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A plan for War against China during
the Winter months. -

Article I. - After declaration of War, the whole of the ships of the Japanese Navy should assemble at Nagasaki, in order to proceed to capture the island of Chusan: that the fleet should convoy transport steamers, having on board at least 7000 soldiers, fully equipped for the purpose of holding Chusan after its capture. -

Article II. - That immediately the troops are at Chusan, the empty transports (having filled up their fresh water at Chusan) should immediately be sent to Liang Kieu Bay Formosa, under convoy of all the Japanese men-of-war; leaving the "Stonewall" ram and two gunboats to watch the island; that all the troops &c &c. at present in Formosa should be embarked and be taken to Chusan to reinforce the garrison of that island. -

Article III. That previous to abandoning the Camp at Formosa, General Saigo should assemble all the conquered Savage Chiefs and state to them that the object of his coming to Formosa had been successfully accomplished: that he formerly met them as enemies - but having punished - he now left them as friends: in token of which he should then hand over to the Chiefs, title deeds for the wooden buildings, of which the camp is composed: telling them to let it be the foundation of a new city, devoted to the protection of future ship-wrecked mariners - no matter of what nation. - General Saigo should then present to each Chief a Proclamation from the Prime Minister of Japan, stating that he hoped the Chiefs would remain faithful to their treaty with Japan &c - &c - &c - &c - &c.

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Article IV. That on return of the fleet from Formosa, the transports should quietly remain at anchor at Chusan, whilst the men-of-war proceeded up the Woosung River, to destroy the Arsenal, about six miles above Shanghai, and likewise to capture and take to Chusan, any Chinese men-of-war at anchor off the Arsenal: this service would be a great blow to China, and is easily accomplished: Foochow Arsenal could be destroyed also: and by the time the 1st of March arrived, the Chinese Navy would have been totally destroyed: so that the transports going North, after March - would have very little to fear from an enemy on the sea: and the Peking tribute rice would afford full cargoes for them to return to Japan. -

Article V. That further Delay in the Declaration of War may prove Fatal to the success of all the Japanese plans. - If they, ^{the Chinese} succeed in their endeavours to procure ironclads, then the Chinese fleet would fight well in company with their ironclads: but not without: and who can say but that an Ambassador may have already reached Europe, as a private gentleman, but with full credentials in his portmanteau? The cunning Chinese are capable of thus acting: thus when the private gentleman had completed his purchases: he could assume the garb of Ambassador - present his credentials to the Foreign Court - and then give the Chinese Flag to his late purchases. - I fear this. - If so: Japan is undone. Strike, at once. -

Tokio Oct. 21st 1874

Alfred Roper.

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My Reasons for the Articles recommended for
Carrying on war against China during Winter months.

Reason I My reason for selecting the island of Chusan, is, that it is the nearest suitable island to Japan; it is ^{the} most central spot in the Chinese Empire for forming a base of operation against that Empire - either North or South: it is situated close to the mouths of the Ningpo and Shanghai Rivers: it is convenient for disposing of native junks & their cargoes, taken as prizes: it is easy of access to the Foreign Communities of Ningpo & Shanghai by boats, and these Foreigners will find a way to help the garrison if they should require it: it occupies a similar position to the Shanghai River, as Hongkong does to the Canton River. —

Reason II. The small number of Japanese troops now in Formosa could not remain there long, after war is declared, without a reinforcement of at least 5000 more soldiers: can Japan afford to lose the services of 10,000 of her soldiers, when she is about to attack Peking? Union is strength: before war is declared, I admit, the Japanese could not abandon Formosa with credit to themselves: but after war is declared, the circumstances are quite altered; then the present troops can be withdrawn with honour; because they will have accomplished the subjection of their enemies, the Savages; and all Western Nations will see the wise policy of concentrating your forces - the more effectually to enforce payment of the indemnity at Peking. I will admit that Formosa could be conquered by 8000 Japanese troops: I will admit also, that Formosa can be conquered at Peking, by one stroke of the Emperor's pencil: why then conquer it twice? if the Expedition to Peking is un-
-successful.

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-successful, in that case, Formosa would have to be given up, even though Gen. Saigo had conquered it; therefore it would be well to have all the assistance you can, by withdrawing all the Formosa troops to assist in the more certain plan of forcing the Emperor to cede it at Peking. - Another reason is that Formosa is too far distant from Japan: to keep possession of it during hostilities, would cost too much: it would paralyze & fetter the Government in their operations against the North: if Japan has an army like France or Germany, where 10000 soldiers are, as only a handful of sand, taken from the sea-shore - then do not abandon Formosa: but, of this I am ignorant, and it is hard to advise, when the means are unknown. -

Reason III I know that most nations when abandoning a camp to a hostile enemy, generally burn it: do not do this: make it a present to the savage Chiefs, with proper papers entitling them to its possession: there is an English proverb which runs thus: - it is sometimes prudent to "make a virtue of necessity": if you burn the Camp, it will do Japan no good: it will do the Chiefs no good: it will do the Chinese ~~no good~~ ^{good}: for immediately the Japanese troops are embarked; the Chinese troops will storm your camp, then in possession of the savage Chief; & this will result in the Chinese dispossessing the Savages: & war to the knife will henceforth be, between the Savages & Chinese: but the Savages will hand down from Father to Son - the generosity & kindness of the Japanese, so that in future they would always be your friends against the Chinese: if you wished to gain land. Of course I know that a Proclamation from
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the Prime Minister of Japan addressed to Savages, is a force: but it would give the Minister an opportunity to express his ideas, as to why the Army is withdrawn: of course the Savages would not care about the Proclamation: but "Copies" would get into the newspapers in China, Japan and Europe: so that the Minister would have a good chance to explain an apparently retrograde movement: the Japanese Minister must not forget to have his Proclamation in grand words, like those of Napoleon the First: and always to remember that he has the opportunity of exciting the Admiration of all Civilized nations. (not to include China).-

Reason IV.
and
Reason V

I have so fully explained these two articles that any further remarks would not be proper: but with this letter I send you a volume of "Lord Elgin's Mission to China": if you read it carefully you will perceive the crafty cunning, and lying duplicity of the highest Chinese Officials: I have marked the most prominent passages in this book with my pen: see page 235-236 - page 299-301 - 379-380 - 414-415 - 416-421-422 -

Alfred Roper

Tokio Oct. 21st 1874. -

E. M. Hirai Esq.

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Tokio

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