minister of Marine sold all the ships and the contents

of the Admiralty, and scattered the crews to the four winds. At the beginning of the reign the conviction prevailed that fleets were indispensable in naval warfare ; at its close all efforts were directed to cruiser operations. And thus things went on all the time. At every step the important question of the very existence of the navy was subject to the capricious folly of the king, and even of his favourites ; and afterwards to the no less wayward self-conceit of the agents of the Revolution, who were as little endowed with common sense as were the king and his favourites. Thus the best naval institutions were ruined by one stroke of the pen. Splendid ships rotted in harbour, proving unready and untrustworthy in the moment of need ; or they were scattered in various ports, instead of forming a compact, homogeneous, well-trained fighting force. In a word, at the beginning of each war nothing was ready that was needed, although here and there among the crews considerable skill and talent were to be found. The failure was due to lack of organization.

The contrary was the case with the English. In England the whole nation very early understood the need and importance of sea-power, inasmuch as this is the best guarantee for the prosperity of maritime commerce. The practical power very soon came into the hands of Parliament, where the representatives of the mercantile classes, and also of other classes interested in commerce, attained a predominant influence. From Parliament there arose a whole pleiad of statesmen stubbornly pursuing the idea of ruling the seas ; and therefore England always had under her hand the navy indispensable for this purpose, and consisting of the types of vessels suitable for achieving it. She was always ready to take advantage of the difficulties and embarrassments of other Powers, either by seizing on portions of their maritime trade, on excellent harbours, and even on whole colonies, or by destroying their war-fleets, which were the mainstay of their commercial and colonial possessions.

It suffices us to look attentively at the system of English sea-ports and stations spread all over the terrestrial globe, in order to convince ourselves that we are in face of a well-thought-out

and definitive plan—carried out, indeed, by various individuals and different generations, and varying also in the development of details, but it is evident that all these men kept before them one clearly conceived and firmly established aim.

In working at the composition of my lectures on the development of the art of naval warfare, I had to give a sketch of this development in various countries. I began with England, and this portion of my work proved to be comparatively easy. From the first rise of the navy its growth was continuous : each stage of its development resulted naturally from the preceding one ; and the whole development proceeded in complete harmony with external politics, and with the advance of the art of shipbuilding, and other branches of maritime affairs. In view of this, there was clearly no need to dwell upon individuals, whether kings or statesmen : everything explained itself, so to speak, by the natural necessity of the case and the logic of facts.

But when I wanted to apply the same method of investigation—that is to say, by the natural progression of development—to other navies, I was obliged, after a whole series of unsuccessful attempts, to give it up, and break up the histories of these navies into those of the various reigns ; subdividing even these periods so as to show the duration of the influence of such and such an individual over the sovereign, as, for instance, in the reign of Louis XIV.

Here, I repeat, we have a powerful illustration how vitally important it is to create a general understanding of the significance of the navy, for which understanding it is necessary that such significance shall be recognized by the whole nation and not merely by isolated statesmen, as in the struggle for supremacy on the sea, which lasted five centuries, between England and France. In the first place, because the constant wars showed the results of the preceding period before war broke out ; and in the second place because, despite the superiority in many respects of several of the French ships, and the merits of various crews, the French navy was beaten all the same, as at Aboukir and Trafalgar, in consequence of its chief weakness, viz. lack of



a stable foundation. It is easy to throw the blame for the defeat of our navy in the late war on the imperfections of our ships and the inefficiency of our crews—there are plenty of such shortcomings. But behind these may be hidden a more important defect, the real cause of all the rest, namely, the absence of a firm basis for the navy in its recognition by the Russian people. Such recognition can only arise when the people take an interest in the fleet, are avowedly in touch with questions of maritime welfare, comprehend the indissoluble connexion that exists between these questions and our domestic policy, and above all when they have a share in all deliberations on these questions.

Thus, therefore, the birth of a national representation among us marks the dawn of new and hopeful conditions for the Russian Navy.

## (II) NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

National representation, and that alone, can do away with the principal cause of the inefficiency of the Russian fleet. I am speaking of its efficiency, not of its strength. Its strength will be in accordance with Russia's political aims; the stability and expediency of which also depend on the share in determining them which may be taken by the national representatives. The inefficiency of the navy, its lack of adaptability to the ends for the attainment of which it exists, its unreadiness for active employment in the moment of need, all may co-exist with any amount of reputed strength; and this failure is the direct consequence of there being no popular understanding of the navy's importance. In order to get rid of the incompetency which has been, alas! the distinguishing mark of the Russian fleet at the beginning of every war, it is first of all necessary that the national representatives should be able to solve the fundamental question: Is a navy necessary for us? Is sea-power for us a mere superfluous luxury, retained by misapprehension or imitation (because all the Great Powers have fleets), or

possibly from inertia, because we have not resolution enough to detach ourselves from the erroneous ideas of Peter the Great, and the repetition of those mistakes by Catherine II?

I, personally, am deeply convinced of our urgent need of a strong fleet, but at the same time I am ready to admit the error of my judgment if it can be clearly proved. In any case, I would rather that the navy should not exist at all (if it really is not necessary to us), than that it should continue in that age-long condition of unstable equilibrium in which it has existed up to the present time, and which has affected it as a disintegrating factor.

Whatever may be the decision of the country, let it stand. Let not the country, however, decide rashly. Let the national representatives study this question from all points of view, and only then decide. Only thus—only by wide diffusion among the public of information as to naval warfare—can the decision of this question be transmitted to succeeding generations; only thus can it gain strength and prosperity, and lay those solid foundations for the constitution of the navy without which it cannot really exist at all. Of course all this cannot be accomplished at once, possibly not in our generation. At first there will be opposition in various quarters against a sincere, and substantial, solution of the question. But in course of time, with the more enlightened comprehension resulting from study, this opposition will diminish, and we shall attain to the sound and well-founded institution which we earnestly desire.

Here again we must help the people through the naval profession. We must begin by thoroughly explaining these questions by means of the Press. At first our efforts may be feeble, but by degrees they will grow stronger and better; and knowledge and conviction will thus conduce to the diffusion of higher military and political culture among our naval officers.

That any real knowledge of the navy has been manifested in Russia by certain isolated individuals only—e.g. Peter the Great and Catherine—I have already set forth. In confirmation of this view, I will bring forward a characteristic circumstance of

quite recent times, borrowed from our well-known naval historian, V. F. Golovatshev :—

“The question of the importance of the navy,” he writes in the “Journal of Journals” for 1898, No. 4, page 297, “so agitated at that time (viz. in the years 1876–7) all naval and military writers for the Press, that in February 1877, on the initiative of the St. Petersburg River-Yacht Club, a special meeting was held in the hall of the Naval Museum. It is stated that the élite of our naval engineers, many men versed in naval matters generally, and many officers of the General Staff, were present. They conducted a very lively debate on the question : ‘Why do we need a fleet?’ And at the end of the sitting the president recalled the well-known French saying, ‘Du choc des opinions jaillit la vérité,’ and observed that ‘although in the present assembly there had been many conflicts of opinion, yet they had still to wait for the coming forth of truth.’ This conclusion of the president was greeted with warm applause.”

Such uncertainty and confusion have always existed, and continue to exist. We must bend all our energies to dissipating this fog, otherwise all will be confusion, and however great the efforts to create a new fleet may be, they will prove in vain. Only see what discordant opinions as to the importance of the fleet run through the newspapers at this very moment! Previous to the war, scarcely any one paid serious attention to the navy. When things were going badly with the army, then everybody began to scream out about the importance of the fleet. When that fleet was annihilated, the current of public opinion clearly inclined to the view that, for Russia, a fleet was superfluous.

This is how, for instance, the “Kievlyanine”<sup>1</sup> speaks in its leading article of 16 July about the appointment of Admiral Birilev to the Ministry of Marine : “We have little faith in the possibility of the regeneration of the Russian navy, since there is neither any object for it nor any moral or material resources for carrying it out. We have paid too dearly for the fatal mis-

<sup>1</sup> A newspaper so named from the town of Kiev, where it is published, i.e. “Citizen of Kiev.”

takes of attempting to produce a fleet and seamen out of a non-maritime nation.<sup>1</sup> A large fleet is neither needful to nor attainable by Russia, and a small fleet on one or two seas would be a frightfully costly Imperial plaything in time of peace, and the cause of disasters in the time of war. It may be that the highest service which the Minister of Marine could render to his country would be to declare, 'I am useless to Russia, since I cannot defend her against powerful naval powers, and the weak ones will not attack her. To create a feeble and easily assailable spot among the defences of Russia surely means to injure, and not to assail, those defences. By expending enormous efforts on our navy, we have only been able once again to persuade ourselves of the truth that the impossible is not possible.'"

The writer's article is sincere and impassioned, and many in Russia think with him. I do not share this opinion. I consider that it is due to our inadequate acquaintance with questions of naval warfare. If I am mistaken, I wish that the conclusion arrived at by the writer of the article may be firmly maintained, and that the Navy Department may be abolished. If, on the other hand, those are in the right who argue for the necessity and feasibility of a strong Russian navy, may it be regarded seriously, and not treated like a toy which pleases us one day and not the next, which is played with to-day, and to-morrow is broken and thrown into a corner. "An Imperial plaything" it must not be. It would be far too expensive a one for the country.

While these words were being penned, I received a long and circumstantial letter from a very clever young naval officer, who has been for more than a year at the seat of war, and this is what he writes: "Speaking generally, can the Russian fleet be equal to the situation? I think it cannot, inasmuch as not only among the populace, but even among the sailors, there is no systematic view as to the indispensability of the navy to Russia. The more we consider the late war, the more must we be per-

<sup>1</sup> Literally "a dry-land nation."

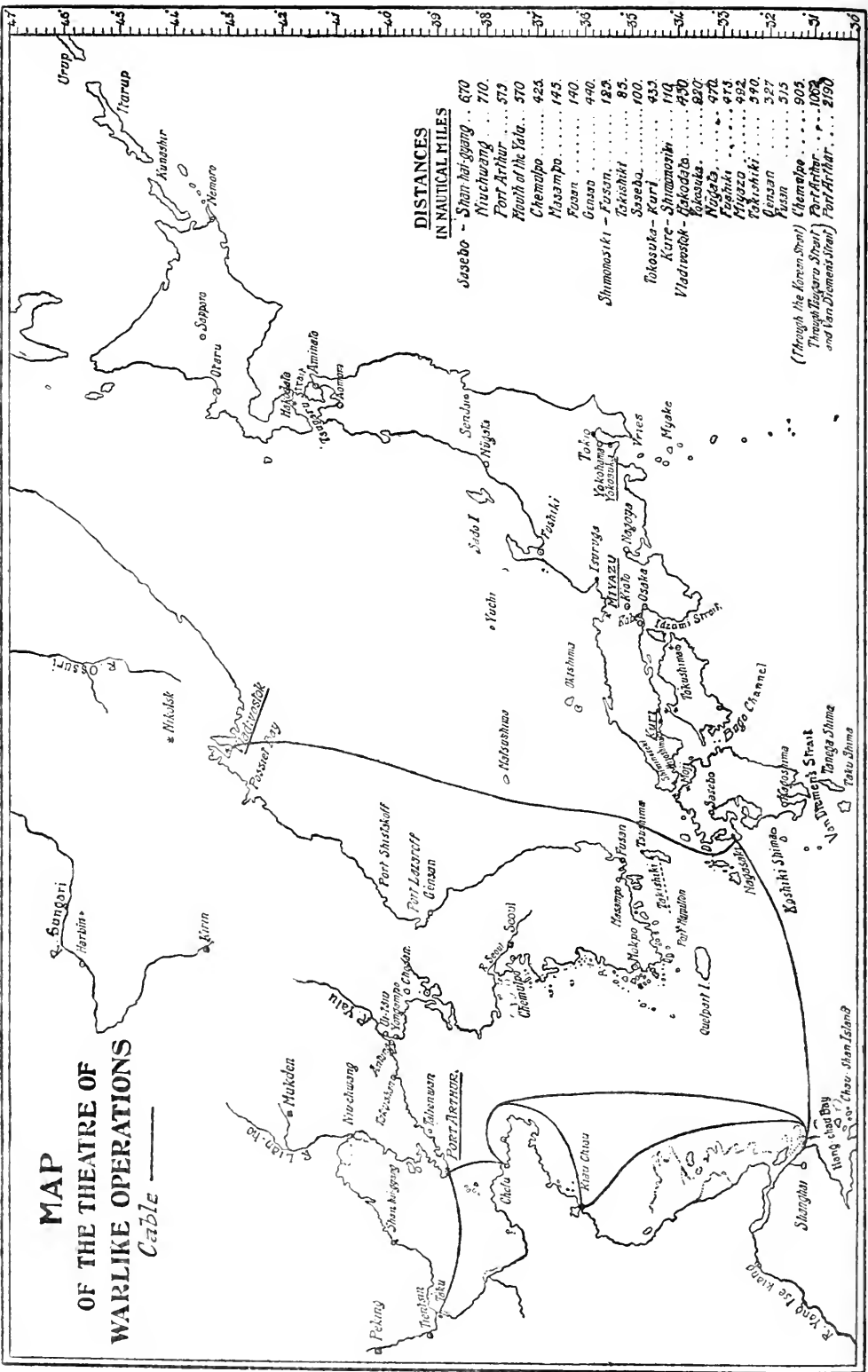
sueded of the necessity of instruction about naval warfare ; but to obtain such instruction is difficult."

As to this matter of obtaining an accurate conception of the navy, I cherish great hope in our national representation. But the representatives must be helped to learn about these questions. This duty devolves first of all on the nautical profession, which it must carry out as best it can by means of the Press. This, so far, is the only means for establishing communication with the future members of the Imperial Duma. To take a vigorous share in this business I hold to be for me a moral obligation, and this is the object I aimed at in my "Letters about the Navy." In them I desired to explain the general significance of sea-power ; what importance the fleet has had, and now has, for Russia in particular ; what kind of fleet it ought to be, and what reforms should be carried out in order to extricate it from its present chaotic condition. In order to make these things clear, it will be impossible to pass over without discussion the events on the scene of the naval conflicts throughout this war which has been so terrible for us, since these events show with special clearness what was ill with us, and what endeavours we must make to get rid of the evils.

It would, of course, be desirable to do this systematically, not dealing with details before the chief points are elucidated ; but this can hardly be managed. Events move at a rapid pace, crowding one upon the other. Certain questions brook no delay, so that it seems probable they will have to be settled without the participation of the Imperial Council : therefore we cannot discuss them at present. For this reason also I was unavoidably compelled to abandon the formation of a systematic course in my "Letters about the Navy."

Some readers may put the question to me, Why do you lay so much stress on the special importance for the navy of national representation, since it is not less important for all the other Imperial institutions? That is true, but not wholly so when we are comparing the navy with the army, as in the navy it is by much the more important.

# MAP OF THE THEATRE OF WARLIKE OPERATIONS *Cable*



## DISTANCES IN NAUTICAL MILES

Sasebo - Shan-hai-giang	670
Niuchwang	710
Port Arthur	573
Mouth of the Yalu	370
Cheampoo	425
Nassampo	145
Fusan	140
Genan	440
Shimonosiki - Fusan	185
Tokushu - Kure	85
Sasebo	100
Yokohama - Kure	455
Kure - Shimonosiki	110
Vladivostok - Hakodadi	430
Hakodadi	820
Nagoya	470
Fuzhiki	415
Kyogo	462
Okochiki	440
Genan	527
Kash	515
(Through the Korean Strait)	505
Through Tsugaru Strait	1065
and Van Diemen Strait	2190
Port Arthur	1065
Port Arthur	2190

(Through the Korean Strait) ..... 505  
 Through Tsugaru Strait ..... 1065  
 and Van Diemen Strait ..... 2190

# NAVAL STRENGTH OF RUSSIA AND JAPAN AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR

## LIST OF RUSSIAN FLEET

### FIRST PACIFIC SQUADRON

Nos. in order.	Names of vessels and years when launched.	Displacement.	Equipment.	Draught.	Store of Coal.	Speed of Travel.	Warlike coefficient.	Remarks.
<b>Battleships.</b>								
1	"Petrovavlovsk," 1894	11,400	IV-12 in.; XII-6 in.; XXXVIII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	26	1,000	16.5	—	* 31 March, 1904.
2	"Poltava," 1894	11,000	IV-12 in.; XII-6 in.; XL-sm. cal.; VI-tor. ap.	26	1,000	16	—	* At Port Arthur. Some refloated.
3	"Sevastopol," 1895	11,800	IV-12 in.; XII-6 in.; XL-sm. cal.; VI-tor. ap.	26	1,000	16	—	"Sevastopol," sunk by her own crew shortly before capitulation. Disarmed at Kiu Shiu, 29 August, 1904.
4	"Peresviet," 1898	12,700	IV-9.8 in.; XI-6 in.; XX-3 in.; XXVIII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	26	1,200	18.5	31.3	
5	"Pobieda," 1900	12,700	IV-9.8 in.; XI-6 in.; XX-3 in.; XXIX-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	26	1,200	18.5	39.5	
6	"Retvisan," 1900	12,900	IV-12 in.; XII-6 in.; XX-3 in.; XXXII-sm. cal.; VI-tor. ap.	27.3	2,500	18	51.1	
7	"Tsesarevitch," 1901	13,200	IV-12 in.; XII-6 in.; XX-3 in.; XX-sm. cal.; VI-tor. ap.	26	2,500	18.5	59.0	
<b>First-class Cruisers.</b>								
1	"Varyag," 1899	6,500	XII-6 in.; XII-3 in.; X-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	19.5	1,300	23	14.2	* 27 January, 1904, at Chemulpo.
2	"Diana," 1899	6,700	VIII-6 in.; XXIV-3 in.; VIII-sm. cal.; III-tor. ap.	21	1,400	19	8.8	Disarmed at Saigon. Refloated.
3	"Pallada," 1899	6,800	VIII-6 in.; XXIV-3 in.; VIII-sm. cal.; III-tor. ap.	21	1,400	19	8.8	Disarmed at Shanghai.
4	"Askold," 1900	5,900	XII-6 in.; XII-3 in.; X-sm. cal.; VI-tor. ap.	20.6	1,100	23.5	9.2	
5	"Bogatyr," 1901	6,600	XII-6 in.; XII-3 in.; VIII-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	20.4	1,500	24	17.1	* 1 August, 1904
6	"Kurik," 1892	11,700	IV-7.9 in.; XVI-6 in.; VI-4.7 in.; XII-sm. cal.; VI-tor. ap.	27.3	2,800	18.5	14.0	
7	"Roosia," 1896	13,700	IV-7.9 in.; XVI-6 in.; XII-3 in.; XXXVI-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	27.5	2,300	19.5	22.9	* At Port Arthur. Refloated 24 June
8	"Gromoboi," 1899	13,200	IV-7.9 in.; XVI-6 in.; XX-3 in.; XXVIII-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	26	2,300	20	33.8	
9	"Bayan," 1900	7,700	II-7.9 in.; VIII-6 in.; XX-3 in.; VII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	21.5	1,100	22	33.5	
<b>Second-class Cruisers.</b>								
1	"Novik," 1900	3,100	VI-4.7 in.; VIII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	16.5	600	25	3.2	* 7th August, at Korsakov post.
2	"Boyarin," 1901	3,300	VI-4.7 in.; VIII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	16	600	22.5	2.7	* At Taitenwan.

Vessels destroyed are indicated by \*

## LIST OF RUSSIAN FLEET: FIRST PACIFIC SQUADRON—continued.

Nos. In order.	Names of vessels and years when launched.	Displace- ment.	Equipment.		Draught.	Store of Coal.	Speed of travel.	Wartime co-efficient.	Remarks.
			Tons.	Tons.					
	<b>Torpedo Cruisers.</b>								
1	"V sadnik "	410	IX-sm. cal.; II-tor. ap.	. . . . .	10	—	20	—	* At Port Arthur.
2	"Gaidamak "	435	IX-sm. cal.; II-tor. ap.	. . . . .	10	—	20	—	* At Port Arthur.
	<b>Destroyers.</b>								
1	"Lieut. Burakov "	250	II-tor. ap.; VI-sm. cal.	. . . . .	—	—	30	—	* At Port Arthur.
2	"Konkor "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	* At Port Arthur.
3	"Rieshchelny "	220	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	* At Chifu.
4	"Riezlastchy "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Chifu, disarmed.
5	"Rastoropny "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
6	"Silny "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	27	—	* At Port Arthur.
7	"Serdity "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Chifu, disarmed.
8	"Smily "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
9	"Storozhevoi "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	* At Port Arthur.
10	"Steregushitsy "	—	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Chifu, disarmed.
11	"Skory "	220	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	* At Port Arthur.
12	"Strashny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Chifu, disarmed.
13	"Stroiny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	* At Port Arthur.
14	"Statny "	350	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Chifu, disarmed.
15	"Boievoy "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	* At Port Arthur.
16	"Bditelny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Chifu, disarmed.
17	"Bezposhtshadny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
18	"Bezstrashny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
19	"Bezshunny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
20	"Boiky "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
21	"Borny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
22	"Vnimatelny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Tsintao, disarmed.
23	"Vlastny "	310	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	* At Port Arthur.
24	"Grozovoi "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Chifu, disarmed.
25	"Vnushitelny "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	"	—	At Shanghai, disarmed.
26	"Vnuoslivy "	"	" "	. . . . .	—	—	26	—	* At Port Arthur.
	<b>Torpedo Vessels.</b>								
	1-6 Torpedo Vessels								
	"Nos. 201-206 "	75-140	Various types	. . . . .	—	—	17-20	—	*
	2-10 Torpedo Vessels								
	"Nos. 208-211 "	120	Norman	. . . . .	—	—	25	—	*





## SECOND PACIFIC SQUADRON.

Nos. in order.	Names of vessels and years when launched.	Displacement.	Equipment.	Drayght.	Store of Coal.	Speed of travel.	Warlike coefficient.	Remarks.
	<b>Battleships.</b>	Tons.		Feet.	Tons.	Knots.		
1	"Kniaz Suvorov," 1902	13,516	IV-12 in.; XII-6 in.; XX-3 in.; XX-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	26	800	18	63	* At the battle of Tsushima. Captured. Attempt by some of her own men to blow her up was frustrated by Japanese.
2	"Imp. Alexander III," 1901	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"Borodino," 1901	"	"	"	"	"	"	
4	"Orel," 1902	"	"	"	"	"	"	
5	"Sissoi Veliky," 1894	10,400	IV-12 in.; VI-6 in.; XII-47 mm.; XII-37 mm.; VI-tor. ap.	25	—	16	13.7	* * * * Reached Manila. * Reached Manila. * Sank herself.
6	"Oslabya," 1898	12,674	IV-10 in.; XI-6 in.; XX-75 mm.; XX-37 mm.; VIII-47; V-tor. ap.	26	1,018	18	31	
7	"Navarin," 1891	10,206	IV-12 in.; VIII-6 in.; XVIII-47 mm.; XII-37 mm.; VI-tor. ap.	27	—	15	6.7	
	<b>First-class Cruisers.</b>							
1	"Adm. Nakhimov," 1885	8,524	VIII-3 in.; X-6 in.; XII-47 mm.; IV-37; III-tor. ap.	28	—	16	5	* Reached Manila. * Reached Manila. * Sank herself.
2	"Aurora," 1900	6,731	VII-6 in.; XXIV-75 mm.; VIII-37 mm.; III-tor. ap.	21	—	20	8.8	
3	"Oleg," 1903	6,645	XII-6 in.; XII-75 mm.; IV-47; II-37 mm.; II-tor. ap.	20	720	23	17.1	
4	"Svietlana," 1898	3,727	VI-6 in.; X-47 mm.; II-37 mm.	18	—	20	1.7	
5	"Dmitri Donskoi," 1885	6,200	VI-6 in.; X-120 mm.; VI-47; X-37; V-tor. ap.	25	825	17	7.1	
	<b>Second-class Cruisers.</b>							
1	"Zhernitslug," 1903	3,103	VI-120 mm.; VI-47; II-37	16	360	24	3.2	Reached Manila. Blown up by her own crew.
2	"Lzumrud," 1903	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"Almaz," 1903	3,285	IV-75 mm.; IV-47 single barrelled.	17	476	19	0.02	
	<b>Destroyers.</b>							
1	"Biedovy," 1902	350	I-75 mm.; V-47 mm.	10	93	26	—	Captured. * * *
2	"Blestiastshy,"	"	"	"	"	"	—	
3	"Bezupretshny"	"	"	"	"	"	—	Towed to Shanghai. Sank herself.
4	"Bodry,"	"	"	"	"	"	—	
5	"Buiuy,"	"	"	"	"	"	—	Reached Vladivostok.
6	"Buisiry,"	"	"	"	"	"	—	
7	"Bravy,"	"	"	"	"	"	—	Reached Vladivostok.
8	"Gromky," 1903	312	I-75 mm.; V-47 mm.	—	—	26	—	
9	"Grozny," 1903	"	"	—	—	"	—	Reached Vladivostok.
10	"Riezvy,"	"	"	—	—	"	—	
11	"Pronzitelny," 1899	220	I-75 mm.; III-47 mm.	—	—	"	—	
12	"Prozorlivy," 1899	240	"	7½	79	27	—	

Transports.		Auxiliary Cruisers.	
1	"Anadyr" . . . . .	VI-47 single barrelled . . . . .	Engaged seeking contraband.
2	"Kamichatka," 1903 . . . . .	VI-47 single barrelled . . . . .	Engaged seeking contraband.
1	"Dnieper" . . . . .	. . . . .	Reached Saigon June 14th. Then engaged seeking contraband.
2	"Rion" . . . . .	. . . . .	Captured.
3	"Kuban" . . . . .	. . . . .	Engaged seeking contraband.
4	"Ural" . . . . .	. . . . .	Engaged seeking contraband.
5	"Terek" . . . . .	. . . . .	Engaged seeking contraband.

Vessels destroyed are indicated by \*

LIST OF JAPANESE FLEET.

In order.	Names of vessels and years when launched.	Displacement.	Equipment.	Draught.	Store of Coal.	Speed of travel.	Warlike coefficient.	Remarks.
<b>Battleships.</b>								
1	"Fuso," 1877-98 . . . . .	3,800	IV-9.4 in.; II-6 in.; IV-4.7 in.; XV-sm. cal.; III-tor. ap.	18	350	13	2.0	
2	"Chin-Yen," 1882-95 . . . . .	7,300	IV-12 in.; IV-6 in.; X-sm. cal.; III-tor. ap.	20	1,000	14	4.0	
3	"Fudji," 1896 . . . . .	12,600	IV-12 in.; X-6 in.; XXIV-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	26.4	1,200	18	29.2	
4	"Yashima," 1896 . . . . .	12,500	"	26.2	—	18.5	31.6	* Off Port Arthur.
5	"Shikishima," 1898 . . . . .	15,100	IV-12 in.; XIV-6 in.; XX-3 in.; XII-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	27.3	1,400	18	53.6	
6	"Hatsuse," 1897 . . . . .	15,200	IV-12 in.; XIV-6 in.; XX-3.1 in.; XII-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	27	—	19	54.7	* Off Port Arthur.
7	"Asahi," 1899 . . . . .	15,400	"	27.3	—	18	52.3	* Sunk by explosion off Sasebo, September, 1905.
8	"Mikasa," 1900 . . . . .	"	"	"	—	18.5	77.2	

Vessels destroyed are indicated by \*

No. in order.	Names of vessels and years when launched.	Displacement.	Equipment.	Draught.	Store of coal.	Speed of travel.	Warlike coefficient.	Remarks.
	<b>Armoured Cruisers.</b>			Feet.	Tons.	Knots.		
1	"Idzushima," 1889 . . . . .	4,300	I-12.6 in.; XII-4.7 in.; VI-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	20	680	16	3.9	
2	"Matsushima," 1890 . . . . .	"	"	"	"	"	4.0	
3	"Hashidate," 1891 . . . . .	"	"	"	"	"	4.2	
4	"Asama," 1898 . . . . .	9,900	IV-7.9 in.; XIV-6 in.; XII-3.1 in.; VII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	24.3	1,200	21.5	37.6	
5	"Tokiwaka," 1898 . . . . .	"	"	"	"	"	38.7	
6	"Yakumo," 1899 . . . . .	9,800	IV-7.9 in.; XII-6 in.; XII-3.1 in.; VII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	23.2	"	20	41.6	
7	"Idzumo," 1899 . . . . .	9,900	IV-7.9 in.; XIV-6 in.; XII-3.1 in.; VII-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	24.2	"	20.5	52.1	
8	"Iwate," 1899 . . . . .	"	"	"	"	"	54.8	
9	"Azuma," 1899 . . . . .	9,500	IV-7.9 in.; XII-6 in.; XII-3.1 in.; VII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	23.7	"	20	44.2	
10	"Nissin," 1903 . . . . .	7,700	IV-7.9 in.; XIV-6 in.; X-3.1 in.; VI-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	23.8	1,100	20.5	"	
11	"Kassuga," 1903 . . . . .	"	I-9.8 in.; IV-7.9 in.; XIV-6 in.; X-3.1 in.; VI-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	"	"	20	"	
	<b>Protected Cruisers.</b>							
1	"Idzumi," 1883 . . . . .	3,200	II-9.8 in.; VI-6 in.; VI-sm. cal.; III-tor. ap.	18.5	600	17	1.0	
2	"Naniwa," 1885 . . . . .	3,700	VII-6 in.; VI-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	18.7	800	18	2.4	
3	"Takatsukihō," 1885 . . . . .	"	X-4.7 in.; VI-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	18.7	"	"	"	
4	"Chiyoda," 1900 . . . . .	2,400	IV-6 in.; VI-4.7 in.; X-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	14	700	19	2.7	
5	"Akitushima," 1892 . . . . .	3,200	IV-6 in.; VI-4.7 in.; X-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.	17.5	550	"	"	
6	"Yoshima," 1892 . . . . .	4,200	VI-6 in.; VIII-4.7 in.; XXII-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	17	1,000	22.5	6.5	
7	"Suma," 1895 . . . . .	2,700	II-6 in.; VI-4.7 in.; XII-sm. cal.; II-tor. ap.	15	600	20	2.9	
8	"Kassagi," 1898 . . . . .	5,000	II-7.9 in.; X-4.7 in.; XII-3.1 in.; VI-sm. cal.; VI-tor. ap.	17.6	1,000	22.5	18.4	
9	"Tshitose," 1898 . . . . .	4,800	"	"	"	20	19.2	
10	"Takasago," 1897 . . . . .	4,200	II-6 in.; VI-4.7 in.; XII-3.1 in.; II-tor. ap.	17	"	22.5	19.0	
11	"Akashi," 1897 . . . . .	2,800	VI-6 in.; X-3.1 in.; IV-sm. cal.	15.8	600	19.5	2.9	
12	"Nitaka," 1903 . . . . .	3,400	II-6 in.; X-3.1 in.; IV-sm. cal.	16.4	"	20	4.3	
13	"Tsushima," 1903 . . . . .	"	"	"	"	"	4.8	
14	"Otoya," 1903 . . . . .	3,000	II-6 in.; VI-4.7 in.; VI-3.1 in.	15.8	875	21	"	
	<b>Advice Vessels.</b>							
1	"Yayeyama," 1889 . . . . .	1,600	III-4.7 in.; VIII-sm. cal.; II-tor. ap.	13.4	350	20	0.3	
2	"Miyako," 1897 . . . . .	1,800	II-4.7 in.; X-sm. cal.; II-tor. ap.	13.4	400	"	0.02	
3	"Chihaya," 1900 . . . . .	1,300	II-4.7 in.; X-3.1 in.; V-tor. ap.	9.8	250	21.5	0.04	
	<b>Torpedo Transport.</b>							
1	"Toyohashi," 1888-97 . . . . .	4,100	II-4.7 in.; IV-sm. cal.	26	860	12.5	"	
	<b>Torpedo Boat.</b>							
1	"Tatsuta," 1894 . . . . .	900	II-4.7 in.; IV-sm. cal.; V-tor. ap.	9.3	150	21	0.02	

\* In collision with the cruiser  
["Kassuga."

"Takasago" (mined and sunk when  
blockading Port Arthur, 12 Dec).

Destroyers. <sup>1</sup>

II-45 centimetre tor. ap.; I-3'1 in.; V-sm. cal.

1. "Akebono"		12. "Shirakumo"	
2. "Ikazuchi"		13. "Akashiwo"	T. Y.; 381 tons;
3. "Inazuma"	Y.; 311 tons; 31 knots.	14. "Akatsuki"	31 knots.
4. "Sadanami"		15. "Kasumi"	
5. "Oboro"		16. "Harusame"	
6. "Murakumo"		17. "Hayatori"	Jp.; 381 tons; 29 knots.
7. "Shinonome"		18. "Asagiri"	
8. "Shiranuhi"	T.; 279 tons; 30 knots.	19. "Murasame"	
9. "Ungiri"			
10. "Kadgero"			
11. "Usugumo"			

"Akatsuki" (sunk by a mine when blockading Port Arthur, 17 May).

"Hayatori" (mined and sunk when blockading Port Arthur, 3 September.)

II-III-35 centimetre tor. ap.; I-III-sm. cal.

1. "Fukurya III"		7. "Hibari"	
2. "Kotaka, Y"	20 knots.	8. "Kari"	Jp.; 152 tons; 29 knots.
3. "Shiratako III"	19 knots.	9. "Kiji"	
1. "Hayabusa"		10. "Tsubane"	
2. "Kasagi"	N.; 152 tons; 29 knots.	11. "Kamome"	
3. "Monasuru"		12. "Sagi"	Jp.; 152 tons; 29 knots.
4. "Chidori"		13. "Usura"	
5. "Aotoka"	Jp.; 152 tons; 29 knots.	14. "Hashitaka"	
6. "Hato"		15. "Otori"	

Torpedo Boats. <sup>1</sup>

II-III-35 centimetre tor. ap.; I-II-sm. cal.

25 constructed earlier than 1895	N.; III; J.; 50 tons?	20-III; 80 tons, 20 knots.
		10-Jp.; 50 tons; 20 knots.
	Constructed since 1895	15-Jp.; 110 tons; 24 knots.

<sup>1</sup> Y. = Vessels of Yarrow construction; T. = Thornycroft; N. = Norman; Jp. = Japanese construction.

Nos. in order.	Names of vessels and years when launched.	Displacement.	Equipment.	Draught.	Store of Coal.	Speed of travel.	Artillery coefficient.	Remarks.
	<b>Gunboats.</b>		A few small quick-firing and revolving guns					
1	"Soko," 1866	600				7.5		
2	"Chunhoku," 1879	450	"			8		
3	"Chinnan," 1879	450	"			"		
4	"Chinsei," 1879	"	"			"		
5	"Chinto," 1879	"	"			"		
6	"Chimpan," 1881	"	"			"		
7	"Chihlin," 1881	"	"			"		
8	"Amagi," 1877	900	"			"		
9	"Iwaki" (Banji), 1878	700	VI-4.7 in.; IV-sm. cal.			10	0.04	
10	"Tsukushi," 1881	1,400	I-6 in.; I-4.7 in.; II-3.1 in.			12.5		
11	"Akagi," 1886	600	II-9.8 in.; IV-4.7 in.; I-3.1 in.; II-sm. cal.			14.5	0.7	
12	"Maya," 1886	"	IV-4.7 in.; VI-sm. cal.			10		
13	"Chokat," 1887	"	II-6 in.; IV-sm. cal.			"		
14	"Atago," 1887	"	I-8.3 in.; I-4.7 in.			"		
15	"Heiyen," 1887	2,200	I-10.2 in.; II-4.7 in.; V-sm. cal.			14.8		Struck a rock and sank before Port Arthur, 6 November.
16	"Oshima," 1891	600	IV-4.7 in.; IV-sm. cal.			19.7		Sank after collision off Liao-tung, 17 May.
17	"Uji," 1900 (river gunboat).	—				—		
	<b>Vessels for Coast Defence.</b>							
1	"Tsukuda," 1851-71	2,000	VIII-6.3 in.; III-sm. cal.			18		
2	"Kaumon," 1877-82	1,400	II-6.7 in.; VI-4.7 in.; I-3.1 in.			16.4		
3	"Termin," 1878-83	1,300	I-6.7 in.; I-6 in.; IV-4.7 in.; I-3.1 in.			17		
4	"Kondo," 1877	2,300	II-6.7 in.; VI-6 in.; II-3.1 in.; II-sm. cal.; II-tor. ap.			17.5	0.3	
5	"Hiyei," 1877	2,500	II-8.3 in.; I-6 in.; I-3.1 in.; VI-sm. cal.; IV-tor. ap.			16	5.8	
6	"Katsuragi," 1885	1,500	II-6.7 in.; V-4.7 in.; I-3.1 in.; IV-sm. cal.			16		
7	"Yamato," 1885	"	"			15.2		
8	"Musashi," 1886	"	"			"		
9	"Takao," 1888	1,800	IV-6 in.; I-4.7 in.; I-3.1 in.; IV-sm. cal.; II-tor. ap.			13.1		

**Auxiliary Cruisers.**

3 cruisers of more than 6,000 tons, of a speed of 17 knots.

NOTE—Vessels for coast defence marked † possess some armoured defence.

**Auxiliary Cruisers.**

Cable steamer: "Okinawa Maru," 2,300 tons.

Hospital vessels: "Hakuai Maru," 2,600 "

"Kosai Maru," "

"Genkai Maru," "

In addition, the Japanese Government have at their disposal

86 (or more) steamers of subsidised lines.

In an article on the casualties and captures in the Russo-Japanese War, "The Times" correspondent of August 5th, 1905, gives the following highly interesting tables:—

## RUSSIAN NAVY.

Nature of Vessel.	Engaged in the War.		Sunk.		Captured.		Interned.		Remaining.	
	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.
Battleships . . . . .	15	180,980	12	144,958	2	23,110	1	12,912	—	—
Armoured cruisers . . . . .	7	63,533	5	38,979	—	—	—	—	2	24,554
Sea-going coast-defence iron-clads . . . . .	3	13,212	1	4,126	2	9,086	—	—	—	—
Cruisers . . . . .	13	65,416	6	26,341	—	—	5	29,115	2	9,960
Other kinds, excluding converted cruisers . . . . .	21	76,793	14	25,222	1	11,700	2	11,449	4*	28,422
Destroyers . . . . .	24	10,290	19	5,666	2	590	11	3,334	2	700
Totals . . . . .	83	410,224	57	245,292	7	44,486	19	56,810	10	63,636

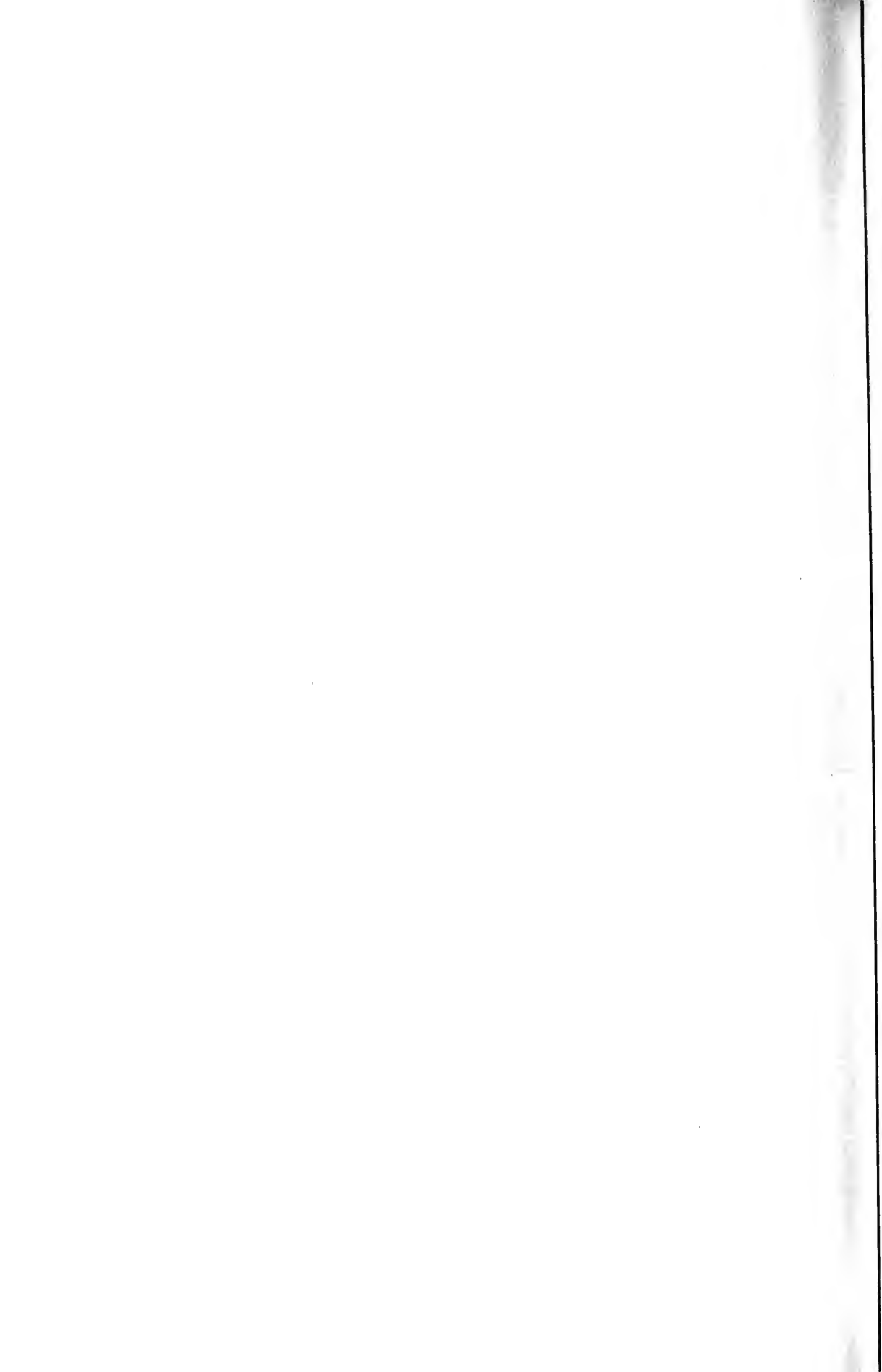
In this table torpedo-boats, special service steamers, as well as converted cruisers, are not included, and the asterisk indicates that the number to which it is attached comprises some vessels whose fate is uncertain. Further, under the heading "captured" only vessels taken in fight are shown, not those subsequently raised and added to the Japanese navy. The broad result is very striking; out of a total of 83 ships with a displacement of 410,224 tons sent by Russia into the belligerent arena, only ten with a displacement of 63,636 tons remain in her fighting line. She has lost 73, representing 346,588 tons.

If a similar table is compiled for the Japanese navy the result is as follows:—

## JAPANESE NAVY.

Nature of Vessel.	Engaged in the War.		Sunk.		Captured.		Interned.		Remaining.	
	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.	No.	Displacement.
Battleships . . . . .	6	86,299	2	27,757	—	—	—	—	4	58,542
Armoured cruisers . . . . .	8	74,178	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	74,178
Sea-going coast-defence cruisers . . . . .	2	11,112	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	11,112
Cruisers . . . . .	20	68,481	4	12,733	—	—	—	—	16	55,748
Other kinds . . . . .	18	26,689	4	4,797	—	—	—	—	14	21,892
Destroyers . . . . .	22	7,425	2	738	—	—	—	—	20	6,687
Totals . . . . .	76	274,184	12	46,025	—	—	—	—	64	228,159

From this table also torpedo-boats, special service steamers, and converted cruisers are omitted. By comparing the two tables several striking facts are observed. The first is that the Japanese force of 76 vessels with a displacement of 274,184 tons has sunk or captured 64 ships with a displacement of 228,778 tons.





# INDEX

## A

- "Admiral Apraxin," the, 34, 89, 100, 142, 154, 155, 202, 206, 212, 218, 220, 221  
 "Admiral Cochrane," the, 106  
 "Admiral Seniavin," the, 89, 100, 142, 154, 155, 202, 206, 212, 218, 220, 221  
 "Admiral Ushakov," the, 84, 93, 103, 154, 155, 168, 177, 202, 206, 212, 218, 220  
 Admiralty, Russian, 3, 5  
 "Adzumo," the, 216  
 Afanasiev, V., naval expert, 28 *n.*  
 — Quartermaster, 185  
 "Akashi," the, 113  
 "Akitsushima," the, 113, 215, 216, 221  
 Alexiev, Admiral, 12  
 "Almaz," the, 88, 92, 113, 141, 145, 154, 206, 217, 218  
 "Anadyr," the, 112, 147, 155, 160, 183, 188, 191, 199, 200, 202, 206, 210, 276  
 Andreiev, Commander, 139  
 Andrzeievsky, Captain, 229, 230, 235, 241, 247, 251, 254, 258  
 "Apraxin," the. *See* "Admiral Apraxin"  
 "Asahi," the, 29 *n.*, 53, 203, 204, 208, 216  
 "Askold," the, 82  
 Askold, island of, 156, 186, 190  
 "Aurora," the, 36, 74, 93, 105, 112, 140, 148, 149, 154, 169, 170, 173, 189-91, 194, 199, 201, 202, 206, 208-12, 214, 265

## B

- Baltic Fleet, the, 1, 9, 134  
 Baranov, Commander, 139  
 Barrow-in-Furness, 29 *n.*  
 Batchmanov, Midshipman, 157  
 "Bayan," the, 267, 269

- Belleville boilers, 29 *n.*  
 "Bezupretshny," the, 154, 206  
 Bickford fuse, 103, 268  
 "Biedovy," the, 81, 83, 93, 104, 108, 132, 139, 141, 142, 146, 150, 154, 156, 184, 206, 228-59  
 Birilev, Vice-Admiral, 59, 60  
 Black Sea Fleet and the Dardanelles, 4  
 "Blanco-Encalada," the, 106  
 "Blestiastshy," the, 141, 154, 206  
 "Bodry," the, 140, 141, 154, 206, 262, 266, 267, 275, 276  
 "Bogatyr," the, 22, 37  
 Bonin Islands, 18, 19  
 "Borodino," the, 50, 88, 120, 122, 147, 148, 154, 155, 159, 160, 164, 165, 168, 202, 205, 206, 212, 213, 218, 219  
 "Bravy," the, 108, 145, 154, 156, 206, 217  
 Broughton's Gulf, 64, 67  
 Buck, Ensign, 214  
 "Buiny," the, 108, 146, 150, 151, 154, 183, 184, 205, 206, 213, 217, 225, 236, 239  
 "Buistry," the, 154, 206

## C

- "Captain Kazarsky," the, 108  
 Chinese, the, 21  
 — language, 21  
 Cochin-China, 65  
 Cronstadt, 4, 13, 60, 172  
 "Curonia," the, 189

## D

- Dardanelles, the, 4  
 Dazhelet, island of, 150, 151, 156, 184, 223  
 Demtshinsky, Mr. N. A., 10

De Ruyter, Admiral, 58  
 "Diana," the, 82, 190  
 "Dmitri Donskoi," 6, 41, 48, 74, 93, 103,  
 108, 109, 112, 141, 146, 149-54, 169,  
 173, 184, 190, 202, 206, 208, 211, 212,  
 214, 236, 264  
 "Dnieper," the, 202  
 Dobrotvorsky, Captain, 14  
 Dobrovolsky, Peter Nikititch, chaplain,  
 149, 153  
 Dofeld, Midshipman, 185  
 Domenshtshikov, Midshipman, 181  
 Durnovo, Lieutenant, 152, 153, 156, 157

## E

"Ekaterina," the, 202  
 English artillery compared with Russian,  
 44, 45  
 Enquist, Admiral, 75, 88, 92, 95, 112-15,  
 117, 120, 121, 132, 140, 141, 145, 147,  
 149, 150, 154, 169, 177, 187, 189, 194,  
 199-202, 206, 229, 260-7, 275, 276

## F

Farragut, Admiral, 105  
 Fedorov, Quartermaster, 185  
 Felkersham, Admiral, 61, 88, 108, 112,  
 116, 154, 160, 174, 192, 202  
 Fersen, Captain, 108, 154, 156, 273  
 Formosa, 64, 65, 73, 202  
 "Fudji," the, 30, 49, 208, 216  
 Fusan, 64

## G

Garison, Lieutenant Pedro, 106  
 Giers, Lieutenant, 152  
 Godsaidan, 156  
 Gravière, Jurien de la, Admiral, 11  
 Gripenberg, General, 61  
 "Gromby," the, 146, 154, 206  
 "Gromoboi," the, 37, 38, 93, 102  
 "Grozny," the, 81, 83, 92, 95, 103, 104,  
 108, 139, 145, 146 *n.*, 154, 156, 183,  
 184, 206, 223, 228-59  
 Guliaev, Mr., naval engineer, 125

## H

Hannefield, General, 242  
 Harvey, system of armour, 29

"Hashidate," the, 117, 120, 151, 207,  
 215, 216, 221  
 Hertzog, Dr., 153  
 Hispano-American War, 107  
 Hong Kong, 188  
 "Huascar," the, 105, 106  
 "Hull incident," the, 51

## I

"Idsukushima," the, 151, 207, 215, 216,  
 221  
 "Idsumo," the, 113, 114, 207, 209, 216,  
 249, 252  
 Ijichi, Captain, 29 *n.*  
 Iki, island of, 207  
 "Imperator Alexander II," the, 41  
 "Imperator Alexander III," the, 50, 52,  
 88, 93, 119, 121, 147, 148, 154, 155,  
 158, 160, 164-68, 198, 201, 202, 204,  
 206, 210-12, 218, 219  
 "Imperator Nikolai I," the, 34, 39-41,  
 48, 53, 56, 89, 96, 120, 142, 154, 155,  
 168, 173, 202, 206, 212  
 Indo-China, 15  
 "Irtish," 93, 112, 155, 160, 169, 191, 197  
 201, 202, 206  
 Ivanov, Lieutenant, 90, 101  
 — Midshipman, 157  
 "Ivans," two unknown, heroic conduct  
 of, 90, 91  
 "Iwate," the, 216  
 "Izumrud," the, 6, 36, 75, 93, 113, 121,  
 140, 141, 145, 154-7, 159, 160, 173,  
 202, 203, 206, 207, 211, 212, 215-8,  
 221, 271-3, 276

## J

Japan, 18, 65, 69, 73, 78, 146, 150, 189,  
 200  
 — Sea of, 19, 64, 184  
 Japanese army, 78  
 — fleet, sketch of formations of, 71;  
 building of, 77  
 — guns compared with Russian, 39-42  
 — losses, 105  
 — naval power, table of ships, with par-  
 ticulars as to armaments, etc., 26  
 Jessen, Admiral, 37, 66, 93, 101, 186

## K

- Kamimura, Admiral, 66  
 Kamranh, 15, 190  
 — Bay, 202  
 "Kamtchatka," the, 93, 112, 116, 148,  
 155, 160, 191, 197, 201, 202, 206, 213,  
 217, 218  
 Kasbek, General, 156, 223, 226, 228  
 "Kassuga," the, 49, 108, 148, 153, 166,  
 177, 181, 207, 208, 210, 211, 215, 216,  
 222  
 Keller, Count, 57  
 "Khitatchi-Maru," the, 99  
 Khlodovsky, Captain, 121  
 Kingston valves, 90, 91, 96, 100, 103,  
 106, 108, 153  
 "Kintchio-Maru," the, 99, 101  
 Kirilov, Mr. N., on the Russian defeat, 79  
 Kiu Shiu, 159, 204  
 Klanier de Kolon, Captain, 139, 229, 242,  
 243, 246  
 "Kniaz Suvorov," the. *See* "Suvorov."  
 Kolokoltsev, Lieutenant, 157  
 Koptevy, Lieutenant, 185, 228, 231  
 Korea, 18, 65, 151, 256  
 "Korea," the, 92, 112, 155, 160, 186, 190,  
 191, 194, 195, 197, 200-2, 206, 264  
 Korea, Gulf of, 62, 67  
 — Straits of, 16, 17, 19, 21, 49, 52, 64,  
 68, 69, 73, 78, 84, 87, 112, 126, 127,  
 130, 159, 172, 174, 177, 183, 184, 188,  
 191, 199, 212, 236  
 "Kornilov," the, 41  
 "Kostroma," the, 112, 155, 191, 202, 206  
 Kotsushima, island of, 147, 180, 192, 209  
 Kozaka lighthouse, 216  
 Kozhevnikov, Dr., 179  
 Krupp, system of armour, 29  
 Kure, 64, 65, 233  
 Kurile Islands, 18, 63, 87  
 Kuropatkin, General, 12, 57, 138

## L

- La Perouse, Straits of, 19, 63, 67, 87, 149  
 Lebedev, Captain, 150, 153  
 "Lena," the, 82  
 Liao-yang, 9, 137  
 Libau, 6, 13, 46, 50, 78, 80, 128, 131

- Linievitch, General, report of, 111-21,  
 156, 267, 275  
 "Livonia," the, 189, 202  
 Lokhvitsky, naval engineer, 179

## M

- Madagascar, 13, 15, 51, 61, 174  
 Makarov, Admiral, 4, 58, 199  
 "Malacca," the, 5  
 Manchuria, 80  
 Manila, 132, 141, 145, 147, 149, 206,  
 262-7, 275  
 Masampo, Bay of, 63, 64, 67  
 "Matsushima," the, 151, 207, 215, 216,  
 221  
 — island of, 229, 230, 236  
 Maytzuru, 64  
 Melnitzky, Lieutenant, 179  
 "Mercury," the, 107, 108  
 "Meteor," the, 189, 202  
 Metre Hill, 13, 267  
 "Mikasa," the, 29, 53, 59, 208, 216  
 Mikhailovitch, Grand Duke Alexander,  
 Register of, 24, 39, 42, 237  
 Ministry of Marine, 1, 5, 11, 12, 20, 22,  
 43, 50, 61, 78, 83, 88, 91, 104, 135,  
 137, 138, 273, 274  
 Ministry of War, 91, 137, 138  
 "Monomakh," the. *See* "Vladimir Mon-  
 omakh"  
 Mukden, 78, 137, 242

## N

- Nagasaki, 64, 153  
 Nakhimov, Admiral, 6, 58  
 "Nakhimov," the, 40, 41, 56, 89, 93, 108,  
 112, 121, 154, 155, 159, 160, 168, 190,  
 205, 206, 212, 217, 220  
 "Naniva," the, 102, 117, 207, 222  
 Napoleon Bonaparte, 97, 99, 100  
 "Naval Pocket Book," the, 52  
 Naval Regulations on surrender, 89, 93,  
 95, 98, 99  
 Naval Technical Committee, 22, 45  
 "Navarin," the, 6, 29-32, 39-41, 49, 53,  
 56, 93, 112, 121, 154, 155, 159, 160,  
 168, 198, 202, 205, 206, 212, 218, 220  
 Nelson, Admiral, 11, 12, 58, 121

Nerike, Lieutenant, 157  
 Nevsky works, the, 6  
 Nicholas I, Emperor, 97, 107, 108  
 — II, Emperor, 4  
 Niebogotov, Admiral, 4, 6, 12, 13, 15, 28,  
 33-5, 56, 82, 88, 92, 93, 94 *n.*, 95, 97,  
 99, 100, 103, 107, 108, 112, 117, 120,  
 123, 128, 129, 131, 132, 140, 141, 146,  
 148, 154, 155, 158, 160, 168, 169, 183,  
 191, 202, 212, 218, 229, 230, 233, 247,  
 248, 252, 261, 272, 273, 274, 276  
 "Nissin," the, 49, 148, 166, 181, 208,  
 210, 216, 222  
 "Nitaka," the, 151, 152, 162, 177, 207,  
 215, 222  
 Nogi, General, 98  
 "Novik," the, 25, 36  
 Novosilsky, Admiral, 58  
 "Novoye Vremya," Russian newspaper,  
 28, 129, 133, 242, 260, 263, 266, 273

## O

Odessa Military Circuit, 17  
 Okhotsk, Sea of, 18, 19  
 Okinoshima, island of, 96  
 "Oleg," the, 6, 36, 37, 74, 93, 95, 112,  
 113, 140, 148-50, 154, 169, 170, 173,  
 177, 178, 183, 190, 194, 196, 198-202,  
 206, 208-11, 214, 217, 218, 262, 264,  
 265  
 Olginsky, Mr. 267  
 "Orel," the, 6, 50, 51, 89, 94, 96, 112, 123,  
 132, 154, 155, 160, 162, 168, 193, 201-3,  
 206, 212, 216, 218, 219, 220-2  
 "Orel," the, hospital ship, 155, 191, 202,  
 206, 212  
 "Oslabya," the, 29, 30, 32, 49, 88, 108,  
 112, 116, 117, 119, 122, 130, 133, 142,  
 146-8, 150, 151, 154-7, 160, 164, 165,  
 168, 192, 201-4, 206, 208, 209, 213,  
 215-17  
 "Otova," the, 151  
 Ovander, Lieutenant, 214  
 Oyama, Marshal, 17, 57  
 Ozerov, Captain, 214

## P

Pacific Fleet, second, 3, 5, 127, 177, 183,  
 260, 261, 267

"Pamiat Azova," the, 41  
 "Pamyat Mercurii," the, 108  
 Parker, Admiral, his signal to Nelson,  
 11  
 Patience Bay, 19  
 "Peresviet," the, 267  
 Pescadores Islands, 65  
 "Petropavlovsk," the, 4, 57  
 Petropavlovsk, 19  
 Podgursky, Lieutenant, 270  
 Politovsky, Lieutenant, 179  
 "Poltava," the, 25, 267  
 Porfirii, Father, 178  
 Port Arthur, 4, 8, 13, 14, 29 *n.*, 45, 49, 59,  
 61-4, 78, 81, 87, 91, 98, 136, 137, 188,  
 238, 267, 269  
 Port Arthur Squadron, 9  
 Possiet, 184, 136, 256  
 Prikhodko, Quartermaster, 181  
 Prokofiev, Lieutenant, 108

## Q

Queen Victoria's Jubilee, naval review,  
 46  
 Quelpart, 202

## R

Radlov, Captain, 189  
 "Raphael," the, 97, 107  
 "Razsviet," Russian newspaper, 3  
 Reitzenstein, Admiral, 190  
 Rheinstein, Admiral, 140  
 Riabov, Captain, 185  
 "Rion," the, 202  
 "Rossia," the, 37, 38, 46, 102  
 Rozhestvensky, Admiral, 1, 3-8, 10, 17,  
 21, 23, 28, 31, 33-9, 45, 48, 50, 54,  
 56, 57, 59, 64, 66-9, 83, 86-8, 92, 93,  
 104, 112, 114, 116, 126, 128, 130, 132,  
 133, 139, 145, 146, 150, 154, 156, 160,  
 165, 174, 191, 192, 199, 201, 203, 205,  
 223, 226, 228, 236, 237, 241, 243, 247,  
 249, 257, 258, 261, 263, 277  
 "Rurik," the, 82, 90, 100, 101, 103, 121  
 Russian fleet, coal used in, 110  
 — guns, compared with Japanese, 39-  
 42; compared with English, 44-5  
 Russian Naval Power, table of ships, with  
 particulars as to armaments, etc., 27

- "Rus," the, transport, 112, 155, 160, 191,  
196, 201, 206, 213, 218  
"Rus, The," Russian newspaper, 61, 79,  
92, 139, 230, 234, 249, 266

## S

- Sablin, Lieutenant, 157  
"Sadanashi," the, 224, 226, 234  
Sado, Island of, 64  
Saddle Islands, the, 14, 16, 18, 20, 62,  
65, 68, 73  
St. Olga's Bay, 19  
St. Olga's Station, 154, 157, 222  
St. Petersburg, 12, 13, 20, 149, 157, 206,  
261, 263, 265, 274  
"St. Petersburg Gazette," quoted, 104  
Sakhalin, 19  
San Francisco, 82  
Santiago, battle of, 107  
"San-yen," the, 151  
Sasebo, 29 *n.*, 64, 65, 96, 103, 146, 153,  
224, 225, 233  
"Sazanami," the, 93, 241  
Schein, Captain, 113, 116, 120, 154, 261  
Schilling, Midshipman Baron, 102  
Scholtz, Quartermaster, 152  
"Seniavin," the. *See* "Admiral Seniavin"  
Shanghai, 16, 20, 74, 82, 140, 188, 189,  
190, 201, 202  
"Shikishima," the, 29 *n.*, 208, 216  
Sinope, 58  
— battle of, 107, 271  
"Sissoi Veliky," the, 29, 30, 32, 49, 53,  
56, 92, 93, 108, 112, 119, 121, 154,  
155, 159, 160, 168, 181, 202, 204, 206,  
212, 214, 218, 220  
Skrydlov, Vice-Admiral, 59  
"Slovo," the, Russian newspaper, 10  
Soldatenkov, Midshipman, 181  
Speransky, engineer officer, 183  
"Steregushty," the, 82, 90  
"Suma," the, 113  
Sundi Islands, 174  
"Suvorov," the, 29-31, 45, 50, 51, 53, 56,  
59, 75, 88, 112, 115, 117, 119, 122,  
133, 134, 142, 146-8, 154-6, 160, 162,  
164, 165, 168, 171, 174, 187, 191, 197-  
9, 201, 202, 204, 206-11, 215-18

- "Svietlana," the, 84, 85, 93, 104, 105,  
113, 116, 117, 141, 154, 168, 169, 183,  
190, 202, 206, 208, 216, 218  
"Svir," the, 92, 112, 147, 155, 160, 183,  
188, 189, 191, 200, 206, 210

## T

- Tagesaki, 75  
"Takasago," the, 36  
"Takatshikhov," the, 102, 207, 222  
Takesiki, 67  
"Tatsuta," the, 29 *n.*  
Tavaststern, Midshipman, 166  
"Temps, The," newspaper, 54  
"Tennessee," the, 105  
"Times, The," newspaper, 29 *n.*, 94 *n.*  
Togo, Admiral, 18, 28, 29 *n.*, 33, 34, 59,  
62-7, 74, 88, 92, 93, 94 *n.*, 97, 98, 104,  
105, 108, 113, 115, 126, 129, 163, 192,  
199, 223  
Tokio, 18, 62, 89, 93, 145, 146, 226, 234,  
267, 272  
"Tokiwa," the, 216  
Tomilov, Dr., 179  
Trafalgar, battle of, 96  
Tsar, H. M., the, 145, 146, 147  
"Tsen-yen," the, 117  
"Tsesarevitch," the, 49, 50, 52, 58  
Tshagin, Aide-de-camp, 145  
"Tshesma," the, 48  
"Tshitose," the, 36, 177, 207, 215, 222  
"Tshitshien," the, 147, 203  
Tshoglov, Lieutenant, 183  
Tshukhnin, Admiral, 4  
Tsugaru Straits, 18, 19, 63, 67, 87  
"Tsushima," the, 37, 177, 207, 215  
Tsushima, battle of, 46, 77, 135, 149,  
190, 206, 223, 226, 260, 261, 271  
— Island of, 62, 65, 67, 116, 146, 147,  
150, 155, 159, 177, 191, 203, 207  
— Straits, 63, 64, 67, 105

## U

- Ukhtomsky, Admiral, 58, 59, 62  
"Ural," the, 112, 113, 147, 148, 154, 155,  
167, 183, 190, 196, 201, 202, 204, 206,  
210, 213, 217, 218  
"Urania," the, 202

## V

- "Variag," the, 82  
 Vickers, Sons and Maxim, 29 *n.*  
 Vigo, 46, 51  
 Villeneuve, Admiral, 96  
 Virenius, Admiral, 260  
 Vladimir Bay, 155  
 "Vladimir," the, transport, 189, 202  
 "Vladimir Monomakh," the, 35, 41, 48,  
 74, 93, 108, 112, 113, 121, 141, 149,  
 154, 168, 169, 173, 190, 191, 193, 194,  
 196, 201, 202, 206, 208, 209, 211, 212,  
 214  
 Vladivostok, 15, 17, 19-3, 37, 38, 49,  
 59, 61, 62, 64, 66, 73, 82, 88, 89, 92,  
 93, 103, 104, 131, 133, 139-41, 145,  
 147, 150, 154-8, 169, 172, 174, 184,  
 186, 188, 200, 202, 221-3, 231, 232,  
 236, 240, 241, 246, 247, 252, 255, 256,  
 260, 272, 277  
 Vladivostok squadron, 9, 37  
 Von Den, Dr., 179  
 "Voronezh," the, 189

- Vrangel, Lieutenant Baron, 165  
 Vsevolozhsky, Ensign, 214

## W

- Whitehead torpedo, 124, 148, 211, 268  
 Withoeft, 8, 32, 58, 61

## Y

- "Yakumo," the, 216, 221  
 Yang-tse-kiang, the, 62, 189  
 "Yaroslavl," the 189  
 "Yashima," the, 30, 34, 38, 49, 129  
 Yatsin, "Course of Naval Gunnery," 45  
 Yezo, island of, 63

## Z

- "Zhemtshug," the, 6, 36, 93, 105, 140,  
 148, 149, 154, 159, 160, 162, 164, 165,  
 167-9, 171, 173, 190, 197, 199, 201,  
 202, 206, 207, 210, 211, 212, 214, 216,  
 218, 264, 265, 276

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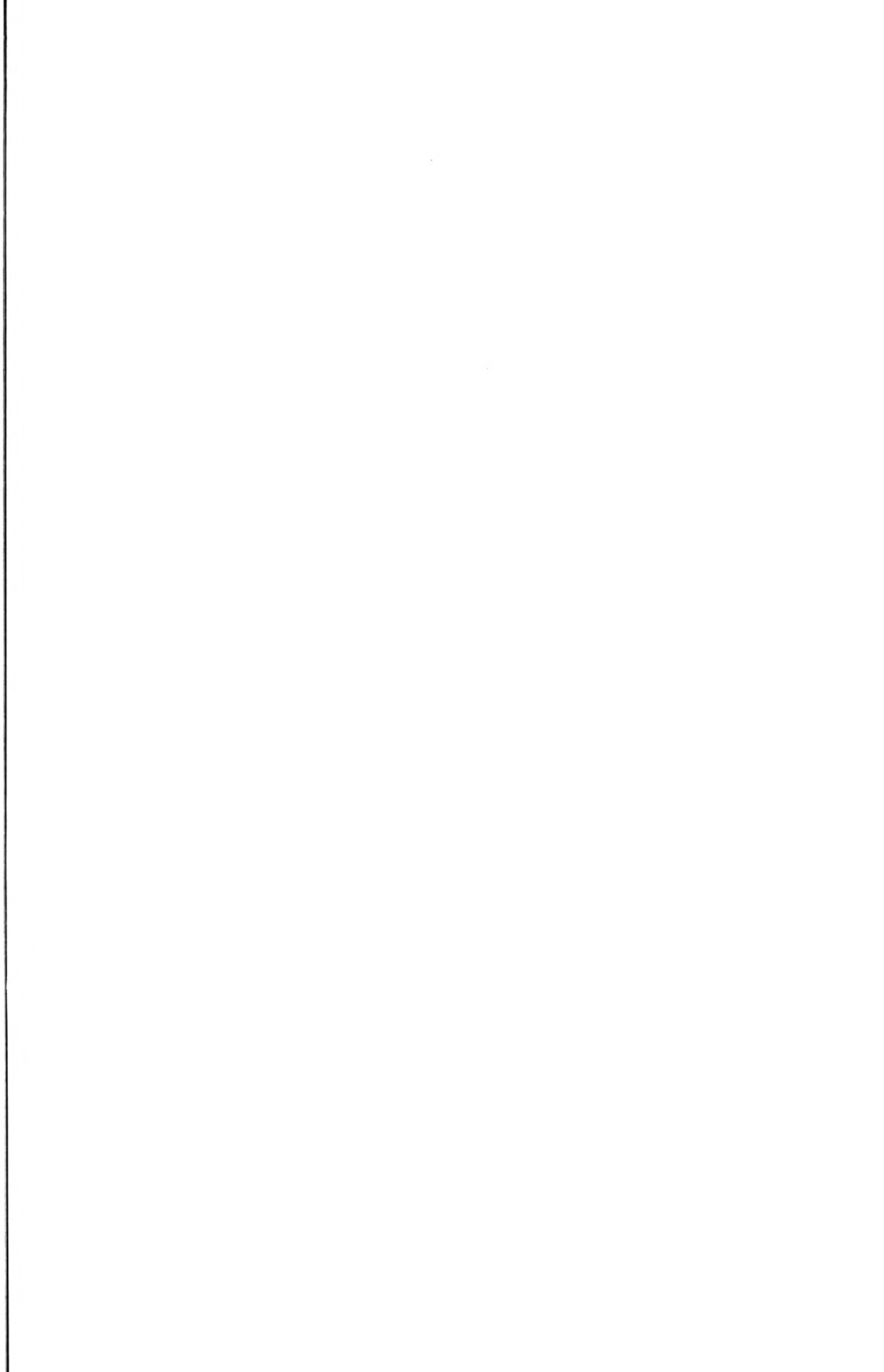
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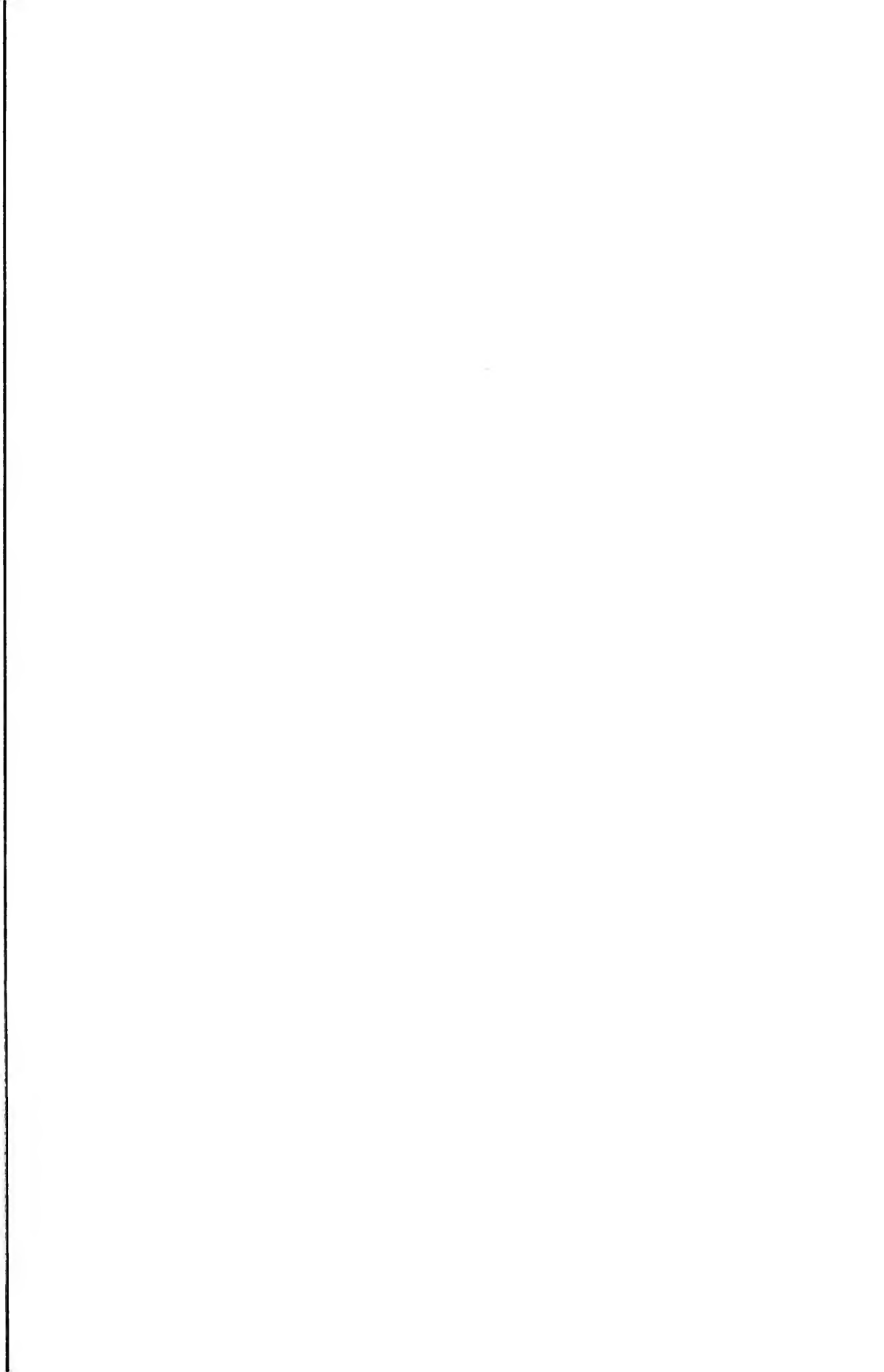
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